

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT -RECOGNIZE-RESIST-REMEDY- IT FOR CHANGE

IT for Change

IT for Change

©2022, IT FOR CHANGE



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction, provided the original work is properly credited. Cette œuvre est mise à disposition selon les termes de la licence Creative Commons Attribution (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>), qui permet l'utilisation, la distribution et la reproduction sans restriction, pourvu que le mérite de la création originale soit adéquatement reconnu.

IDRC GRANT / SUBVENTION DU CRDI : - #RECOGNIZE-RESIST-REMEDY: A RESEARCH PROJECT TO COMBAT GENDER-BASED HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN IN BRAZIL AND INDIA

IDRC Grant Number: 109058-001

#Recognize-Resist-Remedy

**A research project to combat gender-based hate speech
against women in India and Brazil**

Final technical report

IT for Change, India

1 August, 2019 – 30 April, 2022

Date of submission: 11th July, 2022

Location: India

Report Type: Final Technical Report

Research Team:

Anita Gurumurthy, Principal Investigator, IT for Change

Nandini Chami, Co-Investigator, IT for Change

Other team members:

Amshuman Dasarathy, Co-Investigator, IT for Change

Shreeja Sen, Co-Investigator, IT for Change

Malavika Rajkumar, Co-Investigator, IT for Change

Avantika Tewari, Co-Investigator, IT for Change

Copyright © 2022 by IT for Change.

Disseminated under Creative Commons Attribution License
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

Table of Contents

1. <i>Executive Summary</i>	5
1.1 <i>Project rationale</i>	5
1.2 <i>Main Research tracks</i>	6
1.3 <i>Significant research findings</i>	8
1.4 <i>Impact footprint</i>	9
2. <i>Synthesis of Research Results and Development Outcomes</i>	11
2.1 <i>Specific Research Objective 1</i>	12
2.2 <i>Specific Research Objective 2</i>	14
3. <i>Methodology</i>	16
4. <i>Project Outputs and Outcomes. What are the main outputs of the project?</i>	17
4.1 <i>Research studies, reports and thinkpieces</i>	18
4.2 <i>Resource guide for judiciary (forthcoming)</i>	18
4.3 <i>A book on the ‘right to publicness’ (forthcoming)</i>	19
4.4 <i>Policy submissions</i>	19
4.5 <i>Engagements with platform self-governance debates</i>	19
4.6 <i>Events organised by IT for Change</i>	20
4.7 <i>Events we were part of</i>	20
4.8 <i>Media Outputs</i>	22
5. <i>Problems and Challenges</i>	23
6. <i>Administrative Reflections and Recommendations for IDRC</i>	24

1. Executive Summary.

Provide an informative summary of the key advances, significant research findings, important outcomes and innovative outputs of the project. The focus should be on project achievements in terms of outputs and outcomes. Please LIST THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES/OUTPUTS and provide links where possible and include a discussion of:

a. The research. What was the basic rationale of the project and the research problem or problems being addressed? If your understanding of the problems have evolved since the project was approved, the report should describe this evolution and the reasons behind it.

Did the research process lead to a revised view of the research problem?

Provide a synthesized reflection on the overall progress of the global project (please include the general objective of the project). Describe the contribution to knowledge that this project represents from a scientific, developmental and/or policy perspective.

b. Progress in achieving research. Briefly describe achievement of project milestones for the entire length of the project. Have a brief section for each milestone, provide evidence that milestones were achieved, and refer to the evidence. If applicable, explain why any milestones were not achieved.

1.1 Project rationale

The research project #Recognize-Resist-Remedy was initiated in August 2019 with the overall objective of evolving a comprehensive socio-legal strategy to address the proliferation of viral sexism and misogynistic hate in the Internet-mediated public sphere, as a collaborative endeavour between IT for Change (India) and InternetLab (Brazil).

Through context-specific explorations in India and Brazil, led by IT for Change and InternetLab respectively, the project focused on the following dimensions:

- Identifying blind spots in prevailing legal-institutional frameworks on hate speech with respect to recognizing misogyny as a form of hate.
- Exploring effective routes to demanding platform accountability for sexism, misogyny and cyberviolence in their communicational ecosystems
- Building a proof-of-concept model for gender-inclusive digital cultures that effectively challenge the normalization of sexism and misogyny

IT for Change spearheaded the India component of the project and pursued the following research tracks towards the fulfillment of the main objectives of the project:

1.2 Main Research tracks

Track 1. Investigating the adequacy of existing legal-institutional approaches to sexist hate speech

We carried out an in-depth investigation of case laws in India in order to examine the challenges of obtaining access to justice in a context with no specific legal provision addressing sexist hate speech. Through a delimited key word search methodology, 95 cases of women seeking redress for various forms of online sexism, misogyny and gender-based violence were identified from online case law databases. These cases were zeroed upon through a systematic combing of online court records of the Supreme Court, 2 district courts, and 17 high courts between end November and early December 2021. The 95 shortlisted cases were then analysed in-depth for the following aspects: emerging typologies of violations in digital sociality, platform accountability considerations, gender sensitivity of legal readings, and challenges in obtaining evidence for the prosecution.

Our study found that the lack of a specific legal provision addressing sexist hate speech made it very challenging to recognise gender-trolling as an emergent form of gender-based violence in the Indian context. Similarly, non-consensual circulation of intimate images as a strategy of

harassment and intimidation seemed distressingly commonplace. However, despite the recognition of the right to privacy as a historical judgment of the Supreme Court – Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs. Union of India – the dominant tendency of the judiciary was to adopt a lens of obscenity rather than one of privacy and bodily autonomy in decoding NCII. On the whole, courts tend to misrecognise technology-facilitated gendered violence, seeing it as somehow less serious/harmful than offline violence, and in doing so, apply legal provisions that do not correspond with the gravity of the offence.

In the final analysis, our study demonstrates the urgent imperative for legal-institutional reform in India from the standpoint of enabling effective access to justice for victims of online sexist hate and other forms of gender-based cyberviolence.

We also set up a India-based knowledge network of leading feminist scholar-practitioners and lawyers invested in this issue, in order to catalyse a public debate on the specific legal reform directions that are desirable. A [series](#) of 7 thinkpieces examining various facets of this debate was published and a [3-part webinar series](#) was organised by us in Feb 2021, also drawing upon additional support from Edelgive Foundation, India.

Track 2. Exploring feminist visions of social media governance

Over 2021 and 2022, we carried out a research study on examining the prevalence of sexist hate in the Twitter sphere in India. The intent was to unpack how the myriad forms of gendered abuse and trolling tend to fall between the cracks of existing content governance frameworks and algorithmic hate detection techniques of mainstream platforms. For this study, we selected a sample of 20 politically active women (spanning those involved in formal party politics as well as journalists, activists and civil society representatives) based on a purposive sampling methodology to ensure effective representativity across the axes of caste, religion, age, geography and political leanings. For one predetermined week starting from the end of November to the beginning of December 2020, we combed the public profiles of the women using the authorization credentials provided by the Twitter developer platform, to extract all Twitter mentions directed at them in this period.

Over 30,000 Twitter mentions were identified and our bottom-up annotation guidelines showed that there were at least 19 mutually exclusive types of hateful, abusive or problematic speech depicting the many shades of sexist hate. Although nobody in our sample was entirely spared, we found that violence directed at women online is highly intersectional in nature with Muslim women and political dissenters receiving a disproportionate amount of abuse. We also found that abuse directed at women in public-political life rarely had anything to do with their stated political positions and invariably took the form of gendered attacks on their character and bodies. We were also able to identify, certain continuities with the longer socio-cultural histories of subcontinental patriarchy with its emphasis on placing strictures on women's agency and sexuality. Finally and most importantly, the typologies of hate that our study was able to identify through a bottom-up grounded coding have been used by Tattle Tech to develop their open source algorithmic hate speech detection tool that is being launched later this month. The final report of this research study will be released shortly.

As part of this track of work, we also convened a global roundtable on feminist social media governance in April 2022, along with InternetLab Brazil, to facilitate comparative analysis of platform governance experiences across different contexts in the global South. The focus was on chalking out the broad contours of future directions for platform regulation and techno-design overhaul that could effectively address sexist hate from an intersectional perspective, without intensifying gendered censorship cultures. The roundtable witnessed participation from 18 feminist scholar-practitioners from different parts of the world. A [compendium](#) with initial inputs from attendees was produced prior to the table and we are in the process of wrapping up the publication of a final volume of essays and a synthesis report from the event.

1.3. Significant research findings

- Sexist hate speech requires a legal approach that moves beyond the universal frame of understanding the operations of gender power and acknowledges its intersectional workings. In postcolonial contexts such as India, an effective legal response against misogyny online must begin by recognizing how class, caste, community, and ethnicity faultlines also affect gendered experience. Any law on gender-trolling in India needs to begin with the understanding that women from historically oppressed and marginalised social groups, such as Muslim and lower-

caste women, are at the receiving end of a disproportionate amount of abuse compared to those from more privileged social locations.

- A post-liberal approach to regulating the thresholds of free speech rights is needed, which shifts away from the individualistic victim- perpetrator binary and moves towards an ecological view of the online public sphere, centering the unique and unprecedented nature of the virality and amplification of hate on platforms. Rather than seeking to police individual user-generated speech acts, this approach would instead take aim at issues like virality and platform complicity in the unchecked growth of online gender-based violence.

- Intermediary accountability and duty of care is crucial for ensuring women's human rights online. Social media platforms are not passive, neutral conduits of content. Their business model is focused on active algorithmic gaming of virality to maximise user engagement with content. Self-regulation by social media platforms has not necessarily produced effective outcomes in terms of addressing sexist hate speech. To hold platforms accountable, through our work, we propose that there needs to be a proper determination of what constitutes unlawful content and the importance of a higher legal obligation of the platform to act on receiving 'actual knowledge' of unlawful content on the platform.

1.4. Impact footprint

Over the two years, the project has forged a significant impact footprint from the global to the local level, ensuring that the research is leading to policy change, through a range of policy submissions, media pieces and networking and advocacy initiatives.

Output Type	No. of Outputs	Details of Output
Research Studies, Reports & Essays	8	Refer to Point 4.1, 4.2, 4.3
Policy Submissions	4	Refer to Point 4.4
Events and Engagements	24	Refer to Point 4.5, 4.6. 4.7
Media Pieces	6	Refer to Point 4.8

Impacting critical policy debates: As discussed in the subsequent sections of the report, we have been able to successfully input our insights into critical policy debates at the UN level – [Generation Equality forums](#), [UN South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights](#), and consultations of the [UN Special Rapporteur of Freedom of Expression on gendering free expression rights](#). At the [UN IGF 2021](#), we co-convened an Open Forum on feminist social media governance in partnership with UN Women and the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression.

A foot in the door with Meta: Our perspectives on feminist techno-design and the need for an integrated techno-legal governance to prevent individual and collective harms of algorithmic virality have been sought after by Meta on multiple occasions, in the context of their India civil society engagement processes, and in the platform accountability roundtables convened by the Web Foundation.

Expertise sought by Government of India: We were also successful in getting our demands on prompt action from platform companies for NCII complaints accommodated into India’s emerging framework for social media accountability – and Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) – officials have sought our inputs expressly on a couple of occasions as part of the public and civil society consultation processes in this area.

First-ever resource tool for judges/lawyers on gender-based cyberviolence: At the national level, our case law research is feeding into the development of a resource guide for members of the judiciary and the legal fraternity on effectively utilising existing legal frameworks in India to facilitate access to justice for victims of online sexism, misogyny, and gender-based cyberviolence. We have been successful in raising resources from the Ford Foundation to take forward this work through its logical next steps of taking the resource guide to its intended constituencies through convening capacity building programmes with district legal forums and judicial academies.

Feeding high quality, annotated data into open source tech development: Our research study on sexism and misogyny in the Indian Twitter sphere has contributed to the development of an open source machine learning tool for hate speech detection being developed by Tattle Tech. Our grounded coding of Twitter mentions data is one of the few available open datasets

that are available for developers to train algorithms on the nuances of gendered hate for effective detection.

A book on the right to publicness: Our work on platform accountability and its insight about the right to publicness will now provide the conceptual framework for field building. With the feminist publishing house Zubaan, the proposed book project will explore the issue of online sexism and misogyny from a communicative justice perspective. The book is intended to be a compilation of 15 essays from leading gender and media and platform governance scholars in India and other contexts in the global South that examines three critical themes: (a) feminist conceptions of publicness and a supra-liberal idea of communicative justice; (b) political subjectivity and feminist claims-making in algorithmified sociality; and (c) new ground norms for the governance of the platformised post-public sphere.

2. Synthesis of Research Results and Development Outcomes

By project research objective : Synthesize the main research results during the project, highlighting the progress made by the project. This should be done by listing each specific objective as it is written in the Grant Agreement, highlighting the progress for each one, and any changes that were made. Include summarized quantitative analysis to back up the results as an annex to this report. Highlight unexpected, surprising or interesting innovative results that you can draw out of the research. Explain how the research results are being used, and what the impact has been on specific communities or populations in the targeted country(ies) at the end of the project. Describe any potential uptake of project results within 3 years of the end of the project.

The core objective of this research project was to evolve a roadmap for combating gender-based hate speech online against women in India and Brazil, straddling legal reform, platform governance and cultural change, with high relevance for countries in the Global South.

Towards the realization of this objective, the project's research tracks focused on the following specific objectives:

- Understanding sexist/misogynistic speech online through intersectional frames in India and building a road map to combat the same, based on grounded evidence
- Suggesting new approaches for feminist social media governance to provide access to justice and redress for women and girls targeted by sexist speech online

We use each of these specific research objectives as starting points to discuss our most salient learnings from the project, as well as reflect on the myriad ways in which our research findings led us to some relatively unexplored territories.

2.1 Specific Research Objective 1

Understanding sexist/misogynistic speech online through intersectional frames in India and building a road map to combat the same, based on grounded evidence

In pursuit of this specific research objective, we undertook the following tracks of research:

- An in-depth exploration of 95 cases before the Indian judiciary, in order to unpack the typologies of online sexism, misogyny and gender-based cyberviolence that are emergent and the adequacy of prevailing legal-institutional responses. As discussed in Q1 above, this study is under finalization. We would like to highlight here that in June 2022, at RightsCon, we convened a session on [“Filling the legal blanks: access to justice for LGBTQIA+ in online gender-based violence laws”](#) in order to build on our research about gaps in the Indian legislative framework in addressing sexist hate and cyberviolence, in order to identify directions for long term reform. Speakers at the session included eminent researchers and activists such as Vikramaditya Sahai, Sachini Perera and Fernanda Martins working on intersectionality and queer rights.
- A [participatory action research study](#) on gender based hate speech online with 11 young women and young men from subaltern locations in second tier urban centres in Karnataka, in partnership with the youth empowerment organization Samvada. While reaffirming the intersectional nature of gender power structures in the digital publics, this study also enabled the participating collective to develop a high degree of self-awareness about the nature of sexist hate. The participant cohort was not only able to build informed perspectives on sexist hate

online in the digitally-mediated public sphere but also assume leadership, and confidently claim online spaces through local language materials for deepening feminist political discourse.

- A thinkpiece series developed in partnership with the country's leading feminist scholars and feminist lawyers on re-examining legal-institutional approaches to addressing sexist hate speech in India. The [8 essays](#) produced in this think-piece series indicate the new frontiers that are needed both in terms of overhauling legislative provisions addressing hate speech and gender-based violence; and platform accountability frameworks.

- A background [paper](#) exploring the continuities and discontinuities between the pre-digital and the current paradigm in terms of protecting women's human rights bottomlines was produced by the project team in partnership with feminist lawyer Aarti Raghavan. This paper emphasises how new forms of misogynistic speech have harmful impacts beyond the immediate chilling effect on women's freedom of speech and expression. They push back women into the private, denying them their foundational rights to publicness and political participation. Currently, in the Indian context, hate speech redress lacks a constitutional vocabulary for grappling with sexist hate from an equality and non-discrimination standpoint. The legal approach also does not adequately address the complicity of social media platforms in enabling and profiting from the viral spread of such hateful messages. Our paper argues that the solution to this problem lies in moving beyond the victim-perpetrator paradigm of the criminal justice system, and focusing regulatory efforts on de-platforming harmful content, by stemming its viral circulation.

We were able to input the insights from this track of research into a training session for newly recruited judges at the [Delhi judicial academy](#); civil society consultations of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on [amendments](#) to the country's internet intermediary liability rules; and the [law review consultation](#) on cyber crimes against women, convened by the National Commission for Women in December 2020.

2.2 Specific Research Objective 2

Suggesting new approaches for feminist social media governance to provide access to justice and redress for women and girls targeted by sexist speech online

We have consistently been at the forefront of global and national level policy debates on evolving new feminist benchmarks for social media governance, building on the insights from our research about the limits of the ‘neutral conduits’ approach in internet intermediary liability legislation and the imperative to emphasise the platform duty of care. We summarise some note-worthy and impactful policy engagements at the global and national levels in this regard.

Global level

(a) Our engagement with the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression

IT for Change and InternetLab jointly responded to the call for inputs into the General Assembly Report on Gender Justice from the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression in June 202. Building on our research, [our submission](#) articulated a feminist critique of the mainstream global consensus on determining the boundaries of the right to free expression. In her [report](#) on gendering the debate on freedom of the expression issued a few months down the line, the Special Rapporteur referred to our submission as the sole citation in her discussion on platform accountability in tackling online gender-based violence. Furthermore, the office of the Special Rapporteur also partnered with UN Women, Web Foundation and IT for Change in co-hosting an [Open Forum](#) on Safe Digital Spaces at the 2021 Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The session highlighted the need for platform companies to learn from grassroots CSOs in the global South in order to build more localised, effective models of content moderation of online sexist hate.

(b) Our engagement with the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy

In October 2019, we submitted an [input](#) to the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy (SRP) for his report to the Human Rights Council on gendering the issue. Our submission highlighted that special attention should be directed towards the gendered aspects of state surveillance, dataveillance in the platform economy, workplace, social and community surveillance and effectively balancing the right to encryption with the freedom from violence in online interactions.

(c) Global campaign on feminist approaches to social media governance

We also put together a campaign for CSW 2021 articulating the need for a new social media governance approach grounded in women's human rights. On the occasion of the UN Commission on the Status of Women 2021 (UN CSW 21), capitalizing on its focus on gender equality in public life, we published a [commentary](#) and released a [podcast series](#) on a feminist social media future, curating the views of feminist digital rights activists from across the world on a new multilateral bench-marking exercise for content governance and techno-design of online communicative spaces. This campaign received over 17,000 impressions on Twitter. The [closing thread](#), featuring a synthesis piece based on our [Feminist Digital Futures podcast](#), received over 10k impressions, and was retweeted 24 times.

The roundtable on social media governance that we put together in April 2022 and discussed in Q1 was another major watershed, and outputs from it in the form of participant essays and a synthesis report will be shortly released. We are confident that these set of outputs will be cutting-edge contributions to the field.

National level

At the national level, our study on political hate against women in the Indian Twitter sphere has helped us shift the bar from criminal, carceral, and retributive notions of justice for victims of sexist hate; and towards a new model of platform accountability that foregrounds the effective delivery of justice in ways that are responsive to the needs of victims. The study demonstrates (forthcoming, summary [here](#)) that the legal intervention best suited to address the problem of online misogyny is a model of internet intermediary accountability which holds platforms responsible for the hostile and abusive environments that they foster and profit from. A central component of this argument lies in dismantling the notion of the passive intermediary, or the metaphor of the platform as a “dumb conduit”. Instead, the study posits that we need to emphasise the extent to which platforms already mediate content, and thereby regulate speech, by steering and manipulating the attention of users at a mass scale through algorithmic means – organizing, ranking, recommending, hiding, and curating content.

Interim findings from this study have helped us input into techno-design consultations at the national level convened by Meta, and the design of an open source ML hate detection tool, as discussed in Q1.

3. Methodology

Describe and discuss the research methods and analytical techniques used and any problems that arose. Research instruments such as questionnaires, interview guides, and any other useful documentation should also be included. Indicate and explain any changes in orientation that may have occurred since the project was designed. Indicate any particular learning about merits of different methods for addressing the project's research problem and generating desired outputs and outcomes.

For the various research tracks that we have outlined in the previous questions, we have adopted a range of methodologies to study the phenomenon of technology facilitated gender-based violence, in particular, participatory action research, discourse analysis and case law analysis.

A common methodological thread whose significance we appreciated as we studied the incidence of online gender-based violence related to the fundamental question of definition and delimitation of what constitutes misogynistic hate, as explained below:

→ **Terminology Filters:** For instance, in our study of judicial attitudes in the case law analysis, our first impulse was to filter relevant cases based on keywords which might point to the use of technology. This approach threw up a range of different complicating factors as the filtered results gave us a lot of irrelevant results. We then retraced our steps and decided instead to use a combination of keyword filters as well as filters based on relevant legal provisions. Further, based on these, approximately 400 cases were individually appraised to test whether they met the requirements of the kinds of violence we intended to study, and the final number of cases was brought down to 95.

→ **Capturing Nuances of Targeted Speech Online:** We faced similar challenges in designing the annotation guidelines for the research report on political hate on Twitter in India. In order to

capture the various nuances of abusive or hateful speech targeted at women, we inductively developed a set of annotation guidelines after discussion within the team. Again, we had to backtrack and reevaluate our path at certain points in order to more accurately capture the prevalence of certain forms of abuse.

→ **Resistance against Feminist Practices and Solutions:** Apart from the question of definition, another methodological challenge that we have had to confront has been navigating the politically and culturally sensitive matter of tackling gender-based violence in participatory action research and institutional capacity building strategies. In our fieldwork in Karnataka, in which we collaborated with Samvada, an organisation that empowers young people to be part of social change, we had to deal with the challenges of backlash that some young men for their feminist social media posts. Our advisory committee also alerted us to the need for ‘packaging’ feminism in ways that may be less threatening to formal institutions. These challenges served as important reminders of the enormous societal challenges that we still continue to face in achieving gender-just outcomes.

4. Project Outputs and Outcomes. What are the main outputs of the project?

This can include the highlights made in the summary – but should also include all the other significant outputs and outcomes] Identify any outputs that were planned, but which have yet to materialize. Specify when these outputs will be completed, including plans for any future publications. Specify how you have met the requirements of IDRC’s Open Access Policy. If appropriate, highlight any unique or innovative outputs.

4.1. Research studies, reports and thinkpieces

(a) Published studies

- IT for Change (2021). [Participatory Action Research on gender-based hate speech online with a Karnataka-based youth group](#). (810 downloads)

- IT for Change (eds.) (2021). [Thinkpiece series](#) on rethinking legal-institutional approaches to sexist hate speech in India. (1643 downloads)
- Raghavan, A.(2021) with editorial support from IT for Change. [The internet-enabled assault on women’s democratic rights](#). Downloads: 232

(b) Forthcoming research studies, reports and thinkpieces

- IT for Change (2022) Profitable Provocations: A Twitter-based Study of Abuse and Misogynistic Trolling Directed at Indian Women in Public-political Life [To be released on 26 August 2022]
- IT for Change (2022) The Indian Judiciary's Tryst With Online Gender-Based Violence: An Empirical Analysis of Indian Case-law [To be released on 26 August 2022]
- IT for Change (forthcoming). Synthesis report and 15 essays from the roundtable on feminist perspectives on social media governance convened in April 2022 [To be released on 26 August 2022]

4.2. Resource guide for judiciary (forthcoming)

We are in the midst of developing a judicial resource guide to aid judges and lawyers in adjudicating and arguing in cases of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. The resource guide will be structured as a series of modules, and will contain both practical legal advice and feminist best practices on how to adjudicate or deal with cases of technology-facilitated gender-based violence; as well as invitations and provocations to think more deeply about the problem of online gendered violence, beyond the strict disciplinary confines of the law.

We are currently in the process of finalizing the drafting of the various modules, and are in conversation with a web designer to help us design a microsite which will host the resource guide content. This resource guide will be launched in September 2022 as an online resource guide and will be transacted with judges and members of legal fraternity through a follow up project with Ford Foundation.

4.3. A book on the ‘right to publicness’ (forthcoming)

We have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the publishing house Zubaan for this edited compilation of 15 essays. We are currently in the process of identifying and reaching out to potential authors.

4.4. Policy submissions

(a) Global level

- IT for Change and InternetLab (2021). [Submission](#) to the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression for the UNGA Report on Gender Justice
- IT for Change (2019). [Submission](#) to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Privacy, for his report on 'Privacy: A Gender Perspective'

(b) National level

- IT for Change (2020). [Submission](#) on the Draft Amendment to Intermediary Guidelines Rules 2018
- IT for Change (2020). Cyberviolence Against Women – A Roadmap for Legal Reform: [Inputs](#) to the Law Review Consultation Convened by the National Commission for Women

4.5. Engagements with platform self-governance debates

(1) Meta Women's Safety Roundtable (June 2022)

ITfC was invited to the Meta Women's Safety Roundtable held on 2 June 2022. In this civil society dialogue, IT for Change contributed insights from the project's research tracks on the kinds of sexist hate that pass below the radar of Community Standards.

(2) Web Foundation Tech Design lab (June 2022)

IT for Change was invited to provide expert inputs to a workshop hosted by the Web Foundation's Tech Policy Lab and partners at 3x3 and Simple Secure on 'Envisioning

Yesterday's Future' - a techno design solution based workshop. We were able to give inputs on how dark and deceptive patterns on the internet reinforce online sexism.

4.6. Events organised by IT for Change

(1) Virtual Roundtable on Feminist Perspectives on Social Media Governance (April 2022)

IT for Change organised a [two-day virtual roundtable](#) in collaboration with InternetLab Brazil, to catalyse a productive debate on examining feminist imaginaries of social media governance adequate to the task of eradicating misogyny in the online communications agora. As discussed earlier, a synthesis report and compilation of essays is under publication.

(2) Sexism and the Online Publics – A [Webinar Series](#) (2021): organised in partnership with EdelGive Foundation and IDRC (Canada). This 3 part series brought together legal scholars, practitioners, platform intermediaries, feminist activists and journalists in a three-part webinar series to unpack sexist hate speech online across February, in the lead up to International Women's Day, 2021. The stellar lineup of speakers includes prominent judicial members, lawyers and police makers including Amber Sinha, Aparna Bhat, Arti Raghavan, Asha Kowtal, Mariana Valente, Mariya Salim, NS Nappinai, Rishab Bailey, Shehla Rashid, Vaishali Bhagwat, Vishal Gogne and Vrinda Bhandari. Over 100 participants attended the webinars.

4.7. Events we were part of

2022

- [Panel discussion](#) organised by Women's Foreign Policy Group on Countering Tech-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence and Intimidation as part of Generation Equality Action Coalition activities (March 2022)
- [Panel](#) on Gendered Access to Justice organised by One Future Collective (March 2022)
- "AI x Disinformation" [webinar](#) organised by the fact-checking organization BOOM Live and the LMU Munich (January 2022)

2021

- Women's Safety Roundtable organised by Meta to launch the stopncii.org website (December 2021)
- Conference hosted by the Network of Women in Media, India on "Man, Male, Masculinities and the Media (December 2021)
- Workshop on Gendered Online Harms by ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making + Society and The University of Melbourne (December 2021)
- Workshop on "Gendered Online Harms: Conceptualizing, Identifying, and Addressing Harms to Women on Digital Platforms" organised by the Melbourne Law School and the Queensland University of Technology (November 2021)
- Open Forum at IGF with Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, UN Women and Web Foundation (November 2021)
- Twitter chat with Breakthrough India discussing ways to #StopDigitalHate, as parts of 16 Days of Activism (November 2021). Our tweets received over 37k impressions(number of times our tweets have been viewed), and our profile was visited over 10.6k times and mentioned nearly 200 times.
- Asia policy discussion held by Facebook's Oversight Board, to issue a Policy Advisory Opinion regarding community guidelines restricting sharing of private residential information on Facebook (October 2021).
- Women's Safety Symposium for South and Southeast Asia (October 2021)
- Panel on Social Media, Networks, and Movements for Women's Empowerment on September co-organised by The Gender & Health Hub, UNU-IIGH, The University of Cape Town and BBC Media Action (September 2021)
- Capacity-building [session](#) for Young Leaders in Tech Policy Fellowship (August 2021)
- [Thematic session](#) on the role of media in building a feminist agenda during the Generation Equality Forum (March 2021).

- [Panels](#) on social media governance and gender bias in new technologies at the 2nd United Nations South Asia Forum on Business and Human Rights (March 2021).

2020

- [Webinar](#) commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, organised by the Centre for Constitutional Rights Research & Advocacy (CCRRA), India (November 2020)
- [Panel discussion](#) on 'Feminist Internet -- An Alternative', co-organised with Breakthrough and Arthan (September 2020)
- Training session on the Right to Privacy: A Feminist Perspective for newly recruited judges at the Delhi Judicial Academy (July 2020)
- Panel discussion on intermediary liability frameworks organised by the Centre for Internet & Society (January 2020).

2019

- [Panel](#) on 'Internet Detox: A Fail-Proof Mechanism to End Online Sexism' at the Internet Governance Forum, Berlin (November 2019)

4.8. Media Outputs

- A [podcast series](#) titled Feminist Digital Futures which explores feminist imaginaries of social media with scholars, activists and leaders from the Global South (March 2021) Total Views: 1923
- A [commentary](#) on Feminist Social Media Future: How Do We Get There? (Bot Populi, March 2021) Total Views: 3187
- [What's So Private about Online Sexual Harassment?](#) (Bot Populi, October 2021) Total

Views: 1506

→ [Articulating a Feminist Response to Online Hate Speech: First Steps](#) (Bot Populi, October 2020) Total Views: 2270

→ [Public Participation is a Woman's First-Order Claim to Being Recognised as a Human Being, the Pandemic Can't Be Allowed to Undermine That](#) (Firstpost, June 2020) Total Views: 499

→ [Why the Debate on Political Ads on Social Media is a Distraction](#) (Firstpost, November 2019) Total Views: 641

5. Problems and Challenges

Have there been any problems or challenges faced by the project? These could include delays, problems amongst stakeholders, with research activities etc. Highlight any risks that might have emerged in the project, and innovative ways you have found to deal with these risks. Reflect on possible problems and challenges related to ethics.

The most significant challenge faced by the project in 2020 and 2021 were the two waves of the COVID-19 pandemic which threw our activity timelines off gear due to illness and increased care responsibilities among team members during the national lockdowns in the Indian context. We were however able to make up for the lost time in the future months also taking advantage of the 7-month extension that we received.

As is expected in any on-ground action challenging the gender power status quo, the participatory action research did lead to some backlash against some youth participants from elite men in their immediate communities. However, we were able to overcome this challenge with support from the partner organisation Samvada.

Similarly, in relation to the development of the judicial resource guide, we were concerned about the extent to which we may be impactful in communicating feminist perspectives on cyberviolence with mainstream judicial institutions. We managed this risk by constituting an advisory committee of 3 leading feminist lawyers working in the Supreme/High Courts in India to negotiate institutional biases and position the technical credence of the resource guide and its

gendered readings of the law. Though this has led to some delays, it has helped us in producing a robust resource guide. We have also been able to secure funding from the Ford Foundation for the roll-out based on this guide to ensure the objectives of this line of action will be met.

6. Administrative Reflections and Recommendations for IDRC

No specific recommendations. We are extremely happy with the support received at every stage in the project.