APC Women Human Rights Defenders Workshop

24 – 25 July 2016

Taipei, Taiwan

The two - day workshop was organised by Association for Progressive Communications (APC) for the APC partners in South Asia and South East Asia, specifically focusing on woman human rights defenders working in the area of defending human right in the digital age and also working on digital rights – freedom of expression, association and assembly in particular.

The objectives laid down for the workshop were as follows:

- To understand the intersection for Gender and Internet Governance
- To evaluate how freedoms of expression, assembly and association on the internet are experienced, exercised and restricted in the context of gender
- To discuss feminist principles and approaches to technology and the internet
- To share a regional perspective on the emerging issues, challenges and collaborative solutions
- To coordinate common campaign/actions focusing on FoE and FoAA of Women in the region
- To assessing opportunities for advocacy at national, regional and international platforms

The group of participants consisted of participants from the following countries:

Pakistan
India
Malaysia
Sri Lanka
Nepal
Phillipines

This following report describes workshop proceedings according to the order of activities and sessions during the two days.

Day 1: 24 July	
Opening the workshop	The workshop commenced with a round of introductions and an ice breaking session. Participants were then asked to lay down the expectations and possible contributions to the workshop and discussions, on post-it notes. A brief sharing of the same was encouraged and few of the participants shared what they had written down, setting the tone and perspective for rest of the workshop that followed.
The Wall of Women's Technology Firsts	This session facilitated setting out perspective for women's interaction with technology and the internet from their first experiences of the following: • used a computer • visited a web page • the first search word • understood a computer-based concept and what is it • realised what the internet is like • harassment online The participants were encouraged to write down or illustrate their responses, on post – it notes to the questions, to paste on a wall in a collage of the different experiences that women have with technology. The answers were enlightening to understand that our experiences and the thought behind a certain action were not very different from each other. The technology has been empowering to seek and share information in our lifetime. We could easily chalk out the freedoms and limitations that define women's usage of technology in the present environment. Interesting insights such as finding like - minded people online and seeking networks that you could not find offline otherwise because of the existing structural inequalities that exit could be drawn from the sharing and the collage.
Presentation and Discussion on the Gendered Experience of Technology and the Internet	In this session, participants were encouraged to write down, in one word answers what they understand by FOE and FOAA and also what they perceive as prerequisites to FOE and FOAA. The presentation and discussion that followed dug deeper into the gender and women's rights issues on the internet and in the realm of technology. Issues for example, sexual harassment, blocking, sexual expression, LGBT rights and

	challenges, content for children's access to the internet, blocking, filtering, shut downs and censorship, also the State and legal intervention in the region.
Understanding FoE and FOAA Issues and Gender	This identified women's human rights issues that have an impact on FOE and / or FOAA, and FoE and FoAA issues that have an impact on women's rights. The group was divided in four smaller groups to choose a specific issue to have a deeper discussion on. The groups were supposed to unpack the issues through discussion onto paper through a metaphorical tree. Trunk of the tree would define the issue at hand, roots discuss the causes, reasons and factors that make up the problem or the challenge; and the branches will elaborate the consequences and effects of the challenge on an individual or the community and the society at large.
Understanding FoE and FoAA Issues and Gender, continued.	The common theme that emerged from the discussions was restrictions on access to technology for women and the rampant persecution. One of the groups had discussed the challenges faced by LGBT or trans persons in particular who identify as women online.
Putting It All Together Closing the day	This session for closing the first day comprised of evaluating the day and setting out the pints to ponder over for the next day. Feedback was considered and the day was summarised by the facilitators in terms of the major insights and conclusions such as there is growing intolerance and lack of positive state intervention towards justice delivery.
Day 2: 25 July	
Opening Day 2	During this first session on second day, presentations from the previous group sessions along with discussions continued. Facilitators also drew out a plan for this day and final takeaways or plans for the Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum. An important insight we gained during the group sessions was that usually the challenges, factors and implications don't always exist in isolation but we tended to go back and forth as a cycle because of interconnectedness rather than distinguished roots and branches of the metaphorical tree.
Internet Governance Game (and Women's Rights Advocacy)	In this simulation card game, we were engaged in role playing in four teams to understand how advocacy for women's rights can happen in the multi-stakeholder

	world of internet governance. In this game, each participant will inhabit the role and responsibility of a typical stakeholder in internet governance (Internet Rights Advocate, Government, and Big Internet Company). Each stakeholder will have specific traits, and will be divided into "adversarial" and "cooperative" versions of that stakeholder. Each player will be given a set of actions that they can use during the game play. The group was divided in four teams representing the government, corporates, internet rights advocates and feminist rights advocates. We were distributed cards to play out whatever was written on the cards, stablish relations, frame policies, negotiate, convince and organize programs to further our team's agenda and objectives. At the end of game play, the major learnings were discussed, a feedback of the game itself was provided too by the house. We were able to understand the nuances and challenges that we face in our work and the strategies as well as the balance of compromises that we need to employ if we want to further our objectives in the midst of challenges posed by the state as well as the non-state actors.
Presentation and Discussion on Gender and Internet Governance	This presentation and discussion focused on the experience of women's rights advocates in internet governance – what are the spaces / mechanisms / opportunities for internet rights for WHRDs and women. The session was started with history of major milestones in technology and the emergence of internet as we know it. Role of the government and civil society as well as major corporate players during each milestone was also discussed upon. For example, when was the first email sent, when did the social network emerge and then the major developments in terms of UN intervention, resolutions and Global Internet Governance Forums and similar platforms.
Open Space for Strategies for Advancing Women's Rights in Internet Governance	In this round of open space, participants were encouraged to pitch ideas, discuss existing and emerging opportunities / campaigns / activities, and propose strategies for collaboration towards promoting women's rights in internet governance. This was an interesting brief exercise which did not require discussion but only the

	pitching of ideas in two minutes and then collecting possible endorsements or collaboration from partner organisations within the countries and within the region
Planning for the APrIGF	The agenda of the forum was discussed to start with. The orgnisers elaborated major areas of engagement and sessions that were going to deal with human rights and internet. Gender report card was discussed to report on certain aspect of gender diversity present during the session. Participants were assigned to report from each session. A briefing meeting at the end of each day was decided upon to report back on insights from each day of the sessions. Areas of concern and how to strategically push for the issues we work on, in each session was planned.