



# Unequal in an unequal world

Gender Dimensions  
of Communication Rights

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# Digital platforms and citizen journalism

Greater awareness of

- Women's rights
- Gender justice
- Strengthen a contemporary ethics of communication

# Background

**1948:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**1981:** Convention on the Elimination of  
All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

**1993:** Vienna Declaration and Program of Action



## **Vienna Declaration and Program of Action:**

*The human rights of women  
and of the girl-child are an  
inalienable, integral and  
indivisible part of universal  
human rights.*

*...continued*



*The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community.*

# *Gender-based violence must be eliminated*

- ◆ Economic and social development
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Safe maternity and health care
- ◆ Social support



## **The Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995):**

*Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power.*



**Section J of the Platform for Action (234):**

*Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology.*

*...continued*







*This will strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of the power of an increasingly important industry.*

# World Summit on the Information Society

Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005)

- ◆ Advance gender equality
- ◆ Protect traditional knowledge and cultures
  - ◆ Improve situation of vulnerable and marginalized people



**“Much more could have been achieved.”**  
(18 December 2005)

Stronger outcomes if founded  
on an *ethical framework*  
that was more just,  
equitable and sustainable.



*Communication rights and justice are about*

- ◆ *making human communities as technology's home and*
- ◆ *human relationships as technology's heart.*

## Advances since 2005

- *Public and private debate,*
  - *dialogue and*
  - *conversation*

*are essential for positive, long-term changes  
on key development issues.*

## **Access to information is essential**

1. Ensures responsible, informed choices
2. Ensures accountability of elected representatives

## **Critical role of the press:** *to mediate between state and civil society*

- ◆ Public media sector that supports democracy
  - ◆ Financially viable
  - ◆ Editorially independent
  - ◆ Serves public interest

# Freedom of expression Freedom of information

- ◆ Democracy
- ◆ Good governance
- ◆ Development



## For women, the internet represents

- ◆ *New opportunities*
- ◆ *New challenges to claim and fulfill their rights*
  - ◆ *Grants access to information*
  - ◆ *Enables mobilization and visibility*
- ◆ *Helps create new forms of participation in public life*



## **Going Visible: Women's Rights on the Internet** (October 2012)

*The internet has become an increasingly  
critical public sphere for citizenship rights  
and civil liberties*





## **To governments and international organisations:**

- ◆ Promote respect for human rights
- ◆ Promote ICT use and a strategy of information, education and communication
- ◆ Promote women's and girls' communication rights
- ◆ Promote and encourage women's participation in decision-making

## To the private sector:

- ◆ Corporate user policies that respect women's rights
  - ◆ Representation of women in policy making and standard-setting
  - ◆ Ensure policies and standards consider safety and security of users

## To civil society organisations:

- ◆ Women's organisations: use ICTs for activism
  - ◆ Combat violence against women
  - ◆ Promote equality, build solidarity
- ◆ Active participation in movements for communication rights on the internet



## **Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development** (20–22 June 2012)

*We need to place human rights and dignity and gender equality at the centre of the sustainable development discourse, but more than discourse: actions. We need to advance equality so that women and girls can reach their potential.*

*...continued*



## Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (20–22 June 2012)

*... Women's empowerment and gender equality are fundamental to healthy societies and economies, and sustainable development. Women are on the frontlines, especially in rural areas, and their full participation is absolutely essential to address the key issues of sustainable food, water and energy.*

–Michelle Bachelet



**WACC**

communication **for all**



ASMITA – Nepal





Association for Progressive Communications  
– South Africa



# Flying Broom – Turkey



# Tentative Conclusions

## **ASMITA:**

- 🟢 Develop infrastructure, programs
- 🟢 Organize multi-purpose programs on citizen journalism
- 🟢 Execute media literacy campaign
- 🟢 Report progress
- 🟢 Do not use discriminating language or images



# Tentative Conclusions

## **The Association for Progressive Communications:**

- ◆ Ethics are critically important, especially for small online publications
- ◆ Earning and maintaining trust is vital

# Tentative Conclusions

## **Flying Broom**

- ◆ Need for alternative form of journalism by, for and about women using digital technologies to
  - ◆ raise awareness,
  - ◆ tackle discrimination, inequality

# Tentative Conclusions

**All three groups support Globethics’**

**“fundamental values for knowledge societies”**



## Globethics.net

- 🌿 Justice/equity: inalienable human dignity
- 🌿 Freedom, equity, responsibility balance each other
- 🌿 Care and compassion lead to solidarity
- 🌿 Participation in societal life and decisions is a right
- 🌿 Sharing sustains relationships and strengthens communities



## Globethics.net

- ◆ Sharing sustains relationships and strengthens communities
- ◆ ITCs enable extraordinary way of sharing information and knowledge
  - ◆ Sustainability as long-term perspective for green technologies
- ◆ Accountability for one's own actions
  - ◆ Those with more resources bear greater responsibility