

Women Empowerment in ICT: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

One of the least explored and least understood areas in the field of gender and development is that of gender, science and technology. Although we know that access to and control over science and technology is a major factor in determining which nations - and which people within nations - are rich or poor, surprisingly little attention has been focused on the role that women do and can play in influencing the way in which science and technology shapes our work and lives. As a result of several world conferences on women during the past two decades, our attention has been brought to negative impacts which technological developments have had on women through, for instance, their large-scale displacement in the labour force as a result of capital intensive industrialization and mechanization of agriculture and agro processing activities. We have also been made aware that when new scientific advances and technological developments hold out the promise for increased wealth and well-being, it is normally the rich rather than the poor who are able to take advantage of these; and within all societies it is men who are able to benefit more than women. Nancy Hafkin, Senior Associate, Women in Global Science and Technology said, "For women, the basic problems are the problems that are much larger than technology. They are the gender equality, the patriarchy, the violence against women who dare to use the technologies because men are suspicious. The forces that keep women and girls from going to school. These forces keep them from using the technology—even if it is in the house."

Keywords: ICT (information and communications technology), cyber law, VAW (violence against women), internet

Introduction

In 1975 - at the time of the First UN World Conference on Women held in Mexico - gender issues had been thought about very little, and the issue of appropriate technology was still in its infancy. Since that time, our understanding of the importance of recognizing the differential impact of development on women and men has greatly increased and the appropriate technology movement has come into its own. For the main part, however, these developments have taken place in isolation from each other. Those who advocate for engendered development have tended to ignore technology or taken a hostile attitude towards it. Those who advocate for more appropriate technology have tended to overlook or misrepresent women's needs and circumstances - even though an important part of the appropriate technology philosophy is to ask - appropriate for whom? As a consequence, many opportunities for more sustainable development have been lost. Women have been offered restricted educational chances. They have been limited by law from many activities, and left out from professional sectors and publications until the last decades. Over the past many years, these restrictions have begun to be lifted and doors and minds have

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begun to open. ICT (information and communications technology) has become powerful substance for political and social empowerment of women, and the campaign of gender equality. Notwithstanding having huge potential, ICTs have some negative impacts on women in our society. The law is not sufficient; consciousness is most vital.

Objective

The purpose of this paper is to look at experiences with gender and technology over the years - both at the international level and at the local level - to show what we have learned about technology development and dissemination as it relates to women and to look at the continuing and new challenges and opportunities involved. Considering the general objective, the study selected the following focal issues as thematic areas of this research initiative:

- The importance of women participation in matters relating to science and technology;
- The process by which women are approaching and prioritizing activities in science and technology;
- The role of women in mainstream science and technology where their different perspectives and ways of carrying out research could result in a significant shift in priorities in a more people-centered direction;
- The importance of women's indigenous knowledge which should be protected against the worst forces of commercialization;
- Sufferings of the women while working in ICT;
- Prospects of the women in technology.

Methodology

Basically this particular article is written on the basis of qualitative method. This research has been done on the basis of objective approach. The materials of this work have been collected carefully and precisely. In the course of two weeks of field work, the writer visited some parts of Bangladesh. The field discussions were with relatively large groups of people, first with a combined group of men and women, and then with sex-segregated groups. Every effort was made to ensure that the groups included a range of women and girls from a variety of social and economic positions. The discussions included both literate and illiterate women, rural and urban women, indigenous women, garment workers, landless agricultural labourers, and women who did not undertake paid work at all.

Literature Review

To prepare this particular article the author went through a good number of write up and articles which discuss mostly about the gender and technology. As far as the author is concerned there is no article which is directly written on this topic in Bangladesh. The author has tried to follow the reasonable approach in this research for formulating a conclusion.

Women and Technology at the International Level

Although the main focus of the paper is on practical application of technology at the grassroots level, it is nevertheless useful to look at what has been happening at the international level so as to set this in context.

As mentioned above, there was very little concern for technology issues in the Mexico Conference on Women in 1975. Similarly, the UN World Conference on Science and Technology for Development held in 1979 gave little or no recognition to women or to gender issues.

By 1985, understanding had grown that technology was far from being gender neutral. Research in Asia revealed that women had been more badly affected by centralized industrialization and mechanized agriculture than men. Statistics showed that in Java alone over 7 million women lost their jobs in crop processing as a result of the introduction of mechanized rice mills, and in Bangladesh, mills were replacing women at the rate of over 100,000 each year. At the same time, the work of the African Training and Research Centre for Women and other was pointing to the opportunities for increased incomes arising from the introduction of improved technologies in the Africa Region, and calling attention to the fact that men were much better able to benefit from these than were women. Thus, at the UN Conference on Women held in Nairobi in 1985, much greater emphasis was placed on gender and technology issues. The NGO Forum incorporated a very large exhibition of technologies appropriate for women. The so called Tech n' Tools event featured technologies being used by grassroots women from around the world and gave space to discuss the problems and opportunities involved in women gaining access to appropriate technologies. The official UN Conference also recognized women's needs for access to more appropriate technologies and encouraged governments to implement measures needed to facilitate this. Emphasis was given on rural women and on their needs for agricultural technologies, appropriate technologies to increase the productivity of their village industries and labour-saving technologies to lighten their work load.

In the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, it was apparent that much more had been done in terms of increasing women's access to technologies and that the number of organizations and networks concerned with gender and technology issues had grown significantly. It was equally clear, however, that much remained to be done. In particular, many of women's needs for appropriate technology - in all aspects of their work and lives - remained unmet because of a variety of constraints inherent in the technology development and dissemination process. A major concern was that women were seen simply as the passive recipients of technologies rather than playing an active role in their development; and that there was insufficient attention being given to the way in which women's increased involvement and the incorporation of their perspectives might bring about a more people-centered approach to technology policy and practice.

Thus, at the international level, we can see some significant shifts in thinking concerning gender and technology. What we need to ask, however, is how this translates into practice at the grassroots level and to consider whether in reality anything has changed for women.

Women and Technology at the National Level

In spite of the evidence we have at hand of the gender inequalities involved in the field of mainstream science and technology to date, we appear to be entering what is being referred to as the third technological revolution - a revolution based on information and communication technologies - without having learned any lessons from the past. Just as women were disadvantaged more than men by the negative impacts of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, and were less able to take advantage of any new economic opportunities arising from them, the same appears to be the case with the information communication technological revolution for all the same reasons. These include women's limited access to training, and in-built gender biases which make us believe that men are better suited to highly skilled tasks and are better able to handle advanced technologies than are women. If women are not to be excluded yet again from the full benefits of development, then we desperately need to change the way in which we view women and men's roles, both within and outside the mainstream of science and technology. The case study shows that the masses of women still do not have the same benefits from technological improvements as do men. There are several reasons for this.

The commercial route relies on commercial banks and private companies to diffuse technologies through normal commercial channels. This holds out the promise of reaching large numbers of people in a short period of time - although the dangers of the poorest people, and especially women, being excluded in the absence of adequate measures are obvious. One very successful example of this approach to diffusion is that of the marketing of the treadle pump in Bangladesh. The treadle pump was designed by an NGO in the early 1980s. Although it was sold commercially, there was also significant subsidized distribution through NGOs. International Development Enterprises (IDE) became involved when the design had been finalized. They set about changing the existing approach to diffusing the technology, arguing that this should not be a subsidized process and that the most effective way of reaching the largest number of people was a self-sufficient, private network of manufacturers and retailers. Eventually, after resistance from the charitable instincts of some NGOs, this view prevailed. IDE then set about a process of selecting village dealers and agreeing on terms with them (among which was a requirement that they had to set up a demonstration pump), training village well dealers and advertising through a variety of means including village theatre and a film. The result of this effort has been that over 1 million pumps have been sold - around 4 times the initial target - and according to an external evaluation the ratio of benefits to costs is over 40:1. In this case, the pumps were marketed to men rather than women, but there is no reason why models such as this could not be adapted for use in diffusing technologies to women.

For the past 20 years, the challenge in engendering technology has been seen as one of looking at the conventional approaches to technology development and diffusion and seeing how they can be adapted so as to include and benefit women and men equally. In recognition of the fact that women to date have not benefitted on an equal basis, the problem has been seen as one of:

- (a) Correctly identifying women's needs for improved technology;
- (b) Developing and/or adapting a technology which is appropriate in terms of satisfying this need; and
- (c) Successfully diffusing this technology to large numbers of women.

However, we have now moved on by 20 years and even more challenges are being faced with respect to gender and technology. In particular, there is now a need to move beyond the conventional project approach to disseminating technologies to women. There is a need to recognize and support the important role that women play in technological innovation - especially in the informal sector; to promote the participation of more (gender sensitive) women in science and technology professions; and to find ways of incorporating women's perspectives into mainstream science and technology so as to transform it in a more people-centered way. There is also a need to confront the new challenges of globalization and the spread of new computer-based technologies so as to ensure that women are not left out - in the way they have been in previous technological revolutions.

Women make a difference in science and technology

To ensure that women in the twenty-first century take their rightful place in shaping their societies and in sharing the benefits of progress, there needs to be action on a number of fronts. First and foremost, there needs to be a radical change in attitudes towards women's roles in science and technology - on the part of men, and equally important, on the part of women themselves. An essential step in this process is to highlight the significant role that women do and always have played in advancing scientific knowledge and in technological innovation. From early days, women have been key to the development of science and technology, but their achievements have often been overlooked simply because they were women. With the progress of time, women's visibility as scientists and technologists dimmed significantly with the advent of the agricultural and industrial revolutions. Although a closer look shows that they played an important part in these technological revolutions, women's low status in society (which meant among other things that they could not take out patents) constantly led to their innovations being usurped by male relatives or acquaintances who accrued the fame and gain attached to them. Women's lost heritage, in this respect, needs to be highlighted as part of the process of exploding the myth that women are not good at or interested in science and technology. This is particularly the case given that most of those innovations which can be attributed to women are often more practical in nature than those of men, as well as being more life-giving/preserving and more geared to meeting the everyday basic needs of society.

Gender Aspects of New Technologies

One of the most dramatic changes occurring in the past few years has been the very rapid globalization of the world economy and the impact that this is having on patterns of work for women and men on a worldwide basis. In particular, the new computer-based technologies which

are facilitating this global phenomenon have significant implications for women's livelihoods and patterns of work.

New technologies are having effects in several ways. **First**, in Bangladesh, they are leading to the rapid spread of home-based workers who are linked through sub-contractors to large national and international companies producing garments, shoes and foodstuffs. Such workers are predominantly women and one could argue that the increased provision of work is beneficial for women. However, the conditions of such work - very low pay, lack of benefits, lack of right to unionize - are of great cause for concern and there is a growing movement which is seeking to ensure that home-based workers are enabled to organize to advocate for their rights. This will become even more important with the growing flexibilization of the labour force which is occurring as companies seek to save costs by closing factories and re-employing the same workers (at lower cost) on a put-out basis.

Second, there are many opportunities associated with the spread of computer-based technologies for those people who have been given the required skills to use them. If women are not to be excluded from skilled jobs using computers, then they must have the same access to training in new skills as men.

The problems of Women in Science and Technology

Women have always had a bad deal in terms of technological change. They suffered job losses due to industrialization and mechanization to a much greater extent than men. They were left out of programmes designed to introduce improved technologies to small farmers and entrepreneurs. When their needs were addressed by technologists, they often ended up with impractical machines which were quickly rejected. In the meantime, men were the ones better able to acquire commercially available technologies which could be operated at a profit. Industries which were traditionally women's became controlled by men once improved technologies made them more profitable.

The real problem, however, is that in looking only at formal sector science and technology, women's major contributions in terms of indigenous technical knowledge and technological innovation in the informal sector are overlooked, uncounted and unsupported. We certainly need to argue for more (gender-sensitive) women in formal technology but we need even more so to highlight the fact that many millions of women throughout the country practice science and technology as part of their everyday lives. In particular, we need to encourage the process whereby 'formal' technologists recognize that they can learn as much from women as they can contribute to them, and that, the combination of women's traditional knowledge and 'modern' technical skills can provide a very sound basis for the development and dissemination of appropriate technologies.

Women's indigenous technical knowledge and innovation which is outside of the formal science and technology sector, and far from the world of patents, is the everyday process of

experimentation and adaptation which has gone on for years in every part of the country. Much of this activity is seen as non-scientific by the scientific mainstream that refuses to recognize it. However, according to the case studies, the language, problem diagnosis and innovation and experimentation methods of the women who are the custodians of much of this indigenous knowledge are detailed, logical and internally consistent frameworks of understanding. Until these 'alternative' forms of innovation are recognized as the real science and technology that they are, women's extensive knowledge and contributions will not be considered and given their appropriate value and worth. Some of the case studies show that there are not only real gains to be accrued by society as a whole when modern science is combined with this indigenous knowledge, but that the goal of social equity will not be achieved unless women's intellectual property rights are protected in the process.

Although advances have been made in recognizing the role of women in science and technology much more still has to be done. One problem is that there has been a tendency to look only at women's participation in science and technology at the level of secondary and tertiary education and of formal employment in mainstream science and technology departments and institutions. The number of women involved here is much less than for men - and the constraints faced by women - especially in rising to senior levels obviously need to be addressed.

Now, with the advent of new computer-based technologies, the same unequal distribution of costs and benefits between women and men seems to be happening. While men are being trained to acquire skilled jobs using new technologies, women are being exploited by large companies which are using the same technologies to save costs by closing down factories and operating sub-contracting systems utilizing home-based workers. Similarly, while development agencies are beginning to explore the potential uses of new computer-based technologies in respect of technical training for functionally illiterate men, women's organizations and NGOs which work with women are falling behind.

Over the last two decades, the number of rural women living in absolute poverty has risen by 50% (as opposed to 30% for men) and the feminization of poverty is a growing phenomenon. This trend can to a significant extent be attributed to the differential experienced between women and men in their access to and control over technologies.

ICT is a powerful tool for women

Through the Internet, women around the country are able to form a global communication of activism, are able to seek out medical advice and pay bills online, and have the opportunity to become better educated on any topic of their liking. For women the Internet may seem extremely frightening because they are not aware of the many opportunities it has to offer. Women, who have wanted to become part of social movements but were restricted through location, cultural restraints, or lack of local opportunity, can now become members of global movements.

The most important usage of the Internet for women today is empowerment. Women have formed global feminist networks that have allowed them to speak out when they had previously never been given a voice. The Internet may offer opportunities that would otherwise not be available. Women can attend lectures, take part in discussion groups, become activists, read books and articles, and communicate with family and friends throughout the world, all without leaving their own communities, and in some cases, their own homes. There are also opportunities for women to work from home, gather information on health and family issues, shop, pay bills and do their banking.

Some websites offer simple, step-by-step instructions on how to ensure that personal information remains protected. This includes clearing the history caches, as well as blocking addresses that continue to send distasteful and degrading emails.

There is also information on feminist websites for individuals who have the capabilities to search on the Internet but would like to learn how to create websites of their own.

In our country women have made strong steps for the rushing development in ICT (Information Communication Technology) over the last decade. Innovation and use of ICT is helping the educated women to end poverty, boost shared prosperity and be self-dependent. But we all know very well about the increasing amounts and alarming levels of violence committed against women through the Internet and other information and communications technology (ICT). Mobile phones and the Internet access have altered already-existing forms of violence against women and added new systems that frequently lead to reappearance of victimization.

Victims of online stalking or harassment may suffer from severe psychological damage. According to the life cycle perspective, an individual who suffers from abuse at a stage in their life may be predisposed to certain health ailments, even suicide, depression and substance use (FWCC, 1998). It may also create obstacles to women fully participating in the workforce, causing societies not to be able to take advantage of all of their citizens' talents and skills. In this regard, the present power struggles and differentials between the sexes will continue, and more than likely grow. If the number of women IT graduates increases, this will contribute to a greater divide between the sexes, as well as an inability to create a greater presence in the battle against online violence.

Cyber Harassment Faced by Women

New information and communications technologies have created a global movement in communications, development of media, quick movement of information internationally. These same information technologies are also facilitating the sexual exploitation of women at local, national and international levels. It has become a convenient instrument for abusers committing close partner violence, as they can now monitor or send offensive messages through a variety of ways. Anyone can harass, threaten and blackmail women through ICT. Women, particularly young women, are more likely than men to face severe online harassment that is sexualised and

violent. Online violence such as cyber stalking, hate speech and blackmail violates women's rights to privacy, work and public participation, liberty from violence and liberty of expression. Sexual predators and pimps use the Internet and other new technologies to sell women and exploit women. The Internet facilitates such endeavors as it enables people to buy, sell and trade images and videos that portray the sexual exploitation of women and enables sex tourism and the 'meeting' of mail order brides. In addition to this, the Internet enables sexual predators to harm and exploit women anonymously and in the privacy of their own homes. Because new technologies have been mostly unregulated and because the Internet has created a global village that extends past jurisdictional boundaries, it is problematic for law enforcement officials to monitor and control such activities.

According to Dr. Debarati Halder and Dr. K. Jaishankar (2011) Cybercrimes are offences that are committed against individuals or groups of individuals with a criminal motive to intentionally harm the reputation of the victim or cause physical or mental harm, or loss, to the victim directly or indirectly, using modern telecommunication networks such as Internet (Chat rooms, emails, notice boards and groups) and mobile phones (SMS/MMS)"

Suicide Attempts Due to Cyber Harassment in Bangladesh

Year	Suicide Attempts
2010	8
2011	15
2012	19
2013	23

Source: Suicide Attempts due to Cyber Crimes and Harassment in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Woman Lawyers' Association, 2014)

Only data cannot show the precise and entire condition of the women. Each annoyance has a distinctive story, different sorts of complications. So to get some hints some stories are mentioned here.

For 16 years old Rabeya living in a small town in Sylhet, the introduction of the internet was a blessing in many ways. With strict parents who did not allow her to go out of the house alone, she was glad to have access to another world where there was no one overseeing her interactions or telling her what to do. Before long, she developed a relationship with a man who claimed to be working in a bank in Dhaka, with whom she shared intimate details of her life. After a few months of chatting, he demanded that she send him explicit pictures of herself. When she refused, his whole demeanor towards her changed; he began to send her highly inappropriate images and videos and make derogatory comments about her appearance and character. As Rabeya tried to

block and delete him from his friend list, he threatened to call her parents and tell them what a “whore” she was (The Daily Star; 29 July 2014).

“When I was doing my O levels, there was this group of 4-5 boys who liked me at the same time. They had all asked me out separately but I wasn’t interested. They decided to take revenge by taking my photo on MSN, photo shopping a naked body to my face and sending it to everyone in the class, and to my brother”, says Nawsheen Zaman, a young professional. “The photo looked so real that my brother nearly threw up. I couldn’t go to class for about two weeks after that because everyone called me a slut and made fun of the whole thing. One of them also threatened to send the photo to my parents if I didn’t answer his calls all the time. They also opened a fake Facebook account with those photos” (The Daily Star; 29 July 2014).

Rita Haq, student of Class nine, shared her story of harassment: “I used to Skype with a close male friend who was living at UK. One day, I don’t know if he was drunk, but he turned on his camera and he was naked, showing me his thing. I couldn’t tell anyone about it. We had many common friends and I was afraid that people would exaggerate and say bad things about me. Maybe they would have said I had engaged in cybersex.” (Prothom Alo, 28 July 2014)

“I was really shocked when I found a fake profile of me full of pornographic content. I couldn’t tell anything to anyone. Some of my so called friends started laughing at me. I couldn’t tell anything to anyone. Sometimes I thought about suicide.....” said Nasrin Akter a victim of cyber harassment. (The Independent, 23 September 2013)

Stories like this are now common in Digital Bangladesh. An inconsistent number of females and teen-agers who use internet are being affected by cyber harassment over their lifetime.

Protection against VAW

There are some national and international laws and treaty to protect women’s harassment through internet. In Bangladesh there are some laws against VAW. Article 57 of Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006. This act reveals the punishment for publishing fake, obscene or defaming information in electronic form.

(1) If any person deliberately publishes or transmits or causes to be published or transmitted in the website or in electronic form any material which is fake and obscene or its effect is such as to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it, or causes to deteriorate or creates possibility to deteriorate law and order, prejudice the image of the State or person or causes to hurt or may hurt religious belief or instigate against any person or organization, then this activity of his will be regarded as an offence.

(2) Whoever commits offence under sub-section (1) of this section he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to ten years and with fine which may extend to Taka one crore.

The cabinet approved the draft of the ICT (Amendment) Act-2013 on August 19 proposing to empower law enforcers to arrest any person without warrant and increase the highest punishment to 14 years from minimum 7 years. The government has later promulgated the ICT (amendment) ordinance. According to the Section 57 of the ordinance, if any person deliberately publishes any material in electronic form that causes to deteriorate law and order, prejudice the image of the State or person or causes to hurt religious belief the offender will be punished for maximum 14 years and minimum 7 years imprisonment. It also suggested that the crime is non-bailable. In the original ICT Act-2006, the maximum punishment was 10 years' jail term and a fine of Taka 1 crore. And police had to seek permission from the authorities concerned to file a case and arrest any person involved in crimes covered under the law.

CEDAW is one of the very important international treaty to protect VAW. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. General Recommendation 19 on that Convention states, "The definition of discrimination includes gender-based violence, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty" (CEDAW/GR/19/6). Importantly, it recognises VAW as impairing or nullifying the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms (CEDAW/GR/19/7).

Even to protect VAW Ban Ki-moon said, "There is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, cultures and communities: violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable" United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (2008).

Recommendation

- The educated women who have computer skills can access skilled jobs. So like educated women the illiterate women should have benefit from computer-based technologies. The most obvious way is through using computers to give literacy training. The less obvious way is through using computers and specially designed software to transfer technical skills to functionally illiterate women. This type of programme is being implemented successfully in some parts of our country but predominantly with men. Every attempt needs to be made to ensure that women are also given opportunities such as this, especially in remote areas.
- All women's rights groups should be concerned about technology-related violence. This violence keeps hushing feminist authors, frightening women human rights protectors, reducing women's entree to information or keeping women out of leadership roles. The internet can be one of the tools for stopping and answering to violence, providing care to victims and mobilising for change.
- Women's digital knowledge, mostly among marginalised women should be increased.

- Gender-responsiveness in the movement and security of human rights on the internet should be confirmed.
- Women's access to the global governance of ICTs should be enlightened.
- The capacity of women's rights organisations, activists and users to use technology securely and contribute towards building proof and understanding of this emerging form of violence should be firm.
- Government has to ensure VAW (Violence against Women) by developing, supporting and promising online atmospheres. The real and open complaints mechanisms, laws (for legal remedies) and strategies should be adopted to protect cyber harassment.
- Consciousness amongst all users about the issue of VAW should be raised.
- Police department should preserve computerised database. All the police station should be properly furnished with computerized system under a particular centralized server so that any far-off user can recover the essential data for taking instant action for battling violence against women.
- The implementation of cyber law should be secured and necessary amendment should be taken.
- Women should place pressure on the government to continually include women's issues on agendas, and include them in roundtable discussions. A continual underestimation of the number of instances of cybercrimes against women results in females continuing to live in fear and become victims of cybercrimes, stalking, prostitution or trafficking. It is also extremely vital that women should speak to their male co-workers, male family members, neighbors, and their spouses about crimes committed against them.
- Websites should have specific design criteria which will include a content analysis done by the service providers to ensure that the nature of the information is neither graphic, nor illegal. When customers contact the service provider with a complaint, the website in question should go under this analysis, and if it fails, it should be eradicated immediately.
- The government should work with other countries around the world to create a labeling system which will allow governments not to be limited by their own jurisdictions and to work together to create an Internet policing community. Though this can be an extremely lengthy and difficult process but it will be the start of protecting the innocent people who are overwhelmed by cybercrime.
- Internet advisory councils should be formed, and representatives of people may come from all backgrounds and diversities of the society. These should include parents, women from different cultural groups, middle-class genre, members of law enforcement agencies and volunteer members from the general public who have an interest in Internet policies. This is to ensure that any decisions regarding Internet laws and policies have taken into account the varying factors of the issues.

Conclusion

The studies represent a sampling of the extensive range of women's activities in science and technology, the extent of their contributions, their innovations and their vast expertise. We do not pretend that they more than scratch the surface of what is a huge and as yet still relatively under-documented field. We hope, however, that they will point the way to what is possible if women's scientific and technological knowledge and potential is given full reign and will fuel the need to do further research and to promote further action in support of helping women to "make a difference" in science and technology for development.

ICT law exists in the Bangladeshi legal system in order to stop cybercrimes from stirring but this law does not express the crimes to a definite extent so that they may be considered to drop under these laws. Only definite criminality being commonly committed against women and the failures of existing cyber law to protect the women is proving that more needs to be done. If the above mentioned recommendations are taken into account and effected in reality mainly by the government, then women will continue to use and increase using the technology in the future causing the world to become more modernised and leading to more valuable developments.

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