

**GENDER MAINSTREAMING OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) POLICIES AND
PROGRAMMES**

A CASE STUDY OF CHATTISGARH STATE OF INDIA

PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED BY

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INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have dominated the beginning of the 21st century. Its development and use have stimulated huge changes in the life of the people globally, leading to a process of transition from the “Industrial” to the “Information” society. The development of ICT has been termed as ICT revolution due to its transforming potential affecting all dimensions of human civilization of our times which is unprecedented. The ultimate aim of the information society is the empowerment and development of all its citizens through equal access to and use of Information . As a well informed person one is able to take better decisions, ‘the informed decisions’ and is able to influence the decision taking process, that affect him or her .Unfortunately despite the potential ability of information to empower all groups and despite the massive investments in information and communication technologies the benefits of ICT revolution have not touched all the sections of global community equally resulting in a threat of digital divide, a divide between those with access to and control over information and those without access to and control over information. Information has thus emerged as a new dimension of power, and ICT as a tool to access and control that power and those who do not have control over or access to ICT comprise the cetgeogy of information poor. If we view information/knowledge and information technology as key

production tools of the new information age, then the divide could be as serious as the one between the haves and have nots of the of the industrial age. In this sense the lack of access to information could be characterized as a lack of wealth and consequent lack of income. In a way, dramatic changes brought about by ICTs have created new economic and social opportunities the world over. But the real challenge before ICT lies in using it more efficiently for the benefit of the masses, in developing a system which provides tangible, day-to-day benefits widely spread through the society and accessible by the all sections of the population, particularly the disadvantaged sections and especially the most disadvantaged section - WOMEN. If the use of ICT continues to be governed by existing power relations ICT could fail to include the powerless in participating and benefiting from the information revolution.

THE PROBLEM

Technological innovations have always acted as the driving force of economic development of the human civilization and thus have been instrumental in kicking off the process of transformation of different dimensions of human civilization, economic, political, cultural, social etc. Unfortunately the technical innovations have always been treated as a gender neutral phenomenon, though in reality they never have been as they impact women and men differently and often unequally. Due to their inferior status within the household and within the community women always lacked access to and control over technological advancements. Consequently they have always lagged behind in benefiting equally from technological advancements and hence have been constantly losing control over the changed phenomena – social, economic, political, cultural or otherwise. One could easily observe that each technological advancement has thus pushed the human civilization a step forward but has simultaneously pushed women a step backward. Naturally with the ICT revolution, the growing apprehension that women would find themselves on the wrong side of the digital revolution is quite justified.

To many the ongoing debate over the digital divide may seem more important, relevant and urgent than the debate over gender based digital divide. While there may be limits to the expansion and penetration of ICT geographically, or on the basis of region, class, or caste etc., this study aims at analyzing the extent of women's potential inclusion or exclusion in the information society and exploring whether and to what extent gender is mainstreamed into the ICT policies and programmes towards addressing their inclusion or exclusion with a case study of the Chattisgarh State of India. The question of the inclusion or exclusion of women in the emerging information society becomes pertinent in view of the history of gender based discriminations in India.

GENDER AND ICT: GENDER MAINSTREAMING OF POLICIES FRAMEWORK

Women's empowerment is central to human development. Human development, as a process of enlarging people's choices, cannot be realized when the choices for half of the

humanity are restricted. Targeted actions aimed at empowering women and righting gender inequities in the social and economic sphere, as well as in terms of civil and political rights, must be taken alongside efforts to engender the development process.

The United Nations Human Development Report 2001 argues that to harness today's technological transformations as tools for human development requires shifts in national and global public policy. It puts forward "a global call for policy – not charity – to build technological capacity in developing countries".

Unfortunately despite the potential ability of information to empower disadvantaged groups and despite the massive investments in information and communication technologies the information society has remained largely silent on gender issues (Jansen: 1989). There are evidences of a gender imbalance in the use of ICT that threaten to restrict women to be the equal partners/beneficiaries of the emerging information society thus creating a gender based digital divide.

Increasingly it has been felt that unless concerted and corrective policy initiatives are taken women will continue to be excluded from the information society in countries like India where gender based discriminations with strong socio cultural roots already exists. In this context the term 'gender mainstreaming of policies' and the need to make it a goal of all policies has gained urgency particularly since the Beijing Conference in 1995. It is accepted globally that gender mainstreaming of policies may not be achieved easily and there may be many problem areas in realizing this goal relating to the different requirements such as the capacity for gender analysis, development of accountability mechanisms, allocation of sufficient resources, explicit, coherent and sustained attention to the issues of gender equality, targeting not just "soft" areas for gender mainstreaming (for instance health and education), but also supposedly "gender neutral" areas, such as infrastructure development and economic policies, apart from a strong political commitment and political will.

The issue of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies is directly related to the issue of economic development. The new information and communications technologies are considered to be the driving force behind current economic developments and globalization process. The United Nations Human Development Report 2001 points out, "Technology is created in response to market pressures – not the needs of poor people, who have little purchasing power". In most parts of the world therefore, the promise of connecting the majority of the people with ICT remains unfulfilled. There is a broad concern from both governments and civil society that this global trend will lead to deeper and wider exclusion of the majority of the world's people from a world economy and newly emerging global information society that is rapidly being shaped by technological changes. In this climate, it is urgent to look more closely into the relationship between technology, especially information and communications technology, and development with reference to gender issues.

Decades of experiences have shown that without explicit attention to gender in policy, gender issues are not considered for implementation (Hafkin: 2002). Thereby, the issue

of mainstreaming gender into ICT policies and programmes becomes relevant especially when there is much evidence to show that policy making in technological field often ignores the needs, requirements and aspirations of women unless gender analysis is included (Marcelle, 2002). If gender issues are not articulated in ICT policy, it is unlikely that girls and women will reap the benefits of the information age (Hafkin: 2002). Closing one's eyes to this fact can entrench inequality and even enlarge the gender gap, making ICT a "gender-negative" technology. (Transforming the Mainstream: Gender in UNDP, 2003)

THE CONCEPT OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Conceptually the term Gender Mainstreaming is rooted in the concept of gender equality. UNDP's Policy Note on Gender Equality (2002) states that there are two complementary approaches to achieving gender equality: mainstreaming gender and promoting women's empowerment. Both are critical.

Gender mainstreaming was defined by the UN Economic and Social Council (1997) as "a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated." Gender mainstreaming means identifying gaps through the use of gender-disaggregated data; it involves developing strategies to close those gaps, putting resources into implementing the strategies, monitoring the implementation and holding individuals and institutions accountable for the results.

During the Third Meeting of the Working Group of International Telecommunication Union on Gender issues held in Geneva, from (30 June - 2 July 2004), Savitri Bisnath of Youth and Gender Unit defined gender mainstreaming as follows:

'Gender mainstreaming is the process of both assessing the implications and effects of communications related projects and policies on women and men, as well as formulating and implementing context-specific strategies that aim to better address the needs of women and men, improve their well-being, and facilitate their participation in the development process.' (Savitri Bisnath, ITU, 2004)

Gender mainstreaming means 'being deliberate in giving visibility and support to women's contributions rather than making the assumption that women will benefit equally from gender-neutral development interventions'. Policies and programmes that ignore differential impact on gender groups are often gender-blind and potentially harmful for human development. Gender mainstreaming thus requires a focus on results to improve the well-being of poor women. It deals with the outcomes of policies in terms of their impact on women and men, however well intentioned they might be in formulation, from the gender perspective.

If we analyze the background of emergence of the concept of gender mainstreaming it is obvious that it emerged because development organizations all over the world found it difficult to promote structural change in power relationships between men and women. It is an inherently political process, one that is likely to be contentious and challenging to institutions and individuals. For these and other reasons, the focus has been on more visible, less provocative activities like policies, guidelines and data sets, rather than on more difficult, less visible processes to transform organizational culture and practice, as well as individual attitudes and behavior.

THE INDIAN CONTEXT

In the context of India the issue of mainstreaming gender into ICT policies and programmes becomes even more important, as here the ICT policy and programmes have been viewed by national and state governments more within neo-liberal macroeconomic frameworks of GDP, employment and competitiveness(Gurusurthy: 2003) rather than as issues of development or empowerment. A gender study commissioned by the Cisco Networking Academy in India shows that despite the country's vibrant IT industry, women are unable to fully participate in this growth. The reasons cited are the continuing lower status of women and girls in Indian society and the corresponding restrictions on their mobility and educational opportunities. Women's literacy rate stands at 51.4 per cent compared to 74.5 per cent for men in India. Only 23 per cent of Indians with access to the Internet are women. The study also presents an interesting profile of Women in the IT industry.

Women in India are perhaps the most socially excluded group and lack of access to information is being identified as one of the most important reasons for their exclusion (Hooper, 2003). This lack of access to information may add to their alienation from mainstream development activities and empowerment resulting in increased social exclusion and economic and political marginalization, especially of rural, tribal and other socially disadvantaged women of India.

THE INDIAN STATE OF CHATTISGARH: A BRIEF PROFILE

Chattisgarh, earlier a part of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, is a newly formed state of India which came into existence in the year 2000. 79% of state population lives in rural areas, 32.55% of population is of Scheduled Tribes (ST)* including primitive tribes*, and 12.22% is of Scheduled Castes (SC)*.

* The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes refer to the disadvantaged social groups identified for affirmative action policies according to the Indian Constitution. Primitive Tribes refer to the most disadvantaged groups of Indian Tribes

It is a state richly endowed with natural resources including a natural forest cover of 44%. In India it is the number one producer of iron and tin ore, second of dolomite and quartzite, fifth of lime stone and sixth of bauxite. It is the only state of India having surplus production of electricity.. Contrary to the situation in many parts of the country, Chhattisgarh enjoys a comparatively favourable position in terms of women's population reflected in the sex ratio, that is 990 per 1000 males as per census India 2001 against the all India average of 933: 1000. But the condition of women is not very good on many other indicators.

However a contrast to this rich texture in many aspects is presented by a poor socio-economic and educational profile. Some of the glaring data and facts documented in various sources show that during 1999-2000 with integrated Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh was third in share of rural poor in India with 11.35 %of total poor, leaving behind only two other states of India. It was ranked as low as 14th in a list of 16 Indian states on the index of social and economic infrastructure, during the year 1995-00 (Kannan, 2004). Chattisgarh was ranked fourth worst performing state in all Indian states in 21 indicators of socio-economic development. The per capita public and private investment in the state was Rupees 12209, while corresponding figures for Goa and Gujarat (highest in India) were Rupees 56057 and Rupees 33875, respectively. (Kannan, 2004). The per capita plan outlay was Rupees 631 while the corresponding figures for Goa and Karnataka (highest in India) were Rupees 3423 and Rupees 1499 respectively. The share of the state in total foreign direct investment (FDI) approved during the period 1991-03 was only 0.22% while for Maharashtra it was 17.44% (highest in India). Chattisgarh was ahead only of Jharkhand with 0.05%.

Women are less literate in the State, 52% as compared to 77.86% of their male counterparts. The share of women in paid working population is only 26%, and over all it is 17.5%. In rural areas 35% population does not have any assets such as radio, TV, telephone, cycle, scooter, car or jeep. Only 46% of rural population and 82% of urban population use electricity as the source of lighting.

With the formation of a separate State the people of the state have started aspiring for prosperity and growth at an unprecedented pace posing a big challenge for policy making and its implementation. The state government is trying not to leave any stone unturned to meet the needs and aspirations of its people. Realizing the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) the state government has envisaged a very comprehensive and ambitious Information Technology (IT) policy (IT Policy of Chattisgarh State of India 2005). In spite of the fact that Chattisgarh is not rated very high either in e-readiness or teledensity the government has launched a number of ICT related schemes and programmes for the benefit and development of its people.

ICT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

The status of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies and programmes in the State of Chattisgarh is attempted to be examined in the context of the overall framework laid down by the Central Government policies. The study therefore examines:

1. Central government policies: The Department of Telecommunication in Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology of the Central government formulates the policies and guidelines for the whole country with regard to telecommunication which includes telephones, internet, hard ware, software etc. and the Department of Information Technology in Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is responsible for application of IT .
2. State government policies: The ministry of Information Technology formulates the policies and programmes for the use of ICT in the states aiming at application of ICT and formulation of policies related to investment and promotion of IT industry within the general framework of the Central government policies.

ICT POLICIES: REPORTS AND GUIDELINES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

A.POLICIES AND REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INDIA

1. ANALYSIS OF TELECOM POLICY (NTP) 1994&1999

The telecom policy declared in 1994 clearly stated that the main thrust of the policy would be to support the aims and objectives of new economic policy that were, improving India's competitiveness in the global market, rapid growth of exports, attracting foreign direct investment and stimulating domestic investment. It was clearly stated in the policy document that telecommunication services of world class quality were necessary for the success of the economic policy. Although in the objectives of this policy, telecommunication for all and universal service covering all villages as early as possible had been emphasized, services had to be provided at affordable and reasonable prices to meet the customer's demand. Clearly therefore, in this policy, telecommunication was being treated as a consumer item and that also was proposed to be provided on demand and would be charged. NTP 1994 also recognized that the required resources for achieving these targets would not be available only out of government sources and that private investment and involvement of the private sector was required to bridge the resource gap. Accordingly the Government invited private sector participation in this area.

But by the end of the year 1998, the Government had started recognizing the fact that the result of the privatization had so far not been entirely satisfactory. The private sector

entry had been slower than what was anticipated in the NTP 1994. As a result, some of the targets as envisaged in the objectives of the NTP 1994 have remained unfulfilled. The policy of 1994 had announced a series of specific targets to be achieved by 1997. As against the NTP 1994 target of provision of 1 PCO per 500 urban population and coverage of all villages, Department of Technology (DoT) could achieve an urban PCO penetration of 1 PCO per 522 villages and had been able to provide telephone coverage to only about 50% of the villages, almost 50% less of the target. Thus the need of a new telecom policy was realized and as a result in 1999 the Government of India declared a new telecommunication policy. The main thrust of this policy also remained the same, which was to support the economic reforms envisaged in the new economic policy to achieve the economic growth etc. Yet for the first time a clear shift in the thrust of the telecom policy became visible as along with the earlier emphasis on using telecommunication as a major vehicle for economic development it also included the term 'Social Development'. For the first time the rural and tribal areas were mentioned as special thrust areas where accelerated development of telecommunications should be given priority and rural communication was made mandatory for all fixed service providers. Apart from encouraging the manufacturing of indigenous parts it also recognized the importance of human resources development in this sector. But again the needed recognition of telecommunication for development and empowerment was completely missing specially with reference to the disadvantaged sections of the society. The rural and tribal areas were mentioned as special thrust areas not because of their backwardness but because of their inaccessibility due to geographical reasons.

2. ANALYSIS OF BROADBAND POLICY 2004

The thrust of the policy is on economic growth and creating employment opportunities as well as on improving the quality of life specially by providing better services in education, health and entertainment sector. The policy affirms that broadband services will accelerate decentralised governance at Panchayat level. At the same time there is an acceptance of the fact that low PC penetration may act as a hurdle in achieving the objective of the policy. A whopping % of growth in the internet subscribers and % rate in the broad band subscriber was expected by the policy. The government is well aware of the digital gap between the rural and urban areas as a result of which the policy recognizes the role of other facilitators such as electricity authorities, Departments of ITs of various State Governments, Departments of Local Self Governments, Panchayats (Local self government units), Department of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Education etc. to carry the advantage of Broadband services to the users particularly in rural areas. More over significant importance has been assigned to the cost factor and to provide the equipments at an affordable price. The Department is conscious of the fact that broadband services can reach the urban and rural consumers only if services are offered at affordable prices and on easy terms with a determination at the same time of keeping pace with the technological advancements. Keeping the urgency of the situation in view and recognizing the competitive environment there is an assurance of a transparent scheme for time-bound frequency allocation, swift clearance and wireless licensing by removing the cumbersome procedures, computerisation and by setting

predetermined standards. In addition, to give a boost to broad band initiatives there is a fee reduction from 100 Crores to 5 Crores (one crore = ten million).

But although the policy document seems conscious about the rural-urban gap and about the applicability of broad band for the benefit of the rural people especially in some of the priority areas like rural governance, education and health, and also aware of low number of PCs in the rural areas, no provisions, even indirectly, are made in the policy. More over no subsidies or protection measures have been adopted for encouraging rural service providers. Although the policy recognizes the growing competitiveness in the area it misses the fact that as in rural areas there are less chances of profit making no service provider will be interested to provide services unless some special incentive package is offered to him. Thus the rural-urban digital divide is recognised but no measures are being suggested to reduce this. As far as gender issues are concerned they remain unaddressed.

3. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Infrastructure Education Needs Assessment Survey (December, 2004)

4. India's comments on the WGIG III papers(2004)

5. Internet Governance Arrangements: Indian responses to the questionnaire(2005)

6. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Infrastructure Education

7. Needs Assessment Survey(December, 2004) Conducted Under the Auspices

of:1. United Nations ICT Task Force 2. AIT Global Inc. 3. InfoWorld Magazine

8. Inputs from India for the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG) Meeting[14-16 February 2005, Geneva]

Analysis (3-8)

A close examination of the policies cited above do not have any gender element in them. Even the latest documents related to Internet Governance explain it as a vital infrastructure for the dissemination of information having strong linkages to global economy. Internet governance assumes vital importance for the developing countries that are on the threshold of explosive growth.

Likewise Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Infrastructure 'Education Needs Assessment Survey (December, 2004), conducted under the auspices of: United Nations ICT Task Force, AIT Global Inc. InfoWorld Magazine and Acentech, Inc, aimed at enlightening purchasers and consumers at the business, government, and NGO levels, to enable them to make better decisions when purchasing and implementing ICT and related infrastructure components in the support of their ICT for international business, economic and social development. India's comments on the WGIG III papers also do not touch upon gender dimensions.

B. POLICY DOCUMENTS RELATED TO DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

1. ANALYSIS THE COMMUNICATION CONVERGENCE BILL 2000

The purpose of the Bill is to promote, facilitate and develop the carriage and content of communications (including broadcasting, telecommunications and multimedia) and

prepare legislation to cover telecom, IT and broadcasting sectors and to create a super regulator-Communication Commission of India (CCI) keeping with the trend of assigning importance to market based economy. The objectives of the commission opens with the assurance of providing a competitive environment. It emphasizes the need of providing the services at an affordable cost to all uncovered areas especially the tribal and rural areas. It also recognizes the potential of information in empowerment and in the economic development of all citizens. As in all the policies related to ICT there again is an emphasis on technological advancement. It includes taking necessary steps to regulate or curtail the harmful and illegal content on the internet and other communication services. Most importantly it specifies that the Commission shall by regulations from time to time specify programme codes and standards which may include inter alia practices to ensure in all programmes, decency in portrayal of women, and restraint in portrayal of violence and sexual conduct. Keeping in view the globalizing world there are provisions of co-ordination with international agencies. There is however, no specific provision for inclusion of women in any of the committees or on any of the official posts.

2. .IN, INTERNET DOMAIN NAME: Policy Framework 28th October, 2004

In this policy the Internet is again being recognized as an effective medium to support commerce, governance, education and communication. This policy aims at facilitating the proliferation of internet by adopting the liberal and market friendly policies that are consistent with globally accepted policy and procedures of domain registration with an emphasis on establishing the Indian identity as an IT super power at the global level by using IN as domain name in the internet space. Again its orientation towards the trends of market dominated global economy is very clear when it stresses upon following a competitive pricing policy and best market practices along with suggesting the market friendly measures like using the private- public partnership to market Domain Name Registration Services (DNS), open process of selection on the basis of transparent eligibility criteria, decentralized organizational structure, liberal policies, a comprehensive dispute resolution mechanism, deployed state-of-the-art infrastructure and speedy services etc. on the part of the government. Special emphasis has been given for efficiency and quality by making the entire registration process online, including any document submission, and payment for registration. The .IN domain name is registered within 24 hours of the request from the registrant, and the .IN Registry will put in place procedures to ensure that the registrars do not unduly delay transmission of registration requests from the registrants to the registrar. The .IN Registry will have a 24/7 state-of-the-art technical infrastructure for .IN domain name registration, for maintenance of databases and providing requisite registration services in conjunction with the registrars. The urban bias, in fact the metro bias, is very clear in the decision of setting up of four Internet Exchange Nodes at Noida (Delhi), Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata in the premises of the Software Technology Parks of India although the problem of excessive cost of connectivity for smaller ISPs (Class B and C) operating in secondary cities, has been recognized as the policy document includes that the Government is considering a proposal to set up, in partnership with the State Governments, and with the ISPs as stake holders, a second tier of NIXI hubs in a few selected provincial capitals. To sum up this policy can be taken as a supplementary policy of promoting internet use in India with an objective to promote the IN domain name .Though again the internet basically is being

taken as a medium, helpful in supporting and improving the services related to citizens, there is no specific concern about its equal access by all citizens. The gender dimension is completely missing.

3.ANALYSIS OF GUIDELINES FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF STATE WIDE AREA NETWORK (SWAN) 20TH OCTOBER, 2004

The National e-Governance Action Plan (NEGAP) has identified 22 Mission Mode Projects, which are to be implemented in a phased manner over the next 3-4 years by the line ministries/departments concerned at the Central and State level, as applicable, in addition to the various other e-governance initiatives being taken by the respective States and Central Ministries. State Wide Area Network (SWAN) has been identified as an element of the core infrastructure for supporting these e-governance initiatives and the Department of Information Technology (DIT) has earmarked a significant outlay for supporting this activity. Under NEGAP, it is proposed to extend connectivity to the block level through NICNET/ State Wide Area Networks (SWANs). Government of India support for the establishment of such infrastructure up to the block level in the States will be provided by Department of Information Technology. The thrust has been on geographical reach but availability of ICT geographically does not ensure access to it for all sections of the society living in that area especially in a socially and economically stratified country like India where many other inequities factors come into play.

4.ANALYSIS OF DRAFT PAPER ON NATIONAL ELECTRONICS/IT HARDWARE MANUFACTURING POLICY

The first objective of the policy is wealth creation and then comes the objective of improving the quality of life, for all sections of the society. The strategy for supporting/encouraging manufacture of hardware in the policy is aimed at providing a fertile business ambience in which the investments would flourish making the industry globally competitive. The policy recognizes IT as a key-leveraging factor in National Development. Electronics/IT is not only the fastest growing industry worldwide but also having a profound impact on other industries in increasing productivity, changing cost structure and even the way we live and work. The whole policy document presents IT as a catalytic in the economic development but only in terms of GDP, foreign exchange and employment and in its potential to make India one of the key players in the global electronics/IT hardware- manufacturing sector and integrate with the global value-added-chain. It also aims at marketing India as an attractive destination for investments as well as at boosting the exports. Although the concern over the comparatively less penetration of ICT is being expressed in the draft but this also is expressed in terms of market not in terms of people's benefits. Even the section where there is a mention of 'IT for All' it is treated in the same market spirit of increasing the export of software of \$50 billion by 2008.

5. ANALYSIS OF E-GOVERNANCE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS(18.05.04)

It has been prepared by Center for Electronic Governance, IIM, Ahmedabad and National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad (India)

The e-governance phenomenon is one of the fastest growing phenomena of our country during the last ten years. Significant national resources to the tune of about Rs.2, 500 crores are going annually into implementation of e-governance projects. Moreover the National Action Plan on e-governance has an ambitious outlay of over Rs.12, 000 crores involving public and private investments over the next four years. Even then there had been no authentic mechanism, much less an institutional mechanism, for ensuring a rational and objective assessment of the projects. Such a situation was considered to be detrimental to a healthy development and growth of the e-governance sector. Hence the e-governance Division of the Ministry of Information Technology entrusted the study of developing frameworks for the assessment of e-governance projects, to the Center for Electronic Governance, IIMA (CEG-IIMA) and the National Institute for Smart Government, Hyderabad (NISG). This group presented its report in May 2004. The study has explained in detail the categories of projects to be assessed, categories of frameworks, attributes to be assessed, weight ages to be assigned to the attributes etc. The thrust is on delivering "Value" to stakeholders and to enhance the trust and confidence of stakeholders under the efficiency attributes title. The ' % of socially and economically backward users who benefited through e-service ' is being included as one of the important attributes. Like wise under the ' citizen-centricity attributes ' apart from many other citizen friendly indicators ' user interfaces in local language ' has also been included Under the project context the target group / expected beneficiaries includes all citizens including women, children, tribals, NGO etc. In the project objectives indicators ' extending access to un-served groups ' is very important. While suggesting a proforma for data collection gender is included as a variable. In the proforma as Annexure - 1 (G2C-R) (Detailed Assessment) the ' % of disadvantaged users benefited ' is also included. Thus while analysing the suggested frame of assessment of e-governance initiatives it is clear that though the thrust is on citizen welfare there is only a slight reference of disadvantaged class including women. No specific mention of gender related features of the society are taken into consideration. Citizen welfare or access by citizens is taken as referring to all citizens in general.

6. ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL E GOVERNANCE PLAN - WORKSHOP WITH STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES, 11-12 MARCH 2005, NEW DELHI

The main thrust here was on improving the service delivery system of the government. Although the number of people likely to be affected is given importance, there is no specific mention of the different segments of the society. Then if one analyses carefully which services are being included under the e-governance initiatives one can easily see that most of the services are assumed to benefit both men and women equally. The emphasis again is on the economy rather than on social development.

7. ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING OF MINISTRY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC

PROVISIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AS IT HUMAN RESOURCES, NOT EVEN IN THE EDUCATION

There is no specific strategy or concern to increase the share of women human resource in ICT related sector

8. ANALYSIS OF TEN POINT AGENDA DECLARED BY THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, 26.05.2004

Even the Ten Point Agenda declared by the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, on 26.05.2004, emphasized the role of IT in the economic development of India. Apart from advocating the need of technological advancement in the field he focused on PC penetration and thereby bringing cyber connectivity to every citizen and stressed upon the need to bring about transparency in administration and make government functioning more citizen-centric by using the IT. Again there is no specific mention of gender or women.

9. ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACTION PLAN – INDIA

The “IT for the Masses” initiative presents the strategic vision of IT of the Government of India as an enabler of new opportunities to bridge the gap between India’s technology haves and have-nots. The Working Group tasked to set the priorities of this initiative identifies the poor, comprising 40 per cent of the Indian population, as the immediate concern of the government in providing new opportunities through IT. At the same time, the Working Group also recognizes that there are “classes who are not able to actively participate in economic activities of the country such as women and senior citizens” in their report. It identified infrastructure and services, electronic governance, education, mass campaign for IT awareness as the priority issues that need to be addressed to catalyze this development. Various schemes listed under this initiative range from computerization of government services such as registration of deeds, state-level networking of government agencies, setting-up of IT kiosks to enable mass interactive access for citizens, computer literacy programmes, IT policies to strengthen the use of local language and script for the Internet and many more.

India has made tremendous headway in the knowledge-based industry and the computer software industry through human resource development. It is estimated that about 73,000 students are trained every year in the field of information technology. It is projected that there will be no shortfall of personnel till 2008 even allowing for international migration. The Government has earmarked Rs 2,800 crore (approximately US\$622 million) for the training and re-training of IT professionals and teachers.

While there is general recognition that women need to participate fully in the country’s economic activity, India’s “IT for the Masses” strategic framework is silent on gender issues. Gender considerations do not figure in any of the schemes or programmes being

developed under the banner of “IT for the Masses”. In addition to this, information about policies and projects addressing gender needs within India’s major IT development undertaking is also minimal. Nevertheless, the “IT for the Masses” initiative offer some opportunities for addressing gender concerns in the formulation and implementation of ICT policies.

ICT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN INDIAN STATE OF CHATTISGARH

1. ANALYSIS OF STATE VISION DOCUMENT (2001)

Though in all the policy documents a thrust of harnessing the natural resources is predominant, and even the IT policy of the state includes it as one of its objectives, no specific schemes are implanted or even planned to serve this purpose. In a state where 30% population is living below poverty line and 99% of them, specially women, are dependent on natural resources for their livelihood, ICT must be used to harness the natural resources. More than 80% of the work force, again including majority of women specially in rural areas, are dependant on agriculture, a fact clearly known to all those engaged in policy making process, there is no vision to harness the potential of ICT for this purpose. In all the policy documents. the concern for unemployed can be easily noticed but how the ICT will be used for dealing with the problem is not clear.

The states vision document aims at being a part of rapidly developing global economy “where our factors of production (and goods and services) participate and compete more effectively in the new global economic environment ...” It also emphasizes the concern for its people ‘leading to prosperity of our people, where all our people are, out of choice, gainfully employed and have the same (if not better) quality of life as some of the more economically advanced states in our country” But if we go through the IT policy and related programmes and schemes a contrasting picture emerges . All the policies and programmes have a clear urban bias, as well as a clear gender bias. Although the state vision document promises to carry out necessary measures to boost the socio economic development of all the people of the state there is no mention of ICT any where in the state vision document that was prepared in only 2001.

2. ANALYSIS OF IT POSITION PAPER (2000)

Under the final report of ‘Infrastructure Development Action Plan for Chhattisgarh’ Chapter V titled ‘Position Paper – Information Technology’ can be taken as first official draft of the newly formed state on ITES.

In the opening statement of the document it is stated ‘The huge potential of Information Technology (IT) today finds application in all aspects of development and governance’ further, the potential of IT as an industry and as an employment provider are recognized.

‘The potential of IT as an Industry is best exemplified in the estimated revenue potential from IT and its related services. In India, it is expected to be around US\$ 17-18 billion by 2008, with the industry providing employment to more than 1 million people’. Although the thrust seems to be on e-governance, social development, education etc but ultimately when it comes to policy making it clearly states its intentions. In order to harness the true potential of Information Technology, the government needs to begin by formulating an IT policy which will attract growth and investment in the Industry.

While describing the IT Enabled Services (ITES), it covers the entire range of services which utilize IT applications to empower organizations and improve efficiency that have ‘large market potential’. Thus the single application of IT for masses can find only the last place as ‘education for utilizing IT infrastructure to strengthen formal infrastructure development, education system in remote areas’. (distance learning programmes, etc.)

Over all though the position paper consists of all the dimensions of using IT with a prominence for economy, there is no mention of women specific initiatives or no concern for the gender dimension of ICT .

3. ANALYSIS OF THE STATE WOMEN POLICY (2001)

The state women policy document of Chattisgarh is indeed very comprehensive. Apart from recognizing the unique status of women of the state it also recognizes their contribution in the socio economic development of the state. It says that ‘It is based on a comprehensive analysis of the best practices of other Indian states and countries from where positive elements have been culled out and suitably incorporated keeping in view the State’s unique features. Surprisingly however, they have not included any measures related to using the potential of ICT to be used for women empowerment, although in 2001 when this policy was being formulated, many of the countries even many of the Indian states had started using ICT for women empowerment and development.

The policy document clearly states its aim to ‘encourage participation of women at all levels especially in government local bodies, advisory boards, trusts, etc. Further it states that the government would consider reserving one third of the membership in such bodies for women. Women would also be involved in review of various policies of the State and their implementation as far as the arena of ICT is concerned. No such implementation however, has been done so far. While the policy states that ‘The State would ensure participation of women in schemes and programmes of every department in co-ordination with the Department of Women and Child Development and with other departments such as health, education, industry, forest, etc.’ no mention is made of the technology department.

Keeping in view the dependence of women on agricultural sector the policy document includes that research and technical innovations will be encouraged to reorient the administrative machinery of agriculture to cater to the needs of women’ but in ICT policies and programmes there is nothing related to this sector.

Expressing its sincerity towards inclusion of women in technological sector the document includes measures to 'provide training to women to promote skills for income generating activities like handloom weaving, traditional Chhattisgarh arts, handicrafts, terracotta, sale of compost, collection of waste, use of sewing machines as well as focus on information technology, biotechnology, etc. Keeping with the promise the state government was implementing the Indira Sookna Shakti Scheme which is now suspended but there is no other scheme related to e-governance.

There is also a concern for enabling rural women to get the benefits of technology with the aim to 'facilitate rural women's access to capital, technology know-how and other productive resources for increased work opportunities', but to realize this goal nothing much has been done so far.

To give women increased chances to participate in the industries the policy declares several measures to be taken by the state government, important among them being to 'take suitable measures to enable women work till late or in night shifts in organizations accompanied by support services such as security, transportation, etc'. More over the policy also includes the contemporary issue of gender sensitization of the society by including the aim to 'promote societal awareness to gender issues and women's rights as part of course curriculum' although there is a provision to 'reduce fees / promote free education for girls belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and backward communities specially below the poverty line, there is no such general provision for girls. In view of the privatization of the ICT education and even in the government sector the fees for the courses related to ICT being very high and because of the son preference the parents prefer their sons rather than daughters to get ICT education. Last but not the least though there is an aim to 'encourage girls for technical and scientific education' no specific strategy has been proposed.

Over all though the policy has included many dimensions related to women empowerment, development and welfare in the context of local milieu, the mention of ICT has not found its right place.

The absence of ICT in women policy and absence of women in IT policy clearly shows the lack of awareness of the people concerned about the important correlation between the two.

4.ANALYSIS OF STATE IT POLICY

The whole policy document is very ambitious and comprehensive. It includes the vision of state government for the use of ICT for the benefit of all its citizens. The most attractive and important point is that right in the opening sentence the Chief Minister of the State expresses the wish to create a knowledge society and simultaneously he wishes that this knowledge society should be based on 'equal opportunities and social justice'. More over echoing the great spirit of democracy and a welfare state the Chief Minister announces that in this society 'opportunities to its people are not hyphenated by their geographical location, education or social standing'. In fact this is the most ideal way of

planning any ICT policy and programme keeping in view the needs and status of the people of a country like India, specially of a state like Chattisgarh, where there are immense resources but are yet to be utilized for the poor and deprived people of the state.

However, as stated it is an ambitious policy. The state has been ranked as only second last in the scale of tele density in India, and is dreaming of 'pioneering e-governance initiatives in India that serve as a benchmark for others to follow.'

Another important factor is that though starting with the high principles of democratic and welfare state the statement of the Chief Minister ends with optimism which is reflected in his words wherein he refers to the need for keeping in view the present trend of IT in global world by 'laying the foundation of a vibrant IT/ITES industry that harnesses the huge talent pool of the people of Chhattisgarh'.

To sum up the CM of the state has a three pronged vision as far as use of IT is concerned:

1. Using IT for socio economic development and for creating a society based on the principles of equality and social justice.
2. Using IT as an industry for generating employment and for growth of economic and business sectors
3. In spite of absence of many enablers he seems determined to keep no stone unturned in harnessing the potential of IT for the objectives mentioned above.

The same spirit has been echoed in the message by the IT minister who also holds the Industry portfolio, that ICT will be used 'for rapid social and economic development aimed at significantly improving the quality of life for all citizens of the State.'

The point that attracts attention in the statement of IT minister is when he says 'The IT&ITES policy prepared by us is reflective of the uniqueness of our State' and that uniqueness is described as 'wherein over 40% of our area is forest area and where over 40% of our population is that of scheduled tribes.' He also adds the common use of ICT in: 'this policy proposes to leverage the power of ICT to significantly strengthen our current e-governance initiatives to ensure "Good Governance" which is provided to every citizen of the state.' However, he returns to the most common and important aspect of use of ICT as an industry to ensure the economic growth and employment.

To sum up, if ministers are taken as the representatives of the will of policy makers who are eager to use IT as an industry to generate employment opportunities and to boost economic development by attracting huge investments in this sector, they are equally eager to harness the potential of ICT for the development, benefit and welfare of all people of the state by providing them better services. They take ICT as a tool not only to drive the economic growth but also to help in creating an equal and just society by benefiting all its people specially who are in the peripheries. However though there is a mention of tribal people, the most disadvantaged section of the state in terms of socio-

economic development, there is no specific mention of women and there is no mention either of any apprehension of the existing digital divide in any form.

The important point is whether the spirit echoed by the political representatives has any actual representation in the policy itself.

The importance that the state government assigns to ICT is clear by the statement in the policy document wherein it is stated: 'IT has been identified as a 'Special Thrust Sector' and to give this area special attention 'The Chhattisgarh InfoTech and biotech promotion society (CHIPS), an autonomous society, has been set up to give impetus to IT growth in the State and implement initiatives for overall socio-economic development.' The policy document recognizes the 'wide-ranging socio-economic disparities' of the state 'and asserts that '(ICT) is a particularly important medium for the state in reaching out and improving livelihoods specially for its overwhelming SC / ST population across 44% forest area, which had largely remained untouched by modern development'. Further the policy recognizes the importance of traditional sectors of economy in that 'an overwhelming proportion of this population is dependent upon agriculture and forest for their basic livelihood ... agriculture and forest contribute significantly to the State's income'. The most noteworthy point is that the policy document states 'ICT has the potential to significantly improve this contribution.'

Further adding to the purpose of the policy it states its aim 'to set expectations for quality and excellence in state government services to citizens, state transactions with citizens and businesses, and internal state governmental operations / functions.'

It recognizes the importance of ICT as 'a key enabler in its economic development and improving the quality of life.' Returning to the mantras of democracy the document includes 'the State has prepared its IT policy with a vision of establishing an information society consisting of informed, active and therefore responsible citizens – the basic tenet of a true democracy.' The most noteworthy point this policy document made is that it assures 'to provide all citizens widespread and easy access to government services' and for this promises to provide content 'in the local language'.

It assures 'effectively addressing the existing digital divide.' To its seriousness towards this the policy document again repeats 'where there are no islands of elitism or isolated conclaves of wisdom.' and 'The state seeks to create a knowledge society where access to information and knowledge would be symmetric amongst all seekers and users and every citizen must feel comfortable in accessing information through IT – directly or through public – private partnerships.' The policy document thus realizes the threat of digital divide in the state and assures that the policy aims at eliminating this problem.

As for the stated objectives of the policy we can say that it includes everything and every aspect that ICT can be used for. The provision of 100% computer literacy in all the schools for instance can be said to be an important empowering measure but only for those who go to school. The literacy rate in the state, specially the female literacy is very

poor and the drop out rate especially in the tribal areas and more especially among the females is high.

The policy has a pragmatic view in that apart from promising the use of ICT for good governance it also promises to take up necessary measures as and when required for 'Government Process Re-engineering'.

While describing the need of human resources to achieve the set targets, the policy again reiterates the mantra of 'only by preparing all sections of society for future challenges can Chhattisgarh realise its full potential and promise.'

The schemes which are planned to be implemented to achieve the objectives laid down in the policy documents can be categorized in following manner:

1. Computerization of internal working of the government departments
2. Computerization of services directly related to citizens
3. Availability of anywhere government related information and services through Internet, which is said to be a part of the 'empowerment of citizens /agenda of the state government.
4. Spreading the IT education to empower citizens, and setting up of higher educational institutes for education and research related to ICT
5. Developing IT as an industry to boost the economic development of the state by creating the new jobs, by attracting investment and by exploiting the software market
6. Solving other problems of the people by using ICT such as 'Groundwater Modelling System (GMS)', and tele medicine scheme etc.
7. The policy stresses the local needs and circumstances and thus aspires for using Hindi the local language in ICT related interactions to reach out to the masses.
8. The policy also explains the need for all supportive measures that have to be taken to achieve these targets including various subsidies for IT related industries.

Over all we can sum up that the thrust of the policy is on two ICT related dimensions:

1. IT as an industry to boost the economic development
2. ICT to be used for good governance

Unfortunately in the entire document there is no mention of 'gender'. Although the document mentions the digital divide and also assures that all the necessary steps will be taken to mitigate it in the state but in the schemes planned so far no such provision is visible. Special mention has been made of the tribes but women have not even figured as a passing reference. While stating that the aim of the policy is to establish an equal and just information society it is surprising how the policy makers can adopt a gender blind approach towards women who are the most affected section of the society as far as equality and social justice are concerned. The understanding that the ICT related schemes and programmes will have equal beneficial impacts on the all the sections of the population is gender insensitive even though the Chief Minister assures setting up 'A

society where opportunities to its people are not hyphenated by their geographical location, education or social standing.’

The aim to empower citizens by providing IT education also does not mention any intention to make any special provisions for women, who are not many in IT education though the policy document states that IT policy of the state will be planned and developed according to the needs and status of its people, Even while accepting that IT can be used as an industry, the fact that as women have not much representation in the decision making structures of IT and thus they can be left out from the newly emerging information based economy, is totally neglected.

Though the policy asserts the fact that major portion of the population still depends on the traditional means of economy, on agriculture and on forest, specially the women, there is no specific scheme to harness the ICT in these areas. Same is the case with using IT for public health education and telemedicine, as Chattisgarh is a backward area and lack of medical facilities can be understood by the single data that Chattisgarh has the highest infant mortality rate. Although the policy mentions about telemedicine facility there is no provision for its implementation.

Over all we can sum up that the vision and the policy document of the state government considers the ICT as a gender neutral phenomena.

ANALYSIS OF THE SOME ICT BASED PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES OF CHATTISGARH STATE GOVERNMENT

After its emergence in November 2000, the state government has taken a number of initiatives to introduce e-government for the benefit of its people as listed below:

1. ANALYSIS OF INDIRA SOOCHNA SHAKTI SCHEME

Indira Soochna Shakti is the only scheme related to ICT which directly aims at empowering the women using ICT. It expresses the state government’s commitment for correcting gender biases against women and to empower young women through ‘soochna shakti’ or information power. This was the only scheme designed comprehensively for providing computer education and access to information technology for girl students. Meant for the girl students of class IX to X11 it was considered to be the largest IT education scheme for girls at the secondary level in India. It was free for all the girl students .Moreover to make this scheme an important and practical instrument of women empowerment, and understanding the necessity of women’s access and control over information in the emerging information society, the scheme had the following provisions:

1. Girls educated under Indira Soochna Shakti would computerize the Citizens’ Database and Village Database created under the drive which would serve as the human and physical resource inventory of the strength of the rural communities of Chhattisgarh.

2.. Girls educated under Indira Sookhna Shakti would also be volunteers for operating computers and using IT for the benefit of rural societies in villages as part of CHOICE (Chhattisgarh Online Information for Citizen Empowerment) Project.

The significance that the state government had attached to the project can be adjudged by the fact that at the policy level the project was being chaired and monitored by the Chief Minister himself .The Total Outlay for the year 2001-02 was Rs.162 lakhs(Ten Lakhs =One Million)and for the year 2002-03 it was Rs.700 lakhs and it had to be met from the State's own resources. A total of 46273 girls students all from below poverty line families including a majority of tribal and Schedule caste girl students were included for training during the first year of the implementation of the scheme.

This was a scheme for women empowerment in a true sense .But after the change of the government in 2003 the scheme was dropped by the next government of a different political party and so far has not been replaced by any other such scheme . This is an example how party politics could damage the cause of women and not a single voice has been raised by any organization against this decision.

2. Bhuiyan: All land records are computerized under the scheme. By paying only Rupees ten, (0.4 US\$), any one can get a copy of the land records. Implemented in all District head quarters of the state, it is also planned to be extended to the villages at a future date.

3. E Sangwari: This scheme is implemented with an objective of providing 7 services to the common citizen, launched at one district head quarter of Bilaspur only: 1.death certificate 2. Birth certificate 3.Caste certificate 4. Form (16) pertaining to income tax, 5. Khasara (land records) 6. Income certificate 7. Domicile certificate.

4. E-Kosh - aims to computerize all treasury transactions of the District Head Quarters.

5. Rural development: It will be executed through *Janpad Panchayatas* (local self government unit). Each *Janpad panchayata* will be given two computers, which will be linked by Satellite. The total cost of the project is over 9 million rupees excluding the cost of software and satellite linking. It will be an informative programme, aimed at informing the rural people about the development and welfare schemes, it will be interactive in future.

6. Videoconferencing: It was launched in Jan 2001. Heads of various government departments, answer the questions asked by the common people through video conferencing. It is being operated daily and according to the Officer in-Charge at Bilaspur in Chattisgarh, 8-10 questions are asked daily.

7. Choice: CHOICE an acronym for Chattisgarh information System for Citizen Empowerment is in the implementation stage. Choice provides one stop solutions for anywhere any time based secure services for all the requirements of citizens. Choice will provide a wide range of services including connectivity, information IT education, e-governance and e-commerce. This is being implemented in the capital city of Raipur

.
8. Feed Back: Most of the Departments of Government are on the web. There is a feedback system too. A grievances cell provides a facility to register complaints through mail. There is also a facility to send letters to Members of Parliament / Member of Legislative Assembly but no data is available as to how many applications are being sent or what actions have been taken and whether the complainant has been informed about the developments or decisions etc.

Some other e-mechanisms are:

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9. File Monitoring System [<http://cg.nic.in/fms>] Monitoring of File movements within the Mantralaya (ministry)

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10. JANSHIKAYAT [<http://janshikayat.nic.in>] Complaint registration through web based application & status monitoring of complaints received through video conferencing/post/web

11. CM's Jan-darshan [<http://cg.nic.in/cmpgr>] Monitoring of grievances received by the Chief Minister (CM) during the jan darshan (public hearing)

12. CM Relief Fund Monitoring System [<http://cg.nic.in/cmrf>] Monitoring of applications requesting aid from CM relief Fund.

13. PGR @ CM Office [<http://cg.nic.in/cmpgr-cmsec>] Monitoring of grievances received at CM Secretariat

14. PGR @ CM House [<http://cg.nic.in/cmpgr-cmhouse>] Monitoring of grievances received at CM House

15. MP/MLA Letters Monitoring [<http://cg.nic.in/lms>] Status of letters received from MP/MLA for CM secretariat

16. File Register (CM Office) [<http://cg.nic.in/cmfile>] Monitoring file & notesheet at CM Office.

17. Health [<http://cghealth.nic.in>] Epidemic/Immunity/Gradation list monitoring for Health department

18. Rural Industries [<http://cg.nic.in/rural>] Inventory management through web based application for rural department

19. Daily Rain fall [<http://cg.nic.in/varsha>] Rain fall monitoring at all districts of the state for Revenue department

20. Pay Details [<http://cg.nic.in/payroll>] Pay details of NIC staff

21. Stock Monitoring [<http://cg.nic.in/stock>] Hardware & other stock at all NIC centers of state
22. Hardware Monitoring [<http://cg.nic.in/hwms>] Hardware details, status of the NIC State/District units
23. Monthly Assessment [<http://cg.nic.in/mar>] Monthly activity report of NIC district centers
24. Agmark Monitoring [<http://cg.nic.in/agmark>] Site preparation progress of AGMARKNET project
25. Tender Progress Monitoring [<http://cg.nic.in/pwdtender>] Tender details of the tenders floated by PWD
26. Financial Management Information System (FMIS) [<http://cgfinance.nic.in>] Monitoring of Departmental expenditure by various departments, Budget controlling officer wise and treasury transaction i.e. receipts and payments at district treasury.
27. Rice Distribution System [<http://cg.nic.in/food>] Monitoring of Annapurna & Antyodaya Yojana of Department of Food.
28. Ruralsoft [<http://ruralsoft.cg.nic.in>] Monitoring of S.G.S.Y, S.G.R.Y, Indira Awas Yojana by Zilla Panchayats.
29. Priasoft [<http://cg.nic.in/priasoft>] Panchayat Raj Institution Account Monitoring Software
30. e-Management of Assets [<http://cg.nic.in/e-man>] e - Management of assets in NIC Web Enabled Systems (NIC-New Delhi/GOI)

ANALYSIS OF SCHEMES (2-30)

1. There is a clear urban bias about implementing the programmes. Although in all the policy related documents the benefit of the rural population has got a prominent place the reality is that till now not a single programme has been implemented in rural areas.
2. Although the vision is to improve the quality of life of the remotest citizen of the state by using the ICT, the reality is that there is no programme made to fulfill the specific requirement of the disadvantaged section of the society specially the ST/SC and women.
3. Although the policy document states that “Vikas Mulmantra , Adhar Loktantra (Democratic governance is the fundamental basis of development) there is no participation of civil society organizations or of common citizens in the whole

- process of policy making and implementation . There is no mechanism either to evaluate the actual impact of the programmes in improving the quality of life.
4. Citizens do not have any say or control over the choices or priorities for selecting the activity, section, department or service of the government which should be included or converted to the E-governance mode.
 5. Although Chattisgarh is predominantly agrarian with a good forest cover anything related to agriculture or forest is conspicuously absent in the whole vision of e-governance. The important areas which should have been included necessarily to provide the quality life to common people are telemedicine and safe drinking water.
 6. Development of applications in local languages has been promised, but there is no vision on what needs to be done to evolve standards, promote local language content and applications and appropriate hardware. Without this all e-governance initiatives are bound to be limited to a few.
 7. Introduction and acceptance of e-government is a way to ensure that every citizen has a right to be a part of the decision making process which affect them directly or indirectly and influence the process in a manner which may best improve their conditions and quality of life .But unfortunately the underlying trend is that the privileged groups acquire and use the facilities more effectively and because the technology benefits them in an exponential way they become even more privileged , creating a digital divide between the technology haves and have nots .
 8. Surprisingly, though the administrative and political corruption is a matter of most serious concern, there is no plan to use ICT to curb this.
 9. Most of the e-governance schemes in the states are implemented through the public-private partnership. As the private sector works with a profit motive, all the services are charged services. In a state like Chattisgarh where more then 30% of population still lives below poverty line, the promise of the government that e-government will improve the access of benefits for all people is doubtful.
 10. Last but not the least there is a complete absence of a well planned and intentional inclusion of gender dimension in most of the initiatives except one.

ANALYSIS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES

In Chattisgarh ICT related services are being provided by three sectors, government sector through National Information Centre, private public partnership, and private sectors. The services provided by private sectors are as follows:

Some agencies are trying to use ICT as a tool of empowerment for masses and some have

specifically selected women as their target groups. But these initiatives have not come up from the government or from local NGOs and hence the spread is negligible. There is an urgent need to study such initiatives and assess their impact on women so that with necessary adaptations the good practices could be replicated all over the state.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING OF THE ICT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES OF CHATTISGARH

If we go by the definition of gender mainstreaming indicated by UNDP and the guidelines provided by ITU and try evaluating the status of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies and programmes in Chattisgarh state, a gloomy picture emerges.

Chattisgarh is one of the states of India where the condition of women is relatively worse compared to other states in India. Though the state has a very comprehensive policy on women very little gender disaggregated data only on typically conventional areas like health, education, and poverty etc is available. The data related to ICT like such as the number of phone connections given to women, the number of cyber cafés registered in the names of women, the number of women holding various posts in the ICT related sectors or the number of women taking admission in ICT related courses etc. is not easily available. Hence, when even the first step of gender mainstreaming that of collecting the gender disaggregated data has not been initiated, the second step of identifying the gender based gaps is hardly possible.

The third step of Gender mainstreaming involves developing the strategies to close those gaps. But when even the gap is not identified evolving any strategy to close the gap is almost impossible.

All efforts of the government of expanding the ICT facilities or filling the gap are measured in terms of geographical expansion. But in a highly stratified society like India merely geographical expansion does not insure the access of ICT facilities to all, especially women who face many restrictions embedded in the socio cultural norms.

In all the initiatives of e-governance related practices surveys are conducted only to ascertain that what type of services are being used by the citizens more frequently rather than for any gender based analysis.

More over even if some related data is available in some departments such as the number of women joining IT related courses the number of women having mobile phones, the number of women using video conferencing facility where available, or the number of women visiting cyber cafes etc, no serious efforts on the part of the IT related departments are visible to collect such data and use it while making or implementing programmes.

Gender mainstreaming of ICT policies is a process that does not get started automatically without an impetus. The first step to initiate the process of gender mainstreaming is that those who make and implement policy should accept and desire that a particular policy or programme needs gender mainstreaming. Though this term has appeared prominently in all the policy documents at international level during the last decade, not a single reference to this term can be found in all the literature related to ICT policies and programmes at the state level or at the national level in India. It may be argued that merely using a particular term or concept does not matter much if the spirit is present. However, in all the policies and programme documents at the state level or at the national level, the reality that technological development affects women and men differently and women are always at the disadvantaged receiving end and thus need special provisions or supporting provisions, is not present either in letter or in spirit. It seems that ICT is assumed to be a gender neutral phenomenon. Except for very few programmes like Indira Soochna Shakti, no special programmes have been designed to empower women against the existing gender based digital divide. No research has been done for collecting data related to the use of, access to and control over ICT from the different perspectives of male and female. Though at the state level there is a separate department for women development and various other department having many women specific programmes, ICT related programmes specifically for women are completely absent. In the absence of such programmes departments can hardly be made accountable for mainstreaming gender into ICT policies and programmes, the fourth and the last step of the process of gender mainstreaming.

In the absence of deliberate efforts on the part of the stakeholders towards gender mainstreaming of ICT policies and programmes in the state, policies and programmes are likely to be gender blind.

Although at the policy level there are equal hiring opportunities for all women and men, regardless of race, ethnicity, class and age and there are no wage disparities among women and men. There is even 30% reservation for women in all the academic courses at higher education level including the ICT related courses, and these efforts are part of the general agenda of providing equal opportunities to women. No specific efforts however are found so far for gender mainstreaming of ICT policies and programmes .

During interaction with persons associated with NGOs, administration, private sector, political parties and others it was very clear that the concept of gender mainstreaming is still almost unheard of in this region. Even those who have heard of these terms and are aware of its meaning and have included the gender mainstreaming as a stated organizational goal, they are still unsure about how this should be translated into practice particularly in the more specialized sectors like ICT that seem remote to them from gender concerns.

The most surprising fact that emerged was that when the neighbouring states of Orissa and Jharkhand have started including gender experts in all the programmes related to development that can affect women, Chattisgarh still lacks this. There is no plan of

including gender experts so far in the planning and implementation of development policies and programmes of the State. Programmes for women are in fact are directed towards an aim of achieving the targets in terms of quantity rather than quality.

Gender mainstreaming, gender equality etc are perceived by some as academically imported concepts and terms and as being used by local NGOs and administrators without even knowing the meanings. It is felt that even the priorities, targets and programmes are being formulated within the ideological frame of International organizations which many times do not represent the local needs and aspirations and are not attuned to local scenes. Thus achieving the targets related to these remains an official formality limiting the impact only to a few as these can never become peoples' programmes.

It is very clear from the above analysis that despite the gains in gender and ICT advocacy in the international policy arenas, the gender and ICT agenda has yet to be considered by the state government.

Our observations show that government representatives have little interest in considering ICT as a major gender and development issue. They are still interested in viewing it in terms of growth, export, employment etc and that too as a gender neutral phenomenon.

Thus our findings are that the national and state level policies and programmes in India are not gender mainstreamed. The question remains therefore whether absence of mainstreaming has any negative effects on women and whether it really results in depriving women equal access and control over the ICT. Is the threat of gender based digital divide real? When it is clear that though unintentionally, there is almost an absence of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies, the question is whether it will actually result in a gender based digital divide?

While the data related to women's share, control and access over the ICT is not being collected in the gender disaggregated form by the State agencies, we have made an attempt to collect a sample data from some of the districts of the State. The data has been collected from the official records of the concerned government departments and on the basis of field work including personal interviews, group discussions and on the spot observations:

SHARE OF WOMEN IN ICT RELATED COURSES

Name & Type of the institution	2001-02			2002-03			2003-04			2004-05		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
IT GuruGhasidas University , Bilaspur ,	59	44	15	60	47	13	57	38	19	54	41	13

Chattisgarh(Autonomous, Self Financing)	60	43	17	61	42	19	50	37	13	48	25	23
Chauksey Engineering College, Bilaspur, Chattisgarh(Private)	26	22	04	54	44	10	59	49	10	60	53	07
	16	15	01	37	35	02	59	53	06	50	52	07
Government Engineering College, Bilaspur Chattisgarh (Government)	47	32	15	41	22	19	40	26	14	40	26	14
	38	26	12	45	29	16	40	31	09	38	26	12
Total	246	182 (73.99%)	64 (26.01%)	298	219 (73.50%)	79 (26.50%)	305	234 (76.73%)	71 (23.27%)	29	223 (74.59%)	76 (25.41%)

Source: Data Collected from the office of the respective institutions

Year	% Of Girls
2001-02	26.01%
2002-03	26.5%
2003-04	23.27%
2004-05	25.41%
Total	25.26%

Analysis and findings

1. The share of female in ICT related courses (Computer Science & Engineering and Information Technology) is comparatively less than the males.
2. There is almost no change in the over all share of females during last four years
3. Share of women is less in private colleges due to high fee structure.
4. Less percentage of girls in technical education has significant implications, some of which could be:
 - It may eventually result in the absence of women in the decision-making structures of the technical policies and programmes, their formulation and implementation making them insensitive to the particular needs and abilities of women.

- .If technical education is considered to be more rewarding from the point of view of finding employment; a lesser share in this domain means lesser share in the job market for women.

Thus the lack of equal access to technical education for half of the population of society, for whatever reasons, would not only result in depriving them from having equal opportunities for their own economic development but also in depriving our society to gain from the talents of the valuable human capital in its development endeavors .

It is therefore important to locate the reasons for this gender gap in technical education for a better grounding of policies and programmes. Some of the issues, which would require to be addressed from this perspective, would be:

- Historically there has been a tendency to divide the disciplines as masculine and feminine, the more technical professional ones being considered as masculine and the arts, humanities and the social sciences as feminine and this has been followed up with a congealed socialization reflecting and perpetuating the patriarchal mind set of the society.
- Following this and in addition, though technical education has a better chance of employability, since it is comparatively costlier in the state of Chattisgarh and because in the society the son is considered to be the bread earner, parents generally prefer to provide technical education to their sons rather than to their daughters.
- In Chattisgarh State the institutes of technical education are mostly limited to urban areas, and the village communities even today have reservations in sending their daughters to study out side their villages due to deep rooted socio-cultural factors.
- Some of the prevailing social customs like dowry also prevent parents to encourage their daughters to join technical education, as they assume that the more educated the girl, they would have to find an equally educated bridegroom apart from spending more money in such a marriage.
- The uncertain social factors and the real and perceived fears of the parents about the ‘unsafe’ social environment including in the campuses and lack of adequate arrangements of boarding etc also make parents hesitant to send their daughters to far off places.

USE OF E- GOVERNANCE FACILITIES BY WOMEN

Video Conferencing facility (For details of the scheme please refer to point 6 above under the heading ‘Analysis of Some ICT based Programmes and Schemes of Chattisgarh State Government)

Bilaspur and Durg Districts of Chattisgarh

Duration - 02-03-2002 to 02-11-04

Name of the district	Total Cases	Cases by women	Cases by men
Bilaspur	377	77 (20.42%)	300 (79.58%)
Durg	126	44 (34.92%)	82 (65.08%)
Total	503	121 (24.05%)	382 (75.95%)

USE OF E-GOVERNANCE BY WOMEN (RURAL / URBAN WOMEN)

Video Conferencing facility

Bilaspur and Durg Districts of Chattisgarh

Duration - 01-01-2002 to 02-11-04

Name of the district	Total Cases by women	Cases by Urban women	Cases Rural women
Bilaspur	77	35 (45.45%)	42 (54.55%)
Durg	44	30 (68.18)	14 (31.82)
Total	112	65 (58.03%)	56 (41.97%)

USE OF E-GOVERNANCE BY WOMEN FOR ISSUES RELATED TO FAMILY / PERSONAL/ COMMUNITY

Video Conferencing facility

Bilaspur and Durg Districts of Chattisgarh

Duration - 02-03-2002 to 02-11-04

Name of the district	Total Cases	Personal	Family	Community
Bilaspur	77	66 85.71%	--	10 (14.29%)
Durg	44	44 (100%)	--	--
Total	112	110	--	10

		(98.21%)		(01.79%)
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Source: Data collected from the records available in the office of the National Informatics Centre, Bilaspur District Head Quarter

Analysis and findings

1. Use of this particular E- Governance service by women is comparatively less than that by men.
2. Comparatively over all use by rural women is less then that of urban women but the trends are different in two districts. In Bilaspur rural women are using it more than urban women.
3. Mostly this service is being used by women to solve their personal problems related to dowry harassment, torture by in-laws and husband, problems relating to land dispute, employment, pension, or getting cable connection etc. in Durg District; In Bilaspur district, the service is used by women in cases of torture by in-laws and husband, 'Tonahi'(practice of witchcraft by women), land disputes, employment, pension, complaints about government servants and political representatives asking for bribes for providing government facilities etc.
4. Community related complaints have been registered by women panchayat (unit of local self government) representatives that include allegation against sarpanchas (headperson of the local self government unit) asking for bribes or for financial mismanagement, delay in getting the panchayat work done by the government offices etc in Bilaspur District .
5. The evidences of less use of E-Governance facility by women does not mean that women have less problems then men. It is more due to lack of awareness about this facility among women, as well as due to the fact that this facility is available only in the district Head Quarters which are situated in urban centers . For a rural woman it is almost always impossible to come alone and use this facility. Due to this reason only those women who have permission and support of the male members of their family are coming to use this facility. Among the rural women we could not find a single woman coming without a male companion or escort.
6. When we enquired about the reasons of limiting the facilities to district Head Quarters, the reasons cited by the officials were: lack of infrastructure in villages, unavailability of skilled government officers in the villages, and that it is easier for villagers to come to Head Quarters rather than going to other villages to avail this facility etc .

7. Though from the side of the government, efforts to publicize this facility are being made such as, putting the notice boards in the villages, by using the traditional means like 'Munadee' (public announcement), through media, giving information through various means of 'Jan Jagran' (Public Awareness) camps, organized by different government departments etc. But the efforts are not sufficient. Moreover especially the rural women need support and motivation from the NGOs to access this facility. At present the use of this facility by rural women is completely dependent upon the wish and will of their men folk.

USE OF CYBER CAFÉ BY MALE AND FEMALE

Duration -01-02-2005-01-03-2005

Bilaspur City

Name of the café	Name of the owner	Total Visitors	Male	Female	Hours used by male	Hours used by female
Hotline	Mr. Kailash B.	900	685 (74.12%)	215 (23.88%)	2223 (66.40%)	1125 (33.60%)
Speed Computer	Mrs. Anuradha S.	300	175 (58.44%)	125 (41.66%)	130 (52%)	120 (48%)
Om Cyber Cafe	Mr. Manish	195	110 (66.32%)	85 (43.58%)	150 (71.43%)	60 (28.57%)
Ocen C. Online	Mr. Prakash C.	97	85 (87.63%)	12 (12.37%)	102 (80.48%)	12 (19.52%)
Right Click	Mr. Devkant R.	597	471 (88.90%)	126 (21.10%)	502 (71.925)	196 (28.08%)
Cyber Bite	Mr. Ashish A.	2100	1350 (64.29%)	750 (35.71%)	2145 (66.21%)	1095 (33.79%)
Royal Cafe	Mr. Sunil S.	900	600 (64.64%)	300 (33.33%)	1600 (84.22%)	300 (15.78%)
Saber Café	Mr. Rizvan Khan	560	364 (65%)	196 (35%)	1119 (83.26%)	225 (16.74%)
Modern Cafe	Mr. Yogesh A.	580	464 (80%)	116 (20%)	404 (77.70%)	116 (22.30%)
Total		6229	4304 (70.10)	1925 (30.90)	8375 (72.05)	3249 (27.95)

Source: Data Collected from the documents available with the owners of cyber cafes and through the personal interviews

Analysis and findings

1. The number of females using the cyber café is comparatively lesser, the over all %age is only 30.90%. Accordingly the total hours used by female are also comparatively lesser that is only 27.95%.
2. Most of the cyber cafes are owned by men.
2. The highest % of women usage is seen in the cafés owned by a woman (41% & 48% respectively)

The factors responsible for this less use can be described as following:

- Lower literacy rate among women
- Women are not as computer savy as men. They visit cyber café only for academic and professional needs whereas men, apart from all these purposes ,visit cyber café for recreation and other purposes also
- Generally the male members of the family do the cyber related work
- The environment in cyber café is not found to be woman friendly, except a few cyber cafés
- The local milieu is also a backward one, socializing among male female is not so common and not socially accepted
- There are no cyber cafes exclusively for women or there are no separate arrangements for women in cyber cafés.
- Surprisingly cyber cafes are assumed to be a place where women should avoid visiting, this is the feeling not limited to most of the parents as well as university women students and the hostel wardens also agree with this.

Although no official data is available about the percentage of women having the ownership of telephone connections, whether it is landline connections or mobile connections, through the official directory of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, the official phone line providers of Indian Government, it is clear that only 09% of total phones are in the name of women.

In Chattisgarh the population can be divided in to two segments. The segment of the population, where ICT is wide spread, ranging from traditional forms of ICT like radio,

TV, to most modern forms like internet, mobile phone etc., is concentrated in urban areas of the state, covering about 20% of the population. It is here that most of the programmes of the government related to application of ICT are being implemented and most of the educational and training centers are also operating only in these urban areas. In fact during a telephonic talk with some private service providers in mobile telephony and public service delivery, it was made clear that the density of the population and the capacity to spend are the two factors, that are important for taking any decision for expanding their operations to different areas and as the rural and tribal population do not satisfy these criteria they are not interested in providing services to them. The CEO of the IT department of Chattisgarh also indirectly echoed the same feelings, adding that as the population of urban areas is more aware than those of the rural areas, there is more pressure to implement the schemes in these areas first. Right now the areas most benefiting include the capital city Raipur, Bilaspur, the seat of finance minister, Durg, the most industrialized, densely populated and richest district of the state. So as far as the implementation and application of ICT in Chattisgarh is concerned an urban bias is clearly visible, due to many reasons cited.

The other segment of population belong to rural areas where the traditional forms of ICT, like Radio, TV, landline telephone etc. are used. And then there are people to whom even these traditional forms of ICT are not available. At least 20% of the population comes under the category that does not even have a radio.

On the basis of extensive field survey we could say that as far as the access and use of traditional forms of ICT like TV, Radio, telephone etc. and the modern forms like internet are concerned, due to the following reasons women and girls do not enjoy equal access to these in the state, especially in the rural areas:

- The families are male dominated families and males are considered to have the first right in using whatever belongs to the family.
- In most of the families the male is considered to be the bread earner so he automatically gets hold of every thing first.
- Women are mostly busy in house hold affairs and they do not have time to use these facilities.
- Cyber cafés, telephone departments and all other implementation points are mostly run by men and their users are also mostly men.
- One has to spend money to use these facilities and money is available more to men. Even if women and men have equal monetary powers, women are less interested in spending it for mobile phones, laptops, or in cyber café etc.
- Use of technology whether driving a car, using a camera and likewise using internet or information kiosk is considered as the male domain,

especially in rural areas. So even if a woman tries using these she may have to face taunts and some times indecent gestures and comments, may be because the male community considers it as an intrusion into the male domain.

In some places in the rural and tribal areas we have observed that even if a woman is the earning member of the family instead of spending her earning on buying a TV or a radio she likes to buy jewelry or clothes whereas the male prefers TV and radio. Even if the woman buys these under the pressure of the male members of the family she herself is not interested in using these. Getting information is understood to be the responsibility of male members. So right from the childhood getting information or being informed is considered to be the duty of males, and women do not take interest in it.

In the urban areas also, women are not benefiting from ICT equally, again due to the restrictive socio cultural norms.

Mostly the concentration of implementation of ICT related schemes is in urban areas. So among the rural folk it is easier for men to come to city to get the benefits of these facilities like e-land records, or making complaints or getting education in an institution in the urban areas rather than for rural women without proper transportation facility or a safe environment in the city. So this urban bias is also a major factor which may enhance the gender based digital divide.

During surveys it was found that in coeducational schools located in the rural areas the boys get more access to the computers.

Thus it is clear from the above analysis that in Chattisgarh women do not have equal access to and control over ICT. Although the absence of gender mainstreaming may not be directly responsible for this, as the direct factors include low literacy, poverty, socio cultural conditions etc. but due to these constraints women do have a disadvantaged position and hence they need some special provisions in the policies in order to correct the gender imbalance to access the benefits of the ICT revolution and this could become possible through mainstreaming of gender into ICT policies and programmes.

Although the available data and analysis indicating the less access to and control over ICT policies and programmes by women are perhaps not sufficient to prove that our society is heading towards a gender based digital divide, it is sufficient to identify the trends and to conclude that the present scenario does not seem to be in favour of women. The question emerges now is, what implications there may be for women if they don't have access to and control over the ICT?

Related to use of ICT in governance, there are two dimensions of the issue: First, what implications there will be for women if because of the lack of access to ICT they are unable to access the government and how ICT can be used to remove the age old hurdles and facilitate the access of women to governance services. Second, it could be said that if women lack access to and control over ICT and they are not able to use ICT, it will

definitely increase their dependence over men. While the state government of Chattisgarh is publicizing its various policies and programmes on the internet, advertising the tenders or contracts on the internet, making available the application forms of various schemes on the internet, in the absence of any capacity building measures for women for using ICT, at the operational level it is difficult for women to benefit from these schemes. If we analyse closely, we find that the lack of mobility has been the main factor responsible for Indian women to have less access to government services and for their dependence on males. The burden of house hold responsibilities, lack of transportation facilities, an insecure outside environment, a male dominated gender insensitive administration, lack of facilities for women in administrative offices are some of the factors due to which even the educated and aware women have hesitation in approaching the officials themselves. If 'government any time anywhere' through internet could be provided, women would then be able to obtain information more easily and will be able to register complaints or convey problems regarding administration to the concerned officers without facing some of the constraints mentioned above. But unfortunately even with this potential of ICT there have been no efforts to adopt this gender sensitive approach while planning and implementing the e-governance initiatives in the state. Though many small measures can be taken very easily just as the V-Sat based computer which is available in the office of CEO and the Janapad Panchayats (units of the local self government) and are controlled by the male officers there, computers can be given to women self help groups and can be placed in an Aganwadi Kendra (centre for women and child care), where women sit together and interact with each other very frequently and freely. One of the literate members of the group can be trained to operate the computer. Like wise while selecting the places for the proposed change agents scheme, the locations can be selected taking care of women's needs and convenience. This could be in a residential colony or nearer a women's college etc. Though these may seem small measures, but they would make the difference.

Unfortunately in our country, while implementing e-governance, male dominance is clearly visible. All the services related to governance, which are now being brought under the umbrella of e-governance, have the male as the norm though vicariously, and hence are related to the needs and convenience of men. A close analysis of services provided in the state reveals the fact that these services are mostly used by men. There are not many efforts to identify the convenience and needs of women in relation to governance or e-governance.

More over keeping in view the benefits ICT can provide to women i.e. governance at finger tips any time any where, special subsidy schemes can be started by banks and government for women to buy computers and internet connection. The NGOs can help in creating awareness and providing required training to women to use these facilities. This can be a major step towards the empowerment of women as women may be able to access the government easily thus getting benefits and approaching the officials as and when required.. We have to keep in view the fact that the problems related to governance may be different in impact for men and women. While women and men face many common problems, women face added problems merely being women. And we are sure

that at least those problems which women face merely being women can be solved to some extent by women friendly rather than merely ‘user’ friendly ICT.

Another very important negative impact because of the lack of women’s access to ICT is also likely. It is an accepted fact that ICT will be a major contributor to the economy increasingly. According to the widely cited study conducted by McKinsey(2001) for NASSCOM, the IT sector is expected to generate approximately two million additional jobs in the formal sector during the ten year period 1999-2008

Figures 1 and 2 present McKinsey projections for the growth of revenue and employment in India’s IT industry from 2001-2008.

Figure Error! Bookmark not defined.: IT Software and Services Industry in India: 2000-08

(US\$ Billion)

YEAR	EXPORTS	DOMESTIC	TOTAL
2001-02	9.5	3.5	13
2002-03	14	5	19
2003-04	20	8	28
2004-05	27	14	41
2005-06	35	20	55
2006-07	43	28	71
2007-08	50	37	87

Figure Error! Bookmark not defined.: Projection of Additional Employment in IT Sector

Year	Additional Workforce requirements
2001	90,000
2002	115,000
2003	150,000
2004	195,000
2005	250,000
2006	300,000
2007	340,000
2008	370,000

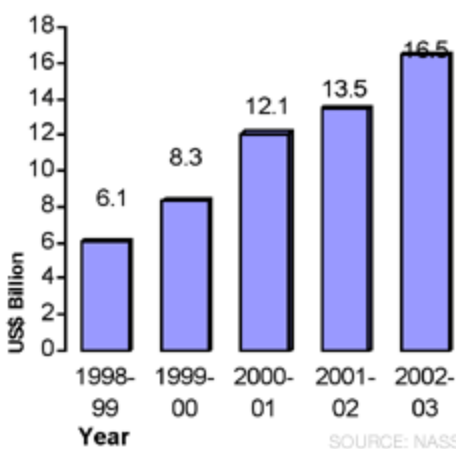
Figure Error! Bookmark not defined.: McKinsey Estimate of Growth Potential for IT Enabled Services in India

(In \$ billion)

Services	Year 1998	Year 2008	CAGR
Customer Interaction Services	6.5	33.0	18
Finance and Accounting Services	1.5	15.0	26
Animation	1.3	2.0	4
Translation, Transcription and Localisation	0.3	1.2	21
Engineering and Design	0.4	5.0	29
HR Services	0.2	44.0	71
Data Search, Integration and Management	---	18.0	--
Remote Education	--	15.0	--
Network Consulting and Management	--	5.0	--
Website services	---	3.0	--
Market Research	---	1.0	--
Total	10	142.0	30

Figure Error! Bookmark not defined.: McKinsey's Estimate of Revenue & Job Potential by Type of Services

IT Enabled Services	1999		2008 (Projection)	
	Employed	Rs. Billion	Can be Employed	Rs. Billion
Back Office Operation/ Revenue Accounting/ Data Entry/ Data Conversion	14,000	6.80	2,60,000	1900
Remote Maintenance and Support	4,100	2.70	1,80,000	1350
Medical Transcription/ Insurance Claim Processing	6,100	3.00	1,60,000	110
Call Centres	2,800	1.00	1,00,000	60
Data Base Services	1,400	0.70	1,00,000	65



Content Development	12,600	6.10	3,00,000	250
Total	41,000	20.30	11,00,000	810

The overall global market for IT enabled services will amount to approximately US\$ 142 billion by the year 2008

Overall, the Indian IT market has grown from Rs. 5,450 crores (US\$ 1.73 billion) in 1994-95 to Rs. 79,337 crores (US\$ 16.5 billion) in 2002-03, accounting for 3% of India's GDP in 2002-03. The IT industry has created employment opportunities for over 700,000 professionals in India in the year 2002-03. (NASSCOM)

As already indicated, the related data clearly shows that the women of Chattisgarh have less share in the IT related higher education. They will have fewer shares in this rapidly growing information based economy and this lack of equal access to IT courses will definitely result in their marginalization in an information based economy.

CONCLUSION

The emerging global trends are clearly indicative of the fact that:

Apart from the information based economy, the future society itself is going to take a shape of information society where recreation, entertainment, shopping and every aspect of human life will be closely governed by the ICT. In the context of the present study we could say that if this trend for women of less access to and control over ICT continues, it will surely result in lesser participation of women in all dimensions of the emerging information society. And the implications will not only be limited to women. If in any of the societies a major part of its human resource is unable to contribute actively in the economy, that will also definitely affect the overall economy. Like wise if a major part of the population is unable to use ICT it will affect the growth of market and business in all the areas such as e-entertainment, e-commerce, e-education etc.

The orientation and thrust of existing ICT policies, and the use and application of ICT in the present form may not be the only single factor responsible but will definitely add to exacerbating the existing gender based divide by adding to it a **gender based digital divide** especially in a traditional, male dominated society like India. Gender

mainstreaming of ICT policies will play a significant role in mitigating this problem. Although the concept of gender mainstreaming has a wide international acceptance, it is yet to be adopted as a conscious policy by national and state governments in India. Taking into consideration the importance of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies and the existing absence of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies in Chattisgarh State of India, in this study we have attempted to identify the probable reasons for this absence. Since other policies in the state pertaining to health, poverty elimination, education etc. are somewhat gender mainstreamed, the probable reasons why that ICT policies and programmes are not gender mainstreamed (though perhaps unintended in terms of their outcome and implications for women) could be:

1. Absence of women in decision making structures

- The over all social phenomena where women are not encouraged to work out side home.
- Lesser number of women opt for IT related courses due to many reasons
- Lesser number of women opt for decision making posts even when they are in IT sector
- The decision making structure is in general dominated by men
- There are no special provisions of reservation for women in decision making structure in IT related services.

2. Absence of gender sensitivity among the policy makers

- There is no provision of special training to create gender awareness among policy makers.
- Although the terms like gender awareness, gender sensitivity etc. are included in the literature related to ICT, the meaning is mostly not understood by many specially the lower level office staff who are responsible for implementation of policies at the field level

3. Lack of awareness in women's organizations about the importance of gender mainstreaming of ICT policies.

4. Lack of gender awareness among other stakeholders for gender mainstreaming.

5. Absence of gender mainstreaming in the policies and programmes at the central level.

There is thus an urgent need to develop mechanisms to continuously assess the growth, development and impact of ICT with reference to women. At the same time there is need for adequate policy measures and their continuous monitoring and timely corrective interventions to ensure the equal access, use and benefit of ICT for women in the emerging information society.

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