

APC FEMINIST INTERNET RESEARCH NETWORK (FIRN)

Second convening (summary)

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Learnings from the FIRN research period

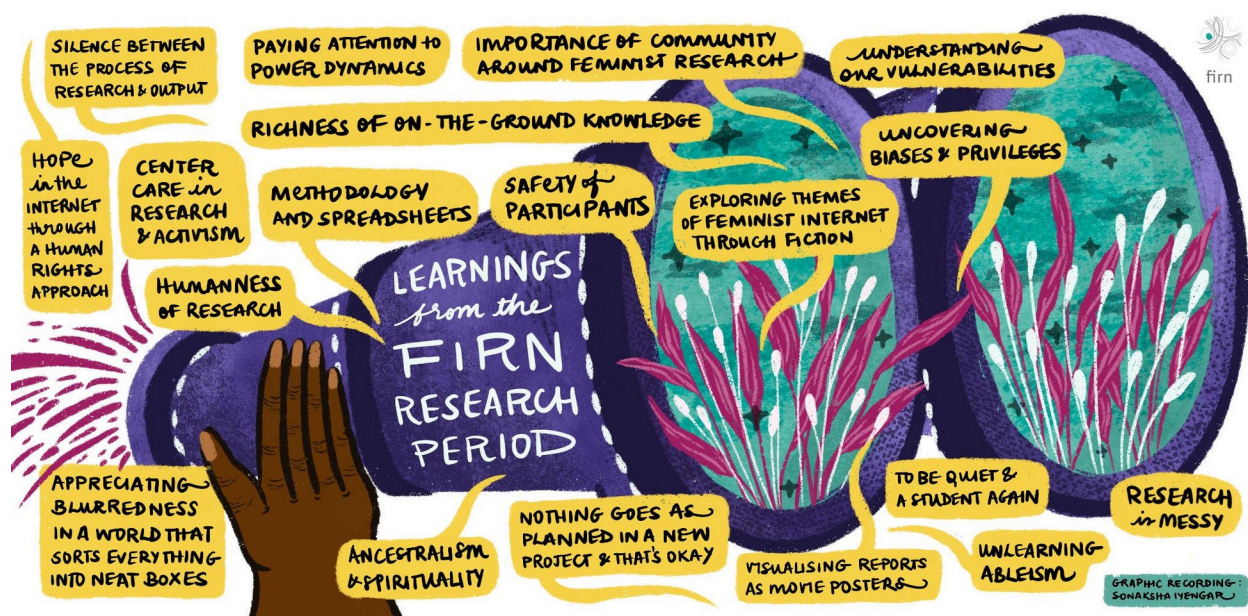


Image: Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Research is messy. Unlearning ableism. To be quiet and be a student again. Visualising reports as movie posters. Ancestralism and spirituality. Nothing goes as planned in a new project and that's okay. Appreciating blurredness in a world that sorts everything into neat boxes. Humanness of research. Methodology and spreadsheets. Safety of participants. Exploring themes of feminist internet through fiction. Uncovering biases and privileges. Understanding our vulnerabilities. Importance of community around feminist research. Richness of on-the-ground knowledge. Centre care in research and activism. Hope on the internet through a human rights approach. Silence between the process of research and output. Paying attention to power dynamics.

Quotes from the convening

1. **Research is messy and fulfilling.** "Feminist research is messy. I'm grappling with just how messy it can be; but also how human it is. We look at something and ask, 'How do we do this? Is this methodology or design?' What's been really fascinating is how much my findings overlap with my own experiences during this project, with my own truths. We are all interwoven into our research processes – many of us are, at least. The person is there. You cannot untangle the researcher from the principles or the ethics. A mantra coming out of this is, 'We're going to be messy, we're going to be humxn.'"
2. **Paying attention to power dynamics:** "I learned that there is a difference of perspectives between human rights research and the internet, and a feminist

perspective of research. I learned that if we don't pay attention to these layers we'll miss something even when we are human rights activists or researchers with a human rights approach. If you don't pay attention to the power dynamics that feminism exposes and puts in front of the research you'll miss something important. My learning is that it's not enough to talk about human rights, and that feminism can provide me with a proper lens regarding research and the internet."

3. **Importance of community around feminist research.** "I learned that I have to adjust some stereotypes about research communities. They can party till the morning! I have also learned that something we have imagined in this infrastructure for other researchers in the field is something already happening. We see it in the first convening, one of the great outputs in domains of changes and research ethics which have since then been followed by other researchers and partners. Also, some of the great findings and learnings which are coming out of your research are really excellent. Looking forward to how we will be building a resilient and strong infrastructure for communities, not just for researchers and activists in the field."
4. **Understanding our vulnerabilities.** "Essential for me, across the board, is how to grieve. It's also something useful in targeting what is going on right now globally. For me it's been a transformative experience to realise that we breathe anxiously, and to reverse that would be a kind of process, doing work that is more mindful and different."
5. **Uncovering biases and privileges.** "I learned about the intersectionality in perpetrators of online gender-based violence. So often I am conscious of the intersectionality of survivors, including victims of systems, institutional discrimination. In this period, I learned more about the intersectionality of perpetrators and suspending my judgement. It's difficult to understand and locate perpetrators because it's easy to hate on those who perpetrate."
6. **Creative energy.** "I learned that I really want to write fiction, based on my learnings from this research project. I'm exploring so many themes around the feminist internet, and I want to put them into short stories and novels, so that everyone can read about them beyond in reports."
7. **Richness of on-ground knowledge.** "Academic training can be quite useless in the face of just years of knowledge that comes from the ground. For example, when our colleagues conducted research in Delhi for this project, their data was richer and obtained faster than us. We were surprised – compared to Bangalore – by how little effort it took."
8. **Silence in the process of research and output.** "I'm learning that there is a big – and hugely productive – silence between the process of the research, what you are learning, and what is being written out in the text that someone else engages with. Reading that distance and silence is an act of active reading. Sometimes in the process of research and building knowledge with specific people and fields, the format we have, to speak about what we've gone through in research, is an awkward container. So you have to read what is not being written in the final container, which

is sometimes very restrictive. Trying to read silence in the margins is something I did when studying, and I think it still holds today. Not everything gets communicated in the research output. Some things will always resist knowing or being known – because of language, vernacular, experience, space, identity, history, among other things. Illegibility is quite an important thing at this moment too, when everything is anticipated to be readable.”

9. **Appreciating blurriness in a world that sorts everything into boxes.** I’ve learned that I like the idea of feminist research. The boundaries between the researcher, practitioners and the constituents that we learn from are so blurred. I appreciate blurriness in a world that pretends everything can be sorted into neat boxes of knowledge.
10. **Centring care in research and activism, including safety.** “If there’s one thing I learned about myself in the past year, it was to centre care – not just in my research, but in my activism as well. There’s been intense social activism in India and that had to be balanced. To bring the care on and centre it within the activism it was a part of, outside of the specific context of the research.”
11. **Revisiting feelings about the internet.** “I’ve learned a lot about digital methods. I also learned that my feelings about the internet have changed somewhat. I’ve been working on these issues for 10 years now. I had a feeling that the internet was something really hopeful, and I still think it is, but some safety has been lost in this feeling because something has changed. We used to talk so much about security/safety and how to bring it to mean something for human rights, and now the internet is a more dangerous space than it was.”
12. **Feminist perspectives of data analysis.** “I’m not from the area of feminist research. For me, I’ve seen and learned about many different perspectives of analysing and interpreting data, and I think that’s quite interesting and useful.”
13. **Diversity of feminist research practices.** “I’ve learned just how diverse feminist research can be depending on the topic, location, perspective, methodology, and so on – FIRN really brought this to life. I realised after what feels like hundreds of Zoom meetings over the past couple of months, this is the first where we made feminist principles of participation and discussed what it means to be a feminist in a space like this. This is a learning for me, for better meetings.”
14. **Ancestralism and spirituality.** “I work with community networks and feminist infrastructures, and realised I need to pay more attention to spirituality and ancestralism. I tried being more open about it, and it was so good. I had a really spiritual contact in an ancient territory I worked with, and it was great.”
15. **Unlearning ableism.** “Distance and time are both functions of the body. That was a huge learning experience. I had a huge health setback, I’m still in recovery with intense treatments. I suddenly realised when I centred my body and all my resources and energy were concentrated on keeping myself alive, distance and time have different meanings. How to negotiate with project plans and deadlines was also profoundly illuminating. I realised how ableist my world view had been so far,

because I had never had to deal with anything so crippling. That was profoundly useful to learn through. And then realising what it means to be in a feminist network when you are going through something like that because you don't get punishments or shouting for missing deadlines but you get care and help instead."

Insights from meta-research project



Presentation: Nyx McLean.

Image: Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Researcher's identity, principles and ethics are interwoven. Digital security and safety or care. Make sure multiple voices are heard. Centring the political. Research is messy. Holding space for participants whose language may be aggressive. Awareness of privilege, power and knowing how they hold themselves. Technology is not neutral. Community of practice. English: Power, dominating research, lost in translation. Whose voice is not included? Who can own a feminist identity. Think about whiteness. What counts as feminist research? Tensions around civil society and academic research. Feminist spaces for dialogue. Researchers being transformed by research. Importance of illegibility when everything is anticipated to be readable. Space for reflexive practice.

Nyx on appreciating this newer conversation: "I've been doing research for 10 years, and I haven't really seen it come through in research literature that the researcher is transformed by the process. I've seen researchers going into spaces of social change, communities wanting something to shift or knowledge brought into spaces so they can figure something out, but never much about the researcher. I see this now in conversations around whiteness mentioned earlier, in taking a step back to consider how they are engaging in the world, and how communities encourage them to learn more, read more and form study groups." **Can**

management, self-isolation). Roles of the internet in GBV: the internet as a tool can be used both ways, different levels of sensitivity, who is in control of ‘the internet’?
 Recommendations: public debate, peer-to-peer support, legal amendments, cross-sectoral policy, publications in Bulgaria.

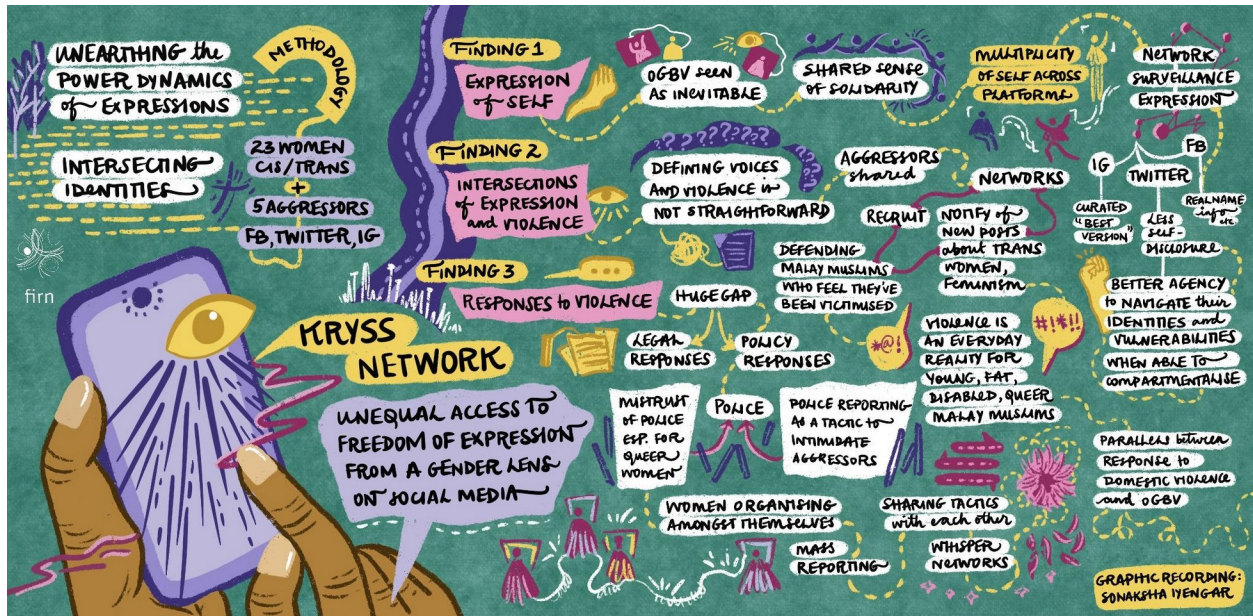
[POLICY] Alternate realities, alternate internets: Feminist methods and ethics in AI (Kenya, South Africa, Senegal, Uganda, Ethiopia)



Presentation: Neema. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Johannesburg, Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Kampala, Dakar. Methods: 3,306 women, 18-65 years old, 1 x week internet use, face-to-face. Gap: 30-40% gender divide in South African countries. Erasure of digital identities/presence. Restrictions on freedom of expression. Self-censorship. Ethiopia: Mainly Facebook and Telegram. 71.2% incidents of OGBV: Facebook. 28.2% self-reported experiences of OGBV. Responses to OGBV: 66% block the perpetrators, 14.5% deleted/deactivated their accounts, 12.2% stopped using their service. 95% of women in Uganda are unaware of laws to protect them. Organised trolling, calling for physical violence against women. Closed platform: Whatsapp. Open platform: Insulted, laughed at, unsuccessful approaching law enforcement. Laws: Confusing, suppressing dissenting voices, censorship against women. Platforms and accountability: 12.4% reported, 28.2% unresolved incidents. 33% received response but no action. 30% unsure of where to get information. Onus on women to keep themselves safe. Hate speech bills punish women and stifle dissent. Rhetoric of the internet as a dangerous space keeps women from being online. Themes: Digital inclusion, power, performing masculinity, legal responses, surveillance, helplessness, ICT4Good, burden on civil society, Afrofuturism. Afrofuturism: African diaspora, creativity, technology. Dreaming of making the work accessible to the people we collected it from.

[KRYSS] Expression and violence: Research on the unequal access to freedom of expression from a gender lens on social media in Malaysia



Presentation: Serene, Angela. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: *Unearthing the power dynamics of expressions. Intersecting identities. Methodology: 23 women cis/trans, 5 aggressors, platforms Facebook (real name info), Twitter (less self-disclosure, better agency to navigate their identities and vulnerabilities when able to compartmentalise), Instagram (curated "best version"). Finding 1: Expression of self → OGBV seen as inevitable → shared sense of solidarity → multiplicity of self across platforms → network surveillance expression. Finding 2: Intersections of expression and violence → defining voices and violence is not straightforward → aggressors shared → networks → recruit → notify of new posts about trans women, feminism → defending Malay Muslims who feel they've been victimised. Finding 3: Responses to violence (Huge gap between legal responses and policy responses). Police: Mistrust of police especially for queer women, police reporting is a tactic to intimidate aggressors. Women organising amongst themselves → mass reporting → sharing tactics with each other → whisper networks. Violence is an everyday reality for young, fat, disabled, queer Malay Muslims. Parallels between response to domestic violence and OGBV.*

[CIS] Platformisation of domestic and care work in India

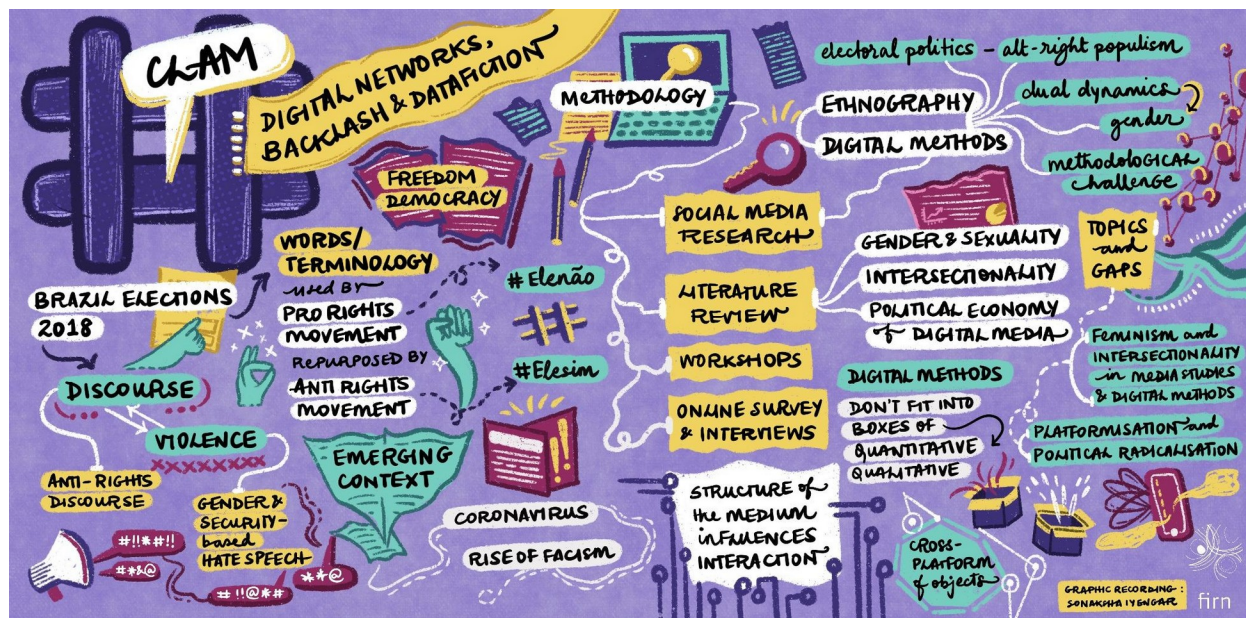


Presentation: Ambika, Aayush. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Present conditions: Undervalued, invisibilised, feminised. Employer-employee: Individualised, caste-based, patriarchal. Government does not recognise basic livelihood, increments, wage security, regular leave. Methodology: 65 interviews (Delhi, Bangalore). Platforms claim to provide formalisation. Taxonomy of platforms: On-demand (end-to-end algorithm, gig-based, constant app presence), marketplace, digital placements (employers provide criteria, platform negotiates wages). Discrimination coded from traditional sector into platform: gender, class, caste. Formalisation treated as desirable. Pre-existing inequalities, digital access, and literacy. Choice. Surveillance machine: One-way flow of information on workers' platform. Labour benefits almost entirely absent. Care work cannot be broken into neat and transactional units. Important to move away from the model of 'Uber'-isation. Surveillance reduces power of negotiation. Workers' conditions not addressed. Worker agency: Uneven distribution of agency. Strong and weak intermediaries. Task segregation: Similar to traditional economy. Platforms see women as liabilities. Marketing of the platforms: Recruitment pathways, negotiation tools (grievance redressal), information asymmetry (privacy, trust), professionalisation.

Research partner updates (ongoing)

[CLAM] Digital networks, backlash, and datafication in Brazil



Presentation: Horacio, Bruno, Elaine. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Methodology: Social media research, literature review, workshops, online survey and interviews. Ethnography and digital methods: Electoral politics, alt-right populism, dual dynamics, gender, methodological challenge. Literature review: Gender and sexuality, intersectionality, political economy of digital media. Context: Brazil elections 2018 → words / terminology used by pro rights movement repurposed by anti-rights movements → Elenao vs Elesim. Gender and security-based hate speech ← violence ↔ discourse → anti-rights discourse. Emerging context: COVID-19, rise of racism. Topics and gaps: Digital methods don't fit into boxes of quantitative / qualitative, cross-platform of objects, feminism and intersectionality in media studies and digital methods, platformisation and political radicalisation, structure of the medium influences interaction.

[CODING RIGHTS] Decolonise AI: A feminist critique towards data and social justice in Latin America



Presentation: Joana. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: "To be deprived of No is to be determined by another's will" – Sara Ahmed. Matrix of domination. Can we develop technologies based on a feminist concept of consent? Algorithms maintain the status quo. What does a feminist algorithm look like? Hacking with feminist values. Game, empirical experiments. Card deck based on feminist principles. Analysis of power relations. How are we asking the question of AI? Behaves, performs, changes, feminist activist perspective. Can these values be used to draft a feminist framework to question AI? Constantly changing. Europe considered one of the most protective frameworks for privacy → falls short → does not consider structural challenges. Aftermath of saying no → digital exclusion. Feminist critique towards data and social (environmental?) justice in Latin America.

[VEDETAS] Action-research on feminist autonomous networks in Brazil



Presentation: Bruna, Débora. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Community network with feminist principles, Vale Do Ribeira, Articulation with feminist collective Sempreviva Organização Feminista (SOF) (5 visits, 3 nodes of a mesh network, 2 towers installed). Methodologies (participatory processes): Coffee time and gambiarras. Coffee time brings up things that we would never hear if we just asked if they were fine. Gambiarras (hacking in Portuguese) are simple and inexpensive solutions, e.g. expense of the infrastructure and transport of towers, towers of bamboo. Build (digital environment and physical environment): Multiple interests and needs, intersectional perspectives, groups and bodies, challenge not to romanticise the technology. Tensions and conflicts (windows to breaking the whiteness → potential for joint reflection → no magical solutions for complex histories. Being a feminist (ongoing search for balanced relations and ethical practices).

[RIA] A feminist approach to intersectional gender equality in internet use



Presentation: Araba, Mariama, Alison. **Image:** Sonaksha.com.

Image text: Rwanda: Digital equality, gender equality. Methodology: Surveys, focus group discussions, interviews. Widest recorded gender gaps. Particularly internet use. Lowest internet penetration rates in Africa. Challenges: Qualitative fieldwork delayed → research permission, staff turnover → departure of project lead. Feminist lens to understand wide structural power issues → barriers → internet access. Recommendations: Conduct fieldwork post-pandemic lockdown, train contacts to do focus group discussions (FGDs) and interviews remotely, policy maker interviews, explore alternative methodologies.

Insights and discussion

Panel on policy reform

Policy Reform: Working towards feminist transformation and change was an online panel which took place on Day 6 of the convening. It was held on 22 June 2020 and was open to the public through Zoom. Mariana Fossatti from APC wrote about the event here on genderit.org: <https://genderit.org/articles/policy-reform-working-towards-feminist-transformation-and-change>



Helani Galpaya: We need to go back to one of the core feminist principles, which is that process is as important as product, both in research and policy making. When governments implement large AI systems, we should be asking, Who is present in the team? Who is creating the policy/system, for whose benefit?



Anriette Esterhuysen: Something we can do as a form of self-strengthening and self-care is to be conscious about, at a human level, where we are in our lives as feminist activists. Is it right for us in this space and time to work at national level or global level? Lots of power and leverage in alternating between those levels and doing it strategically in terms of policy change window opportunities, but also in a way that makes sense in your own life.



Marwa Azelmat (APC WRP): While women are in the room at Internet Governance Forum (IGF) meetings, when one moves through the various layers of leadership and responsibility, the number of women is likely to decrease. In addition to women's participation, we need to look at how receptive internet governance institutions are to women's issues. While participation is welcome, they're not expected to bring up women's issues. Old-fashioned ethos that all issues are gender neutral, policies driven by trademark issues, or whatever the reason is, the issues of internet governance are not seen as gendered.

From network discussion on research updates

This section holds inputs from FIRN as compiled from audio conversations and chat boxes during the week of the convening. Although these inputs are categorised asynchronously by theme, some discussions are chronological. If an organisation is referenced in discussion and someone from the organisation responds, their organisation is added to their name.

Topics covered were:

- Translation, silences, illegibility, and the power relations between knowing, educating, understanding, and resistance
- Discursive and technological struggles
- Increased proximity to and understanding of aggressors
- Gender as ideological glue, visualising a framework of an anti-gender infrastructure
- Emergence of an informal grey digital economy profiting from gender-based violence
- Developing feminist practices in research methodology
- Making bots, and other creative energy from a space of speculation and fantasy
- Agency within strange choice architecture and platform design
- Developing a matrix or pedagogy to analyse tech platforms
- Affective collectivity of shared experience
- Content moderation
- COVID-19 context sharing from domestic workers rights union head in India.

Translation, silences, illegibility, and the power relations between knowing, educating, understanding and resistance

- “Translation as a feminist practice would be hugely valuable to take as a research practice, because it allows for what *[name redacted]* is gesturing towards: the messiness, the need for in-intelligibility, but also the limitations of mediums and platforms to take on ideological aspirations and value-driven negotiations. Translation is also interesting because it doesn't necessarily attempt readability. It accepts the untranslatability but then also creates the appendices that invite the reader to learn and invest rather than extract and just skim. I like the fact that translations refuse quick reading, and pause regular reading practices. Thanks to *[redacted]* for bringing the politics of silence (and perhaps reticence) with this idea of translation. Need to go down that rabbit hole and ruminate on it after this, for sure.”
- “On silence, that is something that needs to be thought through and I'll make a note of that. Who doesn't participate as well? Whose voice doesn't come through? Who do we consider? Another partner was speaking about limitations, for instance in internet research, who can participate? Only those who can access the internet? Are we then being exclusionary by doing so? Are we only going to ask people with certain functions on their phones? What will we be perpetuating by doing so? This is the beautiful thing with feminist research, I don't hear this from people who do other kinds of research, or research I don't like. Feminist research is always thinking, and I

think that is about labour and work and effort and hearts. Everyone spoke about the kind of closeness they felt to the issues and their participants. I don't think anyone was unaffected by their research."

Discursive and technological struggles

- "Something I found super interesting in CLAM's work and am still curious about is the struggles for meaning. How terms like 'freedom' and 'democracy' are reappropriated or captured in the digital arena. These are discursive but also technological struggles."
- "We need to understand that digital networks are built to collapse, while insisting that this is the context that makes meaning. The network creates the only semantic context within which the term makes sense, right? Given the scale and the scope, and the bot-based amplification, it is almost impossible to think of these meanings as 'human' meanings. So much effort has been done to create networks as the verification apparatus for meaning making and meaning holding."

Increase proximity to and understanding of aggressors

- "It seems maybe aggressors have better formed/more explicit bystander/middle ground strategy than social media feminists. I think what is becoming more apparent in perpetrator studies is the gradient of perpetrators – helpful to unpack this to also see where they sit in the network. Not all perps have equal power, have equal motivation, or are equally participating. They are just like us. They also have their bubbles, their networks, their tactics. So a useful thing to unpack either way is to understand what the social-relationship/infrastructure at stake is, masculinities at stake, and how this manifests."

Gender as ideological glue, visualising a framework of an anti-gender infrastructure

- "BlueLink's research saying the use of 'gender' as an insult sounds familiar. Some of us have been called 'genderwallah' in India as well. But this idea of a larger infrastructure that gets deployed towards it is really interesting. I see it emerging in multiple projects that we need, perhaps, a larger definition and mind map of what the word 'internet' means? So many responses see it as a tool, or a platform and exploding that neutrality might be very useful."
- "One sort of overarching thing that strikes me with both BlueLink and CLAM's projects is how transnational some of the anti-gender backlash seems to be. Because both examples we heard from Brazil (in terms of terminology used and appropriated/reappropriated and so on in those online debates) as well as examples we've had from Bulgaria (in terms of how gender is being turned into basically an all-encompassing insult): used by the right against pretty much anyone who disagrees with them. [They] feel very familiar in a way to me in my own context and also when thinking about hearing from friends and colleagues in other countries where similar tendencies are happening. That strikes me as very interesting, how different our

contexts can be and how similar at the same time, in a frightening way. BlueLink's presentation reminded me about an activist from Hungary, very active against anti-gender movements in Europe, who once called gender a sort of ideological glue that brings together different types of right-wing movements and actors, kind of like the lowest common denominator they can agree on they hate and mobilise that as political capital in general. whether that is something you would agree to. How would you see that differently in your project's context?"

Emergence of an informal grey digital economy profiting from gender-based violence

- "I was also thinking about the emergence of an informal 'alternative media' economy which is how churning out discourses happens (payment schedule, and how they actually make money from this). It's not always ideological, sometimes it's banally capitalistic. This informal grey digital economy is another important patriarchal structure that maybe doesn't get enough visibility in the discussion on online GBV and hate speech, and in anti-gender movements. A kind of shadow economy that is basically profiting off violence for violence's sake – for repetitive capital, for building up a viable digital propaganda vehicle for hire, also as a site for convening particular kinds of masculinity (which then links back to the other kinds of patriarchal structures – nationhood etc.)"
- "Something that can also maybe surface more explicitly is digital corporatism in this area, beyond the usual problem of accountability in other people's hate speech."

Developing feminist practices in research methodology

- "It became increasingly clear for us that reflexivity, positioning, critique, and ethics need to be foregrounded in feminist research, and the focus should be on 'methodology' and not 'methods'. It's interesting to see where KRYSS's research has gone since they first started. What their fierce activism reminds me of is that perhaps courage is a feminist method that needs to be taken into account when thinking through research methodology. KRYSS said they wanted to interview aggressors in person, actually locating people who have committed acts of sexism and violence and meeting them. My first reaction was 'oh no you can't do that, you'll put yourself in incredible conditions of danger!' They said that is the point. So I thought as a research methodology through feminist research practice, it would be useful to think about courage and how to navigate it. That's something I took away from KRYSS's framework. The fact they could engage with that was very useful."

Making bots, and other creative energy from a space of speculation and fantasy

- "I really want to start working on a dream future. Something I shared earlier today is a bot I'm working on. It's important to make the work we collect accessible to the people we collected it from. As a 10,000-word paper that will never happen. These women gave us their time, 3,000 of them, they trusted us and shared this with us. How can we do something useful and give this information back and create a

platform for these types of discussions? I'm playing around with this idea of a bot and would love feedback on that."

- "An infusion of speculative reality would be really useful for researchers doing work that is less empirical. The idea of going back into speculation and fantasy is so imperative. It grounds us in a future that we want to shape rather than the one we will walk in. I see the elements of sci-fi and fantasy coming up in so many different projects. We need to do a speculative fiction FIRN project!"

Agency within strange choice architecture and platform design

- "If we want to talk ourselves about a way out of GBV, it's not about what kinds of violence, the safety processes involved, but: Is there any other way of trying to reimagine the internet both at its level of architecture and coding but also level of usage and expansion? I think Pollicy's paper has the potential to make strong policy recommendations around that."
- "I think KRYSS's comparison between Facebook, Twitter and Instagram shows that despite differences in design, there is obviously a similar architecture at play and that architecture keeps on rewarding specific kinds of behaviour. This is something I am calling hyperlinked aggression. It isn't aggression that is visible, as [redacted] points out, it can be in emojis, memetic activities. But you need to understand the computational network context to see how these things work out. I think the comparison between open platforms and what happens in closed ones like Telegram in Pollicy's research might be an interesting contrast to see if the design principles are the same."

Developing a matrix or pedagogy to analyse tech platforms

- "I am wondering what would happen if the platform was not analysed through the role as intermediary but as a technological platform. Also, drawing the red line from the last couple of days, looking at the 'choice architecture' and 'information design' nudges. Would it start blurring the lines between these intermediaries?"
- "An ecosystem of mediations would be really interesting, seeing them as spaces and moments of transformation. Not only as something that facilitates a process – the imperative of modernity of 'professionalising' everyone."
- "I can see the ways in which traditional placement agencies are finding new forms in the digital and also amplifying traditional economy vulnerabilities. I am wondering if there are other genealogies of the digital which could actually be traced to the building of this intermediary. For example, if we looked at the digital intermediary through the protocols of network architecture and protocols, it might also lend a different materiality to the analysis of these 'platforms'. I am obviously now making notes on projects I should do, but it is also something I would like to think of in the future – disrupting the seamless narrative of the traditional to the digital, and tracing the digital to digital connections. I can see a matrix forming with the intersection of formality and informality between traditional and digital."

Affective collectivity of shared experience

- “The affective collectivity of shared experience is something that needs more explication in policy and organisation work, and I am so glad that KRYSS’s research is pointing that out. The resistance to the granular isolation of the digital is to continually emphasise the collective.”
- “The ‘not political’ is still political. And performativity is political. Also, I would be curious to know if they have ‘rogue’ accounts. Not the commonly used word for this but some of my students call their ‘secret’ accounts ‘rogue’ – crafting an alternative identity for themselves so that they can be online/on Instagram without people they know knowing this. I wonder if they have private accounts that they curate content to view/consume but don’t share their own content. And maybe, this is a stretch, that this is in itself performative/political. And what is present in the absence of?”

Content moderation

- “I agree that it is not possible to deal with content moderation without a mechanised process to flag/filter and imagine, so if the framework and equation is a kind of funnelling that we seem to have to live with now. Maybe the issue is also how one platform can be responsible for holding quite so much content to begin with. Thinking about how other platforms with user generated content and communication have different ways of combining ways of engagement with tech design with access to layers of space to think about moderation differently.”
- “I’m also thinking about how saying no to AI in so many other contexts may be necessary. Especially since harm cannot not be reduced to dataset bias. Another interesting technological exploration is the roles of the algorithm and the data itself. With biased data being vilified, the algorithm is accorded a neutral objectivity, but algorithms also differ, say, in their emphasis on the bulk of the distribution versus the tails. The diversity of the outputs of an algorithm trained on a dataset of say, faces, will depend on both the algorithm and the data.”

COVID-19 context sharing from domestic workers rights union head in India

- “The union worked with CIS and conducted a small rapid assessment survey of the situation of domestic workers after the first COVID-19 lockdown throughout April. There was no concept of working from home for domestic workers. They were in cramped conditions at home with rent to pay and food to be taken care of. Among 2,500 workers, we found that 87% had lost their jobs and were not given any promise or reassurance of salaries. 91% did not receive their salaries in April. Domestic workers over 55 years old were told not to return to families, some they had been working with for over 10 years. There is no sense of enduring this health crisis together as domestic workers and employers. The discriminatory attitudes of

employers and resident welfare associations were already there in the space as far as domestic workers were concerned, but worsened in COVID-19. Workers were portrayed as unhygienic and carriers of COVID-19. Resident welfare associations put out alarming notices saying if employers hired domestic workers they would be responsible for illnesses. Domestic workers were told to use separate lifts and were not allowed to sit in common spaces. Long lists of dos and don'ts are issued to employers. Currently, domestic workers do not know when or how they will be called back to work and have to last months with unpaid rent, risk of eviction, piling debts – all without being listed as registered workers by the government.”

- “There is something deeply, deeply disturbing about hygiene, cleanliness and professionalisation of bodies (disciplining) to enter into this platform matrix. COVID-19 reinforced a strangely hyper-patriarchal relationship with the government/state, and then simultaneously, lots of different crisis, mutual aid support networks emerged (or basically pivoted from existing work around this to serve different kinds of care/need). What could possibly emerge in highly regulated environments, but also what is actually sustainable?”