

## ANASUYA SENGUPTA

**websites:** <http://whoseknowledge.org>, <http://sanmathi.org/anasuya>

As an advocate, strategist, grantmaker and storyteller, I have worked nationally in India and the United States, regionally across the global South, and internationally for over 20 years. My work so far has encompassed supporting and strengthening free knowledge, human rights and social justice movements, organisations, and communities of practice. I have done so through my individual leadership as a woman from the global South, and by working in collective partnership with civil society organisations, governments, media and philanthropists. I am committed to amplifying voices 'from the margins' in the virtual and real worlds, while unpacking issues of power, privilege, and access (including my own).

I am currently co-founder and coordinator, with Siko Bouterse, of *Whose Knowledge?* - a global campaign to correct the skewed representations of knowledge on the internet. In other avatars while based in the United States, I created and headed the Grantmaking/Community Engagement department at the [Wikimedia Foundation](#), ensuring that communities across the world were well-resourced in their creation and curation of free and open knowledge, including on Wikipedia. I led the Asia and Pacific portfolio at the [Global Fund for Women](#), supporting women's rights organisations and feminist movements across the largest region of the world. I am on the boards of the [Nonprofit Quarterly](#), a leading news and analysis site for US civil society, and [The Rules](#), aiming to challenge and change the rules of global capitalism and exploitation.

As an activist based in India, I designed and led a UNICEF initiative with the Karnataka Police on violence against women and children. Over the same period, I was a strategy facilitator and researcher with [Gender at Work](#), an international knowledge network for gender equality.

I have founded campaigns, and been involved with national and international networks against religious and cultural fundamentalisms, and for sexual and reproductive rights and women's health. I have designed and led individual and group evaluations and research for UNIFEM (New York), Oak Foundation (Geneva), Hivos (India) and the Ford Foundation (India).

Throughout my career, I have combined my strategic activism with my research and writing interests, and have been published in academic and popular press. I co-edited and wrote for the book, *Defending Our Dreams: global feminist voices for a new generation* (Association of Women's Rights in Development and Zed Books, 2006), arguably the first international anthology of young feminist analyses and experience.

As a Rhodes Scholar, I hold an M.Phil. in Development Studies from Oxford (1998). I have an undergraduate Economics (Honours) degree from Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University (1995). I was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Berkeley, California (2007-2009).

My other passions include poetry, music, theatre, and Wikipedia; yarns of both the fibre and wordy kind; centering through yoga and the potter's wheel; and hikes through the redwoods.

## EDUCATION

- 1996 - 1998** M.Phil. in Development Studies  
University of Oxford
- 1992 - 1995** B.A. (Honours) in Economics (First Class)  
Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi

## ACADEMIC AWARDS/DISTINCTIONS

- Oxford University (1998)** Distinction in the M.Phil. thesis entitled 'Embedded or Stuck? The study of the Indian state, its embeddedness in social institutions and state capacity'
- Rhodes Trust (1996)** Rhodes Scholarship (India)
- Lady Shri Ram College (1995)** Lady Shri Ram Prize for 'All Round Excellence'  
Economics Faculty prizes

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### ***Chief Grantmaking Officer, The Wikimedia Foundation (July 2012 - March 2015)***

First as Senior Director, then as Chief Grantmaking Officer (from March 2014), I led the formation and functioning of the first fully-resourced department supporting global Wikimedia communities with the non-technical support needed to grow online and offline. I designed and led an effective participatory system to disseminate an annual 8 million USD in money, tools and other resources to the global Wikimedia movement - over 80,000 individuals and nearly 50 entities - involved in growing community and content for some of the world's largest collaboratively edited free knowledge projects, such as Wikipedia, Wikimedia Commons, Wikisource etc.

I was also responsible for ensuring effective evaluation frameworks for our grants, and learning from best practices across the Wikimedia movement. As a member of the Executive Team for Wikimedia Foundation, I reported to the Executive Director and was additionally responsible, with my colleagues, for the overall strategy and direction of the Wikimedia Foundation. I led and facilitated the Foundation's strategy on diversity, including deepening our presence in the global South and attracting more women contributors.

### ***Regional Program Director, Asia and Oceania, The Global Fund for Women (September 2009 - June 2012)***

As Regional Program Director of Asia and Oceania at the Global Fund for Women, I was responsible for assessing proposals and giving grants to women-led organisations from

across Asia and the Pacific Islands. With an annual budget of 1.78 million USD, we gave grants to over 125 organisations every year. My specific vision for grant-making in a complex and diverse region involved seeking innovative new women-led organisations, strengthening the capacity and reach of 'hub' national and regional networks and supporting their leadership in social justice movements across the region and globally, through grants, regional convenings, site visits and enhanced virtual communication.

My interest in pushing the envelope on technological issues within the women's rights movements also led to specific grant-making in this area, conversations with interested donors, and a new 'Women and Technology' series of conversations at the Global Fund for Women.

***State Coordinator, The Gender Sensitisation and People-friendly Police Project, UNICEF and Karnataka State Police (2001 - 2007)***

I designed, implemented and monitored the first ever long-term institutional initiative between UNICEF (India) and the Karnataka State Police (then a force over 80,000 officers for a population of over 50 million) on police responsiveness to violence against women and children.

I was responsible for creating training modules on violence against women and children, that have been incorporated into the curriculum for new recruits as well as in service police personnel, and is referenced for all India usage by the Government of India. I coordinated strategy with the police, UNICEF, human rights organisations and community volunteers. The project has been considered 'best practice' both within India and internationally.

***Program Associate, Researcher and Facilitator, Gender at Work (2002 - 2007)***

Gender at Work is an international network for gender equality that I have been associated with since its founding in 2001. From 2002, I worked as a consultant researcher and facilitator in its endeavour to evolve strategy and practice around issues of gender equality in civil society organisations in India and South Africa. With its founders Aruna Rao and David Kelleher, I helped create and implement a framework and design for year long learning cycles with five organisations in India and six organisations in South Africa, that emphasised peer support and contextual learning.

***Advisor, Gender and Health Equity Project, Indian Institute of Management (Bangalore) (2005 - 2007)***

The Gender and Health Equity Project was headed by Professor Gita Sen (from IIM B), in association with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex and the Swedish Development Agency (SIDA). It was a tri-partite partnership looking at issues of maternal mortality and community health in Koppal, a district of north Karnataka. As advisor for a campaign on raising awareness and responsibility for maternal and infant mortality, I designed a travelling campaign team with community volunteers that used myth, theatre, and contextually specific stories. I also advised on indicators for monitoring progress, including accountability from the community and health service providers, and worked closely with the coordinating and implementing teams through the two years of the campaign.

***Programme Officer, Samuha (1995 - 1996)***

As Programme Officer for Samuha, a rural development organisation working with communities in rural Karnataka, I was responsible for a participatory research project across 60 villages in Raichur district and worked as Team Leader for processes of social mapping and evolving governing bodies of women. I also worked on issues of livelihood and animal husbandry in the two districts of Raichur and Karwar, specifically with the Gowli adivasi (indigenous) communities.

***Consultancies***

*UNIFEM, New York (April 2008 - June 2008)* I was research consultant for UNIFEM's publication, Progress of the World's Women, for 2008.

*HIVOS, India (April 2003 - July 2003)* I reviewed a HIVOS initiative for Gender Integration and Organisational Development with five partners, looking at the implementation of a process of integration of gender issues in different rural development organisations of South India. This review served as a benchmark for later HIVOS programmes in the field.

*Ford Foundation, India (June 2002 - August 2002)* I reviewed a project for supporting and empowering Elected Women Representatives in the Panchayati Raj system in the four southern Indian states, led by the Singamma Sreenivasan Foundation (Bangalore).

**POSITIONS HELD**

*The Rules (2016 - )* Board of Directors.

*Nonprofit Quarterly (2015 - )* Board of Directors.

*Institute for South Asia Studies (2008 - 2009)* Visiting Scholar, University of Berkeley, California.

*The Kailath Family Trust (2007 - 2009)* Board Member and Managing Trustee.

*Samuha (2002 - 2007)* Member Secretary of the Institutional Review Board for *Samuha* and *Samraksha*, Karnataka, focussing on their HIV/AIDS programmes.

*The Journal Server Trust (Oxford) (2001 - 2005)* Trustee.

*Association of Women's Rights in Development (2001 - 2003)* Member of the International Advisory Committee for Young Women and Leadership.

**PUBLICATIONS**

[\*Defending our Dreams: Global Feminist Voices for a New Generation\*](#) (AWID and Zed Books, London, 2006) is the first anthology of its kind, featuring analytical work by young feminists from across the world. Shamillah Wilson and I were responsible for the concept and its implementation; with Kristy Evans, we edited and wrote for the book. My chapter in the

book, '[www.coming? imaginings on a world of wealth and well-being](#)' is a speculative story-essay on how feminism might contribute to a future world without poverty.

My poetry and short stories have won awards and been published in anthologies in India and elsewhere. My poem entitled '[Silence](#)' was presented to Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton by the Principal, Lady Shri Ram College, and has been used by her at numerous forums, including the NGO Forum of the Beijing Conference of Women (September 1995). It also inspires a chapter in her memoirs *Living History*. It is frontispiece to Jill McLean Taylor, Carol Gilligan and Amy M. Sullivan's book *Between Voice and Silence: Women and Girls, Race and Relationship*, Harvard University Press (1996).

Part of my former dissertation work has been published in a special issue of the journal *Ethnic and Racial Studies*: 'Concept, category and claim: insights on caste and ethnicity from the police in India', special issue on 'Racial Missions of the Police' edited by Paul Amar, for *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (Spring 2010). This issue has since been published as a separate book, both in hardcover and paperback.

I have written for a number of Indian newspapers and magazines, including, most recently, [opinion pieces on California textbooks](#) becoming an ideological battleground for South Asians.

My writing on the *Whose Knowledge?* campaign has been featured by our partners: [Where On the Internet is Your Knowledge?](#) (Association for Women's Rights in Development, August 2016) and [Mapping the Feminist Internet: the Whose Knowledge? campaign at the AWID Forum](#) (GenderIT.org, October 2016).

## **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- Interview with the Non Profit Quarterly, '[The Radical Passion Economy of Wikipedia, an interview with Anasuya Sengupta](#)' (24 September 2013)
- [Interview](#) with the Alliance magazine, a worldwide philanthropy and social investment magazine (1 October 2013)
- Op-ed in the San Francisco Chronicle during the APEC Summit in San Francisco, '[Women Help Promote A Just Economy](#)' (11 September 2013)
- [Radio interview on KPFA](#) (Berkeley) about the Pakistan floods (24 August 2010)
- Foreign Policy in Focus article on women's rights in 2010, '[The State of the World's Women](#)' (1 April 2010)
- Op-ed in SF Gate, on women's representation in politics: '[Will the U.S. follow India's example?](#)' (15 March 2010)
- Radio interview on Women's Hour at WMNF community radio (Tampa Bay) marking [international women's day](#) (13 March 2010)
- Interview in the Times of India, '[Silence, It's Anasuya](#)' (29 July 2009)
- Interview in the Hindu, '[A Poem That Moved A Clinton](#)' (7 August 2003)
- Interview by the British Broadcasting Services (BBC), '[India's Silence Speaks to Hillary](#)' (27 June 2003)
- Article in the New York Times on the poem Silence, '[Hillary Clinton Finding a New Voice](#)' (30 March 1995)

**CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS ATTENDED AND PAPERS PRESENTED**

- Keynote at the India Literacy Project's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, '[Where the Mind is Without Fear: Education and Human Rights in India](#)' (October 2015)
- Keynote for Alliance for Nonprofit Excellence, '[Leadership in a Networked World](#)' (May 2014)
- Invited speaker at the Blum Center, UC Berkeley for the Speaker Series on Perspectives in International Development: '[Our struggle, our leadership: challenging poverty through women's rights](#)' (October 2010)
- Keynote at the New York Conference on Asian Studies (NYCAS) at SUNY, Brockport, on 'Women's Rights and Women's Leadership in Asia' (October 2010)
- Presented 'Vicious State(s), Virtuous State(s)? The paradoxes of policing in India' at the Center for South Asia Studies, University of Berkeley, California (March 2009)
- Presented 'The Subaltern State and the State of the Subaltern' at the conference on 'Indian Democracy: Justice and the Law', at the University of California, Berkeley (September 2008).
- Consultant and facilitator for an international Young Women's Institute on Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms, held by the Young Feminist Activism program of the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) (Istanbul, November 2007).
- Participant at the Stakeholder Meeting for AWID's Resisting and Challenging Fundamentalisms Program (Istanbul, November 2007).
- Invitee and speaker at the Center for Women's Global Leadership's (CWGL, Rutgers University) Multi-Generational Feminist Dialogue (October 2007, October 2006)
- Organiser and presenter at 'Where is Women's Voice in Civil Society and Public Institutions', a session in the Civicus World Assembly led by Gender at Work and the DAPPU People's Union (Glasgow, June 2006)
- Co-facilitator at the Young Women's Leadership and Feminist Advocacy Institute for South and South-East Asia, held at Bangkok (June 2005), by the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), ActionAid, Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA) and Shirkat Gah
- Invitee to the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the feminist network, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), held at Cape Town, South Africa (October 2004); co-convenor of the Inter-generational Dialogue and speaker on the 'Future Challenges of the Global Women's Movement'
- Workshop facilitator for a session on gender and sexuality at the 2nd International Conference on Sexualities, Masculinities, and Cultures in South Asia (June 2004)
- Invitee to a 'brainstorming' around Youth Perspectives and Sexual and Reproductive Rights, conducted jointly by the Youth Coalition and the International Women's Health Coalition, at Toronto, Canada (February 2004)
- Speaker on '[The Fundamentalisms of the Progressive?](#)' at DAWN's panel on 'The Many Faces of Fundamentalism' at the World Social Forum, Mumbai, India (January 2004)
- Participant at the inaugural Feminist Advocacy Training Institute, conducted by (DAWN), Bangalore, India (September 2003)
- Organiser, facilitator and participant at the first Young Women and Leadership regional institute on 'Tackling HIV/AIDS and poverty in Africa', Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Cape Town, South Africa (July 2003)
- Organiser, presenter and participant at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Forum of the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Guadalajara, Mexico (October 2002)
- Paper entitled 'Embedded or Stuck? The study of the Indian state, its formal and informal

institutions and state capacity', presented at the South Asia Seminar, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford (Hilary 2000)

- Paper on the research methodology, questions and hypotheses of the D.Phil. thesis, presented at the Graduate Workshop in Politics, Nuffield College, University of Oxford (Hilary 2000)
- Presentation entitled 'Samuha and Samskara: the organisational culture of an NGO', made on a panel of Young Women Leaders at the Eighth International Forum of the Association of Women in Development (AWID), Washington D.C., USA (November 1999)
- Moderator and participant at the AWID/AGI (African Gender Institute) Workshop on 'Gender and Organisational Change', Cape Town, South Africa (May/June 1998)

**Languages spoken:** English, Hindi, Kannada, Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam, beginner French.