

Acknowledgements

This book project was born in the pandemic. As such, it has emerged from the everyday courage of numerous people and organizations in South Asia and beyond as they coped with the challenges and carved opportunities to make a living, find a voice, and fill a need. It started as a humble deliverable in the form of a blog series run by the three editors. Our goal was to get people from different worlds—academia, design, tech, business, and activism—to tap into their experiences and insights on the broad themes of the future of work and feminist approaches to design, development, and deployment of tech in the Global South. We were pleasantly surprised that this created a momentum and generated a digital community of sorts that grounded our work. This book is a testament to that community—all the authors in this book. We are grateful that these authors took the leap to engage with ideas, sectors, and perspectives outside their comfort zone. They have inspired us editors to continue our pursuits on stakeholder engagements across borders.

Two of the editors—Usha Raman and Payal Arora—were awarded funding by the Canadian grant agency, International Development Research Centre, for a future of work in The Global South Project right before the pandemic struck. The idea was to get out there in the field and engage with the numerous women workers in India and Bangladesh on how they leveraged digital and social networks to build opportunities in diverse sectors such as the artisanal, garment, construction, ride-hailing, and salon services. From these efforts, FemLab came about, which became not just a project home, but over these years, a feminist academic collective. This could not have been possible without the ongoing support of Gillian Dowie, our project manager at IDRC, as she worked with us to shape our deliverables, and recognized value in the ongoing blog series. We would also like to thank Arjan De Haan from IDRC for supporting us in the tail end of the project.

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Overall, we editors are proud of the FemLab community and are humbled by the sheer creativity, critical thinking, and care that has gone into this work, thus making this book a meaningful contribution to the world of work and feminist design.