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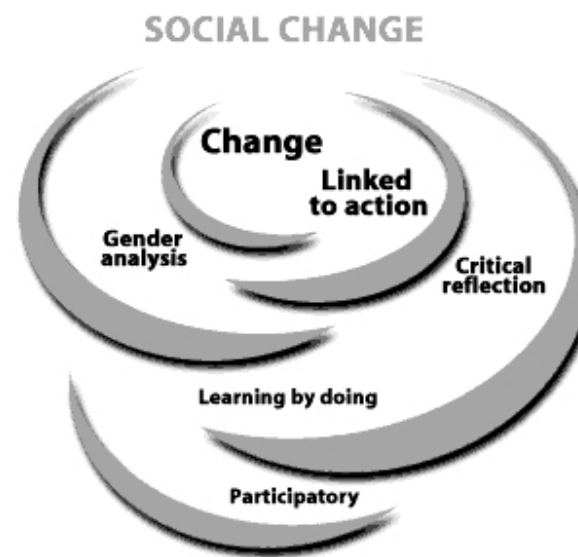
# learning for change

## Learning for Change: The APC WNSP Evaluation Model

Learning for Change is the overall framework that we use in APC WNSP's evaluation model. Our model is based on the notion that learning is continually evolving and dynamic. It is interactive and not static.

The WNSP developed a **Learning for Change** evaluation model that integrates elements we identified through three learning milestones. From these milestones recurring elements were conceptualized into a Learning for Change model to illustrate how the APC WNSP has experienced their ICT gender evaluation work over the past few years.

The first milestone marked the beginning of our work in evaluation. In 1997, APC WNSP tested and critiqued an evaluation framework for ICT projects called the Lanfranco framework, using a gender lens. Our findings showed the absence of a gender component in the Lanfranco framework and illustrated the need to develop gender analytical tools for evaluating ICT initiatives.



The second milestone in our learning comes from lessons in the telecentre experience in Latin America. Their evaluation experience focused on community development and looks at ICT as just one of the many tools available for the use of the communities. It recognises self-transformation as a necessary element in order to improve one's life.

Finally, the third milestone in our continuing journey occurred in 2001, during an APC WNSP workshop on "Building an ICT Gender Evaluation Tool". The synthesis of the collective learning and ideas of the participants in this workshop emphasized that evaluation involves social transformation and takes into account the cultural, social

and economic contexts as they specifically relate to women. It also showed us that the criteria for the effective integration of gender considerations into programmes and projects, and for its effective delivery of benefits to individual women and men, should be carefully established at the beginning of the evaluation process.

### **The Focus of Evaluation**

The focus of the WNSP model for evaluation is examining how an ICT intervention has affected changes at an individual, organisational, community and broader social level from a gender perspective. It is anchored on setting a 'vision' and values for evaluation rather than providing definitions for each of the concepts related to evaluations.

### **Values in Learning for Change**

- **Linked to action**

Evaluation is about change. 'Change' is based on the understanding that action always involves learning by doing, and that change takes place from the lessons we learn.

Evaluations are not ends to themselves. An evaluation linked to action emphasizes the importance of using what you learn. Evaluation results should be popularised and they should empower women and others to take action.

Evaluation findings can also help an organisation make changes. These could be changes in the way the next ICT initiative or the next evaluation is conducted. The key is making the connection between information and change.

Be critical! Evaluation is an opportunity for you to reflect critically on your work and it is important to undertake constant review of the information gained through an evaluation process.

- **Learning by doing**

Evaluation is not a complex technical undertaking only for experts. Real-life experience is valuable and is a legitimate starting point for conducting evaluations. Formal qualifications are helpful but they are not a pre-requisite for this work. Learning by doing is a powerful way to learn. Simply put, it is the motto that experience is the greatest teacher. The key is to be observant and to reflect critically, and regularly, on your project activities and the context in which they operate.

- **Gender Sensitive**

Gender analysis in evaluation involves a systematic assessment of the different impacts of project activities on women and men. Gender analysis within an ICT context asserts that power relations involving class, race, ethnicity, age, and geographic location interact with gender to produce complex inequalities relating to social change in general, and those changes brought on by ICTs in

particular. Disaggregating data by sex, analysing the sexual division of labour, and understanding the gender disparities of access to and control over resources are basic components of a gendered approach to evaluation.

- **Focus on Self and Social Change**

Special attention in the WNSP evaluation model is directed to self and social change. This means that throughout an evaluation process there is a core focus on understanding the dynamic relationship between an ICT initiative and both self and social change. We use the term “self” to mean not only individuals but also the organisations and communities involved in an ICT initiative. Focusing on self-change in an evaluation then means examining the dynamic relationship between ICT initiatives and the way individuals, organisations and communities operate.

Focusing on social change means that an evaluation process must scrutinise the relationship between the ICT initiative and the broader social, political, cultural, and economic context and seek to understand how this context affected an ICT initiative and vice versa.

It therefore is necessary to look at the structure and dynamics of community organizations and how they might respond to women’s empowerment , including those that are structured antagonistically to women’s empowerment/social change. The interactions between these organizations and beneficiaries will affect the

process of ‘gender sensitive ICT initiatives’. The evolution of these community organizations throughout a project and their response to social change and gender equality goals is important to document, in addition to changes for women.

- **Participatory**

Evaluation has to be participatory. Evaluation work needs to engage with the women involved in the grass roots or the women working in the particular community serviced by the ICT initiative.

An evaluation is not a value-neutral activity. All stakeholders, including the evaluator will have specific biases that will impact on the outcome of the evaluation. An evaluation process should therefore involve all stakeholders and evaluation results must be fed back to all stakeholders to ensure accountability.

# Gender Analysis

## Gender equality

The APC Women's Programme approach to gender and ICT work involves understanding power relations in society. This awareness includes an understanding of the unequal power relations between women and men, north and south, rich and poor, urban and rural, connected and unconnected – in local communities, in sovereign countries, and globally.

WNSP works to transform these relations of inequality, with the full knowledge that ICTs can be used to either exacerbate or transform unequal power relations. Part of this recognition includes an awareness of the limits of ICTs – that in and of themselves, ICTs cannot create gender equality, or end poverty, but that they can be tools for social action and positive social change.

Our analytical approach is intended to help users understand the change associated with an ICT intervention from a gender perspective. It focuses both on understanding how this change affects women's lives as well as gender equality at the household, community and other areas. At a broader level, the framework provides an analytical approach to identifying and understanding gender issues in the ICT sector and specifically women's

empowerment issues in ICT projects for development and social justice.

Economic development and globalization cannot be understood without acknowledging gender inequalities. The data regarding how women and men are situated differently within global processes reveals the extent of gender inequality. Women compose one-half of the world's population and perform two-thirds of the world's work hours, yet are everywhere poorer in resources and poorly represented in positions of power.<sup>1</sup> As these inequalities constitute a systemic condition in all parts of the globe, it is imperative to take gender seriously in thinking about or understanding economic development and globalization. Gender analysis should include an examination of economics at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels and across a range of institutional contexts (households, communities, markets and states) to illustrate women's disadvantages position in ICTs, and the male bias in measuring ICT outputs which renders women's work invisible.

## Gender Roles

Gender refers to the socially-assigned characteristics of women and men and their social relationships wherein women have been systematically subordinated. These gender differences are often based on the perception that certain characteristics assigned to women or men are inherent and unchangeable, when in fact they are shaped by ideological, historical, religious,

ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. For example, the perception that women do poorly in science and technology relative to men is often attributed to biological limitations of females, rather than to the existence of gender stereotypes in didactic materials, pedagogical approaches, and technological design that contributes to a gender gap in ICT use.

Drawing attention to the multiple gender roles and responsibilities can enable practitioners to understand that women's ICT needs are often different from men's and that meeting those needs may entail specific planning requirements.

In the gender-analysis body of literature, three common roles are identified: **reproductive**, **productive** and **community management**. *Reproductive roles* include childbearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic roles done by women that are required to reproduce and maintain the labour force. *Productive roles* comprise work done by both women and men that generate an income (in cash and kind) and have an exchange value. *Community roles* undertaken primarily by women at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive roles to maintain scarce resources of collective consumption such as water, health care and education. For women, this is usually voluntary and unpaid work in contrast to formal political activities carried out by men which are usually paid. As women tend to assume multiple roles and work simultaneously (caring for children while engaged in

productive and other reproductive tasks) it is important to consider their 'double' or 'triple' roles and responsibilities.

In the context of ICTs, it is necessary to consider how ICTs interact with women's triple roles and examine changes brought about by the new information economy on women's and men's gendered roles. For example this examination can be carried out in telecentres where women in communities have some access to ICTs.

Gender role analysis is useful for understanding to what ends men and women utilize ICTs (i.e. reproductive tasks associated with educating children, productive tasks associated with work, community tasks associated with volunteerism), whether use of ICTs is time-saving, and whether men's and women's time use is different (i.e. does one sex have greater leisure or does increased time flexibility create the potential for more "double shift" as telecommuting blurs distinctions between private (home) and public (work) domains).

In terms of ICT use and impacts, examining gender roles may lead to greater understanding of the differences between women and men in ICT use and impacts. For example, in a given community, do men and women, boys and girls, participate equally in the use of library- or telecentre-Internet connections? In a development organization, is there a gender difference among those who use/appropriate email and those who do not? Does the availability of a home computer facilitate work management through telecommuting, or does it

create unrealistic time demands because the worker – male or female – is always connected? Do female worker's time demands increase or decrease?

### **Practical Gender Needs and Strategic Gender Interests**

The differentiation of practical and strategic gender needs is theoretically significant for gender analysis. This distinction is often important in gender planning, and can be the basis for identifying actions. For evaluation purposes, assessing the extent of responding to both practical and strategic gender can inform the impact of projects and initiatives.

*Practical gender needs are the needs women identify that do not challenge their socially accepted roles.* These needs relate to fulfilling their productive, reproductive and community managing roles and responsibilities. They are practical needs that include basic living commodities such as shelter, employment and food.

While practical gender needs are related to existing gender roles, *strategic gender interests challenge those roles in favour of equity for women.* Strategic gender interests begin with the assumption that women are subordinate to men as a consequence of social and institutional discrimination against women.

In practice, an approach that emphasizes practical needs may make room for recognition and consideration of

strategic interests. On the other hand, satisfying practical needs reinforces the existing division of labour, which subordinates women. Having access to the Internet, for example, does not automatically change the relative position of women to men. An approach that emphasizes strategic interests, often taken up by activists, challenges existing social systems and structures in favour of equality for women.

Project interventions may target gender disparities in one of two ways. They can address immediate short-term needs without necessarily challenging the structural causes of gender inequality, or they can address larger strategic issues relating to the gender interests of men and women to create conditions for gender equality. For example, a project designed to place computer terminals in rural public school classrooms addresses the immediate need of improving access to computers without necessarily addressing the strategic interests of improving disparities in female and male enrollment in primary and secondary schools.

### **Women's Empowerment**

Empowerment refers to enabling people to take charge of their own lives. For women, empowerment emphasizes the importance of increasing their power and taking control over decisions and issues that shape their lives. Women's empowerment addresses power and relationships in society intertwined with gender, class, race, ethnicity, age, culture and history. Power is identified with equity and equality for women and men in access to resources,

participation in decision-making and control over distribution of resources and benefits. Gender equality is addressed at these different levels with the aim of increasing equality between men and women, and achieving women's empowerment.

Access to resources refers to both the means and the right to obtain services, products or commodities. Gender gaps in access to resources and services are a major obstacle to women's development. The process of empowerment includes mobilizing women to eliminate these gaps.

A cornerstone of gender equality is women's equal participation in decision-making. Collective participation is also one of the essential aspects of women's empowerment. Participation in decision-making is integrated with conscientization, the process of awareness raising among women about gender discrimination and the resulting oppression it creates for women as a social group. Through this process, women collectively analyse various aspects of gender inequality that they face. This process constitutes women's development and becomes the basis for action to overcome and dismantle gender inequality in control of resources.

Achieving control is an essential element of women's empowerment which includes the ability to direct, or to influence events to protect one's own interests. Control makes it possible for women to ensure that resources and benefits are distributed so that men and women get equal shares.

This framework is particularly useful in understanding and evaluating the impact of women's access to ICTs. Gender gaps in access to ICT resources and services remain an obstacle to women's empowerment. In investigating the impact of ICT and development on gender equality, it is essential to trace the factors that govern its production, consumption, distribution and appropriation.

Men and women traditionally have different levels of access to resources and control over resources, whether they exist in the private (household) or public spheres. Traditionally women have had a subordinate position to men, where, for example, she may contribute materially to the household but her husband makes the decisions on how the income is spent. On a macropolitical level, most governing bodies are dominated by men; legislative and judicial decisions often lack a gendered perspective and do not represent women's interests. ICT access and use may be similarly restricted: at the microlevel, son preferences may translate into allowing boys greater access than their sisters to the family computer; at the macrolevel, supposedly "gender-neutral" ICT policies regarding education, training, and price structure may have an unintended negative impact based on gender roles and access to ICT resources.

## Gender and Technology

WNSP's understanding of gender and technology is built around feminist perspectives on women and ICTs. These include early debates to uncover and recover women's history in technology to the access and equal opportunity perspective.

WNSP's starting point in building a gender and ICT framework is to examine the relationship of gender and technology as a whole. One of the issues that the global women's movement has addressed is that of women's marginalization and invisibility in all aspects of technology. A framework that is useful in analyzing gender and ICT is the newly emerging cultural analyses of technology. This framework understands both technology and gender not as fixed and given, but as cultural processes which (like other cultural processes) are subject to "negotiation, contestation, and, ultimately transformation". This 'technology as culture' perspective goes further than the current viewpoint of women's exclusion from full participation in technological work. In the cultural analyses of technology, technologies are 'cultural products,' 'objects' or 'processes' which take on meaning when experienced in everyday life. Whereas technology has been defined as a predominantly male perspective, change comes through a total re-evaluation and appropriate remuneration of women's skilled and technical tasks.

Given this framework, transforming the gendered relations of technology is not merely focused on gaining access to knowledge as it is, but with creating knowledge itself. This means being involved in the level of definition, making meanings and creating technological culture.

WNSP has developed a paper laying out a range of perspectives on gender and information and communication technology (ICT) drawn from a review of literature on the subject. The aim is to present some of the major debates and critiques of ICT to highlight some important issues of concern for women. It also provides an analytical framework from which to view women's global participation in, need for and critique of computer networking.

<http://www.apcwomen.org/work/research/analytical-framework.html>

## Gender Transformative Strategies

Gender-transformative policies are about change and transformation of existing inequalities as opposed to gender-neutral or -specific policies that target one gender over another to achieve gender goals, and in doing so, leave the gender division of labour and the gender division of resources intact.

For example: providing women with the enabling resources which will allow them to take greater control of ICTs, to determine what kinds of ICTs they would need, and to devise the policies to help them reach their goals.

For example: the development and implementation of ICT policies could be evaluated by asking the following questions:

- Do these policies address gender needs?
- Will they lead to the transformation of gender relations and gender roles?

If women are to benefit from ICT interventions, mainstreaming the perspectives and concerns of women is one of the important tasks to be undertaken. Two types of strategies are offered to support this task: top-down and bottom-up.

*Top-down strategies* aim to change the ICT institutions and agencies to promote women's equality and empowerment in ICTs. Examples of top-down strategies might include:

- using political pressure at international conferences and consultations to demonstrate the importance of gender-sound policies and interventions
- as a 'watchdog' to monitor ICT impacts on women
- gathering data as evidence to convince agencies that gender considerations are central to ICTs.
- Promoting the use of gender analysis tools (frameworks, guidelines, checklists and rosters of women and ICT and gender experts)
- working within structures to effect change (through gender training, financial

allocations, staff appointments, and obtaining internal legal mandates)

*Bottom-up strategies* are aimed directly at women, supporting their entry into the mainstream of ICTs. They include: removing legal or social barriers that limit women's access to ICTs, enabling women to take initiative for their involvement in ICT planning and policies, and financial or technical assistance for women to facilitate access to and control over ICTs, money, credit, training and education.

#### **Endnotes:**

1. V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan (1993). *Global Gender Issues*. Boulder: Westview, p. 5.
2. [Building Gender Considerations Into ICT Evaluation Work](#)  
This paper maps out the background of WNSP's initial approach to developing a gender perspective in evaluation of ICT initiatives. Its conclusions are drawn from WNSP's experience pointed to the the need for evaluation frameworks that consider broader issues such as gender, race, ethnicity and class. In developing such frameworks, the paper looks at some gender analysis methods and tools, probing questions, and criterion as preliminary steps in developing tools to assist practitioners in evaluating the role and use of ICTs from a gender perspective.
3. [Evaluating Projects Involving Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\)](#): Sam Lanfranco, Senior Program Specialist, Bellanet, (Draft Version 3.0 - January 2, 1997)

## How to Use the GEM Tool

GEM, Gender Evaluation Methodology for Internet and ICT Initiatives, is a guide shaped into four “elements”, developed by the WNSP. The GEM resource kit provides 2 things:

1. **THEORY**: we present the basic concepts underpinning each evaluation element, and WNSP’s orientation therein.

2. **PRACTICE**: for each element, we provide practical 'how-to' approaches and worksheets to help you conduct your own evaluation. Each Element’s overall purpose and objectives are clearly laid out, followed by worksheets to assist you in your evaluation process, providing resources, methodologies and background concepts for each Element.

Each worksheet contains some or all of the sections listed on the following page. Once you have familiarised yourself with the purpose and methodology of each element, you will see that the model isn’t in reality a start-to-finish type of approach, but rather an ongoing, evolving process.



### Read

This is background and contextual information that explores the relevant issues and introduces the activities of each worksheet.



### Expected Outputs

The products! A checklist of what you should have - gender and ICT for social change indicators or a committed group of project stakeholders, for example - if you complete the exercises in the worksheets.



### Exercise Questions

These questions are intended to help focus on the related gender equality and ICTs for social change issues.



### Exercise

The work in the worksheets! The instructions outlined in the exercises are designed to help you apply the concepts and information contained in the worksheets to your own ICT initiative.



### Resources

Specific and general resources, usually documents and web sites, that provide more detail and instructions about issues reviewed in the worksheets



## Element 1: **Setting Our Evaluation Approach**

### **Overall Purpose**

To understand the concepts and objectives of an evaluation approach that focuses on the impact of an ICT initiative from a perspective of gender equality and social change.

### **Objectives**

- To understand your approach to evaluation
- To develop overall evaluation goals
- To identify specific evaluation objectives that address gender equality, women's empowerment and ICT for social change issues
- To convene an Evaluation Team that has the capacity to address gender equality and ICT for social change issues

## Element 1

### Worksheet 1: Understanding your approach to evaluation



#### Expected Outputs

- List of Evaluation Values and Principles
- List of General Evaluation Goals



#### Read

Before you begin the process of planning your evaluation spend some time reflecting and defining your approach to evaluation.

Understanding your approach means understanding your purpose and your values. It is important to be clear about both these things as they will guide you through your evaluation.

### The Purpose of Evaluation

Often the concept of evaluation is linked to a donor requirement, an externally imposed system of checking that project objectives have been met and that resources have been wisely utilized. However there are many more reasons why evaluations are conducted, for example:

- To identify areas for improvement in a project or programme
- To surface and resolve disagreements
- To set priorities and goals · To clarifying and tackle problems
- To decide new strategic directions
- To get feedback, appraisal and recognition
- To celebrate achievements
- To attract resources

Remember that an evaluation is an on-going process and not an activity that is done only at the end of a project. As such, an evaluation plan should be part of any project plan from the beginning.

An effective evaluation plan also has to consider how evaluation results will be used and disseminated. Will the evaluation results be incorporated into internal organisational learning? Will the results be published publicly?

Taking these matters in account in the early stages of the evaluation process will be important in determining and clarifying your approach to evaluation.

### Learning for Change

The APC WNSP understands the broad purpose of evaluation to be “learning for change”. We conduct evaluations:

- To learn about the impact of our work on the people and communities we are working with; ourselves and our organisation(s); the broader environment (national, regional, social or political)
- To change our approach, maybe our beliefs and our practices, based on what we learn
- To share this information within our own organisation; the community we are working with; members of our network and sector; academics and the media by publishing; and members of donor and development agencies
- To advocate for policy and legislative changes based on our findings.

## Values and Evaluation

There are different ways of doing evaluation for different purposes. Certain underlying assumptions and values, however, shape the way we conduct these evaluations.

What motivates us to evaluate ICT initiatives? For the APC WNSP the answer to this question is twofold: to learn about how ICTs impact on women's empowerment, gender equality and broader social change, and to use this knowledge to make changes that will expand women's empowerment, gender equality and social change focused on justice and development. The APC WNSP has developed an evaluation model based on the principle of

learning for change. This model details the core emphasis, values and practices associated with learning for change.

For the APC WNSP the following values reflect our commitment to gender equality, social justice and learning for change:

- Learning by doing
- Linked to action
- Participatory
- Context sensitive
- Bias aware



### Exercise

Brainstorm a list on flipchart paper to use as reference and answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of your evaluation?
- What values and principles do you want to incorporate in the way you conduct your evaluation?
- How do you plan to use and or disseminate the results of your evaluation?



## Element 1

### Worksheet 2: Setting evaluation objectives that address gender and ICT considerations



#### Expected Output:

A list of evaluation objectives that address gender and ICT considerations



#### Read

### Gender Analysis

If learning for change is the reason we evaluate, gender analysis is the theory that informs how we understand and evaluate ICT initiatives. It is the lens through which we scrutinize all aspects of an ICT initiative and an evaluation of that initiative. A gender analytical approach to evaluation provides a framework for identifying and analyzing specific gender issues that determine the different impact ICT interventions have on women and men. The key elements presented in this gender analytical approach are:

- gender equality
- gender roles
- practical gender needs and strategic gender interests
- women's empowerment
- gender and technology
- gender transformative

After you have established the goal of your evaluation, you can define evaluation objectives that address gender and ICT issues.

In most evaluations, as in most projects, gender issues need to be made visible. Therefore we suggest that you define specific objectives that address gender issues. These specific objectives must look into how ICTs affect women and men differently.

*In drawing out gender and ICT issues for your evaluations, it is useful to hold a session on gender sensitivity prior to planning your evaluation. This will help ensure an understanding of gender issues among the people involved in the evaluation process.*

The following are examples of some standard evaluation goals and suggestions for how these goals could address gender considerations:

**Goal:** To inform future project and programme planning.  
**Specific Gender Objective:** To ensure that women's practical and strategic gender needs are addressed in future programmes.

**Goal:** To review assumptions about needs or priorities in the light of unexpected difficulties.

**Specific Gender Objective:** To understand how and why an ICT project has negatively affected women in a community.

**Goal:** To assess the impact of project activities at the end of a project cycle.

**Specific Gender Objective:** To assess the impact of ICT use on women's sense of empowerment in the community.



### Exercise

Referring to your evaluation goal, define specific objectives that investigate how ICTs affect men and women differently.

- Review your general goals for this evaluation
- What are your specific objectives that look into gender considerations?



### Resources

#### Which framework? Gender training - four current models

As practitioners, we need frameworks and tools to operationalize gender analysis and planning and to assist in gender-sensitive project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. But which framework, which sets of tools best suits our individual, highly specific circumstances? The following summary of current gender training frameworks and methods was developed by Helen Derbyshire for the Department for International Development's Training Review Day in 1996. The DPU text was updated by Caren Levy.  
<http://www.britcoun.org/governance/gendev/netnews/14a.htm>

#### Navigating Gender A framework and a tool for participatory development by Arja Vainio-Mattila

This manual includes key concepts and definitions, as well as introductions to alternative gender analysis frameworks. Navigating Gender takes you through a case study to illustrate the use of these frameworks and sets you up for analyzing a programme you are involved in preparing, implementing or evaluating. Navigating Gender can be used both as an individual study guide, or as a basis for discussion in groups.  
[http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav\\_gender/index.html](http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav_gender/index.html)



**Element 1**  
**Worksheet 3: Ensuring that gender considerations are integrated in forming an Evaluation Team.**



**Expected Output**

A team committed to addressing gender equality and ICT for social change issues in their work designing and managing the evaluation.



**Read**

As soon as your starting point in evaluating your project or initiative is clear, it is time to begin the process of forming an evaluation team. A team approach is an effective way to ensure that an evaluation benefits from a diversity of perspectives and is participatory. An Evaluation Team's role is to review the evaluation goals and objectives and make decisions about the strategies and methods that will be used for the evaluation.

To make sure that gender equality and ICT considerations are effectively addressed by the Evaluation Team it is important to consider the following factors when convening this structure:

- Team membership should be representative of women and men involved in any projective, activity or initiative.
- At least one member of the team should have some experience and an understanding of gender issues. It would be ideal if this experience was resident in the organisation initiating the evaluation or a close partner organisation. If this is not the case, think clearly about the role you want this person to play and define effective ways to bring her or him into the process.
- It is a good idea for the Evaluation Team to undergo a gender-sensitivity training in order to ensure that gender issues are addressed in the evaluation process.
- At least one member of the team should have an understanding of ICTs both at the level of using technologies as a tool for delivering project goals as well as how technology itself functions to empower individuals, organisations and communities.
- Participation of key stakeholder groups (including both project staff and project management) is critical.

The Team, however, should be small enough to work together efficiently and a team leader, probably the initiator of the evaluation, should assume the responsibility of driving the group process.

The Evaluation Team should be made up of individuals who are involved in the initiative/project/organisation from different levels (i.e., project staff, beneficiaries, etc.). If an evaluator is hired to conduct the evaluation, this individual(s) should also be a part of the Team.

The Evaluation Team will be working on drafting and finalising the GEM Evaluation Profile. The GEM Evaluation Profile is a guide in that will help you document and proceed with the evaluation process. It highlights important information about the initiative / project / organisation being evaluated and the evaluation process itself. At this stage of the evaluation, it is helpful for the Evaluation Team to consider how the GEM Evaluation profile can be used in the evaluation. The template can be customised according to the initiative being evaluated. The completion of the GEM Evaluation profile will be further discussed in Element 3, Worksheet 1: Select and Adapt Methodologies to Gather Information, where there is a copy of the profile form to be filled in.



### Exercise Question

Identify a list of individuals to sit on the Evaluation Team and contact them with a request for their participation, then answer the question:

- Do you have the gender equality and ICT for social change experience you need for your evaluation team in your organisation?



### Resource

#### Basic Gender Sensitivity Materials

- Butler, Jennifer and Melissa Gillis. *When We Are All Strong Together: Understanding Gender Discrimination, Building Gender Justice*. Louisville, Kentucky: Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, 1997, 156 p
- Chant, Sylvia and Matthew Gutmann. *Mainstreaming Men into Gender and Development: Debates, Reflections, and Experiences Great Britain*: Oxfam. 2000. 60 p. ISBN: 0-85598 451 1
- Griffen, Vanessa, Maria Chin Abdullah and Saira Shameen, eds. *Asia-Pacific Gender Training Assessment: Papers from a Regional Gender Training Assessment Meeting 7-9 July, 1996, Port Dickson, Malaysia*. Malaysia: Gender and Development (GAD) Programme, 1999. 137 p.
- ILO. *Gender Analysis and Planning*. Geneva: International Labour Organisation, July 1999. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/gender/info/planning.htm>
- Miller, Carol and Shahra Razavi "Gender Analysis: Alternative Paradigms" *Gender in Development*

Monograph Series #6 Geneva: United Nations  
Development Programme, 1998.  
<http://www.undp.org/gender/resources/mono6.html>

- Ostergaard, Lise, ed. Gender and Development: A practical guide. London: Routledge, 1992, 220 p.
- Sweetman, Caroline, ed. Gender, Education and Training. Oxford, U.K.: Oxfam, 1998. 80 p. ISBN 0-85598 400 7
- UNDP. Gender Mainstreaming: Learning and Information Packs. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2000.  
<http://www.undp.org/gender/capacity>
- UNDP (May 2000). Thinking About Men and Gender Equality. New York: United Nations Development Programme.  
[http://www.undp.org/gender/programmes/men/men\\_ge.html](http://www.undp.org/gender/programmes/men/men_ge.html)
- USAID (September 1994). GENESYS: Gender Analysis Tool Kit. Washington DC: United States Agency for International Development.  
<http://www.usaid.gov/gender>





Element 2:  
**Integrating Gender Analysis into Evaluation**

### **Overall Purpose**

To integrate a focus on gender equality, women's empowerment and ICT for social change in all components of planning an evaluation.

### **Objectives**

- To identify stakeholders to participate in the evaluation who can address gender equality and ICT for social change issues
  
- To document the internal and external context of your project and surface gender equality and ICT for social change issues
  
- To establish your gender equality and ICT for social change evaluation indicators

## Element 2

### Worksheet 1: Integrating gender and ICT issues into the process of defining the context and scope of the evaluation.



#### Expected Output

- Detailed information about the critical gender equality and ICT for social change issues.
- A set of questions that articulate the gender equality and ICT for social change issues to be investigated in the evaluation.



#### Read

To begin the concrete process of designing an evaluation it is necessary to establish the boundaries of the evaluation exercise. Different variables – available financial resources, time pressures, evaluation objectives, etc – will all intersect in some way to establish these boundaries. What is important is to actively engage with these variables and define these parameters, or the scope of the evaluation, at the outset.

From the point of view of investigating gender equality and ICT for social change issues in an evaluation, three

activities in this initial planning phase are important. The first is the broad review of the project, or a context analysis. The second is a process to identify which gender and ICT issues you want to address in the evaluation. The third is the process of finalizing the evaluation questions.

#### Context Analysis

The analysis of an ICT project context includes a review of all factors – at an individual, organisational, community, socio-economic, cultural and political level – that make up a particular project's environment, and determining which factors played an important role in the project's operation. It is important to search for and make visible gender and ICT for social change issues in this process because this exercise establishes the parameters for the information collection phase.

Investigating the treatment and inclusion of gender and ICT for social change issues in the life cycle of the project is a fundamental starting point for any context analysis. A project or programme typically evolves in the following fashion:

1. Identification of a need, a concept or idea
2. Consultation and baseline research
3. Development of a proposal
4. Articulation of implementation plan
5. Implementation of project activities
6. Understanding the impact of project activities or evaluation

Because gender issues are not often mainstreamed into project and planning processes, it is particularly important to look at how, if at all, gender issues were articulated in the first three phases of the project cycle. This is also true for ICT for social change considerations.

- Was there discussion of gender issues in the project planning phase?
- Were women or groups of women identified as a specific beneficiary groups?
- What assumptions or research were made about how ICTs would facilitate positive social change for women?

### **Identifying Specific Gender and ICT Issues**

Depending upon your ICT initiative and whether or not gender issues were considered in the project planning phase, these issues may be obvious or opaque. It's worth reviewing project documents to look at what assumptions were made, if any, about gender and using ICTs for social change when the project was conceptualised.

A review of the core gender and ICT thematic areas (see ICTs for Social Change in this package) that the APC WNSP has identified and the elements of our gender analytical framework can assist you in thinking about this question.

### **Finalising Evaluation Questions**

Evaluation questions flow from the evaluation objectives and establish the direction of an evaluation process. The purpose of the information collection phase is to gather data to answer these questions. The process of setting these questions is a sensitive exercise because they have the power to include and exclude important areas of study. In order to address gender equality and ICT for social change issues effectively in the evaluation, evaluation questions should explicitly define your queries about these areas.

Developing the evaluation questions can be one of the hardest parts of an evaluation. Based on experience, organizations often select more evaluation questions than they can realistically answer and the process of negotiating the final questions can become extremely sensitive with gender and social overtones. It would be a good idea to think about processes for facilitating this kind of discussion because having too many questions, devising vague questions, or accepting the question of the most senior person is which usually happens. This can lead to very unsatisfactory evaluation processes and results not being utilized.

One good way to formulate these questions is to break down the evaluation of your ICT initiative into categories and articulate questions related to gender and ICTs for social change for each of these categories. What follows is a suggested division of project and examples of evaluation questions.

### Stated Goals and Objectives

- Was gender equality or women's empowerment considered when the project goals were articulated?
- What was stated about how ICTs were to be used in the project?
- Was there a common understanding of the gender project goals among stakeholders?

### Implementation of Project Activities

#### Implementation Process

- What was the division of labour between women and men and within the each sex group (for example young women and older women) in the project implementation process?

### Participation and Experience

- What was the level of women and men's participation in project activities?
- What was the nature of women's and men's participation in project activities?
- Did women and men participate equally in making decisions?
- What was the experience of working with women and men in ICT skills training? What was the experience of working with women only?

### Project Effectiveness

#### Effectiveness of Information Systems and Tools

- What was the stated purpose of the information systems and tools created for the ICT initiative?

- How did women and men experience their effectiveness?

### Effectiveness of Other Project Activities

For example:

#### Networking and Partnerships

- How did technology facilitate the creation and maintenance of networks?

### Change

- How did the experience of using ICTs change the way women and men think about ICTs?
- How would they use them differently in the future?
- Did ICT skills training change women and men's sense of personal confidence or empowerment?



### **Exercise Questions**

Brainstorm a list of gender and ICT for social change issues you would like to address in the evaluation.

The following questions may also help to focus on the issues:

- What was women's participation in the project?
- What strategies were developed within the project to respond to gender issues?

- Has women's participation in the ICT initiative changed their position in the community?
- What were women's and men's roles in decision-making in the project?
- Were the project strategies gender transformative?
- Were they directed at removing legal or social barriers that limit women's access to ICTs?

Develop evaluation questions to address gender equality and ICT for social change issues.



### Resources

Gender equality and ICTs for social change  
(<http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources.htm>)  
Gender Analysis document from concepts in Element One  
Gender Analysis Matrix (In Element 3, on line.).

### TIP

Make sure that evaluation questions are clear and concise and encourage critical reflection from the respondents.



## Element 2

### Worksheet 2: Set gender and ICT for social change indicators for the evaluation



#### Expected Output

A set of gender equality and ICT for social change indicators to guide the information gathering process.



#### Read

After clarifying the key gender and ICT for social change issues through the context analysis and evaluation questions, the next step is selecting and adapting tools to capture information about these issues.

Indicators are one good mechanism to do this.

#### What are indicators?

Indicators are standards used to measure achievements of a project. They are pointers, numbers, facts, opinions or perceptions that look into and measure changes of specific conditions or situations. Indicators can be **quantitative** – measures of quantity such as the number of women users in a telecentre, or **qualitative** – people's judgement or perception about a subject such as the confidence women

telecentre users had about using skills gained for better employment.

**Gender-sensitive indicators**, as the term suggests, are indicators that track gender related changes over time. Their value lies in measuring whether gender equality/equity is being achieved through a number of ways.

There is obviously no such thing as a set of universal indicators. Users must design and adapt indicators for their own purposes. For the overall evaluation of the project, indicators should be established during the project planning phase and be linked to the delivery of the project objectives. It is also important to consider how indicators will be monitored during the evaluation. The Evaluation Team can then prioritise, depending on the evaluation objectives, the indicators that will be relevant to the evaluation.

Depending on whether or not gender equality considerations were part of project planning, gender and ICT for social change indicators could already exist. If not, the exercise of developing these indicators should follow a similar process to that of developing evaluation questions detailed above.

Some additional criteria to bear in mind are:

- Indicators should be developed in a participatory fashion, including all stakeholders wherever possible.
- Indicators must be relevant to the needs of the user, and at a level that the user can understand.
- All indicators should be sex-disaggregated.
- Both qualitative and quantitative indicators should be used.
- The number chosen should be small.
- Indicators should measure trends over time.
- The ultimate focus should be on indicators that measure outcomes.

(Criteria for selecting indicators from Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency p.21)

### Examples

Some examples of gender indicators:

Access to resources  
 Level and quality of employment of women and men  
 Differences of salaries between women and men  
 Ownership of productive land  
 Access to credit of women in relation to men  
 Availability of appropriate health services for women  
 Empowerment  
 % and level of women in political bodies and government positions  
 Level, quality and nature of women's educational attainment

Nature and extent of women's political organizing  
 Changes in women's political participation



### Exercise

Using data from the context analysis establish the gender equality and ICT indicators for your evaluation and how these indicators will be monitored.



### Resources

Gender and ICT Indicators, in this package. (on line at: <http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/icts.htm>)



## Element 2

### Worksheet 3: Identifying project stakeholders who are critical to addressing the gender equality and ICT for social change issues in the evaluation



#### Expected Output

A committed group of project stakeholders for the evaluation that includes stakeholders who can address gender equality and ICT for social change issues.



#### Read

Gender is a cross-cutting issue that affects all project stakeholders and all aspects of project activity including evaluation. Evaluation, however, for time and resources reasons, cannot include all the groups that have participated, benefited or not benefited from project activities. Choices will have to be made, based on evaluation objectives and gender considerations, about which stakeholders to include.

When thinking about stakeholders and specifically about stakeholders who will be crucial to an examination of gender equality and ICT issues in the evaluation, consider the following:

- Stakeholders can be both internal (project executors including project staff and management) and external (project beneficiaries).
- Particularly in the case of ICT initiatives, stakeholders may be anywhere in the world.
- Projects have direct stakeholders – those who are/or were directly involved in project activities and indirect stakeholders – those who did not participate in the project and may or may not have been affected by it. This second group is often critical in an evaluation process.
- Other organizations that do similar work can also be seen as stakeholders. In fact these organizations can offer important insights and “sector” commentary that provide a broader, but focused, context for your evaluation findings.
- Your relationship with and how you approach project stakeholders is as important as the process of identifying them. How these groups participate in the evaluation should reflect your organizations underlying values or approach to evaluation and ICT project work generally.
- Project beneficiaries – the primary target group for the ICT initiative – are integral to the process of discovering and analyzing gender and ICT issues. A common assertion in gender planning and gender analysis discourse is that gender analysis cannot be transformative unless the analysis is done by the people who are directly involved.



### Exercise

- Brainstorm a full list of your ICT initiative's stakeholders
- Identify core stakeholders and specifically identify stakeholders who can address gender and ICT issues to include in the evaluation process.
- Contact them to let them know about the evaluation and ask for their participation.

### Examples

Example of a list of stakeholders for an ICT project that highlights the core stakeholders for evaluation purposes.

For Telecenters:

#### Internal

Staff of the telecenter  
 Management body of the telecenter (e.g. board of directors)

Community, which refers here to all the groups which can use the telecenter and directly or indirectly benefit from it, such as:

users and non users  
 community organizations  
 local government  
 public services in the area served by the telecenter

Stakeholders, which includes all those whose actions interfere with the telecenter operation, such as:

Sponsors, Funding agencies, Support or operating agencies  
 Government agencies  
 Services providers

#### Interested parties

Other organizations considering use of telecenters  
 Other telecenters and telecenters organizations  
 Educators and researchers working on ICTs use and social development

#### General public, e.g.

Media  
 Development organizations

Source: Monitoring, Evaluation And Impact Assessment (Meia) Of Telecenters: An Initial Framework (Telelac)



### Resources

Project documents (funding proposals, reports, etc) that identify project partners and beneficiaries

See a sample communication about an evaluation at [www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources.htm](http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources.htm).

**Tip**

It is good practice to correspond with stakeholders you want to involve prior to the evaluation process to inform

them of the purpose, goals and overall plan for the evaluation. This would give the stakeholders the opportunity to raise questions if they have strong objections to the process.





### Element 3: **Designing Methodologies**

#### **Overall Purpose**

To design and carry out an information gathering strategy that takes account of gender considerations using a variety of methodologies.

To understand and report on the gender and ICT for social change findings of your evaluation.

#### **Objectives**

- To identify the means to monitor and collect information about gender equality and ICT for social change issues from your stakeholder communities
- To enable as much participation from women as possible
- To collect quantitative and qualitative data on gender and ICT indicators
- To categorise findings according to gender and ICT evaluation questions
- To gather and document stories that illustrate gender concerns and issues within an evaluation
- To critically reflect on these findings and extract lessons
- To prepare an evaluation report to reflect this information

**Element 3**

**Worksheet 1: Select and adapt methodologies to gather information**



**Expected Output**

Detailed strategy for gathering information about and monitoring gender equality and social change issues. GEM Testing Profile, which will have the following information:

**Overall Profile**

<b>GEM Testing Profile</b>	
Name of Initiative:	
Project Holder/s OR Lead Organisation:	
Objectives of the Project: - Overall Objectives - Specific Objectives	
Expected Outputs:	

Project Components / Activities:	
Target Audience:	
Duration of the Project:	
GEM Testing Contact Person(s) / Details:	
General Evaluation Goals	
Specific Gender Goals	
Gender and ICT Issues to be Addressed in the Evaluation	
Indicators Used for the Evaluation:	

Methodologies used in Evaluation:	
Timeline of the Evaluation Process:	



## Read

With a clear definition of the questions about gender equality and ICT for social change issues as well as the articulation of indicators to measure these areas, the next step is identifying where and how to gather information.

This phase in WNSP's evaluation guide concentrates on the information collection process and focuses on outlining methodologies that are effective in drawing out data and information useful for measuring the impact of ICT use for women.

An evaluation essentially requires three sorts of information:

- **Yardstick information** concerns the goal, principles or standards against which activities will be measured. For the purposes of investigating gender equality and ICT issues, gender and ICT indicators constitute these yardsticks.
- **Results information** concerns the achievements or impact of the project in relation to the relevant yardsticks.

- **Contextual information** is anything that helps understand the results in relation to the yardsticks.

(from Evaluation and Effectiveness, Block 1, Book 4, Open University, Open Business School, p.36)

Many data or information gathering tools and methodologies exist, for example:

**Records** – these could be training attendance records, telecentre use records, web site usage statistics, etc.

**Internal Documents** - including original project proposal or funding agreement, papers related to the development of the work, reports, correspondence, minutes of meetings, etc.

**Interviews** – with project beneficiaries, with network members, with project staff, with individuals in other agencies, etc

**Discussions or Focus Groups** – with staff, beneficiaries, etc

**Surveys & Questionnaires** – filled in by various stakeholders

**Stories** – accounts of stakeholders that reveal their perspective about the project

When thinking about choosing sources of information keep in mind that what matters in the end is not the validity of individual sources of information, so much as the coherence and consistency of the information

from different sources taken together. It is the pattern that matters. Using multiple methods can help test, correct and correlate messages coming from different sources of information.

(Evaluation and Effectiveness, p.50)

From the standpoint of collecting information related to gender and ICT for social change issues, the following are important considerations:

- **Affordability** – what is the cost of obtaining the information in relation to its contribution to the evaluation?
- **Time** – how much time will it take to gather the information?
- **Reliability** of the information obtained in one way rather than another.

- **Politics** – some ways of gathering information may help build support for the evaluation and others may cause irritation.
- **Context sensitivity** – group dynamics, subject matter, gender, class, caste, age, race, language, culture, rural/urban issues, etc can impact on how effectively and inclusively information is gathered.
- **Qualitative emphasis** – gender issues in particular and social transformation issues in general require more than numbers to paint a picture. Stories, perceptions, observations, opinions are critical to understanding in giving voice to the stories behind statistics.
- **Frequency** – the number of times will there be mid-project assessment and monitoring.



### Exercise

Using your evaluation questions and gender and ICT for social change indicators as a starting point fill in the following table:

	<b>Information Type</b>	<b>What Information Source?</b>	<b>What Gathering Method(s)?</b>
<b>Yardstick Information</b>	<i>For example:</i> List of Gender and ICT Indicators	<i>For example:</i> Documents Direct stakeholders	<i>For example:</i> Interviews Questionnaire
<b>Results Information</b>	<i>For example:</i> How many women trained? How satisfied? What problems?	<i>For example:</i> Contact with project partners, staff, beneficiaries	<i>For example:</i> Focus groups Interviews Records
<b>Contextual Information</b>	<i>For example:</i> What is the level and quality of Internet access in the project community	<i>For example:</i> Consult other organizations Discussions with staff Beneficiaries ideas	<i>For example:</i> Interviews Research

Gather the results of the last two elements and the outputs of the last exercise to draft the GEM Testing Profile. The document will guide the Evaluation Team for the rest of the evaluation process.



## Resources

### Information Gathering Strategies Overview

- Different types of information collection methods (stories, interviews, focus groups, surveys, anecdotal feedback, quantitative measurement techniques) with pros and cons of each from a gender and ICT perspective.
- Resources/inputs that each of these require (expertise, financial implications, time considerations)
- Explanation about how to use the table to determine your information collection strategy based on who you're trying to reach, what you're trying to find out and which are the appropriate methods of collecting information for you.



### Element 3

#### Worksheet 2: Collect information and gather stories about gender equality and ICT for social change issues from your stakeholder communities.



#### Expected Output

Data and information gathered through several methodologies.



#### Read

Evaluations carried out from a gender perspective of ICT initiatives can include telecentres in rural or an indigenous community, a women's global network or an online resource center. Therefore data gathering tools or methodologies should be chosen based on their appropriateness for different kinds of initiatives. The most effective methodologies are those that are flexible and adaptable, are simple to administer and are designed to draw meaningful results.

In all cases, methodologies should focus on evaluating both the product and the process: what has been achieved so far, and the way it has been achieved as well as how it keeps evolving. Information about these two aspects capture social processes.

There are many gender sensitive methodologies that have been designed and used effectively for various types of projects and initiatives. We can draw from these methodologies in creating specific data collection tools that correspond to our evaluation objective and reflect our values and principles.

In selecting or designing methodologies, we need to keep the following considerations in mind:

- Choose methodologies that are participatory
- Use multiplicity of methodologies
- Ensure collection of sex disaggregated data
- Interrogate gender roles
- Identify female informants

#### Qualitative and Quantitative

Evaluation methodologies should collect information about both quantitative and qualitative changes as a result of an ICT initiative. **Quantitative changes** are changes that can be measured with numbers, for example the number of women trained to use email in a particular project or the number of times a web site was accessed during a specific time period. The WNSP believes that a strict focus on quantitative changes and methods results in an incomplete story about the impact of an ICT initiative. Reports on quantitative change must be augmented and explained by reports about qualitative changes.

**Qualitative changes** are changes that cannot be described with numbers.

Quantitative data can result from statistical secondary data, which can be useful in mapping the context of a program/project. Some examples are:

- Number of women and number of men using ICTs before and after the program/project began
- Number of women involved in online lists, and the way this number increases, compared to number of men.
- Number of women regularly posting messages in the list from the total number of women receiving the list, relevant to men's postings and reception.
- Number of women and number of men regularly using a telecentre. Frequency of its use, and time spent at the computer, for both men and women.

On the other hand, an important **qualitative change** from a gender perspective, for example:  
 is a woman's sense of personal empowerment – something she could describe as greater self-confidence or a higher sense of self-esteem.

Another example of a qualitative change could be:  
 changes in relationships at an organisational or household level as a result of ICT use.

For some organisations, the accessibility of information through email and the internet has weakened traditional hierarchies. These qualitative

changes are captured in an evaluation using qualitative methodologies like interviews or story telling.



### Exercise

You can gather information, data and stories about gender equality and ICT for social change issues through various methodologies. In this guide, we present several methodologies and examples (all available online) that have been used within our network in evaluating ICT initiatives.

- Gender Analysis Matrix (<http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/gam.htm>)
- Asking Questions (see Appendix A)
- Story telling (see Appendix B)
- Surveys/questionnaires



### Resources

#### Online resources about information gathering methodologies:

- Guidelines for the Integration of Gender Issues into the Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of

ILO Programmes and Projects  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/eval/guides/gender/index.htm>

- Gender issues in design, monitoring and evaluation  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/eval/guides/gender/issues4.htm#n4>





#### Element 4: **Putting evaluation results to work!**

#### **Overall Purpose**

To review initial plans about how to use evaluation results and act on the lessons learned.

#### **Objectives**

- To identify recommendations to inform future work
- To develop a dissemination plan to share evaluation results

#### Element 4

### Worksheet 1: Incorporating learning into ongoing project and organisational work.



#### Expected Output

Recommendations for strengthening gender equality practices and ICT applications in your project and organisational work.



#### Read

Evaluation is about learning that leads to change. As explained earlier, one of the principles that animates WNSP's approach to evaluation the importance of using what you learn.

Lessons learned relating to gender equality and ICTs for social change can help you strengthen the gender component of your organisation's work and help you to respond to gender concerns in the application of ICTs for social change. Before deciding how to use evaluation results within your organisation, reflect critically on what action they suggest.

For example, in 1998, APCWNSP evaluated its groundbreaking computer networking initiative that provided communication services and support to over 30,000 women attending the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women and NGO Forum in Beijing, China.

The evaluation was done through a comprehensive follow-up of the team of 43 women (and 4 men) who participated in the initiative. The Women Working in Information and Communication Technologies (WWICT) study explored women's experiences working on the physical communications setup in Beijing, including the technical, user support and training activities, and the information flow and advocacy that was generated internally and externally. As a result of this evaluation, APCWNSP identified valuable lessons that has helped us in strengthening the work of our organisation. ([www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources.htm](http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources.htm))

#### **Question:**

What action would most effectively and most appropriately address gender equality and ICTs for social change considerations that you have evaluated? (Try to differentiate between strategic and practical gender needs and think of corresponding actions that respond to these needs.)

#### **Answer:**

Clearly identifying the gender issues through an evaluation is the first step in thinking about possible actions that will strengthen the gender component of your overall work. In

developing an ICT plan, it is important to address both long-term and short-term needs in your organization. One of the most critical requirements in ensuring any strategic engagement with ICTs is capacity building both at skills and equipment level. To address this could mean, for example, studying how to train more women in technical work or investing additional resources in ICT equipment for your organization.

You can also think about these possible actions:

- **Research and Critical Understanding**

Evaluation results can point to areas of your work that require additional research. This could be research your organisation would undertake as a research project or simply a study of what other work has been done in the field. Evaluation results can start a learning process that will build your organisation's critical expertise in a particular field of work. Evaluation results can also be used to test and advance analytical frameworks that inform gender equality and ICTs for social change work.

- **Sharing Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

Many organisations, donors, development agencies, academic institutions and government departments are hungry for information about what ICTs for gender equality and development projects are working and why. Using evaluation results as material to document best practices and lessons learned and sharing this information builds up a pool of critically needed reference material.

- **Project Planning and Design**

Evaluation results should inform future project design and implementation. Using evaluation results from completed projects as starting points for developing new projects maximises your organisation's learning about its work. It also increases the likelihood that your next project will have even greater positive impact.

- **Resource Mobilisation**

Evaluation results can be used for fundraising. Evaluation reflects a track record and experience of working in a particular area. At a broader level, evaluation results can demonstrate the need for resources to be committed to gender and ICT work.



**Exercise:**

Reflect on evaluation results and design a work plan to act on significant findings.

One way to approach this exercise is to divide lessons and recommendations in two categories:

- **Internal Work** (building organisational capacity) capacity building; equipment/infrastructure needs; lessons for project planning and design; opportunities for fundraising, other

- **External Work** (developing organisation's programme/project work) research; best practices; other.



## Element 4

### Worksheet 2: Planning how to disseminate or share evaluation results



#### Expected Output:

A dissemination plan detailing activities and a timeline for sharing evaluation results.



#### Read

If we approach evaluation as an opportunity and responsibility to learn and change then we need to think strategically about what do with evaluation findings. Reporting to donors is important. But your results should reach a wider audience.

Don't bury your evaluation results in a report in a filing cabinet! Evaluation results should be popularised and used in other aspects of your organisation's work like advocacy or public education. Evaluation results and reports should be educational and empower all the project's stakeholders.

#### **Question:**

How will you share evaluation results with your stakeholders and what information will be disseminated to a broader audience?

#### **Answer:**

It is important to end your evaluation process by planning how to share your findings and how to act on the information and lessons learned in the process. Here are some useful ways of disseminating your results:

- **Advocacy and Lobbying**

Your evaluation results are primary research material and can be used to make inputs in national, regional or global ICT policy debates.

Evaluation results can also be used to lobby for particular approaches to development interventions. If your project used a methodology that was successful – or even used one that wasn't – development agencies and others can benefit from this feedback, and your organisation can build its reputation as an activist development practitioner.

- **Public Education and Networking**

Evaluation results can be used to communicate and build relationships with your constituencies – the communities you work with, other NGOs, development agencies, donors, etc. In fact a participatory approach to evaluation requires feedback of results to all communities involved with a project.

Results can also be used as a basis for publishing articles in newsletters, popular and academic journals and annual reports.

Sharing these results in networking forums – electronic discussion groups or face to face meetings can improve contacts between your organisation and others doing similar work

- **Marketing and Public Relations**

Evaluation results can be a powerful marketing tool, particularly if you have completed a very successful project. Results can be used to advocate for your organisation's work; to raise awareness about what you do and why. Using evaluation results in your organisation's publicity materials – pamphlets, web sites, press releases, etc can raise your organisation's profile by establishing your rigorous approach to your work. Evaluation results can also be used to provide media with "evidence" and story ideas related to gender and ICT issues.



**Exercise:**

Identify specific information from evaluation results, depending on the needs of your audience, and design corresponding products/outputs to effectively disseminate this information.

**Tip**

Although unconventional, there are other means of reporting evaluation findings that can be used, such as video presentations, websites, learning networks and other interesting and creative means.



# Gender Indicators

Evaluation is an on-going process that starts with a project and moves on to a feedback system that continues to collect and analyse data on the effects of a project. Evaluations should be built into the planning process, is rooted in its vision, organic in the process of a project, aims at strengthening it and engages the self, group, organization, institution, local communities as well as regional and global areas that were part of a project. This kind of evaluation not only looks into projects, but into cycles and lives of peoples. This outlook is important because programs and advocacies have long-term goals. Thus, in order to gauge the gains, one must look into all spheres.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS/CONCEPTS

### What are indicators?

Indicators are standards used to measure achievements of a project. They are used for monitoring and evaluating projects. They are pointers, numbers, facts, opinions or perceptions that look into and measure changes of specific conditions or situations. They provide a close look at the results of initiatives and actions. Indicators are useful tools to assess where we stand and where we are going with

respect to values and goals, and to evaluate specific programs and determine their impact.

(Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency. p.5)

In traditional planning and evaluation methodologies, indicators are “specific (explicit) and objectively verifiable measures of changes or results brought about by an activity” (IFAD 1985/37). The generally accepted criteria for good indicators are SMART ones, i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound.

Normally, indicators are defined or set by the objectives of a project. However, we all know that projects effect changes in communities or it may be that changes in the environment may bring about adjustments to projects. Indicators may therefore be refined once the project starts.

### Definition of Gender-sensitive indicators

Gender-sensitive indicators, as the term suggests, are indicators that track gender related changes over time. Their value lies in measuring whether gender equality/equity is being achieved through a number of ways.

Gender indicators take into account that gender roles exist and point to changes in the status and roles of women and men over time. It helps us to see in what ways a project affects gender roles and addresses or disregards gender

discrimination. Gender indicators should be drawn from the identification of gender issues within the specific context of a project or activity. Many indicators that take gender into consideration such as the gender empowerment measure, human and development index and gender development indices are useful tools in tracking gender equality/equity. Many of these indicators are based on gender analytical models that have emanated from a feminist analysis of societies, relationships and development. On the other hand a growing number of gender specialists believe that indicators by themselves are insufficient to capture women's experience especially in areas such as women's empowerment or participation. They argue that policy-makers need to pay more attention to women's experience, towards which indicators can be a pointer.

Despite their differences however, the key question that these models and indicators attempts to answer in measuring the impact of any initiative is:

“Is it life-changing?”

At the end of the whole story, did it really change lives or are we back to the same situation. Is it reproducing inequality and inequity?

(Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency. p.5)

## **Definition of Quantitative/Qualitative Indicators**

### ***What are quantitative indicators?***

Quantitative indicators can be defined as measures of quantity, such as the number of women users in a telecenter or the number of women trained in computer skills or the number of women who have access to the internet compared to men.

### ***What are qualitative indicators?***

Qualitative indicators can be defined as people's judgements and perceptions about a subject, such as the confidence those people have in having computer skills for better employment opportunities or having access to the internet to for better trading/marketing opportunities.

(Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency. p.9)

The commonly held belief is that quantitative indicators are measurements that stick to cold and hard facts and rigid numbers and there is no question about their validity, truth and objectivity. Quantitative indicators are also seen as “objective and verifiable” as they point out the number of computers in a workplace or the number of telephones in a community, or the quantity and frequency of computer and internet related training workshops for example. Quantitative indicators deal with outputs and are easier to define.

On the other hand, qualitative indicators are seen as subjective, unreliable and difficult to verify. Qualitative indicators, are more difficult to ascertain because these indicators probe into the whys of situations and contexts of actions as well as perceptions of people. However, qualitative indicators are valuable to the evaluation process because projects and initiatives are involved in looking into changes in the lives of communities. Qualitative indicators seek to measure the impact of a project or an initiative and are therefore used to evaluate the long term effects and benefits.

Defining how to measure the impacts of outputs is not an easy task. Users of qualitative indicators often stress that these indicators are important because they focus on people's own experience. From a gender analytical/feminist perspective, qualitative indicators are particularly useful and important in understanding women's experiences and perceptions in relation to empowerment and development. For example, the number of women using telecenters become more significant if we find out that the information they find and the links they make through the internet have contributed to their sense of independence and empowerment.

Properly developed and interpreted, qualitative indicators can also play a significant role in identifying constraints to implementation and obstacles to success, which would otherwise not be readily apparent.

Most project monitoring and evaluation models recommend that it is equally important to record outputs

and quality of outputs and to measure the impacts of outputs. The political nature of indicator use must be kept in mind particularly in relation to qualitative indicators, because it is often claimed that such indicators are 'subjective' or unreliable and therefore of little worth.

There are reliable techniques such as surveys that can ensure the reliability and validity of qualitative indicators.

An important principle to remember is that the use of qualitative indicators can play an important role in the promotion and understanding of stakeholder perspectives, particularly those relating to women, and therefore fostering participation. Developing gender-sensitive indicators in a participatory fashion requires a focus on including people's own indicators of development.

(Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency. p.6, 11)

Quote from: Measuring the Immeasurable Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Networks. Ed Marilee Karl. published by Women's Feature Service, 1998/ Novib, 1999. p. 63

"For networks and networking organizations, it is as important to identify indicators that can measure qualitative change as it is to measure quantitative change. At the same time, the concepts of the objective and the subjective in relation to indicators need to be reconsidered. In traditional evaluation

processes, indicators are supposed to be “objective and verifiable”. In practice, most indicators have a subjective element to (in) them. For instance, “increased rice production” may seem to be an objective indicator, but it may be based on subjective assumptions that such an increase is positive per se, regardless of how this affects the environment or different members of the farming community. Indicators of social change are usually based on subjective criteria of justice and equity. This is as it should be. The important issue is that these criteria are clear.

There are, however, ongoing efforts to develop indicators of qualitative achievement of both the tangible and intangible impact of activities on people and society. Work is going on to develop indicators of social and political change, self-reliance and empowerment and, at the same time, to set criteria and standards for “subjective” indicators such as social development and empowerment so that everyone understands what is being measured. Each network and organization must identify its own indicators, but the following examples from previous efforts can help stimulate this process.

### **Guidelines for setting gender indicators for ICT initiatives**

The following guidelines will help stimulate the process of developing both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Some of these guidelines are principles that we have adapted from general monitoring and evaluation models while the rest are culled from ICT practice and experience.

#### **❖ Indicators are linked to goals**

ICTs are used in different initiatives such as networking, lobbying and advocacy. Thus, ICTs indicators should be linked with the goals and purpose of an organization, an activity or a project. Goals can be long term or short term. For example, an information campaign can have as a short term objective the use of online tools to expand outreach and enhance participation in a given advocacy campaign. Indicators for this example could be the number of individuals and groups that participated in mailing lists or online discussions or the amount of contributions from participants and even the geographical spread of participation.

On the other hand, indicators for computer education projects that aim to provide skills for young people so that they can have better employment opportunities will need to measure the long term and broader impact in relation to the creation of jobs, the types of jobs available, the number of boys and girls in these courses, the changes in the economic status of young people who become part of these programs, the other opportunities that open up as a result of these programs.

As you can see some of these indicators are quantitative and are easier to identify while others are more qualitative.

### ❖ Indicators change during the process of implementation

It is sound practice to define indicators at the beginning of a project or an initiative. This will make it easier to track the progress and to evaluate the outcomes and impact of our projects. However, it is important to keep in mind that indicators can change during the process of project implementation. Indicators that we may not have anticipated can manifest themselves or become accentuated along the way.

### ❖ Indicators reflects specific realities and experiences

Indicators are determined based on the specific realities and experiences of the stakeholders of any project or initiative. The findings and critical issues identified in the evaluation must reflect the realities of the communities and the analysis should be organic to the community.

It is important to recognize the realities of women's lives when dealing with the performance of people within projects or initiatives. For example, it should be recognized that there are many factors including personal factors that affect women's performance in and responses to projects and initiatives. If the evaluation framework aims to find out how ICT use changes lives, then the documentation should be done in a manner that respects the integrity of the whole process. Care should be given to translations or interpretations such that complete stories of communities are documented.

### ❖ Technology indicators and gender differences

In considering technology related indicators, we have to take keep in mind that technology is not gender neutral in its design, access and use. A basic element of our framework is the belief that gender inequalities are mirrored in the development of access to and use of ICTs.

While ICTs can be used as transformative tools that can change power relations between women and men, they can also end up bringing women back to their domesticated status. For example, a number of feminist researches are now interrogating the impact of ICTs for women who are now able to work at home and who may unwittingly be potentially placed in a position to assume additional domestic activities.

Indicators should be able to point out if ICTs contribute to empowering or marginalizing women or if ICTs reproduce or transform gender roles. We also need to be mindful of unintended consequences brought about by our projects or initiatives and be aware that ICTs also impact on women who do not have access to it. For example, in a village women who produce handicrafts were able to market their products better because they were connected. An indirect consequence of this is that those who were not connected became more marginalized.

#### *Example 1:*

Compared to other technologies, ICTs are more open to women, i.e., more women are participating in ICTs. But

women are more active on the information and communications (IC) aspects rather than on the technology aspect. This is a reflection of the masculine and feminine assumptions.

*Example 2:*

There are issues around access to ICTs. Women have access to becoming users of ICT as information providers. Some have access to training and support either as trainers and recipients of trainings. But women have less access to the technical part of ICT. At some point in ICTs, we find a bottleneck where women have less access than men. Therefore, using the number of women Internet users is not sufficient to determine how women fare as users of ICTs. Our theoretical approach for an ICT evaluation tool must look at many issues: women as users, women as information providers, women as trainers, women as technicians.

*Example 3:*

Measuring differential impacts. We can evaluate an ICT project from a gender perspective even though it is an ICT project not meant to work on gender issues. For example, a project that provides computers to school children that does not consider gender can be evaluated from a gender perspective by finding out how the project benefits girls and boys.

❖ **Access Indicators**

Access means not only access to technology but also access to information and know how. Access is affected

by race, class, gender or by one's socio-economic status. The most basic quantitative indicator of access is the number of men and women who have access to computers, telephones and the Internet. The factors affecting this access are usually the presence or absence of telecommunications and internet infrastructures. However, our experience has shown that quantitative indicators of access are only the starting point. The more significant indicators are often qualitative in nature. These include the quality of access to information that is useful, empowering and relevant for women. It also includes information for women who are not literate and in the appropriate languages. Other important indicators are those that reveal the amount of power and control women have over these resources and knowledge. Some of the questions that will help us determine indicators are:

- Who makes decision about access to technology?
- Who creates the content that we use?
- Who has the right to create content and language?
- How do women use the information they access?

❖ **ICTs strengthen networking**

One of the most valuable advantages of ICTs is its potential to strengthen and expand links, networks and networking initiatives. We have seen the way social movements, including the women's movement, use various ICT tools to extend their links and connections outside their physical and geographical reach. Many of the early studies of women's use of email and the Internet

have shown that women use new technologies to network with each other. While it is not easy to isolate the impact of networking, a useful indicator of success could be how ICTs helps link women and groups with similar interests who might otherwise not be in contact or how ICTs bring together networks of individuals or groups for promotion and action.

“A turning point for any change process is when different groups form alliances with a common overall objective and a loose coordination framework. Each group does its own thing, but in the knowledge that it contributes to a greater effort. Therefore activities that link people together and help working alliances can be interpreted as contributing to positive change.”

The APCWNSP is a perfect example. WNSP is a global internet-based network that use ICTs extensively to network among its members and partners. It does not have a physical office but conducts much of its work through online workspaces and online meetings and consultations.

#### ❖ **ICTs support advocacy**

Advocacy is broadly defined as a process of bringing about change. Many advocacy campaigns are directed at generating policy changes at government, institutions and other levels where policies are made. ICTs are increasingly being used as tools in most advocacy undertakings because of their effectiveness in group communication and interactivity. Women’s organizations

are at the forefront of using these tools in aid of policy advocacy that strengthens gender justice and equality. The outcomes of these campaigns, whether actual policy change occurs, are indicators of the success of the advocacy campaigns and to a certain extent the effectiveness of ICT tools for advocacy. In the short term, we may be able to gauge if we our making a difference if our use of ICT tools:

- generate discussion and support for women’s concerns and issues
- catalyze more action

#### ❖ **ICTs promote a non-hierachical and empowering organizational culture**

When women's organizations make use of ICTs, it makes it possible for everyone in the organization to receive the same information that may otherwise only be available to management or to certain sections of the organization. Access to strategic information can modify the way staff or members relate among themselves and can promote democracy in the organizations. We have heard of many instances where access has catalyzed changes in the power structures of an organization because it enables women to participate more actively in decision-making.

#### ❖ **ICTs should promote democratic communication**

ICTs are increasingly being used as necessary and effective ingredients in communications strategies. The potential of these new technologies for participatory and

democratic communication and opening up new communication spaces is seen as one of its main contributions to social development and transformation.

A growing body of knowledge and practice in strategic communications and development communication has evolved methodologies of measuring impact of communications interventions and initiatives in support of advocacy and broader development processes. These indicators are also useful in measuring the impact of ICTs. Below are some of the indicators that have been developed in this area:

*a. Expanded public and private dialogue and debate*

Perhaps the most popular use of ICTs within social movements has been towards opening up spaces for online discussions, dialogues and debates. This is also true within the women's movement. Many women have found these spaces as opportunities for political expression and participation. In many cases, women find the anonymity of the medium as a secure space. We must be mindful however that these spaces can exclude and alienate women who are less articulate and who may not speak the dominant international languages that are often used in these discussions. Indicators should take account of the means available that enable people/communities to feed their voices into debate and dialogue.

*b. Increased accuracy of the information that women share in the dialogue/debate*

The quality rather than the volume or quantity of information generated is more meaningful as an indicator. The underlying assumption of the use of ICTs for information sharing and communication is that it provides a means for the sharing of knowledge and information directly by those who generate them.

*c. Increased leadership and agenda setting role by women on the issues of concern*

While women's increased participation in communication spaces is an indicator for the positive use of ICTs, it is even more important to measure their role in these spaces. Some of the indicators could be their involvement in the major decisions related to the initiative. This will ensure relevance and meaning - a vital component for any intervention.

Communication for Social Change: A Position Paper and Conference Report (January, 1999) by Denise Gray-Felder (The Rockefeller Foundation) and James Deane (Panos Institute)

## **EXAMPLES.**

### **Criteria for Selecting Indicators**

From: Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators. Produced by Canadian International Development Agency ( p.21)

There is obviously no such thing as a set of universal indicators. Users must design and adapt indicators for

their own purposes. The most important criteria to bear in mind are:

- ❖ Indicators should be developed in a participatory fashion, including all stakeholders wherever possible.
- ❖ Indicators must be relevant to the needs of the user, and at a level that the user can understand.
- ❖ All indicators should be sex-disaggregated.
- ❖ Both qualitative and quantitative indicators should be used.
- ❖ Indicators should be easy to use and understand.
- ❖ Indicators must be clearly defined.
- ❖ The number chosen should be small. A rule of thumb is that up to six indicators can be chosen for each type of indicator (input – outcome).
- ❖ Indicators should be technically sound.
- ❖ Indicators should measure trends over time.
- ❖ The ultimate focus should be on outcome indicators.

## NEEDS AND INDICATORS

During the World Conference on women in 1995, APCWNSP implemented a women-led initiative that provided Internet access, electronic communications and information services and support to over 30,000 women attending the conference and the NGO forum. Over 40 women from 25 countries and speaking 18 languages worked together to set up and manage a computer

networking facility, provided training and user support, and facilitated the information flow and advocacy generated by women's networks. One of the main goals of this initiative was to “ demonstrate to other women this new technology was appropriate for and could be maintained by women”.

Three years after this initiative, APCWNSP conducted a study to gather feedback from the women who had worked on this project and explored in more depth women's relationship to and experience of working in information communication technologies. Among other things this study identified a series of women's needs in relation to use of ICT. These general needs can be used as a guide for asking questions to determine specific indicators in different environments.

### ***“Users” and “Workers”:* A Comparison of Needs**

Common needs expressed by the women as ‘users’ in the global networking for change study, and the women as ‘workers’ in the WWICT study include:

*Training and technical expertise.* Although training and technical expertise are expressed needs by both groups in the two studies, differences occur with regard to the type of training or expertise required. Women as ‘users’ need training to get connected and to use basic tools such as E-mail, conferencing and the Internet. While the women working on the Beijing communications project need more expertise such as programming, developing appropriate tools, system maintenance, troubleshooting, etc. Training and technical expertise needs correlates with geographic

location and the degree of connectivity of the women participating in the studies. For instance, women from the South identified the need to learn Internet software and tools. Women as ‘users’ and ‘workers’ call for training that focuses on the specific needs of the participants, and is women-centred (training for and by women, and emphasizes the content needs of women).

*Mentoring and support.* Providing mutual support and mentoring were expressed needs by both groups participating in the studies.

*Access and equipment.* Common access and equipment needs expressed by all women focus on the hardware and software to support communications, and the widening access gap for women in the South. For instance, limitations of E-mail only accounts (not having access to remote databases or Internet tools), limited infrastructure (difficulty in getting a phone line), and high costs of data transmission (networks in South often charge their users for all messages, both sent and received).

*Global Network.* Both groups in the study called for a network to support global networking and each other, and to get work done.

*Time.* Time was an expressed need by both groups, in particular, trying to balance day-to-day work with increased workloads associated with the adoption and use of ICT.

*Policy and advocacy.* Policy and advocacy to support women and electronic communications and networking was a common need in both studies. In the global networking for change study, respondents point to an agency’s commitment to information technology and the opinion of women in senior positions within organizations as factors that contribute to a woman’s ease and access to electronic networking. Support from node, boss and/or colleague and policies regarding decision making, accountability, and responsibility within the APC Women’s Programme, information and discussion around ICTs, ICT policy, and lobbying and advocacy to have women’s access issues recognized and addressed were specific examples cited by the women working in Beijing.

*Funding.* Lack of viable funding support for their projects and programmes was another shared need.

*Women-only Approaches.* Female-only approaches that encourage mutual support, mentoring, and women-to-women training were expressed needs by women as ‘users’ and ‘workers.’

(Putting Beijing Online Women Working in Information and Communication Technologies by Peregrine Wood. Published by APCWNSP 2000. pp. 88-90)

## **ASKING QUESTIONS**

A more detailed set of questions that may also be used to define indicators. Here are some examples that can be used:

The Four-step key concept approach to analyzing gender emanating from gender planning evaluation.

- a. *Activities*: asks who does what, when; scrutinizes various roles men and women take, whether these roles are productive or reproductive; a tool may be a daily or seasonal calendar
- b. *Resources*: who has access or control over the resources
- c. *Benefits*: what factors (e.g., social, political, cultural, economic) control access to benefits
- d. *Participation*: how and when do women and men participate in realizing the benefits that they may or may not have in control

### **An African Gender and ICT checklist**

The following is an excerpt from the African gender and ICT checklist developed as a recommendation from an investigation conducted by the APCWNSP and FEMNET to take stock of women's gains in information and communication technologies. The recommendations are published in the research report called "Net Gains: African women take stock of information and communication technologies", June 2000.

"ICTs will only work for African women if a targeted and systematic approach is taken to redress current barriers to

access and effective applications. Women's groups in each country may want to draw up their own strategic plans for engendering ICTs that look at: key issues, policy interventions, targets, time frames, responsibility and monitoring and evaluation criteria. The following checklist may be used as a guide for more detailed plans.

#### Core issues

- ❖ What is the level of literacy of women and what is being done to redress this?
- ❖ What proportion of boys and girls are in primary, secondary and tertiary education? What is being done to address the imbalances?
- ❖ What proportion of girls and boys are in the arts and sciences? What is being done to redress the imbalance?
- ❖ What proportion of men and women are in ICT-related jobs? At what level are they? What is being done to redress the imbalance?
- ❖ What proportion of men and women are in the decision-making structures concerned with ICTs? What is being done to redress the imbalance?

#### Access

- ❖ At what stage is deregulation of the telecommunications sector? What are the potential benefits for women? How can these be maximized?
- ❖ What is the pricing structure for telecommunications services and equipment? To what extent is this a barrier to access for women? How can these costs be reduced to facilitate greater access?

- ❖ Is there a universal access policy in place? Are its provisions sufficient? Is access by women specifically recognized in the policy?
- ❖ What regulatory arrangements are in place? Are they sufficient? Do the regulators see ensuring access by women to ICTs as part of their function? If not, how can this be redressed?
- ❖ Has your country considered increased regional co-operation to realize synergies, sharing of best practices and cost savings with regard to ICTs?
- ❖ Are there policies in place to reduce costs of telecommunications equipment?
- ❖ Are partnerships being established between government, the private sector and civil society that maximize the possibilities of access, and specifically access for women?

#### Policy engagement

- ❖ Are women's NGOs engaging in telecommunication policy debates?
- ❖ If so, how and to what effect?
- ❖ Are women working in this area networked and is there scope for improving communication between them within the country, at regional, continental and international level?
- ❖ How can the engagement with policy issues at all these levels be strengthened?

#### Organisations

- ❖ Does the organization have in place an IT policy?
- ❖ Does the policy recognize the need to promote gender equality through the use of ICTs?

- ❖ Has the organization consciously sought to maximize the benefits of ICTs in house, for example with regard to cost cutting, greater transparency and flattening the structure?
- ❖ How are ICTs applied? Are these the most strategic applications?
- ❖ To what extent are the World Wide Web and teleconferencing used in the organization? Could these be strengthened?

#### Capacity building

- ❖ Have gender considerations, e.g. socialization, been built into the design of ICT training?
- ❖ Have the needs of older women been taken into account?
- ❖ Is the training made available to all members of the organization?
- ❖ Does it serve to demystify the technology?
- ❖ Is training ongoing or once off? Is it accompanied by support mechanisms?
- ❖ Has any thought been given to mentorship programmes for women who are conversant with ICTs to support first time users?
- ❖ Does the training go beyond the basics to incorporate information and knowledge creation and management?
- ❖ Does it include an understanding of policy issues?
- ❖ Gender and ICT training
- ❖ Is gender training being offered to male decision makers in the ICT sector?

- ❖ Is gender and ICT training offered to members of the organization? Are there regular discussions on this issue?

#### Applications

- ❖ How are ICTs being applied to advance gender equality? Are there more strategic ways in which they could be employed for this purpose?
- ❖ Specifically, are there ways in which ICTs could be used to improve women's access to social services, such as education and health?
- ❖ Is there any scope for ICT access to be linked to literacy classes?
- ❖ Can ICTs be used in the HIV/AIDS campaign; and are there specific ways in which they can be used to ameliorate the devastating effects of this pandemic on women?
- ❖ How can ICTs be used to enhance women's access to decision-making, and to making governance more responsive to the needs of women?
- ❖ Are gender consideration built into all stages of the project planning cycle of the organization, including any ICT projects that it may be engaged in?

#### Content development

- ❖ Who is the audience? Which women are you reaching?
- ❖ How relevant is the material you are creating?
- ❖ Has there been a needs analysis to determine information needs? Is the information being created responding to an expressed need?

- ❖ To what extent is language a disempowering factor? What is being done to address this? Is sufficient attention being given to the creation of content in African languages?
- ❖ Is the website content packaged in a way that is accessible?
- ❖ Is there a cross linkage of websites, especially to information being generated by other African women?
- ❖ How can the rich oral traditions and wisdom of African women be translated into content for the Internet?
- ❖ How can African women become more involved in software development? How can this be used to raise the profile and voice of African women on the Internet?

#### Outreach

- ❖ What repackaging possibilities have been explored? How accessible are these to women?
- ❖ What technical options are being explored for making ICTs more accessible to remote areas and specifically to women in remote areas?
- ❖ Is the convergence of ICTs and multimedia being fully taken advantage of in order to increase outreach?
- ❖ What options other than the written word are being explored: e.g. touch screens?
- ❖ To the extent that there are telecentres in the country, to what extent are women benefiting from these initiatives?

- ❖ Have gender considerations been built into the design, implementation and monitoring of these projects?
- ❖ What difference has access to ICTs at such centres made to women's lives?

(Net Gains African women take stock of information and communication technologies. Compiled by Colleen Lowe Morna and Zohra Khan. Published by APC Africa-Women. June 2000. pp. 79-81)

# ICTS for Social Change

This document locates the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) Women's Networking Support Program's (WNSP) GEM work in the context of overall development issues of gender and ICTs. It sets out critical ICT issues relevant to gender equality and women's empowerment in the current context of globalisation. This section also presents the APC and WNSP analysis of these issues and our approach to using ICTs for development.

## ICTs and Globalisation

The Internet has become a powerful and widespread communication platform, particularly with the convergence of existing communication media with new communication technologies. Access to the Internet has increased, in spite of the continued exclusion of marginalised communities and many people in the developing world. At the same time it has become subject to increasing commercialisation, corporate ownership and control.

New communication technologies are a vehicle of a process of globalisation that takes place on unequal terms, and that often increases social and economic inequality, between and within countries; at the same time these technologies can be an empowering tool for resistance,

social mobilisation and development in the hands of people and organisations working for freedom and justice.

## ICTs and Development

With the convergence of ICTs and the emergence of what is being called the 'information' or 'knowledge' society, knowledge and information have become a more important determinant of our economic, social and cultural lives. Therefore the means of control of production and dissemination of information have also become vital.

The social, political and economic changes wrought by the new information and communications technology have prompted certain shifts in development thinking. Development strategists now see the need for developing countries to adapt ICTs as a way to avoid further marginalisation, and also as a potential force for creating new economic growth opportunities and for pushing democratic boundaries.

However, access for people in the developing world continues to be marginal because of the high cost of connectivity resulting in their exclusion from the emerging global system being built around information and knowledge. Women are particularly marginalized since the great majority have no buying power and no access to modern means of communication. Access to ICTs is typically divided along traditional lines of development resulting in unequal access that has become known as the 'digital divide' or 'digital exclusion'. This divide is often characterised by high levels of access to technologies

including the Internet while infrastructure in less developed nations is at a very low level due to problems of poverty, lack of resources, illiteracy and low levels of education. That women are in the deepest end of the digital divide has been the main message of gender advocates working in the field of ICTs.

### **ICTs and Gender Equality**

One of the strengths of APC's work in using ICTs for social justice is that it incorporates a gender perspective in its approach. This approach has been led and developed by the APC Women's Networking Support Programme. (WNSP)

Our approach in gender and ICT work involves an understanding of power relations in society. This recognition includes an awareness of the unequal power relations between women and men, north and south, rich and poor, urban and rural, connected and unconnected – in local communities, in sovereign countries, and globally.

WNSP works to transform these relations of inequality, with the full knowledge that ICTs can be used to either exacerbate or transform unequal power relations. Part of this recognition includes an awareness of the limits of ICTs – that in and of themselves, ICTs cannot create gender equality, or end poverty, but that they can be tools for social action and positive social change.

The APC's Women's Networking Support Programme began in 1993. At that time, preparations for the Fourth

World Conference on Women were under way and the APC WNSP, along with other pioneering women's information and communication networks, were implementing a range of activities concerned with addressing questions of basic access and connectivity and raising awareness about the importance of women engaging with ICTs.

By the time of the Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in Beijing in 1995, various women's organizations led by the APC Women's Networking Support Programme were not only training women in the use of electronic mail and the World Wide Web but were also raising awareness about the urgency of broadening media and communications concerns to include the new ICTs and addressing women's access to ICT and women's participation in the determination of how such technologies are designed and deployed.

Women's organizations globally called for greater women and citizens' participation in negotiations relating to the future of the information and communications industry and the international distribution of the Internet. The Beijing Platform for Action addressed this call, in part, through resolutions that state that women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. The Platform recognized the need for women to be involved in decision-making regarding the development of new technologies in order to participate fully in their growth and impact. It focused on increased access and participation of women to expression and decision making in the media and information and

communication technologies in order to overcome negative portrayals and stereotypes of women and encourage the presentation of balanced, non- stereotyped and diverse images of women in all forms of media.

As pointed out in the five-year review report of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, traditionally, gender differences and disparities have been ignored in policies and programmes dealing with the development and dissemination of improved technologies. As a result, women have benefited less from, and been disadvantaged more by, technological advances. Women, therefore, need to be actively involved in the definition, design and development of new technologies. Otherwise, the information revolution might bypass women or produce adverse effects on their lives. The outcome of the five-year review recommended that further actions and initiatives have to be explored and implemented to avoid new forms of exclusion and ensure that women and girls have equal access and opportunities in respect of the developments of science and technology.

### **APCWNSP gender approach in using ICTs for development and social justice**

Generally, the term ICT has been used to encompass technological innovation and convergence in information and communication that is transforming our world into so-called information or knowledge societies.

ICTs are collectively defined as innovations in microelectronics, computing (hardware and software),

telecommunications and opto-electronics —micro-processors, semiconductors, fibre optics that enable the processing and storage of enormous amounts of information, along with rapid distribution of information through communication networks. Linking computing devices and allowing them to communicate with each other creates networked information systems based on a common protocol. This has radically altered access to information and the structure of communication — extending the networked reach to many parts of the world.

In APC we define ICTs as technologies and tools that people use to share, distribute, gather information, and to communicate with one another, one on one, or in groups, through the use of computers and interconnected computer networks. They are mediums that utilise both telecommunication and computer technologies to transmit information.

### ***Are ICT's contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment?***

The women's movement was one of the first to create and manage its own online workspaces and communities. Where access to and control of mainstream media was dominated by corporate and state interests, the Internet provided the opportunity for women to publish information, news and analysis which were women-focused and from a gender perspective. In recent years, we have seen women publishing their own newspapers, broadcasting radio programmes and their own TV programmes.

Although far greater numbers of women are now using new communication technologies and the Internet in their work, the issues identified five years ago remain critical for most women in the world. At the same time the current pace of globalisation produces new challenges and impacts that we need to consider in relation to gender equality.

Women's organizations, led by those concerned more directly with communication, have therefore been developing advocacy and policy proposals to respond to these new challenges, by putting forward a more integral vision of women's involvement with ICTs. In WNSP's advocacy of integrating a gender perspective in ICT and development for the past 8 years we have identified many concerns that are important. We believe that the following are the most critical towards in achieving gender equality

### **Access and Control**

Women's access to ICTs and control over them is not equal to men's. When considering the way in which ICTs are allocated between women and men (the 'gendered' allocation of ICTs) it is important to look at the difference between access and control.

Access is the opportunity to make use of ICTs meaning not only technology but also information and knowledge. Control refers to the power to decide how ICTs are used, and who has access to them.

Women's access to ICTs and control of them (or lack thereof) is dependent on many factors. Factors such as gender discrimination in jobs and education, social class, illiteracy, geographic location (North or South, urban or rural), influence the fact that the great majority of the world's women have no access to ICTs or to any other sort of modern communication system, and possibly will not in their lifetime. It is logical to deduce that as information dynamics accelerate their migration towards the Internet, people without access are bound to suffer greater exclusion.

But there are also voices that insist that connectivity in itself is not enough, and that the know-how is equally or more important than the access itself. Criticism has been expressed of ICT development programs that all too often concentrate excessively on access to technology and information sources, as though it were sufficient to provide women with computers and modems for them to resolve their development problems.

### **Education, Training and Skill Development**

Education, training and skill development are critical to ICT interventions. Illiteracy rates for women in developing countries are far higher than the percentage of men. Training methods are often 'ad-hoc,' alienating and not customized to women's needs. Learning practices for women should be extended to girls and women, made gender-sensitive (making training women-specific, ensuring ongoing user support, and mentoring in the

communities where women live) and deepened (for women as users, technicians, policy- and change-makers).

World secondary school enrollment statistics show that only 11% have achieved gender equality and 51% have a lower enrollment ratio for girls than boys.

Moreover, training programs for women should focus not only on how to use the technology and software, but also on how to find, manage, produce and disseminate information, and how to develop policies and strategies to intervene effectively in and make use of this new medium.

Other major concerns are illiteracy and language as obstacles to information access; the need to break down gender and cultural barriers to women's access to careers in technology; and the design of software, that often does not respond to the needs of women and girls.

The extent to which ICTs are applied to the total emancipation of African women - in the words of ECA Executive Secretary K.Y. Amoako - will depend largely on an ICT culture being cultivated. In a contribution to the Flamme discussion, Fatma Mint Elkory of the Bibliotheque de l' Universite de Nouakchott shared the following experience of "Internet Days" in Nouakchott:

"they aim to affirm the political will to include this important and unavoidable tool for research, contact, knowledge and exchange. The organizing committee director is a Mauritanian woman." These days, she writes, have been extremely successful in galvanizing

awareness and could be emulated elsewhere. In South Africa, the Link Centre has been running highly successful basic ICT literacy courses for the general public in different localities on a Sunday. These too have helped to raise awareness on ICTs. Many more such initiatives are required.

### **Industry and Labour**

In the ICT industry, labour is highly sex-segregated. Women are found in disproportionately high numbers in the lowest paid and least secure jobs. The gender dimension of ICTs also affects telework, flexi-time, and work from home arrangements where women have few rights, meagre pay, and no health, social or job securities. A woman's wage-labour outside (or inside) the home as a result of the new technologies does not entail a change in the family division of labour. Men still get out of doing the housework, and women find themselves with dual or triple burdens. Poor working conditions, long-hours and monotonous work routines associated with ICTs are often injurious to women's health.

Technological changes affect the quality and quantity of women's work. Along with women's employment benefits from new technologies there are associated health, environmental and other costs. Employment issues of concern to women working in technology relate to contractual terms, intensification of workloads, wages, training, health and safety such as VDU hazards and repetitive strain injuries.

(From Women Encounter Technology as cited in the APC WNSP paper – “Gender and Information and Communication Technology: Towards an Analytical Framework”)

On average, women are paid 30 – 40% less than men for comparable work

In its employment report released in January 2001, the ILO reveals a “digital gender gap” with women under-represented in the new technology employment in both developed and developing countries.

The ILO report also finds that patterns of gender segregation are being reproduced in the information economy. The report adds: “Although pay inequality exists between those who have ICT skills and those who do not, pay polarization also exists within ICT use itself. This polarization is often gender-based.”

Women in India have increased their share to 27% of professional jobs in the software industry.

In the 1990s in the Caribbean and many other countries, thousands of women obtained jobs in the data-processing sector.

According to Professor Swasti Mitter of the United Nations University Institute for New Technologies (UNU/INTECH) who directed a UNIFEM sponsored research project on gender and new technologies, the growth of transnational teleworking has opened up many opportunities for women in the South, including data entry, medical transcription, geographical information systems and software production.

The work of UNU/INTECH in the context of China and Vietnam show that globalisation has brought new opportunities to young women with familiarity with English in new, service sector jobs, but has made a vast number of over 35-year-olds redundant, either because they are in declining industries, or have outdated skills.

### **Content and Language**

What content will predominate on the Internet and in new media? Who creates it? What is its cultural bias? Are women's viewpoints, knowledge and interests adequately reflected? How are women portrayed? These are some of the questions that have been raised relating to content, whether in Internet spaces, video games or virtual reality.

Women's viewpoints, knowledge and interests are not adequately represented while gender stereotypes also predominate the World Wide Web. Some of these concerns are an extension of those formulated previously in relation to sexism and portrayal of women in the media. But they also relate to a broader range of issues such as the need for women to systematize and develop their own knowledge and perspectives and make sure they are adequately reflected in these spaces.

The dominance of English language content on the Internet, often from countries of the North, is also a major concern raised by women's organizations. Language barriers to information access require the development of

applications like multilingual tools and databases, interfaces for non-Latin alphabets, graphic interfaces for illiterate women and automatic translation software.

### **Power and Decision Making**

Although women are acceding in ever-greater numbers to jobs and expertise with ICTs, the same is not necessarily true of their access to decision-making and control of the resources. Whether at the global or national levels, women are under-represented in all ICT decision-making structures including policy and regulatory institutions, ministries responsible for ICTs, boards and senior management of private ICT companies. One problem is that at both the global and national levels, decision making in ICTs is generally treated as a purely technical area (typically for male experts), where civil society viewpoints are given little or no space, rather than a political domain. Deregulation and privatisation of the telecommunications industry is also making decision-making in this sector less and less accountable to citizens and local communities further compounding decision-making and control of resources for women.

Representation is important in creating the conditions and regulations that will enable women to maximize their possibilities of benefiting from ICTs, and ensuring the accountability of the institutions that are responsible for developing ICT policies. This is important in a number of spheres. One is to do with creating the conditions and regulations that will enable women to maximize their possibilities of benefiting from ICTs, and ensuring the

accountability of the institutions that are responsible for this valuable resource.

### **Privacy and Security**

Privacy, security and Internet rights are other important thematic areas for women. They include having secure online spaces where women feel safe from harassment, enjoy freedom of expression and privacy of communication and protection from 'electronic snooping.' They also include the passage of ICT legislation that can threaten human rights.

While many developing countries are grappling with basic access and IT infrastructure issues, many countries in the global North are now defining the basic rights framework for Internet use and governance.

One of the most important democratising aspects of the Internet, often overlooked, has been the creation of private online spaces. The Internet provides the opportunity for such private spaces to develop beyond national boundaries. By enabling the international sharing of experiences by oppressed sectors and by allowing people living under undemocratic regimes to communicate safely and privately, the Internet is playing a role in helping to overcome oppression and exploitation. APC has played an important part in utilising this aspect of the Internet for the development of democracy, particularly in its work to oppose gender discrimination.

However, governments and states around the world are now claiming that the private communication that exists on the Internet has to be ended. Legislation, such as the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Act in Britain and the Wiretapping Act in Japan, is being put in place, together with technical resources, to enable state interception and monitoring of private Internet communication. International agreements are being made between states to combat "cybercrime" by intercepting private email correspondence. For many of the states involved, democracy itself is considered to be a crime. These developments have been given a new impetus by the events of September 11th, 2001. In the name of "the war against terrorism" serious challenges to fundamental privacy rights are being made. Recent moves by the US government and some European countries have the effect of destroying democracy in the name of defending it against terrorism and cybercrime. They enforce unacceptable surveillance measures against the general population that could soon be avoided by terrorists and criminals.

Another justification for interception of Internet communications often put forward to the general public is that this is needed to combat the sexual exploitation of women, and particularly children, and to combat the activities of racist groups. But it is the creation of private spaces, where the victims of abuse can discuss between themselves and with others they trust and have chosen to talk to, that has, in fact, proven to be the most powerful weapon against both sexual exploitation and racial oppression. Activist user groups, often operating on APC

member networks, have brought about many such spaces on the Internet.

APC supports the rights of its members and users to create areas of private discussion and debate free from monitoring and surveillance. We believe this is a basic requirement of democracy, particularly essential for empowering exploited and victimised sections of society. We work with our member organisations and other civil society groups to defend the privacy of the correspondence of our Internet communities.

### **Trafficking, Pornography and Censorship**

The use of the Internet to perpetuate violence against women and as a platform for hate or racist speech and opinions (or other forms of exploitative and offensive behaviour) is of great concern to everyone, particularly women.

Organisations working on the issue of women's trafficking have long problematised the impact of the Internet on the trafficking of women and children and on the proliferation of pornography. While they have recognised the reality that traffickers and pornographers have also moved into the Internet to further their business, women's organisations have been also too aware of the dilemma of calling for government action against this.

A particularly sensitive issue is the use of the Internet for pornography, sexual exploitation or hate literature. One of the fiercest debates in the area of Internet Rights is that

regards freedom of expression and censorship. The large and growing presence of pornography on the Internet has been used to argue for the need to have stricter policies on content. There have been calls on developing technology that will not only filter content but will track down creators and clients of pornographic websites. Some argue that this constitutes an infringement of women's rights and should therefore be controlled. But many women feel strongly that proposing control on these areas constitutes an invitation to censorship that might easily be extended to limit other forms of freedom of expression.

The problem here is that much of this legislation is open to wide interpretation in regard to what the State might consider 'harmful' or 'illegal'. Combined with alarming trends in cooperation and collaboration between state security services, the aim of which is primarily to cooperate in the sharing of information gathered through surveillance and monitoring of the Internet (and some other communication devices), the human rights implications are obvious.

No one has been able to offer concrete alternatives that respond to the various needs and demands the situation present. What is clear and must be a priority is that women are informed, aware and involved in the discussions and debates that must take place around this emerging trend.

### **Making the Connection: Putting ICTs to Strategic Use**

APC's members were often the first providers of Internet in their countries. Today, our network continues to pioneer practical and relevant uses of ICTs for civil society, especially in developing countries. APC is an international facilitator of civil society's engagement with ICTs and related concerns, in both policy and practice. We address both policy and operational issues and feed practical experience into both national and international contexts.

The APC Women's Networking Support Programme (APC-WNSP) facilitates the strategic use of ICTs in support of women's actions and agendas, to bring more attention to issues of concern to women, reinforce solidarity campaigns, enhance traditional women's networking activities and defend the rights of women to participate equally in civil and public life. This entails working with women and their organisations to integrate the use of ICTs in a way that strengthens their capacities, improve information flows within their organisations, empower individual members to do their work and improve their organisation's overall ability to achieve its strategic objectives. Strategic use also involves harnessing information and communications technology to organize and transform information into knowledge and communicating that knowledge to a wider global community to promote the development of cultures that are based on values of equality, freedom and justice, including gender equality.

## The Right to Communicate

There can be no doubt that advocacy for a new information and communication environment should fully integrate gender concerns and women's advancement. The challenge is to ensure that individuals, communities, nations, and the international community gain access to, and are able to use effectively, the information and knowledge they need to address their development challenges and improve their lives. At the core of this new environment is the democratisation of people's access to information and communication facilities and technological resources.

Fifty years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized the right to information as a fundamental human right. The assertion of this right has become even more urgent at a time when technological advancement in the production of information and knowledge is reshaping the organization of our societies globally. Equally important is advocating for the recognition of the right to communicate as a fundamental human right. The exercise of our democratic freedoms and the full and equal participation in current economic development is the basis for the assertion of our right to information and communication. Within this context fall women's rights to equal and democratic access to information and communication technologies.

The right to communicate counters the current hegemonic ownership structure of national and global information

networks. This advocacy is steadily gaining a groundswell of support from civil society worldwide who have no voice in the national and international agreements and legislation to technological resources and information.

Rights related to access and use of the Internet and electronic communication infrastructure allows ordinary people to have their voices heard. The Internet has allowed the voices of ordinary citizens and organisations lacking strong financial resources to be heard. With over 200 million users worldwide and an estimated 1 billion users by 2005, the Internet provides a unique public sphere where decisions that shape people's lives can be freely debated and considered. It allows small groups and individuals, men and women - previously working in isolation from one another - to communicate, network, share information and prepare actions in ways they've never been able to before.

ICTs must be made available to all at an affordable cost and the development of infrastructure must ensure that marginalised groups are not further disadvantaged. . This should be the strategic starting points for all concerned with gender equality and social transformation. In a globalised world that continuously undermines localised democratic institutions the Internet provides an essential means for defending and extending participatory democracy.

The Internet and ICTs can be used to strengthen diversity and provide a platform for a multitude of voices, a pluralism of ideas and opinions and a place for cross-

cultural exchange. But this can only be true if developments are driven by a desire to preserve and enhance local and regional linguistic diversity and civil society has a voice in the policy formations, which regulate control and ownership of the Internet.

## APPENDIX A

# Asking Questions

When we, as evaluators, are trying to start a new initiative or to evaluate one, the questions we ask are always important. But before we ask questions of others, there are some important questions that we need to ask ourselves:

- how do we construct the questions?
- when do we ask them?
- who will reply to them?
- how do we corroborate the information we receive?
- what will we do with the information we collect?

If we ask the questions, on time and to the right people, decision making can be more accurate and effective. Questions are the basis for building knowledge and trust. They are a very powerful tool that we must use carefully and respectfully, especially when we are evaluating a community process and its results.

### Why are we asking questions?

Before asking any question or applying any questionnaire, it is important that the people answering the questions

know and understand why we are asking them.

In evaluation processes, the Evaluation Team is not the only group who will use the information generated. The audience for evaluation results is mixed (donors, government, individuals and organisations who are interested in the same initiative, the community itself), so further work must be done to develop questions based on their requirements, recommendations and comments.

It is important that the Evaluation Team ask questions that the community already has and wants to resolve. Evaluations should help communities understand their reality and not be simply a tool for external users. This means that the evaluation questions are constructed with the communities and translated into new questions that will help the community to know itself better and understand their own process.

### How do we avoid resistance?

Evaluation processes can raise resistance. Fear about consequences of evaluation results (such as confronting conflicts or losing support from donors or trust from the community) can influence the truthfulness and accuracy of responses to the questions we ask of ourselves and other stakeholders in an evaluation.

We can avoid resistance by structuring questionnaires so that they are directed at solving problems, identifying lessons learned, clarifying decisions and informing future

actions.

### Who will reply to our questions?

The inclusion of women and men's perspectives in the responses we receive depend not only on the *questions* we ask but equally on *who* we ask. In all stages of an evaluation it is essential to identify and collect information from female informants. For example, in many organizations, more women continue to do the information, communication and administration.

### What questions should we ask?

Questions must describe and determine the basic as well as gender characteristics of the initiative being evaluated. Here are two examples containing two sets of questions that we can use as a guide in constructing our own questions:

**Below are some suggested questions. The real questions you should ask depend on you and how much you listen and understand.**

- **Context:** Is it a rural or urban experience? What is the social, economic and political situation they are dealing with? What were the gender issues or conditions? What barriers were there before the start of the project? Why was the project started? (team and community motivation)? Who knows about the project (recognition) inside and outside

the community? How are the project relationships with the government and agencies?

- **Timelines:** When did the project start? How long is the timeline of the project? How was the implementation conceived or planned in terms of activities vs time/resources?
- **Resources:** How much contribution (time, information, equipment, goods, money, etc) was received for the project? From who? How were these contributions raised? Under what conditions?
- **Team:** Who is working in the project? How many men and women? What are their roles and responsibilities in the project? How is their life/family situation? How old are they? What is their background? How did they get involved? Are they volunteers or are they paid? If they are paid, what is their salary compared with the minimum salary in the country? Can they live with that? What is their job contract? What extra benefits do they get? What training and support have they received during the project?
- **Lessons learned:** What were the original objectives of the project? Did these objectives address gender needs? How were they addressed? Which activities were carried out to fulfill them? Where? By whom? What project areas do you want to analyze more deeply? Why? What expected and unexpected results were accomplished? What activities would you do in a different way if you were to start your project again? What substantive changes were made during the project

implementation? If you consider your ICT initiative to have been successful, what do you think are the key factors contributing to this success? What recommendations would you make to other project managers based on your experience? What did the use of computers and Internet access teach you?

## APPENDIX B

# Story Telling

The purpose of the following guidelines is to provide a framework in which we can gather stories that can be used in evaluating ICT initiatives.

The guidelines are divided into three sections. The first section explores some important considerations before starting to gather stories. These are fairness of representation, consent, barriers, difficulties and potential for harm. The second section looks at three methods for gathering stories highlighting things to consider. In the final section, we identify the types of content we are looking for to help illustrate concepts, ideas, and experiences explored in gender equality and ICT for social change evaluation work.

### STORY/PARTICIPANTS/SOURCES

#### Choosing a story [top](#)

We can tell our own stories or we can gather stories of others. Storytelling is most potent when we encourage people to tell their own stories. Keeping in mind that there can be many stories within an organization or community, we can enhance inclusivity in choosing stories to be documented. In choosing stories, we can

start by asking ourselves these questions:

- Who is the story about?
- Is the story about me?
- What period of my life and work do I want to tell about?
- Who will be in my story?
- Who will be affected by this story?
- Is the story focusing on one group of women and excluding others?

#### The Storyteller's Point of View [top](#)

It is important to know who the storyteller is and establish whose point of view we are hearing in particular stories.

- Who is telling the story?
- Why is it important for the storyteller to tell the story?
- Was the storyteller an observer or an active participant in the story?
- What is the role and position of the storyteller?

#### Participation of other players in the story [top](#)

There may be more than one voice in the telling of stories. Here are some questions that can help identify other main characters in the story.

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- Aside from the storyteller, who else are involved in telling the story?
- Whose voices are we hearing?
- How are these persons involved in the story?
- Are there women involved in telling the story?
- Who are they?

### **Barriers, difficulties and potential for harm [top](#)**

There are barriers and difficulties for women in making their stories visible. Finding out what these are is the first step in uncovering gender equality considerations in any ICT initiative.

- Are there barriers to telling this story?
- Could these stories put anyone in a difficult situation?
- Could the story benefit or harm some people more than others?
- If we ask women to speak about their lives and ICT experiences, will it be safe for them to do so?
- What should we do to make the environment safe for storytelling?

### **Consent [top](#)**

***Asking the permission of those involved before telling their stories is a sound and ethical practice.***

- Have we explained to everyone involved what

the story/project is about, and who and what it is for?

- Have we explained to everyone involved in the story our understanding of their rights, responsibilities and possible repercussions?
- Are we clear what it means for people to give informed consent?
- Do our story participants, know how the information we collect will be stored? destroyed? used in other ways?
- If a new use for the information emerges, will we consult with participants to determine whether they are willing to have it used for a different purpose than was first intended?

### **METHODS FOR GATHERING STORIES**

There are many ways of gathering stories. In this section, we only focus on two general methods - face-to-face and online interchanges.

#### **Method One: face to face interchange [top](#)**

Face to face interchange can be with one person or with groups. This can be done through a structured interview or through free-flow conversation or discussion.

In all of these situations, our guidelines should focus on how to ask questions, and document answers. In the free flow exchanges the emphasis should be on how to

stimulate discussion and story telling, and how to document them. Our stories will also be more informative if our guidelines explain how to categorise information such as:

- information about the social and environmental context
- information about the people/actors/gender
- information about the communities
- information that is contested

In facilitating a guided conversation, it is important to keep in mind that we need to be focused on the story/experience we want to know more about and the clarity of questions we ask is important. At the same time, we must also try to keep a sense of equality between the person gathering the story and the person whose story is being sought. We need to allow the latter to create new questions and even take the discussion in directions that we may not have anticipated.

In both scenarios, we can enrich stories by capturing quotes so that the storytellers voice remains strong in the documented story. One of the most important learning in story telling is about voice and language. Any story is most powerful if you can hear the voice (through quotes, and through the language) of the person who tells it.

## **Method Two: Online interchange** [top](#)

Story telling can also be done through a combination of online methods through email interviews, online discussions and real-time online conversations through chat facilities. With online methods, we will have to rely more on structured interviews and prepared questions. In phrasing our questions, we can avoid report-like responses if we include many open questions around expected/unexpected outcomes/happenings. Allowing "unstructured" and informal use of language in answering questions will also encourage the spontaneity of storytelling which can easily be diminished when people are not used to writing.

One of the advantages of online methods is the speed and ease of communication. We can make full use of this by getting the story told in several stages through a period of time. For example, we can first send questions via email that maps out the general contours of the story. Then we have an online discussion or converse using chat programs where we can talk more about specific situations and probe problems and questions. This combination can help in surfacing the various layers of stories.

If online methods are not sufficient, we can always make use of telephone interviews which enhances dialogue, conversation and the exploration of elements in more detail.

## CONTENT TO BE EXPLORED IN STORIES [top](#)

This section focuses on the content that is important to explore so that we end up with stories that go beyond the narration of events. We present them here in the form of questions to use in formulating more specific ones in gathering stories.

### Context/Background [top](#)

The first thing to find out about in every story is its setting. In ICT initiatives, this means exploring information about the economic, social, cultural and technological background of the story. General information such as location (rural or urban), economic situation and literacy are important to note. Specific ICT elements in the context/background can be found by asking the questions such as:

- when and why were ICTs introduced?
- how were they introduced
- what ICTs were they?
- what were ICTs used for?

In answering these questions, it is essential to collect gender-disaggregated data wherever possible. We can find out more about the roles and relationships of women and men by exploring answers to questions regarding:

- **participants** - who are involved

- **resources** - who have access to resources; in what way do they access or use these resources
- **power and decision making** - who makes decisions about ICT appropriation, access and use
- **roles** - how do women use ICTs in their everyday tasks/work (household/community; paid/unpaid)

### Learning and Change/Transformation [top](#)

The most important subject of evaluations is finding out the learning and change that occurred in a personal, organizational and community level. This is also one of the most significant things we want to know in stories that we gather. Before we are able to do this, we will have to go back to the values/principles that guide communities/ICT projects and initiatives. This often determines the changes that they perceive. Some general questions that can help identify what changes occurred are:

- Has anything changed as a result of the process/initiative?
- What has changed, at what levels have these changes occurred?

For example:

- Has the use of ICTs made any changes to they type of work you do? If so how?

- Has it changed how you make decisions?

### **Gender Analysis/Gender Planning and ICTs** [top](#)

To explore the learning and changes in gender equality and women's empowerment, we need to focus on questions that proceed from gender analysis and gender planning such as:

- **access and control** - what access to resources do women have now that they didn't have before; who was trained, by whom?
- **power and decision making** - what roles do women and men have in decision-making
- **roles** - what activities do people do; what are women/men using technology for; what are the differences between the roles of women and men; why are there differences; how does age difference affect all of above;
- **change/transformation** - what changes have people gone through; how do women and men perceive these changes in relation their roles, relationships and power
- **project/initiative concept and plan** - does the project reinforce women's roles or change roles
- **vision of the future** - how people see the future, especially in relation to children (gives a good indicator of visioning future) and what change/transformation they would like (e.g., how they see their daughters/sons in the future in relation to ICTs and roles in the community)

- **policy/legislation environment** - is it a gender enabling environment? are women aware of these - if not, why? - if yes, are they influencing/shaping them from women's experience/perspectives
- **economic factors in ICTs**
  - Who supplied the ICTs?
  - Who provides support?
  - Who do you pay to provide support and training?
  - Have you had to employ additional staff/consultants?
  - Are they men or women?
  - Who paid for ICT infrastructure?

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