Gender Evaluation Methodology for Internet and ICTs

A Learning Tool for Change and Empowerment

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Association for Progressive Communications APC Women's Networking Support Programme

2005

GENDER EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR INTERNET AND ICTS
A LEARNING TOOL FOR CHANGE AND EMPOWERMENT

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APC Women's Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP)

What is the APC WNSP

We are an international network of individual women and women's organisations promoting gender equality in the design, implementation, access and use of ICTs and in policy decisions and frameworks that regulate them.

We engage in research, training, information, and support activities in the field of ICT policy; skills-sharing in the access and use of ICT; and women's network-building.

What are the goals of the Programme

- to promote gender in ICT policy-making bodies and forums
- to initiate and implement research activities in the field of gender and ICTs
- to advance the body of knowledge, understanding, and skills in the field of gender and ICT by holding and engaging in training activities
- to facilitate access to information resources in the field of gender and ICT

What does the Programme do

Since 1995, the Programme has implemented a diverse range of activities designed to respond to our mission and goals. These activities are clustered around five main areas of work:

- Policy and advocacy
- Research and evaluation
- Information facilitation
- Developing training methodologies and materials
- Support for emerging national and regional internet based networks

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PREFACE

GEM is not only a *tool* for gender evaluations. Nor is it just a guide or a manual that breaks down gender concepts and makes it relevant for ICT projects.

GEM is also a *project* and a *community*.

GEM as a *project* germinated in January 2000. A workshop, held in a small Manila hotel in the Philippines, was the seed that grew into a four-year undertaking. About 30 women, mostly members of APC WNSP, reflected on almost 10 years of women's networking in an attempt to build a collective understanding of the real impact of our work in changing women's lives. But instead of arriving at definitive answers, we ended up asking more questions about change, empowerment and ICTs. What changes are empowering for women? how do these changes shift gender relations between women and men? how can we tell if ICTs are making a difference in these changes? how do we measure these changes?

These questions led to months of research, meetings and painstaking writing. At that time, evaluations of ICT projects were very hard to come by. Evaluation tools for ICT projects were only beginning to be explored, mainly through the work of the International Development Research Centre which was developing an evaluation framework for ICTs for development projects. APC WNSP provided the gender related perspective in this endeavour through proposals around building gender considerations in evaluation frameworks that were largely gender neutral.

Given the dearth in the ICT field, our research drew heavily from the evaluation field, which though rich in frameworks, tools and experiences were otherwise wanting of a strong gender component. In the end, we went back to our roots. We engaged gender evaluation models, which while mostly clueless in relation to ICT or technology for that matter, gave us grounding in investigating what really mattered most if we wanted to probe deeply about power and relations – between men and women, among classes and races, ethnicities, disabilities, and religions and other inequalities that define women's conditions in society.

The mix of all these distilled knowledge generated a hybrid tool. The GEM tool, its first version, was published online in October 2001. Only now, from hindsight, can I call that "the first version" for back then, we didn't know for sure how the GEM tool would be received and how it was

going to evolve. From the combined wisdom and experience of a talented community of ICT practitioners, gender specialists and evaluators who participated as researchers, critical reviewers, resource persons and workshop facilitators, the tool was modified – widening its reach and applicability and increasing its usefulness to various contexts, areas and advocacies.

GEM, the *community* was born in Cuernavaca, a small town south of Mexico City in May 2002, in the first workshop of GEM testers, the first users of the tool. They were joined by organisations from Asia, then Africa who learned about the GEM tool in Zanzibar, Tanzania and finally by women from Central and Eastern European countries who gathered in Prague for our final testing workshop. The participants in these workshops, numbering around 100, were the first members of the GEM practitioners network – a learning community of women's information centres, community radio networks, community telecentres, education and training initiatives, e-governance projects, internet and service providers, both from rural and urban areas.

Since then, our multicultural and multilingual GEM Project Team and the APC WNSP network have gone through an incredible learning experience, amassing a wealth of knowledge in gender and ICT evaluation. We have worked with more organisations after the testing period of GEM and conducted many workshops for community-based organisations that provide access and information to policy focused networks that advocate gender perspectives in international and national contexts.

In the last two years, we have worked with partners in 25 countries evaluating 32 projects, organised and facilitated 25 workshops with over 350 participants and presented GEM in over 50 events across 25 countries.

Whether you are a practitioner, a policy maker or a donor; in media or in the technical field working in rural or urban contexts and living in a developing or developed country, GEM offers you the convergence of our lessons in the last four years.

Welcome to our growing community of GEM practitioners.

Chat Garcia Ramilo

Manila, Philippines

The Master said You must write what you see
But what I see does not move me.
The Master answered Change what you see.

Vita Nova by Louise Glück

"You had the sense to see that you were caught in a story, and the sense to see that you could change it to another one."

"The Story of the Eldest Princess" by A.S. Byatt

"No matter how elegant or beautiful a theory may appear, it is doomed if it disagrees with reality."

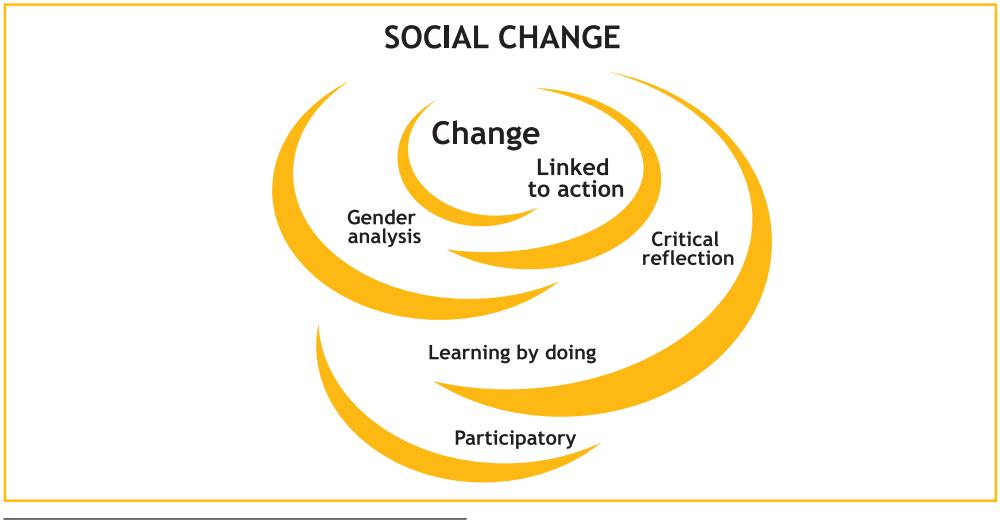
Hyperspace: A Scientific Odyssey through Parallel Universes, Time Warps, and the 10th Dimension by Michio Kaku

Learning for Change

LEARNING FOR CHANGE

The Evaluation Model

Learning for Change is the overall framework Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP) uses in its evaluation tool. Grounded on the advocacy for social change and seen from a perspective that uses gender analysis in evaluating ICT initiatives and projects, Learning for Change, looks at evaluation as a process of learning that is dynamic, evolving, and interactive. It aims to examine how an ICT intervention from a gender perspective affects changes in an individual, organisation and community, including other broader social contexts.



"GEM Reference: The Betel Chew Ritual" [Wood, Peregrine]

Values and Practices of Learning for Change

Self and Social Change

The evaluation model pays special attention to self and social change – understanding the dynamic relationship between an ICT initiative on both self and social change. Learning for Change uses "self" to mean individuals, organisations and communities involved in an ICT initiative. Evaluation that focuses on self-change examines the dynamic relationship between ICT initiatives and the way individuals, organisations and communities operate. At the same time, Learning for Change looks into the relationship between an ICT initiative and the broader social, political, cultural, and economic contexts, seeking to understand how these factors affect the initiative and vice-versa.

Gender Analysis

Gender analysis involves a systematic assessment of the different impacts of project activities on women and men. Used from an ICT context, gender analysis asserts that power relations in class, race, ethnicity, age, and geographic location interact with gender producing complex and hidden inequalities that affect social change. A gender analysis framework also looks into how ICTs, in particular, are used to maintain or bring about social change. Thus, a gendered approach in evaluating ICT projects and initiatives will, for example, disaggregate data by sex, analyse the sexual division of labour, and understand the gender disparities of access to and control over resources.

Learning by Doing

Evaluation is not a complex undertaking performed only by technical experts. Formal qualifications are helpful and valuable but they are not prerequisites for a thorough-going evaluation work. More important qualities to a meaningful evaluation are keen observation, critical reflection, and sensitivity on the effects of project activities and the contexts in which they operate. Recording observations and holding regular assessments give insights. These make up our learnings – real-life experiences – that validate knowledge in conducting evaluations.

Linked to Action

Change springs from learning by doing; from lessons learned. Evaluation exercises are not ends in themselves but are linked to action which emphasises the importance of using what was learned. Evaluation results must be

Evaluation is not a complex undertaking performed only by technical experts

popularised and should empower women, and propel groups and organisations to improve succeeding ICT initiative/s and evaluation exercises.

Participatory

An evaluation exercise must be participatory. It needs to engage with groups involved at the grassroots or those working in a particular community serviced by the ICT initiative. The process should involve all stakeholders; its findings shared with all who were involved to ensure accountability.

Critical Reflection

Evaluation is an opportunity to reflect thoroughly on the project or initiative, its advances and mishaps. It is important to constantly review information gained from an evaluation process. Judiciously examine what have been gathered and transform them into knowledge.

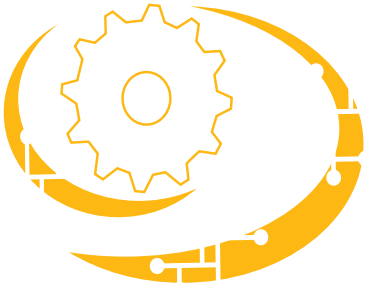
Sensitive to Bias

Evaluation is not a neutral activity. All stakeholders, including the evaluator, bring into the process their specific biases that will somehow affect the outcome of the evaluation. Evaluators should discuss their partialities with the group especially when these begin to influence their judgment in the evaluation exercise. It is best to remember that a successful evaluation thrives in an open atmosphere of trust and sincerity.

Context Sensitive

Each ICT initiative enters into a unique social, cultural, economic and political reality. An effective evaluator is sensitive to each unique reality and seeks to understand its dynamics as well as how these operate in a project. Context sensitivity also puts premium value on the choice of methodologies that will be used in the evaluation. Moreover, it requires an evaluation process to identify and investigate situations or other realities that ICT initiatives or projects were unable to reach.

Each ICT initiative enters into a unique social, cultural,economic and political reality



Quantitative and Qualitative Aspects

Evaluations must take into account both quantitative and qualitative changes that emerge from an ICT initiative. Quantitative changes are those that can be measured numerically like the number of women who were taught to use email in a particular project or the number of times a website was accessed in a specific period. But it is always best to support quantitative data by findings on qualitative changes because quantitative measurements can only give half of a story.

Qualitative changes are changes that cannot be measured by numbers. An important qualitative change from a gender perspective, for example, is a woman's sense of personal empowerment, greater self-confidence or a higher sense of self-esteem derived from or was a result of using ICTs. Another example would be manifestations of changes in relationships in an organisational or household set-up brought about by using ICTs. These qualitative changes can be gathered using methodologies like interviews or story telling.

Work Cited:

Wood, Peregrine. "GEM Reference: The Betel Chew Ritual". Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme. 2001. Online. http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/resources/betelchew.htm#top (n.d.)

Gender Analysis

Gender Analysis

Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) is a guide that integrates gender analysis into evaluations of initiatives that uses information communication technologies for social change. This section draws out the basic definitions that are used in this methodology, particularly around concepts related to gender. It is important to understand that GEM is a tool that undergoes continuous development through its implementation and creative adaptations in different initiatives, as well as from feedback on its applicability. GEM does not present itself as a hard and fast set of instructions and rules that cannot be broken. It is only through this evolving and participatory process that the practicality and effectiveness of GEM as a useful methodology can be realised.

Basic Gender Concepts

What is Gender?

Gender is a concept that refers to the social and cultural constructs that each society assigns to behaviours, characteristics and values attributed to men and women, reinforced by symbols, laws and regulations, institutions, and perceptions. The basis of these constructs lies behind the idea that they are natural or intrinsic, and therefore, unalterable. On the contrary, gender constructs are shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. These are then translated into social, economic and political inequities; where men's activities and their gender attributes are perceived as essentially superior to women's.

It is important to note that gender does not mean man or woman per se. Biological traits that men and women are born with are termed as 'sex', which refers only to differences in sexual organs and anatomy. The concept of gender on the other hand, is used to understand the social and personal *relations* between man and woman, as well as how the concepts of femininity and masculinity are constructed. Gender attributions are often justified on the grounds of sexual or biological difference. For example, women are perceived

to be *naturally* nurturing, a characteristic linked to their reproductive capacity as child-bearers.

Gender attributions are often oppressive – concepts that were passed on through centuries and ensured by societies to be rigidly adhered to. The typical characteristics assigned to women and men are discriminatory that limit and even damage individual lives. Historically, it is woman who has lost in the relations of the sexes. As such, gender is at the same time a category that has to do with relations as well as politics.

Gender attributions have also permeated the field of science and technology. Often categorised as "hard" and therefore "masculine", it is a field traditionally considered more suited for men than women. For example, the perception that women fare poorly in science and technology relative to men is often attributed to biological limitations of women, rather than to gender stereotypes in educational materials, teaching approaches, study opportunities, and technological design that contribute to a gender gap in ICT use. Unchallenged gender role stereotypes are built into these resources and methods, which in turn continue to maintain these stereotypes. Consequently, men are assumed to be better equipped to pursue science and technology compared to women, creating greater obstacles for women from entering the field.

Social dimensions of gender relations

- Gender relations are context specific.
- Gender relations intersect with other social relations like class, ethnicity/race, and age.
- Gender relations can and do change in response to altering political and socio-economic changes.
- Gender relations can be resistant to change because like other social relations, they are expressed in the institutions of society.

What are Gender Roles?

Examining gender roles leads to a better understanding on how women and men use ICTs differently, or to what ends men and women use them. For example, in the field of e-commerce, many projects only taught women to use the internet to shop online. E-commerce applications for productive areas like monitoring prices of farm products were mainly designed for farmer communities predominantly led by men. In the past few years however, ICT applications have begun to focus on training women entrepreneurs in e-business. While many of these applications do not necessarily challenge changes in the reproductive roles of women, they now recognise women's productive roles which in some cases have opened up changes in the status of women in the household. Many experiences in introducing using ICTs in communities have resulted in changes in the status of community members who now have access to and know-how in using ICTs (for example, in telecentres). In some communities, women have been able to transcend traditional barriers of leadership that were previously seen as man's domain by becoming information brokers or trainers in telecentres.

When differentiating gender roles, we need to pay close attention to the differences and similarities by which women and men access and use these technologies and how power relations impact on these conditions. For example, how do boys and girls and men and women use the internet? Do they have equal access to it in practical terms, or is a particular use held to be more important than another? Are there gendered dimensions to this valuation? In a developmental organisation, is there a gender difference among those who use email and those who do not? When decisions are made regarding purchase of new equipment, what criteria in terms of use are employed? Again, does gender play a part in the assessment?

Likewise, the effects of using ICTs impact differently on women and men. For instance, do ICTs save time or in effect create more demands in terms of time because of gender roles? To be more specific, does telecommuting create the potential for more work because it blurs the distinction between private (home) and public (office) domains? In what aspects do gender roles come into this set-up? What are the expectations? Are they different from men and women? 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? Does a woman's work time increase or decrease? Drawing attention to different and multiple gender roles and responsibilities will enable practitioners to understand that women's ICT needs are often different from men's, and meeting those needs may entail specific planning requirements.

The body of literature in gender analysis points to three common roles: reproductive, productive and community management.

Reproductive roles include childbearing/ rearing responsibilities and domestic roles usually performed by women who are required to reproduce and maintain the labour force. Although these roles are actually work, they are however differentiated from what is understood as 'productive' because performing these roles are not recognised as 'work'. As such, work in this category is unpaid. These tasks are not reflected in any country's GDP or GNP.

Productive roles comprise work done by both women and men that generate income (in cash and/or in kind) and have an exchange value.

Community roles are those 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. (Of course, there are other participants in a community that engage in this type of work like senior men and women, infirmed or those who have disabilities, underemployed and unemployed members of the community.)

Because women tend to assume multiple roles (caring for children while engaged in productive and community roles), it is important to take these into account when formulating an evaluation plan or analysing the impact of a particular ICT project in relation to gender. It is necessary to take note on how ICTs impact on these multiple roles and examine the changes that the new information economy bring to women and men's gendered roles. Take the case of telecentres that employ women. Some evaluations usually pay attention only to the infrastructure or hardware issues and fail to consider the social context and content of information that can negatively affect women and girls. Cybercafés or information centres for instance may be open during hours unsuitable for women who have to juggle their time between their productive and reproductive roles. Or the costs of

accessing these centres may be prohibitive to women and girls because they don't have as much disposable income relative to men and boys. In which case, it would be best to look into why women do not have as much income: could it be because the spending scheme of women must factor in expenses in the performance of their multiple roles (e.g. household expenses, family needs, etc.) leaving a small amount or hardly none at all for their needs? Or could it be because women lack the necessary skills for employment? Or since they shoulder most if not all of the reproductive roles in their family, they end up having no more time to engage in productive work?

Defining Gender

Gender is a socio-economic variable for analysing roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities, and needs of men and women in a given context. One aspect of gender analysis is exploring the nature of gender differences and their political meanings by systematically asking questions about how different men are from women in a given population, with respect to their:

* Roles and activities

who does what: productive activities? household reproductive activities (child care, cooking, water and fuel collection)? recreation? who does the work: women? men? girls? boys? is it done by both women and men? by only one of them?

how long does it take? is the work seasonal? monthly? weekly? daily?

where is the work carried out: home? farm? city? factory?

how rigid is the gender division of labour?

* Resources and constraints

what resources do men and women have to work with?

who uses/owns/controls each of these resources? who is excluded from use/ownership/control?

what decisions do men and women make: in the household? in the community?

are constraints to participation in social and economic life different for men and women?

* Benefits and incentives

who controls productive activity? reproductive activity?

who benefits from economic activity? who receives income? who controls income? what about non-income benefits?

do men and women have different incentives for participation in these activities?

Source: "Unit 1: A conceptual framework for gender analysis and planning"

Practical Gender Needs and Strategic Gender Interests

Practical gender needs are needs identified by women that do not challenge their socially accepted roles. These needs relate to fulfilling their productive, reproductive and community roles and responsibilities, which include basic, practical necessities such as shelter, employment and food.

Strategic gender interests on the other hand, challenge existing gender roles. They reflect demands that aim for equity for women, and 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 emphasises practical needs may make room for recognition and consideration of strategic interests. On the other hand, practical needs may reinforce the existing sexual division of labour, which subordinates women to men. Having access to telephones or the internet, for example, provides women access to means of communication but does not, however, automatically change their relative position to men.

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 broader strategic issues related to the gender interests of men and women to create conditions for gender equality. For example, in many developing countries, computers are being introduced in schools as tools to support the learning process. Researches have shown that classrooms are not free from gender bias. A gender assessment in 2001 in four African countries: Senegal, Mauritania, Uganda and Ghana, found that despite efforts to make the programme gender-sensitive, gender inequalities in access persisted. In some

schools in Uganda and Ghana, girls do not enjoy equitable access to the computer labs. High student-to-computer ratios and first-come-first serve policies do not favour girls who are heavily outnumbered by boys at the secondary level. Girls have earlier curfew hours and domestic responsibilities that limit their access time. [Gurumurthy 31-32] A gender-sensitive planning for this project is to implement a fair-use policy that ensures equal access and use of computers. But, the project may not be able to address a more strategic need – create the condition that will give rise to an increased enrolment of girls.

Differentiating practical needs from strategic gender interests provides insights for gender planning and evaluation and can be used as basis for identifying positive actions. For evaluation purposes, assessing the extent of responding to both practical and strategic gender needs can inform the impact of projects and initiatives.

Gender-transformative Strategies

Gender-transformative policies advocate and work for change and transformation of existing inequalities. On the other hand, gender-specific policies favour one gender over another to achieve gender goals while gender-neutral policies dismiss gender differences and do not advocate any change on the gender division of labour and resources.

Gender-transformative policies should provide women with enabling resources that allow them to take greater control of ICTs, to

determine the kind of ICTs they need, and to frame policies that will help them reach their goals.

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

- using political pressure at international conferences and consultations to demonstrate the importance of gender-sound policies and interventions
- serving as a 'watchdog' that monitors ICT impacts on women
- conducting researches and gathering data on gender concerns as central to ICTs for more effective lobby work
- promoting the use of gender analysis tools such as 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 initiatives in their involvement in ICT planning and policies
- extending financial or technical assistance to women to facilitate access to and control of ICTs by providing credit, training, and education

There are multiple frameworks of gender analysis that can be adopted in using GEM as an evaluation tool. We share two frameworks: "Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation" by Sara Hlupekile Longwe and "Gender and Information and Communication Technology: Towards an Analytical Framework" by Peregrine Wood. Longwe's examines gender and ICTs through its impact on women's empowerment while Wood's looks at the relationship between women and technology from various feminist perspectives. Both of these approaches have been used in our work.

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Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation

by Sara Hlupekile Longwe

"Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation" was delivered at a GEM Africa workshop on 16 November 2002. It expounds on a framework using gender analysis developed by Sara Hlupekile Longwe, a gender expert from Lusaka, Zambia. It argues that women's empowerment can be achieved by enabling women to wrest control on the factors of production, allowing them to equally participate in the development process of an activity or a project. (For purposes of this manual, we edited Longwe's paper.)

Longwe is a grassroots organiser, critic and author of the "Longwe Framework for Gender Analysis." She has pioneered the use of international human rights laws in the fight for women's rights in domestic courts. Since her first battle with the Zambia government as a young secondary school teacher for her maternity leave, Longwe has become a prime mover in a lobby group that successfully pushed the government to introduce, in 1974, a provision for maternity leave in the teaching service. Her continued involvement in women's rights in different fields, including ICTs, has earned her the Africa Prize Laureate in 2003 which recognised her contribution to gender struggles. [Zulu and The Hunger Project]

A Lens for Recognising a Gender Issue

We see the world in different ways – our appreciation and involvement are informed by many factors like class, race, gender, cultural backgrounds, economic and political situations, and many others. Aware of this, we need to use a kind of lens to look into the gender problems that operate in a project. These spectacles enable us to distinguish different types of gender-related problems, categorising and defining them according to their level of severity allowing us to better examine the situation.

Levels of Severity of Gender Problems

- *General Development Needs* are those needs which affect women and men equally, which can be said to bear hardly any impact on sex or gender difference, thus, ranking lowest on the levels of severity of gender problems. It is often claimed that such matters as the need for roads, transport, or water are general development needs. But given the severe gender differentiation and division of social and economic roles in most societies, it is doubtful whether any need, with the possible exception of the need for air, can properly be put in the category of a *general development need*. Nonetheless, it may be said that some needs are *more* general than others, where gender differentiation and discrimination are less severe. For example, perhaps roads are more of a general need in comparison with land. In Africa, access to land is an area where women have a much greater need, being the majority amongst farmers and food producers, but at the same time this is an area where women are severely discriminated against.

- *Women's Special Needs* are those needs that arise from biological or sex differences. Of course, these may be serious problems in a general sense, but they are not in themselves gender problems. Obvious examples for this category are the need for maternity hospitals, ante-natal care facilities, and so on. But most childcare facilities do not belong to this category because women's childcare responsibilities arise mostly from the gender division of labour rather than biologically given roles. (Of course, gender problems may arise out of women's special needs, for instance, where male control of the government budget leads to lack of funding for maternity hospitals).

- *Gender Concerns* are needs that arise as a result of the gender division of economic and social roles. Examples of these concerns proceed from women's domestic position like concern with child care, food preparation and production and the like. It is, for example, typical for women to be more dependent on the natural environment (vegetation or forests) where they gather food and medicines. For this reason, too, women and men have a very different *perspective* on development problems, as well as a different *identification* of problems that need to be addressed. A development project may *adjust* to gender concerns but must *address* gender issues.

- *Gender Inequality* is a more severe type of gender problem because the gender concern is *also* overlaid with gender inequality that stems from women having less access to facilities, opportunities and resources. In which case, women would require more resources and opportunities than men.

- A *Gender Issue* arises when people recognise that a particular instance of inequality is *wrong, unacceptable* and *unjust.* This realisation is more likely to arise where the gender gap is large, and when women are aware of their democratic and human rights. (In the very patriarchal states of Africa, most gender injustice is perpetrated against women, rather than the other way around.) Of course, from a purely moral standpoint, gender inequality is always unjust, and therefore an issue. But from a political

perspective, it is difficult to make gender inequality an issue if it lacks support from a broad public.

If your project recognises and addresses gender problems, are these problems the important and more serious issues, or has the project opted for the lesser problem of adjusting to gender role differentiation rather than tackling gender discrimination?

The above list will help you form a clear focus of interest on the type of gender problems which should be the *focus* for your evaluation. Hopefully, you will want your focus to be on the more serious issues, for instance on whether the project assists in tackling gender issues rather than merely disseminating information on gender concerns.

But if a project is to tackle serious gender issues, then we need to understand the dimensions of a gender issue.

A Lens for Analysing a Gender Issue

Our spectacles also need a lens that will enable us to see a gender issue in terms of its underlying causes because addressing an issue necessitates tackling its underlying causes, more than the effects.

Ideally, we expect that the Situation Analysis and Problem Identification parts of a project plan should identify the underlying causes of a particular gender issue. We should then expect that an intervention strategy is appropriate in tackling those underlying causes.

Below provides a useful framework for looking at the underlying causes of a gender issue:

Gender Gap is the observable (and often measurable) gap between women and men on some important socio-economic indicators (e.g. ownership of property, access to land, enrolment at school), which is seen to be unjust, and therefore presents a clear empirical evidence of the existence of a gender issue.

Gender Discrimination is the attitude and behaviour patterns that cause a gender gap. A gender gap is never accidental, but is caused by discriminatory gender treatment. In a patriarchal society, this is almost always the different treatment given to girls and women that cuts them off from access to opportunities, facilities and resources. Such discriminatory treatment may be part of a social custom, or may be entrenched in government administrative rules and regulations, and even in statutory laws. Even if these discriminatory practices reside in religious practices or customs, they may well have achieved the status of law in many countries.

Patriarchal Control is the system of male monopoly or domination of decision-making positions at all levels of governance, which is used to maintain male dominance and gender discrimination for the continued privilege of males.

Patriarchal Belief is the system of belief that serves to legitimise male domination and gender discrimination. It relies on patriarchal interpretations of biblical/religious texts, beliefs in male biological superiority (sexism) claiming that the unequal gender division of rights and duties is either natural (biological), or God-given, or too difficult to change because they are irretrievably embedded in culture.

Coercion is an even more ugly side of male domination that relies on violence against women to keep them in their place. Such

violence may be domestic, or institutionalised within schools, police, army, etc. Where women's acceptance of patriarchal belief begins to waver, physical and sexual violence is the fallback method for control and subjugation.

But if we are to tackle these underlying causes, then we must understand the process of women's empowerment by which gender issues can be recognised and addressed. If a project is to be action-oriented on gender issues, we should expect that it incorporates and enables the process of women's empowerment within its intervention strategy.

In order to evaluate a project's contribution to the process of women's empowerment, we need to understand the process.

A Lens for Seeing the Process of Women's Empowerment

A focus of evaluation interest might arise from the general question of whether a project is merely disseminating information on gender issues, or whether it is also contributing to the process of women's empowerment. But do we sufficiently understand this process? how do information systems contribute to this process? are we to naively assume that women are 'automatically empowered' by being better informed?

Because gender problems are embedded in a patriarchal system and given the dimensions of a gender issue, it becomes obvious that interventions cannot be achieved by 'top-down' planners. Women's advancement, however, involves the process of empowerment, or the process by which women achieve increased control over public decision-making. This empowerment is women's route to changing the practices and laws that discriminate against them, and the means to achieve an equitable gender division of labour and allocation of resources.

The male domination of decision-making is preserved by men for the purpose of serving their interests, where women do most of the work and men collect most of the rewards. It would be folly thinking for women to expect male leaders to suddenly 'realise' the value of gender equality, and 'give' women an equal share of the pie. Past experiences have provided more than enough proof that men do not 'give' power to women. It is axiomatic in gender politics, as in all politics, that power is never given; it has to be *taken*.

Clearly, therefore, we need a lens to look into the process of empowerment as a form of women's action by which a gender issue can be confronted. This process of empowerment may be better understood in terms of the following five 'levels' of a 'Women's Empowerment Framework':

- Welfare
- Access
- Conscientisation
- Mobilisation
- Control

Welfare is defined here as the lowest level at which a development intervention may hope to close a gender gap. By welfare we mean an improvement in socio-economic status, such as improved nutritional status, shelter, or income. But if an intervention is confined to this welfare level, then we are here talking about women being *given* these benefits, rather than producing or acquiring these benefits for themselves. This is therefore

the *zero level* of empowerment, where women are the passive recipients of benefits that are 'given' from on high.

Access is defined as the first level of empowerment where women improve their own status, relative to men, through their own work and organisation arising from increased access to resources. For example, women farmers may improve their production and general welfare by increased access to water, to land, to market, to skills training, or to information. But was the information which was considered appropriate 'given' to them by 'higher authorities'? Or did they increase their own access? If it is the latter, then this suggests the beginning of a process of conscientisation – of recognising and analysing their own problems, and taking actions to solve them.

Conscientisation is the process by which women realise that their lack of status and welfare, relative to men, is not due to their own lack of ability, organisation or effort. It involves the *realisation* that their relative lack of access to resources actually arises from the discriminatory practices and rules that give priority access and control to men.

Conscientisation is therefore concerned with a collective urge to action, to remove one or more of the discriminatory practices that impede women's access to resources. It is here where the potential for strategies of improved information and communication as a means for enabling the process of conscientisation becomes more evident. It is driven by women's own need to understand the underlying causes of their problems, and to identify strategies for action. The leadership of more liberated and activist women is essential at this phase where dissatisfaction with the established patriarchal order moves on to concrete steps.

Mobilisation is therefore the action level which complements conscientisation. First, it involves women coming together, recognising and analysing their problems. Women begin to identify strategies to overcome discriminatory practices, and plan to take collective action to remove these practices. Here communication may not be merely concerned with the mobilisation of the group, but also to connect up with the larger women's movement, to learn from the successes of women's similar strategic action elsewhere, and to link up with the wider struggle. Here communication entails joining the global sisterhood in the struggle for equal rights for women.

Control is the level reached when women have taken action achieving gender equality in decision-making on access to resources. They have taken what is rightly theirs, and no longer wait indefinitely for resources to be 'given' to them at the discretion of men or the whim of patriarchal authority. Here the role of information and communication is to spread the word on the development of successful strategies. For example, in the widows' fight to retain title to their property after their husband's death, strategies developed by women in Zambia may be equally useful, or adapted, in Southern and Eastern Africa.

These five levels do not happen in a linear progression, or the way they were written above. In some instances, the achievement of women's increased control leads to better access to resources, which improves their socio-economic status.

In evaluating a project, we need to ask ourselves if the project intervenes merely at the level of providing improved welfare, and access to information. Or does it enable women's participation in a process for increased conscientisation and mobilisation which then leads to more engagements and achieve control?

Sometimes, while making an appraisal of a project plan, the evaluator may already notice see the phenomenon of a *fade-away* in the

project's attention to gender issue. In other words, gender issues appear quite prominent in the Situation Analysis, but gradually fade away as the plan progresses towards goals, intervention strategies and objectives. This *fade away* may also manifest in the Women's Empowerment Framework. It is quite common for the Situation Analysis to boldly admit gender issues at the level of gender discrimination and women's lack of participation in decision-making. But as the plan moves on towards interventions, matters of welfare and access to factors of production become prominent. The evaluator may find it useful to use the above framework to draw a 'gender profile' of the project, assessing each element of the project plan in terms of its level of attention to women's empowerment.

Project implementation also provides another opportunity for the *fade away* phenomenon. It may be that the project plan provides quite bold interventions for women's empowerment, but management chooses to re-interpret this in a top-down manner. The end result of this is watered-down interventions concerned at the level of welfare and access.

Conclusion: Use Your Spectacles to Find Your Evaluation Focus

The above frameworks demonstrate that there are an *endless number* of questions which can be asked about every aspect of the project, even within our specific interest in the project's gender orientation. From this angle, the evaluator's task may now seem to be overwhelming.

But think of the frameworks as lenses in a pair of spectacles, similar to an optician who changes the lenses, the better for the patient to focus and choose the proper lens. Similarly in this paper, each framework provides a different lens or adds lenses that bring into fore additional aspects of the project evaluation. This enables you to map out well-focused priorities for your gender evaluation.

Using your different lenses, you now have a pair of spectacles that will help you focus on the:

- weakest aspects of the project where gender issues are absent;
- types of evaluation questions needed to look at vis-à-vis aspects of the project;
- more severe or crucial gender issues which the project needs to address;
- important underlying causes which need to be addressed; and
- aspects of women's empowerment to which the project can contribute.

With your new spectacles, you will now be able to focus on the evaluation problem and priorities. After that, you will be in a position to begin formulating essential evaluation questions, indicators, and methods for collecting the essential information.

So, before you do anything, don't forget to put on your spectacles!

Gender and Information and Communication Technology: Towards an Analytical Framework*

by Peregrine Wood

The past two decades have demonstrated the growing strength of the global women's movement in advocating issues on women's equality and empowerment. Among these issues are women's marginalisation and invisibility in all aspects of technology.

This paper presents a range of perspectives on gender and information and communication technology (ICT) drawn from a review of literature. It aims 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 where to view women's global participation in the need for and critique of computer networking. The framework builds on an initial paper developed for a research study undertaken by the Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme on women's global networking by incorporating more international perspectives into the discussion, and highlighting some issues and observations specific to women working in ICT.

Judy Wajcman's book *Feminism Confronts Technology* concludes: "The time is ripe for reworking the relationship between technology and gender. The old masculinist ideology has been made increasingly untenable by the dramatic changes in technology, by the challenge of feminism ... Technologies reveal the societies that invent and use them, their notions of social status and distributive justice. In so far as technology currently reflects a man's world, the struggle to transform it demands a transformation of gender relations." [166]

*This paper was written (circa 1998 or 1999) and can be accessed at http://www.apcwomen.org/resources/research/analytical-framework.html. We edited this paper for purposes of this manual.)

Defining the Concepts

Before embarking on a discussion of gender and ICT, it is important to clarify important terms used in this paper. According to Wajcman, 'technology' has at least three different layers of meaning. [14] First, 'technology' refers to what people know including the know-how to use technology, repair it, design it and make it. Second, 'technology' refers to the human activities and practices of technology such as steel making and computer programming. And finally, 'technology' refers to the hardware or the sets of physical objects such as computers or cars.

Swasti Mitter differentiates 'information technology' as a group of technologies that process rather than merely store or transmit information. [Mitter and Rowbatham 3] At the core of information technology is computers and software.

Pilar Riano defines 'communications' as "a social system of shared symbols and meanings (which) binds people together into a group, a community, or a culture". [280]

The term 'gender,' on the other hand, refers to the different roles men and women play in a society or a community. [Parker 18] These roles are determined by cultural, social and economic factors and differ within and between cultures and countries. Sheila Rowbotham notes that the term 'gender' has no single meaning, but is affected by a whole complex of social relationships. [Mitter and Rowbotham 341] Gender roles are different from sex differences in that sex differences are biological, and for the most part, unchangeable. Gender roles are dynamic and change over time. [UNDP 3]

Some Feminist Perspectives on Women and ICT

'Hidden from History'

One of the first things pointed out in the gender and technology literature is that women's contributions to the field have been left out of history. The task of early feminist scholars was to "uncover and recover the women hidden from history" who have contributed to technological developments. [Wajcman 15] During the industrial revolution, women invented and contributed to the invention of such crucial machines as the cotton gin, the sewing machine, the small electric motor, and the loom. Similarly, feminist work on the history of computing and information technology draws attention to the fact that women have always been involved in computing. To fully comprehend women's contributions to technological development, feminist writers argue for a movement away from the traditional conception of technology (which sees technology in terms of male activities) to a greater emphasis on women's activities.

Women in Technology

The 'women in technology' literature focuses on women's exclusion from technology, with change understood as coming about via increased access and further equal opportunities policies. Early studies of women and the engineering, computing and information technology sectors draw attention to women's under-representation in technical occupations and their over-representation in operator and clerical jobs. Although, more recent studies show women making some inroads into technical and higher level

occupations, there is an increasing feminisation of some of the lower level jobs. Educational data, too, show a distinct gender pattern with women representing a small and declining proportion of entrants to university computer studies courses. Studies on the conditions of work for women in technology draw attention to salary differences which show women earning less than men. [Henwood 32-37] The solution to these problems from the 'women in technology' perspective is to increase the number and proportion of women in computing and information technology.

A Technology Based on Women's Values

In the 1980s, feminists turned their attention to the gendered character of technology itself. "Rather than asking how women could be more equitably treated within and by a neutral technology, many feminists now argue that Western technology itself embodies patriarchal values." [Wajcman 17] Technology, like science, is seen as deeply implicated in the masculine project of the domination and control of women and nature. The argument from this perspective is for a technology based on women's values. Eco-feminists' critiques of technology have been particularly visible from this perspective concentrating on military technology and the ecological effects of modern technologies, which they view as products of a patriarchal culture. [Rothchild 1983] Feminists from this perspective promote women's greater humanism, pacifism, nurturance and spiritual development and seek a new vision of technology that would incorporate these values.

Technology and the Division of Labour

Building on the Marxist labour process debates of the 1970s (which saw the social relations of technology in class terms), technology from this perspective is understood as neutral but misused under capitalism to de-skill workers and increase managerial control over the labour process. Feminist contributions to these debates see women's exclusion from technology as a consequence of the gender division of labour and the male domination of skilled trades that developed under capitalism. As Wajcman points out, women's alienation from technology is accounted for in terms of the historical and cultural construction of technology as masculine. [20] Thus, technology from its origins reflects male power as well as capitalist domination.

Gender and Technology Socially-Defined

Rejecting the notion that technology is neutral, this perspective understands technology and gender as socially-defined. Historically, technology has been defined exclusively as male activities in such a way that many tasks women have traditionally performed (such as knitting) are not defined as technical despite involving a high degree of manual dexterity and computation. [Cockburn quoted in Henwood 40] Similarly, Game and Pringle point to distinctions such as 'heavy/light,' 'dirty/clean,' and 'technical/non-technical' which (they argue) are constructed to preserve a sexual division of labour. [17] Thus, rather than argue for women's inclusion in work currently defined as skilled and technical, this perspective suggests a total re-evaluation of work so that many of women's traditional tasks are recognised as skilled and technical and be given appropriate remuneration.

Technology as Culture

More recently, a number of feminists see the newly emerging cultural analyses of technology as a suitable framework for analysing gender and ICT relationships. 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". [Henwood 44] There is a fundamental difference between this 'technology as culture' perspective and the many studies of women and technology that talk of the masculine culture of technology and stress ways in which boys and men dominate the design and use of technologies, how the language of technology reflects male priorities and interests, and how women are excluded 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. As Henwood says:

"Our theorizing of the gender and information technology relationship should not be reduced to the simple 'man equals technology literate, women equals technology illiterate' formulation. Technological meanings are not 'given'; they are made. Our task trying to transform the gendered relations of technology should not be focused on gaining access to the knowledge as it is but with creating that knowledge. By this I mean to be involved at the level of definition, of making meanings and in creating technological culture". [44]

Henwood (and others from the technology as culture view) call for more research from this perspective to understand women's subjective experience and practices of technology and take these as a starting point for definitions of 'technology,' 'technological work,' and 'skill'.

Democratising Knowledge and Technology

Adding an important voice for the South in the gender and technology literature, Vandana Shiva argues the inappropriateness of modern western knowledge and technologies for the third world. Underlying her arguments is the view that the North's approach to science and technology has led to western systems of knowledge and technology (based on a particular culture, class and gender) that are now being foisted on the South. Shiva challenges the claim these systems are universal: "emerging from a dominating and colonising culture, modern knowledge systems are themselves colonising". [9] As a result, this 'monoculture of the mind' (or process of technology and knowledge transfer) displaces local knowledge and experiences. Moreover, "the power by which the dominant knowledge system has subjugated all others makes it exclusive and undemocratic". [60] In opposition to global capitalism, Shiva calls for an alternative, community-based technology and a redefining of knowledge such that "the local and diverse become legitimate". [62] Thus, the 'democratising of knowledge and technology' perspective is linked to human freedoms because "it frees knowledge from the dependency on established regimes of thought, making it simultaneously more autonomous and more authentic" [62]

'Subsistence Perspective'

A number of feminists offer new visions of technology and society that are non-exploitative, non-colonial, and non-patriarchal. Many of these initiatives draw attention to the need for qualitative changes in the economy and oppose the view that more growth, technology, science and progress will solve the ecological and economic crisis. Maria Mies offers one vision where technology is conceptualised from a perspective of subsistence based on the colonisation of women, nature, and other peoples. This 'subsistence perspective' is based on and promotes participatory or grassroots' democracy in political, economic, social and technological decisions. [319] Like Eco-feminism, it recognises that power systems and problems are interconnected and cannot be solved in isolation or by a mere technological fix. This necessarily requires a new paradigm of science, technology and knowledge that allows people to maintain control over their technology. Opposing the

prevailing instrumentalist, reductionist science and technology, Mies's new paradigm is based on a multidimensional approach that incorporates ecologically sound, traditional, grassroots, women and people-based knowledge systems. As Mies says, "such science and technology will therefore not reinforce unequal social relationships but will be such as to make possible greater social justice". [320] Although some feminists such as Mitter and Rowbotham are not convinced of the practical feasibility of Mies's "critique of modernization", the 'subsistence perpsective' shows a conceptual way forward for an alternative vision of gender and technology.

'From the Experiences of Daily Life'

Other voices from the South welcome modern technologies as long as women can have their say in the manner by which technology is adopted. These women are cautious of the so-called "critics of modernization" who "muffle the appeals and aspirations of many millions of less privileged women and men, who are 'hungry' for the information revolution and advanced technologies". [Mitter and Rowbotham 17] They argue that it is difficult for women to shift the balance of power if they are to use only indigenous social and knowledge systems in opposition to modernisation and modern technologies. Mitter says, "women usually have insignificant power over decision-making when they are confined by traditions and constrained by the norms of behaviour in their communities". [17] Third world feminists from this perspective praise the liberating aspects of the information revolution and advanced technologies which, in some circumstances, "gives them economic power, autonomy and the chance to escape the tyrannies of traditional societies". [Mitter and Rowbotham 17] They demand knowledge of and access to technical know-how and business skills, and welcome international exchange of experience in organising to counteract the pitfalls of the new technologies. As Rowbotham concludes, "a new relationship between technology and gender cannot be devised only in the seminar, it has to be created, by users and workers internationally, from the experiences of daily life." [66]

Gender in Communications

In *Women in Grassroots Communications*, Pilar Riano maps out women's contribution to the debates on gender in communication that starts off with the subordinate position of women in the industry. The recurring themes point to the lack of women's participation and representation in mainstream media, the sexist portrayal of women in the media, the absence of women in news and current affairs, and women's disadvantaged access to new communication technologies.* Early contributions to the gender in communications debates from women in the South, women of Colour, and other marginalised groups emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, according to Riano. Their debates focused on the negative portrayal of these women in the mainstream media, demanded equity, and moved on to an emphasis on the qualitative differences these women make in democratising communications. These collective perspectives suggest that gender identity and the ways women experience subordination are 'connected and mediated' by other variables such as race, class, sexual orientation, age and generation, history, culture and colonialism. Riano points to the creation of coalitions among women in communications as having made the most significant advances. These include women's information networks, women's press, worldwide networks of independent women filmmakers and video makers, participation of

*See *Women Using Media for Social Change* in International Women's Tribune Centre; Brenda Dervin in *Journal of Communications*; C. Moraga and G. Anzaldúa as quoted in Pilar Riano 30.

women in journalism schools and mainstream media, and feminists' works in media, cultural and communication studies. [30-31] These networks create alternative communication channels that articulate other visions of women and act as a form of power that challenges the stereotypical representations of women as passive and silent. [Moraga & Anzaldúa; Charnley as quoted in Riano 31]

Feminist Communications: Diversity and Complexity

Riano describes a number of principles and concerns that act as a framework to her typology of 'feminist communications' and link to the debate on the 'democratization of communications'. [xiii] Her 'feminist communications' approach is important because it points to the diversity contained in the category 'women' and the complexity of communication strategies and processes. These principles and concerns refer to:

- Women as the main actors of the communication process including women's control over decision-making, planning, access to resources, production and distribution

- Rooting women's communication experiences and ways of communicating in their social and cultural concerns and background

- Defining communication enterprises as acts of naming and reframing oppressions and as larger movements seeking change

- Considering grassroots participation as critical to the democratisation of communications

This includes a recognition of a variety of communication processes, practices and systems that are distinguished by their grassroots origins (such as women's informal communication practices, networks and associations, or indigenous communication

systems and practices), as well as the active involvement of a community or group in using communication to produce their own messages and to engage audiences in critical thinking [xi]

- Identifying women as diverse subjects with different experiences which shape their perceptions and identities - "as subjects of struggles, as partners of communication, as mothers, as workers, as activists, as citizens"

- These principles and concerns address the broader issues that connect questions of gender and communication with the various ways in which race, class, culture, sexual orientation, age, history, colonialism, and the social division of labour intersect and shape women's communication experiences and identities.

Some Issues and Observations

Technology and Democratic Process

The loss of democratic control over technological choice is an important issue for women rooted in the historical debates on the impact of technology on society. It is included here because it relates to APC's dedication to equalising the free flow of information. Writing in the late 1960s, Lewis Mumford's *The Myth*

of the Machine describes the domination of society by a small, powerful elite that uses modern communication technologies to centralise social control. He warns that both individual freedom and community will be submerged to "the mega-machine (which will) furnish and process an endless quantity of data, in order to expand the role and ensure the domination of the power system."

Similarly, in *The Real World of Technology*, Ursula Franklin writes about her concerns on the scale of intervention by technologies in everyday life which results in "a culture of compliance" where technology itself becomes an agent of social control. Today, the monopolisation of global information and communication structures where government monopolies control a huge share of the world's telecommunication flows, while a few huge corporations dominate the world's mass media presents a very real challenge to women and the democratic process of society.

Increasing Disparities

Increasing disparities as a result of new information technologies relate to APC's dedication to bridging the gap between the information rich and the information poor. The consensus in the literature suggests there will be an even wider gap between the information-haves and have-nots in the new electronic era. It is particularly important to ensure women from the South participate in the new communication processes since they are often marginalised because of inadequate infrastructure and the cost of transmitting data.

Democratisation of Communications

'Democratisation of communications' is an important issue that appears in the gender and communications literature. It is understood as a process whereby: (a) the individual is an active subject and not only an object of communication, (b) various messages are exchanged democratically, and (c) "the extent and quality of social representation or participation is augmented." [Riano 281]

The concept was introduced by the MacBride report "Many Voices, One World" where discussions on a new world information and communication order saw democratisation being achieved through policy regulation and institutional change at the national and international level. Riano adds, however, that all actors, at all levels (including local and grassroots) need to be considered for an adequate debate on the democratisation of communications to be carried out.

Difficulties of Access for Women

The difficulty of access to new information and communication technologies for women includes access in terms of sheer hardware and software, as well as requiring access to meaningful resources about women. The fact that most computer networks are currently dominated by men raises further questions about women's access to new information technologies. (One study quantifies the male domination of computer networks at 95%). [Ebben and Kramarae 17]

In *Nattering on the Net*, Dale Spender notes that women's marginalisation from the new communication technologies has "less to do with women and more to do with computers" arguing that computers are the sites of wealth, power, and influence. She warns women cannot afford "to permit white male dominance of these technologies because a very distorted view of the world is created when only one social group, with one set of experiences pronounces on how it will be for all." Relevant and useful resources about women will not appear unless women work to create them (often under difficult situations). But, since women's knowledge is

presently encoded in books, women's knowledge may be endangered if the shift from the print to electronic medium is not made.

Currently, there are few women in positions of leadership making the decisions about what electronic materials will be constructed and what they will contain. Women's task, according to Maureen Ebben and Cheris Kramarae is "to create, electronically, a cyberspace of our own that fosters women's communication in this time of rapid technological transition". [16]

Failure of Training Programmes

Another important observation is the shortcoming of mainstream training methods for women. Many writers and researchers, including Maureen Ebben and Cheris Kramarae contend that the problem is not so much a problem of how to teach women effectively, but rather "training (as) ad hoc, unsystematic, and male-centred." [18] One such training offered at computer sites at universities consisted of "directions posted on walls, photocopied sections of published manuals left in strategic places, or an hour's worth of group instruction in which participants are led through a manual's directives". [18] They concluded that the instruction is seldom customised and there is little opportunity to follow-up on questions and problems that arise during actual use.

Other commentators suggest that the lack of training is a more severe problem for women than for men because of the culture of technology which "shares an image of machismo and valorizes the adventurer." [Hacker; Turkle]

Research findings also point out different learning styles for men and women. Sherry Turkle and Seymour Papert's research say that women prefer to learn through an orderly routine where they understand the reason for each step, whereas men (and boys) have been encouraged to learn through experimentation and trial and error. Women take fewer risks than men who also prefer to tinker new environments. This, coupled with male-style, unsystematic learning practices, puts women at a disadvantage.

Women Working in Technology

Women Encounter Technology (eds. Swasti Mitter and Sheila Rowbotham) explores the impact of technology on women's employment and the nature of women's work in third world countries. The following observations provide an "authentic international perspective" on women and technology that can inform further research:

- Gender is one of many factors that determine the impact of information technology on women's working lives. Ethnicity, religion, age and class can play even greater roles in defining women's working position. Similarly, the degrees of exclusivity that arise from the information revolution sharply differentiate regions and communities.

- Technological changes affect the quality and quantity of women's work. Employment issues of concern to women working in

technology relate to contractual terms, intensification of workloads, wages, training, and health and safety such as VDU hazards and repetitive strain injuries.

- Increased job opportunities bring new tensions in women's domestic lives. For example, Acero's case study documents the typical life of a woman textile worker in Argentina: "My marriage started to break down when I started to work… I had more chances than he did. So things started to go wrong." Deeper insights are needed into the links between women's status and roles at work and at home.

- Women are rarely represented in the decision-making areas of technology. As a number of essays document, women are predominantly employed in blue-collar jobs. These are precisely the jobs that will be vulnerable in the next phase of the technological change.

- Upgrading women's skills through a continuous learning process benefits women and society

- Radical thinking about training is essential for utilising women's potentials. In particular, training needs to take into account ethnicity, class, religion and age.

- Women's sharing of experiences has proved rewarding at the community, national and international levels. More international exchanges of experience in organising around some of the new issues relating to the electronic era are needed in order to ensure employment benefits of women from new technologies are not outweighed by the associated health and environmental costs.

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Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Social Change

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Social Change

APC WNSP began in the early 1990s and continues to be one of the strongest women's internet-based networks in the world. Many of its members were the first providers of internet access to women's groups in their countries. APC WNSP is an international facilitator of civil society's engagement with ICTs and its related concerns in policies and practices by addressing policy and operational issues, and feeding practical experiences into national and international contexts.

The network continues to pioneer relevant uses of ICTs for civil society, especially in developing countries. It facilitates the strategic use of ICTs in support of women's actions and agenda to amplify the attention given 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 both civil and public spheres.

It works with women and their organisations to integrate using ICTs in order to strengthen their capacities, improve the flow of information within their organisations, empower their members, and develop their organisation's overall ability to achieve strategic objectives. Strategic use of ICTs involves harnessing these technologies to organise and transform information into knowledge and disseminate this to the wider global community to promote development of cultures based on values of equality, freedom and justice, including gender equality.

This section serves as a background document to the GEM tool by providing its users a basic understanding of gender and ICT issues in the overall context of ICTs for development.

Defining ICTs

Information and communication are processes or activities integral to society. Every person must have the means and access to information and should be able to exercise the right to freedom of opinion and expression, which includes the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any form of media, regardless of frontiers.

Information and communication technologies consist of technologies and tools that people

use to share, distribute and gather information, and communicate with one another using computers and interconnected computer networks. *ICT Policy: A Beginner's Handbook* (ed. Chris Nicol) published by APC, groups these new ICTs into three categories:

- Information technology uses **computers**, which have become indispensable to modern societies to process data and save time and effort;

- **Telecommunications technologies** include telephones (with fax) and radio broadcasting and television, often through satellites;

- **Networking technologies**, the best known of which is the internet, but which has extended to mobile phone technology, voice over IP telephony (VOIP), satellite communications, and other forms of communication

The term ICTs has been used to encompass technological innovation and convergence in information and communication transforming our world into information or knowledge societies. The rapid development of these technologies has blurred the boundaries between information, communication and various types of media. The accelerating convergence between telecommunications, broadcasting multimedia and ICTs is the driving force that increasingly changes many aspects of our lives, including knowledge dissemination, social interaction, economic and business practices, political engagement, media, education, health, leisure and entertainment. [Ramilo and Villanueva 6] The internet is the most complex expression of these technological developments with its capacity to project multimedia in cyberspace.

The last decade (1990s) saw the power of these technologies as instruments for advancing economic and social development that create new types of economic activity and employment opportunities; improve health-care delivery; and enhance networking, participation, and advocacy. ICTs also revealed the potential to improve interaction between governments and citizens, as a result, fostering transparency and accountability in governance. Commercial and community media have taken advantage of technological convergence by using the internet for radio and television webcasting.

Also catalysts to political and social empowerment of women, ICTs promote gender equality for as long as the gender dimensions of the Information Society – in terms of users' needs, conditions of access, policies, applications and regulatory frameworks – are properly understood and adequately addressed. Social and cultural constructed gender roles and relationships play a cross-cutting role in shaping the capacity of women and men to participate on equal terms in the Information Society. [Primo 8]

Still, even as electronic media develop at a fast rate replacing old technologies, many cultures continue to retrieve and disseminate information – record, store and transmit wisdom and history – through speech, drama, painting, song or dance. In many instances, ICTs are now used to augment and enrich these traditional communication forms and practices. As such, GEM defines ICTs to include the use of both new and older technologies, and its convergence with traditional forms of communication practiced in many communities.

Gender Equality, Development and the Information Society

Enthusiasm over the rapid growth of ICTs and their applications has generated a variety of projects that focus on fostering development. Many of these initiatives are directed at arresting the growing divide between countries and communities with access and mastery of new information technologies and

those that lack these technologies. Access to ICTs is typically divided along traditional lines of development defining societies and countries into the "haves" and the "have nots" or what is known as the digital divide or digital exclusion. This digital divide is often characterised by high levels of access to technologies including the internet but with infrastructures in less developed nations at a very low scale due to poverty, lack of resources, illiteracy and low levels of education. For example, teledensity figures alone from 1997-2002 collected by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 2005 illustrate the yawning gap in access. There are 65 phone lines available for 100 persons in the US in contrast to two continents: Asia has only 11.77 phone lines for 100 persons while in Africa, a hundred people must share three telephone lines (2.81 phone lines for 100 people). The rapid technological advances in the last decade driven by a highly competitive and profit-oriented ICT industry has led to products, services and technologies that primarily cater to the needs of viable and profitable markets. As a result, non-profitable communities and markets are left on the margins of ICT development and advancement.

Studies on the impact of ICT development have come up with findings that show the complex effects of ICTs. A study by the International Development Research Center of Canada (IDRC) that investigates ICTs for poverty reduction strategies maintains that ICTs generate changes in markets, private and public sectors and economies in developed countries. It cites the contribution of these technologies to improvements in productivity, growth and poverty reduction. The trend, particularly in the last five years, shows that "ICTs have been applied to systemic improvements important to poverty reduction such as education, health and social services delivery, broader government transparency and accountability, and helping empower citizens and build social organization around rights and gender equality." However, the study also points out that while documentation of experiences increases, there continues to be a need to consolidate research and evaluate lessons to fuel effective use of ICTs for development strategies, including support for pro-poor initiatives such as girls' primary education. [Spence 4-6]

On the other hand, an infoDev report published in 2003 posits that these technologies were hardly transformative tools as they have been heralded to be despite huge resources that were invested in developing countries and among the poor to increase their access to ICTs. But even as ICTs are not panaceas in combating poverty, infoDev points out that ICTs can be harnessed for development and poverty reduction by "mainstream(ing) these as tools of and subordinate them to broader strategies and programs for building opportunity and empowering the poor". The report further states that an ICT development agenda should be more realistic about broader changes required in developing countries and its role in affecting these changes. Such an agenda should be much more selective and think more strategically on the attention and resources devoted to these technologies. [McNamara 3]

This means that the broader goals of achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and promotion of women's rights should be prioritised in the field of ICT for development. The significance of this is magnified by the fact that the majority of the world's population that remains untouched by the ICT revolution

are women. This remains true at present even though in 1995, the Beijing Declaration has already stated: "Eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centred sustainable development."

APC WNSP's Approach to Gender and ICTs

APC WNSP works to transform relations of inequality using ICTs as tools for social action and means to achieve positive social change. Since it began its work in the early 1990s during the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, APC WNSP along with other pioneering women's information and communication networks, has been in the thick of a range of activities that address problems of basic access and connectivity. Our members raise awareness on the importance of women's involvement in ICTs, articulate women's access to ICTs, facilitate their participation in determining the design and distribution of technologies, and conduct ICT training workshops.

In 1995, APC WNSP with other organisations called for greater women and citizens' participation on the future of the information and communications industry and universal access of the internet. The Beijing Platform for Action addressed these demands through resolutions stating that women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. The Platform focused on women's increased access and participation in decision-making in media and ICTs to overcome negative and stereotype portrayals of women and encouraged presentation of balanced, non-stereotyped and diverse images of women in media.

The five-year review report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+5) averred that gender differences and disparities have been traditionally ignored in policies and programmes dealing with development and dissemination of improved technologies. The outcome of the five-year review recommended exploration and implementation of further actions and initiatives to avoid new forms of exclusion and ensure equal access and opportunities to women and girls with respect to developments in science and technology.

The women's movement was one of the first to create and manage its own online workspaces and communities. At the World Conference in Beijing, access to and control of mainstream media were dominated by corporate and state interests. But the internet provided the opportunity for women to publish information, news and analyses from a gender perspective. Recent years have seen women publish their own newspapers, air radio programmes and produce their own TV shows. Although a greater number of women now use new communication technologies and the internet in their work, the issues identified in Beijing+5 continue to hold true for many women around the world. At the same time,

The women's movement was one of the first to create and manage its own online workspaces and communities

the current pace of organisations produces new challenges and impacts that need to be addressed in relation to gender equality.

To respond to these new challenges, women's organisations, especially those more directly involved in communications continue to develop advocacy and policy proposals in ICTs from a gender perspective.

Do ICTs Contribute to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment?

To use new technologies as instruments for transformation, it is important to look into existing gender issues in ICTs in order to formulate and implement strategies for women's empowerment.

Over the past 10 years, APC WNSP's advocacy of integrating a gender perspective in ICT and development has identified several important concerns such as:

- Access and Control
- Education, Training and Development of Skills
- Industry and Labour
- Content and Language
- Power and Decision-making
- Privacy and Security
- Trafficking of Women, Pornography and Censorship

Access and Control

Women's access to and control of ICTs are influenced by factors that affect men and women differently. A gendered approach gives a more comprehensive and sensitive view into these issues. Women's access to and control of ICTs are determined by factors such as gender discrimination in jobs and education, social class, illiteracy, geographic location (North or South, urban or rural), lack of access to financial resources and high costs of access.

The development of infrastructure includes many choices that involve decisions about locations of facilities, the nature and choice of technology, costs and pricing. Women tend to have less disposable income to spend on communications. In many cases, public access centres such as telecentres, information centres or cybercafés are located in places that fail to take into account the impediments to women. Common problems associated with this are inappropriate opening times, safety issues and lack of transport. The availability or lack of women support staff and trainers in these facilities also impacts on women and girls' use of these resources. Literacy and education, geographic location, mobility and social class affect the capability of women in using information and knowledge.

Thus, a great majority of the world's women have no access to ICTs or to any type of modern communication system. As information dynamics accelerates its migration towards the internet, those without access are bound to be excluded and pushed further to the fringes.

But ensuring connectivity is not enough. Know-how is equally as important as access. ICT development programmes for women that too often concentrate excessively on access to technology and information sources paying less attention to training and skills development have been criticised for looking at superficial means of empowering women in the long run.

Education, Training and Development of Skills

Gender and cultural barriers impede women from fully engaging in the technological world. Illiteracy rates of women in developing countries are far higher than that of men. Two-thirds of the world's 870 million illiterate people are women with the lowest literacy rate in 13 African countries. Sixty percent of the 100 million school age children in the developing world are girls who grow up without access to basic education. (2000 and 2001 statistics) [Primo 39]

Research by Maureen Ebben and Cheris Kramarai pointed out that training programmes for women are often ad-hoc, alienating, and fail to address women's needs, experiences or inexperience. [cited by Wood] Some ways to correct these problems are to ensure the participation of girls in the programmes, to engage both women and men trainers, and to provide user and mentor support within communities, recognising women's limitations in mobility. Likewise, learning programmes should be developed for women as users, technicians, policymakers and change agents. Women should also be encouraged to take part in the technical and design aspects of ICTs. Training programmes 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 for effective intervention and use of ICTs.

ICT trainings should also take into account women's needs in matters of affordability and availability of software and user support. Software used in the course of the training exercises should be available to them even after the training courses.

Initiatives and projects on educating women in poor communities and on computer literacy have demonstrated the value of ICTs for women. A study of nine projects, specifically designed for women and youth in South Asia showed that using ICTs encourages and pushes different models of teaching and learning that are practical, functional and hands-on. [Slater and Tacchi 89] New ICTs are also highly adaptable to suit learner preferences and priorities, thus opening up possibilities for designing and providing education in forms that are locally relevant.

Industry and Labour

Labour is highly sex-segregated in the ICT industry. Women are found in disproportionately high numbers in the lowest paid and least secure jobs. The gender dimension of ICTs is manifested in telework, flexi-time, and work-at-home arrangements where women have limited rights – receive meagre pay, and lack health, social or job securities. Women's wages or earnings whether home-based or in industries and institutions as a result of new technologies do not entirely guarantee a change in a family's division of labour for her benefit or development. Men continue to avoid housework and women find themselves burdened with dual or triple roles.

Technological changes also affect the quality and quantity of women's work. New technologies have intensified health, and environmental issues along with issues on women's employment benefits. Some of these are the contractual nature of jobs, intensification of workloads, wages, training, health and safety matters like visual display unit (VDU) hazards and repetitive strain injuries as observed by Swasti Mitter and Sheila Rowbatham. [cited by Wood]

The speed of technological development has also increased the demand for more advanced ICT skills from those employed in the sector. The rate of technological obsolescence correlates with the rate by which technical

Technological changes also affect the quality and quantity of women's work

skills become "old" and obsolete. Workers in the ICT sector must continually improve their skills in order to remain employed in the industry. Given that women fulfil double/triple roles in their home and work life, taking the opportunities to upgrade their skills even creates conflicts in their multiple roles. Most women must find extra time and/or additional funds to avail of training courses. Older women who have been working in computing, in particular, run the risk of losing their jobs to younger workers (men and women alike) who have acquired up-to-date ICT skills.

Another trend in the ICT industry that gravely affects women is outsourcing and teleworking. More recently, technological changes can now segment different parts of the production process, enabling relocation of information processing within the ICT sector. This shift towards business process outsourcing (BPO) is a vital feature and a pressing concern to the sector. In some countries in Asia such as India, China and the Philippines, BPO is the single largest technology-enabled employer of women where they earn significantly. However, there is considerable debate on the impact of this trend for women in the long-term.

The controversy revolves around who benefits from this new form of employment and the type of work it demands. Some claim that outsourcing has created different requirements for labour – a few highly-skilled professional workers and a vast bulk of semi-skilled workers. (Burnout in this sector, is also widely prevalent.) According to Jayati Ghosh's report to the UNESCAP High Level Inter-Governmental Meeting, outsourcing shows clear signs of labour market segmentation along gender, caste and class. Most women employed in BPOs come from the urban and educated sections of their societies – the upper caste English-speaking elite of India. Ghosh argues that this pattern of development, while reducing unemployment among the educated, will not contribute significantly in reversing the growing feminisation of unemployment but could in the long run reinforce current socio-economic inequities. [13]

On the other hand, research by other scholars on women and ICTs in Asia views outsourcing particularly in India, Malaysia and the Philippines, as a major opportunity for economic empowerment of women who stand to earn an average of $500 a year. Looking at this on a national scale, India's ICT services and back-office sector, for example, is expected to grow five times to US$57 billion which will provide employment to four million people and account for 7 percent of GDP by 2008. Women's employment is expected to increase. [Hafkin 6-7]

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 regarding content, whether in internet spaces, video games or virtual reality.

Women's viewpoints, knowledge and interests are inadequately represented while gender stereotypes continue to predominate on the web. True, some of these concerns are extensions of centuries-old issues of sexism and portrayal of women in media. But these also point to a broader range of issues such as the need for women to systematise and develop their own knowledge and perspectives in order for them to be genuinely present in these spaces. [Primo 41]

Dominant languages used in new technologies hinder most women from making use of new knowledge and technology. English and other languages like French, German, Japanese, Korean and Chinese dominate the internet. Billions of

people, majority of them poor women, do not understand these languages. [41]

Breaking down language barriers to information access requires the development of applications like multilingual tools and databases, interfaces for non-Latin alphabets, graphic interfaces for illiterate women and automatic translation software. These tools will allow marginalised and minority groups, including women, greater access to the internet.

Massive investment of time and other resources must be put into content development at the local level based on local information needs. This will significantly contribute to women's access to and relevant use of ICTs. Earnest attention should be paid in recognising women and the poor as information producers by providing relevant trainings in collecting, packaging and disseminating local knowledge. At the same time, new technologies, such as the computer and internet and their convergence with other technologies (e.g. radio, television and print) should be made available to more women and the rural areas. Producing relevant local language content through affordable and easy-to-use technologies that are accessible to an audience with few or no reading skills is crucial if ICTs must meet the needs of women in developing countries.

Power and Decision-making

Although women have now entered the ICT industry in increasing numbers than in previous decades, they, however remain under-represented in positions that require decision-making and control of resources. More men than women, whether at the global or national levels occupy ICT decision-making structures in policy and regulatory institutions, ministries responsible for ICTs, and boards and senior management level of private ICT companies. The eschewed proportion of men and women in decision-making positions reflects a narrow view of ICTs and the bias against women – where ICTs are seen as a purely technical area, believed to be men's field of expertise. (Men are seen as experts in most professional fields but even more so in technical areas.)

Deregulation and privatisation of the telecommunications industry also make decision-making less and less accountable to citizens and local communities further marginalising the role of women in decision-making and control of resources. Representation is important in creating conditions and regulations to enable women to maximise the opportunities they can derive from ICTs as well as ensure accountability of institutions that develop ICT policies.

Corollary to this issue is women's visibility and presence in the ICT field where men are often seen as the main users and producers. It is a must to promote women's credibility and visibility as experts and decision-makers; they who benefit, use and develop ICTs as much as men do.

Privacy and Security

Privacy, security and internet rights are other important areas of concern for women. Women need online spaces where they feel safe from harassment, enjoy freedom of expression and privacy of communication and protection from electronic snooping.

One of the most important democratising aspects of the internet, which is often overlooked, is the creation of private online spaces. The internet provides the opportunity for private spaces beyond national boundaries. It also plays a role in the battle against oppression and exploitation by enabling

international sharing of experiences among oppressed sectors and by allowing people living under undemocratic regimes to communicate safely and privately. APC WNSP, among other organisations, has played an important part in utilising this aspect of the internet for advancing democracy, particularly in its advocacy against gender discrimination.

However, some governments and states now want to control the democratic space that exists on the internet. Legislations such as the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Act in Britain and the Wiretapping Act in Japan along with other technical resources are being put in place to allow state intervention and monitoring of private internet communication. International agreements are being made between states to combat cybercrime by intercepting private email correspondence.

Some of the states involved in such agreements consider democracy itself as a crime while others engage in doublespeak – they violate the tenets of democracy they claim to uphold. These developments were given a new impetus by the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. In the name of "the war against terrorism", serious challenges to fundamental privacy rights are being imposed. Recent moves by the United States government and in some European countries in effect destroy democracy in the name of defending it against terrorism and cybercrime. Unacceptable surveillance measures and racial stereotyping for example are enforced, conditioning the general public to treat these as mere "inconveniences" or "necessary steps" to protect them from terrorist attacks.

Intercepting internet communications and electronic snooping find justification in protecting women, particularly children, from sexual exploitation and putting an end to racist activities. But it is precisely in creating private spaces where victims of abuse can discuss among themselves and with others they trust and have chosen to talk with that has, in fact, proven to be the most powerful weapon against sexual exploitation and racial oppression. Activist-user groups, often operating in APC WNSP member networks, have created many such spaces on the internet.

APC WNSP supports the rights of its members and users to create spaces for private discussions and debates free from monitoring and surveillance. These are freedoms guaranteed by democracy and are essential for empowering exploited and victimised sections of society. APC WNSP works with its member organisations and other civil society groups to defend the privacy of correspondence of its internet communities.

Trafficking of Women, Pornography and Censorship

One of the fiercest debates in the area of Internet Rights concerns freedom of expression and censorship. The use of the internet to perpetuate violence against women and as a platform for hate or racist opinions (or other forms of exploitative and offensive behaviour) is of great concern to all, particularly to women. A sensitive issue is the use of the internet for pornography, sexual exploitation or hate literature. There are 100,000 websites for child pornography alone. [TopTenREVIEWS - September, 2003]

Easy access, relatively low cost and high technical quality of digital television and the internet, as well as the privacy it guarantees to users make pornography mediums attractive to sell. Technological advancement in new cable and telephone lines can now transmit unprecedented number of digital files of pornographic images at extraordinary speed to consumers through computers and other electronic means of communication like digital video disks. The internet provides users with websites and chat rooms and allows them to exchange materials through file transfer protocol (FTP) and engage in live video chats for trafficking and sexual activities. In short,

pornography is varied in kind and medium, ubiquitous and easily accessible to most people. [Kee 11-18]

Certainly, it is understandable to argue for censorship amid the large and growing presence of pornography on the internet, albeit a knee-jerk reaction. Legislation on protection opens a wide interpretation with regard to what the state considers 'harmful' or 'illegal'. The alarming trends in cooperation and collaboration between state security services, the aim of which is to share information gathered through surveillance and monitoring of the internet (and other communication tools) present grave and serious human rights implications.

Important spaces and communication possibilities offered by the internet will be compromised by an unyielding advocacy for censorship as a response to the fear of proliferation of pornography. Privacy can be eroded through such regulations and the vital functions played by cyberspace to civil society movements to discuss, communicate and mobilise for transformative action will be greatly hampered, if not obstructed.

Rather than risk the danger of constricting the spaces for women's content, one compelling approach in relation to pornography and sexual violence on the internet is to increase the spaces for representations of women and sexualities. The capacity for internet spaces to either destabilise or concretise existing discourses on women's sexuality in gender relations largely depends on access to the development and population of these spaces. [Kee 18] Taken from this angle, the trajectory against pornography and sexual violence is directed at corporations that monopolise cyberspace and earn billions of dollars by perpetuating sexist and masculine pornographic materials.*

Making the Connection: Putting ICTs to Strategic Use

Definitely, advocacy for a new information and communication environment must fully integrate gender concerns and women's advancement. The challenge is to ensure individuals, communities, nations, and the international community to have access to, and effectively use information and knowledge to address developmental challenges and improve lives. At the core of this new environment is democratising people's access to information and communication facilities and technological resources.

Communication rights remain a core tenet of APC WNSP's strategies in using ICTs which runs counter to the current hegemonic ownership structure of national and global information networks. ICTs must be made available to all at an affordable cost while the development of infrastructure must ensure that marginalised groups, sectors, and peoples are not further disadvantaged. This should be the strategic starting point for all concerned with gender equality and social transformation. In a globalised world that undermines localised democratic institutions; the internet provides an essential means for defending and extending participatory democracy.

The internet and ICTs can be used to uphold diversity and provide a platform where a multitude of voices are heard, pluralism of ideas and opinions are guaranteed, and cross-cultural exchanges are shared. But this can only be true if developments are driven by a desire to preserve and enhance local, national and regional cultural and linguistic diversities and where civil society is heeded in policy formations that regulate control and ownership of the internet.

* TopTenREVIEWS estimates pornography as a USD57 billion-industry worldwide, with 12% of total websites dedicated to pornography. Other forms of digital communications technology such as pay-per-view channels on satellite television are also extensively marketed for adult pornography in addition to older forms of ICTs such as videos. Revenues from pornography are larger than all combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises. In the US, pornography revenue exceeds the combined revenues of ABC, CBS, and NBC ($6.2 billion). Still another disturbing note: child pornography generates $3 billion annually. (September, 2003)

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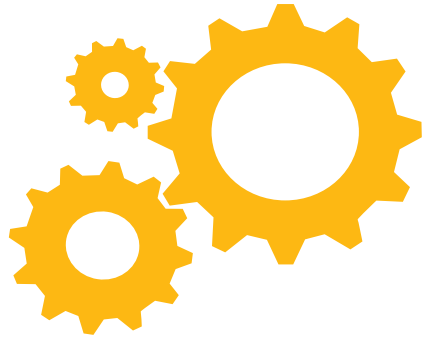
Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) Tool



USING THE GEM TOOL

GEM is made up of seven Steps grouped into three Phases. Each Step suggests reading materials and gives examples, activities, and worksheets that lead to the expected outputs. Each expected output in turn introduces the next Step.

Phase 1 Integrating Gender Analysis

Step 1 Defining Intended Use and Intended Users

- Activity 1.1 Identifying Evaluation's Intended Users
- Activity 1.2 Defining Evaluation's Intended Use
- Worksheet 1 Synthesising Intended Users and Intended Use

Step 2 Identifying Gender and ICT Issues

- Activity 2.1 Understanding Gender Analysis and Concepts of ICT, Social Change and Development
- Activity 2.2 Reviewing Gender Issues in an ICT Project's Life Cycle
- Worksheet 2 Project Profile

Step 3 Finalising Evaluation Questions

- Activity 3 Getting Familiar with Evaluation Questions
- Worksheet 3 Generating Questions

Step 4 Setting Gender and ICT Indicators

- Activity 4 Asking Questions
- Worksheet 4 Creating Gender Indicators

Phase 2 Gathering Information Using Gender and ICT Indicators

Step 5 Selecting Data Gathering Methods/Tools

- Activity 5 Exploring Examples of Practitioners' Methodologies
- Worksheet 5 Developing Your Data Gathering Strategy

Step 6 Analysing Data from a Gender Perspective

Phase 3 Putting Evaluation Results to Work

Step 7 Incorporating Learning into the Work

Phase 1 lays down the groundwork for planning and implementing a gender evaluation of an ICT-based initiative by arriving at an understanding of basic concepts of gender and ICTs. It sets the scope, purpose and limits of the evaluation.

STEP 1

Step 1 Defining Intended Use and Intended Users guides you to identify intended users and define intended use of the evaluation results. It has two activities:

Activity 1.1 Identifying Your Evaluation's Intended Users
Activity 1.2 Defining Your Evaluation's Intended Use

A simple worksheet, Synthesising Intended Users and Intended Use, is provided.

STEP 2

After you have defined the intended use and users of the evaluation, the tool moves to **Step 2 Identifying Gender and ICT Issues**. This step walks you through the life cycle of the project and allows you to probe into the gender issues within the project/initiative. There are two activities in **Step2**:

Activity 2.1 Understanding Gender Analysis and Concepts of ICT, Social Change and Development
Activity 2.2 Reviewing Gender Issues in Your ICT Project's Life Cycle

You may need to read two conceptual background documents – "ICTs for Social Change" and "Gender Analysis" – which provide a broad understanding of gender and ICT issues before proceeding to Activity 2.1. Activity 2.2 gives guide questions that interrogate the gender issues within the context and various components of the project/initiative. These two activities further refine the evaluation plan, and help identify the gender and ICT issues that will be addressed in the evaluation. Worksheet 2, Project Profile, is provided at the end of **Step 2**.

STEP 3

Step 3 guides you in finalising the evaluation question/s. At this stage of the evaluation plan, you are expected to have an explicit idea of the gender and ICT issue/s that need to be addressed. This step gives examples of different evaluation questions that were defined by prior users of the GEM Tool. There is only one activity for this step. A worksheet, Generating Questions, is provided.

STEP 4

Having focused evaluation questions is necessary before going to **Step 4**. This step guides you in developing relevant and effective gender and ICT indicators for the evaluation. Reading materials that

define concepts related to indicators are provided. Activity 4 shows you how to define indicators using two examples: training as a capacity-building indicator and access. Provided is a worksheet to help you document the gender and ICT indicators – Creating Gender Indicators.

By the end of **Phase 1**, you are expected to have the following outputs: a well-defined intended users and intended use of the evaluation, an understanding of the project's background and life cycle, an understanding of gender and ICT issues in the context of the project/initiative, and defined evaluation questions using gender and ICT indicators.

STEP 5

Phase 2 focuses on various data-gathering methods and on analysing data from a gender perspective. **Step 5:Selecting Your Data Gathering Methods/Tools** looks into various ways of acquiring data based on the evaluation questions and gender and ICT indicators that were defined in **Phase 1**. The reading materials will help you select the data-gathering tools that you can use. Activity 5 gives examples of methods/tools other GEM users have used. The activity moves to the worksheet – Developing Your Data Gathering Strategy – which is a matrix of the source of information, data-gathering tools/methods, and time-line for gathering data based on the defined gender and ICT indicators. It is most useful in relating indicators with methodologies.

STEP 6

Step 6 Analysing Data from a Gender Perspective shows you how to analyse data gathered from a gender perspective. It provides readings and examples on how to analyse data and prepare reports. It will be useful to review the background documents on gender and ICT as well as the results of the activities in **Phase 1** where gender issues within the project cycle were explored.

STEP 7

Phase 3 Putting Evaluation Results to Work focuses on how the lessons learned from the evaluation process can influence change within your organisation, your community and the wider gender and ICT movement. **Step 7 Incorporating Learning into Your Work** suggests how the evaluation results can improve the way your organisation works, change your organisation's evaluation practice or influence how an organisation may use ICTs.

The GEM Tool

Phase 1 Integrating Gender Analysis

Overall Purpose

To integrate a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in planning an evaluation of information communication technology (ICT) initiatives

Objectives

- To develop evaluation objectives that address gender equality, women's empowerment and ICT for social change
- To review the context, objectives and plans of a project to highlight gender and ICT issues
- To establish gender and ICT indicators
- To identify stakeholders that will participate in the evaluation exercise

Begin by establishing the boundaries of the evaluation process before actually conducting the evaluation. Variables such as evaluation objectives, financial resources and schedule or time span will all intersect in some way and help define the parameters or scope of the evaluation.

Four activities in the initial planning phase must be taken into account:

- A broad review of the project or a context analysis to define gender and ICT issues that will be addressed in the evaluation
- The process of formulating the evaluation questions that will be answered by the evaluation
- Selecting gender and ICT indicators
- Identifying evaluation stakeholders and the evaluation team

Phase 1 Step 1 Defining Intended Use and Intended Users

Expected Outputs

- To draw up a list of intended users and their corresponding use to the evaluation results
- To enlist an evaluation team that includes stakeholders who can address gender and ICT issues

What are Evaluation Exercises?

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

- To identify areas of improvement in a project or programme
- To highlight and resolve disagreements
- To set priorities and goals
- To clarify and tackle problems
- To suggest new strategic directions
- To get feedback, appraisal and recognition
- To celebrate project achievements
- To attract resources toward a project

What needs to be examined beyond these more common objectives is a straightforward, yet critical question – How will the evaluation be used.

A well–developed evaluation approach called utilization-focused evaluation (U-FE), states that "evaluations should be judged by their utility and actual use". Michael Quinn Patton, developer of this approach, points out that use is not an abstraction. Intended use, he says, "concerns how real people in the real world will apply evaluation findings and experience in the real world". Evaluations should be facilitated and designed having in mind how everything that will be done from the start of the process up to the end will affect intended use. Patton's extensive study of conducting professional evaluation reveals that the most challenging question concerns identifying what needs to be done to get appropriate results that can be meaningfully used. The focus of the evaluation is on intended use by intended users. [Patton 10, 20-22]

Setting evaluation objectives is about clarifying who intends to use the evaluation and how

they intend to use the results. The GEM tool adapts intended use to specifically define evaluation objectives.

Bear in mind that it is important to differentiate intended use or evaluation objectives from project objectives. In a project cycle, formulating objectives are derived from problem identification. An objective may be stated as an expressed intention to address a problem, which can be a statement of intended quantified outcomes to be achieved in a specified time frame. In terms of gender issues, the objective should state the intent to address and eliminate a gender issue, for instance, ending a discriminatory practice that leads to closing a gender gap.

On the other hand, intended use or an evaluation objective may specifically focus on how users intend to use evaluation results. For example, a project objective of GEM tester Fantsuam Foundation was to promote access to ICT facilities and provide skills training for women in rural communities in Nigeria through their community learning centres. The evaluation objective of Fantsuam, as the main user of the evaluation, wanted to evaluate how services provided in the community learning centres empowered women and girls.

How can Gender be Made Visible in a Project?

Overall, the intended use of GEM is to analyse gender issues, perspectives and lessons in ICT projects and initiatives. Your task in **Step 1** is to specifically define your intended users and how you plan to use the results of your gender evaluation.

Who are Stakeholders and Intended Users?

Gender is a cross-cutting issue that affects all project stakeholders and all aspects of a project activity including evaluation. All evaluations, however, do not necessarily have to include all the groups that have participated, benefited or did not benefit from project activities. Choices will have to be made based on evaluation objectives and gender aspects or issues of project stakeholders as intended users of the evaluation.

In identifying intended users, it is good practice to be as specific as possible and determine "actual primary intended users and their explicit commitments to concrete, specific uses." [Patton 21] The choice of users will determine whose values and interests will frame the evaluation. Full and active involvement of intended users will lead to the following advantages:

- they will more likely use the evaluation if they understand and feel they own the evaluation process and findings
- they will more likely understand and own the evaluation if they were actively involved in the process

Primary users should be involved in the evaluation since they, in the first place were users or were directly involved in the project. As recipients and/or participants of the project, they are in the best position to determine how to reinforce the intended use of the evaluation every step of the way.

To determine users of your evaluation, think about project stakeholders who will be crucial when examining gender and ICT issues. Consider the following in making your decisions:

- Stakeholders can be both internal and external such as project executors, project staff and management for the former. Project beneficiaries belong in the latter category.
- Particularly in the case of ICT initiatives, stakeholders may be located anywhere in the world.

- Projects have direct stakeholders, those who are/or were directly involved in the project's activities, and indirect stakeholders or those who did not participate in the project and may or may not have been affected by it. The second group is often critical in an evaluation.

- Other organisations involved in similar projects and activities can also be stakeholders. In fact such organisations can offer important insights and "sector" commentaries 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 stakeholders participate in the evaluation reflects your organisation's underlying values or approach to evaluation and the ICT project in general.

Project beneficiaries, the primary target group of the ICT initiative, are integral to the process of uncovering and analysing gender and ICT issues. Remember, gender analysis becomes transformative when arrived at by people who are directly involved in the process.

Below is an example of a list of stakeholders of an ICT project that highlights the core stakeholders who may be identified as users of your evaluation.

Telecentre Stakeholders

Internal	Staff of the telecentre Management body of the telecentre (e.g. board of directors)
Community (which refers here to all the groups which can use the telecentre and directly or indirectly benefit from it)	Users and non-users Community organisations Local government Public services in the area served by the telecentre
Stakeholders (which includes all those whose actions interfere with the telecentre operation)	Sponsors, Funding agencies, Support or operating agencies Government agencies Services providers
Interested parties	Other organisations considering use of telecentres Other telecentres and telecentre organisations
General public	Media Development organisations Educators and researchers working on ICTs use and social development

Source: Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment (MEIA) of Telecentres: An Initial Framework (Telelac)

Phase 1 Step 1 Activities

Activity 1.1 Identifying Intended Users

Brainstorm a list of ICT initiative stakeholders. Identify core stakeholders and specify those who can address gender and ICT issues. From the list of stakeholders, identify intended users of the evaluation. You may use the example Telecentre Stakeholders as a guide.

Activity 1.2 Defining Intended Use

According to Patton, it is important to negotiate a shared understanding that is mutually arrived at between the evaluators and the users of the project on how the evaluation results can be used realistically. Naturally, the users themselves should commit to the terms of this shared understanding. For example, conducting an evaluation to influence decisions on how a project can be more gender sensitive would attend to the following questions: what would these decisions be, who will make the decisions, when and what other factors will affect decision-making, and how will the evaluators get to know if the evaluation was used as intended. (82)

Below are a set of questions as a guide for Activity 1.2 which can also help in the actual evaluation process.

Questions to Ask of Intended Users to Establish an Evaluation's Intended Influence on Forthcoming Decisions

- **What decisions, if any, will the evaluation findings expect to influence?**
- **When will decisions be made? By whom? When, then, must the evaluation findings be presented in order to be timely and influential?**
- **What is at stake in the decisions? For whom? What controversies or issues surround the decisions?**
- **What is the history and context of the decision-making process?**
- **What other factors (values, politics, personalities, promises already made) will affect the decision-making? What could happen to make the decision irrelevant or keep it from being made? In other words, how volatile is the decision-making environment?**
- **How much influence do you expect will the evaluation have—realistically?**
- **To what extent has the outcome of the decision already been determined?**
- **What data and findings are needed to support decision-making?**
- **What needs to be done to achieve that level of influence?**
- **How will we know afterward if the evaluation was used as intended?**

Source: *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* by Michael Quinn Patton [83]

Phase 1 Step 1 Worksheet 1 Synthesising Intended Users and Intended Use

To help synthesise answers in Activities 1.1 and 1.2, look at the examples below and use the sample table for the activities.

Examples of Two GEM Participants:

Teleworking in Malaysia is Moms4Moms evaluation of its teleworking project whose members are mothers who work at home. The evaluation aimed to facilitate and foster social change to bring about an environment conducive for women to work at home. It sought to understand problems faced by working women and men, the level of recognition of the triple roles of women (child care, housework, and income-earner), and look into how ICTs can help improve lifestyles to enable women to cope with their multiple roles.

The other example, Neighbourhood Information Unit, is an evaluation of Association for Interdisciplinary Work (ATI) on community telecentres that organised gender-sensitivity workshops and ICT trainings in two communities in Bogota, Colombia. The evaluation focused on gender sensitivity strategies in neighbourhood information units in Bogota.

Teleworking in Malaysia

Intended User: Project implementer

Intended Use: To identify the feasibility of teleworking and setting-up a virtual office within the Malaysian context to promote teleworking to the Malaysian government

Neighbourhood Information Unit

Intended Users and their Use of the Evaluation

1. Members of the local community: To strengthen the local communities' capacity in directly addressing issues with local government, international agencies and state entities.

2. NGOs: To involve other NGOs to ensure Units include issues of interest to the local community.

3. Project implementers: To generate cooperation between neighbourhood centres.

Below is a sample worksheet: Synthesising Intended Users and Intended Use

Name of Initiative			
Intended Users			
Intended Use			

At least one member of the team should have an experience and an understanding of gender issues

Ensuring Gender is Integrated in the Composition of an Evaluation Team

Experience shows that a team approach where diversity of perspectives is given free rein in discussions and decisions is effective in any evaluation process. But an evaluation team tasked to look into gender and ICT issues needs to form a group that will meet additional requirements along gender concerns to ensure an objective, in-depth and thorough-going conduct of the evaluation. Below are some guidelines:

- Team membership should be representative of the women and men involved in the projective, activity or initiative.

- At least one member of the team should have an experience and an understanding of gender issues. It would be ideal if the experiences were derived from the organisation initiating the evaluation or a close partner of the organisation. If this is not the case, assign a member of the team to play a significant role as one who will think along gender lines. Make sure to define effective ways of bringing her/him into an understanding of gender issues and concerns.

- It is best for the evaluation team to undergo a gender sensitivity training to facilitate awareness of gender issues that should be 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 uses of technology to empower individuals, organisations and communities.

- Participation of key stakeholder groups or identified users is critical.

The team should be small enough to work together efficiently with a team leader or initiator of the evaluation who assumes the responsibility for driving and leading the group. It should be made up of individuals who are involved in the initiative/project/organisation from different levels (i.e., project staff, beneficiaries, etc.). It is also best to include hired evaluator/s who are not members of or involved in the project as member/s of the team.

The team should be small enough to work together efficiently

Phase 1 Step 2 Identifying Gender and ICT Issues

Expected Output

- To gather detailed information on gender and ICT issues in a project's life cycle

What are the Elements of a Project Cycle?

The analysis of any project includes a review of all factors, including individual, organisational, community, socio-economic, cultural, and political aspects that make up a particular project's environment. In ICT projects, studying the technological component is an added dynamic. Analysis also requires determining factors which played an important role in the project's operation.

The first step of a gender evaluation exercise is to probe for gender issues within the context of the ICT project. Since there are many aspects of a project cycle, you need to determine what part of the project cycle you want to evaluate and the gender issues of that aspect of the project cycle. This is essential because this exercise establishes the parameters in determining the objectives, questions, and indicators of the evaluation.

A project typically evolves in a logical fashion:

- Analysis of situation or context
- Identification of a need or a problem
- Determining policy imperatives
- Formulation of goals
- Articulation of intervention strategies and implementation plan
- Implementation of project activities
- Understanding of project outcomes
- Implementation of a system of monitoring and evaluation

Usually, gender issues are not mainstreamed into project and planning processes. It is common for gender issues to be either entirely absent from the project sequence or fade away from the project's articulation of intervention strategies and implementation plans. And more than other fields and projects, ICT initiatives often miss out on gender aspects. This is why it becomes all the more important to integrate gender at the beginning of an ICT project plan, making certain that gender is visible throughout the planning and implementing phases. Depending upon the ICT initiative and whether or not gender issues were taken into account in the project planning phase, gender issues may be obvious, invisible or may not have been clearly defined. It is worthwhile reviewing project documents to look at what assumptions were made, if any, about gender issues when the project was first conceptualised.

The following activities were designed to help examine the project and its effects and relationship to other factors and situations from a gender perspective.

Phase 1 Step 2 Activities

Activity 2.1 Understanding Gender Analysis and Concepts of ICT, Social Change and Development

Before doing this activity, it may be good to review the basic elements of Gender Analysis. (see page 27) This section deals with APC WNSP's analytical approach which aims to help you understand the changes associated with an ICT intervention from a gender perspective. It focuses on understanding how these changes affect women's lives and locates gender at the household, community and other areas of activities. It also provides an overview of gender issues in the ICT sector and women's empowerment issues in ICT projects for development and social justice.

Activity 2.2 Reviewing Gender Issues in an ICT Project's Life Cycle

Bearing in mind GEM's gender analytical framework, you are now ready to start a review of your project. As a guide to this

TIP Gender Sensitivity Sessions

From our experience, holding a session on gender sensitivity prior to planning your evaluation helps the team members establish a common ground in understanding gender issues.

Gender sensitivity workshops can be customised to suit the needs of an organisation. A session can last for a day or half a day where participants get an overview on the basic concepts of gender, gender equality, women's empowerment and the interrelations between gender, social transformation and ICT. Experience also shows that while most are able to grasp the issues of gender and ICT separately, analysing the relationship between these two issues is new terrain.

The workshop is a preparatory step found most useful in a gender evaluation of telecentres because these initiatives are usually based in grassroots communities where traditional values and beliefs on gender roles and relations are more deeply rooted. All of the evaluation teams that conducted studies on telecentres using GEM found that setting in place gender sensitivity strategies promote reflection and open up opportunities for dialogues, thus, minimising or avoiding antagonistic confrontations.

For example, a GEM evaluator working with two communities in Ecuador was told that the community (i.e., male decision-makers) will refuse to hold workshops on "feminism" because of previous problems with women's groups that "put women against men." The indigenous groups in the communities perceived racial discrimination as a paramount problem rather than gender relations. Thus, the priority aim of the evaluation was to overcome racial discrimination and work in favour of cultural and racial diversity. The GEM evaluator repackaged the gender sensitivity workshop by using the concept of "equity" in a broad sense to include racial, gender, age, cultural and social discrimination.

exercise, examine the gender components in each element of the project's life cycle. Try answering the three questions below:

- Was there a discussion of gender issues in the project planning phase?
- What assumptions were made or researches done on how ICTs can facilitate change for women and men?
- How were women or groups of women identified in the project?

Gender Issues in a Project's Life Cycle

(Below are excerpts from "Spectacles for Seeing Gender in Project Evaluation" by Sara Hlupekile Longwe, one of GEM's consultants, who presented her paper at the GEM Africa workshop, November 2002. Examples were added to expound on some of the gender issues that Longwe discussed in her paper.)

Situation Analysis refers to the initial review of the situation in the area of interest to the project plan, particularly the various problem situations that may need to be addressed. The situation analysis should include a description of relevant gender issues. Lack of identification of gender issues at this preliminary stage is therefore an important evaluation finding. An example particularly in developing countries as the most pervasive problem in the ICT field is lack of connectivity. Most of the available information that describes connectivity are not sex-disaggregated; nor are they analysed in terms of the different ways women and men use ICT and their roles as decision-makers.

Policy Imperatives refer to aspects of a policy environment that are relevant in deciding actions on a given situation. If the planning and implementation of a project are guided by a clear gender policy, one should expect that the policy's principles and goals are achieved in the project's intent in recognising and addressing gender issues. For example, in 2000, the South Korean government developed a policy to educate Korean women in using ICT as part of its "national informatisation program" to bridge the gender digital divide in the country. To implement this policy, South Korea launched a nationwide campaign providing internet use to one million housewives in a span of 18 months. In Seoul and nearby cities, nearly 70 percent of private computer institutes joined the government's program which provided 20 hours of internet courses per month for just US$27, a rate much lower than the market rate of US$90. While the project recognised the need to equalise women's use of ICT in relation to men, it failed to address the underlying gender issue or how women and men use ICT differently. As such, the project came out with a gender neutral policy.

Problem Identification in the context of formal planning usually refers to a problem perceived when certain policy principles dictate that specific aspects of a situation are unacceptable. These unacceptable aspects become the rationale for taking action. Outside of this formal logic, many problems are identified as 'obvious.' However, in the area of gender, even the 'obvious' aspects of problem identification tend to be notably missing. Whereas many ordinary problems are 'obvious' without recourse to looking at policies, gender issues tend to get overlooked along with the gender policy itself. For example, in telecommunications policies and

programmes, a field that is often seen as "purely technological or technical"; gender issues are almost completely ignored.

Intervention Strategies. The logic from goal to intervention strategy comes from the idea that the intervention, to be effective, must tackle one or more of the underlying causes of a given problem. But with poor planning, the intervention is merely considered to be a 'good thing to do' without establishing any causal connection with the problem. In the case of gender issues, intervention strategies are effective only when they address the underlying causes of the gender issue, and are feasible in terms of previous experiences insofar as these steps anticipate, counter or bypass patriarchal opposition.

Information, communication and mobilisation strategies can never be good or effective strategies 'in themselves'. These strategies must achieve goals and address underlying causes and problems, for example – Is lack of information actually a root cause of the problem being addressed? Or is it merely a symptom of a larger underlying problem. From a gender orientation perspective, strategies need to contribute to the process of women's empowerment and act as means of addressing gender issues. As such, women should not be passive recipients of information disseminated by an information centre.

Implementation Strategies. From a gender perspective, it is often useful to distinguish between implementation strategies that address broader, more encompassing and strategic issues from those that answer specific and more tangible problems. There may be many alternative strategies for implementing any given intervention strategy. For example, the goal of increasing women's access to agricultural information may be achieved by an intervention strategy of providing better access to the internet. This may be achieved through various alternative implementation strategies such as making computers available to women's NGOs and community-based organisations by providing computer training, or by having a trained computer expert act for farmers in a resource centre, and so on. Again, coming from a gender orientation perspective, the appropriateness of an information strategy needs to be assessed by its effective means of distributing information as well as by its potent impact in promoting the wide-ranging advocacy of women's empowerment and gender equality.

Objectives are the expression of the more specific and detailed intentions of an implementation process, particularly in terms of activities and intended outcomes. Very often, an implementation strategy is not properly identified, but may be deduced because it is implicit within a list of objectives. Project objectives usually tend to be "gender blind", with no implicit or explicit expression on how gender issues are to be addressed. When asked about this, project planners usually respond with statements like "our project is gender-oriented", "all our staff is gender-aware" or "our implementation is gender sensitive".

A gender-oriented objective may be an outcome objective concerned with closing gender gaps or ending a discriminatory practice. Alternatively, a gender-oriented objective may be a process objective concerned with the activities and social process by which the outcome is to be achieved. The process of women's empowerment is just as important as the

resulting outcomes in closing gender gaps. For instance, even if women's collective community activities, engagements or campaigns fail to make much progress in closing a gender gap, women will have learnt much from their experiences through the entire process of rallying around gender issues. In some cases, their experiences may be more valuable (or transformative) than the material results of their activities. Empowerment, after all, is a cumulative process.

Outcomes are the results of a project intervention in terms of an increase in the number of women using the internet, increased networking between women's groups, actions taken to address gender issues and evidence of closing gender gaps. It is however, always impossible to prove that a particular outcome is the result of a project's intervention. From an evaluation point of view, it is pointless to look for an outcome addressing a gender issue if there were no project goals or interventions directed for this purpose. If the project had no gender-oriented goal, then, that in itself is an important evaluation finding. In which case, the results of the evaluation would be to modify the project to incorporate the required gender goal and its appropriate method of intervention.

Phase 1 Step 2 Worksheet 2 Project Profile

After completing **Activity 2.1 and 2.2** proceed to the first step of your evaluation – filling out a profile of your project.

As an example for this activity, read the profile of a project evaluated by Isis-WICCE in Uganda. Note the column "Gender and ICT Issues to be Addressed in the Evaluation," the topic discussed in **Activity 2.1 and 2.2**. (Read the full summary of all GEM testers at http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

Name of Initiative	**Rural Women's Information Unit**
Objectives of the Project	To enable women leaders to have access to information to enhance their ability to empower women in their communities To give women leaders a central space to meet, exchange ideas and share experiences To instil a culture of reading amongst women
Expected Outcomes	That the targeted group will have an opportunity to access relevant information for empowerment That women leaders will be able to form networks with women in other parts of the country and internationally That women leaders will be able to lobby for policies and decision-makers to address discriminatory laws and policies That women in the community will be aware and able to demand for their rights (for instance, in cases of domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, the girl-child, etc.)

Project Components and Activities	Accessing information (via provision of a space for reading) Drama Video shows Sensitisation meetings/seminars Marketing products made by women
Intended Users	Women leaders in the community Project implementers
Intended Use	To document best practices of women leaders in using ICTs To identify areas for strengthening the capability of women leaders through the use of ICTs
Gender and ICT issues to be addressed in the evaluation	Availability and accessibility of ICTs to women leaders Usefulness of the available ICTs to women's day-to-day activities Ability and capacity of women leaders to utilise ICTs

You may use the sample table to complete a profile of your project, drawing out specific gender and ICT issues by paying attention to analysis of situation, policy imperatives and identification of problems.

Name of Initiative	
Objectives of the Project	
Expected Outcomes	
Project Components and Activities	
Intended Users	
Intended Use	
Gender and ICT issues to be addressed in the evaluation	

Phase 1 Step 3 Finalising Evaluation Questions

Expected Output

To draw up a list of questions to make an evaluation exercise more focused

What are Evaluation Questions?

Evaluation questions are derived from the evaluation objectives. As well, they establish the direction of an evaluation process. All subsequent steps in the evaluation process, particularly Phase 2 Gathering Information Using Gender and ICT Indicators are mapped out to answer evaluation questions. The evaluation questions should explicitly ask the gender issues that need to be addressed in the initiative or project. Therefore, the process of setting evaluation questions is a sensitive and crucial exercise because it determines what aspects of the project will be included or excluded from the evaluation.

Developing evaluation questions can be one of the hardest parts of an evaluation exercise. Most often, team members tend to formulate evaluation questions that they can not realistically answer. Finalising the evaluation questions entails delving into the gender and social issues within the context of the project, which may raise extremely sensitive issues among the members of the evaluation team. Different ideas and perceptions on priorities and assumptions of the initiative or project can come up, some of which may be sensitive and contentious. In some cases, the team comes up with vague evaluation questions or end up accepting the suggestions and ideas of senior persons in the group. Experience says it is best for the team to come up with participatory methods of facilitating discussions when formulating evaluation questions.

Be reminded that it is important to always refer to the gender and ICT issues identified in Phase 1 Step 2 Activity 2.2. Keep these issues in mind when formulating evaluation questions.

Phase 1 Step 3 Activity 3 Getting Familiar with Evaluation Questions

Study the following examples to give you an idea how to develop evaluation questions based on gender and ICT issues.

Evaluation questions establish the direction of the evaluation

Example 1 A Women's Information Network by Modemmujer

It took a long process for Modemmujer to finalise their evaluation plan. The evaluation team was guided throughout by the GEM regional coordinator with whom they communicated regularly by email and who visited them twice during that period to provide inputs. The team met weekly to study the GEM tool and documents, discuss main concepts and ideas and the desired framework for the evaluation. A two-day workshop on evaluation with a gender perspective helped set the main objectives. After almost two months, they finally arrived at the evaluation questions, specific gender objectives, indicators and methodologies.

Gender and ICT issue: The evaluation sought to illustrate how the strategic use of ICT can move forward the advocacies along women's rights and women's empowerment within their specific context.

Evaluation question: The team wanted to know in what way and to what extent their work influenced their subscribers and encouraged changes in subscribers' approach to gender issues and their use of ICTs.

Did the information and communication services contribute to subscribers' empowerment, sensitise subscribers on gender issues and empower subscribers for strategic ICT use?

(Read the full summary of all GEM testers at http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

Example 2 An Employment Training Project by ZaMirNET

ZaMirNet is a non-governmental organisation that uses ICTs to repackage and provide relevant information for the development of civil society in Croatia. Their Job Search Training project, which ran from February 2003 and May 2004, aimed to improve the employable skills of residents in two post-war, economically deprived communities in Croatia. They targeted first time job seekers, the unemployed and irregularly employed residents, giving special attention to the youth, war veterans and women. The training programme consisted of four courses, and was a combination of live/workshop-style training, online training, and individual mentoring and peer-support.

ZaMirNet used GEM to assess the effectiveness of the training in terms of skills and knowledge gained, as well as its impact on the participants' confidence to take on available opportunities in the labour market. In addition, the evaluation's results were used to improve ZaMirNet's training package and were shared with other organisations and institutions.

General Evaluation Objective

To assess the impacts of the Job Search Training (JST) via increase of participant's skills and knowledge in career planning

Specific Gender Objective: To gauge how the training altered the sense of self-confidence of women and men participants

Gender and ICT Issues to be Addressed in the Evaluation

There is a lower response to previous ICT training from women over 40 years old.

How do we involve older women in the project more effectively?

Women and men are affected differently by ICTs due to gender differences in roles and personal, cultural and social constraints. Gender differences exist in using ICTs for career and professional development.

Evaluation Questions

Project impacts

What progress in job search and career planning did each applicant make during and after the course? (disaggregated by sex)

What new skills did women and men participants learn?

Did the training change women and men's self-confidence?

Project effectiveness and sensitivity

How effective were course content and methodologies in increasing self-confidence of women and men trainees?

How sensitive were course content and methodologies to the specific local context, as well as to personal, cultural and social constraints that influence successful career development in specific local contexts? For example, in gender-related issues such as lack of family support and the burden of housework and childcare faced by women?

Specific needs and barriers faced by women over 40

What gender barriers in relation to male participants did younger women and women over 40 face during and after the course? Did their environment (family, colleagues, friends) support their efforts to find a job?

For what purposes did men and women (disaggregated by age) use ICTs during the Job Search Training?

(Read the full summary of all GEM testers at http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

After reviewing the examples, develop your own evaluation questions using the provided worksheet below.

Phase 1 Step 3 Worksheet 3 Generating Questions

As facilitator or team leader, organise a session with your evaluation team to brainstorm and develop your evaluation questions. Remember that your evaluation questions must refer to the gender and ICT issues that you identified in Step 2.

Ask each member of your evaluation team to list five to 10 things s/he would like to know about the project. (You can decide the number of items each member of the team can come up with based on the number of questions you want to ask. To help them, ask each member to answer the question: What do you really want to learn about gender issues in the project?)

- Group your evaluation team into three or smaller groups and ask them to combine their lists into one list of five to 10 things that their group wants to know. Each group must establish their priorities.
- Finally, the evaluation team regroups into one to come up with a list of five to 10 things they all agree they want to know. From this list, the team can then develop a set of evaluation questions that it can focus on in the evaluation exercise.

TIP Focusing on an evaluation means dealing with several basic concerns answered by the following questions:

- What is the objective of the evaluation exercise?
- How will the information be used?
- What new knowledge can be achieved after the evaluation?

Additional Questions to Help the Team

Project Planning

- Was gender equality or women's empowerment taken into account when the project goals were articulated?
- What was stated regarding 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

- What was the division of labour between women and men and within each sex group, for example, among 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 and men's participation in project activities?
- Did women and men participate equally in decision-making?
- 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?

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?

Phase 1 Step 4 Setting Gender and ICT Indicators

Expected Outputs

To draw up a set of gender and ICT indicators to guide the information-gathering process

After clarifying key gender and ICT issues, objectives and evaluation questions, the next step is selecting and adapting tools to gather information about these issues. Indicators are a good mechanism for doing 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. And qualitative – people's judgment or perception about a subject, for instance, self-confidence developed by women users from skills learned in telecentres that may help them get better employment.

Indicators also provide a closer look at results of initiatives and actions. They are useful tools to assess positions and directions with respect to values and goals, and in evaluating specific programmes and determining the impact of such programmes. [*Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators* 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 37]. The generally accepted criteria for good indicators are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART). Normally, indicators are defined or set by the objectives of a project. However, in reality, projects can bring about changes in communities or changes in the environment may lead to adjustments of projects. Indicators may therefore be refined once a project starts.

What are 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 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. They help illustrate the ways a project affects gender roles and confirms or disregards gender discrimination. Gender indicators should be drawn from identifying gender issues within a specific context of a project or activity. Many indicators that look into gender such as measuring gender empowerment, 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 reflect and express women's experiences especially in areas such as women's empowerment or participation. They argue that policy-makers need to pay more attention to women's experiences towards which indicators can serve as pointers.

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?"

In the end, what we really want to know is: Did it really change lives or are we back to the same situation? Is it reproducing inequality and inequity? [*Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators* 5]

What are Quantitative Indicators?

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

Below are two examples of quantitative indicators from GEM practitioners: Women Mayors' Link and Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET).

Women Mayors' Link, a network of women mayors in the Stability Pact region

Quantitative Indicators

- Number of women mayors who have developed ICT strategies that were used in their activities
- Number of city halls with website pages
- Frequency in using email/internet by women mayors
- Number of women mayors who have at least email access and use it as a communication tool
- Number of women mayors who have the necessary technologies like telephones, fax, computers, internet connections and photocopying machines and use them in their work
- Number of women mayors trained in using ICTs
- Number of women mayors fluent in English (written and oral)
- Number of women mayors who participated in the list-serve discussions
- Number of women mayors who initiated strategies for using ICTs in the city hall

WOUGNET, an NGO set up by women's organisations in Uganda working in the area of women using ICTs as tools to share information and address women's issues collectively.

Gender and ICT Indicators

- Actual policy changes in issues that women advocate, for example, in ICT, gender, land bills, and others
- Coalitions formed as a result of the women's network
- Number of women posting to the list-serve
- Number of advocacy actions that women's organisations perform, such as rallies or online debates
- Increased awareness of the project
- Increased networking among women's organisations in Uganda
- Number of opportunities that member organisations gain through the network, like training, equipment, funding

What are Qualitative Indicators?

Qualitative indicators are defined as people's judgments and perceptions on a subject, such as the confidence gained from acquiring computer skills to enable better employment opportunities or having access to the internet for better trading/marketing opportunities.

Qualitative gender indicators include collecting data of women's own perceptions of a project's impact and discovering how an intervention changed conditions of gender inequality. [*Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators* 9]

As an example, read ZaMirNET's qualitative indicators.

ZaMirNET, an NGO that uses ICTs to provide and create information relevant for the development of civil society in Croatia. The specific initiative that ZaMirNET evaluated was a job training workshop for women and men of varying ages. Below is an excerpt from their report showing how they obtained and assessed information about qualitative changes.

Determining and Looking for Qualitative Information

Personal Career Plan

Each participant was asked to prepare a personal career development plan at the start of the course. The original personal plans were then revised as part of the training. Three months after the completion of the course, the actual progress in searching for jobs and career planning was tracked based on the final version of the developed personal plan. The career plans were used in the training and also as an evaluation tool. The participants' reflections on changes in their personal career plans as well as concrete steps taken in terms of self-initiative and strategic approach in searching for jobs, career planning and professional development (which were all reported in focus group discussion, and written reports submitted three months after the completion of the course) gave the most accurate indicators on the outputs, as well as impact and usefulness of the training.

The personal career plans were developed as part of the online training component in the step-by-step exercise on the website. (Go to www.ZaMirNET.hr/vodic and open the guest access. No available English translation.) Each trainee received a personal account with a password to access the online component. Using ICTs made it easy for the participants to reflect on their development and changes in their attitudes. With assistance from the personal adviser, the participants planned their professional development and achievement for the next five to 10 years. The career plans covered the following areas:

- Personal characteristics and interests
- Personal skills
- Past education
- Determine long-term (5 years) goal of professional development and activities in looking for a job
- Personal professional development and job-seeking plans in the next one-, three-, and five-year period

Participant's self-assessment

The impact and effectiveness of the course as a whole was evaluated by the participants in the self-assessment questionnaire distributed before and one month after the training course. In addition to the evaluation of changes in their attitudes, self-confidence and relevance of learned skills and knowledge, the self-assessment focused on personal and social constraints faced by the participants during the course. It also asked about conditions that affected their activities in looking for jobs.

Responses to the pre- and post-assessment questionnaires were almost the same except for the final feedback section. The comparison of the responses again enabled the evaluation team to track the changes in participant's attitudes and skills, and the impact of the course.

Section of the self-assessment:

- assessment of skills in looking for job and attitudes
- assessment of attitudes and expectations in professional development
- environment (e.g. support from family, household, friends, colleagues, etc.)
- assessment of self-confidence and readiness to look for jobs
- participant's feedback on the impact of the course and effectiveness of the course content and used methodologies (only in case of post-assessment questionnaire)

How did women and men benefit from the job search programme?

- General impression of the course was from good to very good; interesting and new for women and useful and interesting for men.
- Everybody rated the training should have lasted longer.
- Best part of the training according to women participants was the interaction among the participants and the interviews. For the men, the online part was the best.

- For the older people, the best part of the training was regaining their self-confidence and combatting their depression.

- The course materials were assessed as very useful but too abundant, requiring significant time for personal learning between the live workshops, which was a challenge to the participants. It was suggested to reduce the number of materials and group them into three, instead of four modules.

- Group work: The younger women and men from among the group participants expressed satisfaction with the group work. (They meet regularly although unintentionally since the community is very small.)

- Women over 40 said the group members rarely meet. Benefits from the group were sharing of experiences and extending mutual support.

- Younger women said that work in the group was fun while women over 40 liked the opportunity to talk to people. Men appreciated sharing information.

- As a result of the training, younger women became interested in starting their own enterprises, launching non-profit organisations, taking formal studies and additional ICT courses.

- Women over 40 did not do anything special but some of them applied for jobs. One woman got employed and likes her work because it is creative, fun and includes using ICTs.

- Changes in attitudes were related to increased flexibility in applying for jobs. Most of the participants before the course did not consider applying for a post that did not match their professional qualifications. After the course, participants showed varied new interests like protection of the environment, organic farming and tourism.

- The most significant effect of the training was in the area of self-confidence, both for some younger women and some older persons. Attributed also to the training were skills learned like self-presentation in interviews. Some participants said the course influenced their attitudes in life because it broadened their perspectives.

What is the Difference between Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators?

Quantitative indicators are commonly believed to be measurements of cold, hard facts and rigid numbers; their validity, truth and objectivity taken as unshakeable facts. They are also seen as "objective and verifiable". For example, the number of computers in a workplace or the number of telephones in a community; the quantity and frequency of computer and internet-related training workshops. Quantitative indicators deal with outputs, are easier to define and to look for.

On the other hand, qualitative indicators are seen as subjective, unreliable and difficult to verify. They are more difficult to ascertain because they probe the whys of situations and the contexts of people's decisions, actions and perceptions. However, qualitative indicators are valuable to the evaluation process because projects and initiatives are involved with studying changes in people's lives and in

communities. They seek to measure the impact and evaluate the long-term effects and benefits of a project or an initiative. They focus on people's own experiences and 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 telecentres becomes more significant if the information they find and the links they make through the internet contribute to their sense of independence and empowerment.

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

Most project monitoring and evaluation models recommend it is equally important to record outputs and quality of outcomes as well as measure their impacts. The political nature of indicator use must be kept in mind particularly in relation to qualitative indicators because it is often claimed that these indicators are 'subjective' or unreliable and therefore of little worth. Reliable methods such as surveys can ensure the reliability and validity of qualitative indicators. (**PHASE 2** discusses these methods in more detail.)

An important principle to remember is that qualitative indicators can play an important role in promoting and understanding stakeholders' perspectives, particularly for women, thus fostering participation of women stakeholders. Developing gender-sensitive indicators in a participatory fashion requires including people's own indicators of development. [*Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators* 6,11]

More on Qualitative Indicators

A study of networks explains the subjectivity of qualitative indicators:

"For networks and networking organisations, 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, 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 organisation must identify its own indicators, but the following examples from previous efforts can help stimulate this process." [Karl 63]

How to Design Indicators

There is obviously no such thing as a set of universal indicators. Users must design and adapt indicators suited for the purposes of their evaluation. For the overall evaluation of a project, indicators should be established during the project planning phase 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 prioritises indicators that will be relevant to the evaluation based on its objectives or intended use.

Some Pointers to Keep in Mind when Setting Indicators

Below are some pointers and guidelines to stimulate discussions on determining indicators, both qualitative and quantitative. Some are principles adapted from general models on monitoring and evaluation while others were culled from ICT practice and experience.

Indicators are linked to goals

ICTs are used in different initiatives such as networking, capacity building and advocacy. Thus, ICT indicators should be linked with the goals and purpose/s of an organisation, activity or project. Goals can be long-term or short-term. For example, an information campaign can have a short-term objective of using online tools to expand its reach and enhance participation in a given advocacy campaign. Indicators in this case can be the number of individuals and groups that participated in mailing lists or online discussions, the number of contributions from participants, and the geographical spread of the participation.

On the other hand, indicators for computer education projects aimed to provide skills for young people to acquire better employment opportunities will need to measure the long-term and broader impact of using ICTs in relation to creation of jobs, availability of jobs, number of boys and girls in the courses, changes in the economic status of young people who become part of these programmes, and opportunities that open up as a result of the programmes.

As the above cases show, some indicators are quantitative and easier to identify while others are qualitative indicators.

Indicators change during the process of implementation

It is sound practice to define indicators at the beginning of a project or initiative. This makes it easier to track the progress and evaluate the outcomes and impact of the project. However, it is equally important to keep in mind that indicators can change during the process of the implementation of the project. Indicators that may not have been anticipated early on arise, manifest or become pronounced along the way.

Indicators reflect specific realities and experiences

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

It is important to recognise the realities of women's lives in dealing with the performances of people within projects or initiatives. For example, it should be recognised that there are many factors, including personal aspects, that affect women's performances 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 is not gender neutral

When setting technology related indicators, it is best to keep in mind that technology is never gender neutral in its design, access and use. A basic element of the GEM framework states 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 be used to maintain the unequal domestic or work-related status of women, or worse, exacerbate their present situation. Such is the case why a number of feminist researches are now interrogating the impact of ICTs on women who are now able to work at home but who may, at the same time, find themselves in a position where they assume additional domestic work. This serves to reiterate traditional gender roles in the home, and at worst, add more load on women's existing multiple roles and burdens.

Indicators should be able to point out if ICTs contribute to empower or marginalise women or if ICTs reproduce or transform gender roles. Be aware though of unintended consequences brought about by projects or initiatives because ICTs also impact on women who do not have access to such technologies. For instance, women from a village who produce handicrafts are able to market their products better because they were connected to the internet. An indirect consequence of their better marketing strategies is the further marginalisation of those who do not have access to the internet.

Source: ***Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators*** **21**

Examples of indicators

Below are different examples of quantitative and qualitative indicators that show the many ways of formulating gender-sensitive indicators.

Example 1

More women get to use ICTs compared to other technologies. But women are more active on the information and communications (IC) aspects rather than on the technology aspect of ICTs which reflects masculine and feminine assumptions.

Example 2

Several issues revolve around access to ICTs. Women have access to ICTs as information providers. Some have access to training and support either as trainers or trainees. But at some point, women get to have less access to the technical aspects of ICTs than men, a bottleneck encountered by many in the ICT field. Therefore, using the number of women internet users is not sufficient to determine how women fare as users of ICTs. Our indicators for an ICT evaluation tool must look at many issues where women are users, information providers, trainers, and technicians.

Example 3

Measuring differential impacts. An ICT project can be evaluated from a gender perspective even if it was not intended to work on gender issues. For example, a project that provides computers to school children that did not look at gender can be evaluated from a gender perspective by finding out how girls and boys benefited from the project.

Types of Indicators and Attribution

There are many types of indicators that can be used depending on the nature of a project. Below are indicators that were identified through research and further developed through various evaluation exercises including GEM pilot evaluations.

But before we proceed, a word of advice on indicators and attributions. Remember we mentioned previously that indicators can be useful tools to assess where we stand and where we are going with respect to values and goals, to evaluate specific programs and determine their impact. All that is fine but we do not want to fall into a problem with attributions, that is, the extent by which we ascribe a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention. Keep in mind that identifying and measuring the net positive effects solely as a direct result of an initiative can limit our learning from an evaluation. Changes in an environment or in the condition of a community occur from a confluence of factors brought about by interventions. When we identify indicators, we do not intend to isolate key factors that caused desired results and attribute them to a particular agency or set of activities. Instead, we want to set multiple indicators within the context of our projects and understand how they interplay with various factors and actors in the community.

Access indicators

Access means having the opportunity and the means to technology, information and know-how. It is influenced by race, class,

Access means having the opportunity and the means to technology, information and know-how

Universal Access issues

Access to ICT infrastructure and basic ICT skills continue to be the most common gender and ICT issues identified by all GEM testers. Developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America including marginalised groups and peoples in Central East Europe have low access to ICTs. In addition to the global digital divide, women are generally further disadvantaged from access to ICTs by other social factors or situations: as single mothers; as disabled or older women; as rural poor women; as unemployed; as those who belong to low-income groups; as refugees; or as ethnic peoples.

Despite statements that universal access is a priority in most ICT national policies, in the majority of countries where GEM testing have been conducted, the use of ICT remains a problem because of poor, inadequate or absence of access. Given these limitations, promoting good practice on the strategic use of ICT for women's empowerment and gender equality becomes more critical.

gender or socio-economic status. The basic quantitative indicator of access is the number of men and women who own or have the means to use computers, telephones and the internet. The main factor affecting access is usually the presence or absence of telecommunications and internet infrastructures. From experience, such quantitative indicators of access point only the obvious and initial elements. The more significant indicators are often qualitative in nature which includes the quality of access to useful, empowering and relevant information to women. It also includes availability of information to women who are not "literate" in the available languages used in ICTs. Other important indicators are those that reveal the amount of power and control women have over these resources and knowledge.

Networking indicators

One of the most valuable advantages of ICTs is its potential to strengthen and expand links, networks and networking initiatives. Social movements, including the women's movement, have used various ICT tools to expand their links and connections outside their physical and geographical reach. Many of the early studies on women's use of email and internet have shown that women use new technologies to network. Though it is difficult to isolate the impact of networking from other contributing factors, a useful indicator of success would be how ICTs assist linking women and groups with others who may otherwise not be in contact with and among each other. Another indicator is how ICTs bring together networks of individuals or groups to promote and gather support for their advocacies. Denise Gray-Felder and James Deane have observed that:

> "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." [22]

An example of a global women's network that uses ICTs extensively among its members and partners is APC WNSP. It does not have a physical office but conducts much of its work through online workspaces and online meetings and consultations.

Advocacy indicators

Advocacy is broadly defined as a process of bringing about change. Many advocacy campaigns are directed at generating policy changes in government, institutional and other policy-making bodies. ICTs are increasingly used as tools in most advocacy undertakings because of their effectiveness in group communication and interactivity. Women's organisations extensively use these tools for policy advocacy to forge ahead gender justice and equality. The outcomes of these campaigns – determining whether or not actual policy change does occur – are indicators of the success of the campaigns and to a certain extent, the effectiveness of using ICT tools for advocacy. Other indicators gauge the differences between using ICTs and traditional methods (such as assemblies or face-to-face forums) by comparing the discussions and actions generated from campaigns using ICTs and traditional methods.

Advancing Women's Rights

Using ICTs have helped push a range of women's issues through information activities and advocacy campaigns. GEM was used to evaluate how projects of some women's information centres used ICT tools as in the case of Modemmujer in Mexico, KARAT Coalition in Poland, WOUGNET in Uganda and the regional Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) networks in Africa and Latin America. These projects included specific e-bulletins, radio programmes and e-lists of women's information centres. The women's centres designed and conducted surveys among their publics to gauge the effectiveness of their media as well as the content of their messages and materials. To many of them, using GEM was their first opportunity to systematically gather feedback. Overall, the survey results validated their projects.

For example, feedback from women's activists in Poland informed KARAT Coalition it was difficult to collect information from the available local social movements in the region. But KARAT Coalition's e-bulletin proved different. It kept them informed about the main initiatives and trends in the region, helped them learn new experiences, shared inputs in shaping their respective NGOs' objectives for future activities, aided them in finding new partners and gave them ideas to further develop their organisations. Particularly important for these NGOs and for most of the women activists in the European Union (EU) candidate countries is information about the EU enlargement process that would directly affect the economic and political situation of their region which the e-bulletin also provided.

A common limitation, however, was noted: the need to translate information into other major regional and local languages because most regions are not linguistically homogenous. This makes language a key indicator in measuring accessibility of information.

Capacity-building indicators

GEM was used to evaluate five ICT training initiatives that ranged from basic training for rural women in South Africa, employment skills training in Croatia, to web-based information management and e-commerce for women's organisations in Asia-Pacific. These trainings empowered the women participants.

Indicators of levels of empowerment included reinforcing the self-esteem of trainees who learned to use a new and more advanced communications technology. Thus, ICTs facilitated networking which in turn gave the women more room to participate in decision-making and strengthened internal democracy in their organisations, improved their chances of finding jobs and renewed their self-confidence.

Organisational indicators

Using ICTs makes it possible for everyone in an organisation to receive the same information that may otherwise only be available to management or certain sections of an institution or organisation. Access to strategic information can modify the way staff or members relate among themselves and can promote democracy in the organisations. There have been many instances where access brought about changes in the power structures of an organisation because it enabled women to participate more actively in decision-making.

Democratic Communication indicators

ICTs are increasingly being used as necessary and effective tools in communications

strategies. The potential of these new technologies for participatory and democratic communication and for 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 towards broader development processes. These indicators are also useful in measuring the impact of ICTs. Denise Gray-Felder and James Deane [21-22] provide some of the indicators that were developed in this area:

- Expanded public and private dialogue and debate

Perhaps the most popular use of ICTs has been towards opening up spaces for online discussions, dialogues and debates. Many women have found these spaces provide opportunities for political expression and participation. In many instances, women find the anonymity of the medium a secure space to express themselves. However, it is wise to note 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 available means that enable people and communities to participate in the debates and dialogues on the internet.

- Increased accuracy of information that women share in the dialogues/debates

Quality rather than volume or quantity of information that is generated is more substantial as an indicator. This is because the underlying assumption of using ICTs for information sharing and communication is that it provides a means for sharing knowledge and information directly by those who generate them.

- Increased leadership and agenda-setting role by women on 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. Indicators for this can include: women's involvement in the major decisions related to the initiative; the tasks they fulfilled in the initiative; the areas of work they were most active in; their participation in key events and activities within the initiative. Probing into these issues will allow evaluation results to surface gender issues in the initiative – a vital component of any intervention.

Phase 1 Step 4 Activity 4
Asking Questions

A more detailed set of questions may also be used to help you define indicators. Select one indicator for your project. After having identified your indicator, answer all of the questions that are related to your indicator.

The example below uses **training** as a capacity-building indicator.

- Activities: Ask who does what, and when. Scrutinise various roles of men and women and determine whether these roles are productive or reproductive. A tool to measure these activities may be a daily or seasonal calendar.

- Resources: Who has access to or control over resources?

- Benefits: What factors (e.g. social, political, cultural, economic) control access to benefits?

- Participation: How and when do women and men participate in realising the benefits that they may or may not have control of?

Below is another set of questions that may help define indicators on Access. Answer the following questions and find out the issues on access in your organisation or project.

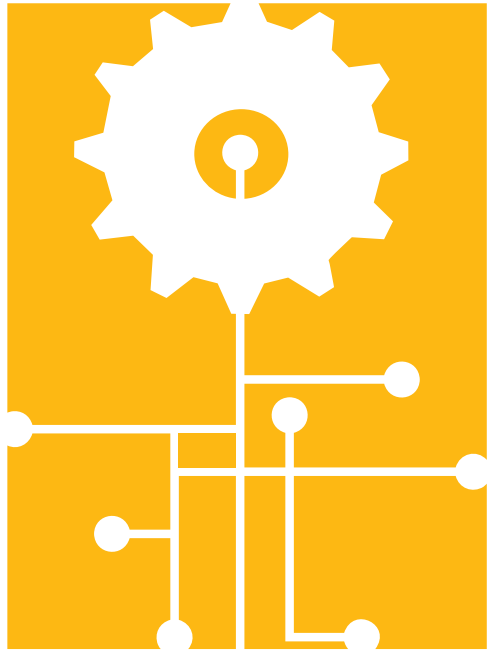
- Who makes decisions on access to technology?
- Who creates the content that is used?
- Who has the right to create content and language?
- How do women and men use the information they access?

Learn more about access issues from Bridges, an organisation that promotes the effective use of ICTs for improving people's lives in developing countries. It developed "Real Access criteria" that identifies 12 factors that determine "whether or not people have Real Access to ICT – access that goes beyond just physical access and makes it possible for people to use technology effectively to improve their lives."
(Visit http://www.bridges.org/digitaldivide/realaccess.html)

Criteria for Selecting Indicators

Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators published by Canadian International Development Agency [21] provides a list of important criteria to bear in mind when setting indicators:

- Indicators should be developed in a participatory fashion with stakeholders participating, if 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.
- Use both qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- Indicators should be easy to use and understand.
- Indicators must be clearly defined.
- The number of indicators should be small. A rule of thumb is to come up with no more than six specific indicators for each general indicator (input – outcome). For example, women's strategic use of ICT is a general indicator, and can have more specific indicators such as the number of women using ICTs, how women are using ICTs, the types of ICTs that women use, the time women spend using ICTs, and many others.
- Indicators should be technically sound.
- Indicators should measure trends over time.
- The main stress should be on outcome indicators.



TIP The GEM Indicators Test: A Sharing of Experiences and Tools

Identifying gender indicators in ICT initiatives, whether in policies, strategies, programmes, projects and activities can be an effective way to ensure that women's specific needs are taken into account in the planning process. While a rich body of gender indicators have been developed in areas like health, education, human rights and political empowerment, this is not the case with regards to ICT initiatives which is a fairly a new area of study. Nevertheless, gender indicators that have been developed and used through the years in other fields can be applied in the ICT field as well.

Indicators are the key components in determining how and why specific ICT initiatives is the key component that bring about changes with regard to women's conditions, gender roles or gender relations. But admittedly, identifying gender and ICT indicators has been the most challenging step for many GEM testers; and between quantitative indicators and qualitative indicators, the latter is more difficult to identify than the former. And yet, qualitative indicators more vividly illustrate the relationship of ICT interventions and women's empowerment. There's simply no way out of these indicators!

For example, five of the first GEM evaluators are telecentre initiatives in rural communities in Ecuador, Colombia, Philippines and Nigeria. At the start, the evaluation teams of these telecentres simply disaggregated their user data by sex, which is a quantitative indicator. After much probing on gender and ICT indicators, data gathered were differentiated by sex with regards to participation in decision-making bodies, roles of volunteers and staff, activities of users in telecentres, trainings received and several more were identified as qualitative indicators. (These are indicators of access, participation and use which reflect different levels of empowerment.)

Because ICTs and ICT-based projects operate within existing gendered social structures such as laws and traditional cultural beliefs and practices, sex-disaggregated data fail to sufficiently reflect gender issues in ICTs. It is more important to examine the reasons behind the numbers even if they may sometimes show there is hardly any gender disparity between those using ICTs and those benefiting from it. It will be possible then for gender issues to surface, which in turn inform us how best to use technologies for social development and close gender gaps.

The following questions can help keep you focused in setting gender and ICT indicators. For additional help in answering the questions, visit the links suggested in each question. After completing **Phase 1**, you will have gained insights to the answers of many if not all of the questions.

In what ways does your project:

- contribute to changing gender roles and relations?
http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/understanding_gem/genderanalysis.htm#Gender_Role_Analysis

- facilitate women's empowerment?
http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/understanding_gem/genderanalysis.htm#empowerment

- encourage the strategic use of ICT?
http://www.apc.org/ for the APC website

- enable gender transformative policies?
http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/understanding_gem/genderanalysis.htm#Gender_Tranformative _Strategies

- create economic opportunities?
http://www.eldis.org/ict/index.htm for ELDIS ICT4Development Resource Guide or http://www.i4donline.net/issue/jan04/connecting_full.htm for ICT4Development Online

- promote communication rights?
http://www.crisinfo.org/ for Communication Rights in the Information Society page

Phase 1 Step 4 Worksheet 4 Creating Gender Indicators

Go over the example of Modemmujer in Mexico and study how indicators were developed from the evaluation questions. Take note of the difference between quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Modemmujer: Setting Indicators

The Gender and ICT Indicators used for the evaluation were:

Empowerment of subscribers in the strategic use of ICTs

- Number of subscribers according to sex
- How many used the information that was sent using ICT tools
- How many asked for documents offered in the information service using ICT tools
- How many sent documents that were recommended by the information services using ICT tools
- How many distributed the contents and documents to other constituencies using ICT tools?
- How did the subscribers use the information services?

- How did they share contents and documents? Why?
- Did the information services help broaden the knowledge on gender and ICT issues. Did they encourage activities using ICT for campaigning, collecting signatures to support women's issues, organise events, demonstrations, etc.?
- Did the information services help widen ICT knowledge and use with a gender perspective?

Each service was evaluated by sending specific questionnaires of each kind of service to subscribers.

1. ***Spot Informativo***: a news and information bulletin, that includes documents, presentations, papers, calls to action and networking announcements. It is produced twice a week.

General Objective: Identify how the *Spot Informativo* contributed to empowering Modemmujer subscribers

Indicators for empowerment:

- The *Spot Informativo* encouraged networking among women's organisations
- The *Spot Informativo* promoted coordination between women's organisations in order to achieve greater presence, and to come up with and exert more influence on public policies
- The *Spot Informativo* helped facilitate women's organisations to acquire more information/knowledge about gender issues
- The *Spot Informativo* reinforced the capabilities of women and women's organisations in voicing out ideas and opinions on women's rights and the status of women

Specific objective 1: Identify how the *Spot Informativo* has sensitised subscribers (both individuals and organisations) on gender issues

Indicators for gender issues:

- the *Spot Informativo* moved its subscribers to take up actions in changing gender inequalities in society
- the *Spot Informativo* contributed to widen susbcribers´ knowledge and skills on gender issues
- the *Spot Informativo* contributed to building the women's image it advocates

Specific objective 2: Identify how the *Spot Informativo* has contributed to empowering subscribers by using ICTs

Indicators:

- How the *Spot Informativo* contributed to widen skills and knowledge of subscribers in using ICTs
- The *Spot Informativo* helped subscribers to learn more about the developments in ICTs
- Subscribers became interested in ICTs' strategic use and value

General Indicators:

- Number of spots sent regularly
- Number of subscribers
- Number of subscribers that read the spot
- Number of subscribers that regularly used the information they receive
- Number of documents sent; classified by subject
- Percentage of male and female subscribers
- Number of subscribers by country
- Number of subscribers according to their activities
- Number of new subscribers in the last six months
- Percentage of requests according to different subjects/issues

2. ***Elecciones Bulletin***: a news and information bulletin on health and reproductive rights issues, with a special focus on abortion.

General objective: To get to know the impact of the *Elección* electronic bulletin in the strategic planning of activities focusing on activities of subscribers with respect to giving information and intervention on policies; and the impact of these activities

Evaluate if the *Elección* electronic bulletin incorporated a gender perspective in the selection, treatment and presentation of its information and articles on legal abortion and related issues

Specific objective 1: To get to know if the *Elección* bulletin contributed to social change by facilitating information that helped women and women's organisations in the direction and plans of their activities on the abortion issue

Indicator:

- How the information sent helped women and women's organisations exert influence on policies in the national arena

Specific objective 2: Identify if the information selected hued closely to or are in accord with the aims of Modemmujer's programme on women's rights for legal abortion

Indicators:

- That articles sent helped update and widen the knowledge about legal abortion
- That the selection of information about legal abortion was guided by a gender perspective and took into account the issues that cut across legal abortion

Specific objective 3: Determine which sections of the *Elección* electronic bulletin gave up-to-date and useful information on ICTs and maximisation of its use

Indicator:

- That the use of electronic tools in producing and disseminating the bulletin empowered women

Specific objective 4: Determine how the electronic bulletin was used

Indicator:

- See if subscribers read and shared the information with other people and groups

Specific objective 5: Evaluate users' perception on the clarity of information and design of the bulletin

Indicators:

- That the format and design were attractive and facilitated reading
- That the sections in the bulletin were clearly distinctive

3. **Letter to Get New Subscribers**: this letter is sent to encourage new subscribers

General objective: Identify if the invitation letter gave future subscribers an adequate idea of Modemmujer's work and philosophy; if it generated interest on Modemmujer's activities

Specific objective 1: Identify if the people who received the invitation letter understood Modemmujer's activities and got them interested in the activities

Indicators:

- Number of people who visited the web page after receiving the invitation letter
- Areas they found interesting

Specific objective 2: Identify if future subscribers understood that Modemmujer works with a gender perspective

Indicators:

- Modemmujer's invitation letter generated interest on gender issues
- Percentage of women and men who replied to the invitation letter and subscribed

Specific objective 3: Identify if the invitation letter was an adequate instrument to get new subscribers

Indicators:

- Number of people who received the letter
- Number of people who forwarded the letter to others
- Number of positive answers
- Number of people who did not subscribe

Now, define your own indicators for your project. Fill in the table below:

Phase 1: Integrating Gender in Your Evaluation Plan	
Evaluation Objectives or Intended Use	
Gender and ICT Issues to be Addressed in the Evaluation	
Indicators Used for the Evaluation	

TIP More questions to help you focus on gender issues:

- What was the level of women's participation in the project?
- What strategies were developed within the project to respond to gender issues?
- Did women's participation in the ICT initiative change their position or standing in the eyes of the community?
- What were women and men's roles in decision-making in the project?
- Were the project strategies gender transformative?

Phase 2 Gathering Information Using Gender and ICT Indicators

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 findings of the evaluation

Objectives

To identify the means to monitor and collect information about gender equality issues based on intended use and evaluation question/s

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

PHASE 2 STEP 5 SELECTING DATA GATHERING METHODS / TOOLS

PHASE 2 STEP 5 concentrates on the process of collecting information and outlining effective methods in drawing out useful data and information for measuring the changes resulting from an ICT intervention.

Expected Output

To produce a detailed strategy for gathering information on and monitoring gender and ICT indicators

Who Decides which Methods/Tools to Use?

Contrary to popular belief, designing methods for gathering data requires professional and technical skills, resources and more. Patton expresses this best in his book, *Utilization-Focused Evaluation* [242]:

> The common perception of methods decisions among nonresearchers is that such decisions are primarily technical in nature. Sample size, for example, is determined by mathematical formula. The evaluation methodologist enters the values of certain variables, makes calculations, and out pops the right sample size to achieve the desired level of statistical robustness, significance, power, validity, reliability, generalizability, and so on – all technical terms that dazzle, impress and intimidate practitioners and non-researchers.

Decisions in determining methods or tools to use should not solely rely on technical elements. Other factors come into play when deciding which tools to use to gather information for an evaluation such as practical and resource limitations, and the intended use of the evaluation results. To determine which methods and tools to use, it is important that identified intended users of the evaluation be primary decision-makers since, after all, they have the largest stake in the results of the evaluation exercise.

What Methods/Tools Can Be Used?

Where can we get our data? Charles Lusthaus, Marie-Hélène Adrien, Gary Anderson and Fred Carden in their book *Enhancing Organizational Performance: A Toolbox for Self-assessment* groups data sources:

> "Essentially, data can be collected from two sources: documents and people. Document sources can be internal (financial statements, annual reports, human-resource policy, program planning documents,

strategic plans, promotion brochures, evaluation reports) or external (country policies, legislation, media, donors reports). Data can also be obtained through people, either individually or in groups, either directly through conversation or indirectly through questionnaires."

There is a range of methods, tools and sources of data one can choose from when conducting an evaluation:

- Records - training attendance records, telecentre's record or logbook of use, website's statistics of use or number of times it was accessed, etc.
- Internal Documents – original project proposals or funding agreements, papers related to the development of the work, reports, correspondences, minutes of meetings, etc.
- Interviews - with project beneficiaries, network members, project staff, individuals in other agencies, etc.
- Discussions or Focus groups - with staff, beneficiaries, etc.
- Surveys and Questionnaires - filled in by various stakeholders
- Stories - accounts of stakeholders that reveal their perspectives about the project

Each type of data gathering tool has its own merits and limitations. It is best to familiarise yourself with the different types of tools before selecting which to use. Below is an example of one method, Storytelling.

Storytelling as a Method/Tool

One of the many gender-sensitive methods that have been designed and used effectively for evaluating various types of projects and initiatives is storytelling. GEM provides guidelines and examples of this method.

The guidelines are divided into three sections. The first section explores some important elements before starting to gather your stories: fairness of representation, consent, barriers and potential situations that may cause harm to the storytellers. The second section gives a brief look at two methods of gathering stories and the last section identifies the types of content GEM is particularly interested in examining.

Elements of Storytelling

- Choosing a story
- Storyteller's point of view
- Participation of others in the story
- Barriers and problems
- Consent

Choosing a story

Encouraging people to tell their stories gives stakeholders and participants an active role in the evaluation and gives depth to the study which is crucial especially for a gender perspective evaluation. These stories can be told from the perspective of the evaluator who writes down her experiences and the stories she has collected from the participants. Or the evaluator asks the participants themselves to write down their stories. In cases where participants can't write, the evaluator faithfully documents

their stories. The last two types of storytelling come from the perspective of the participants.

Keep in mind that there are many stories in an organisation or community which can all be interesting. It is therefore important to remain focused on the evaluation objectives. Below are some reminders that may help you choose the stories you want to document.

- What is the story about?
- Whose story is being told? the evaluator's story? the participants', i.e., members of the project or community?
- Who will be in the story?
- Who will be affected by the story?
- Is the story focusing on one group of women and excluding others?

Story's point of view

It is important to establish the point of view of each story.

- Who is telling the story?
- Why is the story important? why is it important for the storyteller to tell her story?
- Is the storyteller an observer or an active participant in the story?
- What is the role and position of the storyteller in the organisation, community or project?

Other speakers in the story

In most cases, there is more than one speaker in a story, that is, there are other participants or characters in the story. Here are some questions that can help identify other main characters in a story.

- Aside from the storyteller, who else are involved in the story?
- How and in what way are they involved in the story?
- Are there women involved in the story? who are they?
- How and in what way are the women involved in the story?

Barriers and problems

For some, usually women, barriers and problems arise preventing them from fully sharing their stories. What these problems are is the first step in uncovering gender equality considerations in any ICT initiative.

- What are the barriers that prevent the telling of the story?
- Will the story put others in a problematic situation?
- Will the story benefit or harm some people more than others?
- Is it safe for the women to speak out and tell their ICT experiences?
- What steps can be taken to make the environment safe for storytelling?

Consent

Asking permission from those involved before taking down or documenting their stories is a sound and ethical practice. This is a **must**. The answers to the following questions can serve as a checklist for evaluators:

- Was the project explained to everyone involved? why the project is important? what is it about? why is it important to get their story? who will benefit?

- Are the storytellers aware that the evaluators understand and respect their rights? are aware of the possible repercussions the stories may bring about?

- Did the storytellers give their informed consent?

- Do the participants in the story know how the information will be stored? used in other ways?

- Will the participants be consulted if their story will be used for other purposes other than the original objective?

Below are pointers for two general methods of gathering stories though certainly, there are many other ways of collecting stories.

Methods of Gathering Stories

- Face-to-face interchange
- Online interchange

Face-to-face interchange

Face-to-face interchange is talking to one person or with several people in a group using a structured interview or a free-flow conversation or discussion. How to stimulate discussion and encourage storytelling, phrase questions, and document answers accurately are important factors to a successful face-to-face interchange.

For orderly documentation, it can be useful to categorise the kind of information desired:

- about the social and environmental context
- about the people/actors/gender
- about the communities
- about situations, issues, views and the like that are contested

These types of information can serve as general guidelines to the discussion or interviews and also serve as reminders to the evaluation team or interviewers of topics that have to be covered.

In facilitating a guided conversation, it is important to keep focused on the story/experience. Try not to be led astray with irrelevant stories. But at the same time, listen well to the storyteller, that is, let her tell her story the way she wants to. People have different ways of sharing their stories because language, cultural norms, class status, experiences and gender affect the way stories are told. Oftentimes, too, there are experiences that are difficult to share in a straightforward manner. Give room for people to warm up, to feel comfortable. Even silence helps – it stimulates remembering and thinking both for the storyteller and the facilitator or evaluator.

Questions must be clearly understood by the interviewee or members of the group. How questions are phrased and rephrased depends on how good a listener an evaluator is.

Accurately document the stories – note down the specific language and style of the telling through quotes and describe the way the statements were given. This makes the story powerful which in turn records as truthfully as possible the experiences of the participants and stakeholders.

Online interchange

Storytelling can also be done through a combination of online methods – email interviews, online discussions and real-time online conversations through chat facilities.

Online methods rely more on structured interviews and prepared questions. Phrase questions to avoid dominant simple responses like "yes" or "no" by giving open-ended questions that ask about expected/ unexpected outcomes/happenings. Rephrase questions to allow "unstructured" responses and use of informal language to make the respondents feel comfortable. Remember that online methods are a step backward from face-to-face exchanges; they lose the electric response of spontaneity because writing is a different medium.

One of the advantages of online methods is the speed and ease of communicating with respondents. The stories can be done in several stages, which give breathing time both for the evaluators and respondents. For example, the first set of questions by email can concentrate on the general contours of the story. This can be followed by an online discussion or conversation using chat programs to talk about specific situations and to better probe problems and questions. This combination can help uncover the various layers in stories.

If online methods are insufficient, telephone interviews can be resorted to. Listening and hearing a voice at the other end of the line comes closest to a face-to-face conversation where details of a story are better explored or explained.

It is important to get the entire story, that is, to go beyond the simple narration of events. This section suggests questions that will serve as guidelines in exploring and gathering specific details of stories.

Content to be Explored in Stories

- Context/Background
- Learning and Change/Transformation
- Gender Analysis and Gender Planning and ICTs

Context/Background

The first thing to find out 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 that refer to context/background can be established by asking the following questions:

- When and why were ICTs introduced?
- How were they introduced?

- What were the types of ICTs?
- For what purpose/s were ICTs used?

Remember to collect gender-disaggregated data whenever possible. Find out more about 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 (e.g. household, community; paid, unpaid)

Learning and Change/Transformation

The most important subject of evaluations is finding out the learning and change or transformation that occurred on the personal, organisational and community level. This is one of the most significant things you want to know from the stories that you have gathered. But, before doing this, it is best to review the values/principles that guide ICT projects and initiatives because these often determine the changes that they perceive. Some general questions that can help identify the changes are:

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

For example, questions to the participants/ stakeholders can go along this way:

- Did the use of ICTs make any changes to the type of work you do? If yes or no, how?
- Did it change how you make decisions? If yes or no, why?

Gender Analysis and Gender Planning and ICTs

To explore the learning and changes in gender equality and women's empowerment, 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 were trained? by whom?
- power and decision-making – what roles do women and men have in decision-making
- roles – what activities do people do? for what purposes do women/men use technology? what are the differences between the roles of women and men? why are there differences? how does age affect all of the above?
- change/transformation – what changes have people gone through? how do women and men perceive these changes in relation to their previous and present roles and relationships? in relation to power?
- project/initiative's concept and plan – does the project reinforce women's roles or change roles?
- vision of the future – how do people see the future? in relation to children? (this

is a good indicator of visioning a future); what change or transformation would they like? (e.g. how they see their daughters/ sons in the future in relation to ICTs and their roles in the community)

- policy/legislation environment – is it a gender enabling environment? are women aware of these? if no, why? if yes, do they influence or shape women's experiences and/ or perspectives?
- economic factors in ICTs:
  - Who supplied the ICTs?
  - Who provided support?
  - Whom did you pay to provide support and training?
  - Did you employ additional staff/consultants?
  - Were they men or women?
  - Who paid for the ICT infrastructure?

Example — Storytelling as It Was Done

The storytelling methodology was effectively used by the Multi-purpose Community Telecenter (MCT) in the Philippines in evaluating the effects of the MCT in two rural communities. Below is a summary of MCT's experiences. (Read the complete report in http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

Finding its Place in People's Lives

Interview: What it tells us

Kirlyn Baconguis presented sample interviews from the two communities which were used for discussing storytelling as an evaluation methodology.

Community stories

Community members were asked to share their experiences through storytelling and by keeping diaries. They presented how they felt about being interviewed while the MCT volunteers shared how they felt about keeping a daily journal.

All said storytelling was a good exercise; it gave them a way to express themselves in their own words. One MCT volunteer who kept a journal because it was mandatory said it eventually helped him organise his thoughts about the MCT and raise issues about how it was being run.

Edilberto Limare of eDevelopment Initiatives for Civil Society Organizations, Inc. (eDI) who was tasked to gather and write the stories of the community members shared his experiences. At first, he did not feel confident collecting stories, thinking he did not know what questions to ask. But it did not take him long to establish rapport with the interviewees who shared their stories with him. Though successful in gathering stories, he also said it was important to note that the stories be written from a third-person perspective. But to him, it would have been better if the community members themselves wrote their stories to avoid misinterpretation.

Additional Methods/Tools

Explore other methods and tools of data-gathering from *Outcome Mapping* [Earl, et al. 9].

METHOD	USE WHEN . . .
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY Involves a printed or electronic list of questions Is distributed to a predetermined group of individuals Individuals complete and return questionnaire	**SURFACE-MAIL OR FAXED SURVEY:** The target population is large (more than 200) You require a large amount of categorical data You require quantitative data and statistical analyses You want to examine the responses of designated subgroups (male/female, for example) The target population is geographically disperse You want to clarify your team's objectives by involving team members in a questionnaire-development exercise You have access to people who can process and analyze this type of data accurately **E-MAIL OR WEB PAGE SURVEY:** You have the appropriate software and knowledge of this method Your respondents have the technological capabilities to receive, read, and return the questionnaire Time is of the essence
FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW Involves a printed or electronic list of questions Is distributed to a predetermined group of individuals Individuals complete and return questionnaire	You need to incorporate the views of key people (key-informant interview) The target population is small (less than 50) Your information needs call for depth rather than breadth You have reason to believe that people will not return a questionnaire

Additional Methods/Tools

METHOD	USE WHEN . . .
TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS Like a face-to-face interview, but it is conducted over the telephone	**ONE-TO-ONE TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS:** The target population is geographically dispersed Telephone interviews are feasible (cost, trust of respondent . . .) **TELECONFERENCE INTERVIEWS:** The target population is geographically dispersed Equipment is in place
GROUP TECHNIQUE (INTERVIEW, FACILITATED WORKSHOP, FOCUS GROUP) Involves group discussion of predetermined issues or topic Group members share certain common characteristics Facilitator or moderator leads the group Assistant moderator usually records responses Can be conducted in person or through teleconferencing if available	You need rich description to understand client needs Group synergy is necessary to uncover underlying feelings You have access to a skilled facilitator and data has been recorded You want to learn what the stakeholders want through the power of group observation (using a one-way mirror or video)
DOCUMENT REVIEW Involves identification of written or electronic documents containing information or issues to be explored Researchers review documents and identify relevant information Researchers keep track of the information retrieved from documents	The relevant documents exist and are accessible You need a historical perspective on the issue You are not familiar with the organization's history You need hard data on selected aspects of the organization

How to Decide which Methods/Tools to Use?

Deciding the appropriate data-gathering tools should be based on the identified intended use/s and user/s; on the kind of data intended users will find relevant and useful; and on how well the intended use and users of your evaluation results have been articulated.

Still another basis for selecting and designing data-gathering tools can be based on the indicators that were formulated in the previous phase. Based on these, define what type/s of data are needed, and the main source/s of information.

Phase 2 Step 5 Activity 5 Exploring Examples of Practitioners' Methodologies

Below are examples on how two GEM testing partners, Women Mayors' Link and Mothers 4 Mothers, developed their data-gathering strategies.

Women Mayors' Link (WML)

WML, is an initiative of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force (SP GTF), a project developed in 12 countries and territories of the Stability Pact (SP) Region with the Equal Opportunities for Women Foundation (SEF) as the lead organisation. Set up in 2002, the purpose of WML is to foster cooperation between women mayors and local governments and local women's networks in preparing small projects for improving the quality of life of women and children in local communities. Its aims are to initiate and facilitate regional and international exchange of best practices in similar projects; lobby for a better representation of women in local government; and support efforts of women mayors in increasing people's participation in the problem-solving process of their communities.

The WML's evaluation team used a combination of methods to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The busy schedules of the mayors and geographical location of the countries and territories were factors that influenced the methodologies that were used. (The respondents were 50 mayors who came from the Stability Pact countries and territories: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,Bulgaria,Croatia, FYRoMacedonia, Greece, Hungary, Kosovo/a, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia.) The team drafted two sets of surveys. One questionnaire explored the networking process within the WML which was posted on the web and list-serve, and was also sent by email and snail mail to all the women mayors in the network. The other questionnaire probed how the initiative helped mainstream gender in local governance which was distributed at the international conference "Twinning and Partnerships Initiatives of Women Mayors – Matching Conference" held in Romania, November 20-23, 2003. Most of the responses were also gathered there.

In addition to the surveys, the team also collected data on the types of internet connection the women mayors used, put together a comparative analysis on the costs of telecommunication services in their localities, and conducted background research on gender mainstreaming in local governance.

In sum, below is the list of tools WML used to collect data:

- Questionnaires on the networking process that were sent by email, posted on the web and list-serve and sent by post to all women mayors WML were in contact with
- Questionnaires related to the Partnerships' Building to foster mainstreaming of gender in local governance that were distributed at the international conference

Research to identify types of internet connection used by women mayors involved in the project

Research to develop a comparative analysis on the costs of telecommunication services

Research on mainstreaming gender in local governance

(Read the full evaluation report at http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm?x=51601 or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

Mothers 4 Mothers (M4M)

Collecting Quantitative Indicators

M4M developed a survey with a long questionnaire that looked into the factors affecting teleworking. A total of 141 potential respondents for the survey were reached by phone, fax or email from 8 July to 1 September 2003. The potential respondents all worked at home: running their own registered business, freelancers, part-timers, and those employed by M4M.

Questionnaire form

The questionnaire had a total of 83 open-ended and factual (dichotomy/multiple-choice) questions. Forty-two questions or 50% required the respondents to use the Likert scale, 37 or 45% were factual questions and the remaining four or five percent were open-ended questions.

Mode of execution

From the M4M network, a contact list of potential respondents was drawn up together with their email addresses and contact numbers. Email was the primary mode of getting in touch with respondents. Phone calls were resorted to where email addresses were unavailable. There were two respondents who requested the documents be faxed to them because they could not retrieve the documents due to software incompatibility or problems with their dial-up connection.

A random screening on the current job status of potential respondents was made to determine their suitability as respondents to the survey. Potential respondents who met the survey requirements were asked to fill up the questionnaire form.

Follow-up action

The first set of emails sent to potential respondents introduced the purpose of the survey. Phone calls were made to follow-up their willingness to participate in the survey. Reminders were sent in the absence of a reply from respondents after seven days. Some respondents were sent up to four reminders to respond to the questionnaire form. On average, each respondent was reminded at least twice by email and at least once by phone.

Finding Qualitative Information

Seven face-to-face interviews with the virtual team (VT) and one interview using online Yahoo messenger were held with the respondents. The objective was to identify the challenges faced by teleworkers within a structured organisation.

Identify problems faced by the VT

To find out the problems of the VT in teleworking full-time; to get VT's suggestions on the possibility of teleworking full-time and ways of improving their situation

Impact of teleworking on women's lives

To find out the impact of teleworking on women's lives: Does it change gender

relations at home? To what extent do gender issues affect teleworking and how does teleworking through ICTs change women's lives and status?

Observe home office set-up and home situation

To observe home office set-up and home situation and ask the possibility of promoting teleworking full-time

Home office set-up

To find out the conditions of computer availability (e.g. sharing computer), location (e.g. stable internet access), etc.

Home situation

To find out the conditions in the working environment (e.g. noisy, full of distractions); or pinpoint other barriers that impede work

Identify personality of teleworker

To determine the most common traits of teleworkers (e.g. whether teleworker loves working with a computer to check email, to surf, etc.) even during holidays

Identify training and support needs of VT

To find out the kind of training and support needed through observation and interviews

Additional Guidelines for Selecting Methods for Gender Evaluation:

Choose appropriate and relevant methods

Evaluations carried out from a gender perspective of ICT initiatives include telecentres in rural or indigenous communities, a women's global network or an online resource centre. Choose data gathering tools based on their appropriateness for different kinds of initiatives. The most effective methodologies are those that are flexible and adaptable, simple to administer, designed to draw meaningful results, and are appropriate and relevant to the intended use and users of the evaluation.

Choose methods that are participatory

Participatory methodologies are those that allow all the defined users/stakeholders to submit data and information.

Think about the intended respondents and their context when deciding which methods to use. For instance, while online surveys are economical and time-efficient, it is an inappropriate method if the intended respondents do not have regular access to the internet. Make sure that the tools used are accessible to the respondents.

Use multiplicity of methods/tools

Use multiple methods to help test, correct and correlate messages and data from different sources of information.

> "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* 36, 50]

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 the methods keep evolving. Information on those two aspects reveals social processes.

Ensure collection of sex disaggregated data

This is basic to any gender evaluation. All data gathered should at the very least identify the sex of the respondent. Other basic data about the respondents that may prove relevant to the evaluation include: age, religion, ethnicity, nationality, marital status, occupation.

Identify female informants

Gender evaluations should draw out the experiences and input of female respondents/stakeholders.

Interrogate gender roles

The instruments used should address the gender and ICT issues of the initiative or project, and must probe into broader gender issues. For example, in assessing the impact of an ICT training initiative, it is not only important to look into what the trainees have learned but also how they have applied their knowledge in their work or organisation. In order to assess this, it is essential to probe into the gender roles within the trainees' organisations and look at how they are able (or unable) to practise their newly-acquired skills.

Be context sensitive

Group dynamics, subject matter, gender, class, caste, age, race, language, culture, rural/urban issues, etc. greatly influence how effectively and inclusively information is gathered.

Emphasise qualitative data

To get a complete picture of the social transformation issues and gender issues in a project or initiative require more than numbers and statistics. Stories, perceptions, observations and opinions are valuable. They give the human dimension behind the statistics – a crucial part to understanding collected data.

Practical considerations

The following are important practical considerations in planning your data gathering strategies:

- Affordability – what is the cost of obtaining the information in relation to its contribution to the evaluation?
- Time and Timing – how much time does it take to gather the information? are there forthcoming activities that will provide opportunities to hold evaluation activities?
- Frequency – the number of times mid-project assessments and monitoring will be held

Other data gathering methods are available online. Try to take a look at the following resources:

Utilisation-Focused Checklist: Evaluation Design

http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/checklists/ufechecklist.htm#7

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 http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/eval/guides/gender/issues4.htm

Phase 2 Step 5 Worksheet 5 Developing Your Data Gathering Strategy

Fill in the sample matrix below to develop your data gathering strategy.

Indicator	Data Source	Method/Tool	Time/Frequency

Notes:

- **Indicator**: Based on the indicators defined in **Phase 1 Step 4**. (see page 80) Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- **Data Source**: Where will the data come from? who will provide the data?
- **Method/Tool**: How will data be obtained?
- **Time/Frequency**: When will data gathering start? how often?

Example: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of an Online Facility (web and mailing list) for a Violence Against Women (VAW) campaign

Indicator	Data Source	Method/Tool	Time/Frequency
Number of visitors to the VAW website	Web statistics	Record and gather web statistics	Monthly (from beginning of project)
Sex of mailing list subscribers	Mailing list subscribers	Ask subscribers to indicate their sex and monitor responses	Monthly
Expression of denouncement of VAW	Mailing list subscribers	Monitor the posts made in the mailing list	Monthly
	Mailing list subscribers	Online interviews with mailing list subscribers	Mid-project (6 months after project has begun)

TIP

Some indicators that were identified may have more than one data source and method or tool.

PHASE 2 STEP 6 ANALYSING DATA FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

OVERALL PURPOSE

To analyse data that have been gathered from a gender perspective which is also a preparatory step to PHASE 3 PUTTING EVALUATION RESULTS TO WORK

How to Prepare for Data Analysis from a Gender Perspective

Before you analyse and interpret your data, it is important to review the evaluation plan, specifically the intended use, evaluation question/s, and indicators. These three components of the evaluation plan will serve as guides in analysing data and preparing your report. Assuming that the evaluation plan is well-grounded on gender concepts and has a fully-integrated gender perspective, the first is to review your plan.

You may peruse some basic gender and ICT documents available at:
http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/understanding_gem/genderanalysis.htm

How to Decipher Data

Look for patterns, trends and contradictions based on gender and ICT indicators and evaluation question/s. Especially for gender analysis, it is necessary to track down patterns and trends that indicate changes (or the absence of change) in women's and men's status and relations as a result of an initiative.

There is also a need to "weigh your data, to take into account how many interviewees (respondents) gave the same answer, whether the information is confirmed across different interest groups, and whether it is confirmed or denied by external sources." [Lusthaus, et al.] Emphasis is given to information and data from female respondents.

"A Framework for Reviewing Data" by Patton [309] gives "four distinct processes involved in making sense out of evaluation findings:"

- Description and Analysis: Describing and analysing findings involve organising data into a form that reveals basic patterns. The evaluator presents, in user-friendly fashion, the factual findings as revealed in actual data.

- Interpretation: What do the results mean? What's the significance of the findings? Why did the findings turn out this way? What are possible explanations of the results? Interpretations go beyond the data to add context, determine meaning, and tease out substantive significance based on deduction or inference.

- Judgement: Values are added to analysis and interpretations. Determining merit or worth means resolving to what extent and in what ways the results are positive or negative. What is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, in the outcomes? Have standards of desirability been met?

Recommendations: The final step (if agreed to be undertaken) adds action to analysis, interpretation, and judgement. What should be done? What are the action implications of the findings? Only recommendations that follow from and are grounded in the data ought to be formulated.

How to Report Your Findings

After you have deciphered, analysed and interpreted your data, the next step is to prepare a report. The following guide questions serve as reminders:

What information is important to your intended users and intended use?

Prioritise the findings according to those which are most relevant to the goals of the evaluation and the interest of the intended users. It is important to report the gaps in the evaluation findings as well, especially if those gaps point to a need for further evaluation of the initiative.

Who will see the report?

Based on the intended use, determine whether or not the results of the evaluation will be kept within the organisation or presented to the public. Before deciding to make the results public, it is necessary and ethical to inform the respondents and seek their consent.

How to present the findings for the intended users

Decide on how best to share the results of the evaluation to the intended users. Perhaps the most convenient form is presenting a written report, but there are other ways that will surely be more interesting for the intended users. You can use popular forms of publication such as leaflets, comics, or pamphlets. Or you can make use of electronic and digital technology like posting the report on the web or producing a CD or a powerpoint presentation. Be creative – use other media and combine different forms of communication.

Take for example the case of MCT in the Philippines. Aside from a written report, it held a two-day workshop attended by stakeholders and intended users to present and gather feedback. Doing away with long narratives, the evaluation team prepared visual aids and used other creative presentations.

Mothers 4 Mothers in Malaysia held interviews and focus group discussions. Below is a summary. (Read the complete report at http://www.apcwomen.org/gem/practitioners/reports.shtm or in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

Summary Report on the M4M Interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Background: Objectives, Participants and Methodologies

Interviews and home visits were held with the M4M Virtual Team (VT) from July 11 to July 19, 2003. The VT was made up of six women and two men. Two FGDs were held with the eHomemaker members and M4M part-timers on July 12 and July 21, 2003.

The objectives of the interviews and the FGDs were to explore certain aspects of teleworking such as characteristics and skills needed by a woman to fully benefit from working at home, its impact on the women's lives and on their families, barriers faced by women in teleworking and ways to address such challenges.

Findings from the Interviews and FGDs

Reasons for Getting Into Home-based Work

Most of the participants are married, have children, and did not want to spend most of their time in the office. Some of them have been housewives for a long time before rejoining the workforce as teleworkers. Others gave up their jobs to spend more time with their families and have been in home-based work as an alternative source of income.

But for most of them, opting to work at home had little to do with financial reasons. Only two VT members work at home as the main breadwinner in the family. Many said joining the workforce again came from a personal desire to be involved in something else besides their husband and children. Because most of them had careers before they got married, they had begun to feel bored being full-time homemakers and needed something else to occupy their time.

Benefits of Teleworking

All of the respondents agreed that the biggest benefit of working at home was flexibility in terms of time management. Working at home allows them to spend time with their families, manage the tasks at home, and continue to earn income.

To some, working at home compared to being full-time homemakers, has increased their confidence. One source of their confidence comes from earning their own income; no longer do they have to rely on their husbands for their expenses. However, a huge part of their increased confidence comes from involvement in activities and interests beyond the reaches of the home, which has improved their overall relationship with their husbands and children.

Others said their ICT skills have greatly improved as a result of their home-based work because they had to learn how to troubleshoot minor computer problems on their own, unlike in the office.

One of them said that as a result of her home-based work, she has found a reason to tell her husband to start taking on some of the household tasks. Now that she herself is into home-based work, she can use the same reason her husband gave to her before – because of her work, she is too tired to do household chores.

Other benefits cited include no longer having to deal with the traffic in Malaysia, which saves them time; no more office politics; no more worries on office wardrobe and "how you look".

Factors that Affect Home-based Work

Perception of Home-based Work

One of the barriers of working at home was the perception of their families and peers that home-based work is not a "real job". Family members would often disturb them, assuming that since they are home, they can run errands, do the household work and are available for social visits.

This problem was most felt during the first few months of working at home. Distractions became less after explaining to their families

and friends that teleworking is just as serious and as important as office-based work.

Support from Family Members

Support from family members is valuable for home-based work to succeed. Their families must understand that they cannot be disturbed or bothered when they are working. Respondents who have very young children had made arrangements with other family members (mothers, aunts, sisters) to take care of the children during their work hours.

Setting up the home office also needs support from the family who have to understand that they need a work space. Unless family members are supportive, the space where to work efficiently cannot be accommodated. Such was the case of one respondent whose husband refused to give her space for her home office.

However, most of the respondents did get support from their spouses which came in varied ways. Some spouses bought the necessary equipment and others offered technical and work-related support. Other husbands took care of the children, especially during weekends. One respondent had changed her household "standards" and had become less critical of her husband who now helps in the household chores which she has increasingly allowed him to do.

Lack of Technical Support

Lack of technical support at home is one difficulty faced by women who use computers for their home-based work. Some resort to technicians for repair, or call up one of the VT members or their husbands and children for help. One respondent said that repair services are expensive and based on her experience, home-based work is more expensive than office-based work where both equipment and technical support are provided for.

Labour Policies in Malaysia

Some respondents in the FGDs want labour laws in Malaysia to recognise working at home as legitimate work. As such, government should give the same benefits and support enjoyed by office-based workers to teleworkers.

On the other hand, one respondent said that working at home is a supportive option for foreign women in Malaysia. Current laws in the country do not allow spouses of employed foreigners to work. Most of the time, it is the husband who works while the wife takes on home-based, informal work. If home-based work were to be formalised in Malaysia, it will negatively affect the employment opportunities of foreign women in the country.

Cost of ICTs in Malaysia

Respondents also expressed their interest in learning more ICT skills to improve their teleworking opportunities. However, aside from a lack of affordable training for women interested in computer-based teleworking; internet access and equipment are expensive. This is a major problem for homemakers who are just starting out without any support from their families.

Management Issues

Most of the respondents talked about the need for better VT management. Because of the nature of the work, there is very little opportunity for management to monitor and

verify the work of the team. It is important for management to be very clear and focused on what it expects from the staff. The VT works in such a way that when one staff member does not deliver, the work of the rest is affected either because they would have to take on the unfinished work, or because their own work is dependent on the output of the others. Another important matter was transparency of management in terms of payment schemes, decision-making and performance evaluation criteria.

Profile of an "Ideal" Teleworker

One of the main objectives of the M4M evaluation was to come up with a profile of an "ideal" teleworker. Although all respondents agreed anyone can work at home, there being no need for special qualities, they however pointed some characteristics that would make for an "ideal" teleworker: adequate ICT skills, honesty, self-discipline and commitment to the work.

Recommendations: Creating an Enabling Environment for Home-based Work

From the results of the interviews and the FGDs, the following were recommended to set up an environment conducive to home-based work, particularly for women:

Increase ICT Access

A home-based worker, at the minimum will require a PC, telephone, printer and internet access. Setting up a home office is not affordable for everyone and other women may not have the means to make such an investment.

Although Malaysia is developing fast in terms of ICT access, there is still a need for affordable ICT tools and internet connection, particularly for women who want to go into home-based ICT work. Access, while not too much of a problem in Kuala Lumpur and the satellite areas in terms of infrastructure, is still quite expensive. Currently, telephone calls in Malaysia are metered which jacks up the cost of dial-up access. The alternatives – DSL and cable – are expensive. Obviously, government has to lower the costs of ICTs. In the meantime, other alternatives are to open loan schemes for home-based workers, and provide affordable community internet access centres.

Training and Skills Development

Aside from ICT access, affordable ICT training for women who want to take on home-based ICT work is a much-felt demand. Respondents pointed out that ICT training should focus on the following: basic computer use, basic internet training, troubleshooting, email writing skills, website development, and software applications. Other areas for training include: time management, setting up home offices, non-ICT based work that can be done at home, and basic financial management.

Professional Management

Management of home-based workers must also be professionalised. (This does not mean

fully simulating office-based work.) Alternative management plans and schemes for home-based workers must be developed, taking into account the multiple roles that women and men who work at home are faced with. Home-based management schemes must be more output-driven which requires clear tasks, deliverables and deadlines for members of the staff. These management schemes must also make full use of available technologies to ensure transparency and accountability. For instance, M4M's Virtual Office relies largely on email as a means for communicating and file-sharing. There is a need to develop other ways of file-sharing, such as developing a VT intranet where all outputs (reports, funding proposals, financial statements, etc.) are shared among the team.

Changes in the National Labour Policies

Re-think current labour policies in Malaysia to include teleworking where government will offer home-based workers the same benefits that office employees receive. New policies on home-based work will have to ensure that the rights of workers are protected from unfair labour practices and employers.

Evaluating the Long-term Effect of Teleworking on Gender Relations at Home

Given the number of years the respondents have been working at home and the number of years teleworking has been practised in Malaysia, it was difficult to detect if teleworking challenges male and female roles at home. On one level, empowerment is achieved according to the respondents who attributed increased confidence as a result of working at home. On the other hand, home-based work can be seen as merely addressing practical gender needs, that is, "the needs women identify that do not challenge their socially accepted roles". Home-based work can be looked at as a compromise for women who are expected to fulfil their roles as mothers and homemakers. However, none of the respondents questioned why they had to give up their careers in the first place. And besides, does having a wife who works at home excuse husbands from being more involved in household work and family roles?

The long-term effects in terms of gender relations within the family cannot be truly evident until further evaluation and monitoring are done. What is necessary, at this point, is a continuous evaluation of teleworking from a gender perspective. At this early stage, it is all the more imperative to identify and develop indicators and benchmarks to track changes in gender relations as a result of teleworking.

Phase 3 Putting Evaluation Results to Work

Overall Purpose

- To review initial plans on how to use evaluation results and act on lessons learned

Objectives

- To explore changes that an organisation can adopt from evaluation experiences and recommendations

- To develop a communication strategy to share evaluation results

PHASE 3 STEP 7 INCORPORATING LEARNING INTO WORK

One of the principles of the GEM approach to evaluation is the importance of using what have been learned. The main purpose in this phase therefore is to figure out how to act on the results garnered from the evaluation. The first step is to review the project or initiative's intended uses. If the evaluation is about learning that leads to change, then the lessons learned on gender and ICT issues should result in integrating gender or positive changes on gender in the project or initiative. These changes can happen in several ways:

Change in Evaluation Practice

Oftentimes, organisations practice evaluation as a simple activity to be implemented at the end of a project. On the contrary, for GEM, evaluation is an ongoing and evolving process. Subscribing to one of GEM's core values with respect to evaluation is changing an organisation's outlook and practice in conducting evaluations. Moving towards changing an outlook is done after finishing an evaluation exercise where tools and methods have been tested and findings established.

The questions below can help identify where the changes in the evaluation exercise can be implemented:

- Did you identify the intended users of your evaluation correctly? fail to include other users?

- What were the gaps in your evaluation questions, gender and ICT indicators, and overall evaluation plan?

- How effective were the methodologies that were used? Did you get a sufficient number of respondents and responses? How can you improve collecting data?

- What kind of results did the evaluation exercise yield? satisfactory? Can further and continued evaluation of your project/initiative yield results that can be used for other purposes? What were the unexpected results of your evaluation?

- Was the gender analysis of your data satisfactory? Did you uncover other gender and ICT issues in your initiative that need further study?

Honing a data-gathering strategy can be more effective if monitoring mechanisms for projects are put in place within an organisation. Look into practical and administrative needs and opportunities that allow continuous data gathering to assess gender and ICT issues. One such mechanism is keeping a monthly record of how community members use a telecentre, or tracking user statistics of your website. Another method is scheduling regular sessions or meetings with stakeholders or intended beneficiaries to monitor changes in gender relations and in their lives as a result of the project/initiative, such as annual check-ups with former trainees to assess how they continue to use the skills they have learned from the training workshop.

An important change in gender evaluation advocated by GEM is to incorporate a gender perspective in all evaluations of ICT initiatives where adoption of well-articulated core values is operationalised in an organisation. The GEM framework and guide can assist you in learning more about gender and ICT issues. As your understanding of

the issues expands, you will be able to evolve ways of integrating them into your organisation's goals, plans and practice.

Change in Gender Equality Practice

Evaluation results should lead to recommendations that will strengthen gender equality practices in a project and the organisation as a whole. Remember that the first step in thinking of possible actions to strengthen the gender component of your organisation's overall work is to identify specific and explicit gender issues in your evaluation.

- Gender planning

Evaluation results should influence future project designs and implementation. Once a GEM evaluation is completed, the organisation will have gained an understanding of the significance of integrating a gender perspective in its work. The concepts and tools learned in GEM can initiate a gender planning exercise for ICT projects. For GEM's purposes, a gender plan is broadly defined to mean a plan that integrates gender equality and women's empowerment framework into a project that usually consists of a clear indication of the following:

- Gender goal/s
- Gender objectives
- Strategies
- Methodology and tools of integrating gender
- Implementation activities

Several gender planning approaches and strategies have been developed and can be used singularly or in combination with others. Many of these approaches are complex and comprehensive. However, they are useful if the context of the project is kept in mind.

Though many of the principles and strategies in the following suggested resources have been covered in GEM's conceptual documents, you may wish to go through them.

- The International Labour Organisation's South-East Asia and the Pacific Multidisciplinary Advisory Team have collected a representative sample of gender planning approaches and strategies that can be accessed in its ILO/SEAPAT's OnLine Gender Learning & Information Module. Included in the module are The Harvard Analytical Framework; Moser's Gender Planning Framework; Women's Empowerment Framework; Social Relations Framework.
Visit: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/mdtmanila/training/unit1/plngaps1.htm or access this in the accompanying CD of this manual.

You can also learn more about ILO's gender planning strategies at: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/mdtmanila/training/homepage/mainmenu.htm or access this in the accompanying CD of this manual.

- Gender policy

An effective way of institutionalising change within an organisation is by developing and arriving at unities on a gender policy. A gender policy is usually applied to the work of a whole organisation and in all of its projects. Many organisations now have their own gender policy. This is especially true for development agencies and international organisations. A gender policy can simply be an articulation of the organisation's gender principles and goals. Large agencies have more detailed gender policies which include several components of a gender plan like that of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

CIDA's Policy on Gender Equality

(For the full text, go to http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/8949395286e4d3a58525641300568be1/912921e427edaa49852568fc006757b2 or access this in the accompanying CD of this manual.)

A Vision for the 21st Century

Gender equality contributes substantially to improving the well-being of women, men, girls and boys in our partner countries, which is at the heart of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) mission. Although important progress has been made in recent years toward achieving gender equality, much remains to be done.

Entering the 21st century, CIDA remains committed to creating, with our partners, a better world for all - a world where inequality on any grounds, be it gender, class, race or ethnicity, is finally overcome.

CIDA's gender equality policy is one tool to make this vision a reality.

The Goal

To support the achievement of equality between women and men to ensure sustainable development.

The Objectives

- To advance women's equal participation with men as decision-makers in shaping the sustainable development of their societies;
- To support women and girls in the realisation of their full human rights; and
- To reduce gender inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.

Guiding Principles

Eight guiding principles:

- Gender equality must be considered as an integral part of all CIDA policies, programs and projects;
- Achieving gender equality requires the recognition that every policy, program and project affects women and men differently;
- Achieving gender equality does not mean that women become the same as men;
- Women's empowerment is central to achieving gender equality;
- Promoting the equal participation of women as agents of change in economic, social and political processes is essential to achieving gender equality;
- Gender equality can only be achieved through partnership between women and men;
- Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to eliminate gender inequalities; and
- CIDA policies, programs, and projects should contribute to gender equality.

Practical Tools

Sample results, strategies, activities and guidelines are included to support the implementation of the policy.

Gender Equity and Gender Equality

Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality.

Gender equality means that women and men enjoy the same status. Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results.

Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they play. ["Gender-Based Analysis" 1996]

Empowerment

Empowerment is about people – both women and men – taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems, and developing self-reliance. It is not only a collective, social and political process, but an individual one as well – and it is not only a process but an outcome too. Outsiders cannot empower women: only women can empower themselves to make choices or to speak out on their own behalf. However, institutions, including international cooperation agencies, can support processes that increase women's self-confidence, develop their self-reliance, and help them set their own agendas.

- Gender training

Learning to apply a gender analytical framework in all aspects of our work is a continuing endeavour and has to be consistently honed. One way of learning is to engage in trainings on gender which can be done internally or externally. It can also be part of a staff development plan and gender trainers can be invited to conduct training workshops. Another method is to work with gender consultants who can assist with various aspects of gender planning which can be designed as training activities for an organisation.

The following resources were compiled by Siyanda, an online database of gender and development materials:

- Gender Training – Key Issues
  Visit http://www.siyanda.org/docs_gem/index_implementation/t_coretext.htm or access this from the accompanying CD in this manual.

- Good Practice: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating "Tailored" Gender Training Courses:
  Visit http://www.siyanda.org/docs_gem/index_implementation/t_toolsmenu.htm or access this from the accompanying CD in this manual.

Change in ICT Practice

GEM also leads you to reflect on values, approaches and practices of using ICTs.

- Capacity building

There are many available resources that can help you develop ICT plans that address the specific needs and demands of your organisation, both in the short- and long-term frames. One such resource, the ItrainOnline, a collaboration between APC WNSP and five other international organisations, can be accessed on the web. It contains a wide selection of the most relevant computer and internet training resources for development and social change. You can access all the materials at http://www.apc.org/english/capacity/training/index.shtml (To learn more about ItrainOnline, visit its website http://www.itrainonline.org/)

APC WNSP and its partners have also developed training materials specifically developed for and about women on different ICT skills like web development, email based communications, building online communities as well as training resources on using ICT for advocacy work. You will find these resources at:

- http://www.i-went.net/ for Women's Electronic Network Training
- http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/mmtk/vaw.shtml for Preventing Violence Against Women
- http://www.itrainonline.org/itrainonline/women/index.shtml for resources for women trainers and end users

- ICT policy advocacy

One of GEM's objectives is to use the findings of the evaluations to inform APC WNSP's advocacy work. Lessons from evaluations of organisations involved in advocacy can form the basis for policy recommendations because those evaluation results are primary research materials. They can be used as inputs in national, regional or global ICT policy debates or for lobby work on particular approaches to ICT development interventions. Taken collectively, advocacy at various levels can lead to changes in ICT programming and practice.

Take a look at different ICT policies and find out how you may contribute to advance them:

- APC's "What are ICT and internet policies and why should we care about them?" http://rights.apc.org/what_is_policy.shtml
- APC's Understanding ICT Policy http://www.apc.org/english/capacity/policy/index.shtml
- GenderIT http://www.genderit.org

- Research and critical understanding

Evaluation results can point to areas of your work that require additional research. This can be a research undertaking or may simply be a study of what previous work has been done on a specific field. Evaluation results can start a learning process that will build your organisation's critical expertise in a particular field of work. They 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 looking for information about what ICTs for gender equality and development projects are working on and why. Using evaluation results as materials to document best practices and lessons learned and sharing this information builds up a pool of critically needed reference materials which can be used as models for scaling up similar initiatives.

- Resource mobilisation

Evaluation results can also 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.

Food for Thought: Developing a Communication Strategy

Because evaluations are sources of learning and pave the way for improvement, it follows that evaluation findings should reach a broader audience. They should be popularised and used in many aspects of your organisation's work, for example, in advocacy or public education. Thus, evaluation results empower not only a project's stakeholders but other publics as well.

Evaluation findings 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 on the results from all those involved in a project. Sharing these results in networking forums – electronic discussion groups or face-to-face meetings can improve contacts between your organisation and others involved in similar endeavours. Video presentations, learning networks and creative use of other media can generate avid interest in your work, as well.

Evaluation results can be used to advocate your organisation's work; to raise awareness about what you do and why. Making them available to the public through pamphlets, websites, press releases, etc. increases your organisation's exposure by giving the general public a forum to affirm or critique your work which in turn encourages your organisation to improve.

Your findings can also provide media with story ideas related to gender and ICT issues or be used as basis for articles in newsletters, journals and annual reports.

This ends our learning session on the GEM Tool.

Throughout the entire GEM Tool, we shared various aspects of the evaluation processes that GEM users have planned and implemented. We believe that the greatest value of the GEM Tool, what makes it unique, is that it is derived from actual practice of using it. The very first version of GEM, the version that the GEM testers used, is very different from the version you now hold in your hands.

The latest version of GEM went through a substantial period of gathering and culling lessons and experiences from several and diverse ICT projects and initiatives that used GEM in various contexts and realities. We looked into the challenges that various organisations encountered both in conducting relevant evaluations and in incorporating gender into their evaluation processes and mechanisms. We found out that one of the more difficult aspects of conducting gender evaluations was determining the focus of the evaluation because there were different gender issues in every initiative – from decision-making in project administration to long-term effects of the initiative. This is the reason why the initial parts of the tool are devoted in finalising evaluation questions.

Another area that germinated throughout the testing of GEM is the section on indicators. Of course, this may be true as well for other evaluation methodologies but identifying gender and ICT indicators challenged many GEM users. To develop indicators, they had to understand the gender issues within the context of their initiatives, and then imagine the possible changes their ICT-based interventions/ initiatives will bring about in relation to the gender issues and communities where their initiatives were located. The evaluation team of the Multi-purpose Community Telecenter (MCT) project in the Philippines, for example, had to understand existing gender issues and relationships in the communities before they could begin to develop indicators that could reflect the changes that their initiative facilitated. To

be sure, one of the assets of the evaluation was having the members of the project and the evaluation team stay in the communities – the best way to better understand the complex relationships the telecentre had brought into the very lives of the people. It was from this context that the indicators of the MCT evaluation were developed.

GEM recognises the limitations of using indicators in evaluations. For certainly indicators are not the only means of measuring change/impact but its reliability increases when used in tandem with other instruments or approaches which we showed in this manual. Moreover, indicators serve as useful benchmarks for observing change. For example, in the case of the Women Mayors League in Romania, their indicators reflected what they believed were the positive changes they wanted to see as a result of their initiative. Though they were quite aware their indicators were highly ideal given the situation of women mayors in less developed communities in Romania, they were however, optimistic that setting high standards will encourage and inspire women mayors to achieve their best.

GEM will continue to evolve. We are committed to working with more organisations and initiatives, to gather more lessons and experiences, and to cite actual experiences in order to expand the scope of GEM. Through a growing community of GEM practitioners, we hope to keep GEM dynamic, evolving and relevant and continue to be a learning experience to all. Be a part of this continuing process. We encourage you to share your learnings. Join the GEM Practioners' Network at: www.apcwomen.org. Through this network, GEM users from all over the world can continue to share experiences and challenges in using the tool to further our collective appreciation, understanding and practice in developing better and more sensitive methods in gender evaluation work.

Together, let us enrich GEM. But more than this, let us continue to pursue our advocacy: let us make ICTs serve as effective tools for transformation.

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