



Emerging Gender Dimensions for Pro-poor ICT Community Driven Networks

Uganda Country Study

By WOUGNET

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Overview of the Presentation

- Introduction
- What can ICTs do for local women & men in a local context?
- How can ICTs do this?
- Gender dimensions of the community capacity to develop & run an enterprise
- Cost & Income: The Gender View
- Policy Suggestions



Introduction...../1

- Uganda has an established record of a favorable gender sensitive programme
- The Constitution, 1995 and other national legislations (e.g. LGA) provide for addressing specific needs of women and marginalized sections of the society – e.g. women, youth, workers, & children



Introduction...../2

- Uganda has a national ICT policy framework which recognises gender mainstreaming as integral to a delivery mechanism that addresses the needs of women and men.
- The policy rationale emphasises the need to “stimulate industrial growth, commerce, infrastructure and linkage of rural and urban communities as well as uplifting of disadvantaged groups, while taking care of gender balance” (Section 2.3).



Introduction/3

- Policy objective 4.2(x) aims “to ensure gender mainstreaming in information and communication programmes and in ICT development.”
- The policy pledges to “ensure that facilities for communication are provided at levels of cost, which match the ability of their users to pay, so as to reduce gender and spatial disparities in information access.”



Introduction...../4

- Uganda has a favorable Rural Communications Development Policy (RCDP)
- However it does not explicitly address gender
- But the practice on the ground does address women’s needs to an extent
- If gender was explicit in the policy, the results would have been higher



What can ICTs do for local women & men in a local context?

- Can improve the quality of skills learned by boys, girls and adults through enhancing FAL issues/concerns such as
- Navigate cultural issues and biases – e.g. isolation, inflexible time schedules
- Provided Content - relevant to both men and women and that is non discriminative
- Provide opportunities for income generation especially for women through market access, credit, remittances, employment
- Language used localized



How can ICT bring about Such Change

- Infrastructure roll out in rural and peri-urban areas where majority are women
- In the role out ensure women's organizations and grassroots groups are involved
- In education ensure that females are targeted e.g. by involving female only schools
- Ensure information exchanged is gender sensitive



Gender & Community capacity to develop an ICT enterprise

- Evidence of huge capacity for women organize groups – cooperative
- But majority are not in ICT and require capacity initiatives: technical skills, ICT skills and equipment



Cost & Income: Gender View

- Cost of ICT is and can be too high for the poor especially women
- For the pilot and the project, there is need to budget for bringing women and girls on board – awareness and training costs, gender monitoring and evaluation costs, etc.



Policy Suggestions...../1

- There is need to address the gender weaknesses arising from market failure: e.g. failure of private sector to reach all areas.
- There is need to review the Rural Communications Development Policy to explicitly address women's needs.
- There is need to ensure participation of women's organisations, informal sector, rural and peri-urban areas in ICT initiatives.



Policy Suggestions...../2

- There is need to include gender targets, and monitoring and evaluation indicators in any pro-poor ICT initiatives.
- Any initiative that is pro-poor has to necessarily target women as key in addressing poverty.