

Unit 18



Community, ICTs and Gender

Developed by: APC Women's Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP-LAC)

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Objectives



- ♦ Analyse the ways in which information and communication technologies affect the process of human development in the communities.
- ♦ Consider gender perspective in order to achieve fairness and equality of opportunities between women and men in the use and appropriation of technology.

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Introduction



♦ ICTs

- ✓ Make community contributions visible
- ✓ Reinforce communication rights
- ✓ Pervade frontiers
- ✓ Influence: politics, attitudes, behaviour
- ✓ Must represent plurality

Introduction



Communication rights

- ◆ Unalienable human right
 - ✓ Variety of sources
 - ✓ Democratic and transparent management of communication policies

Introduction



- ◆ Means of communication...
 - ✓ Expression centres, collective conversation channels
 - ✓ Information deemed important by society
 - ✓ Public opinion movements
 - ✓ Affect the way people connect and relate to each other in society

Introduction



- ◆ When implementing ICTs projects:
 - ✓ Be conscious and analyse ICTs impact on the environment
 - ✓ Know the needs and expectations of users
 - ✓ Endeavour to attain people's comprehension of how ICTs impact on the community

Inclusion in the information and knowledge society



- ♦ Convergence ICTs – Information and knowledge Society
 - ✓ Transformations on the notion of development
 - Lesser exclusion, new opportunities

Also:

- ✓ Digital exclusion (International and national)
 - Lack of investment, high costs, illiteracy, low educational level, deficient capacitation, lack of access to knowledge.

Inclusion in the information and knowledge society



- ◆ Possible solutions to digital exclusion:
 - ✓ Definition of public policies
 - ✓ Promotion of mechanisms and tools for an active participation of individuals

Understanding of ICTs beyond telecommunications and Internet as an instrument that promotes human development

Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



- ◆ Some alternatives to overcome digital exclusion:
 - ✓ developing of networks based on communities that capitalise on the potential of low-cost technologies
 - ✓ adoption of open access approaches for the deployment of infrastructure and ICT services
 - ✓ creative combination of ICTs and community media

Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



- ◆ Experiences:
 - ✓ Convergence of ICTs and community/citizen radios
 - ✓ Development of community telecentres (www.telecentros.org), community technology centres (CTC), and telecentres network (somostelecentros@org)



Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



- ◆ Community visibility
- ◆ Access to information and knowledge
- ◆ Differentiated use of tools
 - ◆ >strategic use?

Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



For social organisations and citizens:

- ◆ Freedom of expression
- ◆ Exert the right of resistance
- ◆ Integration into broader processes
- ◆ Access to information and knowledge
- ◆ Access to authorities
- ◆ Collective political actions
- ◆ Recreate, reprocess, disseminate information

Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



- ◆ Possible benefits:
 - ✓ Improvement of social and economical relatedness of actors
 - ✓ Direct and indirect job generation
 - ✓ Increasing community income for the community
 - ✓ New opportunities for local market growth
 - ✓ Strengthening of community self-management and promotion of local efforts

Contribution of ICTs to the development of communities



- ◆ Possible benefits:
 - ✓ Widening areas of action and improvement of governmental services
 - ✓ Increasing the use of public and community resources
 - ✓ Provide opportunities of sharing bandwidth and costs
 - ✓ Involvement of youngsters and women in the community

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



Participation of men and women in the information and knowledge society. Is there a differentiated way?

Technology has traditionally been related to the world and knowledge of men. Why is this opinion currently held? Is technology neutral?

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



- ◆ **Gender**

- ◆ **Sex**

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



- ◆ Gender
 - ✓ Roles, characteristics, values, behaviour, symbolism attributed by society to men and women. The “ought-to-be”.
- ◆ Sex
 - ✓ biological traits distinguishing men and women
 - ✓ incompatible roles?
 - ✓ sharing chores, is it possible?

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



◆ Concepts

- ✓ Gender identity (sense of belonging)
- ✓ Gender roles (learned behaviours)
- ✓ Gender relationships (relationships defined by sexual division of labour and power relations that subordinate women)

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



♦ Men and women **relationships:**

- ✓ Are they equal?
- ✓ Do they favour discrimination?
- ✓ Are there real power relationships subordinating women
- ✓ How do those relationships influence technology access
- ✓ Is it possible to detect processes and situations with a differentiated view?
- ✓ How to start working towards equity?
- ✓ **Can they be modified?**

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



- ♦ A gender perspective allows to:
 - ✓ Detect inequities
 - ✓ Alert on discrimination
 - ✓ Foster transformations in social relationships to attain equal opportunities
 - ✓ Contribute to change gender relations
 - ✓ Denounce and fight via ICTs violence against women (video games, stalking, disrespectful treatment, discriminatory social behaviour transferred to ICTs)

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



- ♦ Why using gender perspective in community development?
 - ✓ compromise with human rights
 - ✓ equity (fairness),
 - ✓ equal opportunities
 - ✓ efficient management of human resources

Equality of opportunity in the information and knowledge society



- ◆ The challenge is to:
 - ✓ generate a sustained stance towards equity and equality of opportunities
 - ✓ modify behaviours; work towards modification of stereotypes
 - ✓ envision equity
 - ✓ foster new values without discrimination