

Gender Evaluation Methodology for Internet and ICTs:

A Learning Tool for Change and Empowerment



Association for Progressive Communications
Women's Networking Support Programme

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Mothers for Mothers, <http://www.ehomemakers.net>

Zamirnet, <http://www.zamirnet.hr>

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Special thanks to the following organisations for supporting the GEM project: Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom Engineering Knowledge and Research Programme; International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Canada; UNIFEM, New York

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Published December, 2003

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ASSOCIATION FOR PROGRESSIVE COMMUNICATIONS WOMEN'S NETWORKING SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Networking for change and women's empowerment since 1993
<http://www.apcwomen.org>

APCWNSP is a global network of women who support women's networking for social change and women's empowerment, through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

APCWNSP aims to promote the consideration and incorporation of gender in ICT policy-making bodies and forums; initiate and implement research activities in the field of gender and ICT; advance the body of knowledge, understanding, and skills in the field of gender and ICT by implementing training activities and; facilitate access to information resources in the field of gender and ICT.

We engage in research, evaluation, 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. The programme works primarily in an world. Using a combination of email, mailing lists and real time text and voice'chat', we are able to coordinate, develop action plans, implement activities, support and mentor one another while maintaining and strengthening our organisational and personal relationships. We meet face-to-face whenever opportunities present themselves (such as national, regional or international workshops and conference) or through explicitly funded workshops and meetings of the programme.

APCWNSP is a part of the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), an international network of civil society organisations dedicated to empowering and supporting groups and individuals working for peace, human rights, development and protection of the environment, through the strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), including the internet.

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Introduction

It took 10 months of research, workshops, meetings and painstaking writing before we completed the first version of the Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) tool. Finally, in October 2001, we published the first version of the GEM tool. Since then GEM has been through several incarnations coming from the combined wisdom and experience of a talented community of ICT practitioners, gender specialists and evaluators who contributed as researchers, critical reviewers, resource persons and workshop facilitators.

In January 2002, we were ready to test and refine the GEM tool and began the GEM project. Through the support of the Department for International Development, International Development Research Centre and UNIFEM, we implemented a two-year programme of tool-building, resource sharing and field-testing. Our multicultural and multilingual GEM Project Team and the whole APCWNSP network have gone through an incredible learning experience in this period and have amassed a wealth of knowledge in gender and ICT evaluation. In the last 18 months we worked with partners in 20 countries in 4 world regions evaluating 26 projects, organised and facilitated 20 workshops with over 300 participants and presented GEM in over 50 events in about 25 countries.

As we approach the final phase of our project, we have started to harvest the lessons and findings from this experience. This publication is our first crop. Part 1 is a synthesis of our experience in tool building, testing and training globally. Part 2 is a presentation of the evaluation findings of six GEM testers from South Africa, Philippines, Malaysia, Croatia, Bulgaria and Mexico. Through these examples, we have tried to demonstrate the numerous dimensions of gender issues in a variety of ICT initiatives – telecentres, teleworking, training, advocacy and networking. In no way was our selection of case studies an indication that the rest of our GEM testers are of less quality. Many of our partner organisation's evaluation activities are still ongoing. And finally, Part 3 is an overview of all the 26 GEM testers in 20 countries.

This year, APCWNSP is celebrating 10 years of networking support for women's actions and agenda. We dedicate this publication to the many women and some men who have persevered in making sure that gender equality and women's empowerment remain at the centre of the ICT agenda.

Chat Garcia Ramilo
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Manila, Philippines

Acknowledgements

APCWNSP would like to thank the community of ICT practitioners, gender specialists, educators and evaluators who have contributed to the creation of the GEM tool.

Anriette Esterhuysen, Maureen James, Rebecca Holmes, Sonia Jorge, Sarah Earl, Sara Hlupekile Longwe, Natasha Primo, Anita Seibert, Joelle Palmieri, the Popular Education for People's Empowerment, Angela Nicolettou and special thanks to Gilles Cliché.





Part 1

Global Summary: Tool Building, Testing and Training



About the GEM Project

The Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) for ICT initiatives is an innovative evaluation guide for ICT practitioners seeking an appropriate gender framework and analysis tools for their information and communication technology (ICT) interventions.

GEM was developed by the Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme (APCWNSP), a global network that facilitates the strategic use of ICTs in support of women's actions and agendas. Since 1994, APCWNSP has worked globally, co-ordinating research and "on-the-ground" activities that have highlighted the need for strengthening consideration of gender concerns in the planning and implementation of ICT initiatives.

In 1997, as a contribution to the Global Knowledge conference held in Toronto, the APCWNSP began an evaluation of its own research activities to contribute to the development of a generic ICT audit tool designed to learn more about the role and impact of ICTs on development projects. APCWNSP saw that more comprehensive tools and criteria were needed when evaluating the role and use of ICTs from a gender perspective. From this experience, we initiated a 'Lessons Learned' Project to contribute to the development and strengthening of practical, relevant and sustainable women's networking initiatives at the global, regional and national level in 1999. Through this project, we began the process of creating a framework and developing methodologies that will help us determine if ICTs have really improved women's lives. As more and more of today's development work and money is channelled into projects that employ ICTs, their effects on women are of great importance. For women, the accessibility of ICTs requires adequate equipment, information, financing, organisation, training and time. Evaluation of ICT development work is therefore critical to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed.

The first step in this process was taken in Manila, Philippines. In January 2001, 35 ICT practitioners from 16 countries gathered for a workshop on "Building An ICT Gender Evaluation Tool". The discussion at this workshop was our starting point in developing the GEM tool. The first version of the tool was completed in October 2001. After six months, we published the revised version and we were ready to test the tool. The GEM project was our main testing ground

The GEM project's aim is to strengthen and sustain gender accountability in global, regional and national ICT networking initiatives by:

- developing evaluation methodologies for ICT initiatives
- generating research on the gender dimensions of ICT, particularly its impact on gender equality, women's empowerment and social transformation
- catalysing a process of resource sharing and tools-building
- providing insights and new directions for projects and initiatives, policy interventions and more meaningful use of ICTs for and by women worldwide
- providing training to undertake gender evaluation of ICT initiatives
- facilitating the creation of a network of "gender equality and ICT champions" (both individuals and organisations), with increased capacity in evaluation, policy, advocacy, and training

Through the GEM project, the evaluation tool has undergone testing and refining in the last 18 months.

GEM Tool Overview

The GEM Tool is a guide to integrating gender analysis into evaluations of initiatives that use Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for social change.

It provides a means for determining whether ICTs are really improving women's lives and gender relations as well as promoting empowering change at the individual, institutional, community and broader social levels.

The GEM tool contains:

- Theory: a gender analytical framework as well as basic concepts and principles of evaluation.
- Practice: practical 'how-to' approaches and worksheets to help you conduct your own evaluation.

GEM can be used by practitioners, including:

- Organisations using ICT for development, human rights and other issues
- Project managers and project staff using ICT in projects without a specific gender or women's focus
- Evaluators working in the ICT field
- Donors and development agency staff working in the ICT field
- Gender focal points that support women's and ICT issues
- Policy makers
- ICT planners
- Consultants in the area of gender and ICT

The guide provides users with an overview of the evaluation process (including links to general evaluation resources) and outlines suggested strategies and methodologies for incorporating a gender analysis throughout the evaluation process. GEM is not simply an evaluation tool. It can also be used to ensure that gender concerns are integrated into a project planning process.

LEARNING FOR CHANGE

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



The WNSP evaluation model focus examines how an ICT intervention has affected changes at an individual, organisational, community and broader social level from a gender perspective.

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

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

GENDER ANALYSIS

Gender analysis in evaluation involves a systematic assessment of the different impacts of project activities on women and men. Gender analysis within an ICT context asserts that power relations

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT CYCLE *by Sara Longwe*



involving class, race, ethnicity, age, and geographic location interact with gender to produce complex inequalities relating to social change in general, and those changes brought on by ICTs in particular. Disaggregating data by sex, analysing the sexual division of labour, and understanding the gender disparities of access to and control over resources are basic components of a gendered approach to evaluation.

GEM KNOWLEDGE SHARING SITE

The GEM website www.apcwomen.org/gem was built through a collective process of structured consultations, face-to-face discussions and the collaborative work of our Knowledge Site managers. The main features of the GEM site are the GEM tool; information about the GEM project, links to WNSP's research on gender and ICTs and relevant evaluation resources; news about GEM-related activities; and information about the community of GEM practitioners. Printer-friendly versions of documents and a downloadable version of the GEM tool are also available from the site. The site is bilingual in Spanish

and English. The GEM Spanish site www.apcwomen.org/gem/esp has total correspondence with the English site. The GEM tool is also available in Portuguese at www.apcwomen.org/gem/portuguese/index.htm.

GEM Intranet: The GEM Intranet was developed to enable the WNSP and its project team, GEM testers and partners, to work together collaboratively. Currently the content includes profiles of GEM testers and projects, resources such as GEM PowerPoint presentations, GEM articles and graphics, a quick reference guide and information about regional workshops.

Testing GEM

In 2002, the APCWNSP regional networks, partners and other selected organisations began testing GEM to enrich the methodology and customize it to their own ICT networking contexts and social spheres. The GEM project team has been working with 27 organisations in evaluating a variety of initiatives spread over 20 countries. Initiatives include:

GEM Testers Profile			
REGION	NO. OF TESTERS	NUMBER OF COUNTRIES	REGIONAL INITIATIVES
LATIN AMERICA	6	5	1
ASIA	7	5	1
AFRICA	7	4	2
CENTRAL/EASTERN	6	6	1
EUROPE			
TOTAL	26	20	5



- community telecentres
- education and training initiatives for women
 - employment and e-commerce projects
 - networking and community building projects
 - e-governance programmes
 - advancement of women's rights through women's information activities and advocacy campaigns on a range of women's issues

GEM regional coordinators are working directly with testers from all regions in developing evaluation plans and conducting evaluation activities. This is being done through means as well as face-to-face meetings. Field visits were carried out in 8 locations in 7 countries. During field visits regional coordinators met with evaluation teams to finalise evaluation plans (i.e., setting indicators, methodologies, stakeholders, and evaluation activities). In some cases they participated in evaluation activities like interviews and focus group discussions.

NETWORK OF GEM PRACTITIONERS

A total of 192 participants (157 women and 35 men) from 30 countries have been trained in the use of the GEM Toolkit through regional and local workshops. Some of these workshops focused on raising awareness about gender and ICT issues. Participants represented projects that are field testing GEM, members of the regional WNSP networks and partners who intend to use GEM in their organisations outside the testing environment.

APCWNSP planned a programme of testing and interpretation work in 4

regions: Latin America, Asia, Africa (Anglophone) and Central and Eastern Europe. Participants in the regional training workshop learned about concepts of gender analysis as they relate to ICT projects and went through the whole process of developing an evaluation plan using the GEM Toolkit. The training equipped them with enough knowledge to lead the evaluation of their organisations/initiatives with the support of the GEM project team.

At the same time, the GEM project team honed their skills as GEM trainers as they developed modules, exercises and materials to best respond to participant feedback. The team's methodology evolved through facilitation and consistent evaluation of each workshop.

LESSONS IN TESTING

The GEM testing experience has been a very instructive process for conducting gender evaluation of ICT initiatives. The process of clarifying the objectives of an evaluation and identifying gender indicators are occasions for learning about what constitutes a gender perspective and how a gender analytical framework can be applied in projects using ICT.

GEM's conceptual documents on learning and evaluation and a social change framework for ICT use, steered testing organisations onto a solid evaluation track. Participants began to analyse their own learning experiences and the way their views and perspectives have been influenced by their context, culture, religion and various aspects of society. This understanding about gender



and its relationship to ICT is one of the most significant outcomes from GEM tool use in all the regions.

For example, testers from Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania and Romania gave feedback reports that using GEM helped them to understand what role ICT can play in women's empowerment. Generally they also felt that they have become more aware about the gender and ICT issues in their context. This growing awareness is critical especially in Central and Eastern Europe where there is almost an absence of gender advocacy in the ICT policy arena and most of women advocates and organisations in the region are not familiar with the information society policies and debates nor are they connected with the existing gender and ICT advocacy networks.

The most immediate result of the testing is the discovery that most of the organisations did not have plans for evaluating their projects nor any clearly defined indicators, whether gender or general indicators, to measure the effectiveness of their interventions. After developing their evaluation plans, all of the GEM testers affirmed the usefulness of this exercise in reviewing their project plans and most of them realized the significance of their evaluation results for institutional and project planning.

In addition, the participatory approach espoused by GEM values encouraged organisations to be inclusive of all stakeholders. From the very beginning the GEM team emphasized that the GEM tool was to be used by a group or team of people ready to work on equal terms and share responsibilities and results.

Lessons from the Field

The final evaluation results of GEM testers are still to be completed; however, our findings from the testing so far have yielded a number of lessons:

GENDER SENSITIVITY SESSIONS

In most cases, it is necessary to conduct gender and ICT sensitisation workshops before starting to develop a gender evaluation plan. From our GEM testers' experience, these workshops could be customized depending on the needs of the organisation. This could be a half- or whole-day session that will provide participants with an understanding of the basic concepts of gender, gender equality, women's empowerment and the intersections of gender, social transformation and ICT. Our experience has shown that while most organisations grasped the issues of gender and ICT separately, analysing the relationship between these two issues was new terrain for them.

This preparatory step is even more relevant in gender evaluation of telecentres because these initiatives are usually based in grassroots communities where traditional values and beliefs about gender roles and relations are still the norm. In all of the telecentres that tested the GEM tool, the evaluation teams consciously set in place gender sensitisation strategies promoting reflection and opening opportunities for dialogue to avoid antagonistic confrontations.





From: daphne@uolsinectis.com.ar
 To: gem-team@apcwomen.org
 Subject: [Gem-team] Workshop in Colinas del Norte
 Reply-To: gem-team@apcwomen.org
 X-Reply-To: daphne@uolsinectis.com.ar
 Date: Thu, 14 Aug 2003 13:37:38 -0300 (GMT+3)

Hello GEM team,
 Today I met with Marcelo, Florencio and Givanna Tipan, who will be working with me in the workshop we'll have tomorrow in Colinas del Norte, up in the mountains outside Quito. Giovanna is in charge of the manual on gender issues for telecentres.

The workshop will take place with the young people's community organisation. It will be centred in the work they are doing for their community journal, that comes out once a month and it's run by them. They are also in charge of the local telecentre, where the journal is produced.

It is interesting to see Gem's development so far. Foundation ERPE will use it for planning their work in the telecentres from the very start and they think the tool will help them to address equity, which for them includes not only gender issues, but also class and racial issues. Discrimination of indigenous people in Riobamba is rampant. I had never seen it so clearly. Colleagues told me that not so many years ago indigenous people were not even allowed to take the local buses. It's interesting to see how GEM can widen its outreach in local use. I think it's very challenging!!!

As for Colinas del Norte, as it is a poor neighbourhood outside Quito, people there also feel discriminated because of class issues, so gender issues will also be considered within a wider perspective. They are planning to use GEM to sensitise on gender issues first, then to evaluate what they are doing in their local newspaper and as a third step, to plan their work in the very new telecentre that they are starting to run.

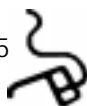
Remember I told you about "The Queens" group? Today, Chasquet colleagues told me that the full name is "Queens Association" and it is not a name the girls choose for themselves, but that the community gave them because the community created that group for the girls that have been candidates or have won beauty awards in the community. So in a way from the beginning their image has been very much attached to sexism.

Girls complain that they are treated as "empty heads" or "decorative objects" and that they want their community to understand their real interests and commitments. So they are very excited about taking part in the workshop. They also plan to work with the group of older women who have their small business of arts and crafts in the community. They want to show that they can do other things and not only be there to be invited to community events as pretty faces. And, of course, they also want to take more active part in the local newspaper, not only in the photographs, but in the content.

As always, I think that GEM is opening more fields for work than expected.

Cordially,
 Dafne

For example, in two communities in Ecuador, the GEM team was told that the community (i.e., men leaders who make decisions) wouldn't allow workshops on "feminism", because they had had problems with women's groups coming to their place to "put women against men". The GEM team decided to use another starting point: "communication, equity and ICTs". In the case of the indigenous groups, another argument is that racial discrimination comes first and to overcome racial discrimination and work in favour of cultural and racial diversity should be on top of their aims. In this case, the concept of "equity" was used with a broad meaning, including racial, gender, age, cultural and social discrimination.



SETTING GENDER AND ICT INDICATORS

Identifying gender indicators in ICT initiatives, whether in policies, strategies, programs, projects and activities can be an effective way of ensuring that women's particular needs are considered in planning processes. Gender-sensitive indicators are useful tools in measuring or evaluating the impact of development initiatives in general and can be applied in the ICT field. While there is a rich body of gender indicators that have been developed in areas like health, education, human rights and political empowerment, development of gender indicators or even general development and social change indicators for ICT initiatives is only just beginning.

One important section of the GEM tool deals with identifying gender and ICT indicators for projects that are being evaluated. This exercise has been the most challenging step for most GEM testers when preparing evaluation plans. At the same time, it has been the key component in determining how and why specific ICT initiatives lead to changing women's conditions, gender roles or gender relations. Identifying quantitative indicators of access and participation has been straightforward for most of the GEM testers. What have been more complicated to track are qualitative indicators. Yet, as we know from other gender evaluation methodologies, these indicators have more vividly illustrated the relationship of ICT interventions and women's empowerment.

For example, five of our testers are telecentres mostly operating in rural communities in Ecuador, Colombia,

Philippines and Nigeria. Before the GEM evaluation, the telecentres simply disaggregated their user data by sex. After much probing about gender and ICT indicators, data differentiated by sex on participation in decision-making bodies, roles of volunteers and staff, activities of users in telecentres, training received and several more were identified as additional qualitative indicators. These could be classified as indicators of access, participation and use which reflect different levels of empowerment.

One lesson to be learned from the GEM testing process is that ICTs and ICT-based projects do not exist in a vacuum and that they operate within existing gendered social structures such as laws and traditional cultural beliefs and

"Given the dimensions of a gender issue, and their obvious embeddedness within a patriarchal system, it becomes obvious that interventions on gender issues cannot be dictated by 'top-down' planners. On the contrary, women's advancement involves the process of empowerment, which we may give the preliminary definition of the process by which women achieve increased control over public decision making. Such empowerment is women's route to changing the practices and laws that discriminate against them, and achieving an equitable gender division of labour and allocation of resources. Clearly, therefore, we need a lens to see the process of empowerment, as the sequence of women's action by which a gender issue can be tackled."

"SPECTACLES FOR SEEING
GENDER IN PROJECT EVALUATION"

Written by Sara Hlupekile Longwe for the Africa GEM Workshop held in Zanzibar in November 2002. Sara Longwe participated in this workshop as the gender evaluation specialist.

practices. The gender issues in ICTs do not only exist in the gender disaggregation of data but, more importantly, they exist in the reasons for the disaggregation. While the numbers may sometimes show that there is hardly any gender disparity in the usage and benefits of ICTs, the stories and reasons behind the numbers may reveal different realities. In planning and developing ICT policies and programmes, this framework is crucial if ICTs are to be used for social development and gender equality.

ICT FOR INFORMATION SHARING AND ADVOCACY

One of the most valuable uses of ICT within the women's movement is the advancement of women's rights through women's information activities and advocacy campaigns on a range of women's issues. As such, GEM selected several projects from various regions to learn how effectively ICT tools have been used. Projects evaluated included specific e-bulletins, radio programmes and e-lists by women's information centers like Modemmujer in Mexico, Karat Coalition based in Poland, Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) and regional AMARC networks in Africa and Latin America.

All of these organisations designed and conducted surveys among their audience to gauge the effectiveness of their medium as well as content. For many of them, the GEM evaluation gave them their first opportunity to systematically ask for feedback from their public. Overall, the survey results were encouraging in validating the significance of the information to women in their localities or region.

For example, Karat Coalition received feedback that information from the region and local social movement groups are generally difficult to collect. A lot of women's activists mentioned their e-bulletin as a very important component of their daily work, keeping them informed about the main initiatives, trends in the region and helping them to learn new experiences, shape objectives for their future activities, find new partners and give them ideas for the development of their NGOs. Most of the women activists, especially those from the European Union candidate countries, are also looking for information about the EU enlargement process that directly impacts on the economic and political situation in that region.

A common limitation noted in many instances is the need for more content translated into major regional languages or local languages. Most regions are not linguistically homogenous, therefore language should be a key indicator that measures accessibility of information.

In an evaluation of a Ugandan information network, respondents said that WOUGNET's website and mailing lists contributed to the visibility of Ugandan women's issues and had promoted women's causes in Uganda. Information provided were repackaged for further dissemination by alternative means such as radio and print publications. The need for more local content and information in local languages was emphasized. In addition, it was noted that while WOUGNET is very beneficial to all its members, active participation is limited to a few and therefore more work is needed to enable

more members to fully engage in the network. Respondents also called for ICT awareness and training sessions, greater networking among members, consideration of other modes of

An excerpt from Karat Coalition's GEM report illustrates how women-focussed information resources contribute to women's empowerment:

95,5% of the respondents of Karat's questionnaire think that Karat News helps to promote women's issues in the region and the same percentage thinks that newsletter helps to show Central and Eastern Europe/CIS perspective on gender issues. Only some of the readers share information from Karat News outside of their organisations by reprinting them in their own publications, putting them on the websites or translating them to the local language. The others use them mostly for their own needs as applying for grants, attending conferences/training they find in the news and learning about gender issues in the European Union.

As a Karat News reader puts it:

'It is the only space where regional info is accessible in one place. Every other newsgroup claims to focus on one area or region, but rarely does this happen. I rarely read those because it is supposed to be about Central and Eastern Europe and then I get everything else about Asia and Africa and what kind of conference is happening in New York. I read Karat News to follow what is really happening with women in the region, and because I know it is relevant and coming directly from the region'.

information sharing/dissemination – targeting rural access in particular, and support in acquiring ICT equipment and internet services.

GEM RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ICTs ON WOMEN'S LIVES AND SOCIETY

While the objective of the GEM evaluation is to zero in on examining specific projects, the process to get to this point has led the GEM team and GEM testers to comprehend critical trends and issues connected with the so-called information or knowledge society. Depending where the testers are from, the issues that have been tackled in GEM workshops and reports range from the digital divide, privacy and security, democracy and governance, employment and economic opportunities and many more.

A clear recommendation emerging from testing is the need to document and promote models of strategic use of ICTs among women, as well as other disadvantaged groups. Of equal importance is building awareness among gender advocates and women's organisations with the strategic aim of making them more familiar with gender issues in ICT and to support the development of pro-active gender advocacy in ICT policies.

Through the GEM testing, we have deepened our understanding of many critical gender and ICT issues. Some of these are elaborated on through the case studies that are presented in this report. We would like to highlight three significant issues resulting from our regional testing.

WOMEN AND TELEWORKING

ICTs are being touted as opening new opportunities for employment. They are presented as a novel employment model with employees working from the comfort of their homes. In many cases,

teleworking is seen as an option among those who want to be employed but prefer or need to stay home for reasons such as disabilities, chronic illness or caring for the children. Women, who are mostly responsible for child caring, domestic work or caregiving for old and chronically ill members of family, are seen to be one of the groups that could move into this new organisation of work. In many parts of the world, teleworking is becoming more widespread as a way of home-based work. However, there is a general lack of information regarding the potential problematic aspects of teleworking (such as social security of teleworkers) and its real impact on the life and empowerment of women. There is a need to examine and open the discussion about the impact of teleworking on women's multiple roles in the family. A teleworking case study is presented in this report to shed light on this significant ICT development. While the findings about how teleworking challenges traditional male and female roles in the home are not conclusive, the report points out that indicators and benchmarks in terms of changes in gender roles and relations as a result of teleworking will be critical in determining the long term impact of work arrangement.

ICT TRAINING FOR WOMEN

Five ICT training initiatives are participating as GEM testers and are evaluating their projects. These initiatives vary from basic training for rural women in South Africa to employment skills training in Croatia to web-based information management and e-commerce for women's organisations in Asia-Pacific. In most cases, these training opportunities have been positive for the

women trained. Indicators of various levels of empowerment include the reinforcement of their self-esteem as women found themselves able to learn a new and more advanced communications technology, ICT facilitated networking that in turn has allowed expanded participation in decision-making and strengthened internal democracy, led to improving one's chances of finding a job and provided people with renewed confidence in themselves.

Many more women can benefit from appropriately designed training programmes in all regions. There is need for more resources to support training initiatives that have demonstrated a developmental and empowering impact.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS ISSUES

Access to ICT infrastructure and basic ICT skills continue as the most common gender and ICT issues identified by all our GEM testers. The digital divide is mostly linked to developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, but it is also an important issue in Central East Europe, considering the low access of traditionally marginalized groups. It is crucial to focus especially on the women who are disadvantaged by several social factors, such as single mothers, disabled women, older women, women living in rural areas, unemployed women or women from low-income groups, women refugees and women from ethnic minorities.

Despite statements that universal access is a priority in most ICT national policies for the majority of the countries included in the testing, the use of ICT remains difficult because of the low levels

of access. Given these limitations, promoting good practice on strategic use of ICTs for women's empowerment and gender equality becomes more critical.

Evaluation Plus: GEM's Other Uses

WNSP'S POLICY ADVOCACY WORK

The GEM tool has informed WNSP's policy work through its conceptual papers expounding a critique on gender and ICTs. The analysis and positions in these papers have been used as the main basis for WNSP's advocacy positions in the current preparatory activities for the World Summit on the Information Society. Advocacy for integrating a gender perspective in ICT programs and policies was high on the agenda of WNSP's recommendations. WNSP has been a leading gender advocate in all WSIS regional and global Preparatory Meetings held in Bamako, Tokyo, Bucharest, Bavaro and Geneva. APCWNSP's gender Issues Paper for WSIS can be found in www.genderit.org and in the APC Publication "Involving Civil Society in ICT Policy" <http://www.apc.org/english/news/index.shtml?x=14223>

There are early indications that in the area of policy development, GEM's initial work in identifying gender and ICT indicators will have an impact. The development of gender and ICT indicators has been consistently taken up as part of policy recommendations.

Outside of the WNSP and our partners, we have been asked to present the GEM tool in numerous events and many

organisations have asked us about how to use the tool.

The promotion and dissemination of GEM has expanded and reached new audiences. The GEM project was presented in several international activities including the Second Global Congress of Citizens Networks, Buenos Aires, Argentina, December, 2001; World Association of Christian Communication World Congress, December 2001; Symposium on Gender Equality and ICTs Development in Hong Kong, Hong Kong, April 2002; KnowHow Conference, Kampala, Uganda, August 2002; AWID Forum, Guadalajara, Mexico, October 2002; Global Communities Network, Montreal, Canada, October, 2002; Pacific Islands Regional ICT Consultation, Suva, Fiji, April 9-11, 2003; UNESCO Expert Group Meeting on "Digital Inclusion and Social Change: Technologies and Strategies", Paris, France, July 14, 2003; and the Forum on ICT and Gender, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, August 27-30, 2003.

GEM SERVICE

In keeping with APC WNSP's focus on building its overall capacity in delivering sustainable GEM service to a much wider audience, the project has involved 26 WNSP members from its networking regions. Members have been trained through the GEM regional workshops and are involved in actual evaluation of projects. GEM has also been used as a framework in:

- Mainstreaming gender in national ICT policy development
- Integrating a gender perspective in e-governance and political participation programs
- Developing a framework for gender and ICT research



GEM team members have also successfully applied GEM in gender and ICT consultancy projects for international agencies.

GEM RELATED CONSULTANCIES

PROJECT	INTERNATIONAL AGENCY	GEM APPLICATION	OUTPUT
E-Governance for Efficiency and Effectiveness Program, Bilateral Co-operation with Philippine Government	Canadian International Development Agency	Assess capacity of Philippine government to mainstream gender in e-governance project using GEM framework	Gender Audit of current e-governance programs Gender indicators e-governance program
UNIFEM Support For E-Quality in The Information Society (Eastern Europe)	UNIFEM	Provision of technical advice on gender and ICT issues in relation to overall WSIS process including integration of gender dimension in European Economic Commission policy paper. Recommendations in developing a gender and ICT program to help strengthen women associations and movements in Eastern Europe	UNIFEM Policy paper and presentation at WSIS regional meeting in Bratislava on November 7. GEM Team members act as resource persons for UNIFEM's program development workshop.
Gender and ICT in CEE/CIS: Assessment of the state of ICT from gender perspective	United Nations Development Program/ UNIFEM Central and Eastern Europe Office	Identification of best practices, challenges and lessons learned; Gender analysis of key initiatives, activities, programmes, projects undertaken (or planned) by different stakeholders in the region	Report mapping the situation with regard Gender & ICT, identifying problems and providing recommendations





PROJECT	INTERNATIONAL AGENCY	GEM APPLICATION	OUTPUT
Gender and ICT in CEE/CIS: Engendering the E-governance Academy UNDP Project, Estonia	United Nations Development Program, Central and Eastern Europe Office	GEM methodology will be applied to the existing course curriculum, with a view to advising as to how the curriculum could be modified to incorporate a gender perspective	Guideline for mainstreaming gender into the current curriculum of E-governance Academy
International Seminar- Equality and Gender Unit	Equality and Gender Unit, Regional Government of Andalucia, Spain	Introducing GEM to local national government of Spain and local and regional government of Andalucia, people working in the Structural Funds initiatives, Gender Equality Machinery all over Spain, Universities and gender experts.	Conducted two workshops for over 100 participants.



GEM in 2004

Two thousand and four will be a bumper year for the GEM project. After two years of field-testing, refining the GEM tool, training a network of GEM practitioners and presenting GEM in numerous forums all over the world, WNSP will reap a rich harvest of resources, lessons and skills. We offer these significant insights and new directions for projects and initiatives, policy interventions and more meaningful use of ICTs for and by women worldwide. And, we expect that this process will also facilitate the creation of a network of “gender equality and ICT champions” (both individuals and organisations), with increased capacity in evaluation, policy advocacy, and training. We hope that this bumper crop will be a significant contribution towards sustainability of women’s ICT networking initiatives and the strengthening of gender accountability in ICT initiatives and projects in general.

When you visit the APCWNSP – GEM knowledge sharing site next year, expect a new, revised version of the GEM tool that you can use or download, with more exercises, examples of indicators and methodologies and reports of GEM testers’ evaluations. The site will include an interactive feature for GEM users and you will be able to add your own indicators and methodologies.

We will also include GEM guides for specific uses such as GEM for Telecentres (a resource being developed Chasquinet, one of our GEM testers), GEM for planning and GEM for ICT policy analysis. The GEM tool will also be translated in more languages including French and Arabic.



Part 2

Case Studies: Evaluation Findings from Six GEM Testers

The APCWNSP network sees this work as part of our advocacy to promote the strategic use of ICTs for women's empowerment and equality.

The six reports in this section were written by GEM regional coordinators based on initial reports and findings by GEM tester organisations, except in the

case of Modemmujer. The Modemmujer report included here is a brief summary of their final report. GEM regional coordinators worked closely with testers in all phases of the evaluation process – from developing evaluation plans, conducting GEM workshops with evaluation teams, designing survey forms and questionnaires, visiting sites, conducting interviews and focus group discussions, and writing up evaluation reports. Most of GEM's testing partners are currently completing their evaluation

EVALUATING A WOMEN'S PILOT TRAINING
PROGRAMME IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

Project:
LIMPOPO PROVINCE WOMEN'S TRAINING PROGRAMME
Organization: WOMEN'SNET
Country: SOUTH AFRICA

WOMEN'SNET IS A VIBRANT and innovative networking support programme designed to enable and empower South African women and girls to access the people, issues,

resources and tools they need to advance gender equity

through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Correspondingly, Women'sNet has progressively engaged in building skills among individual women and women's organisations in the use of ICTs, while drawing on the knowledge and expertise of the organisations in developing the information architecture for sites on human rights issues, and resources available to women in South Africa.

We women, we can bend, we can do everything. It's our time!
(Trainee-Interview September 2003)

and final reports will be submitted by the end of 2003. Once all these reports are in, the GEM team will put together a comprehensive report for publication in 2004.

Background

There are 29 Telecentres in the Limpopo Regions, and three multi-purpose community centres. Limpopo is the fourth most populated province in South Africa, with 250 000 more unemployed people than employed people, and less than half the people who start school complete a high school education. The vast majority of people access telephony through public telephones, with a minority of people having cell phones.

The Project

In 2000 and 2001, Women'sNet, with the support of Alternatives Canada, undertook a training initiative in the Limpopo province (previously, the Northern Province). Two communities were selected for the training: Botlokwa and Mohodi (both about 50km outside of town). These communities were selected because of their access to computers and their connectivity – Mohodi through a computer lab at the school, and Botlokwa through a telecentre and community radio station. In Mohodi, we are in the process of establishing a Trainers Committee to roll out a training programme to the community who were not included in the initial training. The Mohodi Telecentre is managed by a woman and two of its additional staff are both men. While the telecentre is busy, it is attached to the community radio station and is leasing space to the radio station.

The centre is community owned and managed by a board of directors. A secondary reason for their selection was the existence of myriad women's groups within each community that could benefit from the sharing of ideas and resources accessible via the radio station and the telecentre.

Our vision was to provide a training programme, free of charge, for the staff at community radio stations and local women's and gender-based organisations, as well as to provide training and access to training materials that community telecentres can replicate in their future training plans.

The primary aims were:

- To build the community's skills capacity around using newer information and communication technologies (such as computers, e-mail and the internet);
- Provide a platform for community radio stations and women/gender-based organisations to work together to improve the flow of information on issues that concern women and gender organisations into news and programming content; and
- Where requested, to provide additional training to telecentre managers and staff, in exchange for the use of their facility for the duration of the pilot project. Telecentre managers would also be provided with training materials to be used—so that they could continue the skills development project in the community once our pilot training project was complete.

Alternatives Canada supported the project by providing an Intern who was

tasked with conducting the training in the two areas. Based on her accounts of the training initiatives, setting up the training was not an easy feat.

“As this was a pilot project, we learned a lot about potential obstacles that arise at every level of a project. In the beginning they consisted of: making the necessary contacts, investigating options, obtaining bureaucratic approval, arranging for the necessary hardware/software and workspace, dodging egos and juggling individually driven expectations. Some of the challenges experienced during training were as follows: jealousy as to who got to participate, having participants disappear during training due to work related obligations, getting students to comfortably call on you for help, struggling to establish internet connections at both the telecentres, dealing with conflicts between various groups within community and dealing with chronic power failures in Botlokwa.”

THE INITIATIVE HAD TWO PHASES:

Phase 1 – July and August 2001: Entailed the training of community radio stations and local women’s organisations in basic computer literacy as well as the use of software packages that allow for digital editing of radio content.

The telecentre benefited from the initiative in that we gave the managers free access to the training materials which they could then duplicate for future courses the telecentre might want to offer. In addition, we also offered tips on

computer usage and maintenance. Unfortunately, due to many technical problems, both telecentres were unable to access the internet.

Phase 2 - September/October 2001: This training was on use of open source software - which is software that is freely available - on how to publish information on the internet. Training in the use of the Action Apps software makes publishing on the internet easy as it requires basic knowledge of how to transfer information from one source to another (through cutting and pasting, for example). It does not require skill in complicated HTML coding procedures.

Measuring the Impacts of the Initiative on the Communities

Through GEM, Women’sNet aims to build a methodology for working with rural women and ICTs in South Africa.

It has been a long-term goal of the organisation to target disadvantaged women – in South Africa where rural women predominate among the poor, unemployed and non-literate. Rural women also face gender discrimination and have fewer resources to address this. The central evaluation question was whether the project addressed these disadvantages through its training activity.

In so doing, Women’sNet hopes to develop a more effective methodology to effectively work with gender and ICT issues with rural women and rural women’s networks.

METHODOLOGY

Most of the work developing a methodology and indicators for our GEM work was done in December 2002 in Tanzania at the WNSP GEM Workshop. With GEM experts and members of other African organisations there, we had the opportunity to discuss and get feedback for our ideas on evaluating the project, as well as come to grips with the methodology.

This year, Women'sNet designed two questionnaires – one for telecentre managers and the other for participants. We made announcements at the community radio stations that we would be in the community for the day interviewing trainees. We also made personal contact with as many participants as we could.

Interviews took place over the course of a day, at the community radio station (which is adjacent to the telecentre and

across the road from V.P. High School, where the training took place).

Of the 32 people trained in Mohodi, 10 people came for interviews at the radio station. Interviews were done by three staff members – including the original trainer. Interviews were conducted in English and Sotho. We also had the benefit of interviews conducted by a student from the University of Potchefstroom, done in 2003.

The process included the structured interview as well as an informal, unstructured discussion with interviewees about their experience of the training and their ideas for further work.

Unfortunately, just less than half of the participants were interviewed and more than a year has gone by since the training. Many of the people trained had followed

The Women'sNet training was very well received by both the female and male constituency. The Northern Province communities expressed a great deal of gratitude for our work there. The fact that the workshops were offered at no cost provided the communities with the opportunity to acquire new skills that are often required when job searching. But beyond being able to cite such skills on a CV, the training imbued the participants with a sense of confidence and appreciation for Information and Communication Technologies; something that had been previously shrouded in mystery and fear for most. The participants expressed an overwhelming interest in receiving further training.

The women were especially grateful for being able to participate in a community development project that focused on them. Many felt that they would be able to transfer their new skills into other areas of their lives as well. The Botlokwa training group immensely enjoyed the segment on Starting a Small Business, especially since it entailed watching a two-hour video and spending the day talking about starting a small business. We discussed many things and they were assigned specific assessment reports, which included among other things, a personal assessment of the strengths and weakness that they felt they had. Getting them to think in ways that they were not necessarily accustomed to, really contributed to the workshop.

From Elizabeth Araujo, Women'sNet Intern and Trainer



employment opportunities elsewhere and were no longer contactable.

Summary of Evaluation Results

IMPROVING THE LIVES OF WOMEN

“When you need a job, you are not necessarily equipped. You need pride.”

Two of the people interviewed were employed as a result of the experience they gained at the training. Other people interviewed said the training gave them confidence and encouraged them to learn more. However, all people interviewed stated that they would like more training on operating and running a business, accessing finance and linking “office” work with the training.

CHANGING GENDER RELATIONS

“Women and men can come – some men need to be empowered too.”

This comment was made by a female trainee and member of the trainers committee. She felt that while women

should get access to opportunities, it was good to involve men. The same interviewee felt that problems with access had to do with ownership – the computers at the school were ‘owned’ by the school, and the telecentre, although community owned, was a source of income.

A telecentre employee stated, in answer to whether more women were accessing telecentre services: “The changes are there, even though some people could not afford it. Before and after the training, there have been changes.” The same employee said that the telecentre has no activities to specifically encourage women to access computers at the telecentre.

Access at the high school, where the training took place, is now non-existent. Although Women’sNet had obtained an agreement with the school for access for trainees, internal issues have prevented this access. Therefore the sustainability and long-term benefit of the project has been compromised.



GEM AND THE COMMUNITY TELECENTRES: How PARTICIPATORY EVALUATIONS REALLY WORK

Project: MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY TELECENTRES
Organization: PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Country: PHILIPPINES

THE MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY TELECENTRE (MCT) is a project initiated in 2000 by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD), an agency of the Philippine Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in an effort to address universal access issues in the Philippines and to provide rural communities access to information, resources and expertise through ICTs.

Project Background

The Multi-Purpose Community Telecentre (MCT) brought seven personal computers and internet access to remote areas in the Philippines. There are currently four pilot sites in Lanao del Norte and Agusan for the MCT project: Malingao, Taguitic, Jaliobong, and Maginda. The facilities were handed over to the local government units (LGU) in the communities. Both MCTs are being run by a group of volunteers from the barangays. Volunteers were trained in basic computer use, maintenance and support.

One of the valuable lessons from the first stages of project implementation is the importance of community organising in ensuring that the MCTs are utilised. Initial efforts hardly succeeded in encouraging community members to use the facilities provided because they did not see the need and value of the MCTs. After an initial evaluation, PCHRD realised the oversight and corrected it through the help of e-Development Initiatives (eDI), a non-governmental

organisation that aims to promote the use of ICTs in rural areas through community organising efforts. eDI has been working in Malingao and Taguitic for several months, organising the various sectors in the community around the MCTs and facilitating community participation in the project. As a result, in June 2003, the MCTs in Malingao and Taguitic were turned over to independent local bodies made up of the different sectors in the communities. The turnover signified that the communities truly and finally owned the MCTs, and that the MCTs were to be shaped according to the needs of the communities.

GEM Evaluation on the MCTs

Since the Asia GEM Workshop held in Manila in September 2002, PCHRD has been involved in implementing a gender evaluation of the use of the MCTs in Malingao and Taguitic. Apart from gathering gender-disaggregated data on MCT use, the evaluation aimed to look into the particular ICT and information needs of the communities for further project planning and implementation. It



also wanted to test evaluation methodologies and a framework that can be applied to the two other project sites in Agusan.

The MCT evaluation employed a combination of traditional quantitative and creative qualitative methodologies. Once the MCT GEM evaluation plans were in place, PCHRD began monitoring the MCT logbooks and made sure that the data gathered were sex-disaggregated. Members of the GEM Team visited the MCTs on 23-24 June 2003. During the visit, the members of the GEM Team were able to hold a brief focus group discussion (FGD), as well as informal interviews, with members of the communities on how they have been using the MCTs. eDI also held various workshops and FGDs with the two communities throughout the evaluation process, among which were gender sensitivity workshops, health workshops for the women, and workshops to gather information on the communities' information needs.

PCHRD and eDI gathered stories from community members and MCT volunteers about how their lives are changing as a result of the MCTs. These stories were gathered through one-on-one interviews, FGDs and journals that all MCT volunteers were required to keep.

STORYTELLING AS A METHODOLOGY

During the final workshop of the MCT evaluation, the participants said the storytelling process allowed them to share their thoughts and experiences in their own language at their own pace. One of the volunteers also admitted that keeping the journal was initially only something that they were required to do as part of

their tasks as volunteers. Eventually, keeping the journal became a good way for him (and the other volunteers) to reflect on their work and document changes because of their participation in the MCTs.

The communities also discussed how storytelling as a methodology was useful to them:

- for monitoring, both the volunteers and the telecentre
- for determining what specific action(s) to take
 - to serve as basis for planning
 - to provide input in decision making
 - to express their feelings
 - to learn from oneself and other volunteers
 - to develop writing skills
 - to serve as a record of events and project history (milestones)
 - to learn the stories behind user statistics
 - to serve as a reflection of people who work at the telecentre, i.e., their beliefs, culture, values, perspectives, and dynamics
 - to reflect/record changes in community participation and governance
 - to look into gender/family relations in the community
 - to conceptualise social and power structure/relations within the community

PARTICIPATORY DATA ANALYSIS

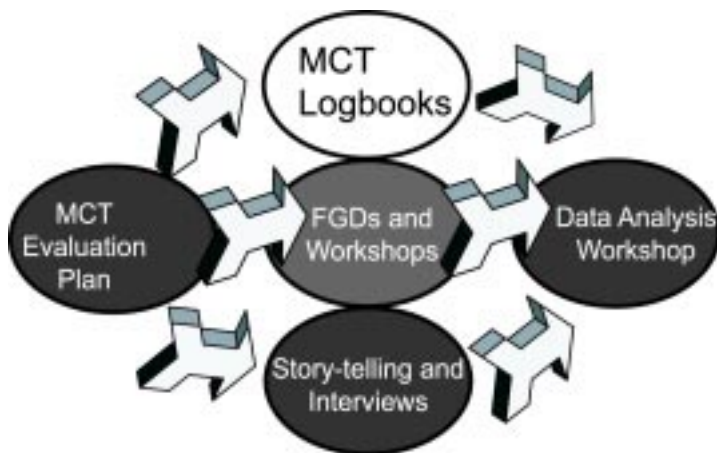
The MCT evaluation included community members in the process. It was designed not only to allow the community members to participate in the evaluation as subjects and respondents. In the final workshop held for the GEM



testing, community representatives were invited to help in analysing the data and information gathered about MCT usage. What became apparent during the workshop was the practical value of ensuring the widest possible participatory evaluation process: that without the participation of the community members, the analysis of the information might have been incomplete, at the least, or false, at the most.

The importance of a participatory approach is that it ensures that all perspectives (the project implementers, the community organisers, the community members) are canvassed and that community members will own the evaluation of the MCT, too. The feedback from the community members at the end of the workshop showed that they were happy to understand the evaluation process and they were sure that the evaluation results would help them make further plans for the MCTs.

Overall, the MCT evaluation process is a good model that other similar initiatives could benefit from.



A GEM Story from the MCT

WRITTEN BY EDILBERTO LIMARE, EDI

Letty Tano, 56, is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Multi-Purpose Community Telecentre. Along with her husband, she tills a four-hectare farm planted to banana and coconut. Farming is the only means of living she knows because she only finished grade school.

Letty is a busy and hardworking woman. She has gone to big cities like Manila but prefers the wide open space that country life offers. She does household chores as soon as she arrives home. She has a garden where she spends her leisure hours. She seldom goes out to socialize, except when she goes to trainings or seminars.

People recognize her capabilities in her community and she was recommended as one of the members of the MCT Board of Trustees. Perhaps that is because of her reputation as a strong-willed woman. She also has a strong drive for knowledge. She attended seminars, lectures, training and non-formal education classes or anything that could somehow augment her knowledge or skills. She even begged the Barangay Captain to be included in a one-year educational program to determine one's equivalence in the educational ladder. She was refused due to advanced age. But education is her top motivation, saying that she has worked hard and invested much for the education of her children.

She looks at her involvement in the MCT as a new opportunity for learning. She became even busier with her involvement

with the MCT, but her husband understands. He does her chores and sees to it that food is ready when Letty arrives from her meetings. Sometimes when she feels too tired to attend meetings after a day in the farm, her husband would tell her that she better quit if she didn't want to go.

It was a long struggle for Letty to get her husband to support her. Her husband used to be very domineering and would not listen to her, even forbidding her from attending seminars. His attitude only changed when he attended a seminar about basic awareness. From thereon they became classmates in similar occasions and Letty began to have a share in the decision-making. This extended also to the children. Her husband had realized how he treated her and the children, having been raised in a broken family with a father who was very strict and domineering.

As member of the MCT Board of Trustees, Letty is an exemplar of punctuality. She is invariably the first to arrive in the meeting place. She is serious in her participation. She said that many meetings she attended in the past wasted a lot of time. Agenda were not clearly defined so, oftentimes the discussions went nowhere. Now she expects clear output in every meeting. She has become observant and talks only when she thinks it is necessary. She has watched the eDI staff facilitate meetings and is confident that she can handle the task if entrusted with the responsibility.

She shared to her daughter with pride her experience in the eHealth conference in Opol, Misamis Oriental. She felt

empowered meeting with people holding key positions in the government. She understood the dynamics of the conference but confessed that she did not understand much of what the speakers were saying, except that the telecentre is a new concept employing ICT to provide rural communities equal access to information.



Letty is a good observer. She recalled the time when answering back to parents was construed as disrespect. Today's generation, she realizes, does not cling to old values. Instead, the family is governed on the concept of democracy, with family members showing mutual respect for one another and differences healed through dialogue. She resented the old system in which women, as she described it, were viewed as "taman ra sa lampin" (good for the nappies only), and the men were given priority in educational access. She also dismissed the notion that responsibility rests solely on the shoulders of men. Life, according to her, has become so difficult that it has become necessary for wives to help their husbands.

When a telecentre staff member visited her, she asked for help in her research on the internet for better management of banana diseases. While she is hopeful that she could get information in the internet, she still has to learn how to operate the computer for research. But she hopes that the telecentre will be able to reach out to the youth, especially the out-of-school ones, and empower them through education.

Results of the MCT Evaluation

The evaluation focused mainly on how community members are using and benefiting from the MCTs. There was a conscious effort to gather sex-disaggregated data and to ensure that different community sectors were represented in data gathering. The use of the MCTs in Malingao and Taguitic is still very basic. Most of the community members are just learning how to use the computer and to surf the internet. The MCTs are most useful to the students in the communities for word-processing and research for their schoolwork. Other frequent users of the MCTs include members of the Board of Trustees and the local government unit who mostly avail of printing and word-processing services.

“In March, more females visited the MCT, mostly students and teachers. According to Ms. Teresita Payumo, female students are more studious compared to male students. Also, Mr. Lagula said that most of the teachers who visited the MCT are female, since teaching is traditionally considered a job for women. Mr. Rasonabe added that in general, male users are not keen on writing logbooks. Hence, there might be more male users but they may have failed to register in the logbook. On the other hand, there were more male users in May because many of them were MCT volunteers, who are mostly males.”

-from the Final Report of the MCT Evaluation

One of the primary beneficiaries of the MCTs are the young people who volunteer for the MCTs. For them, the telecentres provide extra income and an opportunity to learn new skills. The MCTs serve as an alternative venue for skills development for out-of-school youth as well as a more productive way of spending their time. The volunteers reported an increase in their self-esteem and better employment opportunities. Majority of the users are female, many of whom are volunteers. Moreover, most of the males are busy in the farm.

The MCTs also proved beneficial at the community level. One of the immediate benefits of the MCT initiative is that it provided an opportunity to rebuild and strengthen various sectoral groups in the community. Sectors such as farmers, fisher folk, senior citizens and women have participated in and supported the MCTs. Community organising in Malingao and Taguitic has been centred on the MCTs ever since eDI took on the task of ensuring community participation in MCT implementation. The communities also have other plans to make sure that their community further benefits from the MCT. One of their top priorities is to promote the use of and access to community members. Through the evaluation, the organisers and the community members have realised the importance of providing services for other community members that do not have obvious and immediate needs. Aside from this, they have also begun exploring ways of gathering and providing information that will be relevant to the community's livelihood.

One of the needs the communities had expressed is for direct contact with buyers



for their products. The communities see the internet, through the MCTs, as a means for them to do away with middlemen and go into direct selling of their goods (Malingao's main produce is bananas and Taguitic's is crabs). They said that this would make them earn more. They also want information on the current market rates for their goods. The community sells their products through middlemen and have no direct information about market prices.

On the other hand, the women in the community expressed the wish to have more information on health issues. Already, the MCTs are working on developing content and ICT-based applications on health, education, agriculture/fisheries/natural resources, and rural enterprise development, with the help of the communities and project partners. MCT envisions providing telehealth/e-health services, distance education/e-learning tools, and online marketing access to the rural communities.

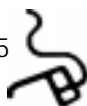
However, not all of the effects of the MCTs on the community are positive. One of the potentially negative effects of the MCTs in the communities is the creation of new hierarchies within the communities. This was apparent during an interview with one of the community members. "She contemplated that patrons would multiply rapidly if it would have a separate building from the barangay. She added that only prominent people in the community entered the Telecentre. Simple farmers, vendors, drivers would not feel at ease going inside the barangay hall. Much less in an air-conditioned telecentre inside the barangay hall with computers and all the air of technological sophistication alien to

the rural folks. Her friend complemented the suggestion citing the experience of her son who once tried to avail of the computer services but did not enter when he saw that there was a Barangay Development Council meeting held in the hall. Tessie continued to say that she even believed that many farmers do not know about the Telecentre because what they can see is a barangay hall." She further added that, "Even inside the Telecentre itself, I heard that the most prominent volunteers have the run of the place. Now the volunteers are heard quarrelling among themselves."

The evaluation helped in drawing out these potentially problematic issues and as a result the MCT volunteers and organisers have already discussed these issues and have taken into consideration the non-users' needs in further planning for the MCTs.

Beyond Malingao and Taguitic

As a result of the participatory evaluation design for the MCT evaluation, Malingao and Taguitic have already committed to continuous and on-going evaluation based on the plans made through the GEM Testing. The value of the evaluation process, and more specifically, a gender evaluation process, has already been promoted and accepted within those two communities. Right after the final workshop for the GEM evaluation, the communities held another meeting to discuss the sustainability of the MCTs and continued implementation of the GEM evaluation plans was included in the agenda. The two other MCT sites in Agusan are also set to implement the



plans and methodologies that were used in Taguic and Malingao, as the original plans for the GEM testing included fine-tuning the evaluation plans so that the other two MCT sites can use them.

However, there is also a need to deepen the gender and ICT issues covered by the evaluation. At this stage of MCT implementation, the evaluation framework and plans are appropriate, but as the communities use the MCTs further and MCT services in the communities increase and diversify, the evaluation plan will need to be assessed and further developed. The value of the recently accomplished MCT evaluation is that it has already laid down the ground work for further and deeper gender evaluation in the future that will draw out other gender and ICT issues and lessons.

The MCT initiative is not the only one of its kind in the Philippines. There are other telecentre initiatives in various areas in the country. The Philippine Information Technology and E-Commerce Council (ITECC), the implementing agency of the government's IT plans, has developed a

national plan to establish Community E-Centres (CEC) in various provinces and localities in the country. The CEC is envisioned as a one-stop shop for all ICT services and facilities for different communities, and all other government telecentre initiatives will be under the umbrella of this programme. This is the Philippine government's way of bringing ICT access to rural areas throughout the country.

In the light of such a programme, the lessons learnt from the MCT evaluation will be very valuable. Already, some lessons, such as the need for community participation and support for telecentre initiatives to ensure its success, are immediately useful. Another practical lesson is the value of gender evaluations and ensuring that women and men in the community will equally benefit from the telecentre initiative. There is a need to share the results and the lessons learnt from the MCT GEM testing to the ITECC, and to promote the framework and methodologies used in this evaluation. If this is done, then the national programme will have a better chance of success.

A STUDY ON HOW GENDER DYNAMICS AFFECT
TELEWORKERS' PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIA

Project: A STUDY ON HOW GENDER DYNAMICS
AFFECT TELEWORKERS' PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIA
Organization: MOTHERS FOR MOTHERS
Country: MALAYSIA

MOTHERS FOR MOTHERS (M4M), formed in 1998, is a network of mothers from multi-ethnic communities and ages involved in women's networking activities to promote the concept of working from home. The network believes that through ICT, women can earn an income without having to leave their homes and sacrificing their responsibilities to their families. How ICTs can benefit women in this situation is clear enough: technology has been able to provide women the "best of both worlds", enjoying both a successful home life and a career.

As a GEM Testing Partner, M4M drafted an evaluation plan called "A Study on How

Gender Dynamics Affect Teleworkers' Performance in Malaysia". The main objective of the evaluation was to explore how women's family lives and home situations affect teleworking and their job performance. More specifically, the evaluation aimed to answer the following questions:

- How ICTs and gender issues affect telecommuting
- How (if at all) ICT can truly affect the efficiency, and productivity of a teleworker
- How a teleworker can use ICT as a tool to balance homelife with worklife, and still be efficient and productive in her work performance
- What are the conditions that enable women to be efficient teleworkers?

The results of the evaluation will be used to promote telecommuting to the

Malaysian government as well as to convince corporations to consider teleworking and create a virtual office environment for their employees. The findings of the evaluation are valuable especially to organisations that have tried telecommuting unsuccessfully. It is also important to mothers who have given up their successful careers due to childcare and household chores. The study will also be used as guide for M4M to launch a national campaign to promote teleworking for women as well as a basis for further project development and fundraising.

Findings from the Interviews and FGDs

M4M's evaluation team used a combination of methodologies including home visits, focus group discussions and a survey using by administering a questionnaire. Initially, GEM's regional coordinator spent two weeks in Kuala

Lumpur and participated directly in the home visits and focus group discussions with members of the M4M Virtual Team (staff members, who all work from home) and E-homemakers members, a virtual network of homemakers, homeworkers and teleworkers who choose parenthood as their primary responsibility. Interviews and home-visits were held with the M4M Virtual Team (VT) from 11-19 July 2003. The VT consists of six women and two men. Two focused group discussions (FGD) were also held with the E-homemaker members and M4M part-timers on 12 July and 21 July 2003. The findings and conclusions discussed below are based on the report filed by the GEM regional coordinator.

The objectives of the interviews and the FGD are the following:

1. Identify the barriers faced by women working from home
2. Identify the ways in which working from home has impacted on the women's lives and on their families
3. Observe the home office set-up and situation of the virtual team members
4. Identify the characteristics and skills needed by a woman to be able to benefit fully from working from home
5. Identify how to address the challenges and barriers faced by the women working from home

REASONS FOR GETTING INTO HOME-BASED WORK

All of the VT members have experience in working from an office. Some of the women gave up their jobs when they had children to be full-time homemakers for a few years and had gotten into home-based work after their

children were grown up enough. Other members got into home-based work as a result of being re-trenched from their previous office work. Most are married with children while one was a single mother. Some of them have been housewives for a long time before going into home-based work.

Many of the female VT members said they decided to join the workforce again not because of financial need (as most of their husbands were employed). It was more to do with being involved in something else besides looking after their family. Before they got married, all of them had fulltime careers. The situation of others were:

- Two VT members work from home as the main breadwinner in the family.
- Two of the female and one male VT members work from home to augment the family income. One has a full-time office-based job and works from home after office hours on a time/work-share basis with her spouse. The other two work from home full-time.
- One member said the reason why she got into home-based work was because her clients kept on calling. She would have preferred to be a full-time mother and homemaker but then her clients depended on her so she had to go back to work.

BENEFITS OF TELEWORKING

All of the respondents agreed that the biggest benefit of working from home is flexibility in terms of time management. The female respondents made it clear that their first priority will always be their families and that most of them had left their former careers to raise their children. They said that unlike office-based work,

they can manage their own time according to their tasks at home. Working from home allows them to spend time with their families and work at the same time. It also allows them to spend more time with their children and have more control over their upbringing, ensuring that their children are cared for and raised right.

Some of the women mentioned that one of the benefits of working from home, as compared to being full-time homemakers, is increased confidence. Some of it comes from having their own income and not having to rely on their husbands for their expenses. However, most of it comes from being involved in something outside their husband and kids. They said that it is important for women to have interests beyond the home and that it improves their overall relationship with their husbands and children. Others also mentioned that their ICT skills have greatly improved because unlike in the office, they had to learn how to troubleshoot minor computer problems on their own.

One correspondent related how she is able to negotiate with her husband to start taking on some of the household tasks. She said that prior to her home-based business, she was expected to do everything at home with her husband saying that he was too tired from work to help out at home. Now, she has used the same reason (being too tired because she's working) to get her husband to do some of the tasks himself.

For another respondent, working from home was the "best of both worlds", having more time to spend with their children and being on hand for their needs, and being able to pursue a career without sacrificing their homelife.

Other benefits cited include, not having to deal with the traffic in Malaysia, which saves them time; not having to deal with office politics and not having to worry about office wardrobe and "how you look".

Factors that Affect Home-based Work

PERCEPTION OF HOME-BASED WORK

One of the barriers the respondents encountered in working from home is the perception of their families and peers about home-based work. Home-based work is not considered a "real job" and did not get support from their families and communities. One of the results of this perception is that family members would often disturb their work and assume that since they are at home, they are available for visit, to run errands and do the household work.

For the male respondents, there was an added pressure of not appearing to be fulfilling the breadwinner role of the husband. One of them mentioned the difficulty of being a "modern husband" and that Malaysian culture expects husbands to work from the office as the sole (or at least the primary) breadwinner in the family.

They also said that they experienced this during the first few months but they have found ways of letting their families and communities know that teleworking is just as serious and as valid as office-based work by explaining to them what they do and how they work from home. As a result these distractions from family members are not as prevalent.

SUPPORT FROM FAMILY MEMBERS

The respondents said that support from family members was critical in the success of working from home. Children and spouses need to understand that when they're working, they can't be distracted or bothered. Respondents with very young children have made arrangements with other family members (their mothers, aunts, sisters) to take care of the children during their work hours. Most of the respondents have household help, but they preferred their kids to be looked after by family members. They also said that when starting to set up the home office, support from family members is critical. For example, one FGD respondent she has a hard time working from home because her husband won't allow her to have a space to work.

On the whole however, most respondents claimed that they had support from their spouses and that support came in different ways. Others had spouses who offered technical and work-related support. Some said that their husbands took care of the children when they were working, especially during weekends. Another female respondent related how she had become less critical of how her husband contributes to household tasks. She has since learned to let go of her "way of doing things at home" and has allowed her husband to do some of the household work even if they don't meet her "standards".

LACK OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For those who use computers in their home-based work, respondents experienced difficulties from lack of technical support at home. When they

have technical problems, they either pay for repair or call on one of the VT members for help. Some call on their husbands or their children to provide the support they need. According to one respondent, repair services are expensive and home-based work is more expensive than office-based work where support for equipment and the technical support is available.

LABOUR POLICIES IN MALAYSIA

An issues raised by respondents is the need for Malaysian labour laws to recognise working from home as legitimate work, including similar benefits and support given to government given to office-based workers for teleworkers. Women and men who work from home (mostly women because they are expected to raise the children) do not get any insurance or benefits from their work.

One sector who may benefit from working from home are foreign women living in Malaysia. Current laws in the country do not allow for spouses of foreigners working in Malaysia to be employed. Most of the time, the husbands work while their wives take on home-based, informal work for employment. If home-based work is to be formalised in Malaysia, as was suggested previously, it will affect the employment opportunities of foreign women in the country.

COST OF ICTs IN MALAYSIA

During the first FGD, the women mentioned their interest in learning more ICT skills in order to improve their teleworking opportunities. However, aside from a lack of affordable training for women who are interested in going into



computer-based telework, there is also the issue of the cost of ICTs. They said that this is particularly an issue for homemakers who are just starting out and have no support from their families. They can't afford computers and internet access so even if they do acquire the skills necessary, they still will not be able to take on computer-related jobs from home.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Most of the respondents interviewed talked about the need for better management of the VT. They said that there is very little opportunity for management to monitor and verify the work of the team and that management's "mind-set" is crucial in ensuring that teleworkers are able to do their tasks professionally. This work arrangement calls for management to be very clear and focused on what it expects from the staff. They also mentioned the importance of transparency from the management in terms of payment schemes, decision-making and performance evaluation criteria.

Recommendations: Creating an Enabling Environment for Home-based Work

Given the results of the interviews and the FGDs, the following are recommendations towards ensuring that the right environment for home-based work is in place, particularly for women:

INCREASE ICT ACCESS

As Malaysia positions itself as an ICT hub in the region and ICT access is

developing in the country, affordable ICT tools and connections for people, particularly women, who are interested in going into home-based ICT work should be ensured. Access is not so much a problem in Kuala Lumpur and the satellite areas, however, the costs are still too high. Currently, the telephone calls in Malaysia are metered, which does not encourage people to stay for long periods of time, which is necessary for home-based ICT work. The alternative to dial-up access includes DSL and cable connection but both are expensive.

A person going into home-based work will require a PC, telephone, printer and internet access at the minimum. Setting up a home office is not affordable for everyone, and while the respondents said that it was a necessary investment, other women may not have the means to make that investment.

While the obvious solution is to lower the costs there are alternative solutions such as loan schemes for home-based workers, and affordable community internet access centres.

TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Beyond ICT access, there should be affordable ICT training for women who want to take on home-based ICT work. Based on the interviews and FGDs, training should focus on the following: basic computer use, basic internet training, troubleshooting, email writing skills, website development, software applications. Affordable training on working from home should also include the following topics: time management, setting up home offices, non-ICT based



work that can be done from home, and basic financial management.

PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

Management of home-based workers must also be professional, but not totally simulate office-based work. Alternative management plans and schemes for home-based workers should take into account the multiple roles of women and men working from home. Clearly, traditional office management systems will not fit in well with teleworking.

Effective monitoring practices will help in ensuring that teleworkers are doing their tasks and fulfilling their duties. One of the benefits of teleworking is time flexibility that allows the workers to attend to their family roles and responsibilities. Instead of focusing on time use, home-based management schemes must be more output-driven. This means that there should be clear tasks, deliverables and deadlines for members of the staff.

Management schemes for home-based workers must also take full use of available technologies to ensure transparency and accountability. For instance, M4M's Virtual Office relies largely on email as a means of communication and file-sharing. Other ways of file-sharing, such as a VT Intranet where all outputs (reports, funding proposals, financial statements, etc.) are shared among the team, should be developed.

CHANGES IN THE NATIONAL LABOUR POLICIES

Current labour policies in Malaysia must take teleworking into consideration.

This means that the government will have to offer home-based workers the benefits it gives office employees. Any new policies on home-based work will have to ensure that the rights of workers are protected from unfair labour practices and employers.

Further Thoughts on the Long-term Effect of Teleworking on Women and Men's Lives

Does teleworking truly challenge and change existing gender roles and inequalities?

It is not easy to draw conclusions on and extrapolate the long-term effects of teleworking on women's lives and gender relations in the family. At first glance, teleworking can be an ideal solution to women's multiple roles (as homemakers and as career women and income earners). Because of the rapid development of ICTs, specifically in the Malaysian context, there are more opportunities for women and men to work from home and potentially decrease the tension of juggling both their family responsibilities and careers. The results of the interviews and the FGDs clearly reflect this.

However, the long-term and larger-scale effects and implications of teleworking for women should be studied as well. Teleworking can be construed as the fulcrum on which women can balance both family and career and promoting it specifically for women is a picture of contradictions.

On one hand, empowerment at some level is achieved, based on the respondents' claims of increased confidence as a result of their work from home. Their work allows them to expand their interests and their lives, allowing them to pursue careers without sacrificing their roles as mothers and homemakers. How (and if) this will affect their relationships with their husbands and children is something that should be explored further.

As one interviewee puts it "Being home-based requires much more courage and mental fortitude, the image has to be that of women who although embracing motherhood still strive to achieve their fullest potentials. Technology has paved much to make this process a little easier and help create opportunities. It is important to view home-based work as WORK, not an ALTERNATIVE. We are just so conditioned to office 9 to 5 = working, that we ourselves forget that doing anything else falls short of working."

However, teleworking must be validated as real and professional work, in the same way that household work must be recognized as real work. There have been several movements towards recognising women's domestic work as unpaid labour for decades now. But prior to this, women's domestic labour was invisible and unpaid, with home-makers and housewives being stereotyped as having no valuable contribution to productive work. Teleworking can benefit from arguments to recognize the economic and social value of housewives and domestic work as a necessary and important role that women have played throughout history.

Promoting teleworking as a viable solution for women and their multiple burdens should be done carefully. Women have fought long and hard to get out of their homes and into offices, to achieve equality with men in the workplace, and to pursue careers and lives outside of home-making. Promoting teleworking specifically for women has the potential of challenging all those gains.

Given that women in Asia continue to fulfil traditional gender roles, promoting teleworking for women should be done with full recognition that it will not fully challenge gender issues and concerns in relation to work and family. Home-based work can clearly address practical gender needs without necessarily challenging socially (and internally) accepted roles of women and men in the home. Home-based work can become a compromise for women so they can continue to fulfill their roles as mothers and homemakers. The respondents in this evaluation gave up their careers and accepted their role in the family. They believed in the importance of the mother's role as the main person in-charge in the upbringing of the children.

But what of the males in the family? Does having a wife who works from home further excuse them from being more involved in household work and family roles?

What is interesting is that the two men interviewed have said that they are taking on more household work and are more active in raising their children as a result of working from home. Based on these results, it might be more logical to say that

if teleworking is to challenge existing gender roles in the family, it might be better to promote it among men. To have the men physically present in the home can result in them being more involved in household tasks and concerns thereby changing the division of labour in the family. In the Asian context, however, where extended families are still prevalent and household help is quite affordable, men working from home may not necessarily have to attend to the household work as a result of teleworking. They can easily leave household work to other (female) members of the family or to (female) household help. In this case, having men working from home will not be challenging gender roles either.

Given that respondents have been working from home only for a few years and teleworking in Malaysia is in its early stages, conclusive findings about how teleworking challenges traditional male and female roles in the home is still premature. The long-term effects in terms

of gender relations within the family will not be truly evident until further evaluation and monitoring is done. What is necessary, however, is to make sure that indicators and benchmarks in terms of changes in gender relations as a result of teleworking are developed and evaluation of teleworking from a gender perspective is continuous.

For teleworking to help in achieving gender equality in the family, both women and men must challenge gender roles and stereotypes and start with the premise of equality between husbands and wives in all aspects of family life—in decision-making, in household work and in family responsibilities. If this is not embedded alongside the promotion of teleworking, all teleworking for women can do at best is to provide an opportunity for women to balance their gender-based roles and responsibilities better, and at worst, be used to justify women's multiple burdens of having both a family and career life.

USING GEM TO EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF ICTs
FOR CAMPAIGNING AMONG YOUTH

Project: COMMUNICATION FOR ADVOCACY PLAN
Organization: BULGARIAN GENDER
RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Country: BULGARIA

THE BULGARIAN GENDER RESEARCH FOUNDATION'S (BGRF, founded in 1998) goal is to promote and facilitate the attainment of a gender balanced society by disseminating information and raising awareness about women's rights and gender issues in Bulgaria. The main focus of the Foundation activities are eradication of violence against women, fighting for social-economic rights of women during the transition, and empowerment of women for larger political participation. The group consists of lawyers, university professors and women's rights activists. This was BGRF's first project with an ICT component.

Country Context

Before 1989, as a centrally planned socialist economy, Bulgaria was the main supplier of electronic and communication equipment for the entire Soviet bloc. Production was supported by research institutes and specialized technical programs at universities, which provided human resources and technology for plants that manufactured computers, computer parts and other IT devices. In this era of "glorious" development of Bulgarian ICTs within the Soviet bloc, women represented about 20% of students in ICT-related subjects at universities and specialists in research or production.

After the fall of the "Iron Curtain" and the transition from a centrally planned to a free market economy, Bulgaria lost its specialization in ICTs. The main institutes could no longer support production, firms closed down and thousands of electronic and communication engineers, both men and women, lost their jobs. ICTs as a subject of study lost its attractiveness to

the young generation because it became difficult to find a job with an engineering diploma, especially for women.

The number of girls enrolling in ICT subjects in higher education today is not higher than 25 years ago. In fact, it is declining, even though there is a quota system for girls—academic institutions reserve 40% of places to female applicants. The problem lies deeper than just the low interest of girls in technical education; it has to do mainly with gender-biased socialization. Girls are discouraged from technical subjects because the traditional division of roles predominates. It is quite difficult to change the gender role set-up in a situation of high unemployment and economic decline. The potential of a literate population, high level of women's education (a significant number of them are in technical courses) and the past regime's political propaganda of emphasizing the equal role of women in the labour sphere, are not being fully utilised in achieving a gender-fair and gender-balanced society.

Nevertheless, computer courses have been introduced at secondary schools. Unfortunately, the content of these courses and the over-all curriculum is very often quite archaic, so that pupils are hardly motivated to learn, even those (usually boys) whose interest in ICTs is very high outside school.

Project Background

In 2001, the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation (BGRF) decided to explore the possibility of using ICTs to promote women's human rights among the youth and implement the "Communication for Advocacy Plan". The first activity of the project was to develop a web site in order to widely disseminate among young people the work being done towards eradication of violence against women. The web site's central element was a contest for the best poster and essay portraying the issue of violence against women. The kids could submit their own essay or poster and they could also vote on everyone else's posters and essays displayed on the website. A user-friendly voting device was available directly on the website. The website was presented to children via their teachers at selected schools (age 13 - 18) in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, and a number of kids found it themselves by browsing. The full results of the project can be found at <http://www.bgrf.org/>.

This website targeted mainly boys, but also had specific focus on girls. The assumption was boys are more familiar with the internet and have better access to it at home, at school, and in internet clubs and could more easily develop their confidence in using ICTs within their peer

According to ITU's World Telecommunication Development Report 2002, Bulgaria is classified as a lower middle income country. Its population numbers 8.11 million and the Bulgarian GDP is US\$ 1,473 per capita. Like other countries in transition to a market economy, Bulgaria has a much higher than expected level of telecommunications development and despite its declining GDP, has managed to increase its teledensity. Networks in these countries were largely constructed during an era in which the nominal GDP per capita was much higher than at present.

There are 55.06 total telephone subscribers per 100 inhabitants and 84,6% households have a telephone. In 2000, 92,3% phone line demand was satisfied. The overall country teledensity is 34,22% and in the capital city Sofia it is even higher at 56,40%. Cellular telephony is developing rapidly. While in 1995 there were only 20,900 subscribers, in 2001 the number grew up to 155,000. The cellular phone users count 19 per 100 inhabitants and compose 34,7% of total telephone subscribers. As for telephone fees, the subscription costs constitute 0,9% of GDP per capita. internet for 30 hours of use per month costs US\$ 9,66. There are 26, 926 internet hosts, 605,000 users, and estimated 361,000 PCs, which is 4.43 per 100 inhabitants. 51,9% of the telecommunication staff are women (positions and work qualifications not specified).



groups. Given this assumption, the project hoped to attract boys to understand the subject of violence. By presenting the theme via the internet and by using technical means like voting, the project was supposed to motivate boys to participate, to get to know more about the phenomenon of violence and to develop boys' understanding of ICTs as a potential tool for defending human rights. In the case of girls, there was one additional aim—to motivate them to use ICTs and to dispel the myth that ICTs are only for male use by showing that internet work can be done by women, for women and on women's topics. The overall aim for both was to raise their interest on the issues of violence against women, using the internet as a tool to reach the younger generation.

Using Gem – Goals of the Evaluation

The project was very successful and got a lot of excellent feedback from the kids themselves, as well as from teachers and parents. There were winners chosen in both categories, essay and poster, through voting. Two posters were printed and used in the campaign of "16 Days of Activism" against violence against women.

The only problem that BGRF faced when trying to gauge the success of the project objectively was that there was no data to measure the real outreach of the website among the teenagers and the public in general. Since there is no data about internet use by different social and age groups in Bulgaria, BGRF decided to apply GEM on the project and evaluate the outreach in a different way.

The first and foremost goal of the GEM evaluation was to assess the effectiveness and possibility of using a website for campaigning among the youth (high school teenagers), and to evaluate the influence of the use of ICTs on the participation of teenagers in the initiatives of NGOs. The specific gender goal of the evaluation was to get to know how this differs between girls and boys. To achieve this evaluation goal, it was necessary to obtain more information about how ICTs, specifically the internet, are used among this age group of youth attending schools in the capital Sofia. Therefore a questionnaire was seen as the initial method of acquiring data about internet use.

The evaluation also had other particular goals (these were to be achieved by using other methods like interviewing school teachers and educators or reviewing the school curricula and gender aspects of the school system), such as:

- Evaluation of the web site – how its existence helped the 16 Days of Activism Campaign; how its users evaluate its design, contents and different technical devices, especially the voting; how different people got to the website and what were their reasons; if the interactive feature of the website (possibility to post opinions) increases the motivation to participate in the campaign; what is the effectiveness of the web forum
- Evaluation of equality of boys and girls in the access and use of ICTs – what is the attitude of girls and boys towards ICTs and how is it constructed; what is the level of school ICT education and what role does it play in creating opportunities and in motivating girls and boys to explore ICTs



- The potential of such internet-based projects to increase gender balance in use and perception of ICTs among the young generation.

The evaluation is still ongoing, but the following report presents the initial findings of the questionnaire survey among teenagers.

Evaluation Results

A questionnaire was prepared as the initial method of acquiring data about how the internet is being used by teenage girls and boys.

Three hundred questionnaires were distributed among teenagers in schools where the project was earlier introduced. The total number of responses received was only 190, because some of the students who participated had already finished school. Among the respondents, 109 were boys and 81 girls. This may seem to be an indication of their interest and involvement in ICT. This, in fact, is not the case as among the participants in the program there was one technical school attended by 95% boys.

The main finding of this poll is that girls are equally interested in ICTs as boys. Only 5% of the responses received indicated a complete disinterest in ICTs and these responses belonged to boys. On the other hand, there were more girls than boys who responded that ICTs are not their priority (14 girls/6 boys). For all the other respondents, ICTs are something very important.

In the regular secondary schools in Bulgaria ICTs are included in the curricula

and are taught as "informatics". Therefore all the respondents indicated that they had passed a training course in the use of computers. But school is the least frequent place where young people seem to be using computers. Only 6 boys and none of the girls responded that they use ICTs in school. Frequency of computer use at home and in internet cafes/clubs is the same (80/80); however, mostly girls have some sporadic access in friends' houses or elsewhere.

USE OF INTERNET		
Place	Boys	Girls
At home	37	43
Internet cafes/clubs	59	21
At school	6	0
Elsewhere	5	16

It is interesting to note that the school is the place where the use of ICTs and specifically the internet is less promoted. Among the teenagers, only 6 learned to use the internet in school (only 1 girl among them). Most of the kids became familiar with the internet in computer clubs (40%), 31% at home, 26% via friends and only 3% in school. Those using the clubs are mainly boys, but girls tend also to visit them. The conclusion—and the concern at the same time—is that what is taught in schools in terms of computer use and internet is very formal, basic and does not interest students. Sometimes teenagers are more advanced in using ICTs than their teachers. Teachers in informatics are mainly middle-aged women and unfortunately they follow the main curricula without trying to infuse more engaging content in their courses.

Boys visit the internet clubs where they "chat", play games, browse, look for



specific information or simply socialize in “talking” about computers with friends. Girls use ICTs mainly if they or their parents have a computer at home. They mainly check their e-mail, or they look for information necessary for school, or eventually they surf the Net.

From all respondents only 10% (16 boys and 2 girls) were more advanced—using the computers and the internet for uploading a web page for themselves or for friends. It should be noted that the students who participated in the inquiry were aged 16-18. This is the upper secondary level of the school, where they practically choose their future studies and professional development.

FREQUENCY OF USE OF ICTs		
Frequency	Boys	Girls
Every day	39	20
2-3 times per week	43	38
2-3 times per month	22	10
Rarely	10	12

ACTIVITY ON THE INTERNET		
Activity	Boys	Girls
Chat	40	11
E-mail	35	37
Looking for information	20	27
Surfing	39	14
Uploading web pages	16	2

Concerning the affordability of services, it is worth noting that cable internet connection is still not accessible for everybody. It remains an expensive service accessible in some locations only. For those using the internet at home, the most common way is a dial-up connection. The price of the connection is reasonable, but the cost of phone impulses is extremely high and causes a

serious limitation to the spread of internet use. On the other hand, access to internet clubs is quite cheap and affordable.

This basic questionnaire survey among teenagers showed basic gender differences in perception and use of internet. The most affordable and preferred place to access the internet were internet clubs. At the same time, clubs are boys’ social places and they spend their pocket money there. Boys are interested in games, software, hardware and web design as well while girls would rather stay at the home computer and check their e-mails or look for some specific information needed in school. Since both girls and boys have interests in modern technologies, we can assume that girls would also explore it much more if the environment was more open and inviting for them. If they receive more motivating signals, perhaps in the form of women’s NGOs campaigns or women role models who use the internet in advanced ways, girls would more interest be more interested in ICTs.

Moving Forward

The survey showed that the internet has the potential to become an effective tool to attract young people to think about social issues, such as violence against women, and to participate in campaigns. The internet is not widely promoted in schools but the interest is there and young people, especially boys, find other ways to access it and learn about it. The internet is probably a more effective tool to reach the younger generation, because school kids are often more advanced than their teachers and parents. However, to validate this assumption, data on its use



among different age groups would be necessary.

In Bulgaria, like in most countries of the former Soviet bloc, women have been present in the labour market for four generations now. However, it was imposed upon them by communist propaganda rather than introduced out of the desire of the women themselves or as a result of the leverage of women's movement (like in most western economies). Moreover, while they were officially declared equal to that of men and their labour commitment was full-time, they were still left to deal with domestic and family duties. Women have also penetrated all strata of economy and education fields. However, they have remained the minority or even a rarity in some technical areas. It is likely that in many cases where women are working in technical spheres or using any sort of technology for their work, the continuity of their technical advancement in ICTs has been interrupted by political and economical changes after 1989.

In this regard, women had to face a set of obstacles in the '90 when the economy started transforming. In the process of privatisation a lot of jobs were cancelled and professions were no longer needed. The unemployment rate rose sharply and many women were rejected in favor of male applicants when applying for jobs. Technology was not compatible with that used by developed economies and extensive update has been necessary in all strata of production. While all this was happening, the boom of ICTs started globally and new ways of communication spread out with the internet. Women simply could not keep

up with this fast changeover, especially those who had to work in low-skilled jobs not suitable for their qualification and education, or who were left out of the labour market to make a living in the grey economy or in domestic production. But taking into account their past work experience, they certainly hold the potential to counterbalance the gap.

Therefore, Bulgaria's future in ICT has potential, taking into account its teledensity, the experience and skills prevailing from the era of before '89 and its progressive youth. As for the gender gap and the potential of girls to exploit ICTs equally with boys, it is highly recommended that women's NGOs acquire information and knowledge on ICTs in order to improve their own work, reach the public and motivate girls to "get into the game". Many women's NGOs still fear technology and would rather use old ways of communication and production of information.

Lastly, the survey implies a recommendation for schools. The "Communication for Advocacy Plan" itself as well as its evaluation according to GEM showed that schools need to become much more proactive in delivering modern ways of using ICTs for its students, while not using gender-biased methods in teaching as well as in the curriculum content. Young people need guidance that would further develop their personal interest and invention. That is probably not happening while playing games in an internet club or chatting with a friend from home. The school should furnish its students with such knowledge and skills that can later be utilized in the job market.

ZAMIRNET'S JOB SEARCH TRAINING EVALUATION

Project: JOB SEARCH TRAINING PROJECT
 Organization: ZAMIRNET
 Country: CROATIA

ZAMIRNET IS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL organisation that uses ICT to provide and create information relevant for development of the civil society in Croatia. ZaMirNET decided to evaluate their Job Search Training Project, a component of the larger program named "Revitalisation of the War-Affected Areas of Croatia Using ICT". The project objective is to improve employability in two post-war, economically deprived, communities in Croatia. Their evaluation aimed to monitor the impact of the course on the increase of skills, knowledge and self-confidence of the participants. Beyond that, they hoped to measure if and how women over 40 benefitted from the training. Since this a pilot project they plan to integrate the lessons learned into the design and implementation of the training package, which then will be shared with other organisations.

Project Background

In the last two decades, Croatia has undergone big changes. As a result of the war that raged from 1991–1995, 9,000 people were killed and 28,000 wounded, 260,000 housing units were destroyed and more than 300,000 people had to leave their homes. Furthermore, 40% of Croatian industrial capacity had been severely impaired, with total damage estimated at 22 billion USD.

Because of substandard living conditions and lack of employment opportunities (in October 2003 18% of the total population were unemployed; 58% of unemployed persons are women), many communities were reduced to passivity. According to recent statistics, only 52% of the total number of unemployed people actively seek jobs. (Source Croatian Bureau of Statistics)

With the objective of providing encouragement to those community members who showed interest in proactively seeking employment, the Croatian NGO ZaMirNET with financial support from Mercy Corps developed a training initiative focused on self-confidence building, strategic approach to labour market analysis, career planning and deconstruction of stereotyping and discriminatory practices in the labour market based on gender, ethnicity and age.

The Job Search Training is a component of the larger project entitled "Revitalisation of the War Affected Areas of Croatia Utilising ICT". The training aimed at improving the potential for employment of the unemployed, first-time job seekers and people in career transition with a special focus on the most vulnerable groups of the population: youth, women and war veterans, in four

post-war, severely economically deprived municipalities in Croatia.

Socio-economic and Demographic Constraints

The small municipalities of Donji Lapac and Kistanje were considered underdeveloped even before the war. Inhabitants faced lack of employment opportunities since most of the factories had been rendered inoperative. In Kistanje, 90% of inhabitants are unemployed, with only 223 persons employed out of 3,038 people. Although women compose the majority of inhabitants (more than 51%), only 46 of them have permanent jobs. In Drnis, the second selected municipality, the situation is a little bit better. Of the approximately 8,800 inhabitants, 2,086 are employed and 40% of these are women. Donji Srb and Donji Lapac, where the second Job Search Training was held, are in a worse situation, because of their geographic isolation and absolute lack of new job possibilities. In Kistanje, only 10% of the population have jobs, 30% of employed are women. (Source: Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2001)

Most inhabitants of these municipalities are seasonal workers, or people working in the informal and grey sector. Electricity, water and other supplies only reach villages close to the main roads. Public transport connections within these areas are poor. Many of the people are new settlers.

Training Course Outline

Face-to-face training components provide an opportunity for personal

empowerment and coaching (instrumental for increasing motivation and self-confidence), as well as increasing the participants' capability for independent study. Training components were used in order to increase program cost-effectiveness, enable participants to adapt their study requirements to their personal obligations, and familiarize participants with IT, as only 20% of the Croatian population use the internet. (Source: Vecernji list – daily newspaper, Business World from October 15th, 2003) Based on the survey conducted by IPSA in 2000, the ratio of men and women using the internet is 60:40, 40% of users are younger than 25, and only 2% are older than 55 (Source: IPSA, March 2000), which is seen as a key factor in a successful job search in contemporary Croatia.

The training team included two trainers, a female (age 31) and a male (age 33). The female trainer, Marina Skrabalo, is an experienced trainer in peace building, non-violent communication, and empowering community groups to take action. She is very familiar with the feminist perspective and psychosocial support. She is also a member of the project evaluation team.

The male trainer is a psychologist with experience in providing professional orientation to workers at risk of losing their jobs at the Croatian railways. He has experience in psychosocial work with youth and refugees.

Participants

The first Job Search Training was held for municipalities of Drnis and Kistanje, and took place from May 22 to June 19,

FIRST JOB SEARCH TRAINING		MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
	GENDER	6	12	18
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
First-time job seekers	2	2		
Unemployed	3	8		
At risk of losing job/ career opportunities	1	2		
Subtotal:	6	12	18	
AGE				
Age 18-27:	2	6		
Age 28-39:	3	3		
Age 40-50:	1	3		
Subtotal:	6	12	18	
EDUCATION				
Primary school	0	0		
High school	4	9		
University	2	3		
Subtotal:	6	12	18	

SECOND JOB SEARCH TRAINING		MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
	GENDER	6	24	30
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
First-time job seekers	0	0		
Unemployed	4	19		
At risk of losing job/ career opportunities	2	5		
Subtotal:	6	24	30	
AGE				
Age 18-27:	3	4		
Age 28-39:	0	11		
Age 40-50:	4	8		
Subtotal:	7	23	30	
EDUCATION				
Primary school	0	0		
High school	6	16		
University	2	6		
Subtotal:	8	22	30	

2003. 17 participants, 6 men and 11 women completed the course (5 women participants were in the age group 18-27, 3 in 28-39, and 3 over 40)

“One woman declined participation during the course due to lack of motivation. She was in her early thirties and got married immediately after high school. She entered the course with a very pessimistic attitude and actually got stuck with her lack of work experience. During the workshop session that she attended, other participants gave her clear and direct feedback that she might be more realistic and strategic if she wanted to get her career back on track but it seems that at that point she was not ready nor motivated to make a personal investment in her career development. An important role was played by her relative economic safety, because she is financially supported by her husband.” - from the trainers report

The second Job Search Training started in Srb and Lapac in October 2003, totalling 30 participants. The evaluation of the second training was yet to be completed before finalizing the case study.

Job Search Training and GEM Evaluation

Since the start of February, ZaMirNET has used GEM to evaluate its Job Search Training program. The evaluation focused on monitoring the impact of the course on the increase of skills and knowledge of the participants. Special attention was given to their self-confidence and sensitivity-building as well as the effectiveness of the content and methodologies used. Personal, cultural

and social constraints that can play important roles in successful career development (e.g., gender-related issues, such as lack of family support and burden of housework and childcare faced by women) were also taken into consideration. The aim was to test the course on the ground and based on the findings, integrate lessons learned immediately to the next Job Search Training course. The first course was implemented in late spring (May) and the lessons learned were integrated into the design and implementation of the next courses. Each of the courses delivered was evaluated, and additional data and lessons were collected. Based on these evaluation findings ZaMirNET will develop a final training package that can then be applied by other organisations like the Croatian Railways Project for the Provision of the Croatian Railways' Redundant Employees.

A combination of traditional methodologies (such as questionnaires, list serve statistics, individual and group interviews, observations by trainers and local staff) and less common ones (such as personal action plans, self-reporting by participants) for gathering quantitative and qualitative data was used to draw out an increase in participants' skills and self-confidence.

Because ZaMirNET aimed to measure participants' behaviour change and increase in self-confidence, the organisation decided to evaluate the impact of each course in several steps, which enabled them to track the changes:

- Participant's pre-assessment with special focus on expected outputs
- Monitoring the impact of each of the four training modules during the course



based on the participant's feedback and quality of their independent work as reported by trainers

- Participant's post-assessment one month after the course
- Follow-up group interviews in three months upon completion of the course to gather stories from participants focusing on how successfully the course helped build their self-confidence and overcome personal, cultural and social constraints. All interviews were held in women-only and men-only groups.

Each participant was asked to prepare a personal career plan and professional development plan, including skills and knowledge they need to learn. The original personal plan was then revised as part of the training. Three months after the completion of the course, the real progress in job search and career planning was tracked based on the personal plan developed. The monitoring of changes in personal plans as well as concrete steps taken by participants, in terms of self-initiative and strategic approach to job search, career planning and professional development, gave the most accurate indicators on the impact and usefulness of the course.

Lessons Learned: Evaluation of the First and Second Job Search Training Course in May and September 2003

- FOR ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS, THE WEB-BASED JOB SEARCH RESOURCES PRESENTED DURING THE COURSE WAS A NOVELTY

10% of participants had not used the internet to search for vital information on loans, employment and business

opportunities before the course. ZaMirNET's trainer recounts that "It was surprising to find out that the local Bureau of Employment officer (the Bureau has an excellent website that has been awarded among the best in the country) had never searched the web before the course and that, by participating in the course, she is learning how to use web resources in her work, something that the Bureau has not considered as part of the professional development of their local staff in small isolated communities like Donji Lapac."

In those communities the traditionally most important information channel about the new jobs possibilities are relatives and friends. Before the course, men marked the internet as the second most common way of finding information about available jobs, while the women used to look for jobs through job agencies and institutions or newspapers. After the course, the internet became the most important source of information for all of the participants. Women participants, in particular, whose mobility is constrained due to their family obligations, found the internet as a very convenient way of searching for new job possibilities and other related information. For example, an unemployed woman from Drnis said that thanks to the course, she discovered a completely new world of information. Another temporarily employed woman participant discovered a job opening on the web and immediately applied and got an interview. She is now waiting for the results, stressing that even if she does not get the job, she is proud of herself for applying.



· Where Job Search Trainings have been held, the use of ICT components and the focus on the improvement of ICT skills during the course helped open new employment possibilities, secure participants temporary jobs and increase the chance to earn an income for people living in geographically and socially isolated communities.

This was especially significant in Srb and Lapac, where self-employment was the only available job opportunity, considering the low traffic infrastructure, high rate of new settlers and absolute lack of employment opportunities. Although the ICT market is still not very developed and remote working or teleworking for home-based people is not a very feasible option given that only few jobs are available for people with very good technical skills, the internet was found as an important tool for self-employed persons. Generally it was mainly women who decided for self-employment in their career plans. For most women, self-employment means greater time flexibility and the chance to work close to where they lived, which would allow them to combine their jobs with childcare and housekeeping. ICTs would assist them to set up new business contacts outside their locality, search for important information (such as loans availability), support their professional development, and overcome their sense of geographic and social isolation.

A woman participant is currently planning to start a new NGO that will base

its services on a solid database of contacts (NGOs, public institutions, education, training and loan programs), ICT access and strong communication skills. Her plan is to act as a local information and advice centre focusing primarily on women survivors of domestic violence but also helping other citizens access vital information on return issues, human rights violations, employment and self-employment. ZaMirNET's female trainer is helping her to develop a clear concept for the centre and overcome her fear of public exposure and leadership.

In the post-assessment conducted a month after the course, many participants mentioned computer skills as crucial for finding jobs and said this was one thing they learned during the course.

But generally, it was mostly the male participants who linked their future careers with new technology and the internet. Although the women appreciated the internet as a practical tool in their new employment, they preferred jobs where they could work closely with people, as in the social services, trade (shops) and administrative work.

· Women need to overcome a sense of social isolation, worries and barriers.

Significantly more women than men harboured a sense of social isolation and a fear of leadership and recognizing themselves as persons who are able to run their own business and make decisions about their future. During the training sessions, men were more assertive and self-confident. They very often tended to dominate the group.

There is also a difference in self-confidence among younger and older persons. The young participants of both genders were more self-confident.

Generally, women tended to be more open in discussing their fears of failure, exposure and leadership. During the group discussions, they often encouraged themselves to review all of their numerous competencies, to look at everything they have done, but even then they had difficulties in overcoming their doubts and fear of failure. As one of the participants described during the evaluation session, "I am raising two kids by cooking for the construction workers but now after I have heard all of you that you see me as an entrepreneur, that you think I can run a family farm with village tourism, I see that I am really a survivor, ready to adapt to new situations. But I still have a sense of this fear in me; will I be able to do it?"

The interactive, open, safe and non-judgemental learning environment, sharing of experience as well as critical feedback, and use of ICT tools played an important role in overcoming those feelings and building up the self-confidence of women.

A middle-aged woman participant from Drnis, applied to the Bureau of Employment after many years of inactivity. She had been employed for ten years in a company that went bankrupt. She was completely inexperienced in ICT when she started the course even though she had a computer at home. She also felt isolated from other people and unprepared to enter the labour market again. Now she uses the internet regularly to check job offers while taking care of her family and home. "I discovered a

whole new world out there, and I can still be at home when my family needs me." Even though it will be tough for her, considering the gap in her career over the past decade, thanks to the course, she now feels confident to apply for different jobs. She also stresses that she is now much more ready to participate in other education and training programs offered to the unemployed.

A young woman, about to graduate from high school from Kistanje, emphasized in the follow-up meeting that the training course has had a significant impact on her decision to continue her studies: "Thanks to the course, I made my decision based on market research, looking at what would be the comparative advantages of studying law, economics or journalism. I made my decision to study law based on factual evidence and not just my vague ideas. Since the course I now use the internet regularly to collect and filter info. I feel much more confident about my plans now."

· Middle-age women participants feel less support from their environment (family, household, friends, colleagues etc.) in their efforts to find jobs.

The younger participants reported that they got much support from the family while middle-aged women and men obtained less support from their home environment. But generally men obtain more support from their families than women. Among 18 participants of the first training course, two women reported problems in their families related to their absence from the home during the course. In a post-assessment

questionnaire, one of women described it as situation where people around her were self-centred, and they did not seem to want her to improve her life.

Recommendations

DO NOT PRESUME THE KNOWLEDGE OF ICT SKILLS AS SELF-EVIDENT

Skill in ICTs should not be presumed as self-evident for participants in trainings where ICTs are used as one of the learning tools. A short training in ICT skills should be offered at the beginning of the course to help the participants be familiar with applications. This training should be based on careful peer examination of participants' interests, needs and competencies. Special attention should be given to women (especially for women over 40) because, as was observed by the trainers, they need more support to overcome their fear of technology.

A COMBINATION OF FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING AND INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION IS INSTRUMENTAL IN ENHANCING THE PARTICIPANTS' SELF-CONFIDENCE AND ICT SKILLS

Live training components can be highly interactive and provide opportunity for exchange of ideas among individuals in very different positions and with very different experiences. It has a particularly positive impact on women, who are generally less confident than men. Direct contact is also important for clarification of technical aspects of training and increasing the participants' capacity for independent online study. On the other hand, "do-it-yourself" training components increased the program's

cost-effectiveness, enabled participants to adapt their studying requirements to their personal circumstances, and helped them to familiarize themselves with IT, seen as a crucial factor for successful job search.

TRAINING GROUPS SHOULD BE DIVIDED BY GENDER

Based on feedback from trainers who reported that women need a "soft, warm and supportive" approach while men work well when put into a "competitive" environment, plus the differences in dynamics among women and men and the tendency of men to dominate the group, organising Job Search Training in sex-separated groups would be more suitable and comfortable for female participants. In that case, the training curriculum should be adapted to include the occasional cooperation/meeting of women-only and men-only groups to practice communication skills together with the aim of preparing participants for real-life situations.

COURSE CONTENT SHOULD BE ADAPTED TO THE SPECIFIC CONDITIONS AND NEEDS OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THE POST-WAR REGIONS

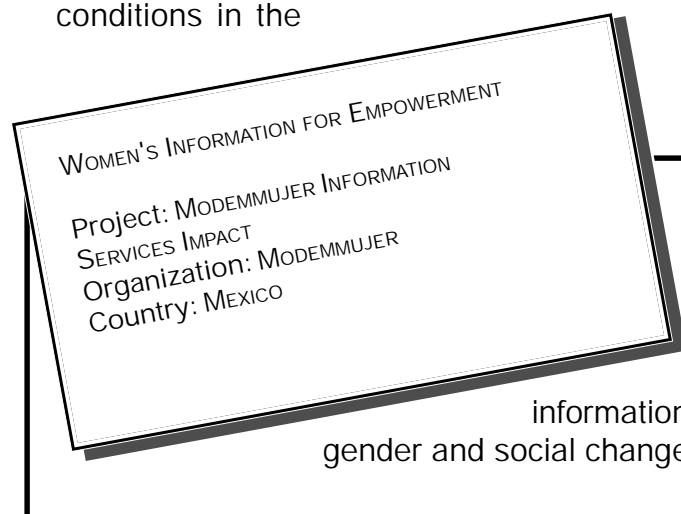
It is very important to carefully map the special needs and limitations of the training participants taking gender as well as living conditions and previous life experiences into account. During the course, the trainers realized that the participants with refugee experience were extremely insecure regarding education and business contacts due to their ethnicity, geographic isolation and broken social networks. Because of that, the

course curriculum had to be modified to adapt to the reality where people are less educated and are dealing with several psychological barriers. There is also need to integrate job search training content with more detailed information on self-employment, which is a highly relevant option for the post-war regions. Because it is widely recognized that most of those working in self-employment projects become a part of the informal labour market, it is crucial to raise awareness among job search training participants about unsound working conditions in the

informal sector such as low rates, long working hours, bad working conditions, and lack of social protection and to provide them with suggestions on how they can protect themselves.

THE STAFF AND CONTENT NEED TO BE MORE GENDER-SENSITIVE

The whole project staff, as well as the staff of the computer centres where the training takes place, need to go through gender-sensitive training. The training curriculum should include more women-relevant content and examples.



information and communication technologies from a gender and social change perspective.

MODEMMUJER IS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION whose mission is to contribute to the empowerment of women and organisations in the feminist movement, focusing on the use of

One of the first women's networks in the region to use e-mail to disseminate information to work with their constituency was Modemmujer. In 1992, Beatriz Cavazos Siller, a co-founder of Modemmujer, started to use e-mail to send information to the southern part of Mexico called Yucatan. Women's organisations in this region felt isolated and had very little access to any kind of information. E-mail was seen as a cheap means of communication in contrast to the cost of telephone, calls, faxes and post.

started, Modemmujer launched an information campaign with a small e-mail infrastructure and some training sessions to enable its members to work effectively. This initiative became a big success, not only in Mexico, but also throughout the Latin American continent. Since then, Modemmujer has built a reputation for effectively adapting electronic tools and integrating this with other traditional communications tools. Their work has encouraged participation, intercommunication and linkage among individual women and women's organisations. Through its training activities, Modemmujer has helped prepare women to effectively use ICT and to

In 1995, a few weeks before the United Nations World Conference on Women

raise their awareness about the importance of women's ownership of technology. Its information and documentation services reach about 2,300 subscribers in Mexico and the rest of Latin America twice a week.

Always concerned with evaluation and impact, the entire Modemmujer team embraced the GEM evaluation as a new tool to measure the nebulous issue of internet impact. The GEM evaluation process was integrated into their daily work. This case study examines Modemmujer's evaluation process in greater detail, linking defined indicators to evaluation results.

The Evaluation Process

The Modemmujer team decided to evaluate its work using the GEM tool, applying the full four elements of GEM during this process. They started by meeting weekly to study the documents, discuss main concepts and ideas and the framework in which they would conduct the evaluation. During this period, a fluid interaction took place with the GEM regional coordinator in order to set the evaluation plan. The team decided to evaluate three of their products: the "Spot Informativo" (information highlights) sent twice weekly to their broad subscriber base announcing the latest information and campaigns, and two products linked to their electronic magazine "Elecciones" ("Choices") for a specific community of 50 users. A visit by the regional coordinator for a two-day workshop with the team helped to establish the evaluation's main objectives and discuss the meaning of evaluating with a gender perspective. The team was then able to establish the specific gender objectives

and work on the evaluation questions, indicators and methodologies they would use for the evaluation. This first phase of the evaluation process took four months, from June to September 2002.

In October 2002, the team launched a survey among subscribers to evaluate the three products. They decided to encourage all subscribers to participate and sent invitations to all of them to answer the questionnaire that was put in Modemmujer's web page. They also did in-depth interviews with key people in the women's movement, women's NGOs, academics and politicians in order to get to know more about the information and documentation service they were giving. All this work took four months, from October 2002 to February 2003.

Analysis of results was another big task for the Modemmujer team. Given the amount of feedback and tackling everyday work at the same time, it took them almost five months to accomplish this, plus two more months to write their report. Initial assessment confirmed that they had done a good job, as subscribers not only appreciated the information they had received during seven years, but also considered that they had been empowered by Modemmujer's information and communications work.

SHARING SOME RESULTS

Modemmujer was able to build indicators to measure the following issues:

- contribution to their subscribers' empowerment
- sensitisation of subscribers on gender issues



· empowerment of subscribers in strategic ICT use

As in every step of the evaluation process with Modemmujer, these indicators were developed as a result of debate and consensus in the team, and attempted to delve into empowerment issues, going beyond simple qualitative indicators.

Using GEM as an evaluation tool helped Modemmujer to see how their work had contributed to strengthen their subscribers in their work, encouraging them to use ICT tools with a strategic perspective in order to take initiatives and continue to in work in promoting women's rights.

THESE ARE SOME OF THE RESULTS THEY OBTAINED:

ISSUE	INDICATORS	REPLIES
Contribution to subscriber's empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information encouraged active participation 2. Information encouraged articulation of actions for inclusion in public policies 3. Information helped to strengthen women's network 4. Information empowered subscribers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Out of 241 responses, 141 participated in signature campaigns, 82 sent letters, 57 went to demonstrations 2. Out of 241 responses, 101 said information is a tool to articulate actions 3. Out of 241 responses, 231 said that Modemmujer helps to strengthen women's networks 4. Out of 241 responses, 218 said they had been empowered by the information service
Sensitisation of subscribers on gender issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information encouraged actions to challenge discrimination against women 2. Information helped to widen subscribers' knowledge on gender issues 3. Type of women's image built by MM information 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 36.1% said they were encouraged to take action on the issue 2. 72% said they have widened their knowledge on gender issues 3. 93.3% consider that MM reflects a women's image as social actors, and decision makers
Empowerment of subscribers in strategic ICT use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information and bulletin use widened ICT skills and knowledge 2. Type of new ICT skills achieved 3. Information sharing using ICT tools 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 130 found more about web pages and women's ICT experiences; 108 more about surfinginternet 2. Surfing internet: 108 Re-sending info: 109 e-mail: 87 Gender policies and ICT: 64 Participation in lists: 44 3. 109 share information, 88 do it once a week



Part 3

Who is using GEM: Overview of all GEM Testers



Asia

MOTHERS4MOTHERS [MALAYSIA]
<http://www.mom4mom.com>

The Mothers for Mothers (M4M) network, formed in 1998, is a network of mothers from multi-ethnic communities and ages, involved in women-connecting-women activities, promoting the concept of working from home. For the GEM testing, M4M looked into the situation of the M4M Virtual Team members (staff) and the M4M network members, aiming to probe into the barriers that women encounter in teleworking towards proposing recommendations to the Malaysian governments on the pre-requisites for promoting working from home on a national scale.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS (c2o) / WEB ORIGAMI KIT (WOK) [AUSTRALIA]
<http://www.c2o.org/>

Community Communications (c2o) is an Australian-based applications service provider that targets local activist and civil society groups. One of the main services they provide is a web content management tool called Web Origami Kit (WOK), which allows for collaborative web-based multimedia projects. In particular, c2o tested and implemented an evaluation plan based on GEM on a project called D3, a prototype interactive storytelling engine that runs through the Melbourne Central Business District, gathering images and stories. The Australian Centre is currently managing D3 for the Moving Images, with c2o providing creative and technical support for the project. c2o used GEM in project evaluation, particularly looking into how gender, race and age affected the formal and informal roles the various project team members played for the duration of the development of the project. They also used GEM to guide them in developing a user-assessment of the D3 project. c2o aims to use the tools that they have developed through the GEM testing in all their other software development project assessment as well as to propose a guide for other software developers in ensuring that gender, race and age issues are taken into account in project development and implementation.

CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S RESEARCH (CENWOR)[SRI LANKA]

<http://www.cenwor.lk/>

The Centre for Women's Research is one of the main women's organisations in Sri Lanka promoting the use of ICTs for women's networking. Through the GEM testing, they aim to assess their internet-based women's network of researchers and activists, and to look into how the network members have benefited from the network and the use of ICTs. The main goal of their evaluation is to use the results for the expansion of the project that will take into account how women and women's groups in Sri Lanka can maximise the use of ICTs.

INFOCON / DISTANCE EDUCATION PROJECT [MONGOLIA]

<http://www.infocon.mn/english/projects.htm>

InfoCon is a private company that supports ICT for development initiatives in Mongolia. One of their main projects is the Distance Education Project (DEP) that aims to make training on various basic subjects (i.e., Math, English, Basic ICT courses, Mongolian Grammar, and Gender Education courses) available to teachers and students in rural communities in Mongolia. InfoCon developed web-based training modules that will enhance education programmes in rural Mongolia. For the GEM testing, Infocon looked into two levels of project implementation, the gender roles played by the DEP team members, and how women and men beneficiaries used the training modules. InfoCon intends to use the results of the evaluation for further project planning.

**PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (PCHRD) /
MULTI-PURPOSE COMMUNITY TELECENTRES [PHILIPPINES]**

<http://www.barangay-mct.org>

The Multi-Purpose Community Telecentre (MCT) is a project initiated in 2000 by the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD), an agency of the Philippine Department of Science and Technology (DOST), in an effort to address universal access issues in the Philippines and to provide rural communities access to information, resources and expertise through ICTs.

FOUNDATION FOR MEDIA ALTERNATIVES [PHILIPPINES]

<http://www.fma.ph/>

Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA) is applying GEM to develop an organisational evaluation and monitoring system as part of its institutional building programme. FMA is a non-government organisation formed in 1986 seeks to enhance the popularisation and social marketing of development-oriented issues and campaigns through media-related interventions, social communication projects, and cultural work. FMA has streamlined its programs and services in both traditional and new media towards what it believes are strategic interventions in promoting the right to information and the right to

communicate. FMA also has focused on democratising information and communications technologies, aimed at empowering Philippine civil society through the critical use of appropriate new media.

WOMEN'S ELECTRONIC NETWORK TRAINING WORKSHOPS [ASIA-PACIFIC] www.iwent.net

The Women's Electronic Network Training workshop or WENT aims to build the capacities of women in the field of information and communication technology and strengthen women's organisations and networks in Asia and the Pacific. WENT has trained 135 women from 19 countries around this region. WENT's participatory approach and focus on ICT training by women, for women has inspired similar training initiatives in other regions of the world including a global WENT training, national WENT-modelled workshops in Korea, Philippines, Malaysia and India. The evaluation of WENT will focus on finding out if the training programme has fulfilled the ICT needs of women and their organisations in Asia and the Pacific and how WENT has been able to increase the capacity of women information and communication providers to make decisions regarding the use of ICT within their organisation.

Central and Eastern Europe

KARAT COALITION [CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE] <http://www.karat.org/>

KARAT is a regional coalition of organisations and individuals from 18 countries. The Coalition works to ensure gender equality in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. Karat Coalition evaluated Karat NEWS - an electronic news bulletin distributed to the members and non-member organisations and individuals throughout CEE and CIS countries. The bulletin highlights gender equality issues, both at the national and regional level. Karat sought to determine if their publication, initiated one year ago, meets reader needs. The evaluation focusses on key gender and ICT issues such as access to information and internet, the relationship and impact of ICT use on women's empowerment, as well as content and language.

ZAMIRNET [CROATIA] <http://www.zamir.net/>

ZaMirNET is a non-governmental organisation that uses ICT to provide and create information relevant for civil society development in Croatia. ZaMirNET decided to evaluate their Job Search Training Project, a component of the larger program named "Revitalisation of the War-Affected Areas of Croatia Using ICT". The project objective is to improve employability in two post-war, economically deprived, communities in Croatia. Their evaluation aimed to monitor the impact of the course on the increase of skills, knowledge and self-confidence of the participants. Beyond that they measure if and how specifically older women (over 40) benefit from the training. Since this a pilot project, ZaMirNET

hopes to integrate lessons learned into the design and implementation of their training package, which will then be shared with other organisations.

INITIATIVE FIFTH WOMAN [SLOVAKIA]

<http://www.stopnasiliu.sk>

The Initiative Fifth Women is a joint effort of seven Slovakian women's organisations with an active history in working against violence against women. The campaign Fifth Woman was the first media campaign against violence against women carried out at a national level in Slovakia. Since the impact of the campaign was already evaluated, GEM was used to evaluate subordinate objectives: what type of ICTs (radio, TV, internet) are the most efficient tools in campaign's against violence, including identifying limitations and who controls the use of ICTs in the feminist organisations working against violence against women.

WOMEN'S ISSUES INFORMATION CENTRE [LITHUANIA]

<http://www.lygus.lt>

The Women's Issues Information Centre (WIIC) is a focal point for women's issues in Lithuanian society, and acts as a catalyst around the most pressing problems facing women. Their work focuses on gender awareness, education and information provision within the national context of Lithuanian society.

WIIC is evaluating its "Capacity Building of Lithuanian Women Through ICT and Networking" project with GEM. This project is implemented by WIIC in Vilnius and the Women Employment Information Centre of Kaunas. Aimed at women in rural areas, this is an education campaign which offers seminars and training courses, creates and maintains an electronic library containing information on Women's issues, and established and updates a Women Information Portal in Lithuanian. The project supported the establishment of 5 computer classes at five different local women's NGOs, which are situated in different regions of Lithuania.

The computer classes are run by: Women's Activity Centre of Marijampole County, Alytus Women's Crisis Centre, Anykscai Women's Club, Jurbarkas Women's Employment and Information Centre, Kretinga's Women Information and Training Centre. Computer classes started on 1st of June 2003. These courses for women are free of charge. As of November 1, 2003, 485 women have been trained. Their internet portal (<http://www.lygus.lt>) for women was created and officially launched in October 2003. "Lygus" means "equal" in English.

SEF FOUNDATION (EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN)[ROMANIA]

<http://www.sef.ro/>

Sanse Egale pentru Femei/Equal Opportunities for Women (SEF) Foundation is a local human rights organisation based in IASI, Romania that promotes equal opportunities

for women and men, working for the protection and defense of women. Women Mayors' Link (WML) is an initiative of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force (SP GTF), a project developed in the 11 countries of the Stability Pact (SP) Region.

The SEF Foundation is exploring the impact of Women Mayors' Link, a networking initiative to build leadership and skills among women mayors in Romania, at the local community level as well as nationally in the Stability Pact Region and developed UNECE countries. The initiative, in addition to facilitating cooperation and information flow, is geared towards building social consensus and gender-balanced development at the community level.

BULGARIAN GENDER RESEARCH FOUNDATION [BULGARIA]

<http://www.bgrf.org>

The Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation is an independent non-governmental organisation that promotes social equality and women's human rights in Bulgaria through research, education and advocacy programs. BGRF has used GEM to evaluate their advocacy campaign around violence against women and issues of gender equality, which was aimed at young men and women to encourage their awareness and action in the area.

Africa

WOMEN OF UGANDA NETWORK (WOUGNET) [UGANDA]

<http://www.wougnet.org>

Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) is a non-governmental organisation established in May 2000 by several women organisations in Uganda to develop the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) among women as tools to share information and address issues collectively. WOUGNET's emphasis is directed towards email and the web, and how these technologies can be integrated with the traditional means of information exchange and dissemination for maximum outreach. WOUGNET's vision is to improve the living conditions of Ugandan women by enhancing their capacities and opportunities to exchange and share information, and to collaborate. WOUGNET used GEM to evaluate its website and mailing lists.

AFRICAN WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK (FEMNET) [AFRICA REGION]

<http://www.femnet.or.ke>

Based in Kenya, FEMNET is a network of NGO's, community-based organisations, and national NGO networks which advocate for African women's human rights. FEMNET has played a key role in Beijing review in the Africa region. The Participatory Communication for Advocacy initiative aims to enable the participatory collection, analysis and dissemination of strategic information on African women's development, equality

and human rights through capacity building, to enhance advocacy efforts around gender.

FANTSUAM FOUNDATION [NIGERIA]

<http://www.fantsuam.com/>

Fantsuam Foundation's Bayanloco Community Learning Centre initiative is the focus of their GEM evaluation. The project aims to use ICT as an additional tool for poverty alleviation in rural communities in Nigeria, by promoting access to ICT facilities and relevant skills for rural women. Community Learning Centres with a library, computer access and community radio, are being established in rural communities with no access to telephone or electricity. Project components include training in computer literacy and micro-finance. In exchange for getting a desktop, laptop, and satellite phone, communities commit to maintaining the CLC, investing in a car battery to power the computers, and keeping up community databases.

WOMEN'SNET [SOUTH AFRICA]

www.womensnet.org.za

Women'sNet is a networking support programme designed to enable and empower South African women and girls to access the people, issues, resources and tools they need to advance gender equity through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Correspondingly, Women'sNet has progressively engaged in building skills among individual women and women's organisations in the use of ICTs, while drawing on the knowledge and expertise of the organisations in developing the information architecture for sites on human rights issues, and resources available to women in South Africa.

The GEM evaluation process entailed questionnaires and interviews of trainees and telecentre managers in rural telecentres, one year after an intensive training process. Through GEM, Women'sNet aims to build a more effective methodology for working with rural women around gender and ICT issues in South Africa.

AMARC AFRICA [AFRICA REGION]

<http://africa.amarc.org/english/index.htm>

AMARC Africa used GEM to evaluate their Women in Community Radio (WIN) initiative, exploring member ICT needs and expectations. WIN promotes women's right to communicate as a basic human right expressed through community radio, and promotes the use of ICTs for women in community radio. The project offers research and training, focusing on all women working in community radio in the region, as well as on media women and media organisations. Results obtained from the GEM survey will guide future training and priorities for WIN members.

ISIS-WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CROSS CULTURAL EXCHANGE (ISIS-WICCE) [UGANDA]

<http://www.isis.or.ug/>

Isis-WICCE relocated to Kampala, Uganda at the end of 1993 with an objective of tapping African women's ideas, views and problems and sharing this information with women at the international level. Since the move to Kampala, Isis-WICCE started national and regional level programmes to facilitate the flow of information from Uganda to other parts of Africa and the rest of the world, and to contribute towards the strengthening of the Uganda and African women's movement. Isis-WICCE exists to promote Justice, and empowerment of women globally through documenting violations of women's rights and facilitating the exchange of information and skills, to strengthen women's capacities, potential, and visibility.

Isis-WICCE is using GEM to evaluate its rural women's information center project. The rural women's information centers involve the sharing of a tape recorder with rural women, to communicate with women from other villages and record life stories.

ZIMBABWE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER AND NETWORK (ZWRCN) – ZIMBABWE

<http://www.zwrcn.org.zw/>

ZWRCN's internet cafe, offering preferential service to women and girls, is the focus of their GEM evaluation process. The internet cafe offers access and training and is open to women, girls, and other members of the community. ZWRCN is examining other models of telecentres in Zimbabwe to compare the impact on girls and women, and see how to improve their own services. Zimbabwe faces a difficult climate in terms of ICT policy, including recent legislation curtailing the right to access and disseminate information. ZWRCN struggles to create greater interest in gender and ICT issues, both among the general public and women's organisations.

Latin America

MODEMMUJER [MÉXICO]

www.Modemmujer.org

Modemmujer is a non-governmental organisation established in 1997. Their mission is to contribute to the empowerment of women and organisations in the feminist movement, focusing on the use of information and communication technologies from a gender and social change perspective.

Modemmujer's tester team plans used GEM to review the gender perspective of Modemmujer's dissemination activities, as well as the extent to which Modemmujer's work contributes to women's empowerment. GEM results have helped to reaffirm strategies and develop new possibilities for improving their work.

CHASQUINET AND COLINAS DEL NORTE [ECUADOR]

Chasquinet will use GEM to support planning and evaluation of a unique participatory community telecentre initiative in Colinas del Norte, located in the mountains that surround Quito, 3,100 meters high, and considered a “model community” by municipal authorities. GEM provides a framework for analysis of the community communication strategies, including internet access, a community newspaper produced with ICT, and the elementary school computer lab. Chasquinet is developing a specialized GEM for telecentres and will put it in practice in Colinas del Norte.

POPULAR RADIO SCHOOLS FOUNDATION [ECUADOR]

www.erpe.org.ec

The Popular Radio Schools Foundation has its headquarters in Riobamba, Ecuador. The Foundation started its work in the 60's by the initiative of local leaders and Mons. Leonidas Proaño, the local Catholic bishop, who was a renowned human rights activist and who struggled for the rights of indigenous people in Ecuador. At present, the Foundation does its work in four areas: health, agro-ecology, education and radio. Three radio stations function in Riobamba (one medium wave, one short wave and one FM) reaching 12 Equatorian provinces. Via satellite links they reach all of Latin America and the Radio Netherland network. The broadcasting is done in Spanish and Quechua, an indigenous language spoken in the Andean Region. The radio's main aim is to build solidarity, citizenship and strengthen social movements' activities in the region. GEM is being used as a tool for gender sensitisation and gender evaluation in education and ICT programmes.

NEIGHBOURHOOD INFORMATION UNITS, ATI/COLNODO [COLOMBIA]

www.uib.colnodo.apc.org

This project formed by three telecentres (Neighbourhood Information Units- NIU) in marginal areas in Bogotá is using GEM to evaluate the work done so far and to develop a proposal to achieve a gender impact in each of the NIUs. The evaluation refers to training with a gender perspective, increasing women's participation in the use of the telecentres and in local development and women's empowerment and ICTs.

The Association for Interdisciplinary Work (ATI, in Spanish) with the support of Colnodo, APC member in Colombia, works in these local telecentres with the aim of democratising access to new communication technologies and involving the community in the development of tools and contents according to their information needs and interests. They also aim to strengthen the community's capacity to reach local governments and exchange ideas and proposals about community development. According to this programme, the local people should participate actively in their communications contents in order to create “local information systems that are more human, open and ready to be used by everyone, women and men alike”.

REDE MULHER DE EDUCACAO [BRAZIL]

www.redemulher.org.br

This project is based on the need to rethink education in the context of modern transformations, characterized by the advance of globalisation, including the use of new communication and information technologies. Women leaders and educators from Rede Mulher, who are also multiplier agents, were trained in 1999 in the use of computers as a communication instrument for community projects, with emphasis in the use of the internet. At present, Rede Mulher wants to evaluate the way these multiplier agents and leaders have been working during the past three years, using ICTs in their daily work, and the effects that these technologies have generated, including new notions of time and space, new ways of thinking, feeling and acting.

In this project, GEM evaluates how ICTs and their use affect women leadership. It will also be used to start a process that will help to review and learn about the connection between communication and education for the training of women leadership.

WOMEN'S NETWORK, AMARC LAC [ECUADOR AND BOLIVIA]

www.amarc.org/alc/servicios.htm

The AMARC LAC Women's Programme has around 250 members in Latin America and the Caribbean and reaches several hundred community radio stations in the region. GEM was used to evaluate their news service "Ciberbrujas" ("Cyberwitches"), on women's issues and information with a gender perspective, produced by RED-ADA, from Bolivia. This service ran as a weekly electronic news bulletin from 1997 to 2000 and GEM results will inform the re-launch of the service in 2004.

The GEM evaluation explores how the Ciberbrujas news service contributed to the production of information from a gender perspective in the radio stations that used it and if it helped to achieve gender equity in the journalistic teams. It also examines how ICTs have favoured the professional advancement of women producers using Ciberbrujas and if this news service has contributed to gender awareness in the radio teams.