Gender Perspectives in Telecommunications Policy

A Curriculum Proposal

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Overview

There is a crucial need for a gender perspective in all areas of policy making.

Policy and development practitioners have reached the conclusion that gender analysis and awareness are necessary if their mission is to have a truly *universal impact.*

The ITU Task force on Gender Issues (TFGI) has taken the lead to promote a gender-aware mode of operation among it's member states.

A training curriculum on gender perspectives in telecommunications policy provides an important opportunity for regulators and policy makers to participate in specialized training that will assist them to effectively integrate gender perspectives in telecommunications policy.

Overview

The methodology is based on a participatory approach to learning, which focuses primarily on participant's own environments and experiences.

Trainers and trainees can gain from the experience and better understand the implications of integrating gender perspectives in distinct social, cultural, economic and political environments.

This curriculum can be implemented in various formats: one to two day workshops or integrated into existing ITU training curricula.

Telecommunications Policy: The Rationale for a Gender Perspective

Why a gender perspective?

If the ultimate goal is to provide universal access to telecommunications services, policy makers must consider the gender dimension during the planing process.

There is no inconsistency between gender specific objectives and development objectives.

Women are at the center of development activities, from being users of ICTs to being business owners (particularly of micro, small or medium size telecommunications businesses).

Allowing for gender perspectives in telecommunications policy means to fully understand how women and men have been socialized differently and, consequently, understand the disparate impacts of policy on the different genders.

Telecommunications Policy: The Rationale for a Gender Perspective

A few examples from a gender-aware perspective:

Women headed households tend to live on smaller incomes, in most cases too small to afford basic service tariffs. Tariff and pricing policy usually does not consider this large and increasing percent of households. Pricing and universal access policies must consider the gender dimension of access and must reflect appropriate solutions to address gender disparities.

Due to lack of income, women and men in rural areas cannot afford basic service when it is available. Network development policies should consider community solutions, such as telecentres, based, for example, on wireless technologies. Community based solutions provide access at reasonable prices.

Telecommunications regulators lack a gender perspective in part because they lack professional women in their organizations. Regulators must actively promote the hiring of women for all professions and ensure that all have access to training opportunities. How many women are participating in this symposium?

Telecommunications Policy: The Rationale for a Gender Perspective

There is a need to train telecommunications professionals on gender issues so they can be better practitioners in the field.

As each new policy builds on the strengths demonstrated in earlier approaches, the field of telecommunications development policy continues to be enriched, to the benefit of all consumers and developing economies.

This curriculum provides a plan to successfully train telecommunications professional on how to be gender-aware and consequently develop and establish universally reaching policies.

Curriculum Proposal: Engendering the Telecommunications Policy Process

Goal:

The primary goal of this curriculum is to train and teach telecommunications professionals on how to rethink telecommunications policy from a gender perspective and consequently implement gender-aware policies in their work.

Curriculum Proposal: Engendering the Telecommunications Policy Process

Objectives

To understand the benefits of a gender perspective in telecommunications policy

To understand why there is a need to be gender-aware

To establish a framework and develop arguments for gender analysis

To rethink the policy process

To integrate gender in the policy process

To mainstream gender awareness in the regulatory and policy arenas

Curriculum Proposal: Engendering the Telecommunications Policy Process

Objectives

To develop knowledge and skills that allow for the integration of gender perspectives in policy-making decisions

To develop skills to introduce and integrate gender perspectives in the work place

To increase participation of women and men in gender taskforces

To provide the knowledge and skills necessary to establish gender task forces or gender units where appropriate

To think critically and analytically about telecommunications policy issues

To develop telecommunications policies that are truly universal

Curriculum Proposal: Engendering the Telecommunications Policy Process

Telecommunications Policy: Engendering the Issues

The curriculum includes specific focus on telecommunications policy issues relevant for regulators, policy makers and operators.

These issues – Modules – were identified by the ITU-TFGI:

Ensuring affordable access pricing/tariffs.

Licensing issues (ownership and control, and reporting disaggregated statistics).

Equitable access to training opportunities.

Strengthening and supporting women as technology innovators.

Network planning and deployment issues, including choice of technology and the effects on cost and access.

Curriculum Proposal: Engendering the Telecommunications Policy Process

Telecommunications Policy: Engendering the Issues

These issues – Modules – were identified by the ITU-TFGI (cont.):

Income generation (business opportunities).

Democratization of policy process through increased inclusivity.

Equitable employment conditions (Human Resources Development and appropriate support systems).

Supporting development of appropriate technologies.

**Workshop at the Symposium: Ensuring Affordable Access
Gender Perspectives in Telecommunications Policy**

Provides an important opportunity for regulators and policy makers to participate in specialized training that will assist in effectively integrate gender perspectives in telecommunications policy.

Provides the tools to assist regulators to rethink the policy process so as to reflect a gender aware approach.

Provides practical examples and experiences to illustrate the impact of gender perspectives in telecommunications policy.

Focus on one of the modules identified – Ensuring Affordable Access.