

CLOSING THE DIGITAL GENDER GAP

Digital technology has the power to create connections, foster learning, accelerate financial transactions, and provide life-saving information. However, barriers such as cost, network coverage, security and harassment, trust and technical literacy all contribute to the fact that women in developing countries are nearly 25% less likely to be online than men,¹ inhibiting their ability to fully connect to their world and communities. Likewise, there are 200 million fewer women than men who have access to mobile phones in developing countries.² Through closing the digital gender gap, women can help pull their families out of extreme poverty and serve as active participants and leaders in their societies.



THE OPPORTUNITY ENDING EXTREME POVERTY

1.2 billion people live in extreme poverty, with women and girls disproportionately affected.³ Increasing women's access to technology creates opportunities in education, entrepreneurship, and access to information and services that help break the cycle of poverty. Between 77 to 84 percent of women reported using the Internet to further their education.⁴



75% of women and caretakers in Bangladesh say they can better improve the health of mothers and babies thanks to text messages.⁵



A woman is 20% less likely than a man to own a bank account; digital finance can provide access to convenient financial tools that meets women's needs.⁶



60% of women say mobile phone ownership saves them money.⁷



If an additional 600 million women and girls were online in the next three years GDP across 144 developing countries could be boosted by up to **\$13–18 BILLION**⁸



PROMOTING RESILIENT, DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES

Women have yet to reach their full potential as participants in all aspects of society. Closing the digital gender gap can help empower women and girls to actively participate in governance as civil society members and political leaders. From promoting citizen advocacy to providing access to important political information, technology can be utilized to strengthen democratic processes and provide more effective governance.⁹



58% of women feel more independent with a mobile phone.¹⁰



More than 70% of women consider the Internet liberating and 85% say it provides more freedom.¹¹



68% of women feel safer with a mobile phone.¹²

WHAT WE'RE DOING

USAID's Digital Development Team focuses on ensuring universal inclusion for women, which means more than an available mobile connection. It also means a woman's ability to afford the services provided, value them, and have the ability to use them. The team has supported the GSMA Connected Women Program, a partnership with GSMA and DFAT, to build the business case and body of research for designing mobile products and services that meet the needs of women and contribute to closing the mobile gender gap in the developing world. And in Nigeria and Kenya, we're partnering with NetHope, Intel Corporation, World Pulse, World Vision, UN Women, and Women in Technology in Nigeria to bring 600,000 young women online through the Women and the Web Alliance.



¹ http://www.mckinsey.com/Insights/High_Tech_Telecoms_Internet/Offline_and_falling_behind_Barriers_to_Internet_adoption

² http://www.gsma.com/connectedwomen/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GSM0001_02252015_GSMAReport_FINAL-WEB-spreads.pdf

³ http://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/Gender%20&%20Extreme%20Poverty_Missing%20Women.pdf

⁴ <http://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/public/us/en/documents/pdf/women-and-the-web.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.mobilemamaalliance.org/evidence>

⁶ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2013/04/01/banking-on-women-extending-womens-access-to-financial-services>

⁷ http://www.gsma.com/connectedwomen/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GSM0001_02252015_GSMAReport_FINAL-WEB-spreads.pdf

⁸ <http://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/public/us/en/documents/pdf/women-and-the-web.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.ndi.org/democracy-and-technology>

¹⁰ http://www.gsma.com/connectedwomen/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GSM0001_02252015_GSMAReport_FINAL-WEB-spreads.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/public/us/en/documents/pdf/women-and-the-web.pdf>

¹² http://www.gsma.com/connectedwomen/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/GSM0001_02252015_GSMAReport_FINAL-WEB-spreads.pdf