



Introduction

- Sub-Saharan Africa
 - general
 - women
- digital divide
 - many aspects
 - substantially researched
 - lots of information, especially on the web
- information and communication technologies
- challenges
- success stories



Sub-Saharan Africa

- 49 countries
 - most continental, 6 island countries
- 33 classified as Least Developed Countries by UN
 - average GNP per capita is 20% of average for all developing countries
 - majority of population live close to subsistence level
- challenges
 - poverty, poor health
 - lack of infrastructure
 - high cost and low quality of telecommunication services



Women in Sub-Saharan Africa

- school attendance (1993)
 - girls: primary 65%, secondary 22%
 - boys: primary 78%, secondary 27%
 - slow improvement
- literacy rate (1995)
 - women 47.9%, men 66.2%
- lack of economic power, land ownership
- ill health, malnutrition
- lack of free time
- issues affect women more than men



Digital Divide

- Africa has 1.1% of world's Internet users (2002)
- Internet users in population (2003)
 - Réunion 23.1%, South Africa 7.1%, Botswana 3.4%, Gabon 4.1%
 - Niger 0.1%, Mozambique 0.3%, Tanzania 0.7%
- Landlines per 100 people (2003)
 - Réunion 39.7, South Africa 10.4, Senegal 2.2, Uganda 0.2
- Mobiles per 100 people (2003)
 - Réunion 74.7, South Africa 36.4, Senegal 7.6, Uganda 3.0
- Internet users predominantly in urban areas
- Access via Internet cafés important



Digital Divide – Gender

- more men than women? few statistics available
- female Internet users
 - Uganda 31.5%, Zambia 37.5%, Senegal 12% (2000)
 - South Africa 40% (2001)
- female telecentre users (2001)
 - Uganda 29%, Mozambique 35%, Mali 23%
 - Gaseleka, South Africa, 60%, Kgautswane, Lesotho, 65%
- female telecommunications staff (2001)
 - Ghana 19%, Gambia 75%, South Africa 22%



Information and Communication Technologies

- range of traditional and modern technologies
 - radio, television, telephones
 - computers, email, Internet
- “radio is the rural internet in Africa”
- HF (High Frequency) radio to email
 - radio modems, very low bandwidth, store-and-forward
- importance of offline solutions, CD-ROMs
- tools to obtain and disseminate information, use of print
- digital divide? analog divide? information divide?



Challenges in the use of ICT

- telecentres
 - assumptions about users that may reduce women's use
 - use for social purposes, copying, reading print, telephone, video
- technology applied as an end in itself
 - GEM tool to assess projects
- content
 - appropriate for local situation, translation to local languages
- obstacles to women
 - financial, educational, time
 - cultural and social issues



Success stories

- Women'sNet (South Africa)
 - provision of information, networking
- Isis-WICCE (Uganda)
 - women's Internet café
- UNIFEM Digital Diaspora Network
 - links between Africans outside of Africa, and African women
- women's NGOs
 - bringing African women's voices to Beijing and later conferences
- APC-Africa-Women/Dimitra/Women'sNet
 - ICTs for the advancement of rural women's empowerment
- many, many others



It may be happening slowly, but it's happening!

- Television advertisement for polka.co.za, a South African ISP (on national television during prime time)

Two black women talking in a hair salon in a South African city

Woman 1: How's your daughter doing?

Woman 2: Oh, she's doing fine and she's just discovered the Internet

Woman 1: You have the Internet?!

Woman 2: And email.

Woman 1: And email?!

etc.

