GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH ICT

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION

- The significance of achieving gender equality cannot be overemphasized, however empowering women is even more crucial to the socioeconomic development.

- In the past women were denied their civil rights, education and other opportunities which their male counterparts enjoyed.

- In Saudi Arabia until recently women were not allowed to drive.

- In some African communities women were denied inheritance and need permission from their husbands to enable them own properties.

- In this presentation I will attempt to show the importance of promoting gender equality whilst stressing on the need to empower especially women through exposure to ICT to attain a balance in Socioeconomic development.
DEFINITIONS

1. What is gender equality?
   
   I. Gender Equality is the state of equal access to resources and opportunities regardless of gender. This includes education, Health, decision-making economic opportunities etc.

2. What is Empowerment?
   
   I. Giving more autonomy, authority or power to someone
1. Provide a better understanding of the role gender plays and also
2. Provide equal opportunities to both men and women
3. Recognize talent and good management leading to excellence
4. Excellence does not distinguish between genders
5. Leverage competitive advantage by attracting and retaining the best talent, regardless of gender
6. This will lead to a reduction in the cost of the recruitment and selection process
7. Increase business performance
WHY EMPOWER WOMEN?

- Women have always been regarded as subservient to men and even great philosophers have regarded women as inferior to men—e.g., Aristotle believed that women are mentally and physically weaker than men and should passively allow men to dominate.
- Sigmund Freud, a famous psychoanalyst, was prejudiced against women.
- Rousseau also held the view that men should be strong and active whereas women should be weak and passive.
- Even in modern times these beliefs still hold.
- With this in mind, it is imperative to encourage and empower women to live up to expectation in all spheres of life but why through ICT?
Women are suffering due to the gap between ICT and its use

- Women on the average are 14% less likely to own a mobile phone than men
- 25% fewer women and girls are online compared to their male counterparts
- In Africa over 40% of women are not able to engage ICT tools for personal and professional activities

Source: UNCTAD SDG, 2016
Empowered women contribute to:

- the education, health and productivity of families and the society.
- the reduction of poverty and promote development.
- improved prospects for the next generation.
CHALLENGES OF EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH ICT

- Sustaining interest in ICT and affordability of ICT tools
- Regular internet connectivity.
- Mechanism for assessing the impact of the training from basic to tertiary
- Creating a System for consistent follow ups for progress
- Monitoring to prevent vices such as internet fraud, scams and other social vices.
CONCLUSION

- The 2015 Global Gender Gap reports that whilst more women than men are enrolling at university in 97 countries. **Women make up majority of skilled workers in only 68 countries** and the majority of leaders in only a few.

- There is therefore the need to increase effort at achieving parity at all levels to ensure socioeconomic development.
THE WAY FORWARD

- Create the opportunity for both male and female to gain access to ICT tools whilst targeting the female.

The Ghana Government has developed a Girls-in-ICT Policy to encourage girls to develop interest in ICT.

In 2018 600 girls were selected from public basic schools for a 14 day capacity building training in coding and programming as well ICT Mentorship.

The aim of the mentorship programme is:

- To motivate the girls to choose careers in the ICT.
- Make the teaching and learning of ICT more interesting, available and affordable.
- Sustain mentorship programmes.