



**Grounding GEM for Telecentres:  
The Experiences of Ecuador and the Philippines**

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2006**

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### **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

APC	Association for Progressive Technologies
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
eDI	e-Development Initiatives
FODA	Fortalezas, Oportunidades, Debilidades y Amenazas (or Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
GEM	Gender Evaluation Methodology
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICT4D	Information and Communications Technology for Development
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
MCT	Multi-purpose Community Telecentre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WNSP	Women's Networking Support Program

## **Executive Summary**

This comparative study examined how the Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) framework was used with telecentres in Ecuador and the Philippines, and outcomes of this use. It was found that the methodology was adapted in similar ways in each place, where variance can be attributed to local contextual differences. Generally, it was simplified conceptually, concretized methodologically, and broadened to 'include everyone' when used. Findings from this study lead to a set of recommendations for the use of GEM within telecentre contexts in the future, including a need for GEM for telecentres to be more concrete, locally grounded, and participatory. It is also recommended to highlight failures alongside successes, include a feasibility scan before implementation, and promote sharing of experiences between practitioners.

## Introduction

Considerable debate exists within international development discourse about how factors related to the introduction, appropriation, and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) affects social change through the use of telecentres. Telecentres are public spaces offering a combination of ICT resources for community development purposes, in an effort to provide access to the global information (or knowledge) society, particularly for those who would not otherwise be able to make use of ICT services. Given the complexity of the role of ICTs within development, it is imperative to be able to accurately assess how telecentres affect change in the communities where they are based, to ascertain and enhance their effectiveness in meeting community needs. This is also true with respect to meeting gender needs, since more men than women tend to have access to and control ICT resources for their own benefits. As a result, “women and girls are poorly placed to benefit from the knowledge economy” (Huyer, 2003), where the role of telecentres in providing these ICT resources needs to be accurately assessed with respect to gender.

The need for an evaluation tool with a gender perspective resulted in the creation of the Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM), which provides a framework to evaluate ICT initiatives with a gender perspective, and has been used with various ICT for development initiatives. This paper presents the experiences of GEM use within two ‘tester’ telecentres chosen in Ecuador, and two in the Philippines, in the form of a comparative study. The purpose here is not to reiterate the evaluation outcomes resulting from each telecentre’s experience with GEM, but rather to compare gathered feedback about experiences of the evaluation process to examine similarities and differences in how GEM has been adapted to various contexts, specifically in relation to telecentres. These findings lead to a set of recommendations to render the methodology more effective for use with telecentres in particular.

Although the use of ICTs in development projects is not a new phenomenon, the realization of their importance as enablers in achieving long-standing development goals is experiencing a new prominence in development agendas (UNDP, 2001). Currently, ICT for development (ICT4D) initiatives are being widely implemented in developing countries, often without knowing or realizing what the consequences might bring, reflected in the relative scarcity of evaluative evidence. More research needs to focus not only on the ‘how’ and ‘why’ with respect to ICT4D projects and outcomes, but also – and perhaps more importantly – the contextual factors that lead to successful (or unsuccessful) ICT4D initiatives (Ofir and Kriel, 2004). This will allow for greater

understanding about how ICTs can be used to help build human capacity, and the enabling environments that may allow this to occur effectively. Throughout this discussion, it should be kept in mind that understanding the ongoing complexity of how ICTs can influence development – and vice versa – is a long-term task that requires considerable investment and should be treated as an iterative learning process (UNDP, 2001).

Gender issues with respect to ICTs are also a recent addition to development agendas. Gender should be understood as a multi-dimensional, crosscutting variable across other variables such as age, race, ethnicity, class and geographical location. It is important to challenge binary and essentialist understandings of gender, since not all men and women are necessarily the same (Faulkner, 2004). Gender and ICTs is therefore a topic of vital importance if women and girls are to be able to benefit from 'inclusion' into the information and knowledge society (Hafkin, 2002). That is, "gender analysis of ICTs suggests that the existence of ICTs in public spaces does not entail access for all" (Odame, 2005), since:

On average, women have less income, education, time mobility and face religious or cultural constraints that restrict their access to and use of technology. More accurately, some groups of women (i.e. rural women) are more disadvantaged as compared to younger, more literate or wealthier urban women (Odame, 2005).

Although this 'gender gap' seems to be closing, 'engendering' ICT policy and evaluation frameworks is necessary because "ICT diffusion alone is not sufficient to close the gap altogether" (Faulkner, 2004). Moreover, gender inclusion strategies into the information society need to be more plural and dynamic to include the many types of masculinities and femininities that exist, since "one size does not fit all" (Faulkner & Kleif, 2003). Existing research shows that women-only ICT inclusion strategies are not always more effective than more plural 'for everybody' ICT strategies to include both men and women, an idea that holds significant implications for the findings presented in this paper. In fact, inclusion strategies that uphold gender essentialisms may exacerbate gender differentials and 'exclusion' (Faulkner, 2004).

Although definitions vary, telecentres are generally agreed to be public places offering shared access to a range of telecommunication and information services for specific social, educational, economic and personal development purposes (Gómez, Hunt, and Lamoureux, 1999). *Shared access* is a key concept in the definition of a telecentre, since it comprises a place where people are able to communicate and gain 'ICT capacity' together – meaning the required skills, knowledge and confidence involved in using ICTs (Faulkner and Kleif, 2003).

Names for telecentres also vary – including ‘telecottages, multipurpose community telecentres, community technology centres, village knowledge centres’ – although variations of the term will be referred to as telecentres here. Telecentres typically offer a range of services and ICTs, which can include “photocopying, computer typesetting, faxing, internet (although many are beset by connectivity problems), phone and computer training, plus other value-added services that vary from site to site” (Parkinson, 2005). Facilities are typically run by a manager or operator with a small group of part-time staff or volunteers (Oestmann & Dymond, 2001). Additionally, the financial orientation of telecentres varies, since business models can be focused on earning profits, recovering costs, or they may be subsidized (Hudson, 1999). For a more detailed discussion on the definition of telecentres, see Gómez and Hunt (1999).

While it is generally agreed that ICTs have enormous potential as tools for human development,

Until relevant methodologies and adequate tools are developed to effectively assess the social impact of the application of ICTs for sustainable development from the user’s perspective, efforts to demonstrate how people are empowered by knowledge will lack credibility (Gómez, Hunt and Lamoureux, 1999).

Apart from examining the effects of the telecentre on the community, it is also imperative that we gain an understanding of community information needs, as well as other social, cultural, political and economic factors that may influence the appropriation and use of ICTs in the community. This baseline information is important in placing telecentre goals and evaluations in context because “of course, telecentres do not exist in a vacuum” (Hudson, 1999). Technologies and communities should be seen as mutually-shaping, since technologies influence human activities, and humans in turn shape how these technologies are developed and used (MacKenzie & Wajcman, 2002).

The implied chain of causality between telecentre goals and outcomes (and therefore between telecentre services and development) can be complex because telecentres “are typically intended to serve a variety of community needs, which may not be as clearly defined as in projects designed for a particular sector or target group” (Hudson, 1999). Clearly defining telecentre and evaluation goals and objectives is therefore essential, particularly since multiple stakeholders may have different goals in mind (Benjamin and Dahms, 1999). Additionally, it needs to be recognized that many changes brought about by ICT4D initiatives are long-term and often indirect, something that evaluation frameworks need to take into account. Above all, telecentre evaluation should be treated as a participatory learning process (Hudson, 1999), and should be “useful, financially

responsible, build local capacity and enable shared learning” (Reilly and Gómez, 2001). Relatively few efforts exist on telecentre evaluation research, where one of the most significant contributions is the collection of research presented by Gómez and Hunt (1999). The Gender Evaluation Methodology presents a framework which upholds many of the positions in this research.

### ***What is the Gender Evaluation Methodology?***

The Gender Evaluation Methodology is an evolving guide to integrate a gender perspective into evaluations of ICT initiatives for development and social change. It is designed to help a range of ICT practitioners to find out how ICTs affect and interact with gender equality (particularly women’s lives) at the individual and broader social levels. That is, GEM is a means to provide input into whether ICTs are having positive (or negative) outcomes in women’s lives and gender relations (Ramilo and Cinco, 2005). The tool itself is not a step-by-step guide for conducting evaluations, but rather provides a more conceptual and theoretical framework for evaluation processes, including a variety of suggested approaches for integrating a gender analysis. It is a changing guide which can be accessed both online and offline, encouraging users to submit experiences and ideas about the tool itself. GEM is designed not only for evaluation purposes, but also as a way to integrate a gender dimension into project planning. It should be noted that APC’s understanding of gender is congruent with the definition presented in this paper, but the methodological approach itself is women-focused. The methodology has been developed by the Association for Progressive Communications Women’s Networking Support Programme (APC WNSP); which is a global network of people and organizations working towards facilitating the access and use of ICTs for women’s empowerment, as well as ICT research, design, policy and regulation that promotes gender equality.

The GEM model for evaluation is based on a ‘learning for change’ approach, with the understanding that learning is fluid and interactive. Processes of ‘self-change’ are taken into consideration (at the individual, organizational, and community levels); as well as ‘social change’, which examines the larger social, economic, political and technological contexts and how both of these types of changes interact dynamically with ICT initiatives. Recognition of these changes allows for the measurement of how the uses of ICTs affect changing gender roles and stereotypes. GEM endorses a participatory, learning-by-doing approach, which leads to action and change in some way. It also encourages critical reflection, and sensitivity to context and stakeholder bias. In addition, the Gender Evaluation Methodology recognizes that both quantitative and qualitative indicators need to be taken into consideration in evaluation methodologies.

GEM has been used with various ICT for development initiatives globally, ranging from e-governance programs to education and training programs to community-building initiatives. The implementation process involves local and regional workshops to provide training on gender awareness and the use of the GEM tool itself, so that participants can apply the methodology to their own ICT initiatives (acting as implementing agencies in this way), with help from the GEM team.

Regional GEM coordinators in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Central and Eastern Europe are continuing to work with GEM 'testers' (those who have worked with the tool) to further develop the evaluation methodology and activities. One particular lesson learned from GEM testers so far is the importance of conducting locally-customized ICT and gender sensitivity workshops at the beginning of the gender evaluation process, particularly for telecentre initiatives (on the basis of the understanding that telecentres are usually based in grassroots communities where traditional gender roles and relations tend to exist). Other lessons learned include the importance of local content creation (which often indicates the level of information accessible for sharing); a need to document and promote useful ICT models for women and other disadvantaged groups; and the importance of building awareness about gender issues in relation to ICTs (APC WNSP website, 2006).

The GEM evaluation process is split into three phases, with a series of steps related to each phase, including activities and worksheets to aid understanding. The first of these phases concentrates on integrating a "focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in planning an evaluation of ICT initiatives" (Ramilo and Cinco, 2005), which involves setting the boundaries for the evaluation (such as determining time and financial resources available). This phase is based on a set of objectives which include: developing evaluation objectives, reviewing these objectives in addition to surrounding context and project plans, creating gender and ICT indicators (including both quantitative and qualitative indicators which measure the extent to which the ICT initiative affects self and social change where it is implemented), and identifying evaluation stakeholders. The purpose of Phase Two is to build on intended use of the evaluation by designing appropriate methodologies which take gender into account, and to organize the information collected to feed into the next phase (acting on lessons learned). Thus, Phase Two focuses on the objectives: identification and monitoring of gender equality issues, organization and documentation of findings, reflection on outcomes and designing an evaluation report which describes these findings according to identified ICT and gender issues. Last, Phase Three focuses on how to act on the evaluation findings, including bringing about change (such as through changes in ICT

policies, evaluation practices or organizational practices), and how the findings can best be communicated.

In order to build expertise on gender and ICT evaluations, increase gender accountability in ICT initiatives and establish partnerships between experts, the GEM Practitioners Network has been created. It aims to bring together GEM practitioners (online and in-person) primarily to share knowledge and resources on gender and ICT evaluation issues, as well as to collaboratively develop new and useful resources, including development of the GEM tool itself by following-up on various GEM projects after 2 years of field testing (APC WNSP website, 2006). It is not clear how active this network currently is, apart from APC WNSP members.

## Methodology

This comparative study investigated how the Gender Evaluation Methodology was used in four telecentres, and the resulting outcomes, in order to provide insight on how GEM can be useful for telecentres in particular. A total of 26 people were interviewed (including 16 women and 10 men), who had a range of experience with, and exposure to the GEM tool.

In Ecuador, respondents included:

- 2 GEM experts (and also members of the GEM implementing agency),
- 4 GEM training participants (including 2 telecentre managers/operators)
- 1 telecentre volunteer,
- 1 community leader,
- 4 community members.

In the Philippines, respondents included:

- 1 GEM expert,
- 2 members of the GEM implementing agency,
- 2 members of the telecentre implementing agency,
- 2 members of the telecentre monitoring agency,
- 3 community leaders and former telecentre leaders (including 1 GEM workshop participant),
- 4 other GEM training participants and telecentre leaders (including 2 telecentre operators).

In addition to these interviews, two workshops were conducted in two rural villages (one in El Chaco, Ecuador; and the other in Malingao, Philippines, respectively) in order to engage with the local communities about gender issues and to gain a better understanding of local context, including family roles and gender relations. The former workshop in Ecuador was attended by 34 participants, only 4 being men, since the majority of the community understood the term 'gender' to imply 'women', so they mistakenly believed that only women were invited to attend. Participants included the local mayor, telecentre manager and operators, telecentre volunteers, participants from the GEM training workshops and other members of the community. The latter workshop in the Philippines had 20 participants, with a roughly equal number of men and women, since the workshop expressly advertised all to attend. Participants included community leaders, telecentre volunteers, GEM workshop participants, and other members of the community.

Interviews were done on a face-to-face basis, either individually or as a focus group of no more than 4 people. Almost all interviews were audio recorded, with the permission of respondents, and all personal information was kept anonymous and confidential. The study was qualitative in nature, where each interview done was informal, semi-

structured, and reflexive. The open-ended questions posed were based on three sets of interview guides geared towards GEM experts, telecentre leaders and community members respectively, where questions surrounded issues related to each of the three research objectives. In Ecuador, all communication was in Spanish, and in the Philippines, all communication was in English, except for the workshop that was in the local language of Cebuano (with translation to and from English by a bilingual speaker).

Although it can be very difficult to generalize qualitative findings from a small number of respondents to broader contexts, the variation in respondents here provided for a relatively wide range of experiences with GEM, gender issues and telecentres.

Additionally, it was difficult to clearly distinguish whether changes in the community were brought about by community use of the telecentre, or GEM itself, since many social development outcomes were likely the result of a combination of factors, including the influences of the implementing agencies. Further research is needed in order to draw deeper conclusions from the qualitative findings of this study.

The interpretation of the findings is based on a social construction of technology (SCOT) perspective, which recognizes that technologies are socially constructed by the broader social, technological, economic and political contexts (Bijker et al., 1987). This enables us to understand the use of technologies in telecentres – particularly computers and the Internet in this study – within the local contexts of the communities visited.

## **GEM use within telecentres in Ecuador and the Philippines**

Before key results and findings are presented about the outcomes of GEM use in each telecentre, some preliminary context and background will be provided about each of the four GEM tester projects and the stakeholders involved. This will lead into a discussion of some general observations which can be made about how GEM was adapted in similar ways to local contexts through the evaluation process.

### ***Evaluating Ecuadorian telecentres: Project background***

In Ecuador, Fundación ChasquiNet was chosen to be the GEM implementing agency in both Colinas del Norte and El Chaco. It is a non-profit organization based in Quito working to help strengthen individuals, communities and organizations through the use of ICTs for development in education, improvement of life conditions and strengthening of local culture.

Colinas del Norte is a neighbourhood built on reclaimed land on the outskirts of Quito, with a difficult past but strong leadership from a locally elected community-oriented woman. The telecentre is based at what is known as the *Casa Comunal*, or the 'Community Development Project', a cooperative organization that has a number of social programs in sectors such as health, education, environment, security and public improvement (such as road upgrading). Colinas del Norte is considered a "model community" by Quito authorities, due to the strong community mobilization which expresses itself in the form of *mingas*: self-organizing volunteer groups which each work towards an identified community improvement project (Galarza, 1999). One of these goals was to improve communication mechanisms within the community, for which a small group of male youth was identified in 2003, leading them to voluntarily run a telecentre initiative within local schools, as well as to create a local newspaper called *Juntos al Futuro* ('Together for our Future'), working from the telecentre. Due to strong cultural prejudices against women who work outside the home, very few young women became involved in the project. However, a group of young beauty queen contest winners self-organized themselves, called the 'Queen's Association' (later renaming themselves 'Youth with a Future', after GEM training). These women also wanted to get involved with the newspaper initiative, claiming, "we don't want to be only pretty faces" (Galarza, 1999).

It was within this newspaper project that GEM was applied in Colinas del Norte: in its project planning and evaluation, and in a sense the participants were thereby self-

selected. Briefly, aims were twofold: first, to evaluate and integrate a gender perspective into the material in the community newspaper, also within the communications team; and second, to produce a manual to integrate a gender perspective on telecentres' work. The project was successful in achieving both aims and was able to increase numbers of women in the communications team; incorporate a greater amount of gender sensitivity into newspaper content (including 'news for everyone', no longer focusing only on soccer news as was jokingly described by one interviewee); and increase gender equity in ICT project participation, decision-making and taking initiative. However, the newspaper is no longer in circulation due to exceedingly high production costs, bringing attention to the importance of project sustainability where GEM is applied.

Aims were achieved primarily through 9 training workshops on a variety of issues including: personal development, gender sensitization, management, computing, network administration, accountability, marketing, multimedia and planning content. Newspaper content was successfully evaluated by using the 'FODA' methodology. This participatory methodology focuses on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, often used in Latin America to self-evaluate social projects. Additionally, a 'GEM for telecentres' manual was developed which is a simplified, more basic, holistic version of GEM adapted for the Ecuadorian telecentre context and still in circulation (Tipán Barrera, 2002). It is a relatively short document in Spanish laying out a participatory means to introduce concepts of gender and gender equalities at the pace of the community. The concept of gender was not directly discussed, but rather in terms of: "How can I change? How can I improve? How can I become better at what I do?" This makes more sense to participants, and change can still be instigated without directly acknowledging the concept or term of 'gender'. The manual is divided into 3 sections: gender, telecentres and ICTs, and how to put results into practice (that is, how to undertake project planning with a gender focus), and includes a number of exercises for participants to conduct (Tipán Barrera, 2002).

The second community telecentre where the Gender Evaluation Methodology was implemented in Ecuador was in El Chaco, a rural village surrounded by mountains about 4 hours from Quito. El Chaco has an active telecentre, with approximately 20 volunteers and a paid operator working towards the involvement and strengthening of the community through a variety of community projects. At the time of interviewing, the telecentre had not had a working internet connection for several months due to high costs of connectivity, but was still actively used by the community for other activities and events.

In comparison to the experience in Colinas del Norte, GEM was used in El Chaco not within the planning or evaluation of a specific project, but rather for promoting gender equality within telecentre management and users. This occurred through a series of training workshops focusing on gender sensitization and personal development in order to encourage the involvement of more women for those managing and volunteering at the telecentre and to increase gender sensitization in the community. Friends and family members within personal social networks seemed to be a key mobilizing factor for local community and telecentre activities, and a factor for drawing participants to local training workshops. Efforts to bring more women to the telecentre (and improve the quality of their participation) therefore snowballed via these social networks.

The 'GEM for telecentres' manual was used to plan the workshops, and proved to be successful in raising local awareness and sensitivity about gender issues. However, these successes cannot be entirely attributed to the use of the manual, since these outcomes likely result from a combination factors, such as the longstanding commitment of the implementing agency to work with the community on personal development issues. Interestingly, even the 'GEM for telecentres' manual was significantly adapted for the workshops in El Chaco, bringing attention to the fact that adaptation to local contexts is necessary for effective gender planning and evaluation implementation. In this case, language and terminology used was further simplified, and issues were approached in a manner more closely related to community needs (Tipán Barrera, 2002).

It is important to note that when 'applying' GEM in Ecuador, the workshops that were conducted did not focus solely on gender issues, but rather integrated gender as a component within a wider range of training modules, particularly personal development (such as building self-esteem). Gender in/equality was framed as one of many social issues in the communities, since gender is a crosscutting theme across many variables. Additionally, as one member of the implementing agency described to me, "there is no social transformation if it is not based on personal transformation". Issues of gender were therefore not discussed in isolation (where 'gender' is often locally misunderstood as meaning 'women'), but rather through examples of how gender relations and inequalities are reflected in participants' lives. Instead, 'gender' was discussed in terms of daily challenges and personal roles within the family or community and what it signifies for their everyday lives, in terms of being a man or woman, girl or boy. In this way, the vocabulary and ideas behind what GEM is trying to achieve for community initiatives is adapted to the communities' understanding of gender.

Similarly, planning and evaluation outputs were framed around community needs, in order to make the evaluation outputs relevant to those individuals. This adaptation to community needs, such as how gender was presented to the community within workshops, was a particular result of the familiarity with the community by the implementing agency. Fundación ChasquiNet already had years of experience with each community, over which time they were able to build a rapport with community members and leaders. In this sense, the outcome of GEM wasn't in terms of how it was *used*, but rather through the changes which were effected in the community as part of the training conducted for the evaluation process.

### ***Evaluating Filipino telecentres: Project background***

In the southern part of the Philippines called Mindanao, GEM was used in two telecentres in remote neighbouring communities in Lanao del Norte. The telecentres, known as MCTs (Multi-purpose Community Telecentres) were implemented by PCHRD (the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development), an agency of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), meant to foster the uses of ICTs in rural communities: Malingao and Taguitic. These two small communities are comparatively similar, but also remarkably different in other respects, most of which can be attributed to land tenure and community leadership differences. Eventually, telecentre support and monitoring responsibilities were handed over to the regional governing Department of Science and Technology office. An NGO based in Cebu city called eDI (e-Development Initiatives) became involved with the telecentres in order to help with local "community preparation", since neither community recognized the value of the telecentres. As a result, 6 members of eDI were supported by the Department of Science and Technology to relocate to the rural communities for over a year, and for the same reason, the two telecentres in Malingao and Taguitic were chosen to be GEM testers, due to the presence of eDI in the communities.

Both Malingao and Taguitic are rural, impoverished, leader-oriented communities, where the church is highly valued as a local institution, and where local economies are based on farming and fishing, respectively. Migration from rural communities in search of a better life is a common trend that reveals how legal access to land is strongly related to the sustainability of livelihoods (FAO, 2002). The community leader (or '*barangay captain*') in Malingao was a dynamic and charismatic individual with a strong vision for the community. In part, his leadership can explain for the high level of community mobilization, which lead to the rebuilding of the community church and the creation of large extension on the local elementary school, both through volunteer work using

donated materials. Taguitic, on the other hand, has a stronger history of corruption and less vision among local governing officials. Lack of land tenure is a significant problem for many residents, and together these factors lent themselves to a general feeling of distrust among community members, with lower levels of community mobilization.

When eDevelopment Initiatives first arrived in Malingao and Taguitic, much time was required for them to build a rapport with the community, particularly in Taguitic. In order to 'create' telecentre leaders, they first had to get to know individuals in the community, identify potential leaders, and then recruit and train volunteers to become telecentre leaders – a lengthy process. Earlier than anticipated, eDI had to leave the communities fairly suddenly due to a discontinuation of funding, and telecentre user numbers consequently dropped. eDI described: "when we're not able to stay consistently, that's when one of the leaders will dominate again. [...] And that's what leads people to lose their confidence." Also, both telecentres lost dial-up internet access due to a break in the phone line, which was too costly to repair, and the ICT services (particularly computers) were becoming obsolete. Both telecentres were experiencing significant sustainability problems, particularly in Taguitic, where local government leaders even discouraged access because the potential benefits for the community to use the telecentre were not recognized.

Telecentre users in both communities were mostly women and girls, and students and teachers in terms of profession. It seems surprising then, that GEM was applied in these two telecentres since the GEM methodology focuses primarily on the inclusion of women. The gender differential in the two Filipino telecentres can be attributed to the fact that many boys begin working at a young age, and therefore have less time to visit the telecentre or go to school than girls, whereas girls are largely stigmatized from working outside the home. Many telecentre volunteers made use of newly gained ICT skills for their own advantages, consequently leaving their communities for better-paying jobs elsewhere. For example, one woman in Malingao began her own small computing enterprise at home, after gaining ICT skills as a volunteer, essentially offering the same services to the community which the telecentre served, with a small cost. Telecentre usage also tended to be related to season (particularly in Taguitic), since many volunteers study outside of the community throughout the year, leaving only the operator to provide ICT training – usually not enough to draw many new users. Given the difficulty of attracting new volunteers to the telecentre, the lack of new telecentre volunteers also proved to be a factor in the telecentre's unsustainability.

In both communities, GEM was applied with similar aims: to investigate the level of community access to the telecentre, as well as levels of gender-sensitivity and usefulness of the information services in addressing community needs. In contrast to the Ecuadorian experience of using GEM primarily as a planning tool for projects with specific aims, GEM was used more as a general evaluation tool in the Philippines. The evaluations focused on finding out how men and women used the telecentre, to identify information needs for each telecentre, and to find out how users' confidence levels and social needs changed as a result.

Stories were gathered from community members and telecentre leaders through individual interviews, focus group discussions and personal journals kept by each telecentre volunteer. eDI first began recording others' stories, but it was later noted that individuals preferred to record their own stories, for a large part to enhance their accuracy –pointing to the importance of community participation in evaluation processes. Keeping a journal seemed to vary in effectiveness across participants, since a number of people were more consistent and comfortable with writing personal entries than others. Some participants nevertheless described the exercise as an “eye-opener”. The collection of stories using these methods was useful in helping key individuals to reflect on the use of the telecentre. Evaluation findings were analyzed at a workshop in Cebu city, which was attended by three members of each community, as well as the GEM implementing agency, local monitoring agency, DOST, and APC. The workshop was generally deemed useful by participants, and helped to inspire those six people who attended. Interestingly, in preparation for participation at this workshop, two extra gender sensitization workshops were given in each community by the implementing agency who felt that extra preparation was necessary, again bringing attention to the importance of familiarity with the community for the implementing agency in order for appropriate adaptation to take place.

Although space is limited to fully discuss the outcomes of GEM in Malingao and Taguitic more fully here, it can be said that those who became involved with the telecentre experienced an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence. However, as eDI explained, and similar to the experiences in Ecuador, in all likelihood this can also be attributed to the ongoing presence and work of eDI with community members. It was also recognized that the information accessible at the telecentres should be more closely related to community needs – that is, to people's *livelihoods* – especially agricultural information such as crab hatchery or palm tree disease treatment. Outcomes revealed the need for more telecentre volunteers, and more community participation (also to improve financial sustainability). Frequency of telecentre use was found to fluctuate both in relation to the

school year (since many users were students) and to personal conflicts between telecentre volunteers and staff members.

***GEM use with telecentres: Commonalities among local adaptations***

From an investigation of how GEM was used in each of these four telecentre projects, a number of key observations can be distilled about commonalities in how it was adapted to local contexts, highlighting the importance of the flexibility of the GEM methodology. In all four communities, it was found that the Gender Evaluation Methodology was simplified through the process of its use – conceptually and methodologically – in a manner that was participatory (including ‘everyone’) and that was locally grounded. GEM was therefore implemented in a way that ‘fit’ within the culture of the local community, including goals and priorities, particularly in a way that made sense for the implementing agency.

Through the GEM process carried out at each telecentre, the planning and evaluation methodology was rendered less conceptual, and more concrete, in how it was used and the ideas behind it. The creation and adaptation of ‘GEM for telecentres’ manual, for example, exemplifies how the evaluation concepts were made more concrete for telecentres. Conceptually, the manual simplified language use surrounding gender issues, where it was discussed in a manner that related to participants’ activities in everyday life. Methodologically, the manual simplified the GEM process by providing participatory exercises and facilitation techniques for workshop facilitators, as well as suggested indicators for telecentre evaluations (Tipán Barrera, 2002). Additionally, the basic ‘FODA’ evaluation methodology (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was used for self-evaluating newspaper content in Colinas del Norte. The simplification of concepts and methods to go about using GEM therefore seemed to be an inherent part of the implementation process, but this shift was not without its difficulties. For example, the implementing agency in the Philippines found it difficult to decide when would be the most appropriate time to involve men in the GEM process. For them, “there was no question about including men – but *when* to include them [in the evaluation process] was the question”. The topic was debated at great lengths between members of the NGO, leading to eventual success in involving a number of men in the GEM process.

Although GEM methodology rhetoric tends to focus specifically on the inclusion of women and ICT initiatives for development, the way in which GEM was applied in each of these four cases was more socially inclusive of all community members, using community and telecentre leaders as ‘examples’ for the rest of the community. It was recognized by

both implementing agencies that gender is a crosscutting theme across many variables such as age, ethnicity, employment, socio-economic status; making it difficult to influence change in a culture or community through the treatment of any of these variables independently. The benefits of a participatory approach were demonstrated in the Philippines, where community members were involved in the analysis of the evaluation results at the final workshop. As a result, not only was the analysis more accurate, but it also gave community members a sense of ownership and understanding of the telecentre issues that arose. Further, ChasquiNet's previous experience with local communities showed that if men are deliberately excluded from efforts to empower women, they might reject the initiative entirely, due to a lack of understanding about the process and a general feeling of loss of control or leadership. Instead, ChasquiNet found that if individuals are brought together and can come to agreement on a variety of issues, a move towards more equitable opportunities through participatory decision-making processes is made. The GEM evaluation process in the Colinas del Norte newspaper project therefore focused on working with young men and women who were existing or aspiring community leaders already. Similarly, eDI focused on building and working with community leaders regardless of gender:

It's really a case-to-case basis, how open [participants] are and how ready they are [...] for gender concepts. And the usual strategy is to start with people who are more open, and more respectful, and you build models for other people.

This ensures that resulting changes last longer and are more effective, highlighting how building on existing skills within individuals in the community is key for effective evaluation processes. This makes sense given that there are many types of masculinities and femininities – not all men and women are necessarily the same – revealing the need to move away from binary understandings of gender towards more pluralist, fluid strategies. It is clear that the inclusion process involving 'everyone' is far from simple, calling for the need for more research in this area, and continued efforts toward effective inclusion strategies.

The telecentre evaluations conducted were adapted to local contexts, "*paso a paso*" (or step-by-step). As has been discussed, the evaluation process therefore first necessitated the building of community and telecentre leaders, working at the pace of the community, including answering needs and priorities. Workshops conducted in each case were therefore not only about gender sensitization, but also about personal development and skills training, designed to build on leadership skills. Further, in the Philippines, extra workshops were conducted before the official GEM workshop to more gradually introduce the concept of gender to the community, relating it directly to the community's understanding of gender issues. Similarly, communities were involved in choosing – and

significantly locally adapting – the indicators for the evaluation studies. The evaluations were thereby able to focus more closely on measuring actual community telecentre needs.

Evaluations were conducted within the available scope for time, human resources and funding levels; resources that acted as limiting factors within the pace of working with the community. For eDI, a fairly sudden lack of funding restricted the amount of time they were able to continue living in the communities of Taguitic and Malingao. With more time and funding, they claimed, they would have been able to learn more, strategize their plans and readjust the intervention process. Instead, they were only able to gain a “candid shot” of the evaluation results, which they believed lowered the long-term sustainability of the evaluation process. This is also directly related to the process of building community leaders: in order for evaluation results to lead to significant changes, continued community participation is essential. Interestingly, in the Philippines this prompted a focus on more elderly people in the community to become leaders, because younger individuals were more likely to migrate from communities when empowered.

### ***Outcomes of GEM use in telecentres***

In order to further enhance the effectiveness of gender evaluation methodologies for telecentres, it is important to investigate the outcomes of how GEM was used in each of these pilot cases. First and foremost, it should be noted that changes which were brought about occurred because GEM was used as a reference tool (*“un marco de referencia”*) particularly for developing indicators through community participation, but not as a methodology for evaluation in itself. Generally, use of the Gender Evaluation Methodology in telecentres helped to bring about relatively small-scale changes in each community, which tended to result from a rise in confidence levels for GEM participants. This had a number of consequences for individuals (particularly for women), for family and community relations, and helped to bring a new perspective towards the potential benefits (and drawbacks) of ICTs in the local community through the telecentre. Many resources were required in the implementation of GEM in terms of time, and human and economic resources, where a shortage in any of these factors negatively affected the evaluation learning process as has been discussed.

Going into more detail, most participants who were involved in the GEM process experienced a rise in levels of confidence and self-esteem, a result of their participation in personal development and gender sensitization workshops, and ICT skills training. As a result, a number of participants were able to describe consequent changes in their own

lives. For example, some women in each community where GEM was used were inspired to pursue higher education, but it is not clear to what extent this can be attributed to GEM or other variables related to their involvement with the telecentre. As described, one woman in one of the Filipino cases used her new ICT capabilities gained from training to start a small enterprise in her own home. She acquired a computer, and offered computing and printing services for a fee. Other individuals used their newly-gained ICT capacity, skills and confidence to pursue employment elsewhere, with the effect that few or no telecentre leaders were left behind, lowering telecentre user numbers in effect.

The story of another woman, 'Melita', is particularly captivating in how she was able to become involved with the telecentre in Malingao, where she is a volunteer and a member of the Board of Trustees, described in the GEM final tester report (PCHRD, 2003):

She looked at it as a new opportunity for learning when she was invited to join the [telecentre]. She became even busier but her husband understands her in her involvement with the [telecentre]. He does his wife's chores and sees to it that food is ready when Melita arrives from the [telecentre] meetings. [...] It was a long struggle for Melita to gain the present supportiveness of her husband. Before, her husband was very domineering and would not listen to her. [...] Melita took to many ways on how to get her husband to recognize her being a person. She was prohibited to attend seminars, which [she] hankered of. [...] One day, [...] to her surprise, she saw her husband attending the [telecentre] seminar. She made herself un-noticed and left with prayers in her heart that may her husband be enlightened by the seminar. The seminar was about basic awareness. [...] From thereon they have become classmates in similar occasions and Melita began to have a share in the decision-making. This extended also to the children. Her husband has realized how he treated her and the children.

From this story it is apparent that telecentre training led to changes in family relationships, through personal or individual empowerment. In the Philippines, a general trend was found that men were more likely to help their wives with household chores after training (even "singing karaoke together"), and women were given more decision-making power within the family (particularly in Malingao where gender roles were less rigid). These changes tended to result in more open communication flows between individuals, which lead to higher levels of mutual understanding.

The process of personal empowerment is complex - including both positive and negative outcomes – as demonstrated by one young woman in Colinas del Norte, Ecuador. She described how she was inspired to pursue further education as a result of personal development training, and eventually became a chartered accountant. Having this position of steady employment, however, greatly affected her relationship with a close childhood friend, whose mother forbade her daughter to spend time with a woman employed outside the home. Empowerment can also be problematic between peers who

experience conflict and competition, as they become local leaders. This occurred between the young individuals who were involved in the newspaper project in Colinas del Norte, as well as between volunteers and non-volunteers in the Filipino telecentres in this study. New hierarchies were also unexpectedly created at the telecentres in the Philippines because they are each based in, or beside, the local *barangay* (government) hall. One community member described how:

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. [...] 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 (PCHRD, 2003).

In terms of telecentres, the implementation of GEM brought about a greater awareness of the services that the telecentre could offer for the community where evaluation took place. Participants in the evaluation process seemed more organized, and more passionate about using and encouraging others to use the telecentre. It is important to note that although these changes were highlighted at the end of the evaluation, they were not necessarily sustained (or measured) over 2 years after the evaluation was conducted. Changes measured were actually quite temporary because many of the volunteers had moved away (leaving few behind to pass on ICT skills and encourage more users), and the telecentres themselves were experiencing low levels of sustainability, as has been described. For example, the newspaper in Colinas del Norte where GEM was applied was discontinued due to the high costs involved, so the changes that continued to have an effect were lessons learned and confidence gained. Also, in the Philippines, what had been most useful at the telecentres was no longer working (where the internet was used to access markets, and health information). Thus, a typewriter was being used again to type out documents, and it is likely that new training programs would be necessary to re-train the communities when internet becomes available again.

### Recommendations for GEM use with telecentres

Since findings reveal similar trends in how GEM was used in four different community telecentre contexts for both project planning and evaluation purposes, it is clear that the value of GEM for telecentres relies on the extent to which the methodology can be adapted to local contexts. These findings provide a useful basis from which to draw a number of recommendations for future use of the GEM methodology within telecentre contexts, namely the importance of:

1. Conducting a **feasibility scan** for GEM project planning or evaluation in the community to determine local needs, priorities, and readiness as pre-conditions for the GEM process to take place at the telecentre;
2. Steering the GEM methodology to become a **more concrete, user-friendly** tool through a clearer set of methods and strategies that can be modified specifically within local telecentre contexts;
3. Ensuring that GEM for telecentres is **locally grounded** in that it is directly answerable to the needs and priorities in the community;
4. Encouraging **participation from various stakeholders** involved, from the community level to the GEM 'expert' level, throughout the GEM implementation process;
5. Highlighting weaknesses in addition to successes, to **ensure clear communication** of all results.

Each of these recommendations will be discussed in turn, with examples from the cases studied, as well as support from a collection of existing research on telecentre evaluation that set out 10 "guiding principles for telecentre evaluation" (see Appendix) (Reilly and Gómez, 2001).

First, **feasibility** for implementation of the Gender Evaluation Methodology – as either a planning or evaluation tool – for the telecentre in question needs to be clearly assessed before implementation takes place. This could imply the inclusion of a feasibility scan as part of the GEM framework itself, as a tool for communities to assess their own needs, priorities, and readiness for a telecentre evaluation with a gender perspective. To evaluate a telecentre's activities and usage requires much time (usually longer than anticipated), and many human and economic resources; where the presence of each of these factors is required for successful implementation to take place. It is likely that GEM use in a community would be more successful if implemented in telecentres that have already achieved a certain level of sustainability in terms of the social, economic, political, and technological spheres. Otherwise, the results of the evaluation are rendered somewhat irrelevant as the telecentre or project loses sustainability and knowledge gained becomes retained in small, disconnected pockets in the community. eDI claimed: "If we had the choice, probably we would not have chosen Taguitic [to implement GEM] for example. Because it had too many problems." [...] For us, we would have wanted o

look at the social context first and see what was viable to implement: the criteria of putting the project at the same time. [...] You should have basic information about the community, probably where the project take place, where it will be implemented – a bit of background. You should have some criteria [first], and probably [identify] what's the appropriate area for the project implementation process. It's not really about gender – [that's] very important, that's why it was so difficult. Like I said, trust building took us a very big time”.

Additionally, telecentre evaluations should support sustainability, such that they can enhance telecentre viability, services offered, and relevance to the community (Reilly and Gómez, 2001). With respect to the study findings here, results varied according to the amount to which sustainability was enhanced and therefore no strict generalizations can be made. Yet in none of the cases can it be said that that GEM implementation greatly enhanced sustainability, most likely because the telecentre projects were difficult to sustain to begin with. It is clear that more research needs to be done on the basic needs and conditions of a community in order for successful telecentre evaluation to take place.

Second, it was suggested by the implementing agencies that GEM would be enhanced if it were **more concrete**: “Something that we can easily apply, something operational. Not just a concept”. Although it is still being developed, it would be useful if the tool had a clearer set of strategies or methods to use “that you can just modify [...] meaning that it can work to the situation of *what* kind of communities, *where*”. Although contexts vary significantly from one location to the next, it would nevertheless be useful to produce a methodology more adaptable for particular telecentre contexts (such as government-implemented telecentres compared to community telecentres). This may ease the amount of modification that needs to be done when implementing GEM, and the confusion that this modification incurs (such as questioning when to encourage men's involvement in the evaluation process). Implementing agencies suggested that a GEM for telecentres could involve the creation of an “indicator menu”: a list that provides suggestions for indicators reflecting common telecentre issues and needs. The implementing agency in the Philippines, for example, was given a basic list of indicators who “just adjusted a few”, but claimed to “never really know exactly what was GEM”. Even after training, they described: “we really still grappled with [GEM] after that [training] presentation, at least from our point of view, on how to implement it [...]. And we didn't really know what would be the output”. In part, this confusion resulted from the broadness of GEM, which also allowed for its flexibility. However it is clear that further clarifications and simplifications would render the tool more easy to use. This is

clearly another area which deserves more study before more specific modifications can be suggested for GEM for telecentres; however, it is apparent that there is room for GEM strategies and methods to be more closely related to telecentre needs.

GEM for telecentres needs to be **locally grounded** in the sense that it is appropriate and strategically oriented to the needs of the community and the telecentre. Generally, the evaluations conducted in the test cases studied were oriented around aims of the implementing agency for the community with some level of input from the community members and telecentre leaders. For example, in the Philippines the implementing agency began to collect participants' stories, who in turn decided that it would be more accurate for them to tell their own stories. Reilly and Gómez (2001) describe how telecentre evaluations need to be "incorporated into the project design and reflect project objectives. It is focused on clear questions that are important to stakeholders" (Reilly and, 2001). This is difficult to achieve, given that stakeholders will have different goals in mind for the evaluation outcomes. More study is needed to determine which methodologies are best suited to reflect project objectives for different telecentre contexts.

On a broader perspective, it also needs to be clarified whether GEM will be used as a planning or evaluation tool, something which the feasibility scan could identify in advance. It is likely that in most cases, the planning tool will be more useful given that it provides a gender-sensitive perspective with a more practical outcome. That is, through the creation of a specific community-building project which has a concrete purpose within the community compared to an evaluation tool on its own. For communities with broad socioeconomic problems it is likely that the evaluation is most useful if used for project planning through the telecentre because it provides an opportunity for capacity building. In Malingao, a number of individuals did not attend the 'gender sensitization' workshops because they did not see "what's in it for them" – community concerns were instead focused on the more basic need of putting food on the table for that day. However, since one of the biggest community priorities was to learn how to produce and sell virgin coconut oil, it is likely that the evaluation would have been more locally successful if GEM had incorporated this priority, through training workshops at the telecentre for example. It is also possible that in other cases the more useful application involves using GEM for planning and evaluation in combination something which has not yet been studied.

That a telecentre evaluation should be **participatory** implies that all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the process, including telecentre users and non-users.

This was found to be true with respect to how GEM was used in telecentres, throughout all stages of the process in both countries where the pilot evaluations were conducted. The need for participation at all levels of GEM implementation – particularly when ‘choosing’ projects – was described by the GEM implementing agency in the Philippines who felt isolated from the planning process:

Well I myself wasn't really oriented in what GEM was, they just said: "Oh, there's something that we'll be doing for women". So we were just waiting, and suddenly they said, "Okay, this is what we're going to do." We were not really even part of the planning at the same time. So we just improvised along the way and what we can do to fit the community in at the same time.

Similarly, the implementing agency expressed regret that the stories of non-users were not included throughout the collection of stories. Given that one of the objectives for the GEM evaluation was to investigate telecentre uses and further information needs, it becomes clear that the experiences of non-users would have been very valuable in answering this question. This is interesting given that many non-users were in fact, men, who would have benefited greatly had more knowledge been gained about their reasons for ‘exclusion’. Clearly, a participatory approach should be encouraged at all levels of GEM implementation, from choosing telecentre projects to analyzing the outcomes.

It should be noted that although the general premise of GEM is participatory in nature, in terms of how each step or stage is carried out, workshop participants who were interviewed still had little or no understanding of what “GEM” was. This is not a problem *per se*, but it is likely that if the concept of GEM was further simplified and concretized (so that it can be clearly explained in the space of a postcard, for example), the methodology itself would be more participatory in that it can be understood by those ‘on the ground’, who would then be able to provide input on other aspects of the evaluation process. Community members are key to the evaluation process, because issues of gender in terms of what it means locally cannot be pre-conceptualized without their input. However, in Ecuador, it was found to be difficult to ‘apply’ GEM in a participatory manner within community telecentres, because gender issues and gender equality was not necessarily understood, or even relevant, to everyone. The need to apply GEM, therefore, should come from the community, so that it is more accurately and appropriately adapted to community telecentre needs.

There is a need to clearly communicate results, including successes and failures, clearly and **transparently**, since they provide rich learning opportunities for others. In these four test cases, communicated results were thorough and widely disseminated among GEM experts and practitioners, and between higher-level stakeholders, but focused on positive, quantitative outcomes as seen through the eyes of GEM experts rather than

community members or even implementing agencies. The implementing agency in the Philippines described how they did not feel that communicated results at the World Summit for the Information Society in Geneva in 2003 were necessarily similar to what they experienced, where communicated results “were almost completely different from what we did – that’s how I felt.” Transparency would be enhanced if evaluation results would be described in participants’ own voices throughout the evaluation process itself, described by participants in the Philippines who preferred to record their own stories instead of the implementing agency. This recommendation is echoed in Reilly and Gómez (2001), who claim that the telecentre evaluation process should be transparent where results are publicized to all appropriate stakeholders.

A GEM practitioner’s network for telecentre initiatives could provide for such a space to share stories on GEM implementation projects, facilitating learning from each other’s experiences. From the cases studied here it becomes apparent that there is a rich variety in how GEM is and can be used with telecentres, while commonalities between cases can also be found. Given that many telecentres lack internet connectivity, offline mechanisms for sharing stories should also be available. Additionally, gender should be introduced into current telecentre network discussions, which would embed gender issues into telecentre discussion and activities more smoothly.

## Conclusions

In order to better identify the outcomes and potential benefits of telecentres for the communities they are intended to serve, and to further enhance their effectiveness within those communities, more effort needs to be centred on the creation and support for solid telecentre evaluation frameworks. An important component of these evaluation frameworks should be dedicated to promoting gender equality and sensitization, as an embedded tool for learning within a larger evaluation framework. This is how the Gender Evaluation Methodology has been adapted for use within four telecentre contexts, in Ecuador and the Philippines, partly as a result of the flexibility of GEM for ICT4D initiatives in general. Given that it has been adapted in similar ways according to similar factors (such as available time span, and telecentre objectives), to 'fit' within the culture and context of the community, a number of recommendations for further use of GEM with telecentres have been distilled.

It must be ensured that GEM effectively meets community and telecentre needs, for which a feasibility assessment would be useful. In so doing, consideration should be given to available time, funding and human resources as well as community priorities to ensure a successful evaluation. GEM for telecentres should provide a concrete framework which relate to common telecentre issues and concerns, and is locally grounded and participatory (also in the sense that inclusion strategies are plural and dynamic rather than women-only focused). Both successes and failures should be highlighted, where experiences are shared through communication networks with other GEM practitioners, often relying on storytelling techniques from the perspective of participants. These knowledge exchange flows are essential for learning to take place about telecentre evaluations, and it is equally important that this occur within a well-defined feedback loop for GEM experts and practitioners to continue modifying evaluations for telecentres. Given these recommendations, the GEM tool can be more useful when extended to new community telecentre contexts. Only through this progressive learning process can a deeper understanding of gender relations and telecentre use be understood, where the ongoing use of GEM with telecentres and the sharing of experiences about this use provides us with this opportunity.

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## Appendix

### Guiding Principles of Telecentre Evaluation (Gómez and Hunt, 1999)

The following synopsis is based on a brainstorming session involving all meeting participants, held at the conclusion of the gathering. It represents the group's collective determination of basic principles to guide our work in telecentre evaluation. Ideas were generated in response to this query:

What basic, guiding principles will ensure that telecentre evaluation:

- (a) is useful;
- (b) is financially responsible;
- (c) builds local capacity; and
- (d) enables shared learning.

A set of criteria was developed from this query (Gómez and Hunt, 1999), which resulted in the development of 10 guiding principles for telecentre evaluation:

#### 10 Guiding Principles:

<b>1) Participatory</b>	All relevant stakeholders, including users and non-users, are involved in the evaluation process.
<b>2) Socially Inclusive</b>	Evaluations explicitly address, include and provide differentiated information about the experiences of sub-groups in a society (gender, age, culture, religion, etc.).
<b>3) Locally Grounded</b>	Evaluations are context sensitive. (By way of explanation, this may imply relying on available expertise or taking into consideration local practices, world views and priorities.)
<b>4) Public and Transparent</b>	Evaluation results are publicized in ways appropriate to all relevant stakeholders. Evaluation processes are transparent.
<b>5) Methodologically Appropriate</b>	Choices of methods and tools are appropriate for the context and use, balancing replicability with usefulness and methodological robustness with practicality.
<b>6) Sustainability Enhancing</b>	Evaluations contribute to making telecentres more viable, to enhancing services and to making them more relevant.
<b>7) Capacity Building</b>	Lessons learned – both failures and successes – are documented during evaluations and are used to empower telecentre practitioners and users. Training is carried out where a need is identified.
<b>8) Reflective of Shared Visions</b>	Evaluations are based on a common understanding of the telecentre mission, the evaluation process, the goal of the evaluation, and how results will be used.
<b>9) Strategically Oriented</b>	The evaluation strategy is incorporated into the project design and reflects project objectives. It is focused on clear questions that are important to stakeholders.
<b>10) Gender Sensitive</b>	The evaluation strategy, process, methodology and tools are sensitive to the particular realities and needs of women. Women are consulted in the development and realization of evaluative processes.