



# Gender in Broadband and ICT Policy: International good practices

Workshop on Gender Perspectives  
in the Digital Agenda

Santo Domingo, September 15, 2015

Sonia Jorge  
Executive Director  
Alliance for Affordable Internet



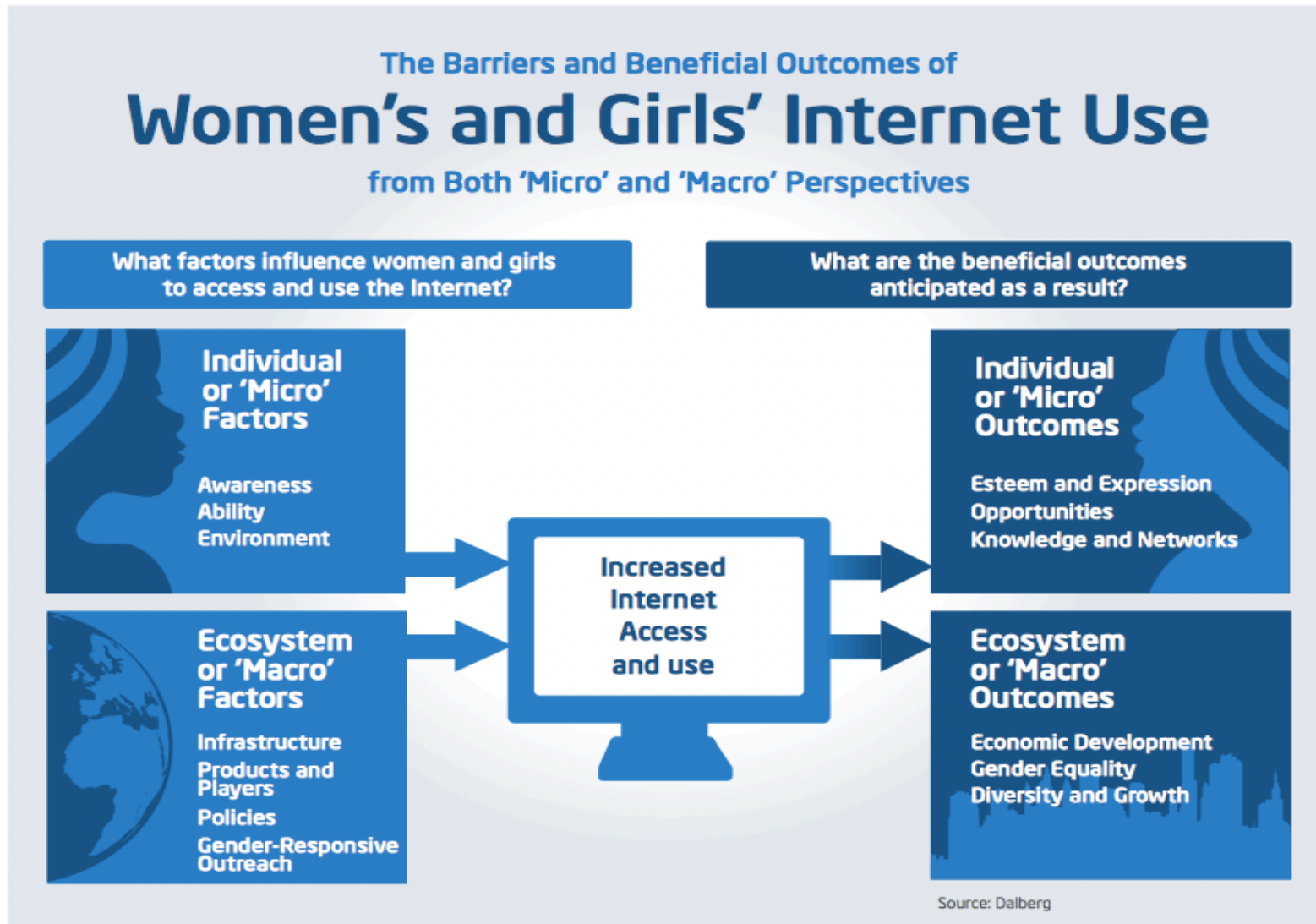
# Today's Agenda

- **Why Gender Matters**
- **Where are the gaps?**
- **Recommendations to achieve the BB Commission gender target**
- **Recommendations to close the gender gap in ICT/Broadband Policies**

# Addressing barriers, supporting opportunities



Figure 4: Framework for evaluating Internet access barriers and outcomes



Source:  
Intel,  
Women  
and the  
Web

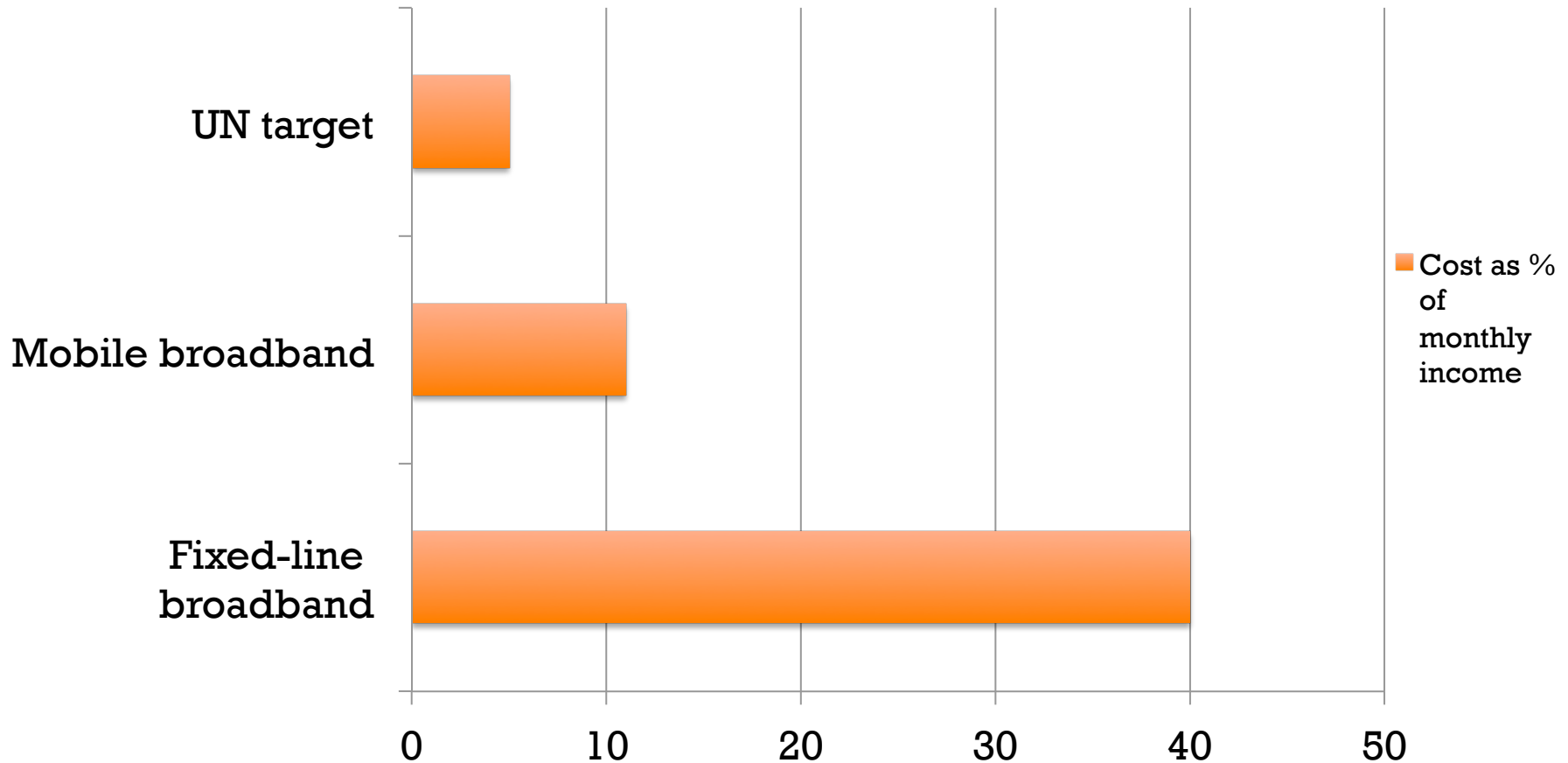
## **Gender access: where we stand**

- **Women are 25% less likely to access the internet.**
- **This gap prevents 200 million women from getting online.**

## **Gender digital divide**

- **Europe & Central Asia: 30% fewer women than men access the Internet**
- **Latin America: 10%**
- **Sub-Saharan Africa: 45%**
- **Rural & remote areas of Asia: 50%**

# What is the true cost to connect?



# Who is hit hardest by the high cost to connect?



The A4AI 2014 Affordability Report found that **women & rural dwellers** are least likely to be able to access affordable Internet.

- Persistent income gaps among women and men, range from 30-50% across regions, and further increase real cost of access for women.
- In the DR, it is estimated that about 1/3 of the population live in poverty and 1/4 of the population lives in rural areas.

# Gender gap in earnings results in higher cost to connect for women.



On average, women earn 30-50% less than men.

Cost of mobile broadband (prepaid handset-based, 500MB)

Country	as % of GNI pc	As % of GNI pc, adjusted for gender income gap
Peru	2.8%	4.0%
Colombia	3.3%	4.7%
Nigeria	5.6%	8.0%
Haiti	34.1%	48.8%
Mozambique	40.5%	57.9%

# How can we close this digital gender gap?



The Broadband Commission Working Group on Gender outlined a set of policy recommendations (2013)

- Integrate gender in national ICT & broadband policies
- Improve sex-disaggregated ICT statistics & measurement
- Take steps to boost the affordability & usability of ICT products & services
- Improve relevant & local content online
- Initiate an action plan to achieve gender equality in access to broadband by 2020

The A4AI and Web Foundation provide clear policy recommendations





**INTEGRATE GENDER IN NATIONAL ICT  
& BROADBAND POLICIES**

*Photo: Stars Foundation*

# How can the Dominican Republic engender its digital agenda?



- Ensure that it will not simply do “Lip-service” without action.\*
  - Concrete targets for gender equity in ICT access and use should be backed by specific programmes that have been allocated adequate budget, and there should be a plan to collect timely gender-disaggregated data to monitor the target.

\* See <http://webfoundation.org/2015/06/five-barriers-five-solutions-closing-the-gender-gap-in-ict-policy/>

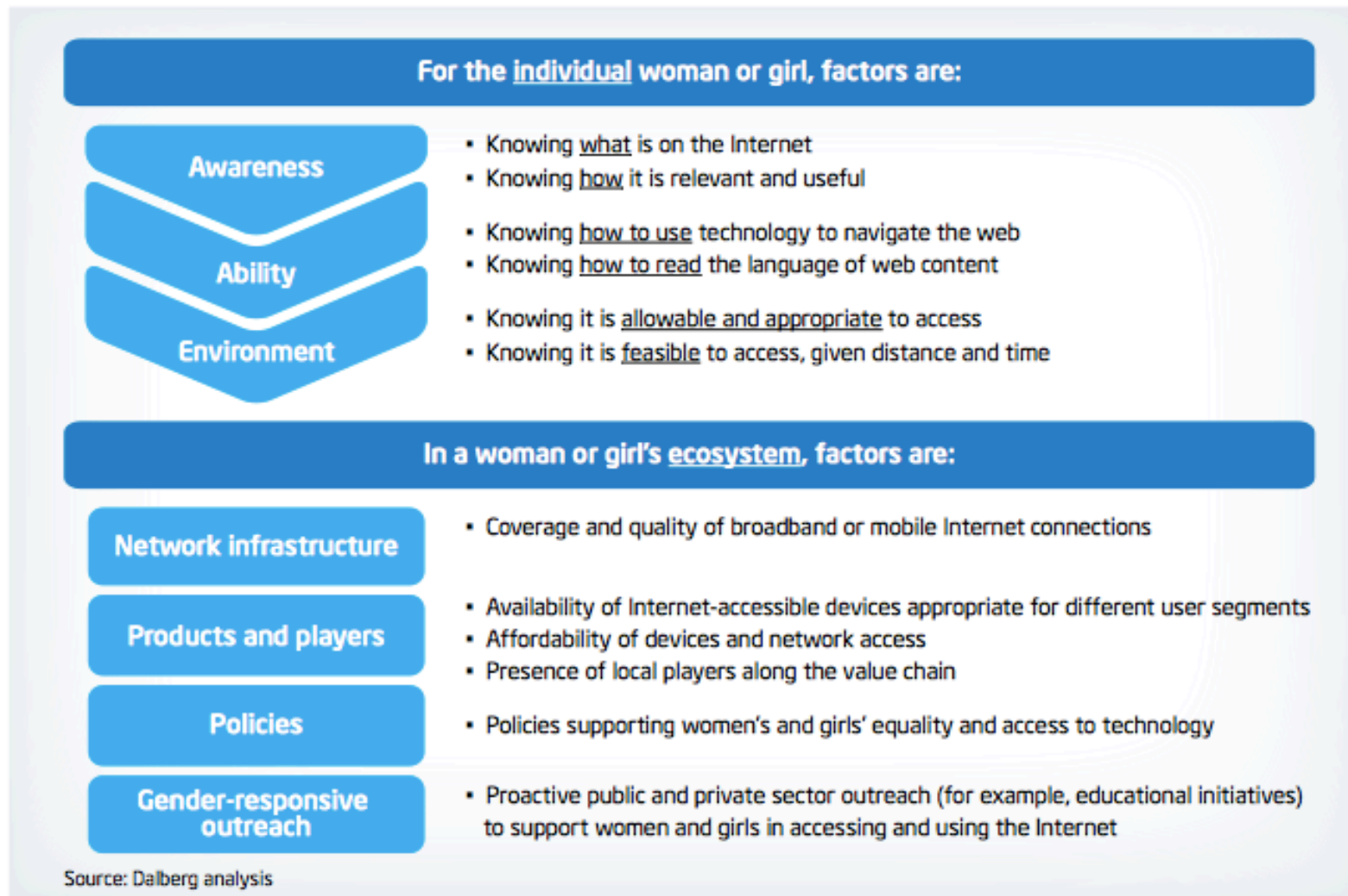




**IMPROVE SEX-DISAGGREGATED ICT  
STATISTICS & MEASUREMENT**

# Measuring is key to inform policy!

Figure 17: Factors that influence Internet access for women and girls



# How can the Dominican Republic engender its digital agenda?



- Women worldwide are under-represented in technology fields. DR is not the exception.
  - National policies should encourage increased access, training and use of the Internet for women and girls. Women should be empowered and encouraged to pursue careers in technology with concrete targets for gender equity in this area. Scholarships and grant programmes should be made available to support women in science and technology training and research, and ICT-related business training programmes should target women to promote and assist women tech entrepreneurs.

\* See <http://webfoundation.org/2015/06/five-barriers-five-solutions-closing-the-gender-gap-in-ict-policy/>



WOMEN OF UGANDA NETWORK



**TAKE STEPS TO BOOST THE  
AFFORDABILITY & USABILITY OF ICT  
PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

Photo: Oran Viriyincy

# How can the Dominican Republic engender its digital agenda?



- Ensure affordable access, especially for women.
  - Specific policies to promote free or low-cost public Internet access, such as budget allocations for Internet access in public libraries, schools and community centers, or provisions for spectrum use by community WiFi options can start to close the gap.

\* See <http://webfoundation.org/2015/06/five-barriers-five-solutions-closing-the-gender-gap-in-ict-policy/>



**IMPROVE RELEVANT & LOCAL  
CONTENT ONLINE**



# How can the Dominican Republic engender its digital agenda?



- Information on Women's Rights must be easily accessible online.
  - Complete information about women's legal rights, reproductive and sexual health rights and services, and services available to victims of gender-based violence should be made available on Web-powered ICT platforms.

\* See <http://webfoundation.org/2015/06/five-barriers-five-solutions-closing-the-gender-gap-in-ict-policy/>



A photograph of two female students in school uniforms sitting at desks in a computer lab. They are viewed from behind, sitting on light blue chairs. The desks have computer monitors and a 'Virtual' logo. The background is a brick wall. The text 'INITIATE AN ACTION PLAN TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESS TO BROADBAND BY 2020' is overlaid in large, bold, black letters at the bottom of the image.

**INITIATE AN ACTION PLAN TO ACHIEVE  
GENDER EQUALITY IN ACCESS TO  
BROADBAND BY 2020**

## 4 Categories of gender references in National Broadband policies:

1. Actions to increase women's ICT skills;
2. Actions to provide equal access to ICTs for women (promoting digital inclusion);
3. Actions to promote female empowerment through broadband and ICTs; and
4. Actions to promote women's role in decision making (government, private sector) through ICT use.

# How can the Dominican Republic engender its digital agenda?



- Women MUST feel safe on the Web.
  - Legislation that defines and penalises ICT-based and online harassment of women and girls can start to close the gap. This could mean that existing laws on gender-based violence are being effectively applied to ICT-based violence, or that new and specific laws are passed to penalise ICT offences. It is important that these laws adequately protect women without encouraging or promoting excessive censorship.



\* See <http://webfoundation.org/2015/06/five-barriers-five-solutions-closing-the-gender-gap-in-ict-policy/>



**Gracias!**

**Sonia Jorge**

**Executive Director**

**Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)**

**[sonia.jorge@webfoundation.org](mailto:sonia.jorge@webfoundation.org)**

**[a4ai.org](http://a4ai.org)**