HOW GENDER IS EMBEDDED IN THE NATIONAL ICT POLICY OF MALAWI

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AGENDA

- Background to the study
- Research problem
- Research methodology
- Summary of results
- Conclusion
- Questions
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

- National ICT policies:
  - Support application and use of ICT in socio-economic development
  - Act as guide for actions and informs practices
  - ICT use has implications for both men and women

- Women form large part of population in Africa
  - Marginalised in access and use of ICT
  - Carry most of the economic burden
  - Few women participate in government decision making

- The need for gender equality in national ICT policy

(Marcelle, 2000; Mansell, 2010; Olatokun, 2008)
GENDER EQUALITY

- Equal opportunities between men and women in society
- Empowerment of the marginalised members of society
- Gender Equality can be streamlined in:
  - Legislations
  - Policies i.e. National ICT policy
  - Development programmes
- Identifying stakeholders, agenda setting, formulating policy, monitoring, evaluation & communication

(Alston, 2006; Bacchi & Eveline, 2010; United Nation, 1997)
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

**Index** | **Value**
---|---
Population | 15.3 Million people (51% females & 49% males)
Life expectancy | 54.3 years
Literacy levels | 74.5%
GDP per capita (PPP) | US$794.00
Fixed line teledensity | 1.3%
Mobile phones teledensity | 25.7%
Internet teledensity | 3.3%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Policy Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PDC1</td>
<td>Malawi Information and Communication (ICT) Policy</td>
<td>June, 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDC2</td>
<td>Malawi National ICT for Development (ICT4D) Policy</td>
<td>July, 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDC3</td>
<td>National ICT Policy: An ICT-led Malawi</td>
<td>February, 2009</td>
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RESEARCH MOTIVATION

Research motivations:
- Limited critical research on ICT policies on context of Africa (Gillwald, 2010)
- Less understanding of gender concerns in national ICT policy

Research questions:
- What is the role of national ICT policy in promoting gender equality?
- To what extent does the national ICT policy supports gender equality issues?

Research objective:
- To examine the role of national ICT policy in promoting gender equality
## Research Methodology

- **Qualitative approach** (Myers, 2009)
- **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)** (Curkier et al., 2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory of Communicative Action (Habermas, 1984)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validity claims</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Testing</strong></td>
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### SUMMARY OF RESULTS I

Content Analysis of the three documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDC1 Policy themes</th>
<th>PDC2 Policy themes</th>
<th>PDC3 Policy themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• ICT human resource</td>
<td>• ICT leadership</td>
<td>• ICT leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enabling environment for ICT</td>
<td>• Human capital</td>
<td>• Human resource development</td>
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<td>• Export oriented ICT industry</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Private sector support</td>
<td>• Health</td>
<td>• ICT in industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investment in technologies</td>
<td>• Human resources development</td>
<td>• ICT infrastructure development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Information security and law</td>
<td>• Governance</td>
<td>• ICT in growth sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Institutional and legal frameworks</td>
<td>• ICT industry</td>
<td>• ICT in communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ICT standards and best practices</td>
<td>• ICT infrastructure development</td>
<td>• Legal &amp; regulatory frameworks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implementation institutions and plans</td>
<td>• ICT in growth sectors</td>
<td>• International Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoting Access to ICT</td>
<td>• Legal and regulatory frameworks</td>
<td>• Universal access of ICTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gender in development and use of ICT</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Partnerships in implementation</td>
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**Highlighted Themes:**
- ICT in Communities
SUMMARY OF RESULTS II

Themes in first and second versions of National ICT policy:

- **Commitment to gender:**
  - Promoting equitable access and use of ICT among women, men, boys and girls

- **Community participation:**
  - Supporting gender equality in ICT initiatives

- **Capacity building:**
  - Skills development to empower communities
CONCLUSION

- Streamlining gender equality in national ICT policy
- **Advocacy:** Awareness of gender concerns amongst policy makers
- **Gender inclusion:** Experts on gender in the process for national ICT policy
- **Gender evaluation and monitoring:** Assessing gender equality in the process of national ICT policy
Thank you for your time
SELECTED LIST OF REFERENCES