

# **Analysis of the uses of information and communication technology for gender empowerment and sustainable poverty alleviation in Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study presents information and communication technology (ICT) as a phenomenon that fits into the globalization project of empowering gender and sustainable poverty alleviation in Nigeria. Poverty amid plenty is the greatest challenge facing Nigeria. Men and women in poverty use diverse coping mechanisms conditioned by their access to various support systems. While women traditionally have access to the family network, the men utilize public and community systems, from which women are excluded. Hence the social dimension of poverty is largely a gender issue and gender is a key issue in the ICT profession with the greatest weight of poverty been borne by women household heads and children from poor homes.

This article is a descriptive analysis of the use of ICT for gender empowerment and sustainable poverty alleviation in Nigeria. It describes the roles that ICTs have played in the lives of the poor and the ones yet untapped in Nigeria, and how ICTs can assist women in addressing the chronic issues of widespread poverty. The result of the study using Likert rank order scale shows unemployment, income inequality, polygamy, business failure, sickness and environmental degradation as the main causes of poverty in Nigeria and sustainable poverty alleviation is unlikely to be achieved without the proper use of ICT. Using ICTs to support poverty reduction is found to be possible, practical and affordable if Nigerian government acknowledges its role as a major employer and user of ICT beginning with a development commitment that targets poverty alleviation. In addition, the development and access to social networks through low-cost ICTs, telecentres will enhance timely access to accurate and reliable information by the poor. ICTs will not only empower the gender but sustain poverty alleviation programmes which in time past have failed in Nigeria through provision of new and enhanced opportunities for participation in the process of self-determination, economic, social, educational and cultural advancement and employment beyond the scope of traditional institutions and any forms of governance.

## **Key words**

Information Communication Technology (ICT), Gender, poverty, sustainability, usability and Nigeria