REGIONAL UNESCO CHAIR

Women, Science and Technology in Latin America

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Gender and ICT:
Unveiling social representations in
the process of appropriation and change

FLACSO
Latin American Institute for Postgraduate Studies
in the Social Sciences
Buenos Aires - Argentina

FLACSO
ARGENTINA

UNESCO
United Nations Education,
Science, and Culture Organization

Gloria Bonder

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CÁTEDRA REGIONAL UNESCO
Mujer, Ciencia y Tecnología en América Latina

Was created into 2001, as an outcome of **UNESCO Regional Form, "Women, Science and Technology in Latin America: diagnoses and strategies" Bariloche – Argentina, 1998**
-One of six events hosted by UNESCO in preparation of the **Budapest World Science Conference-**

Headquarters

**Gender, Society & Policy Area
FLACSO – Argentina
-Latin American Institute for Postgraduate
Studies in Social Sciences-**
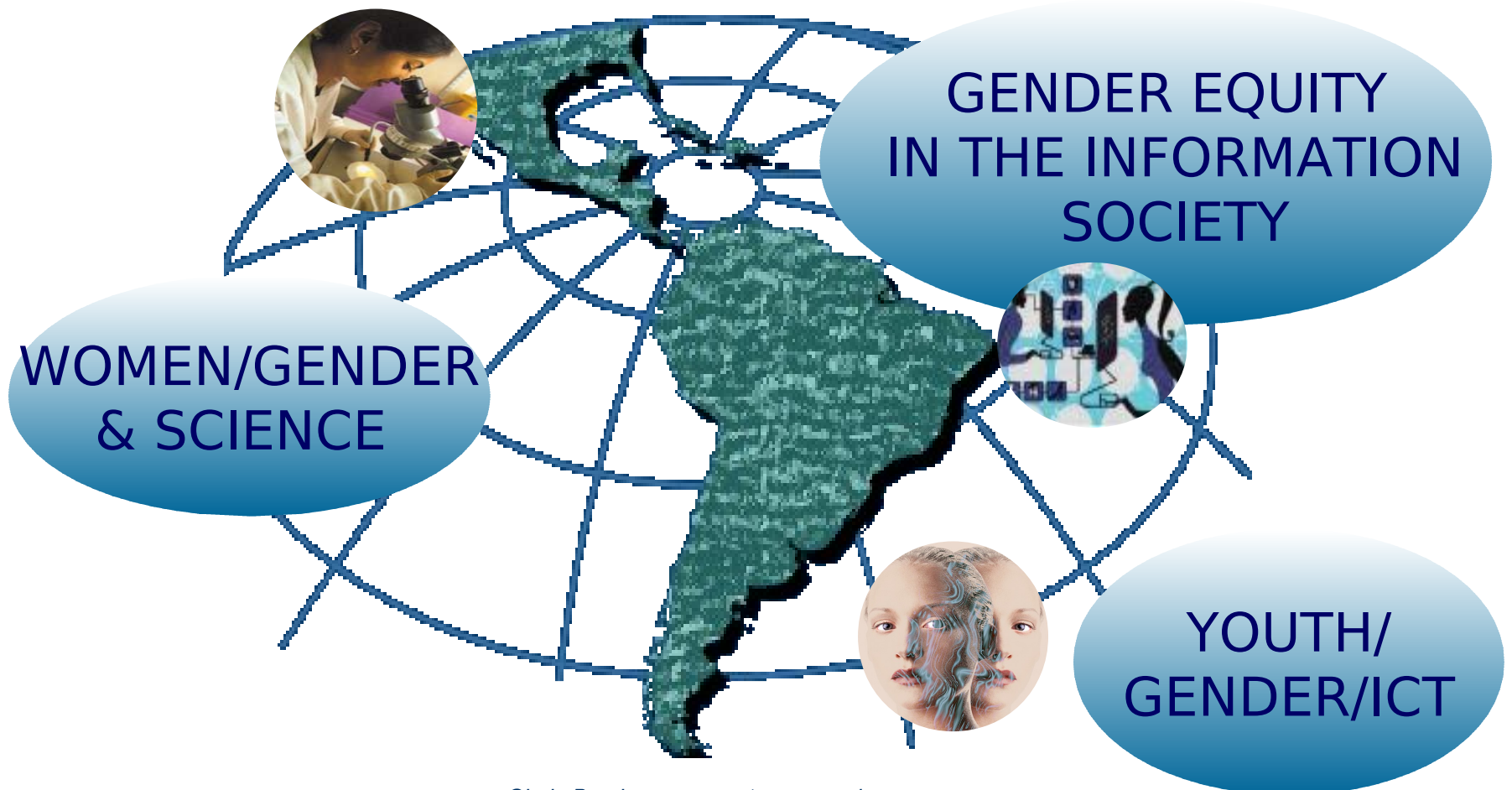
FLACSO ARGENTINA

UNI TWIN

**UNITWIN NETWORK OF UNESCO CHAIRS:
WOMEN, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND WATER:**

Sudan, Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Costa de Marfil, Marruecos y Regional América Latina

UNESCO

BRIDGING RESEARCH AND POLICIES – INNOVATION – NETWORKING

GENDER EQUITY
IN THE INFORMATION
SOCIETY

WOMEN/GENDER
& SCIENCE

YOUTH/
GENDER/ICT

ICT IN LATIN AMERICA: BASIC DATA

- **76% of LAC population is located in urban areas.**

- **Rapid socio-economic changes are increasingly affected by, and dependent on ICT use. However only a minority of citizens benefit from this progress.**

- **Few countries have been very active and successful in embracing new and emerging technologies** (Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica:"technology engines")

- **Key ICT developments:**

    - Electronic government services
    - Adoption of ICTs in the educational system
    - Adoption of ICTs by SMEs
    - Use of electronic commerce

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS

World Regions	% Population (Penetration)	Usage % of World	Usage Growth 2000-2005
➤ AFRICA	2.6 %	2.3 %	423.9 %
➤ ASIA	9.9 %	35.6 %	218.7 %
➤ EUROPE	36.1 %	28.5 %	177.5 %
➤ MIDDLE EAST	9.6 %	1.8 %	454.2 %
➤ NORTH AMERICA	68.6 %	22.2 %	110.3 %
➤ LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN	14.4 %	7.8 %	342.5 %
➤ OCEANIA / AUSTRALIA	52.6 %	1.7 %	134.6 %
WORLD TOTAL	15.7 %	100.0 %	183.4 %

Source: http://www.internetworldstats.com/

Differences among LAC countries. % of population that are Internet Users

Chile	20%
Argentina	10%
Brazil	7.74%
Mexico	3.38%
Paraguay	0.98%
Bolivia	0.36%

1998 – 6 million users

2004 – 72 million users

Users are concentrated in urban areas, big and medium enterprises, medium to high incomes

FEMALE INTERNET USERS

Country	Value
United States 1a	51
Canada	51
Hongkong, China 1	49
Thailand 1b	49
Iceland 1a	49
Australia 2a	48
Sweden 1	48
Chile 1b	47
Singapore 1b	47
New Zealand 2a	46
Finland	46
Korea (Rep.)	45
Ireland	45
Denmark	45
Czech Republic 3	45
Taiwan, China 2a	44
Spain 1	43
Norway 2a	43
Austria 2a	43
Argentina 1b	43
United Kingdom 2a	43
Luxembourg 1a	42
Venezuela 1	42
Brazil 2a	42
Poland 3	42
Mexico 3	42
Israel 2a	42
Japan 2a	41
Philippines 2	41
Netherlands 2a	41
South Africa 2a	40
China 1	39
Belgium 2a	39
Switzerland 1	39
France 2a	39
Italy 2a	37
Germany 2a	37
Malaysia 3	36
Indonesia 1b	35

38% of latin american internet users are women: The gender gaps are generally declining. However it remains large in older age groups, and in the rural areas. (Bonder, Gloria, 2004)

Women represent 9% of medium and high level jobs in information technologies industries . They are 28.5% of computer programmers and 26.9% of systems analysits . However they represent 85% of data entry workers. (UNIFEM, 2000)

Note: 1=National source. 2=Nielsen//NetRatings. 3=TNS. a=2001. b=2000.
Source: International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

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CONDITIONS OF APPROPRIATION OF ICT

- ICTs are not merely tools or neutral resources that can improve *per se* the social economic and cultural conditions as they are.

> We need to "submerge technology within the socio-historical realm"
> Cornelius Castoriadis

- In order to

  - Elucidate the **imaginary social significations** through which virtual technology institutes new meaning of reality, subjectivity, time, space, notions of future, power and social relations.

  - **Understand the processes** by which they are incorporated because of and with the promises they generate; the hope and confidence in their power as well as the fear and a sense of threat provoked by their power.

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GENDER IN ACTION

Virtual Courses & Workshops

Género en acción en proyectos con jóvenes y TIC. Fundamentos y Estrategias para la Sociedad del Conocimiento

Creators in the Knowledge Society

Multimedia Resources

Alice in the Land of Science & Technology

Media, Culture and Education: Gendered Dialogues

"IN THE NAME OF GENDER":

Ways in which projects have understood and applied the gender equality approach

Some women in the project as beneficiaries or staff.

Equal number of men and women among participants and/or staff.

A "gender expert" in the staff or as consultant.

Gender equity integrated in human rights, citizenship and/or development visions and goals

SOCIAL IMAGINARY OF THE ROLE OF ICT IN YOUTH PROJECTS:
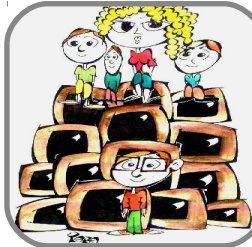
Visions of project leaders

"Social Rescue"
Access and uses of ICT can prevent youth "at risk" from ultimately falling into poverty and social exclusion.

"Springboard" Tools
ICT literacy triggers entry into the labor market and serves as an avenue for successful professional development.

"Citizenship-building" and strengthening of Social Bonds
Access to ICTs as part of a comprehensive program intended to foster the empowerment of youth and its organization, interaction and active participation in the community.

What Do Young Men and Women Look For in ICT-Related Projects?

"To Communicate or Disappear"
To broaden their interaction and communication networks; be part of a youth culture.

"A Passport"
To increase their autonomy and their employment and economic opportunities. *"Technologies are not a window of opportunities; they are a door. People are willing to make sacrifices and give what they have to offer so as to have a door opened that will change their lives forever."*

"Low-Cost Certification"
To develop skills that will qualify them in the job market through a low-cost, short-term training.

"The Top of the Wave"
To participate in the construction of the " future".
"Today, anyone without a good command of technology is an outcast; it is not about being a market outcast but a world outcast."

OUTLOOKS OF ADULTS AND YOUTH ON THE ACCESS AND USES OF ICTS IN YOUTH PROGRAMS

PROJECTS LEADERS

1. IT literacy should:

   ▪ Avoid social and economic exclusion
   ▪ Provide tools and certifications to access better job opportunities.
   ▪ Reduce social risk ("get youngsters out of the streets").
   ▪ Prevent migration from their communities
   ▪ Further skills and encourage an entrepreneurial attitude

2. Create a supportive environment, sense of belonging and networking.

   ▪ Expand means and channels for communication and expression.

YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Preferences: have access to Internet, e-mail and chat for interaction and communication with peers –virtual and face-to-face (integration into a youth culture).

2. Primary interests:
   ✓ Entertainment (music, sports, videogames)
   ✓ Improve school assignments
   ✓ Job and career opportunities.

   However they did not hold great expectations for accessing the labor market through ICT literacy , it might help but …

GENDER EQUITY IN IS/KS: CONCEPTUAL & ACTION FRAMEWORKS

⇨ **Democracy and Human Rights**

⇨ **Human/Sustainable Development**

⇨ **Inclusion, Social & Gender Justice**

⇨ **Struggle Against Poverty**

⇨ **Citizenship, Political Participation**

⇨ **Cultural / Technological Production by Women/from a Women's Perspective.**

Which gender equality rhetorics are used in ICT policies?

- **"Travel Metaphors"** (Hege Skjeie, 2005) or the myth of **"Natural Progress"**

Linear optimism, patience, denial of on going power conflicts, lack of recognition of contextual changes and diversity within gender groups
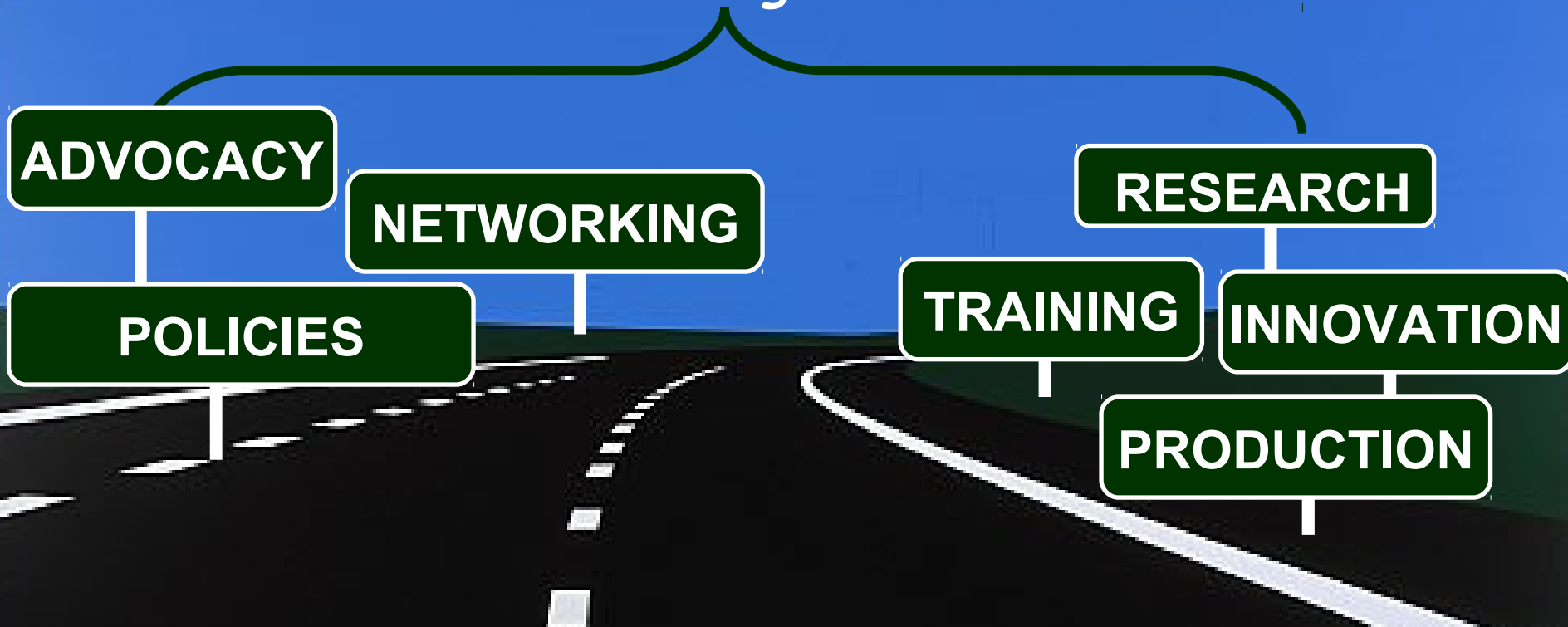
ACCESS ➡ USES ➡ FULL PARTICIPATION???

- MIANSTREAMING: ABRACADABRA

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY: FROM USERS AND CONSUMERS TO CITIZENS AND CREATORS
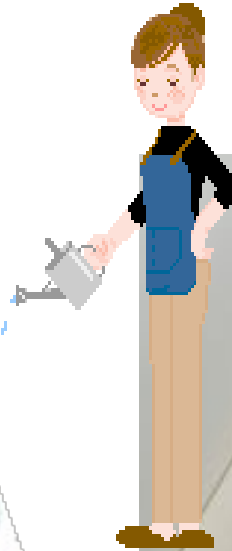
Through

ADVOCACY

NETWORKING

POLICIES

RESEARCH

TRAINING

INNOVATION

PRODUCTION

Symbols and metaphors matters: Seeds and nutrients for enrichening the Knowledge Society

(…) the alleged triumph of high-technologies is not matched by a leap of the human imagination to create new images and representations.(…)

Unless our culture can take up the challenge and invent suitably new forms of expression, this technology is useless.

"Cyberfeminism with a difference", Rosi Braidotti

Solidarity

Creativity

Critical Thinking

Empower ment

Caring

Imagination

KS

Networking

Decision Making

Women's Rights

Voices

TOWARDS...

Innovation, engaged participation, challenges, solidarity

Networks and Policies

Gender S&T Research

High quality education

Creators in the Knowledge Society

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