



# SUPPORT INITIATIVES THAT INVOLVE (MALE/FEMALE/FAMILY) GATEKEEPERS



Men and other (female) family members are often the decision makers on whether women and girls use ICT; they have a crucial role in shaping overall perceptions and behaviors, including awareness and mitigation of risks. Many or most of the information sources in low- and middle-income countries — ICT experts, community leaders, and news broadcasters — are men. If these influencers do not buy into the benefits of ICT and the Internet for women and girls, they may amplify the risks or even block access. By including these groups and marketing to them as well as to the intended female beneficiaries, programs can address the gendered barriers to ICT access and use, and help mitigate the risks.

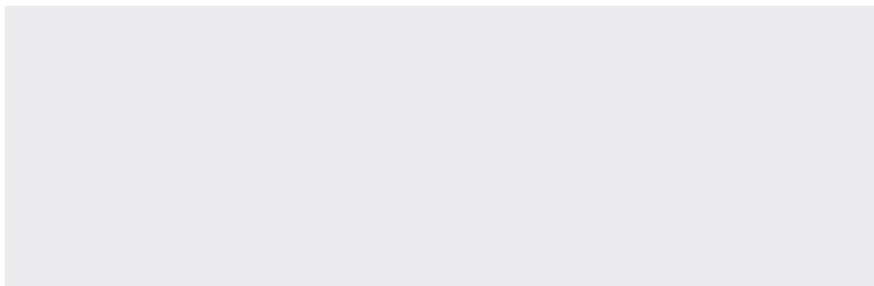
There are several different activities that USAID can undertake in this area, whether by tailoring activities specifically to gatekeepers or by including them in the programs for women.

## SUPPORT ICT OUTREACH AND DIGITAL LITERACY INITIATIVES FOR MEN AND OTHER FAMILY GATEKEEPERS

### CHECKLIST FOR ACTIONS

- Include male/female/family gatekeepers in ICT outreach and digital literacy initiatives, including discussions of what the risks are, how they (as well as their wives or daughters) can stay safe online, and how risks can be mitigated. These initiatives can help overcome barriers by empowering men and helping them feel included.

How are our activities including male/female/family gatekeepers in ICT outreach and digital literacy initiatives?



### HOW DOES THIS LINK TO WEEGE?

#### ADS 205 Domains

- Access and Control
- Cultural Norms and Beliefs

#### WEEGE Principles

- 4 – Engage Men and Boys
- 5 – Collaborate
- 7 – Address Gender-based Violence
- 10 – Embrace Emerging Innovations

- **Frame these initiatives as helping men take an active role in navigating, preventing risks, and “protecting” their female relatives, to help reduce men’s concerns about women and girls going online. If they see that the Internet is not as “dangerous” as they perhaps believed, and that there are protections in place for their female relatives, this may lessen men’s belief that they need to control what women do online.**

How are our activities helping men take an active role in navigating, preventing risks, and “protecting” their female relatives?

- **Work with influential men in the community. This can have a ripple effect; because people tend to trust word-of-mouth information, the other men in the community may start to relax their own concerns, and therefore their control.**

How are our activities working with influential men in the community?



### WEEGE IN ACTION



#### **| Helping men see the value of ICT for women**

In India, women’s level of access and use of mobile and the Internet is much lower than men’s, largely because of social norms. Many men believe that their wives or daughters should not have their own mobile phones, often due to safety concerns or fear of what they might be doing online. The mobile operator [Telenor](#) addressed these gendered norms by selling two paired SIMs with special tariff plans, one to be used by a woman and the other by a male household member.

This program addressed cultural barriers by actively training men, encouraging them to see the value of women having a mobile phone, and creating incentives for the male users. It resulted in a huge uptake in female mobile users: 33 percent of the female customers were first-time mobile owners.

## ENGAGE WITH GATEKEEPERS AS WELL AS WOMEN: HIGHLIGHT BOTH BENEFITS AND RISKS

### CHECKLIST FOR ACTIONS

- Support marketing campaigns that specifically target men and other family gatekeepers, and that highlight how women's and girls' use of ICT and the Internet can produce tangible benefits that outweigh the risks. For example, campaigns can highlight specific benefits to the household, such as income for women through online freelancing, which can help to counteract exaggerated safety concerns or objections.

How are our activities marketing to men and other family gatekeepers, highlighting how women's and girls' use of ICT and the Internet can produce tangible benefits that outweigh the risks?

- Promote all services and trainings to men and families, rather than only to women, and recognize men as playing an active role in their family's future.

How are we promoting services and training to men and families as well as women?

- Develop products and services that can obviously benefit men as well as women.

How are we developing products and services that are beneficial to men as well as women?



### HOW DOES THIS LINK TO WEEGE?

#### ADS 205 Domains

- Access and Control
- Cultural Norms and Beliefs

#### WEEGE Principles

- 3 – Amplify Women's Voices
- 4 – Engage Men and Boys
- 5 – Collaborate
- 7 – Address Gender-based Violence
- 8 – Partner with Women
- 10 – Embrace Emerging Innovations

- Support initiatives through community organizations (for example, women’s organizations) that target the local community; engage with them to understand their concerns about any risks, and work with them on how to mitigate potential conflicts or tensions in the community. Getting the community’s buy-in is crucial to promote women’s and girls’ access to and use of mobile and the Internet.

How are our activities supporting, collaborating, and engaging with initiatives through community organizations?

- Work directly with community leaders to create a compelling case for women’s ICT use. Under what conditions would women be allowed to use the Internet? How can this allowance be expanded over time? Are there technologies or policies that can uniquely support these use cases?

How are our activities working directly with community leaders to create a compelling case for women’s ICT use?



### WEEGE IN ACTION



#### Marketing to men

In Bangladesh, far fewer women than men own a mobile phone or access the Internet, often because of social norms and safety concerns. In promoting their mHealth service for their intended audience of mothers, [Apon jon \(MAMA\)](#) marketed to male household members who were the decision makers, to gain buy-in from husbands to allow their wives to access and pay for the content. They did this through targeted advertizing for

the whole family, not just for mothers, as well as by training community health workers who worked with fathers as well as mothers. This type of engagement often has a big impact on male (and female) uptake of any training or service.

# DOCUMENTS IN THE GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE RISK MITIGATION TECHNICAL NOTE



## HOW TO USE THIS GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE RISK MITIGATION TECHNICAL NOTE



## UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS OF ICT TO WOMEN AND GIRLS



## TOOL 1: PRACTICAL RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- » STRATEGY 1: UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT AND THE RISKS: “FIRST, DO NO HARM”
- » STRATEGY 2: INVEST IN, SUPPORT, AND SHARE INSIGHTS ON DIGITAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT MITIGATE RISKS
- » STRATEGY 3: SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN ICT OUTREACH AND DIGITAL LITERACY INITIATIVES
- » STRATEGY 4: SUPPORT INITIATIVES THAT INVOLVE (MALE/FEMALE/FAMILY) GATEKEEPERS
- » STRATEGY 5: RAISE AWARENESS
- » STRATEGY 6: COLLABORATE AND WORK WITH OTHER NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
- » STRATEGY 7: STRENGTHEN INTERNAL AND PARTNER CAPACITY FOR RISK MITIGATION AND SAFEGUARDING



## RESOURCES 1–3: KEY DOCUMENTS