Tech4Families

The Context

- 60% of the female population in Northern Nigeria does not have access to the internet or smartphones.

Family dynamics dominate women and girls' access to technology

- 55% of men do not want their wives to use the internet

- 61% of fathers discourage their daughters' use.

(Research by CITAD – Center for Information Technology & Development)

Problem

Morality, fear of moral decline and concerns of stepping out of their accepted gender roles used as a justification for restricting women and girls' access to technology and the internet, men felt it was their 'duty' to protect women and girls from the corrupting influence of the internet

70% of women and girls said they had little or no digital skills. 50% said they had no support at home to access or use digital technology, 39% of women said the fear of community backlash prevents them from using the internet.

40% of men and boys were not supportive at all of their wives / daughters using digital technology. 50% did not think it was beneficial at all for women and girls to use digital technology, 80% agreed or strongly agreed that a girl who uses the internet is more likely to bring shame on her family

Solution

Tech4Families: a family-centered approach to social norms change focused on an innovative curriculum and radio program

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The intervention

Community Level:
-   Radio drama & discussion program

Family Level:
- 14 family sessions for 15 families following intentionally designed curriculum

- 2 adult & 2 youth digital literacy sessions

Goal & Objectives:

Reduce normative and patriarchal barriers to women and girls' access to technology by:

Working with **the entire family unit** to increase digital literacy skills and promote women and girls use of and access to technology.

Generate **community awareness** of the benefits of women and girls' access to technology.

Create a case study that proves an approach to closing the gender digital divide centered on **social norms**.

"I didn't think we were going to do this much, in fact we got way beyond what we expected ….we listened to radio programs, and discussed the content, carried out take home assignments where we discuss things at home, and we included other members of the community". (Maryam, Daughter).

"Every time we go back home after the session, people rush to come and hear what we learned from the session. We sit together with my neighbors and discuss this. Even my children tell me about how people ask them about the program in school

"We sit together as family to discuss issues, contrary to when we were not part of this program …this started when we started doing our take home activities together, it provided an environment where we can discuss and have arguments together in a respectful manner". (Abdullahi, family head)

What next?

- We have a tested and proved curriculum and approach that we want to scale.

- Our plan is to embed the curriculum and approach in existing structures, including tech colleges / schools / religious leader networks etc for broader and more sustainable dissemination

- We would also focus more on the radio and community diffusion aspect (which we have evidence can lead to wider societal change)

Feedback & Impact

"My advice to my fellow parents is to allow their children have access to the internet. As a father or mother, you have a responsibility to teach your children how to use internet in a positive way. I personally teach my daughter how to use internet. Kudos to Farar Tattabara for this very educative program". Radio listener