



Equal Access International

In Nigeria, millions of women are prohibited from using the internet or smartphones due to gender stereotypes and religious beliefs, contributing to gender inequality and exacerbating poverty.

Equal Access International, with a grant from the [WomenConnect Challenge](#), USAID’s global call to close the digital gender divide, launched the #Tech4Families program to combat negative norms and promote social and religious justifications for women’s use of the internet.

Driven by cultural taboos and negative gender norms, the majority of Muslim men in Northern Nigeria do not approve of their wives or daughters being online due to the “immoral temptations” of the internet. By adopting a whole family approach, the program was able to connect with multiple members of the family—including fathers who are often the decision-makers and heads of household—to help change the narrative around internet usage. The program highlighted the use of the internet for education and entrepreneurship opportunities, topics traditionally viewed as more morally appropriate for Muslim women.

 Featuring well-known actors, the program produced a 12-episode radio drama, a popular form of entertainment in Nigeria. Airing on two major radio stations with a reach of nine million listeners, the compelling, entertaining, and educational show recounted the stories of three families and showcased the positive impact technology had on their lives, while actively combating common misperceptions and negative gender stereotypes.

An on-air discussion with local leaders, tech experts, and religious clerics followed each episode to help reinforce positive messages about families, including women accessing technology.

 In conjunction with the radio drama, #Tech4Families designed a 16-session curriculum for families in Kano, the second largest city in Nigeria. Families met twice a month to reflect on the radio content and learn new skills, from setting up an email account to effectively communicating as a family.

#Tech4Families favorably shifted attitudes towards technology and gender norms. After participating in the program, families learned to use the internet, allowed women in the home to use technology, and advocated for better technology access.