



Photo Credit: Equal Access International


## 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.

Under the [White House-led Women's Global Development and Prosperity \(W-GDP\) Initiative](#), and with a grant from the [WomenConnect Challenge](#), USAID's global call to close the digital gender divide, [Equal Access International](#) (EAI) launched the #Tech4Families program to combat negative norms and promote social and religious justifications for women's use of the internet.


In northern Nigeria, morality and fear of moral decline is frequently cited as justification for restricting women's access to technology and the internet. By adopting a whole family approach, EAI's programming 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 messaging about family life, including the freedom for women to access and utilize 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.