

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ONLINE

REPORT CARD



MÉXICO

**Measuring Progress,
Driving Action**



DERECHOSDIGITALES

Derechos Humanos y Tecnología en América Latina

MÉXICO



52%

AFFORDABILITY



SCORE: 7

While the Alliance for Affordable Internet measured that 1GB of mobile data costs 2.03% of the average income, when taking the deep inequalities present in Mexico by household income level, internet access for lower income households represents 13.6% of their monthly total expenditure, whereas for those with higher monthly income, it represents only 0.6%. This gap widens when we take into consideration that women, on average, earn 16.7% less than men. According to civil society, it is unlikely that the "Mexico Conectado" flagship program effectively contributed to closing the digital divide. Despite new users, the digital gap remains because the majority of internet spots were set up in very densely connected areas. Connectivity increased but this is due to a methodological change, and not necessarily to the program itself.

**INTERNET ACCESS & WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT**



SCORE: 6

According to the survey by the National Institute of Statistic and Geography in 2016, in Mexico 51.5% of women and 48.5% of men had access to the internet. Nonetheless, we do not know through which equipment or infrastructure women have access, the quality and data amount, nor their capacity of access to information, knowledge and learning processes. For civil society, the statistics presented by the Mexican government are problematic because a recent change in methodology makes data non-comparable. Furthermore, the aggregated data does not reflect other variables like income, education or rurality, where only 27.9% of women have access to the internet compared to 33.7% of men.

DIGITAL SKILLS & EDUCATION



SCORE: 3

Only 33% and 48% of primary and secondary schools in Mexico have at least one computer with internet connection respectively, and the gap is broad between rural and urban areas. Almost 15 million tablets and computers have been given out by the government, but neither teachers nor students know how to use them. On the other hand, the panorama is not positive for women: they only comprise 22% of engineers at the highest level of the National Researcher System. For local professionals in the tech scene, women represent only 10% of the entire industry. More can still be done to advance women in technology and engineering.



SCORE: **5**

According to the World Bank data, 2.8% of women have access to mobile financial services, however, there are no national statistics on the topic. The government provides some information on sexual and reproductive rights, but there is no official statistic regarding how many people access it and use it online. The country could increase its score by collecting official statistics on both indicators and by stopping to promote campaigns that seek to discourage digital sexual expressions, like sexting, instead of providing adequate information on the subject.



SCORE: **5**

There are no institutional or legal mechanisms that allow women to effectively report online violence. Neither training nor clear guidelines are provided to the police or judiciary. However, Mexico does have robust provisions for the protection of personal data even though they still lack a gender perspective.

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP: A 5 POINT ACTION PLAN

- 1 EVALUATE MEXICO CONECTADO FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE.** Mexico Conectado, the country's flagship programme for digital empowerment, must be evaluated from a gender perspective, and a concrete strategy with clear targets for furthering women's empowerment must be designed. Data on women's internet access and use should be collected annually factoring the urban/rural divides along with income and education levels. Furthermore, methodological changes must be communicated with absolute transparency to minimise problems that arise from non-comparable datasets over time.
- 2 END ONLINE GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.** Urgently develop a training and awareness strategy on digital gender based violence for law enforcement and judicial authorities. Different parties (police, legal system representatives) should be trained on how to respond to ICT-based harassment and on relevant legislation. Government must ensure that the proper legal tools exist to prosecute and punish gender based violence committed online, while respecting online freedom of expression.
- 3 IMPROVE PUBLIC INTERNET INFRASTRUCTURE.** The Government should prioritise the construction and modernisation of internet infrastructure as well as legally enable community networks to ensure 100% network coverage, prioritising rural and non-urban areas, where women are disadvantaged the most.
- 4 PRIORITISE DIGITAL EDUCATION IN ALL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES.** Invest in digital skills training programmes in primary, secondary and tertiary schools. The government should provide free or subsidised digital skills and empowerment training in all schools and communities that go beyond giving out hardware, and instead incorporate holistic approaches to empowering all stakeholders with requisite digital skills.
- 5 ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO WOMEN PURSUING STEM EDUCATION AND CAREERS.** Investigate the barriers to women participating in STEM - right from attaining education and joining STEM-related workforce/industries. With such results in mind, establish training programmes focused on the needs of all Mexican women, aiming to promote STEM careers with a gendered perspective as well as foster access and use of the internet as a tool for the full enjoyment of women's political, civil, economic and social rights.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



The United Nations recently made gender-equitable access to information and communications technologies (ICTs) central to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which set the global development agenda until 2030.

Why? ICTs are powerful. They can help to deliver improved healthcare, quality education for all, financial inclusion, more accountable government, and much more. In adopting the SDGs, all countries have pledged to prioritise universal Internet access, and to use ICTs to empower women.

But much hard work lies ahead if we are to translate this vision into reality. A formidable gender gap in Internet access, digital skills and online rights exists - our Women's Rights Online research shows that in many communities, women are 50% less likely than men to be online and 30-50% less likely

to use the Internet for economic and political empowerment. Women face many barriers - including high costs, lack of know-how, and a scarcity of relevant and empowering content - as well as social and legal obstacles to speaking freely and privately online.

The Web Foundation and partners have prepared these gender audits to help countries assess what they need to do to overcome the gender digital divide. Derechos Digitales has taken the lead, in consultation with other national stakeholders, on identifying concrete steps that government can take in the next year to address the challenges and gaps identified. We hope that this report card and action plan will spark debate and galvanise policy change.

A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY:

We based our scores on 14 simple indicators for which reliable empirical evidence exists, and grading was done in the second quarter of 2016. See the accompanying overview for a description of the indicators and sources used. A full methodology is available on our website.

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