
**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY TELECENTRES IN PROMOTING
RURAL WOMEN FARMERS' ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL
INFORMATION AND MARKETS: A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF
CHINYUNYU COMMUNITY MULTIPURPOSE TELECENTRE
(‘CCMT’) IN CHONGWE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA**

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Abstract

The concept of community multipurpose telecentres is used by most developing countries, including Zambia, as a strategy to respond to the perpetual lack of access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the totally neglected or underserved rural communities which are home to a great majority of women. Access to and

usage of ICT facilities provide a ideal opportunity for rural women to realize their fundamental right to information in order to improve their individual livelihoods. This

study critically evaluates the Chinyunyu Community Multipurpose Telecentre's (CCMT's) role in promoting access to agricultural information and markets for women farmers in Chinyunyu, Zambia. The study gathered empirical data from purposive and randomly sampled respondents using in-depth interviews, individual interviews and

Focused Group Discussions (FGDs). The findings showed that the CCMT stemmed from the idea pioneered by the Farmers Study Circles (FSCs) of setting up a farmers' information centre to help organic farmers' access to agriculture-related information.

The design and implementation took a general participatory approach. The rural women farmers which the project was originally intended to benefit, however, were excluded from its planning, design and implementation stages and the services currently offered do not meet their needs. The project is considered foreign and they have no sense of belonging to or ownership of it. Only two of the 12 members of the CCMT board are women and there are no women represented at management level; the election and hiring of members is not gender-sensitive; and the services are not women-friendly. There are no monitoring or evaluation mechanisms. The researcher's conclusion, from a gender perspective point of view, is that the CCMT should provide services which consider the specific context of women farmers' needs and environment in order for it to benefit them and contribute meaningfully to their individual lives.

Finally, a detailed action plan includes suggested recommendations to the problem, including: the formulation of a universal access policy and review of the current ICT policy/legislation, gender-sensitive implementation of community telecentre projects and gender-awareness campaigns to sensitize all actors in the ICT industry in Zambia.

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Declaration

I, Henry KUPALELWA declare that this report entitled:

The Role of Community Telecentres in promoting Rural Women Farmers' Access to Agricultural Information and Markets: A Critical Evaluation of Chinyunyu Community Multipurpose Telecentre in Chongwe District, Zambia.

Is an original work based on my field findings and has never been submitted to any other institution of learning for any type of academic qualification than the University of Zimbabwe.

.....

Author's Signature

.....

Date

.....

Supervisor's Signature

.....

Date

Dedication

To my wife Maureen and the children

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List of Acronyms

APC WNSP	Association for Progressive Communications Women's Networking Support Programme
CCMT	Chinyunyu Community Multipurpose Telecentre
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DFID	Department for International Development
DIHR	Danish Institute for Human Rights
FGDs	Focused Group Discussions
FSCs	Farmers Study Circles
ITC	International Trade Centre
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
KATC	Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOCC	Non-Governmental Organization Coordinating Council
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunity Threats
UAP	Universal Access Programme
UN DAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society
ZICTA	Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority

Definitions

Gender Division of Labour	The socially determined ideas and practices which define what roles and activities are deemed appropriate for women and men.
Gender Equality and Equity	Gender equality denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere. Gender equity denotes the equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources.
Gender Needs	Shared and prioritized needs identified by women that arise from their common experiences as a gender.
Gender Training	A facilitated process of developing awareness and capacity on gender issues, to bring about personal or organizational change for gender equality.
Sex and Gender	Sex refers to the biological characteristics that categorize someone as either female or male; whereas gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male.
Women's Empowerment	A 'bottom-up' process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it.
Women's Human Rights	The recognition that women's rights are human rights and that women experience injustices solely because of their gender.

Source: DFID 2000

List of Human Rights Instruments and National Legislation/Policy cited

Human Rights Instruments

African (Banjul) Charter on Human and People's Rights
Beijing Platform for Action +15
Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development

National Legislation/Policy

Constitution of Zambia
Information and Communication Technologies Act
Information and Communication Technologies Policy

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

“Marginalization of half a nation’s talent just does not make good sense.”

(Harding and McGregor 1996)

The question is: Is participation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) projects implementation inclusive? Are the women actively involved in the processes? What measures are being put in place to ensure women are integrated in these processes? Are we going anywhere? What can we do? These are challenging questions which cannot be answered properly without someone putting on gender-lenses in order to perceive ICT initiatives from a gender perspective. The unequal access to ICTs exacerbates the marginalization of women especially rural women due to legal and administrative barriers, institutional norms, exclusion from public sphere because of cultural beliefs and unequal power arrangements in society.

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) adapted a Plan of Action where connecting villages with ICT and establishing community multipurpose telecentres were among its indicative targets (WSIS 2003b). However, these ICT village-targeted developmental projects pay inadequate attention to incorporating gender analysis¹ during the planning, design, implementation; monitoring and evaluation phases (Rathgeber, 2002). Women are still being marginalized even when it comes to the establishment of community telecentres in rural communities thereby denying them access to vital information which can be used to improve their livelihoods.

It is against this background that I chose to undertake this study on the role of community telecentres in promoting rural women farmers’ access to agricultural information and markets in order to critically evaluate how the CCMT in Chongwe district of Zambia incorporates

¹ Gender Analysis is the systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify understand and redress inequities based on gender.

women's concerns. I argue based on the concept of moving away from gender-neutral approach to community telecentre design and adopt a more gendered approach that would incorporate the specific needs of both women and men in the designated communities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Community telecentres projects are often adopted on a gender-neutral basis thereby ignoring the gender aspect as being an important part of the project's planning, designing and implementation phases. The failure to address the specific needs of women in the targeted communities by these projects exacerbated the barriers women continue to face in accessing ICTs. These projects are mostly designed with imaginary users in mind. The imagined users are those with money to spend and the power to decide how to spend it and can therefore afford to pay a fee. The imagined users already believe the information and the services to be availed at the telecentre would help them and do not need to be convinced. The imagined users are those who are literate and can easily communicate in dominant ICT languages such as English. They would feel comfortable with the services and the ICT gadgets and travelling certain distances from their homes to reach these community telecentres is not a problem for them. They are not constrained by time limitations due to gender roles and they have no mobility restrictions. There is no ability to participate in public spheres.

I discovered that rural women farmers of Chinyunu Area do not fit into this 'imagined users' category. These women's access to the CCMT services is greatly constrained directly as a result of the project's failure to be gender-sensitive throughout its planning, designing and implementation phases despite having universal access provisions² which obliges ZICTA to have regard to any barriers to the use of the available services.

² Section 70(2) and (3) of the ICT Act No. 15 of 2009.

1.3 Justification of the Study

Rural women farmers in Chinyunu Area have inalienable rights and a deprivation of their needs may be interpreted as a denial of their rights. These women's access to agricultural information and markets is not only something they need but something they have a right to enjoy as human beings. The CCMT is a tool that should ensure that women farmers enjoy this fundamental human right. This justifies why it is important to critically evaluate the telecentre to find out to what extent it has emphasized the realization of this right and how it has empowered the women to claim it.

1.4 Main Study Objective

My main objective was to argue a case for women farmers in Chinyunu by critically evaluating the CCMT's role in promoting their access to agricultural information and markets. The following specific objectives, assumptions and research questions guided my study:-

1.5 Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate whether the content and relevance of the services being offered at the CCMT meet the agricultural information and markets needs of rural women farmers.
2. To analyze whether the CCMT have adequate women representatives in the management and Steering Committee, women support staff, women trainers and childcare facilities in order to make the environment user-friendly for most rural women farmers.
3. To investigate whether the State and Non-State actors are doing enough to raise awareness and advocate for community multipurpose telecentre projects that address the needs of rural women farmers in the targeted communities.

4. To assess whether the ICT laws and policies focus more on implementing ICT infrastructures rather than on understanding their impact on the marginalized groups such as women in the designated local community in order to achieve universal access.
5. To recommend the review of ICT laws and policies targeted to address specific gender issues in rural community telecentres that will improve rural women farmers' access to agricultural information and market.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

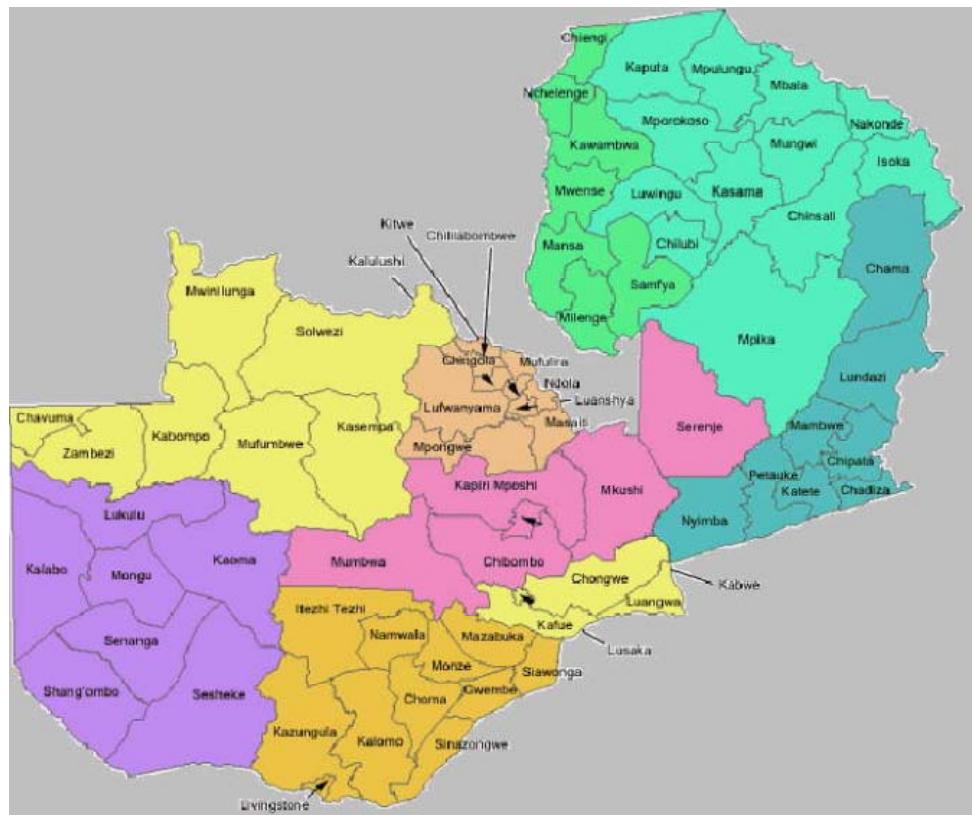
1. The content and relevance of the services being offered at the CCMT do not meet the agricultural and market information needs of rural women farmers.
2. The CCMT does not have adequate women representatives in the management and Steering Committee, women support staff, women trainers and childcare facilities in order to make the environment user-friendly for most rural women farmers.
3. The State and Non-State actors are not doing enough to raise awareness and advocate community multipurpose telecentre projects that address the needs of rural women farmers in the targeted communities.
4. The ICT laws and policies focus more on the implementation of ICT infrastructures rather than on understanding their impact on marginalized groups such as women in the designated local community in order to achieve universal access.
5. The review of ICT laws and policies targeted to address specific gender issues in rural community telecentres will improve rural women farmers' access to agricultural and market information.

1.7 Research Questions

1. Does the content and relevance of the services being offered at the CCMT meet the agricultural and market information needs of rural women farmers?
2. Does the CCMT have adequate women representatives in the Management and Steering Committee, women support staff, women trainers and childcare facilities in order to make the environment user-friendly for most rural women farmers?
3. Are the State and Non-State actors doing enough to raise awareness and advocate community multipurpose telecentre projects that address the needs of rural women farmers in the targeted communities?
4. Do the ICT laws and policies focus too much on the implementation of ICT infrastructures rather than on understanding their impact on marginalized groups such as women in the designated local community in order to achieve universal access?
5. Will the review of ICT laws and policies targeted to address specific gender issues in rural community telecentres improve rural women farmers' access to agricultural and market information?

1.8 Overview of the Study Area

Figure A: Map of Zambia showing Chongwe District (in black-shaded area)



I carried out my study in Chinyunu Catchment Area which is a rural community located in Chongwe district. The area has about 28 villages with an estimated population of 16,000 people. Chinyunu lies 42 kilometers east of Chongwe town and about 80 kilometers from Lusaka. It is generally a subsistence farming community with small scale trading activities. Chinyunu Catchment Area hosts the CCMT located along the Great East Road within close proximity of vital basic economic and social amenities such as police station, high school, health centre, agricultural storage shed, grocery shops and it is surrounded by a farming area.

Building a case for the women in Chinyunu required me to explore a dearth of literature, law and policy to bring to the fore the relationship between women, gender and ICTs and the promotion of gender-sensitive community telecentres.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

ICTs are viewed as tools which can be used to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For example, Target 18 of Goal 8 calls upon the members of the United Nations to make available the benefits of new technologies especially ICTs to their population (UNDP 2003). One important means of incorporating rural women into these new technologies is through understanding the relationship between women, gender and ICTs and also the promotion of gender-sensitive community telecentres.

2.2 Women, Gender and ICTs

2.2.1 Why Does It Matter?

Sen (1999) argues that women's participation in ICTs is a crucial element in development and the expansion of their capabilities enhances not only their freedom and well being but also has beneficial effects on society as a whole. Heeks (2008) puts across important reasons why the world should give priority to ICT applications for the poor in developing countries especially those living in rural areas such as rural women. He explains the moral argument which encompasses the ethical dimensions in development:

“The world’s poor live on the frontline of problems caused by informant professional from the wealthier countries; from climate change to conflict and terror, from disease to resource depletion, where the poorer in developing countries suffer the most.”
(Ibid)

Despite the recognition of ICTs as potential tools for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, there is still a problem of “gender divide” reflected in the lower numbers of women accessing and using ICT as compared with men (UN DAW 2005). The argument is that unless this gender divide is specifically addressed, there is a risk that ICTs may exacerbate existing inequalities between women and men and create new forms of

inequality (Ibid). Hafkin (2000a) argues that ICTs are socially constructed and therefore they have different impact on women and men.

2.2.2 Concept of Community Multipurpose Telecentres

The genesis of community multipurpose telecentres dates back to the 1980s when the first telecottages were established in the Scandinavia and Community Technology Centers in the United States of America (UNESCAP 2009). Community Telecentres aim at delivering computer-related ICTs such as the internet, e-mail, electronic networking and offer basic communication services including telephone, fax, typing, photocopying, printing and training in the use of ICTs (Whyte 2000). They are public accessible facilities that provide computer access for people who are unable to meet the expense of a computer, in addition to technical instruction (Beamish 1999). To introduce a community telecentre into a typical rural area in a developing country represents a substantial innovation for that community (Harris 2001).

2.2.3 Community Multipurpose Telecentres and a Rights Based Approach to Development

ICT initiatives must be critically analyzed in order to expose the inequalities which lie at the heart of the development inadequacies that tend to impede development progress. This is particularly true when delivering community telecentres to rural communities that mere charity is not enough but what is required is a more rights-based approach where the planning, designing and implementation of the initiative is anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law (OHCHR 2006). There is an argument that the main ingredients of development are the people themselves who should state their developmental goals for their own communities and how these goals should be achieved (Nampijja 2010). This can only be achieved by moving beyond the notions of charity and needs approach to that of a rights-based approach where human rights, gender, participation and empowerment, equality and non-discrimination, and accountability inform the project's design and implementation stages.

2.2.4 Community Multipurpose Telecentres and Gender Dimensions

It is argued that gender is a key issue to consider for diffusing new technologies to these historically disadvantaged areas (Rogers 1995). The diffusion model highlights the relationship between technology-centric development and women's accessibility to community telecentres in the African contexts (Ibid). Most community telecentre development programs are shortsighted and fail to consider the gender dimension thereby resulting in additional pressures on women (Sleevs 2001).

I am of the view that the effectiveness and sustainability of community telecentre programs depend on their being contextual and gender-sensitive. It is clear that women and men have different information needs and how they view ICTs. These differences have an impact on how women and men access and use computer-related ICTs being offered at community telecentres. It is also important that community telecentres are designed not only with gender differences in mind but in a way that allows stakeholders to understand the process and potential outcomes accompanying women-friendly telecentre environments. Rogers argues that for innovations to be sustainable, they must clearly spell out the benefits and consequences in a cultural and contextual relevant way (Rogers 1995). He further points out that an understanding of culture, the local environment, and individual stakeholders is a prerequisite to understanding how gender-sensitive development and engendered community telecentres are diffused (Ibid).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Liberal-Feminist Approach

The starting point of this approach is law and policy and it holds that they blatantly discriminate against women, since women and men become subjects of law and policy in very different social, cultural, economic and political contexts (Tong 1994). Contemporary women's and feminist movements in the world emphasize that women's subordination is

rooted in law and therefore they demand gender equality before the law as the only way of having women access the public sphere such as the information society (Plant 2000).

The most notable aspect of the Liberal-Feminists' agenda is its recommendation for more action so that gender justice is achieved by levelling the playing field. They conclude that through better gender equity, with the ICT skills gap being narrowed through the greater participation of women in the ICT industry the digital divide could be narrowed (World Bank 2009). The feminist theme to the impact of technological change on the welfare of women is considered to alter the gender inequality (Ibid).

2.3.2 Social Exclusion and Construction

The recognition of gender equality and the empowerment of women are important goals in their own right and are vital to poverty elimination and achievement of all the MDGs (DFID 2009). Often, reducing poverty and attaining the MDGs is made harder by the phenomenon of social exclusion where certain groups of people such as rural women are socially excluded from developmental agendas thereby they tend to suffer from disadvantage and discrimination on the basis of their identity such as sexual orientation, they are often invisible in poverty analyses, are likely to be least able to contribute to and benefit from developmental initiatives (Ibid).

We need to know more about how to reach the women and how to facilitate their empowerment in decision-making processes at community, national and international level. Social exclusion can be better understood by ensuring that all development programs collect data that is appropriately disaggregated in accordance with gender and age (Ibid). Social exclusion can also be understood in terms of social and cultural construction that determines a group's position in the social order and access to development opportunities. ICTs are socially-defined thereby rejecting the notion of neutrality as it is historically clear that ICTs have been defined exclusively as male activities and women assigned to nurturing roles (APC WNSP 2005).

2.3.3 Women and Access to ICT Facilities

The low number of women accessing community telecentres is attributed to factors like location of these telecentres, women have time limitation given the multiple roles and heavy domestic responsibilities, their leisure hours are few, their mobility is also more restricted than that of men, inadequate disposable incomes (Hafkin 2002). It is argued that most community telecentres often become meeting places for men and young men, hence deter women's absorption and adoption of ICTs to access information and knowledge (Huyer 2007).

The other barriers to women's access to ICT facilities is that much of the content of the services at these facilities and on the internet has not been developed to address the needs of women in designated communities nor is it available in local languages (World Bank 2009). It is true that training in ICT skills is rarely gender-sensitive or tailored to women's needs and is sometimes delivered by a male trainer who has embedded perceptions about women's capabilities inconsistent with women's competencies and contributions in the field (Kennedy 2003). Women make up a small percentage of the governance structure of community telecentres including in the composition of their boards of directors and project managers (Joy 2007).

2.3.4 Women, ICTs and Entrepreneurship

ICTs such as the internet, e-mail, social networks, mobile phones, and computers are widely used in the business world today thereby giving birth to terms like *e-commerce* which involves the purchase, sale, distribution, marketing and delivery of goods and services over computer-based networks (ITC 2000). There are benefits and opportunities that ICTs avail to rural women entrepreneurs including those who depend on agricultural activities for their livelihood. Women running small enterprises like small poultry and pig farms could reduce the time they take to market their products by creating websites which they can use to advertise their products at a low cost; reduce the cost of searching for information about inputs, searching for customers, sourcing credit; reduce the cost of transporting and distributing their products and the increased networking and business alliances (*Ibid*). *E-*

commerce initiatives can link rural women producers and traders directly to markets at national, regional or even global levels, allowing them to restructure their economic activities and bypass middlemen and male-dominated and exploitative market structures (World Bank 2009).

2.4 Legal and Policy Framework

2.4.1 Global Instruments

Article 2(f) of CEDAW obliges State Parties to take appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women. State Parties are suppose to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by ensuring that women participate in the formulation of government policies and their implementation and to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public life of the country³. State Parties are supposed to take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and should therefore take appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the Convention to women in rural areas.⁴

CEDAW further obliges State Parties to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, they participate in and benefit from rural development. This entails women having the right to participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels; to obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy as well as the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency; to participate in all community activities; and to have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology (CEDAW).

³ Article 7(b) and (c) of CEDAW.

⁴ Article 14(1) of CEDAW.

The Beijing Platform for Action +15 (BPFA+15) explicitly mentions gender issues in relation to ICTs in Section J under Strategic Objective 1 where it encourages State Parties to increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in the new technologies of communication. The BPFA+15 also recognizes the key communication rights such as freedom of expression and formally acknowledges the emerging importance of ICTs and their capacity to advance women's empowerment.

The WSIS under Paragraph 12 of the Declaration of Principles states that development of ICTs provide opportunities for women who should be an integral part of and key actors in the information society:

``....We are committed to ensuring that the Information Society enables women's participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. To this end, we should mainstream a gender equality perspective and use ICTs as a tool to that end``.

General Assembly Resolution No.58/146 stressed the need to ensure that rural women have access to and fully participate in the area of ICT. The Resolution invited the WSIS to take into consideration the priorities and needs of rural women as active users of information and to ensure their participation in developing and implementing ICT strategies.

2.4.2 *Regional Instruments*

Article 9 of the Banjul Charter advocates for the right of every person to receive information. Article 2(1)(c) of the AU Protocol encourages Parties to combat discrimination against women by integrating a gender perspective in their policy decisions, legislation, development plans, programs and activities and in all other spheres of life including ICT activities and programs. In Article 19(b) of the AU Protocol, women are entitled to the right to fully enjoy their right to sustainable development. Further, States Parties are obliged to take all appropriate measures to ensure participation of women at all levels in the conceptualization, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of development policies and programs.

The SADC Protocol under Article 12 (2) mandates member States to recognize that all women and men have the right to communicate their ideas, interests and needs and that the member States must strive to give voice to the voiceless as this is critical to citizenship, participation and responsive governance. The Protocol further obliges member States under Article 5(a) and (c) to develop ICT policies and laws that are user-friendly in that they promote every citizen's right to access, share information and knowledge; and that they ensure universal access for women, men, girls and boys to ICTs in languages and formats that are accessible and affordable to them and enable them make informed decisions and participate fully in all developmental processes.

2.4.3 *National Framework*

2.4.3.1 THE CONSTITUTION OF ZAMBIA

The Zambian Constitution guarantees the fundamental human rights of its citizens under Part III thereof. Article 11 specifically guarantees every person the fundamental rights and freedoms without any discrimination. Notably among the rights under this Part and relevant to my research is the human right to freedom of expression in Article 20(1) which entitles every person freedom to impart and communicate ideas and information without interference. Article 23(3) prohibits discrimination based on certain attributes such as sex and marital status. However, the Constitution under Article 23(4) allows discrimination on the basis of custom and personal law. These provisions point to the importance the Zambian Constitution attaches to the right to information which has to be enjoyed by every person including the rural population especially rural women.

2.4.3.2 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES ACT

Section 4 of the Act created the Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA) as a regulatory body mandated to promote the development of a competitive and efficient ICT sector. The overall objective of the ICT Act is to provide a conducive and enabling regulatory environment that will foster a competitive and efficient ICT sector in Zambia. The objective of ZICTA is “*to regulate the provision of electronic*

communication services and products and monitor the performance of the sector, including the levels of investment and the availability, quality, cost and standards of electronic communication services.”

Its specific mandate is to promote universal access, establishment and administration of a universal access and service fund; promote the development and provision of e-service and to protect the interest of consumers. Under Section 2(2) of the Act, ‘access’ includes access to network elements, associated facilities and physical infrastructure. Some of the functions of ZICTA that specifically hinge on the provision of ICTs to rural communities are under Section 6(2)(c) in terms of which ZICTA is supposed to promote and facilitate the provision of information and electronic communication services that meets all the reasonable demands of the concerned communities in rural areas. Under Section 6(2)(e), ZICTA is supposed to disseminate information and promote the participation of the public in the provision of electronic communications services. Section 6(2)(f) of the Act obliges ZICTA to promote the interests of consumers and other users of information and electronic communications services in respect of the accessibility, quality and variety of the services offered to them.

Part 8 of the Act deals with the universal access and service where Section 70(1) establishes the Universal Access and Service Fund which is supposed to be used for the financing of universal access and service. The concept of universal access entails facilitating by all reasonable means every person’s access to ICTs including rural communities especially the un-served and the under-served communities. ZICTA is obliged under Section 70(3) to have regard to the availability of services in particular areas or places and identify any barriers to the use of available services.

2.4.3.3 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The Policy aims: To create an integrated agricultural information system on pricing and market information for agro products to provide strategic information for farmers and other stakeholders; To undertake intensive ICT awareness campaigns for all types of farmers in the use of traditional and new ICT tools at all levels; To promote two-way information dissemination to support the physical and socio-economic planning processes in the

agricultural system. It recognizes the heavy marginalization of women in most activities even when they constitute a very important segment of society. It proposes the need to address them as special groups in society that can positively contribute to the growth of ICTs and use them as empowerment tools in their daily activities.

The government has committed itself through this Policy to implement actions that promote women-friendly ICT initiatives and promote fair access to ICTs by women. It also commits itself to implementing measures to counter gender-imbalances affecting women's participation and benefiting from the information society at all levels. This is to increase women's empowerment opportunities through ICTs and the participation of women in national development. The Policy outlines government strategies of fulfilling its commitments which, *inter alia*, is to implement special ICT training programs for women and promote ICT awareness among women and develop literacy programs for them and acknowledge, protect and defend women's rights in information society. With the review of literature, law and policy, I now discuss the methodologies and research design.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGIES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Methodological Framework

3.1.1 *How ICT Law Sees a Woman*

My focus in this study was to assess to what extent the CCMT promotes rural women farmers' right to agricultural information and markets which is connected to their right to economic empowerment. In the spotlight were the Constitutional provisions on the right to information and access to ICT provisions in the ICT Act and the ICT Policy. I needed to evaluate these provisions in relation to the CCMT from the women farmers' perspective in Chinyunyu and to do that I used the Women's Law Approach. The approach helped me examine and understand the lived realities of the women farmers in Chinyunyu in as far as describing and evaluating their access to agricultural information and markets through the CCMT is concerned.

In applying this methodology, I used the stories and experiences of the women I interacted with during my study as a starting point to analyze their position in society and in the eyes of ICT law and policy (Bentzon, et al 1998). For example, one woman I found at the CCMT told me that she does not frequent the CCMT because the only thing which brings her there is either photocopying which she hardly does and phone charging which she normally sends her child to do and she attributed this to her busy schedule at home.

``...I don't come here myself...I have no time to come here, I have to remain with my young children at home...I normally send my daughter or request my husband to do it for me if I want my phone to be charged...today my husband has remained with the kids``.

This is one story that pointed me to the fact that women are considered as nurturers in society and the multiple gender roles they have to undertake daily are a barrier for them to access CCMT services which can empower them individually or as a family. The ICT law and policy seem to take neutral position on such matters. This confirms my assumption that ICT

laws/policies do not focus on understanding the impact of ICT infrastructures on the marginalized groups such as women in order to achieve universal access.

The methodology allowed me to constantly engage with the empirical data I was extracting from the women, feminist theories, perceptions and norms due to its interactive nature (*Ibid*). I was able to decide what information was relevant to my study and how to subsequently interpret it by using the approach. During my study, some of the issues that emerged to explain the possible root causes of women farmers in the area not accessing information through the CCMT were the charity and needs approaches which seem to have been the focus of the CCMT project. The project's focus was on giving assistance and meeting the information needs of the community instead of focusing on the obligation to respond to rights of individuals in the community.

I realized that a rights-based approach was shelved in this whole project after listening to what the women told me. For example, the women said that no one explained to them about the idea of the CCMT project and how they would benefit from it, apart from being asked to get involved in the construction of the CCMT building and that the centre would serve mainly organic farmers in the area. The methodology helped me to look at the stories and experiences of these women in line with human rights violations, women's vulnerability, the relationship between the women farmers (rights-holders) and duty-bearers and empowerment of women farmers as supposedly beneficiaries of the project. In order to appreciate how rural women in Chinyunyu are viewed by the ICT laws and policies, I used grounded theory.

3.1.2 Grounded Theory

I launched myself into the field with an open mind. I was guided throughout my research by the six tools propounded under this theory (Glass and Strauss, 1967). While in the field, I allowed myself room for change to my assumptions and suppositions depending on the unfolding information coming from the respondents. Before I went in the field one of my assumptions was that the Non-Governmental Organization Coordinating Council (NGOCC) the umbrella women organization in Zambia was not doing enough to raise awareness and advocate for community multipurpose telecentre projects that address the needs of rural

women farmers in the targeted communities. During my field study, with the guidance of my supervisor, it became inevitable for me to broaden the assumption in order to capture both State and Non-State actors' activities on advocacy and consciousness raising for gender-sensitive community telecentres.

I allowed the women to explain their experiences and based on those experiences, I was able to come up with follow up questions to clarify issues they raised. In one instance, women told me that they have never seen anyone coming to their area to come and explain to them about the CCMT project and its services. One woman said:

I have never seen the manager or chairman coming here to come and explain how we can access the services at the information centre and how we can be helped further in our business of pigs.

This statement made me find out from the CCMT manager and the chairman of the Steering Committee what they were doing as management and board to sensitise women in their clubs about the CCMT services and benefits they can derive from them. Lack of resources such as manpower and funds were the reasons given for this non-performance and this lead me to find out from the officials at ZICTA whose mandate *inter alia* is to fund these projects what the position was like. I was told ZICTA only gives initial funding for equipment and subsequent activities like awareness programs are not funded. The sequence of events and interviews was based on the influence of grounded theory. This one-off funding by ZICTA to community telecentres was something I did not anticipate before going into the field and it confirms my assumption that the State and Non-State actors are not doing enough to raise awareness and advocate for community telecentre projects that address the needs of rural women farmers.

3.1.3 Case Study Approach

This approach guided me to run through and analyze the whole developmental process of the CCMT project from its conception to current position. In doing so, I needed to find out what has been written before on this project, read and understand its dimensions as a carryover from my research design stage. This helped me identify and analyze the existing problem of

women farmers in Chinyunyu being unable to access agricultural information and markets despite having the CCMT which was designed to meet the information needs of the whole community. The approach helped me find respondents who were knowledgeable about the CCMT project from inception to assist me answer these WHY and HOW questions. The WHY questions relate to the rationale for coming up with a community telecentre in Chinyunyu and the HOW question relates more to the procedural process of planning, designing and implementation of the project (Yin 2003).

On the WHY question, I framed inter alia questions like: What was the rationale behind the establishment of the project? I was told that they came up with the project in order to meet the information needs of the community especially organic farmers. On the HOW question, I was asking questions like: How were the local women involved in the design and implementation plus management of the CCMT project? The women I interviewed were categorical by saying they were only involved during construction stage; what happened thereafter and what is happening now they are not aware of. How is the management strategy designed to ensure that ICT services at the centre are easily accessed by women farmers in the community? I was told that currently there are no programs targeted specifically to women in the area inasmuch as there are none for the whole community. It is clear that the case study approach helped me understand the whole process of the project and I was able to analyze the position of women in the process.

3.1.4 Influence of Actors on the Structures

My assumption that State and Non-State actors are not doing enough to raise awareness and advocate for community telecentre projects that address the needs of rural women farmers in the targeted communities was based on the reasoning that actors in community telecentre projects have a hands-off approach to matters relating to such projects especially when it comes to incorporating women's concerns. I identified and evaluated the involvement of State and Non-State actors such as government ministries and departments, ICT regulatory body, local authority leadership, traditional leaders, CCMT management, NGOs and women grouping in relation to the CCMT project. I looked at how these actors interact and influence the CCMT as a structure which was designed to provide ICT services to the community and

how they are interacting. One such actor is Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre (KATC) a farmer training institution in organic sustainable farming and it also promotes the formation of Farmers Study Circles (FSCs) in villages. My views are that there is no collaboration among the actors and therefore the CCMT seems to have little to offer to the women and currently it needs to be sustained by the active participation of all actors involved.

3.1.5 Legal Empowerment of the Poor (LEP)

The LEP helped me assess whether ICT laws/policy have created an environment that enables rural women farmers to acquire knowledge and understanding of their legal rights to information, participation in the design, implementation, management and evaluation of the CCMT. It helped me further assess the ICT law/policy in relation to whether it guarantees rural women farmers in Chinyunyu their right to access services at the CCMT that would in turn meet all their reasonable demands such as access to credit, markets for their products, improving their literacy levels and whether the law helps them to effectively assert and enforce these rights.

It was clear from the women's testimonies and my own assessments of the ICT law/policy that it does not offer special protection and incentives to rural women farmers who are supposed to access the CCMT services. The law does not provide special measures that would enable these women use the ICT law provisions to advance their business rights and their interests as citizens and economic actors through the CCMT. Some women complained that the telecentre was not benefiting them in any way:

We grew groundnuts and maize last season but to find market was very difficult and we ended up selling the produce to the local cooperatives at a lower price because we had no choice...so if the information centre can find market for us we can do a lot for ourselves.

This testimony confirms my assumption that the content and relevance of the services being offered at the CCMT does not meet the agricultural information and market needs of the women farmers in Chinyunyu.

Legal empowerment is rooted in a human rights based approach to development which recognizes that poverty results from disempowerment, exclusion and discrimination; thus it fosters development through empowering and strengthening the voices of individuals and communities, starting at the grassroots and from within (UN 2009). I was able to use the LEP to find out whether rural women farmers' voices were being heard during the design and implementation of the telecentre project and whether their voices are being heard by integrating them as management and board members, support staff/trainers at the CMCT. My findings showed that women were not actively engaged in the whole process of designing and implementing the telecentre project and also that there is no woman in the centre management and only two women are in the centre board out of an executive establishment of twelve members. This means the CCMT does not have adequate women representatives in its management and board thereby confirming assumption two of my study.

During my study, this approach served as a legitimate medium for me to engage with my respondents on the CCMT activities from a women's legal empowerment view in relation to their participation in the project, ability to use the ICT law to hold the State accountable as the primary duty-bearer and claim their rights and defend their rights against violation. What came out of the study is that the women's concerns were not effectively and sufficiently factored into the CCMT project despite their being its most vulnerable and needy target group. In arguing the case for these women, making conclusions and recommending interventions, I will use the legal empowerment platform as it can effectively deliver to the women both the 'freedom from want' and the 'freedom from fear'.

3.1.6 Rights Based Approach to Development

The rights-based approach places the individual as a holder of basic rights at the core of the process of development and it also emphasizes the relevance of the whole array of human rights in the development process (Hellum 2000). The approach further offers an analysis of a development problem from a holistic perspective of human rights and corresponding obligations of government according to international human rights standards (Goonesekere 2000). The rights-based approach helped me engage properly with the injustices faced by

rural women resulting from structural and indirect forms of vulnerability and discrimination in terms of ICT law/policy and local power structures. I found that no special attention was given to the legal framework governing the access of the rural population to ICTs by the initiators of the CCMT project in their analysis of the gendered problem of lack of information and markets for local farmers. They did not understand to what extent the ICT law/policy addressed the issue of community telecentres and whether there was a willingness and awareness at national level to solve the problem of rural access to ICTs and whether the actions being taken had any gender dimensions to them.

I assessed the plight of women in the study area in relation to whether the CCMT project was people-centred and whether the strategies and processes leading to its implementation were participatory, that is in respect of the involvement of all individuals in the community including women. I found that women were mere passive recipients of the project which they do not understand and do not share in its ownership primarily because they were in most crucial instances excluded from the process. The women complained that they were not aware of and did not participate in any pre-construction meetings which led to the establishment of the CCMT. They said at no time were they called for a meeting to discuss the planning, designing and implementation of the centre. One woman lamented:

...we hear that the CCMT belongs to Kasisi...

I was able to realize that human rights standards introduces an important issue that other actors have duties to facilitate and foster rural development by the provision of easily accessible ICT services through community telecentres. The State through government bodies is the primary legal duty-bearer and has an obligation to take concrete measures that go to show that it is *respecting, protecting* and *fulfilling* the women's right to agricultural information and related rights such as their right to own and run their own business. In Article 14(1) of CEDAW, State Parties are supposed to take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles they play in the economic survival of their families.

The LEP helped me to analyze whether the stakeholders in the project know and recognize their rights and obligations and whether they have the capacity or not to claim and meet them.

I found that most women talked to expressed ignorance to the fact that they could use the computers at the CCMT; they assume that the computers are meant for those who have school certificates. They complained that no one has ever told them that they are also entitled to use the computers.

3.1.7 Gender and Sex Analysis

Gender refers to the social and cultural constructs that each society assigns to behaviour, characteristics and values attributed to men and women, reinforced by symbols, laws and regulations, institutions, and perceptions which are translated into social, economic and political inequalities (APC WNSP 2005). In order to establish who between the rural women farmers' and their male counterparts is having more access to CCMT facilities, I needed to employ a gender and sex analysis approach. My focus during the study was to assess how gender roles within the home such as child/family nurturing and other related domestic responsibilities exacerbate the differences between women and men in terms of accessing services at the CMCT. It became clear that during my interaction with the women that some of them were restricted in accessing the CCMT facilities due to their multiple gender roles. One woman said:

I don't come here myself....I have no time to come here, I have to remain with my young children at home...

This means women's gender roles undermine their access to ICT services being offered at CCMT and if not challenged women farmers in Chinyunyu will continue to lag behind in as far access to computer-related ICTs is concerned.

The gender and sex analysis was a vital tool in my study in that it made me take a keen interest in finding out how many women compared to men make-up the CCMT management structure. I did that because I was made aware through this approach that gender attributions have also permeated the field of ICTs where it has been categorized as hard and masculine, a field traditionally considered more suited for men than women (Ibid). It is generally assumed

that men are better equipped to understand and use ICT gadgets as compared to women, thus creating further obstacles for women desiring to enter the field.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Sampling of Respondents

I used purposive sampling where my respondents were selected strategically depending on my research questions (Bryman 2008). For instance, my key respondents such as the officials from the ministry, ZICTA, CCMT, a community development official and KATC; two women ICT beneficiaries and the local authority leadership were purposively selected. I also had three focus group discussions comprising five women's clubs from different locations within Chinyunu, two traditional leaders and three CCMT users who were randomly selected.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

3.3.1 In-depth Interviews with Key Respondents

The key informants were interviewed in order to get deeper and wider information on the implementation of the CCMT project and the related information on ICT policy considerations. I was able to triangulate the findings with other sources and test issues of reliability and validity. The key informants are as tabulated below:

Table 1: Showing Key Respondents

Respondents	Female	Male	Total Number
CCMT Committee	0	01	01
CCMT Management	0	01	01
ZICTA Office	0	02	02
Ministry of Communication	0	01	01
Council Officials	01	0	01
Traditional Leaders	0	02	02
Community Development Office	0	01	01
TOTAL	01	08	09

Source: Field Research Diary

3.3.2 Individual Interviews

I interviewed five women CCMT users, whom I picked randomly at different times and locations. Among them was one young woman of between ages of 18 – 22years old and two other women whom I found at the CCMT on different days. The other two women interviewed were the beneficiaries of the computer literacy course being run by the CCMT and these were individually and separately interviewed during the focus group discussions. My main focus when interviewing them was to find out what ICT services they were engaging with at the CCMT and how beneficial they were to their individual lives. I asked them what challenges they face in trying to access the same services being availed at the centre and if they had any suggestions on how to improve on the provision of the services to enable more women access the ICT services.

3.3.3 Focused Group Discussions

FGDs are employed to emphasize a specific theme or topic that is being explored in depth and that this method lends itself to arguments about a topic which in turn reveals a more realistic account of the issues at hand (Bryman 2008). I held three FGDs and these were held at different locations with different women's clubs. The aim of these discussions with women was to investigate their participation in the CCMT project, what benefits (if any) they derive from the centre facilities, how they view the centre, the contributions they are making to improve the centre (if any), challenges they face to access the CCMT services and what are some of the suggestions to improve on the accessibility and usability of the centre. I noticed group members agreed with each other on several issues, for example, on the issue of being asked by their village heads to go and work at the CCMT during construction stage and on their non-participation on the other implementation phases of the telecentre. The women expressed strong opinions about telecentre operations and they engaged in the analytical debates which I managed to control.

3.3.4 Observations

I used an observation technique during my study. This was done within the CCMT internet café and the aim was to specifically analyze the nature of the ICT activities and how the community was engaging with them especially the women. I observed that more men were using the telecentre services than women. For example, one particular day from 9:40am to about 3:30pm, only three (3) women visited the centre in order to charge their phones; in the same period of time ten (10) men visited the centre for the same purpose. I also noticed that the men felt at ease and chatted and laughed freely with the manager and other colleagues unlike; on the other hand, most women who visited the centre looked as if they were strangers. This was a very effective way of collecting data as it gave a direct and honest account of the respondents and their attitudes.

3.3.5 Analysis of Documents

Qualitative analysis of CCMT documents and other related documents was also an important component of my study. The method is non-obstructive and objective as it also avails an opportunity to triangulate the data collected through other methods. In the process of analyzing these documents, my perspective of a lot of issues on the community telecentres was broadened further.

3.4 Assessment of the Methodologies Applied

The methodologies I employed worked well for me, they gave me direction on how to solicit for data from my respondents especially the women whose experiences as they relate to their access to CCMT services was my main concern. The methodologies helped me to assess and analyze women farmers' stories in relation to the fact that the State and other non-State actors are not doing enough to address the many aspects of women vulnerability.

3.5 Challenges/Limitations of the Study

I did not get adequate information from the Ministry of Communication official as I was constantly being referred to ZICTA whom the official said was the correct authority to give me the data I needed. Having FGDs with women was not devoid of problems in that most of them expected to be rewarded for the information they gave me. However, I made sure that I explained to them the true nature of the research so that they came to understand that their contribution to it was more valuable than any hand-out that they could have received. I now discuss what I found on the ground during my field study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE FACTS OF THE MATTER

4.1 Status of the CCMT

4.1.1 CCMT Model

In order to ensure that ICTs are deployed to rural areas of the country, ZICTA has commissioned a Universal Access Programme (UAP) consisting of three models with the establishment of community multipurpose telecentres as one of the models. The idea behind community multipurpose telecentre model is that they are designed with the aim to provide and expand communication and information facilities in rural communities in order to improve people's quality of life. (Gaved and Anderson 2006). These community telecentres are normally established on public-community partnerships where local people participate by contributing in non-monetary form like labour and the moulding of bricks while the rest of the work is done by ZICTA and other external funders. The CCMT is one such example of community telecentre models the government of Zambia through ZICTA has been promoting and designing throughout the country.

Zambia needs to learn lessons from similar models in other developing countries where empirical research suggests that more emphasis has been on the implementation of such initiatives themselves rather than on understanding their impact at the community level. As a result, many of these initiatives have not achieved their desired social impact and, at very best, most of them have ended up as a symbolic gesture and service to a handful of people only (Habeenzu 2010).

Figure B: Two photographs taken of the outside of the CCMT



4.1.2 CCMT Equipment Inventory

One of my key respondents showed me CCMT's equipment and explained to me how it was used. Below is the inventory of the ICT equipment at CCMT:

Table 2: Showing ICT Equipment at CCMT

Initial Equipment Stock	Current Stock of Equipment
08 Desktop Computers	04 Desktop Computers
01 Printer	01 Printer
01 Photocopier	01 Photocopier
Internet (modem, satellite dish)	Internet (modem, satellite dish)
Solar Panel System	Solar Panel System

Source: Field Findings

I observed that the ICT equipment was relatively modern and the internet speed was good. However, the manager complained that servicing the equipment was a big challenge because of limited resources in form of technical staff and financing the repairs. The nature of ICT equipment deployed in a community telecentre is critical in analyzing the accessibility and usability by the targeted users especially women whose literacy levels are generally lower than that of men.

Figure C: Two photographs showing the inside of the Internet Café at the CCMT and its Satellite Dish for Internet usage



4.1.3 CCMT Services

The core services being availed to the community by the telecentre are indicated in the table below:

Table 3: Showing a list and cost of core services offered by the CCMT

Service	Charges
Computer Lessons	K35, 000.00 – (US Dollar 7) per course
Internet Browsing	K150.00 – (US Cent 3) per minute
Photocopying	K300.00 – (US Cent 6) per copy
Printing	K1, 000.00 – (US Cent 20) per copy
Phone Charging	K1, 000.00 – (US Cent 20) per phone
Typing	K2, 500.00 – (US Cent 50) per copy

Source: Field Findings

Figure D: Two photographs showing cellphones being charged at the CCMT



The fees attached to the services were sanctioned by the CCMT board based on the high cost of maintaining the equipment and in accordance with the prevailing market prices on ICT services. In arriving at the user-fees, the board did not put into consideration the income gaps in terms of gender; however, geographical location (the CCMT is rural-located) was basically

their consideration. In terms of affordability, most women said the fees were fair apart from the computer lesson fees which they complained to be high. One woman said:

...I have enrolled for the computer course because I want to be employed by the centre as a typist when I complete the course; the only problem is that I have to pay thirty five thousand kwacha (K35, 000.00) for the course which is a bit on a higher for me...

This was also confirmed by the manager who attributed the low number of women attending computer lessons to the high tuition fee which most of them complained of.

Figure E: Three photographs showing students receiving computer lessons and photocopying and printing being done.



4.2 Genesis of the CCMT

4.2.1 Project Rationale

My key informants especially those who are very familiar with the project told me that the concept of establishing a community telecentre in the area started in 1997 as an idea of setting up a farmers' information centre. The initiators of the idea realized the difficulties farmers in the area were going through regarding information on modern farming techniques especially on organic farming and how they could access ready markets for their produce. This required them to think and analyze how they could overcome this challenge. They came up with the idea of setting up a farmers' information centre which would help local farmers more especially organic farmers to access agricultural information and also to advertise their produce to a wider market through the use of computer-related ICTs which were to be provided at the information centre. The information centre culminated in what is today called the CCMT after the community agreed to widen the targeted groups to include the whole community instead of only organic farmers.

4.2.2 Innovators of the CCMT Project

The concept of a farmers' information centre stemmed from within FSCs in the area especially among members of its top leadership. FSCs are *ad hoc* groupings of about 7-12 small scale farmers who meet to discuss various issues affecting their farming activities. The FSCs were used as discussion fora in order to gain support from other local farmers within the groupings. The FSCs are being promoted by KATC. Membership to these groups is voluntary and open to both women and male farmers. I was told FSCs are male dominated though in certain groupings women outnumbered their male counterparts. When enough support was drawn from the farmers within the FSCs, the question of bringing the idea to reality had to be answered. This is how KATC was approached through its senior Agricultural Extension Officer to help find donors.

4.2.3 Stakeholders' Involvement in Pre-Project Phase

KATC was happy with the idea and through it together with the head of the FSCs, organized community meetings to market the idea of establishing the farmers' information centre to the community. The Swedish Co-operative Centre and UNIDO came on board after KATC sold the idea to them. They were eventually part of the main community meeting which decided the way forward. UNIDO had earlier conducted a community needs assessment survey to ascertain the kind of services which would be suitable for the community. The assessment was based on the general information needs of the whole Chinyunyu community without segmenting the different target groups based on their levels of vulnerability. The community agreed at the main meeting to the idea of setting up an information centre. They also decided on the proposed services which were to be offered at the centre. Stakeholders like the local traditional leadership, ZICTA, and one private ICT service provider committed themselves to certain responsibilities which I discuss below.

4.3 Design and Implementation Phase

4.3.1 Diffusion of the CCMT Innovation

I was told that the meetings within the FSCs and the subsequent community meetings were used as mode of communicating the CCMT innovation to the community. The method employed to call the people to these meetings was through *letters* to village heads, clubs and co-operatives and *notices* posted on school, market place and clinic boards and the notices and letters were written in both English and local languages. One of my key informants emphasized:

We made sure the communities around the area were notified about all the meetings convened to discuss the idea of coming up with a farmers' information centre...the letters were being sent to village heads, and notices on school, market and clinic notice boards in English, Soli and Chinyanja to ensure everyone got the message.

The meetings were always fully attended with a minimum of about two hundred (200) people with a good attendance from women.

Everett Rogers (1995) defined diffusion as “*the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.*” Community telecentres are a form of innovation as they provide a new way to access information in rural communities. They must be marketed to targeted communities using channels that make everyone understand and appreciate them as new innovation. Understanding the underlying socio-cultural structures of a targeted community is critical in this whole process more especially if the aim of the innovation is to be gender-sensitive.

I feel that the particular stages of communicating the CCMT innovation to the community especially the women for them to make a true commitment to it were not exhausted. From the diffusion methods used, it is clear that the people were merely exposed to the existence of the CCMT innovation by the meetings not fully understanding its functions as this was confirmed from most women’s testimonies where they denied having attended these meetings. For example, one woman’s sentiments confirmed this:

...even that meeting was just attended by those closer to the information centre...our headman, I think went for that meeting without informing us, but when it comes to work they involve us.

The meetings both within the FSCs and subsequent community meetings were not sufficient enough to make the women develop and form an attitude towards the CCMT innovation that would allow them make a decision either to accept or reject the telecentre innovation. That is the reason why as I shall discuss later, the women talked to were very uncomfortable with the CCMT facilities saying they are not using them. Two things could have happened during the diffusion phase, either the decision to go ahead with the project was reached by consensus of the community without really understanding the matter or the decision was imposed by an authority which possesses requisite power, status or technical expertise.

4.3.2 Stakeholders' Engagement

The innovators of the CCMT project organized the stakeholders and persuaded them to support the project. The list of the stakeholders and what they pledged to do during the implementation stage of the project are shown in the table below:

Table 4: Showing a List of Stakeholders and Pledges

Stakeholder	Pledges/Commitment
Chief Bunda Bunda	Land on which the CCMT is built
Swedish Co-operative Centre	Construction of steel structure
UNIDO	Solar Power System Furniture Finance the training of staff Two year salaries for staff
ZICTA	ICT Equipment <i>i.e</i> computers, printer, copier
CopperNet Solutions	VSAT (Internet connection)
Community	Mould bricks and construction

Source: Field Findings

The community was engaged in this process through the meetings which took place within the FSCs and it was within these meetings where women were expected to fully participate in the designing of the project. I was also informed that the other opportunity which the women had to participate was during the main meeting of all stakeholders where the community was to give its views about the farmers' information centre. The emphasis by the conveners of the meeting was still about establishing an information centre but the attendees of the meeting resolved that instead of the centre to be for organic farmers only it should cater for the whole community. It was decided that the information centre be established under the name of the CCMT. I was told the meeting was attended by all the stakeholders who came to announce to the community about their commitments and pledges to the project.

During my FGDs, I learnt that most women participated in the project at the construction stage by way of moulding bricks and fetching water for the men who were doing the actual bricklaying as this was mandatory. One woman lamented:

It was a forcing matter....you could not refuse to go and mould bricks because the headman was very serious about the issue and even going to work at the centre was for everyone in the village.

The information requiring them to go to the construction site to mould bricks and do manual labour was being transmitted to them through their village headmen and sometimes through their club meetings. The women said most of them were told during the times they went to work that the building was going to house an information centre for organic farmers where they would be sourcing agricultural information and markets using the computers. One of them said:

They just forced us to go and work at the information centre without telling us who these organic farmers are or whether they will help us become organic farmers as well because we know that organic farming is being done by very few people in this area due to its labour intensity and it very expensive for some of us.

At one of the discussions, the women told me that no one among their group ever attended any of the planning or designing meetings either in the FSCs or the main stakeholders' meeting. No official had ever come to their villages or even clubs to explain the details about the project. They heard about the stakeholders' meeting but not one of them attended it because they were not invited; instead their village headman attended. The women said if any women attended that meeting then it must have been those who lived closer to the CCMT.

...us that are far from the road and the centre are in most cases sidelined from the developmental activities happening there...even that meeting was just attended by those closer to the information centre...our headman, I think went for that meeting without informing us but when it comes to work they involve us.

The participation of community members especially women at this stage of designing and implementation of a project is critical because it enables them to play an active role in the

process of their own community development and it promotes a sense of ownership and belonging (Marais 2005). Before holding the public meeting the innovators of the project should have first identified the potential target groups in the area such as women's groups. Thereafter, they should have formulated marketing strategies to generate interest among the target groups in the planned project. The marketing strategy ought to have been participatory allowing the women to be actively and realistically engaged in order to capture their specific information needs. The participatory methods should have included individual or group interviews, FGDs or community outreach events.

I feel that the approach taken by the innovators of relying on the FSCs meetings whose activities are influenced by male hegemony was not very participatory as it left out the majority of community members such as women who may not be members of these FSCs considering that these groupings only have a maximum of 12 members. That is the reason why most women I talked to viewed the CCMT as not being community owned. One woman confirmed by saying:

...we hear that the CCMT belongs to KATC...

This is proof of a lack of deep and meaningful engagement with those, i.e., the women who are the intended beneficiaries of a project like the CCMT. Though the main meeting was a good forum for developing a link between the CCMT innovation and the local community (i.e., making the community aware of the innovation and getting their support so that they could help to determine what sort of a telecentre is required), the attendees especially women may not have appreciated what was going on.

4.3.3 Formulation of the CCMT Objectives and Services

The main objective of the CCMT is to link Chinyunyu to external institutions and people and facilitates the education of communities in aspects of basic education, health, community development, production and marketing strategies, general welfare management, policing gender equation, human rights, governance and the basic project analysis. The formulation of these objectives and the services for the CCMT was done through the FSCs in conjunction

with other stakeholders like UNIDO whose focus in designing them was on the information challenges facing the whole community. I was told that there were no other actors who were involved in the identification and assessment of the information needs of the community. One key informant said:

The community needs assessment survey targeted the general information needs and interests of the whole community...it did not focus on potential individual target groups such as women, school children, formal workers etc.

The services were not matched with the needs of the specific individual target groups. This could have been done by engaging with various community structures, as everybody in a community is a potential customer and the more people who know about the potential telecentre services the better. There was no active dialogue with women groups, which was very essential for tailoring the CCMT services to the needs of the women it intended to serve. The ICT Act does not have specific provision that makes it mandatory for women to be identified as target groups and that their specific needs are incorporated in the process of formulating and designing community telecentre services and objectives.

Key community stakeholders were not engaged in the designing of the CCMT services. One of them complained that the initiative was not driven by the whole community but rather by a few elite locals and it excluded women. She lamented:

I live in this area and this is my second term as a local government representative of the area...the implementation of the CCMT project was high-jacked by few individuals who did everything for the community without consulting and actively involving them. To tell you the truth women were not even closer to this process, they were left out completely and that is why the CCMT is visited by very few women just for phone charging because they are not aware about that thing.... I am not saying this because I am a woman...

The higher the level of engagement, the more attractive its services become to the community and this in turn guarantees its commitment to the ultimate success of the initiative. This has not been the case with the CCMT project because the basic requirement that community telecentre services are determined by the needs and interests of all potential target groups including women was not met. The project only considered the general information needs of

the community that is the need for agricultural information and markets and emphasis still was on organic farmers though the model changed to a Community telecentre.

This means that the CCMT services are not relevant to the specific needs of the women farmers in Chinyunyu due to the failure to incorporate their needs such as meeting their general agricultural information, including how to plant and manage their crops, respond to climate change, and market their produce, access loans for their small enterprises and other related information. This is a confirmation of assumption one in which I stated that the content and relevance of the services being offered at the CCMT does not meet the agricultural information and market needs of the rural women farmers.

4.3.4 Impact on the Local Women Farmers

The failure by women to fully participate in the design and implementation of the project has impacted negatively on their lives. They are having difficulties in finding an entry point to the CCMT services because they do not have a sense of ownership of or belonging to the project. Their sentiments range from that “if the telecentre is for everyone including themselves, it could have been helping them source markets for their agricultural produce and also help them with the information on where they could secure loans or assistance to grow their club activities” to complaining that the CCMT does not belong to Chinyunyu community but to other organizations. One woman lamented as follows:

We grew groundnuts and maize last season but to find market was very difficult and we ended up selling our produce to the local cooperatives at a lower price because we had no choice...so if the information centre can find market for us we can do a lot for ourselves.

The woman also said:

...we hear that the CCMT belongs to KATC...

These sentiments goes to show that the women were left out completely in the process and this has impacted negatively on their right to economic empowerment in the form of business

rights and access to good markets. This points to the State's failure to comply with its obligations under the AU Protocol in which women are entitled to the right to fully enjoy their right to sustainable development and the government is obliged to take all appropriate measures to ensure women's participation at all levels in the conceptualization, designing and implementation of development programs which are intended to benefit them.

4.4 CCMT Management Phase

4.4.1 Steering Committee and Management Structure

The main stakeholders' meeting elected a 12 member steering committee which comprised 3 women and 9 men and among the women one was elected chairperson, the second one was elected treasurer and the other one was elected committee member. Currently, the committee consists of 8 members of which only 2 are women. The management comprises of 2 male officials and 1 male support member of staff.

There is no provision in the CCMT Constitution to ensure that the composition of the committee is gender-sensitive; neither is there provision for affirmative action or a gender-sensitive quota system. Ideally the committee is supposed to meet every month but this has not been happening and its last meeting was in 2000 after its members were elected into office. It is clear from the composition of both the steering committee and the management that women are inadequately represented, a situation which is, respectfully, at odds with the SADC Protocol which provides that States parties are obliged to take measures to increase the meaningful participation of women in decision-making at all levels.

4.4.2 Selection, Training and Employment of CCMT Staff

The officials at CCMT were employed following an advert done in English which was posted at a local basic school near the telecentre, at the local market place and at the clinic running for two weeks. The advert was calling for application from members of the Chinyunyu community with a minimum of a full 'O' level school certificate. 35 applicants were called

for interviews, of which only 6 were female. After the interviews, 4 candidates were selected to undergo a two months basic ICT training out of which only 1 was female. The selection procedure of candidates to undergo the course did not take into consideration a quota system where at least a specific number of female applicants should have been picked.

The course was made up of computer application, information processing and management. The course did not have a gender component in it. At the end of the course two males candidates were declared to have successfully completed the course and were subsequently employed at the CCMT as manager and deputy manager respectively. I was told that the female candidate, although she had failed the course, she was engaged by the steering committee to take charge of phone and battery charging at the CCMT. She left the centre after UNIDO's two year period of paying staff salaries expired. The job descriptions and terms of reference of the management staff do not specify the importance of understanding and articulating CCMT issues and its related ICT facilities from a gender perspective.

The fact that at the end of this whole process of selection, training and employment of CCMT staff no female emerged as an employee at the centre shows the inadequacies on the part of the actors in this project to ensure that gender-sensitivity is incorporated throughout the process. ZICTA, as a duty-bearer, should have taken the responsibility to ensure measures are put in place to sensitize other actors in this project to be gender-sensitive at every stage of the project including the selection, training and employment of the staff. According to the SADC Protocol, affirmative action measures are viewed as one of the effective ways of addressing the gap on gender equality, especially in bridging the gap between men and women in decision-making positions. Zambia should have reached the 30% women representation by 2005 and by 2015 it should contain legislation the affirmative action provisions in her Constitution.

4.4.3 Impact of CCMT Services on Women Farmers

As indicated *supra*, the core services offered at the CCMT are computer lessons, internet browsing, photocopying, printing, phone charging and typing. The computer lesson course comprise of: Introduction to Computers, Microsoft Word and Internet Browsing. The course was designed by the CCMT manager and when designing the course he did not take into consideration the specific needs of local women farmers and did not engage them through their clubs to get their views. I was told the time schedules for the course is flexible in accordance with a student's schedule. In spite of that most women students come late and sometimes miss classes due to their busy schedules at home. There are no female only classes because the manager is unable to teach separate classes for men and women. He said women students sometimes do not feel comfortable being taught by a man or being taught alongside men but he tries his best to make them comfortable.

The programme has seen 25 women being trained compared to 24 for men and the women trained range between the ages of 18 and 45 years old and these are mainly school leavers and those from formal employment like teachers. Three members of the local women's clubs in the area have taken the course but have not been seen utilizing the acquired knowledge by using the computer facilities at the CCMT. One of these women told me that she enrolled for the computer literacy class after she learnt about the course from the manager when she took her phone for charging at the centre. She has opened a personal e-mail address though she has not extensively exploited it due to the distance from her home to the CCMT. She also alluded to her failure to frequent the centre which she said was because of her busy schedule at home. Her motivation to take up the course was reinforced by the requirement from the organization she works for as a volunteer to have its volunteers/employees be computer literate. She lamented:

I was also motivated to take the computer course due to the work I do as a volunteer where they want us to have some computer literacy....the centre is a bit far from where I stay.... and generally the domestic work at home has made me not to go to the centre regularly to check on my mail and also sharpen my skills further.

The low number of local women farmers enrolling for the computer course is attributed *inter alia* to the wrong perception which has been created that the course is for school leavers only and those who have basic school education. A woman in one of the FGDs said:

...we hear that only those with school certificates can access the computers and not us who are not educated...

The women complained that the advert about the computer literacy classes at the CCMT was worded in such a way that it made the lessons sound as though they were targeted at school leavers and those whose literacy levels are above average. This discouraged most of them from even attempting to inquire about the course because they knew they did not qualify due to their low literacy levels. Others complained that the tuition fee being demanded for the course was high for them.

My observations were that more men than women were coming to the centre bringing the phones for charging, while others used the telecentre to spend leisure time there. During that time some would discuss various issues with other people and talk about politics, community activities while others would browse the internet, type and play music. The manager confirmed that the computers are mostly used by male government employees and other institutions in the area compared to the local people especially women. I noticed that the few women who came to the centre were either bringing phones for charging or bringing documents for photocopying especially court documents. I was informed that the record keeping on how services are being used by women and men is not gender-disaggregated to show how women have used a certain service and of what age compared to men.

The women also explained to me during my discussions with them that they only use the photocopying and phone charging facilities at CCMT. The use of internet facilities was unheard of from the women's vocabulary and most of them attributed their non-use of the computer-related ICT services at the centre to some of the following:

...they aren't for people like us..., we have no time for that...., no one told us about it..., ...no money...,it's far...,who will look after my shop....

The women complained of not accessing the CCMT services because they can only be used when someone has to travel to the centre and even then the gadgets are difficult to use. They want the introduction of sub-telecentres so that they can easily access these services without

having to walk long distances or even pay bus fares for them to reach the telecentre. One woman said:

...bring us a telecentre here...for as long as it will help us grow our club activities...you also help us with literacy classes so that most of us can learn how to read and write...this will help us better appreciate the computers.

The women said they do not see any relevance of the services being provided to their individual lives and their club activities. They expected services such as adult literacy, provision of information on where they could sell their produce at reasonable prices and where they could source some credit to grow their economic activities. These were some of their words:

the information centre can make sense to us if it can help us find where we can get loans to expand our club activities and find for us where we can sell our pigs....even to source cheap feed for our pigs has been very difficult....the centre is not offering any of these things we need...we do not see its benefit to our lives.

It is clear from the testimonies that most women do not find the services provided at CCMT particularly relevant and sufficiently useful to their immediate survival needs because of some of the challenges highlighted from their stories. The women are desperately willing to use the services within their constraints of time, skills, money for as long as it will increase their capabilities, enable them work efficiently within their clubs, save time and costs and achieve economic empowerment for themselves and their households.

There is no government information being accessed at the CCMT to update farmers especially women on the prevailing government policies, new skills, techniques and services on agriculture, guiding on how, where and when to sow their crops. There is also no programme where information is collected by the CCMT from the women farmers within their clubs on the available agricultural products, local market prices, new crops and new technologies. There are no plans to turn the CCMT storage shade facility which is now being used as worship place to a centre of business and community activities which can benefit the women farmers. These are clear indication that the needs of the women farmers in the area

who were supposed to be identified as potential rights-holders of the right to information on agricultural matters were not considered from the beginning of the project.

4.4.4 Diffusion Strategies

I was told by one of the key respondents that the steering committee has never had follow-up meetings from the time it was put into office in 2000 to date for it to determine the CCMT's achievements and challenges, to further market it to the community and ensure that public interest is generated towards its activities. There has never been any programme in place aimed at generating community interest especially of women in the activities of the CCMT. Neither has there been a process of further identifying the potential target groups such as women's clubs in the community to help in determining whether there is need to revise the current telecentre operations and services which would incorporate the identified groups. The key informant told me that there is no strategy in place to sensitize the women in the area about the services being provided at the telecentre as this is attributed to financial constraints.

These sentiments were confirmed by some women in one of my discussions where they complained that they have never seen any CCMT official or someone else coming to explain and educate them on the services being offered and the benefits they could derive from them. One of the women said:

I have never seen the manager or the chairman coming to explain to us on how we can access the services at the information centre and how we can be helped further in our business of pigs.

As a result, most of them indicated that they have not been to the centre for a long time. The women complained that there were no public awareness campaigns to make them familiar with services. I was told the lack of community notice boards at convenient places such as the clinic and market place which are mostly visited by women where they could be informed about the CCMT services is contributing to the difficulties of marketing the centre to the women.

One key respondent told me that his department was currently working with fifteen (15) women's clubs within the Chinyunu catchment area where sensitization about the CCMT services are included as part of the community development activities of the department. The women are encouraged to come to the centre for them to learn computer skills which would be beneficial to both their lives and add value to the club activities. He said some women normally complain that they are too old to use computers and that they would rather leave that to the younger ones, that they do not have money to pay for the services and that it would be difficult for them to understand the computers because of their low education levels. The message on the CCMT receives a lot of resistance from the women he interacts with because most of them view it as an alien project and that they do not seem to have any attachment to it.

The dilemma really is that the diffusion strategies are completely absent; in other words there are no diffusion strategies to make the women aware of the CCMT innovation so that they can build some idea on how it functions and what it offers before they can even form a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards it and make a decision to either reject or adopt it (Rogers 1995). Trying to make these women implement the CCMT innovation immediately without going through all the stages may prove difficult as it has shown in their stories. This needs commitment from all these actors connected to this project ranging from the State as the primary duty-bearers to moral duty-bearers such as those individuals and institutions that have the power to affect women's lives like local leaders, NGOs, private ICT providers to help diffuse the innovation.

4.4.5 CCMT Sustainability Strategies

The telecentre currently funds its activities using the financial resources generated from the user-fees. The CCMT generates an average of K800, 000.00 equivalents to USD 160 per month from all its services and its expenditure is well above that figure per month ranging from equipment maintenance and salaries for the employees. There are no major sustainability strategies currently being pursued apart from the management's plan to increase the cost of the services to be offered such as mobile banking, storage facility, selling solar lamps, DSTV shows, Film shows and TV shows, cold storage services and selling of

refrigerated drinks and foods. There are no specific plans that would increase the participation of women farmers in the CCMT activities thereby boosting its sustainability.

4.5 Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback

4.5.1 Where is ZICTA in all this?

The main role of ZICTA in the establishment of community telecentres in the country is to ensure that the electronic communications infrastructure is developed, provide ICT services in the under-served communities and provide initial funding to the setting of community telecentres. The activities being undertaken by ZICTA as required by the ICT Act is to construct shared communication towers under the Universal Access and Service Fund that enables ICT service providers to extend their service coverage to rural communities. ZICTA provides funding to set up community telecentres while their implementers are normally outsourced.

Before funding is made, there is a requirement that the initiators of the project submit to ZICTA a business plan which must contain a detailed statement of the telecentre objectives, the strategies for achieving the objectives and how progress will be assessed on an on-going basis. The telecentre objectives must be in line with the ICT Act and Policy on promoting access to ICTs to rural communities. ZICTA does not include gender-budgeting in its funding to these community telecentre projects.

I was told that the designing of a business plan must be done through consultations with all stakeholders in the community which must include women groups. ZICTA runs media awareness programmes through adverts in the print and electronic media so that people are made aware of the processes for their effective participation. The question is: “Do rural women have access to a radio or newspaper?” This may not be an effective way of sensitizing rural communities. There are no defined measures put in place to ensure that the women groups are realistically and effectively engaged in this process. The business plan must cater for the various ICT needs of the community and it is up to the stakeholders to include the specific needs of women. ZICTA then evaluates the business plan for funding by considering factors such as location, market and presence of the communication providers to determine

the telecentre's sustainability. The unfortunate thing is that the gender impact on women's access to community telecentres is not part of ZICTA's considerations when funding the establishment of a community telecentre.

ZICTA does not follow-up on the project to ensure that women are actively engaged throughout the process of implementing the project. I was told that implementers of community telecentres are not required to be gender-aware or at least benefit from gender-awareness training. There are no partnerships being worked out by ZICTA between NGOs, service/content providers and other actors to enhance outreach and improve gender equality in telecentre project activities. On the measures to reduce end-user fees that will make electronic communications and ICT services more accessible to rural women farmers, ZICTA lobbies the government to reduce duty on importation of ICT equipments to be deployed in rural areas.

The license terms and conditions do not oblige licensed community telecentres to promote gender analysis and mainstreaming within their operations. The Research and Development guidelines are being developed but they do not include any specific reference to gender. The Universal Access Policy has not yet been formulated and therefore the Universal Access Fund is also not yet fully operational. ZICTA has no permanent working relationships with community telecentres in the country after they have been funded and established.

ZICTA's position in this matter is compromised by the lack of clear directions from the provisions of the ICT Act and Policy regarding the engendering of the whole processes of establishing community telecentres. The emphasis of the ZICTA story regarding the UAP is the implementation of the shared passive infrastructure (*i.e. communication towers*) in rural, funding the establishment of community telecentres and Internet Points of Presence without doing further diagnosis of how these components would impact on the rural women. The ICT law is not giving directions on how ZICTA should proceed on issues of making community telecentres gender-sensitive from planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages. This violates the provisions of CEDAW (to which Zambia is party) that oblige States Parties to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas to ensure, on the basis of equality of men and women, they participate in and benefit from rural development.

4.5.2 CCMT Evaluation

The CCMT has only been evaluated once since its inception in 2006. The evaluation team comprised of 4 people that is a consultant from Airtel Zambia, CCMT coordinator from UNIDO and 2 officials from the CCMT management. The terms of reference of the evaluation team were to perform a SWOT on the telecentre and its staff, to teach the staff how to conduct the SWOT analysis and to develop training and capacity building programme for the CCMT. The terms of reference did not include any aspect of gender analysis and how gender-disaggregated data and indicators could be collected and analyzed in future evaluation exercises. The evaluation itself did not identify the many women's clubs in the area as an opportunity for increased clientele and the lack of gender-sensitivity in the CCMT activities as a weakness. Having been armed with the facts of the matter, I now present my case on behalf of the women farmers in Chinyunyu.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 ARGUING A CASE FOR CHINYUNYU WOMEN FARMERS FROM A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Developmental Initiative: Areas of Concern

5.1.1 Whom to Focus On

According to the DFID report (2009), rural women are amongst the poorest of the poor and have the least access to voice and representation in society due to social exclusion and this makes them vulnerable to poverty and insecurity. This is the reason why they have been given a special recognition under CEDAW⁵. All developmental efforts in rural communities must identify and include women as being among the vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded groups. This gives them a voice and representation that will eventually improve their livelihoods. The Chinyunu Women Farmers are a typical example of a vulnerable group where developmental initiatives such as the CCMT should identify them as vulnerable, excluded and what is not done for them by the project. Developmental programmes should pay particular attention to structural and indirect forms of vulnerability and discrimination faced by rural women in Chinyunu in terms of gender-neutral laws/policies and social construction

5.1.2 Uncovering the Problem

When designing and implementing rural development projects, emphasis should not simply be in terms of the needs of the individuals but a description of a situation should be made in terms of society's obligation to respond to the rights of individuals in the community (DIHR 2007). The initiatives must be comprehensive in nature and consider the full range of the individual rights in the targeted community for purposes of forming the basis for setting project priorities (Ibid). The project should focus on expanding individuals' choices and capabilities to exercise their individual rights and freedoms rather than only improving the

⁵ Article 14.

community's economic status. The focus really of a development effort such as the CCMT should be on the root causes of poverty, deprivation and human rights violations of the community members especially women as a most vulnerable group.

5.1.3 Rights-Holders and Duty-Bearers

In any development work, there is need to recognize the potential beneficiaries of the project as the rights-holders and those who have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the rights-holders as duty-bearers (UNDP 2006). Rural women such as those in Chinyunyu have inalienable rights and a deprivation of their needs amounts to the denial of these rights. For example, access to agricultural information and markets is not only something they need but something they have a right to have as human beings. The development programme should therefore target the women's ability to claim their rights as beneficiaries of the project and also target duty-bearers' ability to fulfil their obligations towards the rights-holders (DIHR 2007). The actors in the project must use the laws and policies related to the project to demand accountability from duty-bearers. The efforts of the project should seek to install legal and administrative procedures that strengthen accountability and if possible for ordinary community people such as women claim their rights (Ibid).

5.1.4 Focus on Empowering the Women

Parties to CEDAW are urged to take appropriate measures that would see rural women participate in and benefit from rural development initiatives⁶. This means the projects must include all the beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners where women are supposed to be party in deciding development strategies and goals. Further, rural development work should promote platforms and networks that mobilize and support women's ability to take part in the governance of the projects and claim their rights as individuals and in groups.

5.2 Programming Phases of a Development Project

⁶ Article 14(2)(a).

5.2.1 What are they?

I discuss the three basic steps of Project programming from the perspective of the four areas of concern mentioned above in relation to how the CCMT project was established.

5.2.2 Conceptualization and Planning Stage – Analyzing the Context of the Project

The problems such as lack of access to ICTs facing rural communities especially women should be placed in a national, regional and international context using the human rights standards and principles in order to give a developmental initiative targeted to address the problem a broader perspective (DIHR 2007). The analysis of the context, the problem and the stakeholders involved in the initiative in terms of human rights standards is crucial for such initiatives. I analyze the context in which the CCMT project was conceptualized and planned in three stages namely; problem identification, problem analysis and stakeholders analysis.

5.2.2.1 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The innovators of the project must first make a broad and overall assessment of the situation not only in the designated community but consider other important spheres which may be related directly or indirectly to the issue that they want addressed (Ibid). For example, the assessment should take into consideration the national laws and policies related to the issue, the actors both national and international involved in solving the issue. In the case of the CCMT project, the innovators' approach in assessing the situation concentrated on merely ensuring that the farmers' information centre is established to address the lack of access to agricultural information and markets for the local farmers especially those involved in organic farming.

The broader assessment should have included analyzing what the ICT Act and Policy provides on universal access, the other actors involved in the provision of community telecentres in the country. The lack of a broader assessment of the situation was a missed

opportunity to analyze from the beginning rural women's position in the ICT national legislation/policy in relation to Zambia's commitments to regional and global human rights instruments such as the SADC Protocol and CEDAW. This would have helped to assess whether the women farmers in Chinyunyu are among the most vulnerable groups that needed voice and representation at the CCMT Project.

The other task for the innovators is to identify the most relevant focus of the development project by looking at the core problems of the most vulnerable groups in the community when it comes to the problem wanting to be addressed by the project (*Ibid*). This can be done by listing all the vulnerable groups, identify which among them are the most vulnerable and what their main problems are. This was not the case with the CCMT project. Some of the aspects of vulnerability include *inter alia* lack of gender-sensitive laws/policies, gender roles, social construction, lack of education, limited productive and economic means, lack of power and influence, cultural practices which my study found common among the women were not formulated as part of the problems affecting them.

The concentration of the innovators was on the general lack of agricultural information of the community without specifically disaggregating the groups in accordance to their vulnerability. This omission indicates the reason why most women talked to complained that the services at CCMT project are not relevant to their individual/group situations because the aspects of their vulnerability were not incorporated in order to translate into services compatible to them.

5.2.2.2 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Problem analysis offers an opportunity to the initiators of a project to understand the problems and actors in more detail and define the key human rights issues related to each problem and what rights violations this implies (DIHR 2007). It defines what the ideal situation should be for the vulnerable group in accordance with international human rights standards, as it also points to relevant national legal and policy framework where we have some of the main deviations (*Ibid*). The CCMT project did not conduct an overall assessment of the situation so as to define the ideal position for vulnerable groups of the community such

as the women farmers in the area in relation to human rights instruments such as CEDAW that specifically provides for rural women⁷. The ICT Act and policy were not interrogated to find out how the rural women are viewed therein when it comes to accessing ICTs I feel this is where the women are getting a raw deal. The provisions of the ICT Act and policy are not women specific in the way they address ICT issues especially when it comes to universal access provisions.

The initiators should have analyzed the root causes of deprivations of the community's right to agricultural information and markets provided through ICTs. Some of the guiding questions should have been for instance, "Does the ICT law/policy adequately address the problem especially on the most vulnerable like women farmers?" This question should have helped the innovators to understand that the provisions on universal access in the ICT law and policies focus on the construction of shared ICT infrastructure⁸ than appreciating their impact on the community especially the rural women farmers. My view is that the ICT legal and policy environment is the dominant root cause for deprivations and violation of rural women farmers' rights to information and market due to its gender-neutral stand on issues of universal access to ICT services. The national legislation and policy is always very important in guiding and regulating national programmes such as the CCMT.

The central question should have been whether the existing provisions of the ICT Act protect the rights to information of the women farmers, or whether they just aggravate the problem, or discriminate against women. They could have done this by determining which provisions of human rights instruments like CEDAW, SADC Protocol applies and if those rights are recognized in the Constitution and the ICT national laws and policies. Whether the ICT laws and policy relate to the specific problem (lack of agricultural information and market) faced by women farmers in the community and whether they adequately guide certain negative perceptions of society towards women. This was not done and even then the ICT law and

⁷ Article 14.

⁸ Under ZICTA's Universal Access Programme which consists of three components namely; construction of shared passive infrastructure (i.e. communication towers) in rural and underserved areas, establishment of multi-purpose community telecentres and the Internet Points of Presence.

policy has little to offer to women especially rural women farmers because of its gender-neutrality.

5.2.2.3 STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS: RIGHTS-HOLDERS AND DUTY-BEARERS

This type of analysis seeks to identify who is responsible for addressing a given problem in terms of rights and obligations because once something has been identified as a human rights problem it is a basic human rights principle that rights should always correspond to specific obligations (DIHR 2007). There is a need for community developmental initiatives to identify the rights-holders and the corresponding legal or moral duty-bearers because they are the main stakeholders of the initiative as far as deprivation or neglect of obligations are concerned. In identifying the rights-holders, the project should be as specific as possible by assessing who they are, their immediate needs, whether they are aware of their rights, how and where to claim them, their capabilities and how they are organized (*Ibid*). My study discovered that all this was not done; the project identified the whole Chinyunyu community as the purported rights-holders instead of segmenting the people like women farmers according to their immediate information needs.

According to SADC Protocol,⁹ Zambia as a Party (legal duty-bearer)¹⁰ has an obligation to ensure that rural women (rights-holders) enjoy the right to access information through ICT innovations like community telecentres. The State is the primary legal duty-bearer though its duties extends to other institutions like ZICTA,¹¹ the Department of Communication¹², the Ministry of Gender, the Department of Community Development and Parliament to enact gender-responsive ICT legislation. There also moral duty-bearers, that is individuals and institutions that have the power to affect women's lives such as the traditional leaders, local government representatives, project officials, women organizations and NGOs.

⁹ Article 31.

¹⁰ Article 20(1) obliges the State to respect the right to information.

¹¹ Whose overall objective is “to regulate the provision of electronic communication services and products and monitor the performance of the sector, including the levels of investment and the availability, quality, cost and standards of electronic communication services.”

¹² It formulates ICT policies that are gender-sensitive and respond to human rights instruments on women's rights like CEDAW.

All these should be identified and analyzed by the project to ensure that the rights-holders are clear on who should be held accountable in case of failure to *respect*, *protect* and *fulfil* the relevant rights. However, my study has revealed that this important step was not critically looked at and as a result women farmers who were suppose to benefit from the project do not know who to blame for not accessing the CCMT services. The CCMT project did not determine whether duty-bearers have the capacity to meet their obligations to ensure the women farmers would adequately access the CCMT facilities and if yes, then how would they be obliged to act and if no, what should be done to make them act.

The AU Protocol obliges State Parties to ensure that women enjoy their right to sustainable development by introducing gender-perspective in all development planning procedures and make women participate at all levels in the conceptualization and implementation of development programmes.¹³ It was clear from my study that important stakeholders such as the women farmers were not included in the process of conceiving and planning the CCMT project thereby having their immediate needs left out and in turn the services being provided are not relevant to their specific needs. This denial of their needs to be met is actually denial of their inalienable rights to access information through ICT facilities.

5.2.3 Designing the Project

General Assembly Resolution No. 58/146 invited the WSIS to take into consideration the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and to ensure their participation in developing and implementing global information and communication technology strategies. This implies that developmental initiatives need to ensure that the core problems (vulnerability of the target groups), rights-holders and duty-bearers as stakeholders identified are operationalized. The initiative should be designed in such a way that it addresses the vulnerability of the target groups and its root causes by formulating responsive project objectives and potentially activities.

¹³ Article 19.

The project objectives should focus on promoting awareness, capacity and interrelations of the rights-holders and duty-bearers, creating special mechanisms that ensure inclusion of the most vulnerable groups of society such as women, ensuring ownership and meaningful participation of all stakeholders especially women and include mechanisms for complaint, resolution and redress in case of violation and deprivation (DIHR 2007). The objectives should also relate either directly to rights or to the elements of human rights standards such as increasing participation, accountability or empowerment of community especially women.

As noted in my findings, the CCMT objectives did not consider addressing the core problems women farmers particularly face ranging from multiple gender-roles, low literacy levels, inadequate disposal incomes, lack of awareness and capacity to access and claim their right to information through the CCMT. There were no special measures put in place targeting the inclusion of women farmers as one of the most vulnerable groups in the activities of the CCMT project. It was clear that women farmers did not meaningfully participate in the designing of the CCMT project thereby denying them a right to ownership and effective participation as demanded by human rights instruments like CEDAW and AU Protocol on Women. There were no mechanisms designed to ensure that awareness is promoted among the women farmers about the CCMT facilities that would make more women farmers access the services from the centre. The lack of awareness initiatives in the project objectives has contributed to a situation where the actors who are also the duty-bearers are doing nothing to ensure the CCMT responds to the needs of the women farmers in the area.

DIHR (2007) report argues that the activities of a development initiative must be formulated to fulfil the objectives of the initiative by targeting the promotion of human rights, root causes of the problems including issues of social exclusion, disadvantage, discrimination or non-fulfilment of rights, having an explicit gender-dimension and ensuring the participation of the relevant rights-holders and duty-bearers in the project. This means the immediate problems of the vulnerable groups like women should be translated into services such as research, training materials, adult literacy, awareness raising activities, network development of actors as this builds capacity of both the rights-holders and duty-bearers. The services formulated should be able to support change in the legal, policy and administrative procedures by building dialogue and interrelations between rights-holders and duty-bearers.

My findings have revealed that all these progressive measures were not part of the activities formulated at the design stage of the CCMT project that would have seen women farmers in Chinyunu as rights-holders being included and empowered through awareness raising and other actors having the capacity for advocacy activities. This could have helped in addressing the root causes of women farmers' rights deprivation and violations like the gender-neutral ICT law and policy which should have been prioritized in the conceptualization and planning stages of the CCMT project. This could have also strengthened the duty-bearers like ZICTA in terms of its accountability to the rights-holders especially women farmers, interest and responsiveness in ensuring that the rights of the beneficiaries of community telecentres are taken serious. Mechanisms for complaint and redress should have been part of the project objectives to give an avenue for women farmers receive remedies for their constant deprivation and violations of their rights such as right to agricultural information and markets by the State through its subordinate bodies like ZICTA.

5.2.4 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Project

The implementation phase is a very crucial stage of the project because it is at this stage where the plans from the previous two phases have to materialize into reality. On the other hand, the monitoring and evaluation is one way of ensuring that the implementation remains true to the basic human rights principles and standards relevant to the project.

5.2.4.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

According to the AU Protocol¹⁴ on the rights of women, the actors in the implementation of development projects must lead by example and should focus on ensuring that the values of dignity, accountability, non-discrimination, participation of women are embedded in the implementation procedures as well as in the everyday behaviour and attitudes of the implementers of the project by focusing on the following issues:

¹⁴ Article 2 on the elimination of discrimination against women, Article 3 on the right to dignity, Article 19 on State accountability and the right of women to participate at all levels of developmental programmes.

5.2.4.2 VULNERABLE GROUPS

The implementers should keep in mind that the project is being developed to empower the vulnerable groups especially women and that their immediate needs and concerns should be the focus of the project (DIHR 2007). The needs of the vulnerable group should remain at the centre of the project by ensuring that its implementation addresses what they say they need not what the implementers say the vulnerable group need. This means the project should view its targeted vulnerable groups as rights-holders not as mere beneficiaries of the project activities and strengthen their capacity to organize and mobilize on their own. The *modus operandi* of the implementation phase should not inadvertently reproduce some aspects of social exclusion and discrimination more especially to exclude women from the process.

The situation at the CCMT project is opposite to the rights-based ideals now under discussion because of the project's failure to translate the human rights-based approach principles into practical standards for implementation such as ensuring that the women farmers who are among the vulnerable groups are recognized as rights-holders not just beneficiaries. It is also clear from my findings that the women farmers have no capacity to organize themselves to claim their right to access information through the CCMT because they are not even aware that they are entitled to access the services at the centre. I feel this exacerbates their social exclusion and discrimination when it comes to accessing the ICTs being offered at the CCMT.

5.2.4.3 ROOT CAUSES

CEDAW demands that State Parties must take certain measures that would ensure equality between women and men by incorporating this principle into Constitutions and other legislation.¹⁵ The project should analyze the law and policy related to the problem being addressed and find out whether they are part of the root causes of the problem. The CCMT project did not do this analysis but through my assessment of the ICT law and policy, I found that it is not gender-responsive even with the implementation of ICT facilities like telecentres thereby making it one of the root causes of women farmers' failure to access information

¹⁵ Article 2(a).

through the CCMT. The Zambian ICT laws and policies do not give a clear direction on the establishment of community telecentres in rural areas and how they can be gender-sensitive right from the conceptualization phase up to the monitoring and evaluation phases of the CCMT project.

5.2.4.4 *RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RIGHTS-HOLDERS AND DUTY-BEARERS*

There is need to ensure real cooperation on the ground between the rights-holders and duty-bearers by strengthening the mechanisms of cooperation and establishing meaningful dialogue and interaction (DIHR 2007). The project should strive to build sustainable, jointly owned and recognized structures and institutions through which the rights-holders and duty-bearers can cooperate on their own (*Ibid*). This is obviously not the case with the CCMT project as it is clear from my findings that there exists no relationship between the women farmers' clubs who are the rights-holders and the CCMT officials and other outside organizations such as ZICTA who are the duty-bearers. This lack of relationship especially between ZICTA and the targeted groups like women farmers has contributed to the former not advocating for community telecentres that meet the needs of rural women farmers like those in Chinyunu.

5.2.4.5 *ENSURING EMPOWERMENT*

According to CEDAW¹⁶ provisions, rural women should enjoy their right to participate in the implementation of development projects at all levels and to participate in all community activities. To be able to participate, the stakeholders in the project such as women need to know what is happening, when and why as there is need to have a constant flow of information between the project and the relevant stakeholders to ensure active and informed participation. From my findings, there has been a disjointed flow of information between women farmers in Chinyunu and the CCMT project where women are saying they have never participated fully in the activities of the CCMT project because no one explained to them about the project. This means that both the State and Non-State actors are not doing

¹⁶ Article 14 (2).

enough to raise awareness among the women farmers and others actors so that the CCMT can begin to be responsive to the concerns of the women farmers in the area.

The boards and management of development projects should be used as fora where stakeholders such as women can participate by serving as members though community public meetings, media campaigns, supporting self-mobilizing groups such as women's clubs, awareness raising and targeted educational activities also facilitate the inclusion of stakeholders (DIHR 2007). The participation should be well structured to prevent the most influential and powerful participants in a community from ambushing and taking over participatory events for their own purposes; well-structured participation can also allow the accommodation of target groups where they already have existing platforms (Ibid). The situation at the CCMT project is different in that the board and management structure has inadequate women representatives thereby making the CCMT environment not user-friendly for most women farmers.

5.2.4.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

The core principle of the rights-based approach is that processes of development should rest on human rights standards and thus the need to continuously ensure that the project processes are accountable, participatory and non-discriminatory (OHCHR 2006). I discuss what should be monitored and evaluated as follows:

5.2.4.7 MONITORING THE PROCESS

According to the AU Protocol¹⁷, State Parties should take appropriate measures to take into account indicators such as *process*, *structural* and *outcome* of development projects from women's perspectives. The monitoring should be able to detect the possible hidden discrimination in the manner the project is being implemented or managed as there are often non-intentional societal practices which end up embedding themselves in the project practices without the implementers or the officials of the project knowing. For example, where only

¹⁷ Article 19(e).

men are elected or hired to occupy positions in the boards and management of the projects excluding the women or only certain group of people shows up for community meetings. Monitoring of the project should be regular and should include a complaint mechanism to allow for genuine participatory monitoring where stakeholders' status as rights-holders is acknowledged. As noted in my findings, the monitoring of the CCMT project has been done only once since its inception in 2006 and that the process did not achieve any meaningful goals that are beneficial to the women farmers in terms of their access and usage of the CCMT facilities.

5.2.4.8 *EVALUATING THE PROJECT OUTCOMES*

Boesen and Martin argues in the DIHR (2007) report that the outcome of a development initiative like the CCMT can basically be measured in terms of the improvement of the human rights situation of the rights-holders the project targeted or its working with. The project should be able to monitor itself as a way of promoting the human rights of members of a designated community such as women. The project should be able to collect and document gaps and unfulfilled rights in a disaggregated manner which would put pressure on the duty-bearers like the State to comply with the rights standards (*Ibid*).

This is not the case as far as the CCMT project is concerned. The project was evaluated only once since inception and this makes ZICTA continue with its hands-off approach towards the project thereby violating and depriving women farmers' rights to agricultural information and the related rights on economic empowerment. The monitoring and evaluation of the CCMT should have offered legitimacy and also underpin future interventions and prioritizations of the rights of the women farmers in the area. Development projects' aim should be ultimately to improve people's lives and it is this change for better life (or lack of it) that monitoring and evaluation measures should focus on. There are no changes in the lives of women farmers that the CCMT project has contributed because there is no evidence to show that their rights are being fulfilled and no longer violated. This is basically due to lack of monitoring and evaluation that should have been the basis of identifying gaps and unfulfilled rights.

Further, monitoring and evaluation of development projects like the CCMT reviews whether duty-bearers are more accountable for the fulfilment, protection and respect of the rights of the most vulnerable groups such as women and whether the attitudes of duty-bearers take into account the best interests and rights of the vulnerable group. I found this farfetched in my study because ZICTA which is the main duty-bearer in this case has no follow-up programmes after funding the establishment of community telecentres. This leaves room for non-accountability for the *respect, protection* and *fulfilment* of women farmers' rights by the duty-bearers and therefore the women also find it difficult to claim their rights properly. The arguments for the women farmers in Chinyunyu are clear, what remains are to hear the verdict and the way forward.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 THE VERDICT AND WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

6.1 The Verdict

“We have no choice but to recognize that the future of the planet, to a great extent, depends on
Women.”

(Momo 2000:184)

6.1.1 Success Story

The commissioning by ZICTA of a UAP which consists *inter alia* the establishment of Community Multipurpose Telecentres in rural communities to ensure that ICTs are deployed to such areas of the country makes it easier for historically disadvantaged groups such as rural women farmers to participate in and contribute to the evolution of the country’s information society.

6.1.2 Whose obligation is it?

6.1.2.1 THE STATE THROUGH ITS BODIES (SUCH AS GOVERNMENT)

The Zambian Constitution being the country’s supreme law guarantees the fundamental human rights under Part III. Article 11 specifically guarantees to every person in Zambia the fundamental rights and freedoms without any discrimination. Article 20(1) guarantees freedom of expression which entitles every person freedom to receive, impart and communicate ideas and information without interference. Article 23(3) prohibits discrimination that is affording different treatment to different persons based on certain attributes such as sex and marital status. The State as the primary legal duty-bearer has an obligation to ensure that these constitutional provisions are not compromised and the persons targeted enjoy the guaranteed rights without any interference. As noted in the discussion of my findings, the State is not doing its duty to ensure that every person in Zambia including

the women farmers in Chinyunyu enjoy their right to receive, impart and communicate information and ideas freely without any interference.

Zambia is party to a number of international and regional human rights instruments which promulgates women's rights such as the SADC Protocol. In Articles 4-11 of the Protocol on constitutional and legal rights, State Parties should endeavour to enshrine gender equality and equity in their Constitutions and ensure that these are not compromised by any provisions, laws or practices. The State has not removed from the Constitution the claw back clause¹⁸ that influences discrimination against women including women farmers in Chinyunyu. The State has not included affirmative action provisions in the Constitution to ensure women including rural women participate in decision-making processes by holding positions of influence at all levels. The State has not adopted an ICT policy and enacted ICT laws which ensure equal access, benefits and opportunities for women including rural women farmers like those in Chinyunyu and men in the ICT industry taking into account the gender-dimensions of the industry.

6.1.2.2. ZAMBIA INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AUTHORITY (ZICTA)

ZICTA¹⁹ has a legal obligation *inter alia* to promote, facilitate and monitor the provision and level of availability, quality, cost and standard of the electronic communication services that meet all reasonable demand in rural communities. It has also an obligation to disseminate information and promote the participation of the public including rural women in the provision of electronic communications services and promote the interests of the users such as women of these services. In providing the communication services to rural communities, ZICTA is obliged to take into consideration *inter alia* the availability of the services to any group like women farmers and barriers to the use of available services. However, as noted in my findings ZICTA has a hands-off approach to issues that specifically affect women

¹⁸ Article 23 (4)(c) of the Zambian Constitution.

¹⁹ Sections 6 and 70 of the ICT Act provides for these obligation by ZICTA though the provision are gender-neutral but can be used to force ZICTA to do what its suppose to do for rural women, that is, for them to have access to community telecentre services.

especially rural women farmers in terms of their access and usage of ICT services provided through community telecentres.

6.1.2.3 *OTHER NON-STATE ACTORS*

Non-State actors be it gender advocates or actors in the ICT sector generally and in particular those who were involved in the CCMT project though they may be regarded as rights-holders in other aspects have an obligation of ensuring that rural women such as the women farmers in Chinyunyu enjoy their right to receive, impart and communicate information and ideas through community telecentres like the CCMT. For example, the traditional leadership, ICT service providers, local NGOs, CCMT officials, local authority representatives and women organizations leadership are all in the bracket of moral duty-bearers whose duty must be to ensure women's rights are promoted, respected and fulfilled.

6.1.3 *ICT Law and Policy*

The legal and policy framework on universal access and service in Zambia have differential gender impacts and do not reflect some innovative solutions to address the several needs and demands of the poor rural women farmers such as those in Chinyunyu Catchment Area who are supposed to benefit the CCMT facilities. I feel that the lack of emphasis on gender-sensitive community telecentres projects by the universal access provisions is one of the root causes of some of the challenges rural women farmers face in accessing ICT services at community telecentres as their focus is divorced from appreciating women's needs.

The lack of guidance on positive discrimination efforts by the legal and policy framework in order to foster women's access to ICT facilities at community telecentres alienates women further in their quest to access ICT services. The failure by the framework to give direction on how rural women should interact with community telecentre projects in terms of the former's involvement in the conceptualization and planning, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of such projects in the designated communities promotes gender-inequalities in the manner ICT services are accessed by both women and men. The non-availability of a gender-sensitive Universal Access Policy and the delay in operationalize

the Universal Access Fund impacts negatively on the access and usage of community telecentres for women's empowerment.

Despite the recognition by the ICT Policy of the marginalization of women in the ICT activities, the incorporation of gender into projects linking ICT and development is taken as an exception instead of a rule. The main reason for this is that project designers wait to be asked for gender inclusion and *if you don't ask for it, you don't get it*. The ICT projects do not incorporate gender into their analyses and design because ZICTA project proposal guidelines do not ask for it.

6.1.4 Telecommunication Infrastructure

The success of a community telecentre does not only require putting up information and communication technologies infrastructure in rural and un-served areas but an understanding of specific needs of the vulnerable groups who are the rights-holders is paramount in fulfilling, promoting and respecting their inalienable rights such as the right to access information through community telecentre facilities. As noted in my discussion, ZICTA's concentration has been on the construction of communication towers and establishing community telecentres in rural communities without understanding their differential gender impact.

6.1.5 Content and Relevance Limitations

Community telecentres established in rural areas can only be useful and meaningful to rural women farmers if they provide information that is relevant to their immediate needs and demands, and content is locally generated in the language they are familiar with. This can only be achieved if the women themselves are actively engaged throughout the process of planning, designing and implementing a community telecentre project to ensure that its services reflect and respond to their needs.

6.1.6 Socio-cultural Arrangements

The male dominated perceptions of community telecentres, social environments that favour men over women, and entrenched gender stereotypes will continue to stifle the diffusion of engendered telecentres in the country if left unchallenged by all stakeholders in the ICT industry including social structures like the family, religious institutions, traditional authorities. To socially reconstruct gender stereotypes and also move away from gender-neutral or male-centric views of ICTs are critical for increasing rural women farmers' access to community telecentre services.

6.1.7 Governance Structures of Community Telecentres

The lack of adequate women representation on the governance structures of the CCMT affects women farmers' inputs and perspectives into the project that can help in deciding questions about issues to do with the project objectives, programs and services, content and relevance, and basically what affects their fellow women.

6.1.8 Linkages

The weak linkages and uncoordinated efforts among/between actors such as ZICTA, the Gender Ministry and other related structures in developing a gender agenda for community telecentres at national level, in training government officials on gender analysis and in increasing awareness on gender-sensitive community telecentres has lead to the establishment of community telecentres such as the CCMT that do not address the rights of rural women farmers in the targeted communities.

6.1.9 Disaggregated Data

The lack of disaggregated data on access and the use of community telecentres will make it more difficult to discern what socio-cultural factors women and men bring to bear during the design and implementation of community telecentres. Lack of gender data also makes it

difficult to advocate for gender-sensitive ICT policies. Gender data is critical for identifying gaps in usage, for improving service delivery, outreach to unmet communities and for gender budget forecasts and planning.

6.1.10 Adult Literacy and Skills Training

The lack of training and skills and low levels of literacy among rural women farmers in Chinyunyu have contributed significantly to the low number of women accessing and using the CCMT facilities as the assumption was that by providing the facility everyone in the community including women would embrace the ICT related services at the centre. Gaining a one off ICT skill does not make women feel comfortable using ICTs but they may become so if the training is sufficiently women-friendly and adapted to suit them.

6.2 What should be done?

“Equity outcomes are not achieved unless they are explicitly stated and operationalized through well thought-out procedures.”

(Derbyshire 2002:10)

I feel that to simply slot in the words *gender* or *women* in a gender-neutral law/policy that has arisen from a fundamentally gender-insensitive background is not doing justice to the situation.

6.2.1 Action Plan

Table 5: Showing a proposed Plan of Action

Areas to Improve: Increase rural women's access to ICT facilities and services to enhance their economic empowerment.			
Problems to Overcome: All socio-legal, cultural, political and economic barriers that impede rural women's access to ICTs.			
ACTION LINES What needs to be done	ACCOUNTABLE ENTITY Who will do it	TIMELINE By when	EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS
NATIONAL ICT POLICY To mandate ICT project designers to incorporate gender not as an exception but as a rule into all community telecentre projects regardless of the source of funding and ownership. To provide for clear gender-sensitive project proposal guidelines that ZICTA must be obliged to follow before funding/license any community telecentre project.	Ministry of communication. Ministry of Gender and Child Development.	Mid 2013	Achievement of practical innovations that increase access and usage of ICT facilities for rural women. Increased women participation in ICT projects at local level. Economic empowerment for rural women farmers. Enhanced understanding and appreciation of the ICT Policy and its gender dimension by the women. Increased emphasis on gender awareness and gender analysis in ICT projects.
UNIVERSAL ACCESS AND SERVICE	Ministry of	Mid 2013	Improvement in the

<p>POLICY (UASP)</p> <p>Formulate a separate gender-sensitive Universal Access and Fund Policy.</p> <p>Formulation and implementation plans must genuinely and effectively include women (i.e. rural women), women organizations, gender and ICT advocates.</p> <p>It must be a platform for the ICT law reform.</p>	<p>Communication.</p> <p>Ministry of Gender and Child Development.</p>		<p>use of ICTs by women in rural, un-served and under-served communities.</p> <p>Increased benefits of ICT related services to rural women farmers.</p> <p>Improved awareness and ability to influence subsequent processes by rural women.</p>
<p>Universal Access Agency (UAA)</p> <p>Universal Access and Service Policy should facilitate the formation of a Universal Access Agency.</p>	<p>Ministry of Communication.</p> <p>Ministry of Gender and Child Development.</p> <p>ZICTA</p>	<p>Mid 2013</p>	<p>Expanded universal access and service to rural women through establishing gender-sensitive ICT projects.</p> <p>Less costly ICT services to rural women.</p> <p>Increased growth in construction of shared communication towers and internet points that benefit women.</p> <p>Discounted tariffs and/or special subsidies to fund community tecentre projects until they are able to sustain themselves.</p>

<p>Universal Access Fund (UAF)</p> <p>To realistically connect the UAF to the community telecentre projects being developed in the country.</p> <p>To actively involve women, women organizations, gender and ICT advocates in the process of establishing UAF policies and plans.</p> <p>To critically include for funding a percentage allocated to gender-focused ICT projects.</p> <p>To incorporate a percentage of women officials in ICT projects in accordance with SADC Protocol threshold.</p> <p>To allocate a percentage of funds for training rural women in ICT skills and conducting gender awareness programs for ICT project designers/implementers.</p> <p>To implement gender-sensitive budgeting.</p>	<p>ZICTA Ministry of Finance and National Planning</p>	<p>End 2012 On going</p>	<p>Sustainable community telecentres that benefit rural women farmers' access to agricultural information and markets.</p> <p>Enhanced inclusive participation and promotion of gender equality in the ICT sector.</p> <p>Reduced barriers like gender relations and social constraints imposed on women in access and usage ICT services provided at community telecentres</p> <p>Increased capacity for women to use ICT facilities.</p>
<p>Gender-dimension of ICT Projects</p> <p>To integrate gender consideration into all ICT project analysis and design from the beginning.</p> <p>To categorically undo gender-neutral design and implementation approach.</p>	ZICTA	<p>End 2012 On going</p>	<p>Reduced socio-legal, cultural and economic constraints rural women face in participation, accessing and usage of ICT services.</p>

Funders and implementers including ZICTA of community telecentre projects should incorporate gender in their work and in the specific requirements for project preparation and funding.			
<p>Gender-disaggregated data and Business plans</p> <p>To oblige community telecentre project officials to develop and maintain a high standard, itemized record of usage of services by type, by user, including age and gender.</p> <p>To publish gender-sensitive design and implementation guidelines for ICT projects.</p> <p>To provide guidance on how to formulate business plans/project proposals for funding from a gender perspective.</p>	ZICTA	<p>End 2012</p> <p>On going</p>	<p>Easily identifiable gaps in usage of ICT services by women.</p> <p>Improved service and outreach to unmet groups like rural women.</p> <p>Improved budget forecasts and planning and for monitoring and evaluation purposes.</p>
Socio- cultural context	<p>Ministry of Communication</p> <p>ZICTA</p> <p>Ministry of Gender</p>	<p>End 2012</p> <p>On going</p>	<p>Increased gender awareness within the social structures like families</p> <p>Reduced negative socio-cultural forces that impede women's access to ICT services.</p>
ICT Literacy, Content and Relevance of ICT Services	Ministry of Communication	On going	Increased capacity for women to develop,

<p>To develop content that is relevant and useful to rural women farmers in local languages.</p> <p>To provide relevant information and ICT tools that address women's needs.</p> <p>To develop ICT literacy programs for women.</p>	ZICTA Ministry of Gender NGOs		promote and publish their own perspectives and knowledge to ensure they are represented on the Internet and in their own voices.
Participation and Linkages <p>To actively engage rural women throughout the processes of designing and establishing community telecentres.</p> <p>To provide a realistic and deliberate opportunity for rural women to have their ideas considered equally for the design, implementation and operation of community telecentres.</p> <p>To promote dialogue with the women on how to adjust community telecentres to be tailored to serve their needs.</p> <p>To build strong community linkages.</p>	Project officials Local leaders ZICTA	Ongoing	Services, location and management reflect and respond to women's needs. Enhanced ownership and belonging. Increased inclusiveness and outreach of a telecentre.
REVIEW THE ICT ACT Universal Access Provisions <p>To address gender imbalances and other areas of disadvantage and discrimination against women's access to ICT services.</p>	Ministry of Communication ZICTA Ministry of Gender	Mid 2013	Elimination of discrimination against rural women Increased capacity for rural women to claim

To conform to the proposals as discussed above under Universal Access and Service Policy.	Parliament		their rights and the duty-bearers to meet their obligations.
Domestication of human rights instruments Domesticate human rights instruments such as CEDAW, SADC Protocol and the AU Protocol. Engender the constitution by adopting gender equality and respect for the human dignity of all citizens including rural women.	Ministry of Justice Ministry of Gender Parliament	End of 2012	Enhanced capacity by women to challenge failure by the State and other related duty-bearers to <i>respect, promote and fulfill</i> their obligations. Improved realization of women's rights provisions especially the ones related to access of ICT services in the national legal framework.
INTERVENTIONS FOR CCMT Marketing the CCMT Project Finance community awareness programs that will focus on women farmers through their organized groupings. Market the CCMT to the community especially women. Marketing strategies to include individual or group interviews, focus groups, needs surveys, community outreach events. Hold a community meeting which must elect a new board of directors for	ZICTA CCMT officials Local community development officers Traditional leaders Council representative Member of Parliament Local women clubs leaders KATC	Mid 2013 Ongoing	Enhanced public interest for the project especially from the women. Improved women participation in the management of the CCMT.

<p>the CCMT which must include at least 50% women representation in accordance to the SADC Protocol.</p> <p>At least 50% of the support staff must be women.</p>			
<p>Re-focusing the CCMT Services and Capacity Building</p> <p>Focusing and re-focusing on services that respond to specific needs of women farmers.</p> <p>Develop ICT training programs for both CCMT officials and community members especially women farmers.</p> <p>Formulate women-friendly adult literacy programs.</p> <p>Training in gender analysis that must include ZICTA officials especially those from the universal access unit.</p>	<p>ZICTA</p> <p>Ministry of education</p> <p>Ministry of community development</p>	<p>End of 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Enhanced women's enjoyment of their right to agricultural information and access to markets.</p> <p>Increased usage of ICT services at the telecentre</p> <p>Improved women's basic education and understanding of ICT facilities.</p>
<p>Relevant Information for Women Farmers</p> <p>Generate relevant information for the CCMT that can be easily be understood and accessed by rural women farmers.</p>	<p>Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock</p> <p>Ministry of Commerce</p> <p>Ministry of gender</p>	<p>End of 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Willingness by women to access and use the CCMT services.</p> <p>Improved economic empowerment for women.</p>

	Ministry of Communications		
Gender-disaggregated data Facilitate training of CCMT management officials in gender matters and on how to develop and maintain a high standard, itemized record of usage of services by type, by user, including age and gender.	ZICTA CSO	End of 2012	Gaps identified in usage. Service delivery improved. Budget forecasts and planning enhanced. Effective monitoring and evaluation.
Monitoring and Evaluation Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the CCMT project. Formulate a complaint mechanism.	ZICTA	End of 2012 Ongoing	Genuine participatory monitoring where stakeholders' status as rights-holders such as women is acknowledged. Implementation of the CCMT project remains true to the basic human rights principles and standards relevant to the project.

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