



Connected Women

Accelerating digital and financial inclusion for women



Mobile has the power to transform women's lives. If the mobile gender gap is not addressed, women risk being left behind as societies and economies digitise. Women's lower levels of mobile ownership and use not only reflect existing gender inequalities, but also threaten to compound them. The mobile gender gap is also not going to close on its own and requires concerted action by stakeholders working together to address women's needs and barriers to mobile access and use.

The opportunity



We have an opportunity to contribute to the achievement of

gender equality and empowerment

of all women and girls through mobile



But there is a significant

gender gap in mobile phone ownership and use,

particularly for more transformational services like mobile internet and mobile money



Mobile can make women

more connected, safer

and provide access to information and services that enhance their lives and which many would not have received otherwise



Closing the gender gap also represents a

significant commercial opportunity

for the mobile industry and can spur economic growth

What we need

To close the mobile gender gap we need to address issues of gender equality and social norms and focus on:



Access:

to networks and enablers (quality network coverage, handsets, electricity, agents and formal IDs) and usability of handsets, content and services



Affordability:

of handsets, tariffs, data and service fees



Relevance:

of content, products and services



Knowledge and skills:

including addressing digital skills and literacy, and increasing awareness and understanding of mobile and its benefits






Safety and security:

including tackling mobile-related harassment, theft, fraud and security, and building consumer trust

How to get there

Our top 3 recommendations for:

 the mobile industry	 the development community	 policymakers and regulators
<p>1 Set gender targets to reach women that are endorsed and communicated by leadership</p>	<p>Develop and invest in initiatives and programmes that improve women's mobile access and use</p>	<p>Ensure your policy and regulation focus on gender equality and helping women access and use mobile technology</p>
<p>2 Understand the commercial opportunity of closing your mobile gender gap and the barriers and aspirations of women in your market using research and gender-disaggregated data</p>	<p>Invest in research to better understand women's mobile access and use and how to reduce the gender gap</p>	<p>Invest in the collection of gender-disaggregated data on mobile access and use through nationally representative surveys and share findings with other stakeholders</p>
<p>3 Ensure your products, services, marketing and distribution holistically address women's barriers and aspirations in your market</p>	<p>Raise awareness of the barriers to women's mobile access and use and consider these in your initiatives</p>	<p>Implement initiatives and policies that disproportionately benefit women, such as digital skills training in schools and lowering mobile-specific taxes</p>

Our approach



The GSMA Connected Women programme aims to reduce the gender gap in mobile internet and mobile money services and unlock significant commercial and socio-economic opportunities. Closing the mobile gender gap requires targeted intervention by all stakeholders. We work with a wide range of partners, including mobile operators, to address the barriers women face.

As part of the Connected Women Commitment initiative, mobile operators are committing to reduce the gender gap in the customer base of their mobile internet or mobile money services to accelerate digital and financial inclusion for women. Since 2016, over 40 mobile operators across Africa, Asia and Latin America have made formal Commitments to reduce their gender gap in these services.

Together we can unlock a substantial market opportunity for the mobile industry, deliver significant socio-economic benefits and transform women's lives.



Market Engagement



Support our operators and other partners to reach more women



Insights



Provide industry-leading research, case studies and data



Advocacy



Engage key stakeholders to increase awareness and action

When women thrive, societies, businesses and economies thrive



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