

**Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)**  
**“More and better ICT based enterprises in Uganda”**

**Radio Script**

*Broadcaster Notes*

The radio script is about Women’s ICT-based Enterprises (WIEs) in Uganda. The radio scripts describe the efforts that are going on in promoting, initiating and improving women’s ICT based enterprises in Uganda. The radio script shows the impact that ICT based enterprise can have on society in Uganda.

The radio script radio productions will raise awareness of the WIEs such as describing what WIEs are, why support WIEs, planning and managing WIEs as an enterprise, and supporting and evaluating WIEs.

This script is made in a three part series aimed at tackling key points of issues affecting WIEs. The radio program involves a presenter and a studio panel. The characters and WIE situations can be changed to suit the different countries and businesses and names of persons used in those countries. The characters have been adapted from the WIE guidebook.

The series are under the following theme “More and better women’s ICT based enterprise in Uganda”. The three part series includes:

*Part 1:* Establishing my ICT business (one-hour show).

*Part 2:* Managing my ICT business (half-hour show).

*Part 3:* Support for my ICT business (half-hour show).

This radio program is developed by Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) located on Plot 53 Kira road, Kamwokya, Kampala or [www.wougnet.org](http://www.wougnet.org) who are working in collaboration with Dr. Richard Heeks of the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom, and funded by the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID).

## **Part 1: Establishing my ICT business**

Sound effect (SFX) : Fifteen (15) second electronic hum with sounds of various electronic ICTs in the foreground, including landline telephone rings, cell phone rings, telephone dialing tones, fax machine dialing tones, computers operating system turning switching on, email ‘you have got mail’ alerts, dot matrix printing sounds, television and radio signature tunes.

SFX fades into Presenter

***Presenter:***

Welcome to the “More and better women’s information and communication technology ICT based enterprises” program.

Many women have started ICT businesses such as data entry, e-services, IT training, cyber cafes, hardware assembly, and software development creating employment opportunities for themselves and are making a lot of money too.

Shortly we will let you know how to join this business and make a lot of money or if you are already in the business, we will let you know how to improve your business and profits.

SFX

***Presenter:***

This radio program is brought to you by Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) located on Plot 53 Kira road, Kamwokya, Kampala or [www.wougnat.org](http://www.wougnat.org) who are working in collaboration with Dr. Richard Heeks of the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom, and funded by the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID).

SFX

***Presenter:***

A lot of research has been done in order to bring you accurate information of how you can benefit from establishing or supporting a women’s ICT based enterprise. All this information can be found in a book entitled:

“Supporting Women’s ICT Based Enterprise” A guide to promote, initiate and improve women’s ICT based enterprise in Uganda 2006.

Produced by: Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET).

Supported by: IDPM, Institute for Development Policy and Management, the University of Manchester and by DFID, Department for International Development.

For those of you who have access to the Internet you can visit <http://www.wougnet.org/Projects/wieug.html>. This website provides a link to the guide on supporting women's ICT based enterprise.

SFX

***Presenter:***

In this program we shall look at how to establish the ICT enterprise and do business with government, NGOs, Private sector, Community based organizations, Donors, banks, and educational institutions. We will share with you experiences of successful ICT business women like:

Amelo of SACROD Limited Uganda

Perpetua of Integrated Computers and Electronics (U) Ltd.

Njeri of Wananchi Online, Kenya

Sharmila of Softech Group of Companies in Tanzania

Aurelia of Millennium Computer Electronic Sales Tanzania.

SFX

Music Interlude 3 minutes

SFX

***Presenter:***

Welcome back to this radio program. In this program we talk about establishing an ICT business and here in the studio panel are women who have done the business and made money, as well as creating jobs for other women. I would like to welcome you Amelo, Perpetua, Njeri, Sharmila and Aurelia.

***All Panel Chorus:*** Thank you very much and we are happy to be here.

***Presenter:***

Firstly, what is this ICT based business that you women have profited a lot from?

***Amelo:***

ICT based business is a way of using digital information and communication technologies such as computers, Internet, software for socio-economic development. They can provide women with immediate and direct benefits from ICTs such as jobs, income, skills and empowerment.

***Perpetua:***

If the business cannot do without the ICT then it is an ICT based business and it is a women's ICT business if it is owned or majority owned and maybe majority managed by women.

***Njeri:***

Typical examples of ICT based women's enterprise are say a women's cooperative that assembles personal computers, a woman running her own cyber café or telecentre, a woman selling computer supplies in her shop, a woman graduate designing web sites and two women providing Information Technology software training.

***Sharmila:***

Generally ICT based enterprises are;

One: Those producing ICT as an enterprise output

Two: Those using ICT as a primary processing technology and

Three: those providing other ICT related support activity.

***Aurelia:***

If you are dressmaker who starts using email or you have a bakery that creates its website you are not on the ICT based business.

***Presenter:***

When we talk about ICT based enterprise we are looking at sales and income and making a profit. In what way can women break into this ICT business?

***Amelo:***

You can join with a business focus run by women entrepreneurs who are interested in business growth and profits. Here you will do most of your business in the private sector. You can also form a small women's group for social welfare and get business from community based organizations and NGOs. Finally you can also join as a women's enterprise supported by government. This group can move towards private sector business if they want more money.

SFX fade in and fade out

***Presenter:***

Tell us about the way you entered this ICT based business.

***Amelo:***

SACROD was founded in 2001 in Uganda and was fully operational in January 2004. Initial financing was from shareholders. The company's aim is to provide customers with ICT services. Customers include NGOs, government, auditors and private sector companies.

***Perpetua:***

Integrated Computers and Electronics (U) Ltd was founded in 1996. I was particularly interested in encouraging women to join the science and engineering field after working at the East Africa Power and Lighting Company in Kenya for a long time. We do sales and service of hardware such as computers, printers, scanners, and photocopiers. We provide software solutions such as database maintenance.

***Njeri:***

We were interested in bridging the digital divide. We provide Internet services, web service, and email service. Our customers are big corporate companies and individual users. Last year, we made a profit of 95,000 US dollars.

***Sharmila:***

After completing my degree in Computer Science in 1987, I started work as a systems designer at computers and telecom in Dar es Salaam. I went on to become a manager in 1992. At this point, I felt I could branch out on my own so I formed Soft Tech company. We started by operating from a single room in the market next to food vendors. We are now a group of four companies under Soft Tech and we provide a variety of services including IT training, software development and customization, hardware integration, connectivity services for the Internet and virtual private networks. We also do electronic funds transfer in Tanzania. Last year, our business turn over was 7 million US dollars.

***Aurelia:***

I set up Millennium Computers using some money I had saved. I was working as a technician at Sokoine University. With my skills I got motivated to start my own company. We maintain computers and sell computer consumables and do data entry jobs. We do business of about 150,000 US dollars a year.

***Presenter:***

We shall be back shortly to find out from our panel what resources are needed to establish an ICT based women's enterprise and what success factors we can try to attain.

SFX

Music interlude 3 minutes

SFX

***Presenter:***

What do women who want to start an ICT based enterprise need? What can help them to become successful in this venture?

***Amelo:***

I started with one personal computer and a laptop, a printer, a wireless Internet connection and Windows software. In order to be successful, one has to have professionalism and ethic in work delivery and client relationships. You must improve your skills and be committed to continuous learning.

***Perpetua:***

Right now we have fifteen computers, a wireless Internet connection and use software such as Linux and Windows. To succeed experience, professionalism and commitment to work are very important.

***Njeri:***

Our resources now include over 100 personal computers, a number of servers, broadband Internet connection and printers. Our software includes Linux, Windows, Pastel accounts, Fireworks, Dream weaver, Macromedia flash and Photoshop. In order to succeed you need a wide scope of products and services, organizational development as well as keeping up with the dynamic industry developments.

***Sharmila:***

Mine is a very big company. Our hardware resources include 275 personal computers, 27 servers, broadband Internet. Our software includes Microsoft products and Oracle. We employ 274 people, 71 of who are female. Our success is because the owners are

technical people who are able to guide the business and take risks in investing in the appropriate technology. Having good, independent and technically competent staff is important.

***Aurelia:***

At Millennium Computers we have one landline telephone, two mobile phones, one laptop computer and two desktop computers. We use Microsoft Office software on our computers. To be successful your own knowledge and confidence in ICT is important as well as being able to enjoy your work like a hobby is something positive.

***Presenter:***

Our panel has shown us that there are different levels of business from small size businesses to big businesses and these need different resources. Most of the success factors are similar for the women who run the ICT based businesses.

But is it all smooth operation for these women in the ICT business? After the break we shall find out what benefits and challenges women face in ICT based enterprises.

SFX

Music Interlude 30 seconds

SFX

***Presenter:***

Many women listening to the program are now ready to establish ICT businesses. What are the benefits they can expect and what challenges exist in this industry?

***Amelo:***

The benefits are that you can earn a regular salary, which is very good for women. The challenge is that many people do not think women can do well in technology and they do not like to pay women as much as they pay men.

***Perpetua:***

Many women who do ICT business get a lot of jobs with banks. Women who have ICT business and knowledge are increasingly participating in developmental projects. The challenge is that women tend to shy away from technical tasks.

***Njeri:***

The salaries in ICT business are good. There is equal training opportunity for all. The challenge for women is striking a balance between work and family.

***Sharmila:***

It is a place where you can start a career at any level. The challenge is being able to multi task and work under pressure.

***Aurelia:***

The ICT business has a good and regular salary.

***Presenter:***

Thank you very much to the members of the panel. We know what ICTs are, we know what a women ICT based enterprise is, we know where to get more information concerning women's ICT based business, we have heard how to start an ICT enterprise, and we have heard what benefits we can get from joining the ICT business together with its challenges.

In our next program, we will feature our friendly women's panel and we shall focus on how to manage the women ICT based enterprise.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET), a women's ICT advocacy and promotion NGO in Kampala, Uganda bring this radio program to you.

Please contact WOUGNET for more information about starting or supporting women's ICT-based enterprises in Uganda. You may also contact WOUGNET for a copy of the "Supporting Women's ICT Based Enterprise" guide to promote, initiate and improve women's ICT based enterprise in Uganda. This guide is available in English, Luganda and Luo.

SFX

**End.**

## **Part II: Managing my ICT Business**

SFX

***Presenter:***

Welcome to Part II of our Women's ICT-based business radio program. Shortly we will let you know how to manage an ICT based enterprise once you have established your own venture.

SFX

In this program we shall look at managing the ICT based enterprise and how to do ICT business with government NGOs, private sector, and community based organizations, donor's banks and educational institutions.

In the previous program we looked at different types of ICT based enterprise. There are those supported by government, there are private businesses serving private markets, and there are community based operations.

Managing an ICT based enterprise can be challenging because many women often from poor communities lack entrepreneurship skills, they lack the skills to face the adverse market fluctuations such as increasing cost of technology and technical staff, and other uncertainties in the business environment need to be understood.

In this program we shall understand the realities of women's lives and the likely impact of a proposed or actual ICT based enterprise. We shall understand how women cope with the uncertainties they face and understand how best to support women's ICT-based enterprises.

Let us welcome our panel that is here to give us good managing tips. We have Amelo, Perpetua, Njeri, Sharmila and Aurelia. You are most welcome.

***All:***

Thank you very much and greetings to all of you.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Who are the potential customers of these women's ICT based enterprises and how do you attract them to your business.

***Amelo:***

Women's ICT-based enterprises often find it difficult to locate new customers due to their small size and lack of links to wider markets but potential clients fall into five main categories.

One, contracts from government agencies and large public sector organizations;

Two, sub contracts from large private sector organizations;

Three, markets and customers identified through donor support and assistance from NGOs;

Four, business from other small enterprise organizations in the locality; and

Five, individual customers and members of the community.

In order to find customers, women's ICT-based enterprises need to identify the growth sectors in their locality for ICT-based goods and services, as well as spot specific market opportunities. Then they need to establish initial contact with potential customers and customer groupings.

Women will need to polish these three skills:

Specific skills to respond to market opportunities, such as how to respond to offers for tenders from large organizations;

Business skills to effectively match enterprise product and service offerings with customer needs and requirements;

Personal and social skills to interact effectively with potential customers through confidence building, effective communication and negotiation skills.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Now that the women ICT enterprise has customers, you need staff to deliver the services. What comment can you make regarding the staffing.

***Perpetua:***

Women should plan staffing effectively in accordance with changing market requirements. Women should ensure that the required skills are available for particular jobs of work in order to respond fluctuations in demand. The ICT enterprise should provide an organizational culture that is motivational, and provides sufficient financial reward for employees. It should make use of non-financial rewards such as flexible

working arrangements. It is important to put in place appropriate contract terms of employment and procedures for staff dismissals and layoffs.

It is often necessary to look at the enterprise as a whole and assess the cultural and organizational factors that influence and affect employee decisions. Creating a positive working environment that values the contribution that staff make, and involving staff in decision-making processes, is often of equal importance to providing increased financial reward.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Thank you very much Perpetua for that insight into staffing. We shall return after a short break with important information concerning money. Financing! Where and how do women get money to start up or improve women's business?

Music Interlude

SFX

***Presenter:***

Welcome back to our program. We shall now look at obtaining finance. What are the financial needs of any ICT-based enterprise?

***Njeri:***

Finance is essential for establishing and growing an ICT based enterprise or for making the necessary investments in an existing enterprise that wishes to take on new business.

One, capital investment funds in the form of loans to pay for start up costs for a new enterprise or additional capital requirements for established companies who wish to grow. Two, recurrent investments funds are necessary to keep the business going. Such funds include payment in advance from customers, prompt payment upon completion of contracts, effective debt collection, and ensure that cash keeps flowing through the business.

Short-term credit to manage cash flow is important. Such is provided through overdraft facilities or micro credit. This is required to manage the ups and downs in business.

Also micro finance credit has emerged as a key strategy for providing financial resources to poor women who run small enterprises. Women can also get informal credit from family and friends.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Well suppose women have now acquired the money to invest in the ICT business. How do they go about procuring the technology to work with?

***Sharmila:***

Introducing new ICT or technology upgrading will be critical to the future sustainability of an ICT-based enterprise. Women entrepreneurs need to make the right decision concerning the procurement of ICT equipment and software. A clear understanding of the business and financial benefits that will accrue from the investment should drive the business processes.

The technology you buy must be able to increase business through attracting new customers and contracts. It should be able to cut costs through reduced expenditure on administration and communication. The technology should increase efficiency through greater flexibility in working practices, and it should encourage business innovation such as working remotely.

***Presenter:***

What are the initial and ongoing costs women may expect to encounter in this business?

***Sharmila:***

Initial costs include hardware purchases such as computers, peripherals such as printers and scanners, and software which may be the highest cost. You may need a specialist advice or consultancy for installation of hardware and software and putting in the necessary infrastructure. Staff will also require training on how to run and how to maintain the ICT systems.

Ongoing costs include consumables like printer ink and toner, communication access charges, continuous staff training, software support and other non-tangible costs.

***Presenter:***

What other good practices are there for women ICT based enterprises?

***Aurelia:***

In managing and supporting women's ICT based enterprises it is important to consider factors that are gender specific, particularly since women are in the minority when we look at engagement in ICT.

Businesses must understand the multiple gender roles that women take and how these can affect each other. These multiple roles such as looking after family may affect a woman's choice of what hours she can work and where she can work.

Businesses must understand how far women are really engaged with the ICT based enterprise rather than simply reporting to work. It is also important to understand how far the more strategic needs of women are being met (for example, career development), as well as more practical needs (for example, good salary and benefits package).

SFX

***Presenter:***

We are now ready to find out what kind of support is required for women's ICT-based enterprises. In Part III of our radio program, we shall address the question: How do I get support for an ICT based business?

For more information about starting or supporting women's ICT-based enterprises in Uganda, please contact Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET). You may also contact WOUGNET for a copy of the "Supporting Women's ICT Based Enterprise" guide to promote, initiate and improve women's ICT based enterprise in Uganda. This guide is available in English, Luganda and Luo.

SFX

**End.**

## **PART III: Support for my ICT Business**

SFX

***Presenter:***

Welcome to the last part of our Women's ICT-based enterprises program. In this program we show different ways in which ICT based women's enterprise can be supported and the different goals that supporting agencies may have.

Support agencies tend to work with enterprises that operate in their areas of interest because they have shared values and norms. Typically, private sector agencies support private business enterprise, and NGO agencies support community-based enterprises.

In the studio our guest Therese will discuss with us what support can be provided to women's ICT-based enterprises. Therese is with the Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Rwanda. Therese, you are welcome.

SFX

***Presenter:***

Therese, what are the different support needs of an ICT-based enterprise.

***Therese:***

An enterprise has five main support needs. These include entrepreneur support, output demand support, input support, enterprise support and environmental support.

Input support addresses the inputs an enterprise needs in order to function. These include finance, premises, raw material, access to information and skilled labor.

Entrepreneur support is assisting the entrepreneur herself develop their goals.

Output support aims at creating demand for what the enterprise produces. Assisting in marketing and provision contracts helps a great deal.

Enterprise support addresses issues regarding running of the enterprise such as providing advice and necessary training.

Environmental support addresses factors within which the enterprise operates. This is supporting the woman's ICT based enterprise to network with other organizations.

***Presenter:***

At what point can one come in to support the women businesses?

***Therese:***

You are able to support a start up enterprise at its birth or an existing enterprise as it grows.

***Presenter:***

In your experience, what are the typical needs of the women's ICT-based enterprise?

***Therese:***

Women's enterprises' needs can be summarized into two categories. One, the mainstream needs of any ICT-based enterprise and two the specific needs of women.

Under mainstream needs are capacity building to accommodate constantly changing ICTs, funding investment for start up and ongoing costs, infrastructure such as access to electricity and communication, and dealing with competition. Small enterprises find it difficult to compete with larger ones.

Under specific needs for women are effects of gender norms, capacity building, being taken seriously, access to credit financing and motivation to work in an ICT-area.

***Presenter:***

Therese, how do we know that women's ICT businesses are doing well?

***Therese:***

There are three ways of gauging the success of women's ICT-based enterprises.

One, when you look at the enterprise, you tell by the number of people employed, the kind of jobs created, the profits and sales of the enterprise.

Two, when you look at livelihoods, you tell by the level of training the women have got, the high social relations of the women, and the type of assets of the women.

Thirdly, when you look at gender indicators you realize that more women are trained; and more women get promotions and become members of decision-making bodies.

***Presenter:***

Thank you very much Therese.

SFX

We have now come to the end of a three part series about supporting Women's ICT-based enterprises in Uganda. For more information about starting or supporting women's ICT-based enterprises in Uganda, please contact Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET). You may also contact WOUGNET for a copy of the "Supporting Women's ICT Based Enterprise" guide to promote, initiate and improve women's ICT based enterprise in Uganda. This guide is available in English, Luganda and Luo.

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SFX

**End.**