

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY STATEMENT

The Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) joins the nation in celebrating International Women’s Day by taking stock of the achievements that the country has made in improving ICT access and literacy among women. The United Nations theme for 2023 is *“DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality”*.

The use of technology has been on the increase over the years. Data shows that the gender gap in access to ICTS still exist, and this keeps women from realising the full potential of ICTS. Because women are under-represented in STEM education, the ripple effect is felt also in the areas of work where women are also under represented. Statistics show that over the years, the number of women making use of ICTs has significantly increased. This includes women’s access and use of computers and the internet. In 2014, the proportion of women age 15-49 years who reported having ever used a computer was 19 percent, while 20 percent had ever used the internet from any location. In 2019, the corresponding proportions were 29 and 34 percent, respectively.

There is notable gender differentials in the ICT skills that women and men possess. This can be attributed to the training that women receive in school which is not STEM related. Data from the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey showed that less women had ICT skills than men in all the areas that were collected in the survey. Overall, about 13 percent women 15-49 years reported having performed at least one of the listed ICT skills below. The corresponding proportion for males was 21.6 percent. The statistics further reveal that the skills gap is apparent between rural and urban areas, underscoring the need to improve access in rural areas.

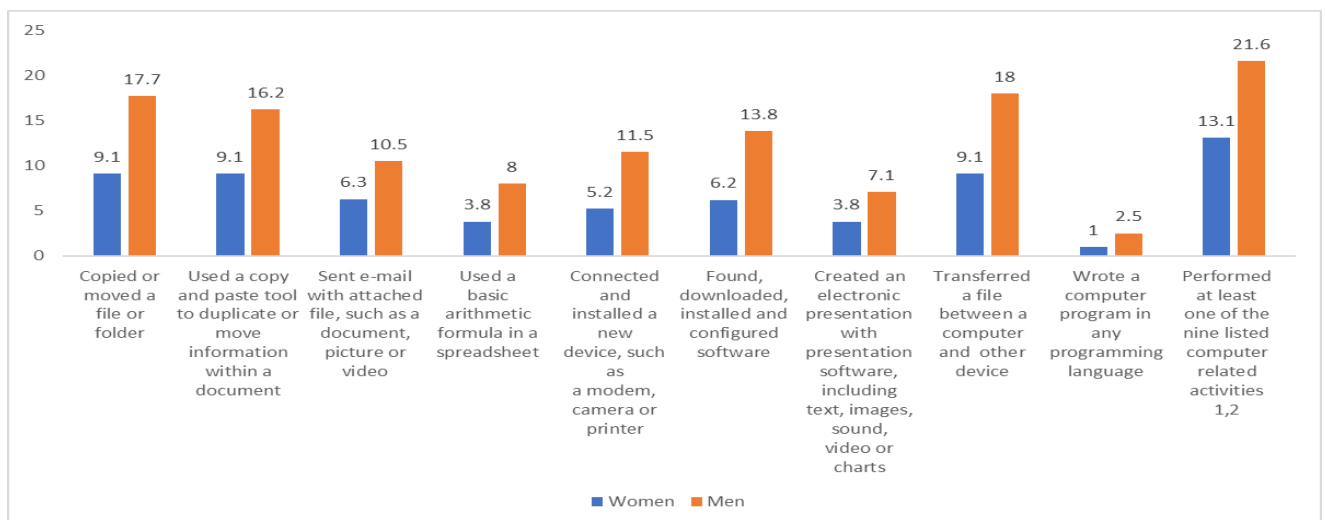


Figure 1: Distribution of Women and Men 15-49 Years who reported performing the Different ICT Skills; 2019 MICS.

On the side of education and training that women are choosing to pursue, data shows that women are opting for areas of study that are not science related. Information collected during the 2022 Population and Housing Census show that women constituted only 22 percent of all persons in the country who studied engineering, manufacturing and construction; and about 32 percent among people who studied ICTs.

Table: Distribution of the Population with Tertiary Education in Selected Science Related Fields of Study, 2022 Population and Housing Census Report

	Natural Sciences, mathematics and Statistics			ICTs			Engineering, manufacturing and Construction			Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bulawayo	53.9	46.1	1,814	65.5	34.5	1,527	76.2	23.8	11,708	58.6	41.4	1,095
Manicaland	62.4	37.6	1,023	64.9	35.1	1,037	78.9	21.1	10,080	66.2	33.8	2,829
Mashonaland Central	67.8	32.2	745	70.3	29.7	535	80.4	19.6	4,362	67.6	32.4	2,120
Mashonaland East	62.7	37.3	1,227	66.8	33.2	1,453	78.1	21.9	9,707	66.1	33.9	3,054
Mashonaland West	65.6	34.4	1,356	67.1	32.9	1,143	80.4	19.6	9,743	67.0	33.0	3,124
Matabeleland North	62.3	37.7	517	61.1	38.9	319	80.5	19.5	3,325	61.3	38.7	798
Matabeleland South	61.8	38.2	463	54.1	45.9	268	80.2	19.8	2,814	57.7	42.3	966
Midlands	63.8	36.2	1,551	60.3	39.7	1,153	79.2	20.8	12,645	54.9	45.1	2,552
Masvingo	62.5	37.5	1,011	60.3	39.7	743	78.0	22.0	7,542	63.8	36.2	2,441
Harare	58.1	41.9	5,093	70.7	29.3	7,738	77.6	22.4	37,573	63.1	36.9	4,370
Total	60.6	39.4	14,800	67.5	32.5	15,916	78.3	21.7	109,499	63.5	36.5	23,349

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