



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Prospects and Potential In Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan,
the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan

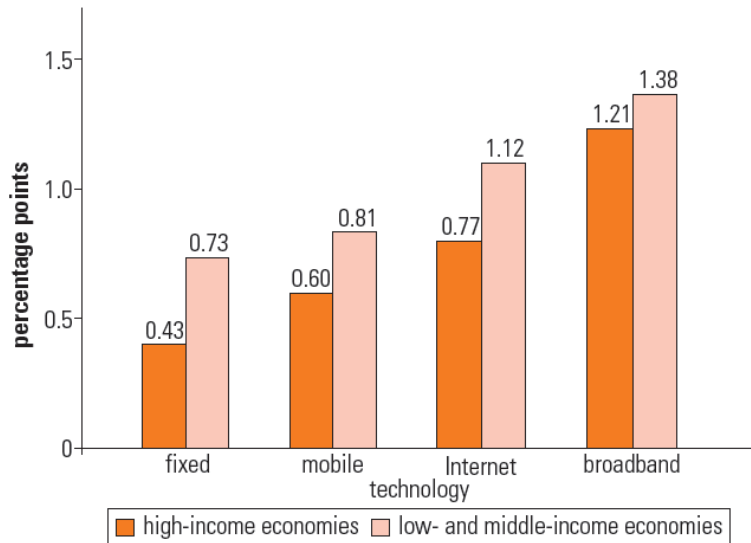
Objectives

- To assess the current environment for ICTs for Women's Entrepreneurship Development
- To explore the potential for leveraging ICT to support women's entrepreneurship
- To identify women entrepreneurs' ICT access, usage, ownership, needs and preferences for support, highlighting urban/peri-urban/rural differences
- To provide recommendations for leveraging appropriate ICT tools for women's entrepreneurship development.

Context: ICT Access = Growth

GDP growth

- Increased broadband access leads to accelerated economic growth (World Bank, 2009)



- If broadband access across CAREC increases to 50% by 2020, it could increase GDP by **\$500B**

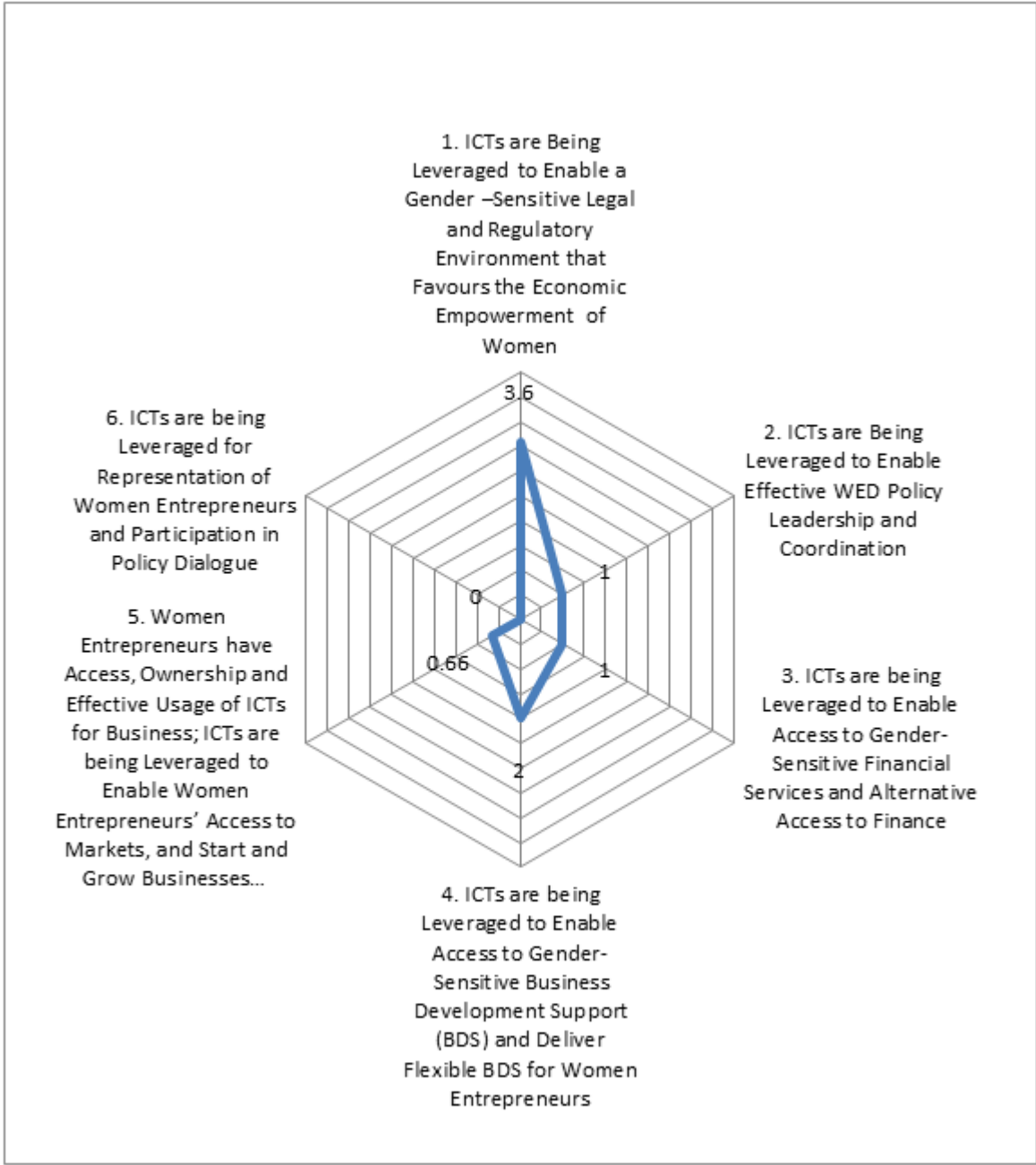
Job creation

- World Economic Forum (2013)
 - Digitization created **6 million jobs** globally and provided a US\$193 billion boost to world economic output in 2011
- McKinsey Global Institute (2012)
 - The Internet helped SMEs in eight developing countries create **3.2 jobs** for every job lost
- 20% of all jobs will be contracted online by 2020 (World Bank 2013)



Assessment of:

- Gender-sensitive legal and regulatory environment that favors the economic empowerment of women
- Effective WED policy, leadership and coordination
- Access to gender-sensitive financial services
- Access to gender-sensitive business development support services
- Access to markets, and access, ownership and use of technology; and
- Representation of women entrepreneurs and participation in policy dialog.



KAZAKHSTAN INITIAL ICT4WED SCORING

There are 200 million fewer women internet users than men worldwide and women are 21% less likely to own a mobile phone than men

Across the countries being studied, women trailed behind men in economic empowerment indicators such as business bank account ownership, labor force participation rates, and savings at a financial institution

While 41% of women entrepreneurs surveyed had internet-capable mobile phones, only 16% had activated internet services on their phones, and only 6% used those services for business activities

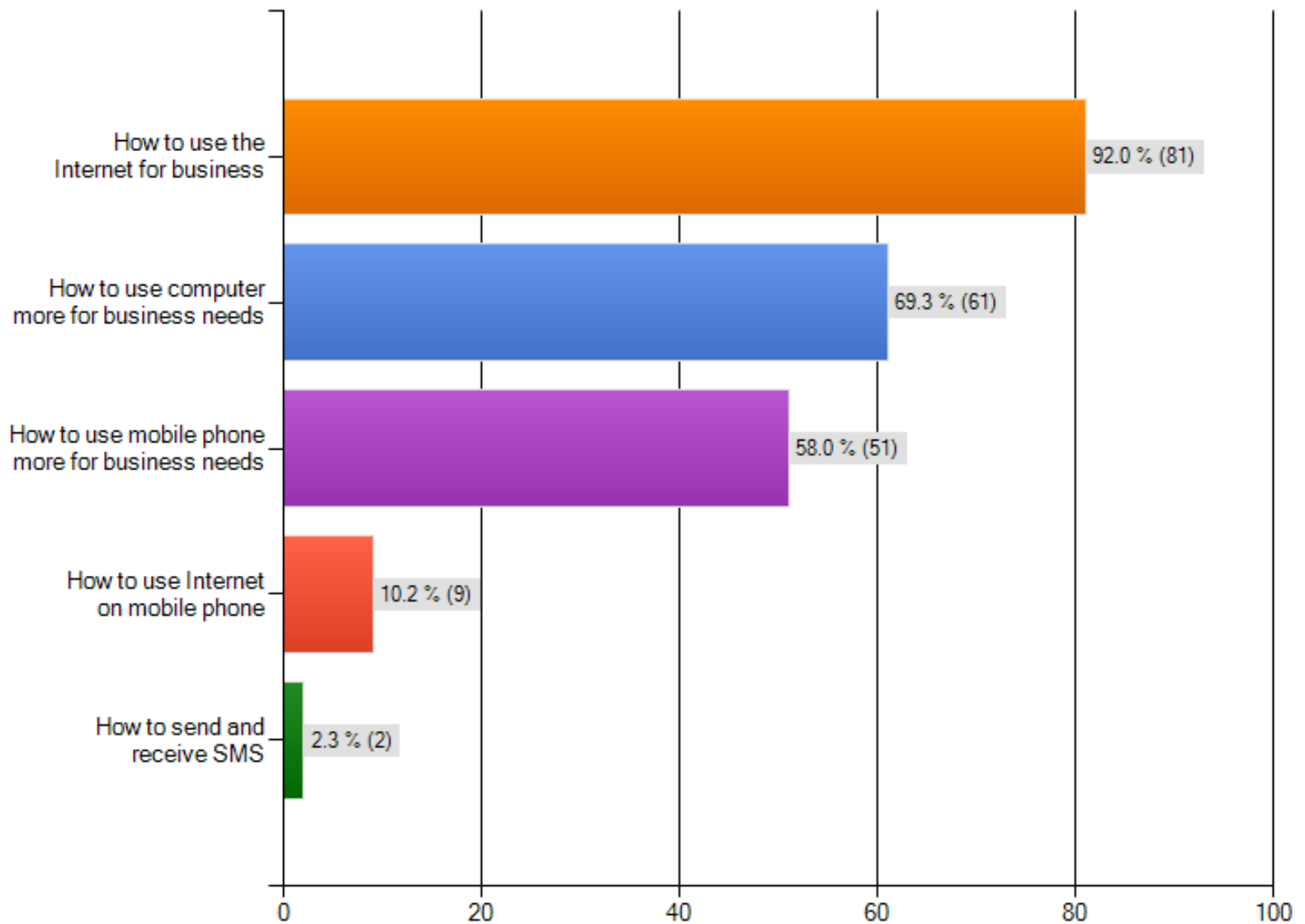


At the end of 2010, entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan totaled 161,000, of whom only 38.3% were women

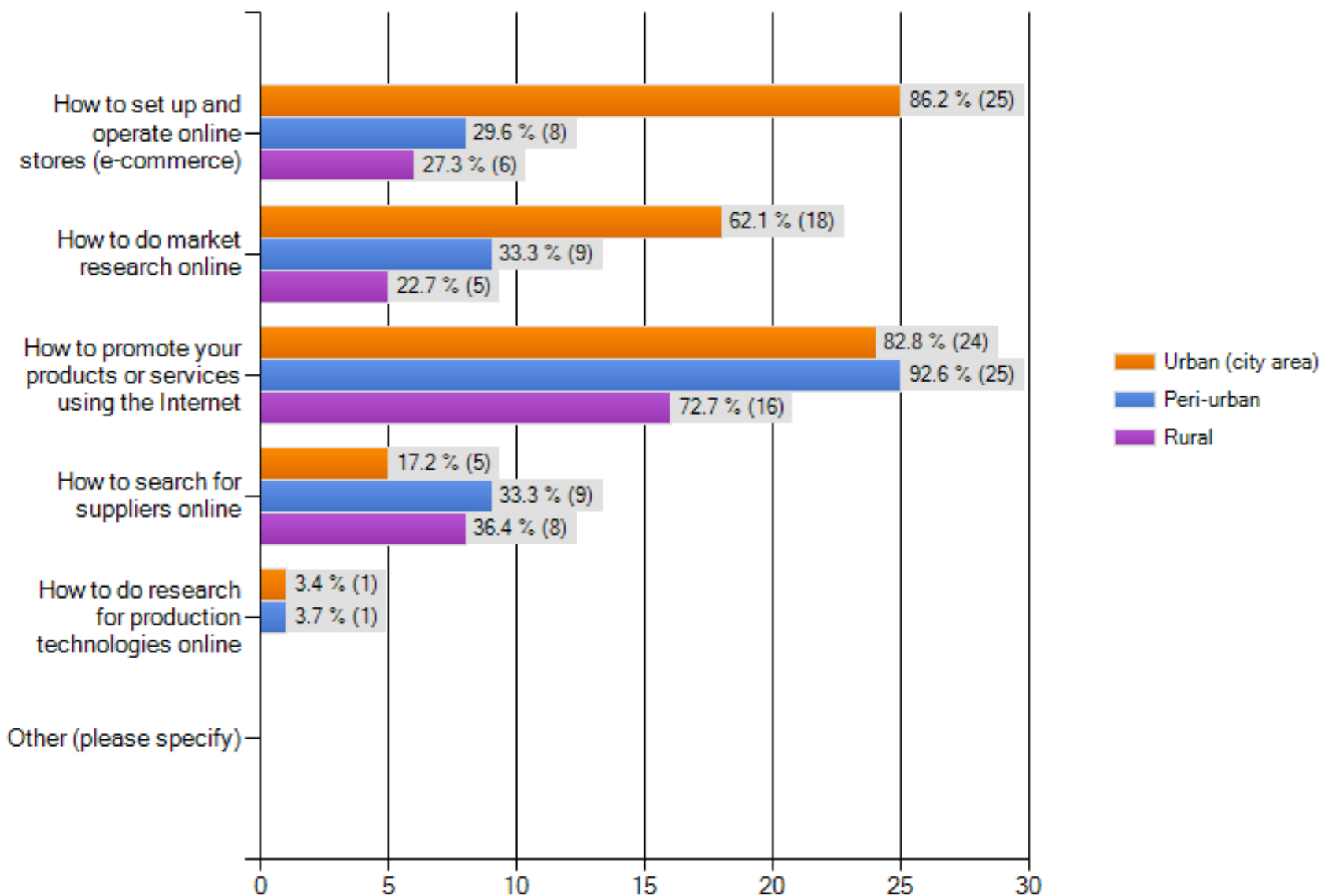
In Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan, women entrepreneurs are missing out on the opportunities presented by information and communication technologies

The mobile phone is the favorite tool of women entrepreneurs in the Kyrgyz Republic—most own a regular mobile phone and about one-third own internet-capable devices

Which specific computer/ICT skill training topics are you interested in?



Which specific topics on using computers, mobile phones, Internet for business are you interested in?



Recommendations

- Campaigns to raise awareness of new ICT-enabled business opportunities for WEs
- E-commerce for WEs to start and grow businesses, esp. in industries with growth potential such as ICT or tourism
- ICT-enabled mentoring programs
- SMS-based information alert services for WEs
- Loan programs for WEs to enable them to set up businesses in the ICT service industry and online businesses
- ICT capacity-building skills and support for WEs
- Maximizing ICTs specifically for BDS in conjunction with access to finance initiatives for WEs
- Creating WED focal points in govt, WE associations and NGOs that work with WEs to leverage ICTs in crease effectiveness
- Leveraging ICTs to enable access to gender sensitive financial services and alternative access to finance esp. for women in rural and peri-urban areas
- Improving infrastructure through, eg, affordable broadband with 100% coverage, electronic payment systems, and mobile money.

Good Practice Examples

Online Outsourcing Services: From data entry to manuscript editing, local pay rates of \$1.50 per hour can be boosted to \$55 per hour on the international market. In any one month, 2 million such jobs are posted online by US companies, and 6,500 by Russian companies.

Online Mentoring Platforms: Such as the Cherie Blair Foundation (ADB supports this in Armenia). Women entrepreneurs matched in developed/developing countries for 12 months. Work together on specific business goals. Evaluation suggests benefits for both mentors and mentees.

Farmer Information and Outreach: For a scattered population, targeted information is sent out by SMS. Online platform for subscribers to opt in simply by dialing *605#. System is cost effective, including bulk purchase of SMS from an online service provider at considerable discount. Same kind of system can be used for other types of information distribution, ie health, hygiene, marketing, leadership skills.

Online Women's Information Center: Provides women with updated information on economic, educational/scholarship, health, and credit opportunities and enables women to report gender-based violence.

Training on Effective Mobile Phone Use: Provided to members of a women entrepreneurs group by a commercial cell company (Kcell), training covered all the ways to use a mobile phone for business activities.



Link to the document online (in pdf and epub for your e-reader):
<http://www.adb.org/publications/information-and-communication-technologies-women-entrepreneurs>