

Gender and Information Society in the XXI Century

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- An SME company, operating mainly in the fields of**
- Information Technology**
 - Technology Transfer from research institutes to SMEs**
 - International Marketing of ICT research results in the European context.**

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This is how I sometimes feel in the role of mother, wife, manager....



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A cardinal point of the woman's universe: Motherhood

The fundamental meaning of motherhood is based on three main characteristics of women's maternal world:

- **Vitality**
- **Flexibility**
- **Interacting through images**

Vitality

At the maternal level

- To cope with the challenging tasks of bringing up children and educating them;
- To sense potential threats or conflict before they become manifest, which we also call 'sixth sense';
- To create and maintain an harmonious social environment keeping some space to realise their own ideas;

Vitality

At the professional level

- To communicate with others, absorbing and/or transmitting ideas and information
- To work hard and tenaciously
- To 'read between the lines', to feel existing or approaching conflicts, to 'smell' innovative products and markets
- To decrease tensions and mediate between conflicting parties
- To promote co-operative work

Flexibility

At the maternal level

- **To react very quickly to changing conditions in their environment -often superficially considered as a kind of moodiness- but in reality one of the most valuable talents for a woman;**
- **To do several tasks at the same time;**
- **To adapt to the persons she interacts with: children, husband, relatives, neighbours.**

Flexibility

At the professional level

- To react quickly to changing conditions in her professional environment (in the company and the market/s), which means continuous review of and, when necessary, adaptation of decisions and strategies;
- To do different things and act at different levels simultaneously (multitasking);
- To network i.e. manage human resources, public relations.

Interaction through images

At the maternal level

- **The capability to think and communicate through images, which emerged from the necessity to make complex issues (traditions, ethical values, dangers) understandable to children and to people with different cultural backgrounds.**

Interaction through images

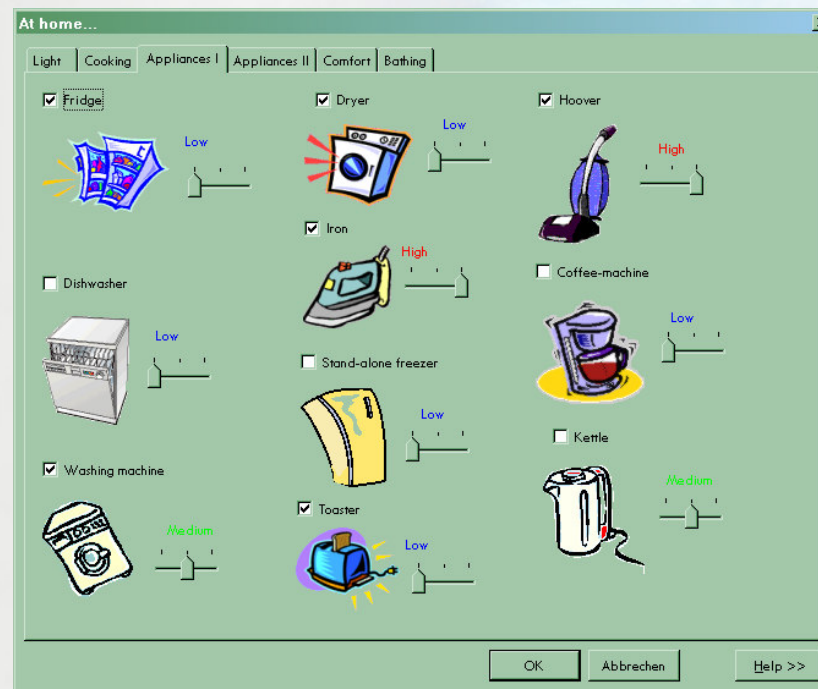
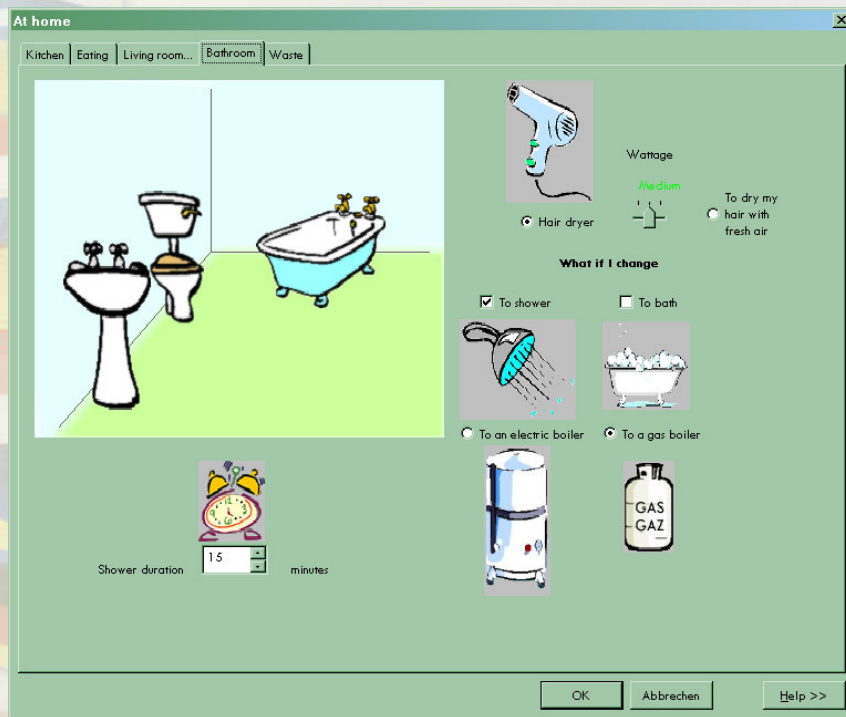
At the professional level

- **The increasing complexity of commercial processes and the growing need for interdisciplinary skills in research, design, finance, production, technology transfer, marketing, requires the ability to simplify complex information without losing the essential features of it, in order to make it understandable to partners who are not experts in the specific field.**

‘To keep complexity manageable and make simplicity effective’

Interaction through Images

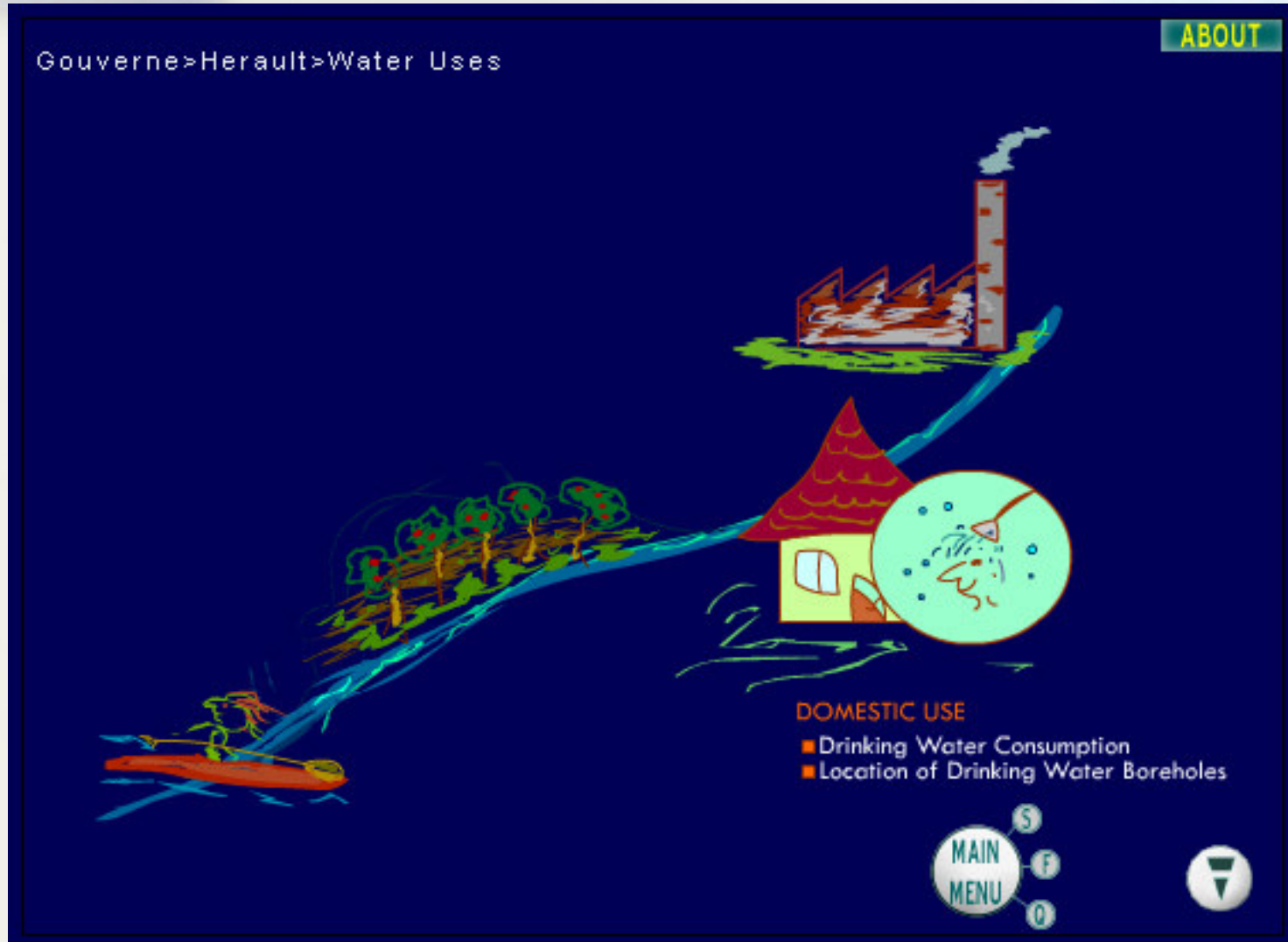
Scientific information for
non-scientific audience



Project GAS – JRC IPSC, Ispra
Angela Guimares Pereira

FUTUREtec

Gesellschaft für angewandte Informatik GmbH



GOUVERNe Project

Opportunities for Women in the Information Society

Transferring women's' ancestral skills to the typical processes of the information society like e.g.:

- **Software design and quality assurance**
- **Knowledge and Content management**
- **Knowledge quality assessment**
- **Information filtering**

as an essential contribution to the building of a knowledgeable and sustainable community.

Implementation Strategies

Facilitated by:

- Growth of jobs in information services which do not need face-to-face contact
- Conversion from a manufacturing-based to a service-based economy;
- Increase in part-time work;
- Companies outsourcing work and reducing permanent staff;
- Families becoming involved and comfortable with technology;
- Declining cost of PCs and increasing of „user-friendly“ software programmes;
- Increasing wish/need to integrate work with social and family life

Opportunities for new Professions and Services

New approaches to work in the information society:

- Work from home
- Distance work
- Tele-working
- Tele-cooperation
- e-Commerce
- e-Teaching and e-Learning
- On-line services

New Professions and Services

Facilitate:

- Working flexible times and reducing work stress
- Reconciling professional and family life, Affirming motherhood
- Decreasing travel to workplace, reducing costs of transport
- Establishing dual-income families
- Re-educating and employing elders
- Promoting mother/child care
- Employing disabled
- Developing new approaches to work, new understanding of employment
- Expanding social participation of women
- Promoting knowledge societies
- Supporting very small scale economic activities

New Professions and Services

Problems and risks:

- **Fear of new technologies;**
- **Restriction of social life to family;**
- **Lack of payment for housework;**
- **Exploitation of casual workers;**
- **Work-family discord;**
- **Conflicts between employment and home;**
- **Overworked women;**
- **Inability of educational systems to keep pace with technological advancement;**
- **Inappropriate training for structural and tech. Changes**

The model of 21st Century IT Enterprise

A small, flexible and well networked enterprise through:

- **developing the infrastructure for SMEs**
- **promoting small scale production units**
- **creating small offices**
- **supporting small size businesses**

Small Scale Communities

- **Most people feel empowered to have a real influence only in smaller scale communities.**
- **When the information society enables smaller scale communities to work together, they will achieve global effectiveness**

because

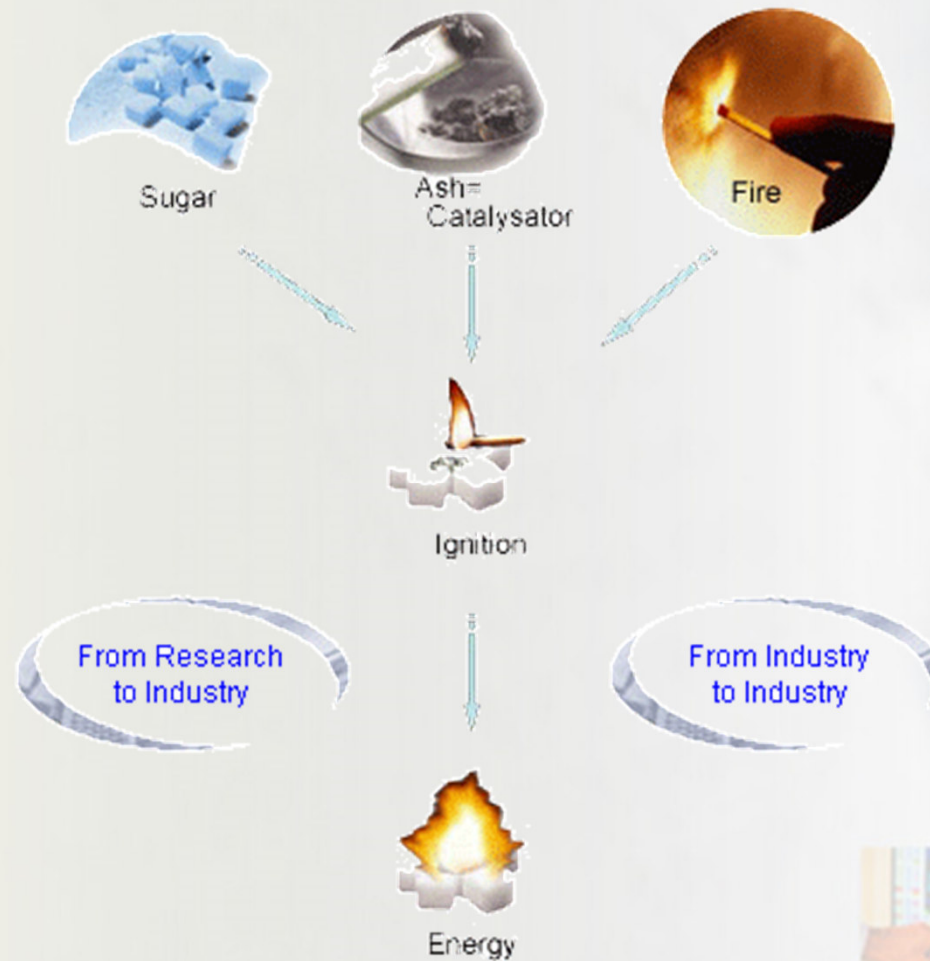
By focusing on the cell-like or family-based nature of society, we enhance the vital role that women can play

Technology Transfer

**A mechanism, whereby practical knowledge
passes from one party to another**

Source: European Commission DG XIII/ Innovation

Interaction through Images: Technology Transfer



Self-Sustaining versus Commercial Marketing

- **Commercial marketing**, defined as marketing of products and/or services with the primary, although not exclusive goal of making profit for oneself. ©1994, FUTUREtec
- **Self-sustaining marketing**, defined as marketing the results of research with all financial benefits constantly reinvested in further research, to benefit society. © 1996, FUTUREtec

Innovative Projects based on Innovative Concepts

- **Environment:**
GOVERNe - Guidelines for the Organisation, Use and Validation of information systems for Evaluating aquifer Resources and Needs
- **Health Care:**
ENN - European Neurological Network
- **ICT for Education:**
VIRTU@LIS - Social Learning on Environmental Issues with the Interactive Information and Communication Technologies

Conclusion

**There is a great need to create
a model of society in which man and woman,
'united without confusion
and
distinct without separation'
build up a solid civil project of democracy
with more and better jobs for all. © P. Gianfranco, OFM**

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