



# Women in the ICT Sector: Time for Action

**WOMEN WITH THE WAVE** High Level Forum Series:  
Turning the Tide for the Pacific

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**Nadi, Fiji**

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(ITU) Area Office, Jakarta



# About ITU...

- ✓ The **United Nations Specialized Agency** for Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
- ✓ 193 Member States, 750+ Sector Members
- ✓ Founded in Paris in 1865 as the **International Telegraph Union**
- ✓ 2015 will mark **150 years of experience** and innovation
- ✓ Three sectors:
  - Radiocommunication
  - Standardization
  - Development





International  
**Girls in  
ICT Day**  
23 APRIL 2015

ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 70 backed by all ITU Member States calls for the celebration of International Girls in ICT Day on 4th Thursday of April every year

Over **3,500** events  
in **140** countries,  
empowering more  
than **111,000** girls  
and young women  
globally.

[www.girlsinict.org](http://www.girlsinict.org)

International Girls in ICT Day



# Pipeline of girls and women in ICT

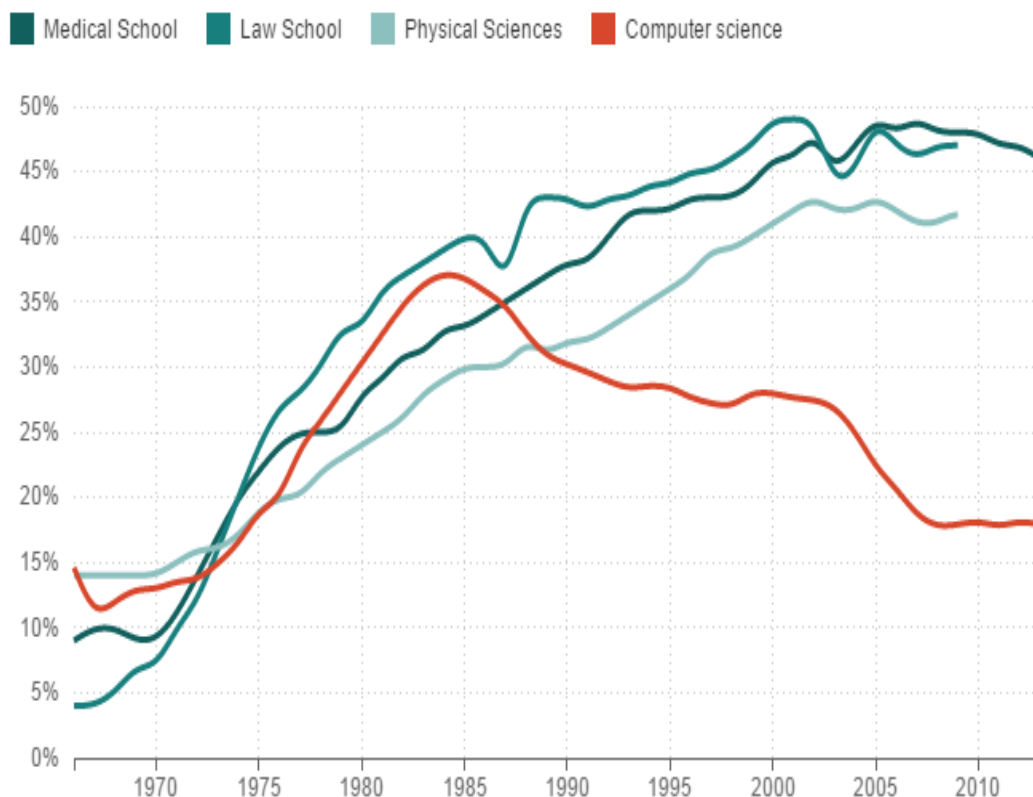
1. Encouraging girls and women into ICT studies
2. Recruiting women
3. Retaining & promoting women





# Encouraging girls into ICT studies

% Of Women Majors, By Field



**In the US, 37% of college computer science grads in 1985 were women, today only 17%**

Source: National Science Foundation, American Bar Association, American Association of Medical Colleges

Credit: Quoc Trung Bui/NPR



# Encouraging girls into ICT studies

While teenage girls use computers and the Internet at rates similar to boys, they are **five times less likely** to consider a technology-related career

## Why are girls not choosing ICT studies?

- **Lack of awareness** among students, teachers and parents on what a career in ICT could offer
- **Misconceptions** and **lack of role models**
  - A lingering perception that ICT jobs are boring, nerdy and generally for boys
- **Stereotypes** enforced by media and popular culture
- **Lack of confidence**
- **Peer influence**, not wanting to be the only girl



# How to change the game?

## Changing perceptions

### What are women looking for?

- ✓ To make a difference
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Collaborative work
- ✓ Work-life balance

**Contrary to the general perception, a career in ICT can offer all these!**

## Taking measures

- ✓ Improving relevance of educational curricula
- ✓ Quality of after school tutoring and mentoring programs
- ✓ Targeted financial and STEM educational programs
- ✓ Funded internships, apprenticeships and training opportunities to promote girls' transition into the sector

# Girls in ICT Day Events

- Workshops and “hands-on” activities such as mobile app labs, hackathons, coding
- Mentoring and female ICT role models
- Open days at ICT companies
- ICT contests and prizes





# Girls in ICT Day Events in the Pacific Islands

## Papua New Guinea

In 2013, International Girls in ICT Day was celebrated at the PNG University of Technology.



In 2012, a ceremony to launch the first Girls in ICT Day was organized by the National Information and Communications Technology Authority (NICTA).

# Girls in ICT Day Events in the Pacific Islands

## Vanuatu



In 2012, the Telecommunications & Radiocommunications Regulator organized an ICT Showcase with the special theme Women and Girls.

# ITU Girls in ICT Portal



The screenshot shows the ITU Girls in ICT Portal website. The header includes the ITU logo and the text "Girls in ICT Portal" with the tagline "EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN ICT". Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: ABOUT, RESOURCES, EVENTS, SPONSOR, PARTNERS, ICT NEWS, CAREERS, CONTACT US. The main content area features a section titled "ICT STUDIES AND CAREERS" and "TRENDS, ANALYSIS AND PROFILES". A paragraph explains that the portal is a global effort to raise awareness and encourage girls and young women to consider studies and careers in ICT. Below this is a section for "International Girls in ICT Day 2014" with a date of 24.4.2014. It includes a call to action to join and organize a "Girls in ICT Day" event on or around 24 April 2014. There are also sections for "Why a Girls in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Portal?" and "What is Girls in ICT Day?". The footer features a pink banner with the text "Explore Information and Communication Technology Opportunities" and a row of six small images representing different ICT-related topics: ICT CAREERS, CAREERS AND SKILLS, TRAINING AND EDUCATION, ICT NEWS, ICT CAREERS, and RESEARCH AND INNOVATION.

- ✓ Almost **300** programmes to encourage girls and young woman to take up ICT studies and careers
- ✓ More than **80** scholarships for girls
- ✓ Almost **100** internships and training opportunities
- ✓ ICT contests and awards
- ✓ Profiles of women role models
- ✓ Inspirational videos
- ✓ Girls in ICT Day events

[www.girlsinict.org](http://www.girlsinict.org)



# Few women are creators of ICT...

- ✓ **Less than 30%** of the ICT workforce are women
- ✓ **19%** of ICT entrepreneurs are women
- ✓ **9%** of app developers are women in Europe
- ✓ **19%** of ICT managers are women
- ✓ **4%** of senior management positions in technical/R&D departments are held by women in Silicon Valley
- ✓ **10%** of corporate officer positions in Fortune 500 technology companies are held by women
- ✓ **5%** of IT patents are held by women in the US

## ...but that's where the jobs are!

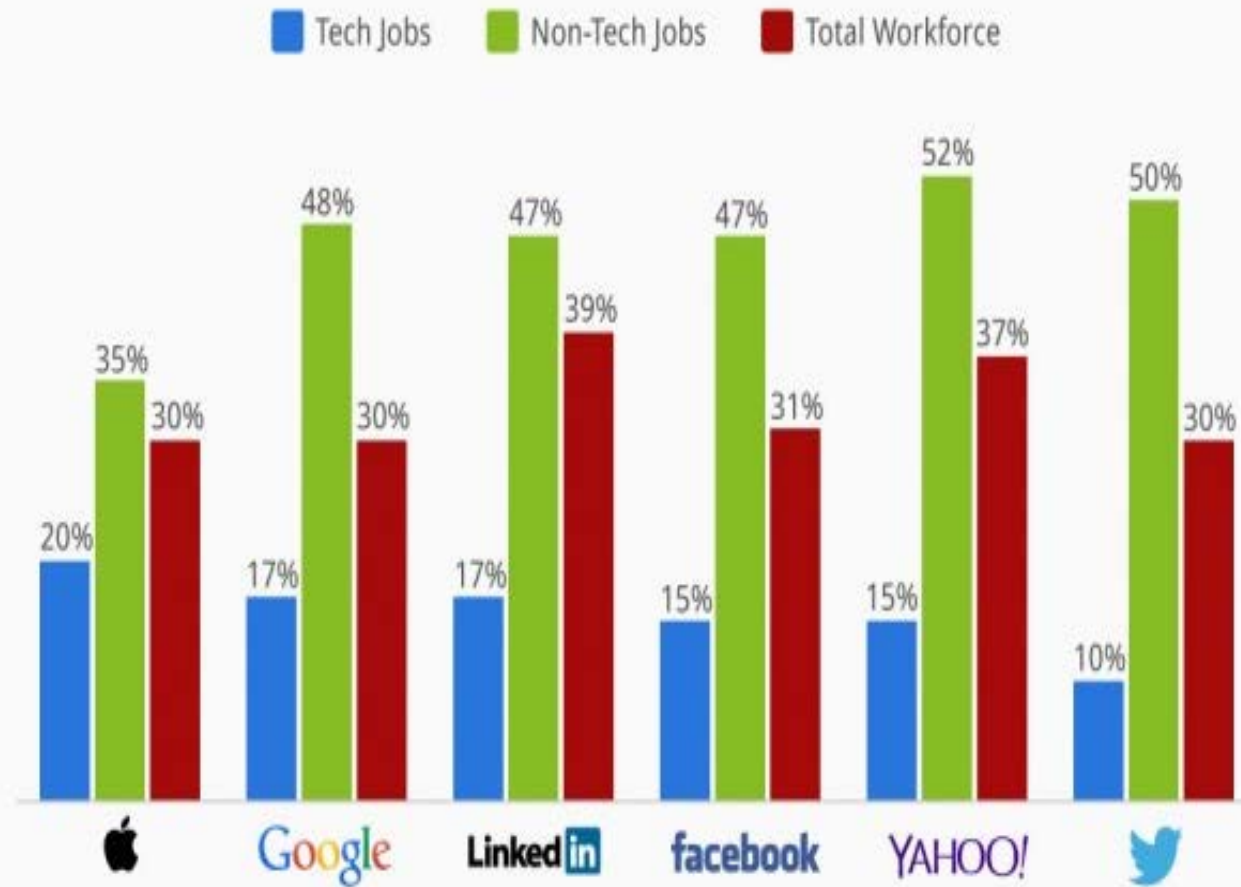
- ✓ Estimated shortfall of over two million skilled ICT professionals worldwide

Source: European Commission, 2013; NCWIT, 2010



## Women Vastly Underrepresented In Silicon Valley Tech Jobs

% of female employees in the workforce of tech companies



Source:  
StatistaCharts, 2014



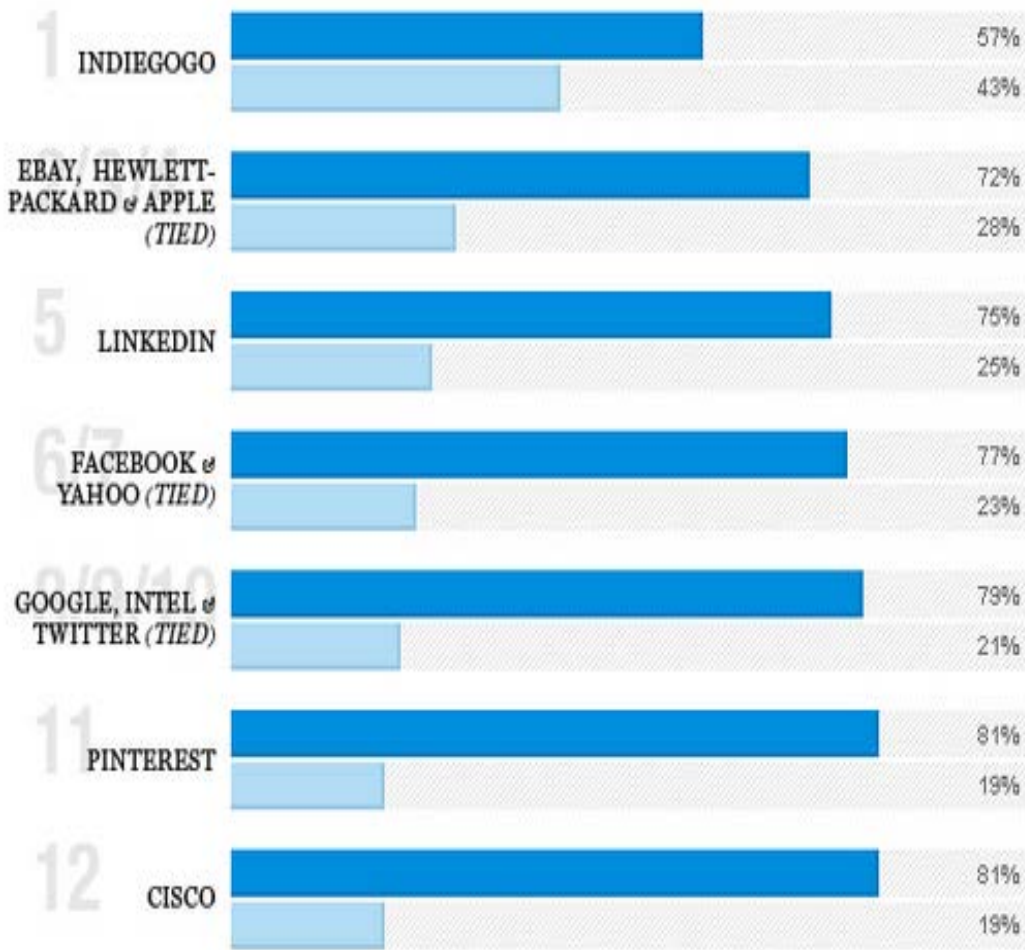
# Recruiting women

- ✓ **Revise job description** to reduce gender stereotypes
- ✓ **Train hiring teams** and managers to reduce implicit biases
- ✓ Build **gender-diverse hiring teams** and showcase technical women during the interview process
- ✓ Build **strong ties to conferences, colleges and universities, and professional organizations** where there are high proportions of women from diverse backgrounds
- ✓ **Set targets** to hire technical women
- ✓ **Measure and evaluate** your efforts to increase the representation of women



### GENDER DIVERSITY (LEADERSHIP TEAM ONLY)

■ MEN ■ WOMEN





# Retaining & promoting women

- 74% of technical women say they love their work
- Yet 56% of women in the ICT sector leave at the “mid-level”
- This is **twice** the quit rate for men

## Why are they leaving?

- Unconscious bias and workplace culture
- Lack of mentors and professional development
- Supervisory relationships
- Bias in performance reviews and promotion
- Lack of support for competing life responsibilities





# Engaging the ICT sector

## Gender equality makes business sense

- ✓ Expanding qualified employee pool
- ✓ Increasing sales revenue, more customers, bigger market share
- ✓ Positive correlation between gender balance on top leadership teams and company financial results
- ✓ Enhancing innovation
- ✓ Better informed decisions, less risk-taking, more successful outcomes
- ✓ Reflecting customer base

Eliminating barriers to female employment could **raise productivity by as much as 40%** and companies with three or more women corporate directors outperform those with no women on the board by as much as **84% on return on sales, 60% on return on invested capital and 46% on return on equity**



# WEPs for the ICT Sector

## The Women's Empowerment Principles

### The Principles

- 1 Leadership Promotes Gender Equality**
- 2 Equal Opportunity, Inclusion and Nondiscrimination**
- 3 Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence**
- 4 Education and Training**
- 5 Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices**
- 6 Community Leadership and Engagement**
- 7 Transparency, Measuring and Reporting**

**Be part of the solution – participate in the public consultation to:**

- ✓ Identify challenges and solutions
- ✓ Promote good business practices
- ✓ Share resources
- ✓ Build an action agenda

Consultation available soon on the Knowledge Gateway:

<http://www.empowerwomen.org/>

Launched by ITU, UN Women & Global Compact

<http://weprinciples.org/>



# Thank You!

## For more information:

ITU Special Initiatives Division (SIS)

[www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion)

[www.girlsinict.org](http://www.girlsinict.org)

Contact: [girlsinict@itu.int](mailto:girlsinict@itu.int)