

**MOD****RESOLUTION 70 (REV. BUCHAREST, 2022)****Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/information and communication technologies**

The Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication Union (Bucharest, 2022),

*recalling*

- a) Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls";
- b) the endorsement of Resolution 7 (Valletta, 1998) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) by the Plenipotentiary Conference in its Resolution 70 (Minneapolis, 1998), in which the conference resolved, *inter alia*, to incorporate a gender perspective<sup>1</sup> in the implementation of all programmes and plans of ITU;
- c) Resolution 55 (Rev. Geneva, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, which encourages mainstreaming a gender perspective in the activities of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T);
- d) Resolution 55 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of WTDC, resolving that the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) should maintain close links and collaborate, as appropriate, with the ITU Gender Task Force, set up by the Secretary-General to support gender mainstreaming in the Union's activities, with the aim of eliminating inequalities in access to and use of telecommunications/information and communication technologies (ICTs);

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<sup>1</sup> "Gender perspective": Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.  
(Source: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF>)

e) Resolution 1327 adopted by the ITU Council at its 2011 session, on ITU's role in ICTs and the empowerment of women and girls;

f) the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Agreed Conclusions 1997-2, and ECOSOC Resolution 2012/24, on incorporating and mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, which welcomed the development of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)<sup>2</sup>;

g) UNGA Resolution 70/125, on the outcome document of the UNGA high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), as well as the Preamble to the WSIS+10 statement on the implementation of WSIS outcomes, which reaffirmed the importance of promoting and maintaining gender equality and women's empowerment and guaranteeing the inclusion of women in the emerging global ICT society, taking into account the mandate of the newly established agency UN Women;

h) the Declaration on Promoting Gender Equality, Equity and Parity in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector, approved at the World Radiocommunication Conference (Sharm el-Sheikh, 2019),

*noting*

a) the United Nations Secretary-General's commitment to achieving full gender parity across the United Nations system through the launch of a strategy in 2017 as the start of a system-wide campaign to advance this priority, referenced in UNGA Resolution 72/234;

b) UNGA Resolution 64/289, on system-wide coherence, adopted on 21 July 2010, establishing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which would be known as "UN Women", with a triple mandate for normative support, coordination and operational functions to provide an effective platform for delivering results on gender equality and women's empowerment;

c) that the United Nations Chief Executives Board, in April 2013, advocated the United Nations system-wide Action Plan to measure gender equality and the empowerment of women, under which ITU will participate in the dissemination, coordination and communication and networking activities that are part of the strategy;

d) the conclusions agreed at the 55th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in March 2011, regarding the access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology;

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/un-system-coordination/promoting-un-accountability>

e) that the Agreed Conclusions of the 61st and 62nd sessions of CSW promote digital change for the empowerment of women, including rural women, and support women's access to skills development by expanding the scope of education and training opportunities, including communications technology and digital fluency;

f) the United Nations Guidelines for gender-inclusive language<sup>3</sup>,

*noting also*

a) the decision of the Council at its 2013 session endorsing the ITU Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy (GEM), with the aim of integrating a gender perspective throughout the Union and leveraging the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower both women and men;

b) that ITU, in its strategic plan, includes issues related to gender equality, empowerment and inclusion with a view to debating and exchanging ideas to define, throughout the organization, a concrete action plan to address issues and barriers, with clear deadlines and goals,

*recognizing*

a) that equal access to ICTs for women and men and equal participation at all levels and in all fields, especially in policy- and decision-making, are beneficial to society as a whole, particularly in the context of the information and knowledge society;

b) that women's and girls' unequal access to ICTs harms everyone, including in terms of, *inter alia*, reduced economic activity, innovation and entrepreneurship;

c) that failure to ensure that women have equal access to the Internet particularly harms low-income countries;

d) the importance of fully engaging men and boys, as agents and beneficiaries of change, in the achievement of gender equality;

e) that ICTs are tools through which gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls can be advanced, and are recognized as being integral to societies in which both women and men can substantively contribute and participate;

f) that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development strives to achieve gender equality and to empower all women and girls and foster gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting issue over all goals and targets of the agenda;

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<sup>3</sup> These Guidelines include a number of strategies to help United Nations staff use gender-inclusive language. They may be applied to any type of communication, whether it is oral or written, formal or informal, or addressed to an internal or external audience. The guidelines can be found online: <https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml>.

- g)* that the outcomes of WSIS, namely the Geneva Declaration of Principles, the Geneva Plan of Action, the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, outlined the concept of the information society, and that continued efforts must be undertaken in this context to bridge the gender digital divide;
- h)* that the WSIS+10 statement on the implementation of WSIS outcomes states the need to ensure that the information society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes;
- i)* that it is fundamental for the ITU membership and partners to encourage women and girls to choose a career in the field of telecommunications/ICTs and to foster the use of ICTs for the social and economic empowerment of women and girls and the achievement of gender equality;
- j)* that women and girls experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and that there is a need to address this discrimination and to bridge the gender digital divide, with special attention to women in rural and marginalized urban areas;
- k)* that affordability and lack of digital skills remain some of the key barriers to the uptake and effective use of telecommunications/ICTs, especially in the world's least developed countries (LDCs) and in particular among women and girls;
- l)* that bridging the gender digital divide requires fostering digital skills, education and mentorship for women and girls, so as to advance their participation and leadership in the creation, development and deployment of telecommunications/ICTs, and also requires connectivity to be affordable and accessible;
- m)* that there is a gap between women and men in the use of Internet, especially in LDCs<sup>4</sup>;
- n)* that the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau has established the ITU Women in Standardization Expert Group (WISE), launched at the meeting of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group in February 2016, dedicated to promoting women in standardization, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields;
- o)* that, at the 2016 World Radiocommunication Seminar, the Radiocommunication Bureau launched a Network of Women initiative dedicated to promoting women in radiocommunications, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields;

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<sup>4</sup> <https://itu.foleon.com/itu/measuring-digital-development/gender-gap/>

*p)* that a Network of Women initiative was launched in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D) in January 2021 as a way to improve the number of women taking up leadership roles in the structures that make up ITU-D, such as chairmanships of committees and working groups and other key management roles related to the preparation of the next WTDC and beyond,

*recognizing further*

*a)* the progress achieved in raising awareness, both within ITU and among Member States, of the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all ITU work programmes and of increasing the number of women professionals in ITU, especially at the senior management level, while at the same time working towards the equal access of women and men to posts in the General Service category;

*b)* the success of the international "Girls in ICT Day" organized by ITU, which is held every year on the fourth Thursday of April;

*c)* the EQUALS Global Partnership<sup>5</sup>, of which ITU is a founder member, and which is made up of other United Nations agencies, governments, the private sector, academia and civil-society organizations, and which aims to reduce the gender digital divide in the world;

*d)* the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in its General Recommendation No. 37, on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction within the context of climate change, recommends that States make sure women have access to technologies to prevent and mitigate the adverse effects of natural disasters and climate change, and that they be able to use and take advantage of technologies for climate-change adaptation and mitigation, including those related to renewable energy and sustainable agriculture;

*e)* that the Buenos Aires Declaration of WTDC-17 states that elaborating proper and comparable indicators/statistics, in sex-disaggregated form, as well as analysing ICT trends, is important for both Member States and the private sector,

*considering*

*a)* the progress made by ITU, and in particular BDT, in the development and implementation of actions and projects that use ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls, as well as in increasing awareness of the links between gender issues and ICTs within the Union and among Member States and Sector Members;

*b)* the progress made by ITU in gathering and publishing data and analyses that help communicate the differences in access to and involvement with telecommunications/ICTs and their effects on gender equality;

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<sup>5</sup> [www.equals.org](http://www.equals.org)

- c) the results achieved by ITU's internal Gender Task Force in promoting gender equality;
- d) the study conducted by ITU-T on women in telecommunication standardization, exploring perspectives and activities related to mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU-T and determining the degree to which women are active participants in all ITU-T activities;
- e) the importance of carrying out an impact assessment based on data collected by ITU, as well as on programmes and projects, to determine the effects of, and promote a better understanding of, the impact of telecommunications/ICTs on the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment,

*noting further*

- a) that there is a need for ITU to continue to study, gather data disaggregated by social economic factors and in particular sex and age, analyse, generate statistics on, assess and evaluate the effects of and promote a better understanding of the impact of telecommunications/ICTs on the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment;
- b) that ITU should have a role in establishing and reporting on gender-relevant indicators for the telecommunication/ICT sector that would contribute to reducing disparities in terms of access to and appropriation of ICTs and to mainstreaming gender equality at the national, regional and international levels;
- c) that more work needs to be done to ensure the mainstreaming of gender equality in all work of the Union;
- d) that there is a need to continue fostering the participation of women and girls in the telecommunication/ICT domain at an early age and to provide input for further policy developments in the required areas, so as to ensure that the information and knowledge society contributes to their empowerment;
- e) the need for ICT tools and applications to empower women and girls and to facilitate their access to the job market, especially in fields related to ICTs and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers,

*taking into account*

the amendments made in Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of this conference, on human resources management and development, outlining procedures to facilitate the recruitment of women at ITU,

*encourages Member States and Sector Members*

- 1 to undertake actions to mainstream gender equality across government, the public and private sectors and academia, for the purpose of promoting innovation in telecommunication/ICT learning so as to foster the empowerment of women and girls, including those in rural and remote areas;

- 2 to review and revise, as appropriate, their respective policies and practices to ensure that recruitment, employment, training and advancement of women and men in the ICT sector are undertaken on a fair and equitable basis;
- 3 to facilitate the capacity building, skills development, and employment of women and men equally in the telecommunication/ICT field, including at senior levels of responsibility in telecommunication/ICT administrations, government and regulatory bodies and intergovernmental organizations and in the private sector;
- 4 to review their policies and strategies related to the information society so as to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in all activities and the fostering of gender balance to secure equal opportunities through the use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICTs;
- 5 to strengthen educational policies and study plans in science and technology and to promote and increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in STEM and telecommunication/ICT careers, including women and girls in rural and remote areas, during elementary, secondary and higher education and lifelong education;
- 6 to attract more women and girls to study for and to pursue STEM careers, and acknowledge the achievements of leading women in these fields, particularly in innovation;
- 7 to encourage and support more women to take advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs to establish and develop businesses and to foster potential contributions to economic growth;
- 8 to engage men in tackling gender inequality and encourage them to support women and girls in taking advantage of the opportunities offered by telecommunications/ICTs;
- 9 to make efforts to ensure gender-balanced representation in delegations to ITU conferences, assemblies and other meetings, as well as in candidatures for leadership roles and encourage participation in the Network of Women initiatives;
- 10 to actively participate in and promote EQUALS, the global partnership to bridge the gender digital divide;
- 11 to collect and provide to ITU data that are disaggregated by sex so as to support its activities in compiling and processing statistical data from countries to draw up indicators that take into account gender-equality issues, highlight trends in the sector and set benchmarks towards achieving equality,

*resolves*

- 1 to continue the work being done at ITU, and particularly in BDT, to promote gender equality in telecommunications/ICTs by recommending measures at the international, regional and national level on policies and programmes that improve socio-economic conditions for women and girls, particularly in developing countries<sup>6</sup>;
- 2 to accord high priority to the incorporation of gender policies in the management, staffing and operation of ITU, so that ITU can become a leading organization in the implementation and achievement of gender equality so as to take advantage of the possibilities offered by ICTs to empower both men and women;
- 3 to incorporate the gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of the ITU strategic and financial plans, as well as in the operational plans of the Sectors and the General Secretariat;
- 4 to have ITU compile and process statistical data from countries and draw up indicators that take into account gender-equality issues and highlight trends in the sector, disaggregated by socio-economic factors, in particular sex and age;
- 5 to encourage, to the extent practicable, the adoption of gender-inclusive language in the work of the Union,

*instructs the ITU Council*

- 1 to accord high priority to monitoring the implementation of GEM, so that ITU can integrate a gender perspective throughout the organization and leverage the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower women, girls, men and boys;
- 2 to continue and expand existing initiatives, and to accelerate the gender mainstreaming process, including through affirmative measures when necessary, in ITU as a whole, within existing budgetary resources, so as to ensure capacity building, skills development and the appointment of women to senior-level positions, including ITU elected positions, and also in recruitment for internships;
- 3 to allocate resources within ITU's budget to facilitate the implementation of this resolution to the fullest extent possible;
- 4 to examine the possibility for ITU, in close collaboration with relevant regional organizations, to take appropriate measures to establish a regional platform for women, devoted to using ICT in order to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls,

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<sup>6</sup> These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

*instructs the Secretary-General*

- 1 to continue to ensure that the gender perspective is incorporated in the work programmes, management approaches and human resources development activities of ITU, and to submit an annual written report to the Council on progress made in the implementation of the GEM policy and action plan reflecting, with statistics broken down by sex and age, the gender balance by category within ITU, as well as the gender balance in ITU conferences and meetings, to be disseminated among the Member States;
- 2 to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in all ITU contributions with respect to the priority areas that must be tackled for the implementation of WSIS action lines;
- 3 to give priority to gender parity for posts in the Professional and higher categories in ITU, particularly in senior positions, in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's gender parity strategy;
- 4 to give appropriate priority to gender parity when choosing candidates who have equal qualifications for a post, taking into account geographical distribution (No. 154 of the ITU Constitution) and gender balance;
- 5 to amend ITU recruitment procedures to ensure that, under the requirements of these procedures, as a target at least 50 per cent of the candidates who move up to the next recruitment stage are women;
- 6 to continue to collect statistics on gender equality in recruitment and promotion, within ITU, and report these annually to the Council and publish them on the ITU website;
- 7 to report to the next plenipotentiary conference on the results and progress made on the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of ITU, and on the implementation of this resolution;
- 8 to make sure that each shortlist submitted to the Secretary-General for appointment includes at least one woman among the candidates;
- 9 to ensure gender parity in the composition of ITU statutory committees;
- 10 to continue to provide training in gender equality for all staff, including training for staff in senior and leadership positions;
- 11 to continue to support gender equality mainstreaming in cooperation with other relevant organizations, including through initiatives like the EQUALS;
- 12 to make efforts to mobilize voluntary contributions from Member States, Sector Members and others for the purpose of supporting gender-equality mainstreaming and outcomes in cooperation with other relevant organizations;

- 13 to encourage administrations to give equal opportunities to women and men candidates for elected official posts and for membership of the Radio Regulations Board;
- 14 to encourage the launch of a Global Network of women ICT decision-makers;
- 15 to bring this resolution to the attention of the United Nations Secretary-General in an effort to promote greater cooperation and coordination in the policies, programmes and projects being implemented by ITU and interlinking access, use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICT and broadband among women and girls, and to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls;
- 16 to fulfil the obligations of submitting reports as required by UN-SWAP and ensure compliance with performance indicators;
- 17 to facilitate the creation of a mechanism that supports the alignment, cooperation and coordination of activities in ITU that empower women across the Sectors, including Network of Women initiatives and WISE activities, in close consultation with these networks and groups, and to encourage alignment of shared activities;
- 18 to continue to support cross-cutting and cross-sectoral training and upskilling of women delegates to ITU meetings, within the available resources of the Union;
- 19 to consider the creation of a sponsorship programme that supports women delegates who have completed training and upskilling initiatives to attend ITU meetings in order to facilitate a pipeline of women delegates to ITU conferences and assemblies,

*instructs the Secretary-General and the Directors of the Bureaux*

- 1 to explore options for delivering a mentoring programme open to participation of the ITU membership under which young women and girls beginning their schooling in ICTs and STEM curricula may have mentors to accompany them and to transfer to them their expertise and knowledge throughout their careers;
- 2 to continue and expand existing initiatives ensuring gender balance in granting ITU fellowships to participate in ITU meetings and activities,

*instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau*

- 1 to continue promoting, among the other United Nations agencies, ITU Member States and Sector Members, the international Girls in ICT Day, which, since 2011, takes place every fourth Thursday of April, and during which telecommunication/ICT companies, other enterprises with telecommunication/ICT departments, telecommunication/ICT training institutions, universities, research centres and all telecommunication/ICT-related institutions are invited to organize activities for girls and young women, as well as online training and/or workshops, day camps and summer camps, in order to promote and increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in telecommunication/ICT careers during elementary, secondary and higher education;
- 2 to call upon women's organizations and non-governmental and civil-society organizations throughout the world to join in the celebration of the international Girls in ICT Day, as well as to provide online training and/or workshops and day camps, among others;
- 3 to maintain the ITU website in all six United Nations official languages in order to ensure broad dissemination of the actions and activities developed by the membership around the world on the occasion of the celebration of the international Girls in ICT Day, as well as the achievements of these actions;
- 4 to continue the work of BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls, working with them to tackle disparities and facilitating the acquisition of skills for life;
- 5 to continue to assist developing countries in order to expedite bridging the digital gender divide;
- 6 to ensure significant contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including SDG 5,

*invites Member States and Sector Members*

- 1 to make voluntary contributions to ITU to support the implementation of this resolution to the fullest extent possible;
- 2 to collect data disaggregated by social and economic factors and in particular by sex and age in order to facilitate better understanding of the impact of telecommunications/ICTs on the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment;
- 3 to observe and promote annually the international Girls in ICT Day, held on the fourth Thursday of April, to share with BDT lessons learned from the Girls in ICT Day activities whenever necessary, and to invite ICT companies, other companies with ICT departments, ICT training institutions, universities, research centres and all ICT-related institutions to organize an open day for girls;

- 4 to actively support and participate in the work of BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls;
- 5 to actively encourage the participation of women in activities of ITU that empower women, including Network of Women initiatives and WISE activities;
- 6 to actively participate in the launch of a Global Network of women ICT decision-makers aimed at promoting the work of ITU in using ICTs for the social and economic empowerment of women and girls, including by building partnerships and synergies between existing networks at national, regional and international levels;
- 7 to foster successful strategies to strengthen gender equality in senior-level positions in telecommunication/ICT administrations, government, regulatory bodies and intergovernmental organizations, including ITU, and in the private sector;
- 8 to highlight a gender perspective in the questions under study in the ITU-D study groups and the programmes of the Kigali Action Plan;
- 9 to further develop internal tools and programming guidelines in the area of promotion of gender equality in the use of ICTs;
- 10 to collaborate with relevant stakeholders that have significant experience in mainstreaming gender equality in projects and programmes, in order to provide specialized training for women and girls on ICT use;
- 11 to provide support so that women and girls can have equal access to studies and careers in telecommunications/ICTs, by creating opportunities, fostering their incorporation into teaching and learning processes, and/or encouraging their professional training;
- 12 to support and/or promote the funding of studies, projects and proposals that contribute to overcoming gender inequalities and discrimination in the field of telecommunications/ICTs and to fostering and promoting telecommunications/ICTs to empower women and girls, including those who live in rural and remote areas and are in vulnerable situations;
- 13 to nominate on an annual basis deserving organizations and individuals for the EQUALS Tech Awards;
- 14 to achieve SDG 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- 15 to encourage greater participation of women within their delegations to ITU events.