

WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION
ASSEMBLY
New Delhi, 15-24 October 2024

**Resolution 55 – Mainstreaming gender equality
in ITU Telecommunication Standardization
Sector activities**



FOREWORD

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency in the field of telecommunications, and information and communication technologies (ICTs). The ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) is a permanent organ of ITU. ITU-T is responsible for studying technical, operating and tariff questions and issuing Recommendations on them with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a worldwide basis.

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

RESOLUTION 55 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024)

Mainstreaming gender equality in ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector activities

*(Florianópolis, 2004; Johannesburg, 2008; Dubai, 2012; Hammamet, 2016;
Geneva, 2022; New Delhi, 2024)*

The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (New Delhi, 2024),

considering

- a)* that, while standardization plays an important role in globalization and the effective development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), complete gender equality in participation in international standardization processes has still not been achieved, and that the effort of pursuing the goal of mainstreaming gender equality can contribute positively to all aspects of ITU activities and processes, in particular in the international standardization sector;
- b)* that the standardization work of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) can be advanced most effectively through the active inclusion of women, providing them with necessary support and recognizing their efforts and contributions;
- c)* that there is a need to enhance and promote the active and meaningful participation of women in all ITU-T activities;
- d)* that the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) established the ITU Women in Standardization Expert Group, subsequently renamed the Network of Women (NoW) in ITU-T, launched at the meeting of the Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) in February 2016, dedicated to promoting women in standardization, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields and recognizing both men and women who have made remarkable contributions in advocating for women and supporting their work in these fields,

noting

- a)* that ITU has adopted a Gender Equality and Mainstreaming (GEM) Policy, with the aim of becoming a model organization for gender equality that leverages the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower both women and men;
- b)* the progress made by ITU in raising awareness on gender issues, specifically over the last decade, in increasing women's participation in and contribution to international forums, in studies, projects and training, and in the establishment of an internal Gender Task Force, as well as the successful establishment by ITU of an international "Girls in ICT" day to be held every year on the fourth Thursday of April;

- c) Resolution 1187 of the ITU Council, adopted at its 2001 session, on a gender perspective in ITU human resources management, policy and practice, which requests the Secretary-General to allocate appropriate resources, within existing budgetary limits, to establish a gender unit with full-time dedicated staff;
- d) Resolution 1327 of the Council, adopted at its 2011 session, on ITU's role in ICTs and the empowerment of women and girls;
- e) that the Secretary-General has issued an updated ITU English Language Style Guide, which addresses the use of non-discriminatory language;
- f) the recommendation in the 2016 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report that the Secretary-General present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an action plan to complement the GEM Policy, with specific targets, indicative timelines and monitoring measures to improve gender balance, in particular at senior management levels, within each component of the Union, and report annually to the Council on its implementation;
- g) priority measures to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, as contained in the report *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals – The Gender Snapshot 2023*, produced jointly by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs;
- h) Recommendations of the ITU/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development on SDG 5 on gender equality;
- i) that TSAG in January 2024 launched the Network of Women for WTSA-24 (NOW4WTSA24) campaign aiming to promote gender equality for this assembly New Delhi (WTSA-24),

recalling

- a) that a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter adopted by world leaders in 1945 is "equal rights of men and women";
- b) United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution 2012/24, on 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); and the relevant report on ITU's performance on UN-SWAP 2.0 indicators for 2021;
- c) the relevant conclusions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women sessions;
- d) the EQUALS Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age, of which ITU is a founding member, 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;

- e) the United Nations International Gender Champion (IGC) initiative and the ITU Secretary-General's commitment to promote the IGC Panel Parity Pledge;
- f) the ITU/UN-Women Gender Equality and Mainstreaming – Technology (GEM-TECH) awards, which celebrate exceptional personal or institutional achievement and innovative strategies that harness ICTs for women's empowerment;
- g) Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/ICTs;
- h) Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on human resources management and development;
- i) Resolution 55 (Rev. Kigali, 2022) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, on mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU to enhance women's empowerment through telecommunications/ICTs;
- j) Resolution ITU-R 72 (Dubai, 2023) of the Radiocommunication Assembly, on promoting gender equality and equity and bridging the contribution and participation gap between women and men in ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) activities,

recognizing

- a) that society as a whole, in particular in the context of the information and knowledge society, will benefit from equal participation of women and men in policy-making and decision-making and from equal access to communication services for both women and men;
- b) that the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, 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;
- c) that enhancing women's and girls' education and their participation in ICTs also contributes to the achievement of SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls);
- d) the 2013 report of the Working Group on Broadband and Gender of the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development: Doubling digital opportunities – Enhancing the inclusion of women and girls in the information society,

resolves

1 that ITU-T continue efforts to ensure that all its policies, work programmes, information dissemination activities, publications, study groups, seminars, courses, assemblies and conferences reflect the commitment to gender equality, and promote gender balance:

- i) for posts, including those at the Professional and higher levels in TSB;
- ii) in the selection of chairs, vice-chairs and rapporteurs of the ITU-T study groups and TSAG, and also in the selection of world telecommunication standardization assembly (WTSA) committee chairs and vice-chairs;

2 that high priority be accorded to gender mainstreaming in the management, staffing and operation of ITU-T, while taking into account geographical representation;

3 that ITU-T continue to support NoW in ITU-T,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

1 to take the necessary steps to continue implementing the ITU GEM Policy, including, supporting the implementation of JIU recommendations relevant to gender mainstreaming, supporting the Gender Focal Points for ITU-T, and encouraging TSB staff to undertake relevant training sessions;

2 to accelerate the integration of a gender perspective in the work of TSB in accordance with the principles already applied in ITU;

3 to accord high priority to gender mainstreaming in ITU-T management, financial assistance, staffing and operation;

4 to conduct an annual review on progress made in the Sector in advancing gender mainstreaming, including by circulating questionnaires and by collecting and reviewing statistics on ITU-T standardization activities by gender and region, in order to identify challenges to women's participation and subsequent solutions; and to share findings with TSAG and the next WTSA on the implementation of this resolution;

5 to encourage the participation of women in all aspects of ITU-T activities, in particular the opportunity to participate in meetings, and support an increase in the number of women from all regions in ITU-T leadership positions by:

- i) encouraging the membership to include women on their delegations, by, *inter alia*, including in all circulation letters the statement, "The membership is invited to include women on their delegations whenever possible";
- ii) making the selection of women for TSB positions at the Professional and higher levels a top priority;
- iii) providing training on participation in meetings, writing contributions and chairing meetings;

- iv) launching a dedicated set of NoW4WTSA activities prior to each WTSA, encouraging the participation and nomination of women to leadership positions for the next study period and at the assembly, taking into account Resolution 208 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;
- 6 to enhance the ongoing work of NoW in ITU-T to ensure that all women have an opportunity to develop as ITU-T leaders;
- 7 to continue posting on a public-facing NoW in ITU-T webpage current information on the number of women attending Sector events, including administration or Sector Member affiliation and study group distribution, and identify the study groups in which women hold leadership positions;
- 8 to include gender balance as a factor in the distribution of financial assistance to attend ITU-T meetings where resources are available;
- 9 to join the ITU Secretary-General in participating in the Planet 50/50 initiative sponsored by UN-Women to tackle invisible gender bias as an IGC Geneva Champion on behalf of ITU-T;
- 10 to inform TSAG on the appointment of the regional representatives and activities of NoW in ITU-T,

invites the Secretary-General

- 1 to comply with the reporting obligations, as required by UN-SWAP, on ITU-T activities aimed at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- 2 to continue encouraging ITU staff to take account of the gender-neutral guidelines in the ITU English Language Style Guide and to avoid, as much as possible, the use of gender-specific terms,

invites Member States and Sector Members

- 1 to submit candidatures for chair/vice-chair posts in order to support the active involvement of women as well as men in standardization groups and activities and in their own administrations and delegations, in accordance with Resolution 208 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022);
- 2 to actively support and participate in the activities of TSB, including the nomination of experts and regional representatives for NoW in ITU-T through collaboration with the regional telecommunication organizations, and to further promote the use of ICTs for the socio-economic empowerment of women and girls;
- 3 to encourage and actively support ICT education that encourages girls' and women's participation, and support all measures that will help increase the interest of, and opportunities for, women and girls in professional ICT standardization careers, as well as advocate for initiatives that will make ICT-related career fields more accessible for girls;

- 4 to encourage greater participation of women delegates and foster their expertise;
- 5 to encourage the adoption of proven measures to increase globally the number of women pursuing academic degrees at all levels in fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, in particular those related to telecommunication/ICT standardization;
- 6 to take advantage of NoW in ITU-T initiatives and activities to help build the capacity of women in telecommunication/ICT standardization, in particular in developing countries¹;
- 7 to consider integrating gender-equality strategies into national sustainable development frameworks on telecommunication/ICT development so as to accelerate achievement of gender equality;
- 8 to assess the challenges that may hinder female participation in ITU-T activities;
- 9 to advocate for the participation of more women in ITU-T by contributing to their capacity building in order to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills;
- 10 to continue supporting voluntary mentorship programmes in ITU-T.

¹ These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.