"ITU-UNESCO High Level Meeting

on

Ensuring Equity and Inclusivity in all that we do: Data, Platforms and Policies"

29 November 2021, Online, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Cairo Time, GMT +2)

Concept Note & Agenda

Overview

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will organize the 5th annual **ITU-UNESCO Regional Digital Inclusion Week for the Arab States** during the period **28 November to 2 December 2021,** under the theme "**Ensuring equity and inclusivity in all that we do: Data, platforms and policies**". The Week will address the pressing issues of equity and inclusivity, which are at the forefront of concern as the world seeks to recover from the pandemic.

Accordingly, ITU and UNESCO are pleased to invite stakeholders across the Arab region to an online "High Level Meeting on Ensuring Equity and Inclusivity in Data, Platforms and Policies", to be held on Monday 29 November 2021.

The High Level Meeting in the form of a webinar, will the examine role of data, platforms, and policies in the context of fostering challenges and opportunities for equity and inclusion. A portfolio of practices, research and resources that can inform efforts to advance equity and inclusion and ensure the wellbeing of all persons, especially marginalized and disadvantaged groups will be presented and discussed. The webinar will draw on recent research, learnings and experiences from across the Arab region and beyond in the three areas of data, platforms and policies.

Objectives

The High Level Panel will seek to identify promising practices and developments that contribute to ensuring "no one left behind" by examining developments and challenges such as:

- ***With respect to data***: To what extent is open data delivering on its promise to be a critical resource for driving inclusive growth, fostering collaboration and improving decision-making? What are some of the new initiatives aimed at safeguarding data privacy, raising awareness and empowering users? What efforts are being adopted to ensure representative and disaggregated data that effectively captures the context/needs of marginalized groups?

- With respect to digital platforms: What has been learnt from digital platform initiatives created to support the implementation, monitoring and dissemination of knowledge and resources for frameworks such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities? Platforms have a key role in disseminating information as well as products and services linked to employment, finance, healthcare, transport and logistics, governance and a host of other areas vital for our effective participation in socio-economic. How are factors such as skills, cost, ability, language, gender and algorithms that influence access and interactions on these platforms being addressed?

- With respect to policy: In today's dynamic, innovation-driven, global environment we need policies that are context-sensitive, fit for purpose and take into account the needs, roles and diversity of stakeholders. How are policy-makers balancing efforts to foster competitiveness and innovation while safeguarding against new forms of potential harm and unintended consequences? What are some innovations aimed at ensuring more inclusive and participatory policy processes?

How to get involved

The event is participatory and targets all interested stakeholders. The event is expected to be of interest to policy makers from the public and private sectors, UN and intergovernmental bodies, civil society, academia, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), citizens, youths, migrants amongst others.The Meeting is an opportunity to raise awareness, strengthen collaboration amongst stakeholders and advance efforts to combat digital divides and all forms of exclusion.

International Telecommunication Union – Arab Regional Office
Smart Village • Building 147 – 3rd Floor • 6th October, Giza, Egypt
Tel: +202 35 37 1777 • Fax: +202 35 37 1888 •
E-mail: ITU-RO-ArabStates@itu.int • www.itu.int/itu-d

UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States
Tawasouat Al-Shamaleya • 6th of October City, Greater Cairo • Egypt
Tel: +20 2 3826 8912 (ext. 7024)
• E-mail: Cairo@unesco.org • www.unesco.org

Event Registration:

The event is an open one but all **participants must register by Friday 26 November** using the following link:

- https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8p3vWAS0QlCCDrqXNQA2Yw

Social Media:

You may follow and tag us on social media under the hashtag #Digitalinclusionweek to get involved! Further information can be found on the event **website**.

For further information, please contact:

ITU:

- Rouda Ali Alamir, Programme Officer, ITU Arab Regional Office, rouda.alamirali@itu.int

UNESCO:

- Paul Hector, Advisor for Communication & Information, p.hector@unesco.org
- Omar Abdel-Gawad, Programme Associate, o.abdel-gawad@unesco.org

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Agenda

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Agenda

10:00 – 10:20	**Welcome Remarks:** • ITU Stephen Mr. Stephen Bereaux, Deputy-Director, BDT • UNESCO Tawfik Jelassi, Assistant Director-General for Communication & Information (TBC)
Session 1: **10:20 – 11:00**	**Data for ensuring equity and inclusivity** **Moderator: Jaco Du Toit / Bhanu Neupane** • Boccar BA, SAMENA Council (TBC) • Jawad Abbassi, GSMA MENA (TBC) • Karima Mahmoudi, Directrice Centrale de l'observatoire Instance Nationale des Télécommunications (INTT), Tunisia • Mohamed Al Binali, Director of Market and Competition, TRA Bahrain
11:00 – 11:10	**Q&A Session**
Session 2: **11:10 – 11:50**	**Platforms for ensuring equity and inclusivity** **Moderator: Rouda AlAmir Ali** • M. Sidi Mohammed DRISSI MELYANI, Directeur Général, Agence de Développement du Digital, Morocco (TBC) • Sylvia POLL, Head, Digital Society Division, Digital Networks and Society Department, ITU • Dorothy Gordon, Outgoing Chair of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Information for All Programme (IFAP) • Nagla Rizk, Professor of Economics & Founding Director of the Access to Knowledge for Development Center (A2K4D) (TBC)
11:50 – 12:00	**Q&A session**

Session 3:
12:00 – 12:40
	Policies for ensuring equity and inclusivity
	Moderator: Paul Hector
	    • **Othman Al Moammer, Misk Foundation**
	    • **Prof. Maria Fasli, UNESCO Chair on Data Science, University of Essex**
	    • **Mr. Tim Gelissen, Director of Advisory Services, Innovation for Policy Foundation (#i4Policy)**
	    • **Mr. Tawfiq AbuBaker, MODD, Jordan (TBC)**

12:40 – 12:50	**Q&A Session**

12:50 – 13:00	**Closing session:**
	    • **Adel M. Darwish, Regional Director, ITU Arab Regional Office**
	    • **Bisher Imam, OIC, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States**