

RPM-ASP Side-Event

"Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific: youth empowerment for a digital future"

9 & 10 March 2021

The countries in Asia the Pacific are undergoing digital transformation driven by technological advances and expanding broadband connectivity, accelerated by the responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Amongst the community that are negatively impacted, socially and economically are the youth community, which represents 1.8 billion of the world's population, the largest number in history.



The pandemic has further magnified the digital divide, depriving vulnerable communities, including youth from the economic and educational opportunities due to lockdowns and restriction of movement. Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are now seen as the means to enhance education, reduce youth unemployment and promote social and economic development. However, for the youth to benefit from this transformative power

of ICTs, they must be equipped with a range of digital skills and have affordable access to connectivity.

Youth voices and actions can all too easily be pushed aside at times of crises and uncertainty like the present one. The COVID-19 pandemic has further aggravated the challenges faced by young people prior to the crisis as youth between the ages of 18-29 are pushed out of employment globally.

The concerns of the youth towards future direction and opportunities require urgent attention. Education and employment opportunities among young people have reduced, as a great number of schools and training institutions around the globe faced closures as ways to contain the spread of the virus. Majority of students and young people were not able to benefit from the shift from face-to-face learning to virtual. Besides inadequate infrastructure to support their learning such as limited internet access, lack of IT equipment at home, insufficient digital skills amongst teachers, trainers and students are all contributing factors which have further diminished various opportunities in this digital arena.

This impact is even more pronounced for vulnerable groups, such as female, disabled, rural and migrant youth. Of the 258 million international migrants, around 11 per cent of them were below 24 years old in 2017. Often, vulnerable groups are unable to get equal access to basic services such as education, health as well as economic opportunities.

Despite these challenges, young people remain determined to step up and partner safely and effectively to ensure that the youth has the right to achieve full economic, social and digital inclusion. ICTs are tools through which both young women and men can substantively contribute to their empowerment and wider socio-economic development.

The **ITU Youth Strategy**, introduced in November 2020, aims to support its members and the youth community to identify innovative ways to include youth in the development and decision-making



process at national, regional and global levels. In recognising the importance of collective voices of the youth in such decision-making processes, the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ASP) is supporting the establishment and launching of the **Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific Youth Group (GC-ASP)**, which will serve as a network of various youth groups to share experience, aspirations and good practices in the region.

In this context, the ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is organising a side-event during the Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Asia and the Pacific (RPM-ASP) on "**Generation Connect Asia and the Pacific: youth empowerment for a digital future**", organised with the aim to foster greater awareness on the issues impacting the youth and pave the roadmap on how ITU activities can better support the youth empowerment and engagement to "build back better" from the COVID pandemic.

The side event consists of two Sessions:

1. Session 1: The Role of the Youth in Advocating for Digital Transformation, 9 March 2021
2. Session 2: Mainstreaming the Youth Agenda in Digital Policies and Programmes in ASP, 10 March 2021

The side event will invite various youths from the region as well as the ITU members.

Provisional Agenda 0900-0950 am (GMT+7): 9 March 2021

0900 – 0950	<p>Panel 1: The Role of the Youth in Advocating for Digital Transformation</p> <p>Session Moderators: Atsuko Okuda, Regional Director for ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Presentation of Key Points of the Draft GC-ASP Action Plan (relevant to the session) by GC-ASP Members</p> <p>Intervention by GC-ASP Members GC-ASP Representatives Youth Representative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Digital Services and Applications- Mr. Cresencio Bacolod, (The Philippines)</i> - <i>Digital Inclusion – Ms. Connie Man Hei, (Hong Kong, China)</i> - <i>Cybersecurity – Ms. Julia Waitara (Solomon Islands)</i> - <i>Capacity Development – Mr. Ramu Pandey (Nepal)</i> <p>Intervention and Comments by ITU Members and Participants</p> <p>Discussion and Q&A session</p> <p>Special remarks by Ambassador for a Day Representative, <i>Ms. Passinee Meetamon</i> on Gender Equality</p> <p>Moderator's summary</p>
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Provisional Agenda 0900-0950 (GMT+7) 10 March 2021

0900 – 0950	<p>Panel 2: Mainstreaming the Youth Agenda in Digital Policies and Programmes in ASP</p> <p>Session Moderators: Mr. Ashish Narayan, Programme Coordinator, ITU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Presentation of Key Points of the Draft GC-ASP Action Plan (relevant to the session) by GC-ASP Members</p> <p>Intervention by GC-ASP Members <i>GC-ASP Representatives</i></p> <p>Suggestions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Digital Inclusion- Ms. Simran Sahni, (India)</i> - <i>Digital services and applications- Ms. Olly Daugunu, (Fiji)</i> - <i>Capacity development- Ms. Neaira Budiono, (Indonesia)</i> - <i>Cybersecurity – tbc</i> <p>Intervention and Comments by ITU Members and Participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion and Q&A session <p>Moderator's summary</p>
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Additional Information

For more information, visit the event page at <http://www.itu.int/go/RIDJ>

Who can attend?

Those participants duly registered for the RPM-ASP can attend this side event.

Registration

You can register for this side event by completing the online form using the following link:

<https://www.itu.int/net4/CRM/xreg/web/Login.aspx?src=Registration&Event=C-00009267>

How to Participate

Information to access the virtual meeting room will be the same as the RPM-ASP event provided to duly registered participants through a separate email.

Only those participants duly registered for the meeting will be able to access the virtual meeting room.



This event will be held on Zoom online meeting platform. For more information on how to use Zoom, please visit <https://us04web.zoom.us/>

When joining meeting, please use the ID in the following template "Yourname_Country"

Event Coordinator

Contact Mr. Sean Doral, *Program Officer, ITU Regional Office for Asia-Pacific* (sean.doral@itu.int)

We look forward to you joining us for this online meeting.

Social Media

This event will be promoted via ITU Social Media platforms. Follow us and join us to promote this celebration through your network.

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