BRIDGING
THE GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE
Inputs from EQUALS to the Open Consultation from ITU’s CWG-Internet
January 2018

An initiative of EQUALS,
the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age
Overview

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1. Background
The Open Consultation from ITU’s CWG-Internet

Following the instructions of Council Resolution 1344 (Mod. 2015), the 2017 Session of ITU Council decided on 25 May 2017, upon request of the ITU Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues (CWG-Internet), to hold an open consultation (online and physical) on the following topic:

Bridging the Digital Gender Divide:
how to make the internet and technology more accessible for women.

Questions covered by this input

- **Question 1.** What approaches and examples of good practices are available to increase Internet access and digital literacy of women and girls, including in decision-making processes on Internet public policy?

- **Question 5.** What are the gaps in addressing these challenges? How can they be addressed and what is the role of governments?
2. Introducing EQUALS’ Action Map
About the EQUALS Action Map

The United Nations University Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS), ITU, the Internet Governance Forum and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development have been working since May 2016 on a joint research project to identify initiatives working worldwide towards bridging the gender digital divide.

The goal of this research is to elaborate a comprehensive map of relevant stakeholders to learn from their experiences, challenges and needs. We want to know who is doing what and when, what results are being achieved, what the lessons learned are and how we can help scale up projects and efforts.

The result of this exercise are being shared through an online platform with all the data gathered from each organization, their projects, focus and objectives. The Gender Digital Inclusion Map seeks to contribute to the global community by collecting and curating critical data to enhance evidence-based interventions that can be sustainable, impactful and scalable.

https://www.equals.org/actionmap
Quick Facts & Figures – The Database

496 Initiatives in the database from 97 countries

200+ Survey responses from 80+ countries

20 In-depth interviews documenting best practices

Visualization Tool
A user-friendly platform that maps all initiatives working on gender digital inclusion

6 UN languages covered

Training
More than 45% of initiatives focus on training women in ICTs

Civil society
Is the stakeholder with the largest number of projects in the database
Methodology followed

1. Desktop Research Database
2. Survey to validate data
3. In-depth Interviews
4. Interactive Map
5. Reports and Public Dataset

500 initiatives aimed at addressing the gender digital divide. Data captures type of project, type of stakeholder and geographical location, among other variables. This mapping was conducted in the 6 official UN languages, through the joint effort of ITU, UNU-CS, IGF and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The team designed and published a 1st survey in 2016 to validate the data from our initial desktop research and expand our database with relevant initiatives. The response rate was over 40%, with 200 responses.

20 interviews with activists and experts from different sectors and geographical locations were conducted in 2016. Interviews allowed us to document best practices and gather a deeper understanding of the challenges and obstacles these projects face.

Development of user-friendly online platform. It displays the information contained in the database. This visualization tool act as a repository of projects and is regularly updated frequently and improved.

Next future steps include a series of publications that will report on main findings. Additionally, and in the context of EQUALS, ITU will make sure to share all relevant data with stakeholders and the community at large.
The Interactive Map

- Embeddable interactive tool developed with CARTO. 2 visualizations:
  - Projects by HQ of implementing agency
  - Projects by location

- All data available via Google Sheets, tailored visualizations can be developed focused on specific sub-sets of the data (e.g. by region, type of project, country, etc.)

- Data is updated real time with new submissions via the web form

- Regular quality control of data implemented by ITU as part of contribution to EQUALS
3. Overall findings
Overall findings - Pillars

When we group project categories into the **GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP pillars**, findings indicate that most initiatives are working to empower women in terms of **ICT skills**

![Bar Chart](chart.png)

**The Global Partnership Pillars**

- **Leadership** - Empower women as ICT leaders, creators, and entrepreneurs
  - 17%

- **Access** - Achieve equal access to digital technologies
  - 19%

- **Skills** - Empower women and girls with skills to become ICT creators
  - 64%

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
Overall Findings - Typology of Initiatives

Most initiatives aim at **training women in ICT skills**. **Awareness raising** and **Capacity-building** projects are also frequent.

**Ranking**

1. Training : 44%
2. Awareness raising : 14%
3. Capacity-building : 14%
4. Networking : 9%
5. Mentoring : 8%
6. Advocacy : 7%
7. Funding : 4%

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
Findings – Implementing stakeholder

Civil society is the stakeholder for which more projects were found, accounting for 62% of all initiatives. The private sector follows with 20% of the total.

1. Civil society organization : 62%
2. Private sector : 20%
3. Government : 9%
4. Intergovernmental organization : 5%
5. Academia : 5%

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
Findings - Initiatives by Region

Entries in database per HQ of the organizations

Europe: 14.88% | North America: 16.03% | Africa: 12.34% | Asia & Pacific: 5.54% | Latin America: 4.15%

Entries in database per project location

Africa: 17.65% | Europe: 12.57% | Asia & Pacific: 9.92% | Latin America: 7.04% | North America: 4.84%

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped

Europe: 30%
Africa: 22%
North America: 21%
Asia & Pacific: 16%
Latin America: 10%
Middle East: 1%

Africa: 30%
Europe: 24%
Asia & Pacific: 20%
Latin America: 12%
North America: 9%
Middle East: 5%
Findings – Geographical presence

The majority of the projects mapped are implemented within a country (national scale)
Strong presence of projects at the global level

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
**Findings - Regional Outlook of projects mapped**

In **North America**, “Training” and “Capacity-building” projects account for 44.1% of the total. Civil society is the most active sector with 64.9% of initiatives. It is also the region where the private sector is more active (24.7%).

In **Latin America**, “Training” is the most widespread type of projects (32.7%) but “Awareness raising” (18.7%) is also frequent.

In **Africa**, “Training” is by far the preferred intervention, accounting for 42.3% of the total. Civil Society is responsible for over 70.3% of this region’s projects.

In **Europe**, 41.7% of initiatives are located in Spain, UK, The Netherlands, Belgium and France. The region seems to be the most diversified in terms of type of project with “Training” (34.8%), “Awareness raising” (19.1%) and “Networking” (19.1%) as the leading categories.

The Middle East is the region that focuses the most on access, with 37.5% of its projects.

Asia & the Pacific shows remarkably high engagement by civil society organisations, with 57.8% of all initiatives coming from this sector. 17% of the projects are located in India.

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
Question 1:
What approaches and examples of good practices are available to increase Internet access and digital literacy of women and girls, including in decision-making processes on Internet public policy?
4.1 Access
Civil society organizations are leading the effort in providing access through training.

Out of 96 projects in the Access pillar, only 3 came from Academia.

Despite the value of mentorship, it remains one of the smallest groups of projects mapped.
Access

Leading countries based on the location
1. USA – 13 initiatives
2. India – 10 initiatives
3. Mexico – 7 initiatives
4. South Africa – 7 initiatives
5. Spain – 7 initiatives

Leading countries based on the headquarters
1. USA – 45 initiatives
2. South Africa – 33 initiatives
3. UK – 25 initiatives

Leading Languages

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
4.2 Digital Literacy
• Civil Society organizations are leading the effort in advancing digital literacy through training projects

• IGOs, Governments and Academia remain jointly underrepresented
**Skills**

### Leading countries based on the location

1. USA – 31 initiatives
2. Spain – 21 initiatives
3. Kenya – 17 initiatives
4. Nigeria – 17 initiatives
5. India – 14 initiatives

### Leading countries based on the headquarters

1. USA – 124 initiatives
2. Kenya – 26 initiatives
3. France, Nigeria – 22 initiatives

### Leading Languages

- Ukrainian
- Spanish
- Portuguese
- Japanese
- Hebrew
- French
- Estonian
- English
- Chinese
- Azerbaijani
- Arabic

Source: EQUALS. Sample of 496 initiatives mapped
4.3 Leadership
Leadership

- The Leadership pillar has the most equal stakeholder engagement and even distribution of project typology.
- The percentage of mentorship projects remains low.
- Severely uneven language distribution.
Leadership

Leading countries based on the headquarters

1. Europe – 30 initiatives
2. North America - 24 initiatives
3. Africa – 16 initiatives

Leading Languages

- Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- English

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Question 2:
What are the **gaps** in addressing these **challenges**? How can they be addressed and what is the role of governments?
Challenges and Opportunities

The interviews focused on gathering rich qualitative data on the initiatives, the objectives, the main challenges and obstacles, and best practices in terms of effectiveness, sustainability and scalability.

Challenges

- Lack of funding and overall support from donors and international actors
- Difficult to engage and retain all the relevant stakeholders
- Cultural barriers hinder women’s self-perceptions
- Many projects have no long-term approach
- Often no “gender approach” in project design
- Lack of data and gender-specific statistics
Challenges and Opportunities

The interviews focused on gathering rich qualitative data on the initiatives, the objectives, the main challenges and obstacles, and best practices in terms of effectiveness, sustainability and scalability.

Opportunities/ Best practices

Projects should focus not only on access to technology but also on access to education, the labour market, and social participation.

Women greatly value the opportunity to learn technical skills when given the chance.

Projects need to include an awareness-raising component to bring down cultural barriers.

Involving all actors in a given environment (teachers, family, local governments, businessmen).

Female networks at work and schools can go a long way towards empowering girls and women and to help them see themselves as future creators of technology.
KEY TAKEAWAYS

Combining findings from the database, the survey and the interviews

1. More than a third of initiatives focus on training women in ICT. Mentoring, funding and advocacy projects are underrepresented despite their importance to address the issue as a whole.

2. Civil society organisations are leading the efforts towards bridging the gender digital divide. We should aim at strengthening the engagement of private sector and, specially, of governments and academia.

3. Organizations working on this issues are mostly based in the developed world, however their projects are almost entirely implemented in developing countries.

4. Scarcity of monetary resources, absence of global frameworks of action, and lack of data on gender digital inclusion are reported as the main obstacles to scale up and enhance projects.

5. Projects should have a comprehensive approach, targeting girls and women but also addressing their social context as a whole.
6. Further Information
Become a EQUALS partner

How to join EQUALS
1. Exchange of formal invitation letters
2. Join one of the Action Coalitions to make progress and implement concrete activities
3. 2017-2018 --> Call for voluntary financial contributions
4. 2018-2020 --> Call for strategic partners to contribute to projects and programmatic activities with time, human resources and financial contributions

What we expect from our EQUALS Partners

- Share data on your organization’s progress towards digital gender equality;
- Donate to scale up activities;
- Support research or contribute data from completed or on-going research;
- Volunteer staff resources
Become a Mapping Partner

1 What we expect from our Mapping Partners

- **To inject**, whenever possible, data into the GDI map’s database in the form of relevant new initiatives
- **To update and improve**, where necessary, data on initiatives already in the database that are relevant to the Data Partner
- **To promote**, whenever possible, the GDI map both online and offline
- **To embed** or otherwise host the GDI on their website

2 What our Mapping Partners can expect from us

- **To have full access** to the database feeding into the GDI map
- **To be fully included** in the decision-making process regarding the GDI map
- **To be on fully equal footing** with all other organizations involved in the GDI map
Our goal:

1000+

Initiatives mapped by 2Q2018
Thank you!

To find out more about the Gender Digital Inclusion Map contact us at gender@itu.int or visit equals.org

Mapping conducted by