

RESOLUTION 55 (Rev. Baku, 2025)

Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/ information and communication technologies

The World Telecommunication Development Conference (Baku, 2025),

recalling

a) that Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) identifies the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a crucial contribution to progress across all the goals and targets and contains Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), which recognizes that gender equality is necessary to contribute to achieving a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world, and specifically SDG 5 target 5.b (Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communication technology (ICT), to promote the empowerment of women), as well as SDG 9 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation), which promotes subject areas that cut across other goals, and SDG 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries);

- b)* Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on mainstreaming a gender perspective¹ in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/ICTs, which resolves to continue the work being done at ITU, and particularly in the Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), to promote gender equality in telecommunications/ICTs by recommending measures at international, regional and national levels on policies and programmes that improve socio-economic conditions for women and girls worldwide;
- c)* Resolution 55 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, on mainstreaming gender equality in ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) activities, which ensures gender mainstreaming in ITU-T activities;
- d)* 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,

¹ "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: Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, third session, New York, 25–27 February 1998).

noting

- a) UNGA Resolution 64/289, on system-wide coherence, adopted on 2 July 2010, establishing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) with the mandate to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;
- b) the United Nations Secretary-General's commitment to achieve 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;
- c) Resolution 2012/24 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, 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;
- d) that the United Nations Chief Executives Board, in April 2013, advocated the "Action Plan to measure gender equality and the empowerment of women across the United Nations system", under which ITU will participate in the dissemination, coordination, communication and networking activities forming part of the strategy, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General's launch of the System Wide Strategy on Gender Parity in September 2017;
- e) the United Nations HeForShe initiative (2014) to involve men and boys in the promotion of gender equality;
- f) the EQUALS Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age (EQUALS), of which ITU is a founding member, including 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;

g) the United Nations International Gender Champion initiative and the ITU Secretary-General's commitment to promote the Panel Parity Pledge;

h) ITU's role as co-leader of the Technology and Innovation Action Coalition part of the Generation Equality Forum, a global five-year action journey and roadmap for gender equality to achieve the SDGs;

i) the Network of Women (NoW) in the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D), launched as a way to improve the number of women taking up leadership roles in the structures that make up ITU-D and in key management roles related to the preparation of the next world telecommunication development conference (WTDC), and beyond,

noting further

a) the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), namely the Geneva Declaration of Principles, the Geneva Plan of Action, the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, as well as the WSIS 10-year review;

b) the four-year rolling operational plans for the ITU Sectors (ITU-R, ITU-T and ITU-D) and the General Secretariat adopted by the ITU Council;

c) the decision of the Council at its 2013 session to endorse 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;

d) the establishment by the Secretary-General, endorsed by the Council at its 2013 session (Council 2013), of an internal Gender Task Force, as well as establishment by ITU of an international Girls in ICT Day, with the aim of fulfilling the main objectives of ensuring coordinated implementation of Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), reporting progress to the governing bodies of ITU, preparing a Union-wide action plan to implement the ITU GEM Policy (Council 2013) and overseeing its implementation, including a NoW in all ITU Sectors;

e) Council Decision 631 (C23), on the implementation of Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), including a request for the development of a Gender Action Plan to coordinate gender-related activities across all three ITU Sectors and establish a functional unit on gender,

recognizing

that telecommunications/ICTs can help to create a world in which societies are free of discrimination, women and men have equal opportunities, and the economic and social potential of women and girls is guaranteed in order to improve their conditions as individuals, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

considering

a) the progress made by BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the purpose of economic and social empowerment of women and girls, in particular the results of international Girls in ICT Day, within the framework of Resolution 70 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022);

b) the contributions made by ITU's Gender Task Force, proposing ways of ensuring that gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women is underscored in policies and programmes and fully integrated into ITU's work and strategic plan,

resolves

1 that ITU-D, taking into account the above considerations, shall continue to support the development of activities, projects and events that reflect the commitment to gender equality and promote gender balance with the aim of closing the gender digital divide;

2 that BDT should maintain close links and collaborate, as appropriate, with the Gender and Youth Office and the Gender Task Force set up by the Secretary-General, to support gender mainstreaming across the Union's activities, with the aim of eliminating inequalities in access to and use of telecommunications/ICTs;

3 that BDT should continue to work to promote gender equality in the field of telecommunications/ICTs, recommending and supporting the implementation of actions on policies and programmes at the international, regional and national levels in order to improve the socio-economic condition of women, with particular emphasis on developing countries², taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

4 that inclusion of the gender perspective should be ensured in the implementation of all relevant BDT initiatives and projects as well as in the outcomes of this conference;

5 that high priority be accorded to the incorporation of gender equality-related goals, policies, and relevant guidelines in the management, staffing and operation of ITU-D, while also ensuring geographical representation;

6 that BDT should contribute to the economic empowerment and high-level professional employment of women in decision-making posts, encouraging women's leadership in the sphere of telecommunications/ICTs, collaborating to promote a plural, inclusive and integrating information society;

7 that telecommunications/ICTs may contribute to preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls in both public and private spaces, while also exposing women and girls to new risks that should be taken into account in initiatives dedicated to addressing the gender digital divide, including in enhancing digital literacy and skills, as well as initiatives to protect women's careers from discrimination;

² These include the least developed countries, small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

8 to invite the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG) and the Radiocommunication and Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Groups to assist in the identification of subjects and mechanisms to foster the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, as well as matters of mutual interest in that regard;

9 that ITU-D should promote capacity-building programmes tailored to equip women and girls with digital and leadership skills, including exposing them to networking opportunities and mentoring programmes for career opportunities in the telecommunication/ICT sector;

10 that BDT should inform the ITU regional offices on, and ensure their participation in, progress and results achieved in implementing this resolution;

11 to encourage Member States to increase the representation of women in their delegations to ITU-D activities to solve the issue of underrepresentation of women,

further resolves

to endorse the following measures:

1 design, implement and support projects and programmes in developing countries that are either specifically targeted to women and girls or are gender sensitive, for the purpose of tackling the barriers that women and girls encounter in accessing and utilizing ICTs in terms of digital literacy and ICT skills, training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, affordability, trust and confidence, at the international, regional and national levels, taking into account SDG 5 target 5.b;

2 support the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators to track the digital gender divide and identify barriers to women's full participation in the telecommunication/ICT sector;

3 promote gender mainstreaming to address obstacles that stand in the way of meaningful and affordable digital connectivity for women and girls;

4 evaluate relevant projects and programmes to assess gender implications, in connection with Resolution 17 (Rev. Baku, 2025) of this conference;

- 5 provide gender mainstreaming training and/or capacity building to BDT staff responsible for the design and implementation of development projects and programmes and work with them to develop gender-sensitive projects as appropriate;
- 6 incorporate a gender perspective into study Questions, as appropriate;
- 7 mobilize resources for gender-sensitive projects, including projects to ensure that women and girls can use ICTs for their own empowerment and in daily personal and professional activities, and create services and develop applications that contribute to the equality and empowerment of all women and girls;
- 8 encourage greater representation of girls and young women in technology by supporting initiatives such as international Girls in ICT Day and year-round activities that raise awareness of STEM opportunities, cultivate ICT skills, and integrate these skills into formal education and career pathways;
- 9 develop partnerships with other United Nations agencies to promote the use of telecommunications/ICTs in projects targeting women and girls in line with ITU's mandate, with the aim of encouraging women and girls to connect to the Internet, increasing training opportunities for them, and monitoring the gender divide in telecommunications/ICTs, including actively participating in and promoting EQUALS;
- 10 promote best practices and guidelines to integrate women's empowerment and gender equality into all aspects of telecommunication/ICT development and use;
- 11 promote educational programmes to protect women and girls from online forms of abuse and harassment and to address their safety needs;
- 12 support international Girls in ICT Day and efforts of the ITU membership to undertake all-year-round activities to make girls aware of STEM studies and careers and job opportunities in the ICT sector and develop their ICT skills;

13 promote efforts to enhance educational opportunities for women and girls in STEM and telecommunication/ICT skills and careers across their lifespan, with a particular emphasis on ensuring access for those in rural and underserved areas;

14 continue to assist developing countries to close the gender digital divide, including enhancing women's and girls' access to reliable, affordable connectivity and the use of telecommunications/ICTs services and devices, and also digital literacy and digital skills;

15 support the continuation of the NoW advisory group, working on a voluntary basis, composed of two women representative coordinators per region designated in collaboration with the regional groups,

instructs the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

1 to report annually to TDAG and the Council on the results and the progress achieved in integrating a gender perspective into the work of ITU-D, and on the implementation of this resolution;

2 to give high priority to gender mainstreaming in the management, financial assistance, staffing and operation of ITU-D, while taking into account geographical representation;

3 to conduct an annual review to track and assess progress in advancing gender mainstreaming within ITU-D, including by circulating questionnaires and collecting and reviewing statistics on ITU-D development activities by gender and region, in order to identify challenges and obstacles hindering women's full participation in the telecommunication/ICT sector, and propose subsequent solutions; and to share findings with TDAG and the next WTDC;

4 to continue the work of BDT in promoting the use of telecommunications/ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Secretary-General's strategy on gender parity;

5 to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to advance gender equality initiatives by engaging in partnerships that leverage global expertise and resources to promote women's empowerment through telecommunications/ICTs;

6 to launch a dedicated set of Network of Women for WTDC (NoW4WTDC) activities prior to each WTDC encouraging the participation and nomination of women to leadership roles for the next study period and at the conference, taking into account Resolution 208 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) of the Plenipotentiary Conference;

7 to ensure that the consistent participation of women within delegations is encouraged in all relevant communications to Member States,

invites the Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

to assist members:

1 to encourage the mainstreaming of a gender perspective through appropriate administrative and policy mechanisms and processes within regulatory agencies and ministries and to promote inter-organizational cooperation on this issue within the telecommunication sector, including with non-governmental stakeholders, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2 to provide concrete advice, in the form of guidelines for gender-sensitive project development and evaluation in the telecommunication sector as well as guidelines for projects aimed at bridging the gender digital divide;

3 to raise awareness among the ITU membership on gender issues related to telecommunications/ICTs by collecting and disseminating information and by sharing best practices, including on gender-sensitive programming;

4 to assist Member States to review existing national ICT policies and regulations and assess their gender responsiveness and share best practices on how to fully integrate women's participation in the development of relevant policies, strategies, regulations and other plans related to the development of telecommunications/ICTs to support the digital economy;

5 upon request, to develop and encourage the adoption of policies that address women's meaningful connectivity, particularly in unserved and underserved areas, and access to and use of telecommunication/ICT devices, services and applications;

6 to establish partnerships with Sector Members in order to develop and/or support specific telecommunication/ICT projects that target women and girls in developing countries, including countries with economies in transition;

7 to encourage Sector Members to promote gender equality in the telecommunication/ICT sector through financial commitments to specific projects involving women and girls, taking into account SDG 5 target 5.b;

8 to support active involvement of women delegates in ITU-D study groups and other ITU-D activities, including project implementation;

9 to provide training for women delegates on active participation in meetings, drafting, contributions, and chairing meetings,

invites the Plenipotentiary Conference

1 to build on and consolidate past accomplishments, by providing the necessary financial and human resources for the effective and sustained integration of a gender perspective in the activities of ITU-D;

2 to instruct the Secretary-General to bring this resolution to the attention of the United Nations Secretary-General in an effort to promote increased coordination and cooperation for development policies, programmes and projects that link access to and use and appropriation of telecommunications/ICTs and broadband for women and girls, in line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3 to support the promotion of gender equality, empowerment and the social and economic development of women and girls, taking into account SDG 5 target 5.b,

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 development groups and activities and in their own administrations and delegations;

- 2 to actively support and participate in the work of BDT, and to nominate experts for the ITU-D NoW group;
- 3 to designate, in liaison with the regional coordinators of NoW, national representatives in order to encourage in each part of the world the participation of women and girls in ITU-D activities;
- 4 to encourage and actively support ICT education that promotes girls' and women's participation, and to support all measures that will help prepare them for a professional and leadership career in ICT, including mentoring programmes and targeted capacity-building initiatives;
- 5 to encourage greater participation of women in ICT development as delegates and foster their expertise;
- 6 to encourage the adoption of proven measures and strategies to globally increase the number of women pursuing academic degrees in STEM fields, in particular those related to telecommunications/ICTs, at all levels.