

Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide: bridging the gender gap in Internet and broadband access and use

PROGRESS REPORT

September 2017



BROADBAND COMMISSION
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide: bridging the gender gap in Internet and broadband access and use

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September 2017



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This report has been created collaboratively, drawing on contributions and insights from the participants of the Broadband Commission Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide, under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development.

The UN Broadband Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide is chaired by Mr Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA, and is co-chaired by Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The GSMA has coordinated the process of drafting this document.

More information about the Broadband Commission Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide is available at <http://broadbandcommission.org/workinggroups/Pages/digital-gender-divide.aspx>.

Progress Report

In March 2017, the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development's Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide, co-chaired by the GSMA and UNESCO, launched a report that outlines a set of recommendations for action that stakeholders can take to address the gender gap in Internet access and use.¹

The report also includes commitments by members of the Working Group on the Digital Gender Divide to take forward some of the recommended actions. This progress report provides an update on progress against many of these commitments as well as new commitments to action by members of the Working Group.

Specifically, it sets out an update from Working Group members on actions they have taken against the four groups of recommended actions outlined in the March 2017 "Recommendations for action" report:

- The first group is concerned with the need for stakeholders to gain a better understanding of relevant contexts by supporting the collection, tracking and analysis of sex-disaggregated **data** on Internet access and use.
- The second group is concerned with the integration of gender perspectives in relevant **strategies, policies, plans, and budgets**.
- The third group seeks to address barriers related to affordability, threats that hamper access and use, digital literacy and confidence, and the availability of relevant content, applications and services.
- The fourth and final group concerns the need for supporting stakeholders to collaborate more effectively in addressing digital gender gaps by sharing good practices and lessons learned.

Figure 1: Recommendation areas



¹ "Recommendations for action: bridging the gender gap in Internet and Broadband access and use", March 2017, <http://broadbandcommission.org/Documents/publications/WorkingGroupDigitalGenderDivide-report2017.pdf>

**Understand
the context:
sex-disaggregated
data on Internet
access and use**

1

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

APC is undertaking a global mapping of actors and initiatives on women on gender and ICT to identify key issues and gaps, which includes a focus on access.

A4AI, the **Web Foundation**, the **GSMA**, and **APC** agreed to collaborate to develop a common and open set of baseline indicators on the gender digital divide, which they will promote amongst research institutions and government stakeholders. This will build on existing recommendations for gender specific indicators and methodologies taking into consideration previous efforts and guidelines produced by ITU and the Partnership on Measuring ICTs for Development Task Group on Gender.

ITU agreed to continue to collect and publish gender disaggregated data on Internet penetration and Internet users, as well as to estimate the digital gender gap in Internet use. This follows efforts of ITU and other Members of the Partnership on Measuring the ICTs for Development to collect internationally comparable gender-disaggregated ICT statistics.

USAID agreed to publish its gender digital divide survey toolkit, which supports the collection of sub-national disaggregated data. It has also agreed to encourage its field missions to use any standardised metrics and tools that are developed by the Working Group.



Update

The report is being finalised for a meeting that will bring together research networks in October 2017, to discuss priorities and strategies to mobilise for resources to support gender, sexuality and feminist research in this field.

Work is ongoing by A4AI, the Web Foundation, the GSMA and APC to provide those interested in the digital gender gap with a toolkit to help them carry out research, whether quantitative or qualitative, to measure and better understand adoption, access, awareness and usage of the internet from a gender perspective. The "Women and Internet Research" toolkit will provide not only suggestions on specific questions, but also advice on approach and design of research to help produce ecologically valid, reliable and robust findings.

ITU continues to collect gender disaggregated data on Internet users twice a year. New Gender ICT statistics, showing gender-disaggregated data for 91 economies, were released on the ITU website in June 2017. The digital gender gap in Internet use was estimated and featured in the 2017 Facts and Figures. The 2017 Facts and Figures shows a wider global gender gap in 2017 than in 2013. While the gender gap has narrowed in most regions since 2013, it has widened in Africa.

USAID will launch the "Gender and Information Communication Technology (ICT) Toolkit" on September 28 at USAID's Global Innovation Week in Washington, D.C. to an audience of international development practitioners, gender specialists, partner organisations, client governments and the general public.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:

- The **United Nations Foundation's Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL)** has committed to conduct research related to an exploration of the socio-cultural barriers to women's access to digital technology.

**Integrate
a gender
perspective
in strategies,
policies,
plans and
budgets**

2

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

A4AI and the Web Foundation agreed to develop a gender-responsive ICT policy curriculum to train policy-makers across regions in key policy areas to address the digital gender gap. They have started the development of this curriculum with the input of several partners who are being interviewed to gather perspectives on important elements of effective gender-responsive policies. The curriculum will be made available to partners, and will integrate the Baseline Gender Indicators and other guidance on how to integrate gender considerations across all policy themes covered in national ICT policies and broadband plans.

The **GSMA** agreed to take forward the Working Group's recommendations for government stakeholders by developing them into a practical training course for government officials and regulators. This course will help participants develop a plan to implement the Working Group's recommended policy/regulatory actions in their respective countries. To achieve scale, it will be rolled out through the GSMA's Capacity Building partner network and on the GSMA's online portal for remote learning (www.gsmatraining.com).



Update

Development of the gender-responsive ICT curriculum is underway, and will be shared with partners for review and input, ahead of piloting in the Dakar workshop on gender-responsive ICT policy in September 2017 (a workshop for policy makers in Francophone Africa, and co-hosted by the Ministry of Post and Telecom in Senegal, The Alliance for Affordable Internet, Web Foundation, UN Women and UNESCO).

Development of this course has been completed and it was successfully piloted at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum in Geneva, in June 2017. It will be delivered free-of-charge as an online and one-day face-to-face training course for policy makers on an ongoing basis.

**Action**

ITU agreed to work closely with its Member States to measure and promote progress towards ITU's Connect 2020 Agenda, and specifically Goal 2, which is concerned with bridging the digital divide and providing broadband for all, and Target 2.5.A, which sets a target that "Gender equality among Internet users should be reached by 2020". The assessment of progress toward this target is and will continue to be done through the ITU performance management system, using data from the annual ITU's Measuring the Information Society Report.

ITU agreed to strengthen the reporting and monitoring of gender equality with the support of the ITU Gender Dashboard, a reporting and monitoring tool that supports analysis processes. The tool aims to ensure that gender equality is included in the future development of ITU's strategy, policies and budgets by gathering data, including on ICT connectivity indicators disaggregated by gender. The ITU Gender Dashboard has also agreed to continue to support the ITU Women in Standardisation Expert Group (WISE) to further encourage the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of all ITU-T activities and groups, as well as to expand the Network of Women for the World Radiocommunication Conference (NOW4WRC) to group women's participation and contribution to those events.

UNESCO has developed Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Policies and Strategies Guidelines with gender equality perspectives, aimed at policy-makers of all countries. Through this tool, UNESCO agreed to partner with Member States in order to integrate MIL with gender perspectives in formal and informal education.

**Update**

ITU continues to measure and promote "Gender equality among Internet users" within the framework of the Connect 2020 Agenda, and the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Union (Target 2.5.A). Regular reports are provided through the ITU Measuring the Information Society Report, and the ITU Annual Progress Report (www.itu.int/en/annual-report-2016).

In addition, ITU will continue to work closely with its Member States, throughout the process of elaboration of the new ITU Strategic Plan 2020-2023, in order to review – and, if needed, update the targets related to the Digital Gender Gap, also taking into account the related targets of the SDG framework.

The ITU Gender Dashboard has been implemented and is available online at: www.itu.int/gendashboard - providing information on: a) the participation of women in the ITU conferences, meetings and events, b) statistical data on the current status of the global digital gender gap, as well as on the participation of women in the tech sector, and c) gender-disaggregated data for the human resources of the organisation.

The Network of Women for WRC-19 initiative was launched last December (2016) and aims at building capacity for World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs), encouraging a larger participation of women as delegates, chairs, vice-chairs, etc., at the conference. In May 2017, the first mentorship programme cycle was launched with a focus on the technical topics for the WP 4A (Working Party on the Efficient orbit/spectrum utilisation of FSS and BSS) of the WRC-19. This initiative was followed by the 2nd launch-cycle of the mentorship programme to the participants of the ITU-R Task Group 5/1 meeting.

Five Member States (Jordan, Serbia, Albania, Kenya and Philippines) have taken steps to develop Media and Information Literacy (MIL) policies. Four National MIL Policy and Strategy Position Papers have been developed, including gender equality perspectives.



Action

The **United Nations Foundation's Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL)** is developing toolkits on the Principles for Digital Development to help implementing organisations and donors integrate and operationalise the Principles in their digital development programmes. These toolkits will incorporate a gender lens to ensure that all resources, including recommendations, guidance and case studies, are inclusive.

USAID agreed to release and share its gender digital divide staff training module, which supports the integration of gender into policies and sharing of good practices and lessons.

VEON agreed to integrate a gender perspective into a number of its plans and programmes, particularly those related to financial inclusion and entrepreneurship. The company will launch financial services in Algeria, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and will aim to include women as a target segment of these services, while also measuring uptake by women.



Update

The Principles for Digital Development toolkit will be launched in October 2017, with gendered content for all resources developed.

The Gender and ICT Gap training module will be released in the late Fall 2017.

JazzCash (VEON's subsidiary in Pakistan) and global nonprofit Women's World Banking entered into a partnership to promote women's financial inclusion across Pakistan. With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, it will work to increase low-income women's adoption and use of digital financial services. Mobile financial services strategies for Algeria and Kyrgyzstan are currently being developed.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:

- Though Resolution 70, **ITU** to accord high priority to the incorporation of gender policies in the management, staffing and operation of ITU, so that ITU can become a leading organisation in the implementation of gender-equality values and principles to take advantage of the possibilities offered by ICTs to empower both men and women.

Progress update: ITU's Council endorsed an action plan for implementing gender equality and mainstreaming in 2017. The plan is aligned to the United Nations system-wide action plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN-SWAP).

- **UNESCO** has launched an Asia Pacific Regional Strategy on Using ICT to Facilitate the Achievement of Education 2030, which emphasises gender-responsive policies to ensure girls' and women's equal access to ICT and address gender disparity in ICT-supported learning environments. UNESCO agreed to support Member States to translate the Regional Strategy into integrating ICT in the sector-wide national education plan, with the special attention to explicit and concrete policy measures to tackle the gender-related digital divides and learning divides.
- **ISTIC** Malaysia, the International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation under the auspices of UNESCO, is committed to gender equality and its Women in STI (Science, Technology and Innovation) agenda

has attracted some 650 participants from 55 countries. Among other activities, ISTIC conducts Women Technopreneur training workshops for women researchers and innovators on how to become successful entrepreneurs in small and medium enterprises. In such training workshops, the productive use of mobile or smart phones is highlighted.

- The **United Nations Foundation’s Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL)** has committed to the continued integration of gender into all Principles for Digital Development content for implementers and donor organisations.
- **UN Women** supports inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment (HLP WEE), to reflect the inclusion of women and girls in the digital revolution in their recommendations for Member States and other stakeholders on the formulation of policies, norms and global standards.

Progress update: UN Women prepared the report of the Secretary General on the priority theme of the 61st session of CSW (March 2017), “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of

work”, which highlighted the importance of technology and digital literacy to women’s economic empowerment (E/CN.6/2017/3). UN Women provided substantive and technical advice during the Member State negotiations of the agreed conclusions on the priority theme, which recommended managing technological and digital change for women’s economic empowerment: “Support women’s access, throughout their life cycle, to skills development and decent work in new and emerging fields, by expanding the scope of education and training opportunities in, inter alia, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and digital fluency, and enhance women’s and, as appropriate, girls’ participation as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders.” UN Women’s Executive Director participated in the HLP WEE and UN Women staff led or supported the working groups on the drivers of women’s economic empowerment, including “Building assets: Digital, financial, and property.” The HLP report, *Leave No One Behind: Taking Action for Transformational Change on Women’s Economic Empowerment (2017)*, recommended: 1) Encourage stakeholders of a country to assess how women are progressing along the digital inclusion continuum, and 2) Enable women’s voice to shape digital, financial and property products, services and policies.

Address the barriers

3

3a: Affordable access

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

APC's Global Information Society Watch 2017 will be focused on community access networks, which will include a gender perspective. This edition is expected to contain 60 country reports and five thematic reports on various aspects of access and development, and will be published during IGF 2017.

APC is developing a local connectivity access project, with research and advocacy components, that will include a gender perspective to understand barriers, opportunities and best practices to foster the growth of new models for the provision of local access, which address affordability and coverage barriers.

The **GSMA** has made a commitment to help take forward some of the recommended actions specified above by supporting the Connected Women Commitment Initiative. This initiative enables mobile operators to drive an effort to reduce the gender gap in mobile Internet and mobile money by making formal commitments to increase the proportion of women in their mobile Internet and/or mobile money customer base by 2020.



Update

The Community Networks edition of the Global Information Society Watch has been moved to 2018. 2017's Edition will focus on outcomes of national and regional Internet Governance Forums, which will include a report on how gender is addressed in these forums.

The project is in its inception phase and will focus on Africa, Latin America and South Asia.

Through the Connected Women Commitment initiative, mobile operators are making formal commitments to reduce the gender gap in their mobile money or mobile internet customer base by 2020. To date, 32 mobile operators have made 46 formal commitments to reduce the gender gap in their mobile money and/or mobile internet customer base across Africa, Asia and Latin America, driving an effort to accelerate digital and financial inclusion for women. Through this initiative and others, the Connected Women programme and its partners have delivered life-enhancing services to more than 17 million women.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:


- **Inmarsat** has committed to continue working with its partners, organisations, and administrations

to bridge the gender divide by connecting women and girls in rural areas. For example, Inmarsat is undertaking programs in Africa focusing on education, healthcare and financial inclusion, and will continue to explore and expand such efforts.

3b: Address threats that prevent access and use

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:

 Action	 Update
<p>ITU agreed to continue its ongoing work on child online protection as guided by the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection (CWG COP), which includes the protection of girls and young women online.</p>	<p>Under the CWG COP, there is an ongoing online consultation for youth. The topic of this consultation is related to digital skills and empowerment of children. Council 2017 nominated UAE as the next Chair of the Group together with other six vice chairs: the Walt Disney Company, Jordan, Chad, Malaysia, Odessa National Academy of Telecommunications n.a. A.S. Popo and Italy.</p> <p>National workshops to define strategies and policies on child online protection have been organised during the year. The ITU CHI campaign encourages ITU members to support and actively promote the role of national helplines, and is contributing to SDG 17.</p>

3c: Digital literacy and confidence

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

ITU has a range of initiatives which include a focus on digital skills and digital literacy which it supports, including its forthcoming Digital Skills for the Digital Economy toolkit. The toolkit will support Member States and Sector Members with assessment, design and implementation of national digital skills strategies. Another beneficiary of the initiatives is the International Girls in ICT Day campaign, as well as its GEM-TECH Awards, an annual special achievement award for outstanding performers and role models in gender equality and mainstreaming in the area of ICTs.



Update

The Digital Skills for the Digital Economy toolkit is under development.

Since 2011, over 300,000 girls and young women have taken part in more than 9,000 celebrations of International Girls in ICT Day in 166 countries worldwide. In 2017 alone, over 2,100 Girls in ICT Day events have been organised in 134 countries worldwide, involving over 71,000 girls and young women. The ITU Girls in ICT Portal received 487,000 page views in the first half of 2017. This compares to a total of 383,552 page views in 2016. #GirlsinICT reached over 63 million Twitter accounts in the first half of 2017.

In 2017, the ITU and UN Women GEM Tech Awards become the EQUALS in TECH Awards 2017. The nominations for projects and initiative in three areas: access, skills and leadership, are open until 15 September 2017. An Advisory Group has been composed by the former past winners, who will help to promote the nomination phase and select the nominations. The Award Ceremony will take place during the Internet Governance Forum 2017 which will be held on 18-22 December 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Action**

UNESCO has launched the MIL Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) for young girls and boys to empower them with necessary competence in media and information literacy (MIL), currently available in English and Arabic. UNESCO agrees to support capacity building for youth organisations to integrate MIL in the policy and operation of their strategy, irrespective of their mandate. This includes youth organisations involved in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

**Update**

Over 25 youth organisations from 25 countries have been engaged in MIL through the MIL Massive Open Online Course and over 500 youth trained on MIL. Over 280 were young girls.

Over 2,000 (over 1,100 girls) young people from 100 countries participated in the global survey, shared their opinion, and increased their awareness about MIL and gender equality in the media, privacy, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, freedom of expression, freedom of information and hate and radical content, online and offline.

UNESCO has launched social media innovation, MIL CLICKS (Media and Information Literacy: Critical-thinking, Creativity, Literacy, Intercultural, Citizenship, Knowledge and Sustainability), to expose young girls and boys to MIL competencies in their day-to-day use of the internet. This includes being able to identify and counter stereotypes and misogyny online. MIL CLICKS has a followership of over 3,000. 46% are women with a majority of young girls. 65% of people engaged (i.e. reading, liking, watching, sharing etc.) in MIL CLICKS are women.

UNESCO together with Punjabi University and Centre for MIL in Kenya (CMIL-Kenya) trained youth leaders and youth organisations in India and Kenya to integrate MIL in their policies and practices. 27 youth-led organisations and 55 (20 were women) youth leaders in India and Kenya received training to integrate MIL in their operations.



Action

Through its YouthMobile initiative, **UNESCO** aims to encourage young people to fully participate in the digital world by developing their skills and confidence to develop mobile applications that address local issues of sustainable development. It pays particular attention to the gender gap in the access to the Internet and ICTs by developing specific projects in partnership with existing local or global relevant initiatives.



Update

Projects have been developed in more than 20 countries worldwide, with the total number of beneficiaries estimated at more than 5,000, with a strong focus on Africa (South Sudan, Kenya, Senegal, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Rwanda). Through partnership with private, public and NGO sectors, high-impact international initiatives such as the Africa Code Week were organised. Many of the implemented projects (particularly in Senegal) directly targeted young women, in terms of both capacity building and networking, including through celebration of the "Girls in ICT" day. International coverage of this work has been ensured through TV features on Al Jazeera, BBC, CCTV, and France 24, and a "women in tech" community has been established in Senegal to promote mentorship and dialogue between private and public sectors and tech entrepreneurs at a national level. In 2017, YouthMobile training workshops were organised in Tajikistan and Qatar, introducing young girls and women to Mobile Apps development. The initiative supported Germany's BMZ project #eSkills4Girls, gathering Rwanda women tech leaders from 30 African countries, and participating in the development of the #eSkills4Girls web platform. The YouthMobile initiative work to advance women in ICTs was highlighted at the 61st Commission on the Status of Women in New York, and at the New African Woman Forum in Dakar.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:

- **Ericsson** is continuing its work on improving access to secondary education for girls through its program Connect to Learn. Ericsson will continue to develop the cloud-based educational platform that provides access to quality education, and to work with UNESCO and other partners to deploy the platform. To date, 80,000 students around the globe are benefiting and in 2018, Ericsson will publish a report highlighting learnings, best practice and findings based on three years of

implementation in Myanmar, which is the largest deployment to date.

- **Nokia** is taking action to advance the gender case, and contribute to reducing the gender gap in ICT. This includes supporting NGOs that work on empowering women and girls with the skills to participate and join the connected world, and those programs which attract women and develop their careers in the ICT business and STEM.

Progress update: Nokia and greenlight for girls (g4g) are working together globally to help inspire young women in science. They have launched at Nokia headquarters in Espoo, Finland as well as in Tampere, Oulu and Paris. These

activities have included 600 girls. The aim is to engage participants aged 11 – 15 from local schools, ideally with at least 20% coming from less advantaged communities, with hands-on Science & Technology workshops and activities run by role-model professionals.

Nokia is also taking actions to increase the proportion of women in leadership roles by 2020, and to increase the share of women in the total employee population, within the same timeframe. Nokia established the Gender Balance Steering Board to drive a holistic action plan for gender diversity at Nokia, starting with awareness. Since the beginning of 2016, over 3,700 leaders and managers were trained on gender balance topics. A StrongHer employee network to promote and enable gender balance has 2,300+ members in 60+ countries worldwide on the five continents, including 23% men.

- **UN Women** commits to supporting specific initiatives at the country level that focus on closing the gender digital divide. This includes leveraging technology to address digital literacy and skills through UN Women’s digital platforms to leave no one behind.

Progress update: UN Women in partnership with Mozilla Foundation established digital literacy clubs for women and girls, training them in participatory digital literacy skills. This project targeted women and girls in both formal and informal settings including in slums in Kenya, and South Africa to support them in building digital literacy skills in their own communities and ecosystems.

UN Women prototyped and piloted a digital enterprise platform (Buy From Women) for women farmers in Rwanda to connect them to markets, information and finance. UN Women is also prototyping and piloting dedicated platforms for second chance education, and vocational, and digital skills through its virtual skills school.

3d: Relevant content, applications, and services

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

UNESCO agreed to continue raising awareness of the potential benefits and uses of the Internet for women through ongoing media outreach. Examples include UNESCO's capacity building workshops for media managers and practitioners', its work helping to provide local radio stations' audiences with quality programming on issues of local concern, as well as its work on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Policies and Strategies Guidelines and on Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM).

VEON agreed to increase the availability of relevant apps by making its pregnancy app available in more of its markets, and continuing the development of its mobile literacy programme in Pakistan by collaborating with more development partners in the country.



Update

Building on the success of its first phase, the UNESCO project "Empowering local radio with ICTs" continued to strengthen the capacities of the 27 new radio stations from six countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda), during its second phase. Thanks to the use of ICTs, including the use of Internet, in the stations' operations, community members, including women, are now able to easily share their concerns, ask questions, and address local authorities, through social media and applications, such as Whatsapp.

At least 234 women were trained as local correspondents for the radio stations. They are now able to investigate issues, conduct interviews, research the Internet for sources, edit their production, and send stories ready to be broadcast live directly to the stations. As a result, there has been a great increase of women's voices heard in the radio stations' programming as sources, interviewees, public call-ins, experts and testimonies. Additionally, radio stations have produced more stories that challenged or neutralised gender-based stereotypes as they were sensitised to issues regarding gender-equality and fair representation of women in and by the media. Larger broadcasters have also been trained on gender equality, with workshops based upon the GSIM held with 25 French-speaking African national broadcasters in 2016 and 20 Arabic-speaking broadcasters in July 2017.

Jazz Smart Schools Programme, which will be implemented in the Islamabad Capital Territory across 75 public sector female high schools in collaboration with CADD and the Knowledge Platform, is geared towards improving the quality of education in public schools by introducing technology-driven blended learning solutions.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:

- The **United Nations Foundation's Digital Impact Alliance (DIAL)** has committed to conduct research into access to low-cost or free relevant content for women.

**Work
together and
share good
practice and
lessons**

4

Update on existing proposed actions:

The following progress has been reported by Working Group members against actions being taken in this area:



Action

APC is co-ordinating the IGF Gender Best Practice Forum's (BPF) work on integrating a gender perspective into multi-stakeholder discussions on access.

The **ITU** will undertake further research and collect evidence on the gender and ICTs and SDG5-relevant references in the ICTs and Broadband policies worldwide.

UNESCO notes that various of its initiatives continue to foster global coordination and collaboration in areas of research, advocacy and visibility. Examples include the Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG) and the UNITWIN Network for Gender, Media and ICTs. UNESCO also agrees to emphasize inter-sectoral and inter-agency work in line with UNESCO's priorities; particularly in implementing gender equality, media and information literacy, and youth-related activities.



Update

The BPF is gathering case studies that focuses on the access needs and considerations for five groups of women (refugee, rural, young, women with disabilities and indigenous), which will be shared as an iterative report and a workshop at the global IGF.

The research is ongoing and based on the preliminary results, the pilot research of a selected sample (69 countries) proved that there is a positive change in ICT and broadband policy landscape in terms of gender goals inclusion over last few years. In 2016, some 46 % countries included some gender component in their policy documents. The main context of gender references is related to access, use and ICT skills building.

These coordinative mechanisms and groups have continued to promote positive steps in the area of gender and media. The long-term sustainability of GAMAG is being assured through support in becoming an autonomous entity with a Constitution and Code of Ethics, and membership numbers continue to expand. The UNITWIN Network for Gender, Media and ICTs met in Barcelona in April 2017 to plan its research agenda and develop concrete research proposals that will assist interregional coordination on the issue. The members will also be implementing the Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media within their own curricula. Inter-agency collaboration with UN Women is ongoing, including the launch of a self-assessment tool for media organisations, and the co-publishing of a landmark publication on Violence against Women and Girls. The annual Women Make the News initiative continues to provide a catalyst for cooperation and knowledge-sharing on factors relevant to achieving gender equality in media and information environments. All of these collaborative efforts will be showcased as part of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2018, for which the review theme addressed gender, media and ICTs.

New commitments to action:

New commitments to take forward action were also made by Working Group members:

- **UN Women** commits to continued collaboration with civil society, the private sector and partners to raise awareness, advocate for action, and assess progress towards closing the gender digital divide.

Progress update: UN Women in partnership with the ITU organised and presented the 2016 GEM-TECH award. This global award raised awareness about the importance of closing the gender digital divide by recognising

organisations as well as individuals making outstanding contributions in this area, and empowering women and girls through ICTs.

- Through a grant from the Swedish Government, the **World Bank Group** is developing a toolkit on best practices to mainstream Gender in ICT project design. The toolkit will look at best practices, and policies to be embedded in future WBG projects so the resulting ICT investments contribute to women's abilities to use technology for socio-economic empowerment. The toolkit, expected to be published in early 2017, is targeting World Bank Group's task teams.

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