

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
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Geneva, 14-18 May 2018**

Priority theme 2 on Building digital competencies to benefit from existing and emerging technologies with a special focus on gender and youth dimensions.

Statement submitted by

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Tuesday, 15 May 2018

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Item 3: Panel discussion on Priority theme 2: Building digital competencies to benefit from existing and emerging technologies with a special focus on gender and youth dimensions

ITU formal Contribution to ITEM 3

- Gender equality is one of ITU's priorities. Along with infrastructure, investment and innovation, inclusivity is one of the four pillars (the "4 I's") at the heart of ITU's strategy to bridge the digital divide and harness the power of ICTs towards the achievement of the SDGs and WSIS Action Lines. We are involved in a number of initiatives like EQUALS, a ground-breaking global network to improve women's access to technology, build relevant digital and STEM skills, and promote female leadership in the tech sector- and in so doing, better the lives of millions worldwide.
<https://www.itu.int/en/equals/pages/default.aspx>
- We thank Germany for expressing their support to the EQUALS partnership in the morning WSIS Session.
- In addition, International Girls in ICT Day, an initiative backed by all ITU Member States aims to create a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in the growing field of ICTs, enabling both girls and technology companies to reap the benefits of greater female participation in the ICT sector. International Girls in ICT Day is celebrated every year on the fourth Thursday of April and this year was celebrated on the 26 April 2018. To date, 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.
<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/Portal.aspx>
- With reference to the youth component, we would like to mention the Digital Skills for Decent Jobs Campaign, an initiative led by ITU and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to equip 5 million young women and men with job-ready digital skills by 2030 in support of the SDGs. This campaign is part of the first-ever, comprehensive United Nations system-wide effort for the promotion of youth employment worldwide.
- A Digital Skills Toolkit is designed both to support the Decent Jobs for Youth community and ITU members in building their own national digital skills strategies. It can be used either to develop a comprehensive national digital skills strategy or it can be used to focus in on specific priorities, such as digital skills for job creation strategies <https://www.itu.int/pub/D-PHCB>