Outcome Document

GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN OUR DIGITAL FUTURE:
A NEW GENDER DEAL FOR WSIS+20

Conveners: World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) &
Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG)

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https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/301

We advocate for a New Gender Deal for WSIS+20:

a. Calling on all relevant actors – the UN system, governments, media and digital
communication companies, and civil society movements - to support the inclusion of a
new gender deal in the digital ecosystem.

b. Interrogating existing norms and reinforces mechanisms to strengthen gender equality
within the technology sector.

c. Implementing actions designed to respond to urgent identified needs, such as:
   i. ensuring universal and safe access of women and girls to the digital ecosystem;
   ii. promoting regulatory and co-regulatory mechanisms at national, regional and
international levels;
   iii. implementing frameworks for algorithmic transparency, incorporating methods
such as third-party audits;
   iv. promoting digital literacy programmes with a gender component;
   v. encouraging efforts by women’s organisations in using digital media and online
spaces to amplify their stories;
   vi. ensuring safe conditions for women journalists and human rights defenders; and,
   vii. tackling online and offline gender-based harassment and violence against women
and girls, gagging clauses and consequent immunity from the law.

d. Urging the international community to recognise the centrality of these issues in achieving
gender equality in the 21st century.
We have recognized the following challenges:

- Marginalisation of women’s rights activists from digital governance spaces
- Solutions tend to be contextual at best while they should be systemic as well. For example, rather than address TFGBV against an individual, address the chilling effects.
- There seems to be no ability to act on digital injustices.
- There is as well no ability to scrutinize data agreements, particularly so in global majority nations that are recipients of what comes from the global north.
- Policy experiments happen without regard for national laws.
- There is a lack of recognition of misogyny in all its forms and intensity.

Our recommendations for the revision of the Global Digital Compact (GDC) are as follows:

- The GDC should include provisions that recognize and address misogyny
- It should include a standalone specific gender goal to prioritize women's and girls’ rights to live free from violence and benefit equally from technology.
- It should provide for the establishment of a gender equality committee to integrate gender perspectives into digital policies, consisting of experts in gender, digital rights, cybersecurity, and representatives from women's organizations and survivors of digital violence.
- It should require mandatory gender impact assessments for all digital policies and initiatives to anticipate and mitigate negative impacts on women and girls.
- It should require gender parity in decision-making bodies related to digital technologies to ensure diverse perspectives and equitable outcomes.
- It should require comprehensive online safety standards that prioritize the safety of women and girls, including robust mechanisms for reporting and swiftly removing harmful content in order to transform norms.
- It should require international collaboration and data sharing given that TFGBV transcends borders:
  - It should require provision of safety services, psychological support and legal aid to TFGBV survivors.
  - It should ensure investment in education and awareness campaigns that promote digital literacy, respectful online behaviour, respect and consent.
- It should hold rights bearers accountable for violating human rights in ALL jurisdictions.
We recommend that the following thematic issues be included in the WSIS Forum 2025:

- Building an Information Society founded on feminist principles of equity, equality, inclusion, fairness and justice.
- Tackling online misogyny and tech-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV)
- Transforming gender norms in the online space to enable respect for women’s digital rights, including the right to participate in all aspects of tech ecosystems.