

**Interactive expert panel on the priority theme**

**Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls**

**Tuesday, 14 March 2023, 3.00 pm – 6.00 pm**

***Rationale***

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will convene an Interactive Expert Panel on the priority theme of its sixty-seventh session, “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”. Technology and innovation have the potential to contribute greatly to improvements in the well-being, education, health and livelihoods of women and girls, providing opportunities for greater access to information, education and skills and opens possibilities for increased employment and business opportunities. They allow for digital tools and services that improve access to health, legal and financial services, and allow traders to access global markets for their products. Digital access also helps raise women’s and girls’ awareness of their rights, increase their civic engagement and expression of ideas and opinions, their participation in creative and cultural practices, leisure and in connecting with peers. However, while the digital revolution brings immense potential to improve social and economic outcomes for women, it also poses the risk of perpetuating existing patterns of gender inequality.

Digitalization has often been portrayed as an equalizer of opportunities; however, it has continued a pattern of gender-blind innovation already seen in the “analog world”, which fails to take into account gender, age, race, locality, disability, income or the sociotechnical infrastructure of low-income countries when developing technological solutions. As a result, the lack of clear and deliberate intention to develop gender-transformative technology that responds to the needs of women and girls and addresses the underlying structural problems driving gender biases creates vicious circles, where inequalities are amplified and perpetuated through digital tools. The differences observed within and across countries require adopting an intersectional lens to examine the impact on different groups of women, including the unemployed, those with low literacy or low incomes, women living in rural or remote areas, migrants, women with disabilities and women above 55 years of age.

***Objective***

The Interactive Expert Panel is an opportunity for the exchange of views, experiences, and new insights on the latest available research and good policies and practices relevant to integrating an intersectional approach in all areas within the technological sector. The panel will bring together

diverse experts who will make short presentations followed by a moderated discussion and questions and comments from the floor.

***Format and participation***

The interactive expert panel will be moderated by a Vice-Chair of the CSW Bureau. It will start with short presentations (6-8 minutes) by six experts, followed by comments, questions and contributions from Member States and other stakeholders addressed to the panelists. Member States will participate in the dialogue on a voluntary basis. No speakers' list will be kept. UN-Women will facilitate an online application process for representatives of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. The list of NGOs proposed for participation in the event will be distributed to Member States through respective Bureau members.

***Proposed topics for discussion***

- Increasing access to and use of digital technologies and strategic financial levers for women and girls
- Enhancing women's and girls' digital skills and competencies towards their economic empowerment in a changing world of work
- Embedding gender perspectives across innovation and technology design, development and deployment
- Improving transparency and accountability in the provision and use of digital technologies and in the governance and protection of data
- Promoting civic space and preventing and eliminating technology-facilitated gender-based violence

***Outcome***

The outcome of the meeting will be in the form of a summary of the Chair of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau.