6-17 March 2023 INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE
CSW67 EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN Progress toward gender equality

Interactive dialogue with youth representatives 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

Monday, 13 March 2023, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Rationale

Digitalization is one of two seismic shifts that will shape the twenty-first century along with climate change. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has magnified how the gender divide in digitalization, layered over structural and systemic barriers and risks to gender equality, is primarily affecting women and girls.

Since 2020, policies and institutions both at national and international level, have been slow-moving in regulating digital innovations and anticipating the impacts of technological evolution. Most existing frameworks adopt an ad-hoc approach that are not always grounded in human rights law. The digital divide, the lack of women in the technology industry, and the need for policies and regulations that promote gender diversity and inclusion in the technology sector are needed to advance women's leadership in the digital revolution.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action mainly frames technology issues from an education and employment perspective, emphasizing access and gender parity. The twenty-fifth anniversary review of its implementation (E/CN.6/2020/3) recognizes these gaps and calls upon States to set priorities for and fund technological development and innovation in a way that advances gender equality, promotes inclusion and respect, enables collective action, and contributes to a sustainable environment. This includes implementing laws, policies, and regulations to combat the risks inherent in technology, that women and girls face, including online violence, abuse and harassment, threats to privacy rights and gender bias in artificial intelligence and robotics.

Objective

The interactive dialogue will provide youth representatives from Member States an opportunity to engage in dialogue and discussion with a broad range of stakeholders that will include Government representatives, Parliamentarians, national human rights institutions, where they exist, as well as NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, including women's and youth organizations, representatives of relevant United Nations bodies and the media. The interactive dialogue will be open to all Member States and observers.

The dialogue will bring together stakeholders including government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations, youth and the United Nations system. The interactive dialogue will start with presentations by a small number of invited participants, followed by good practice examples and other contributions from Member States and non-governmental organizations.

Format and participation
Consideration of the emerging issue will be through an interactive dialogue. A CSW Vice-Chair will chair and moderate the meeting. The topics will be introduced by invited speakers. 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.

Guiding questions
Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to consider the following questions:

- What are examples of policies, programmes, and budget allocations that Member States have implemented to expand the availability and affordability of technology in their countries to address the gendered digital divide? What lessons can be learned from these and how can they be replicated?
- What investments can be recommended to Governments to ensure young women and girls are not left behind in the digital transformation, including in digital literacy and its learning environment, digital safety, blended and hybrid education, digital citizenship skills and accountability?
- What are good practices to empower young men and boys to become allies and change agents for gender equality, both in digital spaces and on innovation teams?
- What measures should be in place to address and track the gendered risks of emerging technologies, including privacy and data protection, and to improve the transparency and accountability systems that ensure necessary safeguards are in place to protect young women and girls from discrimination and 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.