



Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)



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Geneva, 5 February 2021

-Administration of ITU Members States
-Regulators
-ITU-D Sector Members and Academia

Subject: Network of Women for WTDC21 (NoW4WTDC21) initiative

Dear Sir/Madam,

I take this opportunity to inform you that we have launched the [Network of Women](#) (NoW) for [WTDC21](#) (NoW4WTDC21). This took place during the Regional Preparatory Meeting for WTDC-21 for Europe, held on 18-19 January 2021.

The overarching aim of the NoW4WTDC21 initiative is to increase the number of women participating in ITU-D meetings as well as taking up leadership roles, such as committee chairs, working group chairs and other management roles related to processes in preparation of the WTDC itself, and beyond. It will be a platform to understand the challenges that women delegates face and explore possible avenues to overcome them. It will also allow sharing important lessons in a supportive community through mentorship and networking opportunities.

I encourage your Administration to consider the objectives of NoW4WTDC21 by nominating women as delegates and to leadership roles in your delegations, as well as to have leadership responsibilities within the ITU-D structure and programme cycle, including but not limited to chairs and vice-chairs of Study Groups, rapporteurs of Study Group questions and regional spokespersons.

NOW4WRCs have already taken root in ITU's Radiocommunication Sector. NOW4WRC19 kicked off in 2016 for the 2019 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19) and progressed into an expanded NOW4WRC23 initiative as part of the WRC-23 preparatory process globally as well as in the regions. Led by NOW4WRC19 participants, WRC-19 adopted a Gender Declaration that promotes gender equality, equity, and parity in the work of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector. The Declaration called upon ITU Member States and ITU-R Sector Members to take proven measures to address these disparities and to increase globally the number of women entering STEM fields, particularly those related to the ICT. It is available for reference at the link: [Gender Declaration at WRC-19](#).

While the global COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc among all families, communities and countries, it has also disproportionately affected women and girls. However, at the ITU, there is an upside to the pandemic. We have seen a high increase in the number of delegates participating in our meetings, which are all occurring virtually at the moment. These virtual meetings also provide Administrations and Sector Members an opportunity to increase the participation of women who normally would not be able to travel

to in-person ITU meetings. We remain available to provide required support and guidance to help ensure the active and meaningful participation of women in all ITU-D activities.

For more information, please contact Ms. Rachel Alwala, Coordination Officer, at rachel.alwala@itu.int.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director