



**Thematic Dialogue  
Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality  
Challenges and Opportunities Evolving from the COVID-19**

**Concept Note**

**March 29th, 2021**

**13:00 – 14:30 (GMT-6 Mexico City Time)**

**22:00 – 23:30 (GMT-6 Mexico City Time)**

**Background**

The digital revolution is one of the major shifts that have taken place since the Beijing Conference, having profound effects on gender equality and women's rights in all spheres of life. 25 years ago, only 4% of the world's population could benefit from the Internet. Nowadays, approximately half of the world's population is connected and a whole generation has grown in the digital age, in close contact with the Internet through computers, tablets or mobile phones.

In 2020, the [UN Secretary General](#) listed technology and innovation as one of the five areas in which achieving gender equality can transform our world. By singling out innovation and technology as one of the six Action Coalition themes, the Generation Equality Forum's conveners are urging the world to focus on harnessing technology to advance gender equality. They are also recognizing the catalyzing role technology can have in helping implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and accelerating progress.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an extreme stimulator towards the rapid digitalization of work, school and social life and has made digital tools a lifeline for millions of people. However, the pandemic has also exposed the digital divide and shown that the population excluded from the digital world – which include a majority of women and girls – are the most at risk of being left behind by this crisis.

The year 2021 and the Generation Equality Forum will represent a critical moment for engagement, the opportunity to hear the voices of a new generation of gender equality advocates and to be united towards bold, collective solutions that spark a world lean towards a gender-diverse digital evolution.

## General objective

The main objective of this event is to emphasize an **action-oriented vision** on how to drive a more equal and inclusive digital transformation and create a space where participants from across the world can share their approaches, lessons learned, and experiences from before and during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The outcome will be a summary record with a set of concrete action-oriented recommendations to inform the GEF Paris preparations.

## Participants

- Government representatives, CSOs / youth, private sector (representing North and South for each category), academia, international organization.
  - Segment one: Speakers focusing on Asia-Pacific, MENA, Africa
  - Segment two: Speakers focusing on Europe, LAC, North America

## Format

The virtual event will take the form of an interactive moderated intergenerational dialogue and will include active engagement of participants through the chat and the Q&A.

Suggested time	Proposed activity
13:00 – 13:05 22:00 – 22:05	Welcome and panelist's presentation. <b>Opening by inspirational speaker:</b> How COVID-19 can be a catalyst for a gender-diverse digital reset
13:05 – 13:15 22:05 - 22:15	Moderated discussion around 3 guiding questions. Participants have between 3-4 minutes to answer each question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we remove the multi-dimensional barriers preventing women and girls to safely and meaningfully access, use, lead, and design technology and innovation?</li> <li>• How do we build new pathways for women and girls' participation and leadership in technology and innovation?</li> <li>• How can we support the development of technologies through processes that improve transparency and accountability and transform digital societies?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we advance feminist frameworks for T&amp;I and multi-stakeholder cooperation to widen innovation ecosystems?</li> </ul>
13:25 – 14:45 22:55 – 23:25	Q&A session. Moderator reads selected questions from the chat.
14:25 – 14:30 23:25 – 23:30	Closing: moderator thanks participants and audience.