



**WSIS  
FORUM 2026**

**6-10 July 2026  
Geneva, Switzerland**

## **Session Outcome Document**

### **Enhancing CEDAW Accountability through AI Governance and Tech Value Chains**

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) – Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls (WGDAGW) - UN Human Rights (including the B-tech Project) UN Women - International Telecommunication Union

**7 July 2026 - 16:00–16:45**

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/215>

#### **Key Issues discussed:**

- Structural exclusion of women from the AI ecosystems, women remain significantly underrepresented in AI research, development, leadership and decision-making, limiting their ability to shape the technologies that increasingly affect their lives and rights and leading to biased technologies and unequal outcomes.
- Gender-based violence online, including algorithmic bias, online misogyny, harassment, and abuse targeting women and girls.
- Persistent digital gender divide caused by discriminatory access to digital technologies, connectivity and digital skills for women and girls, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, continues to restrict opportunities for equal participation and economic empowerment.
- Strong relevance of CEDAW and its General Recommendations, including General Recommendation No. 40, as a human rights framework for AI governance and digital transformation.
- Importance of applying the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) as the authoritative framework clarifying States' duty to protect, companies' responsibility to respect human rights, and access to remedy in AI governance and technology value chains.
- Importance of collaboration among States, international organizations, academia, civil society and the private sector to advance women's leadership, participation and

inclusion in the digital economy.

**Key Outcomes of the session:**

- **Key insights and findings**
  - Strong emphasis on ensuring the meaningful participation of women as leaders, decision-makers and "architects" of AI systems, rather than passive beneficiaries of technological change. Need for a shift from viewing women primarily as individuals needing protection to recognizing them as producers, innovators and decision-makers shaping the digital future.
  - AI is not gender-neutral: existing gender inequalities are being replicated and, in some cases, amplified through AI systems and commercial AI systems are designed primarily to maximize profit rather than protect human rights.
  - Exclusion of marginalized groups from training data risks reinforcing inequalities through increasingly recursive AI systems.
  - Operationalizing CEDAW in the digital age requires action by both States and technology companies, including embedding gender-responsive human rights due diligence across the design, development, deployment and governance of AI systems.
  - Gender-related harms arise across technology value chains and require ongoing identification, prevention, mitigation, tracking and transparent reporting by companies, consistent with the UNGPs.
  
- **Announcements, launches, or new initiatives presented during the session**
  - OHCHR's B-Tech Project to translate the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights into practical guidance for companies, States, investors and civil society actors working on digital technologies and AI. The Project has a gender workstream.
  - Potential of CEDAW compliant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure and enforce gender parity across technology value chains
  - UN Women's ACT AI School, supporting civil society and women's rights organizations on online safety and digital participation.
  - ITU initiatives to advance women's participation in technology, including Girls in ICT Day and leadership networks.

- Microsoft's AI skills and inclusion initiatives, including Microsoft Elevate and training programmes implemented with the ILO.
- **Agreements, collaborations, or commitments made**
  - Reinforcement of the need for coordinated action and increased collaboration across public and private sectors.
  - Recommendation to increase investment in research and evidence generation on the long-term gendered impacts of AI systems.

**Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Actions:**

- Require gender-responsive and intersectional human rights due diligence, impact assessments throughout the values chains and across the full lifecycle of AI systems, including meaningful stakeholder engagement, transparency and access to remedy.
- Ensure the equal participation and leadership of women, including through measurable commitments, in AI development, governance, standards-setting bodies, regulatory institutions and technology companies.
- Ensure legally binding standards and accountability mechanisms for digital platforms.
- Promote coordinated regulatory frameworks that address algorithmic discrimination, technology-facilitated gender-based violence and other digital harms affecting women and girls.
- Integrate CEDAW standards and gender-responsive human rights due diligence into AI regulation, public procurement and other State governance measures.
- Establish measurable accountability frameworks, including CEDAW-compliant KPIs, to assess corporate performance on gender equality, due diligence and remedy.