

CSW67 Recommendation Briefs
NGO CSW Global Advocacy & Research Group

5. Youth & Adolescents

*Engage with girls and young women in the formulation, design and development of adequately financed policies and programs that **prioritize digital literacy skills, online safety, and STEM education** for girls, young women and marginalized groups. Address **unequal gender norms, policies and laws and lack of infrastructure that hinder girls' access, engagement and safety with digital tools, ICT and STEM education.***

Relevant UN Precedent Language

The systematic marginalization of girls (< 18 years) and young women (over 18-25 years) (and the shocking forms of violence marking that marginalization) in societies globally is the primary barrier hindering their access to digital tools, ICT, and STEM education. To comprehensively address these issues, we must first prioritize the [human security](#) of girls, in addition to the protections outlined in the [CRC](#), and young women as “human beings born free and equal in dignity and human rights (*Article 1*)” ([UDHR](#)) regardless of the range of identities they may (be forced) assume, including “race, color, sex language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status (*Article 2*).” Girls and young women should also realize the full range of social, economic, and cultural rights outlined in the [ICESCR](#), including “adequate food, clothing, and housing” (*Article 11*) and “highest standard of physical and mental health” (*Article 12*); and the full range of civil and political rights outlined in the [ICCPR](#), such as the “right to life” (*Article 6*) and freedom from “arbitrary arrest or detention” (*Article 9.1*).

Girls and young women globally are also subject to a distinct range of shocking, inter-connected violence during the entire course of their life cycles because of social perceptions of their gender. This range of GBV includes: [rape and sexual torture](#); [forced pregnancy](#) (a crime against humanity in *Article 7*, Rome Statute of the ICC); forced abortions; early and forced marriages (ICCPR, *Article 23:1-4*); and intentional malnutrition; and obstacles to education due to cultural views of sexual purity and/or lack of menstrual products and facilities in school systems. Violence against girls and women, the [SRVAWG observed](#), is “so pervasive and widespread that every woman I know has a built-in compass to try to assess and recognize the risks, and navigate violent spaces that she inhabits on a daily basis with the least amount of harm – still often failing at reducing the harm or staying alive.” The [WHO](#) reported that 30% of women globally are subject “to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime” and that almost 30% of girls and women (aged 15-49 years) experienced “some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner.” GBV impacting girls and young women in communities marginalized within states, such as tribal and other [indigenous](#) and Outcaste communities, is compounded by their communities’ inability to access their full human rights. Consequently, the ability of young women and girls to access technology and STEM education depends on the state’s attention to the unequal gender norms that lead to GBV as supported by policies, laws, infrastructure, and belief systems/cultures guiding societies everywhere.

Human right to Education critical to tech access: mindful of equity that addresses their rights as women and girls. In particular, we draw attention to their full and free access to education, as outlined in *Articles 13 and 14* of the ICESCR.

CRC 6.2 states “Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child,” which includes their education.

CRC article 17 states “Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.” This includes textbooks and catering material to the language of children in minority and indigenous groups.

Generation Equality Tech and Innovation Action Coalition: Bridge the Gender Gap in Digital Access and Competencies.

ACTION: By 2026, reduce by half the gender digital divide across generations by accelerating meaningful access to digital technologies and universal digital literacy.

TACTICS: Service Delivery: Improve accessibility of digital services and learning tools

Financing: Advance innovative financing for 21st century skills

Norms: Address stereotypes

Transforming Education Action Plans:

Beijing Platform for Action (Section L2):

- (276 C) -Develop and adopt curricula, teaching materials and textbooks to improve the self-image, lives and work opportunities of girls, particularly in areas where women have traditionally been underrepresented, such as mathematics, science and technology.

CSW61 Agreed Conclusions on the Changing world of work:

- **Strengthening education, training and skills development.** Paragraphs K-N reference digital education for girls and young women in various diversities.
- **Paragraph SS:** Strengthen science and technology education policies and curricula, so that they are relevant to the needs of and benefit women and girls,...

CSW 62 Agreed Conclusions on Rural Women and Girls:

Recommendation: Implement economic and social policies for the empowerment of all rural women and girls

PP. “The Commission reaffirms the right to education and stresses that equal access to high quality and inclusive education contributes to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas. It notes with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and completion of secondary and tertiary education and emphasizes the importance of technical and vocational training and lifelong learning opportunities. It recognizes that new technologies are, inter alia, changing the

structure of labor markets and that they provide new and different employment opportunities that require skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology, and in this regard, emphasizes the importance of all rural women and girls having the opportunity to acquire such skills.”

PPP. “Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote rural women’s and girls’ participation in and access to media and information and communications technology, including by increasing their digital literacy and access to information;”

Data and Statistics

- According to the [International Telecommunication Union](#) (ITU), in 2020, 71% of the world's youth (aged between 15 and 24 years) were using the Internet, compared with 57% of other age groups. In addition, [UNICEF](#) mentions that young people's use of the Internet is mostly for entertainment and for communication with family and friends.
- According to [ITU](#), youth from Africa (40%), Asia Pacific (72%) and the Arab States (73%) use the Internet the least, while youth from the Americas (92%) and Europe (97%) use the Internet the most.
- According to [UNESCO](#), only 35% of women who choose a university career decide to study STEM-related subjects. This gap responds, for the most part, to gender stereotypes taught from an early age and the lack of opportunities that girls and women face.

Good Practice/s

The Latin American and Caribbean Network of Youth for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (RedLAC) conducted a study entitled "[Youth in the digital space](#)" with the aim of identifying the contexts in which young people interact with the Internet.