Unlocking digital opportunities for Ukrainian women and girls for the gender responsive recovery and sustainable development

Regional Consultation for 67th session of Commission on the Status of Women
Concept Note

Date: 22 February 2023
Time: 10:00-16:00 Kyiv time
Venue: Fairmont Grant Hotel - 1 Naberezho-Khreshchatytska Street, Kyiv 04070, Ukraine
Connection arrangements for online participants:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81237672954?pwd=a0lELzFGWlZnTCttNEhpSVE5bkxYUT09
Meeting ID: 812 3767 2954 Passcode: 020847
Language: Ukrainian and English with simultaneous translation

I. Background
The Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, which has been ongoing since 2014, and the full-scale armed invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on February 24, 2022, is a grave violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the UN Charter (UN General Assembly Resolution 68/262 of March 27, 2014 "Territorial integrity of Ukraine"; Resolutions of the 11th Extraordinary Special Session of the UN General Assembly 11/1 dated March 2, 2022 "Aggression against Ukraine", 11/2 dated March 24, 2022 "Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine", 11/4 dated October 12, 2022"Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending principles of the UN Charter" and 11/5 of November 14, 2022 "Furtherance of remedy and reparation for aggression against Ukraine").

International humanitarian law and international human rights law violations by the Russian Federation are committed with little to no accountability. It also caused the largest displacement of people in Europe since 1945 and the greatest modern challenge to global peace and security. Women are most refugees¹ and displaced from Ukraine and they face significantly increased safety and protection risks, including multiple forms of gender-based violence (GBV), particularly conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), domestic violence and human trafficking. They also face a myriad of other challenges to access housing, food, sexual and reproductive health, and employment. 61% of registered unemployed are women in Ukraine.

According to the results of the visit of Pramila Pattern, the UN Under-Secretary-General Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict (May 3-6, 2022) the Framework Agreement on Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the UN system was signed. Within the framework of such activities, an Implementation plan by the participation of authorities, international and national organizations was developed, this plan was approved at the meeting of the Commission on Gender Equality chaired by Olha Stefanishyna, the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine.

¹ UNHCR data as of 10 January 2023 - 7,968,510 persons as refugees in total and 4,928,311 as refugees from Ukraine registered for Temporary Protection or similar national protection schemes in Europe.
Despite the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the ensuring of gender equality remains one of the priorities of the Government of Ukraine. The steps taken by the Government over the past year to achieve the gender equality are the following:

- Ratification of the Istanbul Convention;
- Adoption of the State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men until 2030;
- NAP 1325 was updated in accordance with the challenges and threats that arose as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine;
- Adoption of the State Strategy for Ensuring Gender Equality in Education by 2030.

All this is important in the light of the Euro-Atlantic course of Ukraine and the acquisition of the status of a member of the European Union. Efficient access to ICT and digital literacy and skills have become critical to enable equal access to administrative services, education, and distance learning, support economic activities and entrepreneurship development. Access provides Ukrainian women and girls inside and outside of the country the necessary resources and assets to start and develop their businesses and be formally employed. Targeted support is therefore needed to ensure that national digitalization/IT ecosystems and humanitarian assistance address gender equality needs and priorities and support women and girls as actors for change in the digitalization revolution.

**Gender equality in digitalization profile in Ukraine**

The Ministry of Digital Transformation leads the Government of Ukraine’s policy and actions to develop the digital economy and facilitate the ITC sector’s development as a key SDG accelerator. Prior to Russia’s invasion, the Ukraine Government developed and introduced a comprehensive set of digitalized services to reach the following strategic targets by 2024: **100% of the public services delivered online**; **6 million citizens participate in the digital skills development programmes**; **IT represents 10% share of the country’s GDP**; and **95% of the transport infrastructure and settlements are covered with high-speed internet**.

Ukraine’s National Recovery Council is developing an action plan on digitalization with a focus on infrastructure, public services, and digital economy. It is important to modernize further ICT infrastructure and ecosystem from gender and human centered approach to ensure nobody is left behind and digitalization serves as key recovery force. The Ukraine Government is an active member of the international/intergovernmental processes and platforms to advance progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment and a commitment maker under the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality in 2021. The government’s commitments are focused on equal opportunities for distance education in STEM disciplines (All-Ukrainian online school) and attracting girls to STEM education.

**Purpose and objectives of the consultation:**

The consultation is organized in the context of the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2023 which focuses on “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”.

The planned preparatory consultation will highlight the gendered implications of war on women and girls both inside and outside of Ukraine, as well as their role in leading and driving change. It will explore how technology and digital solutions are playing an integral role in addressing the socio-economic needs of war-effected women across the region, and how technologies and digital economy could efficiently facilitate
gender responsive recovery and development, and reduce existing gender digital gaps. The discussion will focus on the following:

- Innovative solutions and measures underway to support women entrepreneurs (inside and outside Ukraine) with necessary skills and access to the most recent technologies and digital platforms as well as financial resources to sustain and scale up their businesses;
- Digitalization governance and gender responsive economic recovery – skills, technologies for equal access to decent work in Ukraine and refugee hosting countries;
- How international development assistance and humanitarian response and recovery can help address gender digital gaps in employment and economic participation;
- Addressing online and ICT-facilitated gender-based violence and discrimination and protecting the rights of women and girls online.

The specific objectives are to 1) discuss the main directions and achievements on the field of gender equality; 2) present and discuss how digitalization and the development of new technologies can provide effective solutions to address the priorities and needs of women and girls in Ukraine and in hosting countries; 3) share best practices and examples of empowering women in the digital era and highlighting the unique contribution women have made for enhanced innovation and productivity by bringing more diverse technological breadth to address socio-economic issues Ukraine; and 4) agree on the joint recommendations on gender responsive digitalization governance, suggested pledges and commitments of development partners to overcome gender digital gaps in all spheres of social life and with the help of digitalization for recovery and post-war development. These will serve the Government of Ukraine at CSW67. Participants will come from the relevant state institutions in Ukraine and countries hosting Ukrainian refugees responsible for ICT, humanitarian/refugee response and gender equality, Parliaments, CSOs and youth representatives, gender experts, research centers and think tanks, IT companies, United Nations System and other inter-governmental organizations with relevant mandates and expertise, also the relevant regional bodies and mechanisms.

### Agenda

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<td>9:30 – 10:00</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyiv time</td>
<td>Welcoming coffee and networking</td>
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<td>10.00 – 10:10</td>
<td>Opening session - welcoming remarks by:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyiv time</td>
<td>- Olha Stefanishyna, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic</td>
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<td>Integration of Ukraine (video statement)</td>
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<td>- Alia El-Yassir, UN Women Regional Director, Europe and Central Asia</td>
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<td><strong>Moderator:</strong> Dr. Sabine Freizer, UN Women Representative to Ukraine</td>
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<td>10:10 – 10:30</td>
<td>Keynotes by:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Valeriya Ionan, Deputy Minister for Euro integration, Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Dr. Sabine Freizer, UN Women Representative to Ukraine</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:40</td>
<td>Panel 1 – Gender transformative ICT ecosystem for sustained recovery and development</td>
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<td><strong>Moderator:</strong> Tetyana Berezhna, Deputy Minister of Economy of Ukraine</td>
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**Keynote “State gender policy: actual tasks in conditions of the war” - Kateryna Levchenko, Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, Ukraine**

**Panelists:**
- **Emine Dzhaparova**, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ukraine
- **Uliana Tokareva**, Deputy Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine
- **Tetyana Berezhna**, Deputy Minister of Economy of Ukraine
- **Gulsanna Mamediieva**, Director General of the Directorate for European and NATO Integration, Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine
- **Oksana Chyvurina**, Director of Talent Marketing, Communications & Impact, Intellias

**Issues to discuss:**
- What national strategies are aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of the society’s life?
- What national policies and actions are in pace to reduce the digital gender gap?
- How to ensure the substantive and meaningful participation of women as agents of change in innovation and digitalization strategies, policies, programmes, and projects?
- What capacities and resources are needed to ensure women lead the way towards more equitable and sustainable solutions to digital transformation, while ‘leaving no one behind’?
- What barriers hamper rural women’s and girls’ voice, leadership and participation, including access to quality and affordable education, skills and vocational training?
- How do sectoral policies address priorities for gender responsive digital ecosystems?

*Interventions will be followed by interactive moderated discussions with reflections from the side of CSOs, experts, and youth. Participants will be invited to respond to panelists by sharing their views (max 2 min)*

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<tr>
<td>11:40</td>
<td>Coffee-break</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Panel 2. Gender responsive digitalization for economic empowerment of Ukrainian women and girls – how national economic policy and regional organizations’ assistance address gender digital gaps in employment and overcome cyberviolence in a frame of overall recovery efforts</td>
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**Moderator - UN Women Representative**

**Panelists:**
- **Dr. Lara Scarpitta**, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues
- **Niko Tatulashvili**, the Advisor on Human Rights to the Prime-Minister of Georgia
- **Caterina Bolognese**, Head, Gender Equality Division, Council of Europe
- **Oleksandra Iliasenko**, Head of Diia Business Center in Warsaw
- **Paulina Modlitba**, National Committee to UN Women in Sweden (video statement)

**Issues to discuss:**
- What policy solutions can reduce gender discrimination in digitalized employment?
What are the best practices and examples of success stories of women-led initiatives aimed at empowering women and girls to use ITC to improve their livelihoods in the context of war?

How to mainstream gender in digital policies and investments – both public and private, and increase women’s participation in digital cooperation in the recovery context?

What steps have governments, with regional development bodies, taken to ensure that ICT and other technologies reach and empower Ukrainian women and girls inside and outside?

*Interventions will be followed by interactive moderated discussions with reflections from the side of CSOs, experts, and youth. Participants will be invited to respond to panelists by sharing their views (max 2 min)*

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<td>13:15 – 14:15</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<td>14:15 – 15:00</td>
<td>Groups discussion on key recommendations and messages to CSW67:</td>
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<td><strong>Group 1:</strong> Promotion women’s digital empowerment for sustainable recovery through improving the legislation and policy framework</td>
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<td><strong>Group 2:</strong> Strengthening institutional capacity of key stakeholders for women’s economic empowerment through digital solutions</td>
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<td><strong>Group 3:</strong> Expanding access of women to digital literacy, affordable digital technologies and tools</td>
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<td><strong>Group 4:</strong> Strengthening partnership and coordination for women’s economic empowerment through digital solutions</td>
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Plenary discussion – groups present and finalize together their recommendations to CSW67

Moderator – Uliana Tokareva, Deputy Minister of Social Policy, Ukraine

| 15:45 – 16:00 | Wrap-up by Kateryna Levchenko, Government Commissioner for Gender Policy  |
|               | Closing remarks by Dr. Sabine Freizer, UN Women Representative in Ukraine |

| 16:00 – 17:00 | Networking and informal discussions (for in-person participants)           |
|               | Coffee-tea will be served                                                 |

Resource materials:
- [UN Secretary General Report to CSW67, 2022](#) (English version)
- [UNCTAD Technology and innovation report 2021](#)
- [2022 Report on gender equality in the EU](#)
- [Harnessing Technology and Innovation to Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls](#)
- [The Ukrainian Refugee Crisis: A Women’s Financial Inclusion and Resilience Stress Test](#)
- [OECD Digitalisation for recovery in Ukraine, 2022](#)
- [EGM/RWG/Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the CSW 62 Priority Theme](#)