

Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on the Sixty- Seventh Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 67)

Session One:

“Ensuring meaningful connectivity to close the gender digital divide and promoting gender transformative technology design, development, and deployment.”

“Regional digital trends and development and existing gender digital divide”

by Anju Mangal, Head of Asia Pacific, Global Digital Inclusion Partnership

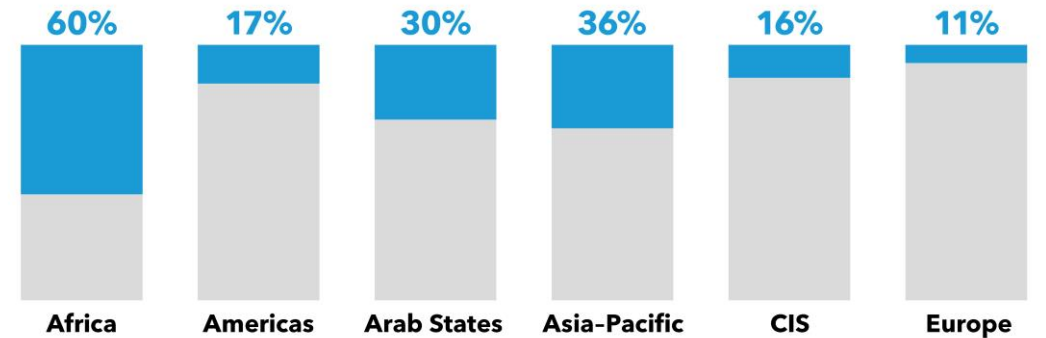
2.7

billion people
offline in the
world

Source: ITU



Proportion of people
offline by ITU Region



Source: ITU



“Regional digital trends and development and existing gender digital divide”

On a global scale, 69 per cent of men are using the Internet, compared with **63 per cent of women**. This means there are 259 million more men than women using the Internet in 2022.¹

In the **Asia Pacific region**, the percentage of **female internet users stood at 61%**, while **men users stood at 67%**.² Regional divides within Asia reflect a more problematic picture, where **in South Asia 36% fewer women have Internet access compared to men**.

Furthermore, **83% of women in South Asia hold ownership of a mobile phone** but only **58% of them have Internet access**. The divide can be measured with more accuracy when analysing data within Asia, where **15% of women are less likely to use a mobile phone in lower and middle-income countries**.

The region most affected is South Asia, where the usage reduced from 50% in 2019 to 36% in 2020, within one year. This reduction was presumably exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affecting women’s access to the digital world.³

Source:

- ¹ <https://www.un.org/en/un75/impact-digital-technologies> ,
- ² <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/2022/11/24/ff22-the-gender-digital-divide/>,
- ³ *The State of Mobile Internet Connectivity 2021 - GSMA,* accessed September 28, 2022, <https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-State-of-Mobile-Internet-Connectivity-Report-2021.pdf>.

What are some of the digital trends and development that the region has adopted for development?)

1) Cultural and socio-economic barriers

2) Cost of exclusion

How the connectivity impacted gender equality and women’s empowerment?

- We have been looking at Meaningful connectivity for women and girls - working with women and girls to develop gender-responsive policies*
- We have been assisting women and girls in Asia and the Pacific are benefiting from digital skills and digital literacy*
- Working on digital gender scorecards to understand the digital gender disparity between men and women using digital technologies*
- Engaging women and girls in developing broadband policies*
- Working with key stakeholders to develop the digital gender inclusion strategy*

What are the opportunities of providing affordable access and meaningful connectivity to women to stay connected and what can be done in order to close the gender digital divide in Asia and the Pacific?

- *Reducing the tax on smartphones and devices*
- *Focusing on digital skills and content*
- *Developing key targets on broadband policies and ICT policies to reduce the digital gender gap*
- *Developing gender-responsive policies*
- *Providing incentives for women to access digital services in rural and remote communities*
- *Mentoring and coaching women and girls in ICT*

Thank you!

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