

In the k-NoW

Network of Women (NoW) in ICT in the Caribbean

Bulletin 001 - January 2023

CTU's role in the ITU's NoW

In his feature address at the Network of Women luncheon at the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre in October 2022, Secretary-General of the CTU, Mr. Rodney Taylor, announced the appointment of Ms. Francola John, Stakeholder and Engagement Specialist, as the CTU's Focal Point for the ITU's Network of Women (NoW).

The ITU's NoW encourages gender balance in the activities, policy decisions and outcomes of ICT initiatives globally. Mr Taylor added that Ms. John's involvement in NoW will ensure, as much as possible, that the Caribbean region builds, in the medium and long term, a community comprising the CTU's twenty (20) Member States, where female delegates support each other, expand their networks, advocate and share experiences and knowledge. He continued, "Ms. John's involvement will promote the active participation of women in the activities of the ITU and the ICT sector in general; will give visibility to women and empower them to take up larger responsibilities in their respective delegations in the international ICT fora; and will encourage experienced female delegates to mentor ICT professionals in order to create a stronger base for women in the digital space in the Caribbean."

The CTU Secretariat will encourage its 20 member states to support the ITU's NoW initiative. In this regard, the Secretary-General has made a commitment to put forward a resolution at the CTU's next Executive Council meeting, to encourage our members to ensure that gender equality, parity and mainstreaming are included in their national ICT agendas.

2023 and Beyond

The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) extends best wishes to each and every one of you and your families for 2023.

As we continue with the momentum of 2022, the CTU is preparing to contribute significantly to the ITU's Network of Women (NoW) initiatives in the coming year.

With our Stakeholder Engagement plan for 2023, we will seek to ensure that through our Member States, policy recommendations are put forward, data is collected and reported on active participation of women in activities, not only in the ITU but in all UN Agencies, we build a cohesive network within Small Island Developing States and we have good Caribbean representation at the upcoming NoW4WRC23 to be held in Dubai in November 2023 and other international fora.

The CTU believes that it must continue to demonstrate the value of women participation and women leadership in the ICT space. In the Caribbean women still represent a small minority in this sector. Join the Secretary-General of the CTU, Mr. Rodney Taylor in his statement to **"Let us make public commitments and let us work together to remove the glass ceiling altogether and address issues of our inherent biases that limit women participation in the digital development sector. We must make commitments, set clear targets, measure and report to our stakeholders."**

Partner with the CTU to make positive change in the Caribbean.

A banner for the Network of Women in the Telecommunication Development Sector. It features a group of diverse women of various ethnicities and ages standing together, some with their hands clasped. The background is a light blue with a network of white dots and lines. The text on the left reads 'Network of Women' in large white font, followed by 'Telecommunication Development Sector' and the website 'www.itu.int/now4wtcd'. The ITU logo is in the bottom right corner.

Network
of Women
Telecommunication
Development Sector
www.itu.int/now4wtcd

Why NoW? Why In the k-NoW? Why now?



Written by: Dr. Kim Mallalieu

There is good reason for the worldwide emphasis on the active participation of women and girls in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and its derivatives, including telecommunications.

STEM provides the structural foundation for much of twenty-first century human engagement, entertainment, health, work and living in general. However, despite growing commitment to equitable access to STEM derivatives, there is global concern about potential harms. The Internet is one case in point, as access to it is increasingly recognised as a basic human right, notwithstanding a hefty spectrum of cyber harms.

Both the facilitation of meaningful universal access to the Internet and the effective management of cyber risks demand longitudinal attention to the needs and circumstances of *all* Internet users. This, in turn, calls for balanced representation of user communities at all stages of information and communications technology (ICT), product and service life cycles: conceptualization, design, development, messaging, marketing, deployment, maintenance and support, as well as in key aspects of the enabling environment such as policy and regulation.

The historically poor representation of women across ICT life cycles has motivated the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to actively promote gender equality, equity and parity within the organization and the world at large. The ITU's Development and Standardization sectors (ITU-D and ITU-T respectively) have expressed this, with emphasis on the participation of women in the work, activities and leadership roles of the sectors, through resolutions dating back to 2004 in the case of ITU-T and 1998 in the case of ITU-D. The Radio sector (ITU-R) has expressed similar positions through its 2019 Gender Declaration; and the overall ITU's position on the matter is captured in a series of Plenipotentiary resolutions dating back to 1998.

Most recently, ITU Plenipotentiary Resolution 70 (Rev. BUCHAREST, 2022), ***Mainstreaming a gender perspective in ITU and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through telecommunications/information and communication technologies***, encourages ITU Member States and Sector Members to mainstream gender equality in all operations, policies and practices; to build relevant capacity at all levels; and to stimulate interest in, and opportunities for, women and girls in STEM studies, careers and business development. The Resolution encourages Member States to collect and submit sex-disaggregated data to the ITU to support benchmarking and tracking of progress towards gender equality.

Resolution 70 also encourages participation in ITU Network of Women (NoW) initiatives. The Networks of Women in ITU-R and ITU-D, as well as the Women in Standardization Expert Group (WISE), encourage greater participation of women as delegates, chairs, vice-chairs, etc., at World Radio Conferences (WRCs), World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDCs) and World Telecommunication Standardization Assemblies (WTSAs) respectively, preparing women to actively and meaningfully contribute to these statutory conferences as well as the other activities and leadership roles in the three sectors.

Why NoW? Why In the K-NoW? The Caribbean has a staggering record of potent women leaders in telecommunications, women not only leading the CTU but also the Caribbean Association of National Telecommunications Operators (CANTO), individual operators, and regulatory authorities. Yet there is no channel for the sharing of experiences, mentoring and encouraging women across the region to take on leadership roles in the longitudinal processes associated with ITU's statutory meetings and study groups. ITU's networks of women are available to fill this gap. At the same time, **In the K-NoW** will provide key supporting resources to do so with a distinct Caribbean focus.

About the Author: Dr. Kim Mallalieu is a member of the ITU-D Network of Women (NoW) Advisory Board for the Americas, Senior Lecturer, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, U.W.I St. Augustine and Deputy Chairman of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT). If you want to be "**In the K-NoW**", please join our mailing list at:

https://form.jotform.com/CTU_NoW/inthek-NoWcaribbean or contact:

CTU's Focal Point for ITU's Network of Women

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2023

FEBRUARY EVENTS

5th - 7th

CANTO 39TH AGM - Suriname
www.canto.org

6th - 8th

**Spectrum Management Task Force
Workshop - Jamaica**
www.ctu.int/events

13th - 15th

**Effective Legal Framework for Building
the Digital Economy - Barbados**
www.ctu.int/events

20th - 24th

**CTO Digital Week and Ministerial
meeting - London, U.K**
www.cto.int/events/upcoming-events/

**27th Feb -
3rd March**

**Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2023
- Barcelona, Spain**
www.mwcbarcelona.com

**27th Feb -
3rd March**

Grenada ICT Week - Grenada

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

www.ctu.int/events