



Summary Report

February 2018

Table of Contents

Background Information3
 Award Categories for 20174
Data Analysis.....5
 Nomination Phase.....5
2017 EQUALS in Tech Awards: Event Summary7
 2017 Winners7
Annex 1. EQUALS in Tech Awards Ceremony and Panel Discussion Program.....9

Background Information

[EQUALS](#), the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age is a multi-stakeholder initiative launched by ITU and UN Women in 2016 to promote awareness; build political commitment, leveraging knowledge, efforts, and resources for the greatest possible impact to achieve digital gender equality at both the global and national levels. It aims at creating an unstoppable global movement where women and girls are equal participants in the technology revolution.

Women's digital empowerment and full participation in the information society is a key objective of UN Women and ITU. UN Women has prioritized this within all aspects of its work and the ITU Council at its 2013 session, adopted the ITU Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy (GEM)¹. In addition, ITU has engaged with gender initiatives both internally and externally – including the annual [Girls in ICT Day](#), the [Broadband Commission Working Group on Digital Gender Divide](#), the [Connect 2020 Agenda for Global Telecommunication/ICT Development](#), which has a target on gender equality among internet users, as well as the Parity Pledge from Mr. Houlin Zhao as part of the [International Gender Champions network](#).

In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), both the partnership and the EQUALS in Tech Awards focus on addressing [SDG 5](#), especially target 5B:

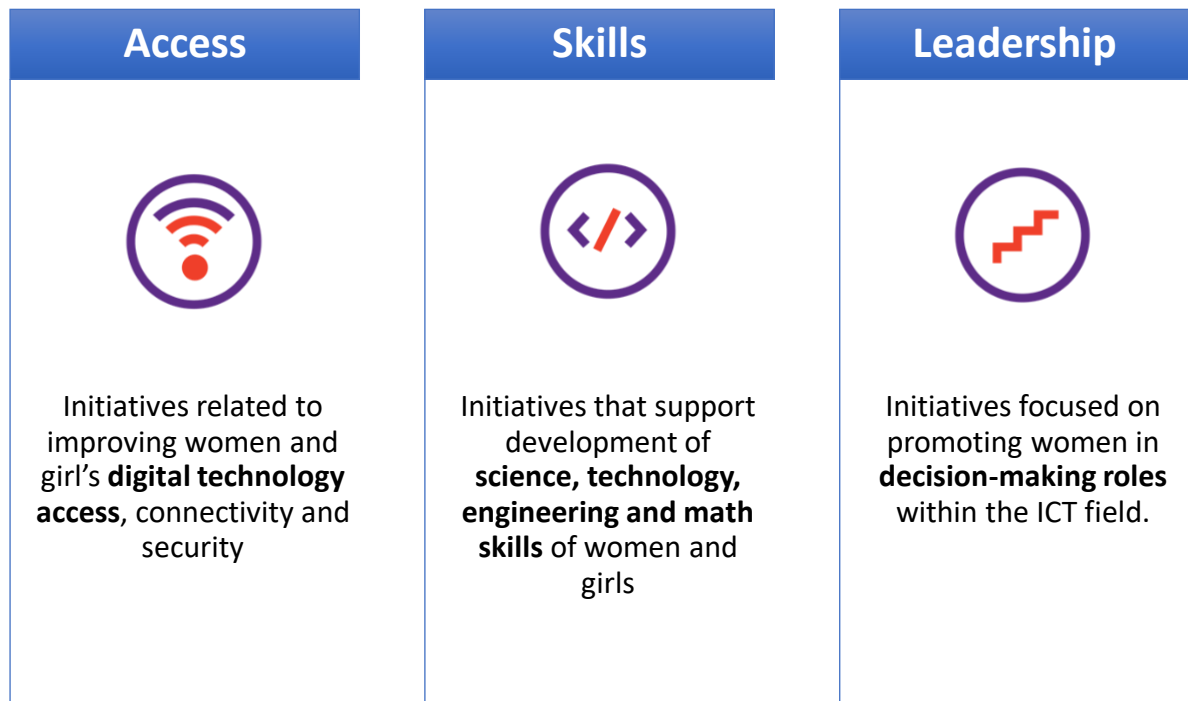
Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technologies (ICTs), to promote the empowerment of women

Formerly referred to as the GEM-TECH Awards, the EQUALS in Tech Awards are now a contribution of ITU and UN Women to the EQUALS Global Partnership. It seeks to create a platform for advancing women's meaningful engagement with ICTs and their role as decision-makers and producers within this sector.

¹ ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference passed [Resolution 70](#) (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010) on "gender mainstreaming in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through information and communication technologies".

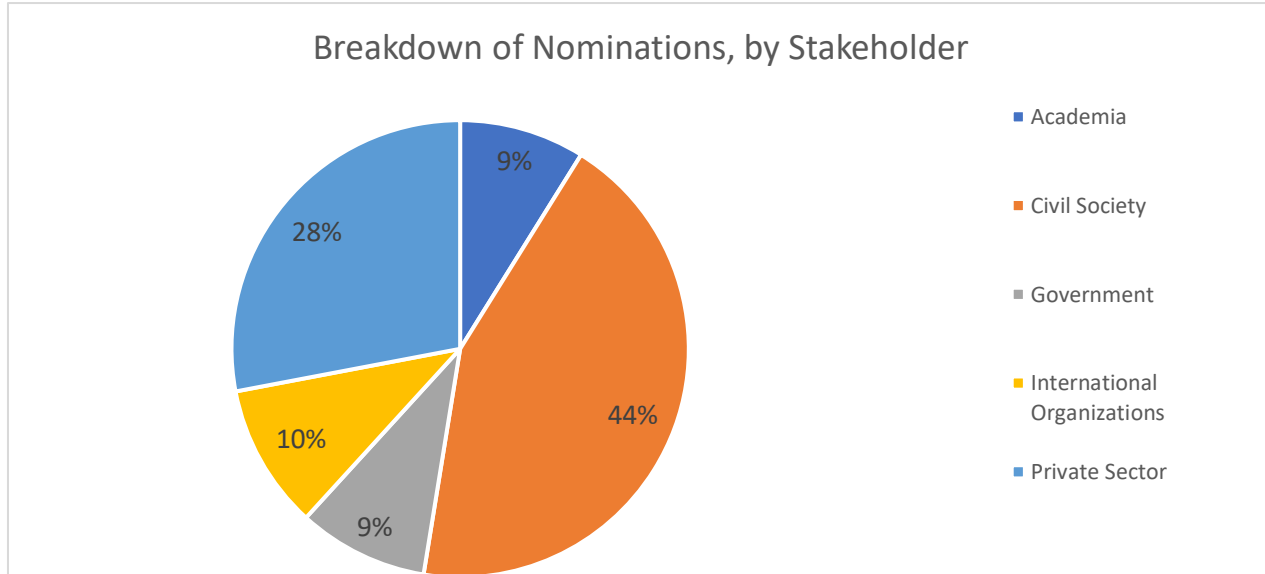
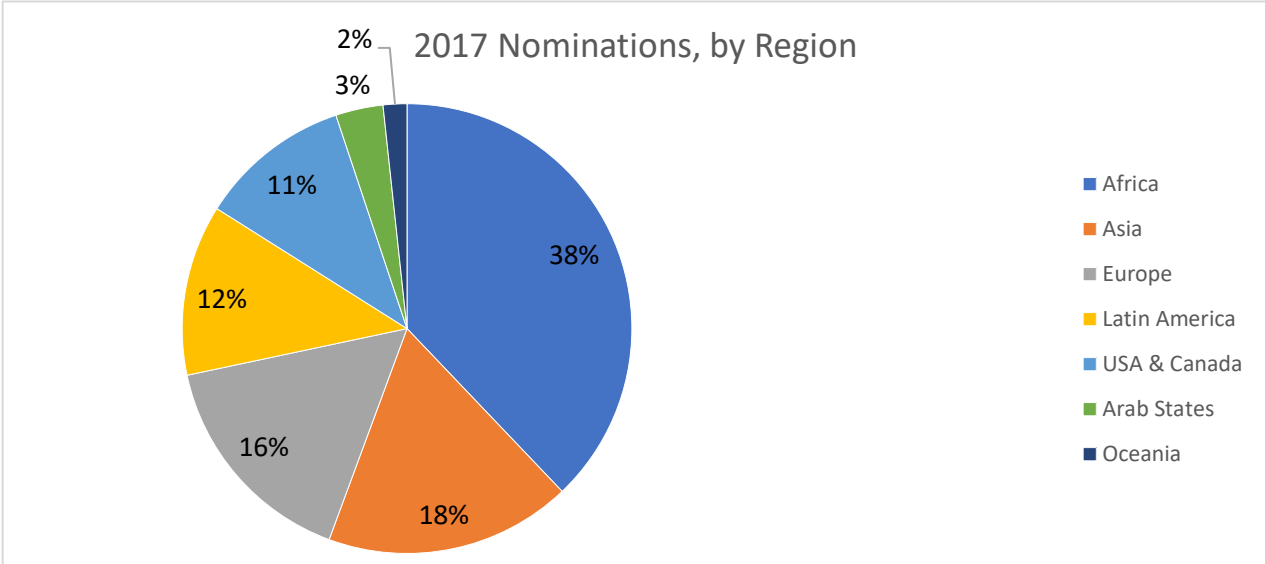
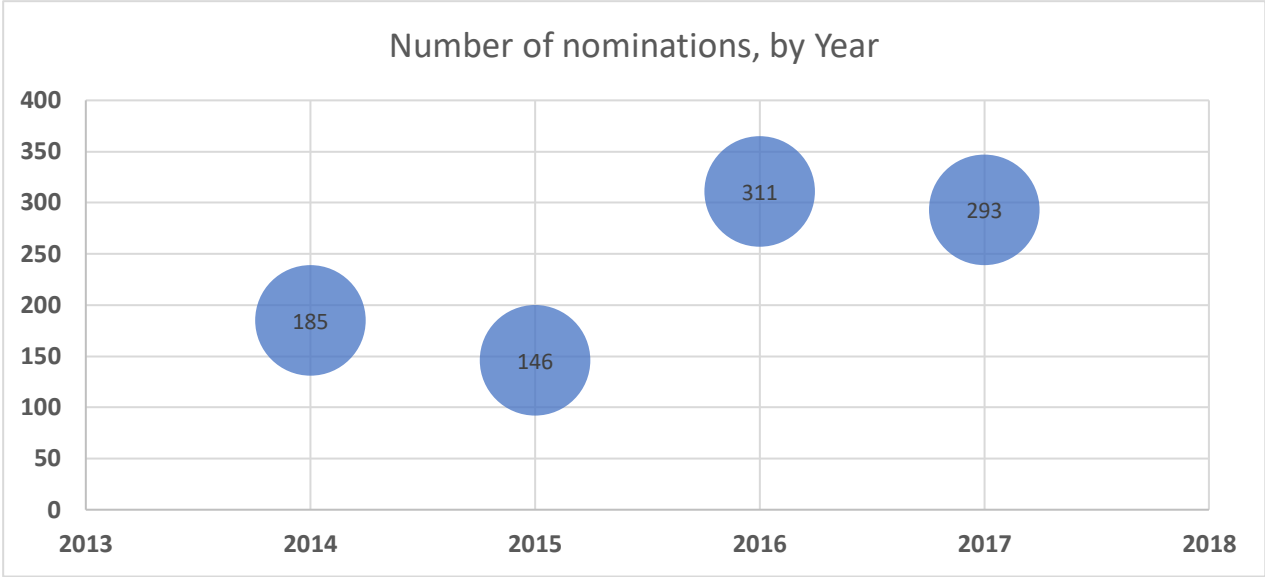
Award Categories for 2017

The Award categories are in alignment with the EQUALS Partnership three areas of action – access, skills and leadership.



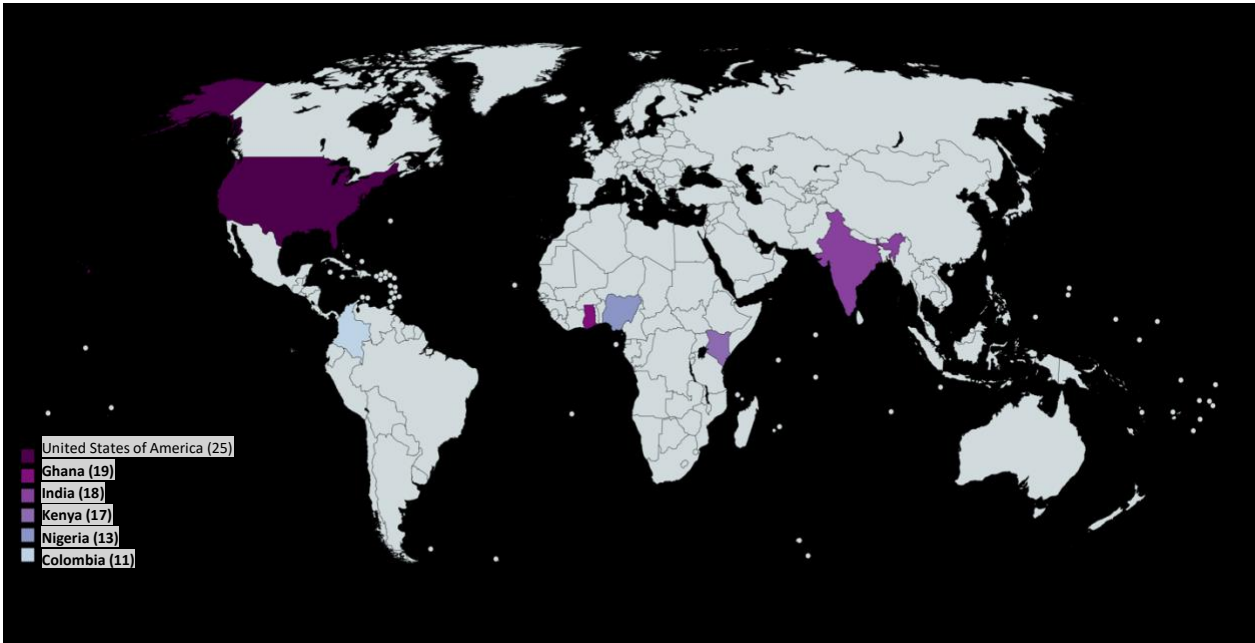
Data Analysis

Nomination Phase

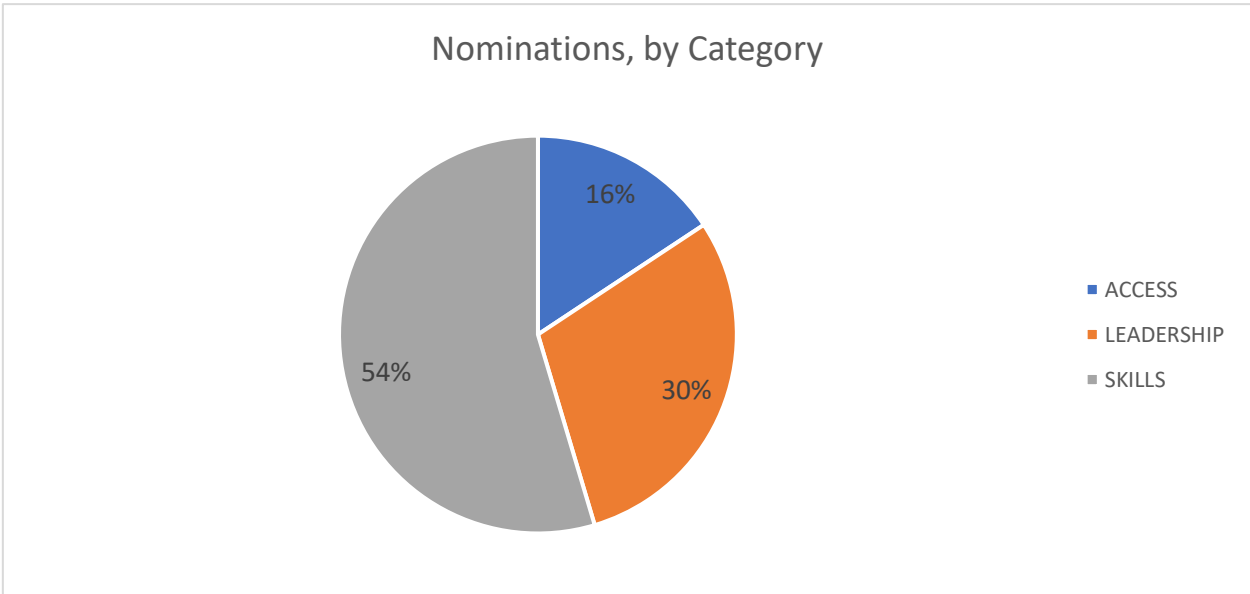


Country Analysis: Nomination locations

Countries with 10+ nominations



While there was representation of each region in the nominations, certain countries were dominant. The legend on the left of the map is in descending order. Combined, these 6 countries represent 35% of all nomination put forward for the 2017 EQUALS in Tech Awards.



2017 EQUALS in Tech Awards: Event Summary

The fourth annual EQUALS in Tech Awards (formerly known as the GEM-Tech Awards), jointly organized by ITU and UN Women, celebrated organizational achievements and innovative strategies to bridge the digital gender divide (GDD).

The only international prizes of their kind, the first edition of the Awards was celebrated in Busan, Republic of Korea in 2014, in New York City, USA in 2015, and in Bangkok, Thailand in 2016.

The 2017 EQUALS in Tech Awards and Panel Discussion was hosted during 12th Internet Governance Forum (IGF), which took place in Geneva, Switzerland on 19-20 December. The IGF is a global multi-stakeholder platform that facilitates the discussion of public policy issues pertaining to the internet. With great convening power, the IGF brings together actors in both the public and private sector from around the world to facilitate a common understanding of how to maximize Internet opportunities and address risks and challenges that arise.

2017 Winners

The 2017 EQUALS in Tech Awards recognized three outstanding organizations, one in each of the three categories, for their work to bridge the gender digital divide:

 Access Category	<p><u>Lebanese Alternative Learning (LAL)</u>, Lebanon</p> <p>LAL is an NGO that develops alternative educational resources through technology and creative interventions. Their priority is to empower vulnerable communities and ensure all children receive an engaging and effective learning experience and avoid school dropouts. Tabshoura in a Box, their educational platform places a particular emphasis on teaching STEAM to refugee girls. The platform is expected to spread to at least 15 schools and learning centers within the next year.</p>
 Skills Category	<p><u>Digital Citizen Fund (DCF)</u>, Afghanistan/US</p> <p>DCF encourages women to be active learners in the world of technology and empower them to create sustainable income opportunities for themselves and their families. Current students of the Fund programmes in Herat, educated and sponsored by the organization, used their skills to win a national robotics competition and were the first team to represent Afghanistan at the FIRST Global Robotics Olympiad in DC.</p>



**Leadership
Category**

Sula Batsu Cooperativa, Costa Rica

Sula Batsu Cooperativa integrates rural young women into the IT sector in Costa Rica by creating women-led rural “technological poles”, which enable women to develop companies that invigorate the local digital economy. It also hosts a network of 400 girls who meet regularly to define and implement actions around women in tech, the results of which influences university curricula, companies and public policies.

The event featured an Address from Mr. Houlin Zhao and Ms. Lakshmi Puri, who also presented the trophies to each winner at the Awards Ceremony. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations sent a video message to highlight the gravity of the gender digital divide and congratulate the three winners. Representatives from the three Supporting Partners, Facebook (Ms. Emilar Gandhi), OFCOM (Ambassador Schneider) and the Internet Society (Mr. *Raúl Echeberría*) gave brief remarks on the value of the partnership. All attendees were invited to a brief cocktail reception outside the room immediately after the Award Ceremony.

Click [here](#) for an overview of the Award Ceremony, and live interviews with the winners.

The Panel Discussion held on the following day gave the winners an opportunity to delve into their projects in more detail, sharing their challenges, lessons learnt and plans for the future. Participating in the panel were: Dr. Nayla Fahed of Lebanese Alternative Learning, winners of the Access Category; Kemly Camacho of the Sula Batsu Cooperativa, winners of the Leadership Category; Roya Mahboob of the Digital Citizen Fund, winners of the Skills Category; Carla Licciardello of ITU; Anna Fälth of UN Women; and moderator Su Sonia Herring, Internet Society Youth Representative.

Click [here](#) for a full summary of the Panel Discussion.

See Annex 1 for the full event program.

Annex 1. EQUALS in Tech Awards Ceremony and Panel Discussion Program

Programme

EQUALS in Tech Awards Ceremony

Tuesday, 19 December 2017

17:00-19:10

United Nations Palais des Nations, Room XVIII
Geneva, Switzerland

17:00 - 18:00

Moderator

Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Chief of Strategic Planning and Membership Department, ITU

Video Message

Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General, United Nations

Opening Remarks

Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General, ITU

Inspirational Speaker Dr. Sue Black, Founder of Techmums and BCS Women

Remarks from Supporting Partners

Awards Presentation

Access

WINNER: Lebanese Alternative Learning

Skills

WINNER: Digital Citizen Fund

Leadership

WINNER: Sula Batsu Cooperativa

Closing Remarks

Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations
Deputy Executive Director, UN Women

18:10-19:10

The event will be followed by a cocktail reception



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Programme

EQUALS in Tech Awards Panel Discussion

Wednesday, 20 December 2017

09:00-10:00

United Nations Palais des Nations, Room XXV
Geneva, Switzerland

08:45 - 09:00

Welcome Coffee

09:00 - 09:10

Opening Remarks

Anna Fälth, Manager, Empower Women, UN Women

**Introduction
of Panelists**

Su Sonia Herring, ISOC Youth Representative

09:40 - 10:00

**Round of questions
to winners**

Roya Mahboob, CEO, Digital Citizen Fund

Kemly Camacho, President, Sula Batsu Cooperativa

Dr. Nayla Zreik Fahed, CEO, Lebanese Alternative Learning

Closing Remarks

Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Chief of Strategic Planning
and Membership Department, ITU



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