



PRESS RELEASE

ITU-UNESCO Digital Inclusion Week for Arab States

Activities to focus on the use of digital technologies to combat non-communicable diseases

Cairo, 22 September 2019 – Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease are collectively responsible for almost 70% of all deaths today.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) are co-hosting the fourth ITU-UNESCO Regional Digital Inclusion Week for Arab States from 22 to 28 September.

Under the theme "Health, Education and Big Data for Enhancing Wellbeing", the week will explore the role that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are playing in combatting non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Activities are taking place in seven countries, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, State of Palestine, Sudan and Tunisia, with the support of 16 public and private sector partners from the region.

"Information and communication technologies present a huge opportunity to deliver health care services and information especially to people living in rural and remote areas," says Ebrahim Al Haddad, Director of the ITU Regional Office for Arab States. "We are delighted to partner with UNESCO during this week, which will help to further strengthen ITU's existing work on non-communicable."

"The Digital Inclusion Week aims to highlight and raise awareness on mechanisms to support the social inclusion of marginalized sectors of Arab societies through the use of ICTs," says Ghaith Fariz, Director of UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States. "The week is also part of our efforts to highlight the importance of information sharing ahead of the UNESCO's International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) which is celebrated on 28 September each year".

During the week, activities will highlight ongoing digital health initiatives in areas such as telemedicine and the use of ICTs to access health information on the management of non-communicable diseases especially in remote and underserved areas. By sharing case studies, experiences, identifying best practices and supporting public awareness, the week seeks to contribute to

positive lifestyle changes and the development and adoption of effective policies that can contribute to a more inclusive society.

For more information on Digital Inclusion Week, visit: <https://bit.ly/2kTPtL8>

Follow the week's activities on social media using #Digitalinclusionweek and #AccessToInfoDay

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About ITU

ITU is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), driving innovation in ICTs together with 193 Member States and a membership of nearly 800 private sector entities and academic institutions. Established over 150 years ago in 1865, ITU is the intergovernmental body responsible for coordinating the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoting international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, improving communication infrastructure in the developing world, and establishing the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems. From broadband networks to cutting-edge wireless technologies, aeronautical and maritime navigation, radio astronomy, oceanographic and satellite-based earth monitoring as well as converging fixed-mobile phone, Internet and broadcasting technologies, ITU is committed to connecting the world. www.itu.int