



25 February 2015 – Of the seven billion people on Earth, over six now have access to a mobile device, yet research shows that women in low or middle income countries are 21 per cent less likely than men to own a mobile phone. As a result, too many girls and women are missing out on the opportunities it can deliver, especially in education. The need to bridge this gender gap is the key message of the 2015 edition of the [Mobile Learning Week](#), a UNESCO project in partnership with UN Women.

"The reasons women cite for not owning a mobile phone include the costs of handsets and data plans, lack of need and fear of not being able to master the technology", says Cherie Blair, founder of the [Cherie Blair Foundation for Women](#).

Mobile access to education

Described by the [International Telecommunications Union](#) as the "most pervasive and rapidly adopted technology in history", mobile devices can, however, offer access to learning in areas where there educational opportunities are limited.

"This is especially important for women and girls who drop out of school and need second chances", added [UN Women's Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka](#) .

#MLW2015

The UNESCO Mobile Learning Week gathers over 1,000 participants from over 70 countries, providing a platform for highlighting these gaps, as well as exchanging and sharing ideas of how they can be successfully bridged.

Additionally, it includes a Policy Forum for government representatives to discuss ideas for mainstreaming and scaling up successful mobile learning interventions to promote gender equality in education, and to discuss the role of mobile technology as the international community develops new goals for education and development.

"Education is a human rights imperative – it is a development imperative – it is a security imperative," stated [UNESCO's Director-General Irina Bokova](#) .

"We must ensure every girl and boy can go to school, receive the right learning and contribute fully to society."

Are you interested in mobile learning? Take a look at the [UNESCO Mobile Learning Publications](#) and explore its potential!

