



Telecommunication
Development Bureau (BDT)



Ref.: Circular BDT/DNS/DGS/077

Geneva, 1 March 2021

- Administration of ITU Members States
- Regulators
- ITU-D Sector Members
- Academia

Subject: Invitation to participate in and contribute to the 2021 International Girls in ICT celebrations

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to inform you that International Girls in ICT Day will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary on 22 April 2021. In this special year, the theme for Girls in ICT Day is '*Connecting girls, creating brighter futures*', and we are extending our activities beyond a single day, to reflect a year-round commitment to the girls who will help shape the global future.

For a decade, Girls in ICT has been celebrated around the world with the bold leadership of the ITU member states. In this regard, I invite you to contribute to the 2021 celebration by organizing programs, trainings, and activities during the year and working with other partners in your country to maximize impact and reach out to more girls. A toolkit on possible Girls in ICT activities, along with the 2021 social media activation plans, is available [online](#) for your reference.

As the lockdowns and school closures of the COVID-19 pandemic have shown us, the global digital divide has limited or prevented learning opportunities for two-thirds of the world's children. These children, who are without internet access at home, are missing crucial learning opportunities related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Gender-disaggregated data shows us that girls have been left even further behind in this context than boys. Where we find extreme poverty, economic vulnerability, and crisis is where we find the highest gender disparities in education. While many girls will be able continue with their education once the school gates re-open, some may never return to school.

This is why we are committed to supporting and expanding the Girls in ICT program. This year, more than ever before, we must inspire girls to see a brighter future through STEM education. Through online access, skills education and digital tools training, they can equip themselves with the necessary skills to think laterally, solve problems and innovate. In an age that is shaped by technological advances, having the know-how to operate, use and create technology and science-based solutions is critical to the advancement of young people and crucial for girls' and women's health, education, voice and empowerment.

Therefore, this year, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and its partners are planning a series of campaigns to engage girls' presence on social media channels, as well as a 10 day worldwide celebration.

I hope I can count on your support to participate in and contribute to the 2021 International Girls in ICT celebrations and to engage key role models, stakeholders and young girls' representatives in your country to commemorate this 10-year international celebration.

For more information on the programme, to share details of events you are arranging and to confirm your interest in joining our activities worldwide, please contact Ms. Carla Licciardello, Digital Inclusion Coordinator at girlsinct@itu.int by 16 March 2021.

I look forward seeing you online during the upcoming months.

Yours faithfully,

[Original signed]

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Director