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| **Telecommunication Development Advisory Group (TDAG)**  **25th Meeting, Geneva, 2-5 June2020** | C:\Users\comas\AppData\Local\Temp\Rar$DRa0.735\jpg\ITU official logo_blue_RGB.jpg |
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|  | **Document** **TDAG-20/****47-E** |
|  | **18 May 2020** |
|  | **English only** |
| Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau | |
| Girls in ICT Day 2020 | |
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| **Summary:**  Every year, on the fourth Thursday of April, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) leads the global celebration of Girls in ICT Day, bringing together governments, NGOs, schools and tech companies all around the world to reach out to girls and young women and showcase the exciting potential of technology as a career choice. The day is all about inspiring girls and young women to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) studies and to leverage the power of digital technologies to follow their dreams. In 2020, International Girls in ICT Day was celebrated on Thursday, 23 April.  In 2019, for the first time, Girls in ICT Day went “on the road” to Ethiopia, as the epicentre of the celebrations. This year 2020, considering the unprecedented times of the global Covid-19 pandemic, the global celebration - originally planned to be held in Samoa - was transformed into a fun and inspiring virtual event, in collaboration with the Samoan government.  Despite these new challenges, Girls in ICT Day 2020 brought together an impressive number of governments, civil society organizations, private sector and public institutions across the globe as a demonstration of the power of technology to change lives.  **Action required:**  TDAG is invited to note this document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.  **References:**  PP-18 Resolution 70 (Rev. Dubai 2018) | |

Every year, on the fourth Thursday of April, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) leads the global celebration of Girls in ICT Day, bringing together governments, NGOs, schools and tech companies all around the world to reach out to girls and young women and showcase the exciting potential of technology as a career choice. The day is all about inspiring girls and young women to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) studies and to leverage the power of digital technologies to follow their dreams. In 2020, International Girls in ICT Day was celebrated on Thursday, 23 April.

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Despite these new challenges, Girls in ICT Day 2020 brought together an impressive number of governments, civil society organizations, private sector and public institutions across the globe as a demonstration of the power of technology to change lives.

**The ITU global celebration**

Of particular note was a successful [***Online Dialogue,***](mailto:https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/GirlsInICTDay/2020/default.aspx)wherein a panel of experts from governments, NGOs, academia, and international organizations engaged in an inspiring conversation about the role of governments in empowering women through technology, alongside the importance of role models and mentors. The dialogue was very engaging and interactive and were 348 participants asked many questions related to the role of ICTs and young women empowerment.

The conversation focused on inspiring examples and strategies around the power of technology, STEM careers, creative thinking, personal aspirations, and the importance of female empowerment. It also touched upon the vast potential that ICTs have to offer, and the exciting career opportunities that can be achieved through technology in various sectors.

Some speakers highlighted the need to inform, support, and educate women in STEM and encourage them to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Many centers and organizations are currently responding to the high demand for free ICT trainings on creative technologies, as well as for social media platforms that may provide opportunities for young women and girls to network and grow professionally.

Each participating organization demonstrated their role in achieving the Girls in ICT Day goals, and the dialogue highlighted the efforts made to enable girls and young women to expand their horizons and network with more relevant contacts than ever before. Nevertheless, participants agreed that there is much that still needs to be done, as many women and young girls are still not connected and are excluded from the benefits of the digital world.

Laura Chinchilla, former President of Costa Rica and Vice President of the World Leadership Alliance, Club de Madrid, was one of the notable panellists during the Online Dialogue; in addition, she contributed with this ITU[blog](https://news.itu.int/we-must-build-on-best-practices-to-empower-women-and-girls-in-tech-laura-chinchilla/)**.**

The[*EQUALS Girls in ICT Day Twitter Chat*](https://twitter.com/search/?q=%28%23gendertechimpact&f=realtime)was another successful online event, a social media conversation focused on “digital superheroes” around the world who serve as role models and build programs to help girls follow their technology-related professional dreams. EQUALS is a global partnership of more than 90 organizations dedicated to closing the gender digital divide in access, skills and leadership opportunities, driven by evidence-based research results.

The 23 April Twitter chat brought together EQUALS partners and representatives from governments, NGOs, civil society, and academia. Through extended engagements such as retweets and likes, the lively chat reached a potential Twitter audience of nearly 1 million accounts. The chat highlighted success stories from participants’ own work, celebrated the work of other like-minded entities, and helped to spread the word about mentorship and role models for girls interested in careers in tech fields.

Furthermore, ITU partnered with social media platform TikTok for Girls in ICT Day. From 23 to 30 of April, TikTok promoted Girls in ICT on their platform to users from countries in the Latin American market by engaging users to see and create videos that shared tips on technology shared by girls and women. The hashtag reached TikTok users worldwide and today the videos around the #GirlsinICT hashtag amounts to over 21 million views on the platform. For content creation for the campaign, ITU partnered with UN Women and with UN Brazil.

Finally, the [***24h World Tour of Girls in ICT Day celebrations highlights***](mailto:https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/GirlsInICTDay/2020/24h-event.aspx)​ featured key virtual celebrations taking place on the day worldwide.​ It featured 36 events coordinated from 25 countries by stakeholders representing governments, industry, academia, and civil society. Despite the global pandemic, many stakeholders made remarkable and inspiring efforts to transform their on-site events into exciting virtual activities, to celebrate the international Girls in ICT Day, thus effectively demonstrating the power of technology.

The ITU BDT Director took part in this world tour by virtually joining four of these events organized from places such as India, Armenia, United Kingdom and in the Caribbean. The celebrations included activities such as live dialogues, virtual hackathons, mentoring and networking sessions, technology for good challenges and various trainings on coding, robotics, mobile application building, digital art, among others.

**Support from the UN Family**

Girls in ICT Day 2020 was supported by many messages and statements from high-level UN officials, including the [UN Secretary-General](https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-04-23/secretary-generals-message-girls-ict-day-scroll-down-for-french-version), the [President](https://www.un.org/pga/74/2020/04/22/girls-in-information-and-communication-technologies-day/) of the UN General Assembly, the Executive Directors of [UN Women](https://twitter.com/phumzileunwomen/status/1253355484628881409) and [UNICEF](https://twitter.com/UNICEF/status/1253326540437217286), the Director-General of [FAO](https://twitter.com/FAODG/status/1253237638125047808) and many more.

To see the official statements, we invite you to visit the Girls in ICT [website](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/GirlsInICTDay/2020/default.aspx).

**Facts and figures**

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