

Concept Note
Girls in ICT Day Celebrations 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
24 April 2025
Venue: Africa Union, Medium Conference Hall

Background and Introduction

Girls in ICT Day is a UN backed, International Telecommunication Union (ITU) initiative, to create a global environment that empowers and encourages girls and young women to consider careers in the growing field of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The event takes place every year on the fourth Thursday of April. The 2025 theme, “**Girls in ICTs for an Inclusive Digital Transformation,**” emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and the need to bridge various divides—be it gender, digital, or socio-economic—to ensure that everyone can benefit from the digital revolution. The celebration will emphasize the critical importance of achieving equal and equitable digital inclusion for ALL young women and girls, especially those in vulnerable situations, in the digital transformation process to accelerate global meaningful connectivity. The venue for this year’s celebrations is the Africa Union compound, Medium Conference Hall.

Globally, 70% of men use the Internet compared to 65% of women¹, leaving 189 million more men online than women¹. In Africa, the disparity is even more pronounced, with only 31% of women using the Internet compared to 43% of men. While there is progress in Africa, but the region is still far behind the other regions. This divide limits women’s opportunities for education, employment, and participation in the digital economy. The 2025 theme underscores the need to address these disparities to ensure an inclusive digital future.

Ensuring digital inclusivity is a collective effort and as such Governments, national ICT regulatory authorities, ICT companies, academic institutions, UN agencies, NGOs and all stakeholders across the world join in initiatives and encourage the celebration of International Girls in ICT Day. Events such as the Days in ICT celebrations create a platform for the sharing of updates and progress made on the different gender related activities being delivered and explore possible area of collaboration to empower girls and women to engage in the digital sector and digital society at large. By fostering an inclusive digital transformation, we can ensure that girls and young women are not only participants but also leaders in the digital future. It can further help bridge the gender, socio-economic, and geographical digital divides, ensuring that girls and young women are empowered to participate fully in the digital economy.

Objectives

The national day celebrations will aim to bring together different stakeholders including mentors, young women and girls to exchange their experiences and share knowledge and challenges on digital inclusion for girls and women and explore possible solutions to the challenges. The 2025 Girls in ICT celebrations follow on the back of the UN adopting the pact of the future and the global digital compact and as such benefits from insights and objectives set within these pacts. In the spirit of acknowledging the centrality of digital technologies in everyday

¹ <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/2024/11/10/ff24-the-gender-digital-divide/>

life, the theme centers digital inclusion and seeks to raise awareness, inspire and engage, promote inclusivity, showcase talent and role models, and building networks.

Approach

Over the past years, the regional Girls in ICT Day celebrations have involved the engagement of girls and young women from different schools together in activities to showcase their digital skills, share knowledge and exchange experiences and aspirations in the ICT sector. The 2024 approach sought to increase the number of girls joining the event, and it was hosted at one of the schools in Addis Ababa and allowed for more girls to participate and contribute to the event. Furthermore, this approach helped to foster ownership and sustainability of the initiative and set an example for other schools not only in Addis Ababa but also in the other regions to be part of the initiative in a collective effort to bridge the digital gender divide. The 2025 event will be held along the same lines as in 2024, with more schools engaged and brought together at a common venue for the celebrations.

In preparation for the event, the region will undertake training of young girls under the African Girls Can Code Course through physical bootcamps in Ethiopia. The target is to train at least 100 girls who will be recognized and awarded certificates at the Girls in ICT Day celebrations.

Expected Outcomes:

- Through engagement of the schools in preparations for the event, lay a foundation that will foster the ownership of the Girls in ICT Day initiative at national level for sustainability and scale up.
- Gain a better understanding of the current gaps, challenges and opportunities within Ethiopia in developing and strengthening digital skills among girls, young women, and youth, among others.
- Sharing of knowledge and exchange of experiences from mentors, project beneficiaries and others to inspire the girls and young women to leverage digital technologies, develop and strengthen their digital skills to actively engage and contribute to the digital transformation process in Ethiopia.
- Build a community among the young girls, mentors, project beneficiaries and the local digital ecosystem to facilitate continuous learning and knowledge sharing on gender related digital inclusion Ethiopia and the region.
- Strengthened networks and support systems for young girls pursuing careers in ICT.
- Concrete recommendations for policy makers to support gender inclusivity in the digital sector.