

International Day of the Girl 2021, 11 October

Digital generation, our generation

In 2021, we commemorate the Generation Equality Forum (GEF), launching 5-year commitments from civil society leaders, governments, corporations and change makers from around the world for bold gender equality impacts. At the same time, we are in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has accelerated digital platforms for learning, earning and connecting, while also highlighting girls' diverse digital realities.

The gender digital divide in connectivity, devices and use, skills and jobs, is real. It is an inequity and exclusion gap across geographies and generations that is our challenge to address. If the digital revolution is to be for all, with all, by all. Let's seize the momentum to drive action and accountability of GEF commitments made, for and with girls to achieve a bold vision of bridging the digital gender divide.

Theme: Digital generation, Our generation

Girls know their digital realities and the solutions they need to excel on their diverse pathways as technologists for freedom of expression, joy, and boundless potential. Let's amplify the diversity of these tech trailblazers while simultaneously widening the pathways so that every girl, this generation of girls, regardless of race, gender, language, ability, economic status and geographic origins, lives their full potential.

Gender equality in digital literacy is also a driver of economic growth, a competitive business, and a national advantage. Yet currently:

- The global internet user gender gap is growing, from 11% in 2013 to 17% in 2019, and widest in the world's least developed countries at 43%
- 2.2 billion people below the age of 25 do not have internet access at home, with girls more likely to be cut off.
- Globally, the percentage of females among Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduates is below 15% in over two-thirds of countries.
- And in middle and higher-income countries, only 14% of girls who were top performers in science or mathematics expected to work in science and engineering compared to 25% of top-performing boys.
- Only 22% of Artificial Intelligence (AI) professionals globally are women, a massive gender gap in who is currently at the heart of designing the algorithms that will impact all our lives

Source: UNICEF

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