International Day of the Girl 2021
9th Annual Events Concept Note

This year’s celebration of the International Day of the Girl demands a continued innovative approach to building connection through digital spaces while emphasizing inclusion of voices often left out of these digital spaces. The Working Group on Girls, Member States Canada, Peru, Turkey, as well as UNICEF, UN Women, and UNFPA seek to put girls at the forefront to share their experiences, to listen to a diversity of girls to hear what they need, and to partner with them and key stakeholders in highlighting sustainable and innovative solutions to issues that they face. In our consultations with girls, they have emphasized “the importance of digital literacy, reliable electricity, devices, and the internet, and how they can impact the way girls interact, educate themselves, and participate in political discourse,” and that “closing the digital gender divide and ensuring access to the internet is crucial.” Given the lack of research and data on the gender digital divide for girls (UNICEF Review), providing this space to hear from girls directly is critical to understand how to address the issue. Thus, this year, in conjunction with UNICEF’s IDG 2021 Theme “Digital Generation, Our Generation,” on this 9th annual marking of IDG, the WGG’s theme for the Girls Speak Out is: “Closing the Digital Divide to Accelerate Opportunity.”

Girls’ Speak Out Event: On 11 October 2021, girl activists and girl advocates will participate in a virtual roundtable designed to deliver unscripted and authentic dialogue between girl leaders, their partners, and other decision makers involved in addressing the digital divide. In a candid girl-led conversation among girl activists, UN agency representatives, leaders, and private sector stakeholders, girls will share how they are impacted by the digital divide and engage in meaningful dialogues around existing innovative solutions and additional resources they need to be able to fully engage in an ever-increasingly digital-dependent world. The discussion will also provide space for key stakeholders to share how they are using their influence to close the gender digital divide.

In addition, a girl-led, girl-moderated webinar of the discussion will be broadcast concurrently, to enhance girls’ participation in the discussion. Key points made and issues raised in the webinar discussion will also be recorded for continued advocacy purposes.

Girl Activists and Advocates and distinguished members of the UN community and commitment makers aligned to the Generation Equality Action Coalition for Technology and Innovation will respond to the monologues and questions put forth by girls, and speak to how they can support girls’ access to digital technology globally.
IDG 2021 Girls Speak Out Speakers

Girl Activists

- Girl Activist- Isidora, Girls Advisory Group, UN Women, Chile
- Girl Activist- Susan, Save the Children, Bolivia
- Girl Activist- Louise, Tech Trailblazer UNICEF, Brazil
- Girl Activist- Melisa, Global G.L.O.W., Cameroon
- Girl Activist- Vonesha, Girl Scouts of the USA

Member States & UN Agencies

- Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, New York- Richard Arbeiter
- Representative from the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations
- Representative from the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations
- UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director, Sima Sami Bahous
- Dr. Julitta Onabanjo, Director of the Technical Division, UNFPA

Civil Society & Private Sector

- Pamela A. Mallinga, Global Head of Impact, Girl Effect
- Stacie June Shelton, Global Head of Education & Advocacy, Dove Self-Esteem Project with UNICEF