

Press Release

On International Girls in ICT Day, Graduate Women International calls for concerted efforts to attract girls and young women into the ICT sector

Geneva, Switzerland, 28 April 2016 – on Girls in ICT Day, Graduate Women International (GWI) calls for states, policy makers and businesses to make a concerted effort to harness the educational potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and to ensure greater uptake of girls and women into (ICTs).

Evidence clearly indicates that women are under-represented in ICT sector employment. Women account for less than 20% of ICT specialists. At the global level, women account for 30% of operations technicians, only 15% of managers and a mere 11% of strategy and planning professionals in the ICT sectorⁱ. Yet the opportunities in ICTs are plentiful. The demand for people with engineering and technology qualifications is high. There are a great variety of roles to fill in the sector, and pay and prospects are attractive, especially compared to female-dominated careers.

Greater access to education through ICTs can extend the reach and possibilities of formal and informal education. Young people should have access to ICTs and be equipped with a range of digital skills, including coding. ICTs can reduce youth unemployment and promote social and economic development.

Catherine Bell, President of GWI, states: “Encouraging women and girls to pursue ICT careers fosters a more dynamic technology sector, with extensive benefits for companies and societies. A more gender-balanced workforce reflects the customer base more accurately, enhances productivity and innovation and leads to better financial results.”

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 80 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls’ and women’s global organisation advocating for women’s rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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ⁱ Tandon, N. (2012), “A Bright Future in ICTs: Opportunities for a New Generation of Women”, International Telecommunication Union, http://girlsiniict.org/sites/default/files/pages/itu_bright_future_for_women_in_ictenglish.pdf