



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, OCTOBER 11, 2024

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD, 2024

As we celebrate this important day, we uphold our commitment to investing in the futures of girls across Nigeria. By amplifying their voices and supporting their aspirations, we can collectively work towards a society where every girl has the opportunity to lead and succeed. It is our responsibility to champion the vision of a future where girls are not only seen but heard and where they play an active role in shaping policies that affect their lives and communities.

The Initiative for Research, Innovation and Advocacy in Development (IRIAD) and The Electoral Hub commemorate the International Day of the Girl Child on October 11, 2024, under the theme **"Girls' Vision for the Future."** This day serves as a powerful reminder of the unique challenges that girls face globally, while simultaneously celebrating their potential as change-makers in society.

In December 2011, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Day of the Girl Child, which was first observed on October 11, 2012¹. This initiative arose from a growing recognition of the pressing issues that girls encounter, including systemic gender-based discrimination, violence, and barriers to education and healthcare. The day aims to promote girls' empowerment and highlight their rights, fostering an environment where they can thrive and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

In Nigeria, the situation for girls is particularly alarming. The country faces many challenges that disproportionately affect young females. Issues such as child marriage remain prevalent, with millions of girls forced into early marriages that curtail their education and limit their future prospects. According to recent statistics, 38% of girls in Nigeria are currently out of school². This educational gap not only stunts their personal development but also has far-reaching implications for the nation's economic growth and social stability. Moreover, gender-based violence continues to be a significant barrier for girls in Nigeria. Reports indicate that many girls experience violence at home, in schools, or within their communities³. This pervasive culture of violence not only affects their physical well-being but also undermines their self-esteem and aspirations. The observance of the International Day of the Girl Child is crucial for raising awareness about these disparities and advocating for policies that support girls' rights while empowering them to envision a brighter future.

At IRIAD and The Electoral Hub, we are deeply concerned with matters relating to the girl child. Our commitment goes beyond mere acknowledgment; we actively engage in advocacy efforts aimed at promoting policies that protect girls' rights and ensure their access to quality education and healthcare services. We believe that every girl deserves the opportunity to pursue her dreams without fear or limitation. Our research and advocacy initiatives focus on illuminating the challenges faced by girls in Nigeria, providing data-driven insights that inform

¹ <https://www.unesco.org/en/days/girl-child>

² <https://malala.org/countries/nigeria>

³ <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/media/7906/file/IMPACT%20OF%20VOILENCE%20IN%20SCHOOLS%20EXECUTIVE%20SUMMARY.pdf>

effective interventions. By understanding the specific barriers that hinder girls' progress, we can develop targeted strategies that address these issues. Furthermore, we are dedicated to fostering innovation through programs that empower girls with education, leadership training, and community engagement opportunities. We aim to create spaces where girls can express themselves freely and develop the skills necessary for leadership roles.

As we celebrate this important day, we uphold our commitment to investing in the futures of girls across Nigeria. By amplifying their voices and supporting their aspirations, we can collectively work towards a society where every girl has the opportunity to lead and succeed. It is our responsibility to champion the vision of a future where girls are not only seen but heard and where they play an active role in shaping policies that affect their lives and communities.

In conclusion, let us unite in our efforts to create an environment where every girl can dream big and achieve her goals. Together, we can build a future where gender equity is not just an aspiration but a reality, ensuring that every girl has the chance to contribute her unique vision for a better world. As we mark this International Day of the Girl Child, we urge Nigerians to commit themselves to this noble cause with renewed vigor and determination.

*#EmpowerGirls #DayOfTheGirl #GirlsRightsMatters #GirlsVisionForTheFuture
#InternationalDayOfTheGirl*

Signed

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ABOUT IRIAD AND THE ELECTORAL HUB

The **Initiative for Research, Innovation, and Advocacy in Development** (IRIAD) is an interdisciplinary knowledge and advocacy hub committed and focused on developing a critical understanding of governance processes and regimes from research, documentation, policy engagements, public education and impact advocacy.

The Electoral Hub is an interdisciplinary knowledge, policy and advocacy hub committed to promoting electoral knowledge, integrity, and accountability in Nigeria. Our aim is to strengthen electoral governance and accountability in Nigeria through the provision of data, critical and contextualized analysis, and solutions to improve the credibility and integrity of the electoral process.

**Knowledge| Innovation | Inclusion|
#Advocacy #Results #Impact
...promoting electoral knowledge, accountability, and integrity**