



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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PRESS RELEASE

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2024 INTERNATIONAL GIRLS IN ICT DAY

THEME: Leadership

Today we celebrate the International Girls in ICT Day with the theme "Leadership." The International Girls in ICT Day is earmarked by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) for every last Thursday of April annually, at a national level.

This day gives prominence to the efforts by the government and stakeholders alike in recognizing and encouraging participation of more girls and women in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

The government of Prime Minister James Marape through my Ministry of Information and Communication Technology call on all our stakeholders, industry players and development partners to join in the celebrations by appreciating the roles of women and girls in the ICT.

This year's theme "Leadership" challenges us to look at where our females are in the fields of ICT and STEM, especially in supervisory and leadership roles. The theme also provides us with an opportunity to encourage more women participation in leadership roles in these fields.

This year's global theme stands to achieve these goals for Girls in ICT;

- ☐ Encourage girls and young women to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- ☐ Inspire girls and young women to work in STEM careers.
- ☐ Encourage the community and promote collaboration through partnership.

The Government through the years has invested and supported the agenda of women empowerment and leadership in various platforms and programs implemented through partnerships driven by development partners and civil Societies.

While we applaud women leaders in the field of ICT and STEM, let us dwell on the purpose of International Girls in ICT Day, and that is to encourage girls to develop interest in the ICT field and pursue careers in this field.

As the Minister responsible for ICT in the Marape-Rosso led Government, I thank the National ICT Authority (NICTA) in supporting this call for the past 9 years through its NICTA Girls in ICT Tertiary Scholarship Program. Many young women who passed through this program are now working in the industry, and many more are pursuing graduate studies in the ICT field.

NICTA has been actively overseeing and promoting the Girls in ICT program in Papua New Guinea (PNG) with the primary goal of promoting gender balance in the ICT sector through targeted support and assistance for young girls in tertiary education.

The Government of Papua New Guinea is continuing to assess and set policies to ensure a safe online environment for all citizens, and in particular, for our girls and young women to be granted equal access to the usage of internet and digital tools in a safe and secure cyber environment.

Our country still faces significant challenges such as expanding access to digital services, improving the quality of ICT infrastructure, access to reliable

and affordable digital infrastructure and services. These are some major areas that we all must work together to resolve those challenges.

Let us commemorate this day, aimed at encouraging girls and young women to pursue careers in the dynamic field of ICT. For us in Papua New Guinea, it is also about bridging the digital divide by addressing the disparity of human capacity in technology.

I commend girls who are currently pursuing ICT studies, and women who are in the ICT sector serving as ICT professionals. I urge you all to work hard in ensuring a safe ICT sector for everyone.

I wish all the Girls in the ICT field, a successful journey in their career Paths and would like to also encourage NICTA in collaboration with the Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT), and other key stakeholders to continue the Girls in ICT initiative.

I look forward to building a dynamic human capacity that is crucial to PNG digital aspirations by way of re-emphasizing NICTA's on-going commitment towards this agenda of encouraging more girls to step into the field of ICT and STEM.

It now gives me great pleasure to announce the winners of this year's NICTA Girls in ICT Tertiary Scholarship.

1. **Naomi Aita** - Bachelor of Business in Information Technology, University of Technology
2. **Rallyanne Salo** - Bachelor in Mathematics and Computer Science, Divine Word University
3. **Theodorah Roy** - Bachelor in Business in Information Technology, University of Technology and
4. **Tatiana Ali** - Bachelor in Business in Information Technology, University of Technology.

Congratulations to these four up-coming female leaders and I wish you all the very best in your academic journey. This inclusion now brings the total number of NICTA Girls in ICT Scholars to thirteen (13).

To date, fifteen have graduated and a total of thirty-two (32) girls have passed through this program since its inception nine years ago.

I wish you all a Happy International Girls in ICT Day.

HON. TIMOTHY MASIU, MP

Minister for Information and Communications Technology,
and Member for South Bougainville

