



**7th March 2023**

### **International Women's Day Press Release**

The International Women's Day commemorated on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March annually is a focal point in the women's rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, violence, and abuse against women. This year's international theme is, **“DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality.”** As the world becomes increasingly dependent on digital technology, women and girls still face the risk of widening social and economic inequalities that still plague various spheres of development.

Even though as a nation, we have enacted several laws and policies to promote gender equality, none of them are specific with clear provisions on reducing the gender digital divide. We are still grappling with, systemic barriers that hinder women's meaningful participation at all levels. The list of injustices and life stories of women who have suffered because of gender inequalities is endless. Even in digital advancement, a gender responsive approach is vital to ensure that no one is left behind.

Digital tools are a powerful vehicle for bringing women's rights issues to the attention of a wider public, galvanising actions around the world and encouraging policy makers to step up commitments to gender equality. The use of innovations and digital platforms has proved be an effective lever to amplify women's voices and identify strategies to better facilitate their impact on decision-making processes. The women's rights movement must capitalise on engaging with a cross-section of gender equality actors, from civil society to governments, as a means of promoting women's voices in policy-making fora.

International Women's Day is an invitation to reflect on the contribution that women and girls make in society and do right by them. As we celebrate the achievements of women in advancing their rights, we must also be intentional on acknowledging the barriers that they have had to overcome and work towards eliminating them. Injustices against women must not go unnamed or unchallenged, we must have equality translated from theory to practice. The government as the primary duty bearer must play its role of upholding the rights of women and put an end to the culture of tokenism. Priorities must be aligned to make meaningful contributions towards the women's cause. As a collective, all stakeholders, development partners should celebrate this day by making society a better place for women and girls to live in.

“As women achieve power, the barriers will fall. As society sees what women can do, as women see what women can do, there will be more women out there doing things, and we'll all be better off for it.”- Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

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