

Press Release

Lagos, Nigeria

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International Women's Day 2023

IMS calls for Increased Capacity Building and Deepened Political Participation of Women.

The Institute for Media and Society, IMS, has called on stakeholders to commit to taking action to promote increased capacity-building on digital-literacy and deepened political participation of women to strengthen democracy and development in Nigeria.

This call is made as the world today commemorates The International Women's Day, IWD a day set aside to recognize the social, economic, cultural, and political accomplishments of women, and to encourage people to speak out against discrimination based on gender and build an inclusive society.

The theme for this year is "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". This theme is aligned with the priority theme for the upcoming 67th Session of the United Nation on the Status of Women (CSW-67), "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls".

IMS notes that this day is particularly significant in Nigeria because the history of the nation can only be completed with reference to meaningful contributions of strong, tenacious and goal-getting women who have enhanced the development of the country.

It is on record that Nigerian women have continued to perform actively in all areas of our national life and turn out accomplishments which deserve to be honoured all the time.

As we celebrate women in Nigeria and the world over, we also want to acknowledge challenges that still need to be addressed so that women will be able to realize their full potentials and take their contributions to greater heights.

Women are still under-represented in politics. The statistics of women in elective and appointive positions in Nigeria sufficiently indicates a far cry from expectations. Barriers are stacked against women within political parties and in the electoral process. We use this occasion to call on all stakeholders, state and non-state actors, to renew commitment towards addressing under-representation of women in political and public offices.

IMS acknowledges that the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and national government policies have amplified pre-existing challenges encountered by women and girls, such as poverty, domestic violence, education, healthcare and others. We recommend that government should prioritise women and girls as it fashions solutions to these problems through various sectors.

Our reflections on the theme of this year's IWD also throws up critical observations on the digital reality in Nigeria. We see clear gaps in the areas of skillsets, tools and software.

We urge the government, Civil Society, and other stakeholders to take steps to promote access to hardware and to digital information, reduce online harm for the girl-child and women.

Importantly, equitable access to digital technology and digital information will create multiplier effects for the girl-child, and women to flourish in the society.

Dr. Akin Akingbulu.

Executive Director

Institute for Media and Society

For more information, please contact:

Timothy Bamidele

+234-8056544562

timothy.bamidele@imesoimeso.org