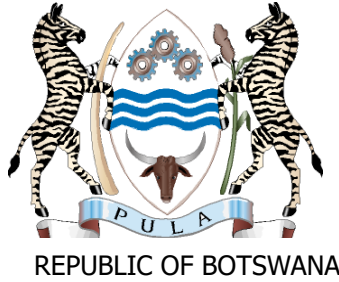


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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**WORLD TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SOCIETY DAY**  
**COMMEMORATION**

The Republic of Botswana through the Ministry of Communications, Knowledge and Technology in collaboration with the ICT Sector is scheduled to commemorate the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022. This year the commemorations will be held in Mmathubudukwane village, Police Grounds.

The event is commemorated annually by International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Member States to showcase and help raise awareness of what Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) offer, the immense opportunities and their life-changing power if harnessed properly and effectively. ITU Member States are encouraged to ensure universal access to ICTs, bridge the digital divide, and empower citizens with digital skills to benefit significantly from new and emerging technologies.

The theme for the 2022 commemoration is; **"Digital Technologies for the Older Persons and Healthy Ageing."** The theme challenges Member States to reaffirm their commitment to accelerating digital technologies to bring older persons online, improve access and empower them to make use of digital technologies effectively for their health and well-being.

Furthermore it focuses on combating discrimination, reducing inequalities and promoting healthy lifestyles through the use of smart technologies.

Though older persons are not as technologically savvy like the younger generation, they should be able to use digital technologies to keep in touch with family and friends, get access to medical care and financial services as well as to be up to date with the latest information. This commemoration will therefore be used to share with the elderly, useful information they will need on the proper use of ICTs.

Preceding the WTISD is the Girls in ICT Day scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at Mabalane Community Hall. The event is commemorated annually to create awareness and encourage girls and young women to pursue careers and studies in ICTs. The Information Communication and Technology (ICT) sector has over the years been dominated by males globally. Botswana has not been an exception. Although efforts have been made to bridge the gap, inequalities still persist, hence the need to increase and advocate for comprehensive knowledge and resources to equip the Girl child with skills to explore the digital world while fulfilling the goals of the Connect 2030 Agenda, one of which is '**inclusiveness.**'

The commemoration this year will be held under the theme: **Access and Safety**. The theme emphasises on promoting and advancing resources to address the obstacles of digital access and safe use of online platforms by girls and young women who are often vulnerable to online scams, bullying and shaming. As part of this year's commemoration of the Girls in ICT Day, secondary school girls from Kgatleng Region were trained on coding, cyber-security as well as entrepreneurial skills using ICTs.

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