



## International Day of the Girl

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an education to being forced into child marriage, **girls face a myriad of obstacles that prevent them from realising their full potential.**

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**This is why ActionAid runs a child sponsorship programme in many parts of the world to support girls and their families.** Find out how we're making a difference to girls' lives around the world.

## What is International Day of the Girl?

Day of the Girl is an occasion observed internationally to **raise awareness of the obstacles** that girls all over the world face and to celebrate and reinforce their achievements.

## When is International Day of the Girl 2021 taking place?

International Day of the Girl takes place on **11th October** every year.

## Why do we celebrate it?

Girls face distinct disadvantages for being both young and female. Around 62 million girls around the world have no access to education<sup>1</sup> and less than 40% of countries provide girls and boys with equal access to education<sup>2</sup>.

We believe that investing in [girl's education](#) not only equips girls with skills and knowledge to grow and prosper, but it helps their siblings, family, and wider community to thrive as well.

Girls who stay in school are more likely to **support themselves, look after their health, avoid early marriage and pregnancy and contribute to society.**

One of the ways we support girls' right to education is through our [child sponsorship](#) work. Sponsoring a girl helps to pay for new school buildings, school fees and school supplies such as books and equipment.

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## How to invest in a better future for girls

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# History of International Day of the Girl

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International Day of the Girl was set as day of observance by the United Nations in 2012 and the first International Day of the Girl was held on 11th October 2012.

Its mission is “**to help galvanise worldwide enthusiasm for goals to better girls’ lives, providing an opportunity for them to show leadership and reach their full potential.**”

The day is marked to raise awareness of the **unique challenges faced by girls** and celebrates the **inclusion of girls' rights as a distinct cohort in research, policy and development plans.**

Up until recently international law and global development plans did not consider the **nature of the added disadvantage girls face in realising their human rights**, so Day of the Girl marks this important inclusion in human rights history every year.

Each year, **International Day of the Girl** has a distinct theme:

- In 2012, the theme was 'ending child marriage'.
- In 2013, the theme was 'innovating for girls' education'.
- In 2014, the theme was 'Empowering Adolescent Girls: Ending the Cycle of Violence'.
- In 2015, the theme was 'The Power of Adolescent Girl: Vision for 2030'.
- In 2016, the theme was 'Girls' Progress = Goals' Progress: What Counts for Girls'.
- In 2017, the theme was 'Empower Girls: Before, during and after crises'.

• In 2018, the theme was 'With Her: A Skilled Girl Force'

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- <https://web.archive.org/web/20140701153244/http://www.usaid.gov/letgirlslearn>
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/events/prizes-and-celebrations/celebrations/international-days/international-womens-day-2014/women-ed-facts-and-figure/>

Top image: Valeria, 5, during a creative workshop run by ActionAid in El Estor, Guatemala. Karin Schermbrucker/ActionAid

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