

TUI Care Foundation supports UNICEF's Techno Girls in South Africa

- *TUI Care Foundation supports new classroom-based coaching programme aiming to reach 5,000 girls – addressing their performance in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).*
- *Programme works through public private partnerships and seeks to reduce the skills shortage while contributing to the promotion of gender equality in South Africa.*
- *Strengthening participants' professional capacity, increasing mutual understanding between key networks of professionals, and expanding girls' interest in STEM careers by exposing them to female role models.*

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Berlin, 20 December 2018. *Techno Girls is an innovative job shadowing programme that promotes girls' participation and learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) – fields in which boys consistently outperform girls in South Africa. Through the programme, young females aged 15 to 18 are identified in underprivileged schools and encouraged to participate in corporate mentorship and skills development initiatives. This helps them gain confidence and links their school lessons to the skills they'll need to succeed in the 'real' working world. Techno Girl also provides life skills training to further empower these young women.*

TUI Care Foundation supports the programme as part of its four year collaboration with UNICEF, which was signed earlier this year with a focus on education in emergency programmes.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of TUI Care Foundation, explains: "We carefully select our partners and projects to bring about real change through education. We are delighted to see the participants of the "Techno Girls" programme thriving; particularly as young women typically face much bigger challenges than their male counterparts worldwide. We want to give these intelligent and curious young women the support and skills they need in order to make informed career choices and pursue their own path with confidence."

Suzanne Laszlo, Director of UNICEF Netherlands, says: "UNICEF cannot fulfil its mission to make this world a better place for children without the support of our corporate partners. We are happy and grateful that TUI Care Foundation supports one of our education and empowerment projects for girls, Techno Girls. Every child has the right to grow up and develop healthily in a safe environment. Our joint efforts will help protect the most vulnerable children and youth to grow up and become strong citizens."

South Africa has made great strides towards achieving gender equality in education. There is almost full gender parity in primary and secondary school enrolment and attendance. However, despite concerted efforts and sound policies, gender inequality continues to persist just like in so many other parts of the world.

In South Africa, girls have not been encouraged to pursue the traditionally male-dominated subjects of technology and STEM, and often perform poorly in these fields when compared with boys. TUI Care Foundation and UNICEF believe that in order to effectively counter the gender gap, young women need to be empowered while at school through the implementation of a concerted strategy – involving the public, private and third sector. The Techno Girls project not only tries to bridge the gender gap, but also helps to fill the current shortage of skills in science, technology and engineering in South Africa. With this purpose, 5,000 girls from underprivileged public schools will be provided with the opportunity to join the Techno Girls programme in 2018/2019. 2,500 of them will be supported to realise their full potential through internship and job placement initiatives. Beyond formal education and training, girls participating in the programme also receive life skills training (aiming to reach up to 8,000 girls). TUI Care Foundation is specifically supporting the new classroom-based STEM coaching programme aiming to reach 5,000 girls.

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Abelina Mokgamo, one of the young women in the project, explains: “Techno Girls enabled me to unlock my full potential and encouraged me to do better academically.” A key premise of the program is also that female students are exposed to role models in STEM careers, who will subsequently motivate the students and support the improvement of their learning outcomes in the STEM fields. Patience Mphuthi, another participant in the programme: “Techno Girls gave me the opportunity to meet with successful women who were willing to empower other young women”. Soon Patience shall become a role model herself for others to look up to.

About TUI Care Foundation

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving communities all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore; 100% of the donations go to partners and projects with all operating costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world’s leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

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