

Press Release

GWI celebrates International Day of the Girl Child with a flash mob dance to focus international attention on investment into girls

Geneva, Switzerland 11 October 2016 – [Graduate Women International](#) (GWI) along with leading international gender champion partners is celebrating International Day of the Girl Child with a flash mob dance at the Place des Nations at 13.00 on 11 October, Geneva, Switzerland. The event aims to increase awareness of the [gender inequality](#) faced by girls worldwide including the right and access to quality education and protection from early and forced child marriage.

The event will also focus attention on the future of girls, who play a pivotal role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Investing in girls is a strategy for success.

The world's 1.1 billion girls younger than 18 should be properly equipped to take on the future. Investing in their education and safety allows them to build more stable lives and to create a more peaceful and prosperous world for us all. There is a direct link between progress for girls, their health and progress for society: An extra year of secondary school for girls can increase their eventual adult wages by 15 to 25 per cent¹; and if all girls completed secondary education in low and lower middle-income countries, under five child mortality could be cut in half².

Yet the ambitious drive for gender equality in the (SDGs) highlights the disadvantage and discrimination suffered by girls everywhere on a daily basis. Existing gaps in data on girls and young women, lack of systematic analysis, and insufficient use of existing data limits our ability to monitor and address the challenges and wellbeing of girls. Disaggregate data on girls including dimensions such as ethnicity, age, disability, and migration status, would help us to better understand exactly which girls are most disadvantaged and where.

On this fifth anniversary of the International Day of the Girl Child, GWI reaffirms the need to enhance national capacity and to collect, analyse and disseminate gender data to improve statistics on education access, gender-based violence, adolescent pregnancy and other priorities for girls and young women. Girls must be empowered with the skills, knowledge and confidence to gain personal and economic independence, which reduces their vulnerable position within society and narrows the gender power imbalance.

GWI President Geeta Desai states: "GWI calls for investment into data in order to effectively hold officials at all levels accountable for creating change that truly improves girls' lives. Only by collecting and analysing girl-focused, girl-relevant and sex-disaggregated data, can we

¹ United Nations, Interagency Task Force on Rural Women, Fact Sheet: Rural Women and the Millennium Development Goals and UNICEF (2011) http://www.unicef.org/media/media_58417.htm

² United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14: Teaching and Learning: Achieving quality for all Gender Summary, UNESCO, Paris, 2014, p. 20.



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

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understand the opportunities and challenges girls face, and identify and track progress towards solutions to their most critical problems.”

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a membership-based international nongovernmental organisation (NGO) based in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 80 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls’ and women’s global organisation advocating for women’s rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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