

The launch of IFUW manifestos gathers strong support for girls' and women's education

Geneva, Switzerland, 20 January 2015 – The International Federation of University Women ([IFUW](#)) today launched its five [education manifestos](#) at *Club suisse de la presse* in Geneva, Switzerland. The manifestos examine the lifelong course of education for girls and women, including highlighting the barriers of access thereto, and provide concrete policy recommendations to address the challenges. The event was attended by representatives from diplomatic missions, international organisations including several United Nations bodies, non-governmental organisations, academics and members of the public with an interest in education and women's rights. The launch provided a platform for IFUW to share its position on how and why it is working towards increasing lifelong learning for all girls and women worldwide.

Four of the five IFUW manifestos examine specific steps in the education cycle: [secondary education](#); [tertiary education](#); [continuing education](#); and [non-traditional education](#), identifying and addressing the distinctive challenges facing girls and women. The fifth manifesto "[Education for All](#)" provides a succinct overview of the necessity to educate girls and women generally, emphasising that "access to education is both an internationally recognised human right, as well as a fundamental enabler to achieve economic growth, human development, peace and stability."

Executive Director of IFUW, Danièle Castle, opened the event by introducing the work of IFUW, emphasising the persistent challenges still facing girls and women in accessing quality, lifelong education in the twenty-first century: "IFUW is acutely aware that despite the significant progress that has been made towards achieving universal primary education, as laid out in the Millennium Development Goals, the statistics show that in many countries children, and in particular girls, have no access to secondary education, let alone tertiary education. Yet, there is an increasing body of evidence indicating that educating girls up to tertiary level significantly improves the lives, health and economies of families, communities and countries. In business and academia, women are often in a minority and are side-lined for training and promotion. IFUW works to combat this gender discrimination and believes that policy makers, education providers and the private sector all have a role to play in increasing access to education and career opportunities for girls and women."

IFUW advocates for the inclusion of both contemporary and traditional approaches to learning that extend beyond formal means, institutions and sectors. New and traditional technologies, such as mobile device applications and radio programmes, can play a critical role in providing alternative methods of education - especially in bringing learning resources to isolated communities. IFUW also strongly promotes greater representation of girls and women within the sectors of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), where diversity of ideas is essential to boosting innovation, competitiveness and economic development.

The International Federation of University Women ([IFUW](#)) is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and has an international membership. Founded in 1919, IFUW 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. IFUW is in special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO.

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