



GRADUATE WOMEN  
INTERNATIONAL (GWI)

Chemin du Grand-Montfleury, 48  
CH-1290 Versoix, Geneva  
Switzerland  
www.graduatewomen.org

# GWIMANIFESTO

# Education for all

Graduate Women International (GWI), founded in 1919, is a worldwide, non-governmental organisation of women graduates, advocating for women's rights, equality, and empowerment through access to quality secondary, tertiary, continuing and non-traditional education.

## GWI mission

Our vision is for 100% of girls and women in the world to achieve quality education beyond primary school. GWI provides a global voice for women graduates, working for the adoption and implementation of international agreements that will protect and benefit all girls and women. GWI also develops and implements fellowships and projects, which aim to increase gender empowerment by supporting girls' and women's access to quality education. GWI enjoys special consultative status with ECOSOC and is an active advocate with the United Nations, UNESCO and other international agencies. These agencies play an important role in supporting country governments to develop and implement policies to reduce inequality and stimulate development.

## GWI means of implementing change

Through cooperation between our national members and international staff at headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, GWI implements projects and initiatives on local, national, regional and international levels that focus on promoting the rights of girls and women to access secondary, tertiary, continuing and non-traditional education.

## GWI priority areas

Recognising that completion of primary school is not of itself sufficient to prepare and equip girls and women with the skills and knowledge they need to realise their full personal, academic and professional potential, GWI advocates for four post-primary steps of education:

### • SECONDARY EDUCATION

Basic literacy and numeracy skills developed at primary school are not enough; quality second-level education provides girls and young women with the academic and personal tools that are vital to progressing further in higher education, work and society. Quality curricula should include the seven domains of learning: physical well-being; social and emotional; culture and the arts; literacy and communication; learning approaches and cognition; numeracy and mathematics; science and technology.\*

### • TERTIARY EDUCATION

Access to quality tertiary education (encompassing all domains of higher learning) equips women with high-level academic knowledge and qualifications. This enables them to take up professional positions, substantially increases earning potential and empowers them with the skills necessary to be future leaders. There are still many barriers for women and girls to access all tertiary education fields and modes. This is especially true in developing countries and in rural areas, where increased institutional

support and long-term commitment are needed to close the gap in participation and achievement for girls and women.

### • CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing learning is the ongoing, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of formal and informal knowledge throughout a woman's lifespan, including learning new skills within the workplace. It enhances social inclusion, active citizenship, personal development, self-esteem and sustainability. It occurs within the context of everyday social, family, situational and workplace interactions and in wider society. Continuing education is both a means of empowerment and an investment in tomorrow's future leaders and decision-makers.

### • NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Non-traditional education is the acquiring of knowledge and skills through learning methods that extend beyond formal means, institutions and sectors. Advancements in technology as well as informal education environments facilitate non-traditional education, including by giving due recognition to hands-on work experience in a particular field. Career gender stereotyping and socio-cultural norms that typecast men and women into different professions have resulted in a distinctive gender gap in certain sectors, where women are particularly underrepresented in innovation-related industries. Empowering women through education, including through accessing contemporary forms of learning, enables them to access these non-traditional livelihoods.

► **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

► **RECOGNISING** THAT GIRLS AND WOMEN ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE AND MANY NEED INCREASED SUPPORT TO ACCESS QUALITY SECONDARY, TERTIARY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

► **ACKNOWLEDGING** THAT INVESTING IN EDUCATION FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN THROUGH THEIR LIFE COURSE IS CRITICAL TO REDUCE INEQUALITY AND TO STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT



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## Education for all

GWI calls on governments, education sectors, civil society and the private sector to take collective responsibility to:

- **Create, fund and implement programmes that ensure women and girls can access quality education throughout their life span and from all available educational sources, whether formal or informal.**
- **Work to limit influence of cultural and traditional practices on girls' and women's right to education.**
- **Promote equal opportunities and the realisation of human rights for all through providing training in basic human rights, including women's rights, and funding to support the realisation of those rights.**
- **Assist access to education in those sectors of society where women and girls are most marginalised through natural disaster, war, genocide and post-conflict dislocation.**
- **Recognise the universal nature of the right to access education, where minority women including those of indigenous and rural backgrounds are provided with access to quality education throughout their life course.**
- **Ensure that girls and women with disabilities can access appropriate learning facilities and training programmes.**
- **Improve women's access to vocational training, science, mathematics, engineering, technology, non-traditional education and livelihoods, and continuing education.**
- **Encourage and enable women and girls to apply their knowledge and skills in leadership and decision-making in all forms of public and private life.**



### GWI AND ITS NATIONAL FEDERATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS WORK TO:

- Promote cooperation, networking, support and understanding among graduate women
- Represent and advocate the views of graduate women in international fora
- Enable graduate women to use their expertise to effect change at all levels
- Provide an interdisciplinary approach to tackling human rights and education issues related to girls and women.

\*UNESCO Institute for Statistics and the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution (2013) Toward Universal Learning Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force