



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On International Day of the Girl, GWI celebrates “Skilled GirlForce” and girls’ future potential

Geneva, Switzerland, 11 October 2018— Since 2012, the International Day of the Girl aims to drive global attention to the challenges girls face worldwide, while promoting girls’ empowerment and human rights. This year’s theme “[With Her: A Skilled GirlForce](#)” shines a light on the pressing need to enable every girl to acquire the necessary skills and training for employability in a world of work that is being transformed by innovation and automation. Educated and skilled workers are in high demand, but roughly a quarter of young people – most of them female – are currently neither employed nor in education or training. Today, GWI stands with girls to develop their skills now and reach their full potential through education at the highest level.

GWI embraces the concept of the Girl Child and many of the organisation’s [resolutions](#) and [advocacy initiatives](#), over the years, have been on the Girl Child. Over the last 15 years, the global community has made significant progress in improving the lives of girls, especially during early childhood. However, what has remained constant is the fact that insufficient investment has been made in addressing the many barriers to the realisation of a girl’s full potential. A pivotal aspect is that of girls’ education, which affects not only the girls themselves but also their children, their community and the economy. GWI remains concerned that around the world, women continue to be disproportionately exposed to lower quality jobs, greater labour market inequalities and longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions.

Ensuring that every girl can join a Skilled GirlForce is integral to the achievement of [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) 8](#) to “increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”. This will also contribute to ensuring that all girls have equal rights, education and opportunities as called for in SDGs 4 and 5.

“The skills, creativity and potential of girls remains largely untapped throughout the global labor market, as girls and young women continue to face pervasive gender-based discrimination and stereotypes”, says Geeta Desai, GWI President. “Now is the time for the global community to invest in our girls by improving the quality, relevance and gender-responsiveness of teaching and learning and create initiatives to support girls’ school to work transition”, she adds.

As an organization committed to improving the education space for girls, GWI aims, through its programmes such as the [Bina Roy Partners in Development](#), generously funded by [VGIF](#), to provide girls and women with opportunities for training and skills development, thus helping them to develop the foundational, transferable and job-specific skills they need to thrive as individuals and professionals.

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with presence in over 60 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 since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

Contributing to this press release is GWI intern, Olivia Flett, Manchester University.

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