



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A shocking 16 million hours per day of girls education are lost due to lack of water

Geneva, Switzerland, 22 March 2019— Access to clean water remains an incredible privilege on a global level, one that is often taken for granted by those in wealthier nations. Although all people in the world should have access to adequate water and sanitation facilities by the year 2057 ([Wateraid](#)), this is 27 years behind schedule; a point of concern for GWI who speaks up for the entire generation of girls who will be left out of school and women left behind in careers because of poor access to clean water.

It's generally understood that in many societies women and girls bear a disproportionate amount of the burden and consequence of irregular access to clean, safe water. Yet, most do not know that some 16 million hours spent per day are spent by women and girls collecting water (United Nations (UN), Global Citizen) in sub-Saharan Africa countries alone. Staggeringly, for 16 million hours per day, women are not pursuing their education.

“Increased participation of women and girls in education and professional environments is an integral step in breaking the cycle of underdevelopment. The international community must come to a consensus on the paramount importance of female participation in empowering institutions and how water access contributes to this participation and in their education”, says GWI President Geeta Desai.

The UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for water and sanitation, SDG 6, aims for universal and equitable access to clean water and adequate sanitation. Access to water underpins public health and is therefore critical to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, through which the global community has agreed to leave no one behind. Increasing water efficiency and improving water management are critical to increasing the number of girls in school.

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.

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