



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Refugee girls: Education is their only weapon

Geneva, Switzerland, 20 June 2019—Every 20 minutes, people worldwide are forced to leave behind their home to escape war, terror or persecution according to the [United Nations](#). Known as refugees, their strength and perseverance are commemorated on World Refugee Day, observed annually on 20 June. GWI calls for global attention to the rights that are stripped from young refugees, including their right to the quality education that could potentially protect them from future dangers.

“Women refugees experience insurmountable challenges at every stage of their journey to safety. Gender- based violence is just one aspect of their lives”, says Geeta Desai, GWI President. “GWI calls upon all countries to provide them with safe harbor, education, healthcare and continuing supports until they can care for themselves”, she adds.

GWI contributes to the global refugee crisis through its [Hegg Hoffet Fun for Displaced Women Graduates](#). The Hegg Hoffet Fund assists graduate women who have been displaced by providing short-term grants for re-entry into the academic and professional fields. By actively creating opportunities for refugee women, GWI is moving the world closer to achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal 4, target 5 that calls for the elimination of gender disparities in education, and to ensure equal access to all levels of education for the vulnerable. “GWI is proud of its Hegg Hoffet Fund that helps refugee women renew their professional credentials in their new country of residence and increases their opportunity for full inclusion into their new societies”, says Desai.

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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Contributing to this press release is GWI intern, Valerie Nam from Boston University.