



GWI UPDATE – 3 February 2021

International Day of Women and Girls in Science
11 February 2021

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On International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Graduate Women International (GWI) celebrates women scientists' vital contribution to the global fight against COVID-19

Click [HERE](#) to access the GWI infographic 

To mark International Day of Women and Girls in Science 2021, Graduate Women International (GWI) has issued an infographic and social media pack, including impactful and easy-to-use resources.

— In this Issue —

- **65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65)**
- **Membership Marketplace: Sign up today!**
- **GWY Young Member Network President, Sudha Srivastava, acrostic showcased by UN Women**
- **IFUWA members make vital contribution to Indian women's and girls' maths empowerment**
- **GWY celebrates women scientists' vital contribution to the fight against COVID-19**
- **GWY calls for increase in domestic funding for education**
- **GWY attends UNESCO Education Day Online Commemoration**
- **United Nations (UN) Representative: Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)**
- **GWY Co-sponsors Corruption Side event: Linking criminal justice and the SDGs in a new way**

— Graduate Women International News —

65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65)

CSW65 will take place from 15 to 26 March 2021. Given the virtual nature of the CSW65, the typical maximum number of 20 participants from an ECOSOC Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) has been waived by UN Women this year. Registration is strictly limited to GWI National Federation and Association (NFA) and Independent members. You must first create an [Indico account](#), then register for CSW65. GWI will thereafter review and approve your registration. **Registration is free. Interested GWI members must register by 18 February, giving GWI time to review and approve your registration before the UN Women deadline. Late registrations cannot be accepted.** Approved registrants will receive direct email communications about CSW-related activities, events, and updates leading up to and during the session.



Alongside the UN Women CSW65 is the NGO Committee on the Status of Women New York (NGO CSW NY) Forum. The Forum functions as the civil society side of CSW65 and holds parallel events. The Forum runs at the same dates as CSW65. This provides civil society, [called Advocates](#), the opportunity to engage in the processes and events of CSW. The Forum and associated parallel events will be held 100% virtual this year.

Registration for the Forum is open and is free. Click [HERE](#) to register for the Forum. Click [HERE](#) for a how to register tutorial.

GWI Parallel Events

Mock Trial – Women and Girl’s Empowerment through Responsive Quality Education (Date/Time to be confirmed). This parallel event highlighting the need for Quality Responsive Education will be held in the form of a mock trial similar to a judicial system complete, with jury and participants.

Women and Corruption (Date/Time to be confirmed). The parallel event will address the GENDERED dimensions of corruption, as women experience corruption in unique and specific ways, and are targeted disproportionately as victims of corruption.

Please go to the [Member Corner CSW65 Documents](#) for more CSW65 information.

— GWI Membership Marketplace —

Membership Marketplace – Sign Up Today!



The GWI Membership Marketplace (MM) is a knowledge sharing platform for GWI members across the world to foster friendship, share skills set and expertise. The GWI MM comprises two streams, an innovative [Peer-to-Peer](#) stream and an [NFA-to-NFA](#) stream. **These excellent Peer-to-Peer activities are currently being offered:**

Information Literacy Skills. Information Literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information.

Early Career Skills: Early Career Skills. This activity will prepare women for acquiring a job. The sessions will cover writing CV, cover letter and motivational letter; how to go through an interview, how to look for a job and basic English terms.

Information and Communication Technology Literacy (ICT). Information and Communication Technology Literacy (ICT). ICT literacy for beginners that includes definition, tools, and skills needed to build ICT proficiency.

Back by popular demand! Spanish language lessons. Learn basic Spanish through stories, vocabulary, songs, etc.

Discussions on the role and challenges of female scientists in academia. Discussions on the role and challenges of female scientists in academia.

Positive Discipline Parenting. Participants will learn tools and skills necessary to create a home environment built on encouragement, cooperation and mutual respect.

Reading at All Ages (Liratoutâge): Learn about organising weekly reading sessions to elderly people living in public or private residences who cannot read anymore for different reasons in order to keep them intellectually alert, informed and part of their society.

The NFA-to-NFA stream, formerly called Twinning, is a virtual platform that offers GWI NFAs the opportunity to join together for a project beneficial to both NFAs and that can be replicated by other NFAs. Currently, projects are being run by the Indian Federation of Women's Associations (IFUWA) with the Egypt Association of Graduate Women with focus on types of harassment and its harmful effects. The other project is being held between the Canadian Federation of University Women and Graduate Women Netherlands with the focus on Afghan peace negotiations.

[Click HERE to explore more about the GWI Membership Marketplace.](#)

— GWI Member News —

GWI Young Member Network President, Sudha Srivastava, acrostic showcased by UN Women “Innovate 2021” at the Generation Equality Action Coalition Virtual Roundtable



To celebrate International Day of Education 2021, Sudha Srivastava, President, GWI Young Members Network, created an education acrostic relating to the UNESCO's 2021 theme 'Recover and Revitalize Education for COVID-19 Generation'. Her innovative artwork was showcased by UN Women in the community activity collage '**Innovate 2021**' at the Generational Equality Forum Action Coalition Virtual Roundtable, 'Young Women Leading Tech and Innovation'. The session focused on a collective vision of young women and girls shifting the landscape and setting the positive ambition in the new year, showing the shift away from what did not work in 2020 and innovating a fresh outlook for 2021. **GWI congratulates Sudha for this recognition!**

IFUWA members make vital contribution to Indian women's and girls' maths empowerment

Women empowerment through education is one of the primary goals of GWI. Abeda Inamdar, GWI Finance Committee member enthusiastically supported IFUWA members Dr. Rahael Koshy Jalan and Nandini Sonthalia to implement the “Math Yes We Can” program at the Abeda Inamdar Senior College’s “Mathematics Academy” in India. Dr. Koshy Jalan presented the program at the 2019 GWI “Peace through Education” conference. Inspired by the success of the ‘Math Yes We Can’ program in Canada and South Africa the expansion of the program to India was initiated by Nandini Sonthalia and Swati Bedekar, members of the IFUWA. They established the Maths Yes We Can Education LLP in partnership with Eagles of Tomorrow. Inamdar is Vice-President of the Maharashtra Cosmopolitan Education Society (M. C. E. Society) which runs various institutes including the Inamdar Senior College. The M. C. E. Society provides education from pre-primary to post graduate level. Most of the students enrolled in the M.C.E. Society’s institutions are first generation learners coming from socio-economically disadvantaged sections of society. Majority of the students are girls and the M.C.E. Society’s ‘Mathematics Academy’ works to uplift them in Mathematics. Mathematics is KEY to accessing a career in STEM. In February 2020, 756 students enrolled in classes VII&VIII were given the opportunity to participate in the ‘Math Yes We Can’ program, using “The Language of Mathematics”, books and videos for Books I, II and III, designed and authored by Dr. Koshy Jalan. [Click HERE](#) to learn more about IFUWA Pune’s Math Academy and this excellent collaborative project for maths literacy and empowerment.

— Advocacy —

GWI celebrates women scientists' vital contribution to the fight against COVID-19

International Day of Women and Girls in Science, introduced by the UN General Assembly in 2015, recognises the critical role women and girls play in science and technology. With this year’s theme “women scientists at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19”, the focus is drawn to the fact that science and gender equality are both vital to build back better and enhance our global society’s resilience to 21st century crises. To mark this day, GWI has issued an [International Day of Women and Girls in Science infographic and social media pack](#), including impactful and easy-to-use resources. **Beginning 9 February, plan to FOLLOW, LIKE, PARTICIPATE, and SHARE the GWI social media campaign that will offer three daily posts for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.**

GWI on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

International Day of Zero Tolerance of FGM was first introduced in 2003 by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) as part of the UN’s efforts to promote the eradication of FGM. GWI’s urges that unless governments and local leaders accelerate action to eliminate FGM, 68 million girls will be mutilated from now until 2030 (UNICEF), and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality will not be met.

With that in mind, GWI welcomes the [UNGA resolution 73/149](#) (2020) on intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilation. The present report provides an analysis of progress made to date by Member States, UN entities, and other relevant stakeholders. It also includes an analysis of root causes, challenges and needs, and efforts to anticipate and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the elimination of female genital mutilation. The harmful effects of FGM are not new to GWI. To learn more about GWI resolutions on FGM and to dig deeper into the UNGA resolution click [HERE](#).

– GWI at the United Nations –

GWI calls for increase in domestic funding for education in its Human Rights Council 46th session written statement

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a global learning disruption of unprecedented scale and severity and has caused the most significant threat in history to education. A staggering 300 million students are out of school. The closure of schools, universities, and other knowledge institutions and the interruption of literacy and lifelong learning programmes have disrupted the lives of an estimated 1.6 billion students globally. The pandemic threatens a seismic reversal of the hard-earned gains of 180 million more girls enrolling in primary and secondary school, and a three-fold increase in third-level education since adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 25 years ago. The pandemic is the largest shock to education in history, and the magnitude of the impact may defy measurement. The World Bank report estimates a loss of \$10 trillion dollars in earnings over time for the current generation of students. Alarming is the 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report that estimates that 11 million girls and young women may never return to education.

Given these astounding facts, GWI is duty-bound to submit this statement to the 46th session of the Human Rights Council. The statement aims to heighten awareness about the critical digital learning crisis continuing as pandemic fallout and to motivate Member State's commitment to domestic funding for education, including resources to support teachers. [Please read and widely distribute the statement that can be accessed HERE.](#)

GWI attends UNESCO Education Day Online Commemoration

On 25 January 2021, GWI joined UNESCO and in the international community in marking the third International Day of Education under the theme "Recover and Revitalize Education for the COVID-19 Generation. This global event was planned along three main segments: learning heroes, innovations, and financing and aimed to highlight commitments and follow-up actions taken to protect education through the recovery, increase inclusion and combat drop-out. [Click HERE to learn more about this worthwhile event](#). To mark International Day of Education 2021, GWI issued a [press release](#) and an [advocacy and social media toolkit](#) including impactful and easy-to-use resources. The toolkit raises awareness about the disturbing inequalities in education exacerbated globally by the COVID-19 pandemic. The toolkit guides in the creation of a strategic advocacy plan to promote education as a fundamental right and includes a comprehensive social media campaign for download.

UN Representative report: Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)

The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) new 2021-2025 strategy released at the CCPCJ 9th session held December 2020 is well worth reading, particularly for its assessment of how the COVID-19 pandemic has created fertile ground for crime to flourish, while worsening the vulnerabilities of the most disadvantaged. During the pandemic, organized crime groups have expanded their reach, there is much increased cybercrime - and there is greater abuse and exploitation of women and children in the cybersphere. The report says, 'Stay at home measures have much increased the likelihood of domestic violence. Criminal justice systems have been further stretched, leading to delays, increasing impunity and the weakening of the rule of law'. The UNODC Strategy Document makes very clear the challenges to global CCPCJ posed by the pandemic. **GWI warmly thanks GWI UN Representative, Vienna, Elisabeth Francis for her thorough report that can be read in full [HERE](#).**

GWI Co-sponsors corruption side event: linking criminal justice and the SDGs in a new way

On 15 October 2020, GWI co-sponsored a side event titled “Linking Criminal Justice and the SDGs in a New Way: corruption creates wicked legacies at hazardous sites”, held as part of the 10th session of the conference of the parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC). The side event consisted of opening remarks by Ilona Graenitz, the chair of the UN Vienna NGO Committee on Sustainable Development: a presentation by Professor Verena Winiwarter, of the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna: and a Q&A/ discussion. **To learn more about this excellent event, GWI invites you United Nations Representative Elisabeth Francis’ full report, available [HERE](#).**

— Call for applications —

Womaniity Award for the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Through its unique model, the [Womaniity Award](#) enables organisations fighting violence against women to adapt and scale proven innovative models with a local partner. The Award provides funding, capacity building and access to networks that enable the project’s impact to be leveraged and replicated. Applications for the fourth round of the Womaniity Award are now opened. The deadline for submission of proposals is **28 February 2021**. Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the application process.

— Give the gift of membership—

It is not too late to formulate 2021 New Year’s resolutions!

One could be to **give the gift of education** to women and girls around the world by contributing to our new [Girls’ Education for Brighter Futures Programme](#), which directly supports GWI’s advocacy work and micro-projects held throughout the world to remove socio-cultural, gender-related and economic barriers girls face towards education endeavours. To contribute to GWI’s work towards the safe access to quality education and to raise awareness about the gender barriers in education please click [HERE](#).

Alternatively, why not start 2021 by [giving the gift membership](#) to the outstanding graduate women in your life? GWI membership allows graduate women to join the leading women’s international organisation that works to empower girls and women through access to lifelong, quality education and training. Give the gift of membership to become part of a global community of some 12’000 members in 52 countries, either as a GWI independent member or as a national member of one of our NFAs.

— Did you know? —

A GWI, formerly International Federation of University Women, delegation of over one hundred members take part in the 4th World Conference on Women and NGO Forum held in Beijing, China in 1994, where they hosted workshops and played an active role in working for the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. A few decades later, the goal of gender equality has still not been reached and now with Covid-19 drastically impacting the lives of women and girls, the steps forward since 1994 risk seismic steps backward. Yet, GWI steadily raises global awareness and the rights of women and girls.

— Dates and events worth noting —

6 February	International Day of Zero Tolerance of Female Genital Mutilation, Global
10-28 February	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 75th session, United Nations, Geneva
11 February	International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Global
24 Feb-20 March	Human Rights Council, 43rd session, United Nations, Geneva
1 March	Zero Discrimination Day, Global
8 March	International Women's Day, Global
9-20 March	Commission on the Status of Women 64 th session, New York
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Global
23 April	World Book & Copyright Day, Global
25 April	International Girls in ICT Day, Global
7-8 May	Generation Equality Forum Mexico
19 May	5th Edition of the Swiss Olympes de la Parole, Switzerland
25 May-5 June	International Labour Organisation Conference, Geneva
28 May	Menstrual Hygiene Day, Global
7-10 July	Generation Equality Forum Paris
18-20 September	Centenary of the French Association of University Women (AFFDU)

Follow us on social media!



Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. GWI, formerly IFUW, is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

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