



GWI UPDATE – 15 September 2021



#StandWithWomenofAfghanistan
#No2TalibanYes2WomensRights

From 1 September, Graduate Women International (GWI) joined on a global call for solidarity action with and for the women of Afghanistan on social media platforms.

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— Graduate Women International News —

GWI stands for Afghan women and girls: our calls to action

A month ago, the world witnessed a critical and horrifying turnover in the government of Afghanistan, placing millions of lives in significant danger. As a worldwide nongovernmental

organisation (NGO) which stands for the equal and safe access to education for women and girls, GWI has been concerned for these vulnerable groups and their most fundamental rights which are even more jeopardised. This is why, on the first hand, GWI quickly responded with an urgent open [statement](#) on 19 August, as well as co-sponsoring a joint [written statement](#) to the HRC and, on 8 September. On the other hand, GWI published several social media posts which included testimonies and ready-to-use advocacy statements. Additionally, GWI National Federations and Associations (NFAs) also issued impactful statements, as for instance the one from FEMU [HERE](#). Afghan women and girls need our support, thus GWI invites you all to peruse our work for your efforts and widely distribute them within your networks.

Alongside some members from its Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW), GWI initiated a [petition](#) to send a message through the HRC to all of the United Nations and its Member States. This petition has already had a successful echo with more than 1000 signatures from 40 countries. GWI invites you to click [HERE](#) to learn more about the petition. The opportunity to sign the petition will remain open for a few more days. **GWI invites you to sign this petition at ipetition via this [LINK](#).**

GWI YMN Connecting Across Generations Webinar ‘International Networking and Collaboration: A Way Forward’ summary

Submitted by Sudha Srivastava, GWI YMN President

“On 13 August 2021, GWI YMN organised the third webinar in the series of ‘Connecting Across Generations’ titled ‘International Networking and Collaboration: A Way Forward’. The purpose of the webinar was to explore the possibilities of international networking and collaboration within the GWI membership. The webinar was oversubscribed with nearly 170 registrations and we had some new young members as well as some members who were attending any GWI webinar for the first time”.

“During the ‘Share Your Story’ open discussion, we learnt from participants: how rewarding this network is for their professional growth and personal friendships. It has been great sharing/contributing from various countries on projects, conferences and other events related to gender equality and education of women and girls”. “We rise by lifting others”, says Srivastava.



Some webinar participants

“With a great delight, we would like to invite you to register and join us for our concluding webinar of the series on Saturday, 18 September beginning at 4pm CEST. We will celebrate International Day of Peace (official UN date 21 September) together with your messages live or shared in advance. See you all soon”, she adds. Register [HERE](#). Also, please click [HERE](#) to read GWI’s latest press release written on this occasion.

Additionally, GWI is starting a new online sign-up for GWI YMN.

“GWI young members who would like to join YMN new communication channel, please register at this link [HERE](#). Select ‘Young Member enquiry’ from the dropdown list and fill out information. If you

would like to join YMN WhatsApp group, please fill your preferred contact number. Please distribute this information widely in your NFA. Thank you.”, she adds.

GWJ would like to thank all the participants for joining us for this memorable event, and would also like to thank Sudha for this summary - please click [HERE](#) to access her full write-up.

— GWJ Member News —

Pakistan’s help for women and girls in Afghanistan

Submitted by Akram Khatoon, President of the Pakistan Federation of University Women (PFUW)

“Dear all office bearers/members of GWJ fraternity on globe:

By now all of you must be aware of the fact that the government of Pakistan is making all out efforts that things get settled down peacefully in Afghanistan. In the past also Pakistan’s government and all NGOs operating in Pakistan have been very positive in ensuring successive Afghan governments all out support needed for welfare of the general public particularly women and children.

It has been ensured by the present ruling Taliban government as appeared in their policy statements that working women and female students will be able to continue their activities once turmoil conditions are settled. Till the time working women are allowed to resume their duties in the organisations they belong they will continue to get salaries and due financial support.

Regards”.

GWJ thanks Ms. Khatoon for this important testimony which recalls how international cooperation and NGOs’ work are a necessity to ensure peace in such difficult times.

UWCV’s Trust Fund for Education is Celebrating Over 50 Years of Supporting Students!

The University Women’s Club of Vancouver’s Trust Fund for Education (TFE) is celebrating over 50 years of supporting students. TFE provides scholarships and bursaries through nine accredited public education facilities that offer post-secondary education in Metro Vancouver. In the 2020/21 year, \$106,765 Canadian dollars was paid out to support students. Of the 37 awards given out in 2020/21, 18 are directed to women and an additional three give preference to women. Most of the awards are given to students who have financial hardship and some awards are reserved for marginalised groups who experience significant barriers to accessing higher education based on their gender, race and/or cultural background. This fund is a notable way to promote quality education for everyone. GWJ congratulates UWCV on this success! Click [HERE](#) to find out more about how you can support TFE.

FEMU’s latest news

Despite the global pandemic, GWJ NFA efforts to contribute to the global advancement towards gender equality through education forge forward with inspiration. In this sense, GWJ is pleased to share FEMU’s latest news that you can read [HERE](#), which comprises their ongoing works and their accomplishments for August. Moreover, GWJ encourages you to have a look at their latest newsletter [HERE](#) which includes a very interesting list of activities.



List of FEMU's September activities.

Also, GWI would like to warmly congratulate Glenda Hecksher, FEMU's Vice-President and GWI Vice-President of Marketing, for recently being elected to the Board 2021-2025 of the International Association of Women's Museum! Women's museums are truly important for women's education, empowerment and self-confidence, and GWI is happy to know that you participate now in fostering cooperation between these important places.

— International Advocacy and GWI at the United Nations —

The recommendations on UNICEF's "The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis" report *Submitted by Dr. Maureen Byrne, GWI United Nations Representative, New-York*

UNICEF recently published a report "[The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis](#)", highlighting that climate change is the greatest threat facing the world's children and young people and introducing what they term Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI), which gives countries a score for exposure to climate and environmental threats and stresses and child vulnerability. GWI thanks Dr. Byrne for this very clear and concise summary, and GWI encourages reading recommendations that she interestingly put forward, shedding light again on the necessity to provide children with climate education, inter alia. Please follow the link to read her text [HERE](#).

GWI cosponsors HRC statement urging actions to protect women and girl in Afghanistan

Jointly with NGOs such as the Women's Federation for World Peace International and Soroptimist International, GWI submitted a cosponsored statement which urges the United Nations to protect the human rights of those currently residing in Afghanistan, namely women and girls. The statement acknowledges that the current environment in Afghanistan is not conducive to a healthy educational

environment, leaving about 3.7 million children out-of-school. Unjustly, the majority of these children are girls. Children are tasked with creating the Afghanistan, the world, of tomorrow, and if these young girls are not able to receive an education, not only are they at a disadvantage to contribute to that future, but they are also being denied one of their basic human rights. GWI stands for this Call for Action and thanks all those who participated in its drafting. GWI encourages you all to read and share the statement [HERE](#).

— Give the gift of education —

Give the gift of education to women and girls around the world by contributing to our new [Girls' Education for Brighter Futures Post-COVID-19 Programme](#), which directly supports GWI's advocacy work and microprojects 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 safe access to quality education and to raise awareness about the gender barriers in education please click [HERE](#).

— Did you know? GWI has 2 new interns! —



"My name is Alexa Grace and I am a Canadian Social Worker and English as a Foreign Language Teacher. I am currently enrolled in a Master's degree of Social Work with a specialisation in International and Community Development at the University of Calgary. I am originally from Vancouver, however in 2018, I moved to France and then in 2020 I moved to Switzerland, where I currently reside. I am passionate about human rights, social justice, gender equality and the right to quality education. Therefore, Graduate Women International's vision and mission highly align with my desire to advocate for women and girls' human rights and their right to quality education. I am grateful for this opportunity to contribute to this important mission".

"My name is Alexandra Taylor, and I am an undergraduate student at Colgate University in the United States, studying political science and history. Going into my third year of university, I decided to partake in a program that would allow me to continue my studies while staying in Geneva, Switzerland for the semester. This study abroad opportunity has given me the chance to get an inside look into the world of international relations and politics while also exploring Europe and experiencing its culture. I am grateful for the education I have and will be continuing to receive, and I am excited to work with GWI to advocate for the rights of women and girls to also exercise their right to an education. I have always wanted to work in a field that would allow me to help to make a difference, and I can think of no better mission for me to support than that of Graduate Women International".



— Dates and events worth noting —

13 Sept-8 Oct	Human Rights Council, 48th session, United Nations Office, Geneva
21 September	International Day of Peace, Global
5 October	World Teachers' Day, Global
11 October	International Day of the Girl, Global
15 October	International Day of Rural Women, Global
17 October	World Day for Eradication of Poverty, Global
24 October	United Nations Day, Global
17 November	Student's Day, Global
19 November	World Toilet Day, Global
20 November	Universal Children's Day, Global
25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Global

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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