

## GWI YMN Connecting Across Generations Webinar Series 2021 'International Day of Peace: Celebrations Across Generations'



On 18<sup>th</sup> September 2021, GWI Young Members Network (YMN) concluded the 'Connecting Across Generations' webinar series with its fourth and final webinar, celebrations ahead of International Day of Peace. GWI Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara set the stage with the opening remarks on GWI perspective of 'Peace' through education.

YMN President Sudha Srivastava, presented an overview summary of four webinars in the series.

1. 6<sup>th</sup> March 2021, International Women's Day 2021 - *Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world*

The series was launched with the celebrations ahead of International Women's Day. We heard from the Chair of NGO Committee on Ageing Geneva. Silvia promotes protecting rights of aging population and also bridging gaps between generations. GWI Civil Society speaker at UN 40th Session Human Rights Council and young member of GWI from Turkey emphasised how important the intergenerational relations are to solve the problems of today's world and make the generation best educated, most connected and egalitarian in history! The session concluded with the IWD messages from participants.

2. 12 June 2021, International Day Against Child Labour - *"NEET" Effect in Changing Times!*

The second webinar circled around the NEET effects in changing times when we had opportunity to hear and interact with two speakers from International Labour Organisation (ILO). "NEET" is an acronym which stands for "Not in Education, Employment or Training", and refers to a person who is outside the education or labour force system. NEET rates particularly hit young people. The gendered dimensions of NEET reveal how girls and women are affected, in particular due to the proportion of domestic work. There had been HARD REPERCUSSIONS OF COVID-19 ON NEET RATE all over the world. The webinar also marked the day against child labour, and we joined hands with international community.

3. 13 August 2021, International Youth Day - *International Networking and Collaboration: A Way Forward*

We celebrated the International Youth Day (officially celebrated on 12 August) by hosting the third webinar. The purpose of the webinar was to explore the possibilities of international networking and collaboration within the GWI membership. Through the open floor and breakout sessions, we found common interests and are working on the next steps. Some of the groups from the breakout session are already progressing towards new collaboration from various NFAs. The main takeaway is that -Intergenerational relations are a two-way street, nurturing both with mutual agreements! It is necessary to understand the common points and interests of the young members and work on tailored solutions.

4. 18 September 2021, *International Day of Peace: Celebrations Across Generations*

In the fourth and concluding webinar ahead of International Day of Peace, we lit the GWI lamp to call for peace globally and highlight how education especially women and girls, plays a key role in shaping a culture of peace.

We were honoured to welcome our guest speaker Tiffany Easthom, Executive Director at Nonviolent Peace Force. Tiffany shared her work and contributions towards achieving peace. Participants had an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session.

Following the speaker, Pouya Saeedi from YMN team shared the Young Members' perspective on Peace. We conducted an activity/exercise on Peace by lighting the GWI Lamp at Geneva office. Stacy passed the lamp symbolically to GWI President Terry Oudraad to share her message and then Terry passed it virtually to YMN President Sudha Srivastava. Sudha shared her Peace message with a PEACE acrostic and poster created especially for the webinar. YMN team shared their Peace messages and opened the floor for participants to share their thoughts/messages. The activity concluded with a beautiful song by a member from Egypt.



Following the concluding remarks from Terry and Sudha, the series and session finished with playing GWI song by Stacy. Thank you everyone who participated. Stay safe and well until we meet again soon!

Here are the glimpses of some PEACE messages shared:

*“Peace means to me is being tranquil and balanced in all aspects of life and work. Also, always strive for solutions and compromises that work in the years of imbalance.” Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director*

*“Inspire women and girls and empower through quality education at highest possible level for all of them.” Terry Oudraad, GWI President*

**“Permanently embracing a culture of peaceful co-existence and empathy towards all lives!**

Peace starts from home; we need to teach our children to respect other human beings with their individualities and education plays a greater role in building a culture of peace. Peace is not only an absence of war or conflict, but it is about creating an environment where everyone can grow together, especially women and young people.”



*Sudha Srivastava (British Federation), President of GWI YMN*

*“Peace means collaborative and constructive relationships.” Pouya Saeedi (New Zealand), YMN Projects Chair and Intergenerational Representative*

*“Peace is a way of coexistence starting with the person himself, inner peace first from inside out, this will make us more calm, wiser, so life become easier and smoother no hard feelings, no pain which leads us to less negativity and more positivity, hope the new generations will be raised on that.” Perine Wagdy (Egypt), YMN Youth and Futures Development*

*“Women’s rights are human rights, and we need to protect peace to secure human rights in conflict areas. I want to see a world where there is gender equality, no violence against women, equal education for all and attention to climate change.” Basak Ovacik (Turkey), GWI Vice-President Fundraising*

*“Co-operation and coexistence among the peoples of the world are essential for our peaceful living. Also, respect for all other diverse life-forms for their value in making the earth’s ecosystems stable and understanding the concept of interdependence are equally important for Peace.” Meera Bondre, India*

*Peace is a gift, a gift to live the way I would like to live with all respect to other people and environment. Peace is a gift to live in peace with my family and my community. Peace is also a gift of education for all and possibilities for everybody to live a better life to work peacefully and live-in peace with themselves.” Zoya Apevalova, President Graduate Women Russia*

*“My message in celebration of the UN Day of Peace quotes H.G. Wells: Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. As a man who lived through two World Wars, he is better known for his moving novels but also wrote this in ‘The Outline of History’. It is still a race for education and we also know that ‘if you educate a woman you educate a family’. Establishing a peaceful and harmonious home where respectful, tolerant discussion of differing opinions is encouraged can surely be the best contribution to a peaceful World.” Jenny Morley, CIR British Federation*

*“Peace begins from inside, it is a state of tranquillity and inner ease with ourselves and others...” Dr Nevine Wagdi, Egypt*

Peace is a place where I can feel free and safe. I feel safe when I know I am respected and feel happy with my kids, my work brings good quality of life family and my friends are ready to help..." *Irina Trofimova, Russia*

"Peace is equality and happiness, and all of this comes with the ability to dialogue each other's opinion...respect and empathy to value peace." *Irene Vazquez, Spain*

"Global freedom from prejudice and injustice, and respect for all." *Fay Weber WG-USA*

"Peace is learning to live without selfishness and understanding that we can never live well while others live badly." *Lenny Roxana, Bolivia*

"Peace is elusive and though so many have longed for it and worked to remove the obstacles, it seems more remote than ever in many parts of the world, though some of that is perhaps just because we see and hear so much more about the problems in this super connected state of modern life. We need a lot more contentment with less and acceptance of a fair share of the earth's resources if we are to rescue humanity from the overconsumption and selfishness currently on track to destroy everything we need. Education – particularly of girls – holds the key to this." *Margaret Middlemass, Vice-President British Federation*

"PEACE is HARMONY WITH YOURSELF & OTHERS! Starting with tolerance, respect, open mind, improvement, a good will." *Leva De Sousa, Lithuania*

'The True Serenity' Poem and Song by Dr Nagia Said, Egypt

*"Not in fashion not in attraction*

*That I find my satisfaction*

*Not in sentimentality nor in popularity*

*That I find my true serenity*

*It's in the peace and unity*

*It's in the love and purity*

*When I am in God's hands obeying His commands*

*When the barriers are broken*

*When the truths are spoken When my heart is open to all humanity*

*Then I would find my true serenity*

*Chorus When the barriers are broken when the truths are spoken when my heart is open to all humanity*

*Then I would find my true serenity"*

**YMN Online Sign-Up:** We have set up a new online sign-up for GWI YMN.

GWJ young members who would like to join YMN new communication channel, please register at this link: <https://graduatewomen.org/contact-us/>. Select 'Young Member enquiry' from the dropdown list and fill out information and submit. 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.

Sudha Srivastava  
President, GWI Young Members Network