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## “Your right, your role: Say no to Corruption”

**Geneva, Switzerland, 9 December 2021**—International Anti-Corruption Day is observed annually by the United Nations (UN) to emphasize that corruption undermines social and economic development, and education opportunities at all levels in every society. Marking the day, Graduate Women International (GWI) endorses the [UN Office on Drugs and Crime](#) (UNODC) 2021 “Your right, your role: Say no to Corruption,” campaign declaring that everyone including Government officials, media, the private sector, civil society, academia has the right and responsibility to fight against corruption.

As staunch anti-corruption advocates, in March 2021, GWI organised with the UNODC the [“Women and Corruption: Root Causes and Impact on Women's Potential”](#) parallel event during the Commission on the Status of Women 66<sup>th</sup> session. This milestone event, co-sponsored by the [Women’s United Nations Report Network](#) and [Transparency International](#), brought together the world’s leading anti-corruption experts from the think tank [U4](#), [Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime](#), and [Gothenburg University](#) who highlighted the many ways in which corruption affects the women and girls.

Panelists highlighted ways female students are both directly and indirectly affected by corruption in education such as by sextortion victimizing some 400,000 girls in 2019 across 10 developing countries. Panelists aimed to mobilise organisations into action, offer methods to dismantle gendered corruption, and propose actions to address the multifaceted effects corruption has on the education sector. ([Event summary](#)) “GWI stands by these goals and rallies its global network of graduate women to work towards them beyond 2021”, says Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director.

The education sector presents a significant opportunity and entry point for long-term anti-corruption work. Education sectors are clearly and increasingly susceptible to corruption activities such as misused funds, bribery, fake diplomas, supply bid rigging, sextortion, and more, leaving schools and universities underfunded, lacking in proper materials, leaving them unable to provide stable, quality education at all levels. “GWI is devoted to women and girls worldwide having safe access to quality education at the highest level, and we will continue to raise awareness about the barrier to education caused by corruption”, adds Dry Lara.

GWI is a membership-based international NGO located 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 the UN Economic and Social Council since 1947 and maintains official relations with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation as well as the International Labour Organisation.

*Contributing to this press release is GWI intern, Alex Taylor.*

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