



Graduate Women  
International (GWI)

# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Stacy Dry Lara, Executive Director  
sdl@graduatewomen.org, Tel: +41 22 731 23 80**

## **Graduate Women International Tackles Menstruation Stigmas through Education**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 28 May 2024** -In many societies worldwide, menstruation remains shrouded in taboo, hindering avant-garde conversations and perpetuating harmful myths. On Menstrual Hygiene Day, celebrated annually on 28 May, it is crucial to confront these stigmas and recognize their profound impact on girls' access to education. Graduate Women International (GWI) is dedicated to dismantling these barriers and stands at the forefront of this movement, addressing the critical issues surrounding menstrual health and hygiene. With a focus on breaking down barriers and standing for education rights, GWI continues to work towards a #PeriodFriendlyWorld through education.

GWI is pleased to announce its observation of 2024 Menstrual Hygiene Day with an educational infographic in support of "The Pad Project" organisation, aimed at highlighting the significant stigmas surrounding menstruation that often isolate women from their communities. As part of the infographic, GWI emphasises breaking stigmas to empower women through education. To access the infographic, please click [HERE](#).

Stigmas isolate women from their communities, leading them to miss school days due to menstruation. For instance, in India, those menstruating are barred from praying and participating in other community-related activities because menstruation is considered impure (The Pad Project). Lack of policies and facilities also diminish schoolgirls attendance rates, impacting 131 million schoolgirls globally and exacerbating gender-based inequality, hindering them from fully realizing education. (UNESCO) "Menstrual stigma is not just a health issue; it is an outdated cultural norm that restricts educational opportunities," says Stacy Dry Lara, Executive Director of GWI. "Ensuring that girls can attend school without fear or shame is critical for their personal development and the advancement of societies", she adds.

Additionally, through its Bina Roy Partners in Development grant program, GWI supports the Association of University Women in Uganda in launching a groundbreaking initiative in June to address menstrual health challenges in Uganda's Luuka District. The project aims to boost girls' school retention, empower the community through income from reusable pad production, reduce early marriages, and enhance menstrual health awareness by training female students, parents, and teachers. Furthermore, GWI's Teachers for Rural Future program in Uganda is planning to expand to include providing free sanitary pads to all female students participating in the program for the duration of their studies, contributing to their educational success. To donate to this effort, GWI invites you to click [HERE](#).

About GWI: GWI is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with a presence in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's global organization 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 Ondine Deruaz-Scheiblin.