



GW I UPDATE – 4 December 2024



UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS GENEVA, 25 - 27 NOVEMBER 2024

— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

Donate Today for GWI's Girls Education for Brighter Futures

You may have missed Giving Tuesday yesterday, the fundraising day organized in collaboration with Global Giving, but it's never too late to contribute! The campaign was held across our social media platforms, emphasizing education as the key to equality. Your support will help GWI's Girls Education for Brighter Futures project, empowering girls worldwide with the opportunity to access education. **Join those who have already donated and make your contribution today by clicking [HERE](#).**

GW I runs 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign

From 25 November 25 to 10 December, GWI is running its annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. This year's campaign features 47 tailored posts, each spotlighting one of GWI's affiliates, to provide resources and vital information on how women can report gender-based and domestic violence in their country, including contact details for national and local hotlines. For our cover page, we chose the gladiolus flower, a symbol of strength, courage and integrity, reflecting the resilience of many women overcoming the challenges of domestic violence. Our campaign tagline, "Breaking the Silence, Reclaiming Our Power," calls on individuals and communities to stand up against violence and embrace empowerment in the face of adversity. **Stay tuned to our social media and don't miss out on this exciting campaign!**

— GWI Member News —

GWI Young Member Network (YMN) mentorship series: final session recap

On 25 November, GWI held the fourth and last session of the YMN mentoring series, which was successfully launched in August 2024. (Access the recording of the previous webinar [HERE](#)). This mentorship programme kicked off the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and welcomed guest speaker Dr. Yennué Zárata Valderrama, a researcher and award-winning documentarian specializing in women and journalism in Latin America. She presented her award-winning short documentary, "They Will Not Silence Our Voices" (2020) on Mexican women journalists. **Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to making this event meaningful, and to all who supported the YMN mentorship series, which has now successfully concluded. You can access the recording of the November webinar on Vimeo [HERE](#).**

GWI hosts a Discussion on the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls

On 28 November, GWI held an interactive Peer-to-Peer Conversation titled UNite to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls. The event was co-hosted by the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Montreal Lakeshore UWC and GWI Democratic Republic of the Congo. **GWI extends its gratitude to the distinguished speakers, Jolie Massay, GWI Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nancy Acemiam, President, CFUW Montreal Lakeshore UWC for their valuable contributions, and to everyone who participated. GWI invites readers to access the webinar recording [HERE](#).**

— GWI at the United Nations —

GWI contributes to the Discussion on the Protection and Participation of Older Persons

On 21 November, GWI participated in the roundtable series Mainstream Knowledge on Ageing: Bridging Paths Towards Strengthening Protection and Participation. This event was organized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Stacy Dry La ra, GWI Executive Director, spoke on the topic Protection and Participation of Older Persons in Times of Peace and War, emphasizing the importance of promoting intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion by empowering older persons in society, valuing their contribution of wisdom and experience, and ensuring inclusion for all generations. **GWI thanks the organizers for the opportunity to engage in this important discussion. Access the concept note of this event [HERE](#).**

GWI and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

On 19 November, GWI met with Mr. Julien Pellaux, Director of the Division for Partnerships at UNESCO Headquarters in Geneva. The meeting offered an overview of UNESCO's priorities, including its mandate to build peace and security by promoting international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information. The meeting provided an opportunity to strengthen non-governmental organization partnerships with UNESCO and explore future engagement opportunities for the NGO community, essential for enhancing capacity for action. GWI has maintained Official Partnership with status with UNESCO for

decades. Building on UNESCO's vision of education as a force for sustainable development and its commitment to gender equality as a global priority, GWI reaffirms its dedication to collaboration. **GWI extends its gratitude to the Partnerships and Communication team at the UNESCO Liaison Office in Geneva for organizing the meeting.**

UNICEF: The State of the World's Children 2024

On 25 November, Dr. Maureen Byrne, the GWI UN Representative from New York, reported on UNICEF: The State of the World's Children 2024. This year, UNICEF's report focused on three key areas: demographic transitions, frontier technologies and, climate and environmental crises, critical issues that will shape the world for children over the next twenty-five years. UNICEF explored various ways to mitigate these challenges for future generations, empathising the importance of investing in education, skill development, and increasing the number of teachers to support the demographic transition. The report recommended that decision makers invest in climate resistant infrastructure, climate education and the phase out of fossil fuels, key actions that can help reduce the impact of the climate crises. UNICEF also highlighted the need to bridge the technology gap between low- and high-income countries by ensuring equitable access to technology, robust governance and accountability. This is essential to ensuring that future generations of children are not left behind. UNICEF's vision for children aligns closely with the goals of GWI, particularly in the areas of education, a greener future and tackling the gap in technology equity. **GWI thanks Dr. Byrne for her report on UNICEF's: The State of the World's Children 2024 and invites readers to access the full report [HERE](#).**

GWI attends the 13th United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights

The 13th United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights took place from 25 to 27 November, bringing together thousands of participants from government, business, civil society, UN bodies, and trade unions, for the world's largest annual gathering on business and human rights. The Forum provided an opportunity to address various issues in focus.

GWI attended the Snapshot Series on Stakeholder Engagement: Combatting Child Labour in Agriculture, co-organized by the Working Group on Business and Human Rights, ECLT Foundation, and Better Cotton. Featuring Innocent Mugwagwa (ECLT) and Leyla Shamchiyeva (Better Cotton), the session explored the roles of businesses, governments, and civil society in tackling the root causes of child labour in agriculture. In response to this challenge, speakers shared insights on collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches to advance human rights due diligence and sustainable solutions in agriculture. GWI contributed to the session by highlighting the role of education in combating child labour and stressing the importance of business measures to ensure children attend school.

GWI participated in the session Smart Mix in Action: Progress and Opportunities for Advancing Business and Human Rights in Africa, co-organized by the Working Group on Business and Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). Speakers discussed how the "smart mix of measures" (national, international, voluntary, and mandatory) supports the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in Africa. Despite recent progress, action is still needed to address the negative impacts of business activities on people and the environment. The session highlighted good practices and stressed

the importance of collaboration among States, businesses, and civil society to scale up solutions to achieve sustainable outcomes for Africa.

— Give the Gift of Education —

GWI thanks all for their support towards Teachers for Rural Futures. Your donations make a tangible difference that enables the training of skilled female teachers in rural areas, improving educational access for girls. GWI invites all to click [HERE](#) to read the latest report with updated progress about Teachers for Rural Futures. To donate click [HERE](#) and thank you for making such a difference for girls in Uganda.

— Did you know? —

In 1979 the UN General Assembly adopted The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), a international bill of rights for women. The bill defines discrimination as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field." In light of our 16 Days of activism, GWI reminds readers the importance of achieving gender equality in education, health, politics and employment. Key areas that can help support women facing Gender- Based Violence and ensure that future generations of women and girls experience less discrimination and violence. **GWI encourages readers to follow our online campaign as well as check out previous work and toolkit [HERE](#) on the 16 Day against Gender-Based Violence.**

— Dates and events —

9 December	International Anti-Corruption Day
10 December	Human Rights Day
18 December	International Migrants Day
10-21 March 2025	CSW69
10 - 13 Sept 2025	GWI 35th General Assembly and Conference, Location: TBD

Follow us on social media!



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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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