



Graduate Women  
International (GWI)

# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Levelling the Playing Field: GWI Urges Investment in Sport to Advance Girls' Education and Inclusion**

**Geneva, Switzerland, 6 April 2025** – In celebration of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, on 6 April, Graduate Women International (GWI) emphasizes the positive influence of sport on the educational and professional achievement of women and girls. GWI highlights the role of sports in keeping girls engaged in education, developing skills that can be applied to careers, social settings, and personal relationships, fostering growth and success. In line with the 2025 theme, "Levelling the Playing Field: Sport for Social Inclusion", GWI calls for greater investment in equal access to physical education, recognizing sport and physical education as essential elements of quality education.

GWI advocates for the inclusion of women and girls in sport as a tool to reduce education and societal barriers, particularly for those facing systemic inequality. Sport contributes to the development of leadership, teamwork, and resilience; skills that are transferable to academic achievement and employment. It also plays a key role in enhancing physical and mental health, while creating space for social integration.

In its [2023 United Nations Human Rights Council statement](#), GWI urged states to recognize the value of sports in promoting gender equality and social inclusion, and to reaffirm their commitment to fund and include in formal curricula equitable, quality physical education, ensuring that women and girls can benefit the same as boys and men from physical education programs. Additionally, GWI urges States to promote women in leadership roles in sports, incorporate marginalized groups, including refugees and people with disabilities and eliminate obstacles restricting girls' access to sports.

"Sport is more than physical activity—it is a mechanism for educational continuity, leadership development, and social inclusion," says Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director. "On this International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, GWI urges policymakers and education stakeholders to prioritize girls' access to sport within and beyond the classroom. Without equitable participation, we miss a critical opportunity to advance gender equality through education."

Through its global advocacy, GWI calls for the implementation of policies that guarantee equal access to sport and education for women and girls, enabling their full participation in all aspects of society. This commitment reflects GWI's founding mission—established 106 years ago—to advance peace through the education and empowerment of women and girls.

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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