



GW I UPDATE – 18 June 2025

GW I Independent Member Network (IMN) proudly invites all IMN to the Raising Awareness Campaign webinar:

Challenges to Women's Empowerment: Causes and Remedies

(Third webinar of a four-part series)

JOIN US TO CONNECT WITH A DIVERSE GROUP OF GWI PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENT MEMBERS AND GAIN INSIGHT INTO THE ONGOING CHALLENGES TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, THEIR UNDERLYING CAUSES, AND INNOVATIVE, CROSS-SECTOR SOLUTIONS.

**23 June 2025
4:00 p.m. CEST
Zoom**

REGISTER HERE

GW I's IMN is pleased to invite you to the third session of its four-part webinar series. This session brings together professionals whose research and experience confront critical obstacles to gender equity in public health and learning environments. Participants will explore systemic barriers and offer evidence-based perspectives on advancing access and wellbeing for women and girls.

GW I IM speakers are:

- Mariana Laranjo Gonçalves on "Women's Underrepresentation in Leadership Positions in the Health Sector"
- Tashie Evangelina Ngwangjong on "Women in Biochemistry: From the Lab to Life-Saving Therapies Empowering Women and Girls"
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This event offers a platform for dialogue among GWI Independent Members, contributing to our collective international voice and reinforcing GWI's commitment to equitable access to quality education and health information for women and girls around the world.

Convener: Sahar Gamal
Co Convener: Ariani Narwastjati

PATHWAY TO PROFESSIONAL REINTEGRATION FOR DISPLACED WOMEN GRADUATES THROUGH THE HEGG HOFFET FUND

GW I invites you to attend a special webinar to mark the World Refugee Day and showcase the Hegg Hoffet program.

**6:00 P.M. CEST
20 JUNE 2025
ZOOM**

REGISTER

The Hegg Hoffet fund provides short-term grants to graduate women displaced by war, political upheaval, or other emergencies. It supports refresher courses, language training, and other studies to aid professional re-entry and integration in a new country.

Participants will learn about the Hegg Hoffet application process and hear directly from past grantees, who will share how the program has influenced their professional and personal growth.

Event Presenters

Patrice Wellesley-Cole, GWI President
Mildred Asmah, GWI VP Projects
Stacy Dry-Lara, GWI Executive Director

Hegg Hoffet Committee Members
Ogechi Adulaku
Brenda Robertson
Eser Alkin

Hegg Hoffet Grantee Testimonials
Cynthia Adinortey, Hegg Hoffet Committee Convener and Event Moderator

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— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

Support girls' education with the GWI 105-year Heritage Fundraising Wall

The GWI 105th Anniversary Heritage Fundraising Wall has raised \$11,050 to date confirming our confidence in our members, NFAs, groups and individuals, family and friends' belief in the GWI mission and support for girls' education. But even more can be done before we reach the end of July 2025 when this Anniversary fundraising event will end. Let's rally together for a strong final push and help complete the wall! The website is: www.GWI105.com.

*"It is coming up to the last chance to be a contributor to the GWI 105 celebration Heritage Fundraising Wall. It truly is a personal thrill to see all the countries, groups and individuals who have contributed to it. As well as the wonderful financial brick gift, what is also exciting is seeing the names of members, names of members, known NFAs and friends. So...here is your last chance...it will close at the end of July as that is a year from the birthday (well just over). There are some rather large bricks there that need filling plus, due to a request **I have added a \$50 brick** to make participation more accessible. We plan to project it up on a real wall at the conference centre Lusaka on 11-13 September 2025," says Dr. Shirley Gillett, GWI VP Education.*

Every donation helps. We recognize that not everyone can make a large donation so have opened some smaller amounts on the wall. Donations can be made in amounts of \$50, \$105, \$205, \$505, \$1,005 or an amount of your preference. Your donations directly support the

continuing work of GWI. **GWI sincerely thanks Dr. Gillett for her leadership in fundraising for the Heritage Fundraising Wall.**

Honouring Mrs. Constance Cummings-John: Plaque Unveiled in Tooting, London

On 20 June, a commemorative plaque will be unveiled in Tooting, London, in honour of Mrs. Constance Cummings-John, a distinguished activist, educator, and former Sierra Leonean politician. Mrs. Cummings-John, who spent part of her life in London, is remembered for her tireless commitment to education and social justice, particularly for women and girls, and Aunt to GWI President, Patrice Wellesley-Cole.

The unveiling will serve as a public recognition of Cummings-John's life's work in advancing educational opportunities and women's participation in political life, both in the United Kingdom and in Sierra Leone. This tribute is especially meaningful for those who continue to advocate for equitable access to education and leadership roles for women around the world.

In connection with the event, Wellesley-Cole is scheduled to speak about Aunty Constance on BBC Radio on 20 June, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0gwtw74>. The planned 10-minute segment will provide a valuable opportunity to highlight Constance Cummings-John's contributions to the international women's movement and her enduring influence on efforts to advance education for girls globally. Given the BBC's extensive audience reach, this broadcast holds the potential to elevate her story and that of GWI to millions of listeners.

— GWI Member News —

35th Triennial General Assembly and Conference registration

The Early Bird registration for the GWI 35th General Assembly and Conference is open. The Early Bird fee is 350 Swiss francs and provides access to all sessions, keynote addresses, related conference materials, workshops, seminars, networking breaks. Early Bird registration closes on 31 August 2025. Thereafter, the standard registration fee is 450 Swiss francs. GWI members click [HERE](#) to register. Guests are welcome to register for the public conference on 13 September.

GWI holds World Refugee Day webinar and showcases Hegg Hoffet grant recipients

On 20 June, GWI will host a webinar titled "*Pathway to professional reintegration for displaced women graduates through the Hegg Hoffet Fund*". This webinar aims to present the Hegg Hoffet application process, the experience of past grantees of the programme and how it influenced their personal and professional lives. The speakers include Patrice Wellesley-Cole, GWI's president, Mildred Asmah, GWI's VP Projects, Stacy Dry Lara, GWI's executive director, as well as Ogechi Adiuku, Brenda Robertson and Eser Alkin, members of the Hegg Hoffet Committee. The webinar will be held at 6.00 p.m on Zoom. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Alongside the webinar GWI released an infographic to mark World Refugee Day that aims to inform people about the global refugee crisis through impactful visuals and key facts; offer clear ways for people to advocate for refugees; breakdown large-scale statistics into easy-to-understand visuals; and that is a multilingual, shareable tool for NGOs, educators, and activists to spread the message. Click [HERE](#) to access the English version and [HERE](#) to access the Spanish version.

GWI Independent Member Network to host 3rd Challenges to Women's Empowerment webinar

GWI's Independent Member Network (IMN) is pleased to invite you to the third session of its four-part webinar series, Challenges to Women's Empowerment: Causes and Remedies, to be held 23 June 2025, 4:00 p.m. CEST. Register [HERE](#). Please see the flyer at the end of the Update.

This session brings together professionals whose research and experience confront critical obstacles to gender equity in public health and learning environments.

IMN speakers are: **Mariana Laranjo Gonçalves** will explore strategies to address women's underrepresentation in health sector leadership and advocate for more inclusive decision-making structures. **Tashie Evangeline Ngwanguong** will highlight how women in biochemistry are driving life-saving therapies and how supporting girls in science can shape future health solutions. **Veronica Elise Eugenio** will discuss disability policies in the Philippines and the potential of music education to empower girls with disabilities and promote their active participation in society.

This event offers a platform for dialogue among GWI Independent Members, contributing to our collective international voice and reinforcing GWI's commitment to equitable access to quality education and health information for women and girls around the world.

— GWI at the United Nations —

GWI submits statement to the 59th Human Rights Council

On 25 May, GWI presented a statement to the fifty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) taking place in Geneva in June, highlighting critical issues such as the high number of girls out of school and the persistent obstacles to achieving educational equality. In its submission, GWI put forward concrete recommendations to safeguard girls' education in conflict and crisis settings and reaffirmed its commitment to the Safe Schools Declaration, highlighted the role of education in creating peace and tolerance, and emphasized that educated girls play vital roles as peacebuilders, civic leaders, and contributors to economic development. Click [HERE](#) to access the HRC statement.

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) revitalization process meeting summary

On 30 May, Maryella Hannum, GWI UN Representative in New York, attended the fifth global meeting on Beijing+30 hosted by UN Women. The virtual session focused on civil society engagement strategies, implementation of the Beijing+30 Agenda, and the ongoing revitalization of the CSW. Key discussions highlighted the need for stronger collaboration with national governments, support for grassroots organizations, and the prioritization of gender-based violence, justice, and services for survivors. The meeting also emphasized bridging the gap between policy and lived realities, promoting inclusive participation, especially of marginalized groups, and integrating the Action Agenda with global frameworks like Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. UN Women presented updates on the CSW revitalization, proposing reforms to enhance inclusivity, effectiveness, and accountability. Civil society participants advocated for increased engagement in decision-making processes and called for more transparent, measurable, and participatory structures to advance global gender equality. GWI warmly thanks Hannum for her attendance and comprehensive report that can be accessed [HERE](#).

— Give the Gift of Education —

Donors Support GWI 2025 Fellowships

GWI released a report on June 9 to thank donors for their generous support of the Girls Education for Brighter Futures Post COVID-19 programme, which has helped fund the 2025 International Fellowships. These fellowships, awarded every three years, support outstanding women pursuing postgraduate research, study, and training. In 2025, GWI received 80 applications from 32 countries, with candidates enrolled in PhD programmes at 50 universities worldwide. After a rigorous selection process, six doctoral candidates were chosen. The International Fellowships awarded this year were, in part, made possible thanks to the generosity of donors. Access the full report [HERE](#).

— Did you know? —

GWI observes World Day Against Child Labour with informative infographic

On 12 June, GWI released an infographic to mark World Day Against Child Labour. 160 million children are involved in child labour, and one third of them are not attending school. Under the 2025 theme “Progress is clear but let’s speed up the efforts!”, GWI raises awareness of the harsh realities of child labour and how it deprives children of education and future opportunities. Find the infographic [HERE](#).



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Hegg Hoffet Grantee Testimonials

*Cynthia Adinortey, Hegg Hoffet
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— Dates and Events —

19 June	International Day for Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
20 June	World Refugee Day
20 June	GWI Hegg Hoffet Program webinar, Zoom
15 July	World Youth Skills Day
11-13 September	GWI 35th Triennial General Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia

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.

Graduate Women International

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