



— GWI UPDATE – 16 July 2025 —



From left to right: CFUW-Ottawa Past President and MC, Catherine Smith; UWHAW Co-founder and Programme Chair, Hally Siddons; CFUW President, Linda Sestock; Ontario Council President, Sandra Shaw; Barbara Newbegin, CFUW President and UWHAW Co-Convener

— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

GWI welcomes Benin as a New National Federation and Association (NFA)

GWI is delighted to welcome the Benin Association of Graduate Women (BAGW) as the newest member of our global network of NFAs. Headquartered in Agla Agongbomey, Cotonou, and led by President Fanny Fanou-Ako, BAGW joins GWI with a shared commitment to advancing education and promoting opportunities for women and girls. We are excited to collaborate with BAGW and support their efforts in Benin to empower women through education, leadership, and community engagement. On behalf of the entire GWI community, we extend our warmest welcome and look forward to a strong and inspiring partnership.

GWI releases Teachers for Rural Futures programme report

GWI has published a new report highlighting recent developments in the *Teachers for Rural Futures* programme in Uganda. The report shares inspiring updates about the scholars supported through donor contributions, including the graduation of two students in January 2025, the ongoing studies of three others at Makerere University, and the summer teaching internships currently underway in rural communities. These internships are a vital part of the students' training, offering them valuable classroom experience while enabling them to act as role models for young girls in their regions. Click [HERE](#) to read the full report and see how your

support is making a real impact. Click [HERE](#) to donate to the *Teachers for Rural Futures* programme and help empower more young women through education.

— GWI Member News —

University Women Helping Afghan Women, CFUW-Ottawa, hosts “Dinner for Hope”

Submitted by Hally Siddons, CFUW-Ottawa

And the Winner is...The Young Women of Afghanistan

“University Women Helping Afghan Women, CFUW-Ottawa, hosted their 15th annual fundraising event, Dinner for Hope, on 19 June 2025. The 140 guests enjoyed an evening featuring dining, an inspiring talk by Canadian human rights advocate and champion of the women and girls of Afghanistan, Senator Marilou McPhedran, a surprise video from two Afghan students, and a successful lively auction. Catherine Smith, Past-President of CFUW-Ottawa, MC’d the evening with her mix of easygoing humour and careful time keeping.

The funds raised by the auction will buy computers and power banks and pay for internet service so more Afghan women can join the Remote Communication Assistance program operated by UWHAW in partnership with Right to Learn Afghanistan. The 31 students currently enrolled study English as a Second Language so they can apply for scholarships abroad, continue with courses halted by the Taliban, or apply for jobs with international companies operating online in Afghanistan. A cadre of volunteer tutors works with the students to help them with their studies and provide the important human touch and encouragement they need to imagine a better future.



A moving drawing exhibited in the hallway during the *Dinner for Hope*, hosted by University Women Helping Afghan Women, CFUW-Ottawa

The UWHAW organisers were honoured to welcome members of the Ottawa diplomatic corps, Ottawa members of Right to Learn Afghanistan, community leaders, and a number of CFUW luminaries, including CFUW President, Linda Sestock, Ontario Council President, Sandy Shaw, and Mary Miller and Margaret Gilbey of CFUW-Belleville.”

— GWI at the United Nations —

2024 UNICEF Global Impact for Children annual report

UNICEF’s 2024 Annual Report highlights both the immense challenges faced by children amid conflicts, climate crises, and poverty, and the critical progress made through its global efforts.

Last year, UNICEF reached millions of children across 448 emergencies in 104 countries, delivered 1.5 billion polio vaccine doses to 87 countries, provided early detection services for wasting to 251 million children under five, enabled 26 million out-of-school children and adolescents to access education, and expanded safe water and sanitation to over 50 million people. **GWI extends sincere thanks to GWI United Nations Representative Maureen Byrne, PhD, for preparing this report summary.** Click [HERE](#) to read the full report.

GWI Advocacy Update: Child Labor Report Contribution

GWI acknowledges another report by Dr. Byrne, for her latest advocacy report based on the June 2025 UNICEF-ILO publication, *Child Labor: Global Estimates 2024, Trends and the Road Forward*. Dr. Byrne highlights both the significant global reduction of over 20 million children in child labor since 2020 and the continued challenges, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Her report emphasizes that millions of children remain excluded from education and childhood, underscoring GWI's advocacy for investment in universal education, social protection, and decent work for adults. **Dr. Byrne's contribution reiterates GWI's ongoing call to integrate girls' education targets across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.**

— Give the Gift of Education —

Girls Education for Brighter Futures is a GWI programme that funds global education, gender equality and women's empowerment projects around the world. With your donations, this programme can, through its various projects, have a profound impact on young girls' lives by ensuring they can access education. The latest initiative, "Training Adolescents, Teachers, and Parents in Luuka District in Making Reusable Sanitary Pads", funded by the Bina Roy Partners in Development project, is helping to improve the personal health of women and girls, teaching them skills that provide new sources of income, and increasing school retention rates for girls in the Luuka District, in Eastern Uganda. GWI invites you to click [HERE](#) to learn more about this project and is grateful to all the generous support of the Girls Education for Brighter Futures programme. We appreciate all contributions towards these projects. Please click [HERE](#). **Thank you for making such a difference!**

— Did you know? —

UNESCO created a prize for Global Citizenship Education

UNESCO and the Republic of Korea have launched the UNESCO Prize for Global Citizenship Education (GCED) to promote global citizenship initiatives. GCED has a critical role to play in transforming education to help address the root causes of violence, and create more just, healthy, and peaceful societies. It has the potential to impact future generations' attitudes,

skills, and priorities in a way that contributes to peace. The prize was established in 2024 with the support of the Republic of Korea and will be awarded every two years. For its inaugural edition, UNESCO is inviting submissions of best practices from individuals, institutions, and NGOs involved in GCED. The deadline to apply is September 1, 2025. Two winners will be selected, one youth-led organization (leaders aged 18-30) and one from other categories (individuals, institutions, NGOs), each receiving a prize of \$50,000. Eligible projects must have been active for at least one year with proven GCED activities and cannot be affiliated with or funded by UNESCO. Applications should be submitted via UNESCO National Commissions or partner NGOs. [Click HERE](#) to learn more about the **Global Citizenship Prize**.

— Dates and Events —

30 July	World Day against Trafficking in Persons
31 July	Pan-African Women’s Day
9 August	International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples
12 August	World Youth Day
8 September	International Literacy Day
11-13 September	GWI 35th Triennial General Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia

Follow us on social media!



2025 Copyright. All Rights Reserved.
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

7-9, Chemin de Balexert, CH-1291, Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
E-mail: gwi@graduatewomen.org Website: www.graduatewomen.org

