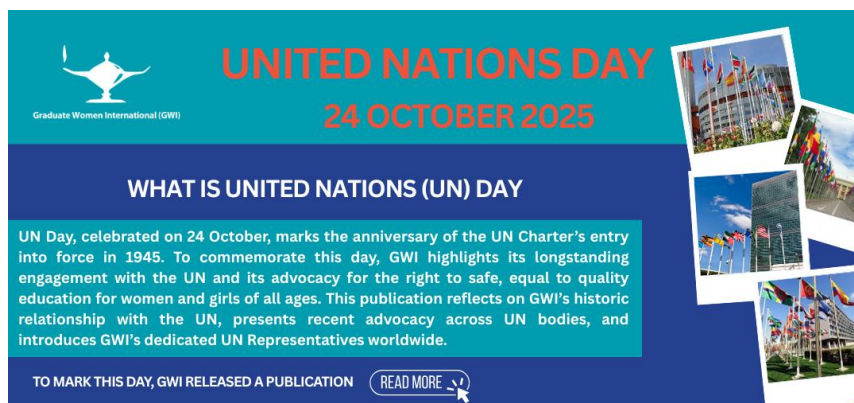




GWl UPDATE – 22 October 2025



— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

GWl marks International Day of the Girl with infographic

To mark the International Day of the Girl, celebrated annually on 11 October to spotlight the challenges girls face and their potential to lead change, GWl released an infographic targeting this year's theme, "The girl I am, the change I lead: Girls on the frontlines of crisis." The infographic, also published by the Women's United Nations Report Network (WUNRN), highlights major barriers to girls' equality and education—child marriage, gender-based violence, limited digital access, and poverty—and illustrates how these factors reinforce exclusion. It also features GWl's advocacy initiatives, including its [Bina Roy Partners in Development](#) (BRPID) projects, policy resolutions on safe access to education and harmful practices, and the [Girls' Education for Brighter Futures program](#). Together, these initiatives highlight GWl's ongoing commitment to advancing girls' rights to quality education as a foundation for equality and sustainable development. GWl encourages members and supporters to click [HERE](#) to share the infographic widely as a tool for advocacy and awareness. To subscribe to the WUNRN newsletter, click [HERE](#).

GWl releases Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) resource for rural women equality

To honour the International Day of Rural Women, observed every year on 15 October to recognise the vital role rural women play in food systems, communities, and sustainable development, GWl has released a document highlighting the persistent challenges rural women face—limited access to land and resources, unpaid agricultural labour, food insecurity, gender-based discrimination, and barriers to education and healthcare—while underscoring their resilience and leadership within rural economies. The publication also shows data snapshots

connected to the SDGs and calls to action for members to advance gender equality in rural contexts.

GWl invites joining its efforts in ensuring that rural women's rights, voices, and contributions are acknowledged and valued across all levels of policy and development. Members are encouraged to use and share this resource as a tool for advocacy, dialogue, and mobilisation by clicking [HERE](#).

— GWl Member News —

Meet the Zambia Local Arrangements Committee responsible for a successful GWl 35th triennial General Assembly

The Graduate Women Zambia Local Arrangements Committee (LAC) led on-site preparations for the 35th GWl General Assembly and Conference in Lusaka, Zambia 11-13 September 2025. Chaired by **Professor Wilma Nchito**, the LAC united an accomplished team of academics and professionals to ensure seamless organization and hospitality for GWl delegates worldwide. Alongside the LAC on-site preparations, GWl acknowledges Planning Chair, **Dr. Shirley Gillett**, GWl VP Education, and extends gratitude to the outgoing Board of Officers (**Patrice Wellesley-Cole**, Immediate Past President, **Mildred Asmah**, VP Projects, **Dr. Meera Bondre**, VP Membership, **Shaila Rao Mistry**, VP Advocacy, **Ujwala Shinde**, VP Legal and Governance, **Fernanda Vidal**, VP Fundraising, and Treasurer **Karoline Dorsch**) for their leadership, dedication, and steady guidance that have brought the organisation to this important milestone and made the 35th General Assembly possible. "All Triennial attendees—delegates, participants, and volunteers—played an essential role in the success of our General Assembly and Conference. Their dedication and engagement are deeply appreciated. Together, we demonstrated the strength and purpose of GWl so let us take pride in our collective achievements and in the difference, we continue to make for women and girls through education," says Wellesley-Cole.

Prof. Nchito, Chairperson, provides overall leadership, coordination, and liaison with GWl international headquarters; **Dr. Annie Musonda**, Communications and Information, oversees media relations, publicity, and information flow; **Dr. Nelly Mwale**, Marketing, leads promotional campaigns and outreach; **Dr. Rose Chikopela**, Conference Programs, managed the academic programme, scheduling, and speaker coordination; **Dr. Pamela Chirwa-Banda**, Finance, handled budgeting, procurement, and financial reporting; **Dr. Charity Meki-Kombe**, Registrations, managed delegate registration, credentials, and materials; **Dr. Judith Ilubala-Ziwa**, Sponsorship and Partnerships, secured institutional and corporate support; **Dr. Sylvia Mwansa**, Fundraising and Donations, coordinated philanthropic initiatives and resource mobilization; **Dr. Euphrasia Ng'andwe**, Local Activities and Tours, organized cultural events and excursions; **Dr. Bibian**

Kalinde, Music and Entertainment, curated performances that showcase Zambian culture; **Ms. Dorica Lungu**, Venue and Technology, managed logistics, venue setup, and hybrid systems; **Ms. Grace Kabwe**, Transport, ensured safe and timely delegate transfers; **Dr. Margaret Mwale**, Host and Lodging, arranged accommodation and hospitality; **Ms. Hope Fulumaka**, Protocol, managed dignitary arrangements and ceremonial order; **Dr. Eunice Ntwala Samwinga Imasiku**, Safety and First Aid, oversaw health and emergency preparedness; **Ms. Peggy Chewe**, Childcare and Special Needs, ensured inclusive participation and accessibility; **Dr. Rebecca Kayumba**, Food and Catering, coordinated all meal and dietary services; **Ms. Womba Kankondo**, Legal and Compliance, reviewed contracts and manages risk; **Ms. Tiwonge Mbale**, Training, developed volunteer training and recognition programmes; **Dr. Pilira Tembo** and **Ms. Josephine Bwalya**, Volunteer Coordination, recruited and managed the event's volunteer team.

"All Triennial attendees' support - delegates, participants and volunteers - contributed to its success which is greatly appreciated. Let us be proud of the work we do and the difference we continue to make. Thank you. All the best," says Wellesley Cole.

Walk for GWI projects raises spirits and support

"We were blessed with a sunny day and positive energy," said Dr. Aisha Alshawaf, GWI Projects Convenor, describing the fundraising Walk for GWI Projects held on Saturday, 27 September 2025, in London's Regent's Park.

The walk brought together British Federation of Graduate Women (BFWG), and GWI members, friends, and family in a shared commitment to advance GWI's work for women's and girls' education. Organised by Patrice Wellesley-Cole, Immediate Past President of GWI, Co-Organised by BFWG's London Association's Dr. Natalie Wright, alongside Shirley Gillet, GWI VP Education and Dr. Alshawaf, the event marked both camaraderie and purpose. Participants walked to raise funds for [GWI's signature projects](#), including the BRPID Programme, the Hegg Hoffet Fund for Displaced Women Graduates, and Teachers for Rural Futures. Thanks to early contributions, the initiative is already gaining momentum toward its USD 10,000 fundraising goal.

Event walkers encourage everyone to share and contribute to the campaign—every donation directly supports GWI's global advocacy and grassroots projects that empower women and girls through education. Click [HERE](#) to make a donation.



GWI walkers pose with medals in Regent's

Pictured: In the front row seated from left Dr. Alshawaf, Wellesley-Cole and Dr. Gillett. Second row from left - Lizzie Gillett, Kerensa Wellesley-Elliott, Sola Elliott, Jonas Wellesley-Elliott, Dr. Robina Hasan, Judith Perle and Dr. Natalie Wright.

— GWI at the United Nations (UN) —

Fighting for a Voice: Women Ex-Combatants and the Politics of Reintegration

Submitted by Elena Bauchiero, GWI United Nations Representative, Geneva

On 16 October, as part of Geneva Peace Week 2025, GWI attended the session “Fighting for a Voice: Women Ex-Combatants and the Politics of Reintegration”, organized by the Center on Armed Groups, United Nations Department of Peace Operations, the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section of the United Nations Development Programme, and the Berghof Foundation.

The panel reflected on the barriers that prevent women ex-combatants from participating in political transformation and leadership after conflict, highlighting how unequal power structures and patriarchal norms often make their contributions invisible. While conventional DDR programs for political transition have largely overlooked women’s political agency, the session showcased inspiring examples from South Sudan, Colombia, and the Philippines, where informal women’s organizations and networks have successfully made a tangible political impact.

Among the main points discussed, education emerged to be central in supporting reintegration. From training women in leadership and political skills, to public awareness campaigns challenging discrimination and traditional gender norms, and even educating mediators on gender issues,

education plays a crucial role in promoting gender mainstreaming in political and peacebuilding processes.

Beyond encouraging women's political participation, recommendations for DDR practitioners and other stakeholders in peace processes emphasised the need of addressing the full range of obstacles that women ex-combatants face during social reintegration. Many experience mental health struggles linked to sexual violence during conflict, face barriers to health and reproductive rights, limited economic opportunities, and stigma for stepping outside traditional gender roles, yet often receive little financial and social support from institutions.

GWI was pleased to participate in this important panel, highlighting education as a key tool for promoting leadership and political agency among women ex-combatants in post-conflict settings.

United Nations Day Spotlight – GWI's UN Advocacy in Focus

In anticipation of United Nations (UN) Day, GWI is publishing a dedicated UN-focused feature that brings forward its ongoing work within the UN system throughout 2025. This special publication presents a comprehensive overview of GWI's advocacy at key UN bodies, highlighting GWI active contribution to international dialogues on education, gender equality, and human rights.

This year, GWI submitted five significant written statements to the UN, addressing some of the most urgent challenges facing women and girls today. At the Human Rights Council held at the UN in Geneva, GWI advocated for the protection of education in conflict zones and called for renewed commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action. At the Commission on the Status of Women held at the UN in New York, GWI underscored the importance of digital equality and women's leadership in the future of artificial intelligence, and through the Commission for Social Development, GWI emphasised that poverty eradication is inseparable from investment in women's education and social inclusion. In Vienna, GWI provided strong messaging through event co-sponsorship during the Convention on Criminal Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The publication also examines GWI's historic and strategic relationship with the UN and introduces the vital work of our UN Representatives in Geneva, New York, Paris, and Vienna. Their presence ensures that the realities of women and girls worldwide continue to shape global policy. By amplifying the voices of women graduates globally, GWI continues to advocate for equitable, inclusive, and accountable policies on the world stage.

GWI invites readers to [click HERE](#) to read and share this publication.

— Give the Gift of Membership—

The GWI Independent Member network is growing, with many new members joining from around the world over the past few months. A thoughtful gift for the graduate woman in your life is a GWI membership. There are many benefits of being a member of GWI, including belonging to an influential international NGO composed of graduate women influencing policy and legislation on women's issues at the international level and gaining an international perspective on women's issues through networking activities. Click [HERE](#) to find out how to join GWI.

— Did you know? —

On 24 October 1945, the UN officially came into existence, an organization that would later become a critical platform for advancing women's and girls' rights globally. From advocating for universal education to promoting gender equality and protection from violence, the UN's creation marked a turning point in international collaboration for human rights. Soon after that, in 1947, GWI first obtained special consultative status with the Economic and Social Commission making it one of the earliest international women's organizations formally recognised within the UN system

— Dates and Events —

24 October	United Nations Day
17 November	Students' Day
19 November	World Toilet Day
24 Nov-10 Dec	16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence
9 December	Anti-Corruption Day

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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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