



## GWI UPDATE - 22 April 2026



*On International Girls in ICT Day, GWI releases ten emerging AI trends in education.*

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### — Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

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#### **GWI marks International Girls in ICT Day with emerging trends**

Tomorrow, Graduate Women International (GWI) will mark International Girls in ICT Day 2026, celebrated annually on the third Thursday in April, with the release of a publication introducing ten emerging trends linked to the 2026 theme, *AI for Development: Girls Shaping the Digital Future*. The publication reflects the global shift from access to meaningful participation, where education, rights, and leadership increasingly determine outcomes for girls and women in digital spaces. The publication examines key developments, including AI literacy as a foundational skill, stronger links from education to employment, online safety as a prerequisite for participation, and greater representation of women and girls in digital decision-making. It also identifies seven practical solutions already delivering measurable progress, such as early exposure to coding, visible female STEM educators, safe learning spaces, and certifications linked to labor market demand. Together, these trends help define where progress is being shaped and where targeted action can deliver measurable impact. For GWI, the publication is a practical framework to align advocacy and action with the areas influencing participation and advancement for girls in the digital economy. Access the publication [HERE](#) for the English version and [HERE](#) for the Spanish version.

#### **GWI celebrates World Book and Copyright Day**

Each year on 23 April, World Book and Copyright Day highlights the importance of books, reading, and copyright in education, culture, and public life. For GWI, the day underscores the importance of access to knowledge as a foundation for the education of girls and women at all levels. With many award-winning authors among its membership, books remain closely linked to learning, providing access to information, new perspectives, confidence, and fuller participation in society. For many girls and women, books continue to serve as an important resource for educational advancement and lifelong learning. GWI remains diligent in its support of copyright as an important framework for the continued creation of books and educational resources used in schools, libraries, and communities worldwide. World Book and Copyright Day also recognizes the wider role of reading and learning in building informed communities. In 2026, the World Book Capital is Rabat, Morocco. The designation reflects the city's efforts to promote reading, books, and cultural participation throughout the year. It also highlights the broader value of literature and publishing in expanding access to knowledge across communities. Click [HERE](#) to share and like the social media campaign.

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## — GWI Member News —

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### **It's Tomorrow: Three GWI National Federations and Associations (NFA) to host “Climate Mitigation: Peatlands of the World” conversation**

Co-hosted by Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) North Delta/Surrey, Graduate Women Scotland (GWS), and the Paraguay Federation of University Women, this online conversation titled “Climate Mitigation: Peatlands of the World” will take place virtually on 23 April 12:00 pm Eastern Time (ET). The discussion will feature speakers Eliza Olsen, Peatlands Protection Society, CFUW North Delta/Surrey, B.Ed. Simon Fraser University; Hon. Doctorate, KPU, and Catriona Sutherland (GWS), Past Chair of GWI Policy Resolutions. Together, they will explore the critical role of peatlands in global climate mitigation and the urgent need to protect these unique ecosystems. This conversation will bring together members and supporters from across different regions to raise awareness of the environmental importance of peatlands and encourage dialogue on sustainable climate solutions. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with the speakers and learn about international efforts to safeguard these vulnerable landscapes. Interested GWI members and guests are encouraged to register in advance to attend the webinar. Register [HERE](#). Please see the flyer at the bottom of the Update for more information.

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## — GWI at the United Nations (UN) —

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## **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD)**

GWJ participated in the 2026 UNECE RFSD, held on 21-22 April at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. It serves as the region's official contribution to the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. Under the theme "Transforming Together: Innovative and Equitable Actions for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," the Forum and its side events bring together member States, United Nations entities, civil society, youth, and other stakeholders to discuss how to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda across the UNECE region. This year's discussions focused on SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy), SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), and SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals), with an emphasis on coordinated, inclusive, and practical action. The official program includes high-level and plenary segments, national statements, peer-learning round tables, and the presentation of the [2026 UNECE SDG Progress Report](#). The report provides an evidence base for the policy discussions by outlining regional progress, challenges, and priorities for further action. For GWJ, the forum is especially relevant as it shapes advocacy focus regarding sustainable development policy and preparation for the HLPF contributions in July 2026. For GWJ, the Forum is especially relevant as reinforces messaging and underscores the role of civil society in shaping sustainable development policy, advancing the importance of education within the SDGs, and informing regional contributions to the High-level Political Forum in July 2026.

### **UNECE RFSD Women and Water side event**

On 21 April, GWJ participated in the UNECE RFSD, side event *Women and Water held* at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Convened by the International Federation of Business and Professional Women with a coalition of partner organizations, the event examined water as a foundation of sustainable development and the links between water access, the need for women in leadership at the municipal level, and for girls to join STEM fields. The program brought together representatives from civil society, research institutions, governments, and international organizations to advance women's leadership in water governance. Distinguished speakers, including Dr. Alena Lohrmann, Researcher at the Chair of Energy Systems Analysis, ETH Zurich, and Ruth A. Richardson, Secretary General and Advisor at the International Network of Liberal Women, Founder of the Women's Network VIEW at the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, recognized that women and girls across the UNECE region and globally continue to carry a disproportionate burden where water access is inadequate, while their knowledge and leadership remain insufficiently reflected in water governance. With the 2030 Agenda deadline approaching, dialogue emphasized the importance of advancing progress across SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 6 and SDG 16. For GWJ, participation provided valuable visibility within the Geneva multilateral community, strengthened relationships with peer organizations and policy actors, and

expanded advocacy opportunities linking education for girls and women to sustainable development priorities. It also reflected the organization’s continued engagement in multilateral dialogue, where women’s leadership, informed policy, and equitable access remain central to sustainable development.

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## — Give the Gift of Membership —

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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 organization 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.

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## — Did you know? —

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Mary Teresa Hayden (1862–1942) was an Irish historian and pioneering educator. Born in Dublin on 19 May 1862, she became Ireland’s first female professor of modern Irish history at University College Dublin in 1911, an appointment that highlighted academic barriers for women. Alongside Hanna Sheehy Skeffington, Mary Hayden co-founded the Irish Association of Women Graduates in 1902, advocating for women graduates’ employment in government, hospitals, and schools while challenging gender discrimination in public policy. She is the co-author of the book *A Short History of the Irish People* (1921), which comprehensively explains Ireland’s history. It became a standard in Irish schools and universities for decades, shaping national education and historical understanding.

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## — Dates and Events —

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23 April	Climate Mitigation: Peatlands of the World
23 April	World Book & Copyright Day
26 April	International Girls in ICT Day
28 May	Menstrual Hygiene 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.

### **Graduate Women International**

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