



## Update - 17 June 2026



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

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This issue of the GWI Update brings together Graduate Women International (GWI) advocacy publications, United Nations statements, educational resources, infographics, and reports released from January to June 2026. Serving as a mid-year reference collection, it highlights GWI efforts to advance girls' and women's right to education while providing members, National Federations and Associations (NFAs), and interested stakeholders with a single location to revisit resources they may have missed and identify materials that support advocacy, educational initiatives, and informed engagement. Each item below includes a direct link and brief description to help readers quickly locate the information most relevant to their interests and activities.

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### — Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) —

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*The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body dedicated to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. The resources below highlight GWI contributions to the 70th session of the CSW (CSW70), including the written statement, parallel event summary, and delegate report summary related to education, equality, and access to justice.*

- The GWI CSW70 written statement, *The Classroom as the First Forum of Justice*, argues that access to justice for women and girls begins with access to quality education. The

statement calls on governments to strengthen educational systems, promote digital and legal literacy, and ensure that education is recognized as a foundational component of equality, civic participation, and the realization of women’s rights. The statement can be accessed [HERE](#).

- The GWI Young Member Network held a parallel event to CSW70. The summary of the parallel event “From Barriers to Breakthroughs: Pathways to Access Justice for Women”, can be found [HERE](#). To watch the video of the parallel event, click [HERE](#).
- GWI collaborated with Soroptimist International to convene a CSW70 side event at the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations, with the support of official sponsors, the Permanent Missions of Ireland, Mongolia, and Sierra Leone, as well as UNESCO, the United Nations Digital Library, CreditAccess India, and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Discussions emphasized that education is central to ensuring women and girls can understand and exercise their rights, participate in economic life, and engage in decision-making processes. The GWI side event concept note is available [HERE](#).
- Delegate reports provide a critical archive of the GWI CSW sessions. The CSW70 Delegate Report Summary presents GWI delegate feedback on CSW70 sessions attended in New York and online, with a concise summary and a separate full-response version, reflecting their experiences, key takeaways, and advocacy outcomes from the session. Click [HERE](#) for the summary and [HERE](#) for the full version of answers.

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## — United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) —

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*As an organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1947, GWI regularly contributes written and oral statements to United Nations processes. The resources below highlight GWI policy positions and recommendations on issues affecting women’s and girls’ rights to education.*

- The GWI written statement to the 61st Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC61) highlights education-related human rights concern and offers recommendations and mechanisms to advance gender equality and the right to quality education. To read the full statement, click [HERE](#).

- GWI President Pat Patton delivered an oral statement at the General Segment of the High-Level segment of the HRC61 on behalf of civil society. The statement reaffirms that education is a fundamental human right and essential for advancing all other rights of women and girls. She highlights how conflict, poverty, and discrimination continue to block access to education and increase risks such as early and forced marriage and gender-based violence. Watch the full intervention [HERE](#).

### **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights submission: child marriage**

- The GWI submission to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Secretary-General's report presents the GWI analysis, evidence, and recommendations on progress and persistent gaps in ending child, early, and forced marriage. To access the document, click [HERE](#).

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## — United Nations Representative Reports —

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*Prepared by GWI United Nations Representatives, these reports provide insights from United Nations meetings, events, and discussions relevant to education, gender equality, and women and children's rights. They offer members and stakeholders a window into GWI advocacy engagement within the United Nations system.*

- GWI United Nations Representative, New York, Maureen Byrne, Ph.D., prepared this advocacy report that explores the GWI participation in the UNICEF Future of Learning Symposium. The report outlines discussions on education, digital learning, and the role of gender-responsive policies in the education of women and girls. Click [HERE](#) to read the full report.
- Prepared by GWI United Nations Representative Byrne, this report highlights GWI advocacy activities within the United Nations system, including participation in discussions commemorating the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and reinforcing commitments to education and gender equality. The report can be accessed [HERE](#).
- Prepared by GWI United Nations Representative, New York, Maryella Hannum, this advocacy report summarizes the GWI engagement in the 64th Session of the Commission for Social Development, including themes, side events, and key messages on education, social protection, and gender equality. Click [HERE](#) to read the report.

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## — International Days of Observance —

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*Throughout the year, GWI marks international days and observances as opportunities to advance advocacy for girls' and women's right to safe, quality education. These publications combine data, analysis, and practical advocacy messages to inform stakeholders, raise awareness, and encourage action on issues affecting women and girls.*

- To mark the 8th International Day of Education on 24 January 2026, GWI released a toolkit aligned with the theme, “AI and education: preserving human agency in an automated world.” The toolkit presents eight key education trends shaping learning systems globally, from competency-based learning and micro-credentials to AI-enabled personalized learning and employer, education co-creation models. Click [HERE](#) for the English version and [HERE](#) for the Spanish version. In this personal essay, GWI Vice President of Education Dr Shirley Gillett reflects on the meaning of the International Day of Education, linking global commitments to the lived realities of learners and educators. Click [HERE](#) to read the essay.
- To mark the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on 11 February, GWI published a toolkit exploring emerging trends in science and higher education, with a focus on artificial intelligence, research funding, digital disciplines, and the inclusion of women and girls in scientific advancement. The toolkit can be found [HERE](#).
- For World Water Day in March 2026, GWI published visual and advocacy content that connects access to safe water, education, and gender equality, emphasizing how water insecurity affects girls’ schooling and wellbeing. Have a look at the advocacy material [HERE](#).
- On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in March 2026, GWI shared resources that address the intersections of racial discrimination, education, and gender inequality, calling for inclusive, non-discriminatory education systems and policies. Click [HERE](#) to access the full publication.
- For the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace on 6 April 2026, GWI Vice President of Education Dr. Shirley Gillett wrote a piece focusing on how sport, education, and intercultural understanding contribute to girls’ and women’s empowerment. Access the publication [HERE](#). GWI released an accompanying social media campaign that can be found [HERE](#).

- For International Girls in ICT Day 2026, GWI released a toolkit that examines developments in AI literacy, online safety, education-to-employment pathways, and women's leadership in digital decision-making, while highlighting seven practical solutions that are helping girls build the skills and opportunities needed to participate in the digital economy. The advocacy materials in English and Spanish can be found [HERE](#) for the English and [HERE](#) for the Spanish materials.
- The 2026 GWI publication for the observance of World Book and Copyright Day in April underscores the role of books, authors' rights, and copyright protection in advancing education, literacy, and access to knowledge, especially for women and girls. For the full version, click [HERE](#).
- The 2026 GWI Menstrual Hygiene Day on 28 May is an infographic highlighting menstrual hygiene as a key education and gender equality issue, calling for accessible information, safe facilities, and the removal of stigma so girls can attend and remain in school. Click [HERE](#) to access the materials, including emerging trends on MH.
- For the World Day Against Child Labour on 12 June, GWI published an infographic highlighting the urgent need to end child labour. Aligning with the International Labour Organization standard, the infographic presents key global statistics and action items to contribute to the elimination of child labour. Click [HERE](#) to download the infographic in English and [HERE](#) in Spanish.

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## — Webinar Recordings —

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*Throughout the year, GWI hosts webinars to facilitate international dialogue on education, women's leadership, young member professional development, GWI policy resolutions, and other issues relevant to women and girls. These events connect members and experts across regions, provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, and support informed advocacy decisions.*

- The January edition of the GWI Young Member Network (YMN) “Connect & Grow” webinar series offers young members a platform to network, exchange experiences, and build advocacy skills in a supportive international community. To watch the video of the webinar, click [HERE](#).

- The February session of the GWI YMN “Connect & Grow” continues the conversation series, deepening discussions on leadership, advocacy, and collaboration among young GWI members globally. Click [HERE](#) to access the recording.
- Hosted by the Canadian Federation of University Women with GWI, this webinar and its explored peatlands’ role in climate mitigation and connects environmental sustainability with education and gender equality. Click [HERE](#) for the summary and [HERE](#) for the video recording of the webinar.

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## — Year-at-a-Glance —

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Published annually in early January, the “Year-at-a-Glance” infographic provides a visual overview of GWI activities and achievements in the previous year, serving as a reference tool for members and partners in the new year. For the 2025 Year-at-a-Glance, click [HERE](#) for the English version and [HERE](#) for the Spanish version.

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## — Join Us —

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The resources featured in this compilation reflect continued GWI commitment to advancing girls' and women's right to safe access to quality education through advocacy, research, policy engagement, and knowledge sharing. Readers are encouraged to explore the publications, reports, statements, and educational resources highlighted throughout this issue and to use them in support of their own advocacy and educational initiatives.

To remain informed about GWI activities, advocacy developments, United Nations engagement, educational resources, funding opportunities, and upcoming events, subscribe to the GWI Update newsletter [HERE](#). Published throughout the year, the GWI Update provides timely information and practical resources for members, partners, and supporters working to advance education and equality for women and girls worldwide.

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## — Did You Know? —

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GWI maintains an active presence across social media and communication platforms. Through the Update newsletter, GWI maintains an average readership engagement rate of 22% across the Update newsletter and advocacy publications, demonstrating consistent audience engagement and continued value for subscribers. On Instagram, more than 76% of viewers are followers while

23% are non-followers, indicating that GWI advocacy content is successfully reaching audiences beyond its existing community. On X (formerly Twitter), most of the engagement comes from followers, reflecting strong interest and a committed audience base for GWI content. The LinkedIn group has nearly 2100 followers, while Facebook has close to 7000 followers.

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## — Dates and Events —

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15 June-10 July	Human Rights Council 62nd session
19 June	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
20 June	World Refugee Day
22 June	Education and Diversity Education Committee webinar
28 October	GWI Annual Meeting, virtual

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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

7-9, Chemin de Balexert, CH-1291, Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland

E-mail: [gwi@graduatewomen.org](mailto:gwi@graduatewomen.org) Website: [www.graduatewomen.org](http://www.graduatewomen.org)

