



GW I UPDATE - 29 July 2026



— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

GW I Marks World Youth Skills Day Under Theme: Skills for a Shared Future

On 15 July, World Youth Skills Day drew attention to the importance of equipping young people with the skills they need for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship. In 2026, the theme “Skills for a Shared Future” highlighted the need for inclusive skills development. The day also served as a reminder that young women continue to face unequal access to opportunities: globally, a significantly higher share of young women than young men were not in employment, education or training.

For GWI, these realities reinforce the focus on education and skills building. Through the Bina Roy Partners in Development (BRPID) projects, GWI supports community-based initiatives that help girls and women build the knowledge and skills needed to participate fully in economic, social and civic life. In connection with World Youth Skills Day and throughout the year, GWI advocates for policies that place gender-responsive education and skills training at the center of long-term development, ensuring that youth skills efforts actively advance women’s and girls’ empowerment. As part of the 2026 World Youth Skills Day campaign, GWI spotlighted an “Interesting Read” from UNICEF. The article “Digital Skills for Girls Lead to Game-Changing Solutions” showcased how girls and young women are using digital skills and technology to transform ideas into practical solutions for challenges in their communities. These stories illustrate the power of access to education and digital skills learning. To read the full article, click

[HERE](#). This connection between the GWI education-driven approach and World Youth Skills Day underlines the GWI investment in education and youth skills, as mentioned in the 2026 theme.

GlobalGiving Bonus Day 2026: Girls' Education for Brighter Futures

GWI is delighted to highlight the success of the GlobalGiving Bonus Day held on 15 July 2026. The annual one-day campaign offered a valuable opportunity for donations to be amplified through matching funds, increasing the overall impact of each contribution made to the GWI projects supporting girls' education. GWI extends its sincere appreciation to all donors, members, and supporters who took part in this initiative. If you would still like to support GWI projects, you can do so at any time [HERE](#)

— GWI Member News —

University Women of Europe Conference and General Assembly

On 3 October 2026, European Women of Europe will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Bucharest. The AGM will be combined with a one-day conference on 2 October. The conference will bring together university women from Europe to explore education across different levels and fields, meet interesting women, and experience new ideas for working together.

The Conference theme is: "Beyond Boundaries: Define the New Era of Women's Leaders". What does modern leadership look like today? How are women leading differently in business, politics, and society? UWE looks forward to connecting with visionary women, exchanging ideas, and exploring strategies to shape the future of leadership.

Alongside an engaging conference, participants will have the chance to explore the charm and character of Romania's capital, a destination that remains a hidden gem for many visitors. Known as "Little Paris" for its eclectic architecture and cosmopolitan atmosphere, Bucharest offers grand boulevards, iconic landmarks, beautiful parks, and a rich gastronomic experience. Visitors can enjoy a diverse selection of international cuisine as well as authentic Romanian specialties complemented by excellent local wines.

To register for and access practical information on accommodation and logistics, click [HERE](#).

— GWI at the United Nations (UN) —

UN80 Merger Assessment of UNFPA and UN Women

On 23 July, GWI participated in a virtual civil society consultation on the UN80 process and the proposed merger of UNFPA and UN Women. The session provided an update on the Strategic Merger Assessment and the Joint Alternative Options Paper. Civil society organisations were invited to share inputs on whether bringing UNFPA and UN Women together in a single institutional framework could strengthen coherence, political weight and end-to-end delivery on gender equality, women's empowerment and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The consultation also examined whether alternative alignment options could achieve these aims while safeguarding existing mandates under CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the ICPD Programme of Action.

Both entities already span the full results pathway from norms and accountability to country-level program delivery, but this continuum is currently fragmented across separate governance and funding structures, with a high reliance on coordination rather than shared accountability. It therefore explores several possible merger pathways as part of the UN80 reform process. The assessment identifies the creation of a new “composite” entity as the main option for further technical work. This entity would bring together the mandates and core functions of both organizations within one framework. It would do so without reopening agreed intergovernmental commitments. In parallel, an additional paper sets out alternative options to a full merger, including more integrated country-level delivery, a joint strategic framework on ending violence against women and girls, enhanced collaboration on Sustainable Development Goal 5 data and analytics, and strengthened operational interoperability.

GWI will continue to follow these discussions closely, given their potential implications for the wider UN gender equality architecture and for programs that shape the educational rights and opportunities of women and girls. To access the final merger assessment report, click [HERE](#).

— Give the Gift of Education —

Girls Education for Brighter Futures is a GWI program that funds global education, gender equality, and women's empowerment projects. Donations to this program impact women and girls' lives by offering education and income-generating opportunities. One of the latest initiatives, “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 readers to click [HERE](#) to learn more about this project and is grateful for the generous support of the Girls Education for Brighter Futures program. GWI appreciates all contributions towards these projects. Please click [HERE](#). **Thank you for making such a difference!**

— Did you know? —

Fumi Takano (1914–1988) was a Japanese scholar of English literature who devoted her career to women's liberation and the expansion of educational opportunities for women and girls. From 1937 to 1983, she taught at Tsuda College for Women in Tokyo, using literature as an entry point into wider debates about gender, democracy, and social change. In her classrooms, she consistently encouraged students to pursue higher education as a route to intellectual independence and to build lives defined by their own choices rather than restrictive social expectations. Beyond her teaching, Takano became a pioneer in promoting women's education within Japan's rapidly changing post-war society. She worked to develop women's studies and feminist perspectives in academic settings, insisting that questions of women's status, labor, and rights belonged at the heart of serious scholarly work. Her calm, broad-minded personality helped her navigate the turbulent political and social context of the 1970s and 1980s, a period marked by second-wave feminism and shifting roles for women in Japanese society.

— 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
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.

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