

Press Release

Contact: office.vaoe@aon.at

Graduate Women International (GWI) marks Pan African Women's Day with 500+Challenge fundraising movement

Geneva, Switzerland, 31 July 2023— Graduate Women International (GWI), the leading network of graduate women worldwide, and **Verband der Akademikerinnen Österreichs (VAÖ)** proudly commemorate Pan African Women's Day, celebrated annually on 31 July. This momentous occasion pays tribute to the remarkable achievements of African women and the enduring legacy of the Foremothers of Africa. This special day, established by the Pan-African Women's Organization in Tanzania in 1962, stands as a poignant reminder of their unwavering dedication to Africa's liberation and development.

Today's celebration is not only a tribute to the past achievements of African women but also a resolute call to action for a future of gender equality and women's empowerment across the continent. African women's invaluable role in upholding Africa's economy, from agricultural to scientific endeavours, entrepreneurship, and beyond, must be acknowledged and amplified by protecting and promoting their right to education.

GWI and **Verband der Akademikerinnen Österreichs (VAÖ)** invite all to participate in the transformative 500+ Challenge fundraiser movement to mark this occasion. The 500+Challenge is harnessing the collective power of 500 individual donors, each committing to education and to contributing \$10 or \$20 per month to programs such as [Teachers for Rural Futures](#) in Uganda, which is increasing the number of qualified female teachers and role models in rural Uganda, and the [Girls Education for Brighter Futures Post-COVID-19](#) program that is improving girls access to education worldwide. Click [HERE](#) to join the 500+ Challenge today. Through this united effort, the impact of every single donor is amplified and posed to bring about tangible and meaningful change in the realms of girls' education and women's lifelong education and training.

"As we stand on the cusp of a new era, GWI urges individuals, organizations, and governments to unite and support the 500+ Challenge, a collective stride towards unlocking the boundless potential of African women. Together, we can forge a brighter, more inclusive future where every girl and woman has the opportunity to thrive and contribute fully to the prosperity of the African continent", says Patrice Wellesley-Cole, GWI President, who is British African of Sierra Leonean origin.

GWI, with two Vice Presidents from Africa, Nneka Chiedozie-Udeh and Mildred Asmah, Nigerian and Ghanaian, respectively, is committed to promoting female educators as role models for girls pursuing education. The 2023-2025 international Board is both inclusive and representative. Together, we can create a lasting impact that will shape the destinies of countless girls and women, propelling Africa toward a future of equality, prosperity, and boundless possibilities.

Graduate Women International (GWI) is a membership-based international NGO based in Geneva, Switzerland, with a presence in over 60 countries. Founded in 1919, GWI is the leading girls' and women's global organization advocating for women's rights, equality, and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels. GWI has been in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO. [About VAÖ click here.](#)

Contributing to this press release is Spring 2023 intern, Alexis Chelle, Dartmouth College

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