

International Day of the Girl Child

Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, UN Women and Zonta International accelerate efforts towards ending violence against girls and young women

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**(New York/London) —**Ahead of the International Day of the Girl, marked globally on 11 October,**the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) and UN Women, in partnership with Zonta International,** today announced the further roll out of the “Voices against Violence” programme in the coming months.

Through the next phase, the “Voices against Violence” curriculum, developed under the framework of WAGGGS’ global advocacy campaign “Stop the Violence: speak out for girls’ rights”, will reach approximately 800,000 young people, boys and girls aged five to 25 years. The programme will be implemented through peer educators and leaders within the Girl Guide and Girl Scout movement in more than 12 countries.

With one in three women and girls experiencing abuse in their lifetime, gender-based violence is the most pervasive violation of the human rights of girls and women. By challenging gender stereotypes and reaching out to the next generation, the programme aims to address the root causes of violence and empower young people to make changes both within their local communities and globally.

“Eradicating all forms of violence against girls is a critical area of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most comprehensive international agreement for the promotion of women and girls’ rights. Youth are critical to this effort to build a zero tolerance to violence environment, with education and early prevention as the catalysts. **UN Women is proud to partner with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and Zonta International** to implement this programme that will empower young people to challenge gender stereotypes and prevent violence against women and girls in their communities. This is where change starts,” saidUN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Speaking about the importance of working in partnership to eradicate violence against girls and young women Chief Executive of WAGGGS, Mary McPhail, said:

“Thanks to the investment by **UN Women and Zonta International,** we will reach an estimated 800,000 young people through this groundbreaking educational programme over the next two years. We are grasping this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to end violence against girls and women, and empower an entire generation. Girl Guides and Girl Scouts from all around the world are uniting to make this a reality.”

**President of Zonta International, Maria Jose Landeira Ostergaard, said, “I am convinced that sustainable change can be achieved by addressing the root causes of inequality and violence against women through education. Zonta International is proud to partner with UN Women and WAGGGS at the international and local levels to support the Voices against Violence curriculum in engaging and empowering youth leaders to end violence against women and girls. Together, we can build a better world for women and girls.”**

For full release, contact: Karen Alleyne, Marketing & Communications Manager  
Email: [karena@wagggs.org](mailto:karena@wagggs.org)  Mobile: +44 (0)7880 327 015

- See more at: http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/10/wagggs-day-of-the-girl-press-release#sthash.K9admfKM.dpuf