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Removing Barriers to Education in Senegal: Birth Certificate Drive

Last month, WGEF Senegal took action to address a critical—and often invisible—barrier to education: access to birth certificates. In Senegal, students must present a birth certificate to remain enrolled in school during national exam years at the end of elementary, middle, and high school. Yet in many rural communities, where children are often born at home rather than in health facilities, families lack a formal way to register births.



Girls in Sokone, Senegal, holding the validated documents needed to obtain a birth certificate.

During this effort, our very own Amy Maglio (WGEP Founder & Executive Director) and Lily Messih (Senior Program Manager) were on the ground in Senegal, witnessing the impact firsthand and engaging directly with community members, local leaders, and families navigating the registration process.

To close this gap, the WGEP Senegal team partnered with local authorities to bring services directly to the community. A judge traveled from the regional capital to Sokone, where WGEP hosted a two-day birth registration forum at the mayor's office. Families were reached through direct outreach to WGEP scholars' parents and through WGEP's neighborhood alert committees, which play a vital role in community communication.

The response was extraordinary. More than **1,000** community members attended the event, and **300** birth certificate applications were submitted. Nearly every application was approved—demonstrating the power of locally led, coordinated solutions. Building on this success, WGEP Senegal plans to host the birth certificate drive again next year, aiming to reach even more families and ensure that no student is kept out of school due to missing documentation.



*Hundreds of families line up in Sokone, Senegal, to register for birth certificates at WGEP
Senegal's birth registration drive.*

Amy Maglio Joins 2026 Global Women Leaders Cohort



We're thrilled to share that WGEP's Founder & Executive Director, **Amy Maglio**, has been selected as part of the **2026 Women Leaders for the World Global Cohort**, a program powered by [How Women Lead](#) that brings together visionary social impact leaders from across the globe. This fellowship supports women changemakers who are advancing justice, equity, and opportunity in their communities through bold leadership and collaborative action.

The cohort represents an inspiring network of women leaders committed to creating a fair, just, and equitable world. Participants engage in immersive leadership development, build deep connections with peers and advisors, and

amplify the impact of their work through shared learning and collaboration. Amy's inclusion in this global circle reflects her dedication to expanding WGEF's mission and strengthening partnerships that uplift girls and communities worldwide.

As the cohort begins, Amy will share insights, build new alliances, and bring fresh inspiration back to WGEF's work. Stay tuned for more updates as she continues this exciting leadership journey!

Congratulations, Amy! We're so proud to celebrate this moment with you.

Advancing Girls' Leadership in Narok County



We are proud to celebrate **Purity Kurraru**, Executive Director of [Enkishon Sidai Africa \(ESA\)](#), whose visionary leadership continues to open powerful pathways for girls across Narok County.

Enkishon Sidai Africa has been selected as a partner organization for *Naserian: Girls Rising in Narok*, an exciting program led by *Girl Rising*. This milestone reflects Purity’s deep commitment to strengthening girl-centered, community-led solutions that expand opportunity and agency for adolescent girls and young women.

Through this initiative, ESA will participate in a comprehensive capacity-building program focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), girl-centered program design, and project implementation. Support includes in-person trainings, virtual learning sessions, one-on-one coaching, mentorship, and peer learning—designed to deepen community-led responses to SRHR challenges, reduce child marriage, and strengthen girls’ leadership and voice across Narok County.

This month, two interns from Enkishon Sidai Africa will begin training with *Girl Rising*, further strengthening ESA’s ability to expand SRHR programming and deliver high-impact, on-the-ground projects throughout the region.

Purity’s dedication to ending child marriage, advancing SRHR education, and championing girls’ voices is transforming communities—one girl at a time.



Upcoming Events



A Night at the Movies with WGEP!

**Date:** Monday, March 9**Time:** 6:30 PM (*runtime: 1 hour, 44 minutes*)**Location:** Wayfarer Theaters – Highland Park

1850 2nd St, Highland Park, IL 60035

**Tickets:** \$20

Join WGEP, *Wayfarer Theaters*, and *New Mountain Films* for a special screening of ***NAWI: Dear Future Me***, followed by a live panel discussion and Q&A.

Set in Kenya's Turkana region, the film follows 13-year-old Nawi as she defies child marriage and fights for her right to an education. Stay after the screening for a powerful conversation moderated by **Amy Maglio**, WGEP Founder & Executive Director, with filmmaker **Kevin Schmutzler**, screenwriter **Milcah Cherotich**, and WGEP partner **Leshan Sancha** of HOPE for Girls Education Africa.

Watch the trailer [here](#)!

A portion of ticket sales supports WGEP's work empowering girls in Kenya and Senegal.

Seats are limited. **Get your tickets today!**

BUY TICKETS!



Ndajee 2026!



Date: Monday, May 11



Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM



Location: [The DalcY Event Hall at Aba](#) (we're back!)

Third Floor, 302 N Green Street, Chicago, IL 60607

Join us for **Ndajee 2026: From Education to Climate Action — Girls Leading Change**, WGEP's annual benefit celebrating how girls' education and leadership are driving community-led climate solutions in Kenya and Senegal.

Enjoy powerful storytelling, a keynote from the ***Rick Steves Climate Smart Initiative***, great food, dancing, and meaningful connection—all in support of girls leading change for a more sustainable future.

To learn more about Ndajee 2026, visit our website [here](#).

Purchase your ticket (\$150 each) or become an event sponsor today to make an even greater impact!

BUY TICKETS!

BECOME A SPONSOR!

Together, we can keep girls learning, leading, and changing the world—make a gift today. 💖

DONATE

For more frequent updates, follow WGEF on Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook! Support girls' education in rural Senegal and Kenya by making a gift via [our website](#).



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