

# THE COUNTRYWOMAN MAGAZINE

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

ISSUE 2 - 2022

The logo consists of a white outline of a map of Africa on a dark grey background, with the text 'rural women in action' to its right.

rural  
women  
in action

Associated Country  
Women of the World

ACWW 2022 | A1922-104

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## The Countrywoman Issue 2 - 2022

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The Countrywoman is the official magazine of ACWW, and was named by Mrs Alfred Watt MBE, the First President of ACWW in 1933.

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Please note that we welcome submissions for *The Countrywoman*, particularly from first time contributors or those in areas not recently featured.

Due to ACWW's strategic advocacy policy, articles may be printed in the most appropriate issue, not necessarily the most immediate. We welcome contributions throughout the year.

The Editor's decision on acceptance and inclusion is final.

# Table of Contents

- 3 MY DEAR FRIENDS...**  
A message from the World President, Magdie de Kock
- 4 CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS**  
Executive Director Tish Collins on recent updates from the Office
- 5 ACWW COORDINATORS**  
Answering some FAQs
- 6 30<sup>th</sup> TRIENNIAL WORLD CONFERENCE**  
Updates, Competitions, and dress guidelines
- 8 PROJECT PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**  
Report from Project 1042
- 9 PROJECTS SNAPSHOT: AGRICULTURE**  
A glimpse at the recently funded agriculture projects
- 10 (NOT JUST) 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM**  
Resources for the 16 Days of Activism to end violence against women
- 15 2021 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY**  
Looking back at 2021, preparing for the future

The front and rear cover photos are from project 1057; here is brief summary of the project activities.

This is ACWW's first time supporting Ntengwe, with this project Women-Led Climate-resilient Farming; Supporting Vegetable Gardens in Zimbabwe which was funded in October 2019. The purpose of this project was to develop an approach to food and income security that puts women first as farmers and decision-makers. The project built women's capacity to practice sustainable climate-smart agriculture through the construction of a poly pipeline. This allowed water to be channelled from the municipal water source to an existing vegetable garden with the aim for enhancing food and income security for marginal farming households. The project provided the garden with irrigation pipes to ensure all-year round food production for women smallholder farmers and their families.

The lockdown restrictions in Zimbabwe delayed the project by 10 months as the groups were unable to travel and gather together. However, as training sessions and the installation of equipment was completed before lockdown some security was provided for the participants. Ntengwe were able to keep in contact with the project participants through weekly WhatsApp mentoring sessions to keep the momentum of the project going through lockdown. They found that the participants adjusted easily to virtual learning which reduced the stress and anxiety of isolation while also allowing project activities to continue; increasing the capacity of the women farmer's ability to adapt to climate and COVID-19 impacts on their farms. This project also included involvement from the Ministry and Agriculture and the Ministry of Small to Medium Enterprises. Once lockdown restrictions lifted, the project participants benefited from training sessions from the two government ministries on topics including organic farming techniques, business and negotiation skills, and creating links to markets.



### MAKING YOUR MAGAZINE SUSTAINABLE

We deliver *The Countrywoman* in an envelope rather than a plastic wrapper. This is because we use Forest Stewardship Council approved sustainable paper for both the magazine and its packaging. For every tree used in the production of this issue, three are planted in its place. This is part of ACWW's commitment to a healthier planet, and Sustainable Development Goal 12.



# My Dear Friends,

Cars and machinery do not feature on my list of interests. Therefore, when I was recently invited to a Gala dinner at the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky, I was surprised by the choice of the venue. In September I attended the Annual meeting of the National Master Farm and Homemakers Guild in Bowling Green and the organisers chose this particular venue to conclude a successful event and to highlight the theme of the meeting: "Trains, planes and automobiles".

As soon as I entered the Museum, I realised that it was not only a privilege to wine and dine in such an extraordinary setting, but to be surrounded by beautiful, expensive and sought-after automobiles was a once-in-a-life time experience! I discovered then I was after-all interested in cars, especially those beautiful and luxury Corvette cars!

The programme of the prestigious evening ended with a performance by Janet Scott who portrayed the life of Mary Carson Breckinridge, founder of the Frontier Nursing Service in Leslie County, Kentucky in 1925. Driven by grief after losing her two children and her husband, a sense of social obligation, and a calling to serve others whose needs were greater than her own, Mary devoted her life to maternal and child welfare at the young age of forty-four.

Seeking to put healthcare within the reach of rural women, Mary and her "angels on horseback" provided midwifery and general nursing care to nearly 10,000 people in a 700-square-mile area of the isolated mountains of Southeast Kentucky.



Why am I sharing this story? Because it reminds me of millions of women and children who are in need. Perhaps not the same need of women and children in Mary Carson's time, but women and children suffering domestic violence and, very often, at the hands of those to whom they entrusted their lives.

According to UNESCO, violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today and is a threat to millions of children and women. It affects women regardless of their age, background, culture or level of education.

The 16 days between 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and 10 December, Human Rights Day, are known as the campaign of "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence", a time to galvanize action to raise awareness to end violence against women and children around the world.

ACWW members are requested to participate in local events and activities to raise awareness for this cruelty to women and children. Please support the "Orange the World Campaign" to eliminate domestic violence. Orange is a vibrant colour and it symbolizes a brighter future, free of violence. Let us be rural women in action and "orange the world" by showing our support as claimed on the ACWW website:

*"Our work is rooted in the fundamental principles of human rights, and we work on behalf of those left furthest behind. ACWW stands against discrimination in all its forms, and works towards gender equality, accessibility, global citizenship, solidarity with those facing discrimination, and sustainable development".*

Since July, I had the privilege to meet many members when I attended the Conference of South East Asia and the Far East, and many conferences of local ACWW member societies. I have just returned from attending meetings in the USA. I am pleased to say that the members I have recently met, were enthusiastic to support the Board in proceeding on our way forward to serve the Membership and secure ACWW for future generations.

While members of the Board find ourselves in the final months of this triennium, we are diligently focussing on the aims and objectives of our beloved organization which remained the same since our founding in 1929. Over decades, strategic changes have shaped the work of ACWW, never changing its core values and principals. Former USA President, Jimmy Carter, once said:

*"We must adjust to changing times but still hold to unchanging principles."*

While ACWW is proceeding into a bright future, we should be reminded that we all are part of a global sisterhood looking out for one another. Mariela Dabbah describes this truth so well when she said:



*"Women who support other women are confident, generous, visionaries. It's about women helping women and women doing things together and supporting each other. Strong women don't use their strength to knock others down, but to help others carry their burdens."*

It doesn't matter how small of a good deed it is that you do, as long as you're doing that deed, it's going to add to the goodness and positivity in the world. In a world filled with hate and anger, any little drop of goodness and positivity is always going to be received extremely well.

It is important that we all try to add to the world's positivity. Although a good deed that you do may seem small and pointless to you, it may mean the absolute world to someone else... like supporting the campaign mentioned earlier in this letter.

Mary Carson Breckinridge and Madge Watt were, among others, true inspirers to millions around the world and so are you, dear ACWW member, when you choose to focus on the aims and objectives of ACWW.

We should frequently remind ourselves of the words of the poem Collect by Mary Stewart, written in 1904 to inspire a new generation of women to aspire to greatness as a collective whole.

*"...grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences; that in the big things of life we are one".*

Of course, as we approach the upcoming holiday season, whatever is beautiful, whatever brings you happiness, whatever is meaningful, may it be yours this holiday season and throughout the coming year.

Warmest regards

*Magdie*

Magdie de Kock  
ACWW World President

# From Central Office

I am writing this on a bright, chilly day in London. The summer and autumn of 2022 have flown by, marked by plenty of activity at Central Office, including working on presenting decisions taken by the Board and responding to queries from members.

Registrations are now pouring in for the 30th Triennial World Conference next May, and I need to remind you that the cut-off date to register is 31 December 2022. If you haven't yet booked your flight we have exciting news from Malaysian Airlines who join us as travel partners. Delegate information packs will be sent out in January, and we are keeping the World Conference section of the website up to date with information as it comes in – scroll down on the page to the FAQs (frequently asked questions). I have received many enquiries about a 'dress code' for the Gala Dinner at the Royal Palace and as soon as we receive information it will be circulated. It promises to be an extra special Triennial World Conference, with additional royal elements and cultural experiences that should delight you alongside a packed agenda with speakers and many resolutions for discussion.

Worldwide our members continue to experience extreme weather conditions; some have gone from drought and wildfires to flooding, others have been hit by earthquakes, hurricanes, or torrential rain. Conflict has also brought personal tragedies, and added to the global cost of living crisis. As we look ahead to the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2023 where Rural Women will be the Review Theme, we re-state and renew our commitment to action and amplifying the voices of our membership.

This summer saw the hottest temperatures in London since records began – and somehow our landlords arranged for roof work to begin just as the heavy rains started! This resulted in Central Office being flooded. We managed to secure the archive into another unit and move the office staff into a third unit in an adjacent building. Whilst we were without internet for a time, we now have a fairly stable connection and expect to be in temporary accommodation at least until January 2023. Post should still be addressed to Ao4 Parkhall, 40 Martell Road, London SE21 8EN, UK as normal. We will not be paying rent on our unit – or the other two we are currently occupying – until everything is resolved and we are back into our normal space. This saves around £20,000 for ACWW, and our landlords will also be paying to replace everything damaged in the flood.

It was also in August that Advocacy Director Nick Newland had a very nasty accident to his hand that resulted in major surgery and three follow-up surgical procedures, infection and extreme pain - resulting in his hand not being

usable for about 12 weeks. In between hospital appointments he has managed to secure the most exciting advances to ACWW's work with UNESCO (read more in this magazine), and has worked throughout his recovery.

I am pleased to report that two new people joined the staff team in September. Recent Masters' graduate Casey Daudelin joined us as Office Administrator following Iga Jazdzejewska who left in June, and we welcomed well-qualified Funmi Omolabi as Finance Assistant to work alongside Finance Manager Yvette. In a small office where there is much multi-tasking, vacancies can put a major strain on the working environment and I thank our staff for covering desks, workload, and training during this period, as well as members for their patience. Iga has moved on to a new job with the Civil Service, and we wish her all the very best! Fleur Boya, our advocacy researcher, got married in June, and when she returned from honeymoon having moved house, handed in her notice. There are no immediate plans to replace her.

In this issue World President Magdie de Kock reports on an inspiring trip to the United States of America with Area President Bonnie Teeple. I attended the European Area Conference alongside Deputy World President Alison Burnett, who was representing the World President, Area President Afrodita Roman and Projects Chairman Edwina Marr. Past World President Ruth Shanks also attended the Conference and helped me with a new presentation of ACWW Past, Present and Future after Alison was taken ill - and I am pleased to report that she is recovering well. In response to requests, this and presentations



from Board members will be made available on the website.

I must also say that it has been lovely to hear from members that welcome the new opportunities for engagement that the Coordinator's scheme brings, and the appreciation of the earthy colour-palette used in this magazine and recent publications. We are continuing to develop processes to ensure we can bring you detailed project impact assessments, photos, and reports, and know that these will prove popular. We are very grateful to all those from around the world who have engaged so positively with recent updates and the re-focused energy being spent on our aims and objectives, and know that we all stand together in looking forward to at least another 95 years of ACWW representing rural women globally.

*Tish*

Tish Collins  
ACWW Executive Director



*Delegates at the ACWW Europe Area Conference*

# ACWW Coordinators

We've been delighted with the response to the ACWW Coordinator Programme so far, with nominations coming from all over the world. There have been two meetings so far, and it has been fantastic to hear straight from ACWW member societies about the challenges they're facing and what support they need from ACWW to help spread the word.

We're looking for Coordinators from all ACWW member societies, so if your society has not nominated one, the call remains open.

Below, we've answered some commonly asked questions about the coordinator programme:

### What if my society is a small branch of a larger ACWW member society?

That's great! We'd still love to hear from you about the challenges you face and resources that would be useful to you. If there is someone willing to act as coordinator, they are very welcome in the programme.

National or State/ Provincial Societies are also welcome to appoint Coordinators.

The aim of the Coordinators programme is that every ACWW member society be represented, regardless of size or status.

For additional clarity, it is only societies, branches and institutes that hold *their own*

*membership* with ACWW who can nominate coordinators.

### Is there a cost associated with being a coordinator?

You should be an ACWW individual member if you're a coordinator, but otherwise there is no direct cost. We encourage people to participate as much as their time and resources allow. For some, this means travelling around giving talks, for others, this means forwarding ACWW newsletters on to the members of their branch. There are many ways that Coordinators can raise awareness of and funds for ACWW, including by doing virtual meetings and newsletters. Suggestions for fundraising ideas and guidelines are forthcoming.

### Can I or my Society pay for the membership of their coordinator?

This a matter between the society and the coordinator; ACWW has no objection.

### Is there training involved?

Yes, there is training, along with resources and the opportunity to learn from other coordinators in your Area and all over the world.

### How can my society nominate someone to be a coordinator?

The call for Coordinators was sent out in July

2022, and the end of October 2022. If these have not reached you, you can email [sydney@acww.org.uk](mailto:sydney@acww.org.uk) for the nomination form.

### Is there a risk of Coordinators doing the work of Area Presidents?

No, the coordinators are intended to support Area Presidents and help give her insight into her Area at a grassroots level. They can also help her ensure that information reaches the societies, and that information and feedback is fed back through the right channels.

### Aren't you just reinventing the wheel when we already have International Officers / ACWW Reps etc.?

We are so grateful for the work of these ACWW supporters over the years, and it is on just these sorts of programmes that the Coordinator Programme is based. There is a need to bring some consistency to what ACWW supporters around the world do and say, and also a need to have some sort of database where we can call for feedback and response when necessary. The Coordinator Programme, though in its infancy, has already provided unprecedented insight into the needs of members and how we can support them in raising funds and awareness. The Coordinator network also provides a forum for learning from each other, which is one of the aims of ACWW.

## Register today!

### The Triennial World Conference approaches!

You can register for the Triennial World Conference on our website, or by filling out a printed form - if you would like a printable form emailed to you, or a paper form posted to you, please contact Central Office by phone at +44(0)207 799 3875 or by email at [worldconference@acww.org.uk](mailto:worldconference@acww.org.uk). Remember that registrations close on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022. This meant that they must be received at the office no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December. Any registrations received after this date will not be processed.

All of the latest information about the conference can be found on the following pages, or on our website. If you would rather not access the website, please contact Central Office as above and we will get the information to you in a way that is accessible. Payment for conference registration can be made online, by bank transfer, by phone, or by cheque.

We are excited to announce that the Hostess Society have arranged discounted flights with Malaysia Airlines, and information about how to book can be found in the table below. Note

that the purchase period is the period of time that the flight must be booked and paid for, and the travel period is the time that you actually take the flight. The discount is available for any Malaysia Airlines flight, and must be booked direct on the website. It does not apply to

codeshare flights. Fares are subject to availability. Malaysia Airlines reserves the right to modify or change these details without prior notice. The flight schedule may change subject to customer demands and government regulations.

	EARLY BIRD PROMO	NORMAL PROMO
Promo Code	MHACWW25	MHACWW20
Discount	Up to 25%	Up to 20%
Purchase period	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2022 until 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023 until 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
Travel Period	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 until 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2023	
Origins and Destination	All Malaysia Airlines operating flights to Kuala Lumpur (only). (Return)	
How to book	<b>Step 1:</b> Visit <a href="http://www.malaysiaairlines.com">www.malaysiaairlines.com</a> <b>Step 2:</b> Insert Itineraries detail and insert "Promo Code" at the "Promo Code" column before clicking on the "Book Now" button. <b>Step 3:</b> Select Malaysia Airlines flight and proceed to payment.	

# Looking forward to Kuala Lumpur May 2023

Like so many of you, we are really excited about the next Triennial World Conference, and finally having the chance to see everyone in person after 4 years... Melbourne seems a long time ago now!

There is a lot of information that has already been circulated, and more is being added to our website at [www.acww.org.uk/2023-world-conference](http://www.acww.org.uk/2023-world-conference) all the time. We know that a lot of you have questions about suggested dress codes for Malaysia, and want to be sure that you feel appropriately dressed - and we're keen to help. The following is guidance, and please remember that our hosts - both in the WI of Pahang, and in Malaysia in general - are incredibly warm, kind, and friendly, and will always be happy to help with answering questions or offering guidance.

In general, the style of dress in Malaysia tends towards the conservative, and when in doubt, go for longer and looser rather than shorter and tighter! Specifically, the following items will be appropriate for Conference sessions and formal occasions:

## Conference sessions & general outfits

- Three quarter or long-sleeve blouses / tops
- Below-the-knee length skirts or trousers
- Avoid plunging or low necklines
- Having a lightweight shawl or scarf handy is always a good idea
- Shoes are preferred, but formal, open-top sandals can also be worn
- Please avoid flip-flops/thongs/casual slippers
- As a general rule, avoid transparent materials, body-hugging outfits and skirts with slits or openings above the knee.
- Shoulders should be covered

## National Dress

- National dress or outfits are encouraged, particularly for the International Evening

## The Gala Dinner

- Formal wear, as you might imagine for the Royal Palace
- Avoid plain yellow or white outfits - especially an outfit that includes multiple items in those colours, like hat, blouse, skirt, handbag etc. These are the royal colours and should not be worn by others
- Hats and Fascinators are encouraged
- Closed-toe, ideally black, court shoes should be worn
- Observe the same notes as above, longer outfits should be the norm, and imagine the most formal occasion you might attend!
- Again, modest National Dress is encouraged



## Head coverings

- It is not necessary to cover your head unless you are entering a Mosque or other religious space; if you are sightseeing it may be sensible to carry a shawl or scarf with you just in case

## For Gentlemen

- Long trousers/pants rather than shorts
- Shirts with collars or polo shirts
- Sports coat / blazer with trousers is ideal for meals

## Gentlemen at the Gala Dinner

- Formal wear, such as a suit and tie, or ideally dinner jacket / tuxedo with bow tie or black tie
- Evening tails for those wishing to impress!
- Black formal shoes

## Tours for Spouses / Partners / Friends

### 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023 - full day

Visit to Royal Selangor Pewter, Kuala Lumpur Craft Complex, and Tasik Putrajaya Lake Cruise, a 3-hour exploration in the new Federal Administrative Centre by air-conditioned boat.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 - half day

Visit to the Islamic Arts Museum, the largest museum of Islamic arts in South-East Asia, and drive around the stunning Kuala Lumpur Botanical Gardens.

### 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 - half day

Visit to Palm Garden Golf Club, a round of golf, and for non-golfers, a golf clinic covering the swing, club grip, stance, posture, proper golf etiquette and rules, knowing your clubs and the basics of bunker play, chipping and putting!

More information and photos are available on our website at [www.acww.org.uk/2023-world-conference](http://www.acww.org.uk/2023-world-conference)



# Guidelines for Competition Entries

30<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference  
17-25 May 2023  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



We are pleased to invite all ACWW members to enter the competitions at the 30th Triennial World Conference. If you are not intending to attend the Conference, you can still submit an entry by asking someone from your Society to take your entry with them!

There are two competitions being run during the Conference, with the specifications shown below:

### TEA TRAY CLOTH

- Any medium, any shape (round, square, oval, rectangle, etc.)
- The cloth can be machine or hand sewn, crocheted, or knitted
- The cloth can be quilted, patchworked, embroidered, or lace
- Approximate Size: 40cm x 30cm (15.7" x 11.8") or 45cm x 30cm (17.7" x 11.8")

### SHOE BAG FOR TRAVELLING PURPOSES

- Article must be machine sewn
- Minimum Size: 30cm x 40cm (11.8" x 15.7")
- Maximum Size: 35cm x 50cm (13.8" x 20")
- The Shoe Bag must close with a draw string

### Additional Information

- The articles must be made by an ACWW member
- You do not have to attend the Triennial World Conference to enter the competition
- There is no limit to the number of entries
- Articles using fabric representing your country can add to the charm of your article
- You must attach the entry form below, fully completed, by stitching it onto the underside of your article
- All entries must be submitted on 17 May 2023 at the Competitions Desk at the Conference Venue
- After the articles have been judged and viewed, they will be sold at a nominal price for the benefit of ACWW

### Judging

- The judging will be carried out by the Hostess Society, WI Pahang
- There will also be a "Viewer's Choice" vote
- The winning articles will be auctioned during the Conference, for the benefit of ACWW

## 2023 Conference Competition Entry Form

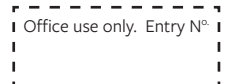
Please carefully read the instructions above before submission

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Society: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick the items you are submitting:       Tea Tray Cloth       Shoe Bag

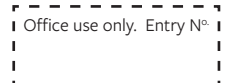
Please sew this ticket securely to the bottom of your entry (no pins)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Society: \_\_\_\_\_



Please sew this ticket securely to the bottom of your entry (no pins)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Society: \_\_\_\_\_



# Final Report: Project 1042

## Sexual and Reproductive Health Education

Based in the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu in Southern India, this project implemented by the PACHE Trust (People's Association for Community Health Education) empowered adolescent girls and young women through sexual and reproductive health and rights education. This is PACHE Trust's eighth ACWW funded project as a long-time member. Established in 1987, the key mission of PACHE Trust is to inspire and mobilise the poorest groups in society towards their own emancipation and empowerment. PACHE Trust's work prioritises children, women and the environment and focuses on education, health, and HIV/AIDS awareness.

This project aimed to provide education and help empower women and girls at risk of sexual abuse, violence, and exploitation. Through education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, PACHE Trust aimed to provide the project participants with the tools they need to empower themselves.

Following on from a successful first stage of project implementation, PACHE Trust were able to complete project activities according to plan in the second stage. PACHE Trust facilitated numerous education sessions;

- 75 PACHE Trust staff members and volunteers participated in an orientation to generate awareness and knowledge of the impact of sexual and reproductive health on all other health indicators.
- 95 young women and adolescent girls attended education sessions based around puberty, menstruation, reproductive health and safer sex. These sessions also covered sexual abuse and exploitation and access to health care services.

- Engaging men in the conversation around gender equality is vital in order to reduce sexual violence and exploitation and to promote more equal partnerships between men and women. In light of this, PACHE Trust facilitated sessions with 118 young men focused on reproductive and sexual health and rights and interpersonal relationship skills such as communication, decision making and equal partnership.
- Training sessions were held for 68 young women and adolescent girls as an opportunity to develop communication skills, assertiveness and exercising their rights around family and marital matters. This activity was aimed at challenging the traditional male dominant role within family and relationships, to encourage women to stake a claim in the decision making processes that involve them.
- An extensive education session was facilitated on the topic of sexual exploitation, abuse and consent with over 90 women and young girls in attendance. This session was particularly thorough in order to give the participants a clear and full understanding of consent and abusive behaviours. As a result of this session, Women's Health Groups were formed to allow for peer support.

As a result of this project, PACHE Trust has seen positive changes in the attitudes, values and behaviours of not just the young women and girls involved in this project, but also the young men in the local community. The Women's Self-help Groups established will enable the positive impact of this project to continue for future groups of young women across the area.

## Project in numbers:

**75** volunteers trained in Sexual and Reproductive health education

**68** young women given training in assertiveness and communication

**118** men trained in sexual health and rights, and taught about equal partnership and consent

**90** young women trained to recognise signs of exploitation and abuse

**95** girls taught about menstrual health and safer sex.



Above: Children learn about good touch / bad touch to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation

To left: women participate in menstrual health training



# Project Snapshot: Agriculture

## Why does ACWW prioritise funding climate-smart Agriculture projects?

Food and agriculture production systems across the world are facing unprecedented challenges in the face of climate change. Without action, this will lead to unpredictable growing seasons, failed crops, loss of soil health, reduced biodiversity, and increased hunger and food insecurity. Small-scale subsistence farmers in Africa, Asia, and South America are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change, increasingly unpredictable weather patterns and increased risk of draught leading to poorer harvests and reduced income. Women make up 48% of agricultural employment across low-income countries - fulfilling vital roles in the management of natural resources and food production.

Despite their vital role in the global food systems, rural women face disproportionate challenges compared to rural men; they are more likely to be food-insecure, lack access to land, resources and market information and tend to have less decision-making power. ACWW is committed to promoting sustainable Climate-Smart Agriculture through small-scale project funding. Climate-Smart Agriculture helps farmers to respond effectively to the impacts of climate change and adapt to these challenges by choosing indigenous seed varieties for drought resistant crops, building irrigation systems, rainfall forecasting and rainwater harvesting.



A major cause of crop failures that Madam Emefa Baffur endures are due to lack of seed security and seed sovereignty. “Seeds we buy from the agro-chemical shops have a poor germination rate. Crops from such seeds are not adapted to our climatic conditions and do not thrive well” she says.

“Another problem for us is our inability to save, process and store our own vegetable seeds for the next planting season.” Having been a participant on the training programme Good Agricultural Practices for Greenhouse Vegetable Cultivation, she has been exposed to new techniques for seedlings production. “A good vegetable crop harvest begins with a good seed and care taken in producing healthy seedlings” she concludes.

## Project 1109: Climate-Smart Agriculture through Greenhouse Production

Climate change has forced smallholder farmers to transform, and continue to adapt, planting season planning. Factors such as extreme weather, unpredictable rainfall and prolonged draught all threaten food security in rural communities and mean that farmers can no longer rely on the agricultural knowledge collected over generations.

Female farmers are disproportionately affected by these challenges. Due to restricted access to resources and land required for adaptation and resilience building they are less able to safeguard their crops from loss and damage due to climate change. These challenges rest on top of the persistent inequalities that women in rural areas already face.

Sankofa Women Cooperative Food Farmers and Marketing Society is providing its members with the tools and knowledge needed to put in place adaptive measures to climate change. The 30 members were trained in the use of greenhouse technology for the sustainable productive of indigenous African vegetables. Agricultural production in greenhouses offers a protected and controlled environment from pests, extreme weather, heavy rains and solar radiation. In a greenhouse environment, the Sankofa farmers also have more control over their cropping methods for optimum growth and a higher yield for market using less land.

## Agriculture Projects funded 2021 - 2022

Empowering Vulnerable Women and Girls at Risk	Youth With a Focus Teso	Uganda
Promoting Food Security and Regenerative Farming for Refugee Women and Youth Farmers	Youth Initiative for Community Empowerment	Uganda
Agriculture Support for Improved Nutrition and Incomes Generation and Livelihoods for Single Mothers	Ndibwami Integrated Rescue Project	Uganda
Intercropping for Increased Small-scale Farming	Youth and women for Social and Economic Empowerment (YWSEE)	Uganda
Kitchen Gardens for Community Growth	Vaigai Mahalir Iyakkam (VMI)	India
Building Resilience through Climate Smart Agriculture	Iseguri Initiative	Ghana
Climate Smart Agriculture through Greenhouse Production	Hohoe Sankofa Women Co-operative Food Farmers and Marketing Society Limited	Kenya
Value Added Crops	Babuyirana Women Group	Uganda
Seed grants for Sustainable Farming	Education Communication and Development Trust	India





137  
too many

Every day, 137 women die at the hands of a family member

243 million women experienced sexual and/or physical violence from an intimate partner in the last year

1 in 4 girls aged 15 - 19 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner

### Educate Boys

### Protect Girls

Invest in programmes and resources to help women be more financially independent

Challenge misogynistic talk and ‘jokes’

Challenge cultural, religious, and traditional attitudes that perpetuate inequalities

Look inward: think about the beliefs you have about yourself and other women that are based in misogyny

The primary way that ACWW can address domestic violence and the policies and systems that allow it to thrive is through advocacy. Advocacy means that we take the issues facing rural women, like increased risk of domestic violence, death at the hands of an intimate partner, and lack of access to resources, and present these to international and national policy-makers and legislators. Last year, we were able to raise the issue of domestic violence while at the Eurasian Women’s Forum in Russia, both through speeches and directly with government ministers. If you want to support our advocacy work, please donate to the Rural Women in Action Fund, the lifeblood of ACWW.



# What can we do in our communities?

## Raise good men

to respect, honour, and celebrate women in all their diversity and to view women as peers, colleagues, and friends rather than only potential spouses, sexualised objects, or surrogate caretakers

## Challenge “everyday sexism”

When you see someone being treated unfairly at work, school, or church, don't let it go unchallenged. This can be as simple as creating discomfort by asking someone to explain a sexist joke, or it can mean reporting harassment to appropriate authorities

## Believe and support survivors

Familiarise yourself with the support mechanisms for people fleeing domestic abuse, and investigate whether they are sufficient to keep them safe, so that you know exactly what to do if someone confides in you.



# What should governments do?

- 1** Give girls and women the support they need to leave abusive situations
  - Financial security
  - Mental Healthcare
  - Physical Protection
  - Community
- 2** Secure financial independence for women through education, loan advice, capacity building, and career advancement opportunities
- 3** Ensure continuity of education and opportunities for further education
- 4** Place qualified women in leadership roles in the community, to ensure that the interests of women are safeguarded
- 5** Give girls female role models and teachers, who are empowered themselves and can teach young women the importance of education and self-sufficiency.



Raising awareness is vital, but the responsibility for change lies with policy-makers and legislators, law enforcement and judiciary systems, and ultimately the perpetrators themselves. Unless we see systematic cultural shifts that prioritise the eradication of violence against women and girls, we will find ourselves in the same place a decade in the future - very aware of a problem that hasn't been fully addressed.

# FROM 16 TO 365

Pressure your local and national governments. Gather statistics and stories from support services in your area, and then find out how your local government is prioritising addressing violence against women and girls.

If you need help writing letters, finding the right people to talk to, or support from your international network or Rural Women in Action, reach out to Central Office.

and please remember...

When making a presentation or doing a talk on these topics, your audience will be full of women from all walks of life. It is important that they are aware of the subject matter before your talk, so that they can decide for themselves whether they want to listen. It is usual to offer a content warning when discussing domestic violence, sexual violence, or abuse in general. When you offer a content warning, you could say something like this:

*“My talk will include mentions of domestic violence, sexual violence and assault, and domestic abuse. If you don't feel that you want to engage with the subjects as they are presented, please feel free to disengage in a way that feels comfortable for you.”*

Please ensure that attendees are aware of the content of your talk in advance of the meeting and directly before you start your presentation or talk. After giving your content warning, give attendees a chance to take action by asking them to talk among themselves while you make final preparations. This gives them opportunity to leave without undue awkwardness or embarrassment.

# Writing an effective lobbying letter

## The Basics

- Make sure you are writing to the most relevant person, and make sure you know their position on the matter you're writing about, if they have one. They probably have a website which explains their positions
- Ensure that you're writing at a relevant time for your subject - is there a debate or discussion coming up? Is there a vote related to your subject soon? If you are writing because you don't think there is enough action on your subject, make sure that you've done adequate research to claim inaction
- Include a subject line
- Make sure that your letter is addressed correctly when writing to government officials
- Keep it short if you want it to be read
- Feel free to use a high-resolution version of the ACWW logo on your letter, or get in touch if you want a word template for your letter.

## Structure and Content

- First paragraph: say why you are writing e.g. in respect of policy passed by the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW), an international NGO representing over 9 million women in more than 80 countries. Don't forget to include the Resolution text - you can find this on our website!
- Body of letter: develop your argument, backing it up with facts, figures, specific cases, quotes, relevant legislation. You can use the facts and figures from factsheets ACWW has created. Don't forget to include your experience in your own area, and the impacts you see locally.
- Final paragraph: state what action you would like the official to take, for example: send you information on their position, commit to ensure that the rights / environment / lives / livelihoods of rural women are protected as it relates to the subject of your letter, or even put them in touch with ACWW directly for more information.

Lobbying Letters can ensure that your local government is aware that there is a rural voice in their constituency, a rural voice which is backed by an impressive international organisation whose purpose is to ensure that your voice is heard. Don't forget to partner with your Area President when dealing with local government, and send her a copy of your letter and any response received. If your local government is not responding to the issues facing rural women, we need to know. Tell your Area President if you're facing issues making your voice heard.



Associated Country  
Women of the World

# ACWW in 2021

*A Summary of the 2021 Annual Report and Accounts of  
the Associated Country Women of the World*

*The photo above shows female farmers from Project 1057, Women-Led Climate-resilient Farming; Supporting Vegetable Gardens in Zimbabwe. Ntengwe empowers grassroots women's leadership through community-based initiatives focused on rural women as the driving force for change. Photo courtesy of Ntengwe for Community Development*

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# ACWW in 2021

Associated Country Women of the World is an International Non-Governmental Organisation (INGO) and pursues its charitable objectives through its member societies and through networks of non-member Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

## Who we are

The Associated Country Women of the World was founded in 1929 to bring rural women and their organisations all over the world together, addressing the challenges they faced because of the isolation of their communities, discrimination against women, and lack of standing in political processes.



## Our Objectives

ACWW's objectives are the relief of poverty, the relief of sickness, the protection and preservation of health, and the advancement of education for women in both rural and non-rural areas worldwide, to empower women and improve the quality of life.

## Our Mission

The charity aims, through its membership and networks of rural and non-rural women, by cooperation and understanding, to empower its members and rural women worldwide, creating opportunities for women to exercise more power.

We believe women will be empowered when they are able to make better decisions and change their own lives. In order to do this, they need to be better informed, be part of an enabling environment and have the necessary tools in order to carry out the changes they want.

ACWW's mission is to bring these conditions about through partnership, advocacy, sharing of knowledge and local activities.

## Representative Democracy

The Triennial World Conference is the highest legislative body of ACWW, establishing policy and electing the Board of Trustees. The Constitution, Rules and Bye Laws govern the workings of the organisation, with Board Members entrusted to act within them, and on behalf of members for the best interests of the organisation and its members.



# COVID-19 and ACWW

## Digital Meetings

For a second year, ACWW's membership, Board, and staff were impacted by global Covid-19 Pandemic. Face to face meetings continued to be replaced with video conferencing, and ACWW's Committee meetings were held in line with their normal schedules - though with an additional meeting of the Finance and Membership Committee.

Reflecting the ease of digital communication, and the need to address issues as they arose, the Executive Committee held 5 meetings rather than the usual 3, and the Board met 3 times instead of once.

Alongside the Specified Committees, there were two meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Data Protection, also held digitally.

## Central Office

National lockdowns in the UK had dominated 2020, but in 2021 the country entered a third lockdown on 6 January, and ongoing restrictions affected the next six months to varying degrees.

Staff worked from home throughout the period, returning to the office when safe and legal to do so. Significant adjustments were made to the office including one-way systems, social distancing, restrictions on the number of people in each part of the building, and increased cleaning procedures.

We are grateful that though several staff did contract Covid-19 in 2021, no one was seriously ill, and everyone returned to work in due course.

Our staff developed a range of new resources, and spent a significant amount of time working to support members around the world. This included safe and effective use of digital technologies to join ACWW meetings, and even their own member society meetings.

## Communications

Almost as soon as the lockdowns began, ACWW's World President and Central Office team started to explore options for members to stay in touch.

The World President hosted regular "Afternoon Tea" sessions on Zoom, welcoming members to her kitchen with a pot of tea and a slice of a homemade treat... and recipe cards were circulated with the registration so members could create similar delights.

An ACWW Quiz hosted by the World President and the Executive Director proved very popular, and was repeated for different regions and time zones.

## Membership & Conferences

In 2020 there were 440 Member Societies and 1,427 Individual Members, in 82 countries throughout the world. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on rural women, the Board decided that no member societies would be lapsed for non-payment of membership fees in 2020 or 2021.

The number of Life Members has declined since no new Life Members have been added since 1997. However, many Life Members voluntarily pay a current membership fee and are included in the Individual Member category.

We normally work to a 3-year cycle, and the 29<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference took place in April 2019 in Melbourne, Australia. The 30<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference was scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in May 2022. Covid-19 put this in jeopardy, and the Board considered what steps should be taken if there was a need to postpone this event.

In line with the Constitution, the Board called a Special World Conference to be held digitally 17-23 April 2021, to consider a single resolution to delay the Triennial World Conference by one year. Notices were sent to all member societies and individual members by email and post, and Conference sessions were repeated in different time zones to ensure maximum participation.

There were six sessions held at which more than 150 people join in via Zoom, and more than 2,200 people watched on Facebook. As Magdie de Kock, World President said *'This has been an historic week for ACWW, and I am honoured to have had you with us for this unique event.'*

*"In light of the unprecedented uncertainties of 2021, specifically in respect of the global Covid-19 Pandemic, it is resolved to:*

*i) Reschedule the 30<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference from May 2022 to May 2023, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In order for this to be enacted, the following Constitutional Amendment is required:*

*The following section of Clause 11.1.1, "...Triennial World Conferences must be held at intervals of not more than 42 months" be suspended, and the following text be inserted: "...Triennial World Conferences must be held at intervals of not more than 52 months"*

*ii) The amendment in i) above be rescinded at the close of the 30<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference"*

The total number of votes received in favour of the Resolution was 300, votes received against the Resolution 4. The percentage of votes cast in favour was 98.6%, with the resolution adopted.

## Area Conferences

In every 3 year cycle, ACWW's Area Presidents organise an Area Conference to ensure that their members can come together and share their experiences, feedback, concerns, and create opportunities for learning from each other.

Covid-19 had an inevitable impact on planning during this Triennium, and almost every Area Conference had to be re-scheduled.

The following Area Conferences took place in 2021:

South Pacific – held digitally 8 March

Southern Africa – held in person 7-9 June  
Howick, Kwa Zulu-Natal, South Africa

Canada – held digitally 6-7 July

United States of America – held digitally 2 August

Caribbean, Central & South America – 2 November

The following were re-scheduled to 2022:  
Europe, East, West and Central Africa, South East Asia & the Far East, and Central & South Asia.

organisations to ensure action to secure meaningful, quality education for all young people. The advancement of education is a pathway to the relief of poverty and the relief of sickness and preservation of health.

ACWW commits to being an anti-racist organisation, and aims to equip all members to address racism within their own communities and collaborate to ensure that the voices of women of colour and indigenous communities are heard. We will work with peers to redress racial inequalities and leverage our partnerships to ensure positive joint working, promoting, sharing, and learning from best practice wherever possible to encourage greater accountability and advocate for meaningful change.

Remembering the resolution passed by our Membership in 1947 and the more than 20 resolutions and recommendations that have followed, ACWW reaffirms its support for the principles underlying the establishment of the United Nations, and to supporting the UN and its Member States in strengthening global governance and representation. This includes realising the success of the 2030 Agenda, amplifying the voices of rural women through UN processes and with UN agencies, and calling for reform to address the inadequacies of existing mechanisms.

Our work is rooted in the fundamental principles of human rights, and we work on behalf of those left furthest behind. ACWW stands against discrimination in all its forms, and works towards gender equality, accessibility, global citizenship, solidarity with those facing discrimination, and sustainable development.

ACWW's development programme for improved quality of life and the empowerment of rural women relies on funding local women-led delivery partners. This ensures that local voices are reflected in project design, implementation, and outcome assessment. We will continue this work, doing everything we can to ensure we are supporting the growth of relevant local capacity with a sustained and positive impact.

We are incredibly proud of our diverse network of women's organisations globally, and the women-led development projects we have supported over the past 50 years. We recognise that there is always more to be done to strengthen, empower, and build capacity within our network, lessons we can learn, and new voices to bring forward. ACWW's Board is elected by our membership, and geographic representation remains critical to bringing forward the priorities of rural women.

In 2019, the Board adopted 'Our Diversity is our Strength' as the Triennial theme, and today we reiterate this commitment, as we move towards marking the centenary of our Association, and ensuring that we, and our members, continue to be Rural Women in Action."

Adopted by ACWW's Board of Trustees, August 2021

## A renewed Statement of Ethics for ACWW

*"The Associated Country Women of the World was founded in 1929 to bring rural women and their organisations all over the world together, and in so doing address the challenges they faced because of the isolation of their communities, discrimination against women, and their lack of standing in political processes.*

*ACWW's membership spans 82 countries, and since 1947 we have passed more than 180 policy resolutions by popular vote. The key concept behind each of these is the empowerment of rural women in all their diversity, and this continues to be our driving priority.*

*Rural women are the backbone of families, of communities, of nations, of global food systems. They bear the burden of conflict, they go unheard in legislation, and remain largely unprotected and unsupported. ACWW exists to change that, and challenge international processes and policies that perpetuate these inequalities.*

*Reaffirming the earliest statements leading to the formation of our organisation and the words of our founders, ACWW calls for co-operation among women's*

ACWW seeks to empower women and communities through local activities

Since the 1970s, ACWW has funded small projects in grassroots communities, led by local women's organisations. In 2021, the Projects Committee met in February and October to award new grants.

Donations received for projects totalled £67,107

27 new projects were funded

Total spent on projects 2021 totalled £255,477

There were two members of staff, working a combined 7 days per week, whose sole job was to administer the project application process, deal with applicants, grantees and donors on behalf of the Committee.

The cost of overheads was to be applied to projects work as recommended by the auditors and restricted funds applied in this respect. Initial evaluation is carried out by these Central Office staff, who prepare a 'longlist' of eligible projects from the applications received. This list is then considered by the Projects Committee Chairman who shortlists the applications to be considered by the Projects Committee at one of their biannual meetings. The recommendations from the Committee are then considered by the Board or Executive, whichever meets first.

Projects primarily benefit rural women and children. These women tend to be strong activists in their own communities but would not normally have access to external funds. Grassroots organisations tend to have expert knowledge of their own communities and realities, and are supported where possible so that their communities can benefit from this knowledge.



ACWW recognises its project partners as experts and teachers, rather than beneficiaries. ACWW does not implement projects but rather funds them and works in partnership with grassroots organisations.

When an organisation applies for funding from ACWW, we apply checks to ensure that donations are used responsibly. Reporting and evaluation allow us to measure the impact of funding and, where applicable, ensure longevity and increasing independence. It is intended to resume evaluation visits once the Covid-19 pandemic allows.

Materials with indicative projects for each of the Women Empowered Fund "pots" were provided to donors and supporters via email and were shared on ACWW's social media channels and website. Donors are given project profiles, progress and final reports for their interest in response to priority focus areas supported. Case studies and project reports are published in *The Countrywoman* and in the annual Projects Newsletter, showing that lives of women are being improved.



# Projects Funded in 2021



Project & Organisation	Country	WE Fund Pot
<b>Intercropping for Increased Small-scale Farming</b> Youth and women for Social and Economic Empowerment (YWSEE)	Uganda	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Go Girls Project</b> Youth and Women for Opportunities Uganda (YWOU)	Uganda	Education and Capacity Building
<b>Improving Access to Water for Marginalised Communities</b> Youth Active in Community Development (YACODO)	Malawi	Sustainable Water, Sanitation, & Energy
<b>Kitchen Gardens for Community Growth</b> Vaigai Mahalir Iyakkam (VMI)	India	Income Generation and Livelihood
<b>Sustainable Water for Sikata Village</b> Star Awake CBO (SAC)	Kenya	Sustainable Water, Sanitation, & Energy
<b>Nutrition for Life</b> Rural Empowerment Women Organization (REWO)	Uganda	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Improved Maternal Health through Ambassador Programme</b> Rural Aid Foundation	Uganda	Maternal and Reproductive Health
<b>Ogongo Dispensary Water Project</b> Ogongo Dispensary	Kenya	Sustainable Water, Sanitation, & Energy
<b>Building Resilience through Climate Smart Agriculture</b> Iseguri Initiative	Ghana	Sustainable Agriculture, Training & Development
<b>Gender Equality Through the Prevention and Eradication of FGM</b> Hope Foundation for African Women	Kenya	Maternal and Reproductive Health
<b>Climate Smart Agriculture through Greenhouse Production</b> Hohoe Sankofa Women Co-operative Food Farmers and Marketing Society Limited	Ghana	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Value Added Crops</b> Babuyirana Women Group	Uganda	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Seeds of Change</b> Association for Human Integrated Massive Social Action (AHIMSA)	India	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Rural School Empowerment Project (RUSEE)</b> Safeplan Uganda	Uganda	Sustainable Agriculture, Training & Development
<b>Empowerment through Vocational Skill Training</b> Give Them Hope, Inc	Liberia	Education and Capacity Building
<b>Seed grants for Sustainable Farming</b> Education Communication and Development Trust	India	Education and Capacity Building
<b>A Step in a New Direction</b> Women for Life Development Initiative (WOLIDEVE)	Uganda	Income Generation and Livelihood
<b>Nutrition Education and Food Production for Yanadi Tribal Women</b> Village Reconstruction and Development Society (VRDS)	India	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Goats for the Goals</b> Vasantham Pengal Sanfam (VPS)	India	Sustainable Agriculture, Training & Development
<b>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Tanzanian Youth</b> Reaching the Unreached Tanzania (RUT)	Tanzania	Maternal and Reproductive Health
<b>Agricultural Skills for Nachampama Women</b> Kashitu Development Organization (KWDO)	Zambia	Sustainable Agriculture, Training & Development
<b>Economic Empowerment of Women through Climate-Smart Agriculture</b> Grass-root Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW)	Ghana	Sustainable Agriculture, Training & Development
<b>Community Well for Better Health and Hygiene</b> Gitaru Marigu Development Group (GMDG)	Kenya	Sustainable Water, Sanitation, & Energy
<b>Economic Empowerment for the Olmarurui Woman</b> Elite Community Development Empowerment Programme (ECODEP)	Kenya	Income Generation and Livelihood
<b>Improved Skills in Poultry Production</b> Courage Women Group (CWG)	Ghana	Income Generation and Livelihood
<b>Health Assessment &amp; Education in Rural Communities</b> Buddha Outcast Social Society (BOSS)	India	Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing
<b>Handloom Weaving for Sustainable Income</b> Association for the Social Educational and Charitable Activities for Poor Communities	India	Education and Capacity Building

ACWW seeks to empower women and communities through sharing knowledge & learning from each other

ACWW publishes *The Countrywoman* magazine which is circulated globally to our Members and supporters. We use Forest Stewardship Council approved sustainable paper for both the magazine and its packaging. For every tree used in the production of an issue, 3 are planted in its place. We are proud to work with a local, family-owned printer in the UK called Polstead Press. During 2019, all magazines from 2011 onwards were added to the website as an accessible digital archive. The Board approved a request from the East, West and Central Africa Area Conference that *The Countrywoman* be made available as a digital download especially for areas where postal systems were unreliable.



committed to sustainable printing and distribution

A consultation was undertaken to ascertain how the membership felt about transitioning to a digital-only magazine, versus continuing to receive a printed and posted magazine. This consultation towards the end of 2020 utilised all communications channels to reach as many members and members of member societies as possible, including those only reachable by post. From the few responses received, it was clear that the membership overwhelmingly wants the paper version to continue, at least twice per year.

Issue 1 in 2021 was printed, issues 2 and 3 were digital and issue 4 was printed. This was a cost saving measure reflecting the vast increase in postal charges and a response to the survey of members. Print costs are competitively low as printed by a small family business in a rural location. To increase interest, the Board decided to vary the way the digital magazine is distributed, by doing shorter newsletter style emails, more often. This was kept under review and very good feedback was received from members at the Southern Africa Area Conference.

## United Nations Decade of **FAMILY FARMING** 2019-2028



The Finance and Membership Committee under the Chairmanship of Acting Treasurer Alison Burnett discussed how to increase membership and income. The discussion focused on the role of ACWW Supporters Groups active in some countries, their primary aim being to spread information about ACWW out to people and gain new members.

During 2021, the Board invited representatives of ACWW supporters' groups from across England, Australia and Canada to speak to them about how and what they did to raise awareness and funds for ACWW, and how similar schemes could be adopted across the world in the future. This form of consultation was much appreciated by the Board.

The Board agreed to a proposal from the Agriculture Committee, which changed the name of the committee to "Food and Agriculture Committee" to be more reflective of the scope of the work of the committee and potential future activities, and bringing it into line with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Decade of Family Farming supported by ACWW.

From November 2021 Zoom meetings were organised to discuss the Decade of Family Farming's core premise that family farms are the key to solving the problem of hunger in the world. Women play a leading role in food security, especially in times of the global pandemic, and these forums listened and learned from the voice of rural women.

ACWW seeks to empower women and communities through partnership



Throughout its ninety-year history ACWW has forged partnerships with like-minded organisations in order to better connect and support women and communities worldwide. The relationship with rural women's organisations has grown from membership covering 18 countries in 1929 to 82 countries in 2020. Through its member societies, ACWW amplifies the voices of more than 9 million women.

In pre-Pandemic years, the World President, Area Presidents, other Board members and some staff would travel to carry out extension work and give presentations to member societies, speaking at meetings and conferences throughout the world. However, no local or international travel took place on ACWW business from March 2020 to the end of the year, nor in much of 2021. In its place, there was a rapid deployment of videoconferencing tools which facilitated local and international meetings and ensured the Board, members and Central Office were able to maintain contact.

In 2021 ACWW maintained its relationships with UN agencies and is proud of the fact that it has held consultative status at the United Nations for so many years.

ACWW's partnership with Global Action on Rabies Control (GARC) continued by offering free awareness raising online training to ACWW members. Members were encouraged to take up this excellent source of information about how to recognise the disease, what to do in an emergency and how to prevent it.

Many member societies work with local partners and they were encouraged to send in reports of work to Central Office so they could be acknowledged and used for reporting to UN agencies, building up a picture of rural women in action and sharing through our media channels.



**THE GLOBAL GOALS**  
For Sustainable Development

**NGO**  
**MAJOR GROUP**

Continued partnership with the NGO Major Group at ECOSOC contributed to our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.



**Economic and Social Council**

Special consultative status (1947)



**Food & Agriculture Organisation**

Consultative status (1948)



**UNESCO**

Consultative status (1949) and Official NGO Partner

Women Walk the World events were severely curtailed again this year because of the Covid-19 Pandemic, however, some members found ingenious ways of marking the occasion, raising awareness and, where possible, funds, to help support women and communities worldwide. This event brings together women in fellowship, a core function of ACWW.

Area Presidents continued to email newsletters to keep in touch with their members and the World President also sent regular newsletters.



## CEDAW

In June 2021 ACWW gave evidence at the UK CEDAW People's Tribunal about the actions of the UK government relating to rural women, and the experiences of our members in the UK (England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland). This involved our Advocacy Director Nick Newland submitting a background policy briefing, then a sworn evidence statement, and giving evidence 'on the stand' (via digital platform) and cross-examination by 4 barristers. Our testimony was well received and included input from the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales, as well as several Institutes and individuals around the country. This tribunal followed the 2019 examination of the UK government at CEDAW, where we also gave evidence based on feedback from our membership.

Later, in October 2021, our Advocacy Director attended a consultation on CEDAW held by the UK Government Equalities Office (GEO) and gave input based on feedback from our members, research, and expertise on rural women in the UK. We were thanked by the GEO and further discussions have taken place.

The United Nations Committee Chairman Marie Kenny reported that Canada is facing many issues of discrimination in schools and she is speaking with the Minister of Education about having the ACWW booklet on CEDAW distributed to schools.

## FAO & Civil Society

In October 2021 the FAO contacted ACWW and carried out an unscheduled and short notice review of our Consultative Status. They told us they are in the process of reducing the number of NGOs holding status by around 12% due to pressure from member governments.

We made the case for ACWW maintaining our status: The work undertaken over the past 3 years that aligned with the FAO was presented by our Advocacy Director, and after internal discussion, very positive outcomes were reported:

- ACWW will continue to hold Consultative Status
- FAO is maintaining rural women as a priority focus
- Impressed by ACWW's work with UNESCO, FAO would like us to work with them to revise their Civil Society processes and organise a forum.

ACWW seeks to empower women and communities through advocacy

## 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

The annual UN Commission on the Status of Women was held in a digital format in 2021 for the second time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. More than 20,000 participants from around the world attended civil society sessions over the two weeks. Around 40 ACWW members registered to attend 58 sessions. ACWW's Advocacy Director was heavily involved in the negotiations on the Zero Draft and then Agreed Conclusions, working to influence the UK government and others through lobbying, negotiation, and inputting during consultations. The results were strong for Rural Women, more so than the past 2 years.

ACWW hosted an official CSW Parallel Event on 18 March 2021, 'Rural Women's Role in Global Citizenship', which was chaired by World President Magdie de Kock. Guest speakers included H.E. Hans Wesseling, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to UNESCO and Gill Naylor, National President of ACWW Member Society Rural Women New Zealand; joined by ACWW UN Committee Chairman Marie Kenny, Area President for East, West, and Central Africa Irene Chinje, and Advocacy Director Nick Newland. The event was attended by 200 people, and was watched more than 1500 people online via our Facebook and YouTube pages.

World President Magdie de Kock also appeared as a guest speaker at a Parallel Event hosted by the UK Civil Society Women's Alliance, titled 'The Last Young Woman Post Covid'; this was well attended and live-streamed by ACWW, and watched by around 1000 people.

Our official Statement to the 65<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission was submitted, with support from 28 other international NGOs who hold Consultative Status at the Economic and Social Council like ACWW. These included new organisations engaging with ACWW for the first time, including one in Brazil, one in Zimbabwe, and groups like the World Organization of the Scout Movement and Association of Families and Women in Rural Areas.

In December 2020 at the International Conference of NGOs in Official Partnership with UNESCO, ACWW was elected to the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee. This group of 10 represents the more than 400 NGOs who hold status with the UN agency.

All but three nations who are member states of the UN participate at UNESCO, the exceptions being the USA, Israel and Lichtenstein. Our engagement with UNESCO in 2021 led to productive policy discussions throughout the year, and led to partnerships in 2022 that will be reported in the account for that year.

Almost exactly a year after our election, our Advocacy Director organised the 12<sup>th</sup> International Forum of NGOs, titled “Achieving Global Citizenship”. This event was held digitally on 6-7 December 2021, and included high-level speakers from the US, Australia, India, Japan, Poland, Brazil, and Zimbabwe. Nick Newland chaired the Forum and secured the participation of former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The Director-General of UNESCO also attended the Forum digitally alongside many ACWW members.



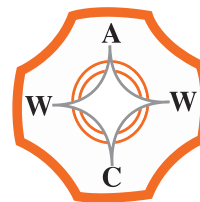
**unesco** **NGO liaison comité UNESCO**

**Achieving Global Citizenship** Online Event  
12<sup>th</sup> International Forum of NGOs in Official Partnership with UNESCO 6-7 December 2021

Since 2012, UNESCO has been developing the concept of Global Citizenship. Recognizing the divergences of interpretation that do not yet allow a universally recognized definition or any legal status, UNESCO has moved towards a pragmatic approach to global citizenship through education. This Forum brings forward the voices and experiences of NGOs around the world as we collectively seek to achieve Global Citizenship, particularly in light of the educational and societal impacts of COVID-19

Guest Speakers include:  
H.E. Ban Ki-moon (Former Secretary-General of the United Nations); GINGER Shankar (Musician & Activist); Professor Everjioce Win (The Shine Campaign); Brian Rusch (Rotary Club for Global Action); Claire Mahon (Global Human Rights Group); Daniel Perrelli (Coalition for the UN We Need); Tharindra Arumapperuma (Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation); Yasmin Knight (Business and Professional Women International); Marcela Browne (Argentinian Campaign for the Right to Education); Rind Allhage (SDG7 Youth Constituency); Mariana Montag (Architect & Activist); Dr Natacha Razava (Architect & Activist); Pascal Valentin Houenou (Institut Afrique Monde) & Monika Froehler (Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens).

To register to attend please visit [www.ngo-unesco.net](http://www.ngo-unesco.net)



Since 2016 ACWW has been active in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, under the global banner of ‘Orange the World’. Efforts to raise awareness have seen statements, videos, posters, and other resources produced and shared with members in more than 80 countries.

In 2020, the UN identified a ‘Shadow Pandemic’ of gender-based violence accompanying the impact of Covid-19. As families all over the world were subject to lockdown, so the prevalence of domestic violence increased. Now, more than ever, the campaign to raise awareness from 16 to 365 Days is critically important. During ACWW’s Orange the World campaign in 2019 more than 63,550 people saw ACWW’s materials online and more than 850 people actively shared these materials on their Facebook pages. This is a fantastic reach for these resources, and the reach of ACWW’s campaign was significantly increased in 2021, possibly reflecting the increased level of digital literacy amongst the membership in light of Covid-19 and greater reliance on computer-based communication.

In December 2021, ACWW co-hosted a Webinar with UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Advocacy Director Nick Newland spoke at the webinar, which specifically addressed violence against women and girls in the Asia Pacific region, with feedback and input from our members in the area. The invitation to co-host this event was a direct result of ACWW holding an elected position on the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.



# Financial Review

The financial Appeal to Secure ACWW for Future Generations, as recommended by the Finance & Membership Committee, was posted to all members as a personal letter from World President Magdie de Kock and Deputy World President and Acting Treasurer, Alison Burnett. The Appeal raised additional donations of around £21,000.

The continuing pandemic and the impact on donations caused the budget for 2021 to be reviewed by the Executive Committee. ACWW's investments managed by Close Brothers were scrutinised by the Acting Treasurer and found to have held up well under the circumstances. Staff implemented a series of cost-cutting measures, some of which were specific to the Covid-19 period, whilst others will be sustained longterm. ACWW continued to benefit from the reduced rate of rent negotiated in 2020, whilst further money was saved by submitting the quarterly electronic VAT return in-house for the first time in years. Most of the staff were multi-tasking to save outside costs, and this included providing training for colleagues and Board Members when necessary. Although the revised budget showed a deficit, it was not reasonable to reduce expenditure any further, so attention was turned to increasing income.

Income from Pennies for Friendship (PFF) was double the budget figure for the first quarter of the year and a legacy of £54,000 had helped considerably. For the first time in many years, the income for unrestricted funds was greater than that restricted to projects.

The 29<sup>th</sup> Triennial World Conference had voted to have a separate chairman for Agriculture on the Board, which will have additional cost implications from 2023. Not having face to face Board and Committee meetings in 2020 and 2021 resulted in considerable savings. The Board decided that all committee meetings were to be held digitally to the end of the Triennium, with the Board meeting in person annually when that became possible.

The Board decided in October 2021 that the three-year membership discount should cease to apply from the renewal year 2022. The Board identified that there was a need to develop sustainable income and not rely on the membership to maintain the organisation financially long-term. In addition to current donations and membership fees, member societies had an important role in responding to surveys and giving their time to promoting ACWW. There was an intention to approach outside bodies for funding to cover core costs.

All the work of Central Office is directed to the charitable activities of ACWW. The direct funding of projects in developing countries and their evaluation and administration necessarily incur support costs. Two administrators, (one full-time and one part-time equalling 7-day equivalent) have their work solely directed towards all aspects of projects administration.

Unrestricted funds cover the costs of maintenance of an information network and production of the magazine, writing and designing artwork for all publicity materials in-house, sustaining the international membership organisation with Board and Committee activities and extension work, representation at the United Nations and related advocacy activities to ensure our consultative status is secure and our advocacy effective. Thus, expenditure is apportioned towards charitable activities which are Projects, Education, Outreach, Information and Research, United Nations Representation and Conference Preparation.

The Board review arrangements with Auditors every few years and decided that after more than two decades, it was time for a change. The audit was put out to tender and four quotes obtained. Appleby & Wood were appointed as auditors at the October 2021 Board meeting. Azets, formerly Wilkins Kennedy, were thanked for their work over the years.

## Reserves policy

ACWW seeks to maintain 36 months' worth of normal income and expenditure in order to meet the requirements of a triennium. That includes:

**To provide a level of working capital that protects the continuity of our core work.** That is, advocacy on behalf of rural women including with United Nations agencies, information and research including production of *The Countrywoman* magazine for all members, education, outreach and projects, Board and governance expenditure, maintaining a Central Office to facilitate all of the above - this requires in the region of £550,000 per year. Projects are paid for from restricted funds received to the Women Empowered Fund and expenditure commitments are generally made in the spring and the autumn each year.

Membership fee income currently yields around £45,000 per year and is relatively stable although there is a slight downward trend. Income from investments has been maintained in recent years but is subject to the volatility of the investment market. Legacies are an important source of income but cannot be budgeted for.

**To provide a level of funding for unexpected opportunities.**

**To provide cover for risks such as unforeseen expenditure or unanticipated loss of income.** Recent years have seen the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation which necessitated investment in computer equipment for all Board members, staff training and changes to working procedures in order to keep members' data secure and ACWW compliant.

**If closure seemed a likely outcome,** there are currently 7 members of staff, five of whom have been employed by ACWW for over two years and would have full redundancy rights.

# Statement of Financial Activities for Year ended 31 December 2021

## Associated Country Women of the World

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
<b>Income:</b>				
Donations, membership and legacies	232,235	1,412	233,647	219,349
Investment income	78,602	-	78,602	67,209
Charitable activities	468	65,695	66,163	3,877
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>311,305</b>	<b>67,107</b>	<b>378,412</b>	<b>290,435</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>				
<b>Raising Funds:</b>				
Investment management costs	10,637		10,637	10,716
<b>Charitable activities:</b>				
Project activities	154,398	101,079	255,477	219,138
Education	57,627		57,627	53,306
Outreach	52,301		52,301	44,422
Information and research	97,896		97,896	88,843
United Nations representation	28,747		28,747	44,422
Conference preparation	-		-	-
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>	<b>401,606</b>	<b>101,079</b>	<b>502,685</b>	<b>460,847</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure):</b>	<b>(90,301)</b>	<b>(33,972)</b>	<b>(124,273)</b>	<b>(170,412)</b>
Transfer between funds	62,831	(62,831)	-	-
<b>Net income / (expenditure) before other gains:</b>	<b>(27,470)</b>	<b>(96,803)</b>	<b>(124,273)</b>	<b>(170,412)</b>
(Loss)/Gains on investment assets	139,948	-	139,948	162,868
Net movement in funds	112,478	(96,803)	15,675	(7,544)
Fund balances brought forward 1 January 2021	2,558,214	371,002	2,929,216	2,936,760
<b>Total funds carried forward 31 December 2021</b>	<b>2,670,692</b>	<b>274,199</b>	<b>2,944,891</b>	<b>2,929,216</b>

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

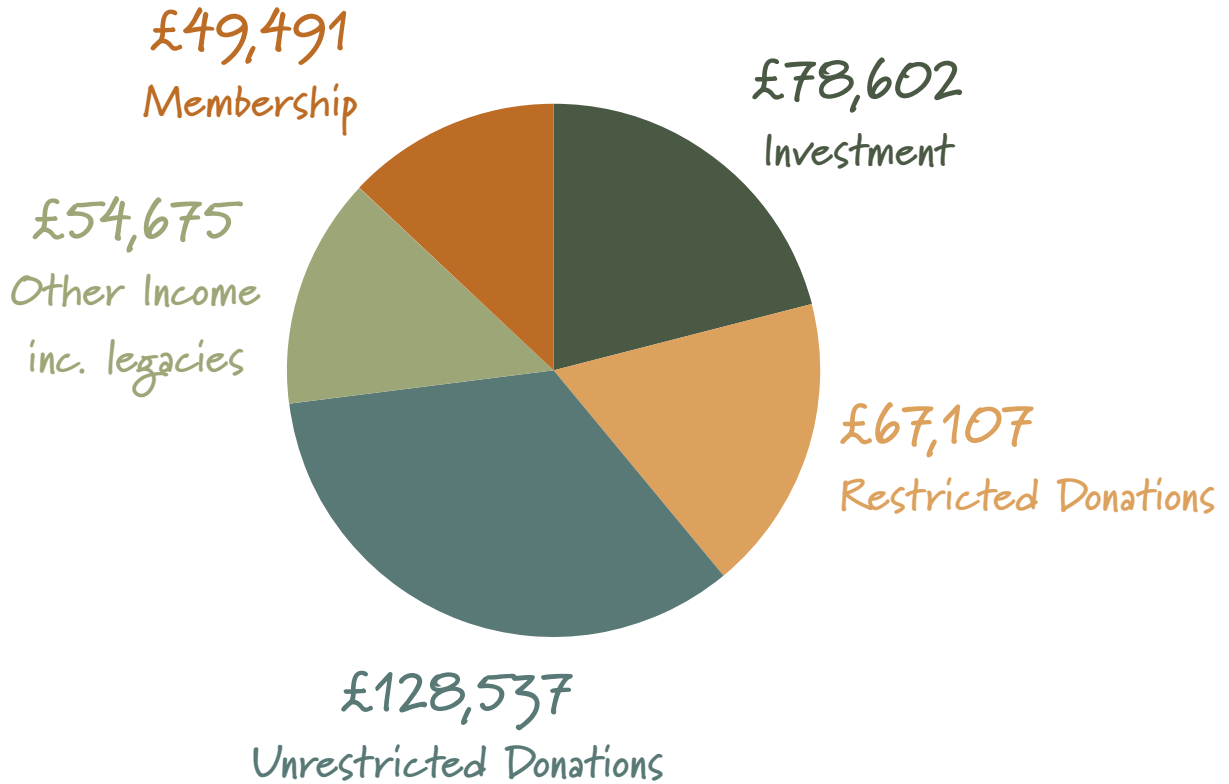
The financial statements were approved and signed on behalf of the Board by Alison Burnett (Acting Treasurer) and Magdie de Kock (World President).

The full Statement of Financial Activities and Annual Report can be found at [www.acww.org.uk](http://www.acww.org.uk)

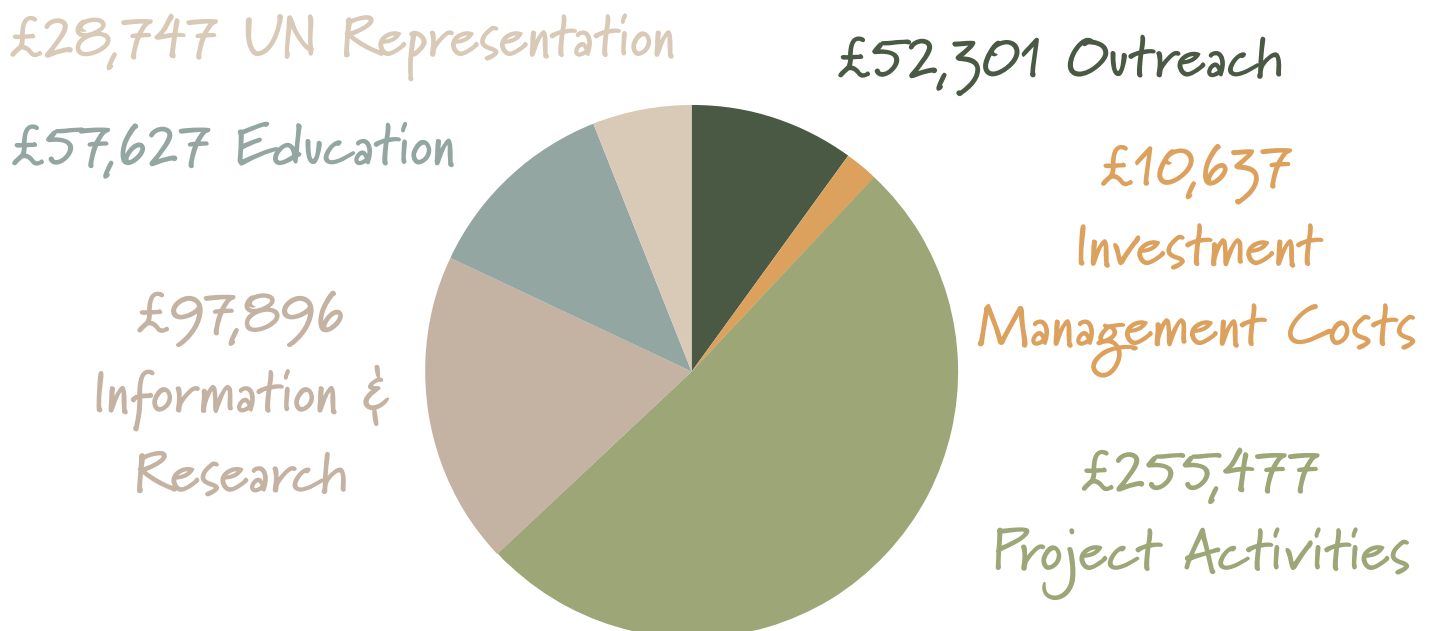
Auditors were Appleby and Wood

# Associated Country Women of the World Income & Expenditure

Net income for charitable activities was £378,356



Net expenditure for charitable activities was £502,685





ACWW 2022 | A1922-104

Registered Charity 1174798

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London SE21 8EN

rural  
women  
in action

Associated Country  
Women of the World