

THE COUNTRYWOMAN

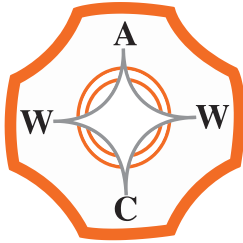
INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

ISSUE 4 - 2021



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A04 Parkhall 40 Martell Road
London SE21 8EN

D. HLON GWANE



Associated Country Women of the World
A04 Parkhall | 40 Martell Road
London SE21 8EN

Registered Charity No. 1174798

Central Office: info@acww.org.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7799 3875
Website: www.acww.org.uk

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

ACWW CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACTS

Executive Director

Tish Collins - tish.c@acww.org.uk

Advocacy Director

Chief Privacy Officer

Nick Newland - nick@acww.org.uk

Finance Manager

Sue Williams - finance@acww.org.uk

Communications and Engagement Officer

Editor of *The Countrywoman* Magazine

Sydney Salter - media@acww.org.uk

Projects Grants Officer

Jenny Sellers - projects@acww.org.uk

Office Administrator

Rowan McKinnon - info@acww.org.uk

Finance Assistant

Becky Ramsey - finance@acww.org.uk

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.

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COVER IMAGE

A beautiful embroidery done by the women of Mapula Club, representing the challenges of the last couple of years.

MEMBERSHIP

All Society and Individual Memberships are due in January. The easiest way to pay is online, but you're also welcome to pay by bank transfer or cheque!

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

Approaching the end of another disruptive year filled with uncertainty, it still does not feel like a moment to see the glass as half full or make lemonade from lemons as the uncertainty prevails...

Last year at this time, having lived through 2020 and the renewed onslaught of a worldwide pandemic, it's doubtful any of us would have readily agreed to all the challenges that 2021 would bring- the continuation of the global pandemic and its attendant economic and health consequences and communities being affected by a record number of natural disasters made more severe and more frequent by climate change. And yet, despite of these challenges, I look back in amazement and gratitude to see how we've adjusted in many ways.

We've been confronted with creating and adapting to new ways of learning, working and living our lives amid challenges that we have never experienced before. This year has also provided opportunities and opened up new ways for us to continue to adapt to unprecedented circumstances. And, thankfully, with 2021 almost behind us, it's clear that the work of ACWW, also on a technical level, gained new respect. Never before has the need for robust connectivity, sound technical infrastructure, and digital literacy been laid so plain. We've adapted and we will emerge with a far greater appreciation for a way of life that can be easily taken for granted. Maybe we'll be less likely to take it for granted in the future.

Since our current Board of Trustees was elected in April 2019, we have witnessed a series of local, national, international and indeed global crises which have affected us all. No single member of the Board, nor one single member of ACWW has been left unaffected by the various challenges presented to humanity in the last 19 months. ACWW has endured, and we have worked hard to ensure that our membership has not been left alone to face unprecedented levels of natural disaster, climate change, physical and psychological violence, prejudice, abuse and harassment.

Reflecting on 2021 I have come to the conclusion that the human spirit is capable of withstanding an incredible amount of stress. Even for those of us fortunate enough to have our health, our lives and routines have been completely upended. During these stressful times I have learned to practise resilience and creativity in connecting on virtual platforms with the membership deliberately moving ACWW forward.

I am pleased with Area Presidents who boldly ventured where ACWW has never

been before by conducting virtual Area Conferences and connected with their members in new and innovative ways. I applaud the ACWW membership for participating in a virtual World Conference to secure ACWW's future when the Board moved a resolution for the current term to be extended until 2023. In 2021 I virtually attended Area Conferences and used all additional opportunities to participate in global events on behalf of ACWW. I am most thankful for every member who joined me for a virtual cup of tea!

As travel restrictions are being eased, I am looking forward to representing ACWW at a face-to-face event when the 3rd Eurasian Women's Forum is taking place in Russia. (Editor's Note: This was written before Magdie's attendance at the Third Eurasian Women's Forum and you can find a report on page 6)

In searching for words describing this most unusual year, words like disruptive, transformative, unprecedented, and extraordinary enter my mind but standing out is the word: [Gratitude](#)

It seems it takes a global pandemic to underline how many things there are to be grateful for. Together, in 2021, we did extraordinary things.

I want to say thank you to all of those who made possible our success in the midst of the year's difficulty and whose support helps us adapt, evolve, and thrive in these unprecedented times.

I've always viewed it as a privilege to serve ACWW and its Membership and the New Year promises to offer more such opportunities. Having lived through 2021, I am poised to continue serving our great organisation with optimism, creativity and a renewed sense of purpose.

I wish to thank the Members of the Board, the Executive Director and members of ACWW's staff as well as ACWW's membership for your continuous support and encouragement. Since I was elected as your World President I am humbled by the honour to serve you but more so by the calibre of the people I am representing so that your voices can be amplified and heard by global decision makers.

Speaking at the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2021, I concluded my remarks with the following: "Today, I recommit ACWW to amplifying the voices of rural women, of older women, of indigenous women, of young women, and of



all those women in non-urban communities who cannot be heard above the din of chaos or the silence of global inaction." I am pleased and proud to be moving forward with all of you, celebrating and championing Rural Women in Action.

I hope that in this upcoming Holiday Season you will take time to appreciate life and treasure everything that brings you joy. I am filled with hope as I look to a new year and I will enter 2023 with renewed commitment to our mission, and a greater awareness of the importance of our work together.

In this most unprecedented year, I wish you and your loved ones good tidings, happy holidays and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

With warm regards

Magdie

Wrapping up 2021

Tish Collins, Executive Director

Well... what a year it has been! We began 2021 with Central Office in London closed, all our staff in Lockdown, and members around the world experiencing different levels of local measures to minimise the spread of COVID-19. Positive updates from members in New Zealand detailing the relatively low rates of infection in that country were a pleasure to receive, whilst we were devastated to see and read about the horrific situation in India and other nations where COVID-19's impact was compounded by natural disasters and climate change. Though there are still around 7 weeks until the end of the year, we are pleased to see that the global trend is for conditions to be improving and the world begins to reopen.

As has been mentioned previously, ACWW was able to open the office for around 4 weeks in late September 2020, and it was in this brief window that our Office Administrator Rowan McKinnon joined us. He replaced Jessica Green who left ACWW when she moved away from London during the first lockdown, and he had been in post for nearly three weeks before we were forced to close the office again on 8 October, with London returning to full lockdown. Rowan, along with the rest of the staff, would spend the next seven months working from home in challenging circumstances before we were finally able to reopen in late May 2021.

Whilst there has obviously been a near-total cancellation of all physical events until the last few weeks, we have committed to make the most of digital opportunities. This has meant a huge increase in our virtual event organisation, from the well-attended and well-received Afternoon Tea sessions with the World President, to the first ever Virtual Area Conferences (congratulations to Area President Gail Commens for taking the leap and hosting the first one, for the South Pacific Area!).

Of course in April 2021 we held the Special World Conference in a virtual format, taking place over 7 days to maximise involvement of members from around the world. We were pleased to have participants from more than 50 countries attending the multiple sessions, and as well as having more than 2,000 people attend live online we are pleased to report that around 5,000 people watched sessions via our Facebook page and website. This was an unprecedented event, but necessary as we needed to amend the Constitution to allow the Board of Trustees to delay the 30th Triennial World Conference until 2023. It was certainly tricky, and a unique set of circumstances for ACWW to deal with, and I would like to congratulate the World President, Deputy World President, and Secretary who led each of the sessions.



Our advocacy work has also had to move online since the onset of COVID-19, and this has been particularly challenging. The annual UN Commission on the Status of Women (65th Session) was held in a digital format this year, with more than 20,000 participants from around the world attending civil society sessions over the two weeks. Around 40 ACWW members registered to attend 58 sessions. Nick Newland 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 stronger for Rural Women, more so than the past 2 years.

ACWW hosted an official CSW Parallel Event on 18 March, '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 Nick Newland. The event was attended by 200 people, and was watched by more than 1,500 people online via our Facebook and YouTube pages.

Whilst we have done our best to meet the challenges of advocacy work in a digital environment, there is no substitute for face-to-face negotiations, networking, and presentation of evidence. Though most UN mechanisms have adjusted to digital setups in 2020 and 2021, there has been a shrinking of space and opportunities for civil society organisations - indeed, in some meetings held digitally NGOs have literally been muted by governments who don't want to hear the perspectives of organisations like ACWW.

For this reason, we were pleased to be able to attend the Third Eurasian Women's Forum in St Petersburg, Russia this month and you can

read a detailed report of that event on page 6. The Forum gave the World President the opportunity to meet with ACWW Members, to advocate for their needs with the Russian government, and to create new linkages with women's organisations across the world and potential funding and project partners.

One element of our work I have been most proud of in 2021 has been the efforts of our staff to establish effective working partnerships with other organisations globally. This has maximised our outputs and opportunities to advance the message of ACWW, whilst also minimising costs and make processes as efficient as possible.

In October 2021, the World President reviewed the titles of staff members at Central Office and approved changing most of them to bring them more in line with current responsibilities and equivalent roles and titles within other, similar charities. They reflect a move away from more corporate titles, and echo the structural changes as staff now work across committees rather than purely acting as an administrator for one focus area.

Accordingly, whilst the Office Administrator title remains the same, the following changes have been made: Projects Administrator Jenny Sellers becomes the Projects Grant Officer, as her work focusses on our project funding rather than design or implementation of projects. Sydney Salter changes from Agriculture and Engagement Administrator to Communications and Engagement Officer, reflecting the broader responsibilities she has undertaken in the past 2 years. Similarly, the Policy and Communications Manager, Nick Newland, becomes Advocacy Director, and retains the additional title of Chief Privacy Officer, the job the Board tasked him with in 2020. My own title has changed from Chief Executive Officer to Executive Director, reflecting the day-to-day responsibility for running and strengthening ACWW.

Sadly, this is not the only change to our staff that I need to highlight. Our Finance Manager Sue Williams is retiring at the end of this year, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her on behalf of all of ACWW's membership for her hard work, commitment, and enthusiasm for ACWW. She has been a fantastic addition to our team since joining us in September 2019, and has done a great job of managing ACWW's finances. We wish her well in retirement, and her future.

As we head toward the end of 2021, I would like to thank you all for your continued support of ACWW, and wish you all well for a happier and easier 2022!

Tish

Message from the Editor

It's been a long couple of years - Sydney Salter

Since late 2019, we have been adapting to a new normal. The pandemic presented challenges that we neither foresaw nor planned for, and we had to adapt quickly to maintain our contact with members and ensure that we could continue to advocate for you all through the pandemic. Part of this adaptation was looking at ACWW communications on the whole, and investigating how to ensure that our communication with members is more resilient, more effective, and has greater potential for growth (that is, the growth of our membership and the expansion of content and channels)

When thinking about the future of our communications channels, I felt that it is vital that we heard from the members what they most wanted. Out of the entire membership, we received less than 50 responses to the consultation on the future of *The Countrywoman*. These responses were overwhelmingly in favour of printed communications. There was also some strong feedback from member societies with large numbers that they prefer digital communications, as it is easier to redistribute.

Taking all this into account, and thinking about the future of the organisation as well as the future of communications in general, the Communications and Marketing

Committee recommended to the Board, that for the remainder of the 2019- 2023 extended triennium, ACWW communications be adjusted to the schedule you see below. They have also requested that the Board recommend to the Triennial World Conference that it ratify this decision and continue the schedule going forward. This change will expand our digital communications capacity and reach (and these are our most effective communications according to the numbers) and represents significant savings on postage.

The newsletters that you see below will be short and sweet, and will ensure that you always have up-to-date information from ACWW. The information presented in them will be hugely varied, from a newsletter from the World President to project reports, to new resources, to news from members.

I want to commit to you as editor that this change does not mean you will receive less information from ACWW, nor will it be of a lesser quality than you're used to. I also want to assure you that this change does not mean that we are leaving those with a lesser degree of digital confidence behind. In fact, if you *cannot* receive digital communications, please send me a letter at Central Office, and I will post the newsletters to you. If you want to be able to



interact with digital communications, but don't have the confidence, I will be happy to have a call with you and walk you through how it all works.

As an interesting aside, I began a (self-funded) masters degree course in September. The degree is in Social Media and Digital Communication. I am working full-time alongside my degree, and want to assure you all that ACWW is, and will remain, my priority. I am looking forward to integrating the things I'm learning into ACWW communications, ensuring that we have the most robust strategy and implementation possible.

As always, my inbox is open to you all. Please send me news from your societies, updates about work you've done on ACWW resolutions, or resources you'd like to see us produce.

wk	January	wk	April	wk	July	wk	October
1		13	The Countrywoman	26	e-newsletter	40	The Countrywoman
2	e-newsletter	14	to include information about the Triennial World Conference, reports from committee meetings, by print	27		41	to include the Annual Report summary by print
3		15		28	e-newsletter	42	
4	e-newsletter	16		29		43	
		17		30	e-newsletter		
	February		May		August		November
5		18	e-newsletter	31		44	e-newsletter
6	e-newsletter	19	to include reports from Women Walk the World	32	e-newsletter	45	
7		20	e-newsletter	33		46	e-newsletter
8	e-newsletter	21	to include reports from Women Walk the World	34	e-newsletter	47	
	March		June		September		December
9		22	e-newsletter	35		48	e-newsletter
10	e-newsletter	23		36	e-newsletter	49	
11		24	e-newsletter	37		50	e-newsletter
12	e-newsletter	25		38	e-newsletter	51	
				39		52	



Third Eurasian Women's Forum

St Petersburg, Russia 13-15 October 2021

On a bright and sunny day in October, the Third Eurasian Women's Forum opened its doors to more than 1,500 delegates from over 110 countries. Grass roots organisers, women's groups, international NGOs, politicians, diplomats and world leaders gathered to accept the challenge laid down by the Forum's chairwoman- that this event should not be a 'one-off', but rather a milestone in constant systematic work focused on addressing challenges within the country and development of women's agenda.

ACWW had been represented at the first two Eurasian Women's Forums and, after the devastating impact of COVID-19 over the past 18 months, we were determined to ensure that we were able to re-engage with our members being represented, to make the most of networking opportunities, and to amplify the voices of our members on critical policy issues for women in rural communities.

Our delegation consisted of World President Magdie de Kock who, thanks to COVID-19, was making her first trip abroad having been elected in Melbourne in 2019. She was joined by Executive Director Tish Collins, and Advocacy Director Nick Newland. Coming from different directions, and having travelled for the first time in nearly two years, the moment of arrival and meeting up in St Petersburg was one to be celebrated.

The first day of the Forum offered an introductory plenary session, including speeches from the W20, the Director General of the World Health Organisation, and women leaders from around the world. After this, the business sessions of the event began, and our delegation split up to cover as much ground as possible; we attended thematic sessions on 'A World of Active Ageing', 'Developing and Supporting Civic Engagement and Public Institutions' and 'Global Corporate Responsibility'. The rest of the day included sessions on promoting women's leadership, climate change, agribusiness, and global statistical analysis of women's status in society.

The Forum held a cultural ceremony at the world famous Mariinsky Theatre the first evening, and then the World President and Executive Director met with the Chair of the Forum and international delegates for a special dinner.

The photo above shows World President Magdie de Kock with Tish Collins and the Chair of ACWW member society the Women's Union of Russia, Ekaterina Lakhova. The Women's Union of Russia has a long and proud history of working for the empowerment of women within the Russian Federation, and has around 1,000,000 members across the country. Below, the World President is joined by Mrs Irina Gekht, the Deputy Chair of the Federation Council Committee on Agriculture and Food Policy and Environmental Management, and also Chair of the Committee of Rural Women.



The second day of the Forum included the formal Opening Ceremony attended by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin. His attendance reflected the importance of the Forum, and also ensured high-level press coverage of the event. On this note, Magdie de Kock was filmed by Channel One news, for a nationally broadcast interview that reached across the Russian Federation. She also took part in several shorter TV interviews, and that evening filmed a video for ACWW members celebrating the International Day of Rural Women which we of course marked on 15 October.

ACWW had been invited to present as guest speakers in an expert panel titled 'Rural Growth Trends: Infrastructure and Amenities for Women', chaired by Ksenia Shevelkina (Director, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation). The other speakers were Elena Avdeeva (Senator of the Russian Federation, and member of the Federation Council Committee on Federal Structure, Regional Policy, Local Government and Northern Affairs); Nadezhda Bezbudko (Chair, Associated Country Women of Russia); and ACWW member Vanda Gagiano, who was attending the Forum as Honorary President of the Free State Women's Agricultural Union, South Africa.

All three members of our delegation had been asked to give speeches - the World President's presentation was titled 'The Role of Civil Society in Addressing Capability Gaps in Rural Development', the Executive Director spoke about 'Rural Development Agendas and Rural Reality' and our Advocacy Director addressed 'Negative Growth and Failed Development Ideals - Regression for Women in 2021'. This was a critical opportunity to bring forward information from our membership, especially as it was broadcast live on national and international television.

On the final day of the Forum, we attended sessions on the 'Role of Women's Associations on the Environmental and Climate Agenda', 'Access to Finance', and the 'Role of Women in the Integrated Development of the African Continent'. As the 15 October drew to a close, we reflected on a very busy, productive, and inspiring few days of work!

Whilst at the Forum, ACWW presented the experiences of our members, as well as the policy positions of our organisation. This included highlighting the need for women in all their diversity to have equal rights, for rural women to be recognised as having specific and legitimate concerns about modern life, the importance of equality for indigenous women, the rights of widows, and challenging the norms of rural migration to urban centres. We also took the opportunity to renew working relationships with colleagues from the Women's Union of Russia, and establishing significant new contacts including the Alliance for Financial Inclusion and others.

The reality of conferences in 2021: All delegates at the Eurasian Women's Forum had to wear face masks at all times, and maintain social distance between delegations. Brief moments of relief came when photos were taken, even then for just a second and with breath held!



After the Forum, our delegation travelled to Moscow where we met with Senator Alexei Mayorov, Chair of the Federation Council Committee on Agriculture and Food Policy and Environmental Management. Senator Mayorov invited us to attend the meeting in the Senate building, joined by the Deputy Speaker of the Social Politics Committee and the Deputy Head of the Cooperative Project for German/Russian Dialogue in Agriculture and Politics. This meeting gave us the opportunity to exchange thoughts on the challenges facing rural women, and for ACWW to amplify the voices of its members. Tish Collins raised the question of land inheritance rights for women, and in particular widows. Nick Newland addressed the low rates of COVID vaccination in rural areas in the Russian Federation, and questioned the Senator on access to funding and provision of social care in rural areas, as well as the Committee's participation in CEDAW reporting - the response showed a clear lack of understanding of CEDAW and its processes, which we were able to report back to our members in the area.



Senator Alexei Mayorov, the Chair of the Federation Council Committee on Agriculture and Food Policy and Environmental Management presents World President Magdie de Kock with a ceremonial tea set with the badge of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation.

Magdie and Tish visit the Women's Union of Russia headquarters in Moscow, meeting with Chairwoman Ekaterina Lakhova and advisor Helena Bashun (some members will remember Helena from her attendance at the Triennial World Conference in Warwick!)

The same afternoon, we met with the Women's Union of Russia at their headquarters in Moscow. We were greeted by Chair of the Women's Union of Russia Ekaterina Lakhova, as well as advisor to the Chair, Helena Bashun and the WUR's advocacy manager Anastasia Kasatkina. We had a productive meeting, giving World President Magdie de Kock the opportunity to film a short discussion with Mrs Lakhova, and to re-connect with this long-standing ACWW member society. As well as agreeing a media partnership with the WUR, we were able to plan ahead for further advocacy work, harnessing the ECOSOC status of both our organisations.

Overall, it was a busy and productive trip. The World President made high-profile statements and press appearances and we took seriously the opportunity to amplify the voices of our members on the international stage.

To help support our critically important advocacy work, donate to Pennies for Friendship on our website, by bank transfer, or by cheque to Central Office. Details are available on request.



Project Partnership Update

Improving Access to Safe Water for Rural Women in Kisiwa - Project 1059

Based in Bungoma County in the west of Kenya, Ufanisi Women Group was established in 2010 in reaction to the high rates of adolescent pregnancy in local schools and high rates of child marriage within the local community. Through its work with rural women over the past decade, Ufanisi has broadened its focus on to a number of key areas:

- Promotion of water and sanitation in rural communities to alleviate water scarcity.
- Reproductive and sexual health education and menstrual health management
- Economic empowerment through livelihood programmes and vocational training
- Advocating against gender-based violence, social inequalities and injustices faced by women and girls.
- Promotion of sustainable food production through advisory services, trainings, and livestock provision.
- This is the second project that ACWW has funded with Ufanisi. In 2016, ACWW funded Project 1009 “Lifting socioeconomic status of young mothers through revolving dairy goat farming”, more information for which can be found in Issue 2 of the 2017 edition of *The Countrywoman*, available on our website.
- This project provides access to water for 800 households that previously had no reliable access to safe, clean water. The project has three main aims:

To improve access to clean and safe water for over 800 low-income rural women providing relief from time consuming water collection from contaminated water sources through the installation of three 8,000 litre rainwater harvesting systems.

To prevent debilitating and potentially deadly waterborne illnesses among 2,400 residents in three water scarce villages by ensuring that accessible water is clean and safe and community members are able to practice good hygiene and proper sanitation.

To reduce amount of money that women in the Kisiwa area spend on purchasing water at inaccessible prices from distant sources.

So far in the project’s implementation, strong progress has been made despite delays and difficulties as a result of Covid-19 and subsequent lockdown measures. Ufanisi have so far installed two rainwater harvesting systems each with a capacity of 6,000 litres,

providing access to safe water for two rural villages. Over the rest of the project cycle one more rainwater harvesting system will be installed in the final village providing over 800 people with a safe, reliable water source.

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, Ufanisi’s biggest worry has been for the vulnerable communities living in the remote rural areas where access to water and other basic amenities remain a huge challenge. However, due to the very nature of this project, community members are now provided with sufficient safe and clean water for use in observing basic hygiene including hand-washing to tackle Covid-19 in rural communities.

Alongside the installation of the rainwater harvesting system, during the final months of project implementation a water quality test for each tank will be undertaken along with community sensitisations to promote good hygiene, sanitation, and water use.



Personal Stories

Sarah and Gentrix tell us how their lives have changed

Prior to the installation of the rainwater harvesting system in her village, Sarah spent at least 6 hours a day collecting water from a river 4 kilometres from her house. This contaminated water would be used for all household tasks including cooking, drinking, and washing and without access to water treatment her family was regularly ill with diarrhoea. The tank installed in Sarah's village provides sufficient water to 270 women throughout the year capturing the reliable rainfall that occurs for 11 months of the year and reduces water collection time to just 30 minutes. With this extra time, Sarah is able to put more energy into her farm and vegetable business a rewarding outcome as the income from her vegetable business has tripled and farm production doubled.

“The income from her vegetable business has tripled and farm production doubled”



Gentrix Kalama used heavily polluted water from a seasonal river that is 5 kilometres from her house for general household chores such as cooking, cleaning, bathing, and drinking.

She also used water from the river for making bricks at her home, which she sells to earn an income. However, the river water is often contaminated by dirty surface runoff, animals, and nearby open defecation. During Ufanisi Women Group's project committee's visit, it was obvious there were tadpoles and frog eggs in the river!

According to Gentrix, diarrhoea among children in her household recurred in 2-3 days and spent a significant portion of her income per month on purchasing medicine for diarrhoea. Gentrix is now just 400 meters from one of the 6,000 litre tanks installed with funds from ACWW, with access to safe and clean water for drinking and sanitation at her home. With the time that she saves on water collection, she can invest more time on brick making business, increasing her income. She has also reduced the amount of money she spends on treatment of illness for her household.



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



Weaving a Tapestry in Southern Africa

Report of the Southern Africa Area Conference - Dr Marina Muller

The Theme chosen by the Board of Trustees in Melbourne in 2019 for this triennium is "Our Diversity is our Strength".

During this Conference a Tapestry was woven. The delegates represented the canvas for the size and shape of the wall-hanging. The colourful and intricate designs were provided by the opening address and reports from the different Provinces and affiliated organisations.

The F.W.I. President Mrs. Girlie Dely welcomed the ACWW World President (our very own Mrs. Magdie de Kock), Dr. Marina Muller-Southern Africa Area President from Namibia and Mrs. Ina Booysse who stood in for Mrs. Tharina Rossell, the SAWAU President - who sent her apologies, and the presidents from the different Provinces. Sixty three members attended the conference. Rev. Frankie Thacker, a retired Anglican Priest from Richmond opened the morning devotions.

The International Anthem of ACWW was sung, accompanied by Mrs. Ruth Renken. The Memorial Candle was lit and Dr. Marina Muller read out the names of the 3 Area Presidents that passed away during the past 4 years. Dr. Semane Molotlegi, Mesdames Mabel Moyo and Anna Boshoff. Delegates stood for a time of silence to remember members and loved ones who have passed away during these past 4 years.



Dr Marina Muller welcomed everyone to this long awaited Conference with a story about a lad who wanted to marry a princess but was told by the king to fetch water from the largest waterfall and from the strongest point of it. After trying various vessels he succeeded and asked the king at their marriage what the challenge was. He said he wanted to show him that it was not only about the power of the waterfall but also about the strength of the vessel. "If we are not strong enough to hold on to the power that comes our way, it might as well pass us by. We need to be strong enough to hold the content that we encounter. We need to build ourselves, our families, friends, colleagues, fellow members and all those we care about into cups that are able to hold the full power that life has to offer us."

Mrs. Magdie de Kock gave the official opening address. Due to the Covid pandemic only a limited number of Delegates were permitted to attend and many neighbouring borders



being closed to the country did not allow them entry to South Africa.

ACWW has 9 million members in 82 countries that share the same goals. Unfortunately this is the only Area conference that Mrs. de Kock will be able to attend physically. These conferences give members the opportunity to learn from one another and build new friendships. Now is the time for us to embrace our diversity and create a colourful tapestry with these threads – all of which are of equal value. The aims are to mobilise and empower rural women into action and embrace diversity.

Mrs. Tharina Rossell's letter requested that members uplift and support each other, celebrate each other's triumphs, be generous with compliments and be yourself.

Our tapestry was then illuminated with colour by Mrs. Debra Bouwer with her illustrated talk on "The Colours of India". We were taken on an exquisite vertical journey of colour into the Valley of Flowers at an altitude of 4,500m. The diversity theme was brought to life in the amazing photography.

The Society Reports carried a common thread in the Tapestry that was being woven. The negative effects of Covid on membership, the support offered to charities, children and the aged in all the Provinces. Skills are taught, projects are undertaken, plastic waste is collected, eco bricks are made from plastic waste, awareness programmes on health and nutrition are presented, and so the list continues.



During lockdown Die Dameskring has translated into English a publication. All these members have used this difficult time to accomplish so much and have found ways to adapt to this new way of life behind masks. Dr. Marina Muller asked that these Society reports be emailed to her. The delegates ended the first day with a wonderful choir performance and an enjoyable Gala Dinner and entertainment, all resplendent in their finery donning orange/black and/or silver.



Day 2

The beautiful Tapestry was picked up once again on a fresh morning, opening with a devotion given by Mrs. Bernardine Hay. Two young ladies from "FREEME" Wildlife gave us an informative and delightful illustrated talk on "The Otters Tale". This dedicated team raised 3 baby otters and learnt how to be Otter Mums! They believe in sharing and gaining knowledge on the animals they raise. Volunteers assist and the community help by bringing river fish and fresh water crabs to the centre. This portion of the Tapestry ended on a happy note with their release when they were able to fend for themselves.

A blast of colour was presented by Mesdames Noleen Walker and Bev Nathrass with a practical workshop on how to make quirky and colourful pencil toppers.



Mrs. Magdie de Kock addressed us eloquently regarding the running of Central Office ACWW has not been interrupted during this disruptive Covid pandemic. These negative issues create dark shadows in this Tapestry.

We can include colour with a positive attitude by including Practical Effective Strategies to deal with unexpected challenges. All the information is available on the ACWW Web page.

The World President brought to our attention the Awareness and Aims of ACWW. Light was shed on the role of the various Committees, and members were encouraged to volunteer their services.

Mrs. Snoekie Erasmus from the Projects Committee gave practical suggestions for a productive committee and explained how they select the applications for ACWW Projects.

Mrs. Vanda Gagiano enthusiastically explained the roles of the 2023 Triennial World

Conference Committee (TWCC) with an invitation to attend the TWCC in Malaysia. Action Packs were distributed. Mrs de Kock encouraged the delegates to study the contents and make use of the information in your community.

Dr. Muller highlighted the Resolution on Rabies and asked that delegates bring this to the attention of their members. She would like to hear what is being done in their areas on this and any other resolutions. Dr. Muller said it was time that SA Area brings a Resolution to the table and circulated pointers for writing an effective lobbying letter. As the 5 other Southern Africa countries were not represented at this Conference, Dr. Muller will ask for an invitation to host the next Area Conference in 2024.

She thanked all attendees, the World President and the President and Members of FWI for an Area Conference excellently organised. The flower arrangements were sold and R1200 as well as another R600 was handed over to SA Area.

Bernardine Hay – FWI Past President did the summation of the conference.

The final vibrant stitches being completed, the conference was adjourned.

Mapula Embroidery Club

Members from ACWW member Society Mapula Embroidery Club made these beautiful embroideries to raise funds during the lockdown. The artisans were E Maletse, F Maiketso, and Zodwa Mazibuku. You can see an additional piece on the back cover, which is very relevant to the current global situation.

Mapula means 'Mother of Rain' and this style of embroidery is specific to this group. Started in 1991 by the Pretoria Branch of Soroptimist International, it is now an independently constituted organisation, with more than 150 women making embroideries for a worldwide audience. You can learn more about them here on their website at www.mapulaembroideries.org

Do you make art that is relevant to the work of ACWW or your life as a rural woman? We'd love to see it and show it to other members!



International Day of Rural Women in Târgu Mures

Celebrating at The Grandparent's House

On 15th October, ACWW Europe Area President Afrodita Roman and ACWW member society Woman of the Third Millennium observed the International Day of Rural Women by celebrating older people in their community. The activities were written about in local press, and a rough translation of the article is provided below:

A group of ladies representing the Woman of the Third Millennium from Târgu Mures, Romania visited on Friday, October 15, the "Grandparents' House" in Cristești, a residential center for the elderly with cognitive problems. The visit was made to mark the International Day of Women in Rural Areas, and on this occasion the representatives of the Association offered surprise packages to the staff serving the Grandparents' House, but also to residents. The packages, which contained hygiene and cleaning products, a sweet surprise and a red carnation, the symbol of life and joy of living, were personally offered to the team coordinated by Adela Cerghizan, and residents took possession of the packages through employees from Grandparent's house.



We, the ladies from the Woman of the Third Millennium, came to congratulate them, today being a special day for us, it is October 15th, the International Day of Rural Women, a day that has been celebrated since 1995, following a proposal made at the UN Conference in Beijing. We were left with a very good impression after the visit made here. It is a family type house and it reminds us in a way of grandparents' house. I congratulated Mrs. Adela Cerghizan, the administrator of this center, the association she runs is called Beautiful Life precisely because she wants to offer a beautiful life to the elderly, said Agatha Bianca Bogdan, president of the Woman of the Third Millennium. The visit was also attended by Afrodita Roman, the founder of the Woman of the Third Millennium and currently the president for the Europe Area.

She said, "We, as an organization, are part of a very large international organization, called the Associated Country Women of the World, which is based in London and is the largest organization for women in rural areas. It is also the reason why we are here, in Cristești, where the residential house Grandparents' House is located, in the rural area, where people with special needs are hospitalized."



At the same time, the president for the Europe Area of the Associated Country Women of the World explained that the visit to the "Grandparents' House" in Cristești aims to mark the International Women's Day in Rural Areas (October 15), but also other important international holidays such as the International Day of Girls (October 11), International Food Day (October 16) and International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (October 17). "It is a four-day procession that is celebrated precisely in order to raise awareness of certain aspects of life, of our daily reality, and this day in particular is celebrated and it should be noted that virtually 25% of the population is represented by rural women who have such an important role in our lives, a role that is not always recognized, is not always appreciated, is not always known," said Afrodita Roman.

The activity of the residential center for patients with cognitive decline "Grandparents' House" in Cristesti is coordinated by Adela Cerghizan, president of the Beautiful Life Association in Cristesti, who were grateful for the visit made by the ladies of the Woman of the Third Millennium



"We enjoyed the visit of the ladies from the Woman of the Third Millennium, "it was a surprise for me that they approached me and wanted to pay us a visit today, the International Day of Rural Women. We all come from rural areas, and the staff and a large part of our patients benefit. We are happy, excited, to hope that the connection with them will continue," said Adela Cerghizan



Begin thinking about how you will celebrate International Day of Rural Women next year!

Remember, we're always on hand to help with ideas, resources, and materials.

Women Walk the World

More walks from around the world

On a lovely warm Saturday morning in September a few ladies (and dogs) from the Quoile Area, Co. Down, Northern Ireland representing Annalong, Downpatrick, Seaforde, Slievenaman and Spa Women's Institutes did a sponsored walk as part of Women Walk the World to raise funds for ACWW.



We are members of the Amity Study Group in Oregon, USA. We had a beautiful day for our Women Walk the World!

"We sold extra wreaths at Christmas so decided to use all the money and donate it for the Walk for Food as it was more than we expected to make. We hope that others did get to participate in the walk. It sure was nice weather here in Oregon!" Lynda Nyseth Amity Study Group President

Pictures of our walkers and spectators. Walking: Linda Romey, Lynda Nyseth and Debbie Puckett. Our supporters are Alice Wicks and Velma Bottenberg.

This group participates in the WWtW every year!

April had been a month of sunny days and clear blue skies right up to the 28th which Four Marks WI (UK) had set as the date for their annual ACWW Women Walk the World walk. The 28th was predicted to be showery all day. However eleven members of Four Marks afternoon WI met at 10.30 in front of the church for a socially distanced walk to Old Down Wood "the bluebell woods" up the lane and back via the pond. Walkers all made a contribution towards ACWW and several members unable to do the walk also contributed so a good sum was collected.

The bluebells were not fully out but showed promise of what was to come and the rain held off until the last few minutes. But what was best was that after so many weeks there was a chance to chat and be sociable, if still at a safe distance!



Not just 16 Days of Activism

You may be frustrated if you haven't received this magazine in enough time to observe the 16 Days of Activism. Normally taking place between the 25th of November and the 10th of December, the 16 Days of Activism is a key period in the ACWW calendar. It is an opportunity to raise awareness of the serious problem of gender-based violence. In ACWW, we talk specifically of violence in rural communities and against rural women. In fact, a disproportionate number of domestic violence victims are from rural communities. For example, in the UK, 26% of domestic violence victims are rural, while rural people only comprise 16% of the population. The story is similar in the USA, where death from intimate partner violence is on the rise only in rural areas (it is declining in urban and peri-urban areas). In Australia, 21% of non-urban women had experienced intimate-partner violence, compared to 15% for urban women.

Most worryingly, rates of domestic violence have increased by about 30% over the last 18 months, showing that any progress we assumed was being made to reduce domestic violence is undone by the unrest and insecurity caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Most worryingly, rates of domestic violence have increased by about 30% over the last 18 months

In light of this reality, and the reality for rural women globally, it is vital that we work year-round to address domestic violence. Not only must we work to support victims of domestic violence, we must also challenge the social norms and structures that allow violence to thrive. These include harmful traditional attitudes and practices like female genital mutilation, but also more covert forms of harm to women like preferential treatment for men in the home and workplace.



Members in Romania crafted this striking illustration of the impact of domestic violence

Sometimes called 'everyday sexism,' these attitudes are one of the reasons violent behaviour can go unchallenged in places where women should feel the safest - work, places of worship, and most of all, home.

Domestic Violence (2019)

Be it resolved that ACWW and its member organisations urge the governments of all countries and their agents to develop and implement strategies for the prevention of domestic violence.

How can governments prevent domestic violence, as the resolution says?

Domestic violence prevention is a difficult subject to contend with. When speaking about domestic violence, we often immediately think of support for women's shelters, educational empowerment, financial independence, harsher sentencing for perpetrators, and awareness of the signs of domestic violence. However, none of these are preventative measures. The only true prevention for domestic violence is in the hands of perpetrators of violence. While recognising that there are male victims of domestic violence and female perpetrators of domestic violence, it is important to acknowledge that this is largely a problem perpetrated by men towards women and children, other men, and people who fall outside their usually binary perspective. Additionally, the problem of violence is usually linked to fundamentalist or traditionalist thinking about the roles men and women are meant to play in society and at home.

So, how can we address domestic violence in our communities?

As mothers, we can raise our sons to respect, honour, and celebrate women in all their diversity. We can teach them to view women as peers, colleagues, and friends rather than potential spouses, sexualised objects, or surrogate caretakers.

As wives, we can try to help our husbands understand what life is like as a woman. Maybe you could explain to him the steps you take to feel safe when you're alone, or talk to him about the everyday sexism you

Indeed, it is in the context of the home that we should focus our attention for now, based on the resolution adopted that the 2019 Triennial World Conference:

experience at work or in public.

137 women are killed each day in domestic violence situations. A disproportionate number of these will be rural women.

This is why we are introducing the ACWW campaign to end domestic violence. The campaign is called **Rural Women in Action: 137 Too Many**. We will use the 16 Days of Activism to launch our campaign and each year check in on progress in our communities, highlight specific issues in different countries where we have ACWW members, and refocus for the year ahead. But, we must remember that the 16 Days of Activism began nearly 30 years ago, and the only change we've seen is an increase in reporting, with little-to-no decrease in actual instances of domestic violence... and in some parts of the world, increases in violence and death in domestic situations. It is therefore vital that we focus on this issue all year round. We will do our best to provide you with resources, guidance for lobbying, and awareness-raising materials that draw attention to this issues, but also provide actionable steps at every level, from resources for those who work with children, to guidance for advocates, policy-makers, and legislators.

Remember to safeguard your mental health when reading about domestic violence, or when acting as advocate for other women. It is important to be aware of how these topics may weigh on you, and practice self-care by taking frequent breaks, talking to trusted friends, and remembering that it is not up to one individual to change the world.



RURAL
WOMEN
IN ACTION

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. Most recently, 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 Pennies for Friendship, the lifeblood of ACWW.

*We won't tolerate violence
in our communities.*

Rural Women deserve better

Time to Start Planning!

29 April will be here before you know it; how will you Walk the World?

If you're a long-time ACWW member, you may be tempted to skip over this page because you know all about Women Walk the World. What you may not know is that participation in Women Walk the World has waned over the last few years, even before the Covid-19 Pandemic. For 2022, we want to see members from all over the world organising walks. For 24 hours on 29th April, we want to showcase members' activities. From broadcasts to live facebook updates, we want Women Walk the World to be interactive experience for everyone who is able to tune in.

After last year, we learned some important lessons from members about fundraising, personalised fundraising pages, and resources. In response, we have developed a system where you can set up a fundraising page, get notified when someone donates, set targets, and provide information to your supporters and walkers directly.

We will also be providing printed sponsorship forms and resources for those who prefer to facilitate their walks in a less digital way.

Also from January, you'll be able to download fundraising materials that are specific to the Women Walk the World event. If you

sign up for an hour slot to be part of our WWTW broadcast, we will work with you to figure out the best way to facilitate your full participation, including technical support. Please don't assume that you can't participate if you aren't comfortable with technology; we're here to help as much or as little as you like. We welcome your ideas for how you want to spend your hour or a portion of your hour. Maybe you could prerecord a video of your walkers saying hello to ACWW members all over the world? If your data signal is strong enough, maybe you can show off an area of natural beauty you're walking around. Even

if you're not walking around a national park, maybe you want to show off your community.

We'd encourage you to use this event as a chance to get people involved in ACWW. If you're not able to walk, why not get a watch party together and connect with your Women Walk the World sisters all over the world?

We are very excited about this opportunity to connect ACWW members globally, and open windows into the lives and communities all over the world.



From January, you'll be able to...

Sign up for an hour slot on the WWTW section of the ACWW website

Set up a personalised fundraising page

Download WWTW resources

Begin working with us to sort out the technical aspects of your broadcast



You can use our fundraising platform all year 'round, not just for Women Walk the World.

If you have an idea for a fundraiser, you are always welcome to contact us to develop resources that are specific to your event.

Skydiving, anyone?

Secure ACWW for Future Generations

It's nearly the end of the Appeal, but there are still plenty of ways to give

We want to thank everyone who has given generously to the Appeal. We have raised nearly £20,000 in addition to regular giving, which has helped to support our work in a year where we have struggled.

The appeal will be closed on the 31st of December, but the list of distinguished donors will be left up on the website until the page is no longer being visited, at which point it will be displayed in Central Office for posterity.

We want to take this opportunity to remind you of all the many ways you can support ACWW financially.

Membership

Joining ACWW is a key way you can support our work. You can also tell your friends about ACWW, and if they are interested in our work, encourage them to join us! If they can't afford the membership fee, why not offer to purchase their membership as a gift - we can even send you an ACWW-themed card to give them! Just remember, you shouldn't buy a membership for people who have not expressed an interest in ACWW, as they may associate ACWW with those annoying unsolicited ads they get all the time!

Women Walk the World

Women Walk the World is a key event in the ACWW calendar, as you've read on the page opposite. Getting involved in 2022 can help raise funds and our profile! If you're not able to organise it yourself, why not mention it to your group or society - maybe you can make it a group effort!

Regular Giving

Regular donations help ACWW tremendously. If you're in the UK, you can set up a standing order to give a certain regular amount to ACWW - just remember, this is an agreement between you and your bank - we cannot start, manage, or cancel a standing order.

If you're outside the UK, you'll soon be able to sign up to receive regular giving reminders. There is no way to set up direct debits or standing orders globally, but as we've had requests from members all around the world, we have tried to come up with a way to make giving as easy as possible. If you sign up, you'll receive an email directly to you with a link to make a quick donation on a specified date each month. Of course, you don't have to follow the link, but the option is there should you like to make use of it.

Bequests

There are a number of different ways to remember ACWW in your Will:

A Pecuniary Bequest

In a pecuniary gift, you leave a specified sum of money to one or more beneficiaries

A Residuary Bequest

This allows you to leave ACWW a share of your net estate once all your liabilities have been paid

If you wish to leave a pecuniary or residuary legacy to ACWW we will be pleased to assist in supplying the wording to be used by the drafter. You can contact Executive Director Tish Collins at tish.c@acww.org.uk

Membership

It's nearly that time of year again! Invoices for society membership will be going out shortly, as will reminders for individual membership. If you are an individual member, be sure to pay attention to the text of the email or letter you get, as we will be sending reminders to those who have paid for multiple years letting them know how many years they have left. On the subject of individual membership, please make note of this notice from the Board of Trustees:

Offering members the option to pay for three years' membership fees together, with a discounted third year was introduced some years ago and it is popular. The popularity seems to be from the fact that one does not have to remember to pay each year, rather than the attraction of the discount.

In light of the impact Covid has had on ACWW income, the Board have decided to stop the *discount* for three-year memberships starting in 2022 and trust you will understand and be supportive of their decision.

If you have already paid for three years you will NOT be affected. For 2022 and going forward, the three-year rate for individual membership will be 3 x £27 which is £81. Please note that you can also pay for 2 years at a time if you wish.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact ACWW Executive Director, Tish Collins.



Food and Agriculture

Re-establishing ACWW's network of women in food systems



Over the last 18 months, we've seen how global disruption can affect our access to food everywhere in the world. ACWW has been raising awareness of the role of Rural Women in Food Systems, most recently during women Walk the World campaign in 2020:

These useful resources can be downloaded from our website.

However, we know that it is absolutely vital that we hear from our members about the issues that affect them directly, and the needs they feel aren't being met by local, national,

and even international government. We can gather all the statistics the UN and FAO have on the lives of rural women, but without the face of ACWW members, these statistics can be meaningless numbers to policymakers.

RURAL WOMEN IN ACTION

FROM POLITICS TO PLATE

How advocacy empowers rural women, who are critical to improving food systems globally

"Women farmers are essential to achieve sustainable, productive and inclusive food systems"
UN Decade of Family Farming, Global Action Plan

Rural Women face

- worse food insecurity than their male or urban counterparts
- restricted access to financial resources
- less access to education and productive technology
- highest global rates of poverty
- high rates of domestic violence
- lack of control over productive land

ADVOCACY
the process by which ACWW raises these issues, and asks governments to listen to, respect, and provide for rural women.

SO THAT rural women are empowered to improve global food systems, making sure that you always have food on your plate, and global hunger is eradicated.

ACWW, 408 Parkhill, 40 Market Road, London, SE21 8EN, info@acww.org.uk | www.acww.org.uk | +44 207 7983875

RURAL WOMEN IN ACTION

Rural Women in Food Systems

Since its foundation, ACWW has concerned itself with the sharing of sustainable agricultural practices and planning for a sustainable future. At the 1936 Triennial Conference in Washington, one of the speakers quoted Benjamin Kidd:

“ Women's eyes always look to the future because they are the mothers of the next generation. If women would participate more fully and more universally in world affairs, we would plan for the future more than we do now. **”**

ACWW knows that Rural Women are uniquely positioned to address the issues of Food Sovereignty and Food Security, and indeed, already have the skills and knowledge to do so. Collaboration allows us to harness these skills and knowledge and share with others until every community, every family, and every person has access to food.

#WillWalkforFood

ACWW, 408 Parkhill, 40 Market Road, London, SE21 8EN, info@acww.org.uk | www.acww.org.uk | +44 207 7983875

RURAL WOMEN IN ACTION

Zero Hunger

Food Sovereignty
the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems

Food Security
the right of all people, at all times, to have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life

Food Security is the goal
Food Sovereignty tells us how to get there

6 Principles of Food Sovereignty:

Focus on Food for People	Build Knowledge and Skill	Localise Food Systems
Work with nature, not against it	Put Local Control over produce and land	Value Local Food Producers

ACWW, 408 Parkhill, 40 Market Road, London, SE21 8EN, info@acww.org.uk | www.acww.org.uk | +44 207 7983875

Over the next year, we will be running a series of forums, surveys, and interactive panels which are specifically aimed at re-establishing our network of women in food systems. If you are involved in food systems at any level you are welcome to join us.

Our goal through these forums is ultimately, to begin to substantiate the idea that Rural Women are key to addressing global hunger, and that their full participation at every level of food systems, from policy to practice, is vital.

We also aim to raise awareness of the barriers that stand in the way of full participation by hearing stories of the lived experience of our members. We will not only raise public awareness, but will use the information gathered to influence policy-makers and legislators, along with empowering our members to facilitate change in their own communities.

Finally, we want to act as a bridge between rural women and the legislation, policies, and support available to them that they might not be aware of.

These forums will be held initially by Zoom, however, you can still be involved if you are not comfortable with video meetings or wish to remain anonymous.

Feel free to write to Sydney at Central Office, who can facilitate your participation by phone.

We need you to
be involved

Over the next year, we will be running a series of forums, surveys, and interactive panels which are specifically aimed at re-establishing our network of women in food systems. If you are involved in food systems at any level you are welcome to join us.

- Livestock Farmer
- Food Crop Farmer
- Other Crop Farmer
- Fruit/Vegetable Grower
- Plant/tree Nursery Grower
- Hunter
- Fisher
- Forester
- Home Gardener/Subsistence Farmer
- Food Processor
- Food Retailer
- Food in Hospitality setting
- Technical support to Food/Farming
- Retired from Farming/Food Industry

Have we missed out an area of food systems? Let us know and join the network!

by email: media@acww.org.uk or
by post: ACWW, Unit A04 Parkhall,
40 Martell Road, London, SE21 8EN



The Only Way is Ethics*

Communications and Marketing Committee Member Moira Hammond

In Support of the National Climate Change Coalition, the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales celebrated *Big Green Week* from 18th – 26th September. The COP 26 international climate change conference will be held in Glasgow from 31st October – 12th November. Neatly sandwiched between the two and to mark International Day of Rural Women, Suffolk East Federation of Women's Institutes held a fashion show with a difference. Entitled 'The Only Way is Ethics,' (a pun based on a popular reality programme in the UK called 'The Only Way is Essex') it combined the theme of ways to help save our planet with an opportunity to raise money for ACWW.

ACWW rep and organiser, Moira Hammond, welcomed an audience from all over the county (and beyond) to the tiny village of Dennington for two shows (afternoon and evening). These combined catwalk sessions with various stalls demonstrating ethical products and, of course, there was a raffle and tea and cake too!



The Fairtrade stall

Before the fashions were modelled, Climate Ambassador Denise Goldsmith alerted everyone to some shocking statistics proving how serious the situation is if we do nothing to halt the effect of global warming. The fashion industry is one of the biggest polluters in the world.

Jo Salter, a regular Radio Suffolk broadcaster on the subject, led the first part of the programme with more information about fabrics, their sources and ethical use of labour. Then, using three WI members as models, she demonstrated some of her own brand clothes ('wheredoesitcomefrom'), sourced and designed personally by her.



Jo Salter's three glamorous models - Wendy Robinson, Gill Denny & Rosie Western

There followed a parade of Fairtrade clothes, including a scarf and hat made from banana fibres.

The second half of the show concentrated



Elene Marsden of 'Pre-Loved Chica

on reducing fashion-waste by recycling and upcycling. It began with a colourful contribution from Elene Marsden who, in addition to frequenting charity shops, e-bay and the like, to dress in the most elegant style, also loves spending time in the far east where she acquires her more unique clothes. Next was Jackie Maxwell showing us a



Jackie Maxwell, wearing her tray-cloths skirt and salvage-edges jacket

beautiful skirt made from her grandmother's tray-cloths and a fascinating jacket created from fabric salvage strips. Finally, we were entertained by a series of wonderful creations by Kate Mason, upcycled from curtains,



Kate Mason ('Bykatymac') and three of her models

tablecloths and other unusual fabrics. Her finale was a collection of quirky bridal-wear which was met with tumultuous applause. So, it was a very successful, dual-purpose event, highlighting ways of tackling the climate crisis, while at the same time raising considerable funds for ACWW.



Rosie modelling Mum's 'Bykatymac' creation



WI Climate Ambassador, Helen Lewis, said that it had been a very interesting and thought-provoking show and noted further comments from the audience:

"I loved the idea of being able to find out exactly where, how and by whom certain garments were made."

"Although ethically-sourced clothing is perhaps more expensive, it is more sustainable and kinder to the planet."

"The wide range of recycled and upcycled clothes proved that you don't have to spend a fortune to be well-dressed."

"I found the whole day very enjoyable and informative."





30th Triennial World Conference, 2023



An update from Christine Reaburn and the Triennial World Conference Committee

The Special World Conference held virtually in April 2021 amended ACWW's Constitution, and allowed for the 30th Triennial World Conference to be postponed from May 2022 to May 2023. This was obviously necessary because of the impact of COVID-19 in Malaysia, as well as the international travel situation - and primarily because of our sincere desire to safeguard the health of our members.

The Triennial World Conference Committee met on 5 October 2021 and received a very positive update from the members of the Hostess Society for the next Conference. Hamimah Abdul Karim reported that Malaysia remains in Lockdown though the country has now moved in to Phase 3, meaning a more relaxed approach. Though it is still not possible to cross state borders, with letters from the Police the members of the Committee had been able to meet.

Work is progressing with Zoom meetings, and the WI of Pahang held their AGM in October 2021. The Hostess Society is hopeful that things will be back to normal by the end of 2021 - or at least have established a 'new normal' which will allow for resumption of smaller events and more detailed planning of larger events. The Hostess Society continues to maintain contact with all venues and facilities being used for the 30th Triennial World Conference.

We are grateful to H.M. Queen Azizah, Hamimah Abdul Karim and Ong Cheng Imm, the representatives of the Women's Institute of Pahang, the Hostess Society for all their resolute work in the most trying circumstances.

We understand that everyone is keen to attend the Conference, and of course also concerned about travel, safety, and doing the right thing. We are taking every possible precaution to ensure that the Conference will be delivered in the safest, most sensible way. Whilst it is too early to fully predict what this will look like, the venue we are working with is large enough to allow for social distancing measures, and there will be significant hygiene and cleaning measures in place throughout the conference. Depending on the

reality of the local and global situation at the time, and legal measures in Malaysia, we may require delegates to wear face masks whilst indoors. All of these details will be reviewed and updated regularly, and information will be made available to attendees at the earliest possible points throughout.

One decision that has already been made by the Board of Trustees is to delay the opening of Registration for the Conference until 29 April 2022. We will close registration on 31 December 2022, meaning that all members will still have 8 months, or 246 days to register!

Our hope is that by April 2022 the world's situation will be clearer, and there will be a greater confidence in international travel. The good news is that we have been able to maintain the prices originally published, and that rather than offering an 'Early Bird' discount as normal, we are holding the lowest possible prices for all registrants.

We will bring you another update in the next issue of the magazine, including some fantastic photos of the venue and more information from the Hostess Society. In the meantime, sit back, stay positive, and look forward to catching up with old friends in Malaysia.



**RURAL
WOMEN
IN ACTION**

ACWW in 2020

Summary of the 2020 Annual Report & Accounts
of the Associated Country Women of the World

THANK YOU!

All over the world, the 2020 presented unique challenges to women in rural and non-urban communities. It has not been easy for any of us. We rely on hundreds of thousands of individuals. Those who choose to donate to us, fundraise for us, remember us in their wills. Those who stand with rural women as campaigners, activists, and those who seek to amplify the voices of those who are not heard. Thank you for your generosity, your determination, and your compassion.



ACWW 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).

The Board of Trustees was elected at the 29th Triennial World Conference, and the list below includes changes in 2020:

World President
Deputy World President
Secretary
Treasurer
- Acting Treasurer
Chairman, Communications & Marketing Committee
Chairman, Projects Committee
- Chairman, Projects Committee
Chairman, United Nations Committee
Area President, Canada
Area President, Caribbean, Central & South America
Area President, Central & South Asia
- Acting Area President, Central & South Asia
Area President, East, West and Central Africa
Area President, Europe
Area President, South East Asia & the Far East
Area President, Southern Africa
- Area President, Southern Africa
Area President, South Pacific
Area President, United States of America

Magdie de Kock (South Africa)
Alison Burnett (Scotland)
Christine Reaburn (Canada)
Ruth Cargill (Australia) Resigned June 2020
Alison Burnett Acting from June 2020
Sheila Needham (Canada)
Maybel Moyo (Zimbabwe) Deceased June 2020
Edwina Marr (Northern Ireland) Co-opted June 2020
Marie Kenny (Canada)
Linda Hoy (Canada)
Irene Hinds (Trinidad & Tobago)
Sr. Lucas Arul Seeli (India) Removed June 2020
Magdie de Kock Acting from June 2020
Irene Chinje (Cameroon)
Afrodita Roman (Romania)
Norjanah Razali (Malaysia)
Anphia Grobler (South Africa) Resigned October 2019
Dr Marina Muller (Namibia) Co-opted October 2019
Gail Commens (Australia)
Bonnie Teeples

COVID-19 and its impact on ACWW

The impact of COVID-19 on ACWW's membership has been assessed via three global surveys, the results of which have been shared with UNESCO. The so-called 'lockdown' has increased rural isolation and made access to food and banking facilities even more of an issue for our members globally, particularly so as public transport has been curtailed. Additionally, the forced cancellation of meetings for

member societies and support groups has resulted in a fall in membership income and donations.

The Board has taken steps to draw down some of the reserves in order to meet commitments for the year, and Central Office staff have drastically reduced expenditure across the organisation to mitigate the impact of reduced donations, and to keep ACWW as active

as possible during these trying times.

Central Office was closed from 17 March 2020 until May 2021, and all staff worked from home throughout the national lockdown in the UK. Mrs Jessica Green resigned during lockdown as she moved to another city and took up employment there. In September 2020 Mr Rowan McKinnon was recruited as Office Administrator in her place.

Central Office IT System

In June 2019 it was agreed by the Finance and Membership Committee and the Board that the Policy and Communications Manager should be tasked with establishing a case for refreshing ACWW's IT setup and bringing a proposal in early 2020 to the Board. This would include the outsourcing of IT support and switching to a Cloud-based system, relieving him of the additional in-house workload of full-time IT support and Server maintenance.

In February 2020, the business case for what was needed was prepared, quotes from 5 suppliers were received, and all was ready to recommend Cloudserve as the preferred vendor at the forthcoming meeting of the Board. When

COVID-19 required Central Office to close in March 2020, staff were unable to work from home because of the existing setup. The Board therefore authorised the plan as presented, and Cloudserve were engaged as Cloud and support supplier. New machines were ordered, and the Policy & Communications Manager worked for 10 days straight with Cloudserve and Harlequin to set up the new system. 11 days after the office closed, with the CEO, he delivered the new machines, and training notes, to each member of ACWW staff at home. By day 12 Central Office was operational, with all staff working from home on new machines and with fully-secure, compliant and user-friendly systems.

Office Rent and Lease

In March 2020, we negotiated with our landlords for 50% reduction in rent for 3 months, saving in the region of £7,500. When discussed with the former treasurer, World President and CEO, it was agreed we should extend our lease at Parkhall, and remain in the current office at the end of the initial 3 years, which ended on 27 September 2020. Our initial lease included an annual 5% increase in rent, with a 5% increase per annum in service charge. We successfully negotiated an additional 3 year lease, with a fixed rate of £52,885.82 – thus no annual increase for the length of the term, and a drop in the service charge increase from 5% to 3%. This will save ACWW a minimum of £5,400 per year over the term of the lease, plus of course removes all the costs of sourcing a new office, setting it up, and moving.



Membership, Conferences & Activities

In 2019 there were 440 Member Societies (445 in 2018) 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. The number of Life Members has declined since no new Life Members have been added since 1997. However, many Life Members pay a current membership fee and are included in the Individual Member category.

ACWW has an organisational structure for members to meet and, at least once every three years, hold a specially convened Area Conference in each of the nine Areas.

There are formal and informal partnerships to enable representation at meetings recognising the varying costs of travel involved. Full reports of Area Conferences are presented by the Area Presidents to the Triennial World Conference. The World President and other officers attended Area Conferences where appropriate,

however, a number of Area Conferences were postponed in 2020 and the World President was in lockdown in South Africa. Each member society is encouraged to send a triennial report of work to be published and distributed at the next Triennial World Conference.

Several of the rescheduled Area Conferences from 2020 were held in 2021 using digital means, in many cases facilitating wider attendance than normal, though with an understandable feeling among attendees that they want to get back to normal!

Contacts

In pre-Pandemic years, the World President and other Board members would travel to carry out extension work and give presentations to member societies, speaking at meetings and conferences throughout the world.

Because of COVID-19, no local or international travel took place on ACWW business from March 2020 to the end of the year. In its place, there was a rapid learning of videoconferencing tools which facilitated local and international meetings and ensured the Board, members and Central Office were able to maintain contact.

ACWW worked with Member Societies and like-minded NGOs to ensure our agenda continued to be progressed, and that we were offering whatever support possible to members.

Partnership

In 2020 ACWW continued its collaborations with organisations to reach as wide an audience as possible. Our partnership with the Global Alliance for Rabies Control continued, and we strengthened relationships with UN agencies, being elected to the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee.

Local Activities

ACWW Project Funding was temporarily paused in 2020, reflecting the reality of global lockdowns and COVID-19's impact. The Women Empowered Fund continued to receive generous support, and we were delighted to be able to start funding projects again later in the year.

Advocacy

Digital engagement at the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women and High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development was effective, though no substitute for in-person attendance. A letter written by ACWW to the UN was co-signed by 185 organisations in 35 countries, representing more than 11.95 million women globally - our points were taken and the issues raised reflected in the final document published by the UN.

Sharing Knowledge

We remain committed to a '2-way street' of knowledge exchange and information sharing, which has proved critical in 2020.

New Projects Funded in 2020

Education and Capacity Building

- 1077 India **Financial literacy for Tribal Community Women**
Children Watch, India
- 1079 Tanzania **Jikwamue Social Enterprise Hub**
Partner: UWWK Umoja wa wawezeshaji K100, Tanzania
- 1084 Uganda **Promoting Girl's Education**
CINTA Foundation Uganda (CFU), Uganda

Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing

- 1078 Tanzania **Sustainable Farming Practices for Economic Growth**
GREPO Green Global Promotion Organization, Tanzania
- 1079 Uganda **Health and Sanitation Awareness Raising for Disabled Communities**
Partner: Kasese District Women with Disabilities (KADIWOD), Uganda

Sustainable Agriculture, Training and Development

- 1070 India **Value Addition Opportunities for Female Farmers**
Partner: Success Trust, India
- 1072 India **Increased Economic Opportunities for Female Farmers**
Partner: WEEDS Women's Education and Employment Development Society, India
- 1082 Malawi **Economic Opportunities through Agribusiness**
Partner: TIDEF Tingathe Development Forum, Malawi
- 1089 Uganda **Goats for Empowerment**
Partner: Pallisa Children's Concern Project (PCCP), Uganda

Income Generation and Livelihood

- 1075 Kenya **Essential Life Skills for Young Mothers**
Partner: CIFORD Community Initiatives for Rural Development, Kenya
- 1080 India **Goat farming to Support Dalit Arunthathiar Women**
Partner: ROSED Rural Organization for Social Education and Development, India
- 1085 Uganda **Tailoring training for Women living with HIV/AIDS**
Partner: Efforts Integrated Development Foundation (EITEDEF), Uganda
- 1087 Uganda **Income Generation for Female Headed Households**
Partner: Kitabu Integrate Development Association (KIDA), Uganda
- 1090 India **Vocational Training for Economic Independence**
Paramedical Educational Trust, India

Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Energy

- 1071 India **Safe Water for Tribal Communities**
Partner: SWEET Society for Women Education and Economic Thrust, India
- 1074 Philippines **El Niño Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project**
Water, Agroforestry, Nutrition and Development Foundation (WAND), Philippines
- 1076 India **Erussi and Ndhew Community Water Projects**
CUWEDE Community Uplift and Welfare Development, Uganda
- 1088 Tanzania **Mabuye Village Water Project**
Partner: Kagera Woman and Aids Organisation (KWAO), Tanzania

Maternal and Reproductive Health

- 1073 Ghana **Midwifery Skills for Community Health Workers**
Partner: MamaCare, Ghana
- 1083 Uganda **Improving Rural Girl's Menstrual Sanitation and Hygiene**
Partner: YWFT Youth with a Focus Teso, Uganda
- 1086 India **Safe Menstrual Health Management for Tribal Communities**
Partner: Institute of Research and Development for the Rural Poor Trust (IRDRP), India
- 1091 India **Sexual and Productive Health and Rights Education for Adolescent Girls**
Partner: Society for Women's Education and Awareness Development (SWEAD), India

Statement of Financial Activities 2020

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Income:				
Donations, membership and legacies	121,007	98,342	219,349	450,799
Investment income	67,209	-	67,209	69,942
Charitable activities	3,877	-	3,877	296,052
Total Income:	192,093	98,342	290,435	816,793
Expenditure:				
Raising Funds:				
Investment management costs	10,716	-	10,716	8,514
Charitable Activities*:				
Project Activities	83,992	135,146	219,138	269,728
Education	53,306	-	53,306	44,417
Outreach	44,422	-	44,422	44,417
Information and Research	88,843	-	88,843	88,835
United Nations Representation	44,422	-	44,422	44,417
Conference Preparation				405,509
Total Expenditure:	325,701	135,146	460,847	905,837
* Project figures Actual, others an apportionment of staff time allocation				
Net (expenditure) / income	(133,608)	(36,804)	(170,412)	(89,044)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Net income / (expenditure) before other gains	(133,608)	(36,804)	(170,412)	(89,044)
(Loss) / Gains on investment assets	162,868	-	162,868	249,730
Net movement in funds	29,260	(36,804)	(7,544)	160,686
Fund balances brought forward 1 January 2020	2,528,954	407,806	2,936,760	2,776,074
Fund balances carried forward 31 December 2019	2,558,214	371,002	2,929,216	2,936,760

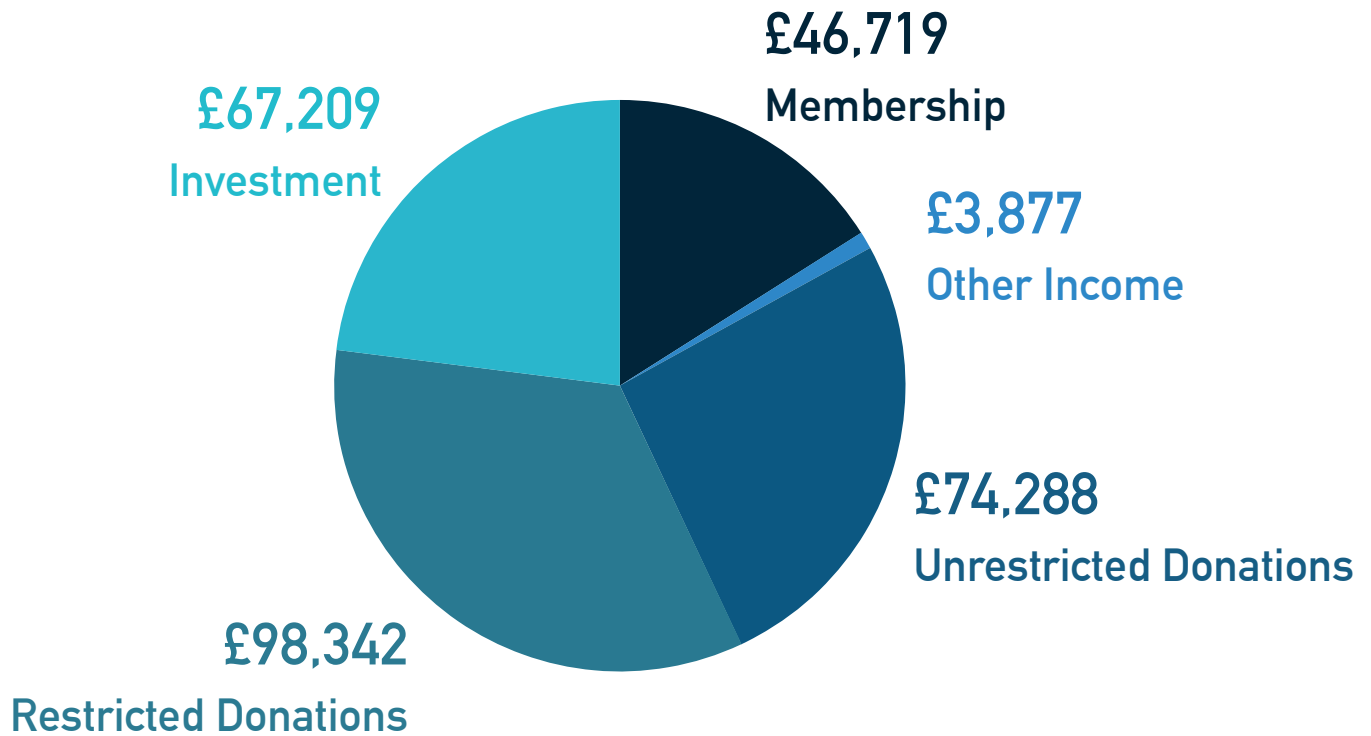
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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

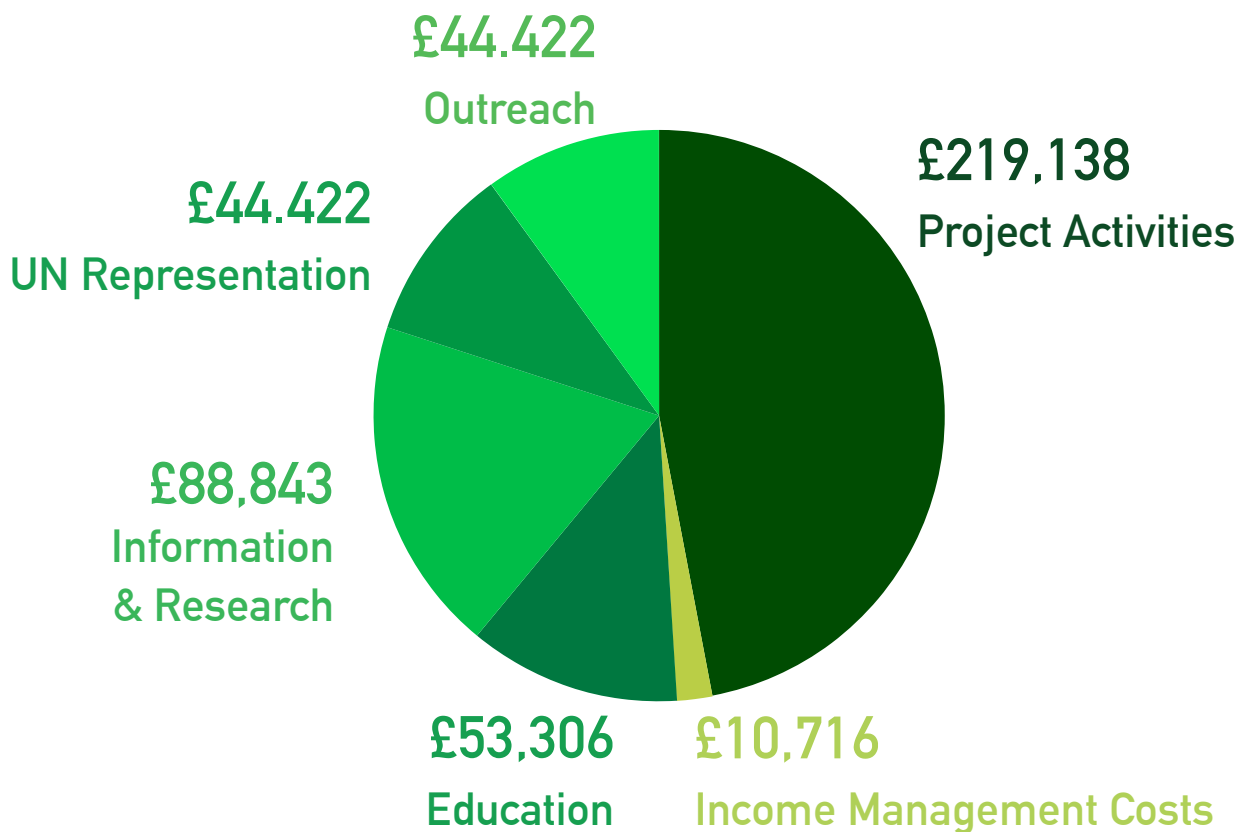
The full Statement of Financial Activities and Annual Report can be found at www.acww.org.uk

Income & Expenditure

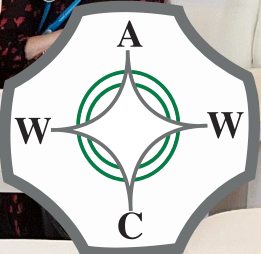
Our net income for charitable activity was £290,435



We spent £460,847 on charitable activity



a view of one of the halls for the Third Eurasian Women's Forum



Associated Country Women of the World
A04 Parkhall | 40 Martell Road | London SE21 8EN
CIO No.1174798

info@acww.org.uk | www.acww.org.uk | +44 (0)20 7799 3875


THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development