

THE COUNTRYWOMAN MAGAZINE

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

ISSUE 1 - 2023

Triennial World Conference Updates

Dress Guidelines, FAQs, Resolutions, and more!

Women Walk the World

for 29th April and beyond!

Seed Sovereignty

What is it, and how does ACWW work on this important subject?

rural
women
in action

Associated Country
Women of the World

ACWW 2022 | A1922-105

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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.

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Resolutions and Recommendations for the Triennial World Conference

The front and rear cover photos are from project 1071 - and we are pleased to include a brief summary of the project activities here:

Established in 1997, Society for Women Education and Economic Thrust (SWEET) is an organisation based in Tamil Nadu in Southern India. SWEET was established to improve the quality of life of women experiencing precarious circumstances or unemployment, domestic violence and poverty. Over the decades, SWEET has achieved these aims by forming women's self-help groups, environmental awareness programmes, water projects, and economic empowerment programmes.

This project has reached over 1,600 participants, including community members from Irual and Aadhiayan tribal villages as Dalit communities. This project provided safe drinking water systems within these communities with particular attention paid to ensuring access for women and girl children. SWEET ensured that project participants attended sanitation and hygiene awareness events, and that community members were trained in the maintenance of the borewells.

The project, now complete, successfully carried out the following activities: hosting a Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) awareness camp, construction of a borewell with hand pump, as well as provision of training in the maintenance of the borewell and minor repairs with the community members. Ownership of the handpumps was handed over to the community at the end of the project with major repairs to be undertaken by the local government as and when needed with oversight by SWEET Board members.



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,

“It is said it takes strong leadership to weather and manage the storms of change with confidence and clear-sightedness no matter how challenging it might be. Now is the time for the current Board to put this into practice and take up the responsibility, taking bold steps ensuring ACWW’s future while strongly upholding our core values, mission and objectives with a more appropriate way of working.”

These were my words in my message in the first issue of *The Countrywoman* in 2022. It was around this time last year, that the Board announced a new strategy and a different approach to some of the ways of managing ACWW – all in line with the Constitution. This was an effort to not only stabilise the organisation but indeed to move ACWW forward, securing the future of our beloved organisation, following the impact of an unprecedented time in the history of ACWW.

As we have said before, in preparing our Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2026, we examined 30 years of data on our Membership, income, expenditure, projects work, advocacy and impacts. We identified the strengths and challenges of our organisation and set a new plan of work and actions to achieve the priorities set by our Membership. And now, one year later, I am looking back on the progress we have made in implementing the new strategy in a relatively short period of time - thanks to the support of forward-thinking members who trusted the Board to apply the mandate received in 2019.

We have seen advances in our advocacy work – last week during the UN Commission on the Status of Women we saw Agreed Conclusions including text drafted by ACWW in 2018 when the Priority Theme was Rural Women, not just included in the final document of CSW, but included in the first draft as assumed language; advocacy takes time to have impact, but it can change international law and procedures. This didn’t happen overnight, and was a result of direct lobbying over the past year.

Three years ago, our organisation was affected by the worst global pandemic in living memory. Working together, we overcame that crisis, and we have started to recover. In January the Board met – only the third time to meet face to face since our election in 2019 – and at this meeting we did a thorough reconciliation of our work during this term and indeed following the implementation of the new strategy. The results were positive and I was pleased with the large number of members who signed up as ACWW Coordinators, and the number is rising! It was also encouraging to note that members understood that it was only the name of the enabling fund that has changed and that members continue to donate to this fund. It was clear that all aspects of the new strategy

are embraced, and I received reports from a majority of Area Presidents as proof.

Moving ACWW forward during challenging times, while the world is still trying to mitigate the impacts of a Global Pandemic and a very large number of our members and their families are facing the disastrous realities of terrifying wars and natural disasters, our work is more important than ever before. It is not an easy task... but we are Rural Women in Action and we are driven and encouraged by our passion to serve ACWW for the benefit of the Membership in 80 countries around the world. Thank you for supporting our new strategy and for embracing the possibilities and the opportunities associated with these changes, and indeed supporting the Board in moving ACWW forward.

In March I represented ACWW at the United Nation’s meetings in New York to discuss how to improve the lives of those for whom we are responsible. As noted above, during the Commission on the Status of Women civil society organisations like ACWW act as a check and balance to the governments present, and also as partners in their positive initiatives to reach the grassroots of their nations. We hosted 2 events during CSW, which many of you joined online, and which had very positive participation from the governments of Canada and Australia, as well as presentations by ACWW members from Kenya, Mongolia, Canada, the USA and UK.

My fellow ACWW members, it is said that true character is revealed in times of crisis. ACWW is an organisation seized with the challenges of the present but we are also an organisation striving to fulfil the promise of our future. Recently the Nominees for the Board of Trustees for the next triennium participated in Video hustings introducing ourselves to the Membership. To the question “What is your vision for the future of ACWW”? I replied: “To secure ACWW for future generations, acknowledging the relevance of ACWW’s work, amplifying the voices of women and influencing global decision makers”.

In another year’s time from now, we will look back to discover the extent of this vision. I am of the opinion that we will be pleased to see the future of ACWW has indeed be secured because you, my dear members, shared my vision.

Whilst we are grateful for the legacy of our predecessors, it is unavoidable and essential for the Board and I to continue implementing a new strategy to secure our beloved organisation for future generations!

I thank you for your ongoing support, encouragement and kindness.

Magdie de Kock
ACWW World President



Do you receive our bi-weekly e-newsletter? It’s the best way to stay up to day with the work and activities of ACWW. You can email office@acww.org.uk to sign up, or simply visit our website where you should see a prompt to sign up to receive the newsletter.

We won’t spam you or share your email address, and you can unsubscribe anytime.



Women Walk the World is coming up soon! We’ve created a fundraising pack for you to use, which can be found here in the magazine starting on page 10. It can also be downloaded as a set of posters from the ACWW website!

From Central Office

Preparations for the 30th Triennial World Conference are proceeding apace, and many aspects are covered elsewhere in this issue of *The Countrywoman*. Although this is taking a considerable amount of time, the regular work of Central Office also continues. It is the beginning of the year, and we are delighted to be receiving membership renewals and reports of work. These are not only vital for the sustainability of ACWW, but they also determine the voting strength at the Conference in Kuala Lumpur. Category 1, 2 and 3 voting member societies must be paid up before 31st March or they will not be eligible to vote. Societies attending in person also need to notify Central Office of the name of their lead delegate. Voting for Area Presidents is active online until 19 May 2023 and the votes will be opened and counted at the Conference when the rest of the Board count takes place.

A number of those registered have indicated their willingness to act as a proxy voter for a society not able to attend in person. If your society would like someone to represent them in this way, please let us know via the Proxy Voter Circular 11 on the website.

Feedback from the Melbourne Triennial World Conference has been taken on board and there will be 'welcome' sessions for first timers, and others wanting a refresher, to include the voting system, Board ballots, seating arrangements and more. Questions will be welcome. Area photographs and main conference photographs are also being scheduled. You will see in this magazine an

advert to attend the Conference sessions online - a first for ACWW! You can register for this experience via our website.

At the recent in-person Board meeting it was decided that the Beijing+25 banner will be on display and offered to Area Presidents to show at their Area Conferences, as it was in Europe last year. The banner was made from squares contributed by every ACWW Area with the intention of it being displayed at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2020. The global pandemic intervened! At one point there was an idea to cut it into sections for auction at the Triennial World Conference, but it has been saved. The panels and accompanying text can be seen in *The Countrywoman* 2020 Issue 2, which can also be seen on our website dropdown from "Our Work" to "Resources for Members" and view the back issues of our magazine there.

If your society has not yet nominated a Coordinator to keep in touch with what ACWW is doing and assist the Area Presidents keep their ears to the ground, it is not too late. Meetings are held monthly online on Saturdays. This is a fantastic opportunity not only to keep up to date with the latest from ACWW, ask your most pressing questions, and learn from other Coordinators, but it is also a vital opportunity to ensure that the concerns and needs of your society are heard by ACWW, so that we can amplify your voice in our work.

Activities at Central Office continue as normal,



though in difficult circumstances. Many of you will remember that there was some severe flooding in our Office last year. Difficulties continue, as repair works by our landlords over the cold, wet winter led to additional challenges with damp and mold. We have prioritised keeping the archive safe, and continuing our work despite these challenges. We also continue to apply pressure to our landlords to fix the previous and ongoing problems with the property.

We thank you for your patience, and can assure you that we are still receiving post, and are still carrying out the work necessary for achieving the aims of our beloved organisation.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Malaysia, and writing to you all again soon.

Tish Collins
ACWW Executive Director



The Putrajaya Skyline, which conference attendees will be able to explore. See pages 5, 6, and 7 for more conference information!

Conference FAQ

More questions, answered!

Airport Collection and Registration Day

When you arrive at the airport on the 17th May, you'll follow all the normal signposting for customs. Once you exit the security section of the airport, there will be clear signposting for ACWW Triennial World Conference Attendees.

You will then be taken via bus to the Conference venue, where you'll visit the ACWW desk to register and collect your credentials and your voting papers if you're a voting delegate. You'll then visit the Hostess Society desk, where you'll pick up your conference bag.



Charity Drive

At every Triennial World Conference, the Hostess Society organises a charity drive to benefit a local cause. This year, the charity drive will benefit local baby groups, children's homes, and preschools. They are asking attendees to bring small soft toys for a variety of ages.

Please bear in mind that the toys should be new or like new, and free from choking hazards and overt words or branding.

Food and Refreshments

There will be a variety of different cuisines to be experienced at the conference, reflecting the 3 primary cultures in Malaysia: Malay, Chinese, and Indian. While these cultures are often known for having some quite spicy dishes, the food available at the conference will be mild, tailored for a palette less accustomed to spice.

Shopping

There will be plenty of opportunities to buy souvenirs from local artisans, as well as explore the local shopping centre.

Local Currency

The local currency is Malaysian Ringgits (MYR). Perhaps confusingly, this currency is known as dollars locally. So, if you're shopping locally and someone gives you a total in 'dollars,' they're not asking for American, Canadian, or Australian dollars, they are referring to Ringgits.

Staying before or after?

You'll need to contact the hotel to arrange any nights before or after the conference. The easiest way to do this is on their website, where you can book your extra nights. You don't need to provide a reference, the hotel will match the booking according to name. If you're not comfortable using the website to book, you can use this phone number to call: +60 3-8949 8888

Alcohol

Alcohol will not be served at conference meals or as part of any conference activities. Alcohol is available for purchase at the hotel bar, open from 4pm to midnight, but out of respect for our hosts (and ACWW!), should not be consumed during conference activities.

Can't join in person for the Conference?

No problem, you can watch the proceedings online!

How does it work?

Use the QR code to the right or visit <https://acww.org.uk/online-conference> to register. You simply fill in the form, and continue to the next page to pay the one-off fee of £75. This will register you for online attendance, and you will receive an automated email to confirm that you have been registered.

Nearer the time, you will be sent a special website link, and a password, so you can access the private Online Conference page. There you will be able to watch the Conference live, as well as access a whole host of additional benefits. Please note you will need an internet connection and suitable device to watch the Conference online!

What do I get for the registration fee?

As well as being able to watch all Conference business sessions, you will be able to watch:

- The Opening Ceremony, the Thanksgiving Ceremony and Closing Ceremony

- Video updates and highlights from cultural events and other activities throughout the Conference

In addition:

- We will post you a Conference Pack, with a copy of the programme, and additional information
- With your Conference Pack we will also send you a special "Online Participant" Conference Badge
- Throughout the week we will post updates, mini-videos, and photos
- You'll get PDF recipe cards so you can cook and enjoy meals that will be served throughout the Conference
- After the Conference you'll be able to re-watch sessions, and we will update the page with photos and other updates, allowing you to catch up in your own time if the timezone is inconvenient or you want to relive some of the good times!



Full package
for Online
Attendance
£75

Looking forward to Kuala Lumpur May 2023

Like so many of you, we are really excited about the 30th 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 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 modest, 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

20th 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.

22nd 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.

23rd 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



Guidelines for Competition Entries

30th 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

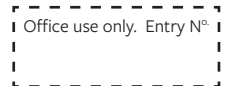
Please carefully read the instructions above before submission

Name: _____ Society: _____ Country: _____

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

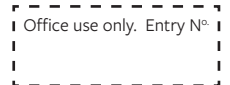
Please sew this ticket securely to the bottom of your entry (no pins)

Name: _____ Society: _____



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

Name: _____ Society: _____



Ensuring Seed Security through Community Seed Banks

Partner: Ntengwe for Community Development (NCD)

Hwange, Zimbabwe

Established in 2010, Ntengwe for Community Development (NCD) is a women's economic empowerment organisation based in rural Zimbabwe that focuses on building deeper collaboration with grassroots women's groups to increase the number of women leaders at all levels. They work to tackle the barriers to women's economic participation, women's rights, social and climate justice in Zimbabwe. The main aims of NCD include strengthening existing efforts to secure women's access to and control over land and resources, promoting community-led sustainable livelihood response, and supporting women-led climate resilient farming practices.

Partnering with ACWW, NCD will increase seed security, secure local biodiversity, and create viable community-based businesses for 150 participants by

- establishing a community seed bank
- providing a network for participatory seed collection
- procure climate-resilient seeds from the Zimbabwean agricultural department
- organising seed fairs
- training in plant breeding and climate smart agriculture

Through the training and resources provided, this project will help farmers to adapt to climate change, educate the community about the need for biodiversity and the importance of local seed banks that prioritise native seed varieties.

What's a seed bank?

Community organised seed-saving initiatives have been around for about 30 years. They have been designed and implemented to conserve, restore, revitalize, strengthen and improve local seed systems, especially, but not solely, focused on local varieties. These initiatives have sought to regain, maintain and increase the control of farmers and local communities over seeds.

Source; Community Seed Banks: Origins, Evolution, and Prospects. 2015. Vernooy, Shresthat, Sthapit



Charity Number 1174798

What is seed sovereignty?

Introduction: What is seed sovereignty and the history of seed saving?

In its most simplistic definition, Seed Sovereignty is the right of a farmer to save, use, exchange and sell seeds¹. The practice of seed saving is integral to Seed Sovereignty and is a vital tool for sustainable agriculture. While the concept of saving seeds may not at first glance appear radical, for many farmers, especially in the Global South, the practice has roots in resistance against the control of powerful multinational corporations over access to seed and therefore, food. ACWW members passed a resolution on Food Sovereignty in 2016!

In fact, The Lexicon of Food defines seed sovereignty as “the farmer’s right to breed and exchange diverse open source seeds which can be saved and which are not patented, genetically modified, owned or controlled by emerging seed giants”². In the fight for food sovereignty, the role of seed is political.

Part 1: Multinationals and the right to save seeds

For centuries, farmers and growers were free to practice saving seeds, ensuring a continuing cycle of growing with each season as seeds were saved after each harvest to be sown the following year. It is how many of us continue to grow on our land (or small balcony in the middle of the city, in my case). But for a huge number of farms across the globe, this historical and sustainable practice is restricted and made impossible. Since the advancements in agriculture made during World War Two, multinational agribusinesses, through genetic engineering and patents on seed varieties, control over 60% of the world’s seed production³. These patents mean that farmers who purchase hybrid seeds are prevented by

intellectual property laws from saving seeds year to year⁴.

These restrictions are not just put in place by multinational agribusiness like Monsanto, Bayer and Corteva⁵ but enforced by governments too. For example, in Kenya, it is becoming increasingly difficult to purchase local, indigenous seed varieties due to recent agricultural policy shifts and public-private partnerships between the Government of Kenya, agricultural researcher groups and multinational seed companies⁶ which favour the distribution of expensive, commercial seed. This increases costs for small-scale farmers, either pricing them out of the market or forcing small-scale growers to increase production and transition to commercial farming. Farmers become locked into contracts with commercial seed companies, reducing their autonomy over what crops are grown, leading to over supply within the market and a loss of their profits.

Part 2: The importance of seed sovereignty for the self, the community and resilience.

As climate change continues to create major shifts in weather and growing patterns, access to affordable, indigenous and climate-resilient seed varieties is key in the fight for food sovereignty and ensuring access to nutritious food for all. Local indigenous seed, grown and adapted over generations, can be more resilient to climate change and more nutritious than expensive engineered “non-renewable” seeds⁷. Saving and growing from local, open pollinated and well adapted varieties of seeds, whether independently or by using local community seed banks, offers farmers an affordable sustainable option. It should not be a radical act of resistance to grow from seeds which have been saved from last year’s harvest.

Community seed banks offer a viable alternative to purchasing expensive non-renewable seeds. Farmers are able to purchase or share high quality seed varieties which are known to grown well within the local environmental context and share knowledge with other farmers. By taking the purchase of seeds out of the global arena and into the local economy, farmers have greater control over their choice and finances. This is particularly important in the current challenging time of economic turmoil, when the cost of seed is often tied to global markets pricing out small-scale farmers who have come to rely on dependable hybrid seed varieties which must be repurchased year on year.

Conclusion: ACWW’s work on Seed Saving

As supporters of the UN Decade of Family Farming, ACWW commits to being a responsive funder in regard to promoting food and seed sovereignty. We see from our members that the issue of access to seed is significant for small scale farmers, particularly women growing on small home plots or in cooperation on shared land. In 2022, ACWW funded the project Ensuring Seed Security through Community Seed Banks in Zimbabwe run by the organisation Ntengwe for Community Development. The community seed banks are locally governed by women farmers to maintain seeds for local use. The project is designed to conserve, restore, revitalise, strengthen availability of seed varieties for food and agriculture, especially, but not solely, focusing on local varieties of crops and also crops that are underused but more resilient to climactic shifts, such as the amaranth and drought resistant maize. The project is a community-led response to climate smart agriculture, improving access to high-value seeds and maintaining biodiversity within the local land.

Jenny Sellers
ACWW Project Grants Officer

Sources

- 1 <https://www.firstnations.org/wp-content/uploads/publication-attachments/2015-Fact-Sheet-11-Seed-Saving-and-Seed-Sovereignty.pdf>
- 2 <https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/news-views/food-sovereignty-seed>
- 3 <https://navdanyainternational.org/key-issues/seed-freedom/>
- 4 <https://sustainablefoodtrust.org/news-views/food-sovereignty-seed/>
- 5 <https://civileats.com/2019/01/11/the-sobering-details-behind-the-latest-seed-monopoly-chart/>
- 6 <https://acbio.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/kenya-seed-sector-lessons-potato-seed-industry.pdf>
- 7 <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20210127-vandana-shiva-on-why-the-food-we-eat-matters>



Project participants from ACWW-funded project 1065, where one of the lessons learned was that the project organisers wanted to focus more closely on the sourcing of locally-appropriate, climate resilient seeds

What is Women Walk the World?

Every year, on or around ACWW Day, the 29th of April, ACWW members all over the world join together to raise funds for ACWW and share information about our work with their communities. This event is called Women Walk the World, and has been going since 2012.

This pack has been developed to help you with your walk, and includes a sponsorship form, ideas for more activities, a page that can be printed off on sticker paper to create stickers or card to create badges, and information about our work.

You are also welcome to visit our website to register your event and set up a fundraising page, post pictures and video from your walk to our facebook page, and send reports and pictures from your walk to be featured in ACWW publications.

Connect
with us!

<https://acww.org.uk/fundraise-for-acww>

email office@acww.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/acww.media>



Please remember to follow all local regulations during your walk, including any Covid-19 restrictions.

Please also remember that all funds raised using ACWW materials should be directed to ACWW, as we are centrally responsible for funds raised in our name.



Come walk with us!

when

where

for further details



rural women in action
Associated Country Women of the World

So, you want to support Women Walk the World!



but don't know where to start?

- Walk around your local park or green space, perhaps 9 times to select the ACWW Areas
- Organise a walk to your nearest farm to learn more about where your community's food comes from
- Go on a walking tour guided by indigenous rural people, learning about Indigenous cultures and practice
- Walk around your village hall, and have snacks that reflect the culture from another ACWW Area
- Walking by yourself? Arrange sponsorship for each step - "Every step is a step towards improving the lives of rural women!"
- Don't fancy walking? Maybe these ideas suit you better:

Have a knit-a-thon, using the ACWW colours

Partner with another ACWW society - if you can't walk, sponsor their walk through their fundraising page on the ACWW website.

Pick an ACWW resolution, and coordinate an activity that raises awareness. for example, 1953: Women's Citizenship talks about the responsibility of women to take up public office. Perhaps investigate the history of women in public office in your village, town, or state, then put together a presentation.

If you are wanting a bigger challenge this year, perhaps you'd like to do a sponsored skydive, hike, or cycle!

For any fundraising efforts,
we encourage you to set
up a Fundraising page on
the ACWW website.

Contact ACWW at
office@acww.org.uk to
set up a
fundraising page

A04 Parkhall | 40 Martell Road
London SE21 8EN

Registered Charity No. 1174798

Central Office: office@acww.org.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7799 3875

Website: www.acww.org.uk

rural
women
in action

Associated Country
Women of the World



ACWW exists to **amplify** the voices of rural women, collecting factual data on their living conditions and using that information to hold governments to account through our status with the United Nations.

ACWW exists to **connect** rural women, knowing that our voice is so much stronger when we speak together.

ACWW exists to **mobilise** rural women to be leaders in their communities, producing resources that can be used to educate at a grassroots level.

ACWW exists to **empower**. We empower by recognising that rural women have a voice and that voice has gone unheard for far too long. We empower by funding small-scale, grassroots projects that improve whole communities one woman at a time. We empower by raising awareness of international treaties and agreements that protect the rights of women and by involving our member societies in treaty negotiations at an international level. We empower through friendship and collaboration at our Area and Triennial World Conferences.

Rural women are the backbone of families, communities, and nations, but they suffer the worst impacts of climate change and conflict, go unheard in legislation, and remain unprotected and unsupported. **ACWW exists to change that.**



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Do you want to be more involved in the work of ACWW?

Join the Coordinator Network today!

The ACWW Coordinator Network is continuing to grow. Remember, we would like a coordinator from every member society so that we are able to reach the grassroots of our network. Just by way of reminder, you can read more about the role below!

We've had 5 meetings so far, and it has been truly wonderful to watch this growing network connect, share best practice and ideas, learn from each other, and continue to inspire one another.

The Coordinator programme serves to reinforce our global network and functions as a genuine and diverse representation of our total membership, strengthening our Area Presidents and their activities. Coordinators promote ACWW within their own societies, and have regular opportunities to meet with members of ACWW's Board - meaning they can relay and represent the feelings and priorities of their society, highlight issues that need addressing in their communities, and reflect their society's thoughts about different ACWW activities and plans.

ACWW's membership elects the Board of Trustees at the Triennial World Conference, who take decisions and run the organisation. Between these Conferences, the new Coordinators will become an invaluable resource for the Board, and the future of ACWW, especially when it comes to amplifying the voices of ACWW members and breaking down barriers to genuine engagement. The Coordinators will act as the hands and feet of the Area President, working collaboratively to extend her reach within their own Area. This will be especially important for larger ACWW Areas.

Each member society may nominate one Coordinator. Those member societies who have a person who functions in a similar role to the Coordinators as outlined here (such as the International Reps, WI Reps, or International Officers) may wish to nominate that person as Coordinator. Please note that even if you have one of these in post, they will need to be nominated via this process to have access to the resources, support, and network associated with the new ACWW Coordinator programme.

For further information or to request a nomination form, please contact your Area President or ACWW Central Office.

Coordinator Responsibilities

- Distribute ACWW information to her society
- Attend online monthly Coordinator meetings with the Area President and Central Office
- Organise an event for Women Walk the World
- Coordinate responses from her society to ACWW surveys and requests for information
- Encourage fundraising and donations
- Encourage individual membership
- Facilitate participation in ACWW events
- Attend training and information sessions

Coordinator Support

- Personalised presentations
- Fundraising ideas and resources
- Regular meetings with World President, Area President and Staff
- Fundraising guidance (legalities and safeguarding)
- Technical assistance for virtual events
- Ad hoc brainstorming with staff about awareness and fundraising ideas
- Full virtual training, including documents and videos

Meet ACWW's newest staff!

Casey and Funmi introduce themselves

Casey Daudelin is ACWW's new Office Administrator

Where are you from, and what did you do before you came to ACWW?

I am originally from New Jersey, in the US. Before ACWW I lived in Edinburgh for a year as I pursued an MSc in International Development at the University of Edinburgh. Prior to Scotland, I was working full-time at my local YMCA in NJ as a Program Coordinator and Childcare Counsellor after graduating from undergrad at Loyola University Maryland during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

What exactly is your job at ACWW?

I am the Office Administrator in Central Office, so I am primarily the main point of contact for all enquiries that come through to the office. Getting to connect with and help out members is the best! With the Triennial World Conference coming up, my days typically include managing registrations and general prep for the conference. I also process donation acknowledgements and membership receipts as well as sort through new member society applications. I get to work a little bit with everyone and assist wherever I am needed.

What do you do in your time off to relax?

I am a former competitive swimmer, so I enjoy being active. Going to the gym and swimming laps are some of my favourite ways to decompress. I am also an avid music lover and frequent concertgoer, but on laid back days I can be found reading, cooking, browsing local street markets, or enjoying museums!

What are you most excited about at ACWW?

What excites me the most about ACWW is the multi-faceted approach to supporting rural women around the world. I think it is so important that ACWW is addressing issues that rural women face through grassroots programming as well as advocacy because one can't be done without the other. During my studies, my concentration was in Globalisation and Sustainable Development where I studied how to incorporate varying methods that allows resources and knowledge to extend and be accessible to marginalised communities. And most importantly, how to do so in a manner that transforms lives in sustainable ways. I see that happening at ACWW with the balance of supporting projects that are helping women and girls at a very local level as well as raising awareness of these issues at an international level. Seeing a charity that operates with both ideas is what drew me to want to work here.



Funmi Omolabi is ACWW's Finance Assistant

Where are you from, and what did you do before you came to ACWW?

I am from south London, in the UK. Before I came to ACWW I worked as a manager at Lidl. I have a BA Hons in Accounting and Finance and am currently studying for my ACCA to become a Chartered Accountant.

What exactly is your job at ACWW?

As Finance Assistant at ACWW, I play a crucial role in the charity's financial operations. My responsibilities include processing memberships and donations, handling petty cash, and banking cheques.

What do you do in your time off to relax?

In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my kids visiting local amenities.

What are you most excited about at ACWW?

My greatest interest in ACWW stemmed from the dedication to empowering rural women from all backgrounds. I am looking forward to applying my expertise in finance to support the charity's growth.



... and a quick goodbye

Sydney here! This will be my last magazine as Editor of the Countrywoman and ACWW's Communications and Engagement Officer. It is time for me to move on, having spent the last 6 and a half years with ACWW. My time with the Organisation has been truly transformative, and I want to thank each of you - every single member - for her support and kindness. I have learned so much about the lives of rural people beyond the community I grew up in, and have been inspired by the resilience and strength of those I've been privileged to get to know over my time here. This is a truly bittersweet transition, and I will miss my colleagues and the members of this inspiring network of Rural Women.



Looking to the Future

Text of Resolutions and Voting for the Board of Trustees

The following pages show the resolutions that will be debated and voted upon at the upcoming Triennial World Conference. If a voting delegate would like to contribute to the debate, they'll have the opportunity at the Conference, during the conference session where the debate and vote is scheduled. You can find the conference rules of debate in the conference programme.

Voting for the Executive Committee of ACWW - that is, the World President, the Deputy President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Chairman of the UN Committee, the Chairman of the Projects Committee, the Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, and the Chairman of the Communications and Marketing Committee - takes place at the Conference via a secret ballot that is overseen and counted under the supervision of an independent scrutineer.

Voting for Area Presidents takes place via an online 'postal' ballot in advance of the conference, with votes held securely until they are counted under the supervision of the same independent scrutineer at the Conference. Results are announced at the Conference, and the current Board officially ends their term at

the Closing Ceremony on the last day of the Conference.

Participation in the debate and voting process is a key way that members can influence the priorities of ACWW. The Board of Trustees is elected to lead the organisations in a way that reflects the needs of the global population of Rural Women. This is no small task, so not only is it important that members participate in the election and debate processes, but also that they recognise the trust placed in those in leadership, and continue to support them as they make the decisions they believe are in the best interest of ACWW.

Do you want to learn more about the women who have been nominated to lead ACWW into the next Triennium? You can watch them talk about their vision and qualifications on our Youtube channel! Simply scan the QR code to the right with your phone, or type the address just below it into your browser.

These videos are a great way to 'meet' your nominees before the conference, and for lead delegates to discuss their voting with the member society.



<https://www.youtube.com/@ACWW1929>

The following Resolutions have been correctly received, approved by the Ad Hoc Committee on Resolutions as suitable, non-repetitive, and factual, and will be presented for consideration of the Membership at the 30th Triennial World Conference in May 2023.

Text of Resolutions and Recommendations to the 30th Triennial World Conference, and call for amendments

RESOLUTION 1: Establishment of Rural Women's Employment Action Plans

MOVER: Rural Women New Zealand

“That ACWW urges all governments to address the particular needs of rural women by working with women’s representative groups to establish, implement and regularly monitor a Women’s Employment Action Plan which ensures access to training and education; fair, equitable and safe employment practices; working conditions and remuneration; access to resources such as finance, materials, technology, and land/property and; including but not limited to, advice on career, business and entrepreneurship.”

RATIONALE:

Women make up a large part of the workforce in their rural areas . Due to the nature of their work, it is often the women who have been most affected by Covid 19 and Climate change . Often these women are doing the unpaid, underpaid or undervalued work in their businesses and community.

This resolution aims to improve the situation of women in regard to the work that they do by encouraging

- equity of access to increase their skills and capabilities, through education and training including, but not limited to, finances, business, entrepreneurship, technology, land and property.
- safe work practices
- being fairly paid for what they do.

We believe that communities will be enhanced and enriched by the improvement in opportunities for businesses, food production and entrepreneurial enterprises and economies will flourish because women are economically empowered to be part of them. The New Zealand Government has launched such a plan and it is here: <https://women.govt.nz/news/womens-employment-action-plan>

Women’s Employment Action Plans would help meet some of the aims of the UN Sustainable Development Goals which many countries have pledged to support. They would also contribute towards meeting the aims of the Women’s Empowerment Principles, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the agreed conclusions of the 62nd Commission on the Status for Women and any reference made to the empowerment of rural women and girls in the Ministerial declaration from the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development .

Having a monitoring component in the Plans will enable changes to be measured and recorded on the way to the desired outcomes and goals for women living and working rurally.

Ensuring there is a plan in place, decision makers then can ensure that no women are left behind, and whole communities are in turn enhanced as a result of further enabling the women in rural communities through Employment Action Plans

REFERENCES:

1 <https://lost.ilo.org/international-day-of-rural-women-the-unfinished-quest-for-decent-work-for-all>

2 Government responses to COVID-19: Lessons on gender equality for a world in turmoil | Publications | UN Women

3 N2122226.pdf (un.org).

UN Women - Women’s Empowerment Principles. <https://www.weeps.org/>

UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2, 5, 8 and 11. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development: <https://hlpf.un.org/>

Agreed Conclusions: CSW62 <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/62/CSW-Conclusions-62-EN.PDF>

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/01/beijing-declaration>

RESOLUTION 2: Rural Gender Impact Analysis

MOVER: Rural Women New Zealand

“That the Associated Country Women of the World urge Governments to apply both a Rural Impact Analysis and Gender Impact Analysis when considering plans, policies and programmes to ensure the intersectionality of being women and living rurally are taken in to account in order to reduce the adverse impact of proposed plans, policies and programmes on rural communities.”

RATIONALE:

The New Zealand Government has implemented a Rural Proofing Guide to enable them to understand the challenges rural communities face and the tool is expected to be used across all Government departments. The response from interest groups, especially the negative responses, could be avoided if all rural voices were involved in a rural community proofing exercise at the policy and plan development stage. Recognition of the inclusion of all rural voices, not just special interest groups, is vital by policy and decision makers. We believe that other countries would benefit from using a similar guide to apply a Rural Impact Analysis over their decision making processes.

Rural proofing decisions and policies which ensure equity for our rural communities, aids in the achievement of a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) dictates that a gender analysis is undertaken by Governments on all policy and legislation. This remit calls for such analyses to be completed, especially in line with the concluding recommendation as below:

Recalling its general recommendation No. 28 (2010) on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention and drawing the attention of State parties to target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, the Committee recommends:

- the Human Rights Act talks about including specific prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, gender expression, and sex characteristics;
- State Parties need to include a gender-specific rather than gender-neutral approach in its legislation, policies and programmes,

In order to empower rural communities, both the public and private sector need to analyse the impact which their policies, plans and practices might have on women and girls living rurally.

This resolution will give ACWW the mandate to continue our authoritative voice on rural communities influencing positive change for rural people and communities, because by combining the two analyses, parties can see how rural communities may be impacted, both positively and negatively, through their work.

RESOLUTION 3: Addressing Food Waste

MOVER: National Association for Family and Community Education, USA

“Be it resolved that ACWW facilitates both action and advocacy on the issue of food waste, recognising that food waste occurs throughout the global food supply chain, and that coordinated action is required to mitigate food loss and wastage at every stage.”

ACTION POINTS:

Individuals:

Consider ways to reduce food waste in your family and community. Make use of programmes at local grocery stores that aim to reduce wastage at the consumer level; if such programmes do not exist, work with your local stores and chains to bring these programmes in.

Societies:

Put together educational programmes using the expertise of homemakers and rural women to share knowledge about traditional methods of food preservation and efficient use of ingredients and resources.

Advocacy:

Work to raise awareness of the systemic causes of food waste, including arbitrary aesthetic standards related to supermarket marketing. Advocate to address insufficient infrastructure that causes food waste in developing nations. Work to promote traditional and Indigenous methods of land use and food preservation.

Supporting Statement:

There is enough food produced in the world to feed everyone, and yet each year almost half of all fruit and vegetables are thrown away, low crop prices and disruptions in international shipping leave millions of tons of crops left to rot in fields, it is estimated that between 702 and 828 million people were affected by hunger in 2021. The number has grown by about 150 million since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food waste occurs for a variety of reasons, including uneaten food that is thrown out at homes, stores, and restaurants; when food does not meet retailers’ standards for color and appearance, or cannot be distributed by producers. It is estimated that one-third of all food produced is lost or wasted, around 1.3 billion tons of food, costing the global economy close to \$940 billion each year.

As individuals, and as Member Societies of ACWW, we can take actions and engage in advocacy to address this global problem.
(references continued on next page)

REFERENCES (for Resolution 3):

FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2022. In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable. Rome, FAO.

UN Environment Programme, 2022, Definition of Food Loss and Waste, 5/16/2022,
<https://www.unep.org/thinkeatsave/about/definition-food-loss-and-waste>

FEEDING AMERICA, 2002, How We Fight Food Waste in the US, 5/16/2022,
<https://www.feedingamerica.org/our-work/our-approach/reduce-food-waste>

FAO, 2021, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021, 5/16/2022,
<https://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

The following series of Resolutions are presented to the 30th Triennial World Conference by ACWW's Board of Trustees. Depending on the nature of the Resolution, there may be specific rationale included with the individual Resolutions, but the Board would also like to present an overall rationale for the proposed changes to the Constitution and other Resolutions.

RATIONALE:

Since the foundation of ACWW, our organisation has grown and changed in its practices to best reflect the realities of its time. In the past, models have included a Council, and various Areas have been formed, adjusted, or re-framed. Committees have come and gone, or had their mandates and titles changed to best suit the prevailing situation. ACWW's Board of Trustees have carefully examined more than 30 years of data and, having discussed the pros and cons, strengths and challenges of the 2019-2023 Triennium, and the past, believe that the current structure needs to be revised to suit the reality of the current global situation.

The creation of the ACWW Coordinators programme in 2022 has already enabled far greater participation from member societies and from a more diverse range of voices than the current Committee structure. The Constitution gives the authority and right to change certain elements of ACWW's working methods to the Board of Trustees - some of which need to be retrospectively ratified by the Triennial World Conference, and some of which do not. The intention here is to make things as plain as possible, and explain the need for the proposed amendments.

The Board of Trustees are required by the Constitution to *"manage the affairs of ACWW and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of ACWW"*. Further, it is the duty of each Trustee to *"exercise her powers and to perform her functions as a Trustee of ACWW in the way she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of ACWW"*.

In 2022, the Board decided that there was no longer a need for Specified Committees to continue in the current format, and that from 2023 these Specified Committees would not be re-nominated, nor function in their current form. This is in line with clauses 20-20.2.3 of the Constitution, which states:

20. Delegation by Trustees

- 20.1** The Trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee or committees, and, if they do, they must determine the terms and conditions on which the delegation is made. The Trustees may at any time alter those terms and conditions, or revoke the delegation.
- 20.2** This power is in addition to the power of delegation in the General Regulations and any other power of delegation available to the Trustees, but is subject to the following requirements –
 - 20.2.1** a committee may consist of two or more persons, but at least one member of each committee must be a Trustee;
 - 20.2.2** the acts and proceedings of any committee must be brought to the attention of the Trustees as a whole as soon as is reasonably practicable; and
 - 20.2.3** the Trustees shall from time to time review the arrangements which they have made for the delegation of their powers.

The phasing out of the Specified Committees means that terminology in the Constitution must also be updated. This will also entail updating of the Standing Orders relating to the Specified and Ad Hoc Committees, and prompts the need for the "Titles of Officers" Resolution.

Given the nature of these changes, the current Board of Trustees recommends that the Board of Trustees elected in 2023 should establish what they believe to be the best Board titles and responsibilities for ACWW's immediate future, enacting these changes through the Standing Orders as allowed for in the Constitution.

The Board are fully aware that any changes can feel strange and challenging to members. It is important to remember that ACWW has never stood still, and though many think "we have always done" this or that, the reality is that ACWW has always had to move with the times. Whether this was the "Million Member Fund" becoming "Pennies for Friendship", or starting and reforming our Projects programme, there has always been forward progress, and we are excited to continue this in 2023 and beyond.

RESOLUTION 4: Titles of Officers

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Whereas the 2017 Constitution lists Board positions which “may” be elected, the Board of Trustees recommends the following text change be enacted at the start of the 2023 Triennium – this to be presented as a Resolution to the 30th Triennial World Conference:

15.4.1. (a-d) *Trustee Positions*

- a. *World President*
- b. *Deputy World President (delete “who shall also be Chairman of the Agriculture Committee”; NB – this already approved at the 29th Triennial World Conference in 2019)*
- c. *Honorary Treasurer (delete “who shall also be Chairman of the Finance and Membership Committee”)*
- d. *Honorary Secretary (delete “who shall also be Chairman of the Triennial World Conference Committee”)*

15.4.1. (a)-(d) *Collectively referred to as the “Officers” and*

(e) four (4) other Board Members (delete “Specified Committee Chairmen (Communications and Marketing, Projects, and United Nations)”

RATIONALE:

As noted above, this removes references to the former Committees from the titles of Board Members.

Updates and clarifications to the 2017 Constitution

Please note that numbers below specifically refer to relevant numbers in the 2017 Constitution:

RESOLUTION 5: “3. Objects”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“After “The objects of ACWW are”, add “the empowerment of rural women and their communities, through:”

RATIONALE:

Recognising international nuance and linguistic interpretation, the Board of Trustees believe it to be important to clarify that ACWW was founded to represent rural women, and exists to work for the empowerment of women in, and from, rural communities. Our original naming ceremony made this clear, and we believe this can only be achieved through the strength of our network which includes rural, non-urban, peri-urban, urban, remote, pastoralist, coastal, and Indigenous communities. Critically, the activities listed remain the same. This does not change the intent or aim of ACWW, but brings clarity to our governing document.

RESOLUTION 6: “10.2 Categories of Membership - Pennies for Friendship”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Change the following sections:

- 10.2.4 (b) *change “Pennies for Friendship” to “Rural Women in Action Fund”*
- 10.2.5 (b) *change “Pennies for Friendship” to “Rural Women in Action Fund”*
- 10.6.2 *change “Pennies for Friendship” to “Rural Women in Action Fund”*
- 10.6.3 *change “Pennies for Friendship” to “Rural Women in Action Fund” ”*

RATIONALE:

In line with the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Trustees in February 2022, and reflecting the redesignation of the Pennies for Friendship enabling fund as the “Rural Women in Action Fund”, it is necessary to update the terminology in the Constitution. The naming of the Pennies for Friendship fund has also, for many years, meant different things to different members, and much negative feedback has been received on the use of the word “Pennies”. This clarifies our governing document.

Processes in the Constitution

Please note that numbers below specifically refer to relevant numbers in the 2017 Constitution:

RESOLUTION 7: “10.7 Termination of Membership”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Add a new clause, titled “Disciplinary Process”. This clause to read:

“Whereas a Member Society or Individual Member of ACWW has acted in a manner contrary to the best interests of ACWW, or a complaint is made about the behaviour of such a Member, the Board of Trustees shall have the option to invoke the following Disciplinary Process.

- (a) The Member Society or Member shall be informed that there has been a complaint, or that their behaviour has come to the attention of the Board of Trustees. They will be sent a letter by the World President, to be delivered and recorded by the Executive Director, asking them for an explanation of their actions, and requesting that they cease the problematic actions.*
- (b) If the issue continues, or the Member Society or Member refuses to take the actions outlined in the letter, they shall be invited to attend (in person or digitally) a meeting with the World President and Executive Director to discuss the situation.*
- (c) If these two steps do not resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the World President, the matter shall be dealt with under the existing Clause 10.7 for Termination of Membership.*
- (d) In extreme circumstances, the existing Clause 10.7 for Termination of Membership may be invoked at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.”*

RATIONALE:

Under the 2017 Constitution, 10.7 lays out the process for Termination of Membership. Though there is a description of how to remove a Member or Member Societies for behaviour the Board of Trustees believes damages ACWW, there is not an escalating disciplinary process – this means that if a complaint is made about a Member Society and the Board upholds the complaint, the only option is to terminate the Society’s membership. The Board of Trustees believes that a more nuanced approach, allowing for stages of warning and counselling would be more appropriate, and better reflects the compassionate nature of ACWW’s work. For this reason, the Board recommends the process outlined above.

RESOLUTION 8: “13.8 Proxy Voting”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Replace current Clause 13.8.1 – 13.8.8 with:

“If a Voting Member Society (Category 1, 2 or 3) is not able to send a representative to the Triennial World Conference, they may apply for a Proxy Vote. This is a request that an observer casts the vote on behalf of the Society unable to attend Conference.

Although a non-attending Society cannot insist the Proxy Voter cast the vote in a particular way, it is possible to make requests or give an indication of how they would like the vote used. If a Proxy Vote is requested, the following procedure must be followed:

- a. The Society must contact ACWW Central Office to request a proxy vote by the deadline published in the appropriate Conference Circular, and complete the relevant paperwork establishing their credentials for making such a request.*
- b. The ACWW Executive Director will contact an observer registered to attend the Conference and ask if they are willing to cast a vote on behalf of the Society making the request.*
- c. The ACWW Executive Director will ensure the correct voting papers are issued to the named observers, who become known as the Proxy Voter.*
- d. A record will be kept of all Proxy arrangements.*
- e. The Proxy Voter and non-attending Member Society will be given each other’s contact details by the Executive Director, and in line with ACWW’s Privacy and Data Protection policies.*
- f. A notice revoking a proxy appointment only takes effect if it is delivered before the start of the meeting to which it relates, and is in a verifiable format from the absent Member Society.”*

RATIONALE:

In 2017 the Board of Trustees agreed the procedure above to standardize and simplify the process for Proxy Voting, and this Resolution simply updates the Constitution with the current process. This also removes the inadvertent opportunity for double voting allowed in clause 13.8.5.

RESOLUTION 9: “15.4.2 Trustee Positions”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“After “Two or more Trustee Positions may not be held by the same person”, add “except in the extraordinary situation of a long-term Board absence, requiring another Trustee to act in a temporary capacity in that secondary role, as considered by the Board of Trustees to be in the best interests of ACWW.”

RATIONALE:

The past two Triennia have seen Board Members need to take a leave of absence, resign, or die in post, and this has left gaps in the Board of Trustees. In certain circumstances, such as the passing of a Board Member early in the Triennium, it has been appropriate to co-opt a Board Member (as allowed in clause 17 “Filling Trustee Vacancies and Co-option”) and in other circumstances, such as a late term resignation, or the impacts of Covid-19, the Board has felt it more appropriate to ask a sitting Board Member to cover the role. The Board of Trustees believe this flexibility reflects modern realities, and commends this Resolution to the Membership. The Resolution further removes any ambiguity in clause 17.

RESOLUTION 10: “18.1.6 Removal of Trustees”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Whereas a Board Member acts other than in accordance with the duties and responsibilities set out in the Constitution, Bye Laws, Standing Orders, and prevailing policies of ACWW, they shall be subject to a disciplinary process for Trustees, as agreed by the Board of Trustees at the Commencement of their term of office. This process has escalating stages of severity, whilst leaving clause 18.1.6 in force for the most severe cases of misconduct or extreme malpractice. The text of this policy shall be available to any Member Society or Individual Member upon request.”

RATIONALE:

Under the 2017 Constitution, 18.1.6 lays out the process for Removal of a Trustee, it does not allow for intermediate stages of a disciplinary process. The Board of Trustees believes that a more nuanced approach, allowing for stages of warning and counselling would be more appropriate, and better reflects the compassionate nature of ACWW’s work. For this reason, the Board recommends the process outlined above.

RESOLUTION 11: “21.3 Procedure at meetings”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Add a new clause:

Confidentiality

In line with good practice and data protection principals, the proceedings of Board Meetings are confidential. This ensures all Trustees can participate fully and openly, and in the collective best interest of ACWW. All decisions and actions are duly noted in the Minutes of such meetings, in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, and decisions subject to ratification (such as changes to the Bye-Laws) are communicated with members at the earliest opportunity.

RATIONALE:

This formalises existing policy and brings the governing document up to date with current procedures and best practice for the management of the organisation.

RESOLUTION 12: “26. Use of Electronic Communications”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Add a new clause:

Data Protection

ACWW will comply with the highest standards of Data Protection at all times; in compliance with UK law and good practice for charitable organisations. This will include all members of the Board of Trustees and Staff receiving training on Data Protection, and being required to conduct their duties in line with ACWW Data Protection Policies.

RATIONALE:

Whereas the General Data Protection Regulation came into effect on 25 May 2018, and with subsequent national legislation in place, ACWW is required to fully comply with data protection regulations in the UK, and uphold any and all data protection regulations in place in any country in which we conduct business or hold personal data. In the UK the law is clear that we are bound by the highest and most strict standard – so for example, if something is acceptable in the law of the UK but proscribed by law in Canada, we must enforce the Canadian standard when dealing with any personal data held in Canada, or relating to a Canadian citizen. Equally, where UK law is the highest or most strict version, we must comply even when dealing with data held in or on subjects of other countries. ACWW has data protection policies in place, and members of the Board and staff have received the appropriate training to ensure compliance internally. As with all Constitutional and legal issues, the Board of Trustees are equally bound to uphold the highest standards of data protection.

RESOLUTION 13: “26.3.1. Use of Electronic Communications by ACWW”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“The current Constitution was adopted before the General Data Protection Regulation came into force in the United Kingdom, and clause 26.3.1 is now outside of acceptable practice. The text of this clause should therefore be revised to read:

“When joining ACWW as an Individual Member, or by providing contact details as the appointed contact person for an ACWW Member Society, individuals should expect to receive communications from ACWW with regards their membership and the work of ACWW. The information provided is necessary to fulfil the obligations of membership, and is provided for in the Powers section of the Constitution, set out in 5.1 (5.1.1-5.1.9). The Board of Trustees shall determine the most appropriate forms of communication, and all such communications shall be conducted subject to ACWW’s data protection policies, and legal obligations in UK law.”

Furthermore, with the changes to the legal definitions regarding consent in electronic communications, clause 26.3.3 should be removed.”

RATIONALE:

This updates the Constitution to reflect current legal obligations and best practice in protecting the privacy and rights of our Members globally, whilst allowing for meaningful communication between ACWW and its Membership in the most appropriate ways.

RESOLUTION 14: “30. Bye-Laws & Rules”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Add new clause:

“The Trustees may from time to time make such reasonable and proper Standing Orders as they may deem necessary or expedient for the proper conduct and management of ACWW, but Standing Orders must not be inconsistent with any provision of this Constitution. Copies of any such Standing Orders currently in force must be made available to any member of ACWW on request.

RATIONALE:

This was an omission from the 2017 Constitution, and brings the Standing Orders in line with the Bye-Laws.

Typographical Corrections and Clarification

Please note that numbers below specifically refer to relevant numbers in the 2017 Constitution:

RESOLUTION 15: “Correcting typographical errors”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Make the following corrections to the text of the Constitution:

10.2.6. (b) change “cease” to “ceases”

14.3.1 (a) change to “inform the members that votes will be cast electronically / digitally, or by post, as appropriate to the decision made by the Board on format of the election”

24.2 remove extra spaces between “does not permit a Trustee or __ member of a Committee”

RESOLUTION 16: “11.1.1 - Special World Conference”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“In 2021 ACWW held a Special World Conference which passed the following Resolution and Constitutional Amendment:

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

a) Reschedule the 30th 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:

i) 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 30th Triennial World Conference”

The Board of Trustees therefore proposes to confirm that the text of 11.1.1 of the 2017 Constitution be reinstated, thus returning the interval between Triennial World Conferences to no more than 42 months.

RESOLUTION 17: “Terminology - 2017 Constitution”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“The current Constitution was agreed in 2016 and came into force in 2017. As this was updated and amended in 2019, and again at the current Triennial World Conference in 2023, it is resolved to refer to the Constitution going forwards as the “2023 Constitution”, and for the full and updated text to be circulated to all Member Societies and Individual Members after the 30th Triennial World Conference.”

RATIONALE:

This updates the Constitution and ensures all members will have access to the most current version of our governing document, without the confusion of an appendix or additional notes and comments throughout where the Constitution has been updated over the past 2 triennia.

Changes to the Bye-Laws for Ratification at the 30th Triennial World Conference

The following changes are to revise and update the Bye-Laws, as well as ratify decisions taken by the Board of Trustees in line with the preamble to the Bye-Laws of the 2017 Constitution.

RESOLUTION 18: “Terminology - Change of Title”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Change all instances of “Chief Executive Officer” to “Executive Director” in line with current staff titles as agreed by the Board of Trustees. (See Bye Law 15.1, 16, 17.2)”

RESOLUTION 19: “Bye-Law 4: The Countrywoman”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

“Revise to read: “The Countrywoman is the official magazine of ACWW, published regularly and is included in the membership dues, except to Life Members of twenty years’ standing (see Bye-law 1.3). The format of the magazine shall be determined by the Board and adjusted as is assessed to be the most relevant and responsible at the time.””

RATIONALE:

This reflects the realities experienced during the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the financial implications of printing a magazine with a low production cost, and very high postal costs. Certain Areas and members have already requested digital-only distribution of the magazine, and this has been honoured, and all members are able to read the magazine on our website - and there is no current intention to remove a printed magazine from circulation, as it is well understood that this is a cherished part of membership for many around the world.

RESOLUTION 20: “Bye-Law 11.5”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

Delete the last sentence.

Add “within the restrictions and requirements of ACWW Privacy and Data Protection policies”.

RESOLUTION 22: “Bye-Law 11.8”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

Remove “facsimile”

Non-Constitutional Resolutions from the Board of Trustees

RESOLUTION 21: “Membership Rates”

MOVER: ACWW Board of Trustees

To update membership fees for all members in the 2023-2026 Triennium to the following rates: for memberships relating to the year 2024 onwards.

Category 1	£130
Category 2	£76
Category 3	£61
Category 4	£41
Category 5	£30

NOTES:

1) One Member Society indicated several months after the deadline for Resolutions to be submitted had passed that they had submitted Resolutions. After an investigation, it was established that these had never been received at ACWW Central Office, in line with the requirements for submission, and all attempts at communication with the Member Society to resolve the issue had failed to provide any evidence of correct submission or receipt. The Ad Hoc Committee on Resolutions duly met to address the issue, and unanimously passed a recommendation to the Board of Trustees that these Resolutions should not be accepted after the deadline. The Board of Trustees met and discussed the issue, and accepted the recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee. This process was necessary to ensure the Member Society had every opportunity to make their case and address the issue transparently, and caused the delay in publication of this circular. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the unavoidable delay.

2) In addition to the Resolutions shown here, two additional Resolutions were submitted by member society the National Volunteer Organization Network (NVON). The Ad Hoc Committee felt that these two topics were critically important to the work of ACWW, but already covered by existing policy resolutions and, after discussion with representatives of the Society, it was agreed that these Resolutions would be withdrawn, but that information activities on these topics relating to the health of rural women would, in line with the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, be organised. The Board would like to express its thanks to NVON for their cooperative and collaborative approach to dealing with this topic.



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