

THE COUNTRYWOMAN

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD

ISSUE 3 - 2017
MID-YEAR BUMPER ISSUE!



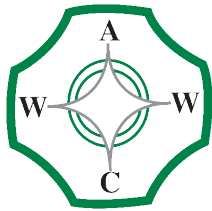
WOMEN WALK THE WORLD

Your photos and stories as we mark ACWW Day

PROJECTS COMMITTEE 40th ANNIVERSARY

We celebrate the impacts of ACWW Projects





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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.

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Please note the following deadlines for submitting your articles, updates and photographs to The Countrywoman. We welcome new contributors and those in areas not recently featured- please get in touch with nick@acww.org.uk if you need any help in submitting.

October- December: 15th August 2017

January- March: 15th November 2017

April- June: 15th February 2018

July- September: 15th May 2018

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

CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

Tish Collins, ACWW Chief Executive Officer

My colleagues and I have all been busy working on following up activities from the Committees and Board meetings in March. I participated in England's ACWW Southern Counties Support Group meeting where representatives exchange experiences and support each other with best practice. World President Ruth Shanks returned from a blizzard-bound meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women and we travelled down to the south coast so that she could address 700 members attending the Spring Council meeting of the Hampshire FWI (also on the bill was explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes!).

Sadly, this was also the day an incident on Westminster Bridge and at Parliament left four dead and many injured. Our Office Administrator Sydney was in the office on her own that day but was safe to leave for home once Mary Sumner House was unlocked and barriers removed from Tufton Street. The World President issued the following statement:

"Thank you for your kind messages, we can confirm that all ACWW staff are indeed safe and sound despite the proximity of the office to today's attack. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their families, and with those members of the emergency services who work so hard to keep us safe, well and cared for in times of trouble. Hysteria, hatred and anger must give way to thoughtfulness, peace and kindness- we must strive to stand together in harmony and not allow those who stand in hatred to divide us."

The WI in England and Wales has about 213,000 members so it seemed appropriate that ACWW should invest in an information and merchandise stand for the four days of the WI Fair at the end of March. We met thousands of interested women and have since received many invitations for Central Office to send speakers across the country.

The first Circular for the 29th Triennial World Conference was circulated in April. This was the call for Resolutions and Recommendations. For any people wondering where ACWW policies come from – it is the passing of resolutions and recommendations at Conference. I know climate change is a major concern for many members but there is no clear policy directive on this for ACWW to act on – yet!

One might almost say the work of the Triennial Conference Committee is never done, as it rolls from one world class event to another. I had the pleasure of meeting members of the Conference Hostess society in Melbourne at the end of April.

Together we checked over the facilities at the Convention Centre and scrutinised the contract in preparation for a wonderful event in April 2019. I stayed at Umina, the CWA Victoria bed and breakfast accommodation, and with the World President explored their facilities for the proposed pre-conference workshops.

Whilst in the South Pacific, Area President Gail Commens kindly invited me to stay on and attend the Area Conference in New Plymouth, New Zealand. It was a pleasure to attend this Conference, and learn more about the hard work of women in the South Pacific. I was also pleased to be able to join the local Women Walk the World event, which was rather damp- but it did help with newspaper coverage!



I was honoured to spend a few days with Jenny Mitchell and her husband Ran at their home in a very remote part of New South Wales before returning home. Jenny and I had worked hard together on the new Constitution and this was a fantastic opportunity to get to know each other better... and for me to see real kangaroos!

Whilst I was in the South Pacific, our Media and Communications Manager Nick Newland attended the UNESCO NGO Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia as a guest of the MISK Foundation and you can read more about this in his report later in the magazine.

By the time you read this we will have had the next round of Finance and Executive Committee meetings, and will be looking towards celebrating the International Day of Rural Women in October. Until then, please do spread the word of ACWW's work as far and wide as possible, and let us know what you're up to!

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COVER IMAGE

2017 South Pacific Area Conference delegates clinch the coveted cover spot with their submission for the annual Women Walk the World competition!

Find out more on page 23...

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.





DEAR FRIENDS...

A Message from the World President

The more I read the newspapers and watch or listen to the news, the more I realise there is a lot of work to do to create peace in a world where there is so much unrest. It also brings it home to me that there is a lot we can do to alleviate poverty, promote economic empowerment and give many women, both rural and urban, a reason to get out of bed every morning. We as an organisation can help in a myriad of ways, from promoting the work of our Member Societies, providing material and finances to improve lives in communities and advocating on behalf of women all around the world.

Of course, this is only achievable if we have the funds to carry out these wishes. This being the 40th Anniversary of Projects as part of ACWW, there will be active promotion for fundraising to continue this work. Of course, we must also continue to promote the work of the Association, making our mark in the world as a worthwhile cause to support. We must maintain the Central Office and ensure that our Areas around the world are provided with resources they need to further our work.

The Strategic Plan the previous Board and the current Board have approved includes using technology, social media, promotional material and attendance at events to showcase our work. To this end, it was agreed that the attendance of any appropriate person at events where our cause can be promoted is important so more people are informed about the good work we achieve. Hopefully if we can be "out there in the marketplace" we may be able to secure corporate funding to further our reach across the world.

The organising committee invited the CEO to visit the Conference Venue for 2019, which she did on 25 and 26 April. To make good use of the cost of the visit, the South Pacific Area invited Tish to attend the Area Conference and the Pre-Conference Workshop, so that she had an idea of what happens at each of these events. It is very difficult when we are all talking at Board and Committee meetings about Area Conferences and she has no idea of the actual event.

The South Pacific Area Conference was held in brilliant weather in the city of New Plymouth, New Zealand, from 30 April-3 May. It was hosted by the Taranaki Area Rural Women New Zealand and the committee, headed by Shirley Read, did an outstanding job. Prior to the conference, a workshop was held for 18 Pacific Island women, whose airfares and accommodation were all sponsored by member societies in the South Pacific. They visited an environmental family run pre-school where they learned about recycling, then visited a Maori cultural centre to do some weaving and learn about natural musical instruments used by the Maori

people in days gone by. The next day was spent with a 'hands on' class dealing with budgeting and all things money, and then participants had a lesson in making scones and pizzas, which provided us with a lovely lunch! The ladies are now going to be well equipped to celebrate Tea Time on 15 October for the International Day of Rural Women. These ladies then joined 164 other ladies (182 in total) from all parts of Australia and New Zealand for a wonderful few days of business, socialising and networking to learn more about each other and ACWW. The Area President Gail Commens and her assistant Lyn Braico should be very proud of their successful conference. Well Done!!

A couple of days at home, then a round trip of 1000kms to attend a Women Walk the World event on the Central Coast of New South Wales. Incorporated into the day was a tree planting in recognition of the 95 years of CWA of NSW and some environmental messages from the local council and Water Watch society.

Your societies will have already received the first of the circulars regarding the 29th Conference. I hope that you are all working on Resolutions and Recommendations to put forward for discussion and debate at this conference. This is the way we can connect and advocate for all women. The members from Victoria are really excited about hosting this event and they are looking forward to showing you their part of Australia.

Early in June I set off for London again, with attendance at the AGM of the National Federation of Women's Institutes in Liverpool first on the list, and then Committee meetings in London. There is work continuing on fulfilling the legal necessities for us to finally become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, but we are hopeful that this will be finalised by the time the next meeting is held, then enabling the Committee Chairs to become an official part of the Executive.

One of the other issues we have become aware of is the responsibility, both legally and insurance wise, to our Resource people who we use to monitor our projects. It is important in this age of extreme litigation, that we cover the Association in these terms.

Then off to Ontario, Canada to attend three conferences, back to back. The Ontario Provincial Conference, followed by the Canadian Area Conference, and then immediately followed by the AGM of the FWI of Canada. These conferences are important especially in the year of 150th celebrations for Canada, and the fact that a plaque was unveiled after the World Conference to celebrate the life and work of our Founder, Madge Watt. I know that Canadian Area President Mrs Sheila Needham in conjunction with her

organising committee will present a great, interesting and informative conference and that Deputy President Mrs Margaret Yetman will also add to the occasion.

As you read this magazine, I will be having some time at home, as I am scheduled to have cataract surgery on 5 July and therefore an enforced rest, as I cannot fly for 6 weeks.

I would especially ask that you keep the lines of communication open and inform Central Office of any change in either postal or email addresses and contact people. Please also inform us of the work you do in your own local communities and as well as further afield. This information will not only enable us to fulfil our reporting requirements to maintain our consultative status with the UN, but will also inform other member societies about ideas, initiatives, successes, and/or failures so that others can take advice and inspiration in their own communities.

We love to have good news stories for the magazine, the e-newsletters and also to put on the website. I hope you have noticed some changes to the website and we are always happy to have suggestions as to how we can improve the information on this site. The website can only be as good as the information we receive.

Membership is the lifeblood of the Association and it is important that we continue to encourage society memberships and also individual memberships. Anyone can become an individual member, they do not have to be a member of another organisation and it is a small way they can contribute and also, on receipt of *The Countrywoman*, they will learn more about us and our work. Often, if you ask someone why they are not a member, they will reply "well no one asked me" We need to get out there and ask! On this note, as we talk about the past, and prepare for a long life for ACWW, we cannot forget making time for communicating with family and friends.

My thought for this issue is:-
When Window was just a square hole in a room and Application was something written on paper. When Keyboard was a Piano and Mouse was just an animal. When File was important office material and Hard Drive was just an uncomfortable road trip. When Cut was done with a knife and Paste with glue. When Web was a spider's home and Virus was flu. When Apple and Blackberry were just fruits...

That's when we had time for family and friends.

Source: *laughingcolours.com*
(South Australia CWA magazine)

Ruth Shanks, A.M.
ACWW World President

FINANCE & MEMBERSHIP



Heather Brennan, ACWW Finance & Membership Committee Chairman

Congratulations to the Projects Committee as they celebrate their 40th Anniversary, and our thanks to all the ACWW members for their continued and generous support over this time. The Committee was set up in 1977, and before this, members responded on an ad hoc basis to appeals ACWW ran on specific issues.

We know how the finances are distributed and are increasingly able to chart the real benefits and changes to women's lives brought about by ACWW grants. We count 9 million women in membership of our member societies but of course, ACWW projects reach families and whole communities by focussing on women. As you will read elsewhere in this magazine, the impacts of 2016's projects have been extensive, with 142,375 beneficiaries around the world, of whom 15,295 were children.

Your donations to Pennies for Friendship and the projects funds have been terrific, especially in years of economic uncertainty and global problems. Applications for ACWW support to small-scale woman-to-woman projects are increasing at a great rate and, sadly, we do not have the funds to support many each year. Our projects team processed a 400% increase in applications in 2016-2017!

All funds designated for projects are used for this purpose. On top of the actual grant amount being awarded, a further 20% is allocated towards monitoring and

administration to make sure due diligence and impact are properly accounted for.

In recent years, in order to maintain making project grants, funds have been used from the general fund (PFF) but, as you will appreciate, this cannot continue indefinitely. The Finance Committee believe it imprudent to eat away at our reserves in this way.

Therefore, and alongside the existing Pennies for Friendship campaign, we are launching the Projects Anniversary Appeal to raise an additional £150,000. This will ensure a future for Project funding, and allow ACWW to increase its impact around the world. You can read more about this new appeal in our Projects 40th Anniversary feature later in the magazine.

As the world is increasingly connected, and yet at times feels very isolated, we see the importance of our network increase. Reaching more people, in areas where we have little recent contact is a very positive thing, and is also bringing in new connections interested in supporting ACWW financially. We are incredibly grateful for your ongoing dedication to ACWW, and your support. We work hard to ensure that money is spent for the greatest impact, and benefit. Please do continue your hard work, and encourage friends and family to take an active role—whether becoming individual members, bringing in new societies, or raising funds with events and activities. Thank you!

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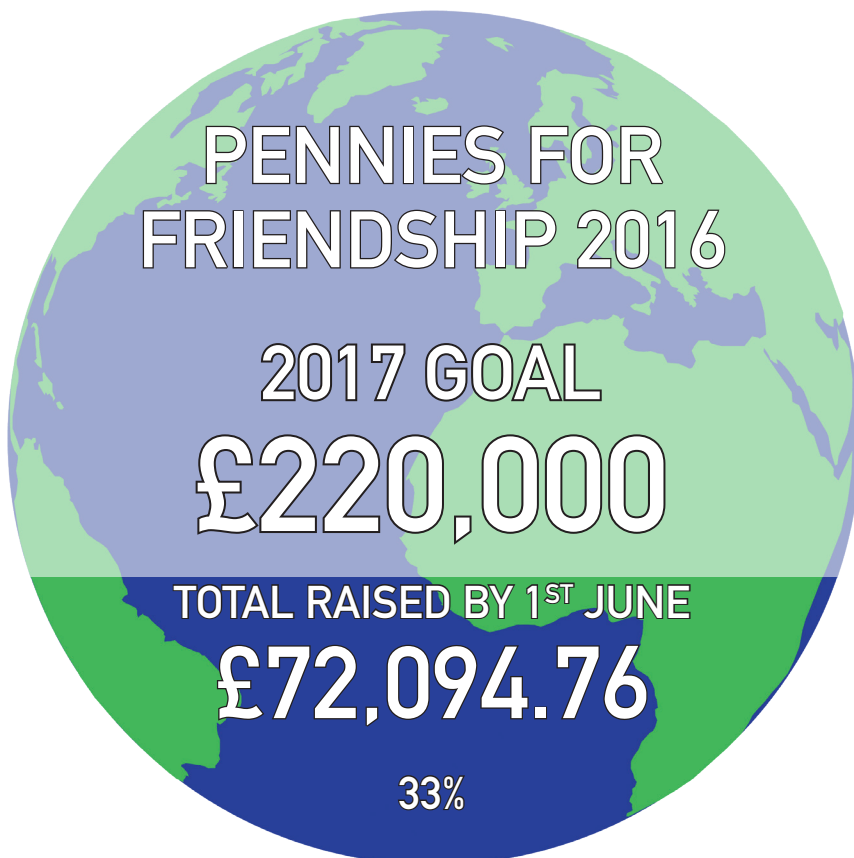
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NatWest Bank, 57 Victoria Street, London United Kingdom, SW1H 0HP

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If you are sending a bank transfer, please use your name or membership number as a reference. Please don't send cash in the post!



LEAVE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

Bequests are incredibly valuable to the work ACWW does – not just for the women and communities who benefit from projects and the connections made globally through our work now – but to women and communities to come. Such legacies enable ACWW to continue to deliver a broad vision of seeing generations of women empowered through the relief of poverty and sickness, the protection and preservation of health and the advancement of education.

You can be assured that your gift will make a genuine difference to our work. To learn more please email tish.c@acww.org.uk to receive a Bequest Information Pack.



YOUTH & THEIR SOCIAL IMPACT

ACWW attends the UNESCO NGO Liaison Forum in Saudi Arabia

As a member of the UNESCO NGO Network, ACWW was invited to attend the NGO Liaison Committee Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in May 2017. The subject of the Forum was 'Youth and their Social Impact', with a focus on equal access and sustainable progress on global youth issues. The Forum was organised in association with UNESCO by the Riyadh-based MiSK Foundation, who generously sponsored the attendance, travel and costs of all international delegates, including ACWW's Nick Newland. ACWW's delegation was completed by Ms Suraiya Moiz and Ms Natasha Ozier, both from Malaysia. Ms Moiz's mother-in-law will be familiar to readers, as she is former Area President for South East Asia and the Far East, HRH Princess Azizah Iskandar.

This opportunity was a great one for ACWW, as we currently have no members or member societies in the Middle East. We have also found that attending UN and specifically UNESCO events is crucial to our mission and our ability to engage with policy makers, funders and change-makers on the global stage. This Forum was the first UNESCO conference to be held in the Arab world, and the largest ever gathering of international NGOs and charitable bodies in the Middle East. More than 2,070 delegates attended, with over 400 NGOs represented and with participants from more than 75 countries.

The first day of the Forum was an informal 'meet and greet' day, set in a resort in the middle of the desert. The vast majority of the international delegates attended, and whilst it may seem whimsical, the day was really very important. Not only did everyone start to talk amongst themselves and make new connections, but the day itself was a chance for us to engage with our Saudi hosts.

The groundbreaking nature of this Forum and its setting were not lost on anyone, particularly when an impromptu game of football (soccer to those outside of the UK!) kicked-off. Why was this important? It was started by female members of the Saudi organising staff challenging their male counterparts, and suddenly a 30 person game featuring players from every faith, a great range of nations and both sexes had erupted with gales of laughter and enthusiasm. Whilst many of us took a turn playing, participation was kept short by the heat and need for a bottle of water! It may or may not have been the first ever mixed game of football in Saudi history, but it played a superb role in 6 | www.acww.org.uk



Sokunpharady Kao and Yen Heng (*Youth Star Cambodia*), Sherihan Akkawi (*Organisation De Developpement Durable, ODDD, Lebanon*); Rind el Hage (*Net-Med Youth, Lebanon*); Seughee Amy Oh (*CCIVS, South Korea*); Yara Hijazi (*Development for People and Nature Association, Lebanon*); Nick Newland (*ACWW*) and Victoria Ibiwoye (*OneAfricanChild, Nigeria*) at the UNESCO NGO Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in May 2017.

setting the scene for the next three days of cooperation, collaboration and discussion.

It was on this first day that I met several delegations from Lebanon, and heard about their impressive work; Mostafa Baydoun of LOYAC (a youth development NGO which takes arts education into refugee camps), Yara Hijazi of the Development for People and Nature Association, Sherihan Akkawi and Reina Hamdan of the Organisation De Developpement Durable (ODDD) and Rind el Hage of Net-Med Youth (who happened also to be the youngest delegate at 19, and the youngest speaker at the Forum). It was a pleasure to spend time learning about their different organisations, and I am delighted that the latter four ladies are in the process of becoming Individual Members of ACWW since the Forum.

The opening ceremony of the Forum was on Wednesday morning, with a keynote address from Her Excellency Noura al Kaabi, the female Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs of the United Arab Emirates. There were also speeches from His Excellency Dr Ali Nasser Alghafis, the Minister of Labour and Social Development for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO and Her Royal Highness Banderi A.R. Al Faisal, the Director General of the King Khalid Foundation.



Two of the inspiring speakers at #UNESCOmiSK

What became immediately obvious as the sessions began and interventions were welcomed from the floor of the Forum, was that delegates were welcome to engage and comment on any topic, and without reservation. The role of women in our global community, and particularly the developing and broadening role played by women in Saudi society was a large part of this discussion, with most speakers referring to the crucial input of women at every level.

The majority of topics discussed, and factors that arose from them (Water and food

security, access to education for hard-to-reach communities, peace and stability, youth engagement in the political process etc) were relevant to ACWW and rural women, and the large number of women delegates and speakers (around 40% women delegates, 50% women speakers) was groundbreaking both in terms of Saudi Arabia, and indeed UNESCO and international meetings in general. The field of discussion was broadened further by Brian Rusch, Executive Director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation highlighted the need for international engagement with LGBT+ rights alongside equal access blind to gender, disability and nationality.

The breakout session on Equal Opportunities was hugely constructive – particularly as it gave a greater insight into the living conditions of women in Saudi Arabia, and challenged many of the assumptions and assertions made by those in the West. This session was attended by 255 people, of whom 220 were women.

During the breakout session, and in response to questions from young Saudi Arabian women about the 'West's view' of equality in Saudi, I indicated that ACWW was a global organisation, and did not feel it helpful to assume a position of moral superiority, particularly when we lack contextual information about other cultures. Specifically, when French and British delegates had pointed at issues in Saudi and were disagreed with by the women supposedly facing them, I suggested that we should listen to the women themselves on the issues that most affected them. This led to discussion of ACWW's forthcoming Global Survey of the living conditions of rural women, and situational understanding of local issues affecting women around the world. The point was met with applause and agreement, and reported back to the main forum when the moderator gave her report of the breakout.

There has been much criticism of Saudi Arabia when it comes to the rights of women, and much press coverage recently of the Kingdom's appointment to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). I was very lucky to have the rare opportunity to engage in free and unfettered conversation with more than 30 women from Saudi Arabia during the Forum, from school students to university professors. What became abundantly clear was that whilst there are issues to be addressed within the Kingdom, it is far more helpful to address the issues Saudi women consider problems, than those the West judges to be problematic. There is a genuine fear that whilst the Kingdom has become more liberal and taken more steps towards progressing equality in the past three years, much of the rest of the world has become more divided and more nationalistic.



Rind el Hage (Net-Med Youth, Lebanon); Seughee Amy Oh (CCIVS, South Korea) and Nick Newland

There is a significant fear that ignorance and Islamophobia are covered in the guise of concern for women's rights. Whilst these women made it clear that issues needed to be addressed, they had no interest in abandoning elements of their culture that are perhaps poorly understood by those in other countries.

One lady from Saudi Arabia spoke eloquently about her situation: *"I am empowered in many ways. I am, by law, paid the same as men who do the same job as I do, and I am empowered by being here, at this Forum, and speaking my views in public. I am not empowered when I am late for the Forum because I have to wait for a man to drive me here"*. Other women questioned legal grey areas, such as whether women may ride bicycles in Saudi Arabia- the law is clear that they may not drive cars, but there is no mention of bikes!

Whilst there is no intention of glossing over issues that are important, it is also crucial that we have better engagement with this part of the world so we can fully understand the difficulties that women face on a daily basis, without the hysteria of press coverage and hyperbole. It is clear that Saudi Arabia is raising generations of well educated, talented and inspiring women and that they are playing an ever-broadening role in the development of their country.

As we mention inspiring women, and broadening the reach of ACWW around the world, I am glad to report that one of the impacts of our attendance at the Forum has been engaging with new organisations and individuals from countries and areas that have traditionally hard to reach for ACWW. In the next few weeks, we will have confirmed new members in Nigeria, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Egypt, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and

Lebanon. This is very important for ACWW as not only does it open up new avenues of communication around the world, but allows us to better inform and influence the global community, policy makers and funding bodies with regards the needs of rural women.

ACWW was offered significant opportunities to network – reconnecting with existing contacts from previous UNESCO, UN-related or ACWW events (such as Soroptomist International), as well as meeting a huge number of new contacts. These included the Executive Director of the Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation, Director of Strategic Alliances at the Hult Prize Foundation, Miss Elham Al-Sanie, Director of Programmes and Grants Department at the King Khaled Foundation (Saudi Arabia's second biggest public funder) and around 40 other organisations who expressed interest in participating in the Global Survey, including implementing it in Palestinian and Sudanese IDP and refugee camps.

This was a hugely positive Forum which broke new ground in several ways. The largest gathering of NGOs in Saudi history; unprecedented engagement on topics not often discussed (women's rights, sustainable education and access to education, LGBT rights and equality) and a firm commitment from the Saudi government to broadening equal access for younger generations moving forward with the UN's 2030 Agenda, as well as their own National Transformation Agenda. For ACWW specifically, commitments to membership, supporting our agenda and potential funding for the global survey and projects were measurable outcomes. Additionally, ACWW was listed as No.3 in the top 5 Forum Influencers by the hosts, and our media coverage of the Forum was significant. More than 79,000 references were made using the #UNESCOmiSK hashtag throughout the Forum, and @acww_news was acknowledged as an online change-maker during the week.

We must thank the MiSK Foundation for their generosity in supporting the Forum and ACWW's attendance, and the people of Riyadh for making us feel so welcome. The organising team at UNESCO, and the NGO Liaison Committee are also due thanks for their tireless efforts. As you have seen elsewhere in this issue, the Projects Committee celebrates its 40th Anniversary this year. Between the foundation of ACWW in 1929 and 1977, the focus of our organisation's work was advocacy and international representation, ensuring that the voices of millions of women worldwide were heard. This element of our work remains as crucial today. Reaching new audiences and helping empower women in new areas is critical, allowing us to raise the volume of rural women's voices globally.



THE ART OF CONVERSATION

Magdie de Kock, Communications & Marketing Committee Chairman

“There are two types of people who don’t say much: Those who are quiet and those who talk a lot” - Dale Carnegie

Knowing how to talk to people and participate in a meaningful conversation is one of the most important virtues one can possess. If you don’t know how to talk to people it’s hard to make friends, build a social life or grab the interest of others. But if you do, many prospects open up in your life. Possessing the art of conversation improves personal, social and work relationships. It offers the opportunity to meet interesting people and be introduced to various topics and subjects.

Too often, it seems that a conversation results in wasted time, having nothing productive to show for it. Whether you’ve run into someone at a conference or been caught up in a group having a friendly conversation, specific tactics can be applied to have a more meaningful conversation.

Think about the people you know who seem to bring out the best in you whenever you talk to them: You feel comfortable talking to them. They could be old friends or someone you just met, but the conversation just seems to flow naturally and smoothly. If you wish you had the natural ability to make meaningful conversation that the people you admire have, don’t despair. This is something that can be learned, and with focus and practice, we can all become better at it.

Listen attentively, show interest and be curious

Great conversationalists have a sincere interest in others, notice things about them, and use these characteristics to start and fuel their conversations. Learn to express interest in what people are saying, listen attentively and don’t interrupt them. Effective spoken communication requires being able to express views with confidence and clarity, promoting free-flowing conversation. Refrain from dominating a conversation or making it all about you. A monologue is not a conversation. Be an active listener by maintaining good eye contact and asking pertinent questions. Good listening builds a rapport and understanding with the speakers and allows them to freely express their views. It motivates them to expand. Poor listening on the other hand, may create resistance. We should take a tip from Sir Richard Branson who said: *“Listen more than you talk”*.

We enter conversations for purposes of pleasant engagement, to gain information and to enjoy social interactions, exchange friendly debate and witty banter. The ability to listen attentively, ask fitting questions, and pay attention to the answers – are all essential.



Queens of Conversation: Past World President May Kidd and Past Area President for the United States of America Beverly Earnhart catching up at the 2016 Triennial Conference in Warwick, UK

Photo by Liz Galloway

Be interesting and have something to say but allow others to participate in the conversation.

People who are genuinely interested in others are usually interesting themselves. The reason being they are more open to learning about and understanding new things. A conversation can get boring if one person is doing all the talking while the other is trying to get a word in edgewise. When that happens whoever is not talking begins to tune out and there is no conversation! If you’ve tried several times to interject but haven’t been able to, then excuse yourself politely and move on.

Determine whether the tendency to dominate a conversation is due to nervousness or self-involvement. If one is not well informed, tends not to read much, or has very few interests, one will have very little to talk about except oneself. Unfortunately, no one wants to hear about your latest troubles, conquests, or daily routine. Yet so many dull conversationalists believe that’s what people want to hear from them. Who hasn’t been stuck with someone who blathers on about their family’s wealth, latest holiday abroad, or the like? Hold back on sharing how awesome you are and realize that the most awesome people don’t have to pitch everyone on how awesome they are.

In a good conversation each person needs to express themselves or it is no longer a conversation but a monologue. A good rule of thumb is after you made a point, pause for either agreement or an alternative perspective.

Show interest and curiosity in others and in their opinions. Maintain an open mind; everyone has a right to express themselves even if you don’t agree with what they are saying. Do not interrupt and cut in with your own ideas before the other person is finished speaking.

To add value to a conversation, become knowledgeable about world events, the latest news, and local developments. Take time to keep up with the latest music, new technological discoveries, or recent best sellers. No one can know everything, so if you can enlighten someone during the course of

a conversation, you’ll be a hit! By the same token, you can learn something new as well.

Of course, not all conversations are knowledge sharing gatherings or discussions of global importance. Many, especially at social functions, consist of light-hearted and cheerful banter. In such cases, be aware of the tone and mood of the conversation and go with the flow. Never act like you feel out of place or ill at ease and aim to be approachable by staying relaxed, smiling and maintaining a friendly attitude. Be reminded of the wise words of Marcus Cicero who said: *“Silence is one of the great arts of conversation”*.

Be relaxed, be yourself and try to genuinely relate

If you are on edge, or trying to be someone you’re not, it will show and therefore doom a conversation to failure before it starts. Admittedly, if you are not relaxed it’s hard to appear as if you are. Slow down and take a deep breath. Also smile warmly; it will make you appear pleasant and therefore, more approachable. Worth noting: if you are trying too hard to be something you’re not, you will come across as a fake.

Make your words count and be sure your words add value to your conversations. It is important to be aware of what you are saying, and, more important, why you are saying it. If you’re having a conversation with multiple people, or if someone’s spouse is standing nearby, make a point to include “the outsiders” in the conversation and give them recognition. Too often, people are so focused on speaking to certain people that they forget to include the rest of the group.

To experience an increase in opportunities from everyday conversations, keep these few tips in mind. Be it at a conference or event where you’ll encounter a lot of people or spending time in the company of a few friends, practise the art of conversation and add meaning to your life and those of others.

“It was impossible to get a conversation going, everybody was talking too much”- Yogi Berra

“Let us make a special effort to stop communicating with each other, so we can have some conversation” - Mark Twain

Contribution by Magdie de Kock
Chairman of the Communications and Marketing Committee

References: *Reader’s Digest*



CONFERENCE UPDATE



Henrietta Schoeman, Triennial Conference Committee Chairman

The first Circular of Conference Information was sent to all voting member societies at the end of March 2017. This was a call for Resolutions and Recommendations to be submitted for discussion and voted on to make ACWW policy.

The Triennial Conference Committee (TCC) point out that that Resolutions should be clear and concise and relevant to member societies in general (rather than country specific). They also need to have a brief supporting case, or 'reasons for' submitted at the same time. These can be in bullet point form and the Office will check through and contact the society submitting to make sure they are understood correctly.

After the deadline, the Resolutions and Recommendations are assessed for suitability by an Ad Hoc Committee which must include at least one member who does not have English as their first language (last Triennium this task was carried out by the TCC as they met the criteria). The Resolutions and Recommendations going forward to Conference are then circulated to all Voting Member Societies so they can consider them before voting at Conference.

The Circulars are sent to the person we have recorded as the contact for each society. Therefore, it is important to let Central Office know if you have new officers or contact details have changed. If you think your Society may have been missed please email worldconference@acww.org.uk and tell us.

The table shows when other Circulars are due to be sent and whether Voting Member Societies (Categories I, II and III) are expected to take action or receive information.

The Circulars are also posted on the ACWW website's Conference page as they are published. The first one is already there. If you can't find it, you may need to click the 'refresh' button as we update the website very regularly and sometimes your computer can load a previous version it 'remembers'.

You'll have noticed that we have used a new email address, shown above. Please ensure that you send any and all Conference related emails to this address, so we can reply most appropriately- it is shown again for ease: worldconference@acww.org.uk

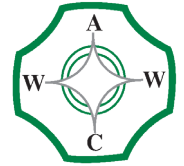
We'll be publishing more details of the 2019 Triennial World Conference in the next issue, so keep an eye out! In the meantime, we leave you with a couple more inspirational photos from Melbourne and the Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Timetable for Circulars 29th Triennial World Conference - Melbourne, April 2019

No.	TITLE	CIRCULATE	TYPE	DEADLINE
1	Call for Resolutions & Recommendations	March 2017	Action	1 March 2018
2	Nominations for Officers & Chairmen of the Specified Committees	January 2018	Action	1 March 2018
2a	Futher request for Nominations for Officers (if necessary)	August 2018	Action	15 September 2018
3	Call for Society Triennial Reports	March 2018	Action	1 August 2018
4	Text of Resolutions & Recommendations and call for Amendments	May 2018	Action	1 August 2018
5	Nominations for Members of Specified Committees	June 2018	Action	1 December 2018
6	Call for Invitations to host the 2025 Triennial World Conference (come prepared to present at Conference)	July 2018	Action	1 January 2018
7	Bio-data of Officers and Specied Committee Chairman Nominees	September 2018	Information	
8	Amendments to Resolutions & Recommendations and Consitutional Amendments (if any)	October 2018	Information	
9	Credential Form to Societies (identifying delegations and delegation leaders) NOTE: Your society will not be able to vote if this has not been returned!	December 2018	Action	1 February 2019
10	Conference Information and Request for Greetings	January 2019	Information	



IMPROVING NUTRITION THROUGH BREASTFEEDING



ACWW UN & Agriculture Administrator Dr Sam Page explains

The number of mothers who exclusively breastfeed their babies for the first six months has declined over recent years and is down to just 38% of all new mothers, globally.

Breastfeeding is the normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Virtually all mothers can breastfeed, provided they have accurate information, and the support of their family, the health care system and society at large. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) say that exclusive breastfeeding from birth until two years could save 800,000 children's lives each year and recommend:

- early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth;
- exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life; and
- introduction of nutritionally-adequate and safe complementary (solid) foods at 6 months, together with continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond

This is because both human breast-milk and the act of breastfeeding have clear benefits. These include protecting babies against infections; reducing childhood obesity and promoting brain development, leading to higher intelligence in later life. Breastfeeding mothers are protected from Type II diabetes, ovarian cancer and breast cancer. The act of breastfeeding also leads to more rapid maternal weight loss, helps to space the conception of further children and creates a strong, lasting bond between mother and child.

Improving childhood nutrition is a key target for Sustainable Development Goal 2 and this starts with breastfeeding:

World Health Organisation aims to increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months to at least 50% by 2025

Unfortunately, the power of formula milk companies and their advertising budgets, along with the absence of supportive working conditions in some countries, is mitigating against achieving this aim. WHO and UNICEF launched the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in 1991, in order to counter these threats. This initiative is a global effort to

implement practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding and now operates in 152 countries. UN Women has called on governments around the world to bring in policies that ban aggressive promotion of formula milk and support women with paid maternity leave together with the creation of baby-friendly facilities in the work place.

1983

ACWW passes Resolution to develop materials to promote the benefits of breastfeeding for Member Societies to use

Family support is crucial for young mothers; grandmothers can play an important role in passing on breastfeeding skills, by building confidence and providing support when asked to do so.

What is ACWW doing?

In 1983, ACWW passed a resolution supporting this:

"That ACWW develops materials which may be used by Member Societies showing by word and illustration the benefit of breast feeding."

Many of ACWW's Woman-to-Woman projects focus on improving mother and child nutrition. Community groups who have signed up to the Zero Hunger Challenge report that the majority of mothers in Uganda still breastfeed their babies for 12 months or more, while their counterparts in Pakistan say mothers only breastfeed for an average of 3.5 months, with many younger mothers being persuaded to use infant formula. Please visit the Zero Hunger Challenge page of the ACWW website, for more information about these projects.

Agriculture Committee members have pledged to raise awareness of the importance of breastfeeding infants, using a specially prepared PowerPoint presentation, at meetings that they will attend over the next two years.

Breastfeeding on demand provides all the water a baby needs, even in hot weather. On the other hand, formula feeding requires access to clean water, hygiene and sanitation.

Infant formula does not contain the antibodies found in breast milk. The long-term benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and children cannot be replicated with formula.

When infant formula is not properly prepared, risks arise from the use of unsafe water and unsterilized equipment or potential presence of bacteria in powdered formula.

While frequent feeding maintains breast milk supply, if formula is used but becomes unavailable, a return to breastfeeding may not be an option due to diminished breast milk production.

What can you do?

Is your local hospital signed up to the BFHI? Spread the word- cut out the WHO's Breastfeeding poster on the opposite page and ask permission to put it on a notice board in your local clinic or hospital.

World Breastfeeding Week is the 1-7 August 2017, and you can also find more information at: www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org





BREASTFEEDING | THE GOAL

By 2025, increase to at least 50% the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months

WHY IT MATTERS

BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING



Babies who are fed **nothing but breastmilk** from birth through their first 6 months of life get the **best start**

Exclusive breastfeeding provides babies:

the perfect nutrition

& everything they need for healthy growth and brain development



Protection

from respiratory infections, diarrhoeal disease, and other **life-threatening ailments**



Protection against **obesity & non-communicable diseases**

such as asthma and diabetes



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

LIMIT FORMULA MARKETING

WHAT? Significantly limit the marketing of breastmilk substitutes



HOW? Strengthen the monitoring, enforcement and legislation related to the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes

SUPPORT PAID LEAVE

WHAT? Empower women to exclusively breastfeed



HOW? Enact six-months mandatory paid maternity leave and policies that encourage women to breastfeed in the workplace and in public

STRENGTHEN HEALTH SYSTEMS

WHAT? Provide hospital and health facilities-based capacity to support exclusive breastfeeding



HOW? Expand and institutionalize the baby-friendly hospital initiative in health systems

SUPPORT MOTHERS

WHAT? Provide community-based strategies to support exclusive breastfeeding counselling for pregnant and lactating women



HOW? Peer-to-peer and group counselling to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates, including the implementation of communication campaigns tailored to the local context

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Globally, only **38%** of infants are exclusively breastfed



Suboptimal breastfeeding contributes to **800,000** infant deaths



40 YEARS OF WOMAN-TO-WOMAN FUNDING BY ACWW

Projects Administrators Juliet Childs & Sarah Kenningham look back

The Early Days

ACWW's Projects Committee was initiated in 1977 after a very successful dialogue at the 15th Triennial Conference in Nairobi. The sheer extent of the needs of rural women and communities was explored, and it was felt necessary for ACWW to have one committee to try to address this. Project funding from the Nutrition Education Fund, Save the Sight, and other trust funds had already been carried out for some years. The hope was that, with the new Committee, ACWW would be able to *'do more to help women in developing countries'* (Valerie Fisher, Projects Committee Chairman, 1989).

Project No.1 was approved (Home Economics Training in Belize), to provide women in remote rural settlements with the materials and skills to produce handicrafts and make nutritious meals for their families. Other early projects included: a child welfare centre in Gauhati, India; 'Operation Fishpond' in Tonga; training workshops in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa covering hygiene, growing and preserving vegetables, cookery and needle-work; and literacy for girls in Pakistan. The International Chairman of the All Pakistan Women's Association commented that the ACWW project grant *'...reaped a fine harvest and has contributed to the library of an APWA-run school'*.

In a 1979 edition of this magazine, ACWW members were invited to donate to projects such as Spinning Wheels for Lesotho and Carpentry Tools for Mexico.



Woman-to-Woman Projects

Thanks to the generosity of ACWW members the Projects Committee has been able, in recent years, to fund a large number of projects using its own Projects Funds. Project No.600 was funded in 2002; Drinking Water for Polio-affected Children, in partnership with the Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate & Collaborators (DMI), India.

ACWW does not normally fund disaster relief, preferring to leave this work to larger agencies with significant resources 'on the ground'. An exception was made, however, in the aftermath of the 2004/5 Tsunami, when coastal areas of countries such as India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia were devastated. Donations poured in from ACWW members, and funding was granted for member societies in the affected areas to re-build their communities, restoring schools, providing fishing nets and start income-generating schemes. 'Tsunami Projects' were monitored by Ursula Goh, World President.

Our work continues...

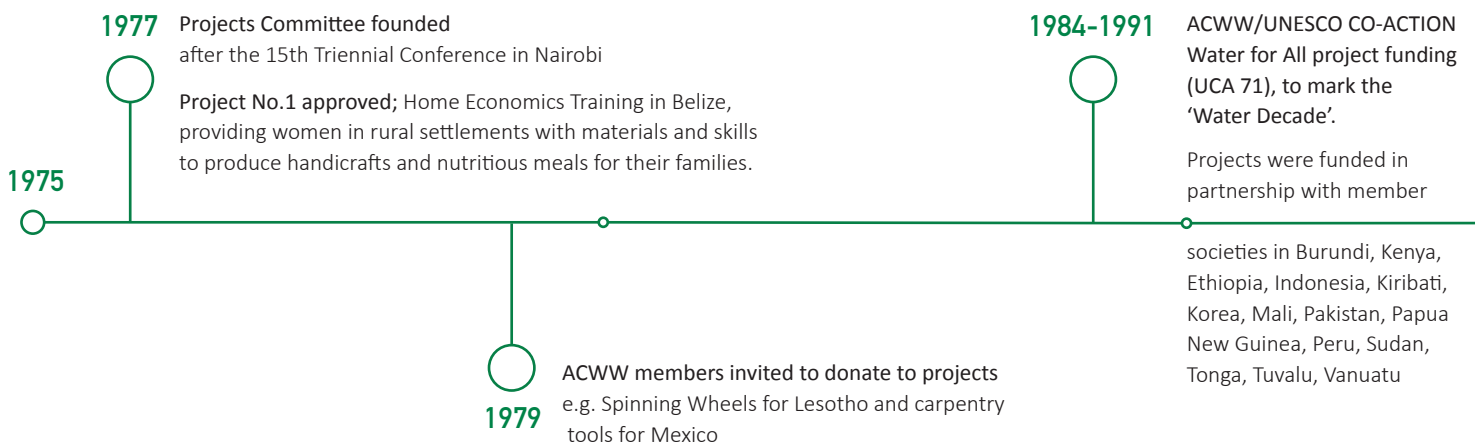
In 2011 the Committee approved its 900th project – 'Support and Committed Action for Remote, Isolated and Stigmatised Families in Areas of Ududumbara & Moneragela', carried out by member society Nest, Sri Lanka.

In 2015 the 1000th project was approved; with Country Women's Association of India training 15 underprivileged female students and five children in computer skills, in order to improve their employment prospects and their status.

Since the Projects Committee started its work, well in excess of £2,500,000 of funding has been sent to some 80 countries in all corners of the globe. ACWW's generous members continue to come up with ingenious ways to raise money – from auctions to sky-diving to wine tasting, and many more besides!



Highlights from the last 40 years of ACWW's Projects Committee



More than
£2.5m
awarded in project
funding across
the globe

2016
17 new projects
funded by the
Committee

23
Final Reports from
completed projects
received in 2016

CASE STUDY - Project 1015 Art Therapy in Romania; Women's Association from Sibiu

ACWW is currently funding an 'Art Therapy' project at the shelter run by Women's Association from Sibiu in Romania. The shelter has been providing refuge and legal advice for women and children fleeing situations of domestic violence since it opened in 2007 and is the only one of its kind in the region.

Art therapy activities teach the women and children how to create beautiful pieces using various materials and techniques, including quilling and embossing. They provide an opportunity for the discovery of creativity in a peaceful and relaxing environment that allows the participants to detach from their personal problems for a time. This is of particular importance as the women and children have come from highly stressful situations.

Handmade products such as greetings cards, photo frames and magnets are then sold online and at local events and bazaars to provide a source of revenue for the shelter. Once the women move out having mastered the techniques, they can also go on to produce their own handicrafts for sale.

Women have remarked how learning these new skills, together with counselling and support received at the shelter, has given them a confidence boost and encouragement to start new and independent lives.

Illustrative project costs:

- £3 buys a pack of quilling paper or card
- £10 buys an assortment of wooden decorations
- £15 buys a set of ten wooden frames to decorate
- £30 buys a silicon glue gun
- £50 buys a quilling set



1991 Funding received from Norwegian 'Telethon', enabling workshops in health, communication skills, income-generation, leadership and business skills including cooperatives, to be funded in Colombia, Fiji, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia

1989-1997 ACWW/UNESCO CO-ACTION
Women Feed the World project funding (UCA 1180) implemented, in Burkina Faso, India, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Philippines, Tanzania and Uganda
Projects were funded by ACWW members and UNESCO groups in Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, UK, USA



COMMITTEE FOCUS

Projects Committee member Edwina Marr reports



The Federation of Women's Institutes in Northern Ireland has supported many ACWW Projects over the last 40 years, and has been one of the strongest financial and material supporters. This has including providing books for children in Chennai, clothing for projects in Ghana and Sierra Leone, as well as building and equipping a medical centre in Estonia. Funding has focused on basic education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, small scale agricultural projects, food processing, micro credit schemes, and leadership training amongst other elements of societal support. We also adopted the project run by Safeplan Uganda, who have since joined ACWW as a new member society.

One of the most recent projects to have been adopted is the Art Therapy project run by the Women's Association from Sibiu, Romania. The aim of this project is to help victims of domestic violence to regain confidence and self-esteem and look forward to an independent life. By learning how to create beautiful things and by developing their physical, social and intellectual skills, it is hoped that the beneficiaries will have a more positive outlook than before, and feel better able to live independently. Items made during the project are advertised and sold at bazaars, local events and the Association's website. Money raised helps to fund the operating cost of the shelter. As the next European Area Conference will be held in Sibiu in September 2017, it seemed appropriate to help make an on-going positive impact on this community.

As the Projects Committee has developed new initiatives, the Federation has been

for All', 'Nutrition Education Fund' and the general Projects Fund. Our Federation has maintained a special interest in projects in Eastern Europe, and we have provided scholarships to ladies from this area, having initially established links during the European Area Conference in Belfast, 1996. Northern Ireland has always been supportive of World and Area Conferences, attending in large numbers.

Anne Marit Hovstad, the current Chairman of the Projects Committee attended this Area Conference in Belfast, and will once again travel to Northern Ireland in October as guest speaker at our next Autumn Council meeting.

ACWW is promoted at the Branch level, and each Institute is encouraged to have their own International Officer; there is also an International Sub-Committee at the Executive level. Hilda Stewart, a member of Randalstown WI, was deputy World President from 1995 to 1998 and World President from 1998 to 2004. Many ladies from Northern Ireland have held posts with ACWW, serving as Officers and on Committees. Mary Boyd, Eileen Glover and Jean Blair are all former Committee Chairmen; Doreen Dawson a former Vice President; Betty Little, Angela Martin and Margery Thompson have also served, whilst Margaret McMillan is currently the European Area President.

Over the past 12 years, the Federation of WI's in Northern Ireland has contributed more than £97,000 towards Pennies for Friendship, and more than £130,000 for Projects. The money raised by this year's 'Women Walk the World' is being given towards Projects, helping to celebrate the 40th Anniversary.

I met my fellow Projects Committee members for the first time in October 2016 when I attended the first meeting of the Triennium at ACWW's Central Office at Mary Sumner House, and we convened again in early March 2017. I was truly amazed at the work that goes on just to get the projects approved, and then the process of getting them adopted by WI's and similar organisations all over the world. The projects then have to be monitored, and the administrative process of dealing with progress and final reports is no mean feat. I can only praise and support those who travel to each country to get everything in place, and monitor the completion of Projects. As you'll have read in the Treasurer's Report, monitoring visit costs and the administrative staff costs (2 part-time Project Administrators) are why 20% is added to the awarded funding of each project.

Northern Ireland will continue to support Projects and credit is given to those WI's who tirelessly work to raise funds for this whether through coffee mornings, bring and buy sales, walks, concerts, or individual donations. I feel privileged to be part of the Projects Committee for this Triennium and have total respect for the work that goes on and money raised "by women for women". We must continue to help with fundraising "to bring an improved quality of life to women and communities worldwide".

1997 ACWW awarded UK National Lottery Funding for 'Mali Project' in partnership with Action Coverture et Developpement, Mali. Hilda Stewart, World President, acted as Project Coordinator and visited the project in 1997, 1998 and 2000. Implemented over four years, the project reached communities in 8 villages and provided wells, market gardens, a maternity unit with trained midwives, and a literacy centre.

2005 Tsunami Disaster Fund Established following requests from ACWW members; 15 projects to rebuild Tsunami-affected communities. Funded in India, Indonesia

2002 600th project approved!
Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate & Collaborators, India providing drinking water for Polio-affected Children

and Sri Lanka with ACWW member societies (separate from Projects Committee work). Monitored by Dato Ursula Goh, World President

2016 PROJECT IMPACTS

142,375

Total beneficiaries reached by projects completed in 2016

91,187 women

15,295 children

17

new Projects approved in 2016

17 new projects were approved for funding by the Projects Committee in 2016, and final reports were received from 23 organisations containing valuable information about the impact that ACWW project funding has had in the past year. They are, by type:

- 7** Water & Sanitation
- 4** Income Generation
- 5** Health Education
- 2** Agricultural Training & Development
- 4** Education & Capacity Building
- 1** Nutrition & Home Economics

Final Project Reports by Area:

- 8** East, West & Central
Cameroon (3); Uganda (2); Ghana (1); Kenya (1); Togo (1)
- 13** Central & South Asia
India (10); Sri Lanka (2); Pakistan (1)
- 1** Southern Africa
South Africa (1)
- 1** South Pacific
Papua New Guinea (1)

Project No.

1,029

received funding confirmation in March 2017

Project No.

1,000

was approved in 2015, providing IT skills for young women in India

2015 1,000th project approved!

Country Women's Association of India; training of 15 underprivileged female students and five children in computer skills, in order to improve their employment prospects and their status.

2016

In this year, funding approved in every ACWW area

June 2017

Projects Anniversary Appeal launched!

2011

900th project approved!

Nest, Sri Lanka; Support and Committed Action for Remote, Isolated & Stigmatised Families in Areas of Ududumbara and Moneragela

2017

Since the Projects Committee started its work, well in excess of £2,500,000 of funding has been sent to some 80 countries in all corners of the globe.

2016 PROJECT IMPACTS

ACWW Projects are a part of the organisation's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, and our reporting conditions are aligned with these goals and their criteria.



Water & Sanitation
7 Projects in 6 Countries
16,553 Beneficiaries
Ensuring access to water and sanitation for all



Health Education
4 Projects in 2 Countries
342 Beneficiaries
No Poverty



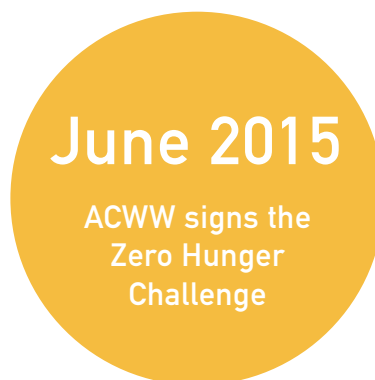
Income Generation
5 Projects in 2 Countries
111,870 Beneficiaries
Ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages



Education & Capacity Building
4 Projects in 4 Countries
13,204 Beneficiaries
Ensuring inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning



Agricultural Training & Development / Nutrition & Home Economics
3 Projects in 3 Countries
406 Beneficiaries
End hunger, achieve food security & improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



ACWW Project funding plays a significant part in our commitment to reducing global hunger. As part of our reporting procedures, data is gathered and fed back through the Zero Hunger Challenge and other mechanisms to the United Nations, Food & Agriculture Organisation and other international bodies.

Donations to the Projects Anniversary Appeal or via project adoption will ensure that ACWW is able to continue with this essential woman-to-woman funding in the years ahead



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development

To find out more visit
www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org

CASE STUDY: SAFEPLAN UGANDA

From Project funding applicant to ACWW Member: Annet Birungi charts their journey

Safeplan Uganda is a community based organisation that has been operating in Masindi, mid-west Uganda, since 2011. We have been working with women and young people; empowering them to increase productivity and reduce poverty through improved livelihoods and sustainable development. With support from local partners and donors such as ACWW, we have formed groups of rural women and young people to start simple and inclusive income-generating projects, which are accessible to people with disabilities or living with HIV. All the group activities are accompanied by business skills training to enhance project management skills and sexual and reproductive health education services for the young people to make informed decisions.



- Budongo Women Bee Enterprise is an award-winning initiative of Safeplan Uganda, focusing on honey production and recycling beeswax to make candles. Honey is now used to make lip-balms, jellies and cough syrup.¹
- Wakina Mama Women (All Women) are door-to-door environmental education groups that collect agricultural waste to make charcoal briquettes, handicrafts and grow vegetables.
- Omugezi Technology Centre equips young people with metal fabrication skills to make improved energy-saving cooking stoves and bee smokers.
- Masindi Young Women Empowerment Enterprise is a girl child-centred programme aimed at increasing the number of girls in higher level education by supporting them with basic educational needs, health and life skills.

Safeplan Uganda first discovered ACWW through an update from fundsforngos.org and applied for a grant as a non-member organisation in 2015. We were delighted to be awarded £2,549 towards the Masindi Young Women Empowerment Enterprise project.

Since this time, we have greatly benefited from the ACWW partnership, which has strengthened our capacity to engage with more groups of young women and girls in rural communities. The beneficiaries also wish to extend their appreciation to ACWW for supporting them to have decent and healthy lives. In 2016, we applied to become an ACWW member organisation because we want to be recognised as part of the network that is creating change among women in under-served communities of the world. We hope to hear about the success stories of other member organisations, find out what they do in their communities and learn more innovative ideas for action to create change.

Annet Birungi
Executive Secretary, Safeplan Uganda



Monitoring Visits: Projects Committee Chairman Anne Marit Hovstad explains

I went to visit Safeplan Uganda last year to monitor how they had used the ACWW project grant awarded to them in 2015 for the Masindi Young Women Empowerment Enterprise. They work out of a small rented office in Masindi and I was shown around by the Executive Director Annet Birungi and her colleague Dilis Akot. In addition to the ACWW funded project, I was taken to visit their woman's beekeeping enterprise and saw that the organisation's activities are widespread and having a real impact in the area.

ACWW Project 998 had different elements, one of which was to create an enabling environment for young women and support girls in school with reusable sanitary pads.

I was advised that two training sessions had been conducted on sexual health and 100 reusable pads distributed, alongside a drama show and the creation of two teen clubs. I felt, however, that perhaps more time could have been spent with the young girls and that more leaflets were required to provide all the information needed. Two of the 13 year olds girls I spoke to felt that they were much more comfortable and happy at school but both suggested that it would be better if there were at least four pads for each girl. The parents, school teachers and local authority representatives that I met were also pleased with the activities being run with the funding.

Another project aim was to build the capacity of 20 women to initiate and manage vegetable growing and selling businesses. A demonstration site had been established and three days training on seed bed preparation, integrated pest management and business skills had been held. It was explained to me that because of a spell of dry weather, the vegetables that season had been consumed by family members but in the future, they would also be sold in the groceries and hotels near Masindi.

I found Safeplan Uganda to be such an interesting organisation that I encouraged them to both join ACWW and apply for further funding. I was really impressed with the wide range of activities they could offer to women in the community with the help of small grants. They are already working in the spirit of ACWW by networking with many different women's groups in Uganda and I hope that as members, they will also be able to share their knowledge and experience with us.

Anne Marit Hovstad
Projects Committee Chairman



¹ The project won a UN SEED Award in 2014 www.seed.uno/awards/all/2014/1356-budongo-women-bee-enterprise.html#tabs1-details

WOMEN WALK THE WORLD



Across the globe, women walked in support of ACWW's work for women

In a year of very mixed weather, it has been wonderful to see the results of so many of your walks. Thank you for your efforts, and for sending in these inspiring photos and reports. Congratulations to all those who took part, and of course our cover competition winners. You read more about the winning entry on page 23, but special mention must also go to Norfolk FWI, in the UK, who walked a staggering 1,800,021 steps between them!

Basingstoke Afternoon WI

There be Fairies in the River! Sue Atrill sent us this photo of 12 ladies trying to spot the mystical guests on the River Test during their walk along the Whitchurch Mill Trail. She reports *"Our keen-eyed President Margaret was the first to spy the tiny fairy doors on the tree by the river and received her prize of miniature fairy cakes with silver stars"*.



Bolehill WI, Derbyshire FWI, UK

Carsington Water in Derbyshire has a 12 km walk around and Liz Thomas, Heather Neaum and Rosie Thompson completed the circuit on April 29th raising money for ACWW... which helped make room for the excellent chocolate cakes at the Severn Trent visitor centre! This photo was sent in by Liz Thomas.



Wirrega Branch, Women in Agriculture and Business, South Australia

The group walked the Mundulla Common, a trail through native vegetation which has a variety of sculptures to see, including these three kangaroos. The Common is part of the Moot Yang Gunya swamp which is a reserve near the small town. After the walk members enjoyed coffee at the Mundulla Store. Anually, the branch donates more than \$200 in Pennies for Friendship, and this walk helped raise a further \$30.



CWA in Victoria, Australia

The Country Women's Association of Victoria, Australia celebrated Women Walk the World by walking along the Ovens River on an Aboriginal heritage trail. This photo was sent in by Ayrton Teed who noted *"We displayed information on ACWW activities in the CWA hall, and the day was enjoyed by everyone- members and visitors alike!"*.

Federation of WIs, Northern Ireland

Agnes Black, Chairman of the Federation's International Subcommittee, sent us this picture: *"Ladies from the Ards, Rowallane and Scabo Area from the FWI of Northern Ireland walked around the Crawfordsburn Country Park and had great weather. Our Federation Chairman, Elizabeth Warden, and myself are included in the photo"*.



Want to see your photos in The Countrywoman? Why not organise a walk around 29 April 2018 now?

Cercle de Fermières Ville-Marie, Quebec

On April 24, a march in support of the ACWW was organized on the footpath of the street Bellehumeur in Ville-Marie. 11 members and a number of friends, including the Regional President Micheline Plante and guests from the Parent Pathway with their children took part. About twenty people walked for an hour on a cold and sunny day, before everyone enjoyed treats cooked by Réjeanne Bilodeau. The wonderful view along the way included a look out over the great Lake Témiscamingue.





Buckinghamshire WI, UK

Tracey Girdler-Rogers sent us this wonderful shot of ladies gathered in Princes Risborough, who took part in Treasure Hunts organised by Buckinghamshire WI; the walks raised over

Binegar WI, Somerset, UK



Somerset ACWW WI Representative Eileen Hurd sent through this photo of Women Walking the World in support of ACWW, as well as the shot below which includes their ACWW information display.

Tarago CWA, Australia

CWA ladies (and some husbands!) set off on a foggy Autumn morning and walked along the main road of Tarago to the cemetery, where a new reflection garden is being established. Morning tea was arranged by Clarice Beileiter at her son's home, before more ladies (and a gent or two) joined the group. Jenni Coles and Ruth Corrigan report having raised over \$500 for ACWW, and sent through this lovely shot taken by the garden.



More Women Walk the World photos on the next page!



Northumberland Group CWA, Australia

Ladies of Northumberland Group of the Country Women's Association, New South Wales in Australia had a combined group day out, marking 95 years of CWA in NSW, as well as a chance to Walk the World.

It was the perfect day for the walk, a 1km trail between the the planting site and the Pelican's Wharf cafe where the group lunched on fish and chips. Around 50 people did the work, with some collecting litter on their way. Morning tea was provided by Peats Ridge branch who donated the \$113 they collected to Pennies for Friendship.



Special guests were welcomed to a tree planting at the Terilbah Reserve, The Entrance North, New South Wales. They are shown in the photo above left, and are: Trish Stabback (State Vice President); Lorraine Sewell (State Agriculture and Environment Officer); Lora Brown (Indigenous Elder); Ruth Shanks AM (ACWW World President); Lynn Radley (Northumberland Group President) and David Mehan MP (State Member for the Entrance North).

WOMEN WALK THE WORLD



Hartswater Country Women's Association, South Africa

Snoekie Erasmus, Chairman of Hartswater CWA, sent us this superb photo from their walk. She reports that "we approached our local high school girls and teachers to Walk the World with us... total attendance was 341 women, who walked 199,144 steps between them!"



Vermilion County Home & Community Education Association, Illinois, USA

Kickapoo State Park near Danville, Illinois played host to members of Vermilion County HCE as they walked on 25 April. Brochures with information about Pennies for Friendship and other ACWW materials were handed out, whilst the group gave readings on ACWW projects. The day was completed by hotdogs and other goodies for lunch; perfect weather, good food and fun conversations- all for ACWW!



Waringstown WI, Northern Ireland

Jennifer Taylor sent in this picture of the Waringstown WI, Iveagh Area taken during their walk in Lurgan Park, County Armagh in Northern Ireland.



Otford Evening WI and Otford Oast WI, UK

Jeanne Barsby has sent us this picture of the joint meeting of two Kent branches from Otford. 20 ladies, along with dogs, set off for their walk; most walking 2.5 miles whilst those with dogs walked 5. The walks generated £245 which was kindly delivered by Jeanne to Central Office in person!



Bowral, Bundanoon, Moss Vale, & Southern Highlands Evening CWAs

A superb joint effort from these branches in Australia has raised \$1200 and had a jolly good time doing so. They walked with a rescued Border Collie called Hope, enjoyed fine weather and ended their walk with coffee and refreshments- well earned!



Abercorn WI, Northern Ireland

24 ladies walked in lovely weather before returning to the church hall for tea and biscuits! Betty Brace sent the photo above through to us, and says that "I encourage the five WIs in our area to save their 20 pence pieces, as well as getting sponsors and additional donations- this has raised £1,267.65! Many thanks to all those who contributed and helped this event".



North Yorkshire West FWI, UK

ACWW Representative Rosie Szlumper sent in this photo from NYWFWI's five mile walk in the Upper Dale, Nidderdale. The event was hosted by Upper Nidderdale WI and involved 28 walkers and 7 guides. Around £300 was raised for Project No. 1016!



Quoilé Area WIs, Co. Down, Northern Ireland

This photo full of smiles was sent in by Edwina Marr and shows the ladies of the Women's Institutes in the Quoilé Area after walking four miles alongside Strangford Lough, a wildlife sanctuary and area of outstanding natural beauty. The group had dinner in a local restaurant called Smugglers Table and spent time catching up. The group raised an initial £430, with more to come when other branches walk in June. Brava!



Avon WI, UK

These ladies followed the Radnor Trail in the New Forest- grateful for the trees giving shelter from the icy winds! They bumped into deer in the Bolderwood Sanctuary, with Marion Firman reporting that "it was fascinating to watch their tails flipping constantly from side to side! Our walk then took us through the majestic, ancient trees, many of which towered above us like sky scrapers and some of which displayed the most interesting bark. We also walked over sparkling streams and were accompanied by continuous birdsong. What a joyous way to support ACWW!"



Wig & District WI, Ceridigion, Wales

Bethan Williams reports walking up to the Bronze Age Hill Fort overlooking Cardigan Bay before a cake tasting of a new flavour: "lemon and cucumber cake with gin icing".



Springville-Island WI, Nova Scotia, Canada

Rose Gillis sent us this photo of ladies jointly celebrating Women Walk the World and the 150th Anniversary of Canada's Confederation

Sangamon County Association of Home and Community Education, Illinois, USA

An awareness raising event was held at the University of Illinois Extension Building in Springfield, which included a mini fun walk which accommodated those with limited mobility. Ruth Ann Theis tells us "Rather than being depicted as a sphere, our world was 'flattened', with tables draped in blue became oceans that contained illustrations of the six continents. As the ladies 'walked around the world', they placed a penny on each of the continents they had visited. Monetary donations were collected at the conclusion of the walk. The photo shows two of our members leading the way with a poster. Marguerite Dixon, age 93, and Kathy Olesen, age 55, represent the oldest and the youngest members present".



Illinois Association for Home & Community Education, USA

Patricia Weitzmann sent us this photo from the IAHCCE's Annual Conference in March; participants walked along learning about each continent and focus country- the spectators enjoyed almost as much as the game players! Patricia, also the USA Friendship Links co-ordinator, reports that there was a 25% increase in Pennies for Friendship donations during the conference.



Lyon'd Brook WI, Canada

A small but hardy group braved the rain and did their walk. The rain eased and we finished in warmer temperatures and a bonus "bug free" walk. Christine, Lynn, Betty Ann, Ruth and Lori and Eleanor behind the camera!



Thank you to everyone who took part in events for supporting ACWW!

WOMEN WALK THE WORLD



Norfolk Federation of Wis, UK

Mary Dorrell sent us this fun photo, with a superb list of statistics! She reports that *"Norfolk WI members with friends and husbands braved the threatening rain and found spells of sunshine, friendship and bluebells galore at Blickling Hall. steps between us; enough to carry us from Norwich to Gdansk (1160km) and raised over £600 for our next ACWW project!"*

She also sent the following message: *"We did so in the knowledge that we were helping women across the world who would never think of walking as a pleasure. 'I'm going for a walk,' cannot even be expressed in some languages. For many women worldwide walking is the only option – to fetch water, tend their crops, reach a market, take their sick relative to hospital. Our next project is no. 1,024, in Kenya. Norfolk Federation of Women's Institutes has undertaken to raise £4,850 during the next year. Small steps add up to big changes".*

Saudia Flight SV107

Flight Attendant Jenlly Carmona from the Philippines didn't Walk the World, but she certainly flies all over it and was kind enough to pose with our T-shirt on the way back from Riyadh to London!



Henry Group CWA, Victoria, Australia

Sue Caslake sent in this photo of the Country Women's Association branch before they set off to walk around Fawthrop Lagoon, having explored the Portland Botanical Gardens in Victoria, Australia. Perhaps we can have a tour when we attend the 2019 Triennial Conference?!



Bawtry WI, South Yorkshire FWI, UK

Ladies (and lambs!) walked 92,400 steps between them as they explored Austerfield quarry. This photo was sent to us by Roberta Eales, the South Yorkshire FWI ACWW Representative.



Isle of Wight FWI, UK

Catherine Davis sent us this photo of ladies as they walked around Sandown Bay in *"windy but bright weather"*, as they disseminated ACWW information to passers by. She tells us that *"the white cliffs in the background are the chalk cliffs of Culver down. This is the first time we have organised and walk and hope to make it bigger and better next year as everyone enjoyed themselves!"*

Jamaica Federation of Women, Jamaica

ACWW Area President for the Caribbean, Central & South America, Mrs Dotsie Gordon sent us this photo of the Jamaica Federation of Women walking on April 29. She reports that *"it was a very good turnout of members and friends at 7am in the lovely morning wind at the historic Emancipation Park"*.



Suffolk East FWI, UK

ACWW Communications & Marketing Committee member Moira Hammond sent us this delightful photo of ladies from Suffolk East FWI walking on Aldeburgh beach. Moira says *"no fewer than 15 women Walked the World, not only increasing the profile of ACWW locally, but also raising several hundred pounds for the Head-load Fish vendors of Tamil Nadu, India, which is our adopted project. We're pictured next to the iconic shell sculpture on the beach"*.



Irish Country Women's Association, Ireland

Maggie Fitzpatrick sent us this photo of 7 members who walked in Demense- Newcastle West on April 29!



and the winner is...



South Pacific Area Conference 2017

The winning photo comes from the 2017 South Pacific Area Conference, where 100 women Walked the World. In the front you can see South Pacific Area President Gail Commens (in the red jacket), as well as members of the Conference organising team (in blue shirts, including Fiona Gower, National President of Rural Women New Zealand), and representatives of Member Societies around the South Pacific including ladies from the Islands. Despite the rain and wind the ladies were steadfast in their determination and support for ACWW. Congratulations to all ladies who took part!



Not sure what to wear for next year? Contact Central Office to order your Women Walk the World T-Shirt £6 + Postage

EDITOR'S NOTE

Nick Newland

In the past four months, we at Central Office have spent a significant amount of time engaging with new faces and audiences. Whether at the WI Fair in London, visiting WI Spring Council Meetings as guest speakers or meeting new contacts at international conferences, we have had some superb feedback on ACWW's work and how we currently communicate it to our membership.

In this issue of *The Countrywoman*, we connect all elements of ACWW's activity and try and illustrate to you, our wonderful supporters, how you make a difference to the lives of women in communities around the world. From new members in new countries, to how projects are applied for, approved, funded and completed, to international advocacy and representation.

Thank you for such a resounding response to our call for photos and articles about your Women Walk the World activities. You can see these photos throughout the magazine, and of course, see how this fits into the overall jigsaw that is ACWW.

Over the next few months you will see some changes to the website, based on your feedback and aimed to make things more accessible. We are, of course, always looking to increase our reach and part of this will be a transition to a fully mobile-friendly website (as opposed to our current 'optimised' site)- if you visit the site on a computer you won't notice any real difference, but those using mobile phones or tablets should find an enhanced user experience more enjoyable.

As part of our reach out to members, we recently revised our stock of brochures and information booklets and these have proved very popular with our members. If your group or society would like some to distribute, please contact our Office Administrator Sydney Salter by emailing info@acww.org.uk or writing to us at Central Office. You can also call us on +44 (0)20 7799 3875. As ever, my email is nick@acww.org.uk

Don't forget that the website password is: **acww2016portal**

Friendship Links

UPDATE

In the next issue of *The Countrywoman* we will launch a new way of connecting members of ACWW all over the world.

To register your interest, please email:

Mrs Magdie de Kock
Chairman of the
Communications &
Marketing Committee
cmchair@acww.org.uk



CSW61

Henrietta Schoeman reports from New York

This year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 13 to 24 March 2017. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-government organisations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attended the session.

I attended CSW61 at my own expense and was accompanied by World President, Ruth Shanks and UN Committee Chair, Kerry Maw-Smith. The Priority Theme of the 61st session was: *'Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work.'*

The world of work is changing fast, spurred by innovation, globalization and increasing human mobility. At the same time, it is adversely impacted by climate change, humanitarian crises, rising informality of labour and economic inequality. For sustainable and healthy economies, the world of work must empower women and remove the persisting inequalities that hold women back from getting on equal footing with men.

Thousands of women thronged conference chambers of the UN building where the main agenda was being passionately debated. This meant that these chambers were often filled to capacity. However, it was also possible to participate in Side Events and Parallel Events that were hosted by various government delegations and NGOs, respectively, in smaller venues away from the main hall.

I attended a Side Event on the afternoon of the 15 March that was hosted by the European Union (EU). It was entitled: *'A Year of Focused Actions to Combat Violence against Women and Girls.'*

The EU Program Director explained that in November 2016, the European Commission had launched a year of focused actions to put an end to violence against women and girls. He said that although a lot has been said and legislation to protect women is in place in many countries, violence against women still persists. He stressed that their biggest problem is a total lack of adequate data.

Dr Helena Dahli, the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties from Malta said that her country was one of the last within the EU to legislate against perpetrators of violence against women. She stressed that NGO's who are working with victims and survivors are the experts and they should be consulted by governments to help them draft new laws. She said that many women who are victims of violence also become victims of homelessness.

Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender and Child Welfare in Namibia suggested that a holistic approach to dealing with the offense should be followed by governments, NGO's, churches, law, (including police officers) and our communities working together.

The Principal Advisor on Gender at the UN, Ambassador Mara Marinaki, said that all 17 Sustainable Development Goal's are either directly or indirectly affected by violence against women. In the last 44 years, violence has killed the same number of women worldwide as cancer. Women need the confidence to say 'No'.

The Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Dr Flavia Bustreo mentioned that one woman in three will suffer violence in her lifetime. This has an impact on both her physical and mental health. The plan of action should include zero tolerance to violence. Health workers and medical doctors must never condone violence. She also mentioned that the key problem is that only 50% of countries have data on this issue.

A Federal Judge from Brazil, Valtor de Araujo, told us that he now separates homicides from femicides (gender-based hate crimes) by marking his criminal files.

Ana Sofia Fernandes from Euro Gender, called on the EU to take firmer action and strengthen public education to prevent victims from keeping quiet due to a fear of stigma.

During the meeting I met Elizabeth Williams, the Chief of Staff of the Canadian Human Rights Commission who gave me suggestions on how to go about trying to get governments to take note of ACWW's Resolutions. She suggested that we request a meeting with the Human Rights section of the Foreign Ministries. This could be a way to get the word out about the International Forum on Rural Women initiative.

My take-away from this meeting was that, since there is a lack of data on women's vulnerabilities, we should keep on trying to get feedback from members at grassroots level, as this information is relevant and should be shared with other NGO's and UN Women. Appropriate actions, including legislation, that can reduce violence against women can only be implemented if the correct data is available.

It is clear that our attendance and engagement with international colleagues and global policy-makers is crucial, and that ACWW can play a critical role in bridging the information gap between civil society, governments and our membership.

OBITUARY

Mrs Mabel Ganegoda Past Area President Central & South Asia 1992-1995



It is with regret that we bring to the notice of all ACWW members throughout the world, the passing away of Mrs. Mabel Ganegoda – Past Area President for Central and South Asia from Sri Lanka on 25 February 2017.

She made many friends through her association with ACWW. She has given great support to Lanka Mahila Samiti and attended many Area Conferences and World Conferences. She will be missed by all ACWW members of the area and all members of Lanka Mahila Samiti, with gratitude.

Mrs. Thilaka Perera
Area President, Central and South Asia



Delegates attending the EU-led Side Event at CSW61, 'A Year of Focused Actions to Combat Violence against Women and Girls.'



AREA FOCUS

Maria Abdul Karim - South East Asia & The Far East



AREA FOCUS

Name: Maria Abdul Karim

Country: Indonesia

Role: Area President, South East Asia & The Far East

Term: 2016- 2019

Member Since: 1970

My professional background is in the practice of law, and education. I taught at Hasanuddin University for 37 years, and also lectured at other universities, including the Catholic and Christian University. Additionally, I spent 10 years as a member of our local provincial parliament.

Since 1960, I have been a member of PERWARI (the Women's Organisation of the Republic of Indonesia); and thus a member of ACWW since 1970. My late mother and sisters were members of PERWARI back in 1950, just five years after it was founded. The organisation was born after the long struggle for Indonesian independence. A voluntary organisation, PERWARI is noted for its long history and veteran status in Indonesian society.

I retired from the government in 2001, and since then have worked as a volunteer for PERWARI and ACWW. My late husband was a public prosecutor, and I have two sons and six grandchildren. One of my sons studied in Perth, Australia and is now an engineer. My oldest granddaughter currently studies economics at the Catholic University in Jakarta.

During my membership of PERWARI, I have held all positions; including two terms as President at the national level, and now sit

as a member of the Advisory Board with four other ladies. I also serve on the Boards of two PERWARI foundations, along with other ladies. One foundation is for education, supporting more than one hundred schools from kindergarten, through to junior and senior high schools all over Indonesia. In other islands and provinces, PERWARI has schools for handicapped children.

During the 11th ACWW Area Conference in Kuala Lumpur, 2015, ACWW World President Ruth Shanks, then treasurer Alison Burnett, then Area President HRH Princess Azizah Iskandar and current USA Area President Jo Almond visited our schools.

The other foundation is for a five floor building, a grant given by the Women's Association of the Netherlands via their Ambassador Mr. Sheltema in 1972. PERWARI use the building as the Headquarters- the address is Jalan Menteng Raya No. 35 Jakarta Pusat 10340, Indonesia. Stop by and say hello if you are ever nearby!

In 1972 PERWARI was invited by the League of Women Voters USA, Asian Seminar to learn about voluntary work in the USA, with another lady of PERWARI. The League's representative was Miss Karen Smith. The Asian Seminar was about two months and was attended by seven ladies from Asia; two from Korea, three from Malaysia and two from Indonesia. The Asian Seminar was funded by the US State Department. We traveled to Anchorage, New York, Washington DC and California.

I was lucky enough to visit Washington State University to learn about Juvenile delinquency and also saw correctional homes for juveniles. We also got the opportunity to visit the headquarters of the League of Women Voters in Washington DC and Arlington Cemetery, where the former President Kennedy rests. We also travelled a few days to Ames, Iowa to see agriculture and other cities in USA.

In 1973 there was a reunion of the Asian Seminar in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. It was then that I met with former ACWW World President Mrs. Ursula Goh for the first time.

From 1991-2001, I served as Head of the Law Department in the women's umbrella organisation KOWANI. This group includes more than 80 national women's organisations, and I was honoured to

represent KOWANI at World Conferences held in Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Thailand, China, Taiwan and Saudi Arabia.

I also served five years on the Indonesian Commission on the Status of Women (KNWKI), working in the Law Department preparing the duties of what would become the Ministry of Women. The Commission has now been integrated into this Ministry.

My first active work for ACWW was in 1991 when I attended Brunei Darussalam. It was my first ACWW Area Conference, and in that time Mrs. Fisher was ACWW World President. Since then, I have attended World Conferences in the Netherlands, Christ Church in New Zealand and 2016's Conference at Warwick University in the UK. I have also attended four Area Conferences in Brunei, Jakarta, Kuantan and Kuala Lumpur.

After my election as Area President of South East Asia and the Far East in August 2016, I always contact my area member organizations. They send me pictures about their activities in some of their countries, which I then put in our Area Newsletter. The South East Asia and the Far East Area Conference will be in Jakarta, Indonesia between 21 and 25 February 2018. I hope all the member organizations will come. Please do stay in touch with me, using my email which is seafe@acww.org.uk.



Maria Abdul Karim (centre) with Area President for Southern Africa Mrs Maybel Moyo, and Area President for East, West & Central Africa, Mrs Irene Chinje, taken in London in March 2017.



A CALL TO ACTION

ACWW Resolutions passed at the 28th Triennial Conference

ACWW member societies voted to adopt these Resolutions at the 28th Triennial Conference at the University of Warwick in August 2016. Traditionally, these resolutions have been circulated to the member societies for action, as indeed they were this Triennium. As ACWW reaches ever more women around the world, it was felt helpful to provide additional information for member societies to support their action and activities. References are shown on page 29.

Food Sovereignty

It is the belief of ACWW that all people have the right to healthy and culturally appropriate food, produced through ecologically sound, safe and sustainable methods.

Food security, as defined by the World Food Summit in 1996, will exist when “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”¹.

ACWW’s members urge national agricultural programmes to adopt the principals of Food Sovereignty, and ensure that there is equity and full access to resources for rural women and communities. This would reduce rural poverty, environmental degradation and assist with achieving food security. There is also a need for local producers to have access to local markets, thus supporting their continued existence and contribution to local communities.

Food Sovereignty is directly related to SDG2 and the Zero Hunger Challenge.²

Since the year 2000, global hunger has declined from 15% to 11%, but this leaves more than 790 million people who lack regular access to adequate food and dietary energy

Global food companies report higher profits than ever in developing world ³

2 ZERO HUNGER



Fructose

Worldwide, obesity is becoming a serious health problem. On advice from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in 2014, the European Union (EU) has ruled that food and drink manufacturers can claim their sweetened products are healthier if they replace more than 30% of the glucose and sucrose they contain with fructose.

Fructose has a lower glycaemic index (GI), meaning it causes a less rapid and extreme blood sugar spike as sucrose or glucose. However, it is metabolised differently, and excess is stored in the liver as fat, which may cause life-threatening diseases. While refined fructose creates a lower glycaemic response in the short term, compared to other sugar, in the long term it causes greater metabolic havoc than sugar, as has been repeatedly demonstrated in scientific studies.

According to the Department of Physiology, at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, there is significant need for further human studies on the impact of fructose:

“Consuming large amounts of fructose can lead to the development of a complete metabolic syndrome in rodents. In humans, fructose consumed in moderate to high quantities in the diet increases plasma triglycerides and alters hepatic glucose homeostasis, but does not appear to cause muscle insulin resistance or high blood pressure in the short term. Further human studies are required to delineate the effects of fructose in humans.”⁴

ACWW members call on governments to ban food and drink makers from claiming their sweetened products are healthier if they use fructose until proven this is true

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



5

Shale Gas

Shale gas is natural gas that is found beneath the ground, trapped within shale formations. It is increasingly used in parts of the world such as the United States of America, and there exists significant international controversy over methods of extraction including hydraulic fracturing, or ‘fracking’.

Fracking involves drilling down into the earth, before a high-pressure water and chemical mixture is directed at the rock to release the gas inside. The process can be executed vertically or, more frequently, by drilling horizontally into the rock layer, creating new pathways for the gas.

The controversy exists because there has been very limited research into the mid- to long-term geological and environmental impacts of fracking, particularly as it relates to earthquakes. It also uses huge amounts of water, which must be transported to the sites, both of which have environmental impacts of their own.

ACWW urges member societies to request their governments gather sufficient data on the impact of fracking before allowing shale gas exploration to commence. This research is important as those companies who apply for fracking licences are able to exert significant pressure through lobbying, based on profit projections rather than social or environmental impact.

An energy source that requires water in vast quantities and which may detrimental affects on the environment around it, and those communities who live nearby, is not sustainable and should not be the focus of national energy policies.

SDG 7 builds towards affordable and clean energy⁷, whilst SDG 9 calls on for the building of resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation⁸. SDG 12 ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns, also very relevant in this case⁹.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



ACWW Member Societies are calling on their local and national governments for action on this issue, highlighting their own local communities, food producers and consumers.

Sustainable Energy

As 2014 opened the United Nations decade of Sustainable Energy for All, ACWW urges the promotion of community energy projects, and universal access to sustainable energy.

The grave impact of lack of clean energy on health, particularly for women and children, is not widely recognised. The first two years of the SE4All initiative are dedicated to the complex ties between energy, women, children and health. More than one billion people in the world still have no access to electricity; millions more rely on unsustainable and polluting fuels for cooking.

In the developed world the problem is not generally one of access, but of inefficiency and pollution. 'Affordable, Clean Energy' – the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goal 7 – sets national targets for energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency; locally generated energy is cleaner, more efficient and more secure. The goal of the resolution 'Secure Sustainable Energy' is *'working together for a better future'*.

Energy is crucial for achieving almost all of the Sustainable Development Goals, from its role in the eradication of poverty through to health, education, industrialization, water and combating climate change ⁶

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



The proportion of the global population with access to electricity has increased steadily, from 79% in 2000 to 85% in 2012. Still, 1.1 billion people are without this valuable service. Recent global progress in this area has been driven largely by Asia, where access is expanding at more than twice the pace of demographic growth. Of those gaining access to electricity worldwide since 2010, 80% are urban dwellers, leaving a severe deficit for rural communities and women in particular.

ACWW's Project 987 provided training and support for the production of compressed recycled materials used to create smokeless charcoal briquettes for cooking. This is just one element of community education use, and a sample of the kind of project that allows rural societies to be empowered through sustainable independence. Furthermore, it has been shown that cooking using smoking fuels inside homes can have serious impact on the health of pregnant women and their children.

Water Supply

ACWW urges all countries to vigorously protect the supply of potable, farming and industrial water through the best technical information available that will provide sustainability of life.

Water and sanitation are at the very core of sustainable development, critical to the survival of people and the planet. Sustainable Development Goal 6 not only addresses the issues relating to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, but also the quality and sustainability of water resources worldwide.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



According to the United Nations, in 2015 more than 946 million people lacked sanitation facilities, with no option but to practise open defecation. This continues to present a major risk to public health and the environment ¹⁰

More progress has been made in access to drinking water. In 2015, 6.6 billion people, or 91% of the global population, used an improved drinking water source, versus 82% in 2000. Despite this improvement, an estimated 663 million people were using unimproved water sources or surface water that year. While coverage was around 90% or more in all regions except sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania, widespread inequalities persist within and among countries. Moreover, not all improved sources are safe. For instance, in 2012 it was estimated that at least 1.8 billion people were exposed to drinking water sources contaminated with faecal matter.

Effective water and sanitation management also depends on the participation of stakeholders. According to a 2013-2014 Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water survey, 83% of the 94 countries surveyed reported that procedures for stakeholder participation were clearly defined in law or policy.

In the Sustainable Development Goals, the focus is being refined to also include the participation of local communities, which will be captured in the next cycle of Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water monitoring.

Sensible use of water, and avoiding its waste is a global and personal responsibility.

Eradicable Disease

ACWW societies and members urge their governments and health organisations to continue local vaccination efforts of potentially eradicable diseases in order to work toward area elimination which would then result in global eradication.

To date smallpox is the only infectious disease that effects humans that has been eradicated and we are close to a second global eradication, that being Guinea Worm Disease. Other diseases Lymphatic Filariasis, Measles, Rubella, and Taeniasis/Systicercosis are currently potentially eradicable with Poliomyelitis at the top of the list.

In some cases there is a public misconception of the seriousness which can be a chief obstacle to eradication. Incredible headway has been made and we need eradication efforts to continue.

Vaccines keep children alive and healthy by protecting them against disease. Immunization is especially important for the hardest to reach families as it can also be a bridge to other life-saving care for mothers and children in isolated communities – such as child nutritional screening, anti-malarial mosquito nets, vitamin A supplements and de-worming tablets. Immunization is one of the most successful and cost-effective public health investments we can make for future generations.

In 2015, nearly 1 in 5 infants, or 19.4 million children, missed out on the basic vaccines they need to stay healthy ¹¹

Low immunization levels compromise gains in all other areas of health for mothers and children. The poorest, most vulnerable children who need immunization are the most continue to be the least likely to get it.

UNICEF and its partners are working to change these numbers and ensure that all children are successfully protected with vaccines. But, if immunization is not prioritized, the most marginalized children will not get vaccines, which could mean the difference between life and death.

1/3rd of deaths in children under 5 years can be prevented by vaccines ¹²

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



CIVIL SOCIETY & GENDER

The worldwide need for food production, the eradication of poverty, and the urgent move towards sustainability needs strong citizens of all ages. It has been clearly shown that budget cuts and so-called ‘austerity’ programmes disproportionately affect women and, more specifically, rural women. There is evidence of rising precarious working conditions, increasing discrimination in the labour market with a subsequent shift to informal work, rising levels of poverty, reduced access to services, and rising levels of domestic violence, accompanied by cuts in vital support services. Solutions are needed which are built on the positive effects of gender equality on well-being, employment and people-centred sustainable growth.

Food, care and health are in the hearts of women. Working in these fields contributes to the development of life-standards and to the eradication of poverty. Investing in sustainability is a chance to restore the gender balance and using the knowledge of the region of both men and women.

An equal relation between civil society, the government and private sector is essential. Women’s organizations, as a part of that civil society, play a role in empowering women through their network and programs at local, regional or national level. The main goals for women are: encouragement in decision making and participation, learning by doing, learning together, strengthening personal development and competences, such as entrepreneurship. Stimulation of knowledge sharing and strengthening civil society, such as women’s organizations, is effective for the livability (survival expectancy) and continuation of projects in local communities.

It is important to recognise that inequality exists at every level of society. Women hold only 22% of parliamentary seats worldwide. They spend, on average, 90% of their earned income on their families (in contrast with 30-40% for men) and represent two thirds of illiterate adults globally and only 5% of national heads of state.

“There is strong evidence from all regions of the world demonstrating that increasing investments in women’s human capital, especially education, should be a priority for countries seeking to increase both economic growth and human welfare. Investing in quality secondary education for girls yields high economic and social returns.”¹²

Global averages show that one in four women are physically or sexually abused during pregnancy and suffer invasive and abusive treatments such as forced early marriage, domestic violence and murder, and female genital mutilation/cutting.

Alongside our work towards the Global Survey of the Living Conditions of Rural Women, ACWW members call on all governments to integrate a gender perspective in their policies and to create an enabling environment for economic and social development with specific emphasis on those in rural areas.



“Evidence from Africa, Asia and Latin America consistently shows that families benefit when women have greater status and power within the household. Increased control over income gives women a stronger bargaining position over economic decisions regarding consumption, investment and production. When women have more influence over economic decisions, their families allocate more income to food, health, education, children’s clothing and children’s nutrition. 15 Social safety-net programmes in many countries now target women specifically for these reasons. A large number of studies have linked women’s income and greater bargaining power within the family to improved child nutritional status, which in turn influences health outcomes and educational attainment.”¹⁴

WOMEN IN CAMPS

ACWW members urge their governments to take action to stop sexual abuse of women and children in refugee camps and shelters. This is an increasingly critical issue, with internal conflicts and insurgencies causing a vast increase in the number of refugees.

There are 65.3 million people around the world who have been forced from their homes. This includes 21.3 million refugees, over half of whom are under 18 years¹⁵

Initiatives such as the UNHCR’s ‘Safe from the Start’ programme are intended to provide gender specific and sensitive, preventative action for refugees. This work is crucial and ACWW calls upon all governments, particularly those actively dealing with the refugee and migration crisis, to act quickly and decisively to bring this situation to an end.

34,000 people are forcibly displaced every day as a result of conflict or persecution. This is the highest level of displacement in history¹⁶

The status and lives of refugees has an impact on each of the following SDGs, and is crucial in establishing a safer, healthier and more peaceful world.



WHAT TO DO

There are many ways that organisations, societies and individuals can influence their governments. From issuing public statements, to writing to your elected representatives, attending demonstrations or protests and helping to organise community activities, your involvement and activism is crucial. Why not stand for election to represent your views and those of others like you?

In the next column there is ACWW's public statement marking the International Day of Families, which was issued in May 2017. This gives you an example of the kind of document that can be sent to your representatives or policy-makers. Always remember to cite your data- legislators find it harder to ignore hard facts and figures!

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2017

A public statement from ACWW

As the world marks the International Day of Families on 15 May 2017, we bear witness to a world in turmoil. Never before have families played a more crucial role in our societies, and never before has the need for strong family bonds and inter-generational cooperation been so necessary. The United Nations has declared a theme of 'Families, education and well-being' for 2017's International Day, and this speaks directly to the focal points of so much of the work done by the Associated Country Women of the World and other NGOs.

We see every day the need for stronger communities, and the open, honest, and brave discussion between those who may disagree, and families play a crucial role in this. Children raised in fear bring fear to others. Peace, unity and friendship comes from those who are nurtured and supported by their family- be it the parents, or carers, grandparents, siblings and others who can guide and encourage our young people to walk a path through life with open eyes and hearts. Never before has the connection between children and grandparents been so strong. In many regions of the world we see grandparents stepping in to care for younger generations when parents are forced to work long hours, or cannot afford child care; in other countries there are whole communities who have been decimated by illness such as HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, leaving grandparents to raise their children's children.

We must support all families- from demanding universal access to good quality education for children, to sensible childcare options and sustainable support for parents, to life-long learning, and ensuring quality of living for grandparents and older generations. Work-family balance must be encouraged and supported, assisting parents in their educational and caregiving roles- the private sector must play a part in this, and responsible employment practice will benefit all stakeholders.

ACWW connects and supports women and communities worldwide, and our project funding has had significant impacts on communities around the world. Our 1000th project was funded in 2015, providing IT skills to young and older women in India; this enables and empowers both ends of the age spectrum in their daily living, and is a significant step towards sustainability of education and training in the local area. The latest round of completed projects funded by ACWW included 5 Health Education projects, 4 focused on education and capacity building, 2 agricultural training and development projects and 1 nutrition and home economics project. These projects, along with 7 water and sanitation projects and 4 income generation schemes, benefited 142,375 people, of whom 91,187 were women and 15,295 were children. ACWW is committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and recognises that families have a specific role in ensuring the achievement of SDG4, which secures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all.

With many countries suffering from internal conflict, and much of the world becoming more divided, nationalistic and isolationist, the role of the family in encouraging cultural and cross-community engagement and collaboration is crucial. We call on all governments and global bodies to work towards securing safe, fair and reasonable living conditions for families - particularly urgent for those living in refugee and internally-displaced person camps. War has a huge and unmitigated impact on families in so many ways, and we further call on those governments around the world leading wars of aggression to consider the realities they impose not only on the families of those they target, but also those in their own countries. Peace, communication, and a collective move towards global sustainability can only be achieved with the support of the family, but are also necessary for the existence of the family and thus all of our futures.

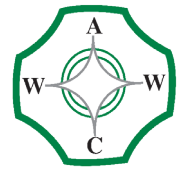
Ruth Shanks AM
ACWW World President

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"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"

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³ ACWW Projects
<https://www.acww.org.uk/projects.html>

SOCIETY FOCUS



We hear from Members and Member Societies around the world



APPLES & AGRICULTURE Martock / Windsor Forks WI

Cheryl Palmer sent us these photos from Martock / Windsor Forks WI in Nova Scotia, Canada. She says that “we are in the Annapolis Valley, noted for apples and agriculture. The group holds meetings monthly. This picture was taken at a coffee party we held to raise money for “Pennies for Friendship”. In photo left to right Maxine Trinacity-Pelletter, Marjorie Knowles, Marion Newcombe, and June Card.

WOOTEN WI EVENTS Barbara Bentley reports

This year Wooten WI, part of the Northamptonshire FWI, held two fund raising initiatives for ACWW. The first was a “January sale” when members tidied cupboards and donated unwanted items. £70.02 was raised which also included some Pennies for Friendship. In April, members strode out on a sponsored “Walk the World” raising £132 – some members walked further than others, one member walked from her car to the after walk coffee shop! Well done Wooton WI (Northamptonshire Federation) and all good wishes for your Centenary which will be celebrated in 2018.



LENTE BRANCH, WAU Cillié van Rooyen

The Lente Branch, Linden, Johannesburg in South Africa has been supporting young mothers in the local Coronation Maternity Hospital. Members Esther Spies, Leoma de Wit, Marijke Snijders and Marlene Wessels are shown amongst some of the mothers, with the Baby Parcels that have been distributed. Thanks to Cillié and her members, with apologies that space did not allow the inclusion of this item in the April issue of *The Countrywoman*!



ARDS PENINSULA AREA Pamela Brown

Ards Peninsula Area in Northern Ireland have been playing their part by collecting old and unused jewellery to be donated for recycling, and thus raising funds for ACWW. The photo below was taken at the Area Spring Meeting and shows FWINI Federation Chairman Elizabeth Warden with fellow international officers Vera Kerr, Pamela Brown (who also serves on the FWINI International Sub Committee and ACWW Agriculture Committee), Yvonne McIlmail, Betty Lyttle, and Helen Carson. Photo courtesy of the Newtonards Chronicle.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN ANDHRA PRADESH Mrs D. Ammulu Raju

ACWW Member Society ASHA celebrated International Women's Day at Renigunta of Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh, India. During this programme, we invited several Women Self Help Group members from 10 villages of Renigunta Mandal of Chittoor District, along with village leaders and Government women officials from various Departments.

The Resource persons who participated in the programme raised awareness with the women participants about the following topics:

- Importance of Unity and Group system to be developed by every woman to establish collective rights
- Importance of Women Education. The speakers were clear that every woman should become literate,
- The women should improve their economical situation so that they will not depend on others for their requirements,
- The women should take care about their health and their family members health conditions, they should keep their surroundings clean and follow other health related issues.

ASHA members were introduced to women who are actively involved in many social service activities in their villages. We distributed free saris to 200 poor women from the 10 villages of Renigunta Mandal, and fed all the participants. I was also honoured to receive the District Best Award 2016-2017 for services to poor people. Best wishes to all ACWW members around the world.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR SOCIETY NEWS

We want to know what you do in support of ACWW and activities on Resolutions, and we'd love to see pictures. Please include some basic information so we can make sure we get the article right:

- Date of the event / conference / meeting
- Where was it?
- Roughly how many people attended?
- How much was raised for ACWW?

ACWW SHOPPING & SUPPLIES

Give as gifts, wear your support or use in every day life!

At the Triennial Conference in Warwick, ACWW's Communications & Marketing stall had a range of ACWW merchandise and souvenirs that proved hugely popular. We thought you might like the opportunity to order supplies- many of these items will prove to be fantastic gifts for friends and family as we head towards the New Year!

To make the buying process easier, we offer several options. You can;

- a) email us at info@acww.org.uk, and tell us what you want! We will work out the postage and get in touch with the total
- b) call us on +44 (0)20 7799 3875 between 9.30am and 17.00pm UK time, Monday to Friday and we can post direct to you

PLEASE NOTE that as postage charges cannot be calculated until we have packed your items, we will need your card details to process the transaction. We will also add a transaction charge of 2% for debit cards; 3% for UK credit cards and 4% for all other credit cards to cover bank charges.



£10

The Countrywoman's Kitchen
87 recipes celebrating 87 years!
LIMITED EDITION OF 500,
only 50 left!



£4

ACWW Recycled and Reusable Water Bottle

NEW DESIGN!



£3

ACWW Brooch



£1

2 x Recycled Wood Pencils with Eraser



£6

Women Walk the World T-Shirt
(sizes M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL)



£6

ACWW Pedometer
(Ideal for Women Walk the World!)



£10

ACWW Umbrella



£5

ACWW USB Memory Stick Pre-Loaded with Info Pack
(supplied with lanyard and ID pouch)



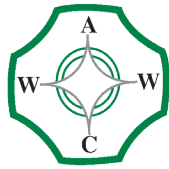
£2

ACWW Pin Badge



£1

ACWW Recycled Pen



PROJECTS ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

Since 1977, ACWW has funded more than 1000 community based, women-led projects. As we mark the 40th Anniversary of the Projects Committee, we launch the Anniversary Appeal to raise £150,000 to guarantee support for the next generation of empowering projects.

Small streams united make a big river. Together, we can reach our goal of raising the standard of living for rural women and their families.

Education, training and community development programmes are funded in every region of the world and we need your help to ensure that this continues.



ADOPT
DONATE
EMPOWER
#WEAREACWW



The soil below your feet,
Can grow a healthy treat

FARMER FIELD SCHOOL

Health, Nutrition Education, Food