



1 November 2012

IFUW Strategic Plan Smart Objective 4.3.1.

IFUW programmes and
activities



**AIM 3: HUMAN RIGHTS FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN.
TO STRIVE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF GIRLS
AND WOMEN.**

The defined SMART objective for this aim is:

1. To support at global, country and local levels proposals that strengthen the human rights of girls and women and to oppose those that weaken them.

Looking at the 23 IFUW programmes and activities 13 of them can support the realisation aim 3:

- Programme for Action pillar 2. Education for Freedom from Violence and overall theme "Education for the Realisation of Rights"
- Bina Roy projects
- Policy Resolutions
- Conference seminars
- Conference workshops
- CSW delegation
- Reps at UNESCO
- Reps at ECOSOC
- Reps at ILO
- Lobby for Afghan women and similar
- IFUW online discussions
- IFUW blogs
- Regional Conferences

To get an impression what each of these thirteen IFUW programmes and activities are see:

<http://www.ifuw.org/what/ifuw-strategic-planning/>

For example: **IFUW online discussions**

IFUW holds regular, thematic e-mail discussions, each lasting for approximately one month. These discussions allow IFUW members from around the globe to share experiences and information on subjects of interest to university women. Recent discussion topics have included: Women and health; Science and gender; and Multi-generational leadership.

An online discussion which started last October 15, 2012 is ongoing. The topic is about **“Women and Women’s coalitions: what do women’s coalitions need to be more effective and how can they achieve more influence in order to enhance the positions of women and girls?”** The outcome of the discussion will be distributed among discussion participants and NFA’s. It will also be used as input for the IFUW advocacy teams.

Review of the IFUW Committees

Aim 5 of the Strategic Plan is: To create an effective and efficient organisation, with the Board, Committees, Staff and Members working together to create a strong global network and implement the IFUW strategy. The Objective to achieve that aim was defined as being to “Strengthen the Governance Function”, and out of several suggested Actions the Board gave priority to: “Review the Committees and re-define the roles, expertise, and responsibilities required to ensure the Committees are fit for purpose.” The Board has spent considerable time on this task. As a first step we asked ourselves why IFUW has, and should have, committees. What we saw as the two most important reasons were:

- To ensure that all tasks necessary for the operation of the international organization are allocated to clearly identified persons or groups of persons, so as to provide for comprehensive and efficient execution of the purposes of IFUW; and
- To involve NFAs and members in the work of the International body and increase their sense of ownership of the organization.

The specific recommendations that have emerged have very much been shaped by those two considerations, as well as by the need to be responsive to the Aims and Objectives of the Strategic Plan. We believe that committees function best when their mandate is focused and does not cover too wide a range of activities. For this reason we are recommending that two of the present committees – Membership and Status of Women – should each split into two more sharply focused committees. We also decided that we needed two new Committees to give stronger attention to the Strategic Aims relating to advocacy and strengthening the financial situation of IFUW (see Strategic Aims 1, 2, 3 and 6).

As a result, we are recommending that there be ten Standing Committees – which certainly will serve to provide more opportunities for membership participation.

Any financial implications of this are minimized by the fact that almost all Committee (and indeed Board) business and meetings are now expected to be conducted by email or Skype, with a reduction of reliance on face-to face meetings, which are expensive for both the organization and the members involved. Indeed we hope that this will increase the possibility of participation for those who in the past have been discouraged by the costs of travel or the difficulties of obtaining visas.

The recommendations that we are proposing to take to Conference are for the following standing committees, which are intended to form a system of mutually supporting functionality:

- The Finance Committee is intended to remain very much unchanged in its purpose of administering IFUW ‘s finances (its dues system, budget and investments), but its work will be supported by
- The Resource Development Committee, the proposed purpose of which is to develop ideas and plan actions to increase IFUW resources, both monetary and in kind.
- The Fellowships Committee is intended to retain its existing mandate, but to work with the Resource Development Committee on ideas for funding specifically for Fellowships.

- The Membership Committee is intended to have as its purpose the gaining and retention of membership. It will be responsible for communications on membership matters with NFAs and independent members, although it is proposed to transfer its existing tasks relating to the technical approval of NFA new and changed constitutions and membership criteria to
- The Constitutional and Procedural Matters Committee. This has as its proposed role to advise Conference, Council, the Board and Committees on constitutional and procedural matters. It is expected that it will interact with
- The Resolutions Committee, the proposed purpose of which is unchanged. It is also proposed that Resolution should work in close connection with the two committees that are recommended to take on the current roles of the Status of Women Committee. These are
- The Programme Committee, whose proposed purpose is to generate ideas and plans for member activities related to the IFUW's Aims and Objective, the Programme for Action and Resolutions, in particular to organize the Conference Seminars & Workshops, on-line member discussions and any other specific activities referred to it by the Board.
- The Advocacy Committee, whose proposed purpose to have oversight of, and increase the visibility of, advocacy by IFUW and its NFAs in support of IFUW's Aims and Objective, the Programme for Action and Resolutions.

We are recommending that the totality be made up by giving standing committee status to the two “special” committees, namely

- The Projects Committee
- The Hegg Hoffet Committee

The mandate of these committees is intended to remain unchanged; both will have an interest in the work of the Resource Development Committee.

All Committees will continue to have a non-voting Board member, whose essential role will continue to be to serve as a two-way conduit of information and ideas between the two entities. A more detailed document on the role is under preparation. There will also be provision for more Convener cross-membership of related Committees, so that the work of the Committees can be better coordinated.

Both the terms of Reference and the Call for Nominations will stress the qualities needed for members to be effective contributors to the Committee's functioning and the readiness of NFAs to consider these in making nominations for Committee positions will be crucial in ensuring that we do indeed have Committees “fit for purpose.”

The proposals will require approval for a number of changes, especially to the By-laws, as it's in the latter that the different Committees are named, constituted and given their mandates. This means that any recommendations approved at the 2013 Conference cannot become operational until 2016.

Full details of the Terms of Reference for each Committee and of the constitutional amendments needed to bring these proposals into effect will follow shortly, but meanwhile we welcome members' comments, which should be sent to jstr0036@bigpond.net.au. Committee members have already had an opportunity for input.

Website and Email Maintenance

Please note that between 16:00 (ECT) on Tuesday 13th November and noon (ECT) on Tuesday 20th November the IFUW website will be closed for maintenance. There will be no access to IFUW e-mail, the IFUW website or the on-line discussion. This closure is to allow sufficient time for the migration of the IFUW website, e-mail and list-servs to a new server.

Thank you for your understanding.

The IFUW Office Team