

GWI – Organizational Development (OD) Process

Phase II: Organizational Readiness Assessment

**Meeting of Groups 2,3,4: Thursday, February 17, 2022**

Discussion Notes

Organizational Readiness Prerequisites 3 and 4 were discussed:

**Prerequisites 3:**

GWI Headquarters and its NFAs have a strong working relationship and a thorough understanding of division of responsibilities.

**Current Relationship between GWI and NFAs represented at this meeting:**

In anticipation of building working relationships between NFAs and GWI Headquarters, the existing relationship from the NFAs' perspective was discussed. Currently, the relationship is fraught with ambivalence. NFAs represented at this meeting expressed the relationship in the following manner:

- Uncertainty about whether the dues were put to the best use in the past, questions about what was accomplished and frustration at the lack of transparency resulting in a loss of trust in GWI as well as a loss of members for the NFA
- NFA does trust GWI but relationship not as strong as it could be even though the NFA was created and joined GWI with the specific objective of being connected internationally. NFA needs to understand better what it means to work with sister NFAs and the GWI. NFA does look at how national and local issues are impacted by global decisions, but still .....
- A stronger case for the membership dues needs to be made by GWI—what are NFA members getting for their money?
- Some NFAs have historic connections to GWI that go back one hundred years – Older members who have institutional memory are proud to belong to GWI but don't want dues increased and are more interested in the social

and recreational aspects of getting together. Members attend international events.

- GWI does a good job of communicating with NFA – communications are constant and ongoing and this is appreciated. There is less communication from the NFA to GWI. Young members question the need to belong to GWI.
- NFA may not be able to pay the required level of annual dues because NFA headquarters depends on its six associations for payment and if associations don't pay, headquarters cannot either.
- NFA's young members feel that they can be self-sufficient and don't need to belong to an international organization. Younger members are not even interested in working within the NFA – with the NFA's other branches/chapters/associations. There are members who work with the UN regularly but don't see the value. They think that they can do whatever needs to be done by themselves.
- Young members may not have the connection to GWI that older members have. The historic connection is still powerful. Young members need a connection to GWI.
- NFAs will benefit when we all work closely – have a shared objective and a common agenda. NFA not sure of alignment with GWI's work. NFA is working on programs/projects already but are not thinking about these programs/projects in terms of SDG 4. It's a matter of semantics – when we get beyond the semantics we overcome any existing barriers to collaboration. Then there is alignment between the NFAs and GWI's efforts
- Members/young members do not see the connection between the local and the global or even the “connectedness” of the world that is driving problems and solutions

## **What is the Value Proposition that Members are looking for?**

What is the value that members are looking for from GWI?

The GWI Board and staff believe that they are offering a vast number of services and products. So, when NFAs and/or their members question what they receive for their annual dues, the worth of GWI, it's incomprehensible to GWI Board and staff.

However, the fact remains that members hold a lot of power and it behooves GWI Headquarters to continually ask the question of members and themselves: "How can GWI be valuable to its members?"

GWI's value proposition to its members is important to retain and grow membership. A working relationship between NFAs and GWI Headquarters, as envisioned in the next chapter of GW, builds on the value proposition.

NFA perceptions of value were described as follow:

- In one NFA's survey, young people showed overwhelmingly that they want the international aspect and advocacy – we need to highlight the international aspect to recruit and engage young members.
- NFA's experience is that new members join only because they want to be part of international work. To the extent that the NFA began to advertise their international group meetings on Facebook and on its website. International work is going to be highlighted at its centenary celebration/event
- NFA's members have enjoyed working with other groups around the exchange of "Best Practices" – an indication that learning from others and sharing experiences with others are also important to members.
- There needs to be a clear articulation of pathways – particularly to leadership, building knowledge and skills and to opportunities both within and outside the NFAs. This would be of value to members in all age groups but particularly Young Members.

- Members have been known to join NFAs in the hope of receiving scholarships and fellowships – these single focus members tend to end their membership if they are not successful in this pursuit, unless other compelling engagement is offered to them particularly in the field of their studies.
- Projects are important. While GWI's Advocacy on an international level seems a bit distant- and by its very nature, members may not feel the effects of Advocacy immediately or even in the longer -term, projects have an immediate relatability for members. They can experience the scope of the work, see outcomes and point to changes in their communities, resulting from their work.
- Mentorship is important in getting people to engage with the work of the NFA and GWI in general. A version of mentorship (buddy scheme) is practiced within one of the NFAs and has been well received by the membership and has engaged more members in the NFA's work.

#### **What GWI Headquarters needs to consider:**

- 1) Build a better the case for the value that GWI brings to the table.
- 2) Emphasize the relevance of GWI in a changing world – connect the dots, show all your internal and external stakeholders the big picture. GWI was founded to create positive change in the world and one hundred years later, it still operates on that premise.
- 3) Articulate the need for the accomplishment of the SDGs. Build awareness of the connection between the local and the global by:
  - ❖ Building knowledge within the GWI headquarters, Committees and NFA system about our global connectedness and the global

economic, social, environmental space we share and in which each one of us lives, studies, works, looks for employment, builds careers, raises families, runs households, cares for older people and loved ones with disabilities, and vacations.

- ❖ Based on this knowledge, make the case for global engagement - why we have to work together on solutions and that no one country, NFA or individual member can do this on their own.
- ❖ Embed this reminder in all GWI says and does.
  - that the solution to the problems in one country do not necessarily lie in that country but are in fact dependent on actions taken in one or more of the other countries in the world –

#### 4) Marketing and Communications:

There has been, for some time now, frustration on the part of the GWI Headquarters and NFAs regarding the dissemination and availability of information, respectively.

GWI does not have the email addresses of its membership.

Communications from GWI go to the NFA President and CIR. Dissemination of this communication within the NFA's membership is entirely dependent on the President and the CIR. In many cases the communication is not distributed, leaving a critical gap in GWI- Membership communications.

While NFAs should take responsibility for the timely distribution of GWI information, GWI Headquarters could also consider:

- ❖ If there is a structural and procedural solution – changes in the current structure to create proximity between Headquarters and NFA Presidents and CIRs
- ❖ Orientation Trainings for CIRs and other new members

An additional problem that is frequently cited by GWI Headquarters is that Members who do receive some communications directly, including the

newsletter, do not open the communication.

- ❖ A review of format, style and content of the regular communications should be undertaken based on a greater experience with members' preferred ways of assimilating content.

### **How can GWI Headquarters create a Working Relationship with its NFAs?**

- Provide the value proposition for NFAs when they participate in a working relationship with GWI. Value to individual members working with GWI in the SDG space include but are not limited to the following:
  - ✓ Opportunities for professional and personal development working with UN agencies or nationally designated agencies for the implementation of SDG 4
  - ✓ Opportunity to develop critical – thinking and other skills and availability of on- the – job training
  - ✓ Opportunity for Leadership Skills development
  - ✓ Opportunity to meet and work with subject matter experts
  - ✓ Opportunity for high visibility, international exposure and interaction with global decision-makers in economic and human development
  - ✓ Opportunities for making contacts that will be useful in employment searches
  - ✓ Understanding of the green economy
  - ✓ Ability to design a sustainable career based on an understanding of green jobs

- ✓ Opportunity to make a measurable change in their communities.

For NFAs:

- ✓ Ability to partner with prestigious human development programs
  - ✓ Ability to create a niche for themselves in the international landscape of women's organizations and NGOs
  - ✓ Ability to recruit and retain new members
- Working Premise: Graduate women want to move into the space where they can take action – we've all talked about the issues and the failure of governments to enshrine women's and girls' rights in the laws of the land and societies that have resisted the implementation of rights and we have discussion fatigue. A working relationship with GWI can provide opportunities to its members to act in impactful ways.
  - Engagement with NFAs needs to start NOW. One example of engagement is to use the Discussions Network to talk about issues – not in an academic, theoretical way but to talk about the UN and what it's doing and what remains to be done – share the research completed in Phase I of this OD process to build knowledge and to build a connection between NFAs and GWI Headquarters.
  - Engagement also includes a discussion on localization of SDGs – on International Women's Day it would be effective to talk about the battle of sustainability being won and lost in the small and big cities.

#### Prerequisite 4:

**GWI Headquarters and NFAs have clarity about the expectations of funders and partner organizations, goals, strategies, deliverables, time tables, reporting and use of funds.**

Beyond the writing of a clearly understandable document/ agreement for a working relationship between GWI Headquarters and NFAs, what needs to take place? What does GWI need to consider?

What is the human dimension of this transaction? This is going to be a relationship not between organizations but between the people of these organizations.

Based on this premise, among other things, both parties need to be able to:

- Trust and have mutual respect
- Identify their relationship needs
- Discuss the challenges of the work ahead and to problem- solve together
- Rely on each other
- Understand shared success and risk

There is deep and thoughtful work to be done in the development of a working relationship between both parties.

Other information:

- GWI Young members are building a workshop to highlight and teach the localization of SDGs – they are SDG Ambassadors
- Young people need to be engaged in organizational decision-making
- Young people need to be engaged at the highest levels of an organization.
- GWI and its NFAs must proactively recruit and engage Young Members
- Intention works – if you want to change board dynamics, you must intentionally decide on how much of the board composition will be comprised of Young Members.
- GWI, until recently was the Chair of NGOCSW, Geneva and currently is the President of the UN NGO Committee on Human Rights – it is essential that members especially Young Members know about this because GWI is very close to the global entities that are working on human development around the world.
- Open Letters are an avenue to raise issues in NFA countries to the appropriate level at the UN. Unfortunately, when GWI does call on its NFAs for information on issues that the UN should be tackling, there is no response from the NFAs. There needs to be more engagement around this.



In the past when GWI has forwarded its own information on behalf of its NFAs, it has worked to create visibility for GWI and its NFAs with GWI's name attached to the resulting publication.

Next Meeting will take place on Thursday, March 3, 2022 and we will discuss Prerequisites 5 and 6 and given time, 7