

GWJ – Organizational Development (OD) Process

Phase II: Organizational Readiness Assessment

Meeting of Groups 2,3,4: Thursday, March 3, 2022

Discussion Notes

Organizational Readiness Prerequisites 5 and 8 were discussed:

Prerequisite 8 was discussed at this time because information generated through this meeting's discussion potentially stands to help the GWJ Board in its preparation for the 2022 AGM to be held in November.

Prerequisite 5:

In anticipation of building UN alliances and funding partnerships, GWJ Headquarters and its NFAs can begin now to create an organizational resume/profile that reflects their collective competencies and the ability to mobilize these.

Organizational profiles have multiple uses. In GWJ's case, we would like our external stakeholders including funders to know that we have the experience and skills to build capacity into ongoing implementation of SDG 4 in our NFA countries.

Discussion of concepts that should be included in the GWJ profile:

- Focus of Education
- Organizational size and reach
- NFA countries
- Our long history – founding story and the early years
- Why we continue to exist after 100 years
- The urgency of our work in the world
- Our Strategic Framework
- Strengths of our membership – our biggest asset
- Pathway to women's leadership – women as powerful /influential participants in changing the world – SDGs say that they depend on women's engagement and empowerment

- Leadership Goal isn't just aspirational – there are many women leaders within our membership in several fields and academic disciplines.

Discussion on how to identify the leaders within our midst:

- How do we get information on these women leaders in our midst?
- We cannot inventory member leaders because we cannot reach individual members.
- A survey would have to be sent to each NFA through the NFA President and CIR – GWI messages frequently do not get to the NFA leadership.
- NFA leadership is loathe to disclose member contact information because of privacy laws. An idea is to ask NFAs to inventory leadership within their respective NFAs by identifying leaders within broad categories – members in political leadership, etc.
- There are other women's organizations that have no trouble identifying their leaders and inventory of skills.
- Members may appreciate being identified as leaders and given international recognition.
- Our inability to glean information about our members may be viewed as a structural problem.
- We have a list of people who receive the newsletter – we need to look at other existing ways through which we can interact directly with our members and understand the profile of a given NFA.
- GWI Headquarters needs to have a closer relationship with its CIRs so that CIRs understand their role and value within the GWI system. The structural framework was reduced in recent years but structure does play an important role within organizations and should be reviewed. Currently

there are many CIRs who cannot explain GWI's importance at the national and international level.

An important but lesser-known feature of GWI's Organizational profile

Stacy shared the following profile- building activities she has been conducting on behalf of GWI:

- Submission of statements for CSW and the Human Rights Council. This year's CSW statement was co-signed by 14 other NGOs.
- In the last 5 years, GWI has been escalating its relationship with the UN – CSW NGO leaders
- Chairwoman of the NGOCSW, Geneva and its recent collaboration with NGOCSW, New York and NGO CSW, Vienna
- Chairwoman of Committee on Human rights, Geneva that supports the Human Rights Council in major ways
- Provision of civil society speakers from within our membership ranks during Human Rights Council meetings. For example, most recently, Ms. Ramita Suwal, President of Nepal spoke about distance learning.

These activities are posted in the newsletter and on social media but don't receive the attention they deserve from the GWI membership at large.

Through these activities, we have created a baseline of a relationships with UN agencies, which provides organizational credibility.

A Request: While GWI may know enough of the activities of its NFAs to infuse into the organizational profile, Steering Committee members are requested to send details of the recent activities/projects of their NFAs, that reinforce GWI's experience with building relationships, collaborations, conducting projects and providing accountability within the organization and to their beneficiaries and other external stakeholders.

Email Geeta at geetadesai@optonline.net

Prerequisite 8:

GWI Board can create an enabling structural framework that allows GWI to optimize this opportunity.

GWI's structural framework is comprised of the Constitution, the General Assembly, rules and regulations that apply to Swiss NGOs, internal formal rules and policies that govern its work and decision-making, Board and Committees, membership and formal relationships with its member NFAs, processes and procedures, communications, etc.

Structures ideally support an organization reach its goals. In some instances, unfortunately structures can become obstacles to progress.

We have to be alert to the fact that practices, especially historic beliefs and practices can sometimes be mistaken for iron – clad structures.

Organizational structures must be reviewed from time to time – particularly when an old organization like GWI is about to begin a new stage in its life – to ensure to the extent possible that they are enabling the accomplishment of goals.

Discussion on Headquarters and NFAs' needs to accomplish the identified goals:

The understanding being that if vital needs are identified, we can create the structure to respond to these needs.

- We need a Strategic Framework – while the mission is the “why” GWI exists, the strategies used by GWI should connect coherently within a Strategic Framework to make clear to external and internal stakeholders GWI's path to accomplishing its identified goals.
- Headquarters and NFAs need a closer relationship
- We need more effective, 2-way communications between Headquarters and NFAs
- We need mutual support between headquarters and NFAs
- Headquarters needs to interact more and differently with the CIRs.

- We need a common platform for NFAs to work together with each other and Headquarters
- We need a unifying structure that supports Teamwork. Structures in the past may have been divisive among NFAs as well as between Headquarters and NFAs
- We need a better decision-making process, whether it is the nominations Committee finalizing a slate of Board members and President or how the General Assembly votes at the present time
- We need to review our existing structures to see how they can be used more effectively in the accomplishment of goals.
- NFAs are important to headquarters and these should be strengthened.
- Headquarters needs to engage its NFAs more often than just once in three years which is at the AGM.
- The value of NFAs to the fulfillment of the organization's mission should be enshrined in official GWI documents and perhaps in the Constitution.
- Representation is important. As many NFAs as possible should be involved in as many UN and UN bodies' meetings as possible.
- We need to build knowledge within the GWI system, about the connectedness of the world, the relationships between national issues and global policies and the need on the part of members, particularly young members for global competence.
- Every new and existing member has a different set of reasons for joining GWI. We need to create a guide for members on how to get to the GWI benefits/value that they are seeking in particular – like a Concierge desk. Currently the pathways within the organization are not defined or visible.

- There are a growing number of women's organizations. Women have a choice of membership organizations. We need to differentiate GWI from its competition.

Other Information:

- Our Russia NFA continues to pursue its goals in education with programs for school children and its mission to help women in Science and Education. GWI supports and encourages our Russian NFA in these pursuits. GWI young members will be speaking at a conference at the Russian University.
- Finland's Steering Committee member has been posting on Facebook about GWI. The posts have been met with favor and displeasure. It is tricky to bring Finland back into the GWI fold because of the NFA's demographics- older members are not interested in international issues, although Finland does have an international group.
- The Swiss NFA has a similar situation as Finland. GWI could speak to its young member by writing to the Geneva branch. **The recommendation is that GWI write a good description of what GWI does with the UN and how that relates to members.**
- The Scottish NFA is becoming a smaller organization. The suggestion is that the Discussion Group Network be used by the CIRs to ask relevant questions and raise issues – a sort of peer discussion rather than a discussion that is started by GWI. **Also, we need to create a Fact sheet including explanation of acronyms.**
- Every NFA should have the GWI logo and link – GWI brings people together on the international level.
- Intention is important – the world -wide YWCA stated its intention to get young women on its board and was wildly successful – as were some of the national YWCAs.

There is a slight change in meeting dates and agenda. We will be discussing Prerequisite 9 at our next meeting. **Please see the cover email.**

After this meeting, we will be presenting a composite of the Organizational Readiness Assessment discussion results from all six Steering Committee Groups.

This will complete Phase II.

We will be consulting you on the path forward described in the Orientation Package and the most goal-oriented way for the OD Steering Committee to interact with external stakeholders in Phase III.