

GWI – Organizational Development (OD) Process

Phase II: Organizational Readiness Assessment

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

Discussion Notes

Note: Immediately below, I've included the Background, GWI's Response, Organizational Development Goals and Results So Far to keep us on track. Meeting Discussion Notes begin after this introduction.

Background:

The effects of the pandemic have been and continue to be devastating for the education of women and girls – setting back women's and girls' education by twenty years in many countries. The UN has urgently called for acceleration in the implementation of the SDGs.

GWI's Response:

To support this acceleration in implementation by adding capacities into the ongoing implementation efforts of UN agencies and nationally designated SDG agencies.

This response is based on GWI's understanding that graduate women have the skills and competencies to respond to capacity needs identified by UN agencies and nationally designated agencies.

Organizational Development Goals:

- 1) To make a measurable difference in the implementation of SDG 4 in our NFA countries by bringing together GWI Headquarters and NFAs to work with UN agencies, national focal points and global decision – makers*
- 2) To work with global funders to develop funding for GWI and its participating NFAs to carry out implementation activities.*

Organizational Development Process Results So Far

Research on the state of implementation of SDG4 and capacity needs of UN agencies and nationally designated agencies, conducted by OD Steering

Committee members in their respective countries, has shown that there are six categories of needs:

- *Building Awareness about the SDGs*
- *Outreach to communities and vulnerable populations*
- *Conducting Community Dialogues*
- *Providing Training and Support based on templates that already exist – not reinventing the wheel.*
- *Policy Review and Development*
- *Data Collection.*

GWl believes that graduate women are eminently qualified to respond to these needs.

Meeting Discussion

During this Phase of its Organizational Development process, GWl is assessing its readiness to carry out its intended work.

The Organizational Readiness Assessment is:

- rooted in looking ahead rather than looking back at the organization's decisions and actions. We honor the past and look to the future.
- a process through which GWl can envision and build a new chapter in its organizational life
- based on nine (9) organizational readiness prerequisites (necessary conditions) that must be met in order to be considered ready
- a discussion that is not so much a debate about the prerequisites themselves as it is a discussion about which actions need to be taken in each system (part) of the organization, to meet the prerequisites.

The first two Prerequisites were discussed at this meeting.

Prerequisite 1:

GWl (needs) Leadership that has:

a) Knowledge of the global social- economic space within which GWI operates.

b) Ability to negotiate and work with UN Agencies, Global Decision-Making Bodies and Funders on a multi-year basis.

c) Ability to manage a global organization.

d) Ability to create a united organizational culture of work that is outcomes -based.

- This prerequisite can be broken down into two parts: the type of leadership and the culture that will enable the leadership to flourish and in turn the organization.
- Organizational Culture, comprised of the values, attitudes and beliefs of the board, staff and members, can be a driving and resisting force for organizational goals.

How do we attract, nominate and select the leadership we need?

The following suggestions were made:

- Write a Vision Statement that envisions what the world will look like when graduate women, guided by GWI's organizational values, use their leadership and skills and competencies in the implementation of SDGs
- Determine which values will guide our work. Write a value statement. Build a culture based on these values. Values including but not limited to:
 - Commitment to the education of women and girls
Measurable work and outcomes
 - Knowledge and its continuous learning
 - Like – minded and mission-based partnerships within and outside the organization
 - Empowerment
 - Working together
 - Respect for Diversity leading to Inclusion and Representation (young people, LGBTQ, etc.

- Cultural Sensitivity and a Human Rights Approach
 - Excellence in management
 - Openness to new ideas and innovations
 - Accountability to all stakeholders
 - Transparency
- Building a culture means that these values are embedded in all of GWI's work, interactions with internal and external stakeholders, including the beneficiaries of its work, its intentions and actions.
 - Use these values to guide job descriptions for the organization's leadership.
 - Prescriptive work also needs to take place and should flow from GWI's Goals. Prescriptive work includes but is not limited to: writing job descriptions that reflect the roles and responsibilities of the board including the President, nominations committee and its search for candidates nominations process; orientation training of the nominations Committee as well as elected leadership.
 - The GWI board could potentially include representatives of global-decision-making bodies, funders etc. who would use their influence in GWI's best interests. Successful international NGOs have a mix of members and external stakeholders. Board to discuss.
 - GWI should have Succession Plan so that there is continuity between administrations that ensures that the organization's work proceeds without interruption. GWI Board should start embedding a Succession Plan in their nominations process starting now so that the slate of Board Members starting in December of 2021 – January 2022 includes their successors for the next triennium
 - NFAs should be encouraged to have succession plans also.

- An idea to facilitate seamless succession is for the board to begin a discourse now with NFAs about members who could potentially serve on the GWI Board and to begin training these members for Board positions.
- A way to be inclusive in the composition of the Board is to have Vice Presidents from different regions. In the world-wide YWCA there usually are more than one candidate from a region- number of candidates allowed to stand for election may depend on the populations of the region. Members from each region vote within their region. Board is then composed of regional representatives. Incentive: The electorate may be inspired to vote knowing that they will vote a candidate(s) who will represent them. This is also a way for elected Board members to feel a sense of responsibility in representing their respective regions. A representative board will also be a Board that is more knowledgeable about the challenges faced by all GWI regions.
- NFAs will be more willing to recruit suitable candidates when they understand that it's a matter of representation from their region.
- Technology plays an important role in attracting qualified internal and external candidates to GWI. Elected Board should be trained in the use of multiple technologies that GWI uses.
- We should ask the VP for governance to peruse all our governance documents to make sure that there are no structural barriers to carrying out the work we intend to in this next chapter of GWI's organizational life.
- An example of a structural barrier that exists currently is the decision-making process. It takes a long time to make a decision that involves the General Assembly – too long if the decision needs to be made in a short amount of time. We should change this without jeopardizing organizational integrity.

How do we permeate this culture throughout the GWI?

The following suggestions were made:

- Leadership embodies the values and drives the culture by example
- Inspire our NFAs. Communications need to be inspirational
- All communications and actions should always promote organizational values.
- Relate strategies and expected outcomes to values

Prerequisite 2:

GWl headquarters and NFAs are committed to working with UN and other agencies to build capacities into their ongoing programs to expand these programs in NFA countries.

GWl has a loose, distributed structure. NFAs and GWl Headquarters do not traditionally work together on specific projects

How do we get the NFAs to Commit to working together with GWl Headquarters?

- Structure can frequently facilitate a situation like this. A document (it doesn't have to be an MOU) that lays out the value proposition for NFAs, shared benefits, responsibilities, activities, funding that NFAs will receive for these activities, could be a starting point of the "commitment" dialogue between GWl Headquarters and NFAs.
- Webinars by UN Representatives would educate NFAs – Building general knowledge about the UN throughout GWl this is a good idea – as is knowledge of the work that is being done by women in SDG implementation.
- Commitment and furtherance of commitment depends in large part on communications between GWl Headquarters and NFAs. Communication is

critical. Communication is not about telling people – we must make sure that NFAs have received, understood and disseminated the message.

- Give people a reason to work together
- Commitment is also more likely if Board Members personally telephone members they know within the NFAs to spread the word about GWI's next exciting Chapter and GWI's intention to work with UN agencies, global decision-makers and funders to expand the implementation of SDG 4 and to develop funding for these activities for NFA and GWI Headquarters.
- The above is a tried- and- true method of activating and engaging the membership – personal contact, understanding and empathy, emphasizing the value that GWI members bring to the world and the value of working together will go a long way in facilitating commitment.
- We should look into networking grants and the role that they can play in bringing the organization together on the same page.
- Curiously enough there may be situations in which a group of members of an NFA may be interested in working with GWI Headquarters even if the NFA leadership is not. How can we reach these groups/ What would our interaction with the NFA look like?

Looking a bit ahead.

The fact that GWI has at least 3 NFAs have consultative status with ECOSOC will be an advantage when we approach UN agencies because in their status application, these NFAs have been vetted by the UN – this bolsters our organizational profile.