Minutes of the GWI Board 2022-25 Meeting held on 9th December 2024, 4pm Central European Time (CEST), zoom

Twenty Fourth Board Meeting

Attendees: President Patrice Wellesley Cole (PWC); VP Advocacy Shaila Rao Mistry (SRM); VP Education, Shirley Gillett (SG); VP Membership, Meera Bondre (MB); Treasurer, Karoline Dorsch (KD); GWI Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara (SDL); VP Fund Raising Maria Fernanda (MF);
Apologies:
Meeting called to an order at 4**pm CEST**.

1. Welcome: PWC welcomed all to the twenty fourth Board Meeting.

2. Conflict of Interest: NONE

3. Adoption of Agenda: KD moved agenda and seconded by MB

4. Adoption of minutes: Minutes of 2nd October proposed by SG and adopted by PWC.

5. **CSW69 delegates and virtual events-** Shirley, Shaila and Stacy: SRM updated that for delegates she sent 20 suggestions. She tried to see that every NFA should get representation. In furtherance to this SDL confirmed that 41 applications had been received by the deadline and many others were received after the deadline; all Board members had the opportunity to vote on all candidates. And votes were tallied according to Board votes; she confirmed that an analysis was done of the number of members that those NFA's have. And based on the number of members that they have, Patrice made the final decision to have three or two or just one representation by the NFA. It was discussed that the GWI UN Reps already have UN grounds badges and whether they should be included in the 20 maximum; PWC makes final determination. SG mentioned that there should be 23 representations and that those three with badges should use them to free up three more places for NFA applicants.. She asked about the 3 UN representatives holding UN badges.

6. **Next steps after voting on Zambia bid for 35th Triennial GA** - Stacy and Shirley: SG said she had sent the board a report on all her steps to secure Zambia and communicate with them in particular Annie (GWZCIR). There had been

many email exchanges. PWC asked SG, to write to Annie about the fact that the board has voted in favor of Zambia. SDL mentioned that the next critical step in the regard would be formalities should be complete. And Zambia members need to decide the venue, cost of the venue for maximum number of seats. And the venue for the general assembly and the days and how much does that cost? How many people will it hold? The food and beverage, the lunches, the coffee breaks. The board needs to give them how many rooms are going to be needed for the workshops. Because they have to get together a cost so that the finance committee can meet and make a budget for the entire conference. And then Board have to look at the number of people that will come and put that into the register, to the overall budget and decide the registration fee. And then registration can be opened. She further mentioned that GWI should know that the deposit to be paid for the venue, and without actually opening the registration it cannot be paid. She mentioned the structure of Local Arrangement Committee, that it needs a president, it needs a secretary, it needs a treasurer, so that they can maintain complete order and there cannot be delay and overspending. SDL to revise LAC member roles and distribute to all; SG to distribute to Zambia. There will be zoom meetings with the LAC and the Board. SRM mentioned about the critical part of the transportation from the Airport etc. MB mentioned that the deadline should be given to set up their LAC. There are subcommittees and with at least two or three members on their subcommittees. And if possible, one or two of members of the board could be on their LAC. Especially like cultures are different. So one or two of board members would be on their committee to sort out these things. MF raised the point of providing for child care at the conference. She further mentioned that it is very important, if we want to promote membership among young people, among people that may be in childbearing age and do require, and also because maybe doing a long trip from wherever they are from, they are going to bring the children. So maybe having someone among the committee members that can look into having child care for the conference will be a good thing. SDL explained that the FinCom is responsible for creating the GA/conference budget and that they cannot do so until they have the costs from Zambia because they need to set the registration fee; she explained the urgency of opening registration so there is cash flow for deposits.

7. **Legal and Governance and Membership updates - Ujwala and Meera** :
   Legal and Governance: US mentioned about advocacy committee, that

Previously, it was not in existence. So we have to form a new one. For new committees, we have to make some provisions in the GWI Constitution as well. Okay. Because in GWI Constitution, it is not mentioned that how Advocacy committee is to be formed. t. Who should be the member, who would be the member, and, whether they will be nominated, whether they will be elected, whether Nomination Committee will come into play, what would be the position, that we have to see. Regarding proclamation, she said that it can be reframed.

Membership updates: MB updated that about the membership letter and the information that would be there in the letter. She requested all the Board members that if they want to contribute in the Membership News Letter, anything which is very important and should reach to the every member, they should write it briefly, it should be very short. She further informed the Board that in YMN letter by Sudha, Sudha has mentioned about the separate committee requirement of YMN. MB asked to US, that whether YMN should be given separate committee status in News Letter. or not. MB further submitted that, although Sudha has been enjoying that status being here, as if she was a vice president of YMN, she was given an independent chance to speak about YMN in the board, but it is not a committee yet and all such networks will be called just networks. SRM commented that it should be continued as it is, as a network. MA submitted her view that it should be maintained as a YMN network. PWC supported the view of YMN network. US submitted that there is no provision for YMN Committee, YMN is a part and parcel of membership. It has not emerged as an independent thing. It is applicable to Independent Members network also, these are just networks.

8. **Treasurer's update** – Karoline: KD briefly informed that, nothing much has happened with the finances and bank accounts. The invoices for the dues have been sent out. She informed that she has received few requests for dues alleviations. That will be discussed at the next FINCOM meeting. SRM asked that if KD has some budgetary information about the Triennial conference, can be used when it is needed. US asked regarding the invoices for dues sent to India, which is 11 CHF this year and the same was 7 CHF last year. US requested to make gradual increase in dues like 9CHF this year and can be increased to 11 CHF next year. KD mentioned that the request should be sent on official letter and with rational behind it. US mentioned that we are already

struggling with the membership and this raise can affect the membership. MB mentioned that India has two affiliates and one is in the process.

9. **Projects and Education**- Mildred and Shirley: **Projects:** MB updated that nine grants have been approved by the Hegg Hoffet Committee for professional recertification or language courses for Hegg Hoffet applicants; four have been paid. SDL mentioned that the current process for paying the grantee courses is inefficient noting that no payments are made to the grantees and must be made directly to the institution; each institution has a different payment platform and getting access to pay is complicated and takes her a lot of time often with no positive result. H. H. Committee will be discussing further how to pay for these courses because of the payment systems. Regarding the Dr. Mehta Seed Fund, she mentioned that as per her information no one has applied so far. She suggested that we could tie that to a competition and then encourage them to apply. and best can be selected. It would be give good publicity. The Project Development Committee will be discussing this. As per MA's information Turkey completed their activities for the 2024-25 ERP ID projects. Final report is awaited.

Education: SG updated that in the last EduCom meeting, they are doing three products, on the concept of the topic of child brides. And one is a written paper collated by Marianne Wariach. They have all given material from their own countries. They are going to emphasise the role of culture. To do a workshop at the next Triennium she interviewed with a Bangladesh person, whose mother got married at 13 and she has given interview to SG. And she may be coming to Zambia. So she will be able to be part of the workshop. SG further updated about CSW that she worked with Lucia and she got FEMU to co-sponsor, And the topic is anti-feminisms and with emphasis on child brides. She had to write the abstract. all of the first week spots had gone. And the Mexicans said they were leaving at the end of the first week. But so she didn't pick the Tuesday of the second week, because we're on the wait list, she said that it would probably go to virtual. SG made a point for setting up of scholarship for one or two persons to travel to the triennium, i.e. travel grant. PWC appreciated the idea of travel grant.

10.5. **Advocacy Updates Shaila :**

SRM updated us that she had represented GWI at a CSW UN meeting with the UN Chair from Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Alawasi, and was invited to intervene. She presented three questions on women's and girls' advancement and requested his support.
She mentioned that she would be organizing a meeting to discuss continuing work on the civil society event at the UNEC, including workshops, oral statements, written statements, etc. She also mentioned the AWB and future opportunities. B+30 report is almost done !
Regarding the Proclamation, she reported that she would be presenting the most recent shortened version incorporating the requested amendments.
SRM informed that she is appointed to a very high-level Environmental

Committee in the US for decarbonization and clean air and emissions. SRM updated the Resolution Committee that as an advocacy chair for the resolutions, the climate is one of the most significant areas they discussed. They are ready to send out the Call for Resolution. All procedural work will be done online, such as the calls for resolutions, receiving and screening resolutions, and approval. Work on the resolutions will be done before our in-person Triennial.

She mentioned the three most critical issues impacting women and girls nationally and globally: 1. Ban on women entering into midwifery or nursing in Afghanistan. 2. Title IX, which protects women's sports in schools, etc. The males who are transitioning are coming into the space of girls and women. 3. The endangerment of children's health regarding gender assignment, discussed in schools, children are being subjected to gender reassignment.

She informed me that she attended the COPS Summit in Baku virtually and can report in further detail. She further mentioned that she would like to participate in the Independent Women Network meetings. Requested membership to send information

Fund Raising: MF asked if board could confirm that for the L'Oréal Fund application, Bina Roy Development Program could be used as GWI's foundation? She also mentioned that she would need information regarding GWI's own finance of the last two years. SDL will provide information to MF, needed for the L'Oréal Fund application. MF further sought Board's approval in order to explore with L'Oréal, the possibility of, for example, having a merchandise that could potentially be a revenue stream. She sought approval of the Board for getting into this project and find a corporate partner with whom GWI can move forward with idea of the merchandise. SG and SRM asked about how much revenue could be generated by this project. SRM mentioned that all new ideas should be considered, but considered carefully. And compare like organizations, because GWI is not as big as a UN. KD mentioned that some more information and comparative study is required for giving opinion on this issue. MF was asked to give more information in the next Board Meeting.

11.SDL presented the following office activities under AOB:

Membership:

Distributed and monitored Circular 3/2024 calling for the number of members per NFA. Deadline to respond was 10 December. About 2/3 of the NFAs responded. This who have not are being contacted individually. Such as Fiji – 50 ; India – 349; Singapore – 96; France – 120

Participated in the Spanish-Speaking Culture Bridge meeting on 12 November. Created promotion plan, monitored attendance and held CFUW webinar 28 November on GBV. About 60 participants.

Produced flyer and promoted the YMN Mentorship Series final installment of 2024 on 25 November; excellent event with guest speaker from Mexico who produced an award-winning short film on violence against Mexican journalists. There were about 18 attendees; we need more because speakers are very good.

Worked with CFUW members who are putting together the Dues Consideration Fund; they have decided to rethink their approach; the intent is to have funds available to GWI to use for operating purposes when NFA numbers decrease due to such things as natural disaster, war or other instability; they are reviewing now how GWI will access these funds NOT the NFAs themselves.

Distributed Call for Applications circular for CSW69; 41 applications were received; acceptance and decline letters have been sent out. Uploaded two parallel event applications. she aims to release a press release to announce the PEs distributed later this week. It's written but needs final proofing.

Launched the 2025 Rose Sedgwick Fellowship; no applications yet but lots of calls and inquiries.

Currently have 53 IMs for 2024; up 10 since 2023; several people have recently inquired; hopefully we will reach 60 IMs

Tonight, she is attending the Swiss NFA Geneva section holiday dinner.

Projects:
No applications received to date for the SDG 4 project Call for Applications. BRPID 2024-2025 project midterm report template is due mid-January. Turkey reported that they have already successfully completed their project Enlighten your Hometown: Enlighten our Homeland; they will submit their final report rather than a midterm.

Spent considerable amount of time on making the Hegg Hoffet grantees payments; the process of how GWI collects the information on how to pay a grant recipient needs to be reviewed; regulations of the HH program prevent us from paying the grantee directly but collecting the pay links to the various universities is a bug challenge and takes a lot of time.

Advocacy:
16 Days of Activism against GBV; successful

She participated in United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) event on education for older persons; since the event I have received numerous inquiries about GWI; a new target group in the UN training sector. Thanks to Patrice and Shirley for attending.

Participated in three events with the Under Secretary Special Advisor in Genocide; events were centred around hate speech and the launch handbook for journalists and also a breakdown of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; all events very good and I will be writing more about it

She was invited to attend a UNESCO meeting in Geneva; the framework of the meeting was to start a dialog with NGOs in Geneva and how UNESCO can better interact with them; very positive results from this roundtable discussion. Since the last Board meeting, released several Update newsletters and have produced social media campaigns for World Toilet Day, International Anti-Corruption Day and Human Rights Day along with the 16 Days

Vanguard tells her they have elevated my request to directly deposit our Kathy Horvat beneficiary funds; the new contact has agreed to a phone meeting to discuss further. The issue remains that we are a Swiss organization with no way to open an USA IRA account as per Vanguard.

Have worked diligently with Restrive on the redesign of the website. She demonstrated the new GWI website and it was well received; Board wants group photo on top of Board page.

Wrap Up: PWC thanked to all the Board members and gave her good wishes for New Year 2025.

Next 24th Board Meeting is fixed on Monday 9th January 2025 @ 5pm CEST

Meeting adjourned: 5:57:14pm CEST

Minutes drafted by US