

# International Anglican Women's Network Steering Group

## Report of meeting at St Andrew's House, London, 7 to 13 November 2013

The International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN) Steering Group members present were: Elaine Cameron, Scotland; Meenakshi Das, North India; Pumla Titus, Southern Africa; Claudette Kigeme, Burundi; Kim Robey, The Episcopal Church; Revd Margaret Mary Dempster, Canada; Elenor Lawrence, West Indies (from 8 November). The Coordinator, Ann Skamp, was too unwell to travel from Australia. Anglican Communion Networks' Coordinator and Women's Desk Officer Terrie Robinson supported the meeting.

### Aims and objectives of the meeting

To increase IAWN's ability to serve as a voice for women across the Anglican Communion, the Steering Group aimed to strengthen its own ability to work together (this being the present Steering Group's first face-to-face meeting), and therefore increase its support to the Network's Provincial Links in their engagement on gender justice issues.

Specific objectives were to:

1. identify the main *challenges* met by IAWN, and decide how these may be addressed
2. identify methods to support implementation of *Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) Resolutions 13.31, 14.33 and 15.07*
3. decide whether to have *one global or more regional meetings* for the Provincial Links
4. consider improvements for (a) global IAWN *communications*, and (b) *fundraising strategies*.

### 1 (a) Challenges for Steering Group members

Mutual challenges were identified as, firstly, communication with Provincial Links and with the wider Communion; secondly, lack of strong support, and consequently little financial support, from several Provinces.

To address these challenges, the Steering Group will take a number of steps:

- The IAWN Steering Group Coordinator will write to the Primates of those Provinces where there is no active Provincial Link to ask for a new nomination.
- The Steering Group will compile a leaflet describing what IAWN does, its strengths, and how global networking through IAWN feeds into the international agenda of the Anglican Communion and adds value to local grass roots activity.
- To ensure that the wider Communion is increasingly aware of IAWN, the Steering Group will disseminate news more regularly via the Anglican Communion New Service (ACNS).
- The Steering Group will send monthly updates to the Provincial Links.
- The Steering Group will urgently seek a Provincial Link for the Spanish speaking dioceses of The Episcopal Church and co-opt a Spanish speaking member for the Steering Group who will keep in touch with the Provincial Links of the Communion's hispanophone Provinces.

## **(b) Challenges for Provincial Links**

Women's economic empowerment and gender equality are the biggest challenges common to all. Reports gathered from the Provinces indicate that there is not yet equal participation of women in decision-making bodies around the Communion.

- In pursuance of ACC Resolution 13.31, progress needs to be measured, so the Steering Group recommends gender audits, or updated audits. The gap between the passing of Resolutions and their implementation was noted.

There is also an urgent, common concern about violence against women and girls, and the need to involve men and boys as well as women and girls in addressing this.

- The Steering Group will encourage Provincial Links to circulate the booklet *Anglicans and the 16 Days* widely in their Provinces ([http://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/resources/docs/16\\_days\\_resource\\_2013.pdf](http://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/resources/docs/16_days_resource_2013.pdf)). Articulating a strategic, scripturally-grounded approach is important.
- To enhance collaboration with other Networks in the Anglican Communion, the Revd Margaret Dempster will act as a contact person with the Environmental and Refugee & Migrant Networks; Elaine Cameron with the International Anglican Family Network.

## **2 Supporting ACC resolutions**

### **ACC 13.31**

The IAWN Report to the May 2014 Standing Committee will support a call for gender audits. A document will be prepared on gender budgeting to increase understanding of the gender budgeting clause in ACC 13.31.

### **ACC 15.07: Gender based and domestic violence**

The clauses of the resolution were discussed.

- The Primates' Letter to the Churches regarding gender based violence (<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/communion/primates/>) continues to be an important tool and still needs promoting. A critical task is to promulgate an understanding of gender justice as a Gospel issue since it involves right relationship between men and women, and ultimately right relationship with God.
- Regarding clause 3 of ACC 15.07 concerning the training of clergy and other ministers, Steering Group members will contact their designated Provincial Links before the end of February 2014 and encourage them to contact theological seminaries in their Province to ask if work is being done in this area or could be developed.
- Terrie Robinson will contact Provincial Children's/Youth officers to survey availability of resources for children concerning respectful relationship.

### **ACC 14.33 Trafficking and gender based violence**

The Steering Group reflected that the church often has a culture of not seizing opportunities to associate with secular initiatives. Where Anglicans are engaged, there can be a 'loneliness' in the work, so networking is important. Steering Group members will gather and share information about provincial initiatives in relation to trafficking.

### **3 IAWN meetings /gatherings**

The Steering Group had asked Provincial Links to indicate whether they preferred a global or a regional Provincial Links meeting. Regional meetings emerged as the favourite. Three possibilities emerged and will be explored further.

- *2014: A meeting of Provincial Links from Wales, Ireland, England, Scotland, and Jerusalem & the Middle East* to focus on issues relevant to their context.
- *2015: A South Asia Conference* for Provincial Links and resource people from Ceylon, Church of North India, Church of South India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar to focus on women's economic empowerment.
- *2016 Lusaka, Zambia, pre ACC-16: A meeting for African Provincial Links.* A concept paper will be developed for this with a likely focus on women's economic empowerment and gender based violence.

### **4 (a) Global communications**

Jan Butter, Anglican Communion Director for Communications, asked challenging questions: what does an audience need to hear about IAWN? What do they watch/listen to/read?

- Jan encouraged the group to continue producing the newsletter so long as feedback was positive. The Steering Group will send a check-list for suggested distribution to the Provincial Links.
- As the new Anglican Communion website, within which IAWN will have a presence, will not be up and running for some months, it was agreed that the existing website should be brought up to date.
- On the new Anglican Communion website, the IAWN web pages will be the Network's shop front and have an interface with Facebook, Twitter and other social media mechanisms. Two people will be responsible for content of the IAWN web pages.

### **(b) Finances**

Mr Tim Trimble, Anglican Communion Director for Finance, discussed fund-raising and management with the Steering Group.

- The Steering Group will produce a brochure to accompany general fundraising activities by end February 2014, and will draft the text for an annual letter to Primates, requesting small donations.

### **Governance**

It was agreed that Elaine Cameron would serve as interim coordinator until Ann Skamp is ready to return to the role. The next elections for the membership of the Steering Group are scheduled for 2015. Consideration will be given to a new election pattern which will guarantee partial overlap of new and existing members.

### **Acknowledgements**

The members of the Steering Group gathered each day for prayer and attended a Eucharist at Lambeth Palace where they were welcomed by Archbishop Justin Welby and had an

opportunity to meet with the Revd Rachel Carnegie who will take up the post of Co-Director of the Anglican Alliance in January 2014. They also met members of the Church of England's Transformations Group comprising senior ordained women. On Remembrance Sunday, the members attended the Act of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey.

In order to learn about a particular area of mission and outreach in an urban context, the Steering Group visited the Church Army's Day Centre in the Marylebone area of London. Day Centre Team Leader, Ms Valentina Ines La Mela, explained the work and ethos of the Project which successfully empowers vulnerable homeless women to live independently.

The Steering Group was assisted in its theological reflection by the Revd Dr Elizabeth Koepping, Senior Lecturer on World Christianity and Religious Studies in the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. Dr Koepping made a presentation to the Group on domestic violence within Christian families based on her research and work experience in different parts of the work.

Dr Sally Thompson, coordinator of the International Anglican Family Network, spoke to the Group about the Network's current priorities: violence in the family; promoting the role of churches in helping families overcome obstacles to birth registration.

The Steering Group is sincerely grateful to everyone who contributed time and expertise to their meeting.

#### **Press releases**

The Steering Group sent out two press releases from its meeting. These are on-line at:

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2013/11/anglican-communion-womens-network-celebrate-wcc-appointment.aspx>

and:

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2013/11/communion-told-anglican-womens-organisations-not-sufficiently-valued.aspx>.

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