



Report of the International Anglican Women's Network to the Standing Committee September 2015

The International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN) has sought over the year to bring voice, encouragement and support to the many contributions made around the Anglican Communion to end and prevent gender-based violence and other injustices borne by women as a result of gender inequality. We continue to note that work towards gender justice is needed in all our communities and that neither the level of development or wealth of a society protects its women from discrimination or threat of the consequences of gender inequality. We also note that the church – and in particular the Anglican Communion – has made significant commitments and contributions in this area and has a vital and ongoing role to play in the universal challenge of progressing gender justice.

The appointment by the Standing Committee of the Revd Terrie Robinson as Director for Women in Church and Society was received with much joy and delight. IAWN recognized this appointment as a significant commitment and prioritisation by Standing Committee to the Communion-wide work for women to enjoy equal, safe participation in daily life and decision-making. Benefits have already been experienced, such as, Terrie's involvement in the Faith Movement for Gender Justice and bringing opportunities for members of IAWN to participate in an online consultation and access resources.

IAWN Provincial Links bring an encompassing overview of both activities and challenges across the Communion and continue to be the focus of the work of the IAWN Steering Group. Over the year the Steering Group has had five Skype meetings to plan for:

Newsletters: The January 2015 Newsletter was a joint newsletter with the International Anglican Family Network called "Church Responses to Human Trafficking". This initiative reflects the commitment of the Steering Group to find opportunities to work with other Networks of the Communion to highlight shared concerns. Edited by Elaine Cameron, IAWN Newsletters can be found online at <http://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/newsletters.aspx>

Website: The IAWN section of the Anglican Communion website has been upgraded and the Steering Group is working to increase its impact. Steering Group members are currently contacting Provincial Links to review their provincial page within the IAWN site and provide updated information. In addition to IAWN's email listserv, the Network has a 'closed' Facebook group with nearly 500 members.

Financial support: Letters have been sent to each Province to request that consideration be given to include financial support for IAWN in their provincial budgeting. While some provinces do already provide some financial support to IAWN and Steering Group members to attend activities, the Steering Group is seeking a more stable financial situation on which to base future planning.

Election of a new Steering Group: This will take place in early 2016 with the new Steering Group coming into office following ACC16.

Among the activities in which IAWN members have participated, the stand-out events for this past year include the following:

- Members of the Network continue to share matters of concern from all parts of the Anglican Communion and respond with supportive and loving prayer for each other.
- In September 2014, the Provincial Links for the Church of England, Church of Ireland, Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church in Wales met for a three-day conference in London. This, their first joint meeting, proved very supportive to these Provincial Links and led to interesting possibilities for future action to promote gender equality in the British Isles. Via Skype, the participants connected with Shafeeqa Dawani in the Diocese of Jerusalem who described some of the challenges for Christian and Muslim women and men living in the West Bank, and the devastation and trauma - especially to women and children - caused by the Israeli bombardment of Gaza. She asked for prayer and for Anglicans to visit the Holy Land to encounter Palestinian people and experience life with them.
- IAWN members in Canada held a Human Trafficking Conference on 14 November 2014 in British Columbia with a range of speakers. See www.anglicanjournal.com/articles/conference-targets-ugly-reality-of-human-trafficking. Steering Group member Margaret Dempster has organized an eBook of the conference, online at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8pr8YNVw7-WdmIYYTVwNEs5aEk/view>. Planning is underway for a further event in Canada with a focus on Indigenous Women: 'Staying Safe', 26 September 2015.
- UNCSW 59: IAWN was once again enriched by this year's gathering of an Anglican Communion delegation of women by the Anglican Communion Office for the UN for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW). This is a unique opportunity for Anglican women across the Communion to share stories, achievements, concerns and challenges and to bring their faith and influence to this international event. Delegates are encouraged to pass on this experience back home in their own provinces. See <http://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/newsletters.aspx> for IAWN's May 2015 newsletter.
- IAWN South Asia Regional Conference: This will be held 5-9 October 2015 at the Henry Martyn Institute, Hyderabad, South India for key workers in women's ministries in the Churches of South India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Ceylon and Myanmar, including IAWN's designated Provincial Links for the region. Organized with the assistance of Terrie Robinson, the Conference will provide a forum in which participants can consider the full, equal and safe participation by women in their churches and society.

IAWN's Steering Group is currently planning for the Network's contribution to the programme for ACC-16. The Anglican Consultative Council has formerly passed resolutions concerning gender justice in the areas of eliminating gender-based violence, equal participation in decision-making, and human trafficking. IAWN will continue seeking to track the impact of these resolutions and commitments, and looks forward to conversations with ACC members so that together we can discern how we all, as the Anglican Communion, can witness to and actively effect the Kingdom of God with respect to gender justice.

IAWN acknowledges with deep appreciation the gracious and encouraging support of Terrie Robinson and her enormous commitment to our Network.

Ann Skamp
IAWN Steering Group Coordinator