

## Feedback from the Independent Review Panel Review Round April 2014

Berlin, 11 June 2014

Dear Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda,

Thank you for submitting your accountability report to the Charter's Independent Review Panel for assessment. As in previous years we found that the quality of reports is generally improving, demonstrating greater institutional commitment and more evidence that mechanisms are working in practice. Before providing individual feedback on your organisation's report, allow us however to highlight three areas of general concern:

### **1.) *Accountability is a pro-active tool to develop and deliver on key value propositions of an organisation (3.5)***

Accountability is all too often perceived as a defensive tool, when it is really a mechanism to pro-actively define what an organisation wants to be held accountable for i.e. delineating key parameter of its identity and drive organisational development accordingly. The profile disclosure 3.5 looks like a rather technical question on how the report is compiled; but it covers a lot more by asking: how do you use the report as an opportunity for a cross functional systematic and critical reflection on how accountability is best implemented and underpins the legitimacy and quality of your organisation's work. Please describe under 3.5 how you use the reporting process to embed accountability into your organisation. Against this background Members are also strongly encouraged to place the Charter logo prominently on their website and to further link to the Charter website, so that stakeholders know what to hold you accountable against.

### **2.) *Complaints Handling Mechanisms (NGO2)***

Having a fully functioning complaints handling mechanism in place is the only Minimum Standard for Charter Members so far. The Panel is very concerned about rather slow progress by many Charter Members to comply with this. We have therefore decided to ask the Charter Board to look into implementing a timeline policy for compliance. In our view the leeway should be no longer than two to maximum three years after a Minimum Standard has been adopted. You find examples of well-functioning complaints handling mechanisms in the Good Practice document on the Charter website, capturing good examples from this and previous reporting rounds.

### **3.) *Succinctness and communication quality***

There is a danger that accountability standards develop a life of their own and become increasingly complex and detached. We have noted that Charter reports tend to get longer without necessarily providing more relevant information. It is important however to use these reports to actively communicate internally and externally how accountability is an integral part of your organisation and strengthens the quality of your work. In order for these reports to be read, we suggest that they should have a maximum of 40 pages. For each GRI indicator it is sufficient to report three things:

- a) Do you have policies and processes in place to address the issue?
- b) Do you have evidence that it is embedded in systematic practice?
- c) Is there evidence to show that this has led to improved quality of work?

Sometimes the Panel asks for more information. We are aware of this and try to limit it. But with all questions we encourage you strongly to be as succinct as possible, and take the above three parameters as guidance. Also try to avoid repetition and where illustrations are given, please keep these brief. Plain language and a minimum of acronyms are also welcome. Organisations who wish to merge their accountability report with the annual report are

encouraged to additionally provide a separate and more reflective addendum relating to the Charter if the annual reports do not embrace that due to a desire to be more promotional.

Organisation-specific feedback to World YWCA:

*The report can be seen as a good first attempt at reporting against the GRI reporting format of the INGO Accountability Charter and is mostly complete. Improvements should be made in the coming years in regard to handing in the report on time, the environmental indicators which are not yet reported on, anti-corruption trainings for staff members (SO3), and how World YWCA manages its impact on local communities (SO1).*

*It is important that Charter Members use this report to mainstream a culture of accountability across all functions and regions of the organisation and give account to key stakeholders. Against this background, YWCA is asked to define precisely who the internal and external target audience for this report is and display information more user friendly e.g. use less acronyms and ensure the reader is involved in its reporting and considerations on accountability as a driver for organisational development at YWCA.*

*YWCA only reports for the World Office in Geneva and states that all 108 Members are encouraged to use the YWCA Standards of Good Management and Accountability based on the original Charter commitments. The organisation honestly reports that the goal for compliance is only 70% until 2019. Although the Panel is aware of the scarce resources at the disposal of the World Office, it strongly recommends investing resources into (i) reviewing if the internal Standard reflects key Charter requirements and (ii) using Charter membership and reporting to speed up accountability compliance among all Members.*

*World YWCA has a [subpage](#) that informs about its membership in the INGO Accountability Charter. However, all Full Charter Members are asked to put the Charter logo prominently on their homepage and provide a link to the Charter's website. Only if key stakeholders know of the organisation's **accountability commitments**, can they hold it to account accordingly.*

*The **GAP Analysis Table** at the end of this document provides an overview of the promises made in this report. With the next report World YWCA should provide an updated GAP Table, informing about progress in regard to accountability promises made in this report. It should also contain further commitments to improve accountability practices, based on the issues identified by the Panel in the assessment below.*

Our intention is that this letter, and any response you may wish to provide, is made publicly available on the Charter website, along with your report. You can find the reports that were previously reviewed on the Charter website. However, should there be errors of fact in the feedback above or in the note below we would of course wish to correct these before publication. Please share these comments or corrections by 10 July 2014.

If you have any other feedback or comments on our work, please share with us by sending them to the Charter Secretariat. We would very much like to hear your views.

Yours sincerely,



Richard Manning · Louise James · Wambui Kimathi · Michael Röskau · Janet Kiragu · Rhonda Chapman

**Review Round April 2014  
Cover Note on Accountability Report**

**World YWCA**

*Reporting period: Calendar year 2012*

<b>PROFILE DISCLOSURES</b>	
<b>I. Strategy and Analysis</b>	
1.1	<p><b>Statement from the most senior decision-maker</b> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The opening statement on the importance of accountability for World YWCA is not signed by the most senior decision maker and does not include relevant information on the strategic thinking and goals of the organisation. Rather than giving generic information on why accountability is important, World YWCA is highly encouraged to provide more information in the next report on how accountability critically shapes the organisation's own strategy and management decisions.</p>
<b>II. Organisational Profile</b>	
2.1	<p><b>Name of the organisation</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
2.2	<p><b>Primary Activities</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The report provides detailed information on the primary activities of World YWCA and how these are linked to the organisation's strategy. However, 6 ½ pages is too long (especially in relation to the report's overall length and to the length of answers on the performance indicators). The answer would profit from being much more succinct and focused. Furthermore, it is advised to set hyperlinks to policies mentioned in the report.</p>
2.3 – 2.10	<p><b>Operational structure of the organisation / Location / Number of countries / Legal form / Target audience</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
2.8	<p><b>Scale of the organisation</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>It is Charter membership criteria to have been in existence with due diligence for at least three years - including annual externally audited accounts (see the Charter <a href="#">website</a> for detailed information). Furthermore, the Panel would welcome information on World YWCA's annual budget, in particular on the expenditure side.</p>
2.9 – 2.10	<p><b>Significant changes of the organisation / Awards received</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p>

<b>III. Report Parameters</b>	
3.1 – 3.4	<p><b>Reporting period / previous report / reporting cycle / contact person</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            World YWCA submitted its last report which covered 2008/2009 in 2010.</p>
3.5	<p><b>Using the reporting process to mainstream accountability</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            World YWCA can be commended for using the reporting process and the Charter as a process to bring together all of the organisation's policies and to check annually on whether they are carrying them out effectively. Further information on the expected audience for the report is welcome in the next report. The Panel looks forward to the 2013 report which will draw key programme staff from member associations into the reporting process.</p>
3.6 – 3.7	<p><b>Boundary and specific limitations</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
3.8	<p><b>Basis for reporting (on national entities)</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            The report only covers the organisation's World Office in Geneva which is unambiguously committed to the Charter. All member associations are encouraged to apply the organisation's Standards of Good Management and Accountability (a link and more information would be useful here) and by 2019, 70% of all members are expected to complete these standards. It would be interesting to know if 70% is the interim or the absolute goal as well as what happens if a member does not comply with minimum accountability standards at all.</p>
3.10	<p><b>Effect of any re-statements of information</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            The financial year changed in 2011 from April to March to the calendar year (January to December).</p>
3.11	<p><b>Significant changes from previous reporting periods</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            World YWCA has not reported for two years and seeks in this report to develop an acceptable reporting format as a baseline for future reports.</p>
3.12 – 3.13	<p><b>Referencing table and external assurance</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
<b>IV. Mission, Values, Governance, and Stakeholder Engagement</b>	
4.1	<p><b>Governance structure</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            The governance structure is well laid out, but it would be helpful to provide more information on how this specific structure is particularly effective in supporting the achievement of YWCA's mission. In this regard, the Charter's Good Practice collection presents the opportunity to learn from the good practices of other Charter Member organisations. YWCA's World Board seems to be diverse in regard to region and age, but not in terms of gender.</p>

4.2 – 4.3	<p><b>Relationship of Board and Management</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            The report provides relevant information about the division of powers between the highest governance body and the management and/or executives.</p>
4.4	<p><b>Internal stakeholder feedback</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            The report states that members are able to provide recommendations and direction at the World Council held every four years. Whereas the process seems solid, the time frame seems rather long time and it would be interesting to know how members are able to provide recommendations between these meetings. Further evidence of meaningful engagement between internal stakeholders and the highest governance body is welcome in the next report (e.g. what happens if the World Council does not respond?).</p>
4.14	<p><b>List of stakeholders</b>  <i>Fully addressed</i>            World YWCA can be commended for a very specific and useful answer.</p>
4.15	<p><b>Criteria for stakeholder selection</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            Further information on the criteria within the affiliation process and how World YWCA prioritises different stakeholders' importance is welcome in the next report.</p>

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
I. Programme Effectiveness	
NGO1	<p><b>Involvement of affected stakeholder groups</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            YWCA regards its members as the key affected stakeholder group of its work and describes how they can influence the Strategic Plan and World Council decisions. As mentioned above, further processes for coordination than only involving members every four years should be identified.</p>
NGO2	<p><b>Mechanisms for feedback and complaints</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            World YWCA reports that they have a Board authorised system to deal with complaints. Please provide a link to this policy in the next report to show <i>how</i> the Board actually deals with complaints. World YWCA is further encouraged to provide data on the number and category of complaints that were received and if they could all be settled. Finally, it is not totally clear if the complaints system is for staff only or also allows external stakeholders affected by YWCA's work to file a complaint or give formal feedback.</p>
NGO3	<p><b>Programme monitoring, evaluation and learning</b>  <i>Partially addressed</i>            More information on the actual methodologies and systems used for programme monitoring and evaluation is welcome in the next report. World YWCA is furthermore encouraged to identify evidence that the monitoring and evaluation processes work well in practice and how the results have led to</p>

	internal learning processes and possible adjustments.
NGO4	<p><b>Gender and diversity</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>Gender obviously plays a crucial and strategic role in all World YWCA's programmes. 2.2 mentions a training event in Tanzania to strengthen building capacity in evidence based programming and girl-centered programme design. The organisation's non-discrimination policy addresses diversity issues such as sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, and disability besides its focus on gender. A link to this policy is welcome in the next report.</p>
NGO5	<p><b>Advocacy positions and public awareness campaigns</b> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The organisation's advocacy policies consider criteria of (partner) involvement, implementing positions, due diligence provisions and ensuring legal compliance. A link to these policies as well as information on what kind of campaigning World YWCA is actually involved in would be helpful. Regarding any global YWCA advocacy campaigns (e.g. Women's Rights), it should be highlighted how consistency is ensured, how public criticisms are made fair and accurate, how corrective actions are taken and how campaigns are actually exited is welcome in the next report.</p>
NGO6	<p><b>Coordination with other actors</b> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The report stresses the importance of coordination with like-minded organisations. However, relevant information is missing on the identification of potential duplication of the efforts of other actors as well as on processes that promote learning from the work of partners. More evidence if the systems in place work well and have led to positive management response is furthermore welcome in the next report.</p>
<b>II. Financial Management</b>	
NGO7	<p><b>Resource allocation</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA is encouraged to demonstrate that the resource allocation process optimally supports the achievement of strategic priorities in the next report.</p>
NGO8	<p><b>Sources of Funding</b> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The importance of individual donors could be better appraised if their contributions could be measured against "Total income" and "Net revenues".</p>
<b>III. Environmental Management</b>	
EN16	<p><b>Greenhouse gas emissions of operations</b> <i>Not addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA does not record any data on greenhouse gas emissions and does not plan to do so. However, climate change poses a fundamental and cross cutting threat to equitable and sustainable development. Only if CSOs have convincing practices in place to limit their own environmental impact, can they credibly demand progress from others. World YWCA is therefore highly</p>

	encouraged to collect data and compare this over time. The Charter Secretariat would be happy to connect the organisation with other Members which found ways of doing this that are adequate to a small organisation's resources.
EN18	<b>Initiatives to reduce emissions of operations</b> <i>Partially addressed</i> The organisation is asked to provide more information on its draft policy and any initiatives planned.
EN26 – EN27	<b>Initiatives to mitigate environmental impacts of activities and services</b> <i>Partially addressed</i> The organisation is asked to provide more information on its draft policy, any initiatives planned, and how to reduce the environmental impact of transporting staff.
<b>IV. Human Resource Management</b>	
LA1	<b>Size and composition of workforce</b> <i>Fully addressed</i> The report provides relevant information on the World Office's 15 staff members, 12 volunteers, 6 interns, and on the different contracting types. Information on the Board composition should be provided under LA13.
EC7	<b>Procedure for local hiring</b> <i>Partially addressed</i> World YWCA states that it does not have a clear policy on local hiring. The organisation is highly encouraged to identify if and how it and its members grant preference to local residents when hiring and what proportion of the senior management comes from local communities – having a geographical representation in mind.
NGO9	<b>Mechanisms to raise grievances</b> <i>Not addressed</i> This indicator will have to be reported on in all reports covering 2013 and beyond. Internal mechanisms for workforce to raise grievances to management and their resolution are very important for a meaningful, efficient and sustainable working atmosphere. While World YWCA is silent on the issue of grievances, it is acknowledged that its personnel policy “provides for ways to deal with disputes, disciplinary messages and appeals” (see NGO2).
LA10	<b>Workforce training</b> <i>Partially addressed</i> World YWCA provides regular update meetings for all staff members. It is, however, not clear if these meetings are real trainings in the narrow sense. The organisation is asked to provide further details on how much it invests into training of its workforce (as percentage of the overall administrative budget) and if it has evidence that the trainings are successful.
LA12	<b>Global talent management</b> <i>Partially addressed</i> Specific numbers on the employees not having received an annual performance appraisal is missing. Further information on how World YWCA tries to attract, retain and develop good staff and if there is evidence that the mechanisms in

	place to develop staff actually work well in practice is welcome for the next report.
LA13	<p><b><i>Diversity of workforce and governance bodies</i></b>  <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The report shows a great deal of regional and age diversity in the World Office secretariat and Board. However, more information on the marginal proportion of male staff members and why the organisation does not involve more men in strengthening women's rights would be interesting.</p>
<b>V. Responsible Management of Impacts on Society</b>	
SO1	<p><b><i>Managing the organisation's impact on local communities</i></b>  <i>Not addressed</i></p> <p>SO1 asks for the impacts of World YWCA's operations on local communities prior, during and after these operations. The answer provided shows that the question might have been misunderstood as it only gives information on anti-corruption policies. Relevant information on how data regarding the impact of YWCA's work at community level is collected, how local communities' feedback is taken into account and how these processes have led to positive management response is missing and asked for in the next report. The organisation is advised to consider the Charter's Good Practice collection which can be found on its website.</p>
SO3	<p><b><i>Anti-corruption practices</i></b>  <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>SO1 mentions anti-corruption policies in place. It would be good to have links to these in the next report as well as evidence that these processes work well in practice. World YWCA does not do any training in anti-corruption policies and procedures but will consider this in the future.</p>
<b>VI. Ethical Fundraising</b>	
PR6	<p><b><i>Ethical fundraising and marketing communications</i></b>  <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The organisation is again asked to provide links to the mentioned policies in place. This would help to better understand which sources of funding are not acceptable for the organisation or how it ensures that partners comply fully with the written agreements. Moreover, information on the number of complaints and breaches of standards for fundraising and actions taken is missing.</p>



## World YWCA

### Gap Analysis Table – Areas of Commitments and Progress achieved

Accountability is a process of continuous improvement. Each year Charter Members in their accountability reports identify and prioritise areas for improvement and corrective actions they plan to take. As of reports submitted in 2014, Members are asked to capture these commitments in this Gap Analysis Table. The Independent Review Panel may suggest the Member to add further issues when reviewing the Member's report. Each year following, the table shall be submitted along with the accountability report and will then be used as a basis to demonstrate progress. The table will be published on the website along with the accountability report and the feedback from the Panel. Please note that the rows where commitments cannot be identified can be deleted from the table.

GRI – Performance Indicators	Reporting year 2012	Reporting year 2013	Reporting year 2014	Reporting year 2015
<b>Programme Effectiveness</b>				
NGO3: System for program monitoring, evaluation and learning.	<i>“(...) an external evaluation of two main programmes – the internship programme and the Power to Change programme – is planned for 2014.”</i>			
<b>Economic</b>				
-				
<b>Environmental</b>				
-				
<b>Labor</b>				
NGO9: Mechanisms for workforce feedback and their complaints	<i>“The organisation will include information on this in its report for 2013.”</i>			
<b>Responsible Management of Impacts on Society</b>				
SO3: Percentage of employees trained in organization's anti-corruption policies and procedures.	World YWCA will consider training in anti-corruption policies and procedures in the future.			

SO4 – Actions taken in response to corruption	<i>“The organisation will include information on this in its report for 2013.”</i>			
<b>Ethical Fundraising</b>				
-				