

Feedback from the Independent Review Panel

Review Round June 2016

27 June 2016

Dear Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda,

Many thanks for submitting your INGO Accountability Charter report. In times of conflict and climate change, when civil society organisations (CSOs) have an increasingly important role to play, the space for civil society is shrinking in many parts of the world. Strong accountability and the demonstration that we “walk our talk” have never been more important. It is also against this background that the Charter has initiated an alliance with eight national CSO accountability frameworks to strengthen our collective voice as we devise a shared [Global Standard for CSO Accountability](#).

Before providing you with an individual assessment of your report, there were some issues that arose in all or many reports that the Independent Review Panel wants to share with you:

Getting fit for the digital age

Digitisation allows for unprecedented connectivity. At a time when citizens have increased levels of agency and literacy this is a game changer in the way CSOs work. Mobilisation and relationship building with large numbers of people to *co-create* the change they want to see is at the heart of most new CSO strategies – particularly in campaigning. Working *with*, not *for* stakeholders, is not just seen as the right thing to do, but also as the most impactful.

Important in this evolution is moving ICSSOs from transparency to actively sharing information, from consultation to joint decision making and from taking responsibility for others to sharing mutually defined responsibilities.

The Charter has initiated the [Digital Accountability project](#) and Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Transparency International and others are already intensively involved in this project. We look forward to more cooperation with and among Member organisations on this particular issue and for these issues to be addressed more in future reports.

Globalisation / National level accountability

Decentralisation processes usually place more responsibility and capacity at the national level. To ensure an ICSSO presents a unified, coherent voice and can protect its brand, a strong and globally shared understanding of mutual accountability is key. Thus, decentralisation often goes hand in hand with a stronger mandate for the ICSSOs’ global accountability mechanisms. These should help national entities build capacity in the accountability practice, and also demand stronger delivery on global commitments. Charter Members are encouraged to ensure that all their entities adhere at least to the following minimum standards: transparency, effective and independent oversight, involving people we serve, coordination with partners, sound financial management and impact focus.

Inclusion and diversity

Many Charter Members still focus mainly on gender when demonstrating their accountability in terms of diversity. This is a lost opportunity. As we all know, there is also discrimination on the basis of disability, age, ethnicity, etc. Actively reaching out to these constituencies will strengthen their rights and their participation. For example, positive action can increase the employment of those with disabilities or from minority ethnic groups. Such inclusion is central to a human rights based approach, but may also improve results by tapping into a wider base of experience. For further advice, click [here](#) on the outcome of a Charter webinar on inclusion or [here](#) to look at some good practice examples of Charter Members.

Please ensure that all points listed above are taken into consideration when further developing your accountability practices in the coming months and collecting data for the next INGO Accountability Charter report.

Organisation-specific feedback to World YWCA

World YWCA's fifth accountability report against Charter commitments is good and complete. It has greatly improved from previous years – now presenting a few more links, figures, policies (see Appendix), as well as some examples and **evidence** throughout the report.

However, similar to previous years, the report was unfortunately submitted 4 ½ months late (on 24 May 2016). In addition, the membership fee for 2016 was paid with great delay after the deadline had passed. This is due to major internal staff changes. World YWCA has apologised and is investing heavily in this regard.

The General Secretary's opening statement provides a strong **institutional commitment** why accountability is important to the World YWCA, how they understand accountability, the different accountabilities that World YWCA is facing, and on how YWCA member associations comply with Standards of Good Management and Accountability (SGMA). It is appreciated that the organisation will align their accountability framework with the Charter in the future.

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

Some **weaknesses** include: Internal and external dissemination and ownership of the report and Panel feedback (3.5); actual methodologies and systems used for programme monitoring and evaluation (NGO3); identification of opportunities of partnerships as well as processes that promote learning from the work of partners (NGO6); and general / theoretical actions taken in response of incidents of corruption (SO4). These weaknesses are captured in the Panel's **Improvement Analysis**. Please let the Panel know you prioritise the identified areas for progress.

Finally, the Panel would like to recommend that World YWCA staff becomes more engaged in Charter events and activities (e.g. Annual General Meeting in spring, annual workshop in fall, webinars or Peer Advise Groups). Charter membership is voluntary and definitely of greatest benefit if peer learning and networking opportunities are used more frequently.

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 our [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 amendments by 29 July 2016.

If you have any other feedback or comments on our work, please share them with us by sending them to the Charter Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,



Louise James · Michael Röskau · Jane Kiragu



Rhonda Chapman · John Clark · Saroeun Soeung

World YWCA

Review Round June 2016 Cover Note on Accountability Report 2014

PROFILE DISCLOSURES	
I. Strategy and Analysis	
1.1	<p>Statement from the most senior decision-maker <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The opening statement from World YWCA’s General Secretary Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda provides a strong commitment to accountability, outlines the different accountabilities that World YWCA is facing, and on how YWCA member associations comply with Standards of Good Management and Accountability (SGMA) approved by the World YWCA. Evidence is provided how these self-assessments have triggered development within World YWCA. It is appreciated that the organisation will align their accountability framework with the Charter in the future. This seems particularly relevant since the SGMAs have not been reviewed since 2003 and approval rate by YWCA Members is still low.</p> <p>For the World YWCA, “accountability is taking responsibility for decisions, acting in accordance with set norms or laws and being answerable to others.” Meaningful participation and accountability is moreover essential to empower women and girls as leaders “to claim their rights and take collective action to achieve justice, peace, freedom, health and human dignity”. The organisation is applauded for this strong human rights approach to make the voices of girls and women heard which is clearly consistent with the organisation’s values.</p> <p>Finally, the Panel acknowledges the General Secretary’s apology for late report submission and strongly supports World YWCA’s efforts to become timelier for the next report on 2015.</p>
II. Organisational Profile	
2.1 – 2.7	<p>Name of the organisation / Primary Activities / Operational structure / Headquarter location / Number of countries / Nature of ownership / Target audience <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>There is a slight mistake in the numbering and “number of countries” should be 2.5.</p>
2.8	<p>Scale of the organisation <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA provides an interesting overview of their scale, including numbers of volunteers, activities and re-granting to YWCA members. However, as asked in previous years, information on the annual budget (in particular the expenditure side) is necessary. Is “net revenue” the upper limit, or is the annual budget increased by a draw on “fund balances”? How do the latter relate to “assets and liabilities”? Please clarify in the next report.</p> <p>Finally, the Panel appreciates that the organisation will share more details on</p>

	the member associations' financial situations in the report on 2015.
2.9	<p>Significant changes of the organisation <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>A high level of staff turnover has affected the workload for existing staff in 2013 and 2014. This was also used as a creative opportunity: Building a new organisational culture with the support of an external consultancy has helped to rebuild trust and team spirit and to develop more efficient structures and practices. This also includes a leaner office structure that aligns better with key organisational functional needs as well as with the funding framework. The Panel appreciates new policies on staff code of conduct, grievance and appeal, and complaints (to be approved at their annual meeting in 2015), as well as congratulates World YWCA for approval of the compensation review process. The new salary scale can be found in Appendix 1 of the report.</p> <p>The answer would overall profit from being slightly more concise.</p>
2.10	<p>Awards received <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The Panel would like to commend the General Secretary for having won a number of African awards.</p>
III. Report Parameters	
3.1 – 3.4	<p>Reporting period / Previous report / Reporting cycle / Contact person <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
3.5	<p>Reporting Process <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>While previous reports were consolidated by a small internal taskforce, the information in this report was compiled by one staff member only with clear guidance from the World YWCA leadership team and consultation with key staff members. While this might be more efficient: How can the organisation ensure cross-departmental ownership on accountability issues? Accountability is always also about feedback and broad integration of relevant stakeholders and experience from Charter membership show greater ownership as soon as more staff / teams are involved.</p> <p>Moreover, it is important to see what Charter Members do with their reports. World YWCA is encouraged to enclose information on which specific stakeholders are expected to use the report in which way. The Panel would greatly appreciate some information on how Panel and stakeholder feedback have informed decision-making within World YWCA and have triggered positive change. What are the lessons learnt?</p> <p>Finally, it is important to widely disseminate the accountability report internally and externally to ensure stakeholders know what World YWCA commits to and how it has progressed against these commitments. With reference to improving the external benefits of this reporting, the example of Educo's executive summary of their 2014 report offers a more user-friendly report, which may be of interest.</p>
3.6 – 3.7	<p>Boundary and specific limitations <i>Fully addressed</i></p>

	<p>This report only covers the World Office in Geneva and not the member associations of World YWCA. The Panel strongly supports the organisation's intent to report more substantially about the 108 affiliated member associations in the future. However, the Panel suggests to only start systematically with either a few offices for full reporting or only look at a few indicators for all affiliated members. This piloting will also help to develop a consolidated reporting approach in the future.</p>
3.8	<p><i>Basis for reporting (on national entities)</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>All member associations are encouraged to apply the organisation's Standards of Good Management and Accountability (SGMA) which will be aligned more closely to the Charter in the future. In 2013, 47% completed these standards and by 2019, 70% of all members are expected to do so. What is the approval rate in 2014? What would happen if members do not comply with these minimum accountability standards at all?</p> <p>The organisation conducts a four-year questionnaire on a quadrennial basis, the next one taking place in 2015. In addition, they will measure members associations' compliance with the World YWCA's Conditions of Affiliation (COA). This is very commendable and the Panel looks forward to information on progress.</p> <p>The Panel urges World YWCA, just like all other Charter Members, to use whichever process is most applicable in the circumstances to ensure adherence to the Charter Commitments also at the national level. It is suggested to show the public that World YWCA is pushing accountability practice even if they are not able to require anything from member associations. The Panel suggests including the topic in the next World Council' agenda and looks forward to progress and increasing evidence as to how accountability is embedded in the 108 member associations.</p>
3.10 – 3.12	<p><i>Changes in reporting parameters / Reference table</i> <i>Fully addressed</i></p>
<p>IV. Mission, Values, Governance, and Stakeholder Engagement</p>	
4.1	<p><i>Governance structure</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>Similarly to previous reports, the governance structure (including committees and responsibilities) is described in great detail. Is the mentioned Audit, Constitution and Governance Committee part of the senior leadership team and supports this reporting process? How does this committee look at compliance? And where has change occurred due to this committee?</p> <p>4.2 states that this specific structure or model aims to clearly define who is responsible for what and accountable to whom. It would be also appreciated if World YWCA includes information on its risk management system ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations.</p>
4.2	<p><i>Division of power between the governance body and management</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA outlines the different roles of the General Secretary and how she works with the governance bodies. How is her relationship with the committees</p>

	in terms of minimising micromanaging? Does the World Board supervise and evaluate the General Secretary? Is there evidence that both bodies optimally support each other?
4.3	Number of members of the highest governance body <i>Fully addressed</i>
4.4	Internal stakeholder feedback <i>Addressed</i> The organisation describes a solid overview of the mechanisms for internal stakeholder feedback in place. The World Council is held only every four years and in the meantime, recommendations can be provided via consultations, surveys, roundtables, annual staff retreat etc. Examples of this include the Reference Group on Peace with Justice, the Envisioning 2035 Working Group and a Human Resource Task Force. As asked in previous reports, the Panel would like to see evidence that this engagement is actually meaningful, two-way, and has led to positive changes in the decision-making. While the described steps to integrate internal stakeholder feedback seem to go in the right direction, it will be useful to see how this works in practice.
4.5	Compensation for members of highest governance body and senior management <i>Fully addressed</i> The compensation review process from 2013 resulted in a new World YWCA Office's base salary scale (see Appendix 1 of the report) which however omits information on the salary of the General Secretary. Moreover, information on updated staff policies and regulations will be welcome in the next report.
4.6	Conflicts of interests <i>Addressed</i> As asked last year, a link to the World YWCA Ethical Guidelines would have been appreciated at this place. Is there evidence that this document is well known among decision makers and has helped identifying and managing possible conflicts of interest? Why are Board members' potential conflicts of interest not disclosed?
4.10	Process to support highest governance body's own performance <i>Fully addressed</i> It would have been interesting to hear more about the World Board's evaluation process for Board meetings and of Board quadrennium objectives at this place. How have results improved the effectiveness of this body? What are the lessons learnt from this evaluations?
4.12, 4.14	Principles or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes / List of stakeholders <i>Fully addressed</i>
4.15	Criteria for stakeholder selection <i>Not addressed</i>

	Information on the process for identification, selection and prioritisation of the mentioned key stakeholder groups is missing. Please include this answer in future reports.
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PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
I. Programme Effectiveness	
NGO1	<p><i>Involvement of affected stakeholder groups</i> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>Regarded as their main stakeholders, YWCA associations are able to meaningfully influence decision-making and strategic perspectives every four years at the World Council. In the meantime, these stakeholders can provide feedback via informal formats such as evaluations or project reports. Regarding strong quality assurance about minimum standards, it is suggested to look at Plan International for a sophisticated model. Some evidence is provided how e.g. the Affiliation Fee Formula Review Task Force or Envisioning 2035 Working Group have shaped policies and activities.</p> <p>It says that the strategic plan “is also evaluated each year in the World YWCA report”. What adaptations resulted from this? In addition, would this be referred to as an assessment rather than an evaluation?</p> <p>Finally, the Panel would appreciate some more details around the mechanisms of the Goodwill Ambassador – i.e. how her interactions feed/inform the organisation around content and deliverables?</p>
NGO2	<p><i>Mechanisms for feedback and complaints</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>Currently, there is no specific form or email address publicly available for feedback or complaints, but rather the general “contact us” email to be used for this matter. This current process seems rather weak. World YWCA has developed a General Complaints Procedure in 2013, which was submitted for Board approval in 2015. The organisation expects to fully implement this procedure during the new quadrenium of 2016-2019 and will then also provide data in this regard. The Panel looks forward to progress and will follow up in the next report.</p> <p>In the meantime, World YWCA is encouraged to provide data on the number and category of complaints received via the “contact us” email address and if they could all be settled.</p>
NGO3	<p><i>Programme monitoring, evaluation and learning</i> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>As mentioned in previous Panel feedbacks, additional information on the actual methodologies and systems (the “how”) used for programme monitoring and evaluation should be given in the next report. While it is appreciated that World YWCA regards ME+L as part of their culture, this report only contains very broad generalisations on ME+L systems.</p> <p>The Panel looks forward to results and the final report from the external evaluation of the World YWCA Strategic Framework 2012-2015. Will results be published online for the broader public? The organisation is encouraged to use processes like</p>

	<p>this to provide evidence that ME+L efforts have led to positive management response, internal learning processes and potentially adjustments.</p>
NGO4	<p><i>Gender and diversity</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>Gender and diversity are in the values of World YWCA’s Strategic Plan. The organisation’s non-discrimination policy addresses diversity issues such as sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, and disability besides its focus on gender. As requested in previous years, a link to this policy is highly necessary – please share. Furthermore, it would be interesting to know how this policy informs planning, implementation and evaluation of their work and whether World YWCA has set any improvement targets. The organisation’s Safe Spaces Model for Women and Girls (page 28) seems like a valuable approach if also extended to other forms of inclusion beyond gender. It could potentially develop into a good practice example for capturing those who are most vulnerable.</p> <p>Finally, it is appreciated that World YWCA provides evidence for girl-centered gendered programme design with their Haiti Youth Centre example.</p>
NGO5	<p><i>Advocacy positions and public awareness campaigns</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA’s Policy on Global Advocacy (see Appendix 4) considers criteria of (partner) involvement, implementing positions, due diligence provisions and ensuring legal compliance. World YWCA lists active campaign examples such as NoXcuses or Thursday in Black.</p> <p>As asked in previous reports, it would be interesting to see any corrective actions or exit strategies in this regard – in particular because both aspects are not mentioned in the global policy.</p>
NGO6	<p><i>Coordination with other actors</i> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA stresses the importance of coordination with like-minded organisations and lists examples – keeping in mind to avoid duplication. However, relevant information is missing on the identification of opportunities of partnerships as well as on processes that promote learning from the work of partners. Furthermore, more evidence if the systems in place work well, if they have led to positive management response and how World YWCA ensures that partners adhere to the same level of accountability commitment (beyond contracts) is welcome in the next report. Some information and further guidance can be found in the Partnership Principles developed by the International Civil Society Centre and CIVICUS.</p>
II. Financial Management	
NGO7	<p><i>Resource allocation</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>Although the Panel provided recommendations in their previous feedback, this answer is very similar to the previous report. All World YWCA transactions are recorded in accounts and annually audited. However, a publicly available link to these audited financial figures is missing again and urgently needed in the future. Please also reflect upon two key recommendations from your auditors in the next report.</p>

	World YWCA can be commended for their robust control mechanisms and are encouraged to demonstrate <i>how</i> the resource allocation process optimally supports the achievement of strategic priorities.
NGO8	<p>Sources of Funding <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA provides a very detailed overview of monetary contributions from different donors. The biggest five donors are: Membership Affiliation Fees, Packard Foundation, NORAD, Bread for the World, and Y Global Norway. In comparison to 2013, the total is ca. 600,000 CHF less in 2014.</p>
III. Environmental Management	
EN16	<p>Greenhouse gas emissions of operations <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>As in previous reports, World YWCA does not record any data on greenhouse gas emissions and does not plan to do so since “this is not significant” within their activities. Once World YWCA feels ready to collect data (and compare this over time), the Charter Secretariat would be happy to connect the organisation with other (smaller) Members who found ways of doing this.</p>
EN18	<p>Initiatives to reduce emissions of operations <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA has a draft Environmental Policy in the staff handbook (expected Board approval in 2016), which outlines several environmental-friendly initiatives and suggestions. How is this approach guided by senior management oversight and regular assessment? Furthermore, World YWCA is greatly encouraged to introduce emission reduction targets as part of this policy.</p> <p>Please have a look at the Good Practice document (pages 88-99) to learn from other Charter Members. The Secretariat will be happy to connect you with relevant peers to progress in the area of environmental sustainability.</p>
EN26	<p>Initiatives to mitigate environmental impacts of activities and services <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The Panel would appreciate a link to the mentioned Sustainable Development Policy in the next report. Moreover, World YWCA is encouraged to start with identifying their main environmental impacts. From there, the organisation can commence conducting environmental assessments prior to carrying out activities and try to minimise their environmental impacts.</p>
IV. Human Resource Management	
LA1	<p>Size and composition of workforce <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>The report provides detailed information on the World Office’s 23 staff members, 10 volunteers, 9 interns, and 10 consultants – including geographical background, responsibility levels and an organigram. Please also provide figures from previous years in the future so that one can see development over years.</p>
EC7	<p>Procedure for local hiring <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>As in the past, World YWCA states that it does not have a policy on local hiring but operates in line with Swiss employment framework, which encourages local hiring.</p>

	<p>Details provided under LA1 show that World YWCA has a very diverse geographical background represented in its workforce. It says that Member Associations usually hire locally – what does this mean in practical terms and are there any figures to underline this practice?</p>
LA10	<p>Workforce training <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA states that 2014 focused on organisational culture review process and various staff changes rather than on workforce training. While this is understood, the Panel would like to stress that workforce training is essential to develop staff in a fast changing world to be able to deliver the quality of work World YWCA have set themselves to deliver. It is thus appreciated that the review process identified certain areas for building staff capacity – which are these areas? – and a training plan for staff will be part of the implementation of the compensation review process going forward. What are the things World YWCA staff have learnt? Does this lead to new objectives?</p> <p>The Panel looks forward to progress in this regard and asks World YWCA to show how much they invest into training of its workforce (as percentage of the overall administrative budget).</p>
LA12	<p>Global talent management <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA has an annual performance appraisal process in place and all staff participate in team and individual performance evaluations to strengthen their collective capacity to fulfil the World YWCA’s purpose. Have all employees received an appraisal within the reporting year?</p> <p>It is appreciated that the Human Resources Task Force has made further recommendations to improve this process and the Panel suggests that the dedicated staff members also looks into identifying future HR trends and needs.</p>
LA13	<p>Diversity of workforce and governance bodies <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA provides a comprehensive overview on why they focus on women empowerment within a human-rights-based framework. Supported by sound policies (e.g. young women aged 30 or under must form at least 25% of all decision-making spaces), the report shows a great deal of regional and age diversity in the World Office Secretariat and Board.</p> <p>Is there also data on other inclusion dimensions such as religion, disability or other minority groups for the next report?</p>
NGO9	<p>Mechanisms to raise grievances <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>As a result from previous Panel feedback, World YWCA developed a Grievance and Appeals Policy in 2014 that was sent to the Board for approval in March 2015. The Panel looks forward to being informed how this policy is applied in practice and if concerns raised could be resolved satisfactorily.</p> <p>In the meantime, the organisation follows the personnel policy (see Appendix 5, section 24) which provides ways to deal with disputes, disciplinary messages and appeals. No complaints were received in 2014.</p>

V. Responsible Management of Impacts on Society	
SO1	<p><i>Managing the organisation's impact on local communities</i> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>The Panel looks forward to results from the upcoming four-year questionnaire to evaluate each Member Associates' impact at community level. In the meantime: What kind of feedback does World YWCA receive from communities? Are there clear enter and exit strategies? And what feedback was received through the Power to Change Fund reporting mechanism (see Appendix 2 and 3 of the report)?</p> <p>Finally, a link to the child protection policy mentioned in the last report would be appreciated.</p>
SO3	<p><i>Anti-corruption practices</i> <i>Addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA lists details of their internal control system as well as specific control areas identified from this approach; more examples of their internal control flows are attached in Appendix 6. Is there evidence that described processes are well known and used among staff?</p> <p>Last year's report mentioned that a Whistleblower, Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy was under review and the Panel strongly supports this recommendation made by the Human Resources Task Team. Finally, World YWCA considered in their 2012 report to set up training in anti-corruption policies in the future. What has happened to this initiative?</p>
SO4	<p><i>Actions taken in response of incidents of corruption</i> <i>Partially addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA states that no incidents of corruption were reported during 2014. While this information is appreciated, the Panel would like to know if there were instances of bad practices that occurred and how the organisation would record / publish those incidents <i>in theory</i> if they were to occur at any point in the near future.</p>
VI. Ethical Fundraising	
PR6	<p><i>Ethical fundraising and marketing communications</i> <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>World YWCA has several guidelines and policies in place (e.g. Investment, Sponsorship and Gift Processing – see Appendix 7) which guide the organisation's ethical fundraising approach. All partners must oblige in writing with World YWCA's ethical standards. Moreover, a gifts policy is part of the Staff Handbook (see Appendix 8).</p> <p>No complaints or breaches of standards for fundraising were reported in 2014.</p>