



**WorldYWCA**  
**ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT**  
**2019 and 2020**  
*(including 2017 and 2018)*

**JUNE, 2021**

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## Opening Statement from World YWCA General Secretary

With a presence in over a hundred countries, the work of the YWCA is grassroots-driven, grounded in local communities, and rooted in the transformational power of women. The World YWCA and global YWCA network have existed for more than 150 years, and over that time have adapted to local, regional and international realities, as experienced by girls, young women and women in community. Those experiences inform the work of the World YWCA. For this design to be successful and, for World YWCA to serve the global YWCA movement, transparency and accountability is a fundamental requirement. When transparency and accountability falter, so does the business model and mission effectiveness of the World YWCA. It is not uncommon for NGOs/CSOs to experience an ebb and flow of operational and governance practices, behaviours, and commitments. Such changes in tide are most often driven by leadership changes, or external forces, or resource surplus, or resource drought, or crisis. While a low tide for an organization can create all sorts of problems and challenges, when the tide comes flowing back in, an organization can build and build on that momentum, which is what the World YWCA has done in 2019 and 2020.

Exceptionally, World YWCA experienced a long low tide, over a period of many years, where accountability was seriously absent. At some point, *some* absence of accountability created an environment of even less accountability and so on. In 2019 and 2020, a stark reversal has taken place. While this report marks the first formal report made by World YWCA since 2016, in 2019 and 2020 the World YWCA was in constant touch with and working directly with staff of Accountable Now.

In addition to the detail outlined in this report, and in response to the 2016 report response, World YWCA has:

- Not only adopted a complaints mechanism, other related policies were created or updated (NGO2 and NGO9<sup>1</sup>)
- A mapped, strategic plan to engage or reengage with strong coordination with other actors, with excellent progress (NGO6)
- More fully integrated workforce training, including budget allocation every year and a very liberal practice of supporting staff training and professional development (LA10)
- Many policies and practices adopted or revived and integrated into operation and governance (SO3 and SO4)
- Mentioned membership of Accountable Now not only on the website, but in both internal (to YWCA movement) and external electronic mailings. And, World YWCA will post this report on the website.

World YWCA has made exciting and notable progress in other areas, not cited in the 2016 report, as well. However, we still must closely consider taking steps related to environmental management (EN16-20). The mobility restrictions caused by the COVID19 pandemic have forced new environmental practices, which will likely accelerate progress in this area in 2021.

Since January of 2019, accountability has been a key focus area for the World YWCA, as the organization embarked on an operational, governance, mission impact and engagement review, with subsequent adoption of a four-year strategic plan, which was vetted and approved by the YWCA World Council in late 2019. Throughout the strategic framework is a strong thread of accountability, including mutual accountability between YWCA entities. The years of 2019 and 2020 included a consistent address of operational accountability by the World YWCA, with a laser focus on: 1) transparent communication and information sharing, 2) stakeholder engagement, and 3) creation and/or refinement of policies, protocols, and practices related to accountability. The operational team of the World YWCA, the World YWCA Office team, almost solely led this work for the global movement, but in embedding the strategic framework with a theme of accountability, set the course for the 12 Accountability Commitments to be strengthened by a process of socialization and institutionalization within the YWCA network, and in time, for the World YWCA Board to perform as partners in the accountability work.

In 2021, the World YWCA continues to ride the tide toward even greater accountability. We will continue to strategically, and steadily, improve varied areas of accountability, and right now continuing to focus on internal stakeholder feedback, transparent communication with internal and external stakeholders, and evaluation of and further improvement in World YWCA consultation and inclusion processes (as part of a larger scope of focus on power dynamics and potential power shifts). As we continue to invest in such tangible and practical work, we also

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to former Accountable Now reporting framework.

anticipate an organic culture shift wherein additional YWCA stakeholders, besides the World YWCA Office, play a critical role in advocating for, ensuring, and role modelling accountability.

An expectation of accountability is paramount in the current World YWCA strategic plan, and we have no intention to side-line or neglect the work, but instead progress. Our Goal 2035 states a vision of a transformation of power structures, and that includes World YWCA. Accountability is the key to transforming power structures to be equitable and just.



**Casey Harden**  
General Secretary  
World YWCA

## Self-assessment of World YWCA performance

As recommended, a self-assessment of the World YWCA performance of each question answered in this report was done on an individual basis by two members of the World Office team, with primary authority and accountability responsibilities related to the subject. In the future, World YWCA would like to involve more internal and external stakeholders to engage and contribute to this process.

The self-assessment rate of each question follow the performance assessment and colour scale as recommended by Accountable Now. Through the report, you will see them next to each question, and a summary by cluster.

1. No policies, procedures, or other documents are provided to explain the member's approach. There is no improvement plan in place, or there is a plan but no actions have been taken yet.
2. Policies, procedures, or other documents explaining the member's approach are provided, but no evidence or examples have been shared to show how these work in practice. A plan to address the commitment has been established and first steps have been taken to fulfil it.
3. In addition to policies, procedures, or other documents explaining the member's approach, systematic evidence or examples have been provided to show how these work in practice. Results, progress, and ambitions for further improvement are documented.
4. The commitment is fully addressed and in addition to the above, there is evidence that the (approach to the) commitment has been fully embedded into the organisation's practice.

## CLUSTER A: WHAT WORLD YWCA HAVE ACHIEVED

### A. The impact World YWCA achieve

#### 1. World YWCA's mission statement and theory of change

4.

The World YWCA is driven by a clear vision of a fully inclusive world where justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom, and care for the environment are promoted and sustained by women's leadership. World YWCA recognises the equal value of all human beings. World YWCA advocates and supports volunteerism, membership, diversity, tolerance, mutual respect, integrity, and responsible accountability.

The purpose of the World YWCA is to develop the leadership and collective power of women and girls around the world to achieve justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and a sustainable environment for all people.

As a result of an envisioning consultation process, in 2015, the World YWCA adopted the [2035 Goal](#) of "100 million young women and girls transforming power structures to create justice, gender equality and a world without violence and war, leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all". In November 2019, at its quadrennial World Council (World YWCA's general assembly), the World YWCA formally adopted its [Goal 2035 Theory of Change](#) that outlines the foundational beliefs, main stakeholder groups and methods to achieve Goal 2035. The Theory of Change is embedded in the long-term vision and purpose of the World YWCA as enshrined in the [World YWCA Constitution](#).

#### 2. World YWCA's key strategic indicators

4.

In November 2019, at the [29<sup>th</sup> World Council in Johannesburg](#), the highest decision and policy-making body of the World YWCA brought together delegates, observers and special guests, including partner and sponsor representatives from across the globe. At [Council](#) the World YWCA movement continued dialogue and discussions on strategic topics and made decision through a democratic process, including formal voting and consultation processes.

Young women and women leaders chaired business sessions, led workshops and consultation sessions, and by design were the lead speakers and facilitators of thematic and plenary sessions. Council also provided the opportunity for reporting and collective discernment of regional and global realities and how the YWCA can creatively and more effectively address global challenges. It also offered a safe space for mutual accountability, learning, to share stories, build community, and nurture friendships.

The many strategic consultations and discussions held and decisions made are instrumental in the accountability, sustainability and relevance of the YWCA movement for the subsequent four years, outlined in the: [29<sup>th</sup> World Council Minutes](#), [2019 World YWCA Constitution](#) and [World YWCA Council Policies](#).

The World YWCA [four-year strategic framework](#) and [budget](#) were approved for 2020-2023. The framework tends to issues of operations, governance, responsibility and accountability within the YWCA movement, and also the YWCA as part of the global women's and human rights movement. It centres young women and their allies in transforming power structures for gender equality, and a just and peaceful world, while leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all.

The four-year strategic framework includes an expectation for the leaders and various YWCA entities, including local and national associations, regional bodies, task forces, advisory councils and committees, and the World YWCA – both Board and Office – to be mutually communicative, responsive and accountable to each other and work in partnership and solidarity. Accountability is a theme threaded through out the plan.

The [strategic framework 2020-2023](#) includes three strategic priorities:

- Management and Governance Excellence Towards Goal 2035
- Strategic Partnerships and Communication Towards Goal 2035
- Engagement and Mobilisation of Girls, Young Women and Women Towards Goal 2035

As part of the strategic framework 2020-2023 development, for each of the three strategic priorities, 12 key initiatives, with indicators, were established in order to provide clarity of focus and to have a way to measure progress. The key initiatives identify the required strategies and goals for World YWCA, and the global movement, to transform into new ways of working together and doing business, thereby increasing our mission impact. In



addition, eight conditions of success for 2020-2023 were identified, outlining approaches that will be critical to the success of the overall strategy.

1. Goal 2035 is reflected in strategic, tactical and day-to-day actions of the YWCA movement, as our shared collective goal.
2. World YWCA (World Board and World Office), YWCA member associations, and YWCA leaders engage in and contribute to each key initiative of the Strategic Framework.
3. A high level of communication and transparency is consistently demonstrated by the World YWCA, YWCA member associations and YWCA leaders.
4. Key initiative campaigns, projects or publications are customisable, replicable, and as appropriate, scalable.
5. Every key initiative either contributes to the sustainability and vitality of the YWCA movement and/or aims to positively impact the lives of girls, young women and women in communities around the globe.
6. Contributions to and the success of key initiatives are measurable.
7. Progress on key initiatives, by both the World YWCA and YWCA member associations, is reported on formally and at least one time per year.
8. YWCA is disciplined in focusing on and investing in the key initiatives.



All this is complemented by and interrelated with the [theory of change for Goal 2035](#), based on the last decade of YWCA experience in young women's leadership and engagement, and the results of internal consultations and findings, theories, and experiences and those of other organizations, too.

### 3. World YWCA's achievements and challenges in meeting the indicators for success

4.

Severe internal organizational challenges were encountered from 2016 to the end of 2018. From 2019 the World YWCA, as an organization initiated an intentional discovery, recovery and transformational process, tending to operations, financial management and sustainability, governance, power shifts, brand identity, and niche and value within the larger women's and human rights NGO and CSO sector. For the World YWCA this has been one of the most important achievement of these last years. For more information see below point 4.

The importance of strengthening communication and the areas of mutual accountability, ownership and vitality among all the internal stakeholders of the World YWCA was fundamental in solving the challenges of recent years. An intentional, regular and consistent communication mechanism with internal and external stakeholders were put in place from 2019, including defined World Office protocols and strengthening direct communication with YWCA formal *and* informal leaders and also with national and local association leaders, as well as YWCA leaders not necessarily affiliated with an association. Several face to face (before COVID 19 restrictions) and virtual meetings were conducted with YWCA young women and women, as part of informative and consultative meetings. It is important to highlight the importance to address the issues of access to internet and connectivity that many individuals around the world confront. The pandemic has provided several positive opportunities for transformation to individual and organizational adoption of digitization but at the same time increased already existing inequities for individuals.

From 2019, the General Secretary presents regular, comprehensive and detailed narrative and financial reports to the Board, as well as access to raw data that supports such reports. The same year, the first ever, inaugural internal



annual report, Annual Internal Report for 2019, was submitted to member associations and internal stakeholders. The report provides a review of the work accomplished during 2019, including a financial summary and the audited FY2019 financial statements. In addition, several core and policy documents were made available, such as the updated [2019 Constitution](#) (English, French and Spanish) and [World Council Statements of Policies 1894-2019 booklet](#). The public [Annual Report 2019](#) of World YWCA was published in December 2020 and shared with the larger, external YWCA network.

#### 4. Significant events/changes to governance and accountability

4.

The year 2016 was a year of great transition for World YWCA. After eight years as the General Secretary, Nyaradazyi Gumbonzvanda, left the organization, and the Board, with external and internal stakeholder's involvement, undertook a 10 month search for a replacement. During that period Sara Llorc, Head of Finance and Operations, was appointed as interim General Secretary, until December 2016, when Malayah Harper, was appointed by the Board as General Secretary, until January 2019. In January 2019, the [Board appointed Casey Harden](#) as the 15<sup>th</sup> General Secretary of the World YWCA, who from May 2018, had served as the Deputy General Secretary.

Due to the organizational changes, including operational and financial challenges and crises, from 2016 to 2018, including a huge World Office team members turnover and reduction in staff positions (from 19 staff members by end 2016 to 13 staff members during 2019), in 2019 there was a lot of uncertainty for the World YWCA. The work ahead was remarkable in urgency and scope and required the newly appointed General Secretary, Casey Harden, to immediately tend to the business and financial management of the World YWCA, adapt the staffing structure with an plan for a continued and intentional severe reduction in staff and consultants, invest in basic infrastructure and policy, begin to recover the financial sustainability of the World YWCA, to analyse and adapt to ensure high outcome mission impact – and to host a World Council by year end.

During the 2019 World Council, the World YWCA movement elected a [new Board](#), with global representation and, for the second time, 60% of the members elected were young women. Same year Staff Representative Group was revive and work was formal, documented and by design. Strategic staffing and team changes went into formal effect on October, 2020, to fully leverage staff skills and interests, organizational needs, and budgetary limitations.

Progressing towards strengthening our good governance, management and accountability policies and practices, in 2019, the Board adopted revised and new policies for World YWCA, reflecting best practices around [Sexual Harassment Exploitation and Abuse at Work Prevention and Response](#); [Whistle-blowing](#); [Transgender Inclusion](#); a [Grants Management Handbook – Policies and Procedures](#); and adoption of [Responsible Data- Privacy and GDPR](#) (General Data Protection Regulation). As well the World YWCA developed appropriate policies and procedure for the business of World Council 2019: [Ways of Work and Rules of Procedure](#), which included best practices such as a World Council [Code of Conduct](#), [Complaints and Feedback Procedure](#), and an [Election Complaints Procedure](#).

As part of our commitment to a mutually respectful, open, collaborative, and transparent communication with and feedback from internal and external stakeholders, in December 2020, the Board adopted the [World YWCA Feedback and Complaints Policy](#) and the [World YWCA Statement of Complaints against World YWCA Member Associations](#). Both documents were socialized with stakeholders and are available in the three World YWCA official languages (English, French and Spanish) in a dedicated [feedback section](#) of the World YWCA website.

Taking into account the COVID19 pandemic effects and the needs for transformation and co-creation of the future, and in order to continue to support a more focused and strategic approach, World YWCA innovatively continued to connect existing and new programmatic commitments and work streams, and adapted commitments and projects to ensure alignment with and impact toward Goal 2035. Across all programmatic partnerships, significant efforts were made to ensure that all initiatives enrich one another and better reflect available revenue. This included significant donor relationship building, conversation and negotiation; inclusion of young women in planning and design; and smart and detailed budget realignment and reallocation.

## B. Positive results are sustained

### 1. What the World YWCA has done to sustain our work, plus evidence of success

3.

In 2019, the World YWCA adopted an [Annual Work Plan](#) and Budget, with specific goals and conditions for success, including a revised staffing plan with a 50% reduction in staff and other significant cost-saving measures. The [theory of change](#) was developed and published for Goal 2035. The strategic and outcome-based 29th World Council was delivered, in the context of a 50% reduction in staff and with an austere budget. The [2020-2023](#)

[Strategic Framework](#) and [Budget](#) were developed and approved by Council, including the [2020 Strategic Plan and Budget](#).

For the first time, the World YWCA evolution of reserves from 2007 to 2018 were presented at Council, part of an agenda to clearly establish and have the YWCA global movement understand the challenges and opportunities of the YWCA. From 2019, budgets have been developed in a very conservative way to most accurately reflect reality of projected revenue and expenses, aim to progressively reduce the deficit each year by a percentage from the previous year actuals (moving away from an at least decade long pattern of multi-million dollar deficits each year), back to surplus, and later to ideally replenish the reserves that allowed the World YWCA to remain solvent during deficit years. It is expected that the World YWCA will continue to experience deficits as it rebuilds and recovers and makes exciting changes to the mission and business model, until the first breakeven year in 2023. The 2019 year ended with a deficit but with a favourable variance: the deficit is lower than 70% compared with the budgeted amount and 78% lower than the previous fiscal year. This was notable considering that 2019 was a World Council year, requiring significantly more efforts, with reduced staffing. The 2020 fiscal year closed with 83% of the budgeted deficit (approved in 2019) and also in relation to the mid-year budget review in 2020. This result was achieved via good management of expenses, restricted funds re-allocated to be used on allowable core costs, and legacies that were received. Even with the reduction of the affiliation fee (see below), which is the main unrestricted core income of World YWCA, the year ended better than the budget.

From 2019, there has been continued tangible progress in improving the financial management and systems. Specifically, audit control and financial tracking and reporting were further enhanced. Cash flow was updated monthly always covering the following next three months. Profit and Loss Statement (P&L) and cash flow reports were continuously carried out regularly within 45 days and were presented on a monthly basis to the World YWCA Treasurer, as well to the quarterly meeting of the World YWCA Investment Advisory Group (IAG)<sup>2</sup>, and to the Board and team members– a consistency that has not been in place for multiple quadrennia.

In 2020, for the first time in many years, best practice financial reports were done at an early period of the year. A comprehensive fiscal year mid-year budget review and analysis were completed, followed by development of a year-end forecast and adapted revenue and expense targets for the remainder of the year. And, again exceptionally for World YWCA, a detailed and comprehensive draft work plan and budget for year 2021 was completed by the last quarter of the year. As part of that and of the overall recovery work of World YWCA, various occupancy and remote work scenario due diligence continued. By end of the year, the World YWCA updated its 2021 work plan and budget reflecting the approval of 2021 grants. The FY2018 and FY2019 organisational and program audits were completed on time.

The World Office team and the Board Audit and Risk Committee met regularly during 2019 and 2020 and completed and updated, according to policy, an organizational risk assessment, including a mitigation plan, and potential implication of COVID19. In 2019 the Board adopted a [Risk Management Framework Policy](#), and in 2020 a risk matrix was developed and updated, it was presented to and discussed by the Board and since.

Building on late 2018 efforts, the affiliation fee process was streamlined for efficacy, including a comprehensive internal audit of the 2016 and 2017 affiliation fee process. A protocol was established for review of exemption and/or payment plan requests, to ensure a fair and equitable response to member association petitions. Consultations with member associations were conducted and a new [Affiliation Fee Formula and Procedure](#) was approved by World Council in 2019.

The global pandemic had a significant impact not only on the life of each person and YWCA, but also on the economy and business sectors across the world. The impact was tangible for the NGO sector, as the demand for services increased and many revenue streams were interrupted or reduced. There was no clarity on the duration or full impact of these interruptions. Therefore, to support YWCA member associations, in May, the Board approved to grant an exceptional one-third (33%) reduction of the invoiced affiliation fee 2020, for every member association that needed such relief. This was done so that member associations could reallocate that cash toward COVID response efforts, and could reallocate the reduction amount toward a budget line item, which was significantly affected by a budget interruption. The World YWCA completed a financial analysis as part of the decision-making process and the organization acknowledged the liability that this decision created for the financial position of World YWCA. World YWCA expected that this proactive measure helped with the vitality and

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<sup>2</sup> The World WCA Investment Advisory Group is an independent body composed of individuals whose main objective is to monitor compliance with Investment Policy and monitor performance of the investment portfolio.

sustainability of YWCAs, mitigating the impacts of the pandemic on the business and mission impact of the associations.

## 2. What lessons has the World YWCA learnt, how these have been shared and their applications in the future

3.

During the last years, the World YWCA: completed several internal audits and data collection analysis; participated in many external audits; and learned and took action based on those analysis. Learnings have been shared with internal stakeholders, including the World YWCA Office team, Board and member associations, and including in the planning and programming work of the World YWCA.

A good example from 2019 is the analysis completed of the 2018 Annual Membership Accountability Survey and the report on the current status of the movement in terms of sustainability, governance and programs, presented at Council. The report was based on the results and analysis of data collected through 2018 survey. The dataset included returns for 105 (96%) out of 109 member associations, although 20 of the responses were highly incomplete.

The survey was largely successful in its three objectives of:

- Updating basic information on member associations
- Systematically assessing compliance with conditions of affiliation (COA) and Standards of Good Management and Accountability (SGMA)
- Providing a snapshot of YWCA's status in relation to its visionary goals

The basic information gathered in this survey is rich in detail and scope including data on board composition and contact details for sub-national YWCA regions, branches and affiliates. This provides an excellent basis for building and maintaining a live database for regular interaction across the movement. The assessment of compliance with conditions of affiliation (COA) and [Standards of Good Management and Accountability](#) (SGMA) reveals that a majority of member associations are still not in satisfactory compliance. Only 14 member associations were shown to be in full compliance with the conditions of affiliation, although a further 31 missed by only a single criterion. The survey also provides insights on the movement's status in relation to its visionary Goal 2035 to engage 100 million young women in transforming power structures. The gap between YWCA's current direct reach as reported (~2 million per year) and its aspiration is greater than previously thought. World YWCA, as a global movement, faces the challenge of once more adapting to rapidly-changing social circumstances and finding new avenues and means to express our purpose.

Based on the 2018 Survey Report, in 2019 a World YWCA Governance Task Force on Change in Membership Status was convened and charged with reviewing work done to date on accountability and membership status; identifying any immediate action priorities; and, formulating a plan for 2020 for the incoming Board to consider. The Task Force presented a report at Council with clear recommendations on good governance and accountability of member associations. The Board 2020-2023 has established a Membership and Compliance Committee which during the four-years will address issues of:

- Affiliated Member Association accountability and compliance with World YWCA conditions of affiliation, membership policies, and other elements of the World YWCA mission, vision, and values. To deal with any breaches and subsequent actions, sanctions, and disciplinary measures as appropriate;
- Membership governance, affiliation, and structure, and recommend appropriate policy changes as part of the governance modernization, stabilization, and transformation process for sustainability and mission impact;
- Specifically consider adapted, new, or hybrid membership models for the World YWCA.

## C. World YWCA lead by example

### 1. How the World YWCA demonstrates excellence on strategic priorities

4.

As a global movement, cooperation and partnerships are increasingly important to effectively respond to the complex world in which the World YWCA works. The World YWCA vision, purpose and values affirm collaboration for mutual support. Combining resources and efforts can maximize our collective impact for women and girls around the world to transform power structures for gender equality.

In recognition to our experience as a women's rights and faith based organization and our efforts to bring the grassroots voices of young women and women to influence the global agenda, in 2019 the World YWCA was invited

to hold a seat on the newly-formed [United Nations \(UN\) Multi-faith Advisory Council](#) (MFAC) for the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Development (2019-2021) to provide strategic advice to the UN Interagency Task Force. The General Secretary, Casey Harden, represents World YWCA at the Advisory Council and is co-chair of the Gender Working Group of the MFAC.

As a member of ACT Alliance, and under unanimous nomination of the [Global Forum](#) members, and in representation of the World YWCA, the General Secretary, Casey Harden was elected as Global member representative of the [ACT Alliance Governing Body](#). The General Secretary is contributing from a youth and gender perspective, bringing the voices of young women and women, and strengthening the role of the Global Members Forum in the life of ACT Alliance. In addition based in her expertise, the General Secretary of YWCA Zambia, Patricia Ndhlovu, was selected to represent the World YWCA at the ACT Alliance [Peace and Human Security Reference Group](#).

With the adaptation of the legacy [World YWCA safe spaces model](#) to a virtual model, World YWCA is successfully adapting YWCA models to a new time and need. Safe Spaces was successfully adapted into a [Virtual Safe Space tool](#) ([English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)) in a fast and responsive manner with the onset of the pandemic in the third quarter of 2020. The tool was made available, internally and externally to the YWCA movement, and was piloted with the intergenerational Rise Up!, and the Young Women Changing Narratives on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)/Mental Health cohorts.

Since 1904, the World YWCA and the World YMCA collaborate and observe annually the World Week of Prayer and Fellowship. In 2019 and 2020, the World YWCA led the creation and publication of the prayer booklets: on the themes: [“Young People Transforming Power Structures for Gender Equality”](#), and [“Rays of Hope: Creating Resilient Communities through Practical Spirituality”](#) with remarkable contributions from ecumenical partners. The 2020 booklet, explored the methodology of *Conceptual Bible Studies* as a tool for advocacy, to raise awareness and consolidate commitment to transformation.

The World YWCA contributed with the gender equity lens in the development of a [joint position paper on non-formal education](#) of the [Big 6 Youth Organizations](#)<sup>3</sup>, released in December 2019. The paper highlighted the collective commitment of the Big 6 to advancing youth development through delivering quality non-formal education programs and made a call for more investment in non-formal education.

With the onset of the pandemic and with the world turning to online events, the World YWCA intentionally and by design created youth only panels, to bring the voices of youth into COVID spaces, beyond tokenism.

As a core supporter of the [International Civil Society Centre](#), World YWCA actively participated at the [2019 Global Perspective event “Let’s Make Lemonade: Legitimacy and Impact in Times of Scrutiny”](#). Casey Harden, General Secretary, was invited to provide the closing for the event. At the [2020 Global Perspective “Passion for Inclusion”](#), the World YWCA facilitated a workshop on [“Beyond Tokenism: Diversity as a transformational tool for youth inclusion”](#).

As members of Accountable Now, Casey Harden, General Secretary, conducted with Restless Development a session on [“Resilience as a Leadership Practice: Post-Traumatic Growth”](#) at the 2020 Annual Workshop.

## 2. Evidence that the World YWCA’s expertise is recognised by peers, partners and other stakeholders 3.

The World YWCA expertise, at collective and individual levels, is recognised in different dimensions and spheres, following are some example of this:

In 2018, Sophie Pierre-Antoine, young woman from YWCA Haiti, 2016 World YWCA intern, and Caribbean representative in the World YWCA Young Women’s Global Advisory Council, was invited as one of the speakers at the [first UN Security Council Open Debate on Youth, Peace and Security](#).

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<sup>3</sup> World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), World Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award, and World Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA).

[Satoko Yamaguchi](#), young woman from YWCA Japan and [Zahra Al Hilaly](#) from YWCA Australia, are two of the young leaders selected in 2019 to be member of the UN Women [Generation Equality Youth Task Force](#) (former Beijing+25 Youth Task Force).

In the beginning of 2020, [Vera Syrovkash](#), young women from YWCA Belarus and World YWCA regional coordinator of the “[Young Women Changing Narratives on SRHR & Mental Health](#)” initiative in Eastern Europe, was invited to be one of the [champions of She Decides](#), a global movement that promote, provide, protect and enhance the fundamental rights of every girl and woman.

[Anjum Sultana](#), the National Director of Public Policy and Strategic Communications at YWCA Canada, was awarded with the [NGO CSW 2020 Women of Distinction Award](#) at CSW 64.

Since April 2020 and on behalf of the World YWCA, the General Secretary, [Casey Harden](#) was invited to join the [International Gender Champions](#) network, a positive progression in focusing on the intersection of youth and gender, and to bring the voices of the global YWCA movement to an expansive audience.

World YWCA continued with consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council. As an example of the recognition of the World YWCA leadership and commitment to UNSCR 1325 and UNSCR 2250, emphasising on the role of women and youth in peace processes, every year World YWCA partners with YWCA of Palestine to deliver on behalf of NGOs a [joint statement](#)<sup>4</sup> at the United Nations Office in Geneva to mark the annual International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people.

### 3. How the World YWCA practices inclusiveness, protect human rights including women’s rights and gender equality 3.

As a women-founded, women-led membership movement, the World YWCA was founded on the principle of advancing women’s empowerment and rights. With this main focus, the World YWCA intrinsically works to advance gender equality ([World YWCA Policy on Gender](#)). It recognizes the importance of changes in attitudes, behaviours and practices; as well as in norms, laws and legislation for real changes in gender equality to be attained in all sectors.

The World YWCA stands for the inclusion and safety of women and people of marginalised genders and sexualities. World YWCA knows they share the commonality of oppression by patriarchy, with the added intersectional experiences of race, geographical location, religion, culture, class and colonisation. World YWCA has been working for gender equality for over a century, and we believe that an inclusive, intersectional approach to human rights is vital to sustaining a bold, progressive women’s movement.

The World YWCA knows that diversity brings strength to women’s movements and have sought to deliver advocacy and support to diverse communities for many years, in our commitment to strengthen community bonds with and between diverse groups of women, young women and girls. As noted in the United Nations Human Rights Council resolution 32/2, ‘an inclusive society enables people to enjoy protection from violence and discrimination’, and World YWCA is committed to our mission<sup>5</sup> of inclusion.

World YWCA is aware that minority women continue to suffer discrimination and marginalisation and are at higher risk of experiencing human rights violations including: women living with disabilities, women living with HIV, women from racial and ethnic and religious groups, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and queer (LBTQ) women, as well as intersex and gender non-conforming people. World YWCA seeks to participate in and advance LGBTIQ advocacy work, and to actualize a more inclusive movement. World YWCA knows that gender equality cannot be achieved without equality for **ALL** women and marginalised genders.

All this is reflected in initiative design as all initiatives are designed in accordance with World YWCA vision, purpose and policies. World YWCA also strives to include young women in initiative identification and design.

In the [World YWCA Standards of Good Management and Accountability](#)<sup>6</sup> (SGMA), several standards ensure diversity and inclusion as for example, standard 2.2 makes sure that member association’s governing bodies

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<sup>4</sup> From 50:53 mins to 55:57 mins.

<sup>5</sup> [World YWCA Statement of Policies](#) [Page 108, 115].

<sup>6</sup> World YWCA member associations shall be in compliance with Standards of Good Management and Accountability ([World YWCA Constitution](#) article 10e), adopted by World Council in 2007 with the purpose Through practicing ethical behaviours and reaching high standards of management and accountability, each YWCA will be working to maintain the credibility of every YWCA because the name “YWCA” carries a certain degree of quality and expected practices.



represent the diversity of the women in the country, or Standard 3.1 ensures that members represent the diversity of women, including intentional inclusion in their membership of under-represented population.

Conceptualised in 2019, the first edition of the [World YWCA glossary](#) and definitions tool created in a consultative and collaborative process with the participation of YWCA young women leaders in 2020, was published and shared extensively in the movement and beyond in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). In December 2020, the World YWCA launched a [digital version of the World YWCA Glossary](#), adaptive to different hardware, with easy search and translation systems. This was a key demand from the global community after the success of the document version. This tool is core to achieve Goal 2035, ensuring messaging related to, and using terms that are appropriate and inclusive across the YWCA movement, as well as a contribution to the broader women's movement.

#### 4. How the World YWCA minimises negative impact on stakeholders, especially partners and the people World YWCA works for

3.

The World YWCA is committed to not discriminate in any way on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression and to create a safe, inclusive and non-discriminatory workplace environment for all employees. Therefore to ensure this, in 2019 the Board approved a [World YWCA Transgender Inclusion Policy](#), which address the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming employees and how to protect the rights and/or safety of such employees, maximizing the employee's workplace integration and minimizing stigmatization. The World YWCA has from 2009 a [World YWCA HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy](#) as part of the efforts in promoting and protecting the health of all its employees, without any discrimination and stigmatization.

Both World YWCA [Board](#) and [staff](#) code of conduct include the commitment to maintain an environment free from discriminatory behaviour, including all forms of harassment directed towards gender, race, ethnic origin, culture, language, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, HIV status or disability conditions of an individual. In addition, as part of the World YWCA commitment to create safe, secure, and positive space for all participants taking part in any World YWCA initiative, in 2019 and for the first time, the World YWCA adopted a [Code of Conduct for participants in the 29<sup>th</sup> World YWCA Council](#), to ensure responsible behaviour for the own wellbeing and that of others, and to prevent all forms of misconduct, including exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption, and to ensure child safeguarding. From World Council 2019, World YWCA merchandise was created, only with vendors that could demonstrate ethical business practices and alignment with YWCA values, for various purposes, including resource mobilisation and strategic partnership tactics.

Recalling past commitments to the protection of children at [World Council Meetings](#), combined with our commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its related Protocols, and consistent with appropriate development practice, from 2010 the World YWCA has a [Child Protection Policy](#). The World YWCA is planning in 2021 to review this policy to make sure that the safeguarding is not only for children, but also for young people and adults at risk.

#### 5. How the World YWCA demonstrates responsible stewardship for the environment

1.

The World YWCA has not progressed in this area during the reporting period.

## CLUSTER B: WORLD YWCA APPROACH TO CHANGE

### D. World YWCA Key Stakeholders Are Identified With Great Care

#### 1. World YWCA's key stakeholders and how they are identified

4.

The identification, selection and prioritization of our key stakeholder groups are initially determined by our Constitution and then by policy/programmatic guidance documents approved by the World Council and the Board. Our key stakeholder groups are affiliated member associations and YWCA entities, and World YWCA specifically targets girls, young women and women around the world, while prioritising girls, young women, women and people of marginalised genders and sexualities, including the intersectionality of race, geographical location, religion, culture, class and colonisation.

As a global movement that engages with and mobilizes women, young women, and girls, the World YWCA is committed to progressive, community-based leadership, particularly through initiatives that are led by and for young women. The World YWCA work is rooted in the needs of local communities and is made possible through the relationships and trust that local young women and women have built over time.

The World YWCA creates opportunities and space for young women and women to take action in response to needs that they see and experience in their communities; World YWCA meets them where they are, taking into account their unique experiences, perspectives, and needs. By providing training, resources, and skills-building opportunities for young women and women to implement change in their own communities, the World YWCA ensures that YWCA leadership, governance, programme and advocacy efforts are locally driven and informed by the lived realities of people.

While working to realise Goal 2035, and as outlined in the strategic priority 2 of the Strategic Framework, these last years, the World YWCA has been actively and intentionally pursuing external strategic partners that share a common desire to build young women's leadership and to transform power structure for gender equality. The efforts from 2020 have focused in continuing to recover former partnerships that make sense, developing and cultivating new strategic partnerships and multi-year funding. The organization works in collaboration with these partners in diverse initiatives. The organizations each bring value to the relationship such as advocacy, funding, technical backstopping and knowledge creation, etc. At the local, national, regional level, YWCA entities develop their own relationships and work closely with similar partners and initiatives.

### INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

**YWCA Entities:** The YWCA globally consists of autonomous affiliated national member associations that are made up of a number of subnational, local member associations, branches<sup>7</sup> and individuals. The World YWCA collaborates and work as strategic partners with YWCA entities: World Board, World Office, [Member Associations](#), other formal associations (such as: [HorYzon Switzerland](#), [European YWCA](#), [YGlobal Norway](#), and [YWCA World Service Council](#)), and YWCA formal and informal leaders.

### EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

**Youth:** Formed in 1996, the [Big 6 Youth Organizations](#) are an alliance of leading international youth-serving organizations. The Big 6 comprises the six largest youth movements in the world: World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and a leading programme for youth development, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (The Award). Together, the Big 6 actively involve and engage more than 250 million young people, contributing to the empowerment of more than one billion young people during the last century. The World YWCA is also a member of the [International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations](#) (ICMYO), a network of representatives and accountable International Youth NGO's and Regional Youth Platforms.

**Ecumenical:** The World YWCA is a member of ecumenical organizations or is in an advisory, partnership, or collaborative relationship with them. Examples are the [ACT Alliance](#), [Arigatou International](#), [Bread for the World](#), [Christian Aid](#), [Ecumenical Women at the UN](#), [Lutheran World Federation](#), [Norwegian Church Aid](#), [Women's World of Prayer Germany](#), [World Council of Churches \(WCC\)](#), [World Day of Prayer International Committee](#), and [Faith to Action Network \(F2A\)](#), among others.

**Government institutions:** Currently government institutions have a mostly funding relationship with the World YWCA and this also include collaborations in advocacy spaces at the international and regional levels. Platforms include the UN Commission on the Status of Women, where annually for example, in collaboration with Governments, World YWCA hosts critical discussions between young women and decision makers using the World YWCA principles. They include: Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Australian Government (DFAT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland Government, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Government (MoFA).

**Multi-lateral institutions:** The World YWCA works in networks aimed at advocating and influencing global policy on women's issues, and has a special consultative status at the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and is also a member of the Multi Faith Advisory Council<sup>8</sup> to the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on Religion and Development, and co-chair the Gender Working Group. World YWCA also has a collaborative relationship with UN agencies and bodies, as example, UN Women, UNFPA, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Human Rights Council. Especially in advocacy initiatives under various frameworks such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Generation Equality), ICPD Program of Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, along with other fundamental UN human rights conventions and resolutions.

**Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions:** World YWCA is member of Accountable Now and the International Civil Society Centre, and collaborates with them and other international, national and local

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.worldywca.org/members-page/>

<sup>8</sup> To uphold multilateralism and international human rights through multi-faith collaboration around/for Agenda 2030. [Joint Statement COVID 19](#).



NGOs. There are also organizations that the World YWCA works with in building feminist movements and they too bring in expertise that adds value to the work with young women, such as Women Deliver, SheDecides, KIT Royal Tropical Institute, and Monash University, among others.

**Corporates:** Between 2018 and 2019, the World YWCA established a relationship with IKEA Vernier, Switzerland, and as part of their sustainability initiative have funded the makeover of the World Office space and common areas to make it a more organized and inspiring working space for World Office team members. With direct input from young women team members, they also created a [safe space](#), based on the YWCA [safe space model](#). Corporations also provided support – either in financial sponsorship or gifts during special events/ meetings hosted by the World YWCA, such as the World Council in 2019.

## 2. How the World YWCA reaches out to those impacted or concerned by our work

3.

From 2019 the World YWCA implements a robust and substantial communication strategy with internal and external stakeholders, including newsletters, intranet, revitalized website, external/public communications materials, social media, etc. Pursuit of local, national, regional and global virtual engagements aimed at movement building through digital mechanism (e.g. [SheSpeaks](#) and [YWCA StoryShare](#)) has been a priority.

Diverse types of programmes, consultations, working groups, and regular contact with internal and external stakeholders have been methods of engagement related to the goals, and design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and initiatives adopted by the World YWCA. Internally, engagement has included the development and strengthening of mutual communication and reporting mechanisms. Internal and external organizational or programmatic evaluations and reports are used not just for reporting requirements, but as a communication strategy.

Another example is the Young Women’s Leadership Cohort 2020 (internship programme since 1991). In addition to the new intern related legal restrictions in Geneva, Switzerland in 2019, and then also because of COVID restrictions in 2020, the programme was redesigned to address both challenges, but to stay true to the unique design of the legacy YWCA internship program. The revised design allowed a further reach of Leadership Cohort members and combined attending virtual programme modules and participating in online activities with the World YWCA, but also the opportunity to practice and apply their skills and leadership to the work of their local or national host association.

The group’s diversity contributed to building on cohort members’ transformative leadership skills and nurtured sisterhood using peer-to-peer learning and a supportive network as the programme’s main approach. This approach was based on good practices from the [World YWCA RiseUp! model](#), leveraging the YWCA's flagship initiative for young women's transformative leadership. To ensure a successful outcome through the collective leadership among all parties involved in implementing the Leadership Cohort 2020, the World YWCA conducted three evaluations at the beginning, middle, and end of the programme. Throughout this journey, cohort members and host associations reflected and provided input to continue adapting the programme by addressing expectations and challenges, sharing ideas, and documenting learnings.

Check-in calls with cohort members also provided a platform for further collecting feedback and offering a safe space for young women to share their experience and voice any concerns or pressing matters. Building on these consultations and participatory process, the World YWCA facilitated consistent and timely communication and resources to address challenges such as connectivity issues for leaders in many regions. This particular challenge is highlighted considering that using online platforms and sharing digital tools to ensure a transformative and inclusive approach was critical.

You can read about some of the young women cohort experiences in [SheSpeaks: Nerat Pam-Hworo, YWCA Nigeria](#); [Yedidiyah Allen, YWCA Trinidad and Tobago](#); [Zahra Al Hilaly, YWCA Australia](#); and [Adaeze Muonyelu, YWCA Nigeria](#).

## 3. How the World YWCA maximises coordination with others operating in the same sectoral and geographic space

2.

Due to its long history, global reach and youth centred, ecumenical, feminist, grassroots, direct service and advocacy identity, the YWCA is woven into the social fabric of communities around the world and has expansive networks in the countries that it works in. In the feminist, women’s rights and faith spaces, the World YWCA has become a formidable ally and a partner of choice. The intersection of YWCA work – service and advocacy and women’s rights and faith and youth- is very relevant and often compelling to individuals and entities around the world.

From 2019, the World Office was active in pursuing and cultivating relationships with strategic partners to leverage the power of the movement, the member association's strength and the strategic positioning of the World YWCA. Collaboration and partnership were strengthened in context of COVID19 pandemic, in some cases accelerating progress in this area.

During 2020, and in line with the Resource Mobilisation Strategy, efforts continued to increase the income of World YWCA, but only as it fit within the Strategic Framework too, and to diversify funding sources. The World YWCA led an alliance of YWCAs, local women's rights organisations (WROs) that are external to the YWCA, progressive faith allies, researchers and legal and policy advocacy experts, in designing a collaborative initiative to expand civic space in Egypt, Kenya, Palestine and South Sudan<sup>9</sup>. At the core of the project design of the initiative, [Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy and Accountability \(YW4A\)](#), is authentic high value collaboration among partners and stakeholders from local to international levels, and the confidence that with capacity and resources, young women and community leaders will facilitate transformational change. With careful consideration of power relations and dynamics, the project focuses the inclusion of young women and WROs at all levels, ensuring transparency and full participation in the project. Working as partners – faith institutions and leaders, young women and women's rights organizations and legal and policy experts – they can collaboratively and tangibly contribute to systemic change, leading to gender equality.

This initiative, [YW4A](#), is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands Government (MoFA). The ultimate objective of this intersectional and multi-partner initiative is to raise awareness, advocate for and hold governments to account on young women's human rights, with a focus on young women's leadership, inclusion and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In December MoFA announced that the World YWCA and its partners had secured the five-year grant, worth EUR11.2 million.

As part of the development of the proposal, the alliance underwent a strategic and demanding process of developing country, regional and global initiatives and budgets in consultation with young women, relevant stakeholders at all levels, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and country embassies. As a result the initiative has national projects that are unique to the context of and gaps in each country. The alliance, which has a total of eight core partners and 23 local women's rights and faith-based organisations (FBOs) is setting a foundation for the development of a scalable young women leadership and advocacy programme design that can be replicated by YWCAs in different countries and regions. The programme combines the World YWCA RiseUp! and Safe Spaces models, as well as the young women's consultation methodology, to develop the effective leadership, participation and advocacy capacity of young women, the YWCAs and the local WROs and FBOs that work with the YWCAs (KI 9, KI 10 and KI11 of the World YWCA Strategic Plan (2020-2023)). The initiative therefore is a strategic win as it contributes to the sustainability and vitality of the YWCA global movement, and the women's rights movements, particularly in the four countries and also contributes to KIs 5, 7 and 8.

From 2019, the World YWCA strengthened the partnership with organisations including Big 6, UN Youth Envoy and a number of ecumenical and civil society organizations. The strategic partnership building through engagement, advocacy, co-branding, and consulting was aimed to leverage shared synergies and goals towards the broader objectives of gender equality.

As part of the efforts to move beyond tokenism, intentionally and by design the World YWCA initiated the [#YoungWomenLeaders Virtual Panel series](#) which provides platform for young women leaders to share their experiences on varied issues. One panel was held every month and over the year. World YWCA partnered with [DFAT](#), [Monash University](#), [UN Youth Envoy](#) offices and other partners to host these panels on topics of shared interest or work.

As a key positioning and advocacy work from the Big 6 youth organisations, early during the pandemic, the World YWCA joined the Big 6 in a statement of ["Community, Hope, and the Power to do Good"](#) and offering of six resources (one per organization). In December 2020, the Big 6 partners published a [policy-advocacy paper on](#)

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<sup>9</sup> **Lead:** World YWCA; Country leads: YWCAs Palestine, Kenya, South Sudan and Egypt (with the support of Ibrahimia Media Centre); **Technical partners:** Equality Now Africa and MENA, Faith to Action Network (F2A) and Royal Tropical Institute (KIT); **WROs in Palestine:** Psycho-Social Counselling Centre for Women, The Stars of Hope Society, Women Media and Development, Al-Harah Theatre; **WROs in Kenya:** YWCA Meru, YWCA Kisii, Inua Mama Mjane, Msichana Empowerment Kuria, Centre for Community Mobilisation and Empowerment; **WROs in Egypt:** Egyptian Foundation for Family Development, Liqaa Association for Solidarity and Social Work, Farah Foundation for Development, Sabaya Al-Khair Association for Development; **WROs in South Sudan:** Centre for Inclusive Governance, Peace and Justice, Self Help Women Development Organisation, Women for Change, and New Sudan Women Federation; **FBOs:** Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (Palestine), National Independent Church of Africa, Evangelism One Accord, Seventh Day Adventist Kisii (Kenya), Ibrahimia Media Centre (Egypt), and Christian Agency for Peace and Development (South Sudan).

[youth in the post-pandemic world](#). The paper provides key policy recommendations for governments and policy makers on issues impacting young people right now and how their inclusion is key to a sustainable world. World YWCA, as a part of [Big 6 Youth Organisations](#), pursued a global partnership initiative with WHO and UN Foundation on changing narratives on young people and COVID-19, emphasising on the need to invest in young people led solutions. The global initiative was [officially launched](#) by Dr. Tedros of WHO and Casey Harden, General Secretary, represented the World YWCA and Big 6 CEO's in the [global press launch in December 2020](#). The project has been up and running since then and the team is working with the larger partnership alliance to actively pursue opportunities for women, young women and girls, and member associations in the movement, which includes significant funding for YWCA's and also youth in YWCA communities. The initiative board also has a young woman leader from the YWCA movement as a youth representative board member. This project is key to our Goal 2035 where World YWCA is not just reaching more young women but also providing them with resources to practice their innovation and leadership on ground.

## E. World YWCA Listen to, Involve and Empower Stakeholders

### 1. How the World YWCA facilitates feedback from stakeholders and evidence to support that World YWCA listens and acts

3.

Two of the 2020-2023 conditions for success address the World YWCA approach on how engage and get feedback from our stakeholders: it's expected that, World YWCA (World Board and World Office), YWCA member associations, and YWCA leaders engage in and contribute to each key initiative; and a high level of communication and transparency is consistently demonstrated by the World YWCA, YWCA member associations and YWCA leaders. In addition, progress on key initiatives, by both the World YWCA and YWCA member associations, is reported on formally and at least one time per year. These are crucial components in the achievement of Goal 2035; below are some examples of initiatives that World YWCA listens to, involves and empowers stakeholders:

In advance to World Council 2019, the Board Global Governance and Constitution Committee and the World Office, in consultation with leaders from member associations, administrated the process for constitutional amendments and World Council resolutions/statements, and developed appropriate policies and procedure for the business of World Council: [Ways of Work and Rules of Procedure](#) which included best practices such as a World Council [Code of Conduct](#) and a [Complaints and Feedback Procedure](#). An official call for expression of interest was made for the World Council Advisory Committee and the Parliamentarians and Moderators Team, which were established at World Council. Recognising the importance of internal dialogue and consultations to prepare for successful and meaningful engagement and participation at Council, World YWCA hosted online conversations and exchanges in English, French and Spanish with member association's leaders before the Council. During Council informal conversations, also a formal town hall session and consultations sessions were held, covering discussion among other topics: The 'C' in YWCA, YWCA membership structure, governance: modernising the World YWCA Constitution, intergenerational leadership, and young women leaders.

During 2020, the World YWCA ran many young women led initiatives, including [#MyBodyMyMind Campaign](#), [Geneva Peace Week](#), World YWCA [Week Without Violence Campaign](#), and 16 Days of Activism, amongst others. The network of young women has been growing in both breadth and depth, with many young women leads and champions collaborating and participating with World YWCA in initiatives. This approach is even more so becoming the rule, instead of the exception of how YWCA initiatives are imagined, designed, and implemented.

Numerous young women from within and outside the movement have published articles and shared their stories and voices on the [SheSpeaks](#) blogging platform, especially at the beginning of the pandemic and during the quarantine and lockdown period.

From 2019, new roles of Young Women Regional Coordinators were established to best connect with and activate the mobilisation of member associations and young women, within and outside of the YWCA. The model was very successful and has more fully leveraged the World YWCA work in collaboration with YWCA leaders in Asia and the Pacific. This work will continue into 2020 and serve as a resource to inform work globally and in other regions. With the support of the Government of Finland and under the programme "Young Women Changing Narratives on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Mental Health", in early 2019, the first cohort of young women regional coordinators and country leads was established spanning 25 countries of the YWCA movement from three regions (Asia, [Africa](#), and [Eastern Europe](#)). The goal was to implement new pathways for collective evidence-based advocacy and strategic communication, co-led by young women. The YWCAs of Ethiopia, [Kenya](#), [Nepal](#) and [Ukraine](#) are all focus countries for the project - directly supported to conduct in - country activities. After a broad call for application was sent, three active and engaged young women were selected as regional coordinators to

coordinate work of the initiative in their respective region. The regional coordinators played key roles in co-developing and coordinating the project implementation with the World YWCA.

During 2019, the World YWCA Global Communications Group (GCG) was created, a consultative group with communication professionals and representatives from YWCAs around the globe as a step to practice inclusion and engagement in all communication and branding efforts and to serve as a consultative group for the World Office.

A COVID19 crisis response plan was developed as the pandemic started shaping and changing the way the world operates in 2020, with the World YWCA shifted to providing immediate crisis response work on ground to the YWCAs. This included revisiting a number of action items and revising engagement, communication and fundraising plans.

Tangible [resources](#) for the movement were developed to understand and better handle the gender impact of COVID19, resources that became advocacy tools on ground for the movement. These were made available and used in multiple languages by member associations and even organisations beyond the movement. As part of the World YWCA COVID19 crisis response plan, two rounds of virtual meetings, in March and then April, with YWCA leaders were held (four meetings per round; two in English, one in French, and one in Spanish). The notes of these critically important meetings are posted on the YWCA intranet, have, and will continue to inform planning, programming, advocacy, communication, fundraising, and other efforts. The information directly informed how World YWCA fundraised for member associations, as well as the awareness raising efforts that World YWCA led related to COVID19.

## 2. Evidence that the World YWCA engages with stakeholders from the beginning to the end

3.

As a membership based movement, member association stakeholders have the opportunity to meaningfully influence decision-making through World Council. At World Council meetings, they actively participate in the discussion and decision making process, propose resolutions and recommendations, influence and adopt the four-year strategic framework and budget. In between World Councils, annually the World Board monitors work plans and approve budgets.

In implementing World YWCA [Goal 2035](#), the World YWCA directly responds to two of the core principles behind the 2030 Strategic Development Goal (SDG) Agenda: Universality, which recognizes that change on a large scale requires action from governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, and people everywhere; and Commitment to Leave No One Behind, which affirms commitment to those with least opportunity, who are the most vulnerable and face multiple and intersecting forms of oppression and discrimination. To realize such critical changes, World YWCA knows that has to ensure that global policy, advocacy, and programmatic priorities involve young women from the very beginning and at the very core of the processes.

With the leadership of young women from different regions, in late 2018, World YWCA started to develop the co-creation of a Feminist Consultation Methodology which is core to the work being done at World YWCA. It will help capture evidence and allow for continued analysis and use of information by and with young women regarding their priorities, barriers, platforms, and interventions they wish to engage with, issues they wish to resolve, access they have or not, and how they collaborate with each other to organise for change. Created in two phases, the process included the young women's co-creation and validation of the at every point, including by using technology and social media as core elements to ensure an innovative, intersectional and feminist approach to reaching, engaging and consulting young women is maintained. The global representation of young women, in the two phased approach, with World YWCA playing the role of a mere facilitator of platform, helped ensure the methodology be truly- by young women, for young women.

The methodology has helped in evidence-based documentation of the challenges of working with young women in different communities, with different backgrounds, different orientations and understandings. As a safe space for these young women co-creators, they drive the inclusion of ideas, maintaining a truly open feedback mechanism.

Young women established the key components of the Feminist Consultation Methodology as follows:

- Participatory process involving young women
- Language as a powerful tool
- Following principles of safe spaces in creation and data collection
- Addressing needs of young people to be skilled in research bits
- Multi-method approach and non-linear process



World YWCA is using the consultation methodology in shaping programme designs including ideation, implementation and evaluation of upcoming and long-running initiatives to ensure the seamless use and adoption of the methodology. For example, the feminist consultation methodology draft was used to conduct a social media consultation aimed towards the selection of the theme and issues for the 2020 YWCA Week Without Violence. World YWCA shared a [toolkit](#) as part of the global advocacy campaign to end gender-based violence. The theme focused on COVID-19 and its impact on gender-based violence, especially marginalized and minority groups. This is key strategic step to ensure that training and use of the methodology within YWCAs and in the broader human-rights sector is strategic and purposeful. The replicable, easy to use methodology will be available to rights-based and community organisations in late 2021.

### 3. What are the main dislikes/likes the World YWCA has received from stakeholders and how the World YWCA responds

3.

Being a movement of many years, the World YWCA in the past had very rigid structures of communication and participation. Despite the fact that in the last decade, communication and engagement strategies have been transformed and strengthened significantly, there is still a way to go. World Office still receives feedback that some individuals do not receive World YWCA news and information, despite being present on a vast array of social media, website, emails, etc. Taking into account the diversity of the stakeholders, the World Office is exploring the incorporation of new methods, such as WhatsApp, to maintain not only informal communication but also formal communication with individual who want to be connected and engaged. Keeping above all in mind and acknowledging the resources limitations such as volunteer driven YWCAs, which the issue of connectivity and access to data continues to be a challenge for many individual in some areas and populations of the world.

During 2019 for the Young Women Global Advisory Council (YWGAC), new working norms were established and opportunities for input from the YWGAC identified and pursued. YWGAC submitted and presented a report with recommendations at World Council 2019. Based on experiences, lessons learned and recommendations, in the beginning of 2020, with the support of the World Office the Young Women's Global Advisory Council (GAC) continued to connect with each other to strategize ways to continue engaging with the young women of the movement. In the course of the year, the World YWCA started the planning of a consultation process with various YWCA stakeholders, which will begin in 2021 with a facilitated discussion of past and current members of the GAC regarding the future of the GAC entity. The purpose of this facilitated discussion is to bring together the key stakeholders across the GAC to agree on up to 10 actionable recommendations for participants in a subsequent consultative process and ultimately, that the Board will consider going forwards. The conversation will be facilitated by an external partner who has worked with the World YWCA several times and several ways in the last two years, and knows our organization, yet is in an external position of objectivity. During the facilitated discussion, the following topics may be discussed: Purpose, The 'A' in GAC, Terms of Reference, Membership, Structures, and Systems.

Another example of how these last years, the World YWCA continue also building meaningful and long-term relationships and secured renewed commitment from partners to support YWCA work on young women's leadership, including a shared plan to understand the impact of and further evaluate the approaches to leadership encapsulated in the World YWCA [Rise Up! Leadership programme](#). In March 2019 the report of "Mobilising Young Women's Leadership in Asia and Pacific" was launched, a joint research partnership between the Monash GPS and the World YWCA, funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Between 2016 and 2018 research was conducted into the leadership qualities and approaches of young women in Asia and the Pacific, with a purpose to understand how young women lead, what barriers they face, and the opportunities that exist to support and extend their leadership. It was done in conjunction with an independent evaluation of the World YWCA Rise Up! Program, funded by DFAT, in which nine national YWCAs deliver human rights training to young women. The [research brief](#) was widely shared with internal stakeholders, and the main findings, opportunities and recommendations have been instrumental in the review of the Rise Up! initiative and have contributed to the transformation of the World YWCA's work, approaches, and initiatives on young women's leadership. Some recommendations can be adapted quickly, others need a little more time to be able to transform certain cultural mind-sets and behaviours. An example of the work centred on young women leadership and their empowerment are the young women regional coordinators and country leads (See above section E1).

Between late 2018 and 2019, an external auditor of Bread for the World, a long term funder, conducted a comprehensive financial, operational and governance assessment of the World Office, with a focus on financial management. The report of this external assessment was very useful to identify the perspective and understanding on the position that the organization was, systematically identify challenges and some of the variables that are driving decisions being made, how the organization prioritize work, how things done in the past may not have been

ideal or may no longer be realistic. The report subsequently complemented work underway and provided the opportunity to consider improvements and make appropriate changes to reality and good practices. A concrete example was the development and adoption of the World YWCA [Grants Management Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#), with a purpose to establish the policies and procedures of the World YWCA concerning the management of grant awards.

#### 4. How the World YWCA knows that people and partners you worked with have gained capacities, means, self-esteem or institutional strengths that last beyond our immediate intervention

2.

As part of the implementation of the strategic framework, especially under strategic priority 2, considerable efforts have been made in which the World YWCA can guide and invest in new ways of working, formal and informal, between various YWCA entities and leaders, in order to optimally leverage the power of the movement. In addition, the World YWCA has been actively and intentionally pursuing external strategic multi-level (international, regional, national or local) partnerships that share a common desire to build young women's leadership and to transform power structures for gender equality.

An important aspect to take in account is the YWCA design, used by World YWCA and many local associations, to have community needs and crises inform advocacy. YWCAs not only tends to symptoms of injustice, etc. but with advocacy and in some cases, program design, seeks to achieve systemic change. A great example is the programme "Young Women Changing Narratives on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Mental Health", education and then narrative change as advocacy.

Another World YWCA initiative "Promoting Peace and Justice Through Women and Youth Empowerment in South Sudan" (2020) under the Fund for 2020-23 "Enabling Young Women's Transformative Leadership and Amplifying Their Voices for a Peaceful and Just World", is another example of the World YWCA efforts of young women transform power structures to achieve Goal 2035 and the SDGs by using their lived experiences and power to influence decision makers to shape policies and actions on gender equality, peace and security. The World YWCA, with the support of YGlobal and Norwegian Church Aid (NORAD funding) for a multi-campaigns initiative, is closely working with YWCA of South Sudan (focused engagement) and international space through the World YWCA network. The overall initiative has been planned for the period of 2020-2023 and the aims are to: Support intergenerational and young women's leadership at the fore-front of decision making in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 for increased women's participation, and contribute to UNSCR 2250's aim of youth being actively engaged to shape lasting peace and contribute to justice and reconciliation.

For 2020, the proposed initiative was designed to enable young women's role and agency as they advocate for peace and gender justice and respond to the needs of their communities in terms of their rights and socio-economic issues around conflict or/and instability. During the course of the year 2020, and with the pandemic of COVID-19 changing the global reality, World YWCA's initial proposed initiative for 2020 was redefined with a focus on providing young women an opportunity to co-define and facilitate trainings and skill building initiatives to better prepare to achieve the intended objectives for 2020-23.

Despite cancellation of global events and transforming of multiple events to an online-internet based design, World YWCA with immediate discussions and consultations with young women, YWCAs and YGlobal, restructured its plans following a need-based approach to reach out and map the realities and plans on ground helped in redefining this agenda. The proposed outcomes for 2020 around young women being actively engaged in agenda setting and articulating their needs was thereby successfully achieved.

In November 2020, World YWCA participated in the Geneva Peace Week, held virtually, through a podcast submission which voiced [the stories of four powerful young women](#) living in conflict and dealing with GBV issues. That podcast was followed up with another episode and both podcasts garnered immense attention on the UNSCR 1325 and 2250 agenda. Another YWCA movement examples: [YGlobal and YWCA Palestine](#), and [YWCA Haiti and HorYzon](#).

## F. World YWCA Advocacy Work Addresses the Roots Cause of Problems

### 1. How the World YWCA identifies and gathers evidence about roots causes of problems and uses this for advocacy

2.

The World YWCA ensures that its advocacy is rooted in the vision of the YWCA movement. In practice this means that advocacy priorities are in line with its constitutional purpose as well as World Council resolutions and decisions. They are communicated via different means, virtual meeting, publications, including policies and World Council minutes, internal and external newsletters, Board communiqués, and advocacy and campaigns materials promoted via our internal channels, website and our different social media channels.

The organisation's written [Global Advocacy Policy](#) describe the criteria or circumstances in which it will involve itself. The World Council and Board policies define the process for adopting and implementing the organisation's positions, and involving partners, experts and other parties as appropriate. They also contain due diligence provisions and sign-off procedures ensuring legal compliance and avoiding unfair or irresponsible public criticism and undue harm to third parties.

The World YWCA facilitates dialogue with YWCA member associations, entities and leaders when developing advocacy positions to draw on experience and input from local, national and regional context and realities in the movement, as well respecting their position, including assessing risks. In addition, the World YWCA develops communication plans which integrate key objectives for public awareness campaigns according to the Strategic Framework for 2020-2023. The communications team also collaborates with partners who are actively communicating in the same strategic areas.

Formally from 2021, the World YWCA Feminist Consultation Methodology will be one of the main human rights approach of the World YWCA to gathering data and stories by and for young women, to inform advocacy on issues defined by them. As mentioned previously in this report.

### 2. How the World YWCA ensures the people World YWCA works for support our advocacy and value the changes achieved

3.

It is important to keep in mind and understand that the World YWCA is designed as a movement of leaders, who owns the organization decisions and actions, it is essentially bottoms up and grassroots driven, and the individuals served by YWCAs and engaged with YWCAs are considered part of the fabric of the movement. As part of our approach we recommend to identify some examples through this report.

## G. World YWCA is Transparent, Invite Dialogue and Protect Stakeholder's Safety

### 1. The information the World YWCA shares via their website

4.

In December 2020, the World YWCA launched its newly designed, mobile-friendly [website](#). Young women and women leaders from the movement participated in consultative processes for the design and content of the new website. The draft new website was shared at the World Council for feedback. The website includes a design that creates a dynamic profile for each member association to reflect real time, updated information provided by member associations, and available to the public-at-large. Also it focuses on accessibility for those with visual challenges, an improved translation tool, an expanded and accessible resource library, expanded private intranet for YWCA internal stakeholders and a newly designed donate page.

The [intranet](#) developed for use by YWCA internal stakeholders, and for the YWCA movement to continuously engage and share more detailed content and information on a private platform, was launched in 2019 as part of the World Council preparations and documentation. The intranet is constantly updated, member associations can access to core policies, and internal narrative and financial reports, including audited financial statements. By the end of 2020, the intranet had around 600 users who created an account to access the platform.

In 2019, the renovated World YWCA [She Speaks engagement platform](#) was published online featuring contributions from women, young women and girls driving social change and transforming power structures for gender equality through everyday activism. A guidance toolkit was created in World YWCA's three official languages (English, French and Spanish) to best utilize the platform and raise the voices of young women.

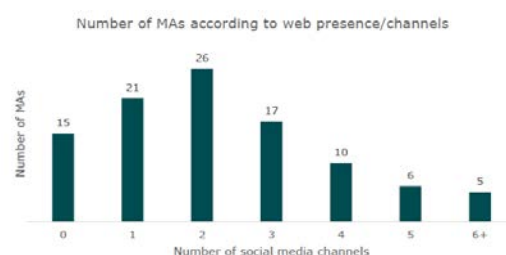


In the last years, the World YWCA social media outreach was expanded in leaps and bounds, with regular postings and other strategic efforts, resulting in better and active engagement and involvement of young women and women around the world to the YWCA: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

In the [website](#) you can find more information about: [leadership](#), [members associations](#), [governance](#), [accountability](#), [resources](#), [feedback and complaints](#), and [privacy policy](#), among other sections.

From 2020, the World YWCA began to brand accordingly with external membership status: Accountable Now, Act Alliance, and International Civil Society Centre, among others, as you can see in our [website](#), and [annual report](#). The World YWCA provides as best as possible core documents in the three World YWCA official languages, and the Google translate tool is available in most of the communication. While respecting copyright and intellectual property, World YWCA encourage self-freedom to translate and adapt World YWCA information and tools into local languages and context, respectively.

The 2018 member associations (MAs) survey results indicate that the digital footprint of many member associations remains very limited (Figure 1<sup>10</sup>). Currently, the most common medium of social media was Facebook, used by over three quarters of MAs (78). A little over half had a website (54). The next most widely-used channels were Twitter (38) and Instagram (28). 12 MAs had a LinkedIn profile. 14 MAs mentioned additional social media channels including YouTube, blogs, WhatsApp and Snapchat. 15 MAs indicated zero web or social media presence and 21 MAs had a presence on only one channel. World Office expects that this has drastically changed due to growth of the use of new technology, especially with the COVID 19 pandemic and new ways of communications. Also, because World YWCA has been actively driving World YWCA leaders to engage via the web and social media, as a vitality pathway.



## 2. The World YWCA's policies to ensure a fair pay scale, gender pay gap, ration between top and bottom salaries

4.

World YWCA pays a competitive salary for the Geneva market to attract and retain qualified and enthusiastic employees, to motivate and stimulate good performance and provide salaries consistent with good standards and in alignment with principles of economic justice.

The organisation's salary scale is based on the industry levels in Switzerland and also specifically Geneva. The government collects wage information nationally and by Canton, creating a database and wage scales that can be benchmarked by employers.

The World Office identified job classifications and a designated wage scale for each classification. This information is shared with all employees. Approximately every two years, the World YWCA uses relevant salary market data, including specific factors, to review the wage scales. The organisation holds itself accountable to remunerate employees with fair wages and other compensation (e.g. health insurance, paid leave, etc.).

Aligned with staffing changes, in September 2020, a market wage analysis for each position of the World YWCA was completed; a revised World YWCA [wage scale October 2020](#) per job classification was adopted. The document provides profile guidance and general parameters for wage compensation. Wage scales were informed by the process described above, including indicators made available by Swiss authorities.

## 3. How the World YWCA ensures privacy rights and protects personal data

4.

Progressing towards strengthening World YWCA good practices, in 2019, the Board adopted the World YWCA [Responsible Data Policy: Privacy and General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#). The policy provides clarity and information in the purpose of privacy policy, definitions, general information, personal data, collection and usage, type of data collected, including the legal basis for processing personal data under the GDPR of the European Economic Area (EEA). For more information, users are invited to contact the World YWCA at [communications@worldywca.org](mailto:communications@worldywca.org) and the policy is available on the [website](#).

<sup>10</sup> Figure 2: Digital and social media presence (Report World YWCA Survey 2018)

#### 4. The World YWCA's five largest donors, safeguards for anonymous contributors

2.

During 2017 to 2020, the World YWCA largest sources of unrestricted funding were member associations' affiliation fee and individual contributions and legacies, and our largest sources of restricted funding were grant from governments and ecumenical organisations/foundations. The World YWCA has no material anonymous donors, but that it will be consider adopting a policy. For further details, refer to the World YWCA financial audited statements [2019](#), and [2020](#).

The following are the World YWCA five largest sources of funding from 2017 to 2020, amount in CHF:

N°	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Coraid - 660,671 CHF	Membership Affiliation Fees - 562,663 CHF	Finland Government Ministry for Foreign Affairs - 666,132 CHF	Finland Government Ministry for Foreign Affairs - 408,223 CHF
2	Membership Affiliation Fees - 440,792CHF	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - 430,201 CHF	Other Income (related to World Council) - 490,441 CHF	Membership Affiliation Fees - 380,972 CHF
3	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - 413,094 CHF	Finland Government Ministry for Foreign Affairs - 211,368 CHF	Membership Affiliation Fees - 369,872 CHF	Bread for the World - 287,430 CHF
4	Individual and Legacies - 227,675 CHF	Bread for the World - 181,808 CHF	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - 292,579 CHF	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - 170,774 CHF
5	Bread for the World - 193,908 CHF	World Service Council, YWCA USA - 87,690 CHF	Bread for the World - 264,158 CHF	Individual and Legacies - 101,727 CHF

## CLUSTER C: WHAT WORLD YWCA DO INTERNALLY

### H. World YWCA staff and volunteers are enabled to do their best

#### 1. Evidence that the World YWCA's recruitment and employment is fair and transparent

2.

The World YWCA operates in line with the Swiss employment framework as its location of incorporation is in Geneva, Switzerland, where the hiring of local staff is encouraged, and mostly required, by the State of Switzerland and Canton of Geneva. At the World Office, the organization tries to make sure there is geographical, cultural and linguistic diversity, which can be a challenge due to Swiss law. For some years, due to Swiss law, each year it is more difficult to recruit people from abroad as Switzerland prioritizes Swiss or European citizens. It is almost as equally difficult to hire a person to work for World YWCA, but be located outside of Switzerland, which can be a challenge to the community based focus of World YWCA.

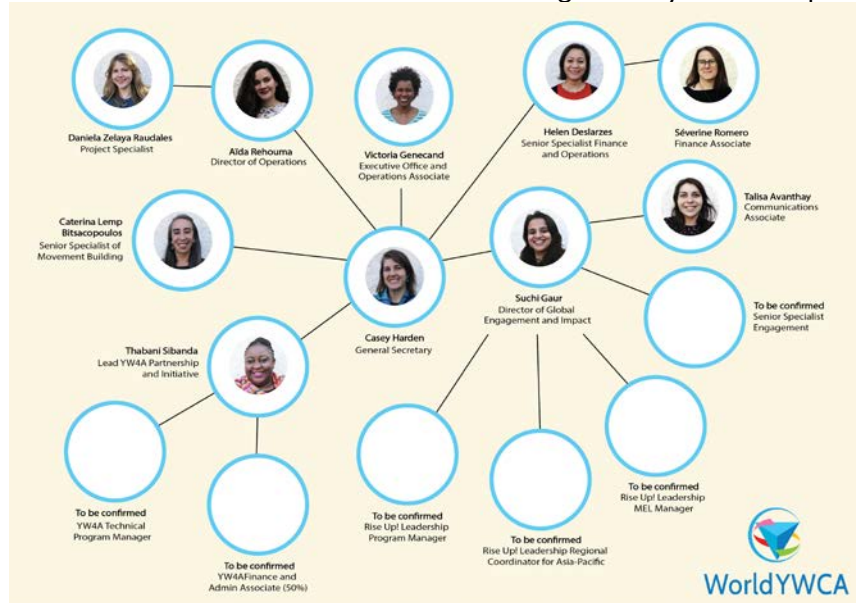
In 2020, World YWCA Office began the practice of publishing the wage scale for all recruitment notices for vacant team member positions, as well as listing experience as being a valid alternative to formal education.

YWCA member associations normally hire local people for their work. When the World YWCA works with consultants at the national or regional level, the organization make sure to respect the local context and expertise of the selected professionals. At the same time, World YWCA tried to prioritize skilled young women with disadvantaged access to opportunities.

The strategic staffing changes in the beginning of last quarter of 2020 were intended to 1) better align employee strengths with function, 2) better align staffing with the 2020-2023 Strategic Framework, and 3) shift functions among team members to allow the General Secretary to let go of work that does not fall within her job description and instead engage in more specific General Secretary roles and responsibilities. All job descriptions were updated, by the end of 2020 the World YWCA had ten World Office team members all under full time contract. The team members diversity is intended to represent the diversity of the YWCA movement and to add regional understanding, lived experiences and perspectives that are diverse, and opens doors to initiatives and understanding

Related, in late 2019, World YWCA adopted a practice of financially compensating, through stipend or honorarium, or technology allowance, the contribution of their time and talent, aligned with principles of economic justice.

[World YWCA Office Team](#), as of December 2020 (excluding Felix Anyouzo'o, Property Caretaker)



These last two years Human resources (HR) internal control were strengthened and are improving continuously. More HR processes were determined and templates were produced, assuring best practices for recruitment and termination (voluntary or involuntary) of employees.

## 2. What the World YWCA is doing to invest in staff development, how this is measured and future plans

3.

From 2019, regular weekly and monthly team meetings were established, and different professional, and organizational, and personal development activities were conducted. In 2020, an organisational development and team coaching initiative for the World Office team members was initiated with an external consultant. Topics of the sessions were collectively selected by team members with the coach: leadership, personal growth, diversity and inclusion, triggers, difficult conversations, among others.

In 2020, the employee performance system was comprehensively revised and now includes provision for mutual performance evaluation between the supervisor and the supervisee. The annual performance review is intended to be a fair and balanced assessment of a team member's performance at the annual mark of the performance year. It is a time for the supervisor and team member to review the performance of the last 12 months (approximately), give and receive feedback, clarify job duties, explain management's expectations, and review goals and improvement areas for the rest of the year. To accomplish a fair and balanced assessment, management must provide the team member an opportunity to express their opinions about the employment relationship. This annual review can also be used for a mid-year review, in order to focus on the first six months of an employee service year, to ensure optimal performance, in task and behaviour, during the remainder of the employee service year. At the end of the process, all team members participate in team and individual performance evaluations. The goal of the process is an enhanced relationship between and among team members, which strengthens their individual and collective accountability and capacity to fulfil the purpose of the World YWCA.

The annual budget always include significant allowance for professional development of not only the team, but individuals (for this, as defined in the Employment Handbook for employees).

## 3. How the World YWCA ensure a safe working environment for everyone, how this is measured and improvement plans

3.

After a review of the human resources policies was conducted by external consultants, in consultation with leadership team and team members, including staff representative group engagement, in 2017 the Board adopted revised Personnel Policies. This review made sure that the World YWCA follows the employment laws of the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland, and uses human resource management best practice and standards while operating in accordance with a human rights based approach. From that time until 2020, the World YWCA

continued reviewing, developing and adopted appropriate personnel policies, to ensure the World YWCA commitment to human rights and to be a safe working environment, such as: [Staff Code of Conduct](#), [Grievance and Appeal Policy](#), [Whistleblowing Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Exploitation and Abuse at Work Prevention and Response Policy](#), [Transgender Inclusion Policy](#), [Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct](#), [Staff Representative Group](#), among others. Several of this revised policies responded to the organizational challenges and transitions of previous years, lessons learnt; improvements and clarifications have been included. Another review of the Personnel Policies is due to happen, to complete this improvement process. While the period of 2019-2020 were focused on high priority tasks, a comprehensive review and edit of the Personnel Policies should take place.

The World YWCA is committed to a safe environment for discussion and dialogue for all team members, to feel able to contribute their thoughts and views and that differences are resolved constructively and respectfully for all parties, framed under a fair, impartial, non-discriminatory and non-retaliated mechanism. As example, the grievance policy provides an informal and formal process, where the involvement includes the person raising concerns, peer staff, the General Secretary and the President of the Board of Directors, as warranted.

As an exemplary practice of commitment to wellbeing and protection of the personnel, the World Office team was proactively prepared for lockdown measures as part of the COVID 19 pandemic impacts. Team members went on semi-confinement and telework in March and returned to the World Office physically in June, with published protocols to follow and flexibility to work from home, as warranted. A new semi-confinement and renewed call for organizations to rely on telework was made effective in early November 2020 in Geneva. Thanks to the experience, tools and processes put in place during the first semi-confinement period, the World Office swiftly returned to having team members primarily working from home. Including with improvements on their homework stations thanks to the generous support of a local movers' company which brought team members the ergonomic items they required from the office such as appropriate chairs, additional screens, etc. Team members were also given an allowance for their home office expenses. Additionally, approximately every two months, the team discusses the remote working situation. Once again, the team members showed resilience and as an employer, the World YWCA remained diligent, keeping abreast of the local announcements and developments.

## I. World YWCA resources are handled effectively for the public good

### 1. How the World YWCA acquires resources aligned with our values and accepted standards without losing independence

2.

The World Office is engaged in fundraising and resource mobilization in support of the organization's programmes and core functions, including fund development (e.g. COVID Response Fund). This is aligned with the fundraising and resources mobilisations policies and guidelines established by the World Council and the Board. The World YWCA mobilises resources through diverse donors and is committed to applying ethical guidelines to these efforts. The World YWCA is guided in this work by the Financial Development and Fundraising section of the [Standards of Good Management and Accountability](#), in addition to specific policies and guidelines on investment and fundraising.

The organisation's policy on the use of agents or other third parties for fundraising purposes states that contracts between the organisation and third parties shall be in writing and will oblige the third party to comply fully with the organisation's fundraising policy and ethical standards.

Donations are tracked and reported. In addition, the organization established and enforces strict guidelines when opening bids for hosting major events such as the World Council in order to avoid any conflicts of interest. In-kind gifts of a personal nature (food, crafts, and books) do not exceed reasonable value amounts and are openly shared with World YWCA internal stakeholders.

From 2019, [World YWCA merchandise](#) was created, only with vendors that could demonstrate ethical business practices and alignment with YWCA values, for various purposes, including resource mobilisation and strategic partnership tactics.

### 2. How the World YWCA monitors progress against strategic objectives and re-allocates resources to maximise outputs

4.

From 2019 the World Office established regular publication of a work plan, budget, assessment and reporting processes to the World Board and internal stakeholders. A good example is that following the development of a comprehensive [COVID-19 Crisis Response plan](#), the World Office established a structured [YWCA COVID19 Crisis Response Fund](#) to raise money to support member associations in response to the pandemic.

Based on feedback received from YWCA leaders in diverse consultations, the fundraising campaign focused on addressing the issues in the [World YWCA iceberg illustration](#) that highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on women, young women, and girls – some effects being apparent, while others going unseen. Appeals were sent to current and past institutional donors to contribute to the fund, as well as our external stakeholder distribution list and on social media channels. Funds were received from individuals, member associations and institutional donors to support YWCA efforts in the response against COVID-19 impact. After the campaign ended, the World Office made an [open call](#) to YWCA member associations to apply for small grants. Read the [Report of the YWCA Crisis Response Fund initial round of funding 2020 \(a first of three\)](#).

In parallel to the first round of interventions, two additional sources of funding for the COVID19 Crisis Response Fund were successfully awarded to the World YWCA. Bread for the World awarded the World YWCA with funds enabling eight YWCAs<sup>11</sup> to conduct interventions under the framework of the COVID19 Crisis Response Fund. The second source of additional funding came through negotiation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland whose grant has supported the Young Women Changing Narratives on SRHR and Mental Health since 2018. Savings were made in 2019 on some of the budget line items and the Ministry agreed for those savings and for the unused contingency amount to be allocated to the COVID19 Crisis Response Fund. Nine YWCAs including a local YWCA<sup>12</sup> got their crisis response projects approved.

### 3. How the World YWCA minimises the risk of corruption, the controls in place and what is done when controls fail

3.

The World YWCA has a multi-year budget framework, which is approved by the World Council. Each year, the Board reviews and approves plans and reforecasts the budget, including budget assumptions and a risk management plan, which then determines the allocation of resources in accordance with the priorities of the organisation and the availability of funds.

The organisation is under contract to donors to carry out activities as per the approved project proposal. The contracts include budgets and financial reports showing the allocation of resources to the project. Key contracts are also separately audited with individual auditor opinions. All transactions are recorded in accounts and are audited annually. In addition, independent auditors appointed by the World Board audit the annual financial statements, which reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and then are approved by the World Board.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), designed in a common global language so that accounts are understandable and comparable across international boundaries.

In addition to the General Secretary, each director, lead, manager for a project or event is responsible for budgeting and reporting on financials. Access to the accounting system respects segregation of duties. The requester approves all expenses and the at least one budget supervisor approves all payments, and then after the payment is set up in the banking system, two additional team members, separately, must review the payment, including documentation, before it is approved. The organization has a double-signature system for authorizing financial transactions in the banking system and for all payments.

The risk management system of the World YWCA is based on continuous advice from auditors, lawyers and experts. The World Office General Secretary, key team members, and the Treasurer are part of the Audit and Risk Committee to monitor compliance, mitigate corruption and fraud risks, and track any needed action.

In 2016 World Office developed a manual on accounting policies and processes, with a purpose to describe all accounting policies and procedures currently in use and to ensure that the financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles; assets are safeguarded; guidelines of grantors and donors are complied with; and finances are managed with accuracy, efficiency, and transparency. All World YWCA team members especially with a role in the management of fiscal and accounting operations are expected to comply with the policies and procedures in this manual. This manual is reviewed annually and revised as needed, based on lessons learned and good practices.

As mentioned previously, the adoption or improvement of good practice policies has been a focus of progress for the World YWCA in recent years. In addition to the Whistleblowing and Grievance policies, it is important to

<sup>11</sup> Armenia, Bangladesh, Greece, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria and the Philippines.

<sup>12</sup> Armenia, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Honduras, India (Local: Secunderabad), Myanmar, Palestine, Uganda and Zambia.



highlight the adoption of policies such as the [Scheme of Delegations to General Secretary](#), [Risk Management Framework Policy](#), [Procurement Policy](#), [Grants Management Handbook Policies and Procedures](#), [Feedback and Complaints Policy](#) and [Statement on Complaints against Member Associations](#), which contribute to reinforce the efforts of the World YWCA for the good practices and zero tolerance to corruption and abuse. Also, as part of the World Board responsibility to comply with the [Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct](#), a conflict-of-interest disclosure process and form to be completed annually by Board members and team members who are signatories for the organization, was introduced as good practice for accountability and risk management, as previously it was done orally and recorded in minutes instead.

## J. World YWCA Governance processes maximise accountability

### 1. World YWCA governance structure, policies/practices for replacing/recruiting new board members

4.

The World YWCA was established in 1894 in Great Britain and is an international, tax-exempt, not-for-profit organisation registered from 1949 in the United States of America as well as in Switzerland from 1975. World YWCA is an all-female organisation. World YWCA is a federation of 109 autonomous national member associations<sup>13</sup> organised into eight regions (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America and Pacific).

The World Council is the supreme authority of the World YWCA, and an ordinary meeting of the World Council is convened at least once every four (4) years. World Council is the largest gathering of YWCA members from all around the world. It is a time for membership engagement, decision-making, reflecting and networking. Additionally, World YWCA Board is elected, priorities are set and policies are determined through resolutions for the coming years' work.



Between Councils, the World Board provides oversight of the organisation's strategy, policies, governance and finances. The Board represents the diversity of the women of the movement and is made up of 20 women, two members from each region, at least one of whom is age thirty (30) years or under and one additional member from each of the four largest regions, who are elected by representatives from the 109 affiliated member associations. Board members are elected for four-year terms and can serve up to two consecutive terms. For the second time on the World YWCA history, as in the previous Board 2016-2019 on the current World Board elected at World Council 2019, 60% of the members are age 30 or under. A concrete example of the commitment of young women in leadership positions.

The Nominations Committee (NC), a Committee of the WC, leads the procedure to elect the governing body of the World YWCA.<sup>14</sup> Its function is to create a transparent and open process for nominations and elections for both the World Board and the Nominations Committee. It also fills vacancies on the World Board and the Nominations Committee as needed.

The World Board sets up committees and subcommittees for any purpose it considers appropriate. The committee members can include external members. The current World Board 2020-2023, until date has established the following committees: Executive Committee, Risk and Audit Committee, Global Governance and Constitution Committee, Membership and Compliance Committee, and Ah Hoc Committee for Affiliation Fee Exemption Requests.

### 2. How the World YWCA Board oversees adherence to policies, resource allocation, risks and complaints processes

2.

The World Board bears collective responsibility for providing oversight and when necessary, intervention, into the financial affairs and financial management of the organisation. The Treasurer has a formal working and reporting relationship with the General Secretary and Senior Finance Specialist, as well as the organisational auditors. The

<sup>13</sup> Affiliated MAs must comply with the World YWCA Conditions of Affiliation (Art.10 World YWCA Constitution). The national MAs are legal entities under the law of their countries and have their own constitutions and boards, which work on a volunteer basis. Some national MAs also have local associations or local branches. Most of our MAs run community programmes and services and advocate locally, nationally and regionally on the World YWCA priority areas.

<sup>14</sup> Art 65 - [World YWCA Constitution](#) - Functions of the Nominations Committee

Treasurer and General Secretary are held accountable by the Board to report consistent and accurate financial information, so that the Board is informed and can take decisions or intervention, as appropriate.

During the year, the Treasurer reviews periodic financial reporting and ensures the Board is provided sufficient information concerning the financial position of World YWCA (e.g. actual results versus budget, cash flow projections) by presenting regular reports to the Board. This includes a report at every regular meeting of the Board, an annual report covering financial results and financial position, presentation of annual audited financial statements with the external auditor, an annual budget, the investment portfolios, affiliation fee status of member associations, and any other matters concerning internal controls or financial governance. The Board has the responsibility to present annual financial report to membership, to approve annual budget, and present the four-year financial report, the four-year budget and recommendations concerning affiliation fees for the quadrennium to the World Council.

Also within the Board is the Audit and Risk Committee, whose role is to assist the Board in fulfilling its oversight and governance responsibilities and ensure the integrity of internal financial controls, as well as working with the General Secretary to consistently assess and address organisational risk. The functions of the Committee include: review of the annual audit results and auditor's comments; making recommendations for the Board to follow up during the next year; making recommendations for the appointment and re-appointment of auditors; meeting independently with the auditors at the close of each annual audit; ensuring that, at the least, a risk assessment is conducted each year; and to play an advisory role as required by the Board.

The organisation also has a standing Investment Advisory Group, comprised of non-Board members that are formally appointed by the Board. These individuals work with the Treasurer and General Secretary on the investment portfolios – to provide guidance and oversight, and serving as a check and balance and guardian on the management of those funds. This group meets two to three times a year with the banks that manage the portfolios.

The President of the Board and other Board members may be involved in the resolutions of complaints or grievances following respective policies, and as needed. Quarterly or more often, as warranted, the World YWCA Office will share information with the Board President on complaints received and actions taken to address them. A summary of the complaint received against the World YWCA – without any information that could disclose the complainant's identity – may also be shared with other World YWCA Office team and Board members for learning purposes. Complaints received against member associations will be shared with the Board committee on membership and compliance. The full movement may be informed of the complaints in the annual narrative report, which will not include specific information about individual complaints to ensure confidentiality for all parties involved.

### 3. [World YWCA's processes and mechanism to manage external complaints, plus a summary of complaints handled](#) 2.

The World YWCA is proud to inform of Board approval in December 2020 of a very comprehensive and integral policy and mechanism for [feedback and complaints against the World YWCA and against member associations](#). Unfortunately, implementation of this policy can't yet be reported.

However, during the World Council 2019 and following the World Council feedback and complaints, one feedback and one complaint were received and resolved satisfactorily at Council, following the procedure. One was related to the lack of vegan food, which was immediately corrected; the second one for discriminatory behaviour against people from a specific religion, also resolved during World Council.

### 4. [World YWCA's processes and mechanism to manage internal complaints, plus a summary of complaints handled](#) 2.

In addition to the World YWCA Feedback and Complaints Policy, the two main policies that guide the internal complaints are the [Grievance and Appeal Policy](#), and the [Whistle-blowing Policy](#). Non complaints formally received or recorded during the reporting period.

### 5. [World YWCA's decision making process around confidentiality and protecting complainants](#) 3.

The World YWCA is committed to protecting the privacy and safety of those who submit feedback to World YWCA, as well as anyone else named or otherwise involved in the issue. All information received will be treated in confidence, and will not be shared with anyone who is not directly involved in the processing of the complaint. If World YWCA needs to share the complaint received with the World YWCA Board or global governance bodies, all



identifying information relating to the complainant will be removed, including names, contact information, and information about the complainant's position - unless the complainant requests otherwise.

During the investigation process, some cases may be reported on a confidential basis, and it is the duty of the General Secretary or Board President and all others required to be involved, that the confidentiality of the reports be kept to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Some complaints may be submitted anonymously. This may limit the extent to which the organizations is able to respond to the complainant, particularly if contact details are not provided. However, World YWCA will make sure in all cases to take the information received into consideration and follow up internally as far as possible, and use it as an opportunity to learn.

## K. World YWCA leadership is dedicated to fulfilling the 12 Commitments

### 1. How the World YWCA governing body and management are held accountable for meeting strategic promises, including accountability

2.

Due to various exceptional circumstance and the impossibility to have the annual in-person business meeting, the Board activities for the year 2020 were adapted. The plan on the development, establishment, and implementation of Board responsibilities and working norms progressed by embracing virtual methodologies. Four virtual business meetings and one circular vote were conducted in 2020. These included discussions and decisions on: exceptional reduction of affiliation fees, Treasurer Report, 2019 financial audits reports, including allocation of funds for FY2019, annual work plans and budgets (2020 and 2021), 2021 annual Board meeting calendar, risk practices and matrix, and terms of reference Board Committees established.

As the new Board took office, the World Office conducted two surveys to the Board, to learn more about their knowledge, experience on governance, objectives, committees and resources mobilization. The results and analysis have been crucial in annual governance planning. As well, there was five facilitated Board orientation sessions to support the Board members in their role; internal and external facilitators conducted sessions. The topics for the session were 1) good governance and accountability; 2) governance and resource mobilization; 3) financial leadership; 4) strategic framework, budget, theory of change, and 2018 member associations survey report; and 5) young women and intergenerational leadership. Two other virtual team building and socialization sessions were organized as well.

The General Secretary and President established periodic monthly calls and communication. As well, both conducted individual calls with the majority of Board members. These calls allowed the respective Board member, General Secretary and President to develop a greater rapport and know each other more fully, toward a vision of strong collaboration.

As part of efforts to address key issues of power dynamics, governance transformations and modernization, in 2020, the World YWCA engaged partially in the second International Civil Society Centre's [Power Shift Lab](#). As part of the preparations, surveys were conducted with World Board members and staff of World YWCA, and power dynamic mapping interviews were held with eight World YWCA leaders (50% young women). This work continued in October 2020 at the Power Shift Lab exchange call and onward, in line with the power shift work completed in 2018, the strategic framework and the governance and transformational work for the quadrennium.

World YWCA team members participated actively in the Global Heads online meeting with heads of other global international non-governmental organisations to discuss the challenges and understand the situations being faced by teams across the member organizations of the International Civil Society Centre.

### 2. The steps the World YWCA takes to ensure staff are included in discussing progress toward organisational accountability

2.

These last two years and as mentioned in this report the World Office have focused mainly on the practice of accountability - to walk the talk. World YWCA is very thankful of the collaboration and partnership with Accountable Now, who for example, was one of the strategic partners invited to engage with the World YWCA at World Council in 2019, facilitating dialogue and consultations, engaging with the core of the movement.

Regular flash weekly and monthly team meetings are established under a mutual understanding that communication, transparency and mutual accountability are indivisible; interdependent and interrelated, to each

one as individual, with the different roles, and a collective, that needs to be reflected in our practices in order to achieve the recovery of the organization and to ultimately achieve Goal 2035.

As small pieces of a larger and long term accountability initiative, as outlined in the strategic framework, in April, 2020, World Office team members participated in an online training session, facilitated by [Accountable Now](#), to discuss accountability and to explore dynamic ways to be accountable to World YWCA stakeholders. As well during the year World Office team member joined the Safeguarding Peer Advice Group. World Office team members also participated in the Accountability and Whistleblowing Survey, carried out during September/October by Jeremy Sandbrook.

As part of our intentional practices of dynamic accountability and to expand the understanding of transformation and engagement with the topic, World YWCA Office team members, a Board member and Young Women Leadership Cohort members attended and actively engaged at the Accountable Now Annual Workshop [“Re-thinking and re-building: exploring opportunities to transform the civil society sector”](#). World YWCA participants had the opportunity to focus the individual and collective learnings, dialogue, reflections from a pandemic disruptive lens on inclusion, equity, and power shifting; and resilience. The General Secretary, Casey Harden, conducted with Restless Development a session on [“Resilience as a Leadership Practice: Post-Traumatic Growth”](#). Expanding knowledge on accountability was a major highlight for Nerat Pam-Hworo, a young woman cohort member from YWCA Nigeria who shared [“The most important learning and achievement I accomplished was moving towards becoming an accountable leader. A culture of accountability sometimes seemed to be a mirage, but I have learned how to make it a reality.”](#)

### 3. The scope of the World YWCA’s accountability report

2.

The basic information gathered in this report is rich in detail and scope focusing mainly in the World YWCA Office (Secretariat), World Board, YWCA entities and individuals, and other committed internal YWCA stakeholders, and reflects the collaboration and support of important partner organizations and donors, as possible and warranted. The report includes information, examples and experiences mainly focused on the last two years (2019-2020) as well highlights from previous years (2017-2018)<sup>15</sup>. More information can be found in our website.

As previously mentioned in the report, especially since January 2019 the World YWCA is seriously addressing the critical situation it was in previous years, and with discipline, focus, mutual accountability, and strategic partnership World YWCA can ensure continued positive action. World YWCA is thankful for the feedback of previous reports which all have been considered and addressed as best as possible.

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<sup>15</sup> The scope of this report also include World YWCA work guided by the three primary objectives of the strategic framework 2016-2019 adopted at the 28th World Council in 2015: 1. Young Women and Girls Transformative Leadership 2. Realizing Human Rights 3. Sustainability of the YWCA Movement.



# World YWCA

CONTENT BY WORLD YWCA OFFICE  
[WORLDOFFICE@WORLDYWCA.ORG](mailto:WORLDOFFICE@WORLDYWCA.ORG)

L'ANCIENNE-ROUTE 16, 1218 LE GRAND-SACONNEX  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND  
[WWW.WORLDYWCA.ORG](http://WWW.WORLDYWCA.ORG)

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