

Accountable Now
c/o MACHWERK in der Alten Münze
Am Krögel 2
10179 Berlin
Germany

08 February 2022

Dear Members of the Independent Review Panel,

Thank you for your feedback on *World YWCA Accountability Report 2019 and 2020*, the first report submitted by World YWCA since 2016. It is evident that you mostly understood the current status of the World YWCA, in an exciting transition to recover and embrace best practices across the secretariat. As it relates to accountability, we have evidenced slow and steady progress, with that progress focused on meaningful, transformative outcomes, instead of what could instead be transactional, cosmetic outcomes.

When we submitted the 2019-2020 report in 2021, we were already implementing more progress, beyond that contained in the 2019-2020 report, and we were heartened to see that the independent review panel feedback tracked closely with our prioritized, new focus areas. The conversation with Mayumi Fuchi, Elodie Le Grand and Hector Payo Meiriño was revealing and helped us to better understand the perspective of the Independent Review Panel, and also to better communicate the World YWCA's current position, therefore we hope, contributing to a better mutual understanding that was not reached by way of an exchange of written reports.

Many of the very specific comments and recommendations were useful to help us to identify blind spots, and also reconsider parts of our current practices. The more macro recommendations were most often areas of need or improvement that we are already fully aware of, and working to address with our current resource limitations, and in balance to other organizational objectives. A few recommendations or notations we acknowledge may be outside of the scope of what is possible for a secretariat of our size, but they are all recognized as valuable.

Speaking specifically to the citations in the Improvement Analysis, World YWCA 2019-2020 Report, produced by the panel and staff of Accountable Now:

Sustainability of our work (B1)

To clarify a misunderstanding of the panel, in 2020 the World YWCA pro-actively and without petition from member associations, provided a 33 percent reduction in affiliation fee to all associations, responding to the reality those organizations were facing due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding being certain to "consider the role of the Secretariat in supporting members and partners to ensure programmatic work is sustainable, beyond project life cycles," that consideration is woven throughout all of the planning processes and decisions on where and how to invest resources. In fact, we have *conditions of success* published as part of our strategic framework, which demand that we continually focus on sustainability. We have a lot of work to do still to encourage our autonomous and independent YWCA member associations to embrace similar conditions of success.

Lessons learnt (B2)

In this feedback, the panel points out the value of analysing qualitative and quantitative data to make conclusions or observations about lessons learned and identify of that learning, what might be actionable and/or constructively inform future work. The distinction is noted and one that we are aware of, and in time and commensurate with resources, we look forward to increased focus on optimal reflection and quality of analysis.

Main likes and dislikes by stakeholders (E3)

In the 2021 report of World YWCA, we will share the findings and analysis of the inaugural World YWCA Satisfaction Survey, completed in early 2021. This survey was open for any internal stakeholder of YWCA to complete, not just formal leaders (i.e. staff executive and governance head). Additionally, in 2021, World YWCA initiated Dialogues, online conversations with YWCA leaders to be in conversation and gain solicited and unsolicited feedback.

Stakeholders support your advocacy work and value changes achieved (F2)

We look forward to building out this response in our report, and sharing more data, as 2020 – the first year of our current strategic plan, was robust in the scope of our progress.

Internal complaints and feedback mechanism (J4)

We agree that training on organizational policy is as important as installation of a policy and we are keen to build out a systemic training practice, fit for purpose for the World YWCA secretariat. We are as keen to have all YWCA associations have a complaints and feedback mechanism, and have made intentional and modest progress on this effort to date.

Protecting confidentiality of those involved in complaints (J5)

The panel suggestions about revising policies to more explicitly outline protective measures for individuals making a complaint is noted and we plan to make appropriate changes to the relevant policies in order to improve the protections for a complainant. We will also review the whistleblowing policy in its totality.

Accountability is a key theme for the World YWCA and mutual accountability with YWCA and external stakeholders is explicitly threaded through the current World YWCA Strategic Framework (2020-2023). This goal assumes that the practice of accountability will not only grow stronger within the secretariat, but to all YWCA entities and leaders – expanding mutual accountability, co-responsibility and shared ownership of decisions and practices. In 2021, we progressed and we will continue to steadily systematise our accountability efforts, implementation and socialization and training. We seek to ensure that such progress is not just installed, but adopted.

You will identify clear and continued progress in the 2021 Accountability Report, to be submitted in 2022, and we will consider as best as possible the suggested areas from the panel, that were not yet taken up in 2021, for improvement in 2022 and future years.

Thank you for your efforts working in partnership toward optimal dynamic accountability with World YWCA.

Sincerely,



Casey Harden
General Secretary