



# IFUW Membership Committee

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## 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

Hazel Bowen, Convener

Part I

### SUMMARY OF ACTION IN 2008

1. We had tried to be in touch with NFAs in arrears and likely to lose their membership in an attempt to assist the NFAs so they do not to lose their membership. We received very little response from these letters. The Finance Committee, naturally, wished to deal with the financial aspects of this problem and it was decided that the Membership Committee (Memcom) would draw up a Business Plan which any NFA could use but which could help an NFA become sustainable through planning activities in a viable manner. This document is on the IFUW website and has been mentioned in communication to NFAs. A recent application from Niger would seem to show that they found this document on the website and have tried to make use of it for their application. It has also been agreed by Memcom that we should pilot the use of the Business Plan with perhaps 5 – 7 NFAs (of varying membership size and at least one non-English association). This will provide invaluable feedback to make the Business Plan as user-friendly and as useful as possible.
2. A Profile of membership/prospective membership was finalized after the last Board meeting. It has been decided to review the layout of the information before it is included on the IFUW website.
3. The Best Practice Survey was conducted and the results have been posted on the website. Some ideas have been circulated to NFAs and we propose to include more in the next newsletter.
4. We have asked all NFAs to ensure that their contact details on the IFUW website are correct and easy to find. We also asked that more than one e-mail address be provided as often a contact is no longer operational (or out of order) and this can result in a prospective member being disheartened.
4. We have asked Headquarters to ensure that Associations wishing to reapply for membership are advised that there is a special fee payable.
5. We have made contact with a number of organizations or people who wish to start an organization and join IFUW. WG-USA, Inc has now been admitted as a new Member by Council. The Hungarian Association is currently looking at suggestions we have made to their constitution. We are about to send suggestions to the Niger Association. Other areas we have been in touch with include : Ghana, Greece, Sudan, Malawi, Mozambique, Tunisia (**Arielle will visit there at Easter time**) Liberia (they have just been in touch once again), Sudan, Benin. Shirley Randell has kept us informed of contacts she has with various organizations.
6. Two conference calls (24 January and 7 February 2009) were held instead of meeting in Geneva. Members were asked to share the minute-taking duties but a member has raised the difficulty of taking minutes in English when this is a language in which one is not that strong. This issue requires members to be flexible.

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## **CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED**

The main challenge has been contacting NFAs or other organizations in regions where e-mail connections are intermittent. Also, when an NFA is experiencing problems, lack of finances and lack of contact are the two aspects which first manifest themselves!

*A way around the difficulties of maintaining contact and ensuring that IFUW has up-to-date contact details is to ask NFAs to provide an **ANNUAL** report on their activities. The development of a project database would also help.*

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

Marketing IFUW and the NFAs is, obviously, crucial. Memcom is keen to create awareness of our organization within the **Higher Education Institutions worldwide**. We feel that if IFUW provides some background on our aims, advocacy and activities and provides the institutions with information about any local NFA this would expand the understanding of IFUW and assist local NFAs with their own activities. We understand the Board is in the process of developing a research project to collect statistics on Women in Higher Education. Memcom suggests that this would be an ideal opportunity to incorporate awareness raising, involve the local NFA and announce the project. Presumably the Board will offer to share the results with the HE Institutions which would encourage them to participate. NFAs could be asked for suggestions about which HE Institutions should be targeted.

IFUW also needs to find ways to facilitate reporting by NFAs. Distribution of a report template at the beginning of each year would help. A second strategy would be to encourage each NFA to develop a **Database of Projects**. This type of database would be relatively easy to develop and keep up-to-date. It would provide a focal point of achievements by the NFA and also quick reference when IFUW requires information on an NFA's activity.

A third area of concern is how to further credence to IFUW's commitment to Young Members. Over the past years there has been an unwritten commitment to nominating and electing members based on geographic spread. If IFUW is to remain viable, we need to find ways to encourage and make possible greater participation of Young Members in IFUW's leadership positions.

A related issue needing attention is that of how Independent Members can be brought into the nomination process, particularly those who have been members for an extended period, e.g. three or more years.

## **PLAN OF ACTION 2009/2010**

Most of the following work will be shared by memcom and is ongoing – certain aspects will be given deadlines and delegated to specific members, as required.

1. Pilot the use of the Business Plan with perhaps 5 – 7 NFAs (of varying membership size and at least one non-English association). This will be the most urgent activity.  
**All/geographic region**
2. Review the profile of membership/prospective membership before it is included on the IFUW website. **HB** will start the process.
3. Provide assistance and encouragement to NFAs with financial difficulties from the time they are one year in arrears. **As per geographic region**.
4. Identify and arrange for key membership material on the website to be translated into French and Spanish. **This is considered urgent**.
5. Provide an update of activities for the next Board & Committee newsletter at the **end of February 2009. HB after committee approval**

6. Develop a topic suitable for the new IFUW Blog. This could link with the theme of “intergenerational leadership challenges”.
7. Ascertain which NFAs/branches are already twinned and with whom, as we would like to encourage this from a fellowship point of view as well as “mentorship”. **HB in newsletter article**
8. Obtain an example of the electronic membership card provided to IFUW Independent Members to offer this as a suggestion to NFAs for their own members. Printing and posting are expensive so we would encourage an electronic version. This card could deepen a sense of belonging and commitment to the organization as well as acting as a “marketing” tool. **Leigh/HB in newsletter article.**
9. Develop background material which could be used for an Intergenerational Leadership workshop. Information will also be linked to the feedback obtained from the Sustainable Future discussions. **All/Regine will begin reading up**
10. Develop a template for an NFA Project Database and to encourage its implementation. **Regine to provide a template/HB in newsletter article.**
11. Continue to work with groups wishing to apply for IFUW membership. **Geographic area.**
12. Increase marketing of IFUW and NFAs to create awareness of our organization within the Higher Education Institutions worldwide. **Assist per Board’s request**

### **2010 IFUW CONFERENCE IN MEXICO**

Memcom is willing to be involved with the accreditation process for all Council and Business sessions at Conference. A roster of duties for Memcom members will be drawn up based on their other (NFA) commitments. Will the Young Members be assisting in this task as well? We await the Board’s decision on who will be asked to oversee the accreditation process.

Memcom will obviously also be willing to participate in any welcoming activity for Young Members as well as to share any knowledge/information we can with them.

Memcom will co-ordinate the welcome function for new affiliates. There should be at least 2 or 3 NFAs to be introduced to Council and Conference.

Memcom is very interested in arranging a workshop on the issue of Intergenerational Leadership (whether we plan it with others or run it ourselves). We would prefer a time slot which does not clash with Council meetings or very important business sessions (final vote on resolutions etc) as our members could be involved in these business sessions. We do not envisage any major costs besides some stationery and the printing of a handout.

Should the Board be planning a technology forum, we would like to mention that Women’sNet/ Feminist Tech Exchange ran a programme at the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID) conference in Cape Town recently. This was called “Take Back the Tech” and involved working with clues to find out how information and knowledge is organized around technology and ICT platforms (internet/mobile phones etc) and how they can impact women’s rights. Their particular theme for the AWID conference was “Violence Against Women” but the idea could be used to work on the theme of “Empowering Women”. What appeals is that this is presented as a game. Our own organizers could very well provide something similar. Information/resources and tools are available on <http://ftx.apcwomen.org>.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL**

1. IFUW should develop a strategy for encouraging Young Member participation in IFUW’s leadership roles. This might include the following:
  - NFA leaders to be encouraged by the IFUW Board to take Young Members into consideration when nominating and again when elections take place.
  - A constitutional amendment could be drafted whereby a Young Member is required to be a committee member of certain IFUW committees (if not all, the relevant committees could be identified) and/or

- A resolution could be drafted where a Young Member is required to be part of the Board
2. IFUW should develop a strategy to bring Independent Members into the nomination process so that they may be considered for election. Memcom would be happy to draft an appropriate constitutional amendment.
  3. The research project to collect statistics on Women in Higher Education should be used as an opportunity to raise awareness about IFUW and NFAs. NFAs should be asked to identify HE institutions to be targeted in their respective countries. Vice Chancellors and Gender Units should be contacted with information about IFUW's project and a request for any statistics or studies that may have been undertaken in their institutions or countries
  4. Memcom should be notified when an NFA is one year in arrears so that Memcom can help and encourage the NFA while there is still time before the NFA is faced with losing membership.
  5. A streamlined template for national reports should be made available to the NFAs at the beginning of a year to expedite the reporting process.
  6. Memcom should organize a workshop on Intergenerational Leadership at the 2010 Conference.
  7. The Board should organize a technology training session at the 2010 Conference similar to the one organized at the AWID Conference.

*HAZEL BOWEN, Convener  
February 2009*

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## *Part II*

*As the conference call proved to be more expensive than anticipated the committee continued its discussions through the IFUW Teamwork Project Management site. This was found to be a most satisfactory way of communicating (although one member did not participate). The following items complete our report to the Board:*

### **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

#### *Brazil*

Memcom recommends to the Board that the women in Rio (led by Izabel Moura da Silva) be allowed to re-affiliate under the name of the original Associação Brasileira de Mulheres Universitárias (ABMU) in order to maintain the historical links. ABMU would be required to pay the re-affiliation fee and provide any other undertakings the Board/Finance Committee require. Memcom would like to use this opportunity to pilot the Business Plan with ABMU.

#### *IFUW Website*

Memcom is delighted to learn that a **Translation Committee** has been established. The committee will be looking at what parts of the membership material should be translated but at the moment would like to recommend that the Model Constitution in its entirety be translated into as many languages as possible.

#### *IFUW International Grants Bulletin Board*

Memcom recommends that a Bulletin Board be established providing information about Donor organizations and offering a network for women involved in research on Higher Education and Women Studies.

## *IFUW CONFERENCE 2010*

### *The Distribution of Leadership Training Grants*

The committee would like to recommend to the Board that these grants should also be available to Independent Members. It was also suggested that members should be asked to apply for the grant which would give IFUW some idea of the number of grants required before an amount is allocated per grant. IFUW will establish the criteria for a member to be eligible. Such grant would be paid at conference or after conference also based on attendance.

### *Registration Fee for Conference*

Memcom discussed quite extensively the issue of discounts being offered. Our suggestion to the Board is if this is possible a discounted rate should be offered to fulltime students (only).

### *Encouraging multigenerational leadership*

The committee recommends that NFAs are encouraged, when nominating members for IFUW committees and the Board, to include Young Members. Equally, when elections take place delegates should again be encouraged to include Young Members.

The committee did not come to any conclusion as to whether this “encouragement” should be written into the constitution (thereby requiring a constitutional change) or whether to informally provide this encouragement. (Similar to how delegates are encouraged to maintain a geographic spread when voting).

A further recommendation is that all committees and the Board should have a Young Member sitting on them – if not through elections then through nomination (such as has been the case for Memcom).

### *IFUW 2010 Conference Credentials*

Memcom is willing to assist with this task. However, at this stage not all the members know what their NFA commitments at the conference will be.

At the last conference it was certainly very useful to have someone outside memcom, Kathy Mumford, coordinate the work. Young Members also assisted.

*HAZEL BOWEN, Convener*  
*16 February 2009*