

**REPORT OF THE REVIEW MEETING FOR YEAR 2013
ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT**

BY

**INTERFAITH FORUM OF MUSLIM AND CHRISTIAN
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, A.K.A., WOMEN'S
INTERFAITH COUNCIL (WIC)**

ON

29TH - 30TH APRIL, 2014

AT

WOMEN MULTIPURPOSE CENTRE, KADUNA

DAY ONE, 29/04/2014: Forty nine (49) participants were in attendance. This includes the Pioneer General Coordinator and Founder, Rev. Sr. Kathleen McGarvey (OLA) who came in from Ireland to witness the proceeding of the Review Meeting and the hired Consultant, Messrs Felix Sha'adu of Faasib Consult.

PREAMBLE: From the document titled **Report: Women's Interfaith Council (WIC) May 2010 - January, 2014**, I discovered that on yearly basis, WIC tries to review its past activities to enable it see the way forward in the coming years. This, we observe is a healthy development. So when Faasib Consult was asked to be a partner in this endeavour, we gladly responded positively. Faasib Consult then tried to refer to the UNDP Toolkit on Civil Society Organization to confirm the health of WIC in meeting the standard structure suitable for engaging NGOs to undertake their assignment efficiently and effectively.

We then drew out questionnaires to be completed by the management team, the other faith group members and the secretariat staff of WIC.

Secondly, every successful entrepreneur does have a Management Information System (MIS) department to keep tap with what is going on in its industry, so this is no different with NGOs. They need to analyse their SWOTs (Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) and see how they can reduce the negative impact of threats to their existence. Lastly, Faasib Consult sought to know the way forward for WIC to continue to enjoy unalloyed support from their sponsors and various public spirited individuals.

Mission/Vision: Faasib Consult desires to carry out its assignment professionally, identify weaknesses and proffer remedial and sustainable actions.

Strategies/Action Plans: Faasib Consult briefed the participants at the Review Meeting on the methodology of its assignment. That there shall be 3 sub-groups with team heads and secretaries for each group. There after the group session ensued and participants were we divided into three groups.

Group 1 (Management Team): To be headed by GC while the PM serves as the Secretary.

The remaining participants were divided into two groups to form Group 2 and Group 3 and team heads and secretaries were appointed to facilitate the discussion sessions in the two groups.

Each sub-group was given a case file to appraise a past activity done by WIC using interrogatives: *what, why, where, when and how* and to come up with suggestions of how well activities can be improved upon in the future.

An appraisal form has been designed by Faasib Consult to be filled by the Program Manager and Secretary. The Program Manager was equally assessed by the General Coordinator.

STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL FOR MANAGEMENT (*Board of Trustee, Representative of OLA, General Coordinator, Christian Coordinator Muslim Coordinator, Secretary, Program Manager and all Committee Heads*) **A SILVER LINING**. 13 members were in this group.

In agreement with UNDP's toolkit, and in keeping with the standard of formation for NGOs, WIC so far is up-to-date.

On Legal Status and History, they have met all the conditions. They are legally registered with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and they have obtained the certificate of incorporation. Though inaugurated in 2010, they have consistently made efforts to build their internal capacity. They have media kits to tell other story to the public, as well as a functional website.

On Mandate Policies and Governance: They are up and running. They have vision and mission statements, solid aims/objectives; and action plans in the possession of faith groups on their website. They equally have a sound and well defined constitution.

From inception, WIC has continued to build the internal capacity of its members. For a corporate organization to succeed it must imbibe the principle of *corporate governance* that states that roles of management be shared and professionally qualified individual members should man such roles. Yes and indeed this is what obtains at WIC. It has a Board of Trustee (BOT) with 6

members and the functions are clearly stated in their constitution on Pages 5-6.

It has clearly defined organizational structure and their chain of command is ideal and smooth.

WIC has a constituency and enjoys external support, though they shall still appreciate willing collaborators. It also interacts with its field members and carries them along.

WIC networks with local and global linkages such as (United Religion Initiative, Women of Peace and Security, United States Institute of Peace Bridge Builders' Africa, Interfaith Mediation Centre, Care Fronting, ABANTU for Development, Partners for Peace etc.)

WIC enjoys collaborative and funding supports from the National Endowment for Democracy, Our Lady of Apostles, Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, Ministry of Women Affairs, United State Institute of Peace and the Irish Embassy.

Technically, WIC understands its assignment and has competent hands to execute those assignments and are eager to improve through training and retraining of its staff/members and the bringing on board of other competent hands as their work expand.

On Planning Monitoring and Evaluation, WIC is on course. The management and members so far, can be seen to be improving consistently just as it is stated: *man learns from cradle to the grave.*

On Reporting and Performance Track Record, they do report their works to donors and include the view point of beneficiaries in the design and review of their programs. They also document reports sent to donors at their secretariat. They will however need to begin to write Annual Reports to document their successes, challenges, funding sources, scope of work and financial audits of the immediate past year.

On Administrative Capacity, at the moment they have a rented office, computers, furniture, printers, inverters, internet connectivity, mini-library and

a refrigerator. They do not have any vehicle at the moment and this is highly essential for them to quickly respond to matters that need their attention, especially for the fact that they exist to serve rapid response and early warning roles. This is a clarion call to willing donors to support them in this regard. At the moment they use vehicles of membership faith groups which cannot be the same as when such vehicles are owned by WIC.

On Financial Capacity: The highest fund they have ever managed is not more than N7.5m. But because they are up-to-date in their records of financial activities, I believe they can handle more funds now. They equally engage professional auditors to audit their accounts. But I suggest they should have on contract basis, auditors for 3 years tenure to handle their accounts. This I believe will further build trust and attract more willing collaborators.

Part of their sources of funds comes from members: Faith groups and individuals. As at April 2014 when this review was carried out, some members are yet to pay their dues. They gave a firm promise to pay up in May 2014. I hope they have fulfilled the promise. If they have not, the secretariat should send them reminders.

APPRAISED STAFF OF THE SECRETARIAT

Staff of the Secretariat (Program Manager and Secretary) appraised themselves. They were also appraised by the General Coordinator and both appraisals were compared and analyzed by the Consultant. They were found to be currently doing a good job, but were told not to rest on their oars and to continue and improve on their work.

CASE FILES OF PAST ACTIVITY; A REVIEW

Group A: 18 members were in this group and they treated the sanitation exercise carried out by WIC on 29/6/2013. This was a great media event. It demonstrated that there can be unity between faith groups and a positive frame of reference for all and sundry to emulate. If such an event should be repeated, mode of dressing should be taken into account by all participating faith-groups. The period should not be during rainy season, to avoid natural

distractions. What this brings to the fore is that adequate planning should precede any activity and appropriate remedial action should be put in place. Hazards if any should be reduced to the barest minimum.

Group B: 18 members were also in this group. Youth Interfaith Council (YIC) a subsidiary of WIC paid a Sallah visit on 16/10/2013 to Yusuf Dantsoho Hospital. It was a needful visit, and it was quite appreciated. Support came from members of faith groups. Improved planning should take place before such activity in the future. An advance group as part of planning should try to find out the immediate needs of the patients and appeal for willing faith-based membership groups to provide those items. All participants in the team to make the visit should all show enthusiasm and empathy. Such visits should be regular, moving from one LG to LG. Again the need for an official vehicle comes to the fore.

SUGGESTIONS FROM GROUP A

1. More commitments from all members.
2. The Executive is further encouraged to be transparent and carry members along in all activities.
3. Adequate publicity of activities, visit to schools, mosques, churches and to MDAs within the state.
4. WIC is also advised to initiate activities that will move the state government to willingly want to support and fund its activities.
5. WIC should not faint in praying for peace in the state and the country at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO WIC FROM GROUP B

- a. WIC should step - down its activities and programmes at the local and state levels for interfaith awareness. At the moment, faith groups that meet on monthly basis can easily find opportunity to step-down activities by including such in the agenda and facilitated by a well articulated

participant. Where they don't meet monthly, summarized versions but unambiguous details of activity should be typed and given to faith group members with a charge that they should read the content in letter and the spirit behind the presentation should be assimilated.

- b. Person-to-person explanation should be further made to members that are not literate, in the language they can understand like in Hausa.

DAY TWO (30/04/2014)

This day was set aside for general discussions, reflections, questions and answers and the election new officers that will steer the leadership of the organization in the coming years. Forty (40) members were in attendance.

Current challenges and suggestion by Faasib Consult

- i. Request for attitudinal change by membership faith - groups in responding positively to the call to attend meetings, punctuality during meetings, meeting etiquettes like putting phones on silence or completely switching off to reduce distractions.
- ii. Unalloyed support to leaders of WIC and complete co-operation and collaboration. If there be any doubt, explanation should be requested. Avoid peddling of unconfirmed rumours.
- iii. Effectiveness of team members: WIC needs to embark on team - membership education. The Faasib Consult is willing to give free tuition to members if requested.

USE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

A lot of faith - group members enjoys quality social capital. They should offer this to the advantage of WIC. That is what has helped sister NGOs to soar. As long as members don't lend this needful support, required support shall continue to be short in supply.

Planned fund raising, visit to identified givers/supporters within faith groups and territories should be embarked upon without delay. This will improve the financial status of WIC a great deal.

RECONSTITUTION OF NEW EXECUTIVES

To cap the review exercise, affirmation of a fresh tenure of the General Coordinator, *Mrs. Comfort Idowu - Fearon* was successfully done. A background to this was that, the founder and past General Coordinator; Sr. Kathleen McGarvey OLA was appointed as Provincial Leader of her religious congregation in Ireland. She had to leave for the new appointment in November 2013 and in order not to leave a vacuum with her departure, the Board of Trustee appointed the current G.C. to replace Sr. Kathleen. During the Review Meeting, the entire members resolved that Mrs. Fearon should continue in that capacity for the next 3 years. In the same vein, members resolved that fresh elections be conducted for the positions of Muslim/Christian Co-Coordinators. A Financial Secretary was also elected. For the former, the Muslim and Christian faith groups were asked to elect who they want to lead them to ensure complete loyalty. This was done in a peaceful atmosphere. Hajiya Amina Kazaure was re-elected as the Muslim Coordinator, while Hon. (Mrs.) Elizabeth Abuk was also re-elected as Christian Coordinator. The serving Secretary, Treasurer and PRO retained their positions as they were unanimously returned unopposed.

A new Financial Secretary in the person of Barr. Biola Kamarudeen was elected to join the Executives. Heads for the underlisted Committees shall be appointed by the Executives:

- a. Peace Committee
- b. Planning committee
- c. Monitoring & Evaluation Committee
- d. Financial Committee
- e. Women's Concern Committee

VOTE OF THANKS AND CONCLUSION:

Faasib Consult thanked the Executives, Council members and the entire WIC members for counting them worthy to carry out this assignment.

The General Coordinator thanked God and all the participants for their support and patience that made the Review Meeting a success. She particularly thanked Faasib Consult and the members for availing WIC of their precious time. She also thanked NED for their support that ensure WIC was able to organize the Review Meeting.

After the elections, the General Coordinator, Mrs Comfort Fearon thanked the members for the vote of confidence passed on them by voting for the Executives to continue in office. On the part of the Executives, she promised that they will carry everybody along by operating a transparent system. She also encouraged members to always ask questions if they do not understand what is being done because it is by asking that they will know and the more they know, the more they will be willing to participate. She then graced members' indulgence to always be willing to participate in all of WIC's activities because it is only through this that WIC can showcase its interfaith works of tolerance, peacebuilding and peaceful coexistence.