



# The Circular

No. 573 June / Hune 2014

*Making a Difference for New Zealand Women*

## The importance of young women's participation at the United Nations

**Nive Sharat Chandran (newly elected Co-President of the YWCA Aotearoa New Zealand, pictured far right) was part of the World YWCA delegation as their short-term communications/advocacy intern at 58th United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women.**



I had the absolute honour and privilege of attending the United Nations' 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), in New York. When I initially started talking about going to CSW, many of my friends, family and colleagues asked me one question: "What in the world is CSW?"

I struggled to answer that question myself, as I had limited knowledge of what it is before arriving in New York. But having spent over 16 odd hours everyday at the UN building, running from side panels to parallel events to negotiations, I think can finally capture briefly what CSW is.

To put it simply, the Commission on the Status of Women CSW is the fundamental UN policy-making body dedicated to gender equality and the advancement of women. It consists of 45 member states elected on 4-year cycles. (It currently includes 11 members from the Asia Pacific region but none are from the Pacific). CSW meets annually at the UN in New York for 2 weeks. During the first week of the session the member states negotiate new policy recommendations, the 'agreed conclusions'. At the same time, CSW arranges an international forum on a specific theme and is attended by representatives of countries, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from all regions of the world.

The Commission meets annually to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set

global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. The theme of the 58th Commission was: "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls."

The next question I usually get asked is, "So Nive, what exactly did you do while you were in New York?"

I had set myself three goals while I was at CSW: I wanted to:

- ♦ gain a global perspective of the inequalities facing women and girls around the world;
- ♦ advocate for women's rights on a global platform; and
- ♦ become a stronger ambassador for the YWCA movement.

My journey began at the World YWCA's Advocacy Institute, where I received valuable training on advocacy efforts and lobbying techniques from the amazing YWCA leadership team. I was also given the unique opportunity to build solidarity with women (many of them young women) from the YWCAs of Palestine, Japan, Canada, USA, Australia, Malawi, Samoa, Great Britain, Mexico, and Taiwan.

Although we came from different backgrounds, cultures and careers, all 70 delegates shared a common passion for gender equality. **cont'd on p4**

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## Looking ahead

How quickly things change! Since my granddaughter was born in April I have been to visit her several times (of course). What I notice on each occasion is how she has changed – every week she has put on weight, she is constantly learning new things and is trying to do more. For those of us at the grandparent end of life change is so fast and can be hard to keep up with. We have to ask the younger members of the family to show us how to use our fancy new phones or download material from the internet, and there is all the new jargon to learn so that we can have a chance at understanding what they are talking about.

Within NCWNZ we have observed the speed of change too. A constant problem for us is in responding to bills and consultation documents through the Action Item system. Fundamentally this works but where the strain is coming is in the length of time between the call for submissions and the due date; in many cases this is so short (sometimes only a week) that we are not able to consult with members as adequately as we would want so that the NCWNZ submission retain the level of quality for which we want to be known. Convenors and PWC have raised this many times with Select Committees and other receiving parties, to such an extent that it is verging on becoming a standard paragraph within the submission. The major part of our problem lies within our process and the inherent time lag from having discussion of Action Items centred around branch meetings, which works when there is 6 to 8 weeks available for consultation but when it is less than an month not all branch meeting fall within the time available. We try to overcome this difficulty by sending the Action Items by email and referring you to websites where you

can find out more about the topic and the document. You can help this by ensuring that the branch return is filled out and set in to the office quickly after your branch AGM. It is also helpful if there is more than one contact for the branch as back up in case of people being away.

In the office too there is an increase in output of work. Since Sue started after Easter there has been a multitude of new ideas and discussions on how to improve what we are doing. An example of this was the media comment that came to you around Mother's Day. This celebration was not one which had featured for NCWNZ before, but the combination of it being 100 years since it was inserted into the US calendar by Congress, and that being at the initiative of the American feminist movement provided an opportunity to take a different slant on the day. We were pleased the Dominion Post in Wellington not only printed the article but also gave it such a prominent position and there has been much favourable feedback. The Board are finding it stimulating and refreshing to have someone who brings different ways of looking at our business and challenges us to consider whether we can be more effective at what we are trying to achieve for women.

Our thanks to you, too, for all the work that you do for women and your communities and we trust that this new spirit of change will be reflected in new enthusiasm for the tasks ahead.

*NCWNZ Mother's Day opinion piece in the Dominion Post:  
www.stuff.co.nz/blogs/opinion/10026353/Real-Mothers-Day-gifts*



*Barbara*

## Time flies when you are having fun

My first four weeks on the job have flown by in a pleasant mix of being briefed, inducted, advised – but more importantly, encouraged and empowered to get stuck in!

Particular thanks go to the capable and hard working Board of NCWNZ, office coordinator Michelle and volunteers including the Parliamentary Watch Committee and standing committee convenors. My knowledge has significantly increased due to the time people have invested in me.

I've spoken to a fair number of members on the phone. Many calling for a simple piece of information were probably relieved to get off the phone after an unexpected 30 minutes of answering my questions. I've been finding branch meeting minutes valuable too.

When I come into contact with members, I'm steadily testing ideas for how the council can become the 'go to' place for people wanting information on or interested in women's issues. Call me if you've got views on this - otherwise I'll have some firm initiatives by the next edition of the Circular.

As a result of the Mother's Day media release template I sent out to branches, you've told me you'd like more of this type of support (but with a longer lead-in time!). Consider it done.

By the time this Circular edition gets distributed I'll have developed resources to support your activity

around the general election. This include some key messages about who we are and what our objective is around the elections, key questions to put to local candidates and how you might involve the media. I'll put together some media release templates too. These resources are on our website's members' only section. Contact me if your branch/organisation can't access this.

Please share your ideas too, as your project may be just what another branch feels fits them. If the timing is right use this Circular, but get in touch with me if you feel that the information needs to be circulated more urgently.

It's the time of year where we put in an application to the Ministry of Social Development for funds for the next 12 months (or potentially longer). The government funding landscape has changed considerably, as the Government increasingly requires its agencies prioritise organisations that can prove they have made a difference in one of its Better Public Service result areas. If you want to read more about how this is being implemented in the social sector, visit [www.msd.govt.nz](http://www.msd.govt.nz) and look at their Work Programmes page, under the heading Investing in Services for Outcomes.

The best part of the job so far has been talking with the membership and I'm sure it will continue to be so. So don't hesitate to contact me – whether you have a brilliant idea, an achievement to celebrate, or a grump you need to share. *- Sue McCabe*

## Constitution update

*By Megan Blenkarne*

After several years of diligent work, we are finally reaching the end of our journey with the completion of the amendments to the NCW Constitution. The committee firstly wishes to thank the membership for their effort and good humour which has greatly assisted in the creation of a useful, usable document.

Through the process of drafting these amendments we have heard lots of great ideas about how NCW can be a modern, vibrant and agile organisation. We have kept this vision of NCW in our minds as we have gone about our work, and the amendments have, we think, brought some useful new tools

into the reach of the organisation. For example, we have created a new category of membership for those women who would like to be involved through electronic communications by creating "Virtual Branches". We have also taken away the concepts of Executive Conference and Conference, so that NCW can consider substantive matters every year and be able to respond to issues far more quickly and easily.

We also heard that members wanted a more streamlined Constitution, and wanted a clearer distinction between the Constitution and the more operational By Laws. We think we have managed to achieve this.

Shortly you will receive a copy of

the amended Constitution to review in advance of our October Conference. At Conference, the membership will be asked to vote on the remit that will either accept or reject the amendments.

We are unable to make further material amendments at this point, but we do think members are likely to have some questions as they work their way through this new document. Accordingly, we'll be running a series of articles in the Circular between now and the Conference to explain the major changes to the document as we progress along to Conference.

If you have a question about the Constitution which you would like answered, please send it to [ncwconstitution@gmail.com](mailto:ncwconstitution@gmail.com).

With the MDGs expiring in 2015, CSW offered the UN a chance to assess the MDGs' progress and gave NGO delegates the opportunity to lobby for strategic framework in the Post-2015 agenda.

With goals including achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, and improving maternal health (just to name a few), the UN has very little time until the 2015 deadline.

"Women's rights have come a long way but there is still much to do and little time to do it in," United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon commented.

CSW58 offered not only an incredible platform for the YWCA delegation team to advocate for the rights of women and girls; it also presented valuable mentorship opportunities. I was honored to serve on the World YWCA's advocacy and communications team, where I was mentored by Marcia Banasko (World YWCA Communications Officer and European Focal Point).

In this role, I met with government delegates from Malawi, El Salvador, Australia, UK, Brazil, Liberia, United States, and of course New Zealand to lobby for the dignity and rights of women and girls in relation to education, ending violence against women, economic opportunities, fulfillment of sexual reproductive health and rights, and ending child and forced marriages.

During CSW, I spoke on several parallel and side events, including on topics such as gender justice in the Post-2015 agenda, young women's leadership and violence against women and girls in Aotearoa.

My role also involved developing the communications strategy for the YWCA delegation and to lead the social media communications while at CSW.

Young women are not only the leaders of tomorrow; we have an important role to play in shaping our world today.

*The Future Young Women Want* call to action, created by the World YWCA, points out that "the experiences of young women are different from the experiences of young men, and women as a gender category; a 'one size fits all approach' undermines the efforts to effect change and recognition of diversity."

This valuable document was shared with UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon and former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton on the International Women's Day by the World YWCA Vice President (and a good friend of mine), Andrea Nuñez Argote.

The YWCA also led the Young Women's Caucus along with the World Association of Girl Guides and

Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). This safe space offered young delegates the opportunity to raise our voices.

Together we drafted an oral statement to be presented to the member states of CSW58, declaring "we (young women) are more than statistics - we are a valuable asset to the nations, a critical population group for achieving sustainable human development, but more importantly we are people whose human rights have to be at the core of any transformational agenda. Our voices must count in shaping the future of humanity."

I also met with several inspirational women in the UN. One was UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka who had been World YWCA Youth Director in the mid-1980s. She continues to be a strong advocate for ensuring young women's voices are heard loud and clear in the UN processes.

Another was Helen Clark, one of the most powerful women in the UN. She encouraged us to lobby our government to improve the status of women in Aotearoa especially given our domestic violence rates. I also had the honour of talking to Helen about the importance of young women's participation at CSW and personally handed her a copy of *The Future Young Women Want*.

One of my core priorities moving forward is to ensure that we get a young woman on the New Zealand government delegation. This young woman will bring a unique perspective to the delegation and therefore should not just be a tokenistic representation.

I am starting the process to lobby the Minister of Women's Affairs and the New Zealand's Mission to the UN to ensure that we have a structure in place to get a young woman at every session of CSW. This move was supported by all NGO delegates from Aotearoa present at CSW including the NCW. If all the NGOs present at CSW put their voices to this, we can ensure that the voices of New Zealand young women are heard loud and clear at international forums.

During the two and half weeks of CSW, I have advocated for the rights of women, young women and girls around the world. I achieved my original goals and joined an incredible network of amazing women who dedicated their time and resources to ensure that gender equality and the priority themes of the World YWCA are put at the front of the Post-2015 Development agenda. I am honored to have been a part of this amazing group and look forward to bringing the valuable skills I learned at the UN to Aotearoa. *Read more about The Future Young Women Want online: [www.post2015women.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/World-YWCA-Future-Young-Women-Want.pdf](http://www.post2015women.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/World-YWCA-Future-Young-Women-Want.pdf)*

## **Why are there so few Rural NCWNZ Branches?**

**By Ann Duncan, NCW Matamata Branch**

At the time of the Suffrage Centenary and indeed at the time of the NCWNZ Centenary there were a number of NCW Rural Branches, now, 18 years later there are few other than our small Matamata Branch. In the 90s there were branches in Morrinsville, Tokoroa, Te Awamutu, Te Kuiti and Thames, now in the Waikato-King Country area only Matamata remain and the question is 'for how much longer'? Why are there now so few branches based in rural communities and bringing a rural perspective to NCW? As is the case for all women, rural women's lives have changed considerably since the centenary of women's suffrage in New Zealand. We don't know all the answers but here are a few ideas:

Women are actively involved in the physical day to day running of farms as well as dealing with the paper work involved with their farming business. A session on the computer dealing with what all this involves is the norm for these busy women, who are also bringing up families, and are usually busy with school and other community activities as well: Others have full or part time farm paid employment as well.

The rise of specific rural women's organisations relating directly to their farming business e.g. Women in Dairying and Women in Agriculture, both of which are very important to farming women, especially younger women who want to learn as much as possible about their business and this takes the time that may have been used for NCW meetings.

Women have been elected to positions of responsibility within Federated Farmers; they are branch and provincial office holders with one woman on the National board of that organization. They are also office holders within specific farming interest groups. Many of these women may have been potential NCW members but prefer to use their time in ways that they see as more useful and relevant to their business and families.

Rural Women New Zealand some years ago began a programme of individual and 'E' membership, where women can be part of the organisation by computer. I am one such member and find it most enjoyable and helpful.

Many of the businesses in rural towns are family owned and operated and the wife is fully involved in it especially at administrative level, this leaves little time after working in the business and looking after children, volunteering in the community and at children's sports, to attend meetings.

Service Clubs have opened their membership to women and Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis etc now have women members and office holders; again these women may have been potential NCW members, and of course there are the women's service clubs, Inner Wheel, Focus etc.

So the questions are:

- ◆ Is NCWNZ relevant to the lives of these rural women these days? Do the issues directly affect their lives?
- ◆ Do rural women have the time for travelling distances not only to branch meetings as part of, or after a busy day, but to regional meetings and discussions?
- ◆ Are urban branch members prepared to travel to rural towns and branches for meetings and discussions, and be content with a biscuit and a cup of tea/coffee and not expect laden tables of food prepared by the rural women?
- ◆ What do urban members of NCW really know of rural life and farming?
- ◆ Is there still the same old stereotype of rural women, one of the good baker, cook, jam maker, knitter, sewer, and gardener?

The real picture is of busy, often tertiary educated women who are the administrators and share holders in often million-dollar plus businesses.

So how relevant is NCWNZ to these women? And without them can NCWNZ truly say it represents a majority of New Zealand Women?

The Conference Convenor is Toni Millar [toni@tonimillar.co.nz](mailto:toni@tonimillar.co.nz) or you can contact our Branch President Julie Fairey 027 285 7734 or 09 620 9256

- From NCW Auckland Branch

*We also remind you that, based on your feedback and for the convenience of delegates, this Conference is shorter than those in previous years so the programme format will also vary from that of previous years. We guarantee that you will find it busy and stimulating.* - From the Board

### **Conference registration costs**

\$280 (incl GST), and dinner is \$61 (incl GST). Please try to give the Conference Committee some advance notice of the number of people you are likely to send that would greatly assist their planning, thank you. Book airfares early and look out for airline specials and the conference opening and closing times.

Can anyone from the membership offer any sponsorships to help the organising committee?

## TRoQs and MRoQs: Qualification Reviews

By Suzanne Manning, NCWNZ Education Convenor

There is a quiet revolution underway – have you heard of it? In 2008-9, the NZ Qualifications Authority (NZQA) undertook a review of qualifications being offered at levels 1-6 on the NZ Framework. The NZ Framework, introduced in the 1990s, has 10 levels: Level 1 is at the standard of the old School Certificate, and Level 10 is for a PhD. The qualifications that were focused on in this review were those offered outside of the compulsory schooling sector, below degree level. This encompassed a myriad of certificates and diplomas, primarily with a vocational focus.

The Targeted Review of Qualifications (TRoQ) found that students and employers found the system confusing, and that it was hard to distinguish between the different qualifications. If you were choosing between, say, a *Certificate of Travel and Tourism* and a *Certificate of Tourism and Travel*, how would you know what the difference was? And why were they two separate qualifications? Students wanted a guarantee of a useable qualification, employers wanted some quality assurance and the ability to distinguish between qualifications (without extensive research) and NZQA wanted some simplification and reduced workload. Therefore NZQA implemented a programme to establish an NZ Qualification Framework which had a limited number of industry-relevant qualifications which could be delivered by a number of different providers. This is the way school qualifications work: NCEA is supposed to be the same qualification no matter what school you attend.

After establishing the refined system, the next step was to reduce the number of qualifications in each sector, in consultation with stakeholders in that sector. These processes are called Mandatory Reviews of Qualifications (MRoQ). Since 2011, a number of sectors have been designated for review each year. A governance group is formed to establish what might be an appropriate qualification system in that sector, and after consultation on this, a group is formed and the new qualifications are written. These qualifications will become

compulsory, and will not be 'owned' by any particular tertiary institution (as is common at the moment).

Tourism is a good example of this process. 'Tourism' as a sector was designated for review in 2011. At that time, there were 117 different qualifications that a student could enrol for, with different credit amounts and pegged at different levels on the NZ Framework. Many names were similar, such as *Certificate in Tourism and Travel (Level 3)*, *Certificate in Applied Travel and Tourism (Level 3)*, *Certificate in Tourism and Travel Essentials (Level 3)*. After the MROQ, a student now enrolls in one of ten qualifications which have specialist strands, and it does not matter which institution that student enrolls in, because all (who deliver tourism training) will be offering a selection of the same ten qualifications. For example, a student can now enrol in the *New Zealand Certificate in Tourism (Level 3)*, and choose strands relating to Visitor Experience, Tourism and Travel, or Aviation; or choose from the *New Zealand Certificate in Tourism (Level 4)*, the *New Zealand Certificate in Tour Guiding (Level 4)*, or the *New Zealand Certificate in Travel (Level 4)*. Certainly I find this a much simpler system to understand than previously.

This is an example of an educational reform that I think is being conducted thoroughly and appropriately. There was planning and consultation, before implementation; there continues to be cycles of planning, consultation and implementation; there has been time allowed for the processes to be worked through, and working papers from the earlier reviews have been produced to inform the practice of later reviews; and there seems to be a valid point to the whole review process beyond cost cutting. It is an on-going collaborative project that appears to be bearing fruit.

More information, see the NZQA website:

[www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/nzqf/reviews-of-qualifications/](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/studying-in-new-zealand/nzqf/reviews-of-qualifications/)

## Recent Submissions made by NCWNZ

NCWNZ made the following written submissions last month. If you would like to read the full submission, please visit: [www.ncwnz.org.nz](http://www.ncwnz.org.nz) (Members' Area).

Title	Submitted to	Date
New Zealand General Social Survey	Statistics New Zealand	30 May 2014

# Government's response to the Inquiry into improving child health outcomes and preventing child abuse with a focus from preconception until three years of age

*By Billa Field, NCWNZ Family Affairs Convenor*

The government responded to Health Committee report in March, with the Health Select Committee releasing a briefing paper to the Government's report in April 2014, in which they noted that 55 of the recommendations were 'accepted' and 54 'accepted in part' with 14 recommendations 'noted' or 'not accepted', but would be reconsidered in due course.

In the briefing report, it has been suggested that the 'not accepted' or 'noted' recommendations need to be monitored, especially in the areas such as children's nutrition, marketing food to children, sugar content of food products and colic acid. In the NCWNZ submission S12.12 poor nutrition was listed as one of the significant barriers that influence the outcomes for children in New Zealand, so it is disappointing that many of the Health Committee recommendations under the heading of "Improving nutrition and reducing obesity and related non-communicable diseases" are for the long term or in the 'to be considered' section for further Government policy.

Recommendation 103 under the heading Oral Health states "We recommend to the Government that it work with Local Government New Zealand and the Ministry of Health to make district health boards responsible for setting standards around water-quality monitoring and adjustments to meet World Health Organisation standards (or their equivalent), including the optimal level of fluoridation of water supplies. Part of the work programme would be to ensure that costs imposed on councils relating to standards and monitoring, are realistic and affordable. This should be implemented within two years of this report being published". This recommendation is also 'not accepted' or 'noted' even though the Health Committee have noted that many local authorities around New Zealand have stated that they would like to work with the ministry and district health boards on the issue of fluoridation. With the district health board members in the main being elected, this would still retain a democratic say in the decision making.

One of the 'accepted' recommendations under the heading "Pre-conception care and sexual and reproductive health" is that the Government

develops a co-ordinated cross-sectoral action plan with the objective of giving New Zealand world-leading, evidence-based sexuality and reproductive health education, contraception, sterilisation, termination, and sexual health services, distributed to cover the whole country. The Ministry did make the comment that it felt that successive Governments have not tackled this area successfully to date, despite it's being a key area to improve New Zealand's high rate of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and unplanned pregnancy.

Further recommendations under this main heading include the following ideas: lower general practitioner fees or no obstacles for women seeking contraception advice and services; people should have ready access to primary care reproductive and sexual health services; the Education Review Office should be required to actively monitor and report on all schools' application of the best-practice criteria for sexuality and reproductive health education programmes, and in particular their efficacy for students of different cultures, ethnicities, genders, and sexual orientations. There are 17 recommendations in this section, and all are asked to be achieved within two - three years of the report being published.

The Select Committee in their concluding statement asked that the Government put its full weight behind the recommendations of this report. If all the 104 'accepted' or 'part accepted' recommendations according to their time-limits were achieved this would go a long way in making a significant difference in helping children grow in well supported families and communities.

#### *References:*

♦ [www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/sc/documents/reports/50DBSCH\\_SCR6007\\_1/inquiry-into-improving-child-health-outcomes-and-preventing](http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/sc/documents/reports/50DBSCH_SCR6007_1/inquiry-into-improving-child-health-outcomes-and-preventing).

♦ [www.parliament.nz/resource/0002200372](http://www.parliament.nz/resource/0002200372)

*The NCWNZ submission S12.12 can be viewed on [www.ncwnz.org.nz](http://www.ncwnz.org.nz)*

# ICW Board meeting, Executive Committee Meeting & Regional Councils of ICW in Malta



Opening Address, followed by speakers on Gender Equality in elected office, The Impact of EU Membership on Maltese women in decision-making. The next speakers spoke on "The role of the media in shaping women's development, Gender Equality (Stock Taking and looking ahead and Women – Building blocks of the Labour Market, with concluding remarks from the Hon George Vella, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Regional Council Meetings were held, a small group of us from Asia and Pacific met, some comments and recommendations will be emailed out to the member countries. Neither the APRC President nor Secretary came to Malta.

I organised again the ICW Gift Shop during the Executive Committee Meeting and we raised Euro 705.00 which was presented to the Breast Cancer Support Group / Europa Dinner at an Evening Fashion Show on our last night.

The small committee of NCW Malta who organised everything did a superb job giving a good balance of business and pleasure and a wonderful introduction to Malta to us all who attended.

*Christine Knock MNZM  
ICW Vice President*

Prior to the ICW Board Meeting commencing in Malta, I had the opportunity to take in some sightseeing of one of the most interesting historical places in Europe, which is shaped by the history of the Mediterranean space for several centuries.

I was fortunate to receive an invitation from the Australian High Commission to attend the ANZAC Day Service of Remembrance, the Commemorative Service and Wreath Laying Ceremony at Pieta Military Cemetery where a number of New Zealanders and Australians are buried. This was quite a moving service and I felt proud being a New Zealander attending this Service, an ANZAC Day reception was held afterwards. Nadyanne and Doris from NCW Malta and Geri and her husband Bruce also attended the Service.

We had a successful Board Meeting with many items to discuss and final preparations for the Executive Meeting were put in place. At the commencement of the Executive Committee Meeting we had the Hon Minister Prof Edward Scicluna, Minister of Finance deliver the Opening Speech. In the afternoon The Hon Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat gave a speech making comment on the interest he showed towards women's issues in the world, a photo with the Prime Minister and the meeting participants followed.

On the Wednesday a Conference was held on "Women – Building Blocks of our Society", at this conference the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties gave the



*Above: Christine Knock at Pieta Military Cemetery for ANZAC Day 2014 in Malta.*



# What we can all do to #BringBackOurGirls

***"Girls are our future. Extremists know this and want to deprive the world of the hope adolescent girls embody. This is not only about Nigeria – it is about protecting the rights of every girl, everywhere to reach her fullest potential without the threat of violence."* - Equality Now**

It has been some weeks since armed attackers stormed a school dormitory in Chibok, northern Nigeria and abducted nearly 300 girls - most of whom have not been seen since and are feared to have been sold into sexual slavery in Nigeria, Cameroon and Chad. Though 53 students managed to escape, more than a month on 276 girls remain unaccounted for.

Just few weeks ago, it was reported that eight more girls between the ages of 12 and 15 were abducted from Warabe in north eastern Nigeria.

In a video message obtained, the Islamist militant group Boko Haram is said to have officially claimed responsibility, stating: "Western education should end. Girls, you should go and get married... I will sell them in the market."

You can support #BringBackOurGirls in three ways:

## 1. **Post daily on your social media networks to keep up the pressure using the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls.**

Social media has been leading the charge to focus the world's attention on the plight of the schoolgirls, directly leading to increased mainstream press coverage and responses from government officials and international organizations around the world. Keep up on breaking news and developments on Twitter (follow @equalitynow and the hashtag #BringBackOurGirls) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/equalitynoworg](http://www.facebook.com/equalitynoworg).)

Retweet, share, and like posts to spread the word and keep up the pressure on decision makers!

## 2. **Contact representatives in our government** and ask them to put pressure on the Nigerian government to take immediate action to rescue the girls, prosecute those who are responsible and provide support services for the girls once they are rescued.

## 3. **Sign the change.org online petition** calling on world leaders to support all efforts to ensure the girls' safe return - [www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/over-200-girls-are-missing-in-nigeria-please-help-find-them-bringbackourgirls](http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/over-200-girls-are-missing-in-nigeria-please-help-find-them-bringbackourgirls)

The target for this campaign is 1 million signatures.

*The Circular No. 573 June 2014*

*Below: 276 Wellington Girls' College students joined the march to Parliament on 16 May, representing the number of schoolgirls abducted.*



Palmerston North Girls' High School students also united - to film a video showing their support for the Nigerian schoolgirls.

The Human Rights Group at the school will be circulating the video on social media and also have put a petition together on the issue.

The video includes footage of the girls raising books in the air with Jessica Wong, the head of the group, stating the message: "*We raise our books to those who deserve an education and those who risk their lives for us all.*"

In the video, the girls form a giant heart with their upturned hands, signifying the message of hope they wish to convey in the video. Commentary from various members of the group communicates their support and encourages others to do so.

*Video on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=CP-ewzQHwh4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CP-ewzQHwh4)*

*More at: [www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/10071707/Girls-send-message-of-hope-and-support](http://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/news/10071707/Girls-send-message-of-hope-and-support)*



Sending Our Love

## Declaration about Boko Haram from ICW and NCWNZ's support

11 May 2014

The President, National Council of Women's Societies – Nigeria & The President, ICW National Council of Women New Zealand (NCWNZ) has been shocked to learn in the news of the abduction of over 200 13 – 17 year old girls from their school hostel in Chibok Boro State Nigeria on 14 April. The actions of the Boko Haram insurgents in abducting these defenceless students and then in broadcasting to the world their intention to sell them as slaves, is utterly reprehensible and cannot possibly be condoned by any civilised nation.

We believe schools must remain places of safety and security where girls and young women can learn and grow without fear of violence and persecution. Education provides them with entry into careers which will allow them to be independent and to contribute significantly to their nation's economy. They cannot achieve this goal in an environment of fear, intimidation and violence. Violence against women and girls is a global human rights injustice, which occurs in every culture, race, religion, and socioeconomic group. We have encouraged our members and also our government to contribute to the world-wide condemnation of this atrocious act.

Our members in New Zealand wish to convey their deepest sympathy to the families of the girls and their support for all the women of the world who are penalised for improving their educational

outcomes and subjected to unacceptable violence.

Barbara Arnold, President  
Rae Duff, International Secretary

12 May 2014

Dear Madame President of the National Council of Women's Societies Nigeria

Dear Mrs. Nkechi U Okemini Mba,

The International Council of Women and its affiliates the National Council of Women round the world would like to express its deep concern and its solidarity to all women in Nigeria and in particular our sister organization the National Council of Women's Societies for the frightful calamity endured by young women and girls abducted in the North of Nigeria.

ICW will join the efforts of the world community to fight against this new type of violence against women which can also occur in other countries in Africa and we hope from the bottom of our heart that our sisters in Nigeria will get the support of their family and of their Governments, local or federal, to arrest the criminals and prosecute them.

We hope that slowly but surely all Islamic countries will recognize that early marriage is a violence against women and a pure violation of Human Rights.

With our sympathy.  
Cosima Schenk, ICW President

## NCW Remits for the 2014 Conference

The Board received a record number of Remits at the Board meeting on 9 May and considered each one and its supporting material and proposed follow up actions very carefully. After discussing some changes with the proposers, we have now have 11 Remits for your consideration at National Conference in October.

Any amendment to the Remits on the wording, accuracy, clarity and format of both the remit and the accompanying notes MUST be received at National Office by 30 June 2014. When emailing, please put the remit number that you are seeking to amend in the subject line and in your message make it very clear how your proposal differs from the original. The final version of the Remits will be printed in the August Circular and also emailed to Branches and NOS.

The Board also intends to make time at Conference to discuss our current Remits Process and the wider

question of how NCWNZ develops policy. You will be receiving an Action Item on this topic within the next few weeks.

### Remit 1: Aged Care: Staffing Levels

Proposer: Federation of Business and Professional Women New Zealand Inc.

#### That NCWNZ urges the Minister of Health –

**a) To make compulsory minimum staffing hours per resident for registered nurses, carers, occupational therapists and physiotherapists in residential aged care facilities, including setting the staffing levels in aged care facilities providing hospital level care at the same level as those in public hospitals.**

**b) To increase and ring-fence the funding to aged care providers to meet the compulsory staffing levels.**

**RATIONALE**

1. At the present time compulsory minimum staffing levels in Aged Care Facilities are set in the District Health Board Aged Care Contract. These are the bare minimum and set according to resident numbers at rest home and hospital level. Residents needs vary and they are not always adequate for the increasing dependence of residents and the complex cares they require. While some facilities employ staff over the minimum requirement, many do not. A Handbook of Indicators for Safe Aged Care approved by an expert group through Standards NZ in 2005, recommends 2 hours of registered nurse care and 12 hours of caregiver time for every resident in a Rest Home per week and 8 hours of registered nurse care and 16.5 hours of caregiver time for every resident at the lowest level of Long-Stay Hospital Care per week. (More hours of care are needed for those at the highest level.)

2. Pay rates in public hospitals are more favourable than in residential facilities making it hard for those aged care providers who do want to employ more staff to compete with the public hospitals.

3. Aged Residential Care in NZ is severely affected by staff shortages, which are often filled at the last minute by Bureau Nurses who are unfamiliar with the facilities they are sent to and with the residents and their special needs.

4. The standard Rest Home contract with the DHB requires a "Social and recreational programme of activities planned to meet the identified interests, stated preferences and level of ability of each resident. Owners must provide the treatment programme prescribed by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner to assist the subsidised resident to develop and maintain functional ability." Input from Occupational Therapy professionals is required to ensure that the program is meaningful and caters to the interests and abilities of each resident. The Occupational Therapists' Association, quoted in a NZ Herald report, November 2013, said that 'Many residents decline because they are not given opportunities to do things for themselves.' In 2012, an Aged Care Association survey found that only 8 fulltime and 92 part time physiotherapists were working across 375 facilities with 20,841 beds.

**Remit 2: Mental Health: Women in Prisons**

Proposer: Federation of Business and Professional Women New Zealand Inc.

**That NCWNZ urges the Government to work with the Corrections Service to ensure:**

**a) that women in prison are frequently screened for mental illness and**

**b) that those who are diagnosed with a**

**mental illness receive appropriate treatment and support as required by Section 75 of the Corrections Act 2004 and**

**c) that these services are adequately funded.**

**RATIONALE**

1. Section 75 of the Corrections Act 2004 states that:

- ◇ A prisoner is entitled to receive medical treatment that is reasonably necessary
- ◇ The standard of healthcare that is available to prisoners must be reasonably equivalent to the standard of healthcare available to the general public.
- ◇ In addition to medical treatment, Article 22 also requires psychiatric treatment to be of an equivalent level to that available to the general public.

This is in accordance to the United Nations Minimum Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (1990). As an international standard of prisoner treatment, these requirements reflect the fact that imprisonment is the loss of freedom, not a punishment of maltreatment or poor health.

2. In 2011, the Ombudsman's report on mental health services available to prisoners concluded that the Department of Corrections' standard does not meet the United Nations Minimum Standard Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. The report also found prison healthcare to be reactive rather than proactive and established that mental healthcare available in New Zealand prisons is inadequate or unsuitable.

3. There is limited funding for primary or preventive care. There are few services for prisoners with mild to moderate mental health illness. More basic treatment options, such as counselling or therapeutic treatment, are not available (Office of the Auditor-General, 2008).

4. Research has shown that certain practices – such as the use of Forensic Mental Health Services (FMHS) to work with those with serious mental illness – provide very good service delivery. As Simpson et al (2006) have identified, these services are costly but offer very good outcomes in terms of lowering offending rates. Their study, of 105 patients (many of whom had psychotic disorders and a history of violent offending), demonstrated that at the end of the study, half were in independent living and half were in employment. Only five were re-imprisoned. This illustrates that committed mental health services can produce high level outcomes.

**Remit 3: Mental Health: Reducing Suicide**

Proposer: The Federation of Business and Professional Women New Zealand Inc.

**That NCWNZ urges the Minister of Health to make the reduction of suicide and the incidence of self harming a national health priority.**

**RATIONALE**

1. Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) establishes "the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health." Suicide is a serious health and social issue. Suicide rates are a sign of the mental health and social well-being of the population. The annual suicide total in NZ has been consistent since records began in July 2007 with between 531 and 558 suicides a year.

2. The District Health Boards have targets for shorter stays in emergency departments, improved access to elective surgery, shorter waits for cancer treatment, increased immunisation, better help for smokers to quit, more heart and diabetes checks. Their performance against these targets is measured and published and the latest statistics indicate a significant increase in performance in all of the above areas. There are no targets relating to mental health outcomes.

3. There is currently no requirement for a District Health Board to include a mental health professional who can advocate for mental health consumers and ensure that mental health services receive the necessary funding to implement the Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2013 – 2016.

**Remit 4: CEDAW**

Mover: NCWNZ Board

**That NCWNZ strongly urges the New Zealand Government to implement the articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), redress the recommendations of the CEDAW Monitoring Committee's Concluding Observations and take cognisance of the General Recommendations issued by the Monitoring Committee.**

**RATIONALE**

1. CEDAW is an international treaty and rights based framework which was adopted in 1979 as one of the six primary international documents for the protection and promotion of human rights. New Zealand ratified the convention in 1985.

2. Governments of countries (called state parties) that have ratified the convention submit periodic reports 4 yearly to the CEDAW monitoring committee, outlining their progress in meeting their obligations under the convention. The Monitoring Committee's 'Concluding Observations' is a comprehensive report

on and provides details of the principle areas of discrimination for the NZ Government to address and makes recommendations on how they may be addressed.

3. The United Nations CEDAW Monitoring Committee has recognised that there are more forms of discrimination that affect women, than is included in the Articles of the Convention, such as Domestic Violence and Women with Disabilities. Many significant issues have arisen since the adoption of CEDAW. These issues are addressed as General Recommendations to State Parties, to take cognisance of them and include them in their Periodic Reports.

4. National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ), a Non-governmental organisation (NGO) has produced a Shadow or Alternate Report to the Monitoring Committee since New Zealand ratified the convention to help strengthen the monitoring committee's capacity to draw accountability from the government.

5. NCWNZ will work with Government and other NGOs to educate NZ women on CEDAW as a human rights instrument. It will assist them with their responsibilities to research, collect disaggregated data, monitor, report and urge progress on the most urgent issues identified in the Concluding Observations and General Recommendations. Through this collaborative action to redress the key areas of concern, the Government and other NGOs will make a difference to ensure the full implementation of CEDAW.

*Consequential motion should this remit be passed:*  
That resolution 18.3.1.2 could be retired as NZ has ratified CEDAW.

**Remit 5: Early Registration of Pregnant Women to improve mother and child health outcomes**

Proposer: Papakura Franklin Branch

**That NCWNZ urges the Minister of Health to set a National Health Target that requires District Health Boards to set a key performance indicator for all women to be booked in for antenatal assessment by 10 weeks gestation followed by wrap around maternal care services.**

**RATIONALE**

1. The Ministry of Health sets key priorities, one being "Improving safety and quality in maternity services and engaging with vulnerable pregnant women and their children are key priorities within the maternity services system".

CEDAW Article 12:

*"Paragraph 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of*

*paragraph 1 of this article, State Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation".*

Medical services for maternity are free for women\* in New Zealand, but they need to access them and utilise all care and advice available. (\*women who are NZ citizens or permanent residents or spouses or partners of these.)

2. Counties Manukau District Health undertook an *External Review of Maternity Care in the Counties Manukau District (2012)* which made many recommendations that could be applied to the rest of the country. A key one is for all women, once pregnant, to register with a Primary Health Provider and a Lead Maternity Carer by 10 weeks gestation. In the view of the NZ Government's Health Select Committee Report - November 2013, setting best practice national guidelines for referral and for treatment, applicable to all DHB's, is fundamentally important.

3. The earlier in pregnancy that medical and social assessment can take place, the sooner intervention can occur if it is necessary. As reported in both documents, in Counties Manukau Health District, between 2007-2009 only 16.8% of all women living in the district accessed maternity care within the first 10 weeks of conception – 36% booked after 18 weeks and a further 2.5% did not book at all. 86% of pregnant Pacifica women were overweight or obese and high rates of gestational diabetes are picked up in the region, especially amongst Maori, Pasifika and Indian women.

4. There are many other medical and social conditions that can have profound detrimental effects on both the mother and foetus, and if they are picked up early, subsequent intervention can markedly improve the outcomes.

5. Early identification of vulnerable mothers, as soon as possible during pregnancy, followed by intensive wrap-around services in line with the Government's Action Plan for Children, should prove to diminish dysfunction and abuse in later childhood.

6. Given the increasing incidence of obesity, diabetes and other communicable diseases in New Zealand, the case for early booking, best-practice testing, and appropriate follow-up care and intervention is overwhelming. Advice on nutrition and not to drink alcohol nor to smoke, needs to be provided as soon as possible (before conception is best) for improved outcomes for the health of both the mother and the baby.

7. The criteria for setting a national health target are practicality and measurability, and that the target must initially be set at an achievable rate, as in the

case of immunisation, and then incrementally increased. A target of early enrolment in pregnancy fulfils these criteria. Implementation would require maternity services to be accessible in the community as well as base hospitals.

## **Remit 6: Sexuality and Reproductive Health Education.**

Proposer: Papakura Franklin Branch

**That NCWNZ urges the government promote education on sexuality and reproductive health rights, particularly with regard to the prevention of teenage and unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, and to strengthen measures to support teenage pregnant girls to continue their formal education.**

### **RATIONALE**

1. The Health Select Committee Report states "New Zealand stands out among developed countries for its high rate of unplanned pregnancy (estimated at between 40-60% of all pregnancies), and of teenage pregnancy (third highest rate in the world), sexually transmitted infections, and terminations. We heard that pertinent public health services are fragmented and unevenly distributed geographically. There is a compelling need for a co-ordinated, multi-pronged action plan to improve this situation"

2. The Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination Against Women, 52<sup>nd</sup> session July 2012, in response to the 7<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report from the New Zealand Government, expressed concern about the high rates of teenage pregnancy among Maori women and the lack of access to effective age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

3. There is a clear distinction between "sex education" and "sexuality education". Historically in New Zealand, "sex education" has been delivered from a medical and biological perspective, often focussing in the physical aspects of the human body, male v female and physical wellbeing, frequently emphasising the negative aspects of sexual activity. Sexuality education is more effective, positive, and holistic in its approach, encouraging students to consider and explore all aspects of wellbeing in any sexuality context. These would include understanding relationships, roles and respect for partners' wishes and decisions. It should increase self-esteem, resilience, the ability to make informed choices and reduce gender-based violence and stigma.

4. The current curriculum requires sexuality education to engage students in exploring the interpersonal and societal factors that influence sexual attitudes, choices and behaviours. However through

ERO compliance monitoring, it was found in 2007 that two-thirds of all schools were found to be weak in assessing students' learning and meeting the needs of all students, with parents deciding whether a child attends sexuality education. The Health Select Committee considers that practice urgently needs to be investigated and standardised.

5. A teen parent unit (TPU) is an educational facility attached to a state secondary school, which provides education for teenage students who are pregnant or already parents. At present there are 20 TPU's in New Zealand, with an average roll of about 30 students. About 5% of teenage parents enrol in such a unit.

6. It is recognised that teenage parents are at high risk of under-achievement in education. Many face difficulty because of their social disadvantage and lack of prior learning in addition to parenting obligations. TPUs are designed to provide these parents with educational support in a flexible environment, and access to community groups and support agencies. Students are expected to attend a minimum of 20 contact hours per week, the legal requirement for those under 16. The units are always close to or co-located with licensed and chartered early childhood education (ECE) centres, and mothers are supported in breastfeeding.

7. New Zealand has a high rate of youth unemployment – research shows that young people who enter the welfare system before 18 years of age are at risk of long-term benefit dependency. Teenage parents and particularly their children are already at risk of socio-economic deprivation and need to be protected from the negative lifelong impacts of poverty.

### **Remit 7: Legal minimum age for marriage**

Proposer: by BPW NZ

**That NCWNZ supports the legal minimum age of marriage being 18 years without any exceptions for parental consent.**

#### **RATIONALE**

1. The UN Committee on CEDAW is concerned about the reports of underage marriages among migrant communities and regrets that there is no legislation to prohibit underage and forced marriages. The Committee is further concerned that the rights of migrant women in terms of family law, particularly forced marriages, polygamy and dowry-related violence have not been sufficiently addressed in law and practice and that girls as young as 16 years could marry with parental consent. These issues were raised in Clauses 21 and 38 of the July 2012 New Zealand "Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women".

2. Currently in NZ, the marriageable age is 18 years. Marriage is illegal under the age of 16, however 16 and 17 year olds (minors – defined as "children" in the Convention on the Rights of Children) who wish to marry can do so with parental consent. This occurs on average about 80 times per annum with 80% of those being girls. There is real concern and knowledge/proof within Shakti (Shakti Community Council Inc NZ /Asian Women's Support Group) that many of these 16-17 year old are being forced into marriage.

3. The *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, states that a person is a child until 18 years of age. Young women with the immature body of a child should not be forced to undergo sexual relations without her consent, (legal age of consent is 16 years) and to become pregnant and bear children until her body is mature enough to cope with this. Many of these young women die from complications in childbirth, commit suicide or become victims of murder by the partner or a family member.

4. Updating this resolution will align it with existing policy (1.4.3.2000) That NCWNZ support the adoption of 18 years as the legal age of majority.

5. At the National Executive Meeting in 2013, policy was adopted from a remit submitted by BPW NZ. That covers the issues of underage and forced marriages, but a remit could not be introduced to cover the age of marriage as existing resolutions can be changed only at a National Conference. The existing resolution is:

*1.8.1.4. a) That the marriage age be raised to 16 for both sexes*

*b) That the age of marriage for minors be 16 years of age instead of 12 for girls and 14 for boys as at present. (1933)*

Note :There was no minimum age for marriage set in law until 1933 (when 16 years was set as the minimum age for non-Maori male and female. In 1939 the same provision was applied to Maori marriages).

*Should this policy pass there needs to be a Consequential Motion: That resolution 1.8.1.4 be superseded by the remit just passed.*

### **Remit 8: Voluntary Industry Code of Conduct on Body Image**

Proposer: Federation of Business and Professional Women New Zealand Inc.

**That NCWNZ urges the Government to introduce a Voluntary Industry Code of Conduct on Body Image to stop negative and exploitative portrayals of women and girls in all forms of media.**

#### **RATIONALE**

1. The continued portrayed view of beauty,

particularly from a Western cultural view, is heavily skewed towards an idealized shape and thinness which is unattainable for most women. This portrayal has clear negative impacts on the mental health, self-esteem and well-being of many young girls and women.

2. Our organisation as signatories to the UN Global Compact Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP's) and the BPW Aims in raising the status of women through assisting them to reach their full potential must raise awareness of the barriers that poor self-esteem and self-image produce for young girls and women.

3. CEDAW Document: CEDAW/C/NZL/CO/7: 27 July 2012- Stereotypes and harmful practice, states in Article 20 – " While noting the efforts made by the State party to eliminate discriminatory attitudes and harmful practices affecting women, particularly through media broadcasting regulations, the Committee remains concerned about the negative stereotypes associated with men's and women's traditional roles in the family and in society at large. In particular, the Committee is concerned about the negative and sometimes exploitative representation of women in the media which perpetuates discrimination against women and girls.

### Remit 9: Universal Child allowance

Proposer: Hutt Valley Branch

**That NCWNZ urges the Government to introduce a universal child allowance for each child between the ages of 0 and 18 years inclusive, to replace all present Government living allowances for children, linked to the Consumer Price Index and paid to the main carer of the child.**

#### RATIONALE

1. This remit advocates for a universal basic income for children as of right just as NZ Superannuation is a basic income as of right for all those 65 and over.

2. Close to 300,000 NZ children live in poverty. Good nutrition, timely healthcare and a stimulating environment are beyond the means of their parents. The lives of these children are blighted right from the beginning and there is ample evidence that they never catch up with their peers from better off families. They impose an estimated economic cost of \$6-8 billion per year on NZ society.

3. Over the last five years, numerous Government reports, NGO reports and research results from individual researchers on children and families in NZ have all come to a similar conclusion. Many recommendations have been made to solve this problem but till now no major policy changes have been made to try to alleviate child poverty and reduce

inequality. Working for Families favours children of working parents more than children whose parents are beneficiaries.

4. Two of the most recent reports to expose this problem and its costs to the country are the report of the Health Select Committee, November 2013, "Inquiry into improving health outcomes and preventing child abuse" with a focus from preconception until three years of age" and the Children's Commissioner's report "Solutions to Child Poverty: Evidence for Action", December 2012 by The Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group.

5. The recent Marmot review of health inequalities in England, cited in the Health Select Committee report, introduces the concept of "proportionate universalism". This is the idea that to reduce inequality, actions must be universal but applied in a way that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. This remit is designed to move in this direction.

6. A universal child allowance should be seen as an investment in NZ's future rather than a cost. By providing long term security of support for children it would help to ensure good life outcomes for them in the future. There is evidence that the security of an "as of right" allowance rather than the present variety of allowances that have to be regularly re-applied for provides a better incentive for parents to act in the long term interests of their children.

7. The child allowance would normally be paid to the main carer of each child. In the case of shared care a formal agreement between carers or a Court Order should provide the formula for sharing the child allowance between carers.

8. Since this child allowance is as of right any contribution by a parent to the care of his/her children by the other parent, who is a sole parent, should not be offset by deductions from the sole parent's benefit as it is now.

9. It would replace all other Government living allowances for children such as those added to unemployment and other benefits and those in Working for Families. It would not replace health benefits such as free doctors' visits and support for children with special needs.

10. The universal child allowance should be at a level to provide, at a minimum, good nutrition and timely health care for the children of unemployed parents or the working poor.

11. It would simplify what has become a complex and confusing system of benefits and allowances, making them easier to understand, fairer and cheaper to administer.

12. The remit is timely for NCWNZ in an election year when child poverty and inequality are election issues. *Consequential motion should this remit be passed:* That resolutions 16.3.5.7 and 16.3.5.11 are superseded by the remit just passed.

**Remit 10: Abortion Law**

Mover: Auckland Branch

**That NCWNZ urges the NZ Government to review the abortion law and practice with a view to simplifying it and to ensure women's autonomy to choose.**

**RATIONALE**

1. The current abortion law in New Zealand was largely set in 1977, after a heated national debate. A 300,000+ petition was quickly collected after the law passed, seeking to repeal the law on the basis that it was too restrictive. Even at the time when the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act 1977 was passed many considered it legislation that reduced rather than enhanced women's bodily autonomy.

2. Since 1977 our society has changed significantly. We have seen many other issues of conscience and personal morality liberalised since then, but the issue of abortion has remained largely untouched.

3. The age of the legislation, and the fact that the law and the practice are perceived to differ with most abortions allowed under mental health grounds, has made access and delivery less certain, with several court cases taken, pressure directed at both those undertaking and undergoing abortions, and large geographic areas of the country without termination services. The laws, which were written for surgical abortion, have also not kept up with medical advances such as early medication abortion.

4. The issue of women's bodily autonomy is also something that has evolved over the last 30 years. 5. There is a debate to be had, publicly and respectfully, to ascertain whether New Zealanders support an approach to terminations that gives the decision to the pregnant person, or support the current law which requires the agreement of two certifying consultants and does not give the right to abort for reasons other than serious threat to the health of the pregnant person or the fetus. There are many misconceptions about our abortion laws; it remains a crime in the Crimes Act, is not available on demand when pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, and the social stigma of seeking an abortion remains to such a degree that it contributes to mental harm for many.

6. As an organisation that speaks for women, and has done for over 120 years, NCWNZ should take a leadership role in securing a review of the law, and clearly stating a position in favour of legal and practical arrangements that give women the bodily autonomy they have in regard to other medical and personal decisions.

7. Along with a number of other health remits being put by Tamaki Makaurau-based branches to the 2014 National Conference, this remit mirrors a recent CEDAW recommendation to the New Zealand

Government, namely 34 a). The CEDAW recommendation goes on to urge that the state party act:

(b) To prevent women from having to resort to unsafe abortions and remove punitive provisions imposed on women who undergo an abortion.

It is hoped that part b) would indeed be addressed by securing the Government commitment to the remit itself.

**Remit 11: Elder Abuse and Neglect**

Mover: Auckland Branch

**That NCWNZ urge the Government to adequately resource the national contract for Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention (EANP) Services.**

**RATIONALE**

Age Concern EANP services have been responding to elder abuse for many years. The number of cases referred to this service has been steadily increasing, with 1,100 referrals in 2010/2011, rising to almost 2,000 in 2012/13. With an ageing population we would expect this trend to continue but apart from a 1.6% Cost of Living Allowance there has been no increase in funding since 2009. Many of the services are finding demand exceeds their ability to respond effectively to intervention, education and public awareness-raising.

The ministry of Social Development (MSD) and Age Concern New Zealand (ACNZ) have been working together to better understand the demand for elder abuse and neglect prevention (EANP) services across the country and whether there is any

Elder abuse is a serious national problem which has significant ongoing costs to government as a result of the poor health and decline in ability to live independently that often is suffered by the victims. Age Concern is working as hard as it can to prevent elder abuse, but without further funding, many older people are condemned to a life of misery and deteriorating health because they cannot access appropriate intervention services.

The EANP services funded by MSD use a multi-disciplinary approach to providing intervention services, as well as education for aged care workers and public awareness raising activities to inform the community about elder abuse, including how to identify it and how to respond when it is suspected.

The needs model for EANP services developed by the MSD does not take into account the size of the population in an area and this tends to be a weakness since some services have a greater demand from a large population.



## Women's Refuge supports calls for release of DV report



Women's Refuge are supporting the call for the Government to release a December 2013 report considering New Zealand's domestic violence problem.

"This report was commissioned by the Government in urgency

and the report writers were given very little time to complete their work. "We have been asking for this report since December," says Women's Refuge spokesperson Kiri Hannifin. "Given the speed in which this report was undertaken and the limited consultation that occurred as a result, the on-going

delay appears disingenuous."

"This report is one of several reports Women's Refuge has been attempting to obtain from Government agencies. It is our view these reports would give us valuable insights and information about Domestic Violence trends in New Zealand. We want this information because we believe it would enable us and other service providers to improve how we respond to and prevent this critical issue."

Sourced from: <https://womensrefuge.org.nz/WR/News/Women%E2%80%99s%20Refuge%20supports%20calls%20for%20release%20of%20DV%20report.htm>, 5 May 2014

### New Funding Structure for White Ribbon Campaign

The change from the Families Commission to a new Trust Board in 2013 means that fundraising will be an important function of the White Ribbon Trust from now on. This signals a significant change in focus as the transfer from the Families Commission is being made through a conditional grant for a two-year period only. The Trust will be looking to build revenue streams to fund 2015, and fully fund the campaign from 2016.

### National recognition for Altrusa Timaru

ALTRUSA Timaru recently received national recognition for their involvement in the successful establishment of a Teen Parent Unit at Timaru Girls High School.

Young women continue to attend school through the provision of the supportive unit where they study with their babies alongside them.

In response to a request for support from NCWSC ALTRUSA representative Heather Campbell, our members have contributed ingredients for making cup cakes to include in their Pink Ribbon Boxed Breakfast initiative. They will take orders for the \$10 breakfast box and deliver later in the month of May.

A note included in the box will acknowledge the contribution of ingredients by our South Canterbury members of NCW who will also support the students by buying their boxed breakfasts.



Above: Heather Campbell, left, holding Axel, Mary Hawke holding Neveh, and Lorraine Watkins holding Savannah.

## Enrolling unconscious patients in clinical trials

If you were interested in the recent media comment about "ENROLLING UNCONSCIOUS PATIENTS IN CLINICAL TRIALS", Lynda Williams, Co-ordinator of Auckland Women's Health Council has written a sobering article about this issue. Unfortunately because of the length of the article and the importance of all the content we did not feel comfortable in editing it.

Lynda's article begins with:

*If there was any remaining doubt about how NZ Ministry of Health's ethics committees are now firmly*

*focused on paving the way for clinical trials to go ahead rather than focusing on protecting the rights of patients it was firmly dispelled at the March and April meetings of the Northern A ethics committee.....*

Lynda covers the role that the FDA (USA) has in the changes in New Zealand:

Topic headings in her article are: FDA changes the rules; NZ changes its ethics committees; Testing new antibiotics; Patients; and Ignoring the lessons of history.

Finally Lynda states: It's definitely time for an inquiry!



If you want to learn more and read this article go to: [www.womenshealthcouncil.org.nz](http://www.womenshealthcouncil.org.nz)

## Calendar

### June

- 1 CEDAW Reports on Concluding Observations sections 36 –38 due at National Office
- 5 World Environment Day
- 5-7 Global Summit of Women, Paris
- 9 Nominations for Distinguished Service awards to reach National Office as per Bylaw 6(b) (i)
- 9 Nominations for all Board positions and Standing Committee Convenors to reach National Office as per Bylaw 5c.
- 15-21 National Volunteer Week
- 21 Branch returns and subs due at National Office| Two copies of Branch Annual reports and Financial statements due at National Office
- 30 Amendments to Remits due

### July

- 25-27 NCWNZ Board Meeting

### August

- 1 Board/Standing Committees nominations in Circular
- 1 Final version of Remits published in Circular

### September

- 1 Closing date for National Conference registrations
- 6 NCWNZ Board Meeting
- 19 World Gynaecological Day
- 17-22 Women’s World Congress, Hyderabad, India
- 19 Suffrage Day
- 21 International Day of Peace
- 27 (to 1 October) 3rd Forum on NGOs in official partnership with UNESCO, Bulgaria

### October

- 2 International Day of Non-Violence
- 9 NCWNZ Board Meeting
- 10-12 NCWNZ National Conference, Auckland
- 11 International Day of the Girl Child

### November

- 25 International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- 28-30 NCWNZ Board Meeting

### December

- 5 International Volunteer Day

### Three Treat Winners of *The Circular* evaluation survey

A treat is on its way to three members who completed *The Circular* evaluation. They are: Patricia (Trish) Hanlen of Tauranga branch; Wendy Sanson of South Canterbury branch; and Ann Duncan of Matamata branch.

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### The deadline for material for the June Circular is Wednesday 11 June.

Please send all contributions to the Circular Editor via NCWNZ National Office: office@ncwnz.org.nz

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