

Minutes of the WAF WC Meeting
17th March 2021

Participants

1. Ayra
2. Bunny
3. Cheemi
4. Erum
5. Jalvaat
6. Meena
7. Naila
8. Najji
9. Narene
10. Neelam
11. Nida
12. Popti
13. Rani
14. Ruby
15. Tauseef
16. Ume laila

Agenda item # 1-SNC update by Committee

Erum said that they were planning a radio programme and a press conference. She would also be attending a discussion at Falleti's where she had been invited by Peter Jacob.

Ayra had suggested that it would be best if WAF kept its own identity and autonomy of views, and not be too closely associated with NGO's who may then use the WAF name in their reports for their own benefit.

Erum talked about the importance of Value-Added Education covering themes like tolerance etc.

Popti said that Value Added Education should be kept separate from religion and Neelam also reiterated that values inevitably leaned on religion and should be kept separate.

Nasrene said that Value Education could be added in different subjects and activities, needn't be taught as a subject.

Ruby suggested that values could be the same as fundamental human rights values.

Cheemi said that the Curriculum was not given to the teachers, they were just handed the text books and what was written in the curriculum was often not reflected in the text books.

Neelam agreed and said while our pedagogy was rote learning the curriculum said activity-based learning.

Ruby said that internationally now the curriculum was designed after consulting teachers, parents and students, whereas ours was a top-down approach and those designing the curriculum had no experience of a classroom.

Ruby suggested we add allocation of an adequate budget for Education, at least 5% of GDP, in the Open letter, and link it to the fact that the SNC cannot possibly work unless there are more teachers and fewer children in each classroom.

Nida added that the Budget should be Gender segregated, so we know how funds are being utilized.

Neelam clarified that she had signed the Petition as an individual and not as WAF, and Bunny confirmed that the three NGO's who had signed Petition, (This was with reference to NGO petitions which should not be signed as WAF, because WAF's independence would get compromised) Simorgh, Shirkat Gah and ASR had done so in their own capacity, not as WAF.

Neelam offered to edit the Open Letter on SNC, written by Nida and Elaine, and send it to Nida by the evening, after which Erum could do the translation.

When finalized the Open Letter will be circulated to the WAF WC.

Nida has to be added to the WC Group on e mail and What's App.

Agenda item # 2: Update on RTI's

WAF members had sent request for RTI's to High Court, Supreme Court and the Defence Services.

Finally, three persons were left in the process, Bunny, Naila and Ruby.

The Lahore high court answered. Now a meeting is needed with the Commissioner and Ume Laila is helping to get an appointment.

The Supreme Court Registrar was ignoring the RTI requests sent. But the Information Commissioner has asked for a meeting in Islamabad on 15th April. Bunny will also ask Farhatullah Babar, Maria and Imaan to attend this meeting. Meeting on 11th or 12th to discuss how to move forward on this at the meeting scheduled for April 15th.

Justice Faez Isa's critique of perks and privileges on retirement of judges would be to the advantage of those filing RTI's. Rani brought to attention that Justice Isa had given details of his assets, salaries, perks etc. Bunny said he hadn't given reference to the petition but had included information on all the points raised in the RTI.

Agenda item # 3: WAF Webinar on 25th March

The Webinar is titled ***Feminist Retrospective 1971*** and is scheduled for 6pm on the 25th of March. Link will be sent before the meeting. ASR has increased its Zoom participant capacity to 300 people and will also live stream the discussion on WAF's fb page.

The panelists had a discussion on the format and finalized the process. Ruby will give an overview, Naila is the coordinator. Speakers are:

Bangladesh – Khushi, Ameena and Shasti

Pakistan: - Saba, Bunny and Anum.

There will be time for Q & A and panelists will also be able to pick up points from each other.

Ruby said the main idea was to link the past with the present and reflect on what's happening in our countries now.

Bunny said the idea is to talk about personal narratives.

WAF Members had their personal stories about 1971 and it was decided that we would schedule a Webinar to talk about our personal experiences of 1971. In fact, Bunny may interview Members and write up about these collective memories.

Agenda item # 4: Update on Website

Bunny has been working on the captions and the statements are being scanned. Bunny clarified that the Narrative will be written by WAF members, old and not so old about their personal experiences and memories of events. Bunny and Naila will send the photographs which will help trigger memories in aid of writing up the narratives.

An introduction to WAF will be part of the web information. Rani suggested that there should be some sort of framework or specific issue and people could then give their perspective on it. Neelam said that we need a mosaic of memories. Some material would be uploaded as is, for example Ruby's completed chapter written for the WAF Book. Other examples given by Bunny were Naila's report of WAF, Lahore for the Convention (2016), and Rani's earlier Report. Neelam said that we can add the process to this. Narratives to be linked to what is going on to the web-site.

At Bunny's request the Statement Committee has taken the responsibility of gathering these narratives.

Agenda item # 5: Lady Health Workers (LHW)

Erum gave a briefing on the demands of the LHW who were doing a 'Dharna'. Rani asked for more information about their legal status, what cadre, is it a pensionable job etc.

Note: Post WAF Meeting the LHW and the Government have come to an agreement.

Agenda item # 6: Aurat March Meeting

The Meeting to discuss issues post Aurat March is scheduled for Thursday at 5pm. WAF members will attend.

Please note that the Aurat March was attended by the following WAF Members as well:

Farida Shaheed

Humaira (Noni)

Gulnar.