



**RURAL
WOMEN
IN ACTION**

**Associated Country
Women of the World**

www.acww.org.uk

Dear Members,

The end of the year is fast approaching. With almost one month to go, we will soon be flipping the pages of our calendars to move onto 2020. Be aware not to get caught up in the end-of-year-craze that makes one feel as though one has to finish everything in a few weeks' time. Some of the tasks are not bound by a deadline, and can therefore wait until next year. Rather identify the tasks that have to be finished and focus on completing those.

A recommendation by the Executive Committee earlier this year resulted in the Board deciding to change the dates for the Annual Board Meeting to take place in October instead of March as it used to be previously. Therefore it was a very busy time at Central Office when members of the Board as well as members of Specified Committees gathered in October for their meetings.

I feel it is important that I update you on a recent change in ACWW's governance and the Board of Trustees. Last month, the Area President of Southern Africa resigned from the Board. In line with clause 17.2 of ACWW's Constitution, the Board of Trustees has, after deliberation, appointed Dr Marina Muller of Namibia as the new Area President for Southern Africa for the rest of this term. I appreciate that this will come as a surprise to many of you, but hope that you will understand the need to protect the privacy of all involved.

The months of November and December annually mark the campaign for *16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence*. This is a worldwide campaign to oppose violence against women and children. It aims to raise awareness of the negative impact that violence and abuse have on women and children and to rid society of abuse permanently. ACWW supports this civil society-led campaign and therefore members are urged to campaign for a brighter future free from violence against women and girls.

Considerable progress has been made in many countries of the world. Comprehensive legal frameworks and specific institutions and policies have been put in place to promote women's rights, prevent and protect women from violence. Yet, the figures on prevalence of violence against women are alarming. According to data by the World Health Organization, one third of women globally experience violence at least once in their lifetime.

However, the success of this campaign rests on our daily individual and collective actions to safeguard our society against this cycle of abuse. In South Africa we are requested to wear a small white ribbon for the duration of this campaign to show our support. Globally, the campaign is marked with the tagline 'Orange the World', and you will notice that the next issue of *The Countrywoman* is clearly supporting this initiative. Be informed of the various ways in which you can show your support in your country to persuade the international community to view gender-based violence against women as a human rights concern and not just as a private matter in which an outsider should not interfere. To help with this, please use the button below to download the 'Orange the World' campaign pack!

In the past ACWW has always strived to amplify the voices of women, to connect women, to mobilise women to be leaders in their communities and to empower women through friendship and collaboration. These aims will remain our focus as we deliberately move forward towards the end of this year.

We are, and must remain, Rural Women in Action.

With warm regards

Magdie

ACWW World President