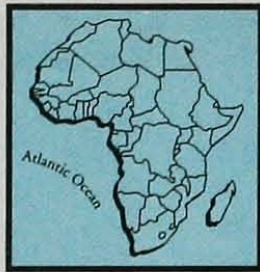


Africa



The 9 million members of ACWW, living in over 70 countries, are divided into 9 geographic areas for administrative purposes. Each Area has a President elected for a 3-year term. In this issue the focus is on the two areas in Africa.

- The current Coordinator for the East, West & Central Africa Area is Ursula Goh, of Malaysia.
- In Southern Africa the Area President is Anna Boshoff.

Membership

- Southern Africa has societies in 9 countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Cameroon, Gambia, Kenya, Mali and Nigeria are the countries that make up the East, West & Central Africa Area.

Special Projects

- Approximately half the ACWW development projects for 1998 were in African countries.
- The women's empowerment program in Mali is a 4-year project funded by the United Kingdom National Lottery Charities Board. Women are gaining self-confidence through access to health care, sanitation, education and family planning. Eight literacy centres have been built, eight wells dug and two market gardens established. All-women committees are running each of these projects, which has improved the status of the women in these communities.
- Another interesting partnership between two American societies and South Africa is Project Sew/Clothe a Nation. The United States members send materials, machines and other sewing equipment to rural South Africa for income generating schemes. Bernina Sewing Machines is a sponsor of this project to reach unskilled women at the grassroots level and train them, to improve their self worth and to assist them to become entrepreneurs. By 1998, 187 groups of women had been taught to sew.
- World Rural Women's Day on October 15 gives rural women a chance to draw attention to local needs and gain recognition for their valuable work and multiple roles in their contribution to agricultural production, sustainable development, food security and social stability. In Lesotho the women used the occasion last year for a 2-day workshop on various topics such as fruit and vegetable solar drying, voter education, oppressive laws and bottling of homemade nutritional soft drinks. The Nigerian women attracted thousands, including politicians and media, to their education program and exhibition in 1997.

The financial and practical support of Women's Institute members in Canada is one way in which we can help women in Africa raise their standard of living.

Prepared by Mary Janes.

Towards ACWW 2001

By Mary Janes

Purpose of the Triennial Conference

The Triennial Conference is the governing body of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). It is the highest legislative and deliberative body of the organization. It establishes the policy of the organization and its decisions override those of any other body of ACWW. What better opportunity for women to discuss common concerns, to form friendships and to learn other customs and cultures, all while making a difference globally!

Area Displays

An ACWW 2001 display giving some details about the conference was made available at fall Area Conventions by the Ontario Coordinating Committee (OCC). Please use the display at any Branch, District, Area or other function between now and June 2001.

Registration Forms

Forms for full conference participants will be printed in *The Country-woman* in January, 2000. The full registration fee will cover all plenary sessions, speakers, workshops, Ontario Day and the Canada event. It does not cover accommodation or food during the conference. For those members planning to attend only part of the conference, day registration forms will be available through FWIO later in the year.

Workshops

All conference workshops are based on the theme "Volunteers Make Visions a Reality." Watch for details in future newsletters.

ACWW 2001 Home Hospitality (Bed & Breakfast)

FWIO is continuing to accept names of members interested in hosting Conference delegates either before or after the conference. This special list is specific to the conference and will be mailed to those delegates from abroad wishing to meet WI members and their families. Even though you may be on the Hospitality Homes List kept up-to-date for the past several years by Gillian Catto, contact the FWIO Provincial Office to be put on this separate list for the ACWW Conference.

Reminder

Have you forwarded your stories of volunteer experiences, ACWW Day plans or reports and Rural Women's Day activities to FWIO yet? *The London Free Press*, in its final report of the International Plowing Match in Huron County, used the headline "Volunteers Key to Success." I'm sure WI members have interesting stories of their volunteer involvement at the Plowing Match, as well as in other community events.

Mary Janes is the Public Relations Director for the Ontario Coordinating Committee planning the ACWW 2001 Conference. She is a member of Warwick WI, Lambton North.