

Women in Church and Society (WICAS) Report to Synod 2019



After the 2017 LWF Africa Women Pre-Assembly in Johannesburg and the LWF Women Pre-Assembly the WICAS needed to continue the journey of advocating for women to be ordained, empowered in elected into positions of power. Back in the Regions the LUCSA WICAS met to map the way forward. The first meeting was held on 9th December 2018 and 23rd-26th April 2019.

Purpose of the Meetings:

The Purpose and Mandate of the WICAS was to RECONVENE and RECONSTRUCT the WICAS and all her programmes:

- Rebuild
- Restore
- Revive
- Renew

Reverse, Renew and Restore was adopted as the WICAS slogan and explained as follows:

Reverse

Scriptural teachings that are used to disadvantage and oppress women
Harmful cultural practices and patriarchal systems that oppress women
The traditional understanding that women can only be nurturers and nothing more.

Renew

Give fresh strength and courage to women to continue striving for Equality.
Deconstruct and Reconstruct Gender Roles and Identity
By emphasising the importance of education and lobbying for more bursaries to be made available for women.

Restore

Women's lost identity.
The dignity of all human being as created in the image of God
Self-love and a Positive Self-Affirmation through women empowerment

The Structure of WICAS



The WICAS Coordination consist of the WICAS Regional Coordinator and the Resource Person co-opted by the Office of the Executive Director. Other co-opted members are the Chairpersons of the Programmes and the Assistant to the Executive Director of LUCSA. This desk falls under the Executive Director's office.

The following programmes fall under WICAS:

- Female Theologians Forum (FTF)
- Women in Leadership (WIL)
- Youth
- Gender Justice

Core Functions:

- Capacity Building
- Empowerment
- Gender Justice Policy - undergirding all programs
- Thematic Issues (HIV and AIDS, Gender Based Violence, etc.)
- Mentoring, Coaching and Support

Activities:

1. **Female Theologians Forum** to proceed with a review of the Policy Document and Gender Justice Policy.

African Female Theologians Forum - to be reviewed with the plan of reviving the programme. The LUCSA WICAS Coordination to initiate the process after the Desk is functional.

Joint LUCSA FTF and ELCA Female Theologians Consultation - to renew the collaboration between LUCSA and ELCA.

Fundraising.

2. **Women doing Theology and Women in Leadership:** Terms of Reference drafted.

Joint Activities:

Enhancing the capacity of Women in Leadership within our Member Churches.

LUCSA FTF and Women in Leadership Forum (a joint Consultation)

Member Church Representation to be increased.

Implementation of the **Gender Justice Policy**.

Workshops with the Church Leadership.

Translation of the GJP

Mainstreaming of the Gender Justice Policy in LUCSA and member Church Activities.

3. **Engendering of the Youth** (Advocacy Program) - HIV and AIDS / Mentorship / Positive Masculinities / Blesser + Blessee phenomenon, Rakgadi and Malome practice (reviewing morals and values within our African societies)
4. **Networking and Bridge Building** with the Member Churches Women’s Departments and Desks (Violence Against Women - Sonke Gender Justice Program + the Blesser Phenomenon, Side by Side: Faith movement for Gender Justice and Heartlines.

Challenges and Concerns



- (a) **Finances**
The Lutheran World Federation has stopped funding the desk. Consultations cannot happen because of lack of funding.
- (b) **The Communion office invites women** through the office of the bishops and only two women per member church are nominated to attend. The women who come for the workshops or consultations do not go back to the churches and

share information.

- (c) Information does not get to the people. The information is not shared with women in the congregations.
- (d) Churches do not create a platform for women to practice what they have learnt.

Continuing the journey of women empowerment and advocating for women ordination and inclusion in decision making roles the LWF invited the women and youth to a pre consultation for Africa Lutheran Church Leaders Consultation (ALCLC) organized a women and youth consultation in Moshi under the theme: “Rethinking Holistic Mission in Africa Today”



Message from The LWF ALCLC Women’s Pre-meeting held on 12 May 2019 and the Group Workshop on Gender Justice held during Session 7 on 14th May 2019, at the UHURU Lutheran Centre, Moshi, Tanzania on 12 May 2019.

1. Promote gender justice as a theological foundation for dignity and justice for all, with gender equality as a universally recognized Human Right.
We therefore recommend that Member Churches represented at the ALCLC, adopt, contextualise and implement and translate (to local vernacular) the Gender Justice Policy and incorporate it into National church constitutions.

2. **Uphold dignity and justice, inclusiveness and participation, mutual accountability and transparency.**
We therefore recommend that Member Churches represented at the ALCLC, **adopt and implement a Code of Conduct to address SGBV, harassment and other abuses of Power.**
3. Ensure equal representation and participation of women and men at all levels in decision-making positions.
We therefore recommend that Member Churches represented at the ALCLC, constructively implement the LWF 40-40-20 representation at all levels of governance within our decision making structures.
4. **Ensure gender analysis in all humanitarian and development work and all levels of governance within all our structures and member church.**
5. Support the empowerment of women, including directly addressing SGBV in the church (structural/institutional Violence).
6. **Actively promote dialogue and involvement of men, including work on transformative masculinities.**
7. Address systemic and structural practices that create barriers to full participation of women, including structural and institutional Violence against Women in our churches.
8. **Ensure that key organisational policies, systems, practices budgets, HR management, staffing, representation, training, management and decision-making bodies are gender balanced and support equal participation of women and men.**
9. Ensure that Gender Analysis is built into all programs and at all stages of project cycles, including women's leadership development and women in the ordained ministry.
10. **Engage all aspects of Theology, Liturgy, and Devotional life from the perspective of Gender Justice including Transformative Theology with a Gender Justice lens.**

It is recommended that:

All Programs and Projects to include the following Guidelines and Tools for Contextualised Action Plans:

Contextual Assessment

Participatory Approach

Declaring Gender Justice as a crosscutting priority

Capacity Development

Organisational arrangements

Establishing safe places and healing communities

Systems and mechanisms of mutual accountability

Formulated by the Women's Pre-meeting held on the 12 May 2019 at the Uhuru Lutheran Conference Centre, Moshi, Tanzania.

Report Compiled by Ann Makhine (WICAS)