



Affiliated with the National Council of Women of Australia Inc. Ltd and The International Council of Women

Patron: His Excellency Paul de Jersey AC Governor of Queensland

## National Council of Women Queensland Inc. June 2019 Newsletter

### Acting President's Report

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- *Chiou See Anderson*

Welcome to the June edition of the NCWQ newsletter.

During the May committee meeting, I accepted the nomination of Vice President and consequently, the position as Acting President. This is due to the imminent short-term relocation of Erin Cunningham to Townsville.

After an absence of over 4 years, it is with great delight that I re-join the ranks of the NCWQ as we continue to represent women on many important issues from environment to social equality and more importantly, happier families.

The formation of the National Young Women Council of Queensland (NCYWQ) has given me the opportunity to work closely with several talented and spirited young ladies. I am excited to be part of their journey as they balance career, studies and personal fulfilment. Members interested in mentoring should reach out to the committee so that we can collectively nurture the next generation of leaders in an increasingly complex society. As you will read, our Annual State Dinner was an excellent success and when reported through the eyes of younger members, it gives us joy that our NCWQ events can make such a positive impact across several generations.

The contributions from our Advisors are valuable and well-considered and I encourage you to read their reports and contact them on matters that are of interest to you. Lastly, I

look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Bursary presentation on July 23<sup>rd</sup> as we come together to celebrate extraordinary achievements from ladies as young as 18 as they continue to build social capital in their immediate habitat, a purpose that has made NCWQ the 114 year old organisation that we are today. I hope you enjoy your June newsletter.



## 2019 NCWQ Bursary Program

- By Kathy Cavanagh

Applications for the 2019 NCWQ Bursary Program closed on Monday 20 May. We expected a late surge, this year probably set a record of about 25% of the applications being submitted within the last 36 hours. A bit of an adrenalin rush all round!

Team Bursary is now hard at work with the individual members of the selection panels making their assessments prior to the moderation meeting on Saturday 22 June. All final decisions will then be made, then the joys of advising the recipients.

The bursary presentation will be held on Tuesday, 23 July, at Brisbane Girls' Grammar School, light refreshments from 5:30, with official proceedings at 6:00pm. It is always a special occasion, with most of our sponsors being able to meet and present the bursary to their recipient. The invitation will be distributed later.

It was a special delight for sisters and previous recipients, Taylor and Madison Birtchnell to speak at the Annual Dinner. They have written the report on that function for this newsletter.

For more information contact Kathy Cavanagh, Bursary Program Coordinator at [bursaries@ncwq.org.au](mailto:bursaries@ncwq.org.au) or phone 0407 117 378.



### 2019 NCWQ Bursary Program

**Tuesday 23 July** – bursary presentation function, 5:30pm, BGGS

### Support of Affiliated Organisations

Previous sponsors:

- ESA International
- Soroptimist International
- Forum Communicators
- Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI)

have been joined this year by:

- Quota International sponsoring two bursaries to mark its centenary, one for audiology, the other for speech pathology
- Queensland Medical Women's Society, with a bursary for a medical student

Another new sponsor is Saalihah Seedat, sponsoring a bursary for a female from a CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) background. NCWQ is sponsoring two bursaries in its regional/rural category, the added bursary in recognition of the current hardships in our regional and rural areas.

## NCWQ Annual State Dinner

- *By Madison and Taylor Birtchnell*

On Tuesday the 30th of April, NCWQ members, special guests, family and friends came together to celebrate all that has been achieved over the past 114 years of the NCWQ. This was an incredible evening; full of celebrations, networking and inspirational insights from an array of guest speakers and presenters. The evening was overseen by Noela O'Donnell AM, a most gracious and welcoming MC.

As first-time attendees, we were thrilled to be able to experience this time-honoured tradition and to be joined by so many influential members of the community was a true honour. Special guests for the evening included: His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, the Governor of Queensland and Patron of the NCWQ & Mrs Kaye de Jersey; Mrs Val Cocksedge OAM and Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE. The NCWQ was also pleased to welcome Senator Claire Moore, Cr Mike Charlton, Cr Vicki Howard, Brigadier Susan Coyle CSC DSM, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Pata and Lieutenant Tayla Davis.

The evening opened with the welcome of His Excellency and his reflections on the important work that the NCWQ does. His Excellency then recognised Erin Cunningham who was the recipient of the inaugural Encouragement Award at the National Council of Women of Australia Triennial Conference last year. Although Erin was unable to attend the dinner due to recently relocating to Townsville, where she has accepted a position as a Judge's Associate in the Family division of the Federal Circuit Court, it was wonderful to be able to recognise her contributions and celebrate her ongoing achievements. Erin was introduced to the NCWQ in 2014 when she was the recipient of the Moreton Bay Regional Council bursary. She has since contributed to the organisation in various ways including on multiple bursary selection panels, supporting past Parent's & Children's Conferences and recently as Vice-President and coordinator of the fledging National Council of Young Women of Queensland.



His Excellency was also able to recognise the service and contributions of NCWQ Honorary Life Member and National Council of Women of Australia Honorary Life Vice-President, Val Cocksedge OAM, who was a nominee in the Senior Service Category at the NCWA Triennial Conference. Val joined the NCWQ in the 1960's while she was the senior lecturer in Home economics at the Teachers College. For 25 years, Val served on the Executive Committee which morphed into the Management Committee. She has filled the roles of Adviser for Nutrition and Adviser for Consumer Affairs for over 30 years – and still actively holds both of these positions today. Val's dedication to the organisation extends to both National and International positions. She truly exemplifies service above self and her passions are enduring.

The service of three long-term members of the NCWQ Management Committee were also recognised by His Excellency. Margaret Vallance has accepted a variety of roles during her time with the NCWQ including Honorary Secretary, President, State Coordinator, Recording Secretary and recently with the Management Committee. Pat Burgess has held NCWQ positions since 1997 when she was both Youth Adviser and a member of the then Executive Committee. Pat has also served as president for two terms and multiple interim roles including Recording Secretary, State Coordinator and Country Branch secretary. The third and final member to be recognised was the service of Georgina Pickers who was the NCWQ's International Secretary in 1997 and 1998, a role that didn't exist the following year. She also became Adviser for both Human Rights and International Relations and Peace, with her dedication to these roles continuing today, totalling 20 years of service. These ladies have given so much of themselves to others and as young people attending, it was incredibly inspiring to hear about the contributions of so many long-time members of the NCWQ and fantastic to see how they have paved the way for so many young women to be supported by the NCWQ.

We welcomed Brigadier Susan Coyle CSC DSM for the keynote address. She was an awe-inspiring addition to the evening. Her story was frank, entertaining and



courageous. She spoke of her journey from being the youngest member of her large country family, to travelling to the city for the opportunity to receive a scholarship which would enable her to enter the Defence Force and the mistakes, challenges and successes she experienced on this journey.



One of the most important messages of the night conveyed to us was “that it's okay to make mistakes, but also that you own up to them and most importantly that you learn from them and don't repeat them”.

Susan has a lifetime of leadership experience of over 30 years in the Army and is known for her strategic, operational and policy experience and reputation as a modern leader. Susan shared that it is the people that she leads who have the skills and abilities to do their jobs and it is her job to lead and to mentor and develop her team. Brigadier Susan Coyle CSC DSM is truly an inspiring and amazing person who we had the privilege to listen to her and be privy to the insights of her many years of experience. She left us with this thought “Aim higher, and then aim higher. Everything is an opportunity ... ensure what you say and do is considered, deliberate and intentional to have the most impact”. Thank you for such an inspiring speech Susan and Thank you for your service.

Taylor and I were invited to also contribute to the evening's proceedings by sharing our experiences and reflections as past recipients of the NCWQ Bursary program. There are so many wonderful opportunities to contribute to our communities and we admire the NCWQ bursary program as it has given women across Queensland, particularly young women, the opportunity to use our passions as a platform to encourage others into the pursuit of service and becoming actively engaged in their communities, in leadership roles and challenging the status quo. What makes the National Council of Women Queensland's bursary program so special is that they not only invest through financial support and mentorship in the success of bursary recipients, but they provide an opportunity for community members to meaningfully recognise the contributions of so many incredible women across our state and continue to support their efforts.

Each and every one of the ladies at the NCWQ is impassioned about the future of young women in Queensland and devotes themselves to bringing this about, predominantly through the bursary program but also through an array of community service endeavours and the recent introduction of the National Council of Young Women. To be able to witness the impact this program continues to have on so many young women, mothers returning to study, and women of all backgrounds has been an incredible privilege. We are sure you would all agree that the NCWQ is an inspiring organisation to be a part of, whose membership base is comprised of those who have devoted themselves to the service of our communities and the pursuit of female empowerment and achievement and is well worth of recognition and appreciation for the work that they continue to do.

The diversity of insights that are shared during the evening and the calibre of individuals who are in attendance at the Annual State Dinner make it an incredible evening to be part of and we look forward to attending many more to come.

## In Conversation with Elise Stephenson: interview from Australian Strategic Policy Institute

- This article is copied from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute website

*Elise Stephenson is a PhD candidate at the School of Government and International Relations at Griffith University and the Co-Founder of [Social Good Outpost](#). You can find Elise on Twitter [@EliseInTheWoods](#)*

### **Thanks for agreeing to chat with us Elise! Can you start by telling us more about your interests and research areas? Specifically, regarding your PhD?**

Sure! So for the last two years I have been working to understand the experiences, pathways, influence and impact of women leaders in Australia's international affairs, focusing on a comparative case study of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Defence, the Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Federal Police (AFP). The project was created after looking at negotiations and delegations internationally, and always being able to pick the one woman in room, if there was one. Research backs up that women's inclusion in decision-making not only improves our representation (an important part of living in a representative democracy), but also our function in international affairs - lowering interstate violence, increasing collaboration, and adding substantially to the success of international negotiations. This research has given me access to interview over 70 of our foremost leaders in international affairs, to create a baseline study to understand women across diverse diplomatic and security agencies, as well as aid agencies by sharing learnings: what it's like, what we're doing well, and what we could improve on. We're making great progress in some spheres, but there are still many barriers to dismantle and it really is an on-going process which requires collaboration and education across different portfolios and ranks. I love this challenge and have greatly enjoyed working with each of the agencies.

### **What inspired your passion for empowering women and driving change through social enterprise?**

It wasn't until I attended a workshop on gender violence prevention in 2013 that the layers of women's disempowerment across societies of all shapes and sizes tangibly sunk in. I studied between Australia and Asia many times, working with women's groups and researchers across Laos, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, China and beyond, and had the immense privilege of being part of the pilot program of the New Colombo Plan Scholarship in Hong Kong, where I began my first research project on the topic of women's leadership. I quickly realised that for all the progress we were making, there remains some critical, often covert barriers to true equality in our society, and many deeply entrenched issues in our home region of the Indo Pacific too. It was around the same time that I got involved in a small group of youth creating Australia's first youth-run youth-led social enterprise conference in Brisbane, Impact Social Enterprise. We ended up bringing 120 of Australia's best and brightest youth together in 2014 to explore how we could tackle some of these 'wicked' problems through new means. After witnessing many forms of gendered violence, discrimination or inequality in Australia and the region, I strongly believe in the power

of business to address issues that have fallen between the gaps. I've aimed to structure my life around making impact in these two spheres. My PhD has provided a rigorous basis to study women's leadership and gender equality whilst working with different government agencies to achieve these goals. And secondly, I teamed up to co-found a creative design agency, the Social Good Outpost, as a way of tangibly applying concepts of gender equality and empowerment to the business world. Simply put, we've taken a standard business model and added impact: for every 10 hours of graphic or web design service we provide, we support 1 hour of low cost or pro-bono design for fledgling women's organisations in the community. I know they seem like they are in two very different spaces of expertise, but there is more cross-over than you would think!

**What advice do you have for women wanting to get into leadership roles within the context of international deployment and representation across foreign affairs, defence, immigration and policing?**

At the end of each interview, I ask my research participants what advice they'd give someone wanting to follow in their footsteps in these fields. One of the first things would be that there is no 'one' way to go about it - start somewhere, make it known where you want to go, and then start gathering around you those who can support you. One participant's beautifully-worded advice was to 'paddle your own canoe' - make sure that you are driving yourself and your own development, as others won't necessarily be there to propel you on your journey. Secondly, depending on what agency you are working for, take a look at those already in leadership, or who get the best international deployments, and see how they got there. What have they got in common? What did they do first, and then next? What was important for them? Sometimes sitting down with your role models can be extremely valuable, but if you can't do that, once they reach the most senior echelons of leadership there will generally be some information out there about their experiences that you can draw upon (or if you wait long enough maybe I will have written a book condensing it all!). Thirdly, do your job well, and make sure others know about it. Often, we think that just doing a good job is enough - but you do need to ensure that you are promoting yourself and making sure key people in your career understand your work. Fourthly, strategise about your career, and gather your supports. Child-bearing and rearing does continue to disproportionately affect women and their careers, so many recommended careful planning and being strategic about when the right timing is for you. For your partners, regardless of their gender, it is also important that they are also there to do their equal share. International representation presents more and often greater challenges than working domestically, from extra-ordinary hours, to crisis management and conflict negotiation, to sourcing trusted and affordable home help, and so it can be quite crucial to have a strong support network around you. And finally, leave room for flexibility and the 'unimaginable'. As well as you might plan, opportunities will arise and the nature of the work will require you to be adaptable and flexible. Use this to your advantage!

**As the Social Good Outpost Co-Founder & Director of Social Impact, what are the benefits of using a feminist approach to design?**

Feminism is all about the emancipation of women particularly, in order to support the betterment of all. In the spirit of collaboration (a key element of feminism), I've brought in my co-founder Lara to help me answer this question. As a principle,



feminism fits naturally with design, the aim of which is to use creativity and design to \*do\* something: whether that is communicate with your audiences, send a message, or promote action. Practically, we use a feminist approach to creating web and graphic designs in two ways: through the clients we support, and through our design ethos. We predominantly work with women-led business, social enterprises, and non-profits, (as well as some government), and we take on a number of these as low-cost or pro bono projects. But further to this, and perhaps most importantly, feminist design is about an equality of knowledge and an equality of exchange. We recognise clients as the experts in their own field, and seek to collaborate with them as equals, using a human-centred

approach to put the diversity of their experiences, views and perspectives together with practical design that conveys their messages and achieves their aims. A feminist approach to design also looks at all the audiences that interact with the design, and how what we design might interact or influence and affect them. For instance, in our first year of business we worked with many domestic violence service providers, and one particular client had just come from working with a 'standard' design agency who designed them a logo of a woman standing behind a keyhole. To the everyday person, this might not mean much - it's a woman and a keyhole, and it looked aesthetically pleasing enough. But to us, we thought about how someone coming from a domestic violence situation might read this - did it connote the woman was trapped? Locked up? Couldn't escape? While the design in terms of look, colours, and artistic form might have been good, this was actually an example of poor design because it wasn't fit for use, and so we were really happy to step in and use feminist principles of respect and understanding to inform our design.

### **What podcasts are you currently listening to?**

I am currently listening to 'How I built this with Guy Raz'. It's an American podcast by their National Public Radio and focuses on unpacking the experience of idealists, changemakers and entrepreneurs. Naturally it is interesting because of my own enterprise, but the learnings run much deeper. Entrepreneurship at its heart is about solving complex problems, and if they don't work, changing and adapting -- values also key to public policy. I've found that learning outside your immediate field sometimes gives you the best perspective. One of my favourite episodes has to be with Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard. He built his company as if it were still going to be around in 100 years, and the foresight and planning that requires makes it possibly one of the best examples of designing solutions not just for tomorrow and



the next day, but for the next and next ad infinitum. And as soon as you think about tomorrow, it's impossible to design solutions based on disenfranchisement and exploitation. This is a critical message not just for business but government and individuals too. Our strategic goals can be reached in myriad ways, but without an eye on the future we're not just digging our own graves, but those of all around us too.

### **Finally, who inspires you?**

In the international affairs space, it's impossible not to admire the resilience and calm of some of our foremost women leaders, Julia Gillard, Julie Bishop and Penny Wong come to mind immediately. Beyond that, I always retreat into the words of 19th century US poet and philosopher, Henry David Thoreau, for inspiration - "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

## **What are NCWQ advisers doing?**

- By Dr Pat Pepper, State Coordinator, NCWQ

The NCWQ Advisers' May/June Reports are briefly summarised below. The full reports are available on the NCWQ website.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & PEACE:**

In her May Report, Georgina Pickers NCWQ Human Rights and International Relations & Peace highlighted the growing necessity to counter the trend for the internet and various social media platforms being used to facilitate the planning and publicity for terrorism, the spread of 'hate speech', of misinformation, or the glorification of unlawful ego driven acts, or simply nasty, racial or personal mischievous attacks. She also drew attention to

- the plight of refugees especially Australian children in Syrian refugee camps and Saudi Women Asylum seekers.
- the number of journalists killed on assignment.

[Adviser Report NCWQ Human Rights & International Relations and Peace May 2019](#)

### **HABITAT:**

Dr Donnell Davis, NCWQ Habitat Adviser circulated information on

- Fifth Pacific Urban Forum (PUF5) scheduled for July 2019 at Nadi, Fiji, and aimed at accelerating the implementation of the Pacific Urban Agenda developed at PUF4 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the Pacific. <http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org/info/news/puf.html>
- Her paper on the power of non-government organizations to shape good governance to advance all of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). [190519 The Power of NGOs.pdf](#)

### **ENVIRONMENT:**

Dr Pat Pepper, NCWQ Environment Adviser reiterated concerns about the impact of the Carmichael mine in the Galilee Basin and advised on recent developments:-

- Reduction in size of mine and port facilities, changes to rail proposal;

- Flaws in company's groundwater models exposed by CSIRO;
- Situation with Government approvals
- History of environmental offences by the company

**[NCWQ Environment Adviser's Report, May 2019](#)**

Pat prepared a submission from NCWQ to the Queensland Government that approval of the company's Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem Management Plan be delayed until the company addresses the environmental issues. Environmental issues include correcting the flaws in the groundwater model, comparing predictions made by the model with ongoing measurements of water levels and other field data, determining the predominant aquifers contributing water flow to the Doongmabulla Springs, defining substantive corrective measures for reversing future spring-flow impacts from mining. Concerns for the Great Barrier Reef including the volume of shipping and the fact that many of these vessels were not Australian flagged and do not always have the same high standards for environmental protection were also raised and a submission from NCWA to the Federal Government prepared.

**CHILD, YOUTH and FAMILY:**

Leanne Francia, Child, Youth and Family Adviser, reported on

- Aspects of 2019 Budget which addressed Family violence;
- Recommendations handed from the Family Law Reform Commission's inquiry into the Family Law Act, and
- Changes in Queensland for 16 to 17-year-olds wishing to be vaccinated.

**[Child, Youth and Family Adviser's Report, May 2019](#)**

Leanne prepared a submission from NCWQ to the Queensland Government urging actions on the rights of the Child and for the protection of the Child's Interests, particularly where there is family violence. The submission included recommendations from the Australian Family Law Reform Final Report handed down on 31 March 2019 which aligns with Resolution 7 passed at the last NCWA Conference.

Leanne also prepared a submission from NCWQ to the Queensland Government urging action on smoothing the way for children in separated families who are in the family court system to be vaccinated. Where separated parents are bound by family court orders that include 'equal shared parental responsibility' then where parents cannot agree about whether or not to vaccinate a child, a parent must apply to the court for an order that the child be vaccinated. This process can be costly and take a long time; indeed some families may not even be able to afford further legal proceedings. These children do not have access to services which are freely available to both children from intact families, or separated families where no court orders exist. There needs to be consideration of a quicker and more efficient pathway for a separated parent to vaccinate their child following separation where they are involved in the family court system.

**ARTS, LETTERS & MUSIC:**

Jennifer Ann Davies, NCWQ Arts, Letters and Music Adviser has critiqued several books and a film to whet the appetite:-

- Chinese Cinderella - The secret story of an unwanted daughter by Adeline Yen Mah – The author's own story of her painful childhood and her ultimate triumph and courage in the face of despair;
- The Last Hours by Minette Walters - a riveting tale of human ingenuity and endurance set against the worst pandemic in history, the Black Death;
- The Ideal Palace: L'Incroyable Histoire du Facteur Cheval film directed by Nils Tavernier and based on a remarkable, true story of love and dedication. Set in the south of France at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Joseph Ferdinand Cheval, a humble postman, builds with his own hands in his retirement a beautifully bizarre palace from stones collected on his postal rounds;
- "When the War is Over" by Jackie French, author, passionate worker for literacy, the right of all children to be able to read, and the power of books, conservationist of wildlife and the planet and daughter of Val French;
- "All That I Am" by Australian Novelist Anna Funder, her first fictional work; and
- "Who Wants to be a Poodle –I don't" -a delightful children's book by Lauren Child, English children's author and illustrator and UNESCO Artist for Peace.

Jennifer Ann also reported on

- Musical renditions e.g. Petula Clark with her hits such as ['Downtown'](#), ['I Know a Place'](#), ['My Love'](#), ['This is My Song'](#) and ["I Couldn't Live Without Your Love"](#). [Salut!; The Ten Tenors' 'Love is in the Air'](#);
- The prize-winning ART depicting tension between concrete reality and abstract by Israel's Lilian Klapisch, based the life and early cases of U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

[NCWQ Adviser's Reports for Arts, Letters & Music, May 2019 & June 2019](#)

## NCWQ Paper: the power of NGOs

- *By Dr Donnell Davis*

I prepared this paper in response to member's concerns about the feeling of helplessness because sometimes, we in NGOs do appear to have little influence on decision-making affecting our collective future. So, as part of the commitment for those who attend local meetings, we have a special segment called 'member development' on each agenda.

Firstly, we should define what we mean by an NGO. In Australia the non-government organization reflects communities seeking better outcomes. However, in UN language this means CSO (civil society organisation) and extends far beyond traditional residents and advocacy groups. This may include professional bodies (that advance policy through codes of conduct and practice standards), private sector organisations (that operate for better futures), industry bodies (seeking better informed legal systems), think-tanks of experts, academic networks of institutions, religious networks, churches and more.

When we consider the breadth and composition of NGOs, it is expected that we influence change and implement pilot programs to enable governments to make innovative and functional policy and legislation.

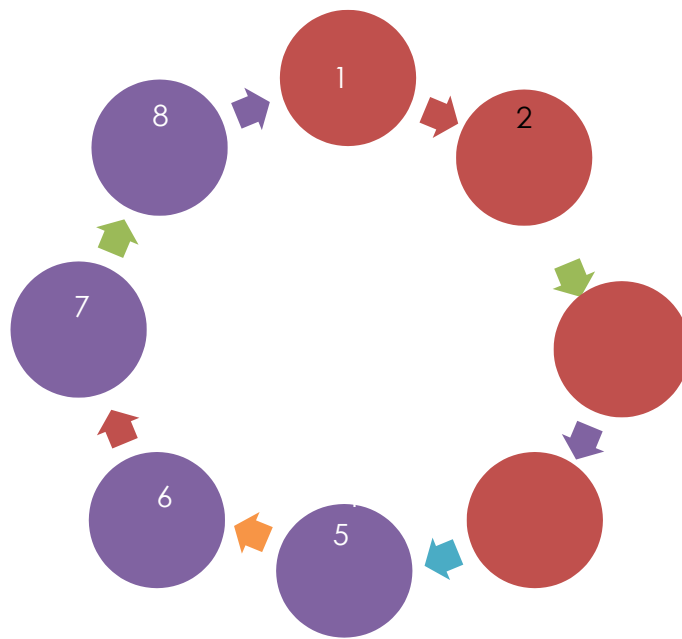
NGOs mostly have mission statements, codes of ethics (guiding principles) and statements of corporate intent. For example an analysis of professional body codes of ethics show trends:

- Do no harm (Medical)
- Apply special skills to benefit others, and provide solutions for vulnerable people
- (Engineering)
- Practice for sustainable futures (Planners and land-carers)
- Care for systems upon which our healthy life depends (environmentalists)
- Work for greater good (Sciences)
- Better quality of life for all (Architects, social workers)
- Do for others as you would have them do for you (religious groups)
- Care for Mother Earth (many religions: translated from other languages)
- Respect for community of life, ecological integrity, social justice, economic transparency, and community participation, where everyone has a voice, and advocates for non-violent dispute resolution. (international NGOs)

Secondly when we talk about shared governance, there are several perspectives. Some people limit their thinking to democracy where it legislates for public participation. However, when the World Bank assessed Moral Compass rankings, some socialist / communist countries rated higher overall in care for their people in terms of social cultural and environmental quality of living indicators. So this begs the question about the expectations and responsibilities of democratic societies.

Dame Quentin Bryce in her speech to the UN Conference on Communities in 2005, outlined that being a citizen (resident) has both rights and responsibilities. The rights include fair treatment as outlined in the UN Declaration of Human Rights (1948) but also the responsibility to constantly guide government decision-makers.

In public policy education in the 1990s, there were eight distinct phases within a public policy cycle. As we refine policy over time, this cycle becomes a spiral iteratively in a better informed direction. In a clockwise direction, red proactive participation helped develop policy while the purple left side of the cycle helped in evaluating implementation.



Public Policy Cycle phases for proactive and responsive community participation (Schneider,1992) (Davis: 2002, 2008, 2012, 2016) more available upon request

In legislation there might be five depths of participation, depending on how the government of the day engages with the NGOs. These are:

1. Edict is a public notice of change already decided by government.
2. Public request for comment by a certain date occurs in inquiry and 'have your say'.
3. Transparent request for comment or submission or public petition, where consequential evidence is considered, involves feedback.
4. Engagement is where innovative techniques arising from submissions are followed up by policy development officials, with a view towards some implementation.
5. Ongoing participation and regular engagement in the development and evaluation of policy-may be by consultative committee, strategic liaison team, ministerial advisory committee, or 'litmus test' network.



These are the ways that NGOs have the power of influence by defining priorities and designing functionality of proposals. NGOs have rights and responsibilities at these levels within each of the eight phases in the policy cycle.

To localize shared governance, we need to consider our own capacity to influence in our own backyards. There needs to be a 'sense of belonging' and 'protecting our own sense of place' against poor governance decisions. The catch-cry 'we only get the government we deserve' may directly reflect our own apathy or sense of helplessness or futility. The community feeling (of not being heard and not being respected) is a symptom of the lack of shared governance and a deterioration of our responsibility to shape our own futures.

**To engage is not just a right but a  
responsibility:  
democracy depends  
on it!**

### **Commonwealth Peoples Forum - CHOGM 2018**

Highly functional democracies employ these policy procedures for the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs are more powerful than the MDG (Millennium Development Goals) because not only do they address the desirable outcomes, but they ensure that enablers are also robust and monitored. The SDGs comprise the Human Rights suite (SDG 1-6); New Economy suite (SDG 7-12); Environmental suite (13-15); and Good Governance enablers (SDG 16 & 17). Good governance relies on public participation. Participation is the foundation for peace, strengthening institutions, informing dispute resolution as seen in SDG 16 indicators, measures and targets. Furthermore, SDG17 spells out how partnerships make things happen. This further reiterates that shared governance is a right and a responsibility for NGOs.

**To go faster go alone, to go further, we must go together.**

### **Old African Proverb**

Justice French reiterates that good governance is evidenced by demonstrated fiduciary duty where one's position in office is a position of trust that demands that decisions made on behalf of others are for the benefit of all (not themselves). Without the support of the people, elected officials in governments have no licence to operate.

From another perspective as a public servant for 25 years, I sometimes found it difficult to lead from within, despite UN conventions, treaties and new mandates. The fastest way to achieve desirable change is to have valid input from NGOs, based on 'ground-truth' evidence and effective strategies for our common future.

This means that NGOs should not simply complain about an issue, but make brave suggestions for improvement. NGOs need to be part of the solution. One approach should be to articulate our concerns, and then propose resolutions to the problems we articulate. So when we write letters or lodge submissions to inquiries, it is important to optimise each opportunity to shape better governance. If we say nothing, we condone undesirable behaviour, and therefore we are part of the problem.

This applies to local, regional, national and international policy. Let's consider what is happening in a broader context.

Thirdly, why does the UN Secretary-General consider that NGOs are the vital ingredient in a sustainable future? Antonio Guterres has three prongs to his reforms. These resulted from his experience from a decade as head of UNHCR (Refugees) because his efforts were limited to end-of-pipe and he felt helpless to stop the causes of the accelerating refugee numbers. He introduced:

- (1) preventative diplomacy to use innovative techniques to prevent war
- (2) structural reforms with efficiencies so that 16 programs and 42 agencies could work together on projects collaboratively rather than incrementally
- (3) 50/50 parity so that women can be properly represented as half the population of the globe.

If we seek proper representation of people in decision-making, we need to be cognizant of the need for women's voices are part of the shared governance, reaching parity in international reforms. As a result, women's NGO participation is strongly encouraged at local, national, regional and global spheres. More importantly, the most affected people need to be part of the solution. Whether they are unheard, voiceless, stateless, homeless, or vulnerable, these are the people who are best equipped to build a better outcome. One recent example was Family and Sexual Violence Program in Parliament, where women, children, men and NGOs joined with Minister Di Famer and public servants to consider how best to apply \$330 million in implementing Not Now Not Ever recommendations for optimum long-term benefits for all.

So, how do we make this happen? We use the gentle and vigilant power of NGOs to shape good governance to advance all of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 16.

In closing, I wish to reiterate

**Margaret Mead's famous quote**

**'Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world – indeed it is the only thing that ever has'.**

Welcome to our new members and affiliates!

Australian Chinese Women's Federation Inc



**2019 Bursary Program**

**Tuesday 23 July 2019 – Bursaries Presentation** in the Barbara Fielding Room, Brisbane Girls Grammar School

Details: Kathy Cavanagh E: [bursaries@ncwq.org.au](mailto:bursaries@ncwq.org.au) M: 0407 117 378

**Thursday 10 October 2019 – Bursaries fund-raising Morning Tea and Fashion Parade**

**NCWQ AGM**

The 2019 Annual General Meeting will be held on:

**Sunday 15 September,**

**Time:** 2:00 pm

**Venue:** Pilot Chartered Accountants, Level 10 Waterfront Place, 1 Eagle Street

Further details will be available closer to the time, along with the relevant documents.

We will have a guest speaker at the AGM: Judy Menary Executive Principal of the Brisbane School of Distance Education

**AGM Reports from Affiliated Organisations**

Reports from Affiliated Organisations are due by Monday 26 August.  
Further information will be distributed next month.

*The NCWQ acknowledges the elders and traditional custodians, past and present, of the land on which we live. We recognise, respect and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' role in and contribution to Australian life and culture.*