



World YWCA

**World YWCA Intervention in
Member Association Disputes
Principles and Guidance Note**

Approved/World YWCA Board/March 2013

Background

In accordance with the Constitution of the World YWCA, the global movement of YWCAs advocates and supports volunteerism, membership, diversity, tolerance, mutual respect, integrity and responsible accountability. Consistent with these values, the World YWCA supports and encourages its member associations to continuously strengthen and improve their governance. In circumstances where a dispute or serious governance problem has arisen in a member association, the World YWCA will encourage member associations to resolve the dispute or problem themselves, with respect to their autonomy, building their capacity and achieving sustainable and rights-based development. In circumstances where a member association is unable to resolve the dispute or problem internally, these principles will guide the World YWCA in intervening to assist in resolving the dispute or problem.

Principles

- 1) A governance problem is identified by the World YWCA or a member association. This can be brought to the attention of the World YWCA through any of the following:
 - a) A formal communication to the World YWCA by the Board or members of a member association.
 - b) Information obtained by the Board or staff of the World YWCA through review of core documents, visits etc.
 - c) A third party sending a formal communication to the World YWCA
- 2) The member association invites or agrees to World YWCA intervention. In circumstances where the member association does not agree to World YWCA intervention, intervention must be considered on a specific, case-by-case basis. Principles and policy in relation to suspension and disaffiliation for serious infringement of the Standards of Good Management and Accountability and for acting contrary to the interests of the YWCA will be developed by the Member Association Support and Affiliation Committee for consideration at World Board 2013.
- 3) The following are the key factors that the World YWCA will take into account in considering whether and how to intervene:
 - a) Compliance with the conditions of affiliation and upholding the World YWCA Constitution
 - b) Autonomy of the member association
 - c) Options analysis
 - d) Cost effectiveness and availability of resources (human and financial) to support the intervention

- e) Availability of capacity and resources in the country or region to support the process
 - f) Risk mitigation and timeliness of intervention
 - g) Sustainability of potential outcomes arising from intervention
 - h) Strategic priorities of the World YWCA.
- 4) The World YWCA President and General Secretary consult on whether the issue is to be handled at staff level with Board monitoring, or the intervention is Board-led with staff providing technical advice and support.
- 5) Procedure for Board-led intervention
- a) The President provides overall leadership and accountability for the intervention and, in consultation with the Board and on the advice of the Member Association Support and Affiliation Committee, may delegate a Board member to lead in an intervention process. The Board members from the region may be requested to lead in the mediation or to provide advice.
 - b) A support team is established consisting of the General Secretary, a Board member (for example from the region, or with relevant skills, including language skills) and an expert from the World YWCA community who can offer skills and advice on a pro bono basis. The General Secretary may delegate to appropriate staff taking into account knowledge of the region and member association; skills; etc.
- 6) Staff level Intervention
- a) The General Secretary shall be responsible for the intervention and reporting to the Board the outcome of the intervention. The General Secretary may delegate to appropriate staff taking into account knowledge of the region and member association; skills; etc.
- 7) The basis of the dispute should be documented and a preliminary list of issues established, in order for the World YWCA to establish
- a) the basis for intervention and
 - b) the nature of the intervention by the World YWCA.
- 8) The basis and nature for the intervention is agreed between the World YWCA and the member association.

The reporting and decision making relationship between the support team and the World YWCA is agreed. In a Board-led Intervention, the reporting requirements should be that of the mediator/lead person to the President and General Secretary and from the President to the Board. If it is a staff level intervention, the internal reporting is through the management process, with the General Secretary reporting/briefing with the President/Board.

- 9) The reporting and decision making relationship between the support team and the World YWCA is agreed. In a Board-led Intervention, the reporting requirements should be that of the mediator/lead person to the President and General Secretary and from the President to the Board. If it is a staff level intervention, the internal reporting is through the management process, with the General Secretary reporting/briefing with the President/Board.

- 10) The guiding principles for the intervention are the World YWCA Constitution, the Standards of Good Management and Accountability and the Constitution of the member association.

- 11) Terms of reference for the intervention are agreed. The terms of reference may include the following key elements:¹
 - a) Nature and details of the dispute
 - b) Identification of the parties in the dispute
 - c) Definition of the role of the World YWCA in the intervention, and the role of the Board of the member association
 - d) Identification of appropriate local and/or international advice and assistance
 - e) Confidentiality and communication protocol
 - f) Responsibility for the cost of the intervention
 - g) Mediation modality, list of documents, responsibilities and roles
 - h) Timelines and Key Actions
 - i) Mediation Outcome
 - j) Closure

¹ Adapted from the YWCA of Fiji Mediation Terms of Reference, 2012

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