

# United Nations Women's Guild - Geneva Newsletter



May-June 2020

Issue 3



## Message of the President

Dear Members,

I hope that you all are safe and well with your family. We members of the UNWG come from different parts of the world with hands on experience. I am sure this will give us strength and help us handle this difficult situation with courage.

The spring season which has started with the nice weather and magnificent nature will help us endure the confinement and be optimistic.

Dear Members,

I would like to share with you that our EC committee had a virtual meeting on the current situation.

Accordingly, it was unanimously agreed by the EC members that the meeting date of the next AGA will depend on future Federal and Cantonal measures as well as the normal restart of UNOG activity. The date of the upcoming AGA will thus be communicated to all members at a later time.

I hope and pray that this will finish soon and we can start our normal activities.

In the meantime, take care and keep safe.

Thank you.

Senait Mengistu Gebreselassie

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## A Call-to-Action

This is a Call-to-Action at this incredibly difficult and unprecedented time in our lives. The UNWG will arrange that any donation you are willing to give will go to the following humanitarian foundation to relieve some of the distress for disadvantaged families who are suffering at this time.

Please see information on the foundation Swiss Solidarity that we will be donating to.

If you are interested to donate any amount that you would like, please pay into the UNWG bank account and note **Covid-19** so that these funds can be sent to people in need.



### Swiss Solidarity in brief

Set up in 1946, Swiss Solidarity is the humanitarian foundation of SRG SSR (Swiss Radio & TV) that raises funds for relief projects. Swiss Solidarity raises funds after tragic events occur in Switzerland or abroad. In the event of major disasters, the foundation appeals for donations via national TV and radio stations as well as the private media.

Swiss Solidarity assists people in emergency situations in Switzerland and abroad, regardless of cause and without any discrimination. Relief projects are carried out by experienced Swiss organizations associated to the foundation.

25 partner relief organizations with specific areas of expertise in emergency aid, rehabilitation and rebuilding enable Swiss Solidarity to assist affected people all over the world.

You can find out more here at: [www.swiss-solidarity.org](http://www.swiss-solidarity.org)

### UNWG bank account details:

CH87 0027 9279 HU11 9293 0  
Beneficiary:  
UBS COMPTE UNWG  
Clearing-no: 279

UBS Switzerland AG  
Rue du Rhone 8  
Postfach  
1211 Geneva  
2 Corraterie

## Comments from Members on the situation of Covid-19

### Rozmi Pahlisch

*Q. How long have you been a member of UNWG?*

A. I signed up in 1993 so in 3 years it will be 30 years!

*Q. What roles have you been involved in?*

A. I was a member of the Executive Committee from 2002-2006 and 2009 to 2012 as head of the Membership Secretary. The big job was the computer listing when Olga Mednikova helped Heidi Pickenhagen and I prepare the membership lists for multiple uses. I received a Certificate of Award on 16 May 2002. From 2004 to 2012, I presented films monthly. I have given seminars in English and French on the History and the Structures of State in Switzerland and also of Councils in notably "the look" on clothing, the forms and the colors suitable for each one. I also presented two projects, which were accepted: aid for the installation of a school canteen and gas heating in Tbilisi, Georgia in 2004, and in 2010 I helped to complete a library and supply furniture for a Kalash children's school in Pakistan through "Greek Volunteers".

For the UNWG's annual luncheon on 7 June 2012, I organized an invitation to Mr and Mrs Hessel (the author of 'Indignant') for benefits for Palastinian children. Busy, but with great pleasure in changing languages, cultural flavors, what the Guild offers so well.

*Q. How are you coping with this particular situation of confinement and have you found any positive points?*

Normally we should be in Greece and I miss it. But Skype and WhatsApp help a lot.

There are advantages, you can tackle a 500-page book without a bad conscience, you have time. I would have to put some order in "paper / photos" the hardest for me. However, it is a delight to cook! Simmer the dishes, try inventive recipes, as I am with my husband and no guests, we are daring! And think, what really matters? The usefulness of things? My thing and my personal politeness: I like clothes and I change everyday with different combinations and accessories, it is also a surprise for my husband ...



## Mary Mahroughe

*Q. How long have you been a member of UNWG?*

A. I've been Member of the UNWG since 1992.

*Q. What roles have you been involved in?*

A. I have assisted in the Membership, Bazaar publicity, Bazaar security and the Hiking Group.

*Q. How are you coping with this particular situation of confinement and have you found any positive points?*

A. I have made peace with this situation in my own way and know that nothing is permanent. What works for me is to go on long walks to meditate and enjoy nature as much as possible.

A positive experience has been seeing people be more responsible, kind, caring and less selfish. We seem to be more aware of the real priorities in our lives.



Dear friends,

I sincerely hope that my words find you in excellent health, inside and happily surrounded by your loved ones.

Of course, as the President stated, the UNWG Geneva is technically closed. Nevertheless, as you can witness, our team of dedicated ladies are trying to keep contact with our members and reaching out. Caroline is kindly putting together this Newsletter for you and there are some unofficial WhatsApp activities amongst members to keep in touch and exchange during these difficult times.

This is the time for inner growth and inner peace. In our modern world we have forgotten to take time for the small things and happiness in the small things. The ray of sun, the beautiful blooming

flower, the enjoyable melody, the loving smile of a grandparent or a meal with loved ones. Please go to the essential while remaining positive and proactive. Try to keep some physical activity and remember the latin saying: "*Mens sana in corpore sano*".

Rest assured, even though our activities are on hiatus, you are not alone. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via e-mail, phone or messaging. You are all in our prayers and we are eager to meet you again soon, under better global conditions.

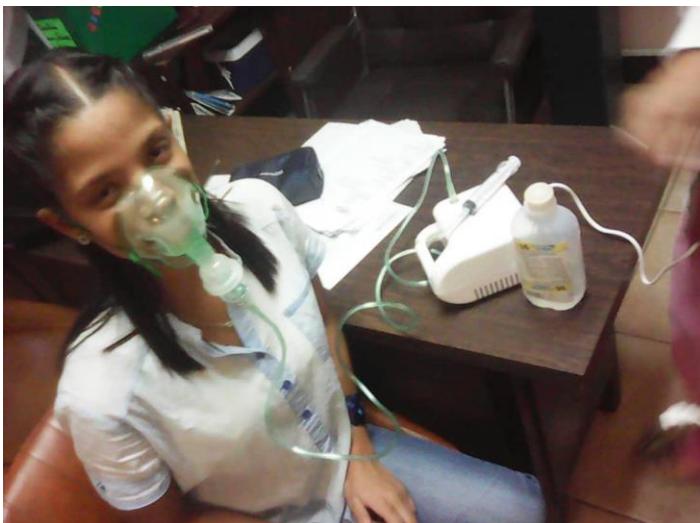
Niloufar Rafi-Kian Bouabid  
Vice-President Activities

## Our Projects Throughout the World

Today: Providing care and health education to children and young women in Venezuela

Report by Raji Sundaram, Vice-President Projects

**Salud y Familia** in Venezuela provides care and health education to the very poor children, young women and their families in and around Caracas. The funds donated were used to acquire new medical equipment to provide optimal care to the underprivileged population; to improve the paediatric and adult consultations with the use of an ECG; to acquire a nebulizer to give emergency medical attention to children with respiratory problems and other measures. As a result of our donation attendance at the clinics increased by 25% and the medical staff are more motivated to care for the patients.



## Our Projects Throughout the World

Today: Bringing youth together in making 'ravanne' in Mauritius  
Report by Raji Sundaram, Vice-President Projects

Le Kolektif Rivier Nwor brings together the main social agents in the region of Rivière Noire and is involved in social projects in education and housing. The project aimed at initiating participants in the creation of 'ravanne' (a traditional drum) and developing their skills to become economically independent. The training for the complete process of the making of a ravanne is around 3 to 4 months. The project has participants from all age groups. Aside from making ravanne the children are also taught about other traditional music instruments such as Maravanne and Triangle. The younger children are also integrated into a literacy programme.



## Feature

In this Newsletter Raji Sundaram, UNWG Vice-President projects, and Ghazala Syeddah, UNWG Welcoming are featured.

### Raji Sundaram

#### **Q. How did you become involved with the UNWG?**

A. I always intended to get involved with the UNWG once I retired, as I had heard a lot about the Guild's activities from many friends who have been members for a long time. Before I joined the UNWG I was also involved in the Children's Walk for several years in my capacity as the Principal of the British School of Geneva as the and it gave me the impetus to join the Guild.



#### **Q. What motivated you to be the Vice-President Projects?**

A. When I was approached to stand for the post of Vice-President Projects, I looked on it as an extension of what I have always enjoyed doing. I love helping people, especially children and this was the ideal opportunity where I could do this while using my experience in administration.

#### **Q. What was your experience in working on the projects for the UNWG?**

A. I have thoroughly enjoyed working on the projects for the UNWG in all its stages. It really has given me an insight into the conditions under which young women and children live in many parts of the world where lack of basic amenities is the norm. It was heartrending to read many of the projects, but also satisfying to know that I have done a small bit in bringing some comfort into their lives.

#### **Q. What do you like most about the UNWG?**

A. I like the international nature of the Guild and the many talented women from all over the world who are willing to work for the betterment of those less privileged than us. I also admire all the teachers who run the classes professionally even though it is done on a voluntary basis.

## Feature

Ghazala Syeddah, UNWG Welcoming Committee

### Ghazala Syeddah

#### ***Q. When did you first join the UNWG?***

A. I joined the UNWG in April 1999, after moving to Geneva with my family in early that year.

#### ***Q. What roles have you been involved in UNWG?***

A. Ever since I became a member of the Guild, I have continued to make active contribution to the Guild's functions and activities. In the year 1999, I contributed as a Recording Secretary (English) of the Executive Committee. Thereafter, I became a member responsible for Education. Currently I am working in the Executive Committee as an official responsible for Welcoming new members. In addition, I am a regular participant in the UNWG annual Art exhibition as well as teaching English for the last 4 years. I have always taken an active part, in all those years, in the sale of lottery tickets, arranging and managing the Guild stalls in the Bazaar as well as other activities in which the Guild participates since I became its member.

#### ***Q. What do you like most about the Guild.***

A. The Guild is a wonderful forum for the spouses of international civil servants/diplomats where they can interact on a regular basis. Hailing from different geographical destinations, members of the Guild represent a myriad of cultures, ethnicities, languages, customs and traditions. This makes the Guild a fertile ground to interact and learn, almost everyday, from each other. I love, in particular, the voluntary nature and Guild for which almost all its throughout the year. It gives me a of UNWG team which is committed and related projects across the charity- based activities of the members work tirelessly great sense of pride to be a part to helping the needy children globe.



## **UNWG AGA 2020**

Members who have applied for the vacant posts since the publication of our last Newsletter:

Post of Recording Secretary – English (1 year: 2020-2021) - Candidate:

- Ingy Amin

Post of Recording Secretary – French (2 years: 2020-2022) – Candidate:

- Olgatte Abdou

Post of Education (2 years: 2020-2022) - Candidate:

- Doris Murillo

Post of Welcoming (2 years: 2020-2022) – Candidate:

- Thusita Makawitage

## **Newsletter**

The deadline to receive information for the next Newsletter is:  
**15 August 2020**. Please ensure that all information is sent to the Newsletter: email: [newsletter@unwg.ch](mailto:newsletter@unwg.ch).

The Executive Committee Team, hopes to see you soon and wishes you an excellent summer!

## **UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S GUILD**

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