



**REPORT
FROM THE
ANGLICAN
COMMUNION
OFFICE AT
THE UNITED
NATIONS**

THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION AND THE 63RD SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Theme for the 63rd Session: Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) is an intergovernmental body established in 1946 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the exclusive objective of promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women around the globe. Each year, the Commission focuses on a different theme, which then shapes the agenda of the intergovernmental body as well as the engagement of broader civil society actors. The theme of the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW63), held in March 2019, was ***social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.***

Women's advocacy and participation have a vital part to play across the United Nations' Sustainable Development framework. The Anglican Communion's engagement with the UNCSW and its themes is underpinned by the commitment set out in our Fourth Mark of Mission to "transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation", particularly as it relates to transforming gender injustices and unjust power relations between women and men, girls and boys. This is the fundamental reason that the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations (ACOUN) has participated in the UNCSW for many years and has brought a delegation of Anglican women from around the Communion to be in fellowship, share in worship, and engage in prophetic advocacy.

The goal of this report is to provide readers with a snapshot of Anglican engagement at the 63rd Session of the UNCSW, including reflections from the delegates themselves and examples of the various opportunities they had to share their own experiences throughout the two weeks, with support from the ACOUN staff.

In it, you will find testimonies from this year's delegates, stories about how they advocated on topics of concern, and how they are taking their experiences at the UNCSW back to their home provinces. The final section of the report looks ahead to the next meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2020, and how Anglicans can be even more engaged with this key moment in the UN agenda.



A NEW APPROACH TO THE UNCSW: ADVOCACY AS INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

2019 marked an exciting change in our approach to selecting the Anglican delegation at the UNCSW as well as to the participation of the delegates in the work of the Commission.

For many years, women from across the Anglican Communion have been very active in the UNCSW through collaborations with the Anglican Communion Office and through groups such as Anglican Women's Empowerment. In previous years, the ACOUN hosted up to 20 women from across the Communion in New York for this purpose.

In 2018, the ACOUN adopted a new approach to the UNCSW, reflecting a new strategy aimed at broader engagement by Anglican women at the United Nations. Provincial nominees were asked to write a statement of purpose indicating how their ministry, work, and interests aligned with the UNCSW63 theme and to demonstrate their experience in and concern for the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality. From those nominated, a group of eight women was selected. This shift to a smaller delegation, selected based on personal experience around the annual theme, enabled the ACOUN team to work more closely with individual delegates and ensure coordinated, effective and fruitful advocacy and learning, connecting global advocacy with local realities and experiences. A smaller delegation also allowed us to release resources to enable Anglican women to engage with other UN bodies and mechanisms throughout the year that work to address issues that are stated priorities for the Anglican Communion.

In March 2019, the Anglican delegation of eight women participated in two valuable weeks of advocacy, worship, fellowship and learning at UNCSW63. Because of their time in New York, the ACOUN is already hearing positive reports of the work delegates are undertaking in their province. Some of this work is highlighted later in this report. We are encouraged that the new approach is already delivering excellent outcomes and impact, and has been seen by ecumenical partners as a worthy model for future engagement. We are very excited to continue developing this approach ahead of UNCSW64 in March 2020.



THE ANGLICAN DELEGATION AT UNCSW63



MS JENNIFER ALLEN
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ms. Allen is currently in seminary preparing for ordination to the priesthood. Before this, she worked as a nurse for 25 years, primarily in women's and children's health. Much of that work was deeply connected with assisting women in accessing public services and services for protection from domestic violence. She has also travelled to Kenya several times to coordinate women's empowerment conferences and assist with the establishment of the first long-term residential domestic violence shelter in Kenya. She has attended UNCSW several times before, which led her to develop a personal advocacy plan that guided her own work in the Diocese of Kansas.



MS ANATOLIE DUSABE
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF BURUNDI

Ms. Dusabe is Diocesan President of the Mothers' Union in Rumonge. Her entry visa to the US was refused and she was therefore unable to join the delegation in New York. She had been looking forward to networking "with colleagues with experience in advocating for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls". Before her visa application was rejected, she said, "It will be a time for learning and to see how I can implement the knowledge back in my country and in my diocese." She said that going to the CSW would have been "an opportunity to share a plan to empower women, especially young ladies, to be able to minimise victims of violence and to overcome such pain."



MS LEY-ANNE FORSYTH
THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ms. Forsyth currently works as an Income Management Housing Officer for a Social Housing provider, which allows her to support vulnerable tenants and ensure that they sustain their tenancies. Prior to this post, she completed her Master's Degree in Social Policy and Housing Studies. She is currently undertaking a project in her Diocese to look at child poverty and how the Scottish Episcopal Church can make a real impact at a local level to resolve injustices in wealth.





MS ANNA TOMIE KANEKO

NIPPON SEI KO KAI (THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION IN JAPAN)

Ms. Kaneko has been the Administrative Secretary at the Provincial Office of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai since 2016, making her responsible for many of the inner workings of the province in support to the Provincial Secretary. Previously, she had been a staff member at the Provincial Office for 20 years. In that period, she provided administrative support to relief efforts organised by the Church during a number of natural disasters that took place between 2011 and 2018.



MS ANIKA KINGMELE

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF MELANESIA

Ms. Kingmele is a lawyer who has been involved with advocacy on women and children's issues for many years. She was recently engaged by the Anglican Church of Melanesia to review its Child Protection Policy, and is set to do similar work on the Church's Family Violence Policy. She was employed by UNICEF for several years and continues to do a lot of work on Children's and Women's issues. Over the last several years, she has worked very closely with members of religious orders managing the Christian Care Centre, a refuge for survivors of domestic and other forms of violence.



REVD JOHANNA NONTLANTLA MASIYANE

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Revd Nontlantla currently staffs the gender desk of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. She was selected as a diocesan representative to serve on the gender desk of the national church. As a member of clergy, she has ministered to patients in hospitals. She has also spearheaded many workshops in the area of health and education.





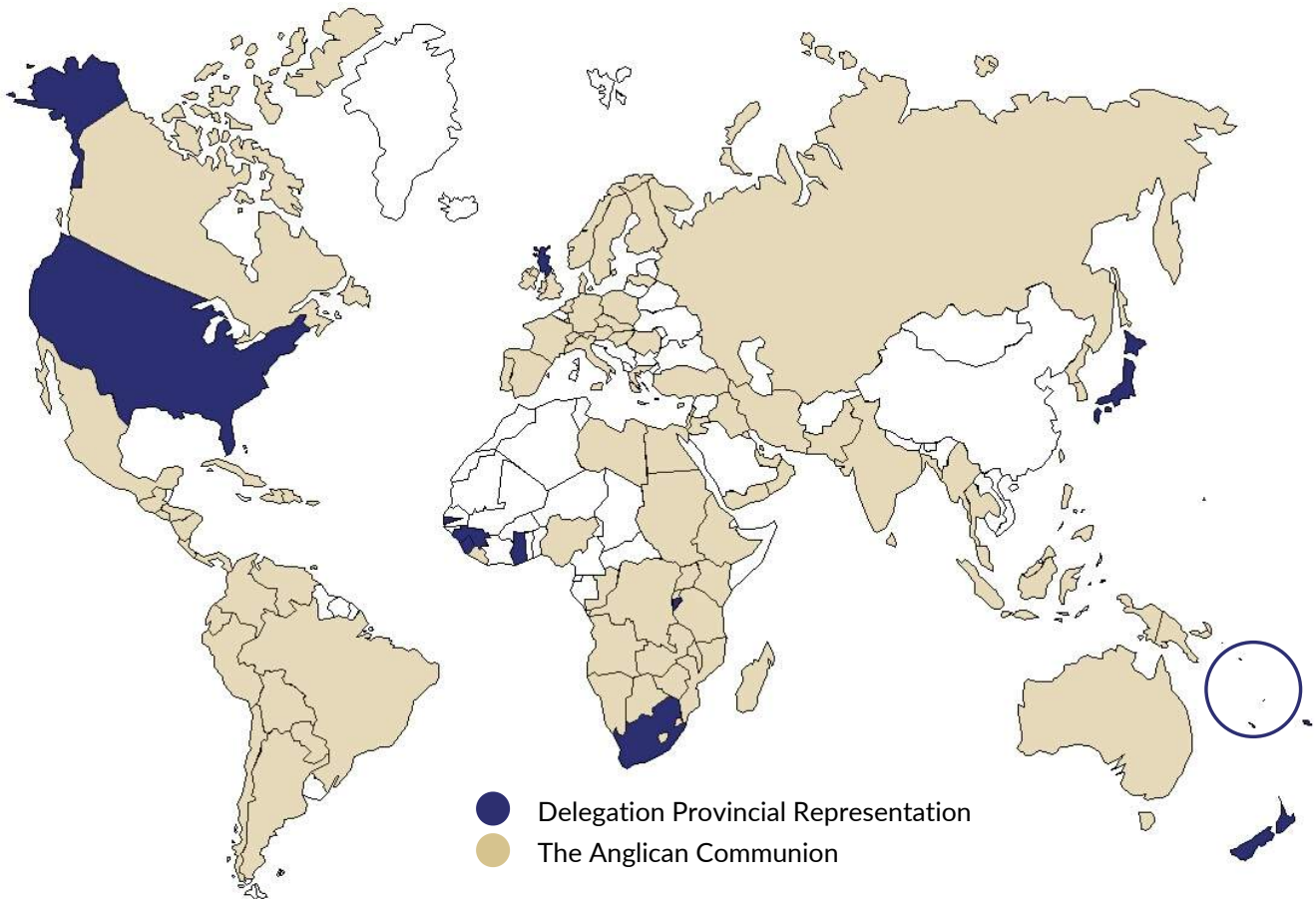
DR GRACE OFORI-ABEBRESE
THE CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE OF WEST AFRICA

Dr. Ofori-Abebrese is the Diocesan President of St Mary’s Guild, one of the strongest Guilds in the Anglican Church in Ghana. In collaboration with the Executive Council and other stakeholders, she has been organising training programmes and workshops to economically and socially empower members of the Guild, predominately women. She has also worked at one of the largest metropolis in Ghana-Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly as the Assistant Director. She holds a Doctorate of Philosophy in Economics and teaches at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi. She has also been involved in building the capacity of girls and young women at the University.



MS RUIHANA PAENGA
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AOTEAROA, NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIA

Ms. Paenga has been a diocesan link on the Anglican Women's Studies Centre for five years and has been a guest speaker and coordinator at the Māori Women Leaders Event. She is also a representative on the Māori Youth Council and has worked closely with young people to be effective instruments for the church and wider communities.





SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS, ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES AND SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE: A FAITH RESPONSE TO THE UNCSW63 THEMATIC FOCUS

In advance of UNCSW opening in March 2019, a coalition of Christian denominations and ecumenical organisations (including the Anglican Consultative Council) organised under the umbrella of Ecumenical Women at the United Nations, submitted a written report on the UNCSW63 thematic focus of social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In that report, the coalition highlighted structural barriers that particularly face women and girls in relation to these particular areas of public policy. It offered a vision for how to address some of these barriers to women's empowerment and human rights. The full report can be found [here](#) and the recommendations from that report are reproduced below:

- Fully implement the Beijing Platform for Action, and additional vital international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, and the Sustainable Development Agenda
- Eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women and girls as stipulated in the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women and Security Council Resolution 1325 as well as following resolutions related to it
- Consider faith communities as integral partners in the protection and promotion of women's human rights
- Increase access to education and training for women of all ages and girls
- Affirm women's rights to own land, to obtain loans, and to market goods
- Dismantle privatisation schemes that undermine fundamental social services, including education, health care, transportation, and jobs
- Uphold the human rights of women including their right to full access to comprehensive sexual reproductive health education and services, free from discrimination and violence
- Promote equitable sharing of authority and responsibilities in all aspects of society, and equal access to economic and political power and decision-making bodies
- Create comprehensive legal protection for women and girls against discrimination, particularly regarding employment, housing, education and health care and for the victims of sexual violence, assault, harassment, abuse
- Ensure medical treatment for survivors as well as provide psycho-social services and support

Throughout UNCSW63, many events hosted by member states or governments, UN agencies and civil society actors, such as non-governmental organisations and women's groups addressed the issues raised in the Ecumenical Women report. Individuals from across the world shared stories that brought the structural barriers affecting women and girls into stark reality, as well as offering data that emphasised the scale of these barriers and what needs to be done to overcome them.



OPENING OUR HEARTS, RAISING OUR VOICES: HOW THE ANGLICAN DELEGATION PARTICIPATED IN UNCSW63

With hundreds of events taking place across the two weeks of the UNCSW session, plenty of planning and preparation went into developing a programme and set of shared and individual priorities that would enable each member of the Anglican delegation to get as much out of the two weeks as possible. This planning and preparation was set in the context of recognising the distinctiveness of the delegation – faith-based, Christian, Anglican, grassroots – and the refocus of the ACOUN strategy towards an approach centered on advocacy and influencing.

An important part of the programme for the delegation therefore centered on making space for times of worship, prayer and reflection throughout the two weeks. Delegates took part in ecumenical prayer gatherings and worship services – including through leading some services. The Anglican and Episcopalian delegations also attended Evensong at the Cathedral of St John the Divine in New York, held daily debriefing sessions that gave opportunity for reflection and prayer together, and held a half-day retreat towards the end of UNCSW to consider the profound impact that the session had on them as individuals, and as a delegation as a whole.

The UNCSW is the only annual pan-Anglican Communion gathering of women, and each year serious consideration is given to ensuring that the makeup of the delegation reflects the rich diversity of the global Anglican Communion. Opening hearts to each other and gaining a better understanding of the breadth of experience of women across the Communion is therefore a core goal of Anglican engagement in UNCSW.

Anglican engagement at UNCSW is particularly enriched by the attendance of other faith-based organisations, providing opportunities for collaboration and networking, while strengthening the collective and distinctive faith voice of women at UNCSW. Our UNCSW experience opened with the Ecumenical Women Orientation Day, with our delegates enjoying a vibrant and joyful programme of worship, panel discussions, and featuring a key-note speech from Lopa Banerjee, Head of the Civil Society Division at UN Women. That day left one delegate “fired up with a belly full of anger and a mouthful of words ... the power of being in a room full of women who are so unapologetic was undeniable.” The Orientation provided a perfect introduction and deepened our delegates understanding of the power of faith voices at CSW.

Our delegates also attended an advocacy workshop entitled *Keeping Faith in CSW63*, organised by USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel) and the Side by Side Movement for Gender Justice. Facilitated by experienced faith advocates for gender justice from the Caribbean, our delegates had the opportunity to learn some advocacy strategies and begin to plan their own advocacy within the CSW space.

Other Anglican entities were also in attendance at UNCSW. Our delegates formed strong bonds with the delegation from The Episcopal Church and attended an event together celebrating the legacy of Anglican women’s engagement at UNCSW. Delegates from USPG and the Mother’s Union joined a few of our daily debriefs, providing some space to build relationships and an Anglican coalition for UNCSW.





ADVOCACY

Advocacy is a key part of participating in the UNCSW process and was integrated as a critical component of our engagement strategy with this year's delegation.

Advocacy can be defined as any action that:

- makes recommendations, most often informed by the lived reality of communities;
- argues for a cause or shares a concern; or
- makes a plea on behalf of others who may not be able to raise their own voice.

Most often, advocacy actions are directed at decision makers or others who have the power to influence a legislative process or policy outcome and often involves working in a coalition with others who share your concerns. As such, advocacy at the UN is often targeted towards:

- member states—i.e. the governments that represent the country of which a delegate is a citizen;
- particular UN agencies, in order to emphasise the important work that is happening in Anglican communities and encourage stronger links between the UN and the Communion at the local/regional level; or
- other civil society organisations, particularly encouraging non-faith actors to consider the important role of faith in transforming injustices and working towards gender equality.

This year, we were blessed with a richly diverse delegation who brought different priorities and concerns from their provinces. For the first time, the individual advocacy objectives of each delegate were compiled into a shared document that formed a cohesive vision for Anglican advocacy at UNCSW63 and provided member states with recommended language to utilise in their negotiations that we felt would adequately capture our concerns. This approach also helped the delegates to understand one another's interests and priorities more clearly and build trust and community amongst them.

This collective strategy guided our advocacy during our engagement at UNCSW63, grounded in Anglican theology and the Five Marks of Mission, and was a helpful tool to share with other civil society groups. This approach brought together the expertise of ACO staff relating to effective engagement within the United Nations with the lived experiences of Anglican women from around the Communion, expressed powerfully through stories of triumph and injustice; of destruction and empowerment; of human rights violations and the conviction of faith communities.



CSW63 ADVOCACY STATEMENT

According to the concerns and priorities of each of our delegates, related both to their Province and their personal concerns for the rights of women and girls, the delegation prepared key advocacy "asks" that they could embrace in a spirit of collective advocacy throughout the CSW. The delegation carried these messages and advocated for them to decision-makers at different levels, which included their states and strategic civil society partners.

The delegation called on states, partners and decision makers at different levels to:

- Implement structures to facilitate ongoing collaboration between governments, academia, media, civil society, religious organisations, and the private sector;
- Recognise faith communities and faith-based organisations as integral partners in the protection and promotion of women's human rights;
- Promote and protect all women's autonomy in decision-making, accessing services, redeeming social benefits and engaging in economic activities by ensuring that the human right to social protection is reflected in both national and local legislation;
- Systematically expand the meaningful engagement of local girls and women as leaders in all levels of programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social systems;
- Increase access to education and training for women of all ages and girls, and remove barriers in accessing primary and secondary education for girls. Use gender-responsive educational curricula to improve the quality of education services, eliminate gender stereotypes and transform unequal power relations;
- Fully realise the right of all girls and all women to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by taking concrete action to reach universal health coverage by 2030;
- Commit to implementing the New Urban Agenda resolution to attain global access to housing and sustainable infrastructure; and
- Take proactive measures to mitigate detrimental effects of climate change, including natural and man-made disasters, conflict, human displacement, and economic instability.

Equipped with these advocacy asks, the delegates were able – individually and collectively – to make clear requests of the decision-makers they had the opportunity to meet with during the UNCSW.





VISITING GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS

UNCSW is a fantastic opportunity to meet with Ambassadors and other representatives from the 193 member countries of the United Nations while they negotiate the content of the 'Agreed Conclusions' document that accompanies most sessions of the Commission. Ministers with responsibility for gender or development policy will often represent national governments. This enables delegates to make connections with government representatives that can be further developed when delegates return home, through ongoing influence and partnership. The simultaneous grassroots and global nature of the church enables a continuity of partnership and engagement during and beyond meetings such as UNCSW.

The Anglican delegation met with a number of governmental representatives as a united group of Anglican women, and they were encouraged to meet with their own representatives.

As a group, the Anglican Communion delegation met with Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations for the United Kingdom (UK). He is also the UK Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

In this meeting, delegates shared their expertise and experience on a wide range of topics including the disproportionate impact of austerity policies on women, especially in the United Kingdom and in Europe more broadly; violence against women felt across all parts of the world; gender-responsive budgeting by national governments; and the plight of Christian women in minority contexts.

Responding to the issues raised by the Anglican delegates, Lord Ahmad emphasised that a partnership with the Anglican Communion was key, and that the government of the United Kingdom was keen to support the important work of faith communities, particularly at the grassroots level. He highlighted that faith is too often seen as a barrier rather than an opportunity for unity and encouraged greater emphasis on faith in global policy discussions. The UK Government has made freedom of religion and belief a priority for its work across the world, and has particularly worked with faith-based organisations in projects supporting girls' education.

The delegation also met with the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Solomon Islands, Ms. Janice Mose. For this meeting, the delegation brought concerns on climate change, indigenous women and the inclusion of language around indigenous rights and traditional knowledge in the CSW63 Outcome Document, as well as the wider importance of partnering with faith-based organisations.

Anika Kingmele, the Anglican delegate from the Anglican Church of Melanesia (which includes The Solomon Islands), had previously worked closely with the government and was very interested to highlight the role of the church in gender equality and women's empowerment. She talked about the positive role that governments can play in partnering with faith-based organisations when they are able to assist with the scaling up of existing projects, such as a domestic abuse shelter that had been created by the Anglican Church in Melanesia. Anika encouraged Ms. Mose to consider how these types of partnership could be included in the UNCSW Outcome Document.





Ms. Mose—an Anglican herself—agreed that the church has a very broad reach in the Solomon Islands, highlighting as an example the importance of Anglican-run boarding schools in the education system. She committed to raising the importance of faith-based organisations and their role as a key stakeholder in the Outcome Document, while noting that the Solomon Islands was negotiating as part of a bloc under the Pacific Islands Forum due to their limited resources and capacity as a relatively small Mission.

The learning that came out of these two group Mission visits centred on the opportunity the delegation had to bring voices and stories from those doing grassroots work at the community level to the halls of power at the global level. Whether or not a government and its Mission has extensive or relatively limited capacity, there was a consistent message that the church fills gaps that the government cannot. In both meetings, the delegation was able to advocate for stronger leveraging of faith communities in achieving gender justice at the local, national and global level.

The staff team supporting the delegation also emphasised the importance of, and supported the delegates in, engaging in meaningful and individualised conversations with their own governments. The team supported delegates in joining government briefings for civil society and many of them attended civil society coalition gatherings with other organisations from their country or region. Attention was also given during planning to events that were being hosted by delegates' governments so that they could attend and pose questions to their representatives and share ideas in a wider forum. Many also approached their government representatives directly after these events.

- Ruihana Paenga engaged with the New Zealand government and attended their regular meetings and briefings for civil society.
- Ley-Anne Forsyth attended UK government briefings and built a relationship with staff in attendance. She also helped to lead the meeting with Lord Ahmad as our representative from Scotland.
- Tomie Kaneko attended the Japanese government briefings and met with her government ministers at a side event to emphasise women's advocacy for an end to nuclearisation at home.
- Nontlantla Mashiyane spoke with the South Africa Minister for Gender at an event, who turned out to be an Anglican herself. While there was limited time for discussion, it was a relationship that Nontlantla hoped to foster when she returned home.
- Anika Kingmale was a critical connection for The Solomon Islands as she had engaged with the government in reporting to UN human rights treaty bodies as well as in many other capacities.
- Grace Ofori-Abebrese met with a desk officer at the Ministry for Women and Gender in Ghana prior to attending UNCSW to discuss infrastructure, access to markets, and the availability of clean water. While in New York, she joined the West African NGOCSW Coalition meetings.
- Jennifer Allen attended the briefing hosted by the United States Mission to the United Nations that discussed the US priorities of women, peace and security; violence against women and girls, education for adolescent girls; and women's economic empowerment. Jennifer was able to have follow-up conversations with fellow Americans and the officials who were present.





LOOKING AHEAD: TAKING UNCSW HOME

An essential aspect of the delegate's experience at UNCSW was a half-day retreat at the end of the programme. This was an opportunity to invoke a quiet moment of reflection on all that the delegates had taken from the two weeks together, as well as encourage them to consider how they would turn their experiences in New York into further action and follow up when they returned home. Below is an overview of the commitments made by the delegates during the retreat, as well as updates from follow-up calls with delegates that were facilitated by the ACOUN staff to assess how UNCSW has influenced them in the months since the Commission took place.

Jennifer Allen

Jennifer intends to raise up the Beijing Platform within The Episcopal Church (TEC). She plans to use the Platform to feed into her diocesan convention and to make presentations at various other fora. Jennifer also plans to extend her advocacy beyond TEC towards her local politicians. After her graduation, she intends to contact them to lobby for her city of Kansas to become a **'CEDAW city.'**

Post-UNCSW Engagement

As a result of UNCSW, Jennifer went back to seminary and wrote a paper on the informal economy. Her professors liked it so much that Jennifer is currently in the process of publishing it. She also went on to lead a clinical pastoral education seminar in Kenya. Here, she worked with a local women's shelter to work on demystifying negative cultural patterns, mainly teaching women about their rights, especially in disallowing domestic abuse as a form of "love". She was also appointed by her Bishop at St. Bart's to prepare a space for NGOs who help women and the homeless to be able to use to carry out their work.

Dr Grace Ofori-Abebrese

Grace has committed to working with Ghana's Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources with the aim of setting up training for women's groups in the church so that they can have alternative streams of revenue in the face of climate change. She will also speak with her Primate to discuss the possibility of the church assisting in establishing business "start-ups" for women in the church, as well as workshops where she can discuss the issues explored during UNCSW63, and inform women of their legal rights.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

Since returning to her province, Grace has presented a report on UNCSW63 to her Archbishop, which was shared across all the dioceses in the province. Inspired by the success of her first presentation, Grace made two other presentations on the economic empowerment of women to the members of her Diocese. She encouraged members to train in economic ventures that would allow them to diversify their businesses. Since these presentations, members of her Diocese have consulted the forestry commission to seek out the necessary training.





Ruihana Paenga

Ruihana was inspired after participating in UNCSW63, realising that there was more that she could do as an activist and advocate. Her message to her Archbishop is simple: "Let's do better." She also plans to be strategic when advocating for women and girls, adjusting her message according to the environment in which she is presenting it. Ruihana wants to stay engaged with the UNCSW process and plans to work with the Council of the Anglican Women's Study Centre in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia in order to prepare for CSW64.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

Ruihana returned to her Province committed to use the knowledge she gained during CSW to affect her community positively. Since returning, she has written a blog for the Anglican Communion News Service, attended the Women Deliver conference, and is currently pushing for more scholarships for indigenous women from the Anglican Women's Study Center. Ruihana has been raising awareness among her fellow Anglicans in New Zealand regarding the need for academic scholarships and support for emerging indigenous leaders. Most recently, she has been talking with the New Zealand government on behalf of the Anglican Women's Study Center to advocate for this important cause. Ruihana and some of her friends have decided to start a foundation focused on indigenous history and ongoing work in order to give back to their community, inspired by CSW63.

Ley-Anne Forsyth

Ley-Anne intends to meet with her Primate to discuss the idea of reviewing the progress made towards gender equality within the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) since the Beijing Platform was passed, with the aim of having SEC commit to full gender equality by 2030. She also intends to advocate on a state level for policy change around social protection. Lastly, at a summer youth camp, Ley-Anne plans to ask the youth what their idea of the perfect gender equality policy would be for the church, and then present the results to the bishops.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

Ley-Anne was truly inspired by CSW and decided to write a report and present it to her Synod. In the report, she took advantage of the upcoming anniversary of the Beijing Platform to reflect on what gender equality looks like within the Church, and what we need to do within the next 10 years in order to achieve gender equality. The Bishops were moved by her presentation, and elected a group to follow progress made with local government.

Ley-Anne also delivered a presentation to senior management at her place of work, which shed light on casual sexism. In response, they launched an equality group that Ley-Anne is chairing. The group's first task is to look at gender equality in the workplace. The group also plans to support tenants, especially women who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Ley-Anne engaged the youth in her community by leading them to join the World Council of Churches' Thursdays in Black campaign, a global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence against women and girls.



Anika Kingmele

During UNCSW63, Anika realised the immense influence faith-based organisations can have in achieving gender equality. Her main goal now is to find entry points within the church and the state to allow her to start a dialogue about gender equality. She also intends to share what she has learned with the Mothers' Union and the Christian Care Center for Women and Children.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

Since returning to her Province, Anika has continued to be inspired by the link between faith and gender justice. She is seeking out training opportunities to better equip her knowledge and capacity as well as gathering resources to serve her Province. She is planning to facilitate a workshop with a rural Mother's Union group.

Revd Johanna Nontlantla Mashiyane

Nontlantla would like to spread her wings beyond the church and establish her roots within the community as well. Her ultimate goal is to empower women and girls to rise to positions of authority within the church. One major obstacle she faces is funding. She committed to looking for new streams of income that will allow her to pursue this kind of work.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

After participating in UNCSW63, Nontlantla returned to her Province with a plan of action to develop and empower women entrepreneurially. To achieve this, she proposed a new business opportunity to her local authorities: training women to independently sew school uniforms to address both the barriers to school attendance, as well as the lack of job opportunities for women in the local community. With the help of the municipal Gender Desk, her aim is to engage the school circuit managers and principals and start fundraising within the schools. Her initial goal is to raise enough funds to give sewing machines to at least five parents. Nontlantla plans to partner with the Mothers' Union in the Mpumalanga Diocese and others to leverage their social outreach programmes and achieve maximum success on her venture.

Anna Tomie Kaneko

Tomie plans to make presentations to her bishops and other authority figures within the churches of her province. She is also planning to form a group for women within the Province who have attended past UNCSWs to ensure that they keep sharing and learning from each other. Her goal is to inspire more women to attend and become engaged with the UNCSW process.

Post-UNCSW Engagement

Tomie felt like she fully understood the UNCSW process once she had returned to her province and presented a report to her diocese. It was then that she realised how significant this process had been. She decided that she wanted to share her experience with as many people as possible so she sent a report to all 320 Anglican churches in Japan. She also delivered a speech at her diocese's women's group that connected their priorities to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which allowed the women to understand how their local actions fit into the global context. The women's group was so inspired that they decided to start working on the theme of UNCSW64, as well as on the SDGs.





BUILDING ON SUCCESS: UNCSW64 AND BEYOND

In 2020, the global community will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and will reach the five-year milestone towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This makes 2020 a pivotal year for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, everywhere, and a critical year for Anglican engagement at the United Nations. Given this, the ACOUN is planning to bring a delegation to the UNCSW64 in New York that will showcase global Anglican women's leadership and voices within the halls of the United Nations. The hope is that the delegation selected will draw together women who are leaders in their church, diocese or province (for example, bishops or leaders in women's ministries), as well as younger women (aged 18 to 30) with experience and interest in gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and women's leadership.

The main focus of UNCSW64 will be on the review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) to assess current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is a moment to share the good news—to celebrate the successes we have had in the empowerment of women and girls, the engagement of men and boys, and supporting women's leadership. It is also a time to assess how far we have to go in order to truly transform unjust power relations and create a world of love, dignity, and justice.

Ahead of the usual two-week session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the ACOUN team is also working in coalition with other faith-based groups to engage with the regional planning processes ahead of the Beijing+25 review in March 2020 and the Global Equality Forums that will be held in May and June of 2020. These regional review processes involve all stakeholders - including all branches and levels of government, civil society organisations, the private sector, the entities of the United Nations system and regional and international organisations, academia, and the media - facilitated under the leadership of the Head of State/Government.

As a coalition of faith-based actors, we acknowledge that gender justice is an integral part of our mission. Our religious institutions work to promote the economic and spiritual empowerment of women and girls, as well as develop theological resources and advocacy tools to equip religious institutions to address structural barriers to women's human rights.

In this spirit, Beijing+25 is a key opportunity to highlight the important role that faith-based organisations play in the advancement of equality for women and girls and to mobilise faith actors for a shared vision of gender justice that counteracts dangerous rhetoric that ultimately denies the God-given dignity of all people. This coalition is looking to mobilise a strategic faith voice at the regional meetings, UNCSW64, and the global conferences that will be held in 2020, through joint statement drafting, advocacy messages, side events and other activities.



LOOKING AHEAD

The new approach towards UNCSW is already bearing fruit for individual delegates, their communities and provinces, and the Anglican Communion more widely. With the forthcoming Lambeth Conference in 2020 likely to consider issues related to women's empowerment and gender justice in some way, this will be an important opportunity for ACOUN staff to hear from and engage with bishops and spouses from around the Communion. Staff will seek to include new learning from the Lambeth Conference into future engagement at UNCSW and other UN events related to gender justice.

The recruitment of a Director for Gender Justice at the Anglican Communion Office (succeeding Revd Canon Terrie Robinson in her role as Director for Women in Church and Society) in the coming months will also support the further development of work on issues of women's empowerment and gender justice through out the Anglican Communion. The ACOUN team looks forward to working with our new colleague to help bring new perspectives from around the Anglican Communion to the halls of power in the United Nations.



THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION
OFFICE AT THE UNITED NATIONS

ANGLICAN COMMUNION OFFICE (ACO) STAFF TEAM

- **Jack Palmer-White**, Anglican Communion Permanent Representative to the United Nations
- **Revd Canon Terrie Robinson**, Director for Women in Church and Society
- **Jillian Abballe**, Head of New York Office and Advocacy Officer, ACOUN
- **Rachael Fraser**, Administration and Research Assistant (London)
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