

National Team Report – October 2016

This month we are pleased to highlight the 12th Asia Pacific Region Conference held in Nepal last month, which was attended by a delegation of five members from Girl Guides Australia.

The Conference commenced with a roll call identifying that 23 of the 26 Member Organisations (MOs) in the Asia Pacific Region were present at the Conference. We were honoured to receive a welcome from the President of Nepal. In the first business session we welcomed WAGGGS CEO Anita Tiessen and World Board Deputy Chair Connie Matsui, who shared WAGGGS' plans for restructure of the regional support mechanisms which will see the roles of our current regional support staff integrated into newly formed departments within WAGGGS.

The three major themes of the WAGGGS Strategy were discussed:

1. More opportunities for more girls: covering diversity and quality of the Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting experience
2. Strong visible leadership: increased capacity and influence on issues affecting girls and young women
3. Sustainability of the movement: leading to increased funding, improved image and visibility

MOs were also asked to provide input into the Asia Pacific Strategic Plan. With the Asia Pacific Region experiencing extraordinary growth of over one million members in the past six years, consideration was given to how this membership growth could be continued. Other consultation sessions provided MOs with opportunities to comment on future strategy, growth and volunteering, branding, values proposition and governance.

The proposed WAGGGS constitutional amendments which will be put to World Conference in 2017 were also discussed at the Conference. It was great to learn about 'For Her World' an exciting new WAGGGS branding initiative, which will be launched on 11 October (the International Day of the Girl).

During the week delegates attended workshops demonstrating MO best practice on topics linked to the conference theme of "Connect, Grow and Impact", including a presentation from NZ on their restructure, from the Maldives on their online training hub and leader support, and from Pakistan on their connection with government. Australian delegates presented a workshop on the 'Connect' theme sharing the work of the AGP review in connecting with its key stakeholders.

Further capacity building workshops included Online Guide Manager, Social Media, and WAGGGS Global to name just a few. One session found the GGA young delegate, Emily, sharing her leadership pathway in the volunteering session.

Australia was delighted to be able to support the Pacific island nation of Kiribati by raising funds to assist with Kiribati's 2017 WAGGGS membership fees through the sale of goods at the International Bazaar night. This was a fun and colourful evening as many delegates wore beautiful national costumes and performed traditional dances and songs.

On the final day of the conference we said farewell to Low Lih Jeng who completed her term as Chair of the Asia Pacific Region Committee and Ching Ching Wee-Ong, Regional Director, who finishes in December after 16 years. Marybell Marinas from the Philippines was elected to chair the Asia Pacific Region Committee for the next triennium. There was much excitement when Sri Lanka was announced as the winning bid to host the 2019 Asia Pacific Region Conference.

Our thanks to the Australian delegation for their hard work and for representing Girl Guiding Australia with dignity and skill.