

Advancing Peace, Justice and Human Rights



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom—US Section

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Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

WILPF US Program Strategic Plan 2017

These six objectives, actions and activities are designed to help connect members and branches with strategies that promote and sustain systemic transformation by working more collaboratively within our organization and between WILPF-US and kindred organizations in our communities and nationwide, and by linking more members at large and branches with issues committees to engage in actions that would make WILPF US more visible

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We are encouraging branches to work in coalition with one another, with issues committees and members at large, and to form local coalitions, thus creating a climate of Program issues “campaigns” sustained over a period of time as reflected by members working together. For instance, a branch can work on localized, short-term issues, such as stopping a particular fracking activity in the local community, or long-term issues, such as ending “the Whole Nuclear Era” and encouraging the US government to support the 2017 UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Ban Treaty).

A campaign should have the goals of raising awareness among the public, getting members of the public to take action, networking with other organizations, and increasing WILPF membership.

Collaborating with other groups is crucial for building a movement.

Note: Many WILPF members active in the leadership of the national issues committees and in the national program committee were involved in the work that has gone into this Program Strategic Plan summary document. Odile Hugonot Haber (Ann Arbor, Michigan, branch and co-chair of the Middle East issues committee) and Maureen Eke (at-large, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan) were the two Chairs of the our national Board standing Program Committee when this project was undertaken. Maureen Eke is currently the sole Chair of the Program Committee and her contact information is listed on the cover of this summary of part of the strategic planning process project, presented for ideas, discussion, utilization. Be on the lookout for an email announcing the next Program Committee telephone conference—all are welcome! Send Maureen an email if you'd like to be added to the list.

Objective 1: Work to End All Wars by Abolishing Nuclear Weapons and All Weapons¹

Action 1.1: Change attitudes that promote militarization, war and violence (including actions supporting the 2017 Nuclear Ban Treaty)[†]

Action 1.2: Draw attention to the importance of having women participate among all parties, including Hamas, at the Middle East Peace table²

Action 1.3a: Implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security [WPS]) by lobbying law and policy makers to support and include women at all tables making policy decisions

Action 1.3b: Utilize WILPF's Peace Women office/resources to connect local efforts on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda to national and international actions, policies, and practices³

Responsibilities: Branches, Issues Committees (AHR, CvD, DISARM-End Wars, Earth Democracy, Middle East), At-Large Members

Objective 2: Convert the Military Budget into a Peace Budget

Action 1: Educate on the military budget by providing educational resources on the US military and the NATO budgets

Action 2: Outreach to policy/lawmakers in support of an economy based on alternative and peaceful energy sources

Action 3: Collaborate with others, outreach, to strengthen WILPF's work in nurturing a peace and social justice culture and agenda (kindred and other advocacy groups including peace centers, academic and policy institutions, religious organizations, and those involved in K-12 and pre-K education)

Action 4: Educate on the conditions that cause wars and how we can stop them by addressing topics such as these: Racial privilege, gender privilege, social privilege, educational privilege; financial privilege; Corporate "rights" v. the rights of the commons (land, water and other natural resources "grabbing" and corporate pollution of earth, water and air). Claims of "national security" often used as excuses to initiate wars or occupation or initiate or increase weapons production, sales, usage as higher priorities than any human security issues; power and patriarchy rather than partnership and stewardship or hierarchical power from top-down instead of community power building

Objective 2 (cont'd): Convert the Military Budget into a Peace Budget

Action 5: Urge our US government to sign and ratify UN conventions on anti-personnel mines, child soldiers, and the 2017 Nuclear Ban as well as all those we have not signed and ratified and to join the International Criminal Court

Action 6: Urge our US government to comply with United Nations resolutions, covenants, and conventions we have signed and ratified: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UNSCR 1325 (Women Peace & Security) and its progeny and CEDAW

Action 7: Strengthen and support programs that address the impacts of war on women peace and security³

*Activities may include: focusing on Violence Against Women in our communities, lobbying policymakers to support the US ratification of CEDAW, working to implement the principles of UNSCR 1325 and its progeny; creating a Fact Sheet re women's actions to create more peace in their communities and using that as a template for other Fact Sheets

Responsibilities: Branches, Issues Committees (AHR, DISARM-End Wars), At-Large Members

Objective 3: Work towards Climate Justice & Women, Peace and Security

Action 1: Highlight the fact that the Paris Agreement COP21 was ratified on April 22, 2016; emphasize its importance

OBJECTIVE 3A: Highlight the Connections between Climate Justice and Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325 and its progeny)

Action 1: Continue to emphasize the human right to water by supporting or helping to develop policies and resources that address the importance of access to clean water for health and agriculture

Action 2: Support and help to develop policies that support the banning of fracking in our communities

Action 3: Work with coalitions to ensure that water remains in the commons--stop privatization of water

Action 4: Educate our communities on the dangerous effects of pesticides, such as glyphosates, on the environment (and human health)

Objective 3 (cont'd): Work towards Climate Justice, Women, Peace and Security

Action 5: Work to ban the use of pesticides

Action 6: Educate our communities on the environmental benefits of supporting sustainable agriculture

Action 7: Oppose the dumping of nuclear waste near our waters, lands, and residential areas, especially those occupied by underrepresented groups and indigenous communities

Action 8: Support rebuilding of our water infrastructure by installing a newer local infrastructure to introduce a green economy

**Responsibilities: Branches, Issues Committees
(AHR, Corporations v. Democracy, Earth Democracy), At-Large Members**

Objective 3: (cont'd) Work towards Climate Justice & Women, Peace and Security

OBJECTIVE 3B: Link UN SCR 1325 and its progeny to the environment by underscoring the connections between gender and climate change and especially the implications for women and children locally, nationally, and globally

Action 1: Educate our communities on the impacts of climate change on women and children who make up 70% of the world's hungry

Action 2: Continue to underscore how climate change affects sustainable agriculture⁴

Action 3: Provide informational sessions that address the effects of climate change on food security by examining such problems as drought and depletion of food resources

Action 4: Plan and implement a Mother's Day set of activities that draw attention to any of the climate change issues listed above⁵

**Responsibilities: Branches, Issues Committees
(AHR, Corporations v. Democracy, Earth Democracy), At-Large Members**

Objective 4: Challenge All Forms of Racism and Bigotry

Action 1: Network with other organizations also addressing these topics

Action 2: Acknowledge diversity and use an **intersectional** lens

Action 3: Support and attend events that celebrate multiple cultures

Action 4: Organize a vigil or protest

Action 5: Write to elected officials about nondiscriminatory laws

**Responsibilities: Branches, Issues Committees
(AHR, Immigration), At-Large Members**

Objective 5: Program Training & Communications Strategizing

Action 1: Launch annual WILPF lab (workshop / seminar / training / mentoring opportunities to bring groups of members together to explore, discuss how to develop, implement and communicate local and/or national coordinated “campaigns” or actions on select issues

Action 2: Develop or create a clearinghouse or repository of WILPF resources under Program to be housed on designated members-only web page. The repository will build on contributions from members, branches, issues committees of resources they have produced for their programs, events, campaigns, activities. These resources will enable us to prepare package/kits for designated actions or campaigns.

Package/Kit for each action may include:

- ◆ Articles
- ◆ Book and film resource list or bibliographies
- ◆ Contact information on organizations interested in similar topics
- ◆ Fact sheets
- ◆ Pictures, or photo-documentary material
- ◆ Postcards
- ◆ Posters, graphics, info-graphics
- ◆ Press releases
- ◆ Sample letters
- ◆ Sample design templates for fact sheets, etc.

Objective 5: (cont'd) Program Training & Communications Strategizing

Action 3: Re-institute an online calendar of all WILPF program events, activities, program/issue committees, branches and other topical issues related events, as well as board meetings with dates, locations and contact info. The organizers (branches, issues committees chairs, at large members) will send announcements of events to be entered or featured on the calendar. This will provide a shared point for disseminating information to everyone about our activities and consequently improve communication and ideas sharing among us.

Action 4: Monthly e-mails/phone calls/mailings to constituents (WILPF members and friends) asking them to take a simple action (e.g., phone Congressional Reps) related to a single issue as part of ongoing branches campaigns). (NOTE, out of this strategic plan, this periodic phone call aspect was picked up by a board member and used partially as the basis for “One WILPF” monthly phone calls that began in 2017).

Action 5: Develop media strategies and share best practices for communicating our programs and activities more effectively to the public. A repository of resources will help us achieve this goal.

Responsibilities: National Board, Program Committee and Issues Committees (All—AHR, Corporations v. Democracy, Cuba & the Bolivarian Alliance, DISARM-End Wars, Earth Democracy, Immigration, Middle East), Branches and At-Large Members

Objective 6: Coordinate Activism Around the US on Select Issues and Share Notice/Info then Photos, Reports on Social Media re WILPF's Actions

Membership, either through branches or regional activities such as the cluster meetings that California has been holding for many years, periodically identifies, in collaboration with Issue Committees, current issues/topics for targeted campaigns—and develops for each a coordinated series of actions on such identified topics/issues by the general membership in branches and in the communities where individual members reside but where no WILPF branches or groups yet exist. The goal for each such campaign is, above and beyond the activism itself and issues that we are organizing around to bring to the attention of our communities, the nation and the world via media coverage, is also to utilize this atmosphere of a regional, local, or national coordinated campaign with a unified language and position that will ALSO give WILPF visibility by drawing media attention to our activism around the issue(s). A recent example (although the impetus was brought to the section via our international Reaching Critical Will program) was the 17 June Women March to Ban the Bomb NYC march and rally and sister actions around the US by WILPF members and kindred organizations.

Objective 6: (cont'd) Coordinate Activism Around the US on Select Issues . . .

Action 1: World Water Day (Mar. 22) Activities

- ✂ Hold public events on this day

Action 2: Tax Day (Apr. 15-18) Activities

Tax Day activities protest the taxes we pay for wars instead of supporting peace, life and our communities

- ✂ Distribute a flyer on Tax day and encourage people to sign a petition highlighting the value of peace
- ✂ Write a letter urging Congress to pass HR 1976 (Economic Conversion Act)
- ✂ Write sample letters on issues that can be used by Branches
- ✂ Build local coalition to support the passage of a US Congress House Resolution on conversion of nuclear energy into alternate energy sources while creating new good jobs or a peace budget⁶
- ✂ Visit your local representative or policy makers to lobby for support; take pictures and document visit to post this picture on a campaign on a campaign page on our website and on our Facebook page
- ✂ Connect with WILPF in Europe on “No to NATO” campaign
- ✂ Any chance your US Senator(s) might resurrect the Women, Peace & Security Act of 2015 (SB 224) that Barbara Boxer (D-Calif) introduced to put in place funding to support the US National Action Plan process to implement the UNSCR 1325 WPS agenda? Have a Democratic Senator and/or a female Senator who might be willing to take this on? Once we get someone to introduce this legislation again everyone around the country can campaign to get our own Senators to support this!

Objective 6: (cont'd) Coordinate Activism Around the US on Select Issues . . .

Action 3: Earth Day (April 22) Activities—International Mother Earth Day⁷

Earth day week end program: highlight the positive actions women are taking around the earth to sustain the environment and address climate change.

Many who are mothers or who have living mothers go to brunch or lunch this day. Here are suggestions for some actions or activities:

- ✂ Give flowers with a peace earth message
- ✂ Join with other groups doing Earth Day activities and highlight WILPF's commitment to a clean, peaceful and healthy earth
- ✂ Plant trees for our mothers, in honor and memory of Wangari Maathai, internationally renowned Kenyan environmental political activist and Nobel laureate
- ✂ Plan a program in memory of human rights and environmental rights activists who have been imprisoned or killed for their causes, such as Berta Cacéres, Goldman Prize winning Honduran activist
- ✂ Organize concerts—invite emerging musicians like to offer their services and perform that day
- ✂ Educate the public about WILPF and our work—have a table at community events with info-graphic and previous WILPF US issues of *Peace & Freedom*
- ✂ Reach out to religious organizations (*see, for example, the Roman Catholic Pope's message on ecology: St Francis: The Little Flowers*)
- ✂ Organize a workshop in collaboration with local environmental groups on how to reduce our carbon footprint
- ✂ Collaborate with community waste & cycling groups for a teach-in on how to support recycling, any local agriculture and/or farmers' markets
- ✂ Organize and support community garden projects

Objective 6: (cont'd) Coordinate Activism Around the US on Select Issues . . .

Action 4: Peace Day (Sep. 21) Activities

- ✧ To support a peace culture: · Organize a music concert, drawing, theatre. · Host round tables of women to discuss local economy and needs in opposition to a military budget. · Create teach-ins to educate the public about the effects of war. · Create reading material on the military budget.
- ✧ Engage in letter writing campaigns to Senators and politicians calling them to end arms proliferation and to support the July 7 UN General Assembly action in passing the legally-binding treaty, **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**, by pressuring the White House and Secretary of State to start the ratification process and to direct our UN Ambassador to sign the treaty itself⁸

Note: List of expenditures to guide us⁹

Topics: The purveyors of war. Military budget versus community budget--we used to have the "Women's Budget." Jane Midgley 2005, *Women and the U.S. Budget: Where the Money Goes and What You Can Do About It* - WILPF had been studying this at the time - we could look into updating this document; it was a good primer)¹⁰

Example of activity: US Congress Member Eleanor Holmes Norton has introduced a bill on peaceful conversion of nuclear weapons and power—urge her to do so again and ask your Congressional Representative to support this legislation

Here are other activities:

- ⇒ Monthly letter writing campaigns to lawmakers in your states or communities targeting one of the issues identified that has significance for your area or community, demonstrations, petition drives, pickets, vigils, letter writing to media, light brigades, lobbying elected officials on issues in person and via phone calls, e-mails, Facebook, Twitter
- ⇒ collaborating with an organization working on any of these issues in your community to visit a lawmaker to gain support for the particular issue
- ⇒ Create fact sheets on an issue of interest to your community to share at an event
- ⇒ Develop a list of books or resources related to your specific topic
- ⇒ March or join an organized public event on an issue
- ⇒ Collaborate with another activist group to host or sponsor a town hall meeting to have a public conversation on any of these issues of significance to your community
- ⇒ Collaborate with community interest groups to place an issue on the ballot, if a vote is needed

Objective 6: (cont'd) Coordinate Activism Around the US on Select Issues . . .

Action 5: Hiroshima & Nagasaki Days (Aug. 6-9) Activities

- ✚ Hold a press conference on Hiroshima Day to draw attention to the destructive impacts of nuclear weapons
- ✚ Develop and hold a press conference calling local policy makers to urge the US. Government to develop a different foreign policy based on peace and justice
- ✚ Organize a local demonstration protesting the military budget and the cost of nuclear weapons. (Example: Ann Arbor alone spends \$84 million a year on nuclear weapons)¹¹
- ✚ Collaborate with other NGOs or organizations such as Raging Grannies and Women in Black to highlight the traumatic effects of war on women and the society at large
- ✚ Some additional suggested activities may include: Art exhibits, street theater, a march to your State Capitol, teaching, peace vigil, rally, and protest in front of a military base or arms corporations

Action 6: Human Rights Day (Dec. 10) Activities

- ✚ Participate in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign, which had this theme in 2016: "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Make Education Safe for All," beginning on Nov. 25 and ending on Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day. Check out <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/> for more information

Selected Resources

† In Spring-Summer 2017, the DISARM-End Wars issues committee has determined to undertake a campaign to “End the Whole Nuclear Era” which we began with our banners proclaiming the same that we carried in the Women’s March on January 21 in Washington, D.C. and in San Francisco, California. A Resolution is being proposed by DISARM-End Wars for adoption by this 33rd Triennial Congress in Chicago so that the first action and all references to ending nuclear war and weapons in this booklet/plan should be understood to be incorporating also our simultaneous work to end nuclear energy/power use as well—the “Whole Nuclear Era.”

¹ See WILPF guiding principles; *see also* worldbeyondwar.org/alternative

² See wilpfus.org/documents/Hamas/WILPF_Hamas_Booklet.pdf for campaign to remove Hamas from the US terrorist watchlist in support of Hamas’ role in working out a just and lasting peace in the Middle East

³ www.peacewomen.org

⁴ <https://youtube.com/watch?v=vd4YCPqz8NQU>

⁵ http://unfccc.int/gender_and_climate_change/items/7516.php

⁶ <http://prop1.org/prop1/HR1976.htm>

⁷ <http://www.un.org/en/events/motherearthday/>

⁸ www.reachingcriticalwill.org

⁹ <http://www.sipri.org/>

¹⁰ www.worldbeyondwar.org

* <http://wbg.org.uk/>

* <http://www.worldcat.org/title/womens-budget/oclc/13415084>

* <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/campaigns/us-militaryspending-vs-world/>

* <http://www.wcwonline.org/WRB-Issues/287>

¹¹ <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/cost-of/nuclear-weapons/>