****

**Activism Subcommittee**

**Saturday 20th May 2017**

**10am – 4pm**

**Room F1**

**Human Rights Action Centre**

**17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA**

**Present:**

Eilidh Douglas (Chair)

Liesbeth Ten Ham

Holly Shorey

Jenny Pollock

Bob Baron

Jerry Allen

Jamie Wheeler-Roberts

Simon Ware

**Staff attending:**

Kerry Moscogiuri

Andy Hackman

Tessa Lamb

**Apologies**

Dave Beynon

Katherine Walton

Jeni Dixon

|  |
| --- |
| ***Item No. 1 Agenda Topic:* Minutes and Matters Arising** |
| * 1. **Introduction**   Eilidh welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Simon Ware for standing in for Katherine.   * 1. **Minutes** * Minutes from previous meeting were approved subject to minor changes. * Co-hosting facbook events: we are already doing this in certain instances, but not done for all events due to capacity issues. Guidance should be that you can only do it through a social media group. There is the need for a guide with clear guidelines for activist involvement with social media, need to be clear when activist led work coincides with Amnesty brand.   **ACTION: Andy** to pick up with Sam and Berry at the beginning of June. In the interim, use the social media group   * **ACTION: Tess** to post minutes as final on the website   1. **Matters arising** * Successful visit of HRE team in Belfast and were very pleased with result. They met with human rights commission and spoke with students etc and got a lot out of the visit. * Holly spoke to Veronica from local group at the AGM, who has extensive experience working with youth groups in her area and they identified problems/benefits of establishing links between local groups and youth groups. They decided it would be preferable to do one off events rather than have long term links, which are often unsustainable in that communication between groups can be tricky. Communication is a recurring issue and highly dependent on who is in each group. Need up to date guidelines, and then encourage people to take responsibility for reaching out and making contacts.   **ACTION: Andy** to share document from Amnesty Australia  ASC discussed the need for an updated, easily accessible guide of best practice for this interaction.  **ACTION: Holly, Jenny and Liesbeth** to look at current guide <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/a-guide-to-working-with-student-and-local-groups-final_draft.pdf> and see if useful as a framework Liesbeth sent on the current best ways of working together guide.   * Ordering Resources:Andy has meeting with MDA to look at connecting website with ordinary systems to make more user friendly with a view to moving to online order page. Catherine is looking at updating resources pdf for groups. * Jeni is working with regional reps, capturing data on people attending conference, less qualitative evaluation.   **ACTION: Jeni** to contact Liesbeth with update.   * Building partnerships and use of social media   **ACTION: Andy and Liesbeth** to catch up   * Impact of movement strategy: Andy has structure from Jo Shaw linked to comms strategy and how we build on that, workshops around the country and builds on how well we skill up more people in more communities * Nomcom: Jeni and Kari have spoken and are working on this. They will send unsuccessful STAN applicants details on to Nomcom next year. |
| ***Item No. 2 Agenda Topic:* Feedback from Constituencies** |
| **2.1 Student Report**  **Committee Handovers**   * Completion of academic year marks an end of current committees and AGMs to elect new committees. This is dependent upon rules of each Students Union. Makes it difficult for STAN to keep up with what is happening within each group * Action for Change (new committee training) taking place 19th June. Has so far received quite a bit of interest from new committees – particularly pleasing as turnout was poor last year.   **AGM**   * High number of student attendees, many of whom were attending for the first time * Very good feedback from attendees – reported that they felt more informed about the issues Amnesty campaigned on, were better equipped to run their student groups for the upcoming year, and felt more involved within the organization   **2.2 Youth Group**  Youth group connections with local groups for campaigning/ fundraising  Youth groups have expressed an interest in working more with local groups in their communities. The benefits of this would be that activism in communities would be greater and both types of groups have skills that would benefit each other.  There are potential challenges to this idea. For example, local groups focus more on individuals whereas youth groups focus more on thematic campaigning due to the quick change over in members. However, one off campaigning/ fundraising events are often successful.  Overall having more links between youth and local groups would be something that we think would produce better activism within communities, and would allow both groups to share ideas and resources. Having means of contacting groups, and a guide of best practice of how local groups can work with youth members safely would be useful.  Financial support for youth groups who were not able to attend the youth conference due to the cost of travel  Although the youth conference was extremely successful there were youth groups that were not able to attend due to a lack of financial support. Some groups considered fundraising to raise enough money to come, but decided that it would be more beneficial for their money raised to go directly to Amnesty rather than to travel costs. Therefore, a fund for groups struggling financially would be beneficial to engaging more youth members.  Andy explained that his team are looking at budgets for 2018 and considering where to put resources, or conference outside of London and are looking at how we adjust things for next year. As we do a review of the AGM, we will look at the relationship between and how we position other events. Attendance at the AGM was down for youth members this year, possibly because youth conference and AGM were only 2 weeks apart.  **ACTION: Andy** to check with Jeni about moving the date of Youth conference and to consider location and funding of events.  Sharing news and successes  Since the last ASC meeting we held a successful youth conference, which a large number of youth groups attended and was a great opportunity for them to meet other youth groups to share ideas, to learn about Amnesty campaigns, and to develop activism skills in practical workshops (such as how to manage difficult questions, and how to run a great youth group). Also youth activists presented the conference and ran a workshop, which allowed us to develop skills as activists, and engage with other youth members. The success of the conference can also be seen in the Q1 2017 feedback report.  **2.3 Thematic Networks Report**  **Growing the Impact of Thematic Networks**   * The Thematic Networks are working towards growing their networks, reaching out to new audiences and increasing their impact. If we succeed at this we will grow Amnesty UK’s members and supporters. In order to this we need to strengthen our identity within Amnesty UK. Our ideas on doing so include the following: * Being able to adopt case files where CCs don’t have capacity to * Having a stronger brand identity (particularly applies to WAN and CHRN) and a better online network branded space * Supporter journeys to incorporate the opportunity to join networks i.e. people who sign Chechnya action for gay men having chance to join LGBTI network (as currently we persuade people to sign it at which point we lose all connection with those individuals who may only have seen it because they have an interest in LGTBI rights)   Andy agreed that it was important to use one issue to give wider understanding of human rights and make a connection with human rights and that there are great opportunities to reach out and establish partnerships. Need to look at how we capitalise and get people into our network and sustain interest in human rights.  **ACTION: Andy** to talk to Mark from St Paul’s Cathedral, a strong supporter of Amnesty, to connect him to Amnesty LGBTI network.  Growing a HRE and/or groups speaker programme  Stronger relationships with CCs, Students, Local Groups, Trade Union Network and others within Amnesty. Greater freedom to develop relationships with external organizations within agreed parameters.  **Sharing news and successes**  LGBTI Network Twitter account now at over 10,000 followers  LGBTI Network in collaboration with local groups expected to be at around 35 Prides this summer  LGBTI Network have had an increased profile from Chechnya petition and driven a huge number of people to sign it and been invited to speak at events as a result  Women’s Action Networks mobilisation of members for Women’s March  Children’s Human Rights Network have plans for later in the year around their campaign to register children as British citizens  Children’s, Women’s and LGBTI networks all keen to develop plans for HRD campaign  June 2nd – Chechnya Petition hand-in  **2.4 Country Coordinator Report**  Collaboration between South Asia team and Student groups/TUNC   * It would be good to know if there is any interest which has been generated by the newsletter regarding South Asian thematic campaigns. * What work can be undertaken over the summer to ensure there is something for any interested student groups to partake in once the new academic year begins in October   **Sharing news and successes**  Government Relations   * CC for El Salvador has been in contact with the embassy in London to discuss the upcoming parliamentary debates in the country regarding the abortion ban * CC for Egypt has been in contact with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Desk Officer to discuss current Amnesty campaigns in Egypt and what potential there may be for support from the desk officer. Also told the 2016 FCO report on human rights has been delayed because of the election, as government priorities may change.   Campaigning   * CC for Vietnam - organized a successful demonstration outside of the embassy in London * CC for China and Taiwan - has been working closely with the LGBTI network on the campaign for Taiwan to become the first Asian country to legalize same sex marriage * CC for North Korea - has been working with North Korean refugee Jihyun Park, which has revitalized interest in the area despite limited resources being produced by the IS * CC for Tunisia - organized a map action on behalf of Ali Aarass in which local groups label a map of their local town with messages of solidarity to be sent to Ali in prison with a corresponding map sent to the Moroccan authorities. The map shows how widespread support for Ali in the U.K. is * CC for Turkey – organized “free Turkey media” protest outside the Turkish embassy with aprox. 60 attendees. Additionally, reached out to several various other organizations which led to an event being co-hosted by English Pen, Reporters without Borders and the Professional Cartoonists' Organisation. Representatives of Index on Censorship and Article 19 also attended, as well as the acting General Secretary of the NUJ. Worked with Community Organiser (Trade Unions) and Media team at Amnesty UK, as well as Media Manager and Turkey Campaigner at the International Secretariat.   **2.5 Regional Reps**  Liesbeth reported back on the work done on the survey. We now have a set of clean data from 141 groups who have filled in survey, some groups more thoroughly than others. There were different interpretation of active members and some groups have IT issues.  RMSO’s are doing excellent work and there is a a lot of scope to build on this model to develop digital presence skills.  Social media can achieve real life results has additional capacity for relationship and knowledge building. We need to understand the journey; when outsiders come in, they need to feel welcome and build relationships. People would need the tools to show people how to use it, see why it matters and then go out and use them. We should be offering tools and making it accessible, connect people to RMSO’s regionally and with constituencies; and facilitate through skillshare: skilled digital professionals and activists to be drawn on to have wider attraction and bring in broader set of skills.  Growing groups and number of groups:  There are 2 routes to growing groups: where are there areas with individual members, where’s the energy. Both cases need to start from AIUK Strategically, we need to look at how we achieve impact and visibility on the ground.  **ACTION: Jeni** to forward postcodes of individual members to map against where we have groups and don’t have groups  The possibility of setting up something like Freshers roadshow was discussed, a voluntary team of committed activist to target communities that would need to establish something that is self-sustaining in community, working together within a region: regional team (cc’s, stan, rmso) activities that bring people together. Need a focused, concerted effort rather than setting up two long term things.  **ACTION:** to be further discussed. **Kerry and Jeni** to follow up |
| ***Item No. 3* *Agenda Topic:* AGM** |
| * 1. Evaluation of 2017 AGM -  share what we have so far and opportunity for ASC to feed in   **Workshops**  Workshops were less well received this year.  -MBMR workshop- little information and too vague  -Trump workshop: brainstorm was not a way of learning more about our work, shouldn’t be put on the activists to come up with ideas.  -I-Welcome workshop: the best part was talking to other people in the area.  -HRD workshop: people raising issues about their country, detracted from the presentation.  Billing of workshops needs to be clearer, need to ensure people are clear in how they describe workshop. Needs to be clear what people are going to, so they sign up for the correct things.  Focus on Facilitation: Experts to talk about content, and facilitator to facilitate discussion, more support for people running the workshop; enabling staff to succeed in difficult situation, activists need to take responsibility.  We also need to look at how we reinforce code of conduct, and encourage respect for others in meetings, no one should feel intimidated and discussions shouldn’t detract from workshop  Jamie suggested that there should be greater emphasis to connect people with thematic networks, and that it is not always clear for activists to tap into what they need to do. It should be our responsibility to let activists know what to do next and think about supporter journey in live environment. Workshops need to include next steps, and how to stay in touch/  Timing on the Sunday was disappointing as the trains went back to London before 2 resolutions were voted on. A list of train times would be useful for the sake of democracy, and make start and finish time available sooner so that people can book travel.  **Speakers**  Good, covered broad range. Stop Hate focussed not only on Trump but what we can do in the UK. Great to hear real stories from people who have been there.  **Engaging with Governance**  Jenny noted that people didn’t know what the governance colour on name tags was. This should be made clearer as it would make a big difference in making Board more approachable. Board Q and A was really useful.  Holly said that it was good to have youth meeting the morning before as an introduction to understanding the lingo and reposted a positive response from youth delegates.  Simon noted the excellent chairing of the sex workers discussion in the working party and plenary.  ASC agreed that the atmosphere at the AGM was very good and that the debates went very well.  ASC discussed the distribution of leaflets and how it created confusion, especially for first time attendees and how can be damaging for AIUK  ASC discussed proxy voting and the problem that people aren’t seeing a debate pre-AGM. Liesbeth noted that we should encourage people to debate beforehand and that individuals should have to have been a member for a certain amount of time before, we should avoid entryism without making it less accessible to others.  Bob asked about what other organisations do with regards to online democracy? Can we get advice from them about how they do it? With new technology, there is the possibility of solving it, but it also new set of problems.  Bob also raised his concerns over the nature of the sex workers debate at the end, in particular regarding the behaviour by speakers and speeches delivered. He asked what the formalised mechanism to deal with that and to protect people.  Andy confirmed that there is the activist code of conduct with complaints procedure within it, and standing order.  **ACTION:**  Andy to ask at the AGM review group to review the standing orders to make sure they are adequate in terms of what the AGM chair can and cannot do during the debate. We also need to make plans for training of the new chair. . Make clear for new AGM chair to be confident   * 1. Check standing orders * 2. Look at supportive amnesty members: encourage them to engage and not only to vote * 3. Address ongoing concern aroun entryism: perhaps amend constitution so that people can only vote 6 months after joining as individual   **Review of AGM decisions and anything of note for ASC**  -Role of Regional reps: Regional reps are unanimously against being paid.  ASC discussed looking at where do we want to grow and why. It was suggested starting with talking to regional reps about if they are feeling if overwhelmed, building regional teams and building constituencies more effectively. Jamie noted that it is a good opportunity if looking at retention of Regional reps, we could look at Country Coordinators too. It might be useful to apply any conclusions to CC’s too. Lots of work done is done on role and retention process for CC’s. Through doing that, we set an expectation of roles and do skills matching and support/training we can offer, advertise, put in post and support. Regional Reps are elected and can establish regional team.    Eilidh noted that this needs thought as to the methodology and calls for review. Considering scope of review and what is the question we are asking. Need to be very clear on what the question is.    It might be useful to ask other constituencies about what they think about regional rep role. Teams can be stronger with a lower drop-out rate and people are much more likely to stay if people are there to support you. Need cohesion and community.  Bob noted that this presents a real opportunity to connect up student, local groups, trade union groups, into regional power houses to drive forward work. Each would bring something different to the table. Regional coordinator would have important role, but the more team-based you become, the more you can do. Capacity based on linked-up team approach. Focus on what we’re trying to achieve: visible impactful in communities: look at structure to put in place to achieve that  Need to bring back a proposal, fitting into growing impact of the movement. |
| ***Item No. 4* *Agenda Topic:* Q1 Feedback Report** |
| **ACTION:** All to read through and send comments |
| ***Item No. 5* AGM: Briefing on the implications of GDPR and its impact on activism** |
| This is an important piece of work we’re doing as a section before new data protection laws come into force from June 2018. There are now issues with consent and it will now be necessary to actively opt in. We need to understand to what extent this will affect activists and their engagement as it is really important that we get this right as everything needs to be compliant by May 2018, groups not regarded as separate identity. Liesbeth noted the importance of developing Regional Reps data protection training. As an organisation, we need to have taken sufficient steps to mitigate risk and need to provide guidance in a way that is useful and good, and to show that the organisation has done all that it can to inform people and mitigate this risk.  **ACTION: Liesbeth** to add to Regional Reps agenda for 1st July to flag up the work that needs to be done before the end of the year. Update on where we’re at and what the timeframes are. |
| ***Item No. 6 Agenda Topic*****: Update on the development of improving the impact of the movement strategy** |
| Andy updated ASC on the work done on the development of improving the impact of the movement strategy from Jo Shaw. It looks at how we empower and connect more and how staff and activists can collaborate more effectively. It will be more innovative, more test and learning, embedding comms strategy with how we engage and partner in communities. Mass coms should tie up with community comms. Suggestions for improvement: skillsharing and upskilling and empowering. The process will involve working with activists doing workshops, gaining insight into what is already working, what can be improved.  ASC discussed the merits of linking up various structures into coherent team approach, which would give regional autonomy but together with an overarching movement. This would help people to feel empowered. Liesbeth pointed out the limited scope for change, unless we change national conference and agm, there would be limited staff and funding. There should be a focussed approach as we look at what is already in place and what we decide to change. Andy explained that we are in the process of reviewing AGM and that we are taking a holistic look at how we spend resource differently.  Eilidh suggested that we should look at the agenda items for conferences as there would probably be a lot of overlap of themes, even though there would be a difference in demographic. This would avoid overlap in workshop topics. Simon added that we need from activists and what we offer in return for their commitment, skills, knowledge and ability.  ASC discussed what the key fundamentals are to deliver throughout the year: to bring students, and youth groups together, locally based regional conferences, three networks conferences, network to come together and being informed about what other networks are working on, skillshare and campaigns based conferences. Jamie noted that at the CC conference there are often too many skills based activities and not enough time for people to come together and that we could have a skillshare for all activists to reach across all groups. We could identify skills that are applicable for all activists and streamline so not all in different places on different days. Core skills such as advocacy skills, actively communicating with MP’s and public, different ways of communicating, working in partnership, campaigning. Some skills for example, skills for becoming speaker or trainer are very transferable skills to other areas of work. For Thematic conferences, there should be greater opportunity for partnering with other organisations.  We need overarching structure that keeps amnesty as a united movement that enables people to have local passion, regional objectives as well as being art of national and international with stability is imparted into the structure  local groups =>regional=>national=>global objectives  **ACTION: Andy** to send round strategy, feed into AGM review. Table a list of activist types and list of constituency needs, identifying strategic partnerships. Bring back to ASC in September. |
| ***Item No. 7* Agenda Topic: HRD campaign briefing** |
| **ACTION:** All to read through and send comments on briefing |
| ***Item No. 8 Agenda Topic:* Plans for the Board Sub-Committee on Campaigns and Impact** |
| Kerry and Eilidh introduced the creation of a new subcommittee on Campaigns and Impact as the Board have identified an area of expertise and oversight that was missing. This was brought to ASC to discuss areas of overlap and gaps that the board might have missed.  ASC discussed the distinction between the two groups and how we will hopefully reach a balance between these two subcommittees and should be able to work in parallel. Campaigns generally have a lot more to them than activism ie. Media, design, engagement, overall campaign design and delivery that would require different skillset. Activism is how people are engaged in Amnesty and how people are organised  These two committees should be complimentary: the role of ASC will be to look at health of activism whereas the role of CISC would oversee AIUK’s topline campaigning strategy, looking at the wo-year model of campaigning work, with a focus on monitoring, evaluation, and impact. It would not be in competition with ASC complimentary, ASC will feed into the development of campaigns strategies.  ASC discussed the close links between activism and campaigning. Liesbeth mentioned that outside campaign specialist without an understanding of Amnesty’s structures/working might leave potential for a gap. It would be useful to sometimes swap key papers to ensure input from each. The risk of duplication was raised as activists are only activists because of campaigns and a recognition that activists (notably networks and CC’s design and deliver campaigns themelves). .  This is going to the Board for approval. All to send on any feedback re-split of work or areas of work  Feedback should be practical on how to make the committee work better. What is the ASC not doing that you want it to be doing?  **ACTION:** Eilidh and Kerry to work on before the June Board meeting to capture these issues to present |
| ***Item No. 7* Agenda Topic: ICM briefing** |
| ASC was consulted on ICM Resolutions ahead of the next Board Meeting, specifically in reference to Resolution 1.01 where there is a suggested change to the Statute, which is a proposal that reference to International Networks be removed from the Statute.  All to look at this resolution and send comments to ensure that this has no impact on ASC  **ACTION: Simon** to talk to Jeni outside of the meeting |
| ***Item No. 7* Agenda Topic: Upcoming ASC Dates 2017** |
| **9 September 2017**  **18 November 2017** |
| ***Item No. 8 Agenda Topic:* Wrap up and close** |
| Eilidh thanked everyone for coming to the meeting |