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**Activism Subcommittee**

**Saturday 11th March 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

Kari Walker (Nominations Committee)

**Staff attending:**

Kerry Moscogiuri

Andy Hackman

Jeni Dixon

Tessa Lamb

Sara Rydkvist

**Apologies**

Dave Beynon

Katherine Walton

Bob Baron

Jerry Allen

Jamie Wheeler-Roberts

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| ***Item No. 1 Agenda Topic:* Minutes and Matters Arising** |
| * 1. **Introduction**   Eilidh welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Kari Walker from the Nominations Committee (NomCom). Kari gave the ASC a brief background on NomCom which following the 2016 AGM, is now officially a subcommittee of the Board. NomCom work to match people with right skills and experience to governance positions and they are now attending various Subcommittee meetings to get to know them better.   * 1. **Minutes and matters arising**   Minutes approved, with some minor formatting changes.  **ACTION (Tess) :** Post as final on the website   * 1. **Matters arising** * Andy/Jeni still to speak to Digital team about co-hosting facebook events. We are already co-hosting in certain instances but is not done yet for all events due to capacity issues. * Update on South Asia: Jerry speaking to Ruth Taylor, Shane interested in Nepal campaign. Initial concern that individual thematics are not always wide enough to retain student interest so possibly look at freedom of expression as a whole, allowing others cc to feed in more generally ie. South Asia human rights for student involvement and input. Treat the entire region as thematic campaign for students to pick up on. Should perhaps be more issues based than using the region as thematic campaign. Jenny noted that thematic issues can lead to more creative campaigning, but she will take to STAN for their input. * Thematics networks meeting: Cathy coming to AGM * List of Youth Groups: ongoing work to find practical solution, not enough administrative capacity. List that is there is out of date but is still useful as long as we know this is out of date and that we’re only able to update twice a year. * Amending resolution: Jeni clarified the word of rules with Tim. The final decision is up to the standing orders committee. If amends are required, ensure it is not a substantive amendment * New delegates meeting: Ongoing. Eilidh still to speak to Nuri * Andy fed back thanks to SCT and street fundraisers |
| ***Item No. 2 Agenda Topic:* Feedback from Constituencies** |

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| **2. 1 YOUTH REPORT**  Local groups and Youth Group Links  Many youth groups would like to have greater links between their groups and other local/youth groups in their area. Are there examples of where this has been done and been effective?  Liesbeth explained that there have been some successes but it depends on the group. Many groups would like these links. Good examples from Kent, Canterbury and Birmingham.  ASC agreed that we should explore links between Student and Local group, which could be interesting as they often have similar ways of campaigning. Could also help transition members from youth to student group. New child protection policy being signed off: then send guidance for groups.  **ACTION: Jeni -** Look at Belfast as example. HRE team going to Belfast in May, targeting schools there.  **ACTION:**  **Holly -**  Holly to talk to Abby at AGM and ask questions to build on and widen it out to work on pilot locations.  **ACTION: Holly and Jeni:** Create a model for good and bad examples with way groups and youth groups work. Best practice for groups integration with young people and what has worked to give ideas, rather than prescriptive. Holly to put together examples of groups working well.  Pull together for next ASC meeting to give update on where we’ve got to.  Ordering Resources  Youth groups would like for it to be made clearer as to how to order resources. There has been some confusion as to how to order resources. It’s confusing on the website, takes time and prevents people from ordering resources  **Action: Jeni**: CORE is working to update ordering instructions and liaising with digital and supplier to make it all more dynamic and intuitive.  Youth Conference 2017  Youth Conference, the first one in 12 years, is coming up at the end of this month with over 200 youth delegates booked to attend. YAG has been involved in organising and also presenting the conference, so youth members are really getting involved. The conference will be a great opportunity for youth members to meet other youth groups to share ideas, and to be inspired.  **2.2 STUDENT ACTION NETWORK**  Improvement in communication  Since the last meeting in which communication between student groups and STAN had been raised as an issue, there has been a significant improvement. Almost all student groups are now in regular contact with their STAN rep, with many approaching their STAN rep first to ask questions and inform us of upcoming events they are holding. Improvement in communication is likely to be in part due to student groups getting to know their STAN rep better – STAN committee have put a real focus on making themselves known through social media to their student groups.  Social media is going very well. Student groups comms improving mostly through Facebook. Student Twitter retweeting events more than before. Jeni has received excellent feedback on current STAN committee. STAN’s geographical spread, not as good as mostly driven by social media  Refugee Action Week  Refugee Action Week in collaboration with STAR (Student Action for Refugees) took place 20th – 26th Feb with almost all student groups participating. Issues involving refugees have always been popular for student groups to campaign on, thus many groups were building upon previous actions and events carried out on their university campuses. Collaboration used in order to increase impact  A couple of groups didn’t receive pack in time, had to put action back. Seemed to go well. Student groups liked working on refugee issue  Paper chains created by all student groups and STAR groups taking part to be collated and used as part of an action at the end of March to highlight the need to allow unaccompanied child refugees to bring the rest of their family into the UK with them. Photo exhibition went well.  Working with STAR was a good example of partnership.  Political campaigning  There has been a push to increase the amount of political campaigning carried out by student groups – particularly increasing the amount of contact they have with their local MP. This has traditionally been an area neglected by student groups, with many having no contact with their MP. Some university campuses are spread over a wide location so more than one MP covers the area which can cause difficulties. Political campaigning training programme offered to small number of student group members as part of a trial project  Action that went well  Queen’s University Belfast held an action on the pavement outside their university to promote equal marriage 1 day before the local Assembly elections. They drew in chalk the phrase “What Marriage Means to Me” and asked passersby to contribute their thoughts. It proved to be a successful event which gained much attention on social media, particularly twitter.  Scottish Student Conference took place 4th March at Glasgow University with approx. 35 attendees. Excellent feedback from attendees and a range of interesting talks and guest speakers.  **2. 3 Regional Reps**  Survey  Liesbeth fed back that 55% of groups have answered survey, with varying percentages from region to region. Many people go into survey monkey but don’t complete form. Deadline is the end of March so by the AGM we’ll have a rough idea of outcomes.  Regional Conferences  Regional conferences in Northern Ireland, South East and South West. SW conference went well. Ros reported SE was very good. North East conference is next week: Kate, Jeni and Andy attending  Eilidh reported that NI conference was really good. There was a good spread of local activists. Issues that need to be campaigned on were there with nuanced regional perspective: campaigns are unique to NI. Gives a really good local focus which can be an advantage. She met several people who weren’t members of local groups, but individual members. Not all areas have local group. Useful to see that perspective as well as people organising in very different ways.  ASC discussed if there was there potential to start up more local groups there.  Conferences can be useful in testing out how people engage. Ie. If receive magazine and get involved in letter writing  ASC discussed ways in which we keeping data on attendees at regional conferences to give idea of spread. Do many Youth members go to conferences (None were at South west). All conferences are very different, might not be a consistent picture, but would be useful to know who to target.  **ACTION (Jeni):** ASC to think about asking questions for data with evaluation, ie Are you a local group member/ind member instead of only general impressions. Jeni to sort out with Data protection compliant way. Separate from personal data  Two vacancies for regional reps will hopefully be filled soon.  Kerry noted that she had recently attended the Women in Media Summit in Manchester. Student and local groups in the area worked well to support event and it was a well put together example of getting people in via a different routes and a very inspiring event.  Andy attended the City of Sanctuary Regional training day in Derby which was also an event which brought people together via different routes. He noted that there are lots of examples of this collaboration and lots of opportunities especially with Refugees and Human rights defenders campaigns. Need to get people through the door, those who are interested in Amnesty’s work generally and understand people’s reasons for coming. Comms strategy to mark campaigns in different ways.  **2.4 Country Coordinators**  Jamie sent through written feedback:  3 Country Coordinators attended the South West Regional Conference where they ran workshops. The conference was a great success and provided a great opportunity for CCs to meet activist from the area  Since the last meeting, the South Asia team has been in contact with both Ruth Taylor and Shane Enright, AIUK community organizers for students, trade unions and workplace Amnesty groups respectively. About developing a thematic campaign for South Asia that could be worked on by these groups. A South Asia Student newsletter has been created and will hopefully be disseminated to student groups. |
| ***Item No. 3* *Agenda Topic:* Impact of Movement Strategy Timetable** |
| Andy talked ASC through the Impact of the Movement Strategy. We are currently in the process of writing brief to bring in facilitator and the process of tendering will be in 2 weeks. There will be a series of workshops in April through to May with the strategy due out in June. He has asked staff and ASC for people to be involved in workshops to hear examples of different organisation of people empowering people in communities. They will be more workshops than focus groups using practical lessons, moving to a mobilising model looking at how we learn from what we’re already doing well.  Looking at how to better partner and empower but an overarching theory is needed.  **Action: Andy**  Liesbeth requested that we provide guidance for activists on building partnerships and use of social media.  **Action: Andy** |
| ***Item No. 4* *Agenda Topic:* AGM Preparation and Check In** |
| **4.1 AGM Prep**  Andy and Jeni updated the ASC on AGM Preparation. Jeni went on a site visit on Monday and ensured the rooms in the activist action centre for pre-meetings are all arranged.  Weatherproof banners have gone to print and arriving this week.  Dan is hosting the activism showcase on Saturday night to pay tribute to great things people have done and inspiring other. This will link in with good news, trying not to repeat. There will also be a chill zone (which will be alcohol free) with board games and beanbags  **4.2 ASC AGM Report - Eilidh**  As discussed in the last ASC meeting, this will cover presenting Good news followed by ASC report. The Good News will cover what we’ve done, and the ASC report will focus on where we’re going in the next few years, whilst acknowledging successes already in place.  There will be a focus on Impact of the movement strategy, empowering activists and enabling partnerships and taking activists with us. Eilidh is keen to focus on the Communcations strategy and reaching out to new activists. It will be very forward looking with a focus on empowerment of activists, enabling them to take action within communities and going on to empower other activists.  Jeni and Andy Hackman have done first draft which is 10 mins so might have to edit down. The first complete draft will be ready by 14th March to be cross referenced with Kate’s speech.  **ACTION (All):** Ongoing help needed from ASC to get good news section populated and encourage people to get up and share  **ACTION: Eilidh/Jeni** to make sure that they keep to time if too many people  Other aspects to cover are the health of the active movement and how well different groups are doing. Eilidh to have one slide at the beginning pulling out headline figures to show things like: an increase in student groups as well as increased level of solidarity actions. This should show how are we doing in terms of activism, how good are we and what we can do to improve.  **4.3 AGM Stats**  505 places booked for the Saturday, 450 booked for Sunday with 50% being first time attendees. We have already beaten donation target of £13k and all is on track.  ASC members agreed they were happy for Kari to refer people to ASC to talk about committees  **ACTION:** All to send list of upcoming activist positions to Jeni  **ACTION:** Jeni and Kari to liaise about upcoming elections/positions  This year, the largest number of people standing for STAN 17 people for 8 places which is a new record. Those who weren’t elected to go and talk to Kari, who is getting together a database of people who have shown interest in governance positions, working with HR and data protection. NomCom are building relationships with different committees so that when people finish term on subcommittee they can stay in touch or get recruited to other positions. Kari is working with Michelle O’Keefe looking at training and induction governance sub-committees.  Eilidh raised the point that subcommittees have different terms starting at different times of the year and that it would be useful to think about a general governance induction. ASC discussed their thoughts on how we would make this work:  -Different ways of training to make governance useful such as video training  - Handover with outgoing and incoming rep.  -CC induction training is working well  -Webinars  -Data protection training  -Accessible, capturing information in one place  -People and Culture strategy, HR  -Training for groups on the basics: what is Amnesty?  -How AIUK/IS works, Comms strategy etc (for people who are interested)  -Develop content around governance/structure  -Brief video for each subcommittee  -IS induction: might have useful bits to use  **ACTION (Jeni):** Jeni to send list of STAN applicants to Kari  **ACTION (All):** All to send feedback about what is done well or what is missing to Kari directly or NomCom |
| ***Item No. 5* AGM: Trump Visit – brainstorm on Activist response** |
| ASC had a brainstorming session on our activist response to Trump visit. Lots of ideas were put forward, recorded by Holly, with an emphasis on putting out an upbeat message to raise the positive aspects of human rights. ASC agreed that it was a chance for us to flag up various human rights achievements of US and UK and to celebrate things that he’s trying to take away. |
| ***Item No. 6 Agenda Topic:* HRD International Strategy** |
| Elidh welcomed Campaign Manager, Sara Rydkvist to discuss the HRD Global Campaign strategy with the ASC.  Sara discussed the launch of the Campaign coming up this year, which is not new territory for amnesty. Human Rights Defenders could be lawyers, journalists, teachers, but not only people who defend human rights through their profession, but also activists, student/youth leaders, anyone who stands up for furthering human rights, believes in universal human rights and defends them through nonviolent methods.  Since 2014, there has been an increase in pieces of legislation particularly targeting civil society and NGO’s supporting human rights work. Laws, visa restrictions, travel bans in UK and other countries, meetings often need to be cancelled because visas don’t come through in time, online and off line surveillance has increased and people expressing views and being censored or imprisoned.  In light of this AI is rallying around HRD’s and scaling up work globally.  The current situation in the US and rhetoric Trump is using at rallies along with hostility towards journalists and the media, serves to highlight the importance of work of HRD’s around the world: recognising and legitimizing. We have good frameworks around HRD’s and EU guidelines, continuing to work with individuals ensuring accountability.  The HRD Campaign Strategy document has been shaped from a bottom up perspective and was set in collaboration with Amnesty partners and human rights defenders looking at how Amnesty can best support defenders in the next few years.  Rather than traditional amnesty work around ensuring human rights through increased pieces of legislation, we as an organisation connect them with other human rights defenders to reduce feelings of isolation and enabling them to make connections and mobilise within countries and regions, gain access to political forums and receive training, having access to decision making forums, where decisions about your community are taking place and having the confidence to participate in these discussion.  Some key themes are: Surveillance, Women’s rights defenders, human rights being targeted as a result of identity (ie. LGBTI), Misuse /repressive use of new pieces of legislation  Increase of attacks and killings (ie. Honduras). Casework ensuring protection and accountability  Training needs: are: being able to document human rights, doing research, Advocacy training,  How to go about work without fear. Some work will be carried out by Amnesty and some through partners ie. Tactical Tech who are specifically working on security work for activists.  Sara asked ASC to think about what our role as representatives of Amnesty is and as human rights defenders ourselves and how we can work in collaboration with activists in UK as part of this campaign.  Eilidh commented that the strategy was innovative but all comes back to Amnesty’s core message and traditional associations with what we’re about which ties together nicely  Jamie sent through the following comment:  This is in response to the following quote located on page 35 of the strategy “we will ensure there is as much regional balance as possible. Case will be selected from all regions and help demonstrate the particular trends of that region”   * It was felt by some CC’s that what would be more realistic is to depict that in some regions, namely South Asia, it is not possible to highlight HRD’s who work on certain areas. Ex Human rights defenders working on migrants’ rights or sex workers’ rights would disappear in Afghanistan or Bangladesh if highlighted by Amnesty. This means that South Asia team could only use 1 out of 255 of the IAR cases   Jeni and Andy asked about the timing of the Launch in May and what that would mean. They pointed out an opportunity to link with Write for Rights and suggested creating a big public launch day and the opportunity to build plans within this context. Sara explained that the May launch is an internal point when we will start mobilising within section and in the next 2 years we will focus on specific themes and objectives. AIUK’s role will be to identify section support, thinking about how to work with activists, sharing skills with activists in other sections, how to link up with others, how we want to communicate and galvanise human rights community in the UK and how to best contribute to the campaign. Colleagues at IS are working on the branding of the campaign. By the launch date in May we will have set broad framework of how we will work which will be fleshed out over a longer period of time.  ASC discussed the language and what we mean by a Human Rights Defender and how we use campaign to talk about Human rights. The opportunities around networks and identity groups. ASC suggested making networks aware of it over summer and give them time to think about it and prepare.  Opportunities for collaboration with partners such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, with an emphasis on environmental activists for defenders who get killed through this work    Opportunities for collaboration with feminist societies and women’s action networks regarding Women’s rights. There could also be a focus on young human rights defenders around W4R in Nov/Dec. Could also do something in June that would be more cross-cutting. Use in Action for change or during Freshers. Create moment in September to push online courses MOOKS in collaboration with the IS. Ensure that we all feel confident and trained through internal building up and training.  **ACTION:** Sara to write up summary and share with ASC |
| ***Item No. 7* Agenda Topic: Upcoming ASC Dates 2017** |
| **20 May**  **9 Sept**  **18 Nov** |
| ***Item No. 8 Agenda Topic:* Wrap up and close** |
| Eilidh thanks everyone for coming to the meeting and looks forward to seeing them at the AGM |