

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE COUNCIL

With reference to Council Exhibit 9.6.2

Committee members raised concerns about the proposal to disband the Standing Committee for Communications and place its mandate under the Executive Committee.

The LWF Council is the only unique platform where representatives from Member Churches come together yearly for governance, to share concerns and enrich the communion.

Communications is a vital instrument of the communion that relates to the visibility, mutual understanding and identity of the communion. It is also a dynamic field that calls for expertise. To enhance and meet the needs of the member churches and the communion office the committee feels it is necessary to have a platform to raise these issues and hear the voices of the communion, while at the same time gathering input from experts in the field.

The committee feels that the Council meeting provides a unique, efficient and effective platform in the LWF for such an exchange.

It is

RECOMMENDED

that the General Secretary proposes an alternative solution to the one presented in Exhibit 9.6.2 that would safeguard the broader role of communication as a communion building instrument and a tool for making the LWF visible and vibrant. This would be presented to the Meeting of Officers in November.

II. ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION BY THE COUNCIL

III. ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE COMMITTEE - for information to the Council

The Committee met for a one 2-hour session on 18 June 2016. It received the report of the Head of Communications on the implementation of the LWF COOP 2015 (Council Exhibit 9.1) and discussed the following issues:

Mapping of communication needs and capacity in the LWF Member churches

Communication needs vary from region to region, therefore it is critical to map or assess what the needs and gaps are in order to define the best way to engage with the member churches in raising the profile of the Lutheran communion. The mapping that is going on in some of the regions needs to be extended to all, with the goal to providing a comprehensive overview of capacity needs.

Support from the LWF regional communication networks is critical in the mapping exercise. It was noted some of the networks are still not stable and require more support from the LWF to be operational.

Engaging communicators in LWF member churches

Communicators in the LWF member churches serve as the primary source of information about the member churches and similarly in sharing stories and material from the LWF Communion Office (CO) about the life of the global church. Committee members said it was important for the Office of Communication Services to engage the church communicators and regional networks also for stories that help churches raise funds for LWF's work.

Committee members noted it was easier for the local church to use its own brand to raise funds for the LWF as most locals are not familiar with LWF's brand. Cooperation between the Geneva CO and churches was critical in this area in packaging materials that can help churches tell LWF's story.

Creating and nurturing awareness about communication on all levels of the LWF

There are many good things happening in the LWF, both on a global level and in member churches. It's important to leverage LWF's communication channels or media to facilitate shared learning and experiences especially through interest groups or networks. Growing access to modern communication technology today offers many opportunities for a dynamic and vibrant communication in the LWF especially by involving young people.

Over the past few years, LWF's Global Young Reformers' Network has proved to be an important interest group in sharing experiences from the member churches with the global church. Similar models should be explored, and use of social media in the LWF optimized for the respective regions.

Priorities in LWF communications work

The strategic role of communications is reflected in the LWF Strategy and work plan. Committee members noted further priority setting was required as some of the goals spelt out in the LWF Communications Strategy such as creating a visual identity for the organization had been achieved.

There are different models for fundraising and communications among the LWF member churches. Committee members felt the LWF should clarify the link between both components not only for funds but most importantly for LWF's visibility, and clearly define the role of communications in this respect.

IV. ISSUES REFERRED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**1. Report of the Implementation of the COOP 2015**

The Standing Committee for Communication endorses the Report of the Communion Office Operational Plan 2015 for the Department for Planning and Operation with appreciation as reflected in the Council Exhibit 9.1.

2. LWF Budget 2017 and LWF Program and Budget Overview 2017

The Standing Committee for Communication endorses the approval of the LWF Budget 2017 and LWF Program and Budget Overview 2017 of the Office for Communication Services in the Department for Planning and Operation in the amount of EUR 993,200 as reflected in the Council Exhibits 12.1 and 12.1.1