

July 2009

## **Implementation of the IAC “Women for Science” Advisory Report**

### **Background**

The InterAcademy Council (IAC) Advisory report “Women for Science” (WfS) was accepted by the IAC in June 2006. At its annual meeting in November 2006, the InterAcademy Panel (IAP) chose it as one of its top priorities for the next three years. Some of you may have been wondering what has happened to the report since. I am happy to report substantial progress.

### **Implementation by IAP regional units**

The InterAcademy Panel has decided to delegate implementation of all IAC reports to regional units. It will provide funds for implementation. A call for proposals can be found on the IAP Web site. <http://www.interacademies.net>

*India.* One regional unit that has begun implementation is India. My co-chair, Manju Sharma, whom I saw in Mexico City this past April, presented the report to the India President. He forwarded it to the Ministry of Science and Technology with the task to start implementing. Manju has informed me that implementation is going at a fast pace. In a nation with more than a half billion women, the IAC WfS report could have a far reach.

*IANAS.* The InterAmerican Network of Academies of Sciences (IANAS) and includes Canada, the United States, the Caribbean and all of Latin America, representing a total of 16 academies of sciences, and almost a half billion women. Currently, the Past President of the Academia Mexicana, Juan Pedro Laclette, and Hernan Chaimovich Guaralnik, President of the Brazilian Academy, are co-chairs of IANAS. The Executive Director is Marcos Cortesão Barnsley Scheuenstuhl, and the headquarters are at the Brazilian Academy. <http://www.ianas.org>

*IANAS and the IAC Energy Report.* IANAS has already begun implementing the very visible 2007 IAC report “Towards a Sustainable Energy Future” (co-chaired by Steve Chu, NAS, and currently the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy). The IAC report WfS will be implemented following the approach used for the Energy Report, namely a workshop in which the report co-chairs, representatives of the 16 academies, and other relevant parties participate, followed by a report that must lead to action. Fundraising is part of the implementation.

### **IANAS Women for Science Symposium, Academia Mexicana, April 20-21, 2009.**

The workshop preparing for implementation of the IAC WfS report was the WfS Symposium held at the Academia Mexicana on April 20-21, 2009. The meeting had a total of 31 participants. The Science Academies of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, México, Peru, United States and Venezuela were represented, as well as the Caribbean Academy of Sciences (CAS) and the Latin American Academy of Sciences (ACAL). Other

participants included representatives of the Third World Organization for Women in Science (TWOVS) and of the Gender Advisory Board (GAB). Both co-chairs of the former IAC Advisory Panel WfS, Manju Sharma and I, attended.

*US Academies Representation.* I represented the NAS and NAE. The other representative of the US Academies was Lilian Wu, Chair, Committee of Women in Science, Engineering and Medicine (CWSEM) of the US Academies. I had been invited to give the opening address, while Lilian spoke at Round Table II session, see below.

*Program.* Fifteen speakers were organized in four Round Tables around the following themes:

- I. Gender and Public Policies in Education, Science and Technology: Improving gender equity;
- II. An agenda for change: removing obstacles for a career in Science and Technology;
- III. Increasing the visibility of women in science in Latin America and the Caribbean: role models, mentoring and awards;
- IV. Improving the collection of gender-disaggregated data for S&T policy making.

Each round table had two rapporteurs preparing a report. The round tables were followed by two break-out sessions, where the eight rapporteurs presented their reports, followed by a plenary session to discuss final conclusions.

A preliminary version of the final report, based on the round table reports and the lively discussions of the plenary, was planned to be circulated by the Organizing Committee by end of May 2009. After incorporating comments and corrections, a final version with recommendations and action items will be sent to the IANAS Executive Board for approval, prior to being sent to all Science Academies of the region, TWOVS, GAB and ICSU, as well as to IAP.

Although we had not been involved in the planning of the meeting, Lillian Wu and I decided that we could make a genuine contribution by composing and presenting a short list of simple action items that the Academies could immediately implement with little effort. That way, the Mexico meeting could jump-start the process of implementing the IAC report within a week, rather than waiting for a report for months if not a year. That was naive on our part – IANAS, understandably, follows a set protocol of not releasing any conference results unless they have been reviewed and approved by all Member Academies. For what they are worth, here follow our action items, including an estimate of the amount of time needed for implementation of each of them.

**Actions Items from the IANAS Women for Science Symposium  
Academia Mexicana, April 20-21, 2009**

**As Proposed by Lilian Wu and Anneke Levelt Sengers**

**The National Academies**

**1. Academies annually post on the web sites the total number of members and total number of women members\***

\* -- one line: total number and women number

-- if there are different categories (correspondents, young academy, etc. ) post one line for each category

**2. Academies to post links\* to the four IAC reports on their web sites**

\* one line each (one hour of work)

**3. Academies to post good management practices on their web sites\***

\* one table from the IAC report (one hour of work)

**Actions for IANAS**

**1. This symposium will create an adhoc committee from attendees\* to advise the Academies on gender issues and serve as liaisons with relevant national and international organizations. Announce the committee immediately on the IANAS Web site.**

\* We have some suggestion of members

**2. IANAS Web site: post links\* to the four IAC reports on their Web sites**

\* one line each (one hour of work)

**3. IANAS annually collects all the one-line totals and female membership data from the Academies and posts them on its web site\***

\* one table

**Actions for IAP**

**1. IAP Web site: post links\* to the four IAC reports on its web site**

\* one line each (one hour of work)

**2. IAP annually collects all the one line total and female membership data from all Academies and posts them on its web site\***

\* one table

**3. In its call for proposals, IAP includes Women in Science and Technology as a subject area\***

\* two lines in the left column on the IAP Web call for proposals (one hour of work)

**Some Personal Impressions.** The leading academies in Latin America are those of Brazil and Mexico. The Brazilian Academy is particularly well organized, and hosts the IANAS headquarters, as well as the regional offices of GAB and ICSU. I spent considerable time talking with the IANAS Executive Director, Marcos Scheuenstuhl, and was impressed by his leadership qualities and his experience in working with as diverse a group of academies as represented in IANAS. That the WfS report's implementation follows in the wake of the IAC Sustainable Energy Report is a huge advantage.

Anneke Levelt Sengers, NAS Section 31, NAE Section 3

Lilian Wu, Chair, CWSEM