


WOCO 7: 37TH WORLD CONFERENCE EVALUATION REPORT

November 2021



“Attending the conference opened my eyes to a lot of what is going on with WAGGGS and makes me want to continue working with young girls.”



Walking together, walking far.

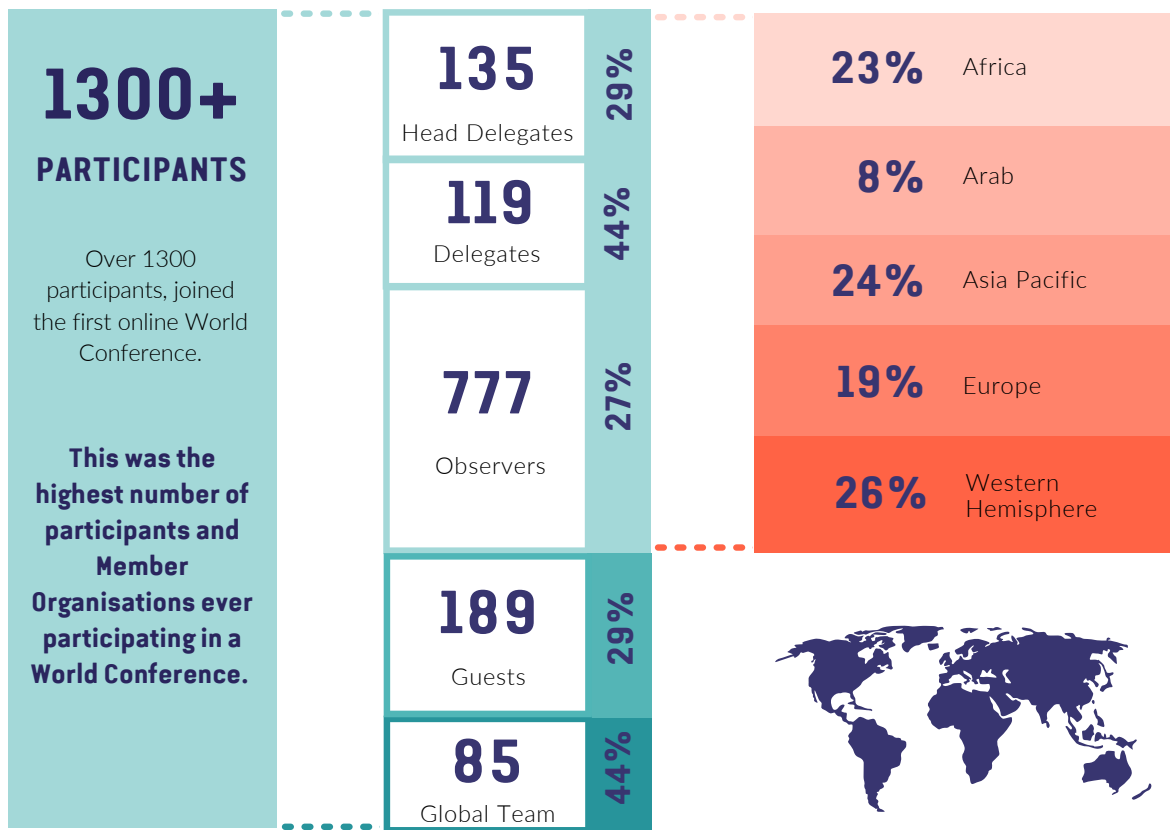


37th WORLD CONFERENCE 2021

OVERVIEW

The 37th World Conference was delivered online on the EventsAIR platform from 27th to 31st July 2021.

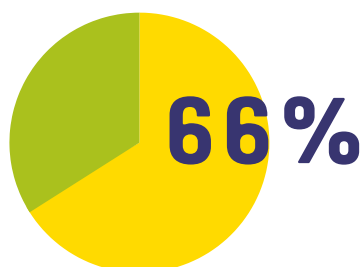
It was originally due to take place in Uganda in July 2020 but, unfortunately, this was not possible due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In November 2020 a decision was made that the World Conference could not take place in person and should be moved to an online conference in July 2021.



[Image not at scale]



135
MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

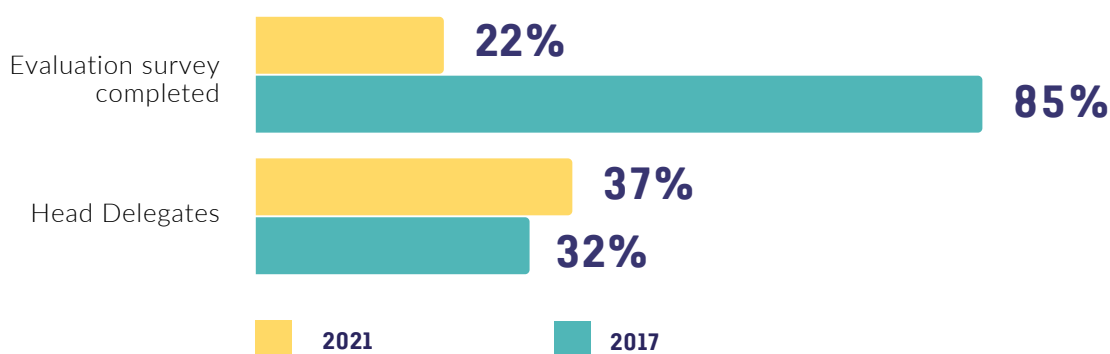


Two thirds (66%) of those who responded to the evaluation survey said that this was their first time attending a World Conference.

Given the difficulties of conducting the World Conference virtually, the conference programme was more focused and shorter than usual, with only two plenary sessions of 90 minutes each per day. The focus of the Conference was governance with more time to discuss motions than in previous conferences (3 hours to discuss motions were allocated in 2017 compared to 12 hours in 2021: 6 hours during World Conference week plus 6 extra hours during pre-conference sessions). Additional online pre-conference discussion sessions were arranged in June and July in the lead up to the World Conference due to the high number of motions and amendments that we received. These pre-conference sessions enabled Member Organisations (MOs) to connect, discuss and ask questions about the proposed motions and amendments, bids to host the next World Conference and meet the World Board candidates.

WAGGGS decided not to charge a registration fee for the 37th World Conference recognising the difficult circumstances that many MOs were facing and to enable participation from as many MOs and their delegations as possible. All costs for the conference were therefore covered by WAGGGS.


After the Conference all participants were invited to complete an evaluation survey in one of the four official languages (English, French, Spanish, and Arabic). Thank you to all those who completed the evaluation survey. This information will be useful to inform planning for future WAGGGS Governance events and, in particular, for the 38th World Conference in 2023 hosted by the Girl Guides Association of Cyprus.





Unfortunately, only 22% of the participants completed the survey this time (compared with 85% in 2017), with less than 20% of the answers being from Head Delegates. Only 37% (50) of the Head Delegates who attended the conference replied to the evaluation survey, but this was slightly higher than in 2017 (32%, 37 HD). Please bear this in mind when reflecting on the results shared in this report.


OBJECTIVES


WAGGGS' objectives for the 37th World Conference were:


1. 80% of attendees are satisfied or better with the first virtual 37th World Conference.


93% satisfaction rating achieved.
2. 80% of attendees are satisfied or better with that the World Conference embodied the Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting methodology.


85% of participants felt that the World Conference utilised Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting methodology appropriately throughout sessions.
3. 80% of attendees are satisfied or better that the World Conference programme was relevant to its target audience.


95% of participants felt that the World Conference programme was relevant to them and their delegation.
4. More MOs participate in the 37th World Conference than participated in the 36th World Conference (2017).


135 MOs participated in the 37th World Conference, compared to 114 at the 36th World Conference in 2017.
5. More participants attend the 37th World Conference than participated in the 36th World Conference (2017).


1300 participants took part in the 37th World Conference, compared to 537 in 2017. 66% of participants who responded to the evaluation survey had never attended a World Conference before.
6. More Young Women participate in governance and decision-making within World Conference (commitment to Motion 32)


More than 311 young women under 30 participated in the World Conference (representing 24% of the total participants). 93% of participants were satisfied or strongly satisfied that there was young women participation and interactions during the World Conference.

7. (To the extent that it is within our control) Individuals do not encounter any barriers to participating fully in the World Conference



100% of Member Organisations that requested financial support were awarded a grant towards purchasing equipment, hiring a venue with good internet connection, or purchasing internet data.

By providing staff support, orientation and pre-conference sessions and giving grants, WAGGGS did its best to help participants overcome any barrier. Evaluation of these areas can be found later in the report.

8. Participants find the information and resources shared before the conference useful in preparing them for the World Conference sessions.



From the evaluation survey results, 98% of participants felt that the documents shared before the World Conference were clear and understandable and were received well in advance, enabling them to prepare for the World Conference.

However, some participants found the documents to be too long and too complicated.

67% said that they had sent feedback to a consultation and 90% said they or a member of their delegation had attended at least one pre-conference session.

9. Volunteers and staff involved in planning and delivering World Conference feel engaged, motivated and valued.



The Planning Team felt engaged, united, and motivated throughout the long journey. However, the ever-changing situation, the workload and long hours, and the reduced staff resources from previous World Conferences, had a negative impact on wellbeing.

YOUR FEEDBACK



YOUR COMMENTS

Alongside valuable numerical data collected through the evaluation, we also received many helpful comments and suggestions for the future.

CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS

“As the documents were sent via email and in advance I had time to look it over repeatedly to my satisfaction. While the voting was taking place I could follow with the documents seen before of which I was now familiar with.”

Several respondents mentioned that their Member Organisation had made arrangements to share information and views internally to help prepare their delegation for the World Conference:

“We had weekly meetings to discuss the documents, so having the documents in advance helped.”

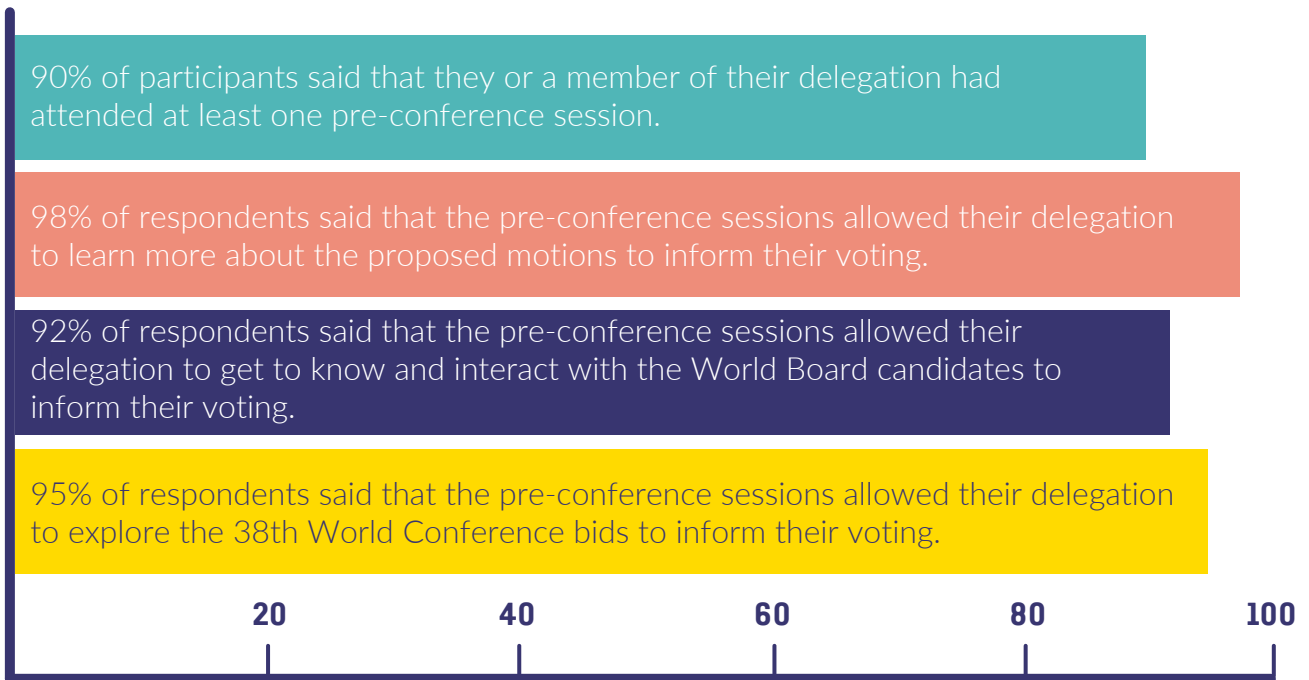
“Enough time was given for us to meet and discuss the documents in advance and to give our Head Delegate our vote on the proposed motions.”

“Our delegation were able to read through the documents and have a fruitful discussion on the motions and bids before the World Conference.”

“English is not our official language. Therefore, receiving the documents before the World Conference allowed us to translate them for our members.”

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Most participants welcomed the pre-conference sessions which received overall high ratings:



You told us:

“The pre-Conference sessions were extremely valuable and even if we never have another virtual Conference, I would strongly suggest that about a month to six weeks before Conference, we again have those virtual sessions. However diligent one is about reading the proposals, they really only came alive during those sessions to give much more understanding. The discussions opened one's eyes to so many different opinions and possibilities.”

“Although it was a virtual conference, the pre-events enabled us to get the ideas of the structure of the conference, as well as empowering young women to active participate in the conference.”

“Activities done before the World Conference really helped us to perform better during the conference.”

A number of respondents highlighted that having the pre-conference sessions with the bidding MOs and World Board candidates earlier in the lead up to the World Conference would have been more helpful in helping delegations to prepare. Some respondents also raised concern about how much time was needed for pre-conference events.

One participant commented that “it felt like the conference went on all during the summer. It would have felt better if the program was only for a week, even though it would be long days” and another said “I think some of the pre-conference sessions should have been earlier as now it felt like a marathon conference with events many weekends”.

Other respondents highlighted that there were challenges as not all MOs seemed to participate in the pre-conference sessions. “The pre-meetings was great! The only problem was that there was many that did not attend them. For us that attended we felt that it was a waste of time since the people not attended asked the same questions we did, a month before. and we spent valuable time talking about the same stuff” and suggested that “MOs not preparing and taking advantage of the pre-sessions” was one of the challenges they faced.

ORIENTATION SESSIONS

Orientation sessions would normally take place the day before World Conference officially begins, as everyone arrives at the conference venue. Because of the online format this time, and the different way the World Conference was run, we offered three orientation sessions in different languages more than three weeks before the conference began. The orientation sessions covered a run through of the programme, a summary of the World Conference Rules of Procedure, a voting test for Head Delegates, and housekeeping arrangements.

Overall feedback on the orientation sessions was very positive but a number of comments were made that the orientation sessions needed to share more about the platform:

“The only suggestion is that there could have been more training sessions on the platform closer to the meeting dates.”

“The orientation session didn't explain enough about how to use the platform.”

“There is never going to be an ideal time for everyone in a global movement. Not many people engaged with the platform in the chat functions. This also was not explained well in the orientation [...]”

Although test-voting was part of all of the orientation sessions, a few comments were still made about the need to offer test voting sessions in the lead up to the conference. For example, one participant suggested “Having a test session on voting as there were some who were not able to vote” and another commented “Every other virtual event that I have attended that requires voting has a test vote held in a practice session ahead of time. That should have been part of the very first day!”.

Unfortunately, only 50 Head Delegates attended one of the orientation sessions. Therefore, three additional sessions were quickly arranged to provide another opportunity for Head Delegates to test out the voting system before the conference. Unfortunately, despite these additional sessions being offered, the total number of Head Delegates that attended an orientation or voting test session was still only 79 (59%).

YOUNG WOMEN

More than 311 young women under 30 participated in the World Conference (representing 24% of the total participants). 93% of participants were satisfied or strongly satisfied that there was young women participation and interactions during the World Conference.

However, young women under 30 were underrepresented in leadership roles. Only 15 Head Delegates fell into this age group, which some participants picked up on:

“the heads of delegation were mostly not young women, I hope that with the approval of the motions related to Motion 32, this will change in the next World Conference.”

“it is important to keep engaging young women in governance work to create inclusive, diverse, and representative spaces. It will motivate young women to take the lead.”

“young women are part of the delegation, not because they have to be there, but because they are passionate and want to be there.”

Two pre-events for young women under 30 attending the World Conference were offered. Participants highly valued these events, making comments such as “this event provided an opportunity for young women to connect and discuss how we can make important decisions at the World Conference for our Movement.” and “The pre-World Conference Young Women event helped me understand how to get ready and move forward for the World Conference”.

INTERACTION

Being the first time that the World Conference has been held online it was natural that it would be a very different experience than usual. In addition, interaction during the World Conference was challenging due to the Conference programme being focussed on governance items and to the time zone differences of participants.

Participants missed the social side of participating in a physical World Conference.

“I would suggest 1 day for a pre-conference in which we have sessions we just socialize and get to know each other maybe for each person to give a presentation of her country its culture and tradition. that would educate us more and make our bond stronger.”

“Maybe more events to socialize and learn about the positions of the other organizations.”

“A little more space for interaction between participants.”

“The interaction was completely one-way and that is not in the spirit of the Conference.”

“The level of interaction between delegations [was a challenge] because we were not face to face.”

“I would have preferred to see all in attendance, to see familiar faces, if it's a virtual conference I expected to see everyone virtually.”

Networking sessions were offered before and after the plenary sessions each day and many enjoyed these opportunities to connect with others. However, there were some challenges with the timing of the sessions and with language barriers:

“

"The networking opportunities were not conducive to my time zone. Having an opportunity to connect at various times, suitable and inclusive to all, would have been a benefit."

”

“

"Perhaps have a few more networking sessions at different times to maximise participation across the Regions."

”

“

"Allow people to opt into the randomised networking sessions based on which language they wish to speak."

”

“

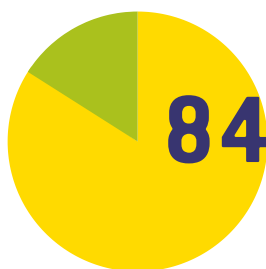
"more time for the networking sessions in between the programmes."

”

PLATFORM

Due to the complex needs of the WAGGGS World Conference, finding a suitable platform to deliver the Conference was difficult. Some of the key features that were needed, which most available platforms do not support, are:

- Translation of the platform in four languages (English, Spanish, French, and Arabic)
- Enabling interpretation
- Voting features that allowed access only to Head Delegates
- The ability to deliver plenary sessions to an unlimited number of participants
- Ability for all participants to speak during plenary sessions
- Ability for Procedural Team members to export participants' reports during a session



84% of participants stated that they were satisfied or strongly satisfied with the conference platform.

“

"The platform was really good!"

”

“

"The platform was great, unfortunately we were not able to see how many participants were present, and to chat."

”

“

"Was very impressed with the platform as a whole."

”

“

"It was awesome."

”

However, some felt that the platform could have worked better:

“

"The platform was very useful but it could have worked better with more engagement."

”

“

"The conference platform was not user friendly."

”

“

"The platform did not allow for a feeling of connection across the movement."

”

“

"The exhibition space could be utilised more, maybe providing a space for participants to chat with the bidders and world board candidates, or giving comments to different motions."

”

“

"It was a very confusing platform."

”

“

"Hold a "open platform" or "mock session" day to let participants test around the platform, ask questions."

”

“

"Suggest training participants on it before the conference."

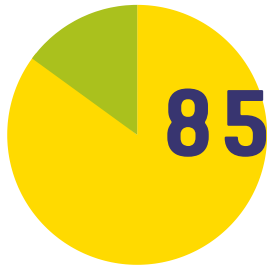
”

“

"Getting people into the green room was challenging."

”





85% of participants were satisfied or better with the chat/discussion forum, but a number of participants felt that the way this was used during the sessions was one of the main challenges they experienced with the platform:

“

"It was very confusing with all the different places with messages, Q&A and so on. Every time a new message was received, the cursor jumped down to it even though you tried to find an old message."

”

“

"There should be a separate chat for important information posted only by staff and admins."

”

“

"There was confusion as to who participate in the discussion-chat room."

”

“

"The 'live chat' function is great but the format can be re-designed. Trying to read hundreds of live messages in such a narrow format wasn't very user friendly."

”

A number of participants commented and thanked the conference team for addressing the initial challenges at the beginning of the conference and improving the user experience

“

"I am grateful that you have taken into consideration the recommendations that we have made as MOs after the first day of the Conference; an improvement in the manner of carrying out the sessions was visible."

”

INTERNET

In total, 83 participants reported experiencing challenges with internet accessibility during the World Conference.

“I do sympathize with MOs who might have connection problems, thus were unable to be in attendance all the time, through no fault of the organizers.”

“It was sad to know some countries wanted to share and participate, but connections couldn't be made or would go off. I felt that all of us lost out from that standpoint.”

“As worldwide connections and speeds improve, the participation experience will improve. Some things are just going to be out of our control such as the Saharan sandstorm that disrupted communication in parts of that region.”

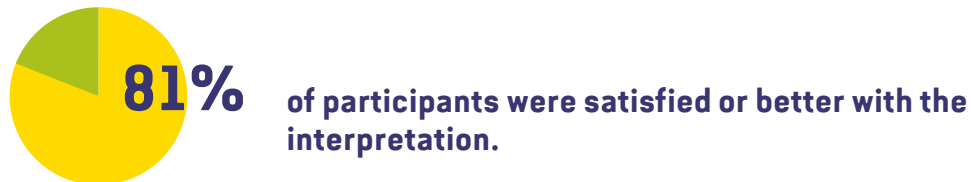
A few participants highlighted that, whilst they enjoyed watching the videos that were shared, this unfortunately used a lot of data:

“the streaming of the videos (which were great to showcase the World Centres), should be optional as this ate a lot of our data.”

“The streaming of the videos (which you could not avoid as you didn't know when the speakers / conference would continue) required a strong internet connection and / or used a huge amount of mobile data. An option not to stream the videos and use data would be very welcome, taking into consideration some delegates with unstable internet connection.”

INTERPRETATION

All plenary sessions at the World Conference were available in the four official languages of WAGGGS: Arabic, English, French, and Spanish.



However, some commented that it was not always of a high quality and that the process for accessing it was confusing.

“The translation did not always work and I sometimes missed it by the time it did.”

“The interpretation could have been better.”

“Understanding how to use the interpretation so you didn't hear two voices.”

“It was difficult to follow and I had to listen in English.”

“Interpretation tab was hard to find during sessions.”

PROGRAMME

Although pre-conference sessions were arranged for discussion of the motions and amendments circulated before the World Conference, some participants felt that more discussion was needed during the conference. Several participants also commented that there were too many Proposed Motions.

“In the discussion sessions about motions we should have more time so as all the voices to be heard but also to make sure that for every motion or amendment we hear both for and against opinions. To have a balance.”

“Need for more time to discuss motions and amendments. It felt as though available time differed from motion to motion. Suggestion: Open before the session a list of MOs wishing to talk on a motion or amendment apart from those signing.”

Whilst appreciating that the main focus of the World Conference was on governance, some participants missed the variety of sessions that would usually be offered in a World Conference:

“It would have been fun to have more webinars on topics relevant to WAGGGS during the conference or an international game night somewhere in the middle of the conference.”

“We did not have the opportunity to discuss topics of relevance to the movement such as membership growing, programme delivery, covid impact, fundraising, etc.”

“we could have made better use of the voting breaks to highlight Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting.”

Many commented that the sessions were not very engaging for observers and suggested that alternative activities could have been offered during voting periods and at other times.

“If it could involve all the observers with some activities. for example quiz, games, etc.”

“The lull during the voting session needs to be filled with appropriate activities.”

“The time during which head delegates were casting their votes could be utilized to interact with other observers to create awareness or even to promote WAGGGS activity packs (short video clips could be used for this purpose).”

“observers didn't have the possibility to interact, maybe the "Campfire" Platform or another parallel event could be useful to be more motivated.”

“Try to have things that can motivate the observers, as parallel events or resources to fill during the main session.”

Many noted the difficulty of accommodating a wide variety of time zones, and the need to limit the plenary time on the programme to just two sessions per day. However, this inevitably impacted on the experience of the World Conference for some participants for whom the timing was challenging:

“We appreciate it is impossible to please everyone about the time zones, but it was difficult for us. We did appreciate the apology email at the start of the process which acknowledged the difficulties we would experience.”

“Because we were working across many time zones, not all sessions were possible for me to participate in - but I realise it's impossible to fit in all time zones at times that suit everyone.”

WORLD CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

Overall, the 37th World Conference was well-received and participants greatly appreciated the work of WAGGGS, who had delivered a successful event in a very different format within a shorter timeframe than normal.

“Being the first time attending the World Conference, the first hand experiences provided me greater knowledge to WAGGGS governance.”

"Being a delegate in this World Conference has been an eye opener, it has helped me to have an understanding of our organisation and how best we can strategise in our association too. The conference has also helped me to include young leaders in decision making positions as well as including activities that make sense to them."

"It was a wonderful experience through which experiences were shared."

"it's the only time I have felt connected with my Girl Scouting sisters around the world."

"Being with a sisterhood of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts - it always helps give perspective to being a part of a global movement."

"The World Conference was outstanding! I never imagined it could be carried out via computer. Even though this has been a difficult time for the world, WAGGGS continued to create new ways to communicate and I think has become better for it."

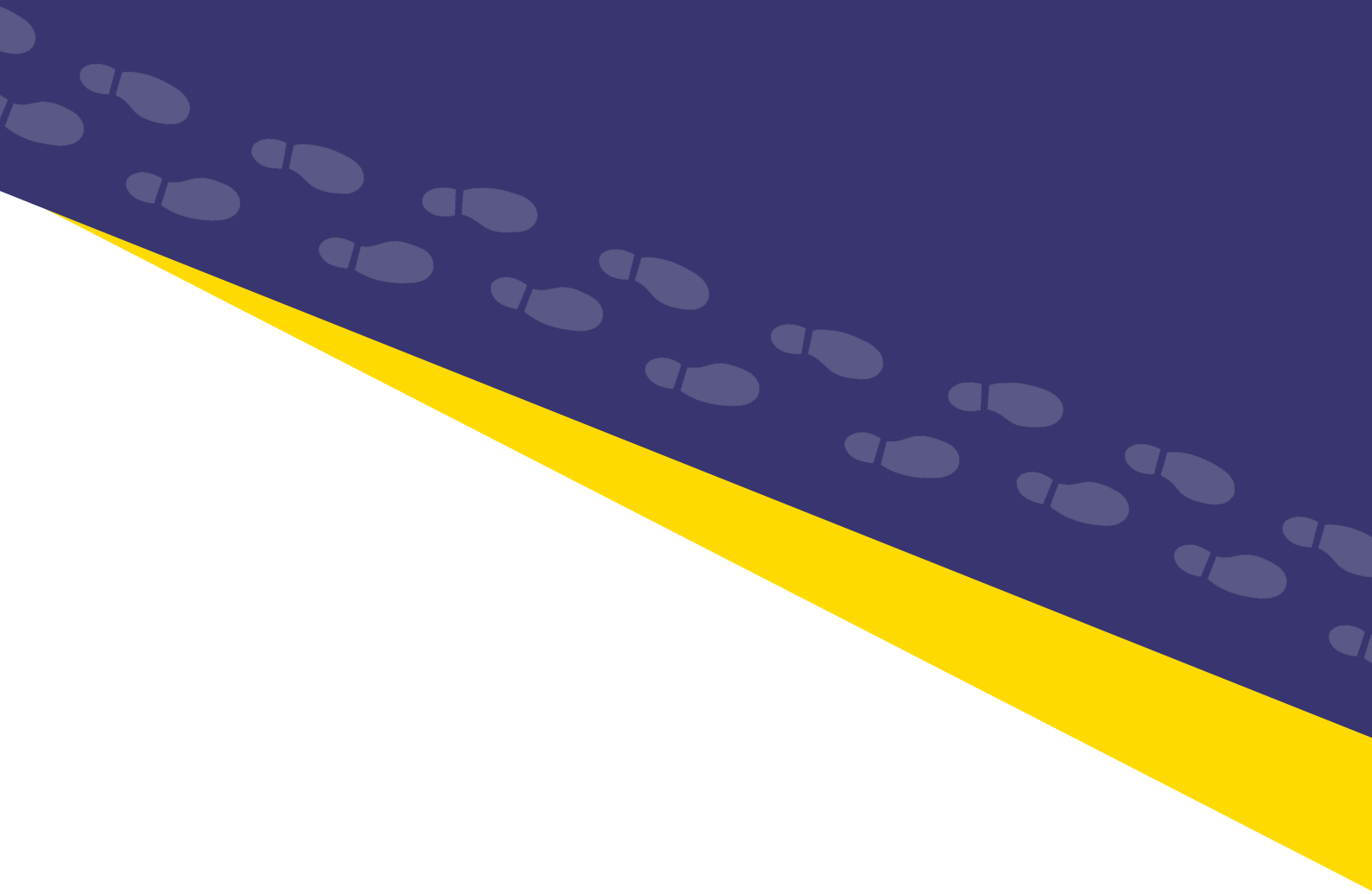
"I would love to participate in the next World Conference to grow even more and give the best of myself."

"Staff support was excellent. WAGGGS staff were prompt and ready to assist."

"The staff support were excellent, willing and ready to help."



WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES
AND GIRL SCOUTS



Walking together, walking far.

37th WORLD CONFERENCE 2021