

Some Essential Features of the All-African Women's Revolutionary Union (AAWRU)

WHAT IS THE ALL-AFRICAN WOMEN'S REVOLUTIONARY UNION?

The All-African Women's Revolutionary Union (AAWRU) was founded November 1980 as the women's wing of the All-African People's Revolutionary Party (AAPRP). The AAPRP understood that the solution to the many problems facing women is organization and political education.

Thus, the Revolutionary Union was organized primarily for the following reasons:

1. to increase the recruitment and retention of African women and to more effectively incorporate them into the struggle to build the AAPRP towards the establishment of Pan-Africanism;
2. to forge a stronger bond between African women and men through political education concerning the past and present realities of African Women; their role in the African Revolution, while working together to combat all forms of exploitation and oppression in the building of scientific socialism.
3. to develop liaisons through Party alliances with women of other revolutionary organizations carrying out momentous nation/class struggle; and
4. to insure the socialization of child care within the Party and the ideological education and development of African children through the Young Pioneers Institute.

The AAWRU understands that the real freedom for African women is possible only through Pan-Africanism. The total liberation and unification of Africa under Scientific Socialism. It is only through the unification of all sectors of our people, African women in particular, that we can wrestle our land from the grips of imperialism. The struggles for our demands as African women must be bound up with the object of seizing power from bourgeois society. African women must come to understand the benefits of socialism to them. It is only through socialism that the development of women is insured. Consequently, it is only through organization and

political maturity that we will arrive at this understanding and mobilize ourselves and our people for the final victory.

I. STRUCTURE OF THE AAWRU

As a women's wing, the membership of the All-African Women's Revolutionary Union consists of all the women militants in the All-African People's Revolutionary Party and this assembly of women constitutes the highest policy making body of the AAWRU. The AAWRU elects a sister who represents them to the Central Committee of the AAPRP.

- A. Responsibilities of the Central AAWRU coordinator. The Central Union Coordinator's primary responsibility is coordinating the work of the AAWRU and is a co-coordinator of the Political Education (PE) Committee with the same rights and responsibilities. Collectivism must exist between the AAWRU coordinator and other women coordinators on policy-making bodies, i.e., Central Committee, Chapter Coordinating Councils and Chapter Union Assemblies.
- B. All policy decisions made by the leadership bodies are the result of a process of full discussion and debate. All Party work-study circles, committees and the AAWRU are encouraged to openly and fully discuss our ideology (Nkrumahism-Tureism), and our objective (Pan-Africanism). Everyone has the right to express their opinions and views to full freedom even when these opinions are incorrect. However, once a decision is taken by a majority vote it is binding on all, including those who disagreed. In the AAPRP and thus the AAWRU, the minority must submit to the majority and lower bodies must submit to higher bodies.

II. CONSOLIDATION OF THE UNION ON THE CHAPTER LEVEL.

The AAWRU must become a catalyst in generating the type of discussion and debate by the masses of African women and men in the Party on a consistent basis, this will result in a stronger ideological understanding of the role of women in revolution, as well as combat and smash myths, and release the creative energy of women in the Party as that they can effectively develop the Union, the chapter and concretely build the Party.

- A. In the mid 1990s, the AAWRU as a result of instituting a party wide 5 Year Plan, it was decided to step up the process of political education and work within the AAWRU at the chapter level. This resulted in organizing Union Assemblies, which are designed to meet once every other month for a total of 6 times a year. Since the struggle to raise the political awareness around women is aimed at both women and men, the decision was made to preempt the regular workstudy meeting during the normal workstudy week for the assembly meeting so that all brothers and sisters in the chapters can participate. During the assembly meetings, items are democratically discussed and decisions are made. Items are prioritized, planned and organized for the entire chapter and/or party to implement. Brothers can raise discussion in the meetings and other contributions, but cannot vote. The AAWRU must work harmoniously with and consult all institutions and structures inside the party. The Union must also do research on other women's wings to further clarify our line, function, role, structure, etc.
- B. The implementation of the Chapter structure – election of an AAWRU coordinator to the Chapter Coordinating Council (the “CCC”) and the establishment of a chapter assembly – given the objective and subjective realities of the Union in particular and the party in general has come to maximize democracy inside the AAWRU. Sisters can develop and criticize their organization, move as a unified force within the Party, and push for ideological clarity around the women's position, within work-study circles, committees and seminars as well as external programs.

III. THE AAWRU CHAPTER STRUCTURE AND HOW IT FUNCTIONS

- A. Chapter Structure will consist of:
 1. AAWRU Chapter Assembly composed of all women members of the Party who are actively carrying out party policy (consistent in work-study circle, committee work, dues, program task). These sisters represent the AAWRU's highest body in the Chapter. The AAWRU chapter assemblies will meet every two months. Meetings will begin with an ideological discussion (similar to workstudy meetings).
 2. An elected AAWRU chapter coordinator that functions as an equal member of the CCC.
- B. Chapter AAWRU coordinator must:
 1. Spark continuous ideological development around the role of women in revolution in all arenas.
 2. Coordinate Union activities with respective committee coordinators and consistently assist sisters within all committees, assigned to carry out union tasks.
 3. Chair AAWRU chapter assembly meetings every two months.
 4. Function as a PE committee member. Emphasis on Union work within the PE committee (This was a strategic decision not a permanent structural designation. It was based on the reality that in enemy held zones the most significant task of revolutionaries is to politically educate the masses and the fact that the primary task of the Revolutionary Union is to assist in the development of political education material for internal and external use).
 5. Continue campus work and become a major impetus for the recruitment and retention of women.

The assignment of the AAWRU Chapter Coordinators to the Political Education Committee is not uniform in all chapters throughout the Party. When the material conditions in the chapter prevent a coordinator from being assigned to the P.E. Committee she may serve as Union Coordinator with all rights and responsibilities.

In chapters where there is no Chapter Coordinating Council, those sisters who accept the responsibility of representing the AAWRU is an AAWRU coordinating, despite here committee affiliation with all rights and responsibilities. This situation is to be monitored by the Central AAWRU.

IV. AAWRU RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EXISTING PARTY INSTITUTIONS

- A. An integral party of the AAPRP, the All-African Women's Revolutionary Union uses existing committee structure of the Party to carry out Union activities.
- B. The elected women chapter coordinators, who are serving on Program, P.E. and Administration Committees, are also Union Coordinators. They must serve as liaison to their respective committees for the Union, seeing to it that Union programs and tasks are efficiently and effectively implemented. In addition, along with making collective decisions on the Chapter level as members of the AAWRU and the CCC, these coordinators must take on AAWRU tasks and coordinate their successful implementation. In most instances, this work only represents approximately 30% of their total work responsibility of their respective committees.
- C. The revolutionary union work will continue to be implemented through the committees. Therefore, committee distribution of the sisters with the Chapters must be consistent with party policy.
- D. The revolutionary union has all the institutions of the Party at its disposal. It must utilize them properly and scientifically. The union must proceed democratically, scientifically, ideologically and practically from the bottom up. If it does not, it will galvanize the opposition to the Union and give its enemies the weapon to delay its progress and the leap. The Central Committee of the AAPRP can and must serve, help and guide the Union.

Accordingly, the Central Committee mandates the AAWRU to become a functioning democratic structure.

- E. The revolutionary union cannot suspend sisters. If a sister is in violation of Party rules and regulations it is the responsibility of the AAPRP to extend necessary disciplinary action. If a sister has been suspended, she may not participate in any internal AAPRP activities i.e. work-study circles or internal Party meetings and cannot received AAPRP communications, consequently she may not participate in AAWRU assemblies until her behavior is corrected.
- F. The Revolutionary Union has at its disposal all the institutions within the Party, and when necessary can create vehicles internal to the Union to do what must be done to build the AAWRU

Now, women are an integral part of productive forces, and when they are excluded from any activity, for outmoded reasons, the society is blocked, both economically and morally.
Ahmed Seku Ture
(p. 128 from
"The United States of Africa")

V. AAWRU RELATIONSHIP WITH THE THREE STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. **AAWRU Relationship with the P.E. Committee**
 - 1. The primary thrust of the Revolutionary Union is Political Education. This is why the Union Coordinator is on the P.E. Committee. Union Coordinators are responsible to the Union,

utilizing the P.E. Committee to help raise the consciousness of the entire party of issues relating to women.

2. The AAWRU chapter coordinators are on the P.E. Committee. In ideal situations, eighty percent of their work within the committee is Union related, while twenty percent is allocated to general P.E. tasks. However, it must be stated that ideal situations do not exist party wide. Nonetheless, Union coordinators are full-fledged P.E. members who should be integrated into the P.E. committee and must be consulted regarding all P.E. decisions and help implement P.E. plans and programs.
3. The AAWRU coordinators should be responsible for monitoring the work-study circle, process, the internal ideological development of the AAPRP. In doing so we can assess, monitor and insure the ideological development of the AAPRP in general and in respect to the role of women in the revolution in particular.

The work of the AAWRU and the P.E. Committee must be integrated. By the second or third year of the five-year plan the AAWRU may be prepared to expand our role on the P.E. committee to include coordination of propaganda development.

B. AAWRU Relationship with Program Committee

The Revolutionary Union has general access to this committee in order to carry out such programmatic responsibilities as the Farm Projects in Guinea-Bissau, Ghana and Azania/South Africa, School in Sierra Leone, organization and coordination of the annual Women's Conference, initiating and maintaining contact with other revolutionary women's wings, and the recruitment and retention of women.

C. AAWRU Relationship with Administration Committee

The Administration committee generally will assist the AAWRU to insure that our propaganda is reproduced and efficiently distributed; that the AAWRU information is consistently mailed out; that our memos are quickly distributed and that accurate fund-raising records are kept on our fund-raising activities.

D. AAWRU Role in work-study

The Union must be discussed in every work-study circle meeting. Information to be discussed under the Party Affairs section include:

- a. Announcements
- b. Memos
- c. Update on the development of the Union
- d. Call for input to Union assignments

VI. MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE

The work load of women during and directly after pregnancy will be reduced. Specifics will be dealt with in each chapter.

