



Women on the Move - Her Story



Name:	Ana Villanueva
Country of origin:	Argentina
Date of Birth:	1 December 1954
Church:	United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva, English Speaking Congregation
Period of Mandate:	Member of the LWF WICAS Advisory Committee from 1986 to 1988. LWF staff member from 1989 to 2000 and since 2014 to this date.

Short biography:

In 1989, Ana left Buenos Aires, where she had been working as a school teacher and had been deeply involved with her church. She joined the Office for Women in Church and Society (WICAS) of the Lutheran World Federation as the conference assistant for the women's pre-Assembly that took place in Mexico City, prior to the 1990 LWF Ninth Assembly. What was initially a fifteen-month assignment turned into a long-term commitment to WICAS.

The theme of the 1989 gathering in Mexico City, "Open our Eyes," also reflects a turning point in Ana's professional life: the move from her engagement with her local church to the open waters of women's global participation in church and society.

This was not Ana's first encounter with the LWF. From 1986 to 1988, Ana had served as a member of the Advisory Committee to WICAS, which allowed her to play an active role in the Latin America region. In Dr Musimbi Kanyoro's words (WICAS Executive Secretary from 1988 to 2000) "these seven women [the Advisory Committee] have struggled with issues and with people, with the ultimate goal of helping to create an inclusive church and society."

Ana had firmly intended to return to Argentina after the 1990 Curitiba Assembly in order to resume the work that is still close to her heart: teaching. However, each attempt to return "home" was postponed as a new chapter unfolded in her engagement with WICAS.

In 2000, Ana left the LWF and joined the World YWCA where she continued working with Dr Kanyoro, then General Secretary of the World YWCA. Before starting in her new position as Assistant to the General Secretary, Ana wrote: *"God has incredible plans for our lives, and if we are willing to listen and dare to risk following God's call, we might find ourselves in the most unexpected circumstances, meeting the most extraordinary people. Stories, faces, joys and sorrows, challenging perspectives of life, personal friendship and women from Africa, Asia, Latin and North America, Europe have enriched my life up to a point I would have never imagined. During all these years, I was called every day to rediscover that we are not born women, but become women, as we allow ourselves to be sensitive and assertive, smooth and firm, solidary and visionary, as we give ourselves and still keep a high sense of self-esteem and as we work seeking recognition for all, regardless of age and race, gender, social, economic or physical condition."*

Today Ana serves as the Executive Assistant to the General Secretary of the LWF.