



Notes from the field...

Introduction to April Newsletter

In this issue of the newsletter, many of the articles will focus on migration. The UN is approaching its final negotiations toward a “Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.” Government delegations, UN agencies, and the NGO/Civil Society sector have been busy preparing and commenting on drafts and conducting educational sessions related to migration. IASSW has been well represented this year on the NGO Committee on Migration by Dr. Rebecca Thomas (IASSW team member) and MSW interns Justice Konowe and Shrevie Shepherd. We deem this work to be particularly important given the migration crises around the world and the growth of anti-immigrant hate speech in many countries. Social work perspectives are badly needed at practice, policy and educational levels.

Other articles will include a few highlights from the 17th United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and brief analyses of the outcome documents from both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Social Development.

With this issue of the newsletter, we also bid farewell to our two interns. They both graduated with their MSW degrees at the end of April and will move on to their professional careers. I am sure you join me in deep appreciation for their work at the UN on IASSW’s behalf and for these excellent newsletters.

Lynne Healy, Main Representative

Parliamentarians at the UN Discuss the Global Compact



The annual meeting at the UN for international parliamentarians was held in the Trusteeship Council room. The meeting focused on the Global Compact for Migration and how parliamentarians are

essential to combat xenophobia and enact laws and policies that will work within the international cooperative agreement on this global phenomenon. Louise Arbor, the Secretary General’s Special Representative on Migration as well as MK Solomon, the chief of the International Office of Migration, spoke about the specific statistics on global migration, explained the need for global cooperation, and for national policies to implement protections for these vulnerable populations. Integration was emphasized, as the moderator stated, “Compassion leads to integration.” The speakers both emphasized the need for parliamentarians to fight xenophobia and racial prejudice which is so prevalent throughout the world. Louise Arbor explained that this xenophobia is based on real economic and cultural fears which must be directly addressed by lawmakers. Ms. Solomon stressed that the Global Compact in no way takes away from each country’s sovereignty and self-determination over migration policies. The overall message was that the movement of people around the world, 258 million, has reached a crisis point, and nations, governments and regions must work together to ensure protections for these displaced and vulnerable people.



The most interesting and dramatic part of the meeting were the statements by individual countries. The member of parliament from Turkey impassionedly stated that his country hosts the largest group of migrants from Syria- 3.3 million. Turkey has spent over \$30 billion on housing, feeding and dealing with these people. He asked why the wealthiest countries aren't accepting more of these Syrians and why are they only taking the most skilled, while Turkey and its neighbors are left with the poorest and most needy? It was pointed out that these people are refugees, which is dealt with on the Global Compact on Refugees, not the Global Compact on Migration, although everyone acknowledged it is an important issue. Canada then stated that they are a model of integration with immigrants and want to accept more immigrants and refugees, but they have found that it is the most recent immigrants who are hesitant and fearful of allowing more migrants into the country. Ms. Solomon acknowledged that psychologically it is hard for new migrants because they are fearful of being displaced or losing their jobs if more people are let into their host country. It became apparent from the statements from all over the world, that every nation is affected by this issue and it is imperative that we work together to come up with solutions for this human problem.

Xenophobia and Migration

Xenophobia and Migration was the subject of an afternoon session during the stakeholder negotiations on the Global Compact on Safe and Regular Migration. A representative from Morocco, Ahmed Toumi, discussed the vital need for inclusion and integration for migrants into societies. He used his country as an example of how migration should work for host countries. A British Parliamentarian commented that data collection surrounding migration is important, but statistics will not change anyone's opinion on immigrants. He states that we need to put a human face on these migrants, possibly through film and media. A German parliamentarian discussed the growth of far-right parties against immigration throughout the world and again emphasized the importance of integration in society.

She acknowledged the growing economic inequality in the world and called upon the ultra-wealthy in the world to help with the costs of these integration initiatives.

The panel discussed how social media has changed the discussion on immigration throughout the world. All the panelists agreed that young people are more informed on issues because of social media but are now bombarded by various messages. They all recognize that social media is now completely value driven. All the panelists agreed on the importance of messaging to combat xenophobia. It is important to use social media to spread the word on the value of immigrants to society and the human face of migrants which might start to change the negative rhetoric surrounding migrants.

For example, migrants are important contributors to economies, in fact many of the largest and most profitable companies in the United States were started by first generation immigrants.

The Press and Migration

A particularly interesting talk at the UN was a presentation by the Ethical Journalism Network. The talk was not only relevant for the American audience who is dealing with the fight over the press in our political sphere, but important in the global narrative surrounding migrants. The speaker outlined five important rules for the media to ensure fair, just and accurate reporting to combat inaccurate narratives about immigrants. These rules are 1. Be factual and accurate 2. Show humanity and be empathetic 3. Put a human face on stories 4. Be impartial 5. Don't demonize other perspectives. He then went on to discuss the importance of the use of language and ensuring that accurate and non-stereotyping words are used. Refugees, illegal immigrants have negative connotations in certain societies. He gave the example of the young undocumented children in America, or DACA recipients, who were strategically referred to as DREAMERS. Depicting this population as DREAMERS puts a positive spin on this group, while calling them illegals or aliens, perpetuates a negative stereotype. It is important that members of



the media be conscious of their proper use of words when writing about the migration issue. An acknowledgement of this by the media, can begin a conversation leading to a reduction of stereotypes and xenophobia surrounding immigrants.

Art as a Messenger

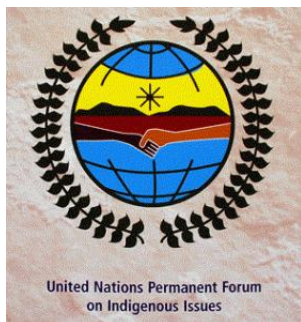
At the end of a long corridor where the public waits for their tour of the UN, there are a few benches and a video which is constantly running. In conjunction with the negotiation on the Global Compact on Migration, the video is about migrant experiences. It shows a split screen with a small boy on the left and an old man on the right, shown in black and white. They tell a continuous story about their experience fleeing their countries and becoming unaccompanied child migrants. Their stories are exactly the same, even though one is a Syrian refugee and the other fled during the Nazi invasion during WWII. Look up and share these stories of migrants at www.iamamigrant.com and get involved with the UN's, *Together*, campaign to raise awareness and put a human face on migration.

Stay Informed on the Global Compact!

To stay up-to date on the latest draft of the Global Compact on Migration please visit:
https://refugeemigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180326_draft_rev1_final.pdf

To follow the work of the Committee on Migration and to continued efforts of Civil Society, please visit: <https://ngo-migration.org/>

Forum on Indigenous Issues



The 17th United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was held at the UN from April 16 to April 27. This year's theme was Indigenous people's collective rights to lands, territories and resources. There were over one

thousand indigenous representatives from around the world attending the forum. The UN states that globally, over 370 million indigenous people are facing challenges to their right to self-determination, their traditional lands, education and more. Information on the forum can be found at www.un.org/indigenous and follow the hashtag #Weareindigenous. Here are a few highlights.

Indigenous Rights in the Amazon

Mining and extraction of natural resources for corporate benefit has had a devastating effect on indigenous populations throughout the world and has caused environmental devastation of some of the earth's most precious ecosystems. This devastation has had a particularly negative impact on the environment and the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. The Amazon covers over two million square miles in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela and is the traditional home of over 2.8 million indigenous peoples. The Permanent Representative to the Holy See, Bernardito Auza, hosted a side event to discuss how corporate profit of mining companies has violated the human rights and self-determination of these indigenous inhabitants. Pope Francis has taken a great interest in advocating for the rights of these people to their land and to be able to pursue their traditional lifestyles. The head of the NGO-Mining Working Group at the UN called the Amazon the "Principal lung of the world" whose important biodiversity is now being threatened from mining. Two representatives from Indigenous groups, one from Ecuador and one from Peru talked about their experiences in being exploited by their governments who ordered their removal from their homes and communities, giving companies the mining rights to this land. The Special Rapporteur for the rights of Indigenous peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, spoke of the negative health impacts of mining in the Amazon with communities being devastated by mercury poisoning and other communities being destroyed because the mining companies constructed roads right through their homes. She spoke of the social injustice of indigenous people being criminalized because they are fighting to protect their lands from



environmental devastation. She hopes that the advocacy of the Pope on this issue will create a worldwide awareness as to these injustices.

Successful Partnerships in the Tundra!

The Russian oil company, Lukoil, hosted a side event about the corporate/governmental and indigenous populations' cooperation and agreements on Lukoil's corporate responsibility towards the indigenous people in the northern tundra regions of the Russian Federation. The panel included representatives from Lukoil, local governmental spokesmen and three tribal leaders who have benefited from the oil company's social programs.

There is a private/public sector fund which is used towards the implementation of their various programs. These include, Red Chum, which provides health care for nomads in this region. Helicopters fly in teams of doctors to treat these citizens, teach first aid classes, provide long term stores of food and provide traditional teepees for shelter. They also help to promote agricultural initiatives and set up reindeer breeding farms for these traditional reindeer herder tribes. The government also establishes boarding schools for their children to be properly educated while their families lead nomadic lives. (Historically there have been issues with these schools in a number of countries but seem to have improved in the last few decades).

The traditional leaders all spoke positively about this cooperation and how it has benefitted their communities and allowed the maintenance of their traditional ways of life. One senior tribal leader explained that traditional nomadic populations in northern Russian territories have increased since these programs were initiated. He also described business partnerships between Lukoil and indigenous groups through ethnic tourism and hosting cultural events in their communities.

Although one is never sure if governmental policies affect populations in the exact way they are intended or presented at the UN, the presentation provided a

good example of how government can work with and for the indigenous populations.

Outcomes from CSW62 and CSocD56

Following the conclusion of both the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) and the Commission on Social Development (CSocD56) member states worked together, with some influence from civil society, to produce an outcome document. Below are articles providing a brief summary of these documents.



Agreed Conclusions, Commission on the Status of Women (by S. Shepherd)

The agreed conclusions from the 2018 Commission on the Status of Women highlight the factors that maintain the marginalization and inequality of women and girls who live in rural areas and outlines actions that governments can take to change the norms, culture, structures, institutions and policies which keep them isolated. The first part of the document discusses previous UN conventions and declarations which serve as the foundation of this new outcome statement. These include: The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Convention of the Rights of the Child, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Paris Climate Agreement, The Beijing Declaration and the SDGs. The goal of the CSW document is to present a working framework in order for governments to realize gender equality, empowerment, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls and in particular those living in rural areas.

The factors which keep rural women and girls marginalized include: persistence of structural unequal power relations, lack of resources such as decent work, health care, education, land ownership,



access to money, inheritance rights, justice, technology, safe transport, water, sanitation as well as the unfair burden of unpaid domestic work. The document points out that gender- based violence, cultural practices such as FGM, early marriage and early pregnancies also contribute to the inequalities of women and girls. It acknowledges that indigenous rural women and girls are at a greater disadvantage. The document then calls on member states to strengthen legal and policy frameworks and to implement economic and social policies which will elevate the structural and societal status of women and girls. It also calls for sexual and reproductive health care, universal health care and universal right to sexual and reproductive health rights for this population. It calls for the right to elementary and secondary education for all girls as well as equal pay for equal work, an end to all gender- based violence and equal access to land, inheritance and financial resources. Food security, nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation are also seen as essential components to female equality.

The three most important issues included in this document are the right for every girl to have sexual and reproductive health education and care, the fact that Climate Change is real and overwhelmingly affects rural women and girls, and the stigma facing this population due to HIV/AIDS infections. It was surprising but positive that these important issues are included in this document.

This new agreed conclusion document looks at women's and girls' equality from a human rights and sustainable development point of view. The text, though, is nothing new. It is exactly what is said in every meeting we attend at the UN. The delineated actions are too broad. While reading this document, I felt frustrated and it all felt too overwhelming. Who will pay for all these actions? Are governments willing to change policy without first challenging the underlying norms and cultural realities which keep females marginalized? The agreed conclusions are a global wish list for women's and girls' equality. It is broad and overreaching but might work as a road map for certain governments to begin their work towards

equality and female empowerment. A member of the Working Group on Girls asked at our last meeting in regards to these agreed conclusions, "What is the point of this document anyway? Does it change anything?". I believe it is a document that can be used by societies as a tool for change, and to hold governments and societies accountable and as a clear outline of the goals we should all be working to achieve. To read the document, go to <http://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/62/outline/csw62-agreed-conclusions-advanced-unedited-version-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3837>

56TH COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategies for eradicating poverty
to achieve sustainable development for all
2018 United Nations Headquarters, New York

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development



#CSocD56 #SDGs #GlobalGoals

WEBSITE: social.un.org/csocd

Final Report from the 56th Commission on Social Development, 2018 (by J. Konowe)

The final report from the 56th Commission on Social Development (CSocD56) included an outline of the work done by the commission during the 10-day session. This outline includes the discussions that took place surrounding the adoption of the four purposed draft resolutions as well as a summary of panel discussions that took place.

Panel discussions addressed the priority theme of eradicating poverty, a 3rd review of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, Disabilities, and a theme discussion on "Toward Sustainable and Resilient Societies: Innovation and Interconnectivity for Social Development." These panel discussions were hosted by a number of various stakeholders from the private and public sectors, member states, and civil society and all contributed vital information to be considered for inclusion in the final draft resolutions that would be voted on at the end of the session.

The final draft resolutions that came out of the work of the Commission included commitments by the



commission for future work in the areas which each resolution addressed.

Draft resolution I Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development: This resolution set forth a plan for future work done by the Commission. This plan includes adopting a multi-year program of work and set forth the Priority Theme for the 2019 Session, “Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies”. The adoption of this theme is an exciting development for the NGO Committee on Social Development, as it provides civil society with a platform to discuss social protection floors and gaps in existing social protection policies.

Draft resolution II Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development: The second purposed resolution discusses the priorities of the African Union and the African Union Road Map that aims to address inequalities, gaps in maternal and child healthcare, as well as eliminating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. The Commission decisions on this resolution include giving prominence to and raising awareness of the social dimensions of the new partnerships as well as giving due consideration to the agenda 2063 of the African Union during the 57th session of the Commission on Social Development.

Draft resolution III Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all: This resolution examines the efforts and progress made by member states in their efforts to eradicate poverty. The resolution recognizes that progress has been uneven, stating “total number of persons living in extreme poverty remains unacceptably high.” The report also acknowledges that many countries are working to create a fiscal space for introducing various elements of social protections, which aids in the eradication of extreme poverty. One call to action by this resolution is for member states, the international community, and global health partners to work together to accelerate the goal towards universal health care. Ensuring everyone has equal access to affordable health care is one social

protection that could strongly contribute to the eradication of poverty.

Draft resolution IV Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002: This document is a systematic review of the implementation of the 2002 plan to address the needs of an aging population. The resolution “recognizes population ageing as one of the major trends that is likely to shape the prospects for achieving the sustainable development goals.” By implementing the MIPAA the commission believes it will help in achieving the 2030 agenda, including the goal of eradicating poverty. The Commission calls for member states to continue to consider the multidimensional nature of vulnerability that the aging population experiences as well as promote inclusion and understanding of the aging population in all policy and program development.

The adoption of these four draft resolutions aid in the efforts to eradicate poverty by strengthening the language around social protection and promoting inclusiveness of vulnerable populations in the implementation of the sustainable development goals. As members of civil society, we can use these resolutions to promote social protection and the eradication of poverty within our own communities. To read the full report, please visit <http://undocs.org/E/2018/26>

SDG Alert: Call for Engagement in Upcoming Voluntary National Reviews

Are you based in one of the following countries?

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Benin, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Kiribati, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Congo, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Switzerland, Togo, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Viet Nam.



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International Association of Schools of Social Work
Association Internationale des Ecoles de Travail Social
Asociación Internacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social
国际社会工作教育联盟
国際ソーシャルワーク学校連盟

If so, your country is preparing its Voluntary National Review (VNR) of progress made to date toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the UN's 2030 Agenda. The report will be presented in July at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). Additional countries have reported in 2016 and 2017. The 2030 Agenda called for each country to conduct periodic "open, inclusive and participatory reviews" of progress. Have you and others from academia and the civil society sector been included? Surveys conducted by various interest groups in the first few years of the VNR and SDG processes suggest that countries are falling far short of the goal of inclusive review. Many civil society organizations responded to surveys that they did not know about the VNR process or know much about their own country's plans to implement the SDGs.

Let's get involved on behalf of IASSW and the social work profession. For overall information, check this website <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>. It is the knowledge platform for sustainable development and also houses the country VNR reports. Contact your own government to determine what body is responsible for coordinating the VNR and to locate the national plan for achieving the SDGs.

IASSW is also collecting information on what individual schools and national organizations are doing toward the SDGs. We will need this for our quadrennial report to the UN which will be due in late 2018. Please send relevant information to lynne.healy@uconn.edu and/or rashmi@iassw-aiets.org

Farewell from the Interns!

It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye as we write our final edition of the IASSW newsletter. We have learned so many valuable lessons during our time at the UN. In addition to gaining an understanding in international policy, the sustainable development goals, and the inter-workings of UN

agencies with member states and other stakeholders, we learned that the most important and vital work is done by members of civil society such as the readers of this newsletter to implement international agendas. We know that while the UN is a necessary place for discussions to take place for progress to occur, it is the people on the grassroots level, such as social work professors, students, and practitioners, that are the true agents for change in the world.



Interns Justice Konowe (left) and Shrevie Shepherd (right), with Professor and IASSW member Dr. Rebecca Thomas (center) at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work graduation ceremony.

We want to thank the IASSW and Dr. Lynne Healy for giving us the opportunity to intern with them and providing us with an amazing field placement experience. We look forward to taking all we that we have learned and the skills we have gained back to our communities and use them to take on the battle of ending injustices around the world.

Respectfully,

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