

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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## NEWS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE

'Greetings from the Mercy Global Action Office where this month we participated in numerous global initiatives highlighting the inter relatedness of Mercy International's two thematic areas of Degradation of Earth and Displacement of Persons.

'Today we were inspired by the advocacy work of Lorna Gold who recently published *Climate Generation: Awakening to Our Children's Future*. Lorna is a writer and environmental activist who lives and works in Ireland with her young family. She is convinced that dialogue and advocacy on Climate Justice must be inter-generational and focuses her efforts on linking young and old in pursuit of a sustainable earth. I highly encourage you to read her publication.

Last week, we were delighted to host various students from Mercy Universities around the USA and to engage in critical discussions related to Mercy Advocacy. The students from the various universities had the opportunity to exchange ideas and share their experiences of justice initiatives in their various universities and to make the link with MIA's global initiatives.

The issue of homelessness is finally on the UN agenda and given the many mercy ministries either directly or indirectly linked to homelessness, MGA will contribute to an emerging global discussion about ways to respond to this systemic violation of human rights.

Our work at MGA continues to be inspired by Sisters and associates on the ground. Next week we will welcome Sr Patricia O'Donovan from MECPATH in Ireland who will both share her wisdom on human trafficking and seek to learn more from coalitions we work with. As we work towards a more just and sustainable world, let's continue to be a people of hope.'



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH



- *Mercy International Association Co-Sponsors Event "We, the Climate Generation"*

People of all ages, faiths, and nationalities are joining together for an important cause: to save our planet from the damage done by climate change. The United Nations, who first came together as “we, the peoples,” will hold its annual Climate Change Summit this fall to address the ecological issues endangering our planet as well as people’s livelihoods and wellbeing. On June 12th, activists of all ages —“we, the climate generation”—came together to do the same.

Keynote speaker Lorna Gold, author of the new book *Climate Generation: Awakening to Our Children’s Future*, described her drive to protect her children’s future which led her to explore the extent of climate change and what she could do about it. A panel of activists

shared their experiences as individuals and members of their communities taking action for climate justice. The presenters, who were teenagers, adults, and grandparents, come from different faith, education, and national backgrounds, as well as different professional specialties and activist organizations. The event ended in a call to action from more than 150 Youth Activists, faith-based organizations, UN Delegates and more to continue to protect our planet.

This event was recorded via Facebook live and is available at: <https://www.facebook.com/uwpofficial/>

- *Mercy Global Action at Event on Air Pollution to Commemorate World Environment Day*

“Air pollution”, the theme for **World Environment Day 2019**, is a call to action towards one of the greatest environmental challenges of our time. Chosen by this year’s host, China, the theme of World Environment Day 2019 invites us to consider how we can make changes in our everyday lives to reduce the amount of air pollution we produce, and recognize its contribution to climate change and its effects on our own health.

UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, recalled his latest experience in the South Pacific island states in his address; where he witnessed the “severe and worsening impacts of the global climate emergency...Solutions exist. Tax solutions, not people. Stop subsidizing fossil fuels. Stop building new coal plants. People everywhere are demanding action...let us heed their call”.

Air pollution is both a health risk and a climate challenge. Tackling air pollution can bring many benefits, including better health, quality of life, and improved well-being, as well as reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Around the world, many measures are being taken to clean up the air and mitigate climate change. See [here](#) for how the global community is addressing this challenge and how we as mercy can also make a difference!







# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

### • *Mercy Global Action Participates in an Open Dialogue on the 2020 Priority Theme of the UN Commission for Social Development*

On 4 June, Mercy Global Action participated in the First open Dialogue on the 2020 priority theme of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD58), “Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness”. Participants included representatives from the UN Working Group to End Homelessness, the Vincentian Family Homeless Alliance, the Institute for Global Homelessness, Member States, Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the New York office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Additionally, a representative from Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates (LEFSA), Iris Bailey, Shared her personal experience of homelessness and urgently called for more affordable housing and adequate resources.



Photo:MGA

The dialogue forum brought together various stakeholders to create an advocacy strategy for mobilizing political will among UN Member States and relevant stakeholders to address the multifaceted issue of homelessness. Discussions focused the need to implement a global definition of homelessness in order to measure and disaggregate data on homelessness. Additionally, participants called for a recognition of access to adequate housing as a human right, and therefore homelessness as a systemic breach of this right, which leads to violations of other rights. Angela Reed rsm, speaking for Mercy Global Action highlighted the significance of changing the current dominant narrative that views homelessness as a personal failure instead of a consequence of systemic inequality. Furthermore, many participants pointed out the significance of meaningfully including individuals personally impacted by homeless in policy discussions.

### • *Inherent Dignity Webinar Session Two!*

Participants from Australia, United States, New Zealand, Spain, Italy, India, Ireland, Canada, Ecuador, and Papua New Guinea tuned into session two of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series entitled “Governments’ Obligation to Prevent Trafficking”, which took place on 24 May. During the webinar session, guest speakers Angela Reed rsm, PhD and Amanda Lyons, J.D. explored the common patterns of human rights violations that take place during the trafficking experience and discussed the obligations of governments to prevent trafficking under key human rights instruments. Thank you to our participants for their engagement and continued advocacy. Click [here](#) to watch a video recording of session two!

The **third and last session of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series**, “Prevention of Trafficking: What Organizations and Individuals Can do” will be taking place on 25th June at 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM [New York time]. We will hear from anti-trafficking advocates from the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and the Philippines.



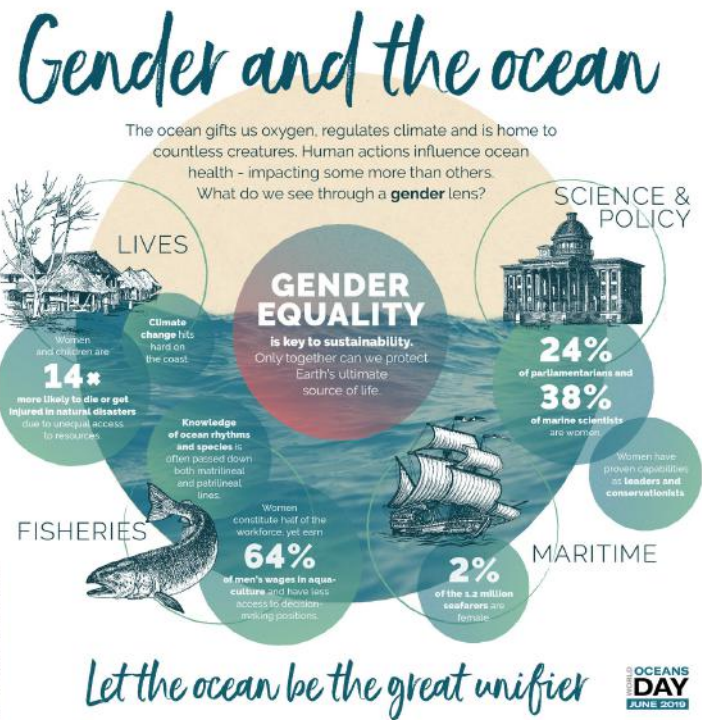
Click [here](#) to register for session three!

# At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

## • *United Nations Celebrates World Oceans Day*

This year, the theme for World Ocean's Day was "Gender and the Ocean". At this year's United Nations' event, women storytellers and speakers from around the world gathered to share their own perspectives in order to build greater ocean and gender literacy. It is imperative that oceans and gender equality — in particular for the effective conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources — is increasingly recognized.

Watch Part **One** and **Two** of the UN Commemoration here!



# MGA HLPF SERIES



## • *Mercy Global Action Advocacy Points for HLPF*

As a member of the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Major Group, Mercy Global Action has signed on as a supporter of the NGO MG Position Paper, which was submitted to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) as a contribution to the 2019 session of the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The Paper calls for a "holistic, coherent, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder" and human rights approach to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Position Paper can be accessed [here](#). Below we highlight some of calls to Member States and the UN Institutions in the Position Paper with regards to three of the Sustainable Development Goals under review.

### Sustainable Development Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth

- Implement a human rights based approach to decent work and economic growth that includes the rights to decent work for marginalized people...;
- Eliminate indecent, harmful and forced labour including debt bondage, human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery

### Sustainable Development Goal 10 - Reduce inequalities

- Ensure policies that enable all people of all ages to enjoy their human rights to food, decent work, water and sanitation, education, healthcare and housing, culture, free from direct or indirect discrimination;
- Commit to and enforce migration policies that reduce inequalities for migrants, refugees, and displaced persons and uphold their human rights identity, and dignity;

### Sustainable Development Goal 13 - Climate Action

- Align actions with the Paris Agreement, and jointly coordinate local, national, regional policies...
- Recognize traditional ecological knowledge systems ... to combat climate change and to strengthen resilience;
- Increase donor funding for developing sustainable local/territorial/regional food systems in Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States to reduce disaster risks and to strengthen resilience;
- Analyse and make visible the impacts of climate change and climate related disasters on women, and girls ...

These advocacy points align with the work of MIA: MGA under its two thematic areas: degradation of earth and displacement of persons. However, we recognise the interrelatedness and interdependence of all of the SDGs, and therefore advocate the implementation of all seventeen of the SDGs to ensure no one is left behind.

*\*The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*  
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# MGA A WAY FORWARD...

As in past Newsletters we are featuring a section from the "MGA: A Way Forward" document. See [here](#).

## NETWORKING: COORDINATION AND ANIMATION

Key to the work of Mercy Global Action is Networking, Coordination and Animation which requires working in partnership with others responding to justice issues. Engagement with Mercy Clusters (see p. 14) must be prioritized. Other networks include faith based justice organisations, civil society organisations at grassroots, national, regional and international level.



## MERCY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN ADVOCACY DAYS IN NYC

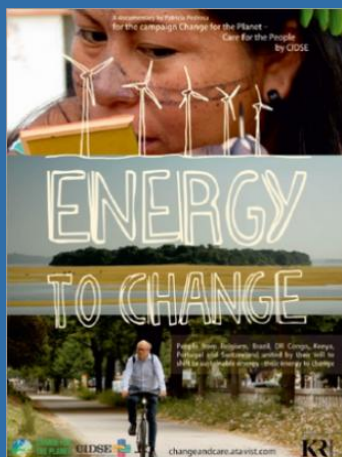
From May 28th-30th, 18 students from various Mercy Universities, and New York Based Mercy Volunteer Corp, came to the Mercy Global Action Office to learn about Mercy's Critical Concerns and how the Sisters of Mercy have advocated at the United Nations.



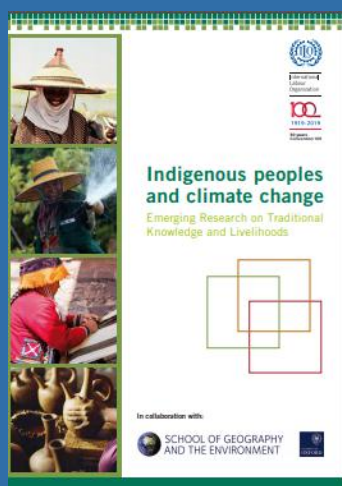
Students had the opportunity to delve into the Key Themes and Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy, including global justice issues such as climate change, human trafficking, immigration and exploring the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. By looking deeper into the experiences on the ground, students were able to build capacity and skills for critical thinking and analysis for their own advocacy and within their own major area of study.

# “USEFUL RESOURCES

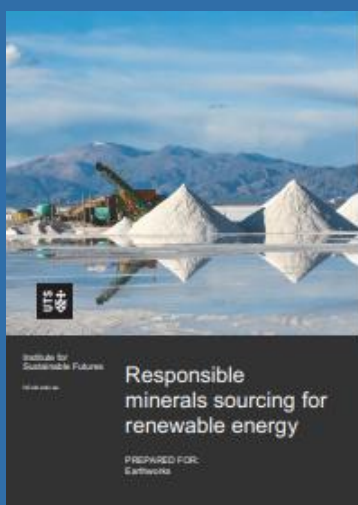
## Energy to Change- CIDSE



## Indigenous peoples and climate change—Emerging research on traditional knowledge and livelihoods



## Responsible Minerals Sourcing for Renewable Energy



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 12th June World Day Against Child Labour
- 17th June World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 20th June World Refugee Day
- 25th June Mercy Global Action Webinar on Human Trafficking
- 26th June International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
- 1st July High Level Meeting on Climate
- 9th- 18th July High Level Political Forum
- 16th-19th July Marian Gardner and Colleen Swain attend Young Mercy Leaders Conference in Dublin

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**