

MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Marian Gardner, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

Inside the Issue:

NEWS FROM THE
MIA GA
OFFICE AT THE UN

INSIDE THE UN:
THROUGH OUR
ECOSOC EYES

THEMATIC
AREAS

UPCOMING
EVENTS

USEFUL
RESOURCES

NEWS FROM THE MIA
GA OFFICE
INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE

NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

NEW YEAR AND REFLECTIONS FROM COP 24 IN POLAND COLLEEN CLOONAN

First, I must begin by saying Happy New Year! As 2018 has come to a close it is a time of new beginnings, new challenges, and new opportunities. It is a continued time of hope and determination to start afresh. I reflect on John O'Donohue's words:

*"For the gift of eyes to see the world,
The gift of mind to feel at home
In my life, the waves of possibility
Breaking on the shore of dawn,
The harvest of the past
That awaits my hunger,
And all the furtherings
This new day will bring"*

These words bring rejuvenation, comfort, and aspirations that awake the soul not just to a new day, but a new year. I wish you all a blessed beginning to the new year.

Imperative to beginning a new year is the reflection on the one past. This past December, I was honored to attend the 24th Session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, otherwise known as COP 24. One of the main agenda items for this year's conference was the finalization of the "Katowice Rulebook" which defines how climate action in the Paris Agreement is to be implemented and accounted for decades to come. Taking into high consideration the outcomes from the Mercy Asia Pacific Gathering in Samoa, the Mercy delegation had clear advocacy points to ensure these guidelines were based in human rights, that climate action would be adequately financed, and for countries to increase their ambitions due to the outcomes of the 1.5° IPCC Report. Furthermore, the Mercy delegation aimed for the incorporation of local knowledge; enhancement of ecosystem-based approaches and systems to aid waste reduction and promotion of sustainable consumption and production; the placement of people over profit; and continuation of advocacy promoting the Human Right to Water and Sanitation. Mercy International Association was also a signatory and supporter of the **"People's Demands for Climate Justice"**.

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878

MGA UN COORDINATOR: SR. ANGELA REED RSM PHD E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

OFFICE AT THE UN CONTINUED



Photo: Colleen Cloonan

Going into the conference, I knew these were ambitious goals but they were achievable with international cooperation and commitment.

WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES?

SETBACKS

- Within the final text of the “**Katowice Rulebook**” there is no mention of human rights, despite the recognition of human rights within the preamble of the Paris Agreement. Negotiators were not willing to mix social policies and climate policies despite the two influencing one another.

- Finance, the next contentious theme of COP 24, resulted in permissive texts giving wealthier Member States more flexibility with their contributions and reporting. Agreements were made to conduct negotiations on climate finance every two years after 2020.
- Despite widespread support and recognition of the 1.5° IPCC report, four Member States (Russia, Saudi Arabia, United States, and Kuwait) were not willing to heed the urgency and need for increased ambition to stay below this temperature limit. As a result, the final text does not “welcome” the report but welcomed its “timely completion” and “invited” countries to make use of the report in subsequent discussions at the UNFCCC”. (See CarbonBrief)
- Although talk emphasized increased ambitions towards reducing carbon emissions, some Member States fell into the trap of placing profits over the people themselves. One strong testimony against this was from 15 year old Greta Thunberg from Sweden who stated “You are not mature enough to tell it like it is. Even that burden you leave to us children. But I don’t care about being popular. I care about climate justice and the living planet. Our civilization is being sacrificed for the opportunity of a very small number of people to continue making enormous amounts of money.” Watch her full speech [here](#)..



Photo: Lifegate

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878

MGA UN COORDINATOR: SR. ANGELA REED RSM PHD E: mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie

NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

OFFICE AT THE UN CONTINUED

WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES?

HIGHLIGHTS

Despite setbacks there were some positives at COP 24 as well.

For one, Member States agreed to the launch of a facilitative working group that will scale up consideration of the experiences of local communities and indigenous peoples with climate change and efforts to respond to it. Additionally, decisions will also be made at COP 25 in Chile regarding the **Escazu Agreement**, Latin America and the Caribbean's first regional environmental treaty, which aims to protect the rights of access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters. These are important steps in the right direction as human rights and environmental defenders continue to risk their lives across the world.

There were also many inspiring showcases of ecosystem-based approaches and systems to aid waste reduction and promote sustainable consumption and production in many country pavilions, as well as knowledge from local communities shared (See useful resources on page 4). Lastly, the voices of civil society and youth were both strong and motivational in both the ministerial plenary sessions and events. The large presence of both civil society and youth focused discussions on 'people over profit/polluters' and the urgency to increase climate ambition (see picture above).



Source: MIA MGA UN

MOVING FORWARD

The Mercy Global Action Office at the UN is currently preparing a summary of issues presented at this conference and is undertaking some analysis in relation to further actions. This will be made available to the Mercy World in the coming months.

BEYOND COP 24

- United Nations General Assembly Summit on Climate- September 2019
- COP 25 -November 2019 (Negotiations of Escazu Agreement)
- COP 26- TBD 2020 (Paris Agreement enters into force. Deadline for countries to submit their National Climate Pledges)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

While you continue through the newsletter, you will read more about events, themes, find key resources distributed, and topics that were discussed throughout COP 24.

For daily, detailed accounts of the conference and its outcomes please see: Carbon Brief's analysis of COP 24 at <https://www.carbonbrief.org/cop24-key-outcomes-agreed-at-the-un-climate-talks-in-katowice> and the Climate Action Network International Newsletters which were produced daily during the COP 24 which can be found at <http://www.climatenetwork.org/eco-newsletters> . If reading other sources regarding outcomes from COP 24 be wary of "red flags".

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878

MGA UN COORDINATOR: SR. ANGELA REED RSM PHD E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

THROUGH OUR ECOSOC^{*} EYES...

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust



Photo: Colleen Cloonan

While in Poland for the COP 24, I had the opportunity to meet Mary O' Sullivan from the Centre for Dialogue and Prayer based at the edge of the Nazi concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau, as well as visit the former death camps.

This Centre was founded in 1992 by Cardinal Franciszek Macharski of Krakow in co-operation with the bishops of Europe as well as representatives of Jewish organisations. Through reflection, education, sharing and prayer, the Centre aims to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust while creating a place to help in the rebuilding of humanity, faith, reconciliation, mutual understanding and courage in solidarity for all those who are moved by what happened there. See <http://cdim.pl/en,1033>

Before my encounter at the former death camps, Sr Mary discussed the four dimensions of the Centres' programme which are all based on listening: to listen to the voice of the Earth, to listen to the voice of your heart, to listen to the voice of the other and to listen to the voice of God.

My time was unforgettable and will forever change the way I have previously learned the histories of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. Since returning, I continue to process my encounter and have found it a frequent conversation amongst others. Sharing my experiences and learning from the experiences of others is a small stepping stone to understanding and building a world filled with love and respect. It has also taught me the value of life.

I recently read an article detailing how Auschwitz shows the end of a process. A process that did not begin with the gas chambers “but from words, stereotypes and prejudice through legal exclusion, dehumanization and escalating violence.” This is important to remember in times of human suffering and hate, and stresses how we ourselves must create the opposite in our actions and speech. Those at the Auschwitz Memorial state “if you see human suffering & you think this is not so important because 'it's not yet Auschwitz' think again. We commemorate and educate about the tragic history of Auschwitz as we believe it should inspire people today to build a better and more responsible world.” Bob Behr, Holocaust survivor strives to encourage others to “feel an obligation to human kind to do whatever you can to help people, to liberate people, to do something good for people”.

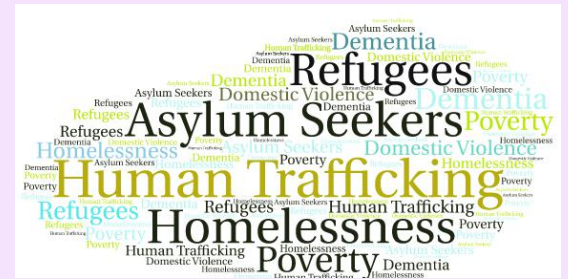
January 27th is International Holocaust Remembrance Day and I urge you all to bear witness and strive to be messengers of peace not just on this day but every day. The United Nations will be **hosting events** which can be seen at UNWebTV. For those that are able, I strongly encourage a visit to the Centre and the camps; each person's experience, healing, and processing is different. And above all, think about what you can do to help people.



Photo: Colleen Cloonan

THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACED PERSONS



- *Mercy Global Action Celebrated The Formal Adoption of the Global Compact on Migration!*

After the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the migration conferences in Morocco, the UN General Assembly made history by voting on and endorsing **UNGA Draft Resolution A/73/L.66** regarding the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration on December 19th, 2018.

The voting results by Member States were as follows:

- 152 in favor
- 5 against
- 12 abstention

This is a historic and hopeful achievement. Many thanks for all those in Mercy ministries and missions who assist migrants around the world, your partnership has been monumental and we are most grateful. This is the end of the beginning and the real hard work of implementation will now begin.




Photo: Committee on Migration



For those who want to view the webcast of the plenary meeting, the video is available and can be accessed **here**.

- *Climate Displacement at COP24--An Overview*

While coinciding with the UN migration conferences in Morocco, displacement due to climate change was to be addressed at COP 24 in many forms.

There continues to be widespread recognition internationally about how climate change has been and will affect the number of people migrating both internally within a country and to different countries. This year's COP stressed the issue of "just transition" for workers as they move away from fossil fuels towards other forms of employment and decent work; this creates internal displacement as countries move towards more sustainable means of energy. The Silesia Declaration on "just transition" was signed by 50 countries and noted in the final COP text.

Furthermore, "At the Paris talks in 2015, countries agreed to establish a taskforce to provide recommendations on averting, minimising and addressing climate-related displacement...The recommendations of this task force were submitted and discussed in September at a meeting of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), the formal mechanism at the UNFCCC for addressing the loss and damage caused by climate change. They were then endorsed at this year's COP as an annex to the WIM's final text, which "invites" countries to consider the recommendations." It is our hope that loss and damage continues to be addressed and reviewed with more urgency.

Many UN Agencies and countries of Asia-Pacific stressed the theme of climate displacement through hosting events entitled "Climate Induced Human Mobility: Taking Stock of 3 years discussions under the UNFCCC", "Voices from the climate frontlines: Protecting the most vulnerable and furthest behind" and "Living in the Face of Climate Change: From the Pacific Islands to the World". Some events may be found via <https://unfccc-cop24.streamworld.de/ondemand>

For more information on climate displacement see **UNHCR's "Key Concepts on Climate Change and Disaster Displacement.** Or **Sierra Club's "Women on the Move in A Changing Climate.**

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH

- ***Degradation of the Earth at COP 24--An Overview of Civil Society Action***

COP 24 was filled with a myriad of ministerial dialogues, press conferences, technology showcases, events, and more. One group of attendees that moved me in particular was civil society. Many civil society groups shared their concerns in striking ways, urging delegates to increase ambition and take action.



Photo: Colleen Cloonan

One creative way was through skits. To the left you will see a skit from an Asian nation who was recently affected by a typhoon. Holding a sign that says "2030" the participants fell to the ground, demonstrating the loss and destruction that will be caused if we do not act soon to mitigate temperature and sea level rise. Typhoons were also a concern that was voiced from Sisters in the

Philippines, Samoa, New Zealand, Guam, Mariana Islands and Micronesia at the Mercy Asia Pacific Gathering. We must continue to build resilience to climate change and disasters through international cooperation. We also must urge States to strengthen their disaster risk management and national action plans and incorporate local knowledge. For positive examples of climate action in the Pacific see groups like SPREP and The Nature Conservancy.

Another powerful skit can be seen to the right. This image shows a group that stood in silence to remember environmental and human rights defenders who have lost their lives. The protection of environmental and human rights defenders must be ensured. We must advocate for the incorporation and signing of the Escazu Agreement at COP 25 in Chile.



Photos: Colleen Cloonan

- ***Release of the 8th UN Ocean Action Newsletter***



Want to read about how the United Nations and local communities are working to preserve the world's oceans? Read the 8th volume of the United Nations Ocean Action Newsletter at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21289_Ocean_Action_NewsletterDec_2018_final.pdf

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

“ USEFUL RESOURCES

NEW RELEASE:
Global Trafficking in Persons
Report 2018



Gender Just Climate Solutions



Limiting Global Warming to 1.5
Degrees



Secretariat of the Pacific
Regional Environment
Programme (SPREP)



Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Image: United Nations

- **Free Online Courses on the SDGs**

Looking for ways to increase your knowledge about the UN SDG's? Well look no further! 17 universities from around the world have worked to create an initiative to educate learners about the SDGs and ways to achieve them. These universities have partnered with Coursera to offer free courses for the general public in the hopes of increasing SDG participation; also the courses often provide a hands-on experience with an NGO or international organization who is working to achieve the SDGs through their work. In addition to learning about the SDG's goals and targets, you will learn how to identify the heart of the issues and understand ways in which individuals and organizations are working nationally and internationally to achieve the SDGs. Read more and explore the courses here:

[https://www.humanrightscareers.com/un-sustainable-development-goals-courses/?](https://www.humanrightscareers.com/un-sustainable-development-goals-courses/?fbclid=IwAR1rKCFIIQvCPITvXIFDfsCeD6BwT_6tSbbAeaSVchbhotCQRKLIfGfQJcs)

[fbclid=IwAR1rKCFIIQvCPITvXIFDfsCeD6BwT_6tSbbAeaSVchbhotCQRKLIfGfQJcs](https://www.humanrightscareers.com/un-sustainable-development-goals-courses/?fbclid=IwAR1rKCFIIQvCPITvXIFDfsCeD6BwT_6tSbbAeaSVchbhotCQRKLIfGfQJcs)



USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Concrete Policies, Practices, and Partnerships to Promote the Implementation of the Global Compacts for Migrants and Refugees**, this Compendium was produced by the NGO Committee on Migration and shared at the Migration Conference this past December in Morocco.
- The Migration Policy Institute has published their "Top Ten Migration Issues" selections for 2018. As we launch a new year of advocacy, click [here](#) to review or broaden your expertise on the biggest developments in migration and migrants' rights over the past year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in

- **5 December- January 31st- Accepting applications for the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship** (click [here](#) for more information)
- **27th January-International Holocaust Remembrance Day**
- **29th January- 5th Annual Symposium The Role of Religion and Faith Based Organizations in International Affairs**
- **11th-22nd of February- Commission on Social Development**

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE) NEWS UPDATE

Greetings with the hope that 2019 has started well for you and will prove to be an enriching year, with not too many challenges! As we only returned to work last week, our news is limited this month. MGA is delighted that the EU ban on one-use plastic is now being implemented by the 28 member countries of the EU. We worked hard to achieve this ban through our Lenten campaign in 2018 and several other initiatives as outlined in the article below. Now we are nearing the completion of our series of pamphlets on the SDGs. Number 11– ‘Make Cities Inclusive, Safe Resilient and Sustainable’ plus SDG 14 on ‘Life Below Water’ is now available.

This month we will sadly be saying ‘au revoir’ to Betty Lacey, our Researcher for the MGA international programme. Betty joined the MGA Team as an intern in 2011 and then took on the responsibility of working collaboratively on ‘position papers’ to submit from MGA to the UN, in the development of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Funding from Trocaire made this possible. In March 2014 Betty was employed by MIA as a researcher working two days a week. We will miss Betty very much. Her professional approach, great sense of humour, flexibility and generosity made it a joy to work with her. It only remains to say a very sincere ‘thank you’ and to wish Betty every success and happiness on the next stage of her journey....

Denise Boyle fmdm

DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH- CARING FOR OUR COMMON HOME

- ***Supporting the EU Ban on Single-Use Plastic...***

Governments throughout the European Union (EU) are backing the critically important initiative of the EU to ban single-use plastic. The EU Parliament voted overwhelmingly on 28th October for an EU-wide ban on single-use plastics such as straws, cutlery, cotton buds and balloon sticks that account for 70% of the waste found in oceans and on beaches.

After the vote, the EU’s environment commissioner Karmenu Vella said: “Today we are one step closer to eliminating the most problematic single-use plastic products in Europe,” The vote to ban single-use plastic was passed by 571 votes to 53 opposed. That is only part of the story, now it’s the responsibility for us individually and collectively to support this critical initiative.

Following the EU vote Ireland passed legislation that all government departments and all public bodies including schools, have until the end of March 2019, to implement and comply with the EU legislation on single-use plastic.

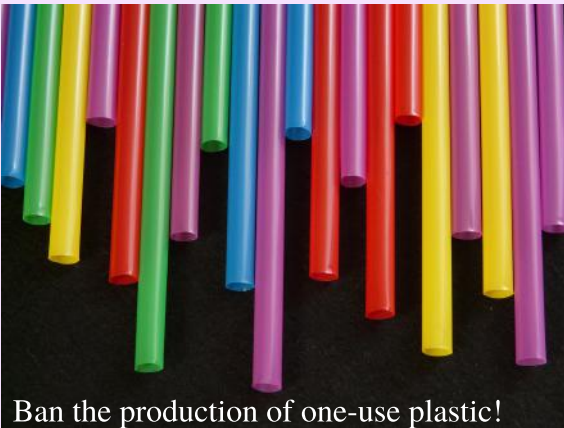
From this date the purchase of single-use cups (coffee), straws and plastic cutlery for use within their offices will be prohibited. The move to ban plastic water bottles is still a challenge due to the influence and resistance of the multi-national drinks companies



**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)



Ban the production of one-use plastic!

MIA Global Action was delighted to hear news of the EU legislation, as we have been deeply involved in the campaign to prohibit the sale of one-use plastic. In March 2018, we met with Eamonn Ryan, leader of the Green Party in Ireland to offer support for their effective, anti-plastic campaign. Eamonn shared other initiatives the Green Party is taking and was impressed with the resource we prepared: "The Journey Away from Plastic", developed as a series for Lent, 2018.

He was very supportive of our campaign, in collaboration with the 'Future We Need' (FWN) inter-religious group, to get the urgency of this critical environmental message out, not only in Ireland but also internationally.

The Mercy Family is facilitating this outreach to the global community. Eamonn believes that as a faith-based organisation, focussing on the "ethics and morals of protecting the environment for future generations" has a great impact.

- *Pamphlets of SDG 14 and 11 Now Available on the Mercy World Website!*

SDG Goal 14-Life Below Water



"We cannot allow our seas and oceans to be littered by endless fields of floating plastic"

Pope Francis, Earth Day, September 1, 2018

SDG Goal 11- Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable

"Surely, we have a responsibility to leave for future generations a planet that is healthy and habitable by all species."

Sir David Attenborough



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

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

MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Marian Gardner, Denise Boyle fndm, and Catherine Gibbons rsm

Inside the Issue:

NEWS FROM THE
MIA GA
OFFICE AT THE UN

INSIDE THE UN:
THROUGH OUR
ECOSOC EYES

THEMATIC
AREAS

UPCOMING
EVENTS

USEFUL
RESOURCES

NEWS FROM THE MIA
GA OFFICE
INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE

NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

HONING IN ON SOCIAL PROTECTION

Two significant Commissions will take place at the United Nations over the next two months. These are the 57th Commission for Social Development ([CSocD57](#)) and the 63rd Commission on the Status of Women ([CSW63](#)) Mercy Global Action will participate in both Commissions. In attendance at these commissions will be representatives from Member States, UN entities and NGO's from all regions of the world.

As is the practice, these commissions each have a priority theme. Significantly, both commissions this year include the theme of Social Protection in their Priority themes. Social Protection is considered a human right and in 2014 the Human Rights Council requested that the Secretary General of the United Nations submit an annual report on [the question of the realization](#) in all countries of economic, social and cultural rights with a particular focus on social protection.

So, what is social protection? There are numerous definitions on social protection floors but the most

commonly adopted one can be found in the International Labour Organizations, Recommendation No. 202 (ILO, 202). It states, ' Social Protection Floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees that should provide access to essential health care and to basic income security for all those in need over the life cycle'. (June 2012). Comprehensive social protection systems cover the following eight functions: benefits for sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family/child, maternity, invalidity/disability and survivors (Social Security Minimum Standards Convention, 1952 No. 102).

According to ILO's [World Social Protection Report](#) 2017- 19, approximately three quarters of the world's population lack adequate social protection. We have much work to do to ensure universal access to adequate social protection. We recommend reading the [report](#) to learn more about the current state of social protection systems around the globe.

Over the next couple of months, this newsletter will provide resources that specifically relate to the theme of social protection. As poverty eradication is a central concern of Mercy International Association, we encourage you to explore this notion of social protection and explore how your own particular country delivers social protection to the most vulnerable.

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878

MGA UN COORDINATOR: SR. ANGELA REED RSM PHD E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

THROUGH OUR ECOSOC^{*} EYES...

Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda: Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality Jan 16th Geneva

In March 2018, the Human Rights Council adopted **resolution 37/24** regarding the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within this resolution, the Council decided to organize intersessional meetings for dialogue and cooperation on human rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Agenda of the United Nations in New York focuses, in many ways, primarily on Sustainable Development while the United Nations in Geneva focuses on Human Rights issues; however, while the two are distinct, they are multifaceted, interconnected, and one in the same. This meeting was designed to bridge the gap between the two agendas in order to increase dialogue, exchange practical experiences and deepen the relationship between human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals.

On 16 January 2019, States, relevant United Nations and regional human rights mechanisms, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, national human rights institutions (NHRIs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) came together for the first intersessional meeting. This meeting focused on the 2019 session of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) ("Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality"), which will review global progress in achieving the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 4 (Quality education), SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), SDG 13 (Climate Change), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnership for the goals). The meeting gave space to voluntarily share good practices, achievements, challenges and lessons learned in the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Notable presentations were given by Mrs Mary Robinson, Chair of the Elders and President of the Mary Robinson Foundation—Climate justice, Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Click **here** for links to their presentations and recorded webcast of sessions.



Human rights and SDG implementation must be mutually reinforcing. Achieving the sustainable development goals will contribute significantly to the realisation of human rights, including importantly through the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions. A human rights-based approach, with the attendant features of participation, accountability, and non-discrimination, is essential if the 2030 Agenda is to be realised in a way that truly does 'leave no one behind.'

-Mary Robinson

THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACED PERSONS



- **UNODC Releases its 2018 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons**



On January 29, 2019 the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released its 2018 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The opening remarks featured H.E. Valentin Rybakov, Permanent Representative of Belarus to the UN, on behalf of the Group of Friends United Against Human Trafficking; as well as Ms. Kristiina Kangaspunta, Chief UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons Unit and Ms. Kalliopi Mingeirou of UN Women (ICAT 2019 Co-Chair). Ms. Simone Monasebian, Director UNODC NY Office, moderated the discussions.

The report covers 142 countries and provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the global, regional and national levels. According to the report, women and girls together continue to represent more than 70% of detected trafficking victims and with 59%, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is the most detected form of trafficking globally. These findings reaffirm Mercy Global Action's commitment to advocating for a human rights-based approach to

preventing trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in order to address the marginalisation of women and girls throughout their lifetime that render them vulnerable to being trafficked. Read the full report [here](#).

- **Introducing Inherent Dignity Webinar Series!**

Mercy Global Action is launching a three session interactive webinar series to take a closer look at Mercy International Association's publication entitled "Inherent Dignity", anti-human trafficking advocacy guidebook. A PDF version of the guidebook can be accessed [here](#). The Inherent Dignity Webinar Series aims to engage participants with the major learnings of this guidebook and address the following questions;

- What is the human-rights based approach to preventing trafficking?
- Why is it important to listen to survivors and ensure their participation in the work of prevention? What are governments' legal obligations to preventing trafficking?
- What can governments, organizations and individuals do to prevent trafficking?

INHERENT DIGNITY

An Advocacy Guidebook

to preventing Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and realizing the human rights of women and girls throughout their lives

human trafficking

Mercy Global Action Presents

INHERENT DIGNITY WEBINAR SERIES

Session One: Introducing the Human Rights-based Approach as Applied to Trafficking

March 7, 2019
11:00AM - 12:00PM [NYC Time]

Save the Date

The first session, 'Introducing the Human Rights-based Approach as Applied to Trafficking' will take place on **Thursday, March 7th, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM [NYC time]**. Please save the date! Stay tuned for more information!

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- *Another Vale SA Brazil Dam Collapses*

After a tailings dam burst at the Feijao iron mine in the state of Minas Gerais on Friday January 25th, Brazilian rescuers have already confirmed 121 deaths and have been searching for some 200 missing people. The company responsible is Vale SA, who is also one of the three companies that owns the Samarco tailings dam, also located in Minas Gerais, which collapsed back in November 2015 killing 19 people and pouring 60 million cubic meters of toxic waste into a major river. It is being reported that the Feijao iron mine has released 12 million cubic meters of toxic waste. A Brazilian court has recently ordered Vale SA to refrain from disposing of tailings at eight of its dams.

The Churches and Mining Network has released a statement to stand in solidarity with the victims and to demand justice and an end to impunity. The Statement rightfully argues that “socio-environmental crime is not an accident” and also points out the responsibility of the State, which grants licenses to extractive projects, to monitor projects and “ensure safety and dignified life of the communities and the environment.” Read the full statement [here](#).

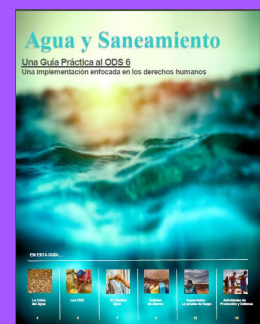


Click **here** to watch a video from a Brazilian television station that captured the dam collapse.

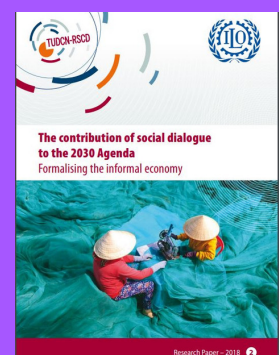
Photo: www.reuters.com

“USEFUL RESOURCES

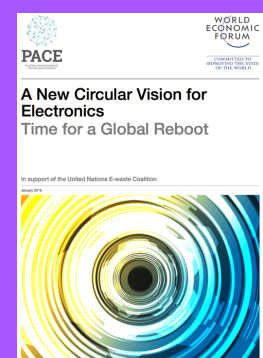
SDG 6 Water and Sanitation NOW IN SPANISH



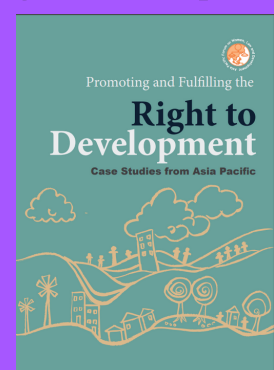
The Contribution of Social Dialogue to the 2030 Agenda



A New Circular Vision for Electronics: Time for a Global Reboot



Case Study on Fulfilling the Right to Development



**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Image: United Nations

- ***Progressing National SDG Implementation***

On 30th January, 2019, a coalition of civil society organizations launched the third edition of "Progressing National SDG Implementation" report. This recent edition analyses the 46 Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) submitted to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The report found that almost two thirds of reporting countries have incorporated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into existing national development plans directly. Using its findings, the report provides a range of recommendations on how countries can improve their implementation of the SDGs. One of its recommendation is for member States to improve on their engagement of non-state actors in governance mechanisms for the implementation of SDGs. To learn more about the key findings and conclusions of the report read the full report [here](#).



USEFUL RESOURCES

- Migration Policy Practice Publishes a Special Issue on Migrant Children. Read it [here!](#)
- Chair of the 11th Global Forum on Migration & Development reports on 10 Commitments from Civil Society for the GCM. Read them [here!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Some events MGA at the UN will be participating in

- 11th-22nd of February- Commission on Social Development
- 11th February - Homelessness: A Prominent Sign of Social Inequalities
- 19th February - Youth Empowered! Enabling Youth Through Social Protection: Education, Employment, & Environment
- 27th February- PGA's High Level Debate on International Migration and Development
- 7th March- Mercy Global Action Webinar on Inherent Dignity

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

REFLECTION FROM DENISE BOYLE FMDM

As I sit here preparing to type what is my last contribution for the MIA-Mercy Global Action (MGA) Newsletter, my mind is a kaleidoscope of images and memories.... I will endeavour to share some of these in this short article. My first memory is of meeting Sr Mary Ryan to speak about working with her on the MECPATH (Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Trafficking with the Hospitality Sector), a new initiative that was great to work on together. In turn this led to meeting Srs. Patricia O'Donovan and Marie Louise White, followed by three generous volunteers from each of the four Mercy Provinces in Ireland. Together we made up the MECPATH Team. In the MIA offices in Herbert St where my office was located, I met Sr. Mary Reynolds, the Director of MIA, also Mary Purcell, Betty Lacey and Sr. Catherine Gibbons, the three members of the MGA Team.

The conference call meetings are an important part of our programme as we learn from each other, share ideas, concerns, best practice initiatives and support each other in the challenges that justice work entails. Recognising that our collective work for justice would be enhanced if we met face to face and visited some of the projects the Mercy Family were working on in the different countries, we began a series of 'field visits'. South Africa was our first one, followed by Kenya, then Australia, Newfoundland, the four Provinces within Ireland, concluding with the Philippines this past October.

In between we met in the New York office and participated in different conferences organised by the UN, and also the Vatican. The latter ones covered issues around the heinous crime of human trafficking, a justice issue that Pope Francis is committed to eradicating. Last July I participated in an excellent Vatican conference to mark the third anniversary of Pope Francis' ground breaking encyclical on the environment 'Laudato Si'.

As I enter the final week of my ministry with MIA-MGA I am conscious of the many gifts, challenges and valuable learnings that have been part of my journey with the global Mercy Family. I have been and am inspired by the dedication, professional competence and deep compassion for those on the margins, especially the vulnerable, including Mother Earth.



Left to right: Denise, Catherine and Betty during the farewell lunch

Now it is time to hand on the leadership baton to Sr. Angela Reed rsm in the NY office. Angela has been a pleasure to work with and I know will do a great job leading the Global Action Team into the future.

Sr. Catherine has added a short reflection on her time with MGA. Also included are two more of the SDG pamphlets # 3 and 10 on 'Good Health and Well-Being' and 'Reduce Inequality within and between Countries.'

Thank you for all that we have shared during my journey with the Mercy Family. I wish you and all our colleagues every blessing as you continue your journey, to redress injustice in all its forms...

Peace,

Denise Boyle fmdm

NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

REFLECTION FROM CATHERINE GIBBONS RSM

This morning 12 Feb 2019, I was present at Morning Prayer in Catherine's Chapel. I was conscious that it was here that Catherine Mc Auley herself prayed. It was also here that the early foundresses that took the Mercy spirit far afield also prayed. There was something about lifting people up and the global Mercy story that attracted me to respond to an advertisement in Mercy E-news. The ad was seeking a volunteer to work with the MIA Global Action Team.

I began on 28 August 2011 and agreed to do two and half days each week in the Global Action office. This necessitated travelling down from Enniskillen and staying in Baggot St.

At this time Rio+20 was all in the air and its importance and breadth touched me. It is amazing to see how the global picture has developed in the intervening years. We are now sharing the outcome of Rio, in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Central to this are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our team in Baggot St have produced a user friendly pamphlet for every SDG.

Early on I was engaged in research and collecting information about the Mercy Family who were working in the area, plus raising awareness about Human Trafficking. This work touched me deeply as the plight of women, young people and children was horrendous. At the 20 Anniversary of MIA I watched a production by the 'Diabola Group' from Belfast, which moved everybody to the core, even though we knew that this was just a 'mild' version of reality.

As Institutes and Congregations became more aware of the extent of human trafficking more Mercy sisters worldwide became involved in making a difference. Today, stories of real action encourage us all to do our part. And it has left me with a 'band of heroes' that I have 'met', among them Colleen from South Africa, Jeanne from the U.S, Lynda from the UK, Judith in Guyana, Margie in Newfoundland and many, many others.

Now it is time to say thank you and au revoir...

FINAL SDG PAMPHLETS NOW AVAILABLE ON MERCYWORLD.ORG

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at every age



SDG 10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries



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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3



NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE

Greetings from the Mercy Global Action Office. Attached to this newsletter are two significant items. These news items were featured in MIA's Mercy E-News over the past two weeks. A significant initiative that will be coordinated through this office is the Mercy Global Action Fellowship. After an extensive selection process, we are pleased to announce that ten vibrant and passionate women of Mercy will begin a 12-month fellowship in August 2019. The first phase of the program will take place at Metta Karuna in Siem Reap, Cambodia, where Sr Denise Coghlan RSM will host the group and engage all in a reflective as well as participatory process. For a list of Fellows and their Bios, see this [link](#).

Another significant publication is 'Mercy Global Action: A Way Forward' March 2019. Mercy International Association has committed to building a solid Mercy Global Advocacy Unit, which will operate out of New York. This document provides a comprehensive overview of the work of Mercy Global Action, including core strategies, team structure, methodology and the integration and adoption of the MIRP into the work of Mercy Global Action. I hope you will take time to become acquainted with this document. See link [here](#). For the next couple of editions of this newsletter we will have a section entitled "Mercy Global Action: A Way Forward". In this section, different aspects of our work will be highlighted. We hope this enables you to gain insight into the ministry of Mercy Global Action.

IN THIS ISSUE

MGA A WAY FORWARD

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER





MGA A WAY FORWARD...

At this time in history, and indeed in this time of global vulnerability, MIA is committed to building a solid Mercy global advocacy unit. This office has an agenda that positions itself as a change maker for global justice, not only at the United Nations, but through its work in local communities, nations and regions throughout the world. Grounded in the spirit of Mercy, MGA's justice and advocacy work seeks to analyse root causes and engage in theological, ethical, social, political, economic, gendered and human rights analysis. This Mercy unit is in a critical position to advocate and influence policy makers and governments at national and international level and to 'harness the energy that was created world-wide' through the Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP).

Mercy Global Action is the justice arm of Mercy International Association and its mandate is as relevant today as when it was first established. We are in a time when peoples and earth are crying out for justice. Millions of people are living in poverty, displaced and/or have no voice to influence global justice. Note that, currently 42 individuals have the same wealth as 3.7 billion of the most impoverished.¹ Likewise, we are extracting and using the Earth and its resources as if they are infinite. We are "faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature."²

As Mercy is an international religious organization, there is a moral and an urgent need for the Sisters of Mercy to respond, by working to transform global systems of oppression with justice, active compassion and global solidarity. Some of the key issues MGA has been committed to responding to are:

- Human trafficking and violence against women and girls
- Ecological abuse and the effects of catastrophic climate change
- An unsustainable model of development that focuses on growth, expediency, the accumulation of wealth, and the exploitation of Peoples and Earth
- Patriarchal structures that oppress women
- Mass migration largely driven by economic, social, and political factors as well as conflict
- Human rights abuses related to water, land, air, and life of entire populations
- Government abdication of responsibility to protect human rights

In working for global justice, Mercy Global Action seeks an alternative vision to: Patriarchy, Unsustainable models of development, Neoliberalism, Anthropocentrism, Gendered Violence, Racism, Sexism, Colonialism and other systems that result in people being excluded and exploited.

The 2016 Mercy International Reflection Process affirmed and articulated even further the concern for justice and the need for action throughout the Mercy World. As a result of the MIRP, Mercy Global Action is now specifically focused on Degradation of Earth and Displacement of Persons. Mercy Global Action seeks to interact and work with Mercy grassroots ministries and at policy level at the UN.

1. Elliot, Larry "Inequality Gap Widens as 42 People Hold Same Wealth as 3.7bn Poorest" The Guardian, Jan 22 2018. Accessed March 8, 2018

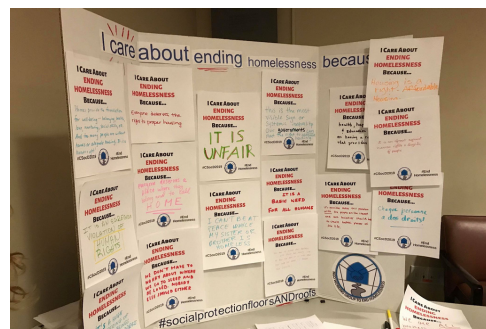
2. Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home, Encyclical Letter, by Pope Francis, Vatican City, Italy: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015.



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

• *Homelessness: A prominent Sign of Social inequalities*



As a member of the the United Nations NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), Mercy Global Action helped organize a side event titled “Homelessness: A prominent Sign of Social inequalities”, which took place on 11 February during 57th Commission on Social Development (CSocD57). In his opening remarks, Ambassador Brian Flynn, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the U.N., stated that “homelessness is one of the most visible and egregious signs of inequality” and it “touches every country, every city.” Ms. Nan. Roman, President of the US National Alliance to End Homelessness, spotlighted how marginalised communities in the United States, including racial minorities and individuals with disabilities, are at a greater risk for becoming homeless.

Julietta Perucca, the Senior Aide for the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, underscored that “homelessness is a gross violation of human rights” and therefore requires a human rights-based response that recognises individuals in situations of homelessness as right holders with agency, who must be at the center of solutions to homelessness. The most moving part of the event was when Iris Bailey, who represented Life Experience and Faith Sharing Associates (LEFSA), shared her personal experience of being stripped of her identity and dignity when she entered a homeless shelter in New York City. LEFSA helped connect Iris to resources and helped her move out of the shelter, which enabled her to reclaim her identity and dignity. Iris stressed the need for investment into affordable housing stating, "We need to stop building luxury buildings. We need affordable housing."

• *Launch of Inherent Dignity Webinar Series!*

Mercy Global Action Invites You to Engage with

INHERENT DIGNITY

An Advocacy Guidebook to Preventing Human Trafficking

Webinar Series

Session 1: Introducing the Human Rights-based Approach to Trafficking Prevention
7 MARCH 2019
11:00AM - 12:00PM [NY Time] [Register here!](#)

Session 2: Governments' Obligations to Prevent Trafficking
24 MAY 2019
9:00AM - 10:00PM [NY Time]

Session 3: Prevention of Trafficking: What Organizations and Individuals Can Do
24 JULY 2019
11:00AM - 12:00PM [NY Time]

Save the Date!

On 7 March, 2019, Mercy Global Action launched session one of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series to take a closer look at Mercy International Association publication **Inherent Dignity**. A total of 100 people from across the world registered to participate in this first webinar session. The countries represented include, Mauritius, Macedonia, United Kingdom, Kenya, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Australia, India, Albania, Malta, Romania, South Africa, Nigeria, Poland, Zambia, United States and Canada. Mercy Global Action is encouraged by the high level of interest on this vital human rights issue.

This first session titled, “Introducing the Human Rights-Based Approach to Trafficking Prevention” explored seven different paradigms for considering trafficking, presented quantitative data from the recently published UNODC Trafficking in Persons report, and examined how survivor stories and international human rights law interact in prevention work. During her presentation Sister Angela Reed, co-writer of the Inherent Dignity guidebook, pointed out the limitations of quantitative data and stated that “the most significant data is the data that we gain from survivors accounts, and this is very much in line with the human rights-based approach.”

The highlight of the webinar session was when guest speaker Mely Lanrio, a trafficking survivor advocate, shared her powerful story, providing insights into the human rights violations she experienced as a young girl that made her vulnerable to being trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Mely’s story highlights the need for trafficking prevention that is centered on realising the human rights of women and girls. We want to sincerely thank Mely for her willingness to share her story and for her deep commitment to trafficking prevention. We also want to thank all of our attendees for their participation and engagement. The webinar session was recorded can be viewed [here](#). Please feel free to share it with your networks. We hope you will all be able to join us for session two and three of this webinar series.



THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Sisters of Mercy Signatory to Statement Holding Corporations Accountable for Human Rights Abuses during the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva*

On March 11th, Constantine D'Abreu from Edmund Rice International delivered a statement on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy International Association and Members of the NGO Mining Working Group during the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council.

Supporting the complementarity of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Draft Legally Binding Instrument on Transnational Corporations in respect to Human Rights, the statement focuses on prevention, protection, and accountability. Some key advocacy points are detailed below:



- "We encourage States to strengthen and incorporate into their domestic laws clear provisions and obligations to enforce corporate human rights, due diligence policies, including within supply chains, subsidiaries and private investors.
- The Draft Treaty's focus on the rights of victims and access to justice and remedy is key, especially for human and environmental rights defenders.... we promote the establishment of a forum where those most affected, in particular women, can testify, safely and privately, in regards to injustices.
- We call for the integration of preventative mechanisms..and recommend that regulations mandate human and environmental impact assessments that are ongoing and regular.

You can watch the full delivery of the statement **here**. (1:10:30)

- *Mercy Global Action Recommends Sr. Mary Tinney's Webinar on EcoSpirituality*

On February 14th, Mary Tinney rsm gave a Webinar presentation discussing the principles of ecospirituality in relation to her doctoral thesis "When Heaven and Earth Embrace: How Do We Engage Spiritually in an Emerging Universe?". The presentation was recorded and can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/317175839>. A replay is also available on the front page of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Papua New Guinea and Australian website.

During her presentation, Mary references some resources which can be found below:

- Simple Daily Gestures Booklet: <https://institute.mercy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Simple-Daily-Gestures-booklet.pdf>
- Blessing of the Rivers: <https://institute.mercy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BOTR.pdf>
- Encounter in the Bunyas: <https://institute.mercy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Encounter-in-the-Bunyas.pdf>
- Earth Link: <http://www.earth-link.org.au/>

At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



• *Youth-Led Side Event! by Marian Gardner*

Along with five youth interns from faith-based NGOs, I had the opportunity to organize a youth-led side event titled “Youth Empowered! Enabling youth through social protection: Education, Employment, Environment” during the 57th Commission on Social Development. The event, which took place at the United Nations on 29, February, 2019, explored how youth are impacted by lack of access to social protection in the areas of education and employment and how this exclusion impacts their capability to respond to environmental challenges.

The panelists included, Morgan Thobe, a UNICEF youth Engagement Fellow; Saphira Rameshfar, a representative of the Baha’i International Community’s United Nations office; Devopriya Dutta, a young environmental activists and campaign manager at Tarumitra, a students’ movement to protect and promote a healthy environment; Agostino Sella, creator of the “circular migration” projection, which supports agricultural interventions to provide job opportunities to African youth in order to prevent migration due to unemployment and poverty; and Apefa Adjivon, founder of the Pearl Project, a centre that connects youth and women of color from low-income communities to job opportunities through mentorship. Devopriya, who joined the discussion via video, stressed the importance of extending youth’s access to social protection in order to enable and empower them to address environmental challenges.

Many of the panelists highlighted youth’s lack of access to decent employment opportunities. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 77% of young workers (97 % in developing countries) are in informal employment. Youth’s high participation in informal employment is one reason their access to contributory social protection schemes, like unemployment insurance and health insurance, is limited. This in turn puts youth at a greater risk for falling into extreme poverty. Through discussions on the Pearl Project and Circular Migration Project, the event provided examples of good practices for addressing the exclusion of marginalised youth from employment opportunities. Panelists called on governments to partner with youth and implement social protection policies that address the specific needs of youth, a vital step towards enabling youth to reach their full potential and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

I am grateful for the opportunity to organize a side-event and look forward to participating and contributing to the Pre-Commission on the Status of Women Youth Dialogue, which will further explore social protection as well as the implementation of public services and sustainable infrastructure that address the needs of young people.

Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



• *Pope Francis Affirms the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*

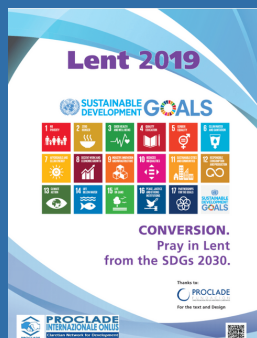
The International Conference “Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Listening to the cry of the earth and of the poor”, promoted by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, took place in Vatican’s New Synod Hall from March 7-9, 2019.

During this conference, Pope Francis affirmed the importance of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and stressed the need to involve all people, especially the indigenous, in the creation and implementation of the goals. Pope Francis stressed “solutions are what I hope will emerge from this Conference: concrete responses to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor...Concrete commitments to promoting real development in a sustainable way through processes open to people’s participation. Concrete proposals to facilitate the development of those in need... Concrete economic policies that are focused on the person and that can promote a more humane market and society. Concrete economic measures that seriously take into consideration our common home [and] concrete ethical, civil and political commitments that develop alongside our sister earth, and never against her.”

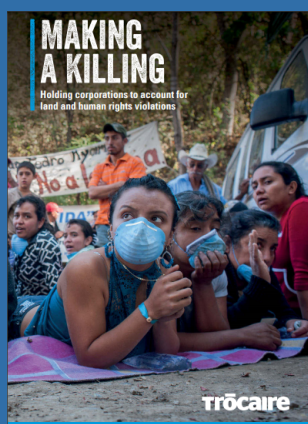
Concluding his statement, he expressed his “heartfelt appreciation for...efforts in caring for our common home at the service of promoting an inclusive sustainable future...And yet, “Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start” (Laudato Si’, 205).” To read Pope Francis’ full statement click [here](#).

“USEFUL RESOURCES

SDGs and Lent Resources
Spanish & English



Trocaire Making a Killing: Holding corporations to account for land and human rights violations



**Beyond Boundaries Summary Report:
Allying human rights with other
struggles for social and economic
justice**



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 11th-22nd of March- Commission on the Status of Women
- 18th March - Addressing Vulnerability: Collaborative Approaches to Trafficking Through a Human Rights Lens
- 19th March - Trafficking Event at St John's University
- 18-20th March - Gaps in International Environmental Law in Nairobi
- 22nd March- World Water Day
- 28th March - High-level meeting on the Protection of the Global Climate for Present and Future Generations of Humankind
- 1-5th April- Commission for Population and Development
- 5th April- Carlow University Honors Students Visiting
- 9-11th April- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Anti-Racism Conference in Philadelphia

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

MARCH/APRIL 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4



IN THIS ISSUE

MGA A WAY FORWARD

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA HLPF SERIES

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER



MARY REYNOLDS RSM VISITS MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

Angela Reed rsm , Coordinator of Mercy Global Action, was pleased to welcome Mary Reynolds rsm (Executive Director of MIA) as she visited from Ireland to mark the beginning of the newly consolidated Mercy Global Action office in New York. The week hosted by Angela Reed, Colleen Swain and Marian Gardner provided an opportunity for evaluation, forward planning and celebration.



Left to right: Colleen Swain, Mary Reynolds rsm, Angela Reed rsm,
and Marian Gardner

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

THEMATIC AREAS

Degradation of Earth and Displacement of Persons are the two main thematic areas of Mercy International Association. These issues are complex and intersecting. Ultimately, while the naming of specific issues is important, it is critical for Mercy Global Action to focus on root causes. In many instances root cause analysis intersects across all the issues. Outlined below are the issues identified through the Mercy International Reflection Process ([MIRP](#)) as well as those identified by Mercy Global Action.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

- 
- Ecological abuse and the effects of catastrophic climate change on people and the planet
 - Fossil Fuel Extraction
 - Garbage & Pollution
 - Mining & Fracking
 - Oceans
 - Sustainable living
 - Violations Against Human Rights Defenders
 - Water

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- 
- Asylum seekers
 - Family Violence
 - Homelessness
 - Human Trafficking
 - Mental Illness-Dementia
 - Migration
 - Refugees
 - Violation of indigenous people's territorial rights

These concerns are critiqued and informed by Mercy Charism, Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach, Mercy International Reflection Process, Catholic Social Teaching, Laudato Si' and other relevant materials.



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

• *Ending Homelessness, a Key Focus for Mercy Global Action*

Steps Mercy Global Action has taken to advocate for the eradication of homelessness

- Joined the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH)
- Signed on to a written statement to urge the 57th Commission on Social Development (CSocD57) to address the multifaceted problem of housing exclusion and street homelessness
- Co-sponsored a side event at the United Nations, which examined the underlying causes of homelessness.
- Participated in a two-day conference to discuss strategies and tools for strengthening global advocacy efforts to end homelessness
- Lobbied United Nations Member States to vote for homelessness as the priority theme the 58th meeting of CSocD in 2020.

Under the umbrella of Displacement of Persons, one of the thematic areas identified during the Mercy International Reflection Process ([MIRP](#)), homelessness has emerged as a key advocacy concern for Mercy Global Action (MGA). In 2018, MGA joined the United Nations NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH) to bolster its advocacy for the eradication of homelessness and the realisation of the human right to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all.

As a member of the WGEH, MGA signed on to a written statement for the 57th Commission on Social Development (CSocD57). The statement urges the Commission to address the multifaceted problem of housing exclusion and street homelessness. Read the full statement [here](#). In addition, MGA helped organise WGEH side-event titled “Homelessness: A prominent Sign of Social inequalities” during CSocD57 with the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations and Institute of Global Homelessness as co-sponsors. The event brought together advocates, researchers, policy makers and people living on the streets to explore the structural causes of homelessness and advocate for a human rights-based response to homelessness.

In February 2019, through WGEH, MGA participated in a two-day conference to discuss opportunities for coordinating existing efforts around ending homelessness and strategizing for effective advocacy at the United Nations. The conference brought together six members of the WGEH, representatives from Institute for Global Homelessness (IGH), National Alliance to End Homelessness, Depaul International, Community Solutions, and a representative from FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless.



DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

CONTINUED...

The discussions throughout the two-day conference focused on concrete actions in the areas of advocacy, research, education and engagement. Some of the agreed initial strategies include; raise the global profile of homelessness, push for a global measurement of homelessness, and achieve agreement on a global goals related to homelessness. After sharing and unpacking the lessons and outcomes from the conference, the WGEH has drafted a strategic matrix document, which outlines our advocacy priorities, operational and functional structure, and our partnerships moving forward. A final draft of this document will soon be available for sharing.

Following the conference, Mercy Global Action along with members of the WGEH continued our efforts to mobilize support among UN Member States to vote for homelessness as the priority theme for the 58th meeting of the UN Commission on Social Development (CSocD58), which will take place in 2020. The negotiations among member states were contentions as there were five other issues competing to be the priority theme. We are happy to share that the selected priority theme for CSocD58 is “Affordable Housing and Social Protection for All to Address Homelessness.” This gives MGA about a twelve-month lead in to set our advocacy points and policy recommendations in order to effectively advocate and influence the outcome of the Draft resolution.

As a priority theme of next year’s CSocD, the urgent need to address global homelessness will be on the UN Agenda for the first time. As is the practice, the Secretary General will release a report on the priority theme, this means the global situation of homelessness and the need for affordable housing and social protection will be brought to the forefront. Additionally, at the end of CSocD58, a draft resolution will hopefully be passed, which will seek to establish agreed language and a common definition of homelessness. WGEH has started working on a zero draft resolution, which we will provide to the CSocD58 committee responsible for drafting the UN resolution. Additionally, WGEH hopes to build a partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the department responsible for facilitating agreement on resolutions for the Commission for Social Development, in order to move our advocacy agenda forward during CSocD58.

Mercy Global Action is encouraged by this critical step the UN has taken to recognise homeless as a global issue. We will continue to ensure that the grassroots experiences of Mercy Sisters and affiliates across the Mercy World influence global policies on homelessness. As the MIRP report states, we envision “cities and towns where homelessness is prevented, treated and resolved for all; safe, affordable housing is basic in giving people dignity, hope and a sense of belonging.”

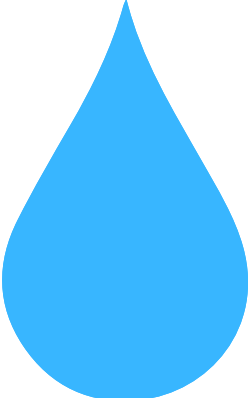




THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Urgent Words from Pope Francis on World Water Day*



At a meeting of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development in commemoration of World Water Day (March 22nd), Pope Francis sent an urgent appeal to the participants on the issue of water and sanitation. As the United Nations aptly chooses an annual theme for World Water Day, the Dicastery also supported the symbolic theme of "Leaving No One Behind".

The theme comes to life through "evangelical teachings on the loving care for the poor, the humble, and the marginalized; and the social implications of the Christian faith make us long for truly nobody to be left behind in terms of access to water". And in his encyclical, *Laudato si'*, re-iterates "access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave

social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity". Pope Francis calls on all generations "together with all the inhabitants of the planet --to value and defend what is good." Which "also means being aware of the need to respond with concrete facts; not only with the maintenance or improvement of water structures, but also by investing in the future...[and] overcoming the notion of turning water into a mere commodity, regulated exclusively by the laws of the market."

Read Pope Francis' full statement [here](#).

- *Mercy Global Action to Co-Sponsor Side Events During the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*

The 18th Session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) will take place April 22nd-May 3rd in New York. This Year's theme is "Traditional knowledge: Generation, transmission and protection".

Mercy Global Action will be Co-Sponsoring an event entitled "Grandmother Council: Anishnabe Training Bundle for Sharing Knowledge on Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation". The Grandmothers Training Bundle is a tool that offers an Anishnabek perspective to those doing the work of protection and prevention of human trafficking. In addition, Mercy Global Action, through the NGO Mining Working Group, will be Co-sponsoring events with the Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) and the NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the rights of nature.

As we learn from traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples, Alma Jean Migwans, Ashinabe Grandmother states "we need to know each other's truths and understand each other. We are in a time in the world today, there is powerful energy in every kind of movement. It is challenging us to move forward to pick up our bundles and take over in governance, politics, and healing". Stay turned for a report on these events in the May newsletter.

- *Integral Ecology and the Synod for the Amazon Region - October 2019*

Connecting the theme of the PFII of traditional knowledge, the theme of the 2019 Synod of Bishops for the Amazon region is "The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology".

REPAM is a key advisor for the Synod and its "field teams are holding 45 assemblies across nine countries in preparation, with indigenous peoples, rural communities, social movements and pastoral workers. In the words of Pope Francis, 'We need the native peoples to shape the culture of the local churches in the Amazon'". See 'Useful Resources'.

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

- ***Mercy Global Action at CSW!***

On 18 March, 2019, Mercy Global Action, Mercy International Association, along with three other co-sponsoring NGOs including, UNANIMA International, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, and the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, organized a parallel event entitled “Addressing Vulnerability: Collaborative Approaches to Trafficking Prevention through a Human Rights Lens” during the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The event was also endorsed by the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons.



Photo: MGA

Jean Quinn, Executive Director of UNANIMA International, moderated the panel discussions. Panelists included, Ambassador Mr. Valentin Rybakov, Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations, Mely Lenario, a human trafficking survivor advocate, Marietta Latonia, a Professor of Social Work, and Ms. Simone Monasebian, Chief of the New York Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Panelists discussed the significance of reducing the vulnerabilities of women and girls to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and ensuring that survivor advocates' voices are central to preventive policy. Additionally, panelists called for effective prevention and treatment services, and for the implementation of the Trafficking Protocol and the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Thank you to all of our panelists and our moderator for participating in this critical discussion and thank you to our engaged attendees. Watch the event on the MIA Facebook page [here](#).

- ***CSTIP CSW event!***

On March 12, 2019, Sister Angela Reed, Coordinator of Mercy Global Action, participated as a panelist in another parallel event for the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The event entitled “Using The SDGS Preventing Women and Girls' Vulnerabilities to Trafficking” was organized by the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (CSTIP), where Sister Angela serves as a member of the steering committee. The other panelists included, Ruchira Gupta, founder/president of Apne Aap, a grassroots Indian organization that works to empower girls and women to resist and end sex trafficking, and Shandra Woworuntu, a survivor leader and executive director of Mentari, a human trafficking survivor empowerment program.

During her presentation, Angela shared about her decade long work with survivors of human trafficking from the Philippines and called on all governments to address the “multiplicity of vulnerabilities” including poverty, lack of access to adequate education, drug and alcohol abuse, community and family violence, and sexual abuse, which put women and girls at a higher risk for being trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

- ***Mercy Meets Mercy during the Commission on the Status of Women!***

Mercy Global Action had a large delegation this year at the Commission on the Status of Women, including staff of MGA, survivor advocates, academia, and staff of MercyFirst in Syosset, New York. In addition, MGA had support at event on "Addressing Vulnerabilities" from Sr. Michele Schroeck rsm and seven youth from the House of Mercy in Erie, Pennsylvania! Thank you!

Reflection of Eileen McGann, MercyFirst Syosset Delegate to CSW

"I wanted to thank you again for all the generous support in facilitating our group from MercyFirst to attend the CSW at the United Nations last week. The programs and side events give us much to consider in our work, and how to move forward to help the mission of the Sisters of Mercy and the values of the UN integrate with the work we are doing at MercyFirst. The art therapy staff was inspired, and we are looking at ways to incorporate through the arts, interventions needed to help keep our youth safe and find ways to heal..."

It was an honor to attend the side event on "Addressing Vulnerability: Collaborative Approaches to Trafficking Prevention Through A Human Rights Lens". The perspective of all the speakers was interesting and valuable. The most moving part of the day was hearing Mely Lenario, Survivor Advocate, share some of her experiences. She is courageous, kind and has a gentle presence, I am so glad you introduced us after the talk."



Angela Reed RSM pictured with MGA CSW Delegates!

- *Mercy Global Action and CSW Delegates at St. John's University!*

Angela Reed RSM, coordinator of Mercy Global Action, and Mely Lenario, a human trafficking survivor advocate, Marietta Latonia, a Professor of Social Work, who were Mercy Global Action's delegates for the 63rd Session for the Commission on the Status of Women, presented at "Human Trafficking Unveiled: Women Speak Out" event at St. John's University on 19 March, 2019. The event was organized by Catholic Relief Services, Ladies of Charity, St. John's Vincentian Center for Church and Society and Mercy Global Action. Click [here](#) to read an article about the event, which was published on the The Torch, an independent student newspaper of St. John's University.

Introducing MGA HLPF SERIES



- *What is the HLPF?*

The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the central platform for reviewing and following up on the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals at the global level. The HLPF meets every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly (also called the SDG Summit) for two days. The next meeting is taking place 24 - 25 September 2019. Additionally, the HLPF meets annually under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for eight days.

The 2019 HLPF meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC will be held from 9 July to 18 July 2019. This includes the three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from 16 July to 18 July 2019. This year's HLPF theme is "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality" and the following goals are being reviewed:

- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Mercy Global Action will be paying close attention to the reviews on Goal 10 and 13 while recognizing the interlinkages between all the Goals. Click [here](#) to learn more about HLPF. Please stay tuned for next month's discussion on Voluntary National Reviews and how major groups and other stakeholders participate in the HLPF!

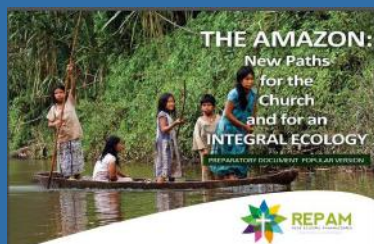
Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

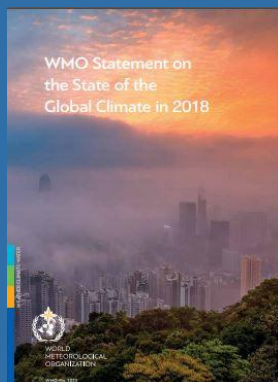
777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

“USEFUL RESOURCES

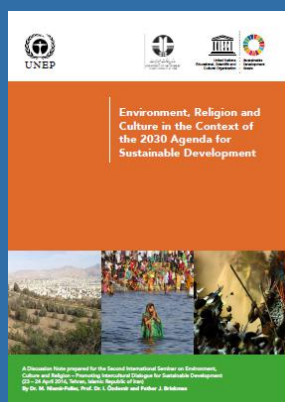
The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology



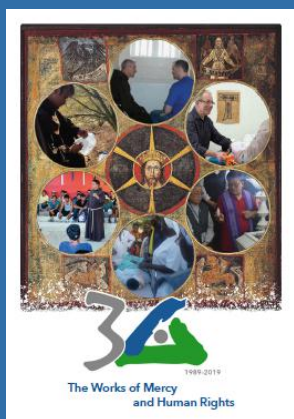
The UN Global Climate Report



Environment, Religion and Culture in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The Works of Mercy and Human Rights



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 8-11th April 2019 Angela Reed rsm Moderates Panel at "Releasing those Unjustly Bound: International Conference Pastoral Orientations of Human Trafficking for the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development at the Vatican in Rome
- 7 April 2019 World Health Day
- 15 April 2019 Prevention, Liability and Rights of the Victims: Discussing towards the first Draft of a legally binding Treaty on TNCs and other Business Enterprises with Respect to Human Rights
- 22nd April International Mother Earth Day
- 22 April - 3 May 2019 Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- 23 April 2019 Mercy Global Action Co-Sponsoring "Grandmother Council: Anishnabe Training Bundle for Sharing Knowledge on Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation"
- 24-25th April 2019 Colleen Swain Presenting during Earth Week at Salve Regina University in Newport, Rhode Island
- 2nd May World Tuna Day

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

APRIL/MAY 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 5



NEWS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE

'Happy Easter to each one of you. In New York, Spring is emerging and many budding flowers are bursting forth with colour and bringing life to the city.

This past month the MGA staff have been on the move both internationally and within the US. Angela travelled to Rome to represent MGA at a Vatican Conference in Rome and Colleen made a road trip to Salve Regina in Rhode Island to spend numerous days sharing the Eco justice agenda of MGA. Marian Kept the homefires burning in New York and represented MGA at the ECOSOC youth forum. We hope you enjoy reading of these events and more in this edition of the newsletter.



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA HLPF SERIES

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH



• *Colleen Swain Shares MGA's Eco- Justice Agenda to Salve Regina University!*

During Earth Week on Salve Regina University's campus, Colleen Swain ('16, '17 MA alumnus) was invited to headline several events. Colleen presented at an event entitled "Environmental Justice as a Work of Mercy" and highlighted Mercy Global Justice and Advocacy in action through her participation as delegate to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 24th Conference of Parties in Poland last December. She encouraged students to "have the courage to face the realities of our time and allow ourselves to feel deeply enough that it transforms us and our future".

In addition, Colleen hosted a luncheon dialogue for faculty, staff and community partners on "Call of Mercy and Care for the Earth" and was a keynote presenter at the Navigator Program's Symposium and discussed "Discerning Vocation in Response to the World's Needs: Mercy Justice Advocacy".

• *The Mercy Asia Pacific gathering in Samoa inspires a meeting with the Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of the Independent State of Samoa to the United Nations*

The MGA team met with H.E. Mr. Aliioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative of the Independent State of Samoa to the United Nations. The meeting's agenda included a report on the gathering of the Sisters of Mercy in Samoa and an offer of solidarity to the Asia Pacific initiatives on climate change. Ambassador Elisaia expressed great gratitude for the Sisters of Mercy and agreed to collaborate on numerous levels, including at grassroots level with the Sisters and with MGA at the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2019.



Photo: MGA
Left to Right: Ambassador Elisaia, Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Swain, and Marian Gardner

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

CONTINUED...

- *Responding to the Cries of the Amazon*

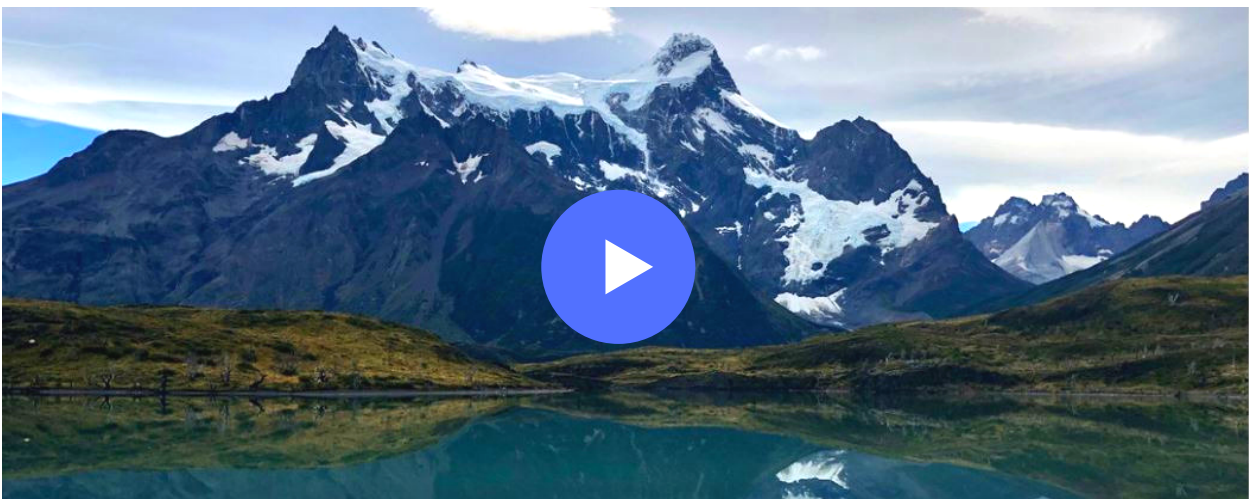
The United Nations NGO Mining Working Group, which Mercy Global Action is a member of, co-sponsored an event titled “Towards an Integral Ecology: responding to the Urgent Cries and Horizons of the Amazon” during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN hosted the event, and other co-sponsors included, Red Ecclesial Pan Amazónica (REPAM), Conselho Indigenista Missionário of Brazil, and the Justice Coalition of Religious.



The event took place in preparation for the upcoming Synod on the Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology, which will take place at the Vatican October 6-27, 2019. During his remarks, Fr. Justino Rezende, a member of the Pre-Synodal Council of the Synod of the Amazon and the only indigenous priest participating in the pre-Synodal meetings, stated “Often when we defend our land and culture, we are blamed for preventing progress, but we cannot have progress equal to destruction. Progress needs to be defending humanity, not destroying it.” Read more about the event [here](#).

- *United Nations Chief Calls for the Protection of the Planet on Earth Day!*

To Mark Earth Day on 21 April, UN Secretary General, António Guterres tweeted "This Video is a poignant reminder of the urgent need to protect the planet. On #Earthday & every day, take #ClimateAction in every way you can. " Watch the video below! President of the General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, also called for immediate action tweeting "We are the last generation that can prevent irreparable damages to the planet and to its inhabitants."





THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- ***Mercy Global Action Presents at Vatican Conference on Trafficking***

Angela Reed rsm presented a paper entitled 'Responding to Survivors of Human Trafficking', at a recent International Conference. The Conference was held in Rome from 9-11 April and was convened by the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Focused on the newly published '[Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking](#)', the conference brought together 200 service providers, academics, policy makers and pastoral agents. At the heart of the conference was the aim of sharing best pastoral practice in relation to working on the issue of human trafficking and with survivors. The conference concluded with a private audience with Pope Francis in which he addressed all the delegates. He stated 'The numerous initiatives that place you in the front line in preventing trafficking, protecting survivors and prosecuting perpetrators are worthy of admiration...much has been done and is being done...but their remains much yet to do'. Address to Participants given by Pope Francis can be accessed [here](#).



- ***Mercy Global Action Co-Sponsors Event on Traditional Knowledge Sharing on Human Trafficking***



Mercy Global Action co-sponsored an event entitled "Grandmother Council: Anishnabe Training Bundle for Sharing Knowledge on Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation" during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). Panelists included, Jessica Desmond-Solon, a trafficking survivor advocate, Grandmother Isabelle Measwasige, and Dr. Cindy Gaudet, assistant professor in Indigenous Studies, University of Alberta, Canada. Sheila Smith, UN-NGO Representative Society of the Sacred Heart, and a long time advocate for the Ojibwe community, moderated the panel discussion. The event highlighted how indigenous women and girls are disproportionately impacted by human trafficking and the significance of a culture-based response to trafficking.

The historical roots of trafficking in indigenous communities include, loss of identity and hope, control and fear, and loss of family ties, when family and friends reject victims or due to shame. The training bundle was created in partnership between Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Persons (PACT) and the Grandmothers. The creation of the training bundle began with a Indigenous led research project in Ottawa, Canada, where the Grandmother's created a coalition to understand the issue of human trafficking in their communities. The research used a relational methodology, which respects indigenous perspective and their way of living. Indigenous women's work is often underfunded, so the Grandmothers are filling the gaps through using traditional knowledge to prevent trafficking and heal survivors. Watch the event on Facebook live [here](#)

- ***Register for Inherent Dignity Webinar Session Two!***

Session Two of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series titled, 'Governments' Obligations to Prevent Trafficking', will take place on Friday, 24 May, 9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M. [New York Time]. Please click [here](#) to register!

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



- *Marian Attends Youth EcoSoc Forum*

On 8 and 9 April, Marian Gardner, Mercy Global Action intern, along with nearly 1,000 youth advocates from around the world, was selected to participate in the 8th Annual Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum at the United Nations in New York. The Forum was co-organized by ECOSOC and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. With the theme, "Empowered, Included and Equal" this year's Forum aimed to focus on ways to empower, include and ensure equal opportunities for young people. The two-day forum included discussions on empowerment and engagement of youth in the 2030 Agenda, interactive round-tables on youth, peace and security, breakout session on key regional concerns and priorities for youth, among other discussions. During one of her remarks, Jayathma Wickramanayake, the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, stated, "Let us make sure that youth participation is the rule not the exception. Make sure you're not the lucky ones to have a seat at the table, but rather let us be a door opener."

MGA HLPF SERIES



- *Inputs to the High-Level Political Forum*

In our last month's newsletter issue, we provided a brief introduction to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), which is the central platform for reviewing and following up on the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.

The main feature of the HLPF are Voluntary National Reviews or VNRs. The 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country driven" (Paragraph 79). VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experience, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, as well as mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs (Paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda). For the 2019 HLPF meeting, 48 countries will be presenting their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Click [here](#) to see the list of reporting countries.

In addition to the VNRs, there are various processes and meetings that provide inputs to the SDGs being reviewed in-depth (SDG 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, and 17). These include, Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) and Stakeholders E-Consultations on each of the SDGs under review; Regional Preparations, where each region hosts a sustainable development forum to collect inputs from the local, national, and regional levels; the Secretary General's SDG Progress Report; Inputs from UN System; and Inputs from Major Groups and other Stakeholders.

In accordance with Paragraph 89 of the 2030 Agenda, nine major groups and other stakeholder organizations are invited to submit coordinated sectoral position papers related to the theme of the HLPF and the SDGs under in-depth review. These inputs are not official documents of the HLPF, but they are posted on the HLPF website, which can be found [here](#). Among the nine Major Groups are; Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous People, and Non-Governmental Organizations. Mercy Global Action is a member of the NGO Major Group, which is the main mechanism through which MGA follows and contributes to the HLPF.

Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

**The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

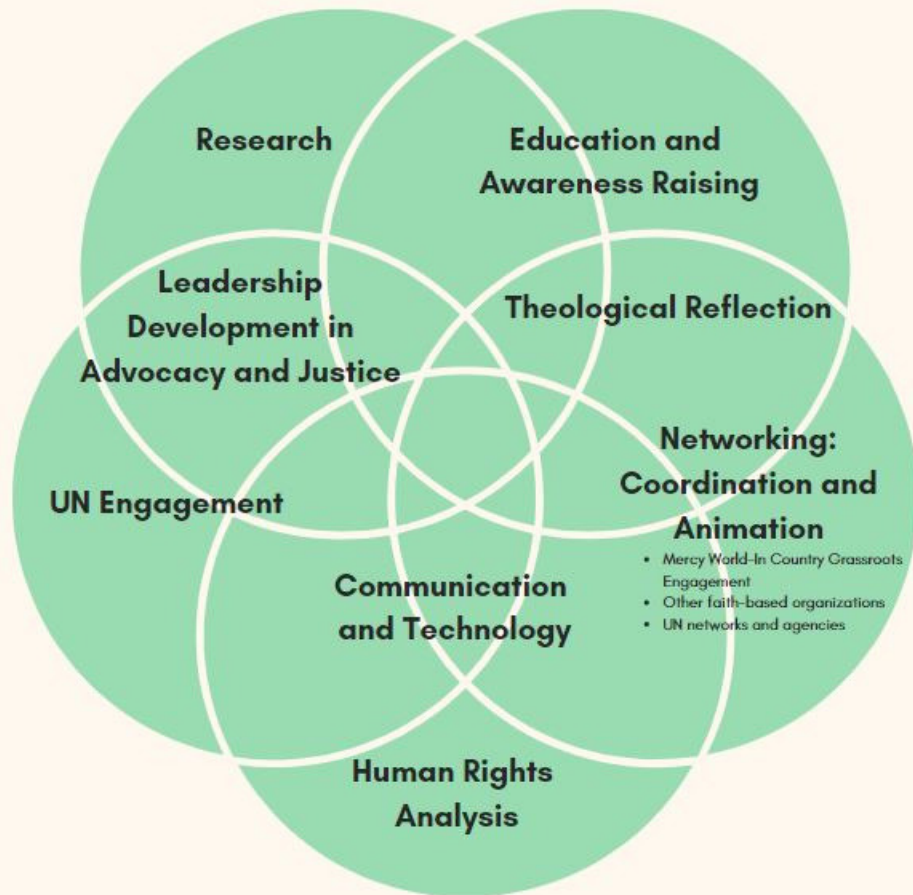
777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

LOCATION AND CORE STRATEGIES

Since March 1, 2019, Mercy Global Action has been operating out of and has been coordinated from New York. While it is strategic for MGA to be located in close proximity to the UN, the work of MGA extends well beyond UN processes to international NGOs, faith-based coalitions, and academic institutions. The figure below illustrates the multiplicity of tasks and responsibilities of the office.



COLLEEN ATTENDS ANTI-RACISM ANALYSIS WORKSHOP

Colleen Swain participated in a two-and-a-half day Anti-Racism Analysis Workshop at Cranaleith Spiritual Center in Philadelphia in early April. The Anti-Racism Analysis Workshop was facilitated by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Anti-Racism Team and CrossRoads, an organization focused on dismantling systemic racism and build anti-racist multicultural diversity within institutions and communities. Three analysis workshops are planned for the coming year. Stay tuned for the dates!

STUDENTS FROM CARLOW UNIVERSITY VISIT MGA OFFICE!

On April 5th, twenty students from Carlow University's Honors Program came to the Mercy Global Action Office! Students and Faculty met with Colleen Swain and Marian Gardner to learn more about the ministry of the Sisters of Mercy in international advocacy and justice.

Upcoming later in May, select students from Carlow University, other Mercy Universities, and NY based Mercy Volunteer Corps will come to the MGA Office for intensive two-and-a-half day Mercy Advocacy Days sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Conference for Mercy Higher Education.

“USEFUL RESOURCES

Healing Earth Website



2019 State of Civil Society Report Overview and Full



White Fragility (Short Video)



Ecumenical Advocacy Days - Recorded Live Stream of Sessions

2019 National Gathering



Troubling the Waters for the Healing of the



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 11th May World Migratory Bird Day
- 13th-17th May Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
- 14th May High Level Debate on Inclusive Development and Inequality within and among Countries
- 21st May Event Mining and Gender Equity: Promoting Women's Inclusion
- 22nd May International Day for Biological Diversity
- 21 to 23 May 2019 African Dialogue Series (ADS 2019) at UNHQ in New York "Theme: "Towards durable solutions for forcibly displaced persons in Africa"
- 24th May Mercy Global Action Webinar on Human Trafficking
- 28-30th May Mercy Global Action Mercy University Education in Advocacy Days
- 5th June World Environment Day
- 8th June World Ocean's Day

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 6



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA HLPF SERIES

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER



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!

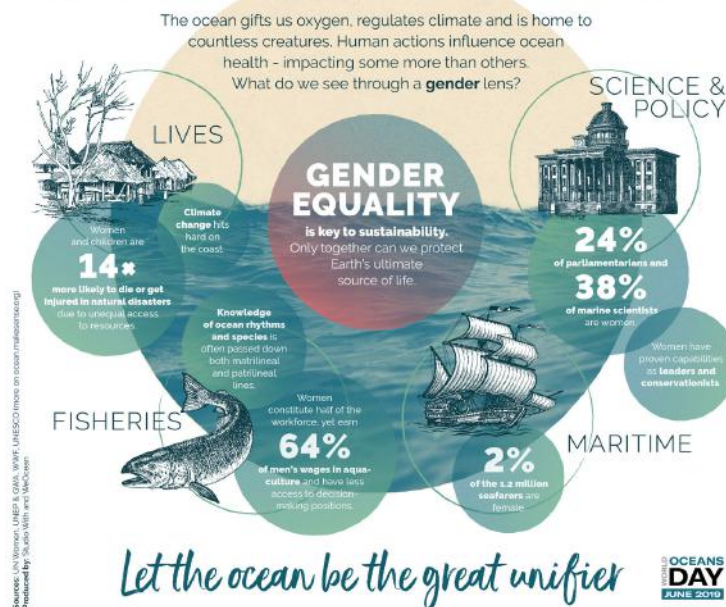
At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

• *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!

Gender and the ocean



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*
777 UN PLAZA, 6TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 T: 1 646 227 1878 E: MERCYREP@MERCYINTERNATIONAL.IE

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

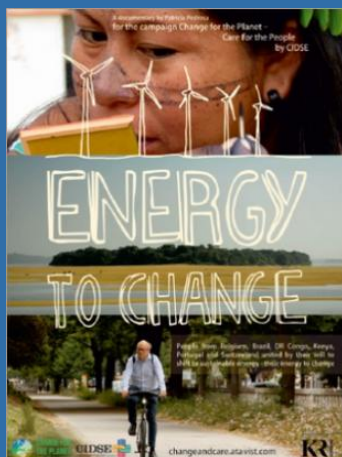
From May 28th-30th, 18 students from various Mercy Universities, and New York Based Mercy Volunteer Corp, came to the Mercy Global Action Office to learn about Mercy's Critical Concerns and how the Sisters of Mercy have advocated at the United Nations.



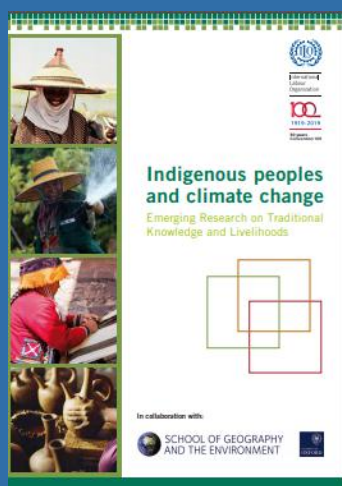
Students had the opportunity to delve into the Key Themes and Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy, including global justice issues such as climate change, human trafficking, immigration and exploring the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. By looking deeper into the experiences on the 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

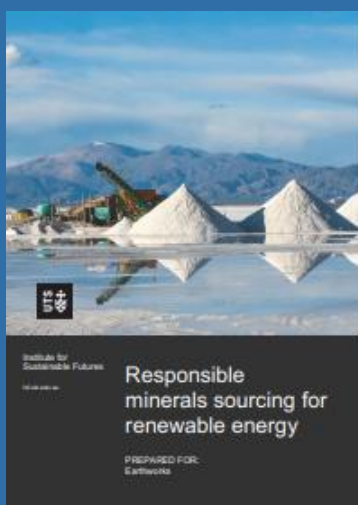
Energy to Change- CIDSE



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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 8



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA HLPF SPOTLIGHT

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER



FAREWELL TO MARIAN GARDNER, MIA: MGA INTERN

Last week Marian Gardner completed her internship with Mercy Global Action. It is with deep gratitude that we farewell Marian who has given fully of herself over the past ten months. Marian has been a highly valued member of the Mercy Global Action team and contributed so much to the work of our office during this time. Of particular note is her production of the Inherent Dignity Webinar series, and more recently her keynote address to the Young Mercy Leaders at Mercy International Centre in Dublin. Marian has inspired many with her generosity of spirit, her welcoming nature and her professional approach to her work. Marian we wish you well as you continue to explore ways to promote the human rights of all and send you off with the following blessing.



Photo: Mercy Global Action Office



*May the road rise up to meet you. May the
Wind always be at your back. May the sun shine
Warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon
your fields.*

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION AT YOUNG MERCY LEADERS PILGRIMAGE



• Mercy Global Action Presents at Young Mercy Leaders Pilgrimage!

Colleen Swain, the leadership development and advocacy associate of MIA-MGA and Marian Gardner, MIA-MGA Intern, presented at the Fifth Biennial Pilgrimage for Young Mercy Leaders, which took place at Mercy International Centre at Baggot Street in Dublin, Ireland 16 July to 19 July.

Marian Gardner delivered a keynote, in which she shared her personal life journey and how her life experiences shaped her passion for human rights advocacy. Her talk was designed for the students to think critically about themselves and the injustices in our world and to examine the tools necessary to be effective Mercy leaders and changemakers. She provided some examples of how Sisters of Mercy and co-workers around the world are working to dismantle oppressive systems at grassroots and policy levels and stressed the importance of critical thinking, deep listening, and understanding.



Photo: MercyWorld



Photo: MercyWorld

Colleen Swain led a workshop on “Environmental Justice as a Work of Mercy”. Through the use of videos and an activity using “The Earth Cube”, students were challenged to unpack what it means to be both Mercy Leaders and stewards of creation. They also considered Mercy responses to issues related to the degradation of the Earth and the actions they can take. A full report on the fifth Biennial pilgrimage can be found on Mercy World here.

• Mercy Meets Mercy

Marian Gardner and Colleen Swain had the pleasure of connecting with Srs Margaret Tiernan and Maura Walsh from the Western Province of Ireland. They discussed past achievements, in particular the Western Provinces' award of Eco-Congregation in which they were the first religious body recipients! Their work is highlighted in the book "Walking Gently on the Earth" which can be found here!



Pictured left to right: Maura Walsh rsm, Marian Gardner, Margaret Tiernan rsm and Colleen Swain

• Mercy Global Action Connects with Vita!

While in Dublin, Ireland in July, Mercy Global Action (MGA) had the pleasure of meeting with John Weakliam, who is the CEO of Vita and Ciara Feehely, who is of head of fundraising and communications of Vita Dublin team. Vita is a Mercy supported grassroots organisation fighting hunger and climate change in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The meeting was an opportunity for Mercy Global Action to learn more about the work of Vita and discuss possible advocacy channels for MGA to bring forward the work of Vita to the global policy level. During the meeting, MGA learned more about the

Green Impact Fund as a circular model of climate justice and Kamal Kar community-led model, which is critical for promoting sustainable development. MGA looks forward to growing this partnership and advancing the work of Vita through global level advocacy. For more information on the work of Vita visit their website here.





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Mercy Global Action Hones in on Business and Human Rights*

The Open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights has just published a new draft business and human rights **treaty**.

One key revision of the treaty is an addition to the preamble that recognizes “the distinctive and disproportionate impact of certain business-related human rights abuses on women and girls, children, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees, and the need for a perspective that takes into account their specific circumstances and vulnerabilities.” This addition is welcome especially in terms of prevention, rights of victims, and access to remedy and justice.

Mercy Global Action will continue to follow the process intervene at the meetings in Geneva October 14-18th. For more commentaries on the new draft of the treaty see **here!**

- *Mercy Global Action Joins the Climate Action Campaign!*

Mercy Global Action team has officially joined the United Nations’ **ActNow Climate Campaign**, which is a global call to citizen action on climate change. The campaign highlights "the impact that collective action can have at this critical moment in our planet’s history. The more people act, the bigger the impact." **Join us** in taking the following action to reduce our carbon footprint and show your support for urgent climate action! For more information on this campaign click **here**.

**JOIN THE
MOVEMENT!**



5 minute shower



Drive Less



Meat-free Meals



Local Produce



Recycle



Lights Off



Unplug



Refill & Reuse



Zero-Waste
Fashion



Bring your own
Bag



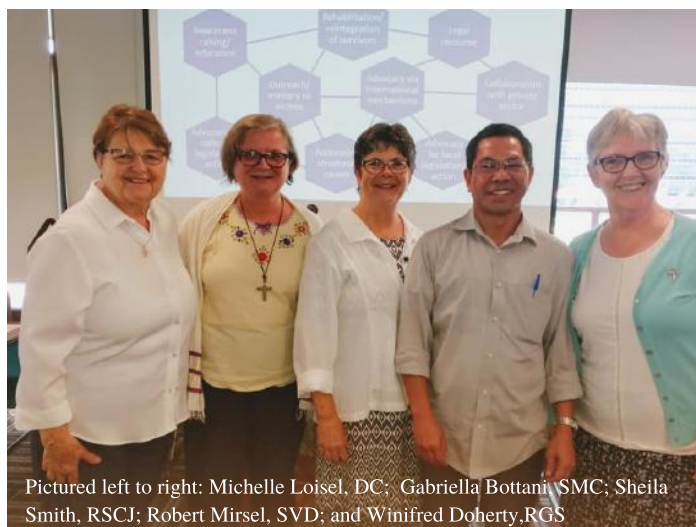
THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

• *Mercy International Association Among Co-Sponsors of Human Trafficking event for World Day Against Trafficking in Persons*

In Commemoration of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, faith-based organizations alike came together to host "Strengthening Connections to End Human Trafficking: An interactive dialogue with Talitha Kum, USCSAHT, and UN NGOs". The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has named this years' theme for the international day 'Government Action' in the interest of the women, children and men who continue to be trafficked across the world.

Key to the **event (click to watch)**, was the sharing of knowledge and experiences of working with both grassroots networks and United Nations bodies. Emphasis was placed on the strengths, challenges and best practices of how each organization has called local, national, and international governments to action. Mercy International Association's publication "Inherent Dignity" and subsequent webinar series was highlighted as notable tools for such advocacy. These can be accessed on the Mercy World Website at <https://www.mercyworld.org/newsroom/webinar-series-now-concluded-3-session-videos-available-for-viewing-here/>



Pictured left to right: Michelle Loisel, DC; Gabriella Bottani, SMC; Sheila Smith, RSCJ; Robert Mirsel, SVD; and Winifred Doherty, RGS

Another prominent event that took place on the Eve of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons was "Faces in the Fight Against Human Trafficking: Appreciating the Work of Catholic Religious Sisters in the Talitha Kum Network and the Photos of Lisa Kristine". See **here**. Mercy Global Action stands in solidarity with all Catholic Religious Sisters and Partners in Ministry who continue to empower those experiencing human trafficking and survivors.

• *Angela Reed rsm Among Key Religious Seeking to Advocae Against Trafficking in Persons*

Angela Reed rsm, Coordinator of Mercy Global Action, was interviewed in recent article entitled "Advocates work to stop human trafficking's causes like poverty, exploitation of human rights". Integral to her approach, the Optimal Life Course Conditions, she emphasizes that "factors [such] as education, adequate standard of living, gender equality and safety that, if in place, could reduce the vulnerability to trafficking for girls and young women". She highlights that "We can't address the problem of trafficking until we address the issue of violations of human rights...[further saying that] prevention is not a very popular response to trafficking [by the countries] because it's long-term, it's an investment, it's not a quick fix."

Coinciding with the theme of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, Angela Reed rsm details that "we must continue to advocate to our local and national governments to enact policies to improve social and economic conditions, as exemplified in the U.N.'s 17 sustainable development goals, are the best way to get at root causes and end trafficking". Read the full article **here**.

At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

• *Mercy Global Action Advocates for Ending Homeless through the Sustainable Development Goals!*

As a member of the UN Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), Mercy Global Action (MGA) participated in advocacy efforts during the 2019 UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to mobilise more support for addressing global homelessness. Using the flyer below, MGA and other members of the WGEH highlighted the interconnectedness between homelessness and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to UN Member States and potential NGO partners, arguing that meeting the goals requires addressing global homelessness.

Ending Homelessness through The Sustainable Development Goals

1 Ending homelessness is key in ending poverty 	2 The homeless are one of the most food insecure populations in the world 	3 Homeless individuals are more likely to be exposed to health threats 	4 Education prevents sustained homelessness throughout an individual's life 
5 Homelessness presents unique and difficult challenges for women and gender minorities 	6 Without a home it is often difficult to access necessities such as clean water 	7 Clean energy = less climate impact = less natural disasters = less displaced people 	8 Without a home many struggle to obtain decent work and achieve professional goals 
9 Improved infrastructure includes adequate housing for all 	10 Homelessness is the most visible sign of the growing economic and social inequalities that must end 	11 Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums 	
12 Responsible production means producing housing for all 	13 Victims of climate disasters can become homeless as a result 	16 The ongoing criminalization of the homeless is a threat to our peace, justice, and strong institutions 	17 It will take the effort of the United Nations, Member States, Private Sector and Civil Society to end homelessness 

Joanna Padgett Herz
Congregation of the Mission – UN Office

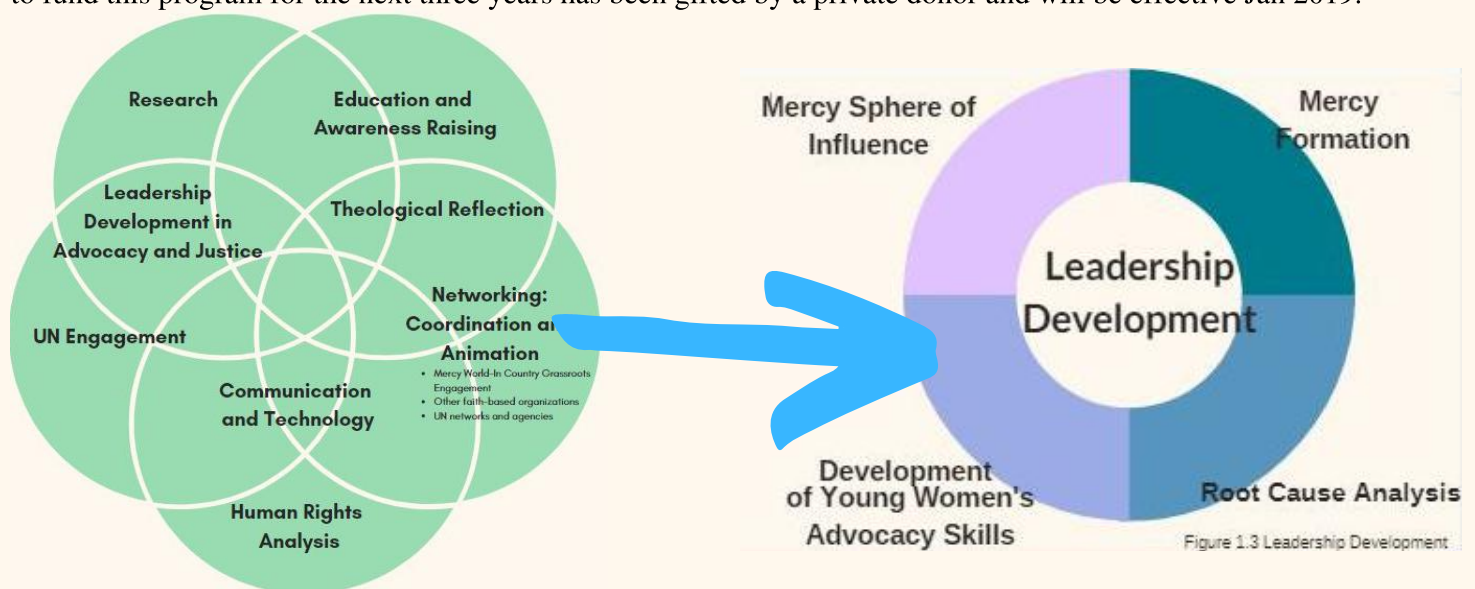
MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

At the heart of our Mercy charism is the education, empowerment and encouragement of women. The contribution of young women to Mercy Global Action is both a gift and an opportunity, providing mutual benefits to the women and also to the advancement of work at Mercy Global Action.

Women's positive responses to immersion in the Mercy Global Action ministry and their valuable contribution to the ongoing mission of the office are the impetus for developing a fuller and more formal leadership program in which young women can have the opportunity to share their knowledge and further develop their understandings of Global Justice. A significant grant to fund this program for the next three years has been gifted by a private donor and will be effective Jan 2019.



LAUNCH OF MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP (MELF)

Mercy Global Action is delighted to announce the commencement of the inaugural Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship on August 23rd in Cambodia.

Over the course of the next twelve months, ten very diverse Fellows will be challenged to think critically about the global reality of our world through the lens of Mercy, Leadership, and Justice.

The Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship seeks to build upon the capacities of women and provide effective tools to be agents of change in their own communities and in the greater society. These women are already active leaders of justice and peace in our world; however together, they will build relationships with other Mercy leaders and form a united network, advocating for justice in their own communities.

Catherine McAuley had a deep trust and desire to develop women's skills and capabilities so that they could carry on the work of Mercy. As these ten women embark on this immense journey, we ask for prayers that their journey is inspired and led by the heart and charism of Mercy.

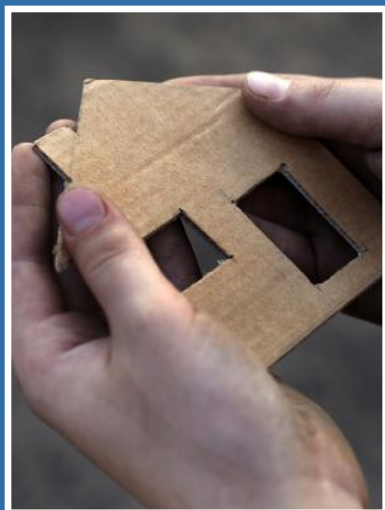
Stay tuned and follow the work of these women throughout the Fellowship on the Mercy World website and the Mercy Global Action Newsletter.

“USEFUL RESOURCES

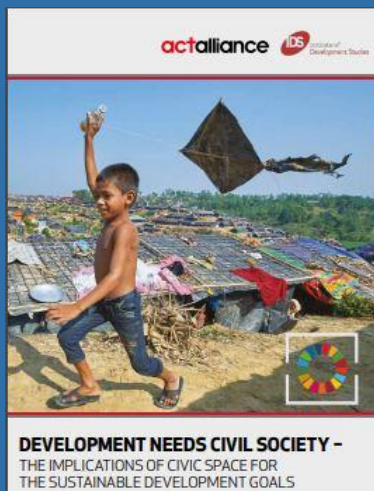
The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019



Upcoming Research and Resources on
Homeslessness from UNANIMA
International (Global Sisters Report)



Development Needs Civil Society



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- August - Angela Reed rsm/MGA in country visit Australia and Keynote Presentations at the AMSSA Conference 2019
- 9th August -International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 12th August -International Youth Day
- 19th August -World Humanitarian Day
- 23rd August -International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition
- 23rd August through 1st September - Commencement of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship in Siem Reap, Cambodia
- 30th August -International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 9



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

UPDATE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM AND
COLLEEN SWAIN



GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

This month the MGA office spent much time abroad, with Angela Reed RSM making an in-country visit to Australia and engaging many Mercy Sisters and Associates in the theme of 'Breaking the Silence'. Using the MGA Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach, participants of numerous presentations and workshops were challenged to reflect on the experiences of the earth and community and then to work through various stages of analysis culminating in a commitment to action. Presentations were made at the Mercy AMSSA Conference, ISMAPNG Advocacy workshops, North Sydney Congregation Day, Parramatta Congregation Day and other events.



Photo Credit: Monte Sant' Angelo

Following the Australia visit Angela Reed RSM and Colleen Swain traveled to Cambodia where they led the Inaugural country immersion experience for the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship. A full report of the days in Cambodia can be read [here!](#)

As we are grounded in New York, we have been preparing for the 74th Session of the General Assembly, subsequent Climate Summit, and associated meetings. Read more about these meetings and ways in which Mercy Global Action will be engaging in these events on page 4.



THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Season of Creation*



The month of September marks the Season of Creation, an annual celebration of prayer and action to protect creation. It begins on 1 September with a day of Prayer for Creation and concludes on 4 October, the feast of Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.

As we continue through the Season of Creation, we stand with faith leaders around the world in saying we are "unite[d] as one family in Christ, celebrating the bonds we share with each other and with "every living creature on earth." (Genesis 9:10) The Christian family celebrates the season by spending time in prayer, considering ways to more sustainably inhabit our common home, and lifting our voices in the public sphere. This Season of Creation, we offer our reflections on the web of life itself, in the hope that they might provoke richer contemplation and deeper responses among us, brothers and sisters. We do it in ecumenical spirit and in acknowledging that Creation is given as a gift to all of us and that we are called to shared responsibility for its protection." (Read more [here](#)).

To guide us through each day of the Season of Creation, Mercy International Association has created guides filled with prayer, readings for reflection, contemplative videos, questions, and actions. Follow along [here](#) as we move into the third week.

- *MGA and Mercy to Earth Program*

To celebrate the season of Creation, Mercy International Association hosted a Mercy to Earth Programme at Baggot Street from 9-13 September. A number of speakers from around the mercy world gave input on their experiences in caring for our common home (See [here](#)). During the programme Sr. Angela Reed made an online presentation on issues related to the global water crisis. Drawing on the work of theologians Elizabeth Johnson and Cristiana Peppard, Angela outlined some overarching eco-justice concepts. Following this, participants viewed the movie trailer, 'Flow' and then engaged in a discussion on water justice, including the different advocacy strategies that Mercy Global Action has participated in. Angela concluded with a powerful quote from Indian Scholar and environmental activist, Vandana Shiva 'Today, we need to overcome a wider and deeper apartheid, an eco-apartheid based on the illusion of separateness – the separation of humans from nature in our minds and lives. This eco-apartheid is an illusion because we are part of nature and earth and not apart from it' (Vandana Shiva, Making Peace with the Earth: From a Destructive Anthropocene to a Creative Anthropocene, Guided by the Living Earth 2012)

- *Synod on the Amazon, What you need to know, and How to get involved*

In October 2019, a Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon region will meet in Rome to discuss the theme "The Amazon: New paths for the Church and for integral ecology."

This is a timely meeting as situations for the earth and indigenous communities are "getting more critical in terms of violence, extractivism and other preoccupation situations". For resources on the October 2019 Synod to read our statement of support with Pax Christi International and others go to <https://justresponse.faith/synod-amazon>



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *Excerpt of Reflections during the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship - Day 3 by Amy Thomas and Sr Theresia Tina*

The day was led with a prayer with the theme of “Welcoming” based on the main topic of the day on “Human Trafficking and Refugees.” The group reflected on the Gospel reading from Matthew 25: 35-40 with two questions; “When did you welcome someone into your space” and “when were you welcomed by someone else into their space?” There was robust discussion in pairs and then in the large group. The song “The Key of The Sea” accompanied the prayer.

Following this time of reflection, Sr Denise and members of her team in Cambodia led a panel on the theme of the day. The session began with exploring the different forms of displacement; including: refugees, asylum seekers, and those experiencing statelessness. A very moving segment of the panel was the sharing of stories by former refugees who had been displaced as a result of the Khmer rouge and the reign of Pol Pot in the 1970s. Experiences included stark conditions in prisons, having to completely abandon all possessions and walk for days with little food and water. It was very powerful listening to the experiences of victims of refugees and how they came to be where they are today. It was an inspiring session where we learned that the people who are marginalised themselves advocate for the good of others and help people to have a life with dignity and respect.

Some important facts that we heard during this session included:

- 1.2 million Cambodians go to Thailand to work, leaving their children back with grandparents.
- As refugees were returning to Cambodia in the early 90’s they were granted a form of reparations. They could choose between a plot of land, 50 dollars, or tools and a house. As much of the land still had active land mines, most chose the 50 dollars.

We were given resources including “Step By Step” and “Words From Faith” to help us reflect on the experiences of displaced people. And were asked questions such as what touched us and how we are moved to respond to these issues. Following our session on the stories of refugees and forced displacement we explored the international mechanisms that are in place to support refugees and asylum seekers. This led to a review of the the Global Compact on Migration and Refugees which was adopted by the United Nations in December 2018. We then moved into a discussion about displacement in our own countries and shared insights and concerns about the mass displacement of people throughout the world.



Photo Credit: Mercy Global Action

Read more daily reflections from the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leader Fellows at <https://www.mercyworld.org/newsroom/mercy-global-action-emerging-leaders-fellowship-melf-has-begun/>

At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

• *United Nations General Assembly to begin next week!*

The 74th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 74) will open on 17 September 2019. Each year in September world leaders of all 193 Member States gather together to make recommendations on international issues ranging from political, economic, humanitarian, social and legal, within their competence.

During the 74th Session, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will convene the 'Climate Action Summit 2019: A Race We Can Win. A Race We Must Win'. Starkly aware that global efforts to tackle climate change are running off-track, Antonio Guterres called the Climate Summit to mobilize political and economic energy at the highest levels to advance climate action that will enable implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Climate Summit, seeks to challenge states, cities, companies, and citizens to increase ambitions and actions towards Climate Change. Areas in which they are seeking action are: 1) social and political drivers of change; 2) transition to renewable energy; 3) industry; 4) infrastructure, cities and local action; 5) nature-based solutions; 6) resilience and adaptation; 7) mitigation; 8) finance and carbon pricing; and 9) youth and citizen mobilization.

The Climate Summit will commence on 23rd of September and greatly feed into the actions leading up to and our advocacy at the 25th Session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Read more about the Climate Summit [here](#). Mercy Global Action will be attending the Climate Summit and a gathering of Faith Based Organizations on the Climate Emergency. Stay tuned!

Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



• *Mercy International Association Signs onto Global Fracking Ban Letter*

Leading up to the 74th Session of the General Assembly, Civil Society, led by Food & Water Europe/Food & Water Watch and the Breathe Project, has prepared an open letter to Secretary-General António Guterres calling on him to publicly demand a global fracking ban. An excerpt states:

"As you are aware, manmade climate change is the biggest and most comprehensive existential threat humanity has ever faced – apart from a nuclear war. Scientists confirm that we have maximum 10-30 years left to phase-out all fossil-fuels (including fossil gas) if we want to avoid overshooting significant climate tipping-points. Scientific evidence shows that methane emissions from gas extraction in general and from shale gas in particular are a significant driver of global warming and climate change."

This statement will be delivered to the Secretary General prior to the gathering of the United Nations General Assembly and Climate Summit. The statement further highlights a call to action regarding the 1) Negative climate impacts of fossil gas; 2) Environmental and public health implications of fracking; 3) Fracking supports polluting plastics industry and; 4) Fracking impacts human rights. The full statement can be accessed [here](#).

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

UN ENGAGEMENT

The Sisters of Mercy have Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations. This allows MGA to influence political decisions and to lobby for change at International, national and local levels. UN engagement requires visioning, planning and strategizing and oversight of the work in collaboration with the Mercy World. Leadership also requires navigating the dynamics and politics of complex international systems, networks, movements and alliances. Formal alliances over the long haul and learning intergovernmental processes are essential. This requires time devoted to understanding how the UN system (NY and Geneva) works, to responding to the changing environments, to collaborating with coalitions and preparing and coordinating advocacy positions. The UN operations in NY and Geneva are linked. Due to our focus on rights-based advocacy, we are using the Geneva system more often and with greater urgency.



Photo Credit: Mercy Global Action



“USEFUL RESOURCES

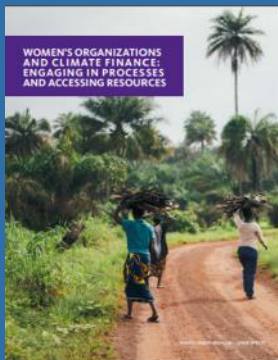
Season of Creation Toolkits -
Rahamim Ecology Center



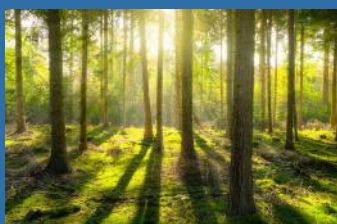
Promising local practices for the
enjoyment of the right to health by
Migrants



Enhance Women's Organizations Role
in, and Access to Climate Finance



Faith For Forests with Dr. Jane
Goodall



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 1st September - 4th October - Season of Creation
- 16th September - International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- 21st September - International Day of Peace
- 21st September - Colleen Presenting at Mercy Day Celebrations in Hartsdale
- 21st September - Angela panelist at 2019 General Assembly of Talitha Kum in Rome
- 24th September - Angela at Mercy Day and 25 year celebrations of Mercy International Association in Dublin
- 24th September - Colleen attending "Climate Emergency: Faith-based Organizations Raising Ambition - Leaving No One Behind"
- 26th September - International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- 1st October - New Mercy Global Action Intern to begin
- 2nd October - International Day of Non-Violence
- 7th October - World Habitat Day

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JUNE/JULY 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 7



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA HLPF SPOTLIGHT

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, COLLEEN
SWAIN, AND MARIAN GARDNER

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE HOSTS SR PATRICIA O'DONOVAN RSM

Mercy Global Action team had the pleasure of hosting Sr Patricia O' Donovan, co-founder of Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Trafficking with the Hospitality Sector (MECPATHS) in Ireland. Sr Patricia's visit was an opportunity for Mercy Global Action to share its advocacy strategies in relation to human trafficking and to learn more about the work of MECPATHS. The Mercy Global Action team also facilitated Sister Patricia's meeting and networking with other relevant organisations working to address human trafficking. In addition, Sr Patricia participated as a panelist in session three of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series.



Photo: Mercy Global Action

VIBRANT CONVERSATION OVER THE AIRWAVES: MGA NEW YORK TO MIC, DUBLIN



Last week, Angela Reed RSM engaged in a lively conversation with Mercy Sisters undertaking a program at Mercy International Centre in Dublin. These sisters recently made final vows or are preparing to do so in the near future. Speaking from the Mercy Global Action Office in New York, Angela was able to zoom into the International room

at the Mercy International Centre in Dublin. The conversation included an overview of the work undertaken at the MGA office on behalf of Mercy globally and some of the challenges this involves. Angela spoke about the need to collaborate with sisters and associates on the ground and the importance of ongoing communication and advocacy.





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH



Click [here](#) for more information.

- [UN Expert Releases Report on Climate Change and Poverty](#)

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Philip Alston, released a report entitled “Climate Change and Poverty” on 25 June. The report calls for more focus on the impact of climate change on human rights, with a specific attention to the rights of people living in or near poverty. According to the findings of the report, “Climate change threatens the future of human rights and risks undoing the last fifty years of progress in development, global health, and poverty reduction.” The report highlights that although the poorest half of the world’s population is only responsible for 10 percent of carbon emissions, the greatest burden of climate change will fall on them. They will be further subjected to food insecurity, lost incomes and livelihoods, worse health, displacement and many other human rights consequences. **Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action will leverage the findings of this report as it continues to advocate for climate justice.** Read the full report [here](#):

- [Voices From the Mine](#)

We encourage you to view the following film entitled “*Voices from the mine- Artisanal diamonds and resource governance in Sierra Leone*” which was featured at a recent event at the United Nations in New York. This film, set in Sierra Leone, casts a critical eye over resourcing within the artisanal diamond sector. It documents the stories of different stakeholders and particularly hones in on why those working at the bottom of the chain do not accrue benefits. Mercy Global Action continues to question exploitative practices within the mining industry and condemns both the degradation of earth and human rights abuses.



Watch the event on UN webtv [here](#) and click [here](#) to watch the film 'Voices from the mine'

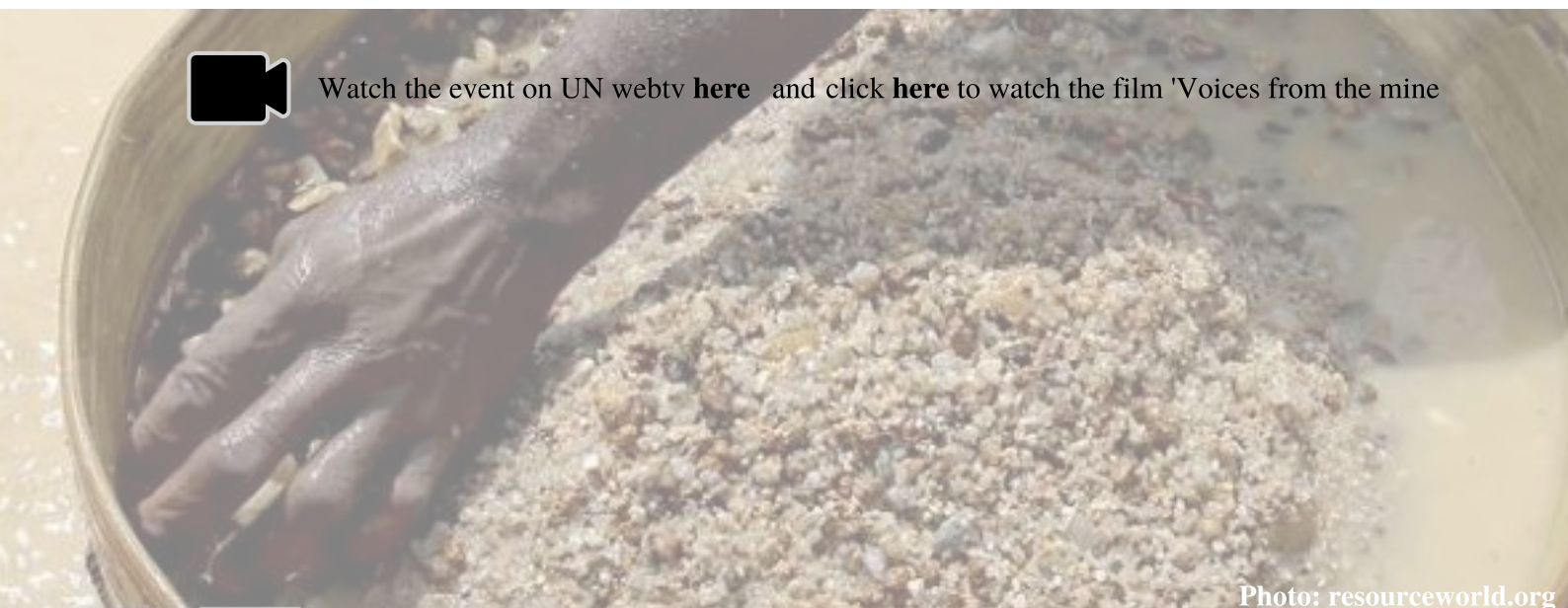
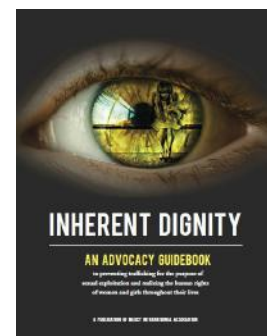


Photo: [resourceworld.org](#)



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS



- *[Mercy Sisters and Affiliates Share about their Anti-Trafficking Advocacy Efforts in Inherent Dignity Webinar!](#)*

On 25 July the final session of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series entitled “Prevention of Trafficking: What Organizations and Individuals Can Do” took place. During the webinar, anti-trafficking advocates from Canada, Ireland, United States and Australia presented on their advocacy efforts. Panelists included Grandmother Isabelle Meawasige, Ojibway Head Grandmother and Healer from the Serpent River First Nations in Ontario, Canada; Ms. Christine Carolan, National Executive Officer of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH); Sister Jeanne Christensen rsm, the Justice Advocate against Human Trafficking for the Sisters of Mercy West Midest Community; Sister Patricia O’Donovan rsm, co-founder of Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Traffickign with the Hospitatlity Sector (MECPHTS) in Ireland; and Sister Angela Reed rsm, Coordinator of Mercy Global Action and co-author of the Inherent Dignity Advocacy Guidebook, delivered closing remarks.

 You can view the recordings of all three sessions of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series [here](#).

- *[More than 70 Million People were Displaced in 2018!](#)*

A key area of concern for MIA: MGA is the displacement of persons. Sisters of Mercy and associates have been working with and advocating for refugees and asylum seekers for many years. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) 2018 report on the state of force displacement, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million in 2018 - the highest level that UNHCR has seen in its almost 70 years. Every minute in 2018, 25 people were forced to flee. Click [here](#) to read the report and click play (right) to view the video.



Photo: Talitha Kum

- *[Trafficking in Persons Report](#)*

The 19th annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, published by the US Dept. of State was released on 20 June 2019. It is pleasing to see that the 2019 TIP report includes the promotion of human trafficking survivors and their leadership in establishing effective and comprehensive anti-trafficking strategies. The report states ‘survivors know firsthand what is needed to improve government anti-trafficking responses and their input is key to ensuring anti-trafficking policies reflect perspectives that only those with a lived experience

can provide’ (see page 24). MIA, through the Mercy Global Action Office, has highlighted the significance of survivor advocates voices in anti- trafficking policy and prevention for many years. MGA continues to consult with survivor advocates on issues of policy and prevention in relation to Human Trafficking. Click [here](#) to read the full report. Can you identify your own country in this report? Congratulations is extended to Sr Gabriella Bottani, the International Coordinator of Talitha Kum who was honored as a TIP report Hero. Mercy Global Action works closely with Talitha Kum and Sr Gabriella and is delighted to see that her advocacy across the world has been acknowledged.

At the United Nations THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

- *Mercy Global Action Advocates for the Protection of Children from Abuse and Exploitation During the UN High-Level Political Forum*



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mercy Global Action (MGA) along with members of the UN Committee to Stop Trafficking In Persons (CSTIP) developed a one-page advocacy guide for Sustainable Development Goal 16, Target 16.2: “End Abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.” The guide will be distributed to UN Member States at official sessions, side events and Voluntary National Review presentations during the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), which is held from Tuesday, 9 July, to Thursday, 18 July 2019. MGA and members of CSTIP will be paying special attention to UN Member States who did not provide data for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report.

Please find the advocacy points below. Which of these advocacy points are relevant in your country's context?

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



Goal 16, Target 16.2: “End Abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children”

Adopt an action-oriented approach to prevent human trafficking, which recognizes the systemic issues that create vulnerabilities to exploitation, especially in women and children. Respond to these vulnerabilities through gender-sensitive, age-appropriate strategies throughout a person's life course.

Adhere to the recommendations of the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, noting where it connects to Agenda 2030. Abide by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. Ensure universal ratification and full implementation of both.

Address DEMAND. Without demand there is no trafficking in persons. Addressing this root cause is essential. Demand for high profits, cheap goods and labor, organ removal and commercialized sex is the driving force behind trafficking. Ending demand is key to eliminating human trafficking and paving the way to peaceful and sustainable societies.

Attend to the urgent need for disaggregated data on the number of victims of human trafficking by age, sex and form of exploitation, as called for in indicator 16.2.2. This is critical to understanding the full scope of human trafficking nationally and internationally, and will help certify that no victim, especially child victims, will be left behind.

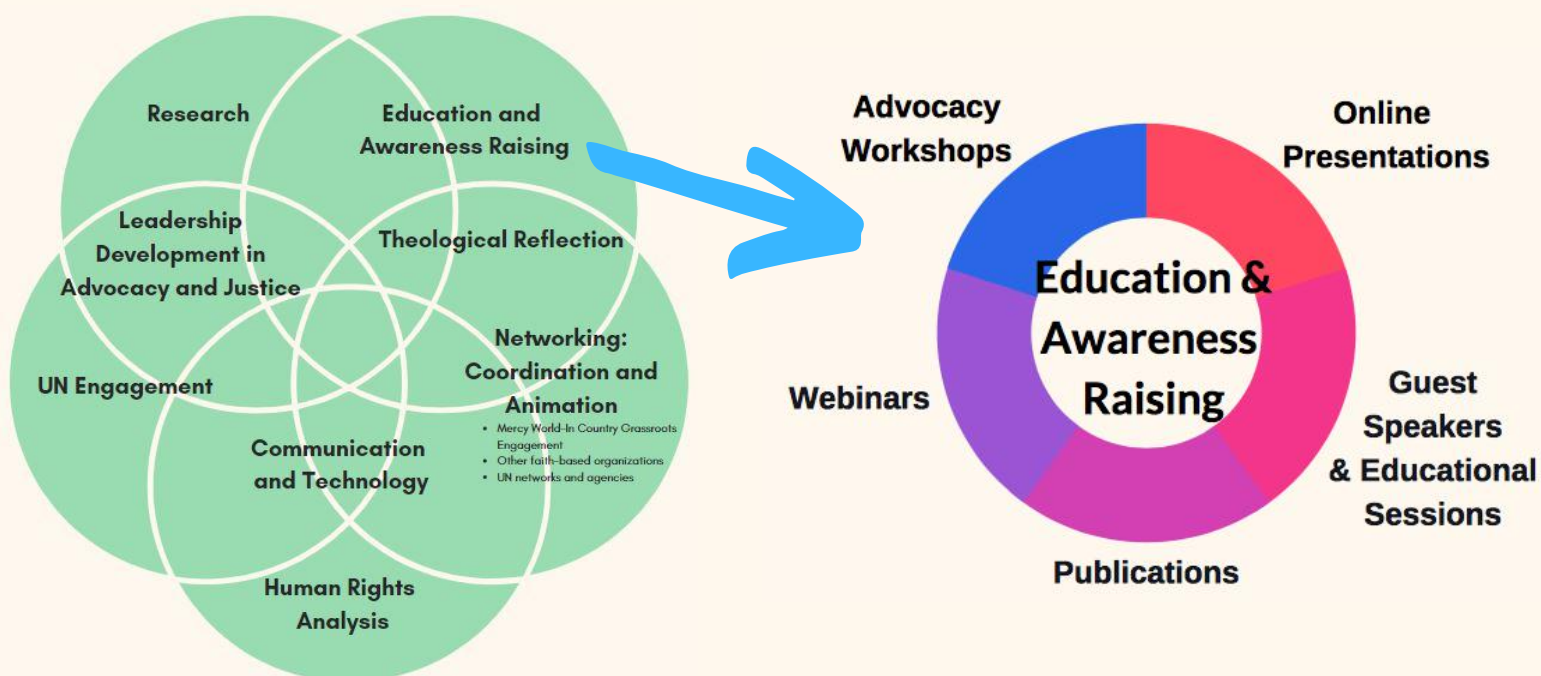
Allocate significant resources at all levels toward prosecution strategies, which should include, at a minimum, training for police, prosecutors and judges; and investments in partnerships to track traffickers' financial flows. Furthermore, full funding must be granted to comprehensive services, including exit programs, for victims and survivors.

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

Education in Advocacy and Awareness Raising is a constant call of the Mercy World. This is critical. Education and advocacy are complementary but distinct. Both are key to the work of Mercy Global Action. Mercy Global Action is committed to critical analysis, informed advocacy and participatory education resulting in new insights, ideas and action for justice.



#AMAZONSOURCEOFLIFE

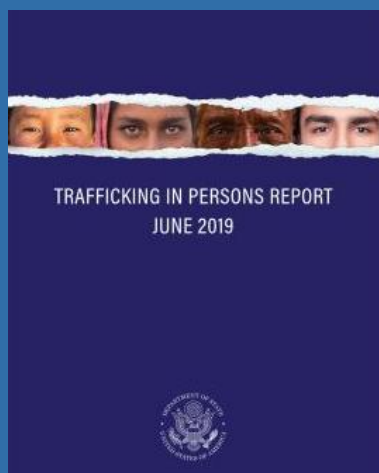
CIDSE and REPAM collaborated to produce a series of 17 mini video interviews on the Amazon covering issues such as the upcoming Synod, nature, climate, gender equality, indigenous rights, land rights, corporate regulation and systemic change.

All interviews last approx. 1.5 min each and are available on the CIDSE Youtube Channel with EN / ES / FR / GE / PT subtitles.

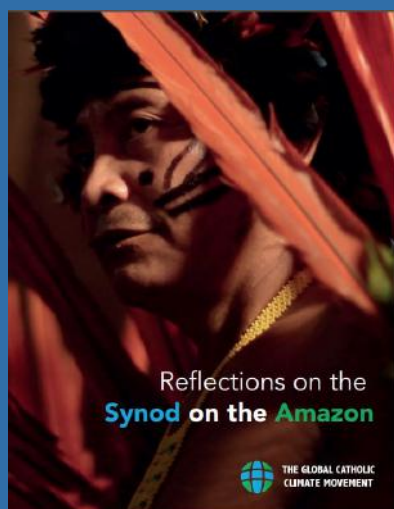


“USEFUL RESOURCES

Trafficking in Persons Report 2019



Reflections on the Synod on the Amazon



Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2018



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 9th- 18th July High Level Political Forum
- 8th-12th July- Srs Rosemary Patterson rsm and Margaret Moore rsm visit with MGA Office
- 11th July- MGA Meets with Misean Cara
- 15th July- Marian Gardner and Colleen Swain Meet With Mercy VITA in Dublin
- 16th-19th July Marian Gardner and Colleen Swain present at Young Mercy Leaders Conference in Dublin
- 29th July-Event "Faces in the Fight Against Human Trafficking" To mark the 10th anniversary of the Talitha Kum Network & World Day Against Trafficking in Persons
Photo Exhibit 'Nuns Healing Hearts' by Lisa Kristine
Followed by a Reception
- 30 July World Day against Trafficking in Persons
- August - Angela Reed rsm/MGA in country visit Australia
- 9th August -International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 10



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, AMANDA
CARRIER RSM, AND COLLEEN
SWAIN



MEET OUR NEW INTERN SR AMANDA CARRIER!

I am Sr. Amanda Carrier, RSM and it is my pleasure to introduce myself as the new intern at Mercy Global Action. Over the course of my formation as a sister these past nine years my understanding and commitment to social justice has grown thanks in great part to the many wonderful connections I have made through the Mercy community. These relationships with like-minded and passionate people have served to deepen my understanding and broaden my horizons as I have continuously explored justice issues through ministry as well as through the lens of our vowed lives as sisters....Read full article [here](#) on the Mercy World website.





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH



- *MGA's Leadership and Advocacy Associate, Colleen Swain Celebrates Mercy Day in Hartsdale, NY*

On September 21st, Colleen Swain was invited to the Mercy Mid-Atlantic community in Hartsdale, New York to join in their celebrations of Mercy Day and present on the work of Mercy Global Action.

As the Mercy celebrations also fell on September 21st, the International Day of Peace, with Climate Action as the theme, prayers, psalms, songs, reflections and presentations were centered on this theme. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres stated we see more frequently than ever that “peace faces a new danger: the climate emergency, which threatens our security, our livelihoods and our lives”. Colleen Swain reiterated what the Mercy International Reflection Process has shown us, that core to our work of Mercy is an ongoing focus to heal the degradation of the earth. In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis says “... ‘Each human being is an image of God ... each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God’s love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God...The universe as a whole, in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible riches of God.’ (LS #84, #86)

Colleen then led the group in a lively discussion on who we are and where we are in our own experiences with the environment. Groups discussed ways in which they see themselves as connected with the Earth, ways in which they see the Earth as a gift, ways in which we use only what we need, and steps for climate action.

- *Mercy Global Action Engages in Faith-Based Consultation on Climate Change*

On September 24th, Mercy Global Action participated in consultation “Climate Emergency: Faith-Based Organizations Raising Ambition-Leaving No One Behind”. The meeting gathered Episcopalians, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, United Methodists, Muslims, Buddhists and Baha’i representing some 48 organizations to strategize ways faith-based organizations can address climate change by filling the gaps left by governments in regard to climate change and adaptation to its effects. It was held simultaneously as the Climate Change Summit was underway at the United Nations Headquarters down the road in New York.

Rev. Dr Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel, president of Brot fur die Welt, said “There is no future that has the truth unless we rely on each other, joining hands with other religions, and understanding jointly the spiritual power of affirming creation”. It is through both personal and collective spirituality we can make key differences in climate change.

The consultation included breakout sessions on justice, loss and damage, migration, an emergency declaration and key actions for 2019 and beyond as related to climate change. This resulted in a vow of faith-based leaders to maintain

momentum for an action-oriented movement on climate change. Conclusions and recommendations from the faith-based consultation are currently being drafted into a formal statement to be circulated among organizations and beyond. Stay tuned.



Photo: Simon Chambers/ACT Alliance



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

• *MGA Coordinator, Angela Reed presents at International network on Human Trafficking*

On September 21, 2019 Angela Reed represented Mercy International Association _ Mercy Global Action at the ten year commemoration and Assembly of Talitha Kum in Rome and was a panelist on human trafficking and its challenges today. A link to an article published by Global Sisters Report covering the insights presented by Angela can be found [here](#).

Mercy sister, Lynda Dearlove was also present at the Assembly. As Human Trafficking is a core area of concern for Sisters of Mercy all over the world here are some interesting facts about Talitha Kum.

- Talitha Kum is a project of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), in collaboration with the Union of Superiors General
- Talitha Kum is an International network of Consecrated Life against trafficking in persons. Working as a network facilitates collaboration and the interchange of information between 70 countries.
- Many sisters of Mercy throughout the Mercy World belong to Talitha kum networks and are committed Ending Human Trafficking.

A link to the Talitha Kum website can be found [here](https://www.talithakum.info/). <https://www.talithakum.info/> with further links to the recent Assembly and its outcomes which can be accessed in Italian, English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.

Resources related to human trafficking can be found on this website including Mercy International's publication of Inherent Dignity which is soon be published in Spanish.



Photo: Talitha Kum

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

- *Mercy Reflects on the UN General Assembly Climate Summit and Greta Thunberg*

During the U.N.'s Climate Action Summit activist Greta Thunberg expressed her outrage at world leaders who have chosen profits over the survival of our common home. She stated that their current plans and policies have only a slim hope of actually preventing an “irreversible chain reaction beyond human control” (Thunberg). Furthermore, this sliver of hope depends greatly upon technologies which “barely exist” (Thunberg).



Photo: UN News

Greta cried out, “How dare you” as she reminded the assembly that people are dying from climate change now. Her own generation’s survival is at risk. Yet, the science behind climate change is not new; three decades ago (Thunberg), scientists discovered the environmental consequences of our actions. Nonetheless, politicians and corporations continue to trade away our future for the delusion of “eternal economic growth” (Thunberg).

Greta’s calls us to wake-up and face reality. Her words resonate with Pope Francis who wrote, “Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition but also because of a more general lack of interest” (Laudato Si’ 14). In the face of overwhelming odds, and the apathy of corporations focused on their bottom line, we hear our call to action. This call comes to us from present generations as well as from our Mercy roots. Because of human abuse, our earth has become as poor and abandoned as many of the women Catherine encountered in Dublin. Like Catherine, we too are impelled to respond with mercy and compassion.

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION



Theological reflection is at the heart of our Mercy justice activism. The most recent example of global theological reflection can be seen through MIRP. Such a process evoked a strong will and commitment to address specific justice issues. These responses are deeply grounded in our Mercy charism. The call for Mercy Global Action is to "harness the energy worldwide" (MIRP 14). Sacred listening and contemplative dialogue will replicate the four stages articulated in the MIRP at local, regional and global levels.

REFLECTIONS ON MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP (MELF)

BY JEMIMA WELSH (MELF 2019-2020)

We are still at the beginning of our journey, but the first couple of months of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship have been challenging and compelling. We have been confronted with difficult realities - poverty, trafficking, statelessness, oppression and environmental degradation - and while I have struggled at times to confront or 'be present' with these realities, I know that my struggle in merely being confronted with them is nothing compared to the struggle of those who experience these realities everyday. I knew this Fellowship wasn't going to be easy, but I already feel like it's going to be one of the greatest learning curves of my life. And we know that genuine leadership always has to begin with learning and discomfort.

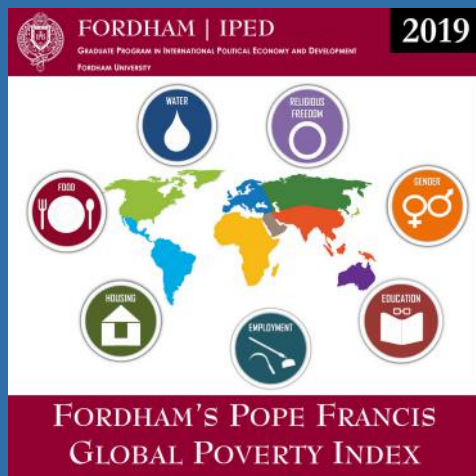
For me, the greatest strength of our Fellowship lies in our group. We have an incredible group of women who come from many walks of life and bring their own experiences, wisdom and sense of humour. Led by the kind and visionary work of Sr Angela and Colleen, we have become a tight-knit group that is buoyed by the encouragement and patience we share with each other. Together, in Cambodia, or on our webinars and weekly discussions, we often find ourselves saying 'I never thought of it that way', or 'What can be done about this?' It's rare to have the opportunity to work so closely with a group of people who are so like-minded in their hope for justice. I feel like I have found my 'tribe', and for that I am truly grateful. I'm really looking forward to seeing what the next year brings, and what we can all do together.



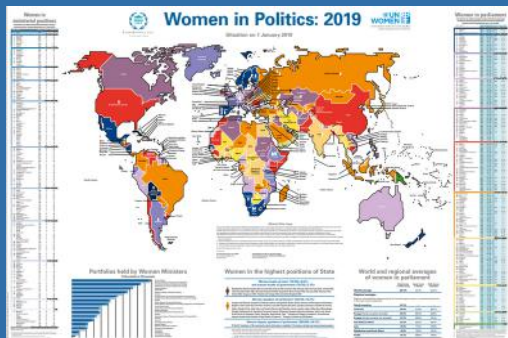
Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

“USEFUL RESOURCES

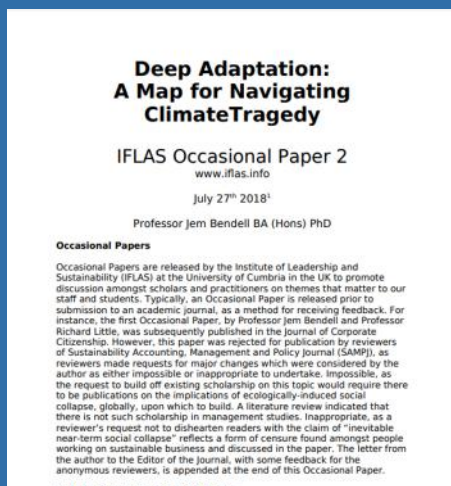
Fordham University's Pope Francis Global Poverty Index 2019



UN Women - Women in Politics 2019



Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- **October 10th - World Mental Health Day**
- **October 11th - International Day of the Girl Child**
- **October 12th - World Migratory Bird Day**
- **October 15th - International Day of Rural Women**
- **October 16th - World Food Day**
- **October 17th - Mercy Global Action Presents David Haas in Concert for International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**
- **October 18-20th - Mercy International Board Meeting in New York**
- **October 31st - World Cities Day**
- **November 5th - World Tsunami Awareness Day**
- **November 16th - International Day for Tolerance**

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 11



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, AMANDA
CARRIER RSM, AND COLLEEN
SWAIN



MGA COMMEMORATES THE UN INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

In solidarity with people living in extreme poverty, MGA commemorated the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN has committed to the eradication of poverty by 2030. This day raised awareness, and provided educational opportunities for civil society and delegates working towards this goal.



Photo Credit: UNANIMA International

The day began with Angela Reed, RSM moderating the Women's Homelessness Symposium sponsored by UNANIMA International. Leaders and delegates from interrelated organizations formed a panel presenting to a standing room only audience. The panel shared data, concerns, and a challenge to

change our paradigm of this global issue which disproportionately affects women and children. Watch video [here](#).

continued on Page 3.



THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *What you Need to Know about the 5th Session on Business and Human Rights...*

During the month of October, the UN intergovernmental Working Group met to continue their efforts in establishing a treaty concerning human rights and transnational corporations (i.e. Coca-Cola, Walmart, Nike, etc). This treaty seeks to establish a framework to hold these corporations accountable for their abuses of human rights. This has been a challenge because of the structure of international corporations which operate through convoluted subsidiaries in many countries simultaneously, thus allowing for corporate impunity. The original treaty was first drafted by the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group (OEIGWG) in 2018, though the movement to establish the treaty can be traced back to 2004.

At OEIGWG's session this year the draft was further developed and remains a working document. Several groups from Civil Society have urged OEIGWG to keep true to the original spirit of the working group and defend the scope and accountability structures of the treaty. In a letter to the OEIGWG, several key groups came together to voice the necessity for stronger language in the draft in order to hold transnational corporations accountable for their violation of human rights. These groups (Global Campaign, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity) denounce limiting the treaty to State obligation as a step backwards to the status quo. Furthermore, they demand the treaty include all transnational corporations in order to prevent them from continuing to circumvent accountability structures.



The ongoing work to uphold human rights across the world is crucial to the work of MIA-MGA. Corporations, especially those which operate transnationally, are often the cause of poor working and living conditions, and environmental degradation. These issues frequently affect women and children disproportionately due to their increased vulnerability and lack of fundamental rights in some societies. As the OEIGWG's work on this treaty continues it will be increasingly important to ensure structures for transnational corporations are in place so these companies can be finally held accountable for their actions.

Learn more here through CIDSE's Statement and Article:

- <https://cidse.org/blog/2019/10/18/are-the-eu-going-to-miss-the-boat-on-the-un-binding-treaty/>
- https://www.cidse.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/EN-CIDSE-submission_5th-IGWG_Oct-2019.pdf



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *MGA Commemorates the UN International Day for the Eradication of Poverty continued...*

A focus on the plight of children was the main emphasis during the official UN event that afternoon as this marks the 30th anniversary of the UN's Convention of the Rights of the Child. Children living in poverty cannot develop their full potential physically, mentally, or spiritually thus perpetuating cycles of poverty. This injustice cries out for our action and mercy.

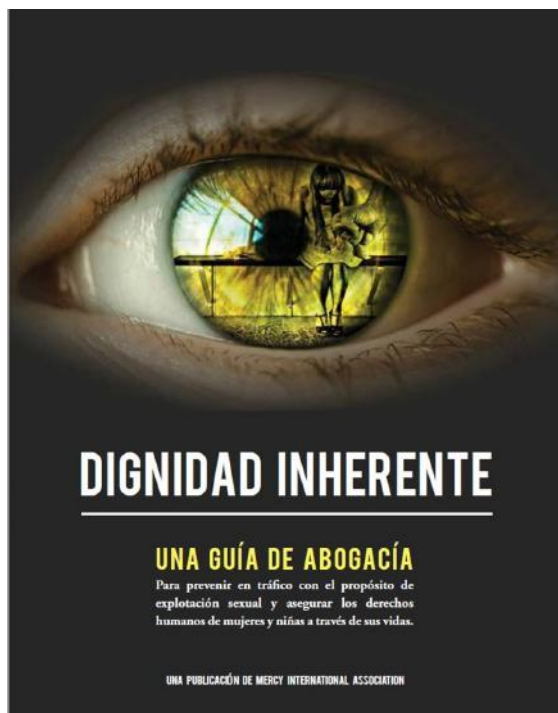
Closing the day in solidarity and prayer for those experiencing extreme poverty, MGA hosted David Haas for a musical event. David featured his popular song, "Blest are They," which resonates with MIA's vision for global compassion and justice. In his book *Rejoice and Be Glad*, David explains that he wrote this song as a "trumpet blast calling us each to conversion...and bring[ing] to heel policies and initiatives that keep people in bondage; that keep people trapped in poverty and exclusion." May we continue to head this trumpet blast as we carry on Catherine's concern for the poor, and especially for women and children.



Photo Credit: David Haas

- *Spanish Edition of 'Inherent Dignity' Now Available*

Mercy Global Action has now completed the Spanish translation of the important resource and book, *Dignidad Inherente*, which is available to download [here](#). MGA launched the guidebook, *Inherent Dignity*, July 2018 coinciding with the International Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Since its original release, this resource has spread internationally. Organizations specializing in not only trafficking, but also migration, gender equality, and the special rights of children, have utilized *Inherent Dignity* in their work.



Trafficking is a global scourge affecting the most vulnerable among us first. Due to gender inequalities and the vulnerability of children, traffickers disproportionately target and exploit women and girls. *Inherent Dignity* views the impact of trafficking and sexual exploitation through the lens of human rights and focuses on how these issues have specifically affected vulnerable populations. By taking on this complex issue from the paradigm of human rights, activists and agencies can see trafficking in its global context, which inseparable from socio-economics, migration, corruption and crime.

During a grass roots engagement trip to Peru, Angela Reed rsm will be presenting the new Spanish edition to **Red Kawsay Peru**, a member of the Talitha Kum network. Talitha Kum, the International Network of Consecrated Life, focuses its ongoing efforts on the issue of human trafficking. It is our hope that these resources will provide useful information and strategies to Talitha Kum and other organizations and agencies.

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

- *SDGs in Action at the Pan-Amazon Synod!*



The issues discussed at the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for the Pan-Amazon Region concern us all as members of a global community to listen to the 'cry of the earth' and 'cry of the poor'.

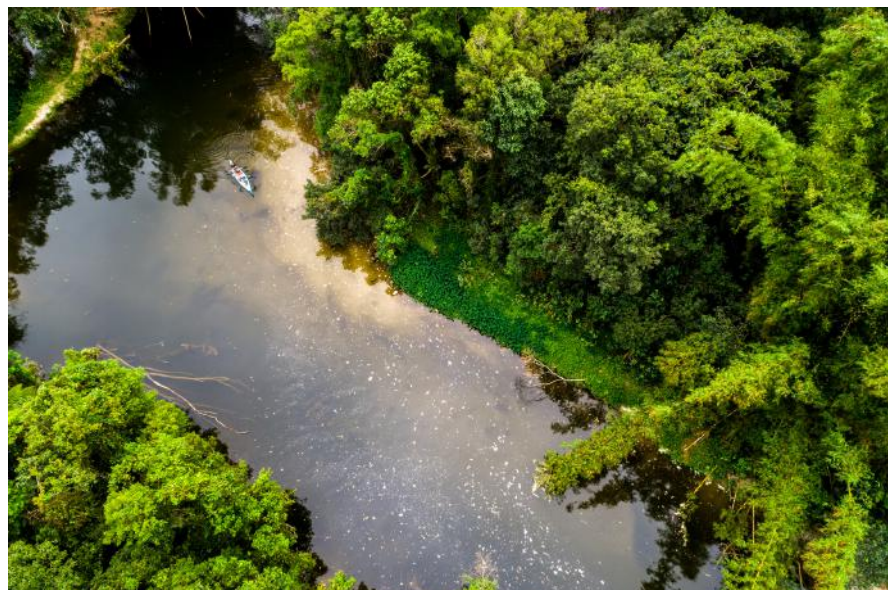
The participants stressed the involvement of the global economy in the degradation of the Amazon. Burning stretches of the jungle increases profits in the international beef market. Illegal mining provides transnational companies cheap metals, which are crucial for our technology (i.e. smart phones, tablets, computers). These, and other immoral practices, are committed without the consent of indigenous peoples who lose their land and lives as collateral damage.

The residents of the Amazon are the first to face the environmental impact of this degradation: water pollution, mining, fires and deforestation, and the increasing threat of desertification. However, people in other hemispheres are not far from this growing destruction. The Amazon is often referred to as the world's lungs; so, where will we be without our lungs?

The synod called for the conversion, not only of the Church as an underutilized moral voice, but also for the consumers who benefit from products that degrade human lives and the environment. This call shifts the focus from individual policies and companies to a holistic view of integral ecology, which underscores the “interconnectedness that exists among God, human, and creation, but also recognizes how political, economic, cultural, social and religious values and decisions are interrelated.”

Our everyday actions and purchases change people's lives, and threaten increasingly fragile parts of our ecosystem. In the light of our interconnectedness, we, as global citizens, cannot ignore the suffering of people or our planet. We must answer the call to ever-deepening conversion as we care for our common home.

Through ecological conversion and the implementation of the SDGs we can realize the calls of the Amazonian Synod.



MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

RESEARCH



Mercy Global Action Research agenda is focused on identifying ways in which Mercy International Association can effectively intervene in public policy and service response. Policy analysis must always be informed by grassroots experience and service delivery. There has been increasing interest from university students seeking to undertake research. Research strategies include; literature and policy reviews, participatory action research, qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation research. There are currently numerous opportunities to undertake research in the office.

REFLECTIONS ON THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP (MELF)

BY THERESIA TINA RSM (MELF 2019-2020)

"It is now about two months into the fellowship program but it feels like we have walked on this journey for much longer. The Fellowship has linked us together, women of mercy, from many miles across the world. We come from the countries of United States, Peru, Australia, Ireland, and Papua New Guinea. It has enabled and engaged us to link social justice issues which are affecting the earth community, beginning with the various countries from which we all have come. Our passion for justice for all individuals has united us to journey together on this fellowship. So far, it has been a great experience of uniting us as one in the name of mercy and justice within self, family, community and society.

We are all aware that there are many people on this planet who care about others and our earth, but painfully, there are also those who care only about themselves but not about others or our common home. For some people there is no realisation of a growing change in human behaviour or the environment around them. However, those that are connected by the touch of a web of justice are united because their hearts are disturbed by the displacement of people and the displacement of the resources of our earth.



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

CONTINUED...

The fellowship is like a spider web that connects us - the fellows - in a web with our leadership team and our mentors; while we the fellows then connect with other Mercy people building on the web by making more connections.



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

By reading and reflecting on the monthly resources and the webinars, we deepen our connections, as well as connecting with others in the world when we are sharing and reflecting with them. It is an invisible, yet tangible and alive connection. Each of us has gone beyond our doors for the sake of the displacement of our earth and the displacement of people. So often this happens due to a self-centered hunger for power, wealth, and greed. The monthly resources affirms, strengthens, supports, and motivate us, as well as giving us insights about the effects of change in the world and how these affect our whole earth, all human beings, and all life forms. All of this encourages and gives us hope for a more just world.

The other fellows, our leaders, and the different panelists on the webinars, as well as most of our other resources, all reveal that women have a lot of power to influence and to lead. It is women who care about others in practical ways such as caring for the whole household. We join with other justice women in the world crying and longing for a just world that allow each individual to be respected and enable them to live life to the fullest. It is a challenge for us when we don't always see immediate effects of change in community and society. It is easy to feel disempowered when whole systems are imbalanced and corrupt in some countries. It is always the ordinary person and family who are most effected at the grassroots level.

For example, in my own country of Papua New Guinea, people are dying from curable diseases due to lack of proper medical facilities, or not enough specialised doctors. Poor roads full of potholes mean many do not have access to good health care and local hospitals or aid clinics. It is those who are vulnerable and marginalized who cannot afford to go somewhere else for the better health treatment. And so mortality rates are high.

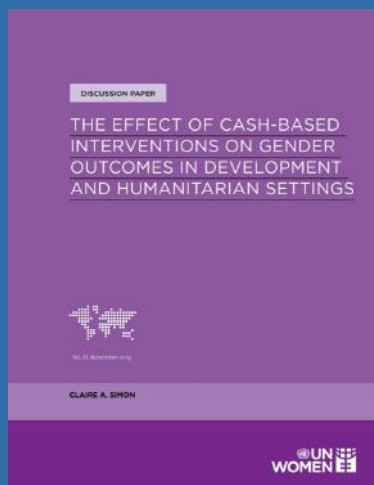
It is my hope that one day the cry of the 'displaced persons' and 'the earth' will be heard by the people in power so that there is peace and justice in the world."



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

“USEFUL RESOURCES

The Effect of Cash-based Interventions on Gender Outcomes in Development and Humanitarian Settings



A Human Right Defender Toolkit for Promoting Business Respect for Human Rights



Rahamim Ecology Centre - 'Climate Emergency' Online Course



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- **November 16th - International Day for Tolerance**
- **November 19th - World Toilet Day**
- **November 20th - Mercy Global Action Grassroots Engagement in Peru**
- **November 25th - International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**
- **November 25th - International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**
- **December 2nd - International Day for the Abolition of Slavery**
- **December 2nd - 13th - UNFCCC 25th Conference of Parties in Madrid**
- **December 3rd - International Day of Persons with Disabilities**
- **December 10th - Human Rights Day**

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

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

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 12



IN THIS ISSUE

THEMATIC AREAS

INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

MGA A WAY FORWARD

USEFUL RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, AMANDA
CARRIER RSM, AVERY KELLY,
AND COLLEEN SWAIN



MERCY GLOBAL ACTION ADVENT GREETINGS

*Thus says our GOD, the Holy One of Israel:
O people of Zion, who dwell in Jerusalem,
no more will you weep; God will be gracious to
you when you cry out, as soon as God hears God
will answer you. Our God will give you the bread
you need and the water for which you thirst. No
longer will your Teacher hide, but with your own
eyes you shall see your Teacher, while from
behind, a voice shall sound in your ears: "This is
the way; walk in it," when you would turn to the
right or to the left. (IS 30:19-21)*



Isaiah's words of hope reach us today amidst Advent, our season of preparing, while we wait in our own time of injustice. We wait to celebrate Jesus' birth and we wait for justice to prevail in our world. Reflecting on this passage fills me with hope and a sense of purpose. These words remind me of our responsibility to work with our Teacher to create this promised future. The words, "This is the way; walk in it," keep me focused and fueled for mission during this crucial time in our cosmic story. So many issues held dear by the Mercy world call forth in us a deep response; finding our own light in the darkness will keep us fresh on this long road to a more just society.



THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Mercy Global Action to Advocate at COP25*

Colleen Swain will be attending COP 25 in Madrid, Spain on behalf of Mercy International Association Mercy Global Action as we continue to respond to the climate crisis and heed the call to respond to the degradation of the earth and the displacement of peoples.



The 25th Session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) commenced on December 2nd and will end on December 13th. Originally scheduled to take place in Santiago, Chile, the conference was cancelled and Spain made an offer to host the event.

Pope Francis sent an urgent plea to the official conference calling for an increase in ambition towards addressing climate change. “We are facing a “challenge of civilization” in favour of the common good and of a change of perspective that places this same dignity at the centre of our action, which is clearly expressed in the “human face” of climate emergencies. There remains a window of opportunity, but we must not allow it to close. We need to take advantage of this occasion through our responsible actions in the economic, technological, social and educational fields, knowing very well how our actions are interdependent.”

In line with Pope Francis message, Mercy Global Action aims to bring the voices of those from Latin America and the Amazon to COP25. Working with members of CIDSE, as well as other Catholic and faith-based organizations attending the COP, side and parallel events are taking place to bring Latin American and Amazonian voices to the forefront (see ways to engage below). MGA will also be advocating on behalf of local and indigenous communities who have been impacted by extractive industries such as oil and gas drilling, hydroelectric dams, transnational corporate agriculture, mineral and coal mining and more.

We continue to bring the voices of those from the 2018 Mercy Asia Pacific Gathering who emphasized that climate change is human made and exacerbates issues including: loss and damage of biodiversity, sea level rise and rise of carbon emissions, waste management, pollution of the earth, sea, and food, displacement of peoples, water scarcity, erosion, sea bed mining and other forms of extraction. These robust and vivid contributions from the Mercy Asia Pacific Gathering, as well as local knowledge from Latin America, has further informed our key advocacy and lobbying points at COP 25; taking into account the interconnectedness of environmental degradation and human displacement.

Read the full article on mercyworld.org with "What's at Stake?", "Mercy's Focus at COP", "Ways to Engage" and more!



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *Inherent Dignity workshop provided in Lima, Peru*

Angela Reed rsm, Team Leader, Mercy Global Action, provided a workshop in Lima for members of Red Kawsay who are a network within Talitha Kum. The workshop focused on human trafficking advocacy and how prevention is an important way to address the issue. Participants included religious women working to prevent trafficking, some of whom also provide service provision to trafficking survivors. The workshop introduced participants to the advocacy guidebook produced by the Mercy Global Action Office and now translated into Spanish.



In exploring the different paradigms for understanding trafficking, participants felt a strong association between gender violence and human trafficking. Many shared stories where women were treated as objects and subjected to violence and ultimately commodified. Angela stressed the importance of understanding the local manifestations of trafficking and enabling trafficking survivors to inform policy and service delivery.

Special thanks to the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas for funding the Spanish Translation of the publication.

- *The Eye that Cries: the Global Reality behind Femicide*

Achieving gender equality around the world is not only a Sustainable Development Goal for the United Nation; it is also a key concern for Mercy Global Action. Empowering women, encouraging the enactment of just laws, and ensuring all children receive a good education[1] are some of the steps organizations at the UN are pursuing in order to address the culture of inequality. Taking action to end violence against women, which is rooted in social inequality, continues to be of vital importance to the Mercy world, and MGA affirms the work being done to end this crisis.

Globally, gender-based violence claims the lives of women every day. In 2017, approximately 87,000 women were killed[2] out of the total 464,000 homicides[3] worldwide; family members or intimate partners intentionally killed 58% of those women[4]. Motives for femicide can be difficult to research especially in the context of wars, gangs and organized crime. However, within the context of family life motives for violence

[1] UN Women. "Focusing on Prevention to Stop the Violence." What We Do, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/prevention> Accessed 4 Dec. 2019.

[2]United Nations. Global Study on Homicide:Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls. Vienna, Austria, Division forPolicy Analysis and Public Affairs, July 2019.

[3]United Nations. Global Study on Homicide:Executive Summary. Vienna, Austria, Division for Policy Analysis and PublicAffairs, July 2019.

[4]]United Nations. Global Study on Homicide:Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls. Vienna, Austria, Division forPolicy Analysis and Public Affairs, July 2019



DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *Continued...*

are well-documented. Domestic violence, honor killings, deaths related to gender-based violence such as female genital mutilation, dowry disputes, and sex-selective abortions[5] are all a part of this category. Additionally, motives for femicide include human trafficking, prostitution, sexual orientation and gender identity, and witchcraft. These studies show that femicide is fundamentally based on cultural norms that under value women and girls. Furthermore, these social norms also validate gender-based roles for men that foster a climate of dominance. The most common motives noted in studies of femicide show the cultural roots of femicide: “possessiveness, jealousy and fear of abandonment.”[6] In addition to a culture of inequality lack of education, poverty, migration, and a large age discrepancy between intimate partners all increase the risk to women and girls. [7]

To pray for an end to femicide Sisters of Mercy from several countries visited a memorial in Lima, Peru called the Eye that Cries. Tucked between low hills and embankments the memorial is quiet and still while children play nearby and families relax under shady trees in the large Campo Marte Park. The memorial itself is a massive stone labyrinth with smooth river stones lining the paths. Many of the stones are marked with the names and ages of people killed by the Shining Path in the 1980-90’s, and the retaliatory violence following that guerrilla movement. Names include men and women from a wide range of ages, even infants. Flowers decorate the memorial, and at the center of the labyrinth is a reflecting pool where a large rough stone stands. An eye carved near the top of the stone slowly drips water into the pool below. At the memorial, we remembered the violence endured by Peruvians, and the violence still endured today by countless women and girls due to gender-based violence and femicide. Praying in a circle around the weeping eye, and carrying symbols of our home countries, we proclaimed the names of women murdered in our geographic areas.



Photo: Angela Reed rsm/MIA MGA

By surrounding that memorial with our Mercy presence, we gave voice to those who have been silenced by femicide thereby adding to the Mercy World’s continuing work for greater inclusion and justice. While the struggle for gender equality continues, we add the strength of our convictions to those who fight the injustice of gender discrimination every day. Like Catherine, we will work with women and girls to form a better and more just world.

[5]United Nations. Global Study on Homicide: Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls. Vienna, Austria, Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs, July 2019.
 [6]Ibid
 [7]Ibid

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

• *Former MGA Intern Avery Kelly Attends Business and Human Rights Forum in Geneva*

I am a former intern of Mercy International Association: Global Action and am now a human rights lawyer at Corporate Accountability Lab, where I work on developing innovative legal strategies to address corporate impunity for human rights and environmental abuses worldwide. With MGA's support, I had the opportunity to participate in this year's Forum on Business & Human Rights at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, a dedicated space at the UN for discussions on the impacts of business operations on communities and the environment. At the Forum I had the opportunity to meet with civil society partners from around the world to share strategies and make connections for collaborations going forward and to attend the Forum's sessions on relevant topics in the field.

On the first day of the BHR Forum, I attended the opening panel "Voices from the Ground," one of the most important sessions of the Forum, with the most representation from communities on the front lines of corporate abuses of human rights around the world. At this session, activists from Brazil, the Philippines, Colombia, and Armenia shared their experiences defending people and the planet from corporate abuse in their local contexts and denounced the violence and harassment they and their communities face as a result of their activism. At this session, CAL partner Danilo Rueda from the Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz stressed

the importance of the ongoing truth and reconciliation process in Colombia as a forum for Colombians harmed by business activities and corporate support of armed groups during the long-lasting civil conflict to face those actors and demand justice. Indianara Ramires Machado of the Guarani Kaiowa community in Brazil spoke about the human rights abuse and environmental destruction her community faces from extractive industries and that while Brazil, like many other countries, upholds the rights of Indigenous People on paper, the reality on the ground is starkly different.



On the second day of the Forum, CAL Founder and Co-director Charity Ryerson and Innovation Fellow Zobaida Khan spoke on a panel with partners from MSI Integrity, SOMO, WSR Network, the Clean Clothes Campaign, and OECD Watch to discuss the shortcomings of and alternatives to multi-stakeholder approaches, which bring together private companies, government actors, and affected communities into initiatives to develop and implement voluntary guidelines to address human rights abuses. Across the varying perspectives that were shared at the panel, the speakers all agreed that it's time to rethink multi-stakeholder initiatives.

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

Continued...

I also attended a riveting film screening and discussion with members of the European Coalition for Corporate Justice and the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights about a textile factory fire that killed 260 people in Pakistan in 2012 and subsequent litigation brought in Germany against KiK, a retail clothing company that was the factory's main client.

On the last day of the Forum, I attended a session on child labor in cocoa supply chains. During this session, Antoine Fountain of the Voice Network described the dire situation of child and forced labor in cocoa that continues despite 10 years of multi-stakeholder initiatives in the sector: "Farmers are still poor, children are still working, and trees are still being cut down." At this session, a Nestle representative made the disturbing revelation that the company has identified 28,000 child laborers in the cocoa supply chain in West Africa, all on farms that have a fair trade or social compliance certification. This point raises fundamental questions about the validity of certification schemes and whether they address root causes of child labor in the cocoa sector.

Another noteworthy session I participated in was a research sharing session in which the authors of the Mind the Gap project debuted some of their key research findings. Mind the Gap is a project of many non-governmental organizations and organized by SOMO. The project uses a large sample of data and extracts overarching strategies that corporations use to skirt accountability for human rights abuse. These strategies include: constructing deniability, using judicial strategies to avoid liability, distracting stakeholders, undermining defenders and communities, and utilizing state power. This research will be immensely helpful for communities and civil society who seek to address corporate abuse of human rights and the environment to develop counter strategies based on these pervasive tactics that are often used against them.

Recorded sessions from the BHR Forum can be accessed [here](#), with key words "Forum on Business and Human Rights 2019."

I am so grateful for the opportunity to have attended the BHR Forum this year and to have heard from and connected with so many fearless civil society and frontlines representatives. The connections and learnings gathered there will greatly serve my work on human rights and environmental abuse by corporate actors going forward.

Avery is a Staff Attorney at Corporate Accountability Lab and former Intern/Fellow at MIA:MGA.

MGA A WAY FORWARD...

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

HUMAN RIGHTS ANALYSIS



Rights based advocacy is at the heart of our global justice work. Human Rights Analysis requires familiarity with human rights instruments and mechanisms. This is largely made up of conventions and their review mechanisms. A significant part of the work of MGA is to undertake human rights analysis and to inform grassroots of the way in which rights can be realised.

A further focus is to document circumstances in which the Mercy World identifies the denial of human rights and to seek redress.

REFLECTIONS ON THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP (MELF)

BY SIOBHAN GOLDEN (MELF 2019-2020)

"I am just over three months into my Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship journey and I am really enjoying every experience of it! I am so grateful to Sr Angela Reed and Colleen Swain for their support and encouragement, as I extend my knowledge on issues of Social and Environmental Justice through the Mercy lens.

My MELF journey began last August in Cambodia. This was an incredible trip which truly touched my heart. I met the other nine fellows and a strong bond formed among us regardless of age, ethnic or racial background, as we share the same vision for Mercy and Justice. A strong sense of empowerment grew

as we learned that together we can create change and advocate for justice. It was a very special time. I am still in awe of the generosity, openness, hospitality and wisdom from Sr Denise Coughlan and the Cambodian community.



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

CONTINUED...



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

great wisdom about working towards justice and dismantling oppressive systems. This, along with their intimate nature, rekindles the sense of empowerment and our shared vision for Hope and Justice that we created in Cambodia.

On top of this, I have been assigned Sr Suzanne Ryder as my mentor for the year, who has grass root experience achieving Peace and Justice, as part of a strong group of women. I am very grateful to be connected with her. I hope to follow in her footprints!

I am carrying out my MELF research project on Homelessness in Ireland. I am focusing my project on women and the impact being homeless can have on their health and well-being. MELF supported my attendance to a regional conference which focused on 'Youth Homelessness: Practice, Policy and Campaigning'. Attending this event deepened my knowledge on the homeless crisis and the fundamental need for measures of prevention instead of only focusing on emergency aid.

I am looking forward to advancing in Social Justice Work and Human rights while continuing to look at the world through a lens of Mercy. I am so excited for our next international encounter in New York in March 2020 and to continue to learn, laugh, share and grow in this sisterhood and with the huge support that MELF has received from around the world."



Photo: Colleen Swain/MIA MGA

“USEFUL RESOURCES

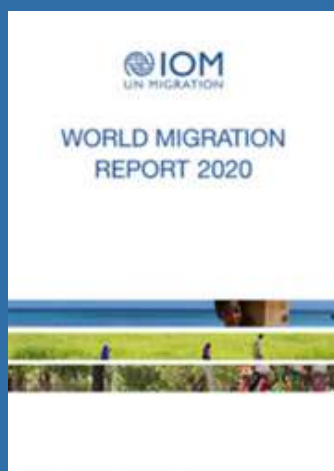
Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda



Convention on the Rights of the Child 30 Years



International Migration Report



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- December 7th - 13th - Colleen at COP25
- December 10th - Human Rights Day
- December 11th - International Mountain Day
- December 18th - International Migrants Day
- December 20th - International Human Solidarity Day
- December 25th - Christmas Day

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

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