



United Nations



# Notes from the field...

## November 2015

By the IASSW Interns at the United Nations, New York, 2015-2016

### Conference Participation

Members of the team that represents IASSW at the United Nations in New York (in photo, from left to right: M.C. "Terry" Hokenstad, Lynne Healy, Shirley Gatenio Gabel, Rebecca Thomas, Grace Felten) gave a panel presentation at the Council on Social Work Education annual conference in Denver, Colorado, U.S.A. The overall topic was "Representing Social Work Education at the United Nations." Main Representative Lynne Healy explained IASSW's consultative status at the UN and spoke about her work on the NGO Committee for Social Development. Other current team members gave highlights of the issues being addressed in committees they serve on: Terry Hokenstad spoke on Ageing; Shirley Gatenio Gabel on the Committee on the Status of Women; and Rebecca Thomas on the Committee on Migration. Grace Felten, graduate intern with the team in 2014-2015 presented some of her extensive work with the Working Group on Girls and the Migration Committee. The panel concluded with a brief summary of the recently adopted Post-2015 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.



### Committee Priorities

#### Committee on Social Development

The Committee on Social Development is strongly focused on preparing for the Civil Society Forum (1 to 2 February 2016) which directly precedes the Commission on Social Development at the United Nations. Lynne Healy, Christi Holmes, and Sarah Johnson are participating on a sub-committee focused on grassroots development projects in preparation for this event, as noted below.

#### *Grassroots Project*

The United Nations NGO committee for Social Development commissioned a survey on economic community-based initiatives, in preparation for the Fifty Fourth Session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development. The survey elicited 70 responses from 26 countries, representing every continent. IASSW representatives, along with a robust team of multidisciplinary collaborators, are in the process of analyzing the survey results to highlight best practices, barriers to social/economic stability and recommended policies that might enhance economic stability and the sustainable development goals. Additionally, it is anticipated that the survey analysis will be used for a joint Financing for Development and Committee on Social Development/United Nations side event, with a supplemental report drafted to



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[www.iassw-aiets.org](http://www.iassw-aiets.org)

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Association Internationale des Ecoles de Travail Social  
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国际社会工作教育联盟  
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inform policy outcomes for the forthcoming Commission for Social Development. We encourage IASSW members to attend, if possible. Stay tuned for dates.

### **Committee on Financing for Development**

The Committee on Financing for Development is focusing: 1) on creating a follow-up response to the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#), the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and 2) on establishing a meaningful collaboration with the Committee on Social Development, so as to stronger advocate for people-centered development practices, especially in financing practices. To our knowledge, our participation on this committee is a first for the IASSW UN team. In fact, we specifically chose to participate on the committee because of the importance that issues regarding financing will have in the successful implementation of the SDGs.

### **Committee on Migration**

The Committee on Migration is focused strongly on the implications for migration policy as a result of the topic's inclusion in the 2030 Agenda, especially in Goal 10's (Reduce inequality in and among country's) targets, as well as the general hope stemming from the Global Forum on Migration and Development that took place in Istanbul in October. For outcome documents from the Global Forum, please see: <http://www.gfmd.org/docs/turkey-2014-2015>

### **Working Group on Girls**

The Working Group on Girls is focused on preparations for the [60<sup>th</sup> session](#) of the Commission on

the Status of Women, which will take place from 14 to 24 March 2016. As part of these preparations, the Mission Outreach Sub-Committee is identifying each member state that is participating in CSW, in order for members of the sub-committees to directly address country-specific issues facing girls at each mission. You can find information on the NGO CSW Forum here: <http://www.ngocsw.org/ngo-csw-forum>

## **Other Events at the UN**

### **International Day of the Girl**

The International Day of the Girl Child was on October 11<sup>th</sup>. To mark the day, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Girls Speak Out was held at the United Nations on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. For the event, girls performed poems, songs, monologues, and stories that had been submitted from girls around the world to create dialogue about girls' needs and priorities. You can watch the full webcast [here](#).

### **International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**

October 17<sup>th</sup> marked the [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#). The theme this year is "Building a sustainable future: Coming together to end poverty and discrimination" and was co-organized by the Permanent Missions of Burkina Faso and France, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the International Movement ATD Fourth World, and the NGO Committee for Social Development. You can watch the full webcast [here](#).



## Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura

In this side event at the UN, Mrs. Zainab Hawa Bangura spoke of her experiences that led to her becoming the Secretary General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The Special Representative is from Sierra Leone, and she began advocating for democracy as a way to promote women's rights in during the civil war. She was able to document the human rights abuses during the war, which was the first time forced marriage has been documented in international law. Security Council Resolution 1818 created her office in 2010, and she works strongly with the International Criminal Court, with some challenges; the Special Representative noted that although there are indictments, there are not nearly as many prosecutions. She travels substantially throughout the year to conflict-ridden countries, and spoke at length about the creation of ISIS and the implications that this new form of terrorism has on her work.

### Request for Input

If you know an IASSW member (including yourself!) whose work should be highlighted, please contact Sarah Johnson so she can recognize that member in the monthly spotlight. Additionally, if one of the committees is working on a topic that is within your expertise or area of interest, please reach out to us so that we can make social work's voice heard.

Respectfully,

### Member Spotlight



Dr. Gidraph G. Wairire is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Social Work, University of Nairobi, Kenya. He is the President, Association for Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) and a board member of the IASSW. He is widely published in social work and has undertaken research on different social work related issues including 'The Role of Social Work in Poverty Reduction and Realization of MDGs in East Africa' a joint research project involving the University of Nairobi-Kenya, Carinthia University of Applied Sciences-Austria, Makerere University - Uganda, Institute of Social Work-Tanzania and National University of Rwanda. The outcomes of this study yielded the publication of the first book ever on social work in east Africa entitled 'Professional Social Work in East Africa: Professional Social Work in East Africa: Towards Social Development, Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality' by Spitzer H., Twikirize, J and Wairire, G.G., Eds (2014).

In addition it resulted in the publication of the book 'The Role of Social Work in Poverty Reduction and Realization of Millennium Development Goals in Kenya' co-authored with Zani, A.P., Machera, M. and Mutie, P.M. (2014). Besides highlighting the role that social workers play in MDGs in East Africa, the publications have laid a firm foundation for social work education in East Africa and a possible point of reference for social work practitioners in their potential role in the newly set out sustainable development goals.

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