



# WINTER 2023 NEWSLETTER

*Social Work Day at the UN New York will be held on April 3. More information at the end of this newsletter.*

## Youth Focus at the United Nations

The United Nations has expanded its focus on youth and young adults in the past year. Many of the events promoted at the UN have a central focus on the participation of young individuals. The UN defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. During the Climate Change Conference (COP27), a children and youth pavilion was held to amplify the voices of children and youth around the world. In the recent Commission for Social Development (CSocD61), many side events were held and organized by youth with a great focus on employment opportunities and innovation. NGO committees have also considered youth as a priority in their events. NGO CSW/NY has hosted a Youth Preparation Series event to educate and prepare young individuals for the NGO Forum and UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Every Wednesday, youth training was held starting from January leading up to the NGO CSW Forum. The training consisted of discussing the CSW67 priority theme, “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, in the context of civil society and youth advocacy” as well as other topics related with the status of women. All the youth series have been recorded and published on NGO CSW/NY YouTube channel. As educators, you may want to call your students’ attention to opportunities for engagement with the UN through the youth initiatives.

For more information about the youth series, please visit NGO CSW/NY:

<https://ngocsw.org/ngocsw67/>

Youtube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjQaHona8K4TgcXlvp1wE0w>



## UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MEETS IN FEBRUARY

The 61<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of the UN Commission for Social Development was held in early February with significant participation by members of the IASSW Team of Representatives. Reviews of these meetings are the focus of this edition of the newsletter. The Commission met in person at the UN for the first time since 2020. It was supplemented by a number of side events held virtually. Note that side events are panels and workshops sponsored by governments, UN organizations and NGOs held as part of the Commission session. The session focused on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 on employment and 10 on inequality.

 **COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**   
United Nations Headquarters, New York

 **United Nations** | Department of Economic and Social Affairs



## Commission for Social Development (CSocD61) Orientation and Networking



An orientation event was organized by the NGO Committee for Social Development as a way to network and provide essential information about the Commission. The event started with a few words from the current chair, Jean

Quinn. She welcomed the participants and expressed her gratitude to the members of the NGO committee. It continued with some remarks from Wenyan Yang from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN/ DESA). She addressed the role of DESA in the commission and its contributions. She also explained the collaboration between DESA and NGOs. DESA has invited experts from the NGO committees to support the secretary-general's reports during the commission. The event continued with an overview presentation on the commission. The vice-chair of the committee presented the overview and went over registration, high-level discussion panels, side events, and the civil society declaration. The event concluded with networking interaction



between all the participants. Intern Eunices Pineda had the opportunity to attend the orientation and network with NGO members, including the current committee chair, Jean Quinn (in the picture).

## Opening Session for 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD61) Highlights Global Crises



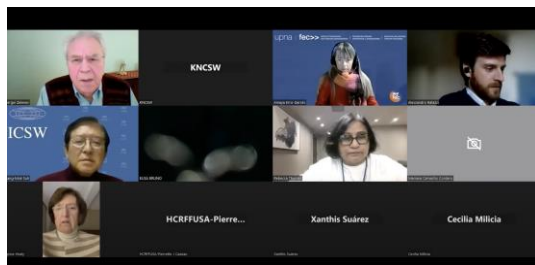
The opening session started with remarks from the commission chair, H.E. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani of Qatar. She welcomed all delegates and participants to the 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development. She presented the commission's theme for this year, "Creating full and productive employment and decent work for all as a way of overcoming inequalities to accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". She emphasized how currently the world is dealing with multiple crises at once caused by multiple layer factors including climate change, social and economic inequality, social instability, political unrest, and more. The event continued with opening remarks from the president of the Economic and Social Council, the UN Under-Secretary General, the chair of the NGO committee for Social Development, a youth representative from Nigeria, and a representative for the International Federation on Ageing and the NGO Committee on Ageing. Some of the common themes included climate change, the effects of the covid-19 pandemic, and the impact of social disparities. The meeting continued with the election of officers for the next bureau members. The representative from Zambia and the representative from North Macedonia were chosen as the vice chairs for the next session. An important element of the panel was follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the 24th special session of the General

Assembly. The director of the division of social inclusion at the UN/ DESA, Ms. Daniela Bass, introduced this item. She provided an overview and summary of the six secretary general reports. She stated that there are currently three crises affecting employment in the world: the covid-19 pandemic, the global effects of the Ukraine war, and climate change. She also highlighted that the reports have a strong focus on youth and the ways we can improve employment opportunities through innovative technology. She concluded her speech with an introduction to The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPPA). The session concluded with general discussions from the members of the state and delegates.

For more information about CSocD61, please visit:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csod-social-policy-and-development-division/csocd61.html>

### Decent Work and Inequality: IASSW Co-Sponsors Social Development Side Event with ICSW



IASSW joined with the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) in co-sponsoring a panel for the Commission meeting. Panelists examined the intersections and challenges of meeting SDG8 on decent work and SDG10 on reducing inequality under the title “Addressing inequality predicament: trade-offs and the quest for decent employment,

poverty reduction and social inclusion.” The virtual format allowed us to feature Dr. Suh Sung Mok, Global ICSW President from Korea; Mr. Alessandro Batazzi, Inequalities Specialist, International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva; Professor Amaya Erro-Garcés, Public University of Navarre, Spain, and Dr. Sergei Zelenev, Special Representative of ICSW to the United Nations in New York. Lynne Healy (IASW) served as panel moderator. Mr. Batazzi noted the importance of bringing informal workers under the protections of decent work as a priority for developing countries. Professor Erro-Garces reported that research shows that the social service sector is particularly weak on provisions for decent work to employees—an important point for social work attention. In concluding, Dr. Zelenev highlighted the importance of finding synergies among the SDGs to address the multidimensional nature of inequality. We thank Dr. Zelenev and ICSW for their regular invitations to collaborate at the UN.

### MIPPA at 20: Fit for the Future of Aging



This event focused on the future of The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPPA) and how we should manage MIPPA and the 2030 agenda. This event occurred after the high panel discussion on the “Fourth Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing”. The meeting started with remarks from Daniel Savala of Costa Rica, Vice-chair of the bureau. He provided information about how the MIPPA final version has been agreed by member states.

The resolution acknowledges some of the data on the aging population, current challenges (poverty, old age, lack of social connection), and new challenges (climate change, impacts of digital transformation). He also provided input on how Costa Rica has been an advocate for these issues for many years as well as how it has implemented many of its policies based on MIPPA. The former Head of the DESA Programme on Ageing provided some remarks on MIPPA and how the implementation to date is not sufficient. He stated that there must be an international consensus to make sure that MIPPA is well-implemented. He also pointed out that some of the current obstacles to full implementation are due to insufficient structures, lack of financial resources, and disinterest from the younger generation. The event continued with input from Turkey's Director General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly. She stated that there is a lack of understanding of the purpose of MIPPA and that many older individuals do not know that MIPPA can be used as an advocacy tool. She also pointed out that national reports on aging might not always reflect the actual disparities in the population. She concluded her discussion with a call to action for member states to pursue a social justice approach. The event concluded with questions and discussion. For more information about MIPPA, please visit:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/madrid-plan-of-action-and-its-implementation.html>

## Achieving Digital Well-being and Addressing Digital Inequality for Sustainable Employment and Decent Work of Youth



The side event was jointly hosted by The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, The Blue Tree Foundation (The Foundation for Preventing Youth Violence), and The European Youth Information and Counseling Agency (ERYICA). The event focused on the aspects of digital well-being that may affect the future and sustainable development of all, with a special focus on youth, and the different ways to recover from COVID-19 in the post-pandemic era through the appropriate use of digital technology. The meeting started with opening remarks from Jong Ik Lee, Secretary General of The Blue Tree Foundation. The event was mostly led by young panelists. The first speaker was Erica Reina, Secretary Director of ERYICA. She started by addressing the nature of information and how it has changed over the past few years, specifically how information reliability has become harder to obtain. She provided information about how Covid-19 has impacted youth mental health and the importance of providing proper youth services. She also emphasized the different global views of mental health services and how countries treat mental health services globally. The co-founder and CEO of the Logout Organization, Boris Veler, provided some remarks about employment and quality jobs in the digital transformation era. He provided positive and negative insights into digital technology. The event continued with remarks from UN Youth Delegates of

the Blue Tree Foundation. The event provided good input on the intersectionality between well-being and technology. The event also discussed recommendations to address digital inequalities as well as how to achieve digital well-being post-pandemic. The event concluded with questions and discussion.

### Civil Society Forum 2023 Emphasizes People-Centered and Rights Based Approaches



Each year, a forum organized by civil society organizations is held as part of the Commission.

The Forum was hosted jointly by UNDESA-DISD, the NGO Committee for Social Development, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Foundation. The Vice Chair of the NGO Committee on Social Development, MaryAnn Dantuono, welcomed all participants and then emphasized how CSocD61 highlighted the need for productive employment and decent work in the reduction of poverty and the achievement of the Agenda 2030 as well as emphasizing a human rights perspective and social dialogue. The event continued with remarks from the Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development, the Bureau of CSocD Chair, the Under-Secretary General DESA, the director of the Division of Inclusive Social Development at the UN/ DESA, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, the Director of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), and Executive Assistant of the NGO Committee for Social Development. The first thematic session, “Working Toward Concrete Solutions for Marginalized Young People Facing Unemployment,” addressed systemic discrimination and how to create work opportunities. It also presented how

organizations have been promoting concrete innovative programs involving youth participation, education, and the well-being of youth drawing on their experiences. The thematic theme for the second session was “Rethinking the Dominant Economic Paradigm- Ensuring Social Protections and Just Transitions For the Changing World of Work”. It focused on how to address employment protection through people-centered policies and rethinking global economic arrangements. The purpose of the session was to think through dominant economic paradigms and how to mediate the challenges caused by these paradigms. The forum concluded with summary remarks from Dr. Ify Ofon, National Coordinator of the Worldwide Network Nigeria, and closing remarks from Lara Hicks, Executive Assistant of the NGO Committee on Social Development and Chair of the Civil Society Forum.



For more information on the Civil Society Forum, please visit:

<https://ngosocdev.org/what-we-do/commission-for-social-development/civil-society-forum-2023/>  
 Civil Society Declaration 2023:  
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2023/01/CSD-2023.pd>

### IASSW UN Team meets in New York



Five of IASSW’s representatives to the UN in New York were able to meet in person on February 8 during the week of the Commission on Social Development. After 3 years of

working virtually, the opportunity to get together was a welcome change. As pictured, joining Main Representative Lynne Healy were graduate student intern Eunices Pineda, Dr. Rebecca Davis (Rutgers University), Dr. Martha Bragin (Hunter College) and Dr. Marciana Popescu (Fordham University). Members shared updates on their NGO committee work and discussed ways to strengthen our presence at the UN. Dr. Davis and Eunices Pineda are engaged with the Working Group on Girls. They noted the increased emphasis on youth involvement at the UN. This can offer opportunities for social work students around the world to become active with the UN. Another article in this newsletter expands on this point. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remain a major discussion theme at the UN. The team would welcome input from members about social work contributions to the SDGs in various countries.

## UPCOMING EVENTS SECTION

**Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will be in March 2023**



This year, CSW67 will take place from Sunday, March 5th through Friday, March 17th. The meeting will take place in a hybrid format for the first time. It is expected to have both in-person and virtual events throughout the NGO Forum to supplement the official sessions of the Commission. The priority theme for this year is “Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.” The review theme is Challenges and

opportunities in achieving gender equality and empowering rural women and girls. High panels and side events can be watched on UN WebTV.

For more information see:

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw67-2023>

## United Nations to Review Progress on the Right to Water



Several IASSW representatives will participate in the World Water Conference that will be held at UN headquarters from March 22-24. This major conference will review progress on Sustainable Development Goal 6: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” and is the midpoint review for the Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028”. Clean water is essential for health and the Covid pandemic underscored global inequality in access to this essential resource. Millions of people lacked access to soap and clean water and were unable to follow even the basic prevention strategy of hand-washing. As is true for other SDGs, progress has been too slow for targets to be met by 2030 without significant scaling up of efforts.

Themes to be addressed in the Conference include Water for Health, Water for Development, and Water for Climate, Reliance and Environment. As one speaker in a preparatory conference said, you can sum up issues with water in 3 phrases: “too little, too much, too dirty.” Beyond emphasis on the human right to water, the conference will highlight effective interventions in diverse settings.



Major conference sessions can be viewed on UN Web TV. For more information including the meeting schedule, see: <https://sdgs.un.org/conferences/water2023>

**The Global Social Work Student Conference** will be on Sunday April 2nd, 2023.

IASSW along with IFSW and ICSW will be hosting a parallel event following Social Work Day at the UN. This event is primarily for students, professionals, and educators. The appeal of the student conference is its focus on community, action, and interaction. Students are encouraged to collaborate, ask questions, and brainstorm solutions. Following the same theme of “Creating a More Inclusive World: Overcoming Barriers to EnABLE Environments” the student conference will focus on “Respecting Diversity Through Joint Social Action: Reframing Disability as Ability”. The conference will be held on Sunday, April 2nd, 2023 in a hybrid platform. Registration will open on March 21st at 1 pm.

**The Social Work Day at the UN-New York** will be on Monday April 3rd, 2023.

Every year, the United Nations hosts Social Work Day at the UN, an opportunity for social workers and interdisciplinary students and professionals to gather and collaboratively discuss and brainstorm action steps to address some of the world’s pressing issues. The focus is always intersectional, seeking to represent all individuals fairly in all of their diversity. This year, the theme of Social Work Day at the UN is “Creating a More Inclusive World: Overcoming Barriers to EnABLE Environments”. Registration will open on March 21st at 1 pm.

For more information on Social Work day at the conference, please visit: [www.monmouth.edu/swday](http://www.monmouth.edu/swday)

IASSW Members are reminded that all major United Nations events are available on UN WebTV. Most events are archived and can be used as teaching resources.