Good Shepherd Participates in High-Level Meeting on Trafficking in Persons

A High-Level Meeting of the plenary of the General Assembly was held on 27–28 September, 2017 to appraise progress achieved in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This gathering, which happened during the opening weeks of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly attracted high-level ministers, who met to assess achievements, gaps and challenges, including in the implementation of the relevant legal instruments, as well as to adopt a Political Declaration. Throughout the negotiations of this Declaration, which refers to the integrated and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a reference to combating all forms of trafficking in person, Good Shepherd advocated that the three targets where trafficking in person is mentioned in the 2030 Agenda – target 5.2 (on trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation), target 8.7 (forced labor and child labor) and 16.2 (all forms of trafficking in children) must be given equal priority, especially as it seems that target 5.2 is slipping under the radar of the UN and Member States.

During the two-day meeting, there were opening statements from the Secretary-General, the new President of the General Assembly, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mira Sorvino, UNODC Goodwill Ambassador for the global fight against human trafficking, and Grizelda Grootboom a civil society representative from South Africa, and survivor of human trafficking. Her strong and emotional testimony represented the power of survivor leadership and emphasized the critical importance of Member States to address sex trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution. Following these there were country statements and two panel discussions. During the second panel, on the topic of effective partnerships for the protection of and assistance to victims, the Holy See made a statement which payed tribute to the work of Religious Sisters throughout the world, and Winifred Doherty, our Good Shepherd Representative at the UN was able to make a statement, urging Member States to recognize that women, girls and children are disproportionately affected by human trafficking, and to commit to intensify efforts to eliminate demand, as well as proposing solutions that would help to eliminate these systemic causes of human trafficking. You can watch the webcast of the session here (Winifred is at 56:58) and read Winifred’s statement here.
The Good Shepherd community in Colombia, with other Congregations including the Jesuits, the Congregation of Jesus the Teacher, the Congregation of the Franciscans of the Immaculate, and Marist Sisters, is part of the RED TAMAR, Network against Trafficking in Persons, a network that is part of the Conference of Religious from Colombia.

On July 30, the TAMAR Network participated actively in the "Run for Dignity and Freedom", an activity organized and supported by government entities such as the City of Cartagena and the Government of Bolivar, where more than 800 people participated. Cartagena is a coastal and tourist city. Weekly, many people come from all over the world to visit this walled city full of history and beauty, and so it becomes vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking.

For the day of July 30 we marched during the morning, where we talked about the atrocity of this crime. It was possible to reach many people, among them the young people who are so vulnerable. The strategy used was a race where the top 5 winners were awarded.

This activity was publicized by several media sources, which garnered participation and therefore furthered the sharing of information on the prevention of this crime.

The GSIJP Office participated actively in the International Day of the Girl celebration this year, sponsoring one of the 11 Days of Action, and holding a Twitter Chat on October 8th, focusing on girls’ human rights. We prepared and responded to a series of 12 questions, hoping to engage people around the world to share their stories, insights and good practices related to girls’ enjoyment of human rights, including health, education, safety, water and sanitation, and many more! You can read the entire Twitter Chat at twitter.com/gsip (Look for the tweets on October 8th, 2017).

Of course, the highlight of the International Day of the Girl was October 11, with the Girls Speak Out in the ECOSOC Chamber of the United Nations. The Speak Out was cleverly crafted using a ‘Girls in Crisis Hotline’ to introduce stories and issues that affect girls. Three criteria were outlined prior to answering a call ‘Listen with full attention; Ask how they are feeling,’ and thirdly say ‘We love you, we believe you, and you are not alone.’ You can view the full webcast here.

At the end of July and into August there was a request from the Working Group on Girls and through our GSIJP Office to submit stories, poetry, or art, telling the story of what it is like to be a girl where you live. These stories were collated and formed the backdrop for the Girls Speak Out. Thanks to those who submitted from Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and thanks also to Indonesia for sharing photos from their celebrations with us! You can see the video Good Shepherd Indonesia sent us here.
In a period of uncertainties, when the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity were merging with the Good Shepherd, I was the Justice Peace link for the Kenya province in 2016, and later the NGO Regional Designate for Africa in January 2017. On my first to-do list was to take a course on Sustainable Development (February–March). Sounds good, but no way, it is complex, demanding and engaging. The High Level Political Forum, the UN process which reviews Member States' implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was to be held in July, and Kenya was one of the States in the list of reviews. Owing to this a lot was expected of me: to search for the Organizations spearheading the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including non-governmental organizations as well as government ministries, and locate the United Nations Offices in Nairobi to get started. I identified and was endorsed in the SDGs Kenya Forum’s 'Leave No One Behind'. This platform has around 38 Organizations, among these groups like GCAP, FEMNET and CIVICUS. It was established to strengthen the capacities of civil society groups working at the county level to engage communities to progressively embrace the new development priorities. In a Forum Dialogue held on Tuesday, 9 May 2017 at Ufungamano House, Nairobi, I was involved in the panel that drafted the review of SDG 3 and was able to advocate for insertion of free or subsidized medical treatment for fistula into a statement to be pushed to the Kenyan government.

I attended the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa on 17-19 May 2017. My contribution to the Forum resulted in the mention of fistula and cancer treatment in Para 18(b) of the official Input of the ECA to the HLPF: Key Messages from the ARFSD. From the different workshops during the Forum I learned the importance of the African unified approach towards eradicating poverty, zero hunger, quality health, and gender equality.

From Regional to Global level, I came to the GSJJP-Office in

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**Good Shepherd Presents Grassroots Realities at HLPF**

The 2017 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was held from Monday, 10 July, to Wednesday, 19 July 2017. The theme was "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world". The HLPF reviewed SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17 in depth, and featured the Voluntary National Reviews of 43 Member States. Information about the 2017 HLPF and the Voluntary National Reviews can be found [here](#).

Good Shepherd is present in 20 of the countries reviewed. A survey was conducted of grassroots organizations in these countries, to see how much awareness and implementation of the SDGs is occurring in the countries under review. Of the 13 responses from the 20 of the countries making Voluntary National Reviews, there were some discrepancies between the reports of governments and the experiences of grassroots programs with people who are among those furthest behind. Read our report on efforts towards linking ministry with national implementation programs – [Report HLPF 2017 GSJP Office](#). (Not available in French)

Good Shepherd helped to organize a side event with the Mission of Ireland and five other NGOs of Catholic congregations entitled “Poverty to Prosperity: Shared Stories from NGOs Working with Communities.” The event included presentations from around the world, demonstrating the efforts of NGOs to translate the Sustainable Development Goals into local contexts and the lessons learned from engagement with grassroots communities. Sr. Donatus Lili, the GSJJP Regional Designate to Africa presented on her work on fistula in Kenya, as well as her engagement with national civil society in Kenya and with the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in Addis Ababa. The entire event was streamed live on Facebook, and the archive can be viewed [here](#).

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**Who Will Listen to Their Stories: A journey from unknown to representation, by Donatus Lili**

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Who Will Listen to Their Stories, Continued

New York from June 25th - July 27th to participate in the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Orientation at the GSJIP-Office involved trainings in social media, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Good Shepherd position papers and multiple activities with the aid of Sr. Winifred Doherty, Sr. Clare Nolan and Cecilie Kern. These included preparing a presentation for a side event at which I was a panelist. The event, titled ‘Poverty to Prosperity: Shared Stories from NGO’s Working with Communities,’ was held at the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN, on July 11th. This was co-sponsored by the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. Ambassador David Donoghue, from the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN was the moderator.

I attended the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), a UN process to review implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the UN Headquarters in New York. This is the main United Nations process on sustainable development that provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations. It was divided in two parts. The first five days, July 10th to 14th was dedicated to a thematic review of SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14, 17, and their inter-linkages. The second part, July 17th – 19th was dedicated to Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) from 43 Member States: 7 from Africa, 11 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 12 from Europe, and 13 from Asia. Kenya was among the 7 African Member States to be reviewed.

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd is fully involved in grassroots activities, as I have been and love to be. The GSJIP-Office has enlarged my horizon to see that we have been responding for over 300 years to the SDG’s, while walking in the footsteps of our founders St. John Eudes and St. Mary Euphrasia. My background in counseling, psychology, and involvement with women living in vulnerable situations, children living in the streets, and children who are trafficked prepared me to not only listen, counsel and empower them but to advocate for their rights. Mark this, although I have been using concepts like “street children” and “trafficked children,” I am now aware of people and human rights, thus differentiating the person from the situation, and now refer to “children who live in the streets,” or “children who are trafficked”.

All the SDGs are interlinked, i.e. to eradicate poverty, there must be zero hunger, clean water, healthy land and sea ecosystems, good infrastructure and innovation, education, equality and equitable share of resources, peace and justice, an end to harmful practices such as FGM and Child, Early, and Forced Marriage, and most of all gender equality. As much as gender inequality persists worldwide, our new ministries will need to address not only gender equality, but all the SDGs to offer a holistic model for development. The persistence of violence against women and harmful practices continues: 1 in 4 women aged 20-24 were married before age 18 in 2015, and 1 in 5 women and girls 15-49 faced violence by an intimate partner.

One of the sessions revealed that grassroots women are not meaningfully consulted in the review of the SDGs, and for the few who are consulted; they are only consulted on gender issues, not all SDGs. In a workshop held on 15th and 16th July at the Church Center for the UN on cross-cutting Civil Society platforms, one of the participants questioned “are women not affected by climate change?” This is one of the many gaps and irregularities in data reporting. More than often women at the grassroots level are invisible in policy implementation, and consequently in national reviews. This is reflected in the case of pensions, where women are covered less than their male counterparts. From the Voluntary National Reviews, most developed countries have set up mandatory pension plans, either public or private, that together achieve quasi-universal coverage. In contrast, in less developed regions the old age pensions cover only a fraction of older persons. The following are a few of my observation from the reviews: it was clear that patriarchal governance is a threat and major challenge to gender equality and there is a need to change the stereotypes for women and girls; pension coverage is typically lower among women than men, owing to their over-representation in the informal sector, self-employed and in unpaid family work.

In solidarity with the Kenyan delegates, the Kenyan NGOs were invited to attend a preview of the Kenyan Voluntary National Review at the Kenya Permanent Mission to the UN on July 13, highlighting the need for inclusive collaboration between government and NGOs in the implementation of the SDGs. After Kenya presented its statement at the UN, we were invited for dinner by the Honourable Iruungu Nyakera, the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure on July 18th. This was sign of collaboration and solidarity.

Conclusion: As the annual holding of the High Level Political Forum closed its 2017 session, it hoped to accelerate the pace of implementation, ignite political will, and encourage governments and the world community to mobilize the required resources to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to lift millions out of poverty.
October 17, 2017, marked the 25th anniversary of the declaration of October 17th as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Activists directly affected by poverty, people standing in solidarity with them, UN high-level officials, Member States and NGO representatives, gathered at the United Nations to celebrate this commemoration. The observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty dates back to the first Call of Action launched on October 17, 1987. Fr. Joseph Wresinski (who was born to immigrant parents in Angers, France in 1917, and knew the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd as a child, serving Mass each morning in the Contemplative Community), along with more than 100,000 people, gathered at the Human Rights Plaza in Paris to honor the victims of extreme poverty, violence, and hunger and to proclaim that extreme poverty is a violation of human rights. Inspired by this first Call to Action, the United Nations adopted October 17 as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in 1992 through the UN General Assembly resolution 47/196, making this year the 25th anniversary of its commemoration.

Participation of people living in poverty has been at the center of the Day’s celebration since its very beginning. This year, delegates coming from all over the world shared their experience, intelligence and struggles to keep their families together, to strive to overcome the obstacles, no matter what, and, to face the shame and humiliation related to discrimination and stigmatization. The commemoration at the United Nations started with a video message from UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, who emphasized how we should stand in solidarity with those living in poverty, and join hands to ensure dignity for all. (Full remarks here in English only). The Secretary-General’s remarks were followed by the testimonies of people who have experienced extreme poverty. They shared how, despite all odds, they still do their best to lead a life in dignity, for themselves and their communities. The voices and experiences were heard by the Ambassadors of France and Burkina Faso, the UNDP Administrator, the President of the International Committee for October 17, and the Director General of the International Movement ATD Fourth World. All reacted to these messages of struggles and hopes transcending borders and nationalities, and shared their messages of support and solidarity with those furthest behind. The sense of solidarity and togetherness between people from different social backgrounds, made this commemoration a unique space at the United Nations. The video of the commemoration can be viewed here.

This year, the commemoration ended with a time of reflection around the Commemorative Stone in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty located on the North Lawn of the UN Gardens. Here again, unity and solidarity were expressed through speeches from UN officials, the Ambassador of France and delegates with lived experience of poverty. Young people and children read the Call to Action of the Commemorative Stone in the six official languages of the United Nations: “Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated” – Father Joseph Wresinski.

Participants were invited to pick up a small stone, symbolizing our personal commitment, and reminding us of our contribution and commitment to create a society where everyone’s voice and place will be recognized and valued equally. Speeches around the stone reaffirmed that only if we come all together, we can eradicate poverty, and it is necessary to ensure that the voices, experience, and knowledge of those living in extreme poverty are taken into account in decision-making processes. The dialogue between people living in poverty, who face daily hardships and stigma related to their situations on one hand, and policy-makers and Member States’ representatives on the other, is a necessary bridge that must be strengthened to achieve the fundamental objectives of the United Nations.
Consultation Phase Concludes for the Global Compact on Migration Process

The first phase of the process to develop a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration has come to an end. This consultation phase included six thematic consultations and a series of regional consultations in all regions to discuss the many facets of migration, the challenges that exist to increasing cooperation and protecting the human and labor rights of migrants, and to propose action-oriented mechanisms to solve these challenges.

The GSIJP Office has been busy attending these consultations, and writing statements to submit as contributions to this process. As we reported in June, Winifred and Cecilie attended the second thematic consultation in May, which discussed the drivers of migration. In June, Cecilie went to Geneva to attend the third thematic consultation, which addressed international cooperation and governance of migration. You can read the statement she delivered at that meeting here. Cecilie then went on to Berlin to attend the 10th annual Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), where she met up with Sr. Magdalena Saavedra from the Philippines. During the Civil Society Days, members from NGOs from all over the world discussed the elements and mechanisms that would be necessary to create a Global Compact for Migration worth adopting in 2018. You can read the final recommendations and actions from that meeting here. In July, Winifred and Cecilie both attended the fourth thematic consultation, which addressed contributions of migrants and diaspora communities to sustainable development. Read the statement Cecilie delivered here. Winifred attended the fifth thematic consultation in Vienna in September. This session discussed smuggling of migrants and human trafficking. Her statement to the meeting can be read here. Cecilie attended the sixth thematic consultation in October in Geneva, which dealt with irregular migration and regular pathways, including labor migration. The statement she delivered can be found here. In addition to these thematic consultation, Good Shepherd engaged with the regional consultations in Asia Pacific, Latin America, and North America.

Now that the consultation phase has ended, what is next? The second phase of the process to develop the Global Compact on Migration is the stocktaking phase, which will take place from December 2017 to February 2018. The main meeting will take place in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, from 4-6 December, and is a chance for Member States and civil society to consolidate the contributions from the consultation phase, and determine what should go into the zero draft. The zero draft is anticipated to be published in January, 2018. The third phase of the process will then begin in February – the negotiation phase. Member States will negotiate the text from February to July. The final text is expected to be adopted in an intergovernmental conference in Fall, 2018. This is a historic opportunity to address international migration. The GSIJP Office will stay engaged with this process, and we hope you will too.

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Editor’s Note: “Embrace the World” can be published, thanks to each of your contributions with articles, stories and other news concerning justice peace issues in the world-wide Good Shepherd Congregation. We continue to count on you for the next editions of the journal. Share with us your activities, news and events in your Units and countries. Thanks to all who were helping with translations and proof reading and especially to those who sent articles for this edition of October 2017.

Working to end poverty, human trafficking & gender-based violence
Advocating with women & girls, migrants & refugees
Recognizing our interconnectedness with the whole of creation, we seek to realize the rights of all and achieve gender equality

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