



Partnership for Global Justice

August 2017

# Partnership For Global Justice Monthly Newsletter

Welcome to the Partnership for Global Justice Monthly – a newsletter about PGJ programs, news from the United Nations and its briefings, and information about the activities of our participating membership. With this Monthly, we invite our members to provide updates of their social justice initiatives and share their related experiences. Please respond to this posting with a comment on our blog or send your thoughts to [partnershipforglobaljustice@gmail.com](mailto:partnershipforglobaljustice@gmail.com).

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# LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear PGJ Members and Friends,

This month at the United Nations began with *Intergenerational Dialogues on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*. Such Dialogues are an activity that each and every one of us can initiate and support. We need not have an agenda; just start the conversation with a friend or a relative on any aspect of any one of the SDGs. Such conversations could lead to transforming the national dialogue from hatred to positive steps for the future.

On August 9, we celebrated the *Ten-Year Anniversary of the adoption of the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)*. Although there have been strides made in recognizing indigenous people, they still are not accepted as having a voice on such key issues as climate change to which they say they have answers.

By the time you receive this, we will have experienced an eclipse. I hope you will also have made preparations to join the *September 1 Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation*. You can read more about this at the [Catholic Climate Movement's website](#).

Meanwhile I will be preparing for the Annual Meeting, at which I sincerely hope to see each of you. Please invite others to join us at the Meeting. It will give them a feel for the dedication of PGJ members and the manner in which we all can respond to global issues.

The Membership Committee has been meeting in an effort to increase the membership. We would appreciate receiving any names of congregations, colleges or individuals that you think would be interested in joining PGJ. A member of the committee will make the contact.

Due to the death of the lady who owned the house in which I live and have PGJ's office, I am needing to look for office space and for living space. Although they have been at the same address for the past 2+ years, that is not a necessity. The first, most important challenge is to locate office space with the intent of moving by the end of 2017. Please keep this intention in prayer.

May each of you experience inner peace and joy as we move toward the end of summer and the beginning of autumn.



JoAnn Mark, ASC  
Executive Director



## An Overview of High-Level Political Forum: The High Level Political Forum Examines Growth and Plans for the Future

by Susan McCarthy, RDC, PGJ Board member



# THE GLOBAL GOALS

## For Sustainable Development



[According to the [website for the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), the theme of the 2017 meeting of the HLPF is “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”. The set of seven goals was included in the Voluntary National Reviews. HLPF 2017 concluded with a three-day ministerial meeting of the forum from July 17-19, 2017.]

As a relatively new member of the Board of Partnership for Global Justice, I have spent the past year coming to know and appreciate the work of so many men and women religious working as NGO’s at the United Nations.

Their efforts (as well as the notifications from PGJ) have encouraged me to attend meetings that explain the work of the UN.

One such meeting is the HLPF (High Level Political Forum) on Sustainable Development. This meeting, which was held July 10-19, has as its theme “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.” The Forum examined a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s), specifically #1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17 to see what progress has been made in forty-four countries that have provided a VNR (Voluntary National Review). For a review of these Goals go to <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>

I was fortunate to hear reports from different regions of the world on the progress being made on these goals. (Unfortunately, one area where progress is experiencing the least growth is in the area of gender equality.)

The real blessing of meetings this week (both at the UN and at side meetings held near the UN) was to see the efforts being made by so many people to further human development in our world. I am encouraged to continue learning more and doing my part in furthering Sustainable Development.

### July 17 High-Level Political Forum: [Partnership Exchange](#)

by M. Doretta Cornell, RDC

[The purpose of this session is detailed in the program: “The [Partnership Exchange](#) presenters will aim to show how their multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments can address challenges and needs encountered by countries taking part in the Voluntary National Reviews, by sharing their expertise and lessons learned.”]

### Opening Panel

In his Keynote Address, **Peter Thomson**, President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly, noted three assumptions underlying the SDGs:

- It is possible to eliminate poverty.
- It is possible to address climate change.
- Human-induced problems have human solutions.



Partnerships are the prime movers in accomplishing the SDGs. For instance, the recent Ocean Conference was attended by over 6,000 people and generated almost 1,400 private [commitments](#) to action by individuals, nations, corporations and other groups.

This Partnership Exchange has been set up in groups by focus to foster partnering to attend to a country's need or to root causes. To succeed, partnerships have to have trust and clarity about who does what, consultation with all stakeholders and aspects of a situation, transparency, and means of securing financing.

After two years since the SDGs were adopted, there is still a long way to go, Mr. Thomson reminded us, but Major Groups have been identifying and creating innovative approaches, which are available through the UN. For instance, the UN has identified many partners for financing, the “public bedrock” for the SDGs, although more financing partners are still needed, especially public-private ones, to build the infrastructure needed for sustainability.

Environmental, social, business and development must be integrated in implementation the SDGs and in reporting on progress and obstacles. More technical expertise and innovation are needed, especially for remoter areas.

Most important for success is raising global consciousness about human rights and civil responsibility. Education about the logic of the SDGs and people's rights is essential. We are off to a good start, Mr. Thomson declared, and, with collaboration and a spirit of partnership, achieving the SDGs is well within our grasp.

[Wu Hongbo](#), United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), pointed out that this second High-Level Political Forum is “the central UN platform leading the movement to achieve the SDGs for People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships.”

Mr. Wu thanked the participants for their commitment to partnering, mentioning the strides made at the Global Small Island Developing Countries ([SIDS Partnership Dialogues](#)) held in June, which identified guidelines for such collaboration. This, along with the Ocean Conference and its commitments, Mr. Wu said, was a good start to successful partnering to achieve the SDGs. He recommended the [Partnership Exchange website](#) which includes more than 3,000 entries, clear proof that the world has taken ownership of the 2030 agenda.

### The Partnership Exchange Dialogues

[Ola Goransson](#), Partnerships Coordinator, Outreach and Communication, Division for Sustainable Development, UN DESA, gave a presentation on “Partnership Data for SDG Framework,” an overview of partnership commitments and the platform with links for all levels of engagement. Major international agencies are the primary drivers of the Framework; resources can be found at the [UN DESA website](#).

### Partnership Exchange: Reviewing Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to achieve Goals 1 and 2

*Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere and End hunger; Goal 2 Achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture]*

### Introductory National Statements

Ambassador [Gustavo Meza-Cuadra](#) of [Peru](#) reported that in the fifteen years of the MDGs, Peru made strong progress, reducing poverty from 58.7% to 20%. However, 6.5 million people are still living in poverty. Strong partnerships of government, universities, and the private sector collaborated with the [World Food Programme](#), reducing food insecurity from 29% to 14%. The ambassador attributed this success to good practices. Peru is now acting to address remaining pockets of food insecurity, aiming to reduce chronic malnutrition and anemia to 6%.



In a Special address, **Guy Ryder**, Director-General, International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)), Social Protection Systems and Floors Multi-stakeholder Partnership, spoke of the challenges of ending poverty and hunger and extending social protections in addressing SDGs 1 and 2. Although social protections and human rights are essential to the SDGs, Mr. Ryder told us, 55% of the world lives without them.

Like other speakers, Mr. Ryder asserted that all-inclusive approaches are essential for sustainable solutions. Strong commitments to these are necessary; country-level teams have been formed to establish protections, which will foster stable conditions for business and workers, for instance, and allow for stable growth in the country.

### Partnership panelists:

*The Partnership Exchange presenters will aim to show how their multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments can address challenges and needs encountered by countries taking part in the Voluntary National Reviews, by sharing their expertise and lessons learned.*

1. *Growing Together* **Juan Gonzalez-Valero**, Head of Sustainability and Policy, [Syngenta](#), presented highlights of **Bangladesh's** Voluntary National Review, focusing on rural areas and financial networks. Volunteers are working to harness expertise within the country. He told us of a local NGO that supports high-potential youth to come into local areas to build teams to analyze what works and what does not, and to make recommendations for local farmers about building up social franchises and establishing links to markets, for instance.

2. *PARM* **Jesús Antón**, Senior Programme Manager, [Platform for Agricultural Risk Management](#) (PARM), Policy and Technical Advisory Division, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), told us that PARM engages partners in the EU, like Germany and France, with members of the African Union, to create opportunities to manage agricultural risk, develop finances and policies to assist and provide solutions, for example, to meet climate change risks. They involve farmers and communities to be resilient and adapt their livelihoods to develop sustainably. To meet SDG2, they bring innovations and data on markets, policy, and investments for global development. PARM works on both regional and national levels. Mr. Anton cited Uganda and Zambia as examples of countries participating in developing new policies, drawing on PARM's knowledge base, which is available on the website.

3. *SDG 2 Advocacy Hub* **Peru, Carmen Burbano**, WFP Country Director in Peru, reported that Peru's president, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, campaigned on the need to address anemia and malnutrition and introduced Peru's [Zero Hunger Initiative](#). To accomplish this, three of the formerly multiple ministries are collaborating, involving the private sector and civil societies to promote education about better eating and healthier cooking. The president asked them to produce a TV show for the national station that reaches 90% of Peruvians. Ministries are promoting it, and it has been greeted with enthusiasm. Private companies are supporting the program's distribution. UN agencies like UNICEF are also involved. The first episodes, set in a region which has high anemia rates, were being filmed that day. The colorful "teaser" he showed us looks very effective; chefs and children are shown selecting good local ingredients, preparing simple recipes, and enjoying the meals.

4. *Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)*: **Katherine Richards**, Head of Hunger and Nutrition, [Save the Children UK](#) and Vice-Chair of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Civil Society Network (CSN), reminded us that good nutrition is a matter of life or death. SUN member countries have made nutrition a national priority. She gave as examples Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Laos. They established platforms for educating the citizens, but the platforms, many of which are run solely by volunteers, need stable financing to ensure their continuance.

**A Question and Answer** period followed, during which members of the audience cautioned panelists to remember the elderly and other often-forgotten groups and asked questions about bringing the programs mentioned to their own countries and regions.

*[Editor's Note: The second part of the program focused on Goals 9 and 17 (Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation & Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development). Unfortunately, I was unable to stay for this. Summaries are available on this [website](#).]*



## July 17 HLPF Parallel Event: Grassroots Perspectives: Reviewing SDG Implementation

by M. Doretta Cornell, RDC

The Commission on Social Development [Grassroots Subcommittee](#) [scroll down to find the committee] presented the results of their Survey of the countries reporting on their Voluntary National Reviews during this HPLF. A video of the event was promised to be posted to the website soon (this is still pending).

Moderator **Lynne Healy** described the origins of the survey: Participating NGOs were asked to reach out to grassroots projects and programs to see if the people involved at grassroots levels were aware of the SDGs and of what connections their own work had with the SDGs.

The survey was translated into five languages and sent by Survey Monkey, asking for emailed replies. The survey was sent only to grassroots programs in the nations presenting their Voluntary National Reviews this year. One hundred and sixty responses came from 28 countries in South America, Asia, Africa and Europe; one response was received from Jordan. The greatest number of responses came from India, then Portugal, then Brazil. Twenty-eight replies did not provide enough information to count in the tallies.

Respondents were equally distributed between rural and urban settings; 50% identified themselves as “local,” with others as “international,” although it was not clear if these were working at the local level, too. Respondents identified 108 issues being addressed. Of these, poverty, gender equality, health, hunger, and infrastructure were most often mentioned, with a few citing oceans. Others figuring high in their work were education, the environment, human rights, trafficking and migrants.

In regard to knowledge of the SDGs, 121 respondents had heard of them; 11 had not. Of those who did know of them, social media and their own NGO were the sources. Others, 40 respondents, heard of the SDGs through newspapers, TV, and community meetings.

Asked if the public they served had heard of the SDGs, 41% replied yes, 32% no, and 24% didn't know. Some of the ways the respondents had promoted awareness of the SDGs were awareness campaigns that included tree plantings with distribution of information about the SDGs and social media “events.” For literate communities, media like newspapers and TV were most effective in promoting awareness, including art, songs, posters, etc. For illiterate communities, community meetings and social gatherings that included talks about the SDGs were most effective.

**Jocelyn Quijano**, PBVM, reported on the involvement of NGOs and other grassroots groups in the Voluntary National Review process. She emphasized the need for civil society (NGOs) to educate the public, especially in remote and rural areas, about the SDGs and to move governments to act on achieving the Goals.

Of the respondents, those from 26 countries were aware on the Reviews, 42 were unsure, and 64 said they were not aware. A very few had been asked to partner with their governments for achieving the SDGs, especially on education; women in parliament were active in this. School principals invited people to come to their schools for information. One NGO sent an independent report to the United Nations.

The challenge is how to improve participation in the Voluntary National Reviews. More Member States need to give more attention to civil society actions and investment. NGOs must insist on participation, speaking with one voice and insisting that their work be included in the reviews, as well as in forming policy.

Daughter of Charity **Margaret O'Dwyer**, a representative of the Vincentian Family at the UN, reported on how the responding organizations made connections between their work and the SDGs. Most respondents said they did recognize connections. Goal 1 was identified by 60 respondents; 59 said Goals 3 and 5; 39 said Goal 2; 37 said Goals 13, 14 and 15.



Most groups reported working on poverty; one Belgian group noted that they addressed poverty first in all their activities, with the aim of leaving no one behind. Groups from Sicily had as their priority the dire poverty of migrants and refugees, as well as high rates of hunger. Gender equality and education ranked high in Nigeria, including education of the whole person, to reduce hunger and food insecurity. Groups from Peru reported that rural hunger is so great that people chew on coca leaves to forget they are hungry. One group reported that intervention by a judge spurred a response to trafficking. Many groups reported environmental actions, planting trees, addressing their carbon footprint, and focusing on energy.

The SDGs have changed the programs of 61% of the respondents, while 36% reported that they have not. About 9% reported that their work was related before the SDGs were adopted, so they had no need to change.

New efforts to create SDG awareness were described: a campaign in India about food security; in Zimbabwe, a group promotes SDGs awareness through celebrations of UN Day. Lots of energy emerged around education and engaging students. For instance, Kenya has a Literacy Kenya campaign; a Rags to Books campaign is at work in India. One school donates a plant to the school for each child's birthday; others have created partnerships with schools to plant trees for zero carbon emissions. Other issues mentioned frequently were awareness of women's rights and working against female genital mutilation and HIV.

In answer to the question about whether they or their local governments are doing something new for the SDGs, 73% replied yes, while 54% said no. *[I'm not sure how those numbers work out.]* Some cited increased numbers of scholarships; for example, Peru hopes to sponsor 500,000 students to college.

**Veronica Brandt**, RSHM, reported on the role of partnerships in achieving the SDGs *[Partnerships for sustainable development are also Goal 17]*. Only 31% said they were aware of new NGO-government partnerships. Most, 60%, reported NGOs partnering with other NGOs.

One change that some have made is partnering with small businesses, which gives them access to new markets. Partnerships have widened their vision, many groups reported. For one group, this meant recognition of the value of not institutionalizing children. For another, it led to a program to prevent people from emptying cooking oil into local streams. Other collaborations have reduced trafficking by providing women with useful skills.

An interesting result: when groups partnered with government bodies, the government learned the importance of the SDGs' integrated approach to addressing problems.

These voices from various countries reported widely differing results: one group reported no progress at all by the government toward SDG 1; government corruption, conflict and new policies increased rather than reduced poverty and inequality. Peru, on the other hand, has actively worked to strengthen infrastructure, which is increasing the number of jobs.

On SDG 2, Zimbabwe groups reported worsening hunger, while Peru is reporting progress to reduce it. Others cited problems related to climate change and "useless policies" that increased problems in agriculture, even failed crops, while government functionaries profited at the expense of the people. Some reported increased training in sustainable agriculture for farmers. Others, like Ethiopia, reported crop failures due to drought.

While some cited political obstacles leading to a breakdown of health services, others – including Thailand, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Botswana – reported good new health initiatives and improved access to medications, and, in Botswana, improved HIV services.

On SDG 5, most groups reported continued cultural biases against gender equality, and in many cases gender-based violence, as well as inequality in employment and wages, and few women in public offices. Others reported an increase in access for women and girls to education and more job opportunities for them. In Nigeria, however, male dominance still is the rule in most Nigerian cultures.



Attention to infrastructure also varies widely, with some having increased access to roads and technology because of the partnership they have formed. In others, water is an increasing problem because of huge dams. China, on the other hand, has made great progress in improving many coastal areas. All reported that corruption and political partisanship are huge problems, usually leading to the greater neglect of remote areas.

**Helen Saldanha**, SSpS, spoke more specifically about India, from which 40% of responses came. India has invested in some large infrastructure projects, like highways, mainly to attract foreign investment, while neglecting rural areas, she reported. Public distribution systems are inadequate, and eradicating poverty needs much more attention. New financial policies do not seem to be improving conditions, and planning to meet crises is poor. For example, heavy monsoons led not only to crop failures but also to more migration, greater hunger, and an increase in human trafficking.

Women in India are more likely to live in poverty, and they have few property rights.

While some laws may mandate gender equality, the people's mindset has not changed, so there is little real progress. There are few women in government positions. Huge gaps exist between urban and rural women, especially on equal pay and education. Helen asserted that it is lack of political will and action by leadership that inhibits progress. The laws now exist but they are not implemented.

Where people have become aware, there is progress: more girls have access to primary education, and there are some local initiatives like microfinancing. None of this acts against the violence against women, though. The official Review says that gender equality is complete, but the NGOs report the inequality is still deep in the mindset of most people, so there is little progress toward real equality.

Moderator **Lynne Healy** brought this section of the program to a close by reminding us that the survey was informal, not scientific, as there was no random sampling. Responses in some case conflict with each other. In general, the NGOs report little local awareness of the SDGs. Governments, therefore, need to increase awareness of the connections between initiatives and the SDGs. Ms. Healy said she had heard little about local involvement or the work of NGOs in the Voluntary National Reviews she had heard at the High-Level Political Forum, and nothing about relationships between the environment and poverty. Because laws are not sufficient to change mindsets, most places need local advocacy to address attitudes, as well as practices and challenge the lack of political will.

One respondent recalled a quote she had heard, saying that India needs to consider the NGO sector to get a feel for the people. She said that some in government in India, for instance, see NGOs as intruding on "government territory." Governments make policies and determine budgets (eradicating poverty is not mentioned in India's budget), so many initiatives are at the mercy of elections, which favor projects to help politicians get elected, rather than helping the poor. She asserted that the UN structure needs to give more space to NGOs when addressing ways implement the SDGs, instead of relying solely on government proclamation.

A second respondent noted that Zimbabwe is a good proof of the survey. The government is bragging about what it did, but in reality it was the NGOs that were doing the work for the SDGs. She recommended working to partner with governments to expand services.

The participants were then invited to **work in small groups** to discuss ways to increase grassroots awareness of the SDGs and to make the Voluntary National Reviews more inclusive, covering what groups other than government agencies are doing, and any other lessons gained from listening to the Reviews.

**Suggestions** included urging the UN to include explicit questions about the work of NGOs in the Review questions and encouraging governments to gather more data, for instance by using cell phones as Zimbabwe did; wearing the pin with the SDG logo to stimulate conversation about the Goals; and reaching out to grassroots organizations, graduate schools and other students to collect data that can then be presented to the government (and/or UN).



A tangent conversation led to suggestions that we (NGOs) be more direct in asking for more NGO participation, by asking the President of the General Assembly to meet with NGOs, for instance, or finding a way to encourage moderators of every session to be sure to call on NGO representatives, so other voices can be heard. A big problem with excluding NGO input in the Reviews is that the country (and others) assume that everything in a country is OK (in the US, for instance, in spite of poverty rates, etc.). Someone recommended that we, as NGO representatives, send our government documents like the nuclear treaty and the SDGs, and let them know we are expecting action.

Other suggestions included bringing the SDGs to classrooms, seminars and training for community leaders; inviting celebrities to endorse the SDGs on social media; giving talks locally about the SDGs and initiating advocacy, for instance on Moveon petitions. Others suggested that NGOs train local people to collect data on what is happening in their area and send messages to let people know what is being considered at the UN. A wider audience could be reached by getting the SDGs on the backs of notebooks, grocery bags and tee shirts, or giving them out as bookmarks, or creating songs about the SDGs to post on YouTube and air on local radio stations.



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**





Save the Date • 1 August 2017 • 10 am - 6 pm  
United Nations Headquarters, New York

Intergenerational Dialogues on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)  
co-hosted by the Department of Public Information (DPI) and NGO/DPI Executive Committee



## August 1 Intergenerational Dialogue on the SDGs

by Megan Scali, Molloy College student and PGJ Youth Representative

An important aspect of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is that they pertain to people of all age groups. However, this fact is often overlooked. The best way to ensure that the SDGs include people of all age groups is by shining a light on these issues that are so bright that they cannot be ignored.

In the **Opening Plenary Session**, a panel of speakers discussed one of the main goals of these Dialogues: to begin intergenerational dialogue or to open the lines of communication between the youth and the elderly members of our society. It must not be overlooked that both the youth and elderly benefit from mutual mentorships in which different skills, experiences and ideas can be exchanged.

The exchange of a broad spectrum of ideas is necessary for obtaining sustainability. **Peter Thomson**, the President of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, stated, "We have two great generations that can make a change." He calls people of all ages to make a change however they can and to share the importance of the SDGs. Both generations are fighting for a change for all.

**Jayathma Wickramanayake**, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, emphasized the importance of NGOs' involvement in the United Nations. It is also their responsibility to facilitate partnerships between different generations working together to achieve sustainability. NGOs are vital in providing outlets which allow all people to embrace diverse behaviors and attitudes. The young and the old need to fight discrimination based on age together.

**Donna Butts**, Executive Director of Generations United, explained that the SDGs are best achieved when solutions are created to best highlight the abilities of all generations. Together, we need to break down stereotypes and build bridges to a better tomorrow. We must work together, for it is interconnection that gives the world purpose.

**Cody Blattner**, a student from Lehigh University, added his insight regarding his sexuality. Being a transgender male, Blattner spoke about his struggles in fitting in, particularly among members of older generations. His main point focused on shaping role models in older generations.

Older generations can also play a large role in ensuring that all types of young people feel safe in their environments. Older generations can be role models in advocating for the basic human right of safety. Young people need to be open minded to continue the change that older



generations have started. Everyone should feel comfortable with who they are and should not be afraid to be themselves.

The final two presenters gave a very real account of intergenerational connection. **Brianna Perez**, a young, 15-year-old student and violinist, and **Joseph Feingold**, a Holocaust survivor, had created a very powerful intergenerational partnership. Perez began by pointing out that a factor that unites every human being across the globe: the fact that everyone has some struggle in their life. People have so many different struggles and problems but the fact that each person has them is uniting. It is very powerful to connect to others through struggle and to work together to come out of that struggle stronger than before.

At a young age, Perez struggled with mental abuse, self-harm and drug use. It was not until she joined a program at her school when her life changed. The program gave musical instruments to children in need. Miss Perez was a lucky recipient of a violin. The violin had been donated to the program by Mr. Feingold. After her initial involvement with music and the violin, Miss Perez was able to get her life back on track. Feingold explained that, when he found out how much his donation had helped and changed somebody's life, it made him very happy. Perez now enjoys spending time with Feingold often. The pair represents an intergenerational mentorship in which different experiences were used to strengthen both parties.

Following the opening session, **conference participants were invited to participate in their choice of six dialogue sessions** for both the morning and afternoon sessions. Sister JoAnn and I attended dialogues regarding gender equality, environmental conservation and healthy living. Summaries from these dialogues follow.

### **Intergenerational Dialogues on the SDGs: Dialogue 2: Gender Equality: Opening the Door to Full Inclusion**

by Sr. JoAnn Mark, ASC

This dialogue was moderated by **Kamolwan "Juli" Juabsami** from International Federation of Social Workers. There were four speakers before the session was open to the participants: **Cody Blattner**, Lehigh University Student; **Ravi Karkara**, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Executive Director at UN Women; **Janice Peterson**, Chair and Co-founder Huairou Commission; and **Charles Whitely**, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the European Union to the United States.



I selected this dialogue because of PGJ's focus on SDG 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. However, a good part of the discussion focused on LGBTQ because the Lehigh student is transgender and had spoken at the main welcoming session. It seemed to be the consensus that the fact that he spoke indicated an inclusion of LGBTQ individuals, but it was also mentioned that many in other countries have no idea what transgender means.

The speaker from the European Union (EU) indicated that the EU is outlawing unpaid internships as they are seen as a way of older persons taking advantage of youth. He also mentioned that they have a program that pairs young women with older women who have macular degeneration, teaching them to use iPods. (There is also a service in the US for those with macular degeneration.) In the discussion that followed, it was mentioned that having high school students talk with elders to prepare family trees was a means of promoting intergenerational dialogue.

All present were encouraged to engage in intergenerational dialogue in their families, where it may be more difficult than outside the family. Dr. **Patricia Sayers** from the Catholic Community of Nursing stated that 90% of healthcare services worldwide are provided by nurses, and most of them are female. The profession needs more males.

The most recent research on gender in the media reveals that only 35% of the characters in the top family films are women; that most films do not feature women over 40 or over 65; and that women characters are 3 to 5 times more likely to experience sexual violence than males. She said, "We need to show women over 40 and reduce the depiction of gender violence."

The session was brought to a close due to a lack of time, not to a lack of individuals wishing to speak.



## Intergenerational Dialogues on the SDGs: Dialogue 4: Sharing Responsibility for the Planet

by Megan Scali, Molloy College student and PGJ Youth Representative



Before introducing the three opening speakers, moderator **Scott Carlin**, Long Island University Representative to the UN Department of Public Information, began the session by reminding participants to make commitments to personal growth in order to help achieve sustainability. We need only a 1% improvement globally, he assured us, to make a big impact on the well-being of the environment. Many countries, including the United States, currently have *linear economies*. In a linear economy, raw materials are produced and made into products that are consumed by members of that society and then discarded as waste. Carlin presented the idea that the United States and other countries begin to adopt a *circular economy*. Circular economies begin with raw materials which are turned into products but are then reused or recycled to greatly reduce the amount of waste. A circular economy can work only if we begin to engineer our products more intelligently. To help convert our economy, people need to be passionate about change.

The first speaker, **George Garland**, Treasurer for the United Nations Association of the USA ([UNA-USA](#)), Southern New York State Division, quickly brought up the powerful fact that, without people, the planet would be just fine. We need helpful people to make a difference in promoting environmental conservation. We have to break cultural norms in order to stimulate change.

To add to this point, **Chris Hall**, Head of Marketing for Kaptyn Inc., shared that change can also come from education. We should be leaders in sharing and expanding our knowledge about natural conservation. Building partnerships is the best way to share information and learn more about initiatives that other people are taking.

The fact that you are reading this PGJ newsletter right now is helping to spread knowledge and awareness of what is going on around us. All of us here at Partnership for Global Justice encourage our members to share our newsletter, begin their own dialogue about SDGs, and create their own initiatives to attain sustainability and thank those who have already begun to make a difference!

**Natalie Ingle**, Program Manager of the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#), explained that countries need to begin to work toward the SDGs at a national level in order to create conservation and spread education about the importance of nature and wildlife. We also need to look to our elders more to jumpstart conservation for creating eco-friendly jobs for youth. Youth are the best advocates for the natural areas which they live in, but they need to follow an example that can be set by the older members of society.

**During the Open Dialogue**, many participants shared their own perspectives on environmental conservation. One idea that came up repeatedly was that, in order to change the mindset of a large group of people, they need to be able to visualize change and the contribution that they are making to the change. We must figure out how we can determine the best indicators of the planet's sustainability. Mr. Carlin asked participants what they thought would be the best daily indicator to "flash across a television screen on a news station" so people could have a visual of their contribution. Some ideas were to present the daily smog levels in China, the number of Living Machines in use, visuals of these implementations in use, and visuals of people composting or recycling and the products that are created through these methods.

Ultimately, people need to begin to make lifestyle changes in order to improve sustainability. There are small actions that people can take every day in order to change tomorrow. It needs to start small, with people thinking about how they can start to help the conditions directly surrounding them. People need to ask, "What is it that I can do to make a meaningful change for myself to make a difference?" **I challenge all of our PGJ members** to start small and make a 1% change in your own lives. Start by reducing the number of plastic water bottles you use, whether it means recycling bottles or buying a reusable canteen. Just start to think about the environment that you live in and stop making excuses not to help increase sustainability.



*"Being at the UN gave me an opportunity to experience hope in the world."*

– Sr. Joan Hornick

ASC Novice Director,  
on PGJ Orientation

*"Our visit to the UN was inspiring to see so many countries working together and seeming to agree on the importance of taking care of the oceans. All too often we see negative news of disagreement, but the experience was inspiring and filled me with great hope that we can work together for great causes."*

– Kristen Forgotch

ASC Candidate,  
on PGJ Orientation

## Intergenerational Dialogues on the SDGs: Dialogue 6: Healthy Living: Physical and Mental Wellness

by Megan Scali, Molloy College student and PGJ Youth Representative



The aim of this session was to discuss tactics that can be used to improve healthy living. Moderator **Dr. Padmini Murthy**, Professor and Global Health Director, New York Medical College, began the conversation by explaining that youth and elders face similar issues, especially since non-communicable diseases such as type two diabetes and heart disease are becoming more common in younger people. Therefore, health initiatives should be focused on healthy aging across all generations.

Often times, we talk about health in the present tense rather than thinking of health as something that we need to sustain over time. **Jane Barratt**, the Secretary General of the International Federation on Ageing, explained that aging starts at birth, and the decisions you make when you are young will impact your health as you age. There are many decisions that you can make about your health environment, such as where you live, the relationships you develop, and the medical help you seek, that play a large role in your overall health. In order to promote healthy aging, it is important for generations to be united. It is important for children to see the older people in their lives, such as their grandparents, live healthy lifestyles. It is also important for all people to be seen as valuable members of society, no matter what age they are. Partnership is the best way to create that mindset. Younger people are not just connectors to old people but to all people.

**Shermin Luo**, [The Resolution Project](#) representative to the United Nations Department of Public Information, spoke of the importance of mental and emotional health. The Resolution Project partners with schools in developing areas all over the world to work with young students and create long-term mentors for them. Globally, there are about 58 million students left behind each year. These students are more likely to develop mental and emotional health issues than students who regularly attend school. Therefore, mentors who belong to the Resolution Project work with students on social and emotional learning. They teach drama classes, practice self-reflection exercises, and engage in group activities in order to build the students' social and self-awareness. The one-to-one mentor-to-student ratio allows both members of the partnership to grow together. Education is important, but young students also need knowledge and resources to improve their mental health and self-awareness earlier.

To emphasize the point of maintaining health over the course of a lifespan, **David Alexander**, Vice President of International Affairs of Dentistry International, spoke about the importance of oral care. Oral disease is a burden on many societies but is very commonly overlooked. Oral disease, in particular gum disease, is becoming more and more common in young people as well as older people. Gum disease can be considered a "canary in a coal mine," as it develops early in a disease process that is often associated with heart disease and type 2 diabetes, and it causes poor nutrition, pain, and low self-esteem in affected patients. Again, education is one solution to this problem.

Future healthcare providers, such as medical and nursing students, often do not study a curriculum that includes information about basic dentistry and the importance of oral care. Adding these pieces into the standard curriculum would help decrease the incidence of oral disease and give healthcare providers up-to-date information regarding oral care that could be passed on to patients in a clinical setting.

There are many opportunities to create partnerships and mentorships in regard to overall health and wellness. The easiest way to share healthy habits is by practicing them yourself for others to follow. When we work intergenerationally in healthcare, we are more productive, especially as the healthcare world is becoming more digitalized. Younger people are responsible for helping show their older counterparts how to access and use the technology that is taking over the healthcare world. The digital world could also be a common forum for people young and old to communicate about their healthcare. It is important to remember that age is what you feel; there are ways to kick start a healthy aging journey starting from birth.



*"Less than 1% of the world's refugees are ever resettled."*

- Holly Sammons,  
Adrian Dominican  
Volunteer



## Intergenerational Dialogue on the SDGs: In Conclusion



In order to achieve all of the SDGs, it is crucial that all members of society are included in the process. The SDGs are a commitment, and we need to partner with those around us to make the Goals work. Intergenerational partnerships can be very powerful in attaining sustainability because of the broad spectrum of ideas and ex-

periences that they offer. Every member of society is accountable for his or her actions in achieving the SDGs.

**To all reading this newsletter**, do not underestimate the power of your own actions. Set examples and be leaders so that other people can follow. To learn more about the Intergenerational Dialogues, explore this link: <https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/dialogues>

*Editor's Note:*

*After Megan and Sr. JoAnn submitted their articles, organizers of the Intergenerational Dialogues on August 1 posted a [Final Statement](#) from the sessions.*

*Also, a colleague from RUN (Religious at the UN) from the International Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Association shared this [reflection](#) by one of their Youth Representatives.*

## August 9 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples and Ten-year Anniversary of the Adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

by Sr. JoAnn Mark, ASC

**Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild**, in full headdress, began [the session](#) with a traditional welcome and prayer in the language of his people. [Dr. Littlechild is Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations] This was followed by an Honor Song for all those who have given their lives pursuing the rights of indigenous people. The [entire program](#) is available in the UN webTV archives.



The Under Secretary for the Division of Social Policy and Development, **Zhenmin Liu**, indicated that the [Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) took approximately twenty years to negotiate. The Declaration has led some countries to amend their constitutions and laws to recognize indigenous people. It has also been used by indigenous peoples to protect their rights. However, in many cases indigenous peoples are still being "left behind" in education, health, and land rights. More than 200 have given their lives in seeking to protect land rights.

Individual speakers referred to indigenous peoples in Japan, countries in Africa, countries in South America, in particular Bolivia, and places in Canada. There are more than 370 million indigenous people. Issues of concern include the high rate of youth suicides, high rate of education drop-outs, alcohol and drug abuse, and the negative perception of indigenous living styles resulting from media portrayal and artifacts in museums. Those present were asked to say "indigenous" and not "marginated."

On a positive note, speakers stated that change is trickling down into law and into commitment, and people are recognizing that indigenous people have answers to climate change. The question is how to share these so that they are heard.

You can find a story from the Cree tribe titled Warriors [of the Rainbow](#) at the link.

Indigenous peoples are standing together in places such as Standing Rock to "honor our future generations, we fight this pipeline to protect our water, our sacred places, and all living beings," as the [protestors' statement](#) of purpose says. The session ended with the saying, "Let us stand together and stay the course." This program is available at [UN videos](#)



## Advocacy

The Partnership for Global Justice signed on to these letters during August:

- [We Are with the Dreamers](#) letter from elected officials, law enforcement, faith, and civic leaders urging the Trump administration not to end The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allows nearly 800,000 immigrant young people who were brought to the United States as infants or young children to remain in this country, attend school, and work here.
- Faith Letter [against the RAISE Act](#), promoted by the LCWR Immigration Coalition, asking our representatives to reject the "Reforming American Immigration for a Strong Economy" (RAISE) Act, proposed by Senators Cotton (R-AR) and Perdue (R-GA). This proposed legislation would slash immigration by 50-70 percent, with an 85 percent cut to family-based immigration (including no longer allowing people to sponsor their own children!), to the lowest levels ever, even though we are in the midst of a global crisis of immigrants and refugees needing resettlement. It would also replace family-based petitions to
- A Letter, again promoted by the LCWR Immigration Coalition, urging Congress [not to allow the Threats](#) to the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programs to lapse.
- Letter from Faith Leaders to President Trump and Congress to support a presidential [determination for refugee admissions](#) of at least 75,000 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, so that the United States would assume some responsibility for the millions of refugees from the current conflicts.



*“Without people, the planet would be just fine. “*

– George Garland, Treasurer, ([UNA-USA](#)), Southern New York State Division



## OPPORTUNITIES TO JOIN US

### Join in the Work to Achieve the SDGs

We know that many of you have been educating and acting to promote the SDGs, to change the systems and mindsets that bind people into poverty and devastate our Earth. We invite you to become more public about your commitment (or begin to be committed to the SDGs) by taking part in the [SDG Challenge](#). Sign on to see what others are doing, share what you are doing, and – if you are comfortable in the Social Media world – join in a Thunderclap for the SDGs on September 25. And, please, send us notes about what great things you and your communities are doing, for this newsletter.

### PGJ 2017 Annual Meeting

PGJ Board has begun planning for the **2017 Annual Meeting** which will be held in the Weber Retreat and Conference Center from October 23-26. The Weber Retreat and Conference Center is located on the Adrian Dominican Sisters' Motherhouse campus. Adrian is located in southeast Michigan in Lenawee County. Our address is 1257 East Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, Michigan, 49221-1793. Here is a link to the home page: <http://weber.adriandominicans.org/>



*“Three assumptions underlie the SDGs:*

*It is possible to eliminate poverty.*

*It is possible to address climate change.*

*Human-induced problems have human solutions.”*

-- Peter Thomson, President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly



*“We need only a 1% improvement globally to make a big impact on the well-being of the environment.”*

– Scott Carlin, Long Island University Representative to UN DPI



## Adorers Fight on in Gas Pipeline Dispute

by Cheryl Wittenauer, Communications Director, Adorers of the Blood of Christ

The Adorers of the Blood of Christ, U.S. Region, an order of Catholic religious women [and Executive Director JoAnn Mark's community], have been embroiled in a legal dispute over a company's plans to place a natural gas pipeline under their property in West Hempfield Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

On August 23, the Adorers suffered a legal setback when a federal judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania allowed the company, Transco, to take immediate possession of their property, even though it has not yet obtained all of the permits and approvals required to commence construction of the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline.



The Adorers said in a statement that they are disappointed with Judge Jeffrey Schmehl's decision, but that they will continue to pursue their independent claim that the use of their property for the pipeline would violate their right to religious exercise as protected by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. That suit names the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which has approved Transco's plans to put a pipeline on Adorers' property.

The Sisters' opposition is based in part on their Land Ethic, which includes reverencing Earth as a sanctuary where all life is protected, so that they may pass along a legacy of beauty and sustenance to future generations.

The Adorers sought to stop Transco's immediate possession of their land. A second matter, which has not yet been heard in court, alleges a civil rights violation of a federal religious freedom law.

The Adorers, whose religious practice includes protecting and preserving creation, which they believe is a revelation of God, allege that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and its Commissioner, Cheryl La Fleur, have violated the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act by forcing the Adorers to use their land to accommodate a fossil fuel pipeline. Such use is antithetical to the Adorers' deeply held religious beliefs.

The Adorers allege that FERC's action places a substantial burden on their exercise of religion by taking their land, which they want to protect and preserve as part of their faith, and forces the Adorers to use their land in a manner and for a purpose they believe is harmful to the earth.

In recent months, the Adorers received a request from the grassroots coalition Lancaster Against Pipelines to install and use, and to invite other people of faith to use, a portable prayer "chapel" on their land. The structure, dedicated on July 9, has drawn people to prayer and reflection about just and holy uses of land.

While the Adorers understand that the federal court order of eminent domain can allow Transco to call for the removal of the "chapel" from the easement, they believe that having this structure on their land, for however long, gives tangible witness to the sacredness of Earth.



The Adorers' fight against the pipeline has drawn support – and some criticism – from throughout the country. News organizations including the *Washington Post*, the BBC, NBC and BuzzFeed have covered the issue.



August 21: **Viewing the Eclipse with Molloy College**

by Angelika Gassner, visitor from Austria



As observing the eclipse has scientific value and Molloy College has a strong interest in nature and its way of working, a big event was set up for the solar eclipse. Many people in some way connected with the university were there; some of them were personally accompanied onto a deck similar to a VIP lounge with chairs and umbrellas, equipped with box lunches and special sunglasses to actually follow the process of the moving moon. Happy faces everywhere, along the pathways and along the shores.

**Dr. John Tanacredi**, Professor of Earth and Environmental Studies and Director of Molloy’s Center for Environmental Research and Coastal Oceans Monitoring ([CERCOM](#)), welcomed the crowd and introduced the team who had set up various telescopes which gave even a clearer picture of the happenings out in space.



Apart from having the opportunity to experience the changing position of the moon as its shadow crossed the sun, there was a little show on the nearby beach, especially enjoyed by the kids: two Molloy students took a net and brought in some small crabs and little eels that could be watched closely. Further education and insight were given in the actual Horseshoe Crab Lab, where the famous crabs could be seen, starting with mating, and continuing with eggs in the experimental lab and the different sizes of crabs in their respective water tanks.

Many former graduates brought their children along, possibly future nature lovers, hopefully future nature preservers. After a good three hours of being witnesses to this partial eclipse, most people left satisfied and with more experiences.

Visit Angelika’s website, *Garden of My Soul*, in German <http://www.internetexerzitionen.com> or in English <http://www.internetexerzitionen.com/en/>

## PARTICIPATE IN UN ACTIVITIES

September is a very busy time at the UN, as world leaders gather to open the **72nd Regular Session** of the General Assembly, which will convene at New York UN Headquarters on Tuesday, September 12. The **General Debate** (when world leader generally speak) will open on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. Access to the UN is strictly limited during the General Assembly meetings in September, but there will be video coverage at [UNwebTV](#).

On **September 20**, a **Conference on Facilitating the Entry** Into Force of the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty** will convene in New York. This Conference is convened every two years to renew commitments to the Treaty. More information about the Conference can be found via the link at the bottom of the main page of the Conference link. The entire program will be broadcast on [UNwebTV](#), with a link on the Conference page as well.

Also on **September 20**, the recently negotiated **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**, which was accepted by a huge majority of Members of the UN General Assembly on July 7, will be opened for Member States to sign. I have not seen any notice of the event, but I am sure there will be video coverage at [UNwebTV](#).

**September 21** is the **International Day of Peace**. The [website](#) for the celebration has a map of activities around the world and other suggestions for participating.

In preparation for the celebration, a **Global Student Videoconference** is scheduled for **September 15** from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., EDT via <http://webtv.un.org/live/>. Please tell your young friends and students!

If you are in New York, the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN is having an **Interfaith Prayer Service for the International Day of Peace** on **Friday, September 15**, from 12-1 in the Tillman Chapel of the Church Center, across the street from the UN, at the corner of 44th Street and First Avenue.

**September 26** is the **International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons**.

On **September 27-28** a **High-level Meeting on Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons** will be held. Again, I have not found details of this, but I am sure there will be video coverage at [UNwebTV](#).



*“What is it that I can do to make a meaningful change for myself to make a difference?”*

– Megan Scali, Molloy College student and PGJ Youth Representative

