

## **Update Concerning Attendance At NGO Board Meeting**

In mid-September, Sr. Toni Temporiti and Sr. Lucy Meissen attended the semiannual Board meeting of UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL (UI). A key focus of the three-day meeting was raising awareness about the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. 2023 marks the halfway point in reaching these goals set for 2030. The question put before this NGO was how can we help to draw awareness about these goals on every level of government in the world, in our country, in our state, local government, community, and in our very own lives, especially after the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

For us personally, just being with women representing 22 other international religious women communities from around the world was exciting. Hearing stories of the work being done by communities from Australia, Chad, Ireland, and Italy, to name a few, was energizing.

Grassroot stories were interspersed with the reports given by UI executive director, Jean Quinn.

We were reminded of the organization of the UN, namely that there are 2 main working bodies: the 192 voting member states and the Civil Society of which UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL is a certified member. The UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL staff frequently interacts with the ambassadors and staffs of member states at the UN. Jean, along with UI staff and interns, are members of several Civil Society commissions and committees: the NGO Committee on Social Development (NGO SCocD); the committee on Migration; the Working Group to end Homelessness; as well as the Commission for the Status of Women and Girls.

**Civil Society organizations** are important partners in disseminating and amplifying information globally regarding the work of the United Nations and its priority issues. The importance of such partnerships has been highlighted, for example, in the fight against climate change, on issues around gender equality, poverty and water. Members of the Civil Society work to secure sustainable human rights protection in all regions of the world.

UNANIMA International was formed in 2002 through the initiative of LCWR. Its first major concern was human trafficking. While that continues to be a major focus of awareness, UI has succeeded in getting a definition of homelessness into

the language of the UN. While housing has been an issue for years, the whole plight of the millions of homeless people was being overlooked. Now, with a recognized definition, Civil Society can present information, design solutions, and demand accountability from the Member States concerning homelessness.

Below is the list of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN in 2015. Because of the Pandemic caused by Covid-19, many countries have not made the progress expected by 2023, the halfway point.



Of special interest, the UN will host a World Social Summit in 2025 to evaluate how countries are moving forward with the Sustainable Development Goals. Srs. Toni and Lucy joined the UI communications committee and will be working on preparing videos that can be used by member communities to raise awareness about the World Social Summit 2025. We will share more information about the Summit as we learn about it and how we can be involved.

Board members and friends were asked to share grassroots stories about their work. From her work with MPA, Sr. Toni shared a water story that illustrates Sustainable Development Goal #6 Clean Water and Sanitation. Here is her story.

### **Grassroots Story**

Water is a desperate need for the community of Warr, in the Zombo District of Northern Uganda. The mountainous region's breathtaking beauty belies the challenges faced by its residents, namely access to a reliable source of clean

water. Women and children were walking miles for water every day taking up many hours of every day.

Working with the Marian Brothers, Microfinancing Partners in Africa (MPA) provided the collateral for a bore hole to be dug.



*Children collect water from a dirty stream for family use.*

The first hurdle to overcome was the daunting task of locating a suitable drilling site. They worked with water experts and geologists to identify the perfect spot, considering factors such as the availability of groundwater and geological formations. Eventually, the perfect location was pinpointed.

The spot was chosen, the drilling company was hired, and the heavy equipment needed to drill the bore hole arrived. However, reaching the chosen site proved to be more challenging than expected. The drilling trucks had to cross a small river to get to the chosen spot. The initial attempts to cross the river were unsuccessful, leaving the community at a crossroads. Did they need to find another site to drill? Would the drilling company just turn around and disappear?



*Heavy drilling equipment trying to cross the small river.*

Undeterred, and recognizing that they needed to overcome this obstacle, the women of the community came together. Using their limited resources and knowledge of construction, the women began to work and within an unbelievably short time constructed a makeshift bridge strong enough for the heavy truck to reach the designated area.

With the bridge in place, the drilling truck arrived, bringing with it a renewed sense of hope and anticipation. The drilling process began, and after days of hard work, the borehole was successfully drilled. Clean, safe water is now available within a few minutes of the women's homes. The community can now focus on other aspects of development, such as education, agriculture, and overall well-being.



*The Warr community celebrates access to clean water close to home.*

A recent article in the Global Sisters Report gives additional information about UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL members working at the UN. This article can be found in the Social Justice section of [www.cpps-ofallon.org](http://www.cpps-ofallon.org).