



Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2013 and with the Department of Public Information since 2006.

News from the UN - # 83

RSHM at the UN

May 2017

Introduction

A theme running through the month of May at the UN was accountability and reporting. An important review and follow up Forum was held in late May, focused on the **financing of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (see p. 2). As member states review their progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, 44 countries are preparing to voluntarily present their **National Reviews** at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July. One of the SDGs being reviewed is SDG 9 – the goal that we are featuring this month (p.2). As part of a project of our **NGO Grassroots group**, we circulated a survey to our members in the countries that will be presenting their reports this year. Thanks to the help of our JPIC animators, 12 responses were received from the countries in which RSHM are present: **Brazil, Portugal and Zimbabwe**.




Another aspect of our RSHM NGO reporting included the preparation of our first **Quadrennial report**, covering the 4 years since we were accorded **ECOSOC status** at the UN. It was a daunting task, trying to reconcile the restrictive UN word limit with the exactitude of detail required when it came to official titles, dates and names! A special word of thanks is due to the **RSHM JPIC Animators** who helped gather relevant information about initiatives in their Provinces/Regions since 2013 to implement the MDGs and the SDGs. Quadrennial reports are eventually reviewed in formal sessions of the UN Committee on NGOs, with possible follow up questions being asked, if necessary.

International Dialogue on Migration 2017



On 19 September 2016, Member States adopted the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants** (A/70/L.61) which outlined steps towards the achievement of two **Global Compacts in 2018**: one on **Migrants** and one on **Refugees**. As part of the two year process, the second informal thematic



consultation on facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration took place at the UN HQ May 22nd – May 23rd, focusing on the factors driving migration, including climate change, natural disasters and conflict. The immensity of the Syrian refugee crisis has brought significant attention in the media, however migration has been a focal point at the United Nations for some time. As far back as December 1990, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families was put into place to protect migrant workers' rights. Although it was meant as a legally binding mechanism, 14 years after it came into effect this convention has still only been ratified by 51 Member States. **The Global Compact on Migration to be negotiated and universally agreed in 2018** will be the first comprehensive international framework to address all aspects of migration.  Watch the [the short video....](#)


Fast Facts:

- **By the end of 2015, 65.3 million people were displaced worldwide.** This included approximately **21.3 million refugees** and **40.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPS)**. (UNHCR)
- **The duration of displacement is also increasing:** protracted refugee situations across the globe now last an estimated **26 years on average**. (UNHCR)
- **33,972 people a day** are forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. (UNHCR)
- **Worldwide, nearly 28 million children** have been **forcibly displaced by violence and conflict**. (UNICEF)

International Day of Families



May 15th marks the **International Day of Families** and this year, an event was held at the UN on May 18th in commemoration. The importance of family values, family structure, and family-supportive policies is not what first comes to mind when thinking of sustainable development. However, the 2030 Agenda strives to "To provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend, including through safe schools and cohesive communities and families." (A/RES/70/1). This requires a focus on the nuclear family and household. Experts on the subject spoke about the importance of early childhood

development and education, parental education as the foundation of familial wellbeing, and the importance of parents achieving a work-family balance.  [Read more....](#)



SDG 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

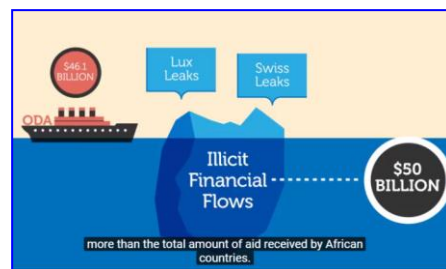
The Targets to be reached by 2030 include

- 9.1** Develop **quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure**.....to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
- 9.2** Promote inclusive **and sustainable industrialization** and double its share in **least developed countries**
- 9.3** **Increase the access** of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to **financial services**.....
- 9.4** By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and **greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes**....
- 9.5** Enhance scientific research, **upgrade the technological capabilities** of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular **developing countries**.....
- 9.A** Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through **enhanced financial, technological and technical support**....
- 9.B** **Support domestic technology development**, research and innovation in **developing countries**.....
- 9.C** **Significantly increase access to information and communications technology** and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2030

➔ [Read more about SDG 9.....](#)

Financing for Development Forum

The **Financing for Development (FfD) Forum** held at the UN in late May is a four day annual meeting for the purpose of following up more than **100 commitments made by UN Member States** at the 3rd FfD Conference held in Addis Ababa in 2015. Many of the commitments relate to initiatives designed to fund the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Lack of adequate funding for the SDGs was identified as a major block to achieving progress. The outcome document of the Forum acknowledges “*The current global trajectory will not deliver the goal of eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions by 2030*”. Overreliance on the private sector to fill the gap without adequate checks and balances to hold businesses to account is one key aspect of the critique raised by NGOs and Civil Society groups. Other concerns raised by civil society groups during the Forum included the **failure to address illicit financial flows** out of developing countries and the absence of a global body to address taxation issues. Mispricing of raw materials by foreign companies, tax avoidance by Multinational companies, tax havens and creation of shadow companies are just some of the ways in which there is a loss of rightful gains that should be benefitting sustainable development in the least developed countries, among them being Zambia, Mozambique and Timor Leste.



➔ [Watch the short video](#)

Civil Society Policy Forum - World Bank



In late April, Veronica RSHM was one of several members of the **NGO Committee on Financing for Development** who attended the **Civil Society Policy Forum** held annually just before the Spring

Meetings of the **IMF/World Bank in Washington**. The 3 day session provides an open space for NGOs to dialogue and exchange views and experiences with World Bank IMF staff, as well as representatives of CSOs from around the world on many issues relating to Sustainable Development.

Provision of Infrastructure and design of megaprojects such as dam construction, hydroelectric power schemes and major road transport networks in developing countries is often facilitated by grants and concessional loans from the World Bank. However, many of these have come in for heavy criticism because of their failure to adequately take into account negative social and environmental consequences and the failure to engage the local people in planning. Some of the most interesting sessions included an open discussion with the **Directors of the World Bank** and input and dialogue with the **Inspection Panel** which is the World Bank’s independent accountability mechanism tasked with investigating complaints raised by communities around the world who are negatively affected by specific projects. Input from the “lessons learnt” has recently led to positive changes in World Bank policy.



➔ [Watch the short video...](#)

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