



**IASSW AIETS**

[www.iassw-aiets.org](http://www.iassw-aiets.org)

International Association of Schools of Social Work  
Association Internationale des Ecoles de Travail Social  
Asociación Internacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social  
国际社会工作教育联盟  
国際ソーシャルワーク学校連盟

# Notes from the field...

## February 2016

By the IASSW Interns at the United Nations, New York, 2015-2016

### IASSW at the 54<sup>th</sup> Commission on Social Development

IASSW was an active contributor to the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission for Social Development, held in February. All members of the team attended the Civil Society Forum on February 1 & 2 and the IASSW sponsored one side event and participated in two others. To further the Global Agenda theme of human dignity, we co-sponsored a side event on: “The Quest for Dignity: Towards universal social protection coverage” with the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), the ILO, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung foundation of Germany. Lynne Healy, IASSW Main Representative, presented on the discourse of dignity and Sergei Zeleney, Executive Director of ICSW, served as moderator. Among other speakers was Vinicius Pinheiro of the ILO who addressed progress in moving towards universal social

protection and urged universal protection across the life cycle.



“Grassroots Matter” Side Event Panelists, including IASSW Intern Sarah Johnson

IASSW representatives played a significant role in planning a second side event, “Grassroots Matter: Anchoring the SDGs in Community-Based Economies” (see below), sponsored by the NGO Committee for Social Development, the Permanent Mission of Ireland, and several other NGOs. IASSW Intern Sarah Johnson presented a summary of results of a survey conducted by the NGO Committee of community-based local economies projects. Through micro-finance projects, savings groups, small scale industries, community farming and cooperatives, people at the grassroots are making progress in sustainable livelihoods while preserving their environments. These findings will be shared with governments as exemplars for the 2030 Agenda. Aspects of the survey highlighting empowerment of women will be presented at the March Commission on the Status of Women. A full report of the survey findings will be available in the

spring at <http://ngosocdev.org> Finally, Lynne Healy moderated a session on “The Social Dimensions of the 2030 Agenda” sponsored by UNESCO, UNDESA (Economic and Social Affairs) and (Research Institute for Social Development) UNRISD.



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The overall theme of the 54<sup>th</sup> session was “Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development.” The discussions among governments were forward-thinking, pointing toward the beginning implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For more information on the Commission for Social Development, visit [this webpage](#).

### **Committee Updates Committee on Social Development**

The NGO Committee on Social Development prepared heavily and participated in the 54<sup>th</sup> Commission on Social Development, which just ended. As part of its contribution to the Commission, the Committee held a very successful two-day Civil Society Forum. As a result of the Forum, a Civil Society Declaration was adopted and can be accessed in three languages on the UN website (English, French, and Spanish). The English version of the document can be reached [here](#).

### **Committee on Financing for Development**

The NGO Committee on Financing for Development is currently working on establishing a direction to maximize its efforts at the United Nations in the wake of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and its outcome document, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. That document can be found [here](#). Members of the committee recently created subgroups to further focus on the implementation of its mission.

The *Advocacy Working Group*, which advocates for grassroots organizations and people whose voices are not usually heard in corridors of world economic



Some IASSW UN team members at the 54<sup>th</sup> Commission for Social Development, from left to right: Dr. Rebecca Davis, Dr. Lynne Healy, and Christi Holmes Staples

power, advocates to policymakers at the UN seeking development plans and programs that put people and planet ahead of unjust profits.

The *Education Working Group* provides educational resources on FfD processes and how they relate to crosscutting issues. It also works to empower members and others to bring about change in systemic financing issues.

The *Writing Working Group* develops materials to guide committee advocacy agenda and other statement needs, focusing on 'Finance is a Human Rights Issue' as the key message. Christi Holmes Staples serves as the chair of the Writing Working Group.

### **Working Group on Girls**

The Working Group on Girls is still preparing for the [60<sup>th</sup> session](#) of the Commission on the Status of Women, which will take place from 14 to 24 March 2016, but it has identified its three primary areas of advocacy this year: girls in humanitarian crises, girls' education, and violence against girls. The Mission Outreach Sub-Committee is focused on reaching out to member states who serve on the Statistical Commission and/or the Commission on the Status of Women to advocate for the inclusion of indicators in the 2030 Agenda that are appropriate in measuring the



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implementation of the goals in areas concerning girls  
(e.g., educational attainment, violence against girls).

### **Other Events at the UN**

New Resource Available on Human Rights and  
Poverty

*Making Human Rights Work for People Living in Extreme Poverty* is a new handbook to help community members and professionals implement the United Nations Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2012. The handbook was published in 2015 by International Movement ATD Fourth World and Franciscans International.

Following an introduction, users are led through a series of key principles for engaging with people living in poverty. The main section identifies numerous rights-based actions that can address issues of those living in poverty, including rights to health, food, work, education, participation, and more. The final section addresses the importance of monitoring and holding governmental authorities accountable for respecting and fulfilling rights.

Local examples and photographs illustrate the text.

The manual is available free at: [bit.ly/see-handbook](http://bit.ly/see-handbook).

There is also a brief video available at the same website.

The English version of the UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights can be accessed [here](#). (also available in other languages).

### **Request for Input**

If you know an IASSW member (including yourself!) whose work should be highlighted, please contact Sarah Johnson so she can recognize that member in the monthly spotlight. Additionally, if one of the committees is working on a topic that is within your expertise or area of interest, please reach out to us so that we can make social work's voice heard.

Respectfully,

**Sarah Johnson**

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