



Human Rights Office

International Institute Maria Ausiliatrice - IIMA

NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2018

Introduction

In 2018, IIMA carried out various activities in accordance with the following Pillars of Action: Advocacy, Training and Capacity Building, and Communication.

Pillars of Action

1 – **Advocacy**: we provide UN experts and Member States representatives with relevant and reliable information on how human rights are being implemented at the local level, including denunciation of violations. IIMA Human Rights Office carries out this action in close collaboration with local members. Moreover, we provide local human rights defenders, including educators and youth, with the possibility to participate in relevant UN meetings and to advocate for their own rights.

2 – **Training and Capacity Building**: we organize training courses, in Geneva and at the local level, to make Human Rights Defenders aware of the UN international mechanisms and procedures intended to protect human rights.

3 – **Communication**: we disseminate information in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national level.

Within the above-mentioned pillars of action, we work in synergy with other NGOs and Institutions in order to bring major issues to the attention of the international community and to identify top priorities for the human rights agenda.

The pillars of action are further defined below, and include their relationship to the strategic objectives of the organization.

2018 Activities

Pillar of Action	2018 Activities
	<p>➤ Objective 1: IIMA enables local actors, including children and young people, to express their views on the implementation of their human rights and share best practices throughout the world in order to support Governments in complying with their international human rights obligations.</p>
Advocacy	Universal Periodic Review (UPR) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Produced reports for human rights defenders in the field



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on the UPR sessions of Mexico and Republic of Congo.

- Issued **joint submissions** at the UPR of Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.
- Carried out lobbying, by producing and disseminating **Advocacy position papers** prior to the UPR session of Colombia and Mexico.
- Delivered **oral statements** during the 37th, 38th and 39th sessions of the Human Rights Council Item 6, pertaining to the UPR of Argentina, Benin, Gabon, Guatemala, Japan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Burkina Faso, Canada and Colombia, respectively.
- Co-sponsored **oral statements** during the Human Rights Council Item 6 General Debate, pertaining to the UPR.
- Prepared **UPR questionnaires and consultations** with human rights defenders in Madagascar, El Salvador, Angola and Italy in order to submit UPR submissions for these countries in 2019.

HRC and Treaty Bodies Participation

- Participated in the **Human Rights Council and Treaty Bodies sessions** for the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Committee Against Torture (CAT), the Committee on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), and the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR).
- Participated in the **Day of General Discussion of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on “the protection and empowerment of Children Human Rights Defenders”**, through the **intervention of a young speaker from the Philippines** who shared her experience as environmental defender.¹

Human Rights Council (HRC)

- Produced and/or co-sponsored **twenty-one** additional **oral statements** at the HRC on various themes, including violence and sexual abuses against children,

¹ More information available at: <http://www.iimageneva.org/children-and-youth-defending-human-rights/>



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environment, international solidarity, human trafficking, discrimination against women, the right to development, the rights of people with disabilities, youth, and unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents.

- Delivered **two oral statements at the 28th Special Session of the Human Rights Council on “The deteriorating situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem”** (May 2018).
- Organized a **side event** titled **“Girls with no name – best practices for the reintegration of girls in street situation”** during the 38th session of the HRC (June 2018), in collaboration with VIDES International, Don Bosco Fambul Center of Sierra Leone, Misiones Salesianas, Don Bosco Jugendhilfe Weltweit, and the Permanent Mission of Italy. Co-sponsored by eight States and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the event panel featured the First Lady of Sierra Leone, Fatima Maada Bio; Fr. Jorge Crisafulli, SDB, director of Don Bosco Fambul in Sierra Leone; Elisabetta Murgia, IIMA and VIDES representative; Hatem Kotrane, Independent Expert of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and Federica Donati, Coordinator, Equality, Non-Discrimination and Participation Unit, SPB, OHCHR. A video message from Augusta Ngombu – Gboli, a girl in street situations in Sierra Leone, was shared during the event. Imma Guerras – Delgado, Team Leader for the Rights of the Child and of Youth at the OHCHR was the moderator. ² Extracts of the Video “LOVE”, describing the situation of girls on the streets of Freetown (Sierra Leone) were showed during the event.³
- Co-sponsored a **side event** titled **“Arts and Cultural Education as a Right”**, held during the 37th session of the HRC (March 2018). Ms Aranzazu Toledo, Primary School Director – IIMA Spain, participated in the Panel providing through the Project “Mi viaje” a concrete example of how Arts education is to be considered a valuable tool for promoting human rights education.

Other Advocacy activities

² For more detailed information, please refer to: <http://www.iimageneva.org/together-to-give-a-name-to-girls-in-street-situations/>

³ The video “LOVE” is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPhtGG9qZo0>



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- Organized meetings with Permanent Missions and UN experts in preparation for the side events and other interventions in the framework of the Human Rights Council.

Research-based reports

- **Contribution to the call for inputs launched by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** in the framework of the preparation of a detailed study on **Youth and Human Rights**, as requested by Human Rights Council Resolution 35/14 (June 2017). Based on information provided by 18 members of IIMA and VIDES from Europe (Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy and Portugal), America (Canada, United States of America, Haiti, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Uruguay), Asia (Japan and India), and Africa (Gabon and Republic of Congo).
- **Contribution for a publication on “Job, Demography and Migration” in the framework of the Project “The Future of Work, Labor after *Laudato Si.*”** This contribution focuses on empowering and integrating migrants – give them responsibilities and role within the society.
- **Disseminated questionnaire and collected relevant data on Human Rights Education activities carried out in all IIMA countries.**

- **Objective 2:** IIMA reinforces the use of the defense mechanisms for the rights of children and youth among both IIMA educators and society at large.

Training and Capacity Building

- **Provided training sessions in Geneva for 11 youth activists** who worked in the IIMA Human Rights Office.
- **Provided training sessions in Geneva for 12 human rights defenders, especially educators**, who operate at the local level to raise awareness on Human Rights and the UN mechanisms for the protection of these rights.
- **Contributed to two Workshops in Rome (Italy) for 14 Volunteers from VIDES International**, focusing on “Human Rights Education”.
- **Contributed to a Workshop for 190 students in secondary school, held in Debrecen (Hungary) and**



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Lecco (Italy).

- **Provided a training for 60 IIMA local members in Italy.**
- **Awareness raising on best practices carried out by IIMA to welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants worldwide.** Target: 60 IIMA coordinators and experts on related field.
- **Contributed to a Congress for 200 coordinators of national medical associations of catholic doctors, held in Zagreb (Croatia).**

- **Objective 3:** IIMA shares advocacy tools as well as other human rights-based materials with local human rights defenders and international organizations.

Communication & Fundraising

- **Participated in various NGO working groups and platforms such as the Right to Education, the Right to Solidarity, the Catholic NGO Forum, the International Catholic Center of Geneva, and the Global Partners Forum – Faith Action for Children on the Move.**
- **Update and development of IIMA website in English and Italian.**
- **Disseminated information** through the IIMA website (www.iimageneva.org) in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national and international levels. Twenty-two (22) web articles were produced in English and Italian in 2018. Information on IIMA's activities was also posted on Facebook and Twitter.
- **Submitted a preliminary funding application** for a project on the promotion of human rights for indigenous people in Mexico.
- **Annual narrative and financial reporting.**