



## 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 2020

## Introduction

In 2020, 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.

## 2020 Activities

Pillar of Action	2020 Activities
	<p>➤ <b>Objective 1</b>: 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>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<p><b>Universal Periodic Review (UPR)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Produced <b>reports</b> for human rights defenders in the field</li></ul>



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on the UPR sessions of Spain, Lesotho, Kenya, Panama, Honduras and United States of America.

- Issued **joint submissions** at the UPR of Myanmar, Lebanon, Paraguay, Mozambique and Solomon Islands.
- Participated in advocacy and follow up **meeting with OHCHR**, in preparation of the 4<sup>th</sup> UPR cycle.
- Delivered **oral statements** during the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> sessions of the Human Rights Council Item 6, pertaining to the UPR of Angola, Bolivia, Italy, Kenya and Lesotho, respectively.
- Prepared **UPR questionnaires and consultations** with human rights defenders in Ireland, Tanzania and Papua New Guinea in order to submit UPR submissions for these countries in 2021.

## HRC and Treaty Bodies Participation<sup>1</sup>

- Participated in the **Human Rights Council and Treaty Bodies sessions** for the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

## Human Rights Council (HRC)

- Produced and/or co-sponsored **thirteen** additional **oral statements** at the 43<sup>rd</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> HRC sessions on various themes, including the right to education, the right to health, the rights of women, the right to development, and the rights of children and youth.

## Research-based reports

- **Contribution to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education concerning “The cultural dimension of the right to education”**, with inputs from IIMA members in Democratic Republic of Congo, Spain, Uruguay and India, as well as an overview on the African context, provided by 26 IIMA country members.
- **Sharing with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to**

<sup>1</sup> Due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, several sessions of UN bodies scheduled for 2020 were postponed and/or took place with restricted attendance.



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**Education of “best practices on how IIMA promotes the right to education in the period of COVID-19 pandemic”<sup>2</sup>**, including inputs from IIMA members in Italy, Uruguay, Brazil, and Republic of Korea. This contribution was included in the Report of the *Special Rapporteur* to the 44<sup>th</sup> Human Rights Council Session.<sup>3</sup>

- **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 session in Geneva for 3 youth activists** who worked in the IIMA Human Rights Office.
- **Provided training session in Geneva for 7 human rights defenders, especially education coordinators and young students**, who operate at the local level to raise awareness on Human Rights and the UN mechanisms for the protection of these rights.
- **Contributed to an Online Workshop for 1'000 participants from Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina**, focusing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- **Contributed to an Online Workshop for 20 IIMA coordinators of South-Asian schools, in China, Philippines, Japan, Republic of Korea, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam**, focusing on “The implementation of the Right to Education”.
- **Provided Online Trainings for 149 IIMA local members from 44 education institutions in Italy, Japan, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Haiti, Colombia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Argentina, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Spain, India, Philippines, Ethiopia, and Kenya**, focusing on Human Rights Education.
- **Facilitated monthly Online Trainings for South-Asian and Indian IIMA members, to support local efforts for a more effective implementation of the Right to Education in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.**

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Education/COVID19/IIMA.doc>

<sup>3</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/44/39>



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- **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 Development and Solidarity, the Catholic NGO Forum, and the International Catholic Center of Geneva.**
- **Update and development of IIMA website in English and Italian.**
- **Disseminated information** through the IIMA website ([www.iimageneva.org](http://www.iimageneva.org)) in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national and international levels. Nineteen (19) web articles were produced in English and Italian in 2020. Information on IIMA's activities was also posted on Facebook, Twitter and other partner websites.
- **Disseminated IIMA Publication "PROMOTING A SAFE AND EMPOWERING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH - Best Practices for Child and Youth Protection and Participation through Human Rights Education"** among Permanent Missions, donors and partners.<sup>4</sup>
- **Submitted to donors the final report of the project on "Promoting a Safe and Empowering Environment for Children in India" and a new funding application** for a new project.
- **Produced and submitted Quadrennial Report to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, based on inputs received from IIMA members in 46 countries. A **targeted survey tool** was created to inquire on SDGs implementation in all countries where IIMA is present.
- **Annual narrative and financial reporting.**

<sup>4</sup> The Publication is available at: <http://iimageneva.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Rapport-IIMA-final.pdf>