



REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2024

Introduction

In 2024, 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.



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2024 Activities

Pillar of Action	2024 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	<p>Universal Periodic Review (UPR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Produced reports for human rights defenders in the field on the UPR sessions of Congo, Nigeria, Mexico, Uruguay, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, and Ethiopia.Run consultations with human rights defenders in The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Spain, and Kenya in order to prepare <i>ad hoc</i> training and/or submit UPR submissions for these countries in 2024.Issued joint submissions at the UPR of The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Spain, and Kenya.¹Participated in the UPR pre-session of Uruguay and prepared the briefing Report for the local members in the country examined.Completion of the UPR Advocacy Assessment Tables for India, Brazil, Philippines, Ecuador, Argentina, Benin, Zambia, Canada, in order to assess the impact of advocacy actions undertaken on the UPR recommendations addressed to the countries concerned.IIMA, in partnership with VIDES International, delivered oral statements on Item 6 during the 55th, 56th and 57th sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC) pertaining to the UPR Outcomes of Canada, Colombia, Nigeria, Mexico, Congo, and Uruguay.

¹ The submissions and the following advocacy actions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Spain, and Kenya were the result of an extensive capacity building initiative addressed to local human rights defenders. All submissions are available at: <http://iimageneva.org/reports/>



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- The Office also **co-sponsored additional statements** on the adoption of UPR outcomes for Canada² with Edmund Rice International and Enhancing technical cooperation and capacity building in the implementation of UPR recommendations with the Centre Catholique International de Genève (CCIG).

Treaty Bodies

IIMA participated in the Following Treaty Bodies sessions:

1. 95th session on the **Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** for Russia and South Africa;
2. 87th session on the **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** for Italy;
3. 26th session on the **Committee on Enforced Disappearance (CED)** for Cambodia and Burkina Faso;
4. 140th session on the **Committee on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)** for Chile.

Reports are produced and shared with local human rights defenders.

The Human Rights Council (HRC)

- **Produced and/or co-sponsored twenty-one additional oral statements** at the 55th, 56th, and 57th sessions of the Human Rights Council on various themes, including albinism, the right to privacy, the rights of migrants, the right to development, the rights of children, youth, and women, international solidarity, children in armed conflict, trafficking in persons, digital technology and artificial intelligence, extreme poverty, climate change, States obligations on supporting the family and its human rights, the promotion of digital education for young people and their protection from online threats.
- Co-sponsored the **side event of OIEC** on the “*La paralysie dans le système éducatif : le cas d’Haïti*,” on July 10, 2024, in conjunction with the 56th session of the HRC.
- **Contributed to the Informal Consultations for the new HRC Resolution on Youth and Human Rights.** IIMA/VIDES was invited in September 2024 to intervene in the States’ core group meeting on this resolution.

IIMA/VIDES suggested that the resolution on youth and human rights includes **youth related challenges** such as mental health,

² All statements are available at: <http://iimageneva.org/statements/>



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young women victims of violence (domestic, sexual, marital, etc.), and young people in foster care and/or exiting support.

In addition, IIMA/VIDES proposed to Member States to **establish a mandate for a Special Rapporteur on youth and human resources**; and/or organize an expert workshop in order to: a) provide technical insights to member states and other stakeholders on **mainstreaming youth rights**; and b) help further **identify persistent gaps in the implementation** of human rights for youth on the ground.

In the Resolution on Youth and Human Rights adopted in October 2024 at its 57th session, the Human Rights Council (HRC) requested the OHCHR to:

- a. Convene a panel discussion during the 60th session of the HRC focusing on the role of youth in promoting peaceful societies and creating an enabling environment for the enjoyment of human rights;
- b. Organize the panel discussion in consultation with youth and youth-led organizations and prepare a summary report on the roundtable for consideration by the Council at its 61st session;
- c. Conduct a detailed study on the impact of mental health challenges on young people's enjoyment of human rights and submit the study for consideration by the Council at its 63rd session.

Research-based reports

- **Contributed to the OHCHR Study on the solutions to promote digital education for young people and to ensure their protection from online threats**, submitted on February 6, 2024. Information for this paper was provided by 27 members and 4 other local partners from the following 16 countries: Europe (France, Germany, and Spain), America (Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Panama, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica), Asia (Myanmar, Nepal, and India), and Africa (Kenya and South Sudan).

- **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 3 youth activists** who collaborated with the IIMA Human Rights Office.



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- **Provided Targeted Online trainings to 39 local human rights defenders, from Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, India, Philippines, and Uruguay** to engage with the UPR of their respective countries (drafting of UPR submissions, Monitoring and Follow up).
- **Formation in loco**, given to around 60 young people and student leaders from the Philippines, focusing on the empowerment of youth as defenders of human rights and the common good
- In the framework of the **Project: A Multi-Congregational Observatory to advance girls' rights in 6 countries in the post-pandemic: A joint effort to close the digital divide and guarantee girls' mental health**, in partnership with VIDES International, IIMA conducted **several online Training sessions** addressed to girls and young women (14 – 21 years old) as well as local project coordinators from Ecuador, Kenya, India, Nepal, Peru and South Sudan on how to effectively engage with UN system for the protection of human rights, by developing oral statements and reporting to the Universal Periodic Review.³
- IIMA and VIDES International, in accordance with the first objective of the project, that is, to **consolidate and strengthen the "Girls Observatory,"** organized **two plenary gathering of the Advocacy Group** (February 6 and May 23) participated by girls, young women and educators working with them. The gatherings aimed to 1) design a follow-up needs assessment to plan intervention based on girls' experience in terms of digital divide, violence and mental health; 2) design an advocacy plan to develop coordinated actions and enable girls participating in the initiatives to present their proposals for policy change.
- **Webinar** on Empowering Youth as Human Rights Advocates (May 14). The theme: **Realizing youth rights with and for young people**, was presented by the keynote speaker, Helen Griffiths (Child and Youth Rights Unit, OHCHR).
- In April 2024, as part of the abovementioned Project, the **online course on how to track the human rights situation in Kenya** was conducted. It consisted of several training modules relevant to the different stages of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). In the case of Kenya, representatives of other congregations as well as girls and young women involved in the multi-congregational project participated.

³ See: <https://iimageneva.org/a-multi-congregational-observatory-to-advance-girls-rights-in-6-countries-in-the-post-pandemic-a-joint-effort-to-close-the-digital-divide-and-guarantee-girls-mental-health/>



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Training Module 1: The UPR and Forms of Participation of Civil Society Actors (April 16) and Module 2: How to Draft a UPR Submission (April 18).

- **Online event “The Commitment of the Human Rights Council to Youth and Human Rights: Addressing the digital divide, online threats and mental health.”** The online event was held on 12 December, with the participation of State Representatives, UN officers and the Youth Speakers from India, Ecuador, South Sudan, and Peru.⁴

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

Communication and information

Update and development of IIMA website

- **Disseminated information** through the IIMA website (www.iimageneva.org), including outreach materials, articles, UPR Submissions, and oral statements, in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national and international levels.
- **Contributed several articles on the website of the Salesian Sisters** (www.cgfmanet.org) on World Day of Water (March 22), World Day against Child labor (June 12), International Day of the World's Indigenous People (August 9), International Youth Day (August 12), International Day of the Girl Child (October 11), and Human Rights Day (December 10).
- On December 16, a **youth page** was created at the IIMA Human Rights Office website in order to promote the Global Youth Agenda (<https://iimageneva.org/youth/>). It aims to sensitize youth and other relevant stakeholders on the empowerment of young people through the full exercise of their human rights.

Networking: IIMA **work in synergy** with other NGOs and Institutions in order to bring attention of the international community to the major issues and identify top priorities for the human rights agenda.

⁴ <https://iimageneva.org/the-commitment-of-the-human-rights-council-to-youth-and-human-rights-addressing-the-digital-divide-online-threats-and-mental-health/>



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Networking and Fundraising

Networking and partnership with NGOs

- **IIMA participated in various NGO working groups and platforms** such as: the Geneva Catholic NGO Forum and its Platforms on the Right to Education, the Right to Development and International Solidarity, the Working Group on Human Rights Education and Learning (WGHREL), the International Catholic Center of Geneva (CCIG), the International Catholic NGO Forum (Rome based), other CINGO Regional Fora located in Paris, Strasbourg, Brussels, and New York.

Global Youth Agenda

- IIMA continues to launch the **Network of Youth Defenders of Human Rights and the Common Good** among high school students and Institutions of Higher Studies present in the different regions of the world.
 - **Conference (in person) given to 92 law students** on the theme "**Human rights and youth participation**" at the ISECENSA Higher Education Institutes in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on their 8th International Congress of Scientific Knowledge (CICC) in September 2024.
 - **Conference to ISECENSA Higher Education Institutes** on the theme "**Human rights from the United Nations Perspective**" with the participation of 156 students and educators (September 2024).⁵
 - **I am Brave National Convention LVF, Philippines. Talk on the global imperative to safeguard human dignity and human rights perspective of child protection in the Philippines** to around 2000 high school students⁶

Partnership with VIDES International

- IIMA shares with VIDES International⁷ a strong commitment to promoting Human Rights education and the empowerment of children, youth and women through human rights capacity building and sensitization. The Human Rights Office based in Geneva represents both organizations at the United Nations.
- **IIMA partners with VIDES International at the Human Rights Council** by delivering oral statements during the Human Rights

⁵ See: <https://www.cgfmanet.org/en/ifma-en/8th-international-congress-of-scientific-knowledge-isecensa/>

⁶ See: <https://www.cgfmanet.org/en/infosphere/i-am-brave-national-convention-lvf/>

⁷ <https://www.vides.org/>



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Council, submitting written contributions for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and in reply to the OHCHR calls for inputs.

- IIMA continues to collaborate with VIDES International in **various advocacy projects** such as:
 - a. **Project: A Multi-Congregational Observatory to advance girls' rights in 6 countries in the post-pandemic: A joint effort to close the digital divide and guarantee girls' mental health (Phase 2: 2023-2025).** It underscores the training of a team of girls and young women from Ecuador, Kenya, India, Nepal, Peru and South Sudan as participants, informants, co-designers, so that they can be empowered to actively advocate for human rights in their respective countries and internationally.
 - b. **Project: "Youth to reshape the World" (2023-2025): Youth as Advocates and Agents of Transformative Actions in Social Inclusion and Environment Protection."** Funded by the European Commission, this three-year project aims to: Enable young people to become agents of change in terms of social inclusion and environmental protection within their communities as well as at the international and European levels; Promote intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding by valuing youth cultural identity and active citizenship; Improve the internal and external communication of the network by developing innovative and creative practices for the use of digital tools.
 - c. **Project: 'Keeping Families Together – Promoting family based or alternative care solutions for vulnerable children in Kenya and India.'** Funded by the GHR (Gerald and Henrietta Rauenhorst) Foundation, this project aims to act as a catalyst for change in India and Kenya in order to encourage the deinstitutionalization of children and to promote an ethical model of volunteerism that has community support and the best interest of children at its core. IIMA's Human Rights Office has prepared an Advocacy Action Plan specifically designed for this project's implementation from May 2024 to April 2025.