

Updates on Grail and UFER activities  
January/February 2019



# GRAIL LINK TO THE UNITED NATIONS NETWORK

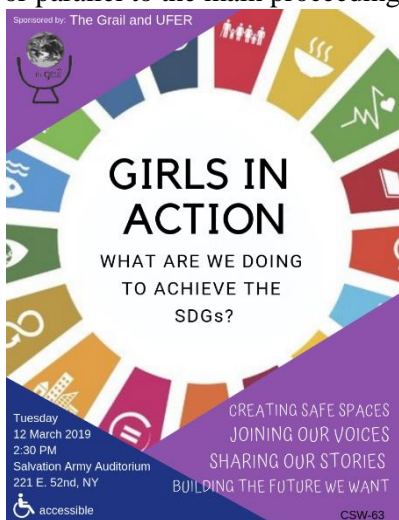
## Zona Centro de Noticias



We have an exciting group coming for CSW in 2019! You've already 'met' our interns: Ana and Coline. They continue to share here and in the International Newsletter.

Now for our participants: girls from Brasil, USA, Portugal, Uganda, Tanzania, Moçambique. And young women from Mexico, Portugal, Moçambique, Australia and the Netherlands. Two were denied visas—from Kenya and Zimbabwe. And, a few of us older ones. This brings us together as an intergenerational, international community for 2 ½ weeks. We also have language to bridge. What an exciting challenge.

Our two 'parallel events'—that means a panel or other kind of meeting that carries the CSW theme but is outside of or parallel to the main proceedings happening in the UN.



These are the flyers advertising our events. In addition to circulating them to various groups via email, we hand them out at various events we attend.

### YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM...SOME SHARING

#### **MONICA FREITAS from Portugal**

Last May I started my "Wo(men) Project" of meeting with 12 men and women. Our aim is to promote gender equality and social justice in Madeira with Facebook campaigns and do sessions for the general public as well as in schools.

In December we organized in Madeira a session about Human Rights, called "Men's rights and Women's too?" to celebrate the 16 days of activism. The session was on December 9<sup>th</sup> so it was close to the International Day of Human Rights. It was facilitated by Ana Costa, my mentor from Girl Effect Coimbra and Grail member. She came to Madeira to help us dinamize the session and talk about the Declaration of Human Rights. We had 10 men and women in the session.

In January, I was back in Coimbra and did an open session to share my experience in Maputo, in the Young Women's Leadership Training Program and shared one more time with Grail members my 'back home' Project.

Even though I've been busy with my internship to finish my degree, I've been working with the girls from Girl Effect Madeira in the 4 community centers, and organized the International Day of the Girl Child in October and the 16 days of activism in December!

In addition to the Girl Effect and Wo(men) Project, I've been also working with a group of women, ages between 35-77 about domestic Violence and did a paper work about it to present in my university. February 14<sup>th</sup> is another activity where we will share some photos about 'what love means and what love doesn't mean' in our Facebook page. We are already thinking about something to do on March 8.

### **YENZIWE MASUKU from South Africa**

Our way forward is to organise a one day meeting every term, a meeting that will include boys and the community at large. With the help of WLTP young women we organised a one-day career meeting for teenage girls around Sbizane. The aim of the meeting was to provide career guidance and follow up on the previous meeting.

One of our achievements is that the meeting went well despite all the challenges. Facilitators managed to answer personal questions directed to them. We were able to provide a powerful guidance tool to participants for choosing subjects because they told us that some teachers force them to choose certain subjects even though they don't like them and want other subjects. They were empowered and promised to be assertive to teachers forcing them.

### **CAROLINE MUTIMBANYOKA from Zimbabwe**

Upon my return from the Young Women's Leadership Program in Maputo Mozambique, I started working with St Agnes women in Action group in October 2018. I work with a group of 15 disadvantaged women who are unemployed and some of them are widows. Upon doing several workshops on needs assessment, poverty came out as one of their main challenges

We decided to start a small garden which we could use for our own consumption and one lady offered space at her house for a bigger garden that we planted vegetables for selling in our community. This has been a successful initiative which ensured that 15 Families can at least have access to vegetable through our small efforts.

### **NOELINA NAKABUYE from Uganda**

Together with my Mentor Angelica we were able to visit the Secondary School (Sacred Heart SSS Mushanga) and I shared and hopefully inspired the girls. I went to our Formation Center in Kishabya and shared with the young women on the Grail Formation program; we shared what it means to be a girl, challenges girls face and what they thought would help girls be productive, creative and make a change in our communities. We sang, danced and took a lot of snaps; it was really a great day with them. I visited two primary schools (St. Patrick and St. Charles Lwanga Primary school) and encouraged the girls to stay in school as education is the beginning of change to a better community.

### **ROSI HUAROCHO, Cheran, Mexico**

In the community of Cherán, in Michoacán, the Cherán Grail team, in dialogue and coordination with the Grail Mexico City team, we agreed to pilot the second of a series of awareness workshops to prevent the process of deception and kidnapping of women via social networks, this time with enriched contents that were conducted to facilitators as well as to participants from all over the Mexican Republic.

One of the aspects we look forward to achieve is that both teens and parents get interested in this approach because it focuses on the power that the knowledge/ meaning of Social Networks, as a tool, can develop in order to manipulate/encourage the will of many people (especially teenagers), placing them in a situation of vulnerability before possible attempts of deception and kidnapping.

### **ELSA NOGUEIRA from Portugal**

In September we organized a big event with 70 young people about violence in relationships: NAMORarte. In December we held a three day residential meeting for 30 young people about the SDGs. It was a dynamic meeting where we worked on issues such as peace, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Once a month we gather young people at terrace to address these issues. (There is much more exciting info to share which will appear next issue.)

These have been brief excerpts from some very full reports. If you are interested in reading more about any of them, contact Abida at [azeja72@gmail.com](mailto:azeja72@gmail.com).

### **R.U.N. AT THE UN...from Mary Kay**

Coline and I attended the January and February meetings. It is primarily a Catholic group, initially just women but not some men also have joined.

- In January there were presentations and much discussion about the migration issue especially the Mexico-USA border anti-human rights situation.
- In February there was a session on the Katowice Climate Change Conference – December 2018 otherwise known as COP24. According to many, the climate talks are the most important round of negotiations since the Paris Agreement was reached three years ago at COP21 in 2015. It was at COP21 that world leaders committed to making sure global warming stayed "well below" 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. They also agreed to pursue efforts to limit the temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

According to the United Nations, COP24 is important because this year marks the deadline agreed by signatories of the Paris Agreement to adopt a "work program for the implementation" of the commitments they made in 2015.

### **CSocD57: 57<sup>TH</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development**

**from Coline Bruintjies CSocD57:** 11 to 21 February 2019, at the UN in New York. The Commission is the advisory body responsible for the social development pillar of global development. Ana and Coline attended a training related to CSocD and the UN as well as several side events, especially ones that were related to our work in CSW. Theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies.

On Sunday, 10 February 2019, we attended the CSocD57 orientation for NGO participants who were attending CSocD for the first time. The orientation provided a useful overview of the United Nations (UN) and its various committees. The organisers gave a detailed explanation of civil society's role at the UN. This ranges from posing questions at high level panel discussions; being on a panel at a side event; organising meetings with representatives of member states; and submitting statements to the UN on relevant topics. These are all mechanisms for holding our governments accountable and ensuring that lived experiences of marginalised communities throughout the world are paid attention to.

The orientation also provided practical information about how to access the UN and tips for getting around and finding venues. The first week of CSocD57 had some interesting side events. On Tuesday, 12 February, I attended a ministerial forum on social protection. Different country representatives looked at challenges faced in implementing social protection and some mentioned the different social protection measures which they already have in place. Another side event focused on social protection as a tool for reducing inequality. Here a panelist from civil society highlighted that we need to look at the way policies are designed and implemented to see if they have an adverse impact on women. There was an emphasis on putting human dignity at the heart of social protection. On 15 February there was a civil society forum where NGOs had the opportunity to ask a broad range of questions and raise pertinent issues related to social protection.

**From Ana Barata** It's been a month and a few days since I got to New York. Since then I have had some opportunities and challenges and moments of sharing that are making this experience unique. In the build-up to CSW-63, I am involved in various activities.

I am helping to plan the session where participants will look at how the priority theme is relevant to their contexts and communities in the Teen Orientation and I am also working with the sub-committee planning an event for youth on 9 March 2019, one of the Youth Dialogue events, where they will come up with a set of common minimum standards related to the priority theme, which will be presented to member states.

In the last days I had the opportunity to participate in the 57th session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD57). One of the events that I enjoyed being in was the "Youth Rights: Time for Action! Promoting Equality for Young People" sponsored by the European Youth Forum. In this session was present the Ambassador Francisco Duarte Lopes, Permanent Representative of Portugal in the

United Nations, and this was a surprise for me (and for the ambassador too when he came over to meet me after I had made an intervention during the meeting). It is very important for me as a Portuguese to see that my country is involved with youth issues and is interested in including the youth priorities on the government agenda. Young people are the future, so it is very important to listen to us and involve and consult us in the design and implementation of the politics. In my point of view, to promote equality for young people it is necessary to link different issues, such as the social development, social protection and human rights, including the youth rights, and for that is fundamental assume the Youth rights in different discussions rooms, in various life themes.

The last few weeks have been very busy, but we are doing our best to give the opportunity for all the grail participants to live a wonderful experience on the CSW63 and here in the Grail house.

**U.F.E.R International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples** from Sharon Joslyn The Bronx Grail was honored to welcome Bijayananda Singh, UFER Board member, for three days in January on his way to a course with Richard Rohr in Albuquerque, NM. Bijay, as we know him, works in Orisha, India with the Indigenous Peoples as part of a conflict resolution/peacebuilding team: Solidarity for Developing Communities.



Indigenous Committee of which Joy Garland and I are members, Bijay shared about his work in Orisha--one of the poorest regions in the country. There are 64 Tribal groups which comprise 23% of the population and 97 sub-cast groups comprising 70% of the population. The work consists of peacekeeping and education. There are difficult situations among the tribes and extremist violent ideology groups foment the conflicts. Solidarity also works with the education of youth in their mother tongue to enable them to advance into professions.

At the regular monthly meeting of the

Early in GLUNN's efforts to bring girls to CSW, Bijay prepared girls from his school. The girls were denied visas. Having spent a few days with us, as well as visiting the UNHQ and speaking at the Indigenous Rights Committee, Bijay is more confident that he will be able to send girls to CSW64 and that they will be able to make a significant contribution to the event. It was an inspiring visit and a wonderful opportunity to know Bijay better. On our final day together at our evening prayer with Bijay, Mary Kay, myself and our two CSW interns (Coline and Ana), Bijay carried out a traditional tribal blessing by bending and touching the feet of the elders (Mary Kay and Sharon). We were all very moved by the ritual and by the sincerity and commitment of our Indian brother. We look forward to future collaboration with Bijay and CSW.

In September 2007, the General Assembly, through its resolution 61/295, adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration provides a comprehensive framework of minimum standards for economic, social and cultural well-being and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. The Declaration recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples to revitalize, use, protect, preserve and transmit their histories, languages, and oral traditions to future generations. It further grants the right to indigenous peoples to establish their own media and educational systems in their own languages.



The 18th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) will take place 22 April – 3 May 2019 at the UN. The Theme: “Traditional knowledge:

Generation, transmission and protection”. During the second week there will be regional dialogues. **If anyone thinks she can attend, please advise Mary Kay by April 4th.**