

## UN report, Nairobi

In my role as the main IFSW representative at the UN-Habitat, I have managed to create time to engage by way of attending meetings, participating in events, dialogues and tracking on the unfolding issues associated with this role.

The initial IFSW investment in this process in the year 1998/9 enabled me to fully participate in the formation of World Urban Forum in 2001 after three years of protracted agitation for the change of Rules of Procedure to enable civil society and other non-state actors to engage directly with UN-Habitat. In the years that followed, IFSW become more visible and audible in the preparation and participation at the World Urban Forum events that followed in Nairobi, Vancouver, Madrid and in Nanjing - China. Ever since, IFSW has been involved in the design and preparatory committee meetings of the consequent events including the recent ninth session held in Kuala Lumpur on February 7<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2018, the location of the UN-Habitat in Nairobi has made my regular participation possible, convenient and affordable.

After transiting from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there has been a deliberate inclination focus on the urban components of the SDGs. Clearly, more than half of the goals and targets have an urban component linked to several of the goals indicators. Issues of concern to social workers such as climate change, housing and slums, sustainable production and consumption, inequalities, gender equality, food security, nutrition and migration are all inextricably linked to cities. This therefore explains the correlation between social work and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). The New Urban Agenda which was adopted in October 2016 at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat 111) held in Quito is about the planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships (the 4ps) in urban settings. At the recently held ninth session of the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur NUA was reinforced by a resolution which highlighted the transformative power of cities and also recalled the genuine aspirations to leave no one and no place behind in this NUA process.

I have been able to attend at least four major meetings at the UN complex in Nairobi. One meeting was looking at the possibility of expanding partnerships and capacities to integrate both the implementation and reporting of SDGs into urban development agenda. This is an area with funding potential and which Priska in her new role could take up across the regions and among the UN representatives. The meetings of this group are ongoing and are open to voluntary inputs from member states, UN systems, regional and sub-regional entities, partners and stakeholders across the board.

As part of monitoring the implementation of Social Protection Floors, Helpage Kenya has recommended me to be a member of GAP-Older Persons group, this team, among other issues is expected to mainstream the older persons agenda into NUA. The initial contact was made by m/s Katherine Kline who is also known to Priska.

I was able to represent Klaus Kuehn at a meeting of Global Coalition for Social Protection floors held in Nairobi on 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The meeting did a review of the opportunities and challenges in influencing Social Protection Floors both at global and regional levels. The final report of this meeting is available.

## **Way Forward.**

1. The first reporting period for the implementation of the Agenda indicates that regional action plans can provide guidance for national and local frameworks and help mainstream agenda into decision making. This is the case with Urban Agenda for the European Union, Latin America the Caribbean and Africa. Perhaps this is also an area that the new UN Commission could engage. I will be happy to do a draft for Priska on the way forward.
2. On the New Urban Agenda (NUA), often governments face challenges in implementing NUA`s specific urban components. This is so because in many cases development plans are never urban specific and this is compounded with the low level of awareness regarding the potential benefits of urbanization and urban related mechanism for main-tracking the current trends of reporting and then identifying areas in which IFSW could engage. A part of mentorship the implementation social protection floors, Help page Kenya has recommended me to be part of a member of GAP-Older persons which is a key vulnerable group now identified and represented in NUA. This group, among other issues is expected to mainstream the older persons agenda into NUA; initial contact was made by m/s Katherine Kline who is also known to Priska. I suggest we deepen the IFSW engagement with the NUA initiative by getting involved again in the World Urban Forum events. IFSW regional networks are now well established and have the capacity. The cost if any will be minimal as we can use regions or even local national associations as IFSW network.
3. In real terms, NUA is about social work, whether we focus on old stable cities there are challenges for NUA to address, in the context of fragile states, disaster, conflict and other acute vulnerabilities, training and capacity building to connect humanitarian and development efforts is required and hence a domain for IFSW UN Commission to engage.

Finally, I thank and congratulate IFSW executive for establishing the UN Commission at this time in history, when UN links in regions is the way to go for global entities and when IFSW has representatives and focal points in Chile, Bangkok, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and New York. It is my hope that social work ideals, voice and language will find more space in UN work and documentation as we move forward.

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