



Franciscans *International*

2008 Annual Report



BROKEN CHAIR

A monument erected by Handicap International stands in memory of landmine victims on the *Place des Nations* in Geneva.

MISSION

Franciscans International works at the UN and international organizations to influence decision makers on behalf of the most vulnerable.

VISION

As St Francis once addressed the social leaders of his time with the challenge of peace, so today we are called to engage policy makers and world leaders at the United Nations for the work of justice, peace, the care of creation, and the promotion of human rights.

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Year in review...

A backward glance at the year just ended brings many rich memories to mind for Franciscans International (FI).

There are memories of all the Franciscans who came to visit us in our offices in Bangkok, Geneva and New York. Some came to share the pain of those with whom they journey; others to accompany groups; and others came to participate in a training programme or a session at the United Nations (UN). I have vivid memories of meeting old and new friends at the opening of the Bangkok office; also at the Franciscan Federation Conference in July; and at various meetings in the US, Rome, Assisi and Singapore, as well as here in Geneva.



Sr. Denise delivering a statement on behalf of FI during the UN Human Rights Council.

It was a transition year for FI, which means there were challenges aplenty! But transitions also provide new opportunities. FI worked hard to embrace these; particularly those we believe will help us to serve the Franciscan family more effectively. To this end, FI adopted a number of 'best practice' policies, to ensure greater transparency and accountability to those we serve and to those who generously support our ministry. We published the first FI Calendar, with a view to sharing how Franciscans working at the 'grassroots' are engaged in human rights work around the world; and highlighting issues FI can bring to the UN on their behalf. The year also saw FI working more collaboratively on issues with Partner Organisations, to our mutual benefit.

In 2008, the FI Staff Team accomplished much as reflected in the reports that follow. The Bangkok office, serving the Asia Pacific Region, had an excellent first year with the focus on provision of trainings and in-country programmes. In Geneva, FI actively participated at the UN Human Rights Council; fully engaged in the new Universal Periodic Review process, with the assistance of many Franciscans throughout the world; and continued its capacity building programme in Africa. The appointment of Sr. Kathie Uhler OSF in November will help us further develop the FI programme in New York with its focus on the UN agenda, including peace building, sustainable development and the status of women. Across the organisation the advocacy team, under the new leadership of Gotzon Onandia Zarrabe, worked hard to ensure that issues brought to us by Franciscans, were raised in the different fora within the UN, to effect change.

Significantly this year, FI was blessed by the establishment of the 'Rose Marie Khoo Foundation', which will provide a small but steady source of income in the years ahead. Within the context of a turbulent global financial crisis, FI is endeavouring to provide maximum service, whilst reducing financial costs significantly. The FI web page is important for information as less printed material is being sent out, to conserve resources for training and advocacy work.

In 2008, the FI programme was made possible by the wonderful support of Franciscans throughout the world; our generous donors; our prayer-support team of the Poor Clares; the dedicated service of our hard working International Board of Directors (IBD); and the active involvement of members of the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF). To each one we offer our deepest gratitude. Without you, FI would not be able to achieve what it has to date!

Sr. Denise Boyle FMDM
Executive Director

As already highlighted, 2008 was a year of significant transitions for FI. The FI Asia Pacific Office in Bangkok, Thailand, opened in March 2008 and the Board of Directors soon after welcomed Sr. Denise Boyle FMDM as FI's new Executive Director. Sr. Denise "hit the ground running," instituted some important changes in the staffing and internal structures of FI, and has worked tirelessly to re-establish relationships with a number of groups within the Franciscan Family, the broader community of religious orders and the UN.

While dealing with challenges in finances, personnel and programming in a world in the deep grips of a recession, FI has also strived to remain mission-focused. After years of talking about it, we have added another advocacy staff person to the New York office. In addition, we have also tried to refine and improve our partnerships with other religious order NGOs.

As that process continues, we are seeking new partners among religious communities and to broaden FI's collaboration with other groups, including the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF), the JPEC/JPIC offices and commissions (the Capuchins are especially interested), Religious at the UN (RUN), the Franciscan Action Network (FAN), and especially our Franciscan brothers and sisters at the grassroots.

The IBD is itself confronting the challenges of transition. At our March 2009 meeting, we welcomed 7 new board members (their predecessors were largely term-limited) and elected a new Executive Committee. I am pleased to note that Fr. John Doctor OFM will serve as the IBD Director until March 2012.

While these past three years have been filled with challenges and sometimes severe tests, they have also demonstrated the resilience of Franciscans International. I am confident that we will continue the process of building an organization that is stronger, more collaborative, financially sound, more efficient, and especially better able to fulfill our mission of serving our brothers and sisters who are poor and vulnerable and assisting them in making their voices heard at the UN.

Br. John Celichowski OFM Cap
IBD President (2006-2008)

Advocacy

Franciscans all over the world live and work with the most vulnerable in order to bring support and assistance. During 2008, FI continued to develop contacts with them, learning about their concerns and those of the most vulnerable wherever they were. Thanks to this worldwide network of Franciscans, FI collected direct and reliable testimonies from those most in need in the five continents.

FI documented these challenges and concerns in several reports, documents and public statements and raised awareness about them at the UN and internationally. In order to address the plight of the most vulnerable, FI proposed specific measures and policies and urged the international community to adopt them. Several advocacy initiatives were carried out with UN Human Rights bodies and the diplomatic missions present in Geneva. These advocacy initiatives were carried out at two levels: through an Urgent Action Network and the Universal Human Rights Review.

The Urgent Action Network

The Urgent Action Network mechanism provided an immediate response to gross human rights and humanitarian violations that needed immediate action, such as armed conflicts or global crisis. Under this program FI advocated in coordination with Franciscans at grassroots on the election crisis in Kenya, the food crisis, communal violence in India and the armed conflicts in Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sri Lanka, amongst others.

The advocacy activities included submitting first-hand information on human rights violations to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; addressing the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on behalf of the victims; urging the international community to assume its responsibilities regarding the protection of their rights; and meeting diplomatic missions in order to raise awareness about the plight of the vulnerable and proposing specific measures to be taken.

Urgent Actions in 2008

The election crisis in Kenya

(UNHRC Session, March)
Hundreds of people died and between 180,000 - 250,000 people were displaced.

The food crisis

(Special UNHRC Session, May)
Sky-rocketing food prices added millions of people to the existing 850 million people with no access to food.

Incidents of communal violence in Orissa (India)

(UNHRC Session, September)
Tens of thousands were displaced and thousands of religious buildings were destroyed.

The humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo

(Special UNHRC Session, November)
Hundreds of thousands were displaced, thousands killed, women raped and children recruited into the armed forces during the year.

Armed conflict in Sri Lanka

(UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)
As the Sri Lankan military forces attacked the last stronghold of the Tamil Tigers, hundreds of thousands of IDPs were trapped in the midst of the conflict with no humanitarian aid.



Universal Human Rights Review

The focus countries and topics for FI during the UPR in 2008 were:

Benin

Food, right to health (particularly women in rural areas), education and “witch children”;

Burkina Faso

Food, education, health, human trafficking and the promotion of human rights;

Burundi

Peace and reconciliation, women’s rights (discrimination and sexual violence), education, food, displaced people, administration of justice, conditions of detention and Millennium Development Goals;

Cameron

Education, health, forced marriages, child labour, trafficking, detention of children and other issues;

Canada

Poverty and discrimination, water, trafficking, rights of migrants and asylum-seekers;

Guatemala (with FMSI and Save the Children Guatemala)

Violence against children and young people;

Indonesia (with Justitia et Pax Netherlands)

Torture, human rights defenders, rule of law and impunity;

Slovakia

Discrimination against Roma people;

Vanuatu (with FMSI)

Right to education;

Zambia (with Edmund Rice International)

Education, HIV/AIDS, street children and natural resources and local development.



Universal Human Rights Review

The UN regularly supervises the implementation of specific human rights instruments in different countries. One of the key mechanisms in this regard is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which reviews the human rights records of all countries over a period of four years. This new mechanism allows the members of the Franciscan Family in each country to alert the international community about the needs of the most vulnerable and the human rights issues that concern them most.

In 2008, FI contacted Franciscans in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Guatemala, Indonesia, Slovakia, Vanuatu (Marist Brothers) and Zambia. As a result of the joint work between FI and Franciscans in each country, FI was able to document the most pressing human rights violations. Topics included: health, education, human trafficking, street children, poverty, peace and reconciliation, torture, forced marriages and several others. The reports submitted to the UN Office of the High Commissioner were the first step in a long process of advocacy activities aimed at the adoption, by the country under review, of the recommendations proposed by FI in order to address the challenges identified. A significant number of the recommendations presented by FI were adopted.

Treaty Bodies Mechanism

The human rights treaty bodies are committees of independent experts that monitor implementation of the core human rights treaties. FI intervened at these committees by submitting reports and making statements which addressed the subject of focus of the committee in the country under review.

Committees

In 2008, FI worked with local Franciscans in the following countries and on the following Committees:

Indonesia and the Committee Against Torture (CAT)

See *West Papua Programme* (page 10).

Benin and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

Right to food, health and education.

Togo and the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Discrimination on employment and public sector.

The UPR is a State-driven mechanism to assess the human rights situation of all the UN Member States every four years. This mechanism aims to improve the human rights situation in every country. FI participates in the process by sharing the concerns of Franciscans at the grassroots and advocating for measures to address them.



Advocacy

Contemporary Forms of Slavery (CFS) affects, according to Kevin Bales author of *Disposable People*, an estimated 27 million people worldwide. It is difficult to believe that such a phenomenon still exists in the 21st century and on such a large scale. Franciscans around the world witness CFS taking place and how the victims' human dignity is denied, becoming the property of someone else.

The CFS Programme aims to empower Franciscans to advocate for the abolishment of slavery and to demand remedy for victims. This includes advocating for prevention programmes addressing the root causes of slavery, prosecution of the traffickers and other perpetrators of human rights violations and adequate protection of the victims.

Contemporary Forms of Slavery (CFS)

Annually since 2002, FI has hosted trainings on CFS, including trafficking and forced labour. These trainings have been organized in collaboration with Anti-Slavery International. The issue of CFS has been raised by various Franciscans at the Human Rights Council (or at the Commission on Human Rights, the Council's predecessor and its Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery) every year. In September 2007, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution creating a mandate entitled the "Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, including its causes and consequences." FI's efforts have been critical in what resulted in the creation of this UN mechanism on CFS.

In 2008, FI conducted two trainings on CFS in English and French. Sixteen Franciscans from six congregations (FMM, SFO, OFM, SFA, SFIC, OFM Conv) took part in these trainings. FI lobbied for the appointment of a qualified and independent mandate holder to fulfill the position of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. In May 2008, the Human Rights Council appointed Ms. Gulnara Shahinian, with whom FI maintains regular contact.

CFS has also been raised in several reports by FI that were submitted to the UPR. FI's reports on Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada and Cameroun contained recommendations to the respective governments of these States, asking them to address the issue of CFS which includes human trafficking and forced marriages.



Fifteen countries were represented during the 2008 CFS training: Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Jordan, Madagascar, Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland & Zambia.



FI is closely involved in the drafting process of the UN Guiding Principles on extreme Poverty and Human Rights, voicing Franciscan concerns on the subject.

Once adopted, those are meant to act as a key tool to effectively implement existing human rights standards in the context of extreme poverty. The Guiding Principles would be the first document adopted by an intergovernmental UN body on the issue of poverty and human rights. This would constitute a milestone in the promotion of the rights of the most vulnerable. It would also be a major sign that the international community is taking the situation of persons living in extreme poverty seriously.

FI, together with other civil society organisations (in particular ATD Fourth World), delivered joint statements during the Human Rights Council sessions 7 and 8 (March and June 2008), asking for this drafting process to be treated as a priority matter.

In November 2008, FI hosted a two-day consultation involving 13 NGOs and the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty to prepare for an expert seminar organized by the UN in January 2009.



Extreme poverty is the most widespread human rights violation in the world and one of the biggest scandals of our times.

In December 1948, the world community adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Now 60 years later the number of people living in extreme poverty and those who see their human dignity violated continues to increase. The unfortunate reality is that extreme poverty remains a major impediment to the universal realization of human rights. Urgent collective action at all levels is needed to address this global scourge and to bring change.

The ultimate aim of the Extreme Poverty Programme is to impact policies and international standards in relation to extreme poverty, to push for real and authentic implementation of human rights for all, and in doing so to improve the situation of the world's poorest.

Extreme Poverty

The issue of poverty has been a focus of FI's work since its inception. In fact, it is an issue that lies at the heart of FI's mission at the UN. Those who live in poverty constitute the largest single group of victims of human rights abuses. While carrying out this programme, FI is in regular contact with Franciscan at the grassroots, thus keeping our advocacy initiatives connected to the reality at the local level. FI wants its work at the international level to be rooted in the local realities experienced by the Franciscan Family as well as the most vulnerable.

FI actively engages in advocacy activities in favour of a human rights based approach to combat extreme poverty. FI consistently request governments and international institutions to enable persons living in extreme poverty to take part in the decision making processes. FI also takes strong positions against discrimination facing the poor, believing that discrimination is not only a major cause but also a consequence of extreme poverty.

These advocacy activities include, but are not limited to: statements at the UN Human Rights Council together with other NGOs, meeting and advocating with diplomatic missions, organizing side events and inviting Franciscans to testify at the UN.



Food Crisis

Sky-rocketing food prices added millions of people to the existing 850 million people who do not have access to food.

For more information on FI's Advocacy initiatives, contact: advocacy@fiop.org

Or consult FI's website: www.franciscansinternational.org

Advocacy

Africa Programme

PROGRAMME HISTORY

2005
Programme initiated.

2006
Preparatory mission to Central, East, Southern and West Africa and Madagascar/Mauritius.

Meetings with Franciscans and their Superiors to discuss priorities & challenging issues to be included in the human rights education training programmes.

Organizing local core teams to support and aid in the planning and implementing of future trainings.

2007
Five leadership-training seminars delivered for the Franciscan Family in Nairobi, Antananarivo, Kinshasa, Lusaka & Lomé.

Six Franciscans from the Republic of Congo & Democratic Republic of the Congo attended the 42nd session of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights in Brazzaville.

The Africa Programme aims to empower and educate grassroots Franciscans from the sub-Saharan region on human rights issues, as well as project design and management in order to support them in social transformation projects.

The human rights trainings have increased the expertise at the local level. They have encouraged the active participation of Franciscans in advocacy work rendering substantive inputs to various UN human rights mechanisms, with qualitative research and reliable first-hand information.

In a spirit of collaboration, the programme has bolstered tangible connections and interactions between FI and the grassroots with Franciscans increasingly requesting FI's support for their local programmes and joint activities. The Africa Programme has also encouraged the development of joint activities with existing programmes (Damietta Peace Initiative and JPIC FA) within the Franciscan Family in Africa.

In 2009, the Africa Programme will continue to provide support to sub-Saharan Franciscans through capacity strengthening, reporting to UN human rights bodies, as well as providing technical assistance for local advocacy initiatives.



2008 Reports

Universal Periodic Review
Addressing the human rights violations in: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon and Zambia.

Treaty Bodies Mechanism
Report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Benin.

Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on Togo.



TRAININGS



Jinja, Uganda

24 February - 2 March 2008

Fifty participants attended, representing Franciscan Institutes and Entities from four countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda);



Kinshasa, DRC

17 - 24 August 2008

Thirty-nine participants attended, representing Franciscans from six countries (Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Congo and Rwanda);



Lusaka, Zambia

2 - 9 November 2008

Twenty participants participated in the training seminar, representing Franciscan Institutes from four countries (Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia).

The trainings focused on the UN and African Human Rights Instruments and Mechanisms; Advocacy Strategies; Leadership and Management; Networking and Communication; Millennium Development Goals and the Participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the Elaboration, Implementation and Evaluation Processes.

In total, one-hundred and six Franciscans from fourteen countries participated in three regional trainings implemented *in situ* (Jinja, Kinshasa and Lusaka).

OUTCOMES

The human rights education process:

- Animated, mobilized and trained local Franciscans whilst strengthening their ties to FI;
- Deepened their expertise in human rights advocacy;
- Developed human rights-based approaches to grassroots justice and peace endeavors;
- Fostered an understanding of the UN, as well as African human rights instruments and mechanisms, in a practical way to enable Franciscans to use them;
- Developed communication and networking with and within Franciscan communities from the same countries and regions;
- Created a connection to social grassroots engagement and human rights perspectives for action, making a difference in the lives of the poor at a local level;
- Empowered grassroots Franciscans to undertake advocacy initiatives, thus engaging them in the participation of local, regional, as well as international human rights fora;
- Strengthened project design and management skills for grassroots Franciscans.



Sr. Mary Wangare LSOSJ
Nairobi, Kenya

"I am very grateful for having had a chance of meeting you and other Franciscan brothers and sisters. Thanks too for the good work you are doing to make sure that we move forward responding to the signs of our times, human rights issues are very much a sign of the times when we have many different rights being violated..."

Thank you for your encouragement. I am very happy to be involved at this level and to benefit from the seminar in Jinja. It is not easy as a religious sister to be engaged in human rights issues, but God has always seen us through. We still have a long way to go, some of us are still in those ages where a sister like me should not be challenging the authority and superiors for that matter.

Networking with different NGOs has taught me a lot and my participation in the workshop in Jinja has increased my knowledge. Thank my Lord for giving me this chance.

We are now planning to make a presentation to the Bishops of Kenya on our participation in the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission after the power-sharing deal ending the post electoral violence."



For more information on the Africa Programme, contact:
africa@fiop.org

Or consult FI's website:
www.franciscansinternational.org

Advocacy

West Papua Programme

The following urgent actions were taken:

On the **imprisonment of a Papuan student leader** charged of treason for staging a protest against government policies.

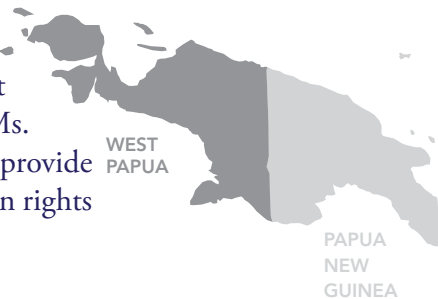
On a **cholera outbreak** in Papua, where a great number of indigenous Papuans died as a consequence of poor healthcare and lack of health facilities.

The West Papua Programme is an advocacy programme tailored to support local programmes of the Office for Justice and Peace (SKP, Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian) of Jayapura, led by OFMs. FI has been working closely with SKP since 2001 to provide the UN with factual and empirical evidence on human rights abuses in West Papua.

Since 1998, SKP has been working on community building, local advocacy for human rights, support and pastoral care for victims of human rights violations, researching and documenting breaches of human rights in the region, and many other activities.

The West Papua Programme was initiated in 2002 when SKP requested FI to bring the murder of a Papuan leader to the attention of the international community.

In 2008, timely reviews of Indonesia by the UN human rights mechanisms as well as a considerable attention on West Papua from the international community, helped FI raise awareness on the human rights situation of indigenous Papuans.



Publications



West Papua Factsheet

A useful, up-to-date resource on the human rights situation in West Papua that includes facts and history of the region.

See the report on our website: franciscansinternational.org/resources/publications.php



REVIEWS



Indonesia had two major reviews by the UN Human Rights Mechanisms in 2008: the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in April and the Committee Against Torture (CAT) in May.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The UPR provided us with the opportunity to submit a joint report together with other faith-based NGOs which are part of the Faith Based Network on West Papua.

FI was instrumental in ensuring that many diplomatic representatives included West Papua in the discussion on Indonesia's performance vis-à-vis its international human rights obligations. Our joint report ensured the inclusion of Papua in the documents compiled by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) - documents used by States during this inter-governmental UPR Review.

The Committee Against Torture (CAT)

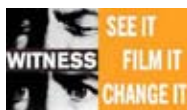
FI advocated at the CAT, with SKP and other Indonesian NGOs (including close collaborator Imparsial, a leading Indonesian human rights organization) with whom FI worked to strengthen the campaign. A number of meetings and events were held with diplomatic representatives and members of CAT, including a public event featuring a movie on torture in West Papua (*Listen to our Voice*, co-produced by SKP and Witness, a US-based media-advocacy organization).

This event gave a Papuan victim of torture the opportunity to speak about her own experience. We were able to ensure that the Committee questioned Indonesia on the pattern of torture and ill-treatment documented in our report (on cases from 1998-2007). Based on precise documentation and information presented to the CAT, the Committee highlighted its concern at the presence of systemic impunity in the security services in West Papua.



In 2006, the torture victim, a 56-year old woman, was separated from her three children and taken from her home by the Indonesian security apparatus.

When she could divulge no information about the separatist movement, she was beaten on the head with a rifle and burnt with cigarettes until she lost consciousness. She was kept in a Papuan prison for three days before being released.



Special Recognition

FI would like to congratulate Br. Budi Hernawan OFM, a tireless human rights defender and campaigner, for his 10 years of service at SKP, and to thank him for over five years of joint collaboration with FI through the West Papua project. Br. Budi's willingness to motivate Franciscans in the region to engage in advocacy work, particularly through our Bangkok office, has positively enriched Franciscans and Papuans alike. FI wishes him every success in his next endeavour.

Advocacy Tour to Washington, D.C.



In 2008, FI undertook an advocacy tour to Washington D.C., following the request of our partners.

Together with three Papuan representatives belonging to the Catholic and Protestant churches in West Papua, we spoke to members of the US Congress and Senate, met representatives of the US Catholic Bishops Conference, as well as a number of key human rights and faith-based groups in the US.

This trip provided us with an opportunity to work with our colleagues from Franciscans Action Network, who kindly hosted us and helped to facilitate several of our meetings.



For more information on the West Papua Programme, contact: asiapacific@fiop.org

Or consult FI's website: www.franciscansinternational.org

New Beginnings

Asia Pacific Programme

PROGRAMME HISTORY

In 2008, FI expanded its advocacy programmes in Asia-Pacific via its new Bangkok office by planning for closer collaboration with Franciscans in the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Through the "Linking and Learning" advocacy workshop, FI Bangkok started a dialogue on future advocacy initiatives between FI and the Franciscan Families of both countries.

As a result of this workshop, Franciscans in Sri Lanka were made aware of FI's potential as an advocate of the rights of all those who are suffering in ongoing conflicts.

In December, Franciscans requested FI to speak on behalf of those affected by the conflict in Sri Lanka. This was done through the different human rights mechanisms within the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

The primary role of the new FI office in Bangkok is to strengthen capacity building activities for human rights and environmental advocacy. Activities centered on training grassroots Franciscans, thereby complementing the focus on advocacy of FI Geneva, and the networking activities at the UN of FI New York.

In March 2008, the official inauguration of the office was presided over by His Excellency, Archbishop Salvatore Pennachio, the Papal Nuncio to Thailand, Br. John Celichowski OFM Cap, President of the International Board of Directors from 2006 to 2008 and Sr. Denise Boyle FMDM, the new Executive Director of FI. The opening ceremony was also attended by the participants from the first human rights training offered by the new office.

FI Bangkok was able to offer and implement four trainings, advocacy workshops and animation activities because of the generosity of many Franciscan communities throughout the region. This generosity and support enabled the infrastructure upon which the programmes were built and launched.



The Asia Pacific Region



New Horizons

Sr. Denise Boyle FMDM, His Excellency, Archbishop Salvatore Pennachio, the Papal Nuncio to Thailand and Br. John Celichowski OFM Cap at the official inauguration of the Bangkok office in March.

TRAININGS



Introduction to the UN Human Rights System

The first training programme of the Bangkok office was the “Introduction to the UN Human Rights System” Course for Provincials and Superiors. The programme aimed to provide support and advocacy skills to Franciscan leaders.

The programme introduced relevant core human rights concepts, treaties and conventions, so that our participants deepened their intellectual knowledge, built their programming and advocacy skills, and developed strong and effective programmes for change that could be implemented at the grassroots level.

The “Introduction” programmes were designed for leaders and JPIC coordinators who were seeking a basic overall introduction to the core human rights treaties and conventions.

The 34 participants came from Australia, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and West Papua (Indonesia).

Peacebuilding

In late 2008, several Catholic organizations in Thailand asked the Regional Director of FI Bangkok to facilitate a peacebuilding training for Church workers in Southern Thailand. Whilst this area was not devastated by the 2003 Tsunami, it is plagued by intense violence caused by a separatist movement.



It is hoped that the partnership between FI Bangkok and the Roman Catholic Church in Thailand can be strengthened in future years, not only through involvement in FI human rights and environmental protection capacity building programs, but also through additional initiatives.



Advocacy

In October 2008 the FI Bangkok office facilitated a special Advocacy Workshop. We invited three specialized JPIC practitioners from the Philippines and Sri Lanka to join us in Bangkok in order to work with Br. Budi Hernawan OFM from West Papua, Indonesia. The aim of the three-day intensive workshop was to reflect critically on the experiences of human rights abuses in each country, learning from Br. Budi about how the Friars Minors established the Office for Justice and Peace in the Diocese of Jayapura, West Papua.

Our aim in bringing JPIC specialists together was to inspire them to learn from one another, to show them how FI’s offices in Bangkok and Geneva can assist them, and to help them plan new inter-Franciscan advocacy initiatives. By the end of 2008, the Franciscans in Sri Lanka and the Philippines had developed the outlines for new inter-Franciscan, national advocacy programmes.



Julie Morgan

Regional Director of FI Bangkok

“We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of those who saw, even in our first year, the potential that the FI Bangkok office has to strengthen and deepen the professional competence of Church development workers throughout the region.

The presence, therefore, of Franciscans International in this region is extremely important. We established ourselves at a time of turmoil and instability; during a year that started with an international food crisis and ended with a global financial crisis. For the casual observer such a start was, perhaps, a little crazy but nevertheless courageous.

That we finished the first year with so many successes and achievements, despite the turmoil in which we were embroiled, will make other observers watch FI Bangkok with even greater interest in the coming years. But for those of you who believe that now is the perfect time to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, such a start, in such a place, at such a time, was truly Franciscan.”



For more information on the Asia Pacific Programme, contact: bangkok@fiop.org

Or consult FI’s website: www.franciscansinternational.org

Sustainable Development

Environmental Programme

PROGRAMME HISTORY

FI's Environmental Programme was launched in 2007.

The programme aims to train grassroots Franciscans and their local communities in the practices of sustainable development; specifically aspiring to build and increase the capacity of Church development project leaders to engage in systemic change in some of the world's most marginalized communities.

Br Bernd Beermann OFM Cap traveled to Indonesia earlier in the year to conduct a needs assessment on the Franciscan family in terms of local environmental issues. His research formed the backdrop for a ten-day training.

In August 2008, FI and its partner Edmund Rice International (ERI) organized and delivered a workshop that gathered 23 participants from eight Asia-Pacific countries. The People-Centred Ecosystem Management workshop was coordinated by the FI Bangkok office; it was the first time that FI and ERI had cooperated to plan and deliver this kind of training and the first time that such a mix of grassroots project managers and international experts came together.

People-Centred Eco-Management Training

With the "People-Centred Ecosystem Management" training, FI and ERI assisted Franciscans, Christian Brothers and other church development workers to become more effective project leaders and managers. The training aimed to empower them with a wide range of techniques to increase food security and therefore reduce the vulnerability of communities living in extreme poverty in East Timor, India, Indonesia (including West Papua) and the Philippines.



Reuse Repair Recycle Brochure

Nature's own strategies for conserving resources have proven sustainable for millions of years. We must apply the same principles in our daily lives.

Download at: www.franciscansinternational.org/resources/publications



Empowerment

The People-Centred Ecosystem Management training aimed to empower participants with a wide range of techniques to increase food security and therefore reduce the vulnerability of communities living in extreme poverty by:

Building the capacity of grassroots project leaders by increasing their awareness of and ability to use the language and mechanisms of the internationally agreed standards of environmental law

Building the knowledge of participants and nurturing their commitment to integrate the techniques of organic farming into their current projects, including the preservation of biodiversity, (e.g., soil management, land use, and water conservation).

Building the capacity of participants to analyze the various dimensions of sustainable eco-system management (e.g., right to and access to workable land, potential and limitations of local resources and stake-holder analysis).

Building the confidence of participants to develop strategies of engagement with local civil authorities and local environmental agencies.

Helping participants to network more effectively with regional and locally based UN agencies that can assist their local eco-system projects (e.g., UNDP and UNEP).

Ecosystems, International Law and Organic Farming

Within the overall framework of Franciscan and Edmund Rice spirituality, the workshop wove together three major themes – ecosystems, international law and organic farming. Participants were able to see themselves as part of the ecosystems surrounding them, they learnt that a complex web of international treaties could support their efforts to protect the earth, and they learnt practical techniques of farming sustainability.

The inputs and discussions were enriched by a visit to the Bangkok office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); a talk by a Buddhist NGO working on improving rice varieties; and an overnight stay at Baan Sanam, an organic farm in Suphanburi Province. There were also films and video presentations shown throughout the ten days.

The high point of the workshop was a simulation where a small impoverished village and a new Christian project team faced, head on, the forces of international agriculture. By the end of the workshop, every participant had completed an Action Plan for a new or ongoing project in their local area, incorporating many of the workshop initiatives.

These ranged from collecting monsoon rains to developing markets for organically grown rice; from a school food programme using organic farming techniques to confronting the mining industry; from reforestation of local sites to child care for agricultural workers. The projects were all aiming to preserve local ecosystems, grow food sustainably and use international law as a protection for basic rights.

Participants & Facilitators

Participants

The participants gathered from India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Timor Leste, the Philippines and the South Pacific Republic of Kiribati. Most were friars, sisters and lay members of the Franciscan Family; three were local Thai workers; two were Christian Brothers; and one was a lay woman from South Pacific Republic of Kiribati who works with the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice in Sydney.

Facilitators

Ms. Julie Morgan (FI Bangkok), Br. Bernd Beermann OFM Cap (FI Geneva), Sr. Vida Cordero SFIC (Philippines), Br. Mike Peruhe OFM (JPIC Indonesia), Ms. Kristen Genovese (CIEL, Washington DC) and Br. Moy Hitchen (ERI) were the main facilitators, planners and presenters of the course. Nevertheless, everyone introduced their local projects as part of the workshop.

Franciscan Testimony

“Knowing how to advocate on behalf of local people when a big mining company’s activities impact their village will help me be more effective on their behalf.” - Sr. Vida Cordero SFIC



For more information on FI’s Environmental Programme, contact: environment@fiop.org

Or consult FI’s website: www.franciscansinternational.org

Empowering Women



New York

LOOKING AHEAD

FI is expanding a programme with the new staff personnel and moving into engaging the Franciscan family in North America in programmes on **women and child** and the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**.

In May 2008, Franciscans participated in the **UN Meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)**. The participants suggested that we offer a training session, similar to the one done for the CSW. As a result, we are currently developing a training session for future CSD meetings.

In late February, FI New York organized two events to promote the empowerment of women. Attended by several North American Franciscans, the events were geared towards the 52nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The two-week session addressed the theme of “Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.”

As part of the CSW, FI New York, together with the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor, organized a side event entitled “Women of Senegal: Forging a Path of Financial Empowerment.” Participants were introduced to the humanitarian work of the François Schervier Center, run by the Franciscan Sisters of the Poor in Dakar, Senegal. The Center’s programme educates women and young girls to obtain the skills necessary to work and open small businesses. Due to the publicity generated by the Senegalese government’s co-sponsorship; many African and Senegalese women attending the CSW came to FI’s side event. The event was extraordinarily well attended and well-received by all. H.E. Mr. Paul Badji, the Ambassador from Senegal, attended the event with his Minister for Family and Women’s Affairs.

In July, staff from FI New York and Sr. Denise Boyle attended the Franciscan Federation meeting in Denver, Colorado. Sr. Denise had the opportunity to address leaders in different communities and to explain and promote FI’s work.

In December, FI New York attended a programme on Racism and Xenophobia that was put together by the UN Working Group against Racism, where Sr. Bernadette Sullivan (Advocacy, FI New York) has been actively engaged for many years.



Sr. Kathie Uhler OSF joined FI NY as Advocacy Officer.

“In this role I will represent FI at the UN on matters concerning, among other things: the status of women and poverty. Crucial to this role is the involvement of Franciscans in similar advocacy in the UN system, from where they stand regionally and within various UN forums around the world. For this collaboration I will concentrate particularly on Franciscan networks and grassroots in Canada and the USA,” said Sr. Kathie.

Communications



UN Photo/John Isaac



In commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, FI produced a 2009 calendar. The quad-lingual calendar illustrated Franciscans working to bring awareness to several global concerns.

Pax et Bonum Magazine

The newly re-designed *Pax et Bonum* was released in June 2008, covering the humanitarian efforts of Franciscans worldwide.

Newsbriefs

Send an e-mail to: newsbriefs@fiop.org to sign up for FI's monthly e-mail newsletter.

FI utilizes several communications mediums for the widespread dissemination of its advocacy efforts at the UN and to inform the Franciscan family of its initiatives and programmes.



One such important medium is FI's website, which provides comprehensive information on FI's activities. The website is designed to be the first source for Franciscans interested in our advocacy and grassroots involvement. During the year, the website was enhanced by continually updated news about FI's work and programmes, statements at the UN, and the addition of downloadable publications and reports. Furthermore, a collection of FI news ("Newsbriefs") was distributed monthly via e-mail to over 5000 Franciscans in French and English. This will be expanded to German, Italian and Spanish in 2009. FI grew its online presence by utilizing social networking website Facebook to reach Franciscans and friends and as an alternative medium for delivering FI news and publications.

FI proactively works with the media. Many of its articles were also carried in other Franciscan magazines, including the Italian *Missioni Francescane* and the Dutch *Franciscaans Maandblad*. Throughout the year, FI was featured in other media venues, including Switzerland's newspaper of record *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*.

Website

FI's website receives visitors from the US, Switzerland, France, Canada, United Kingdom, Colombia, Italy, Germany, Australia and Mexico.

Contact FI's Communications department by e-mailing: press@fiop.org

View FI's publications at: franciscansinternational.org/resources/publications.php

Protecting the Environment

In light of our environmental concerns, our printed documents are printed with vegetable-based inks on paper produced from 100% sustainably managed forests. Nonetheless, FI is publishing more of its materials online rather than in print. As a result, a redesign of FI's website is underway with the goal of providing a clearer medium to inform Franciscans and others.

Working Together

FI believes in the merit of faith-based organizations working collectively to respond to the ever-increasing global need for justice, peace and human rights. FI's long-term strategic plan is to develop a network of faith-based organizations at the UN. To this end, FI has established partnerships with **Edmund Rice International (ERI)** and the **Foundation for Marist Solidarity International (FMSI)** and also an association with the **Good Shepherd Sisters**.

Edmund Rice International (ERI)

Established in Geneva in late 2007, ERI works at the international level to promote and protect the rights of the child, the right to education and to engage in ecological advocacy through the promotion of ecological sustainability. Inspired by the vision and life of Blessed Edmund Rice, ERI believes that education in all its forms offers opportunities for the promotion of a rights-based and faith-based approach to social justice and ecological advocacy.

ERI works with FI in the promotion of peace and justice. ERI engages with the UN through the Human Rights Council in Geneva, the UN Treaty Bodies in New York and through other UN agencies in seeking shared solutions to the issues affecting the lives of the most vulnerable.

Foundation for Marist Solidarity International (FMSI)

Formerly known as the Bureau of International Solidarity (BIS) for the Institute of the Marist Brothers, the Foundation for Marist Solidarity International (FMSI) was established in 2007. It is the Institute's voice and resource for children and young people, especially in situations and areas around the world where resources are limited, and children and young people are considered at-risk.

With its Geneva-based Child Rights Advocacy Officer, FMSI, in partnership with FI, presents co-signed interventions to the HCR and relevant UN human rights mechanisms, monitors and participates in UN and NGO meetings and activities related to child rights, meets with diplomatic missions, NGOs and UN agencies to discuss child rights issues and monitors, gathers and disseminates relevant UN reports among its contacts in 79 countries.

Good Shepherd Sisters

Good Shepherd Sisters have focused on women's rights and children's rights and engage the Human Rights Council and Treaty Bodies. Of particular interest are the following thematic issues: women in prostitution; trafficking in human beings; economic justice; peace; indigenous rights.



Income & Expenses

Income

In 2008, FI's total income reached EUR 1,090,246 / USD 1,597,879, which represented a decline of approximately 4.9 per cent from 2007. The most significant factor in this decline arose from the joint re-assessment of the contributions made by our partners, which were reduced by EUR 86,000. Donations received from the Franciscan family also declined by some EUR 77,100. Donations from the Franciscan family made up just over 50 per cent of total donations, compared to 60 per cent in 2007. Donations from individuals were also very much lower in 2008.

To off-set the above, we saw a considerable increase, EUR 147,750, in donations received from funding agencies, with *Missio Aachen*, *Missionszentrale der Franziskaner*, and *Cordaid*, all increasing their levels of support. We also received support from some new agencies, such as *Misearn Cara* and *Misereor*. We received the first income, EUR 45,300, from the Rose Marie Khoo Foundation. Given the current worldwide economic outlook, it will take considerable effort in 2009 from FI's Development department to attain the 2008 levels of income.

Expenses

Expenses in 2008 were once again concentrated on the training and formation of Franciscans and other supporters at the grassroots level, with specific follow-up courses being held in Africa. In addition, other courses were organized by our offices in New York and Bangkok for Franciscans in the US and Asia Pacific. The Bangkok office, officially inaugurated in March 2008, had a particularly successful first year. In 2009, a specific goal for FI will be to strengthen the resources and capabilities of our office in New York.

Total Income

2008 €1,090,246 / USD \$1,597,879

2007 €1,145,909 / USD \$1,568,573

Total Expenses

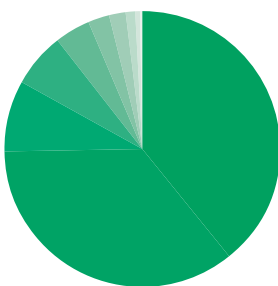
2008 €1,092,618 / USD \$1,601,354

2007 €1,214,600 / USD \$1,662,601

Please note fluctuations in average exchange rate each year:

2007 €0.73 = USD \$1 | 2008 €0.68 = USD \$1

Analysis & Allocation of 2008 Funds



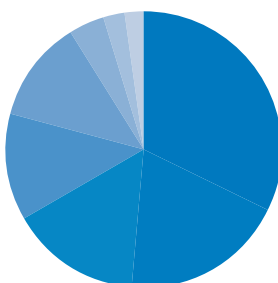
Income Source	CHF	EUR	USD
39% Major Franciscans	680,198	€428,493	\$628,005
35.5% Funding agencies	615,352	€387,643	\$568,134
8% Franciscan Superiors	141,809	€89,333	\$130,928
6% Partners	110,759	€69,773	\$102,260
4% Interest from Foundation	72,000	€45,357	\$66,475
3% Franciscan Houses	46,998	€29,607	\$43,392
2% Other (Religious non-Franciscan)	31,050	€19,560	\$28,667
1% Individuals	18,933	€11,927	\$17,480
1% IBD Members	11,300	€7,118	\$10,433
>1% Bank Interest	2,280	€1,436	\$2,105

Sub-total Franciscan Family

880,305 CHF
€554,551 / \$812,757

TOTAL 2008 Income

1,730,679 CHF
€1,090,246 / \$1,597,879



Expenses	CHF	EUR	USD
32.5% Advocacy (excl. Africa Programme)	564,393	€355,541	\$521,086
19% Development	331,130	€208,596	\$305,721
15.5% Administration*	265,071	€166,982	\$244,731
12.5% Communications	214,673	€135,234	\$198,201
12% Africa Programme	205,678	€129,567	\$189,896
4% Animation	74,903	€47,185	\$69,155
2.5% Partner Collaboration	44,171	€27,826	\$40,782
2% IBD Support	34,424	€21,686	\$31,783

Sub-total Advocacy (incl. Africa Programme)

770,071 CHF
€485,109 / \$710,981

TOTAL 2008 Expenses

1,734,443 CHF
€1,092,618 / \$1,601,354

* Our Accounting System is set up in such a way as to classify many general expenses under Administration, when these costs are more properly in support of the other departments. The above numbers are after an analytical exercise that tries to reallocate these costs to where they more properly belong.



FI NEW YORK

focuses on the Commission on Sustainable Development, relates to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, trains Franciscans in the empowerment of women, and is a member of the NGO Observer group on the UN Security Council.

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FI GENEVA

works with the UN Human Rights mechanisms and procedures: the Human Rights Council, Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies, with a particular focus on the Universal Periodic Review and on issues such as Extreme Poverty and Contemporary forms of Slavery.

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FI BANGKOK

offers capacity building training for human rights and environmental advocacy using international standards. The office works to enhance the capabilities of Franciscans as well as FI's partners to advocate for change at the local level.

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Franciscans International

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