

Who we are

Franciscans International works at the United Nations, with the Franciscans, to address human rights injustices that impact on the poor and the vulnerable.

FI is the first shared ministry of the global Franciscan Family representing over one million Brothers, Sisters and lay members in over 160 countries.

Through our General Consultative Status at the UN, FI is able to raise the concerns of the Franciscans who work in schools, hospitals, shelters and specialize in services for the poor.

What we do

FI and Franciscans work together to influence the world's decision-makers at the highest diplomatic level to effect positive change for the poor and the vulnerable. We address issues in two categories:

Themes

FI specialises in issues relating to:

- Extreme Poverty
- Ensuring poor children have the right to go to school
- Pressuring governments to protect victims of human trafficking and to recognize traffickers as criminal offenders
- Peace Building & Conflict Resolution
- Raising awareness to stop violence against women and children
- Promoting ecumenical and interfaith dialogue where there is conflict and violence
- Environmental degradation
- Advocating for poor families' access to clean water
- Encouraging the development and implementation of environmentally-friendly policies

Working at the UN in Geneva and New York

In our globalising world, international collaboration is increasingly important. Individual countries meet at the UN to set and monitor international policies and laws which affect the poor, the environment and peace in nations around the world.

First-hand statements from Franciscans give policymakers a better understanding of the injustices facing people who have been pushed to the margins of society. FI enables delegates to visit different UN missions and attend conferences.

FI uses three main mechanisms to raise attention to Franciscans' concerns at the UN in Geneva:

- **Raising issues and working with UN expert committees and working groups.** FI has a strong working relationship with specialised UN official and working groups to help draft mandates and monitor their implementation in-country.

- **Urgent Action Alerts**
At the request of the FF and those whom they serve, FI intervenes immediately at the UN to address the imminent threats or gross violations they are experiencing.
- **Uni versal Periodic Review**
FI works closely with Franciscans and other NGOs to submit official statements and lobby diplomats as the Human Rights Council reviews the human rights record of each Member State ever four years.



The advocacy activities and programmes of FI at the UN Headquarters in New York reflect the agenda topics of the UN ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council), memberships to different NGO committees, and FI's expertise on concerns relating to: The Millennium Development Goals; Interreligious Cooperation and Peace Making.

Working at the Grassroots

Franciscans at the grassroots play a pivotal role in alerting FI to human rights violations and keeping us informed of the implementation of international policies at the local level.



To facilitate our work at the UN, we run regular training programmes for Franciscans and members of other NGOs in our three regional offices and in-country. Participants learn more about Human Rights and how to use the UN Mechanisms if and when they are needed.

Why support our work

Whilst our work is not as quick and tangible as delivering a bag of rice to a starving family, it is just as impactful because we aim to change systemic injustices at the government level. This encourages governments to give their own people their dignity and rights to a better quality of living.

Get involved with FI

- Assist with your country's UPR
- Become an FI school of parish ambassador
- Subscribe to The Franciscan Voice newsletter

Countries

FI recently worked on the following national situations at the UN:

Canada: Protection for victims of human trafficking and migrant workers.

D.R. Congo: Killings, armed and sexual violence, forced eviction of over 300'000 persons, attacks on properties including churches.

France: Mistreatment of the elderly in institutions.

Honduras: Violations and abuse against human rights defenders and the religious.

Slovakia: Discrimination against minority groups (Roma); right to adequate health; right to work; right to an adequate standard of living; right to education.

Sri Lanka: Human rights violations over 300'000 Internationally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and detention of migrants and asylum seekers.

Zambia: Access to education and the right to food for children under five years.



How to support our work

FI's work depends entirely on the support of individual donors, communities and funding agencies. An new and easy way for everyone to support FI is to join '5 for Francis'. Just sign-up online or complete a Gift Form to 'Give \$5' each month and 'Ask 5' family and friends to do the same. Imagine what we could collectively achieve if we all 'Give 5 & Ask 5'.

"Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is necessary and suddenly you are doing the impossible." St. Francis of Assisi

Contact us

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FranciscansInternational
A voice at the United Nations

