

IBVM/CJ UN Student Resources Guide

Context:

We have created three foundational lessons that teach students about the United Nations (UN) and its processes, the work of IBVM UN NGO, the Sustainable Development Goals, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Rights of the Child, and the Working Group on Girls (WGG).

We will also provide a Conversation Circle Toolkit. This Toolkit gives instructions on how girls can host their own group conversations surrounding gender equality and an opportunity to practice advocacy. A new Toolkit is released by WGG every year based on the CSW theme.

We recommend schools share these resources via a UN student club or incorporate it into their humanities/religious/pastoral classes. If you want a PowerPoint version of these slides, please send an email to unngo@mary-ward.org.

Project Objectives:

Our primary objective is to engage students to advocate for justice and equality within their own community. We want students to recognize local inequalities, understand the structural causes, learn advocacy skills, and apply these.

Our secondary objective is for students to understand the Sustainable Development Goals and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We want to encourage students to critically assess these frameworks and identify gaps in their country/community in achieving these goals. Observing the gaps will help them recognize what inequalities exist and consequently shape their advocacy initiatives.

Our final objective is for students to learn about the United Nations (UN) processes, engage and collaborate with the IBVM/CJ UN NGO advocacy by participating in various opportunities like the Conversation Circle Toolkit, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Girls Caucus, International Day of the Girl, etc. The Conversation Circle Toolkit provides a strategy for students to engage in a respectful conversation, identify the inequalities experienced by girls and women in their society, analyze its causes and devise recommendations to local, national and global leaders which we can leverage in our work at the UN.

There are also other opportunities for students to participate and collaborate with students from around the world. These are events organized in collaboration with the Working Group on Girls, other NGO Coalitions, UN Women and other UN agencies at the UN.

Target Audience:

Our target audience is students from 13 - 18 years old who are passionate about justice issues within their community and interested in international affairs.

Suggested Methodology:

- Create a student UN Club and host a minimum of 4 meetings annually to cover all mandatory content. We recommend hosting more meetings with the suggested additional content.

- Mandatory content: 3 lessons + Conversation Circle Toolkit Session
 - The 3 three lessons will be approximately 30 minutes, designed to be completed within a lunch time break.
 - The Conversation Session Toolkit will require approximately 90 minutes.
 - We require students to have completed and submitted the Conversation Circle Toolkit around June. The UN Representative will make the Toolkit available in early May each year via email. If you do not have access to the Toolkit by June, please contact the UN rep for further information.
 - We recommend students complete the 3 lessons before the Conversation Circle Toolkit.
 1. Lesson 1: Introduction to the UN and work that IBVM/CJ does at the UN.
 2. Lesson 2: Understanding the Sustainable Development Goals.
 3. Lesson 3: Understanding Human Rights, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with a focus on Section L, rights of the child, Working Group on Girls, and preparation for the Conversation Circle Toolkit.
 4. Advocacy Action: Complete Conversation Circle Toolkit and submit recommendations (complete by end of June).

- Inform students of upcoming major UN days and forums, especially Commission on the Status of Women (March)
 - Make girls aware of these days and forums and their priority themes
 - Inform students how they can engage virtually in their own time through UN Web TV or attending virtual side/parallel events listed under the programme details for each forum

- Suggested additional content/activities:
 - Complete the suggested activities and watch the additional resource videos at the end of the lesson packs
 - Share the IBVM/CJ UN website News Updates with students and discuss
 - Host annual/bi-annual province webinars with UN representative to provide students with the opportunity to learn about what IBVM/CJ has been doing at the UN and directly ask questions
 - Discuss upcoming ECOSOC Commissions/Forums and their priority theme (eg. make students aware of the Commission on the Status of Women, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, High Level Political Forum, etc.)
 - Offer a space for students to watch UN Web TV and have a club viewing (eg. watch the opening session on the Commission on the Status of Women together)
 - Share/read the zero draft recommendations for the major forums. A UN Zero Draft is the first version of a UN treaty's legal text. It's a basis for negotiations and

can include options for treaty provisions. If you need assistance in finding a UN draft document, contact the UN representative.

- Discuss ideas for local advocacy outlets (eg. writing letters to your local governments, creating petitions, joining youth groups, participating in youth consultations with government)
 - Create content in the form of video or written reflections about student advocacy interests or experience in the UN club which the UN representative can share on social media/website (requires signed consent forms)
 - Learn about Model UN and investigate the possibility of either organizing your own Model UN event or participating in existing Model UN events (see <https://www.un.org/en/mun>) in the state/country.
- For highly interested students who are seeking additional engagement: students can apply for the Mary Ward Girl Advocacy Program (*directly contact the IBVM/CJ UN Rep to engage in this program. Note, it may be challenging for students to attend meetings due to time zones*).
 - Be part of the WGG Girl Caucus and Statement Writing to engage in the development of WGG written and oral statements
 - Participate in CSW Virtual Town Hall
 - Engage with the local UN Women office

Expected Outcomes:

After completing all suggested mandatory content, we would like students to have and understanding of:

- The difference between advocacy and social justice actions (JPIC)
- The Sustainable Development Goals and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- Why advocacy is important
- Advocacy outlets and opportunities within their community

We would like students who have engaged with the club to have practiced advocacy through participating in the conversation circle.

Monitoring & Evaluation:

- Inform the UN Representative of your plans for action (ie. start date and intended number of meetings throughout the year)
- Record the number of students who attend each club meeting
- During the last meeting for the year, ask students to complete an evaluation form and pass on any recommendations to the UN Representative

Calendar of Key UN Commissions/Forums and UN Days Followed by IBVM/CJ UN:

January:

- CSW Advocates Training
- World Education Day

February:

- **Commission on Social Development (CSoCD)**
- International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation
- World Day of Social Justice

March:

- **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**
- International Women's Day
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

April:

- **Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII)**
- **Financing for Development (FfD)**
- **World Bank and International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings**
- **ECOSOC Youth Forum**
- Earth Day

May:

- **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**

June:

- Environment Day
- Laudato Si Anniversary
- World Refugee Day

July:

- **Higher Level Political Forum (HLPF)**
- World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

August:

- International Youth Day

September:

- **UN General Assembly**
- International Day of Peace

October:

- **International Day of the Girl (IDG)**
- International Day of Eradication of Poverty
- United Nations Day

November

- 16 Days of Activism against Violence Against Women (VAW)