



Geneva Reporter

Upcoming event will explore the role of governments in supporting small-scale farmers & ensuring food security

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Briefing paper



Participants during an expert consultation in May 2015.

Susan Bragdon talks about QUNO's consultation in November on the role of governments in supporting small-scale farmers and ensuring food security.

Can you tell our readers about your upcoming event? Who will be participating?

We are bringing together small-scale farmer organizations, economists and experts in public administration—people who don't commonly sit at the same table—to discuss the role of governments in supporting small-scale farmers, agricultural biological diversity and ensuring the long-term food security of their populations. We will have small-scale farmers from Bolivia, Cuba, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal and Zimbabwe in attendance. We have an economist from India who has been exploring these issues around health and agriculture for a couple of decades. We will have experts in public administration, in food system policy and in public-private partnerships. This wonderful mix of disciplines and geographies should yield interesting insights and results.

How did this come about?

Well, the issue about the role of government was repeatedly raised in a consultation we held in 2015 on small-scale farmer innovation. There was concern about the increasing focus on market-based approaches to solve the problems of hunger, the influence of the private industry on the direction of research and development, and a general decline of government involvement in food and nutrition, which is of obvious and enormous public interest. The participants in the innovation consultation were describing the growing belief, indeed a faith, over the last several decades in markets and the private sector as the primary means of providing for the public good in many spheres, not just in addressing hunger. Unfortunately, the tilt towards markets and commercial interests as solution providers has been paralleled in many cases with a dismantling of the public sector's capacity to regulate and provide goods and services. Unexamined, these twin trajectories have the potential to significantly affect issues of peace, justice and sustainability.

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Governments & food security *(continued from page 1)*

How have market-based approaches affected food security?

Trade and intellectual property rights (IPR) are market-based systems increasingly relied upon to ensure that populations have reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate foods. In practice, trade liberalization and globally established minimum standards for IPR are not working to ensure this, evidenced by the approximately one billion people who remain food insecure and the more than one billion who are obese and struggling with chronic health problems. Paralleling other arenas, these market-based systems as they currently operate provide a framework for the distribution of food to those with the ability to pay rather than those in need, working in favor of commercial interests rather than the public interest.

Depending on the region, only 20-30 percent of food that is produced is actually traded across borders. And what is traded are commodity crops that result in dietary simplification and food that is not healthy for us. In addition

something like 30 percent of this food is never eaten, but is wasted. As Pat Mooney said in a side event co-hosted by QUNO at the World Committee on Food Security in October 2016, “It is either waste or more ‘waist,’” referring to the problem of overconsumption.

What are your expectations for the consultation?

This consultation is an attempt to challenge the dominant narrative that orients us to markets. We’re going to develop a strategy for raising awareness among national and international policy makers of the importance of small-scale farmers and agricultural biodiversity, and develop tools for helping governments determine what their roles should be in ensuring food security. Of course, every country is different and food security strategies must be tailored accordingly. This consultation is just the start. We need to keep this conversation going—asking critical questions and bringing together different perspectives—with the long term objective of achieving more just and sustainable food systems.

UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants

In September, states came together in New York for the first time at the UN level to shine a spotlight on the global refugee and migrant situation. The UN Secretary General declared the summit a “breakthrough”, while the High Commissioner for Human Rights hailed it as a reminder to States that on this issue, they have been “largely failing.”

The Declaration adopted indicates high-level political commitment to an overarching framework for the protection of both refugees and migrants, and this must be recognized positively, as should the inclusion of robust language on human rights. However, other areas were more problematic. The language on detention of children, for example, falls below the standards set by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

As the details of follow up actions to the Summit are negotiated, a key challenge will be ensuring that the process is guided by human rights principles, for both refugees and migrants. The work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on these issues, including their recent report on migrants in the context of large movements is a useful resource on this. However one views this moment, it is not the end of the process and provides a basis for further engagement by civil society, in which QUNO expects to play a significant part.

QUNO co-hosts event on inequality at Geneva Peace Week

As part of ongoing efforts to show the links between human rights and sustaining peace, QUNO is co-hosting a side event focusing on inequality at the 3rd [Geneva Peace Week](#). Inequalities in income and also the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, including access to education, social services and the justice system are important drivers of destructive conflict. Addressing existing socio-economic inequalities is thus not only crucial to ensure economic development and the full enjoyment of human rights but also from a peace and security perspective. *Inequality as a Danger to Sustainable Peace: Converging Perspectives on Human Rights and Peacebuilding* will be held on 11 November and brings together experts to discuss the impacts of societal inequalities on sustainable peace from a human rights and peacebuilding perspective.

Geneva Peace Week is an annual event that seeks to promote peace and collaboration among peacebuilding organizations. It underlines that each and every person, actor and institution has a role to play in building peace and resolving conflict. It also highlights that peace promotion occurs in many different contexts and cuts across disciplines and sectors. In this sense, Geneva Peace Week is an attempt to break down the silos which all-too-often characterize the international community and can limit more creative responses.



The 2030 Agenda

One year after its adoption by the United Nations, QUNO Geneva staff offer their perspectives on this landmark agreement



September marked the first anniversary of the UN's 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These "Global Goals" are a bold, multilateral step to set the international agenda for the next 15 years. The 17 goals are intended to serve as a lighthouse to guide development policy and address the world's greatest challenges. They are remarkable because they integrate many areas of action that were often left unconnected in development thinking, because they are relevant to all countries from poorest to richest, and because of the consultative way in which they were discussed and agreed. The challenge now is to implement this bold vision in practice and to hold all States accountable to their commitments.

Laurel Townhead, Human Rights & Refugees

There is no "human rights goal" in the SDGs, instead human rights run like a thread through the 2030 Agenda and implementation of existing human rights standards will be essential if the goals are to be achieved. To "leave no one behind," inequalities and discrimination must be addressed. All societies contain inequalities and discrimination and these are either at the heart of or an exacerbating factor in many human rights violations. The universal nature of the SDGs means that all States must seek to address these inequalities.

However, experience in international human rights institutions and agreements shows that commitments are not enough and that effective monitoring systems are needed to help catalyse action that can make a difference. In developing a monitoring process to hold States accountable to the SDGs, lessons can be learned from the human rights system's treaty bodies and Universal Periodic Review processes.

Using the SDGs in the promotion and protection of the rights of those that our programme focuses on, will depend on how the goals are monitored and how data is collected and disaggregated. In order to be sure that the children of incarcerated parents, for example, are not left behind (and indeed to recognise that many are among the furthest behind) better data collection is needed. This information needs to be used to inform policies and practices to increase protection and participation for these children to mitigate and put an end to their increased vulnerability and inequality.

Diane Hendrick, Peace & Disarmament

Peace focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including QUNO, worked hard to ensure that peace and security would be reflected in the SDGs. The inclusion of Goal 16 (see back of this page for full list of SDGs) was considered a great achievement. However, while there are important elements relating to violence elimination, illegal arms trafficking and public participation in decision making in the goal, it left out many things that peacebuilders would have liked to see, such as conflict resolution and reconciliation. There has always been a recognition among the peace community of the need to understand the peace and security aspect of the SDGs as more than just Goal 16, as there are many complex and interrelating elements across the goals that determine whether sustainable development together with sustainable peace can be advanced.

To take just a couple of examples: Goal 1 on ending poverty with its reference to "equal rights to economic resources" and "the social, economic and political inclusion of all" is key to making progress in positive peace. And Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls is crucial for all peace and justice work and would release untapped resources for development and peace. The focus now is on the national level and it is up to civil society to help to make use of the SDGs for furthering national peace and justice agendas. They can ensure that the peace dimension of the SDGs is included by each state in their national action plans and that reporting to the UN reflects this priority.

Lindsey Fielder Cook, Climate Change

The 2030 Agenda helps inspire all countries to focus on a right relationship with their citizens and with the earth. This comes at a time of increased inequality and destruction of ecosystems; new norms and values are critical. Goal 13, “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”, most clearly relates to QUNO’s Human Impacts of Climate Change programme. We would stress that humanity must address the root causes of anthropogenic climate change in order to stabilize global temperature rises, including the transformation of unsustainable human behavior. Oddly, the phrases “address the root causes”, or “human behaviour”, are not mentioned in any of the Goal 13 targets.

Climate change is a symptom of a greater challenge, how to live sustainably and fairly on this earth. As the SDGs engage with sustainable human development, most SDGs either address root causes of anthropogenic climate change or would benefit from efforts to stabilize rising global temperatures. Goal 2, for example, on ending hunger, addresses unsustainable agricultural practices which, often through industrial agriculture, are responsible for a significant amount of anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Similarly, promotion in Goal 7 of affordable and clean energy, Goal 8 of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, Goal 9 of sustainable industrialization, Goal 11 of sustainable cities/communities, and Goal 12 of responsible consumption, address the main drivers of current anthropogenic GHG emissions.

A failure to urgently address the root causes of anthropogenic climate change would have a devastating effect on efforts to achieve many of these “global goals.”

Susan H. Bragdon, Food & Sustainability

The SDGs provide a framework for addressing global food security in a more comprehensive manner. They invite us to look at food through the lens of *universality*: how are all people, *everywhere*, going to achieve the dietary requirements needed for leading healthy, active lives now and into the future? The question helps us to look at the underlying causes of hunger, malnutrition and obesity *everywhere*. This is a momentous change in perspective.

It helps us connect the dots between industrialized agriculture, the dietary simplification that underpins both undernutrition and overconsumption, the loss of biological diversity, climate change and other environmental degradation. Industrial agriculture produces 30% of greenhouse gases. Fertilizers have more than doubled the nitrogen and phosphate in the environment leading to wide spread water pollution. Industrial agriculture is also the biggest driver of biodiversity loss. But agriculture is not optional.

The Global Goals

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

The SDGs help us understand that the loss of diversity within food systems threatens human wellbeing as well as the sustainability of agricultural systems everywhere. Critically, we begin to see small-scale farmers in both the global north and south as fundamental to the achievement of global food security and a transition away from industrial agriculture. In their integrated approach, the SDGs help us understand the need to move away from industrial agriculture as presently practiced. One part of this must be support for small-scale farmers and for on-farm agricultural biological diversity.

Addressing food security from a universal perspective invites developed and developing country governments alike to actively support their small-scale farming populations as a means of achieving sustainable development.

News in Brief

QUNO welcomes new Programme Assistants (PAs)

In September, three PAs arrived in Geneva to begin their year-long terms. Cassandra Moll, who will work with our Peace & Disarmament and Human Impacts of Climate Change programmes, has a BA in War, Peace and International Relations from the University of Reading, and a Masters in International Relations from Queen's University Belfast. Cassie has interned with War on Want Northern Ireland, and volunteered with Oxfam Ireland.

Catherine Baker joins our Human Rights & Refugees programme with a degree in

History from the University of Bristol and a Masters in Human Rights from the University of London. Cat worked for the All-Party Parliamentary Human Rights Group and volunteered for two years with people held in immigration detention centres in the UK.

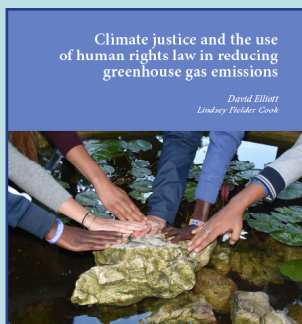
Prior to joining QUNO's Food & Sustainability programme, Nora Meier worked for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability in Portland, Oregon and volunteered with a non-profit to provide clean water and renewable energy to rural areas of the developing world. She has a BA in Political Science and a Master in Public Administration from Portland State University.

New children of prisoners resource

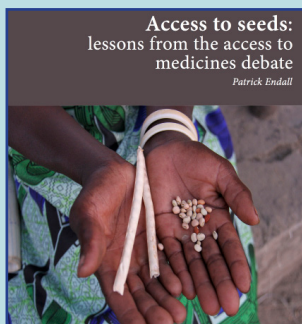
To mark five years since the Committee on the Rights of the Child held a Day of General Discussion on Children of Incarcerated Parents, Child Rights Connect's Working Group on this issue launched a database of relevant recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

QUNO has compiled this new database to highlight what has been achieved and to encourage further progress in protecting the rights of these children around the world. The database is now online and can be found at crrcip.com.

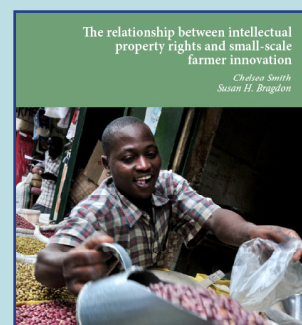
Recent publications



Climate justice and the use of human rights law in reducing greenhouse gas emissions
David Elliott, Lindsey Fielder Cook (August 2016)

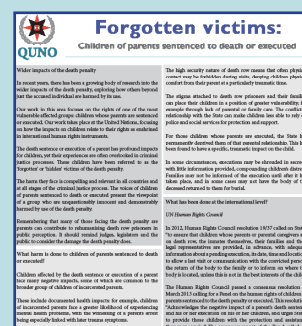


The relationship between intellectual property rights and small-scale farmer innovation
Chelsea Smith, David Elliott, Susan H. Bragdon (May 2016)



Access to Seeds
Lessons from the access to medicines debate
Patrick Endall (April 2016)

Forgotten Victims
A briefing paper on children of prisoners sentenced to death or executed prepared for the 6th World Congress against the Death Penalty
QUNO (May 2016)



QUNO Q & A with Ayah Abubasheer



In QUNO Q&A, we feature brief interviews with alumni about their experiences as Programme Assistants or Geneva Summer School (GSS) participants. For this issue, we spoke with GSS participant Ayah Abubasheer. Ayah is a Palestinian from Gaza and holds a master's degree in Global Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). She has experience working in the international NGO and development sector. Ayah was accepted into GSS in 2014 and 2015, but despite getting the necessary visas, could not attend after being denied permission to exit Gaza's tightly controlled borders. Thankfully, she persisted and QUNO was finally able to welcome her to Geneva in 2016.

How did you discover the Geneva Summer School and what led you to apply?

I have been involved with the American Friends Service Committee's (AFSC) projects, meetings and events in Gaza. I always believed that what AFSC is investing in Palestine is very unique, special and significant to us as individuals as well as to my community.

AFSC's Director in Gaza recommended that I and some other volunteers apply for the GSS. I hadn't heard about it before. Because of AFSC's work in Palestine, I strongly wanted to know more about Quakerism. I also wanted to connect to other people and youth who have been involved in activism along with their professional careers. I am an activist who has been volunteering and working on different aspects regarding the Palestinian cause and the implementation of International Law. I am interested in engaging in issues related to politics, social life, women's empowerment, youth participation, human rights and the governance of law in Palestine and the world.

What stands out the most from your experience?

The GSS programme offered me a unique opportunity to maintain and expand my connections, and build on my dreams of a better and just world.

I was staunchly excited and curious to actively participate in this inspiring programme and to critically engage through interactive workshops with other fellow participants and speakers. Geneva has long been one of the world's capitals of international law, and this intensive course gave me a clear view of the work of the UN and NGOs. It was also a great opportunity for me indeed to exchange my experience with other people who work in the sphere of peace, human rights, culture, society and politics, and to develop a mutual understanding and future collaboration.

The negotiations role play on climate change, where each one of us carefully studied, discussed and then represented the official position of a country on climate change, was a very interesting

and unforgettable experience for me. Afterwards, we had an interesting quiet diplomacy lunch. This was like a first hand, real-life experience to me. It was inspiring to witness how QUNO staff are guided by Quaker spiritual values in their everyday work while showing respect and understanding to others' views.

Is there anything you learned that was surprising or that feels relevant to what you are doing now?

I learned from QUNO staff about how Quaker methods are used at QUNO, including in their processes and engagement in issues that are tackled at the UN. This has been very educational and useful to me, especially in how these methods can bring negotiators together off-the-record to have more open dialogue that can lead to finding common values and working together constructively.

Moreover, this experience enhanced my respect for others and tolerance towards others. It positively struck me how QUNO, though a faith organization, doesn't push for its own agenda or faith. I have been wholeheartedly thinking about how effective faith organizations can be to lead changes in our societies if they stick to such inclusive human values beyond limited religious polarization.

QUNO depends upon the support from individuals and Quaker Meetings.

Visit quno.org/donate and help us continue working to promote peace and justice at the UN and other global institutions.