

## How does the future for girls look like after the pandemic? A study on the Rights of Girls during the pandemic in six countries, promoted by four women religious congregations

The research will be presented on 7 December 2022  
and hosted by UISG in Rome

### Media Release

Rome, November 29, 2022

More than 111 million students have dropped out of school in developing countries. It all started in March 2020, when Covid-19 hit the world. The negative effects of the pandemic have affected people in different ways: the weakest social groups have paid the highest toll, as well as the most vulnerable countries. In this context, four International women religious congregations have set themselves a goal during this unprecedented and historic moment: protect the most vulnerable and guarantee the basic rights of women, youth and children.

This is the daily mission of the **Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Salesian Sisters, Comboni Sisters and Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions**, who have always worked at grass root level to promote human rights in the Southern countries of the world. The result of this ongoing commitment, uninterrupted by the pandemic, to reduce the social and educational impact especially on girls aged between 10 and 20, has been detailed in the report “*How are the Girls? A study on the Rights of Girls in six countries during the Covid-19 Pandemic*”, that will be presented on 7 December 2022 at the UISG (International Union Superiors General) at Piazza di Ponte Sant’Angelo in Roma at 11.00am.

The four congregations have collected data in six countries for a year to evaluate the impact of Covid-19 on girls, in terms of their daily life and protection of human rights. The countries involved in the research, namely Kenya, South Sudan, India, Nepal, Ecuador and Peru include some of the most marginalized communities of our world.

The socio-economic integration of the youth in the most vulnerable countries was an ongoing challenge even before the pandemic. Today, girls are still the ones who are affected the most, and almost irreversibly, by the health emergency. The school closure and the change to home schooling have worsened the inequalities between the most privileged and the most vulnerable. It was estimated that closures and restrictions forced millions of girls from developing countries to drop out of school since March 2020 and many of them never went back. In many cases, this resulted in early marriages and other forms of violence and exploitation.

The results that emerged from the research, coordinated by a research team from the University of Rome La Sapienza, guided by Prof. Maurizio Franzini, Director of PhD school

of Economics, and supported by the expert on girls' rights, Mathilde Gutzenberger, will be crucial to guide the future plans of the congregations, who are mainly involved in the field of education, protection and promotion of girls' and children's rights.

This joint research is the first important step towards the establishment of an ongoing observatory aimed at monitoring the living conditions of the most vulnerable, often marginalized, groups, like girls, and to draw the society's attention to these relevant humanitarian issues. In fact, the goal of this initiative is also to develop and reinforce joint *advocacy* actions, among women congregations, in the field of education and protection of girls' human rights, in order to raise their influence on public politics.

The event of 7 December is organized by Good Shepherd International Foundation Onlus, Vides Internazionale ONG, Fondazione Comboniane nel Mondo and RNDM International Mission Development Office, with the collaboration of UISG International Union Superiors General. Four International congregations based in Rome who work for supporting their missions in more than 80 countries of the world to promote social and economic development of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities – through cooperation, development programs and international *advocacy*.

A panel of researchers and experts in human rights and *advocacy* will lead the presentation and show the results of the study, alongside the project team of the different congregations, with the video contributions of some of the girls and local coordinators of the six countries, who will share their experience and their forecast for their future.

*The event is organized in collaboration with UISG International Union Superiors General. The research 'How are the girls?' was funded with the support of Misesan Cara, the Irish agency supporting the missionary works in 50 countries of the world and by Toronto Province of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.*

.....

To register online <https://bit.ly/registration-7dec-event>

To attend in person please contact [eventi@gsif.it](mailto:eventi@gsif.it)

### **Contacts**

Sara Braga - Good Shepherd International Foundation

[sara.braga@gsif.it](mailto:sara.braga@gsif.it)

+39 347 3230573



CONGREGATION OF  
OUR LADY OF CHARITY  
OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



Fondazione  
Comboniana  
nel Mondo - ONLUS



Santa Madre Teresa Comboniana



RNDM  
International Mission Deve-  
lopment Of ce



GOOD SHEPHERD  
INTERNATIONAL  
FOUNDATION  
ONLUS

In collaboration with



INTERNATIONAL UNION  
SUPERIOR GENERAL

Sponsored by



misean cara  
Non profit - 1988 - 2008