



UNANIMA International

one spirit, one mission, one hope

“From little things big things grow...”



Catherine Ferguson SNJM, founder and Executive Director of UNANIMA International

In 2000, Catherine Ferguson attended the Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and invited any interested religious congregation to form a coalition NGO to advocate at the United Nations on behalf of Women and Children

December 2001 six interested congregations met to develop a mission statement and to choose the name UNANIMA International. The name begins with UN representing the United Nations and ANIMA from the Latin word for feminine 'spirit'. Representing a group acting with one heart and mind.

Founding congregations 2001



Back row: CCV, SHCJ, RJM, OSU, MSC
Front row: SNJM, Catherine Ferguson, CSA

Initial areas of advocacy

- ❑ Women and children, particularly those who live in economic poverty
- ❑ Migrants and refugees:
 - Palermo Convention held in 2000 and enforced in 2003 – against transnational crime:
 - Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children and to prevent the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air
- ❑ The welfare of our planet, care of Mother Earth
- ❑ Clean water not a need but a human right

Tasks of the first years

- Obtain United Nations accreditation
- Establish by laws and incorporation
- Determine a limited focus and priorities
- Invite member congregations and person to give their testimony before the United Nations
- Encourage members to have a UN experience so to understand the possibilities for advocacy and influence
- Visit congregations to explain the possibilities of UNANIMA International
- Establish a website

UNANIMA International priorities

- Human Trafficking
- International planning Sessions
- Work on UN NGO subcommittees
- CEDAW
- Campaign - launched in March 2008
- HIV/AIDS



Ongoing Developments

- ❑ Successful submission of quadrennial reports for DPI and ECOSOC
- ❑ Phase 1 and 2 of STOP The DEMAND
- ❑ Welfare of the Planet, WATER = LIFE = Environment, Water & Life Subcommittee
- ❑ CEDAW
- ❑ Delegations
- ❑ Migration and Trafficking
- ❑ Financing for Development of UNANIMA International
- ❑ Establish future planning
- ❑ Short term internship programs with UI
- ❑ Climate Change and Sustainable Development
- ❑ Successful advocacy at the United Nations on homelessness, which formerly was not included in UN documentation nor Agenda

Expansion of UNANIMA International's presence in local communities and beyond

- ❑ Visiting regions where UI congregations work and live
- ❑ Participation in high level international events
e.g. COP 27, 61st Commission for Social Development 2023, Jean Quinn, Chair of C Soc D
- ❑ Establishment of the Woman of Courage Award - Honoring women from around the world who have exhibited exceptional courage and leadership and have made a difference in their communities

Executive Directors of
UNANIMA International



Sr Catherine
Ferguson SNJM
Founder of UI and
first Executive
Director
2001 -2012



Sr Michele Morek OSU
Executive Director
2012 - 2016



Sr. Jean Quinn DW
Executive Director
2017 - present

“From little things big things grow ...”



From 2001 -2003 we were 6 and then 7 congregations

In 2023 UNANIMA International has 22 member communities, with over 25,000 members in 85 countries throughout the world.

