Conference Update: IACD at the United Nations High Level Political Forum

by JOHN STANSFIELD

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IACD at the United Nations High Level Political Forum

Members of IACD attend a side event to the UN high level political forum on Agenda 2030. Photo: John Stansfield

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July was an action packed month for the International Association for Community Development (IACD), which hosted its first ever joint conference with the American Community Development Society in Minneapolis St Paul.

Another significant achievement was the production and hosting of a side event to the United Nations high level political forum on Agenda 2030. The side event was the brainchild of outgoing IACD president Charlie McConnell and lead with the proposition that 'without community development, there is no sustainable development'. This was argued by a panel of speakers at the event including Charlie McConnell, Anita and Kalyan Paul of the Pan Himalayan Grassroots Foundation based in India and myself - John Stansfield, Aotearoa Community Development Assocation (ACDA) chair and deputy editor of this journal. An active audience of IACD friends, UN and diplomatic staff as well as NGO activists shared a lively debate with insightful contributions from participants who had come from many countries.

This event was the first tangible work arising out of IACD's support for the sustainable development goals. A four-month process of consultation with members and stakeholders culminated in a formal position statement by the IACD board pledging its support to the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The full position statement can be found at: http://www.iacdglobal.org/files/js/iacd_position_statement_on_sdgs.pdf

In preparing for the event ACDA's Amber Frankland-Hutchinson and I did some desk research that mapped the 17 sustainable development goals against community development textbooks articles and teaching materials. This showed that the goals have a long history in community development work and that the community development sector has significant expertise and research which can be applied to Agenda 2030.