

Report on the Secretary's activities between August 2021 and July 2022

By Diana Bashur

1. BIEN Administration

- As Secretary, I administer Executive Committee (EC) and General Assembly meetings, EC elections, and requests for BIEN membership.
- EC meets monthly with a committed presence among its members.
- Currently the EC has 12 members: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Public Outreach Coordinator, Social Media Manager, Website Manager, News Service Editor, Features Editor, Volunteer Coordinator, Research Editor, Hubs Supervisor
- Several EC members are to be elected or re-elected at the General Assembly
- EC's current focus: Professionalising BIEN through growth in posts and responsibilities; partnership management; support to the 2022 Congress organisers; website management; social media outreach.

2. BIEN Membership

- To date BIEN has over 400 members, spread across 48 countries and 5 regions with high concentration in Europe and a majority male membership.
- The aim is to increase our membership rate, diversify our geographical spread and increase our female membership through the expansion of our regional presence through the hubs.

3. Strategic Partnership

- Partnering with United Nations (UN) agencies is essential given the UN's position as a global player in the development field and has a vast network in the Global South with reach and considerable influence among national policy makers. Accordingly, and given the global interest in Basic Income, there is an opportunity, through UN agencies, for BI to be more systematically considered as a policy tool in development projects in the Global South.
- I contributed to the BIEN letter addressed in May 2020 to the UN Secretary-General and to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) inviting the consideration of Basic Income as a policy tool given the socio-economic ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a follow up, BIEN held fruitful discussions with UNDP, which I contributed to given my previous work in the UN. This resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding signed with UNDP in February 2021. UNDP initial interest in Basic Income is based on a report they issued in 2020[1].

- Since being elected in August 2021, I worked on building a broader strategic partnership with the United Nations. In this vein, we organized a panel at the 2021 Glasgow Conference at which six UN agencies and two international organizations spoke in favor of Basic Income. These were: UNDP, ILO, UNESCO, UNESCWA, UN-ECLAC, UNIDO, World Bank and the IMF.
- To maintain the momentum which resulted from this panel, we drafted a Joint Statement for endorsement and publication by all participating agencies. In parallel, we proposed creating a Basic Income working-level platform, which would offer a space for discussing this tool in terms of policy implications, lessons learned etc. BIEN would offer expertise on advice sought.
- The broader aim of these initiatives is to endorse BIEN's position as the go-to-source on Basic Income among the global players in the development and humanitarian fields.

[1] Molina, G. G., & Ortiz-Juarez, E. (2020). Temporary Basic Income: Protecting Poor and Vulnerable People in Developing Countries. UNDP.