

My Reflection on the IFS100 Conference and the Locality Convention 2025 – Sunday ibobor

Being a member of the International Federation of Settlement Houses and Neighbourhood Centers (IFS) leads to several travel opportunities to join other IFS members at various conferences to share our experiences, explore new ideas and collaborate with peers from around the globe on social policies development and to advocate for policy change. In 2016, It was in Berlin, Germany; Lilie, France in 2023 and from 9 to 14 November 2025, it was in the United Kingdom.

I was privileged to spend almost a week in November 2025 in the United Kingdom to participate in the IFS100 Conference and the Locality Convention 2025. This was made possible by the 2025 IFS Conference Scholarship and support from Susan Matloff-Nieves and the Goddard Riverside Team.

The experience in the conference and convention was just awesome. From the start to finish, the contents and all the speakers were inspirational and engaging; the workshops were interactive the logistics from one venue to the other were smooth and timely and the organization was excellent.

There were valuable opportunities for networking with members of Locality, more IFS members, and members of the International Association for Community Development (IACD). For the first I met Vincent from Singapore. We have always met online. I also met African members of Locality who are interested in promoting the development of IFS Africa or take IFS to their countries.

The selection of the community organisations in London and Liverpool was divine. After the IFS Conference in France, we planned for a study visit to most of the community organisations in the UK such as Toynbee Hall and Oxford House in the UK. So, the selection of the organisations met my expectations. It was a dream that come true. The visit to these houses has a lot of implications on the advocacy for the settlement house/neighbourhood center project in Nigeria. A good number of social workers in Nigeria struggle to understand the place of the Settlement House/Neighbourhood Center movement in contemporary social work practice. So, visiting these houses in 2025 and sharing pictures from Oxford and Toynbee Houses strengthens the work in my community and in the social work world in Nigeria.



Sunday Ibabor in Toynbee Hall, London, 10 November 2025

Beyond my expectations, we visited other community organisations like Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre and the St. Magdalene House,



Coin Street Neighbourhood Centre, London.

These centres provided good models for organisations working in countries like Nigeria where there is no funding for the neighbourhood house work. There were so much to learn from all the community organisations we visited and many practical instruments that has inspired me to do more for my community, IFS Africa and the global IFS community. I noticed that all the Facilitators who received us and lectured us about their organisations did so with so much passion.

The choice of Anfield Stadium for Locality Convention was second to none particularly for the fans of Liverpool Football Club. The Liverpool Slogan: "You Will Never Walk Alone" rings a bell. Yes, as we celebrate community power across the world and looking towards 2030 and beyond, there will be no need to walk alone. This keeps reminding me of the Sustainable Development Goal 17: Global Partnership.

The conference and Convention were really great. I sincerely thank the leadership of IFS, Susan Matloff-Nieves and the Goddard Riverside Team and for giving me the opportunity to participate in the 2025 conference and convention

I appreciate all the efforts from the leadership and members of Locality to host the IFS100 Conference and Locality Convention 2025.