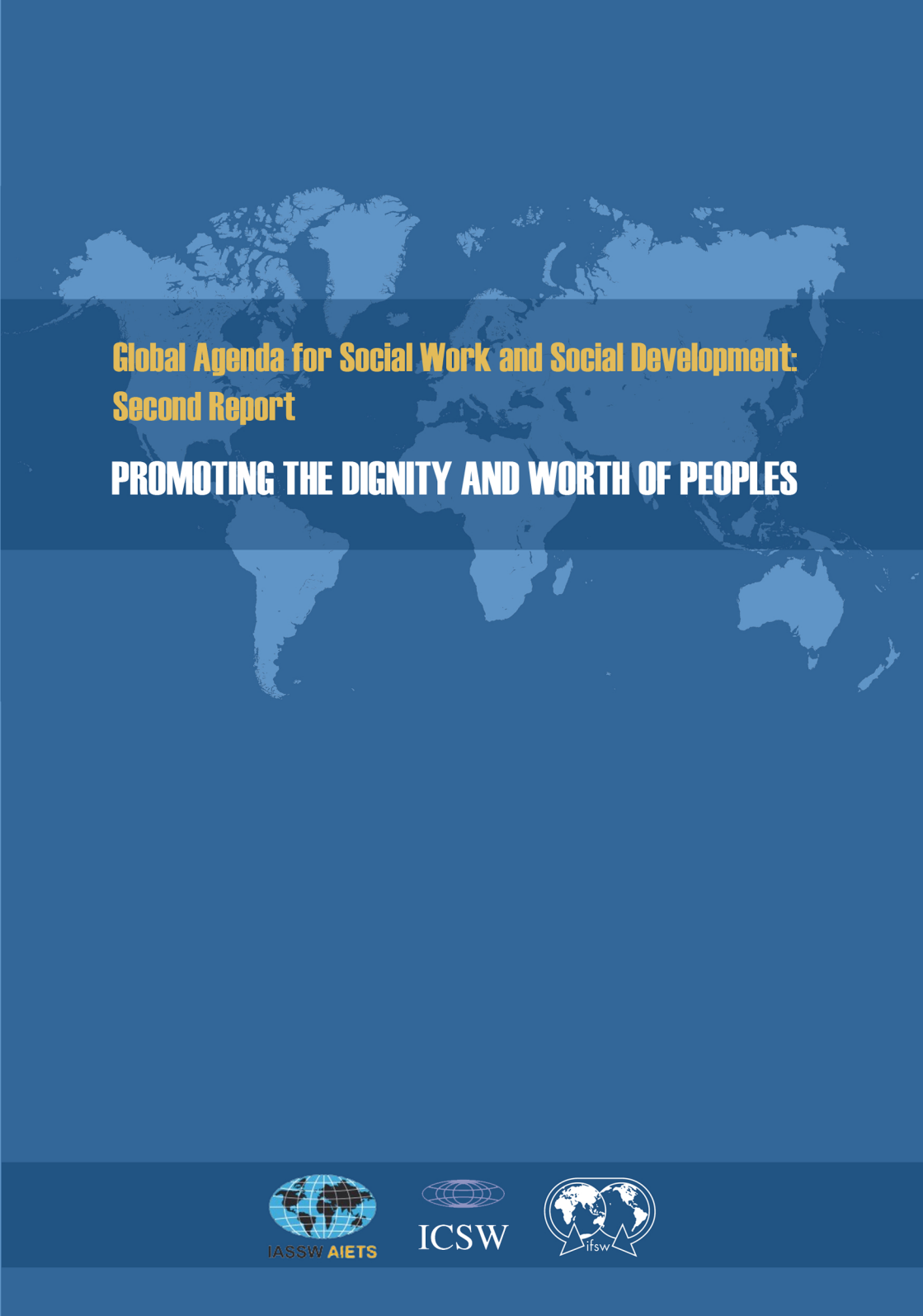




Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: Second Report

PROMOTING THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF PEOPLES



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Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples



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Global Overview

Respect for '*the dignity and worth of peoples*' is the second pillar of The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development. The concept is at the heart not only of professional ethical codes (e.g. International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) but also of international conventions and statements on human rights and peaceful coexistence (United Nations 1948; United Nations 1989; International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work et al. 1994; United Nations 2006; United Nations 2012). These aspirations aim to shape environments in which people can live without fear, give expression to their identity and personality as they wish whilst showing respect to others, care for their family and community members, practice their beliefs and religions, participate in and shape their communities through social as well as political engagement and have access to the resources needed for a dignified and secure life.

This is the second of a series of four reports on *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development* from IASSW, ICSW and IFSW (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work et al. 2012; Jones and Truell 2012b; Jones 2013; Zelenev 2015). It presents the findings of 5 Regional Observatories that have examined social work and social development practice related to this second pillar of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social

Development. These observations are, set in the context of the social, political and economic realities of 2014-16. The background to The Global Agenda process is summarised in Appendix 3 (Jones and Truell 2012a; Abye 2014).

This section draws together common themes from the Regional Observatory reports alongside description of some activities of the three global partner bodies over the past two years aimed at ‘promoting the dignity and worth of peoples’. It presents some conclusions about the relationship between social work and social development and the discourses around human dignity.

A clear message from each of the regional reports is that sustainable development is best achieved by people and professionals working together with mutual respect: ‘co-construction’ of solutions to difficult issues, involving those affected whether by community, family or personal trauma, calamity, disaster or mistreatment. Those contributing to the Regional Observatory processes, reflecting wider experience, show that dignity and worth are respected when people have self-determination and influence over their own futures.

The process

The 2010 world conference on social work and social development in Hong Kong (Jones, Yuen et al. 2008; Sha 2010) identified four pillars of social work and social development. These were subject to further consultation and refinement, concluding with the following:

- Promoting social and economic equalities
- Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples
- Promoting environmental and community sustainability
- Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships

The 2012 conference in Stockholm (Dominelli and Hackett 2012; Stockholm World Conference 2012) reviewed, refined and reaffirmed these pillars and the 2014 conference in Melbourne focussed on the first pillar (equalities) (Bailey 2014; IASSW, ICSW et al. 2014). Activity during the two years leading up to the 2016 conference in Seoul has focussed on the second pillar.

The 2010 conference was held as the first reviews of progress to achieve the Millennium Development Goals were published (United Nations 2010; World Bank 2010). The synergy between the Millennium Goals and the Global Agenda was noted and welcomed by UN leaders and others (Sha 2010; Clark 2012). The debate about what should follow the Millennium Goals continued through the early years of The Global Agenda process (Fukuda-Parr 2012). It is interesting to note that The Global Agenda connected social development and environmental sustainability before this surfaced as a significant element in the debate about the Sustainable Development Goals (Dominelli and Hackett 2012; High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda 2013; United Nations 2015a; United Nations 2015b).

For this second stage of The Global Agenda process, the three global organisations invited bids or proposals for leadership of five Regional Observatories to report on the second pillar (Zelenev 2013). It was hoped that this process would not only identify organisations and individuals who would take on the research challenge of gathering information about practice across those regions but also that they would attract new resources to underpin and strengthen the process.

Bids were received from all regions and Regional Observatories and lead people were identified. The final regional structures were very different. As the process continues, more work is needed to identify resources to provide robust, sustainable structures to undertake the full remit of Regional Observatories on Social Work and Social Development.

The Regional Observatories were asked to gather information from across their regions to illustrate how social work and social development promoted *respect for human dignity and worth of peoples*. They chose to do this in a variety of different ways, sometimes in different configurations: organising a regional conference which examined the theme and its implications for practice, a qualitative on-line survey, a call for direct submissions of practice examples and/or relevant studies or publications and a consultative process between national or regional groups of associations or academic institutions. The outcomes from the process in each region are included in this report. The regional reports drew on published and unpublished papers, videos, poster presentations, course syllabi, website links and conference literature, ranging in scale from very local community projects to ambitious national strategies and political lobbying by a professional association.

The Global Agenda process has energised and united social work and social development around the world. The process started with discussion papers published before the 2010 Hong Kong conference and has since developed and broadened. The themes for World Social Work Days (including Social Work Days at the United Nations (Clark 2012)) and the global conferences in the years since 2010 are derived from The Agenda. The work on The Agenda has continued alongside and has interacted with other activities of the three global organisations, including work on *The Global Definition of the Social Work Profession* (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2014), *The Statement of Ethical Principles* (International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) and the *Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession* (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2005). The Agenda process itself and its themes have been examined and critiqued in articles and publications, some examining the implications of The Agenda for local and regional practice and policy and others examining the global issues (Chenu, Sims et al. 2012; Gamble 2012; Hall 2012; Gray and Webb 2014; Healy and Wairire 2014; Lombard and Twikirize 2014; Nikku and Pulla 2014; Raniga and Zelnick 2014; Sims, Chenu et al. 2014; Spolander, Engelbrecht et al. 2014; Costello and Aung 2015; Lombard 2015; Sogren and Nathaniel 2015; Truell and Jones 2015; Stark 2016). This is the debate which the three global organisations had hoped to provoke and is very welcome.

Global context

The theme '*promoting the dignity and worth of peoples*' is deeply embedded in the values and ethics of the humanitarian professions (International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) but its topical relevance became evident during the two years culminating in this report. Whilst the global economic crisis has been experienced differently in different regions, the response to the crisis has had global impact alongside violent regional conflicts (World Bank 2010; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2011; Anthony 2015). These two factors have had devastating social consequences, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable groups within a population (United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2016). Inequality within and between countries has continued to widen (UNRISD 2010; Deacon and Cohen 2011; Stiglitz 2012; United Nations Development

Program 2013; UNICEF Office of Research 2016), the subject of the first Global Agenda report, and there has been a substantial increase in the migrations of peoples as a result of conflicts, climate change and economic realities (Jayaweera and Choudhury 2008; Davidson 2011; Chen, Wub et al. 2012; Raoa and Presentia 2012; Zetter 2012; Noyori-Corbett and Moxley 2015). This report provides further evidence that showing respect for *the dignity and worth of peoples* is not only ethically right but also essential to the effectiveness of responses and solutions to these crises. The choice of this second pillar was, therefore, not only prescient in 2010 but also highly relevant to the current context, as was the visionary decision to include the third pillar: *promoting environmental and community sustainability*.

Respect for human rights and respect for dignity are not necessarily the same thing, but they are related and both are demonstrated and made real through the quality of relationships. Social work and social development educators and practitioners recognise that human rights of individuals and communities can be in tension and, therefore, that achieving a balance may involve a struggle. It is therefore significant to this report that there is some questioning of the current international human rights instruments and their effectiveness in achieving social justice (Pettifor 2004; Skegg 2005; Healy 2007; Equality and Human Rights Commission 2012; Mtetwa and Muchacha 2013; Hawkins and Knox 2014; Healy and Wairire 2014; Law and Lee 2014; International Council on Social Welfare 2015; Reichert 2015).

Lack of respect for *dignity and worth of peoples* is evident worldwide. This lack of respect is not only a consequences of age, race and gender, but it also affects many minority groups such as people with disabilities and certain health conditions and LGBT people. Arguably large numbers of the world population who lack access to safe living and working environments, clean water and certainty for their futures experience a lack of *dignity and worth* (Mukherjee, Waring et al. 2011). Making a reality of respect for *the dignity and worth of peoples* is therefore a profound and practical challenge in a divided world.

Respect for human dignity and worth of peoples – what does this mean for social work and social development?

The nature of human dignity at first sight seems self-evident and uncontested. However attempts to develop a common understanding of 'dignity' have illustrated its complexity (Glensy 2011; O'Mahony 2012; Misztal 2013). One person's understanding of their dignity can be different from another's, just as one person's perception of social justice may differ from her/his neighbour: 'the meaning of dignity is therefore context-specific, varying significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and (often) over time within particular jurisdictions' McCrudden (2008 p655).

For some people, respect for *human dignity and the worth of peoples* is an essential consequence of the humanitarian value system which is enshrined in international conventions (see Appendix 3) and professional ethical codes. Social work and social development, by their very nature, are engaged with those who face personal, family and community problems and challenges of differing kinds. This includes people who have offended against legal and social laws and norms and who may therefore be seen as having put themselves outside the right to respect. Discovering or regaining self-respect and a sense of self-worth is core to social work practice and social development. Some people struggle with the concept of accepting the person whilst not condoning the action. What are the implications of this for social work practice and social development?

Respect is an active concept. To show respect implies more than an attitude or a state of mind, but also action and behaviour. Outward, practical evidence of *respect* has to be seen as a consistent feature in relationships with individuals and groups for it to be meaningful (Annan 2003).

Dignity is defined as being 'the state or quality of being worthy of honour or respect' (Oxford English Dictionary Online). International conventions start from the assumption that every person has inherent human qualities and rights and is therefore deserving of respect. This is derived from religious and philosophical traditions. It is also evident that there are many situations in which the dignity of people is not respected (Annan 2003).

Worth implies the recognition of value and significance. This is close to the concept of dignity but perhaps goes further in recognising the potential for good in all people. It focuses on peoples' strengths and not their weaknesses.

The use of the term '*peoples*' in the text of the second pillar has provoked much debate and has proved a challenge when translating into other languages. The intention behind the use of the plural of the word was to emphasise that not only individuals but also groups and communities – '*peoples*' – should be shown respect and be valued. This recognises the significance of the cultures and values of indigenous peoples and of the diverse range of communities around the world (Weaver 1999; Gray, Coates et al. 2010; Rankopo and Osei-Hwedie 2011; Yunong and Xiong 2012; Bar-On 2014; Law and Lee 2014; Chong 2016).

There is now overwhelming research evidence that helping people to change, to modify their behaviour and to adapt to new circumstances must start from a basic respect for their individuality and sense of identity – their *dignity and worth*. Participation is not only a right (Harris 1999) but also more effective practice (Foster and Naidoo 2001; Farrell 2004; Stein 2010; Morris and Connolly 2012; Smith, Gallagher et al. 2012; Tan and Yuen 2013; Wisner and Kelman 2015). Involving people is also likely to make social and medical interventions safer (Dale 2016). This does not mean accepting all aspects of behaviour, including anti-social and even criminal behaviour (Comartin and González-Prendes 2011). There can be a distinction between respecting the humanity of the individual and their inherent value and potential for growth on the one hand and disapproving of aspects of their behaviour and lifestyle on the other. Other routes to change, including the use of force and authority, can have an impact, but is ultimately less stable and sustainable than working **with** people and respecting them and valuing their contributions. Ignoring this evidence-based reality results in failed policy and failure to realise human potential.

For that reason, the three global partners in The Global Agenda assert that respect for human dignity is essential to the creation of tolerant, peaceful, and sustainable societies. Evidence in this report, and from existing knowledge, research and our wider experience, shows that social workers and those promoting social development are promoting and contributing to systems that reduce stigma and oppression every day, in all parts of the world, enabling people to live respectfully with confidence and dignity.

Human dignity is key to sustainable development and well-being

Social agencies and practitioners do not consistently demonstrate respect for *human dignity and worth* in their dealings with individuals and communities, however, and organisational policies and cultures may actively impede showing respect, despite explicit codes of values, ethics and practice. There are many examples of policies and practices which undermine and even deny respect for dignity (e.g. Eaton 2000; Joint Reviews 2002; Hörberg, Brunt et al. 2004; Kirkpatrick, Ackroyd et al. 2004; Powell 2005; Buchanan and Gunn 2007; Hitzler and Messmer 2010; Klasing, Moses et al. 2011; Ney, Stoltz et al. 2013; Vincent 2014). This report illustrates ways in which practice can positively promote dignity and respect for the worth of peoples.

Action to promote the dignity and worth of peoples

In parallel with the Regional Observatory process, the global and national bodies have engaged with others in action and campaigns to promote *the dignity and worth of peoples* and to respond to the global social crises which have dominated the last two years. Activity related to the theme of this report includes the campaign for social protection systems and actions against neo-liberal austerity policies, which have dominated Europe and have been evident on other continents for some decades, and the response to the mass migration of peoples on several continents..

ICSW held its ASEAN Government-NGO forum on social welfare and development in Kuala Lumpur in September 2015, focused on older persons, where dignity issues were covered at length. ICSW and its partners also organised a regional conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil in March 2016 on the primacy of human dignity as a value in public policy for the Latin American region in March 2016. EASSW held a regional conference in Milan in July 2015 which included material on The Global Agenda and the promotion of dignity, IFSW Europe held a conference in Edinburgh in September 2015 focussed specifically on The Global Agenda theme.

On a global level, IASSW represented social work at the UNFCCC COP21 meeting on climate change in Paris in December 2015, leading on a side-event (supported by EASSW and its French organisations) on 1 December 2015 on upholding the dignity and worth of peoples during disaster situations. IASSW represented social work at the UNISDR follow

up on the Social Development Goals (SDGs which replaced the Millennium Development Goals) at a meeting in Geneva on 27-29 January 2016, arguing for the inclusion of social work and its values of recognising the dignity and worth of peoples. This theme was also addressed during WSWD 2016 at the UN in Geneva where IASSW and IFSW presented materials on the importance of dignity and worth in working with migrants and people affected by HIV/AIDS. *International Social Work* journal, owned by IASSW, ICSW, and IFSW, published a themed issue on *the dignity and worth of peoples* in social work, which was launched at the Seoul Congress (27-30 June 2016). IASSW also published a special issue of *Social Dialogue* including papers on human dignity and social work (Lombard 2016).

Conferences in Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and North America are mentioned in the Regional Observatory reports.

Poverty and the social protection floor

Poverty (implying extreme inequality) is one of the most undignified experiences for millions of people (Narayan, Chambers et al. 1999; Marmot 2012; ElBaradei 2015). Poverty not only creates economic vulnerabilities, but also pushes people to live a life devoid of dignity and self-worth. The options for livelihood and income generation for the poorest people frequently involve threats to health and safety, sanitation facilities are generally seriously inadequate and thousands resort to begging and homelessness. Addressing poverty effectively has been a challenge for many nations. Social exclusion and inequality are the result of the interaction of social, economic and political factors which makes poverty a complex, multifaceted phenomenon demanding a nuanced policy response (Deaton 2013; United Nations Development Program 2013). While state-centric approaches to poverty and poverty eradication programmes have brought limited and unsustained results, micro-initiatives at local levels do not offer the scale and proportion to make significant improvement in the conditions leading to poverty. Global Action on Poverty (GAP) is an initiative led by a Non-Governmental Organisation in India (Head Held High Foundation (HHHF), Bangalore). The International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) South Asia region and HHHF are working jointly to bring civil society, private corporations and academic institutions together to design, develop and scale up ideas for addressing poverty, also providing the necessary energy and impetus.

Micro-initiatives coming from potential changemakers are brought together and, where appropriate, are provided with necessary support for converting their ideas into sustainable initiatives for reducing poverty and its manifestations. Help is available to scale up projects to a level where they can impact on larger sections of the society. Annual GAP summits held in 2015 and 2016 enabled nearly 200 changemakers to connect with catalysts, mentors and potential funders for operationalising their ideas into actions. The summits also provided an opportunity for making successful models available around the globe in similar or comparable contexts, thereby avoiding the need for reinventing the wheel and accelerating the eradication of poverty, an essential precondition for enabling the poor to live a life of dignity. ICSW is also involved with Tata Institute in Mumbai in campaigning for a proposed 'Persons in Destitution (Protection, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill'. The Institute is working with several community groups and government departments to provide rehabilitation and relief for homeless people in cities, many of whom survive by begging, and aims to revoke the anti-beggary laws in India and decriminalise begging.

Social protection systems and welfare schemes should be designed to promote the sustainability and wellbeing of the population as a whole (Truell 2015b) but an increasing number of governments are limiting social protection to the provision of basic relief for people in extreme circumstances; ambivalence about social protection appears to have been one factor among others which influenced the rejection by referendum of a proposal to introduce a guaranteed basic income for all in Switzerland (Agence France-Presse in Geneva 2016). The social work profession advocates that social protection systems should be universal and designed to *promote the dignity and worth of all peoples*. Such systems, therefore, should be tools for social transformation, building solidarity within and between communities, and promoting self-determination, thereby encouraging democratic participation (Truell 2015b). Recognizing the right to social protection as a human right has become an important element within the international development discourse (United Nations 2014; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2015).

Each of the three global bodies have actively supported the ILO recommendation 202 concerning national floors of social protection in each country and have worked with the broader international NGO community to highlight the need for social protection to be included within the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework. ICSW held a

conference “*Human right, social protection floors and citizenship*” in Copenhagen in December 2015 with outcome documents focused on upholding dignity and measures on implementation of the right to social protection through the adoption of social protection floors for all.

Recommendation 202 rests on a strong foundation of international human rights law. In addition to specific references to various provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations 1966), it calls upon States to respect “the rights and dignity of people covered by the social security guarantees”. The objective is to secure at least basic social security guarantees for health care and also income security for children, older persons and those unable to work, which benefits the whole community whilst respecting the dignity of all its members. The absence of a social protection floor is seen clearly in countries affected by austerity policies.

Austerity and economic context

The social consequence of the imposition of pre-dominant, neoliberal economic policies has been the increase in inequality within and between countries: the rich get richer, the poor get poorer and respect for human dignity and worth is eroded (Deacon and Cohen 2011, Truell 2015c). At the time of writing, 62 individuals hold more of the world’s wealth than the poorest 50 per cent or 3 billion of the world’s population (Oxfam 2016). Social work and social development practitioners have been at the heart of action to challenge austerity and support people surviving the consequences. Social work organisations and members of the communities that use social services have been working together to building solidarity and mutual support, share best practice examples and advocate to their governments and regional bodies with common messages on rights and dignity. This is a classic example of co-production for change.

Social workers based in the austerity affected countries have often not been paid for many months and sometimes even forced into homeless themselves (Truell 2015a). They nevertheless turn up to work each day and provide professional services in a context where public health and social services have nearly collapsed. Social workers have utilised a ‘community led’ approach, whether it is in homes or shelters or within communities of people with disabilities. This approach unlocks the community’s potential for developing informal care systems by recognising the strengths and capacities of each individual within the

communities. Whether the service is a centre for trafficked child refugees who have had their organs harvested and who were then abandoned on the street, or a community of elderly people who can no longer access health services and have had their pensions significantly reduced, the social work response has centred around the concept of building solidarity and self-respect between members of the communities and between the communities themselves - and rediscovered dignity. This approach of building solidarity in the austerity-affected countries is a reflection of the wider global process influenced by the four pillars of the Global Agenda.

Migration and refugees

The social work response, coordinated by IFSW, to the thousands of people forced to escape war and conflict in their own countries reflected the commitment to recognising the dignity and worth of those involved (Truell 2015d). Rather than waiting for political cooperation from the countries affected, social workers and refugee representatives spanning 3 regions and 26 countries, (including the countries in war, the countries that refugees are passing through and the asylum countries) met to coordinate their responses and plan how to support people who had been forced into refugee status.

The meeting discussed how best to coordinate social work services to meet the differing needs of refugees, but the social workers and refugee representatives also reframed the perception of the challenge by stating that the origins of the migration lie in the political crisis that resulted in a refugee and displaced person crisis; this analysis will lead to a more positive outcome for those affected. The representatives continue to advocate for policy and action plans to be developed jointly between the refugees' advocacy structures, governments, regional bodies, the professionals involved and relevant NGOs. The social workers are now playing leading roles in finding solutions to the massive chaos and suffering created by the crisis, such as humanising the face of refugees to concerned host communities and engaging refugees into self-supporting new communities and integration within their new environments.

The participants in the consultation demonstrated that refugees are not helpless, as often portrayed by the media and by some politicians. Refugees have significant resources, skills, strengths, and education and can make positive contributions to their new environments. Doctors, teachers, nurses and construction workers, for example, can all make a positive contribution to their new environments. Another example is the

professional social workers who were forced into refugee status and are now being employed by NGOs in Germany. Not only do they have the lived experience of being a refugee but they are also multilingual and therefore able to win trust of people seeking safety and or resettlement.

Social work experience throughout the world has highlighted that not all refugees seek the same futures and that policy and agency responses must take into account the differing needs and aspirations of the refugees and their communities. Some refugees, for example, seek only the immediate safety of their families until they are able to return to their home countries. Others seek to establish a new life and full integration in their host environments, while others who have suffered the trauma of war and perilous journeys say it is too early for them to foresee their future. The social work response mirrors the classical social work assessment process; first make contact, build trust, listen to what people want and co-construct plans. Such approaches are respectful of each person's dignity, their strengths and their role in their own futures. Social workers have long understood that, when people are actively engaged and take some responsibility for their own recovery, the effects of post traumatic stress are significantly reduced. Their plans tend to result in sustainable outcomes and the 'victim' or 'aid seeking' mentality is replaced by a culture of interdependence, and mutual aid in the context of rebuilding communities.

Social development practitioners based in Europe who attended the ICSW-organised conference on migrants and social protection floors in Madrid in April 2015, affirmed that the plight of migrants has direct relevance to the social protection discourse, as migrant workers represent an important and often vulnerable population group. In the European Union, there exists arguably a basic outline of a harmonized, pan-European policy on minimum social protection for legal immigrants. But whether it is satisfactory or sufficient is an open question; budget cuts made recently by several EU governments have affected health care for undocumented migrants, for example. Another conclusion of the conference was the need for studies at the European level to determine the level of application of the minimum social protection.

Advocacy is also a key component of the professional task. Whether working in highly resourced social protection systems, or in environments where social protection is based entirely in culture and religion, or in aid-reliant contexts, social workers advocate to shape social protection systems so that they preserve and enhance social

relationships, promote social integration and make relationships between people as harmonious as possible. . This approach to SPF advocacy and policy practice was underscored at the high-level forum on the meaning of human dignity and its perception in the Arab region organised by ICSW in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in June 2015 in Rabat with participants coming from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The regional reports which follow illustrate the daily work of social work and social development practitioners, strengthening solidarity between people, encouraging people to care for others, engaging people to respect the rights of others, challenging anti-social behaviour and strengthening solidarity within families, communities and society. The evidence shows that this is supported by the active involvement of educators and the development and refinement of the qualifying and post-qualifying curriculum. The reports demonstrate the commitment, passion and unique approaches taken by social workers, educators and social development practitioners. Uniqueness can be claimed because the approaches to the building of informal family and community systems of wellbeing are linked with both individual behaviour change (where appropriate) and also with government accountability and responsibilities to ensure the dignity and wellbeing of all peoples.

Social work and social development promoting dignity and worth of peoples – practical examples from the Regional Observatories

The major part of this report consists of material from the five continental Regional Observatories including examples of positive action by educators, social workers and social development practitioners. This overview section examines some of the key themes which emerge from these reports; quotations are taken from the regional reports. The overview also takes account of recent activities involving the three global bodies which have not been included within the regional reports, including responses to the increased inequality exacerbated by policies promoting 'austerity' and the 'refugee crisis'.

Material from all the regions shows that 'being involved' demonstrates respect and reinforces personal dignity; 'active engagement and participation is fundamental to giving people a voice'. 'Making policy with people has greater influence than making policy for people.

The material from all regions, in different ways, points to the need for dignity to run through organisations like a golden thread'. To be authentic and therefore credible, it needs to be consistent - 'a way of life, an ethical project, instinctive, not 'put on', [and] sincerely assumed by those engaged in it'. It therefore follows that, regardless of setting, the people involved at all levels must be seen to be consistent in their behaviour and relationships with each other - management and staff, students and academics. This way of relating then naturally embraces relationships with the wider community - service users, community members and others. Put simply, this should be seen as nothing complex or strange, but rather seeking to apply basic, good human relations (Joint Reviews 2000; Jones 2000).

This way of living and respecting people - recognising the dignity and worth of each person - is shown in the quality of relationships, the theme of the fourth pillar of the Global Agenda, which will be the focus of future activity and research. Respecting the humanity and dignity of the other person 'is about having time to engage with others and to take the perspective of the other, regardless whether it is a person in need or a person who represents another organisation'.

Having recognised that effective practice, all round the world, is based on showing people respect and involving them in decisions about themselves, the regional material also acknowledges that 'there appears to be a lot of awareness about human dignity, however, 'awareness' does not necessarily result in 'practicing' human dignity'. It is suggested that the UN Conventions, which uphold a singular framework of human rights, are not always implemented and ignore social rights. This will only change when awareness turns into commitment, and commitment into action - where 'I' and 'we' and 'us' (together) become central to effecting social change, vulnerable people will remain on the margins and excluded, even though they may get some services and support.

Respecting the dignity and worth of the other person appears to be especially challenging when, as is frequently the case in social work practice, the other person has committed serious offences, their behaviour is challenging and does not show respect to others and the role of the social worker is to exercise control. Social workers understand that the purposeful exercise of authority is necessary in such situations, sometimes to the extent of depriving the person of their liberty, using formal court processes (Schmid 2010; Okitikpi 2011). However the experience of social workers is that respecting the

humanity and potential worth of people in such situations is still absolutely essential to building a constructive relationship with that person and working towards the potential for change. This is important, not only for the individual, who may not change and may persist with anti-social or violent behaviour, but just as importantly for others involved. Denying dignity of one person undermines the culture of respect for all and erodes the cornerstone of human relationships.

Evidence from the regions is remarkably consistent in the identification of what undermines a sense of personal dignity and worth, wherever people are in the world. These factors are well-recognised and include collective experiences such as the abuse of power and control, disasters, conflict and post-conflict trauma and internal and external displacement, pollution and lack of water and sanitation, More personal experiences include: poverty, inequality and unemployment; domestic violence; homelessness, over-crowdedness; child labour, sexual exploitation, poor health (physical and mental) and dementia. Other experienced forms of discrimination may be a consequence of a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation and culture, any one of which may have an impact on the personal sense of dignity and self-worth.

Some of the regional material points to the importance of the working environment as a symbol of the extent to which employers recognise the dignity and value of both staff and those using the facilities. A poor working environment not only undermines the quality of the work but also gives a message that the work is not valued (Jones 2000; Eborall and Garmeson 2001; Jones 2004): 'it is difficult for staff whose rights are not respected to show respect for the rights of others'.

The third pillar: promoting community and environmental sustainability 2016-2018

The evidence on '*dignity and worth*' from the Regional Observatories blends into the third pillar of the Global Agenda: Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability. This pillar will be launched alongside the publication of this report in June 2016 and will be the central theme for the three global partners for the next two years. It will be the focus for the World Social Work Days in 2017 and 2018, culminating in the 2018 world conference in Dublin, Ireland. All social workers and social development practitioners are invited to contribute ideas and examples to support this theme.

The title of this third pillar underwent some change during the 2010-2014 consultation. The Hong Kong formulation was '*Working towards environmental sustainability*' (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work et al. 2010; International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work et al. 2012; Jones and Truell 2012a). The final formulation was '*Promoting environmental and community sustainability*' (Jones and Truell 2012a). This reflects the determination of the Global Agenda Coordinating Group from the three partner organisations to use positive and assertive language. However the reformulation also recognised the inter-relationship between environmental sustainability and community.

Over the next two years, the Global Agenda will continue to unite and strengthen the social work and social development professions and to build the voice and capacity of sustainable environment. The focus will be not only on climate change but also on other factors affecting peoples' wellbeing or which undermine social rights (Marlow and Rooyen 2001; Coates and Gray 2012; Dominelli 2012; High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda 2013).

The three global partners look forward to developing the relationship with the Regional Observatories and all contributors to The Global Agenda reports in providing social work and social development responses and solutions to the globalised social problems of the world of today and tomorrow.

June 2016

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Africa Region

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Introduction

Africa is currently the second-fastest-growing region after Asia, with an encouraging but still inadequate average growth rate of about 5% (ElBaradei, 2015). However, despite progress made, the continent continues to be faced by poverty, inequality, communicable diseases, oppression, violence and environmental degradation where almost half of the two billion people who survive on less than \$2 a day, and more than one billion living in extreme poverty, on less than \$1.25 a day, live in Africa (ElBaradei, 2015). Africans experience 'alienation and injustice in the form of sexism, racism and xenophobia, as well as being subject to violence and crime, natural disasters, and abusive cultural practices' (Koopman, 2010:241).

Koopman's statement in 2010 still applies: "On no continent do we witness such a terrible violation of human dignity than on the continent of Africa" (2010:241). Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (African Union, 1981:2) recognises that, 'Every individual

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shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his [her] legal status'. Article 19 stipulates that all people are equal, and therefore they shall enjoy the same respect and have the same rights. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (African Union, 1995) includes a specific article (3) to recognise women's right to dignity.

For purposes of defining human dignity in this report, a section of the IASSW's statement of human dignity is adopted: 'Human dignity is regarded as inherent in all human beings. Being treated equally and with dignity is a human right. It is the right that all people have to be respected because they are humans; regardless of class, race, gender, nationality, culture, sexual orientation, education, religion or any other divisions. Human dignity should not have to be earned, it is inherent in the human'³.

In October 2015, international and regional representatives of IASSW and IFSW formed a panel during a workshop at the 1st Joint International Conference of ASSWA, IFSW and ASASWEI, in East London, South Africa, to discuss the progress made with the Global Agenda in the Africa region. Further, the way forward on collecting data on the theme, Promoting the dignity and worth of all peoples was discussed. Questions for inclusion in the planned questionnaire were discussed and refined during the workshop. The Global Agenda Observatory for Africa was also formally launched during the workshop. However, there was no time to discuss the specific details on action plans in rolling out the Global Agenda which is still in process for the region.

The report covers the methods used to collect data, followed by a discussion of the findings of the study, and conclusions, including the challenges for the way forward.

Research methods

A qualitative survey design was adopted, using the Qualtrics platform to upload the questionnaire. The survey link was distributed electronically through list servers and networks across the Africa region. The questionnaire included closed and open-ended questions, and an invitation to submit case studies electronically to the regional

³ <http://www.iassw-aiets.org/>

coordinators. Data was collected from December 2015, and data analysis includes all responses up till 19 March, 2016. At the time of data analyses for the regional report, 99 people had participated in the survey. Questions were not equally relevant to all possible participants, and hence the response rate per question differs. The completion mean of the survey was 59%.

Eleven countries participated in the study including Burundi, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Liberia, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe. The primary area of sector involvement of participants was 17 (23.29%) from practice; 44 (60.27%) from education; one (1/1,37%) from policy; six (6/8,22%) from advocacy, and five (5/6,85%) were students. The explanation for the higher education response rate is most probably due to more structured electronic list servers in academic institutions. However, only 84 (84.85%) respondents answered this question, which means 16% respondents' designation is not known.

Discussion of findings

Findings indicate the number of respondents who answered the respective questions, followed by a consolidation of the narrative responses that they provided on the questions. The findings are presented under headings that represent the respective question themes. The presentation of the findings is done in an integrated manner, however, where applicable, it is clearly distinguished in relation to a practice, education, policy or advocacy context.

Areas of vulnerability in relation to human dignity (N=57)

The areas of vulnerabilities that impinge on the dignity of the people that respondents work with include poverty, inequality and unemployment; conflict and post-conflict trauma; domestic violence; internal and external displacement, and homelessness. Further, poor access to clean running water and inadequate sanitation, exacerbated by overcrowdedness and polluted environments, pose health risks to many people. Poor income, for many only a mean social grant(s), impact on food security, access to education and health care. Child neglect and abuse emphasise the demand for protection services. Socio-economic deprivation and associated trauma, trigger psycho-social problems related to drug abuse, promiscuous behaviour, prostitution, and mental health challenges. High teenage pregnancies lead to early school leavers which continue the vicious circle of low literacy levels, poor education,

little vocational skills which in turn, perpetuates unemployment and poverty. Girls and boys who drop out from school are exploited for daily casual labour and are paid less than a dollar per day. This makes them vulnerable to all sorts of physical and sexual exploitation and subsequent emotional trauma, and susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection, drug usage, induced abortion, and other risky behaviours which contribute to unsafe environments and communities. Opportunities for a better future are further undermined by a lack of parental care, growing up in the absence of a father figure, being orphaned at an early age, living in child headed households, and exposure to violence.

Other vulnerabilities reported include delayed justice for incarceration, xenophobia, exploitation of forced migrants, including refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons and deportees; discrimination against people with HIV infection, and Aids. Older people, in particular women, are burdened as care takers of orphaned grandchildren and in turn, often confronted with the new generation's disrespect toward older people, leaving them more vulnerable to abuse and financial hardships. Poverty, inequality and violence are perpetuated by gender issues, leaving women and girls in particular more vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation. Discrimination and oppression against women and girls are also culturally related.

Many social work students come from social and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. They report challenges related to poverty, race and gender discrimination, feelings of being unworthy, and that they are not heard and treated with respect. Personal factors at home, such as non-supportive families and pressure to financially support families whilst studying place huge demands on students' physical and mental capacity to cope. Their capacity is further exhausted by demands of a learning environment foreign to their context, such as having to conceptualise key terms due to language barriers. Other areas where students feel vulnerable, include field work education e.g. in scenarios where the student is expected to identify the field work agency by himself/herself or where the agency charges for the placement yet the student cannot afford. If not handled well, they develop academic low self-esteem. The impingement on student's worth and value is aptly captured in the following statement of an educator: "The students I work with sometimes experience that they are inadequate on an academic and personal level to be able to study at a university. Students often come from deprived circumstances (rural, poor and or a deficient school

system) and find it difficult to adjust to a typical first world university setting. This often leaves them vulnerable and prone to negative influences’.

There is a reciprocal relationship between peoples’ vulnerabilities, and being discriminated, stereotyped, marginalised, and excluded from broader society. The vulnerabilities’ impact is on both a personal and society level, and results in a lack of agency which is evident in low self-esteem and human insecurity.

Promoting the dignity of service users (N=57)

In this section the responses indicate how organisations, education institutions, practitioners or educators promote the dignity of service users, who include clients or students.

Treating all people with dignity and respect starts with the *self* – a personal commitment. An approach of unconditional regard and empathy with others are important to make people feel valued and worthy, especially in resource poor environments. Showing self-respect and respect for others are encouraged through principles of non-judgemental attitude, acceptance, genuineness, care and compassion, and social inclusion. This is equally relevant in a classroom context. Teaching a module on human rights and the underscoring principles that value people, are only authentic when these principles are modelled by the educator in interaction with students, and students have opportunities to demonstrate them in the classroom and during field practice. Learning about human dignity should thus be a lived experience which is demonstrated in actions during teaching, and in practice. In demonstrating human dignity, professionals’ approach was described as a generosity, the virtue that asks for a daily commitment by putting oneself at the service of humanity, working with a vital attitude, whole heartedly, and with professionalism, a daily struggle to make their work ‘to become a way of life, an ethical project sincerely assumed by those engaged in it’.

Advocacy featured as a central theme in promoting dignity. It creates awareness of the plight of vulnerable people; influences the development and adoption of policies, and explores the effectiveness of service delivery for vulnerable populations. Advocacy distinguishes the champions in standing up for the rights of vulnerable people. An example is advocating the continuing education of young teenage girls who fall pregnant before completing school, and are not welcomed back into the

schooling system after the delivery of their children. In the absence of directive policies, it asks for professional resilience in exploring all possible avenues to protect the rights of children, such as using the Children's Act, and even a country's constitution, in search for enshrined human rights. Writing petitions to government was also shared as a means of advocating people's rights.

A holistic approach to service delivery is essential to acknowledge the worth of people. An example to demonstrate this is the case of forced migrants of the Refugee Law Project in Uganda. Through the *Conflict, Transitional Justice and Governance Programme*, they confront the challenges of dealing with legacies of past atrocities and human rights violations, the pursuit of justice, the promotion of democratisation and good governance. The Access to Justice for Forced Migrants Programme focuses on access to justice which is important to bring legal aid services closer and empower migrants to demand their rights. The Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing Programme enhances their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. The Gender and Sexuality Programme, they can access, restore their sexual and gender rights, and raise global awareness of the close relationship between violations of sexuality and gender, and patterns of forced migration. The Media for Social Change programme is used for migrants and host communities to contribute their own voices to critical debates.

Further to a holistic approach, counselling and trauma healing are seen as important service areas for vulnerable people, however, alongside skills training for jobs and income generation; and thus financial inclusion. One example is cooperatives for women. A holistic approach in promoting and protecting dignity include partnerships, on all levels, but in particular on an international level which can make an impact on a macro, political level. An example includes working with Save the Children International in empowering children.

Human dignity is also promoted by social work values and ethics. Ethical practice is linked to employer policies, and service agreements which should clearly stipulate how the service user must be assisted, the time to be taken for delivery of each stipulated service, and the criteria indicated for efficient delivery of services.

Education and training is another critical area in which human dignity of service users is promoted. A practice example reported was empowering people to live fulfilled lives, e.g. after testing HIV positive, emphasising

their right to be treated with dignity. Educating society and family members on the need to care for old people, or protect the rights of people with disabilities, are other examples. A further example is training social workers in human rights practice; in the case of correction services, to protect inmates' right to have access to justice.

In student context, social justice was pointed out as central to the social work curriculum, training programmes, teaching approaches, and theoretical frameworks. Further, students should be engaged as equal partners in their training. They have to experience respect and dignity first hand before they can apply principles underpinning human dignity to service users. Educators indicated that the dignity of students who are poor is promoted through scholarships, and through opportunities to work part time at the university. Students burdened with psychological and social problems are assisted through referrals to appropriate support services. Educators engage in advocacy for students with physical disabilities, assist with accessing finances or applications for bursaries. Those who cannot meet the deadline of paying tuition fees, are assisted to make a payment arrangement with the finance department so that they can continue to enjoy their right to education. The recent #FeesMustFall student campaign in South Africa, provided a laudable example of an opportunity for educators to stand in solidarity with students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds to campaign for a better future through education.

Educators also promote human dignity by engaging students in direct dialogue and advocacy on human rights in academic forums like seminars, conferences and workshops, and by conducting research and producing publications about problems facing various vulnerable groups and the role of the state in addressing them. Open class discussions, group presentations, case scenarios and role playing provide opportunities to students to build self-esteem and agency. Educating students on their basic rights and the rights of others, and what it implies to be guardians of their rights and the rights of others, sensitises them on the necessity to protect the dignity of all people. An example of acknowledging undergraduate students contributions, is to engage them as co-authors in a published article based on the emancipatory and participatory work they have done.

Mobilising communities for active *engagement and participation* is key to giving people a voice and promoting their dignity. Partnerships play a key role in this, such as engaging schools and the local authorities,

building cohesion among groups in communities through sport, dialogue, and entertainment. Other examples include training of teachers, parents and home carers on child development; building capacity of youth clubs in environment conservation and improving household incomes for a sustainable development. Giving service users a voice, even in the case where service users were in a psychiatric unit, experiencing mental health problems, was indicated as a commendable example of a field placement where students observe human dignity in action.

Research is critical in engaging students, practitioners and educators in providing evidence to and documenting best practices, including teaching approaches. Research outputs also strengthen awareness on vulnerable populations and highlight areas for action. Knowledge on good practice is disseminated through presentation of conference papers, publication and advocacy.

Interventions in communities that promote human dignity (N=55)

This section presents responses regarding the interventions that practitioners; organisations, training institutions, and educators or students, are involved in within the surrounding communities that promote human dignity.

Outreach programmes include, among others, life skills and awareness on HIV; enhancing employability through vocational and skill development training among adolescent girls and boys; sponsorships for education, education guidance and counselling; advocating the rights and improved quality of life for older people; making education accessible to all, including higher education for disabled youths and young people with special needs; providing shelter to vulnerable women and their children and reintegrating them into society; facilitating access to health information, and quality health care through capacity building of health workers. Communities are mobilised to save for health care and education; in schools, teachers are engaged in capacity building and caregivers sensitised on the importance of education for children and retention of the girl child in school by preventing unwanted pregnancies. Interventions to empower women, business skills training, and sensitisation on mental health, gender equality and financial inclusion are other examples of interventions that aim to promote human dignity. Other interventions include psycho-social support by visiting impoverished and vulnerable communities and groups, especially

people living with HIV and AIDS; and provision of basic needs such as toiletries and sanitary packs in collaboration with international donors and funders. In outreach programmes to forced migrants, various activities are aimed at empowering them to know and speak out on their rights.

Interacting and networking with NGOs, NPOs and government are central to outreach programmes in communities. Celebrating world events such as Environment Day; International Day of Peace; and the International Human Rights Day strengthen partnerships with other stakeholders and show solidarity on specific themes. Media, such as YouTube and the radio, are used in getting vital messages such as children and youth living on the streets, and suicide among school learners out into the public domain.

Through fieldwork programmes at welfare institutions and organisations, students make a significant contribution through various service learning site placements in inner cities, peri-urban areas and rural communities. The projects include low cost housing development, human settlements; early childhood development; youth work; learners at risk; the homeless; migrants; sex workers, and HIV. Some students engage in outreach projects to other students on campus by providing material assistance to needy students who come from poor communities.

Individual professionals engage in community services through various forums where they get the opportunity to extend the promoting of people's human dignity through structures such as churches and school management boards. Outreach to communities also includes research targeting the extent of problems in the community. Furthermore, participation in research and curriculum reviews are pertinent to ensure that education promotes human dignity. Working with traditional and cultural institutions is helpful to identify and address beliefs, norms and practices that foster gender based violence, HIV/AIDS, maternal ill health and unproductive large families.

Human rights and social work education (N=54)

In this section, the findings indicate how human rights, teaching approaches and methods in promoting human dignity are incorporated in the social work curriculum. All but one (1.85%) of 54 responses from this question indicated that human rights are incorporated in the social

work curriculum. What follows gives an overview on what and how this is done.

In the undergraduate social work programme human rights are presented in different formats in curricula. In some social work schools it is integrated in the learning outcomes of all the social work modules across the year levels. In others, human rights are presented in specific modules, on specific year levels, e.g. in a module on health care, the rights of people with various kinds of disability are addressed. A third model, is a mix presentation where human rights is integrated in all the undergraduate modules, while the philosophical foundations of a rights based approach to social welfare and social work is covered in more depth in a specific module, such as on social welfare policy. Some educators reported the need for a revision and improvement of the curriculum to include some courses on human rights and dignity.

Specific content of teaching include the origins of human rights as well as its meaning on a personal and professional level. Human rights targeted in the curriculum focus on socio-economic rights such as the right to employment, education, access to health care, the right to freedom of speech and the right to protection. Further inclusions in the curriculum are Acts pertaining to specific vulnerable groups; ethical codes of conduct; country constitutions, especially sections on human rights, and charters, declarations and conventions such as the United Nations Declaration for Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Students are taught about these instruments of human rights and their roles in enforcing their application.

One of the key objectives in teaching human rights is to enable students to reinforce justice for marginalised and vulnerable groups which include an emphasis on the promotion of human dignity. A module focused on advocacy for woman and child rights is one such example. Social policy, critical social work, social work ethics and values, research ethics, child protection, community development, human behaviour, the social environment, social law, and social work case management are some of the modules highlighted to cover human rights teaching, as well as opportunities for community engagement to apply learning. In one social work programme students are taught humanitarian principles, including impartiality, neutrality, and how to use them in assisting survivors whose houses have been demolished. Following the flood

disaster in 2011 in Dar es Salaam, along the Msimbazi River, the government of Tanzania compensated people with land in a different location after rescuing them. However the people then moved back to the disaster area, where they rebuilt homes which were then demolished by the government. Social work students are given an assignment on how they can use those principles to maintain the dignity and worth of the survivors. By incorporating human rights issues with humanitarian assistance they have to show how they apply principles of impartiality, non-discrimination, and being non-judgemental in providing the services as people are entitled too.

Methods of teaching on human dignity and human rights, and preparing students not only to be human rights conscious but being able to act accordingly, range from case studies, assignments based on policy analyses, and applied knowledge in practice. In other instances, policy implementations such as inclusive education for disabled students are observed for analyses. In another example, attached to a social work case management module, students have to organise themselves into groups and each group has to undertake a project 'Adopt a Blind Person'. The students are encouraged to connect the blind person to a faith-based organisation for continued support. Other examples are where students have to prepare documents such as the Rights and Welfare of Children, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child for class discussion and reflection on factors that hamper the attainment of the rights of children as well as how social workers can enhance the rights of children in their practice and in communities.

In some modules, human rights issues are openly discussed in class, based on current news from around the world, assigned reading or visual material. Another way of teaching human rights is by putting emphasis on the principles of social work, how social work promotes human rights and the dignity of the person, assisting students to understand that all the interventions by social workers aim at protecting and restoring the dignity of service users, and also exhort students to know basic human rights and help the community members to know their rights for their own protection. Written petitions to government, advocacy marches, and fund raising for people affected by disasters are further examples of projects in which students engage. One university formed a human rights club as basis to teach the neighbouring communities on issues of human rights through seminars, and workshops. Student bodies are also used as a platform to engage in human rights issues.

Examples in practice include empowering children to know their rights, and women and girls are assisted to fight against gender based violations of their rights. Awareness campaigns in schools where children are taught about their rights and responsibilities and how they can access services, is another example to which students are exposed too in practice.

For human rights teaching it is critical to adopt approaches that can assist students, many of whom are exposed to poverty, marginalisation, and exclusion, to free themselves from oppression and discrimination in order to assist others with similar experiences. Students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the leadership of Prof Vishanthie Sewpaul, show examples of how students who, having been exposed to emancipatory social work education and become bold and courageous enough to take on issues of justice at institutional, national and international level, can make a difference on student-level. She indicated that, based on the praxis and consciousness-raising strategies of Freire, Gramsci and Althusser - the cornerstones of anti-oppressive theory and practice - students showed how emancipatory social work education is concerned about the Self being the site of politicisation, by using their awareness of their external sources of oppression and/or privilege, and building on their self-esteem and courage to engage in societal change efforts. As a collective, the students challenged university management regarding the structural impediments to the inclusion of students with disabilities; they lobbied provincial government for support of students threatened with exclusion on account of non-payment of fees; networked and collaborated with provincial government and various NGOs to hold a public march highlighting the issue of violence against women and children, and they made statements rejecting homophobia and challenging governments that violate people's right to dignity based on their sexual orientation.

When the Al Shabab killed almost 150 people, mainly students, at Garissa University College in Kenya, first year students at KwaZulu-Natal University, who had been exposed to emancipatory education, and saw themselves as agents of change on a global level, developed a petition that was sent globally and produced a video condemning the acts of violent extremism and calling for non-violence, peace, love and unity in diversity. The video was shared globally and the consolidated petition was sent to the UN Security Council, the African Union and the Kenyan government. To date students send Facebook postings on the initiative, and feel proud to be part of global justice initiatives. The message in class

was unequivocally: The Power of One (each one of us can make a difference within the sphere of our influence at micro, mezzo and/or macro levels); The Power of Many (as a collective we can make a world of difference - as demonstrated by collective student action ... and linking them with global structures), and The Power of Now - the lesson that there is no virtue in procrastination. These initiatives also serve as good examples for linking micro and macro practice which will next be discussed.

Linking micro and macro practice in promoting dignity (N=56)

This section covers the efforts of respondents to promote human dignity, through practice or teaching, in linking micro (person) practice with macro (political/policy/advocacy) issues. From a total of 56 respondents, 51 said they do link micro and macro practice while five (5) did not. How they do this was shared by 47 respondents.

Linking micro and macro practice connects the personal/individual problems with macro/political issues such as poverty, education, and socio-cultural issues on both a national and global level. Treating each individual with dignity is the starting point to ensure that everybody can enjoy social justice and a peaceful living. Adopting a holistic approach guided by theoretical frameworks such as the ecological systems theory, Freire's empowerment theories, and the social development approach were reported. A holistic approach situates the individual within a broader political and socio-economic policy context. Individual cases of abuse and violence against children underscore the magnitude of the problem which requires engagement in political and policy debates that challenge child protection systems. Advocacy and awareness raising are core in bridging micro-macro practice, strengthened by people participation and inclusion. One example of raising awareness through activism is on sexual abuse against men in conflict areas where male survivors of violence were provided both national and global platforms to share their experiences (Refugee Law Project).

Another example emphasises the important role of social work educators in demonstrating political strategies while working along students in field placements. Sewpaul and her students (see Clarke, Sunday Tribune, 2015) worked in a school where suicide turned out to be a major concern expressed by the teachers. Apart from immediate psycho-social support, students were fully included to plan and implement a "Suicide is not an option campaign" for the whole school. Recognising that suicide is not only an individual and family affair, but a

community issue, the matter was dealt with via community radio. The students, school Principal and students took part in the radio talk show. Another example is turning lack of access for individual students with disabilities into a political issue at the institutional level, drawing on institutional and national policies on social inclusion. Both these examples indicate the essence of emancipatory teaching approaches where students learn to change perceptions of themselves in understanding social issues. Within the context of emancipatory theory, Sewpaul argues that without politicisation of the Self it is unlikely that students will become aware enough to understand external sources of oppression and privilege. 'Without such awareness there are far too many taken-for-granted assumptions about race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality etc. and both oppression and privilege become internalised. Such awareness is an important precursor to motivated social action.' Self-experience will have more of a life-changing impact on empowering students to better understand external sources of oppression and privilege and in turn, motivate them to become change agents in their respective communities.

The media, and in particular radio programmes were strongly supported by respondents in creating awareness on violation of women's rights and linking them with the gender desk, and legal and human rights centers. The ultimate aim is that vulnerable people are empowered sufficiently to represent themselves on all levels that influence micro and macro decisions and policies.

Policies, laws, and procedures should be analysed by practitioners, educators and students to expose unintended consequences, and possible areas of discrimination for individuals, which in turn should be challenged. The use of fictitious case studies, detailing abuse of vulnerable people such as women under the pretext of culture were suggested to promote reflexive thinking among students in order to encourage them to challenge some of the prejudicial dominant thinking. Further, research on policy, access to services and retention of treatment programmes should inform interventions that bridge micro and macro practice. Social work associations are considered to play a significant role in this regard. In 2015, during the international social work conference organised by Hope Africa University, the important role of social workers in challenging policies was illustrated with the launch of the National Association of Social Workers in Burundi with the purpose to creating awareness among Burundians on social work, but in particular to have a recognised platform to influence the formulation or

reformulation of policies that will promote people's wellbeing and dignity.

Challenges in promoting human dignity (N=55)

In the question on what kind of personal challenges respondents experience in their efforts in practice or teaching to promote human dignity, the purpose was to provide an opportunity to recognise own perceptions and infringements that impact on social workers/educators value of themselves and possible violations of their rights in an attempt to bring about social change.

The first challenge relates to the importance of the self in demonstrating respect for others. There appears to be a lot of awareness about human dignity, however, 'awareness' does not necessarily result in 'practicing' human dignity. Human dignity is not always reflected in people's views and behaviours towards others, especially when it comes to dealing with diversity issues. In addition, the concept of treating people with dignity may be clear to individual professionals, but not to others with whom they work in the same environment. As such, human dignity may be promoted by some service providers, but violated by others in the same situation. There is also a notion that human dignity applies only to certain groups, and that not all people deserve to be treated with respect. Self-reflection is very important in relation to one's own position on human dignity and promoting it in the working context.

Paying lip-service to human dignity is further illustrated by social workers' experience that human rights, although imposed by law and social policies, are not always recognised by politicians, or correctly interpreted within law. Although lack of resources may play a role, the lack of initiative to implement and monitor existing policies that should promote human dignity, is a concern.

Community participation is a huge challenge for various reasons. Political influence in social service delivery creates suspicion on individuals' intentions and this does not only influence involvement, but also causes resistance. Further, a lack of knowledge and ignorance on human rights impacts on cooperation, e.g. when children with disabilities are hidden by their families. The lack of commitment and cooperation that seriously hamper services, stretches beyond uncooperative families, to local and district officials in cases that require time and money, for example tracking girls who elope and drop out of school.

The impact of conflict and war, poses serious challenges to social workers in promoting peoples' dignity as exemplified in responses from Burundi. 'It is very difficult to promote human rights in Burundi after many years of war. You cannot fight against poverty when there is no mutual trust and insecurity in a given community'. The holistic approach is not known, in particular to social work partners who think that a social worker cannot be a counsellor and work on one or many projects of community development at the same time. This perception diminishes the role of social work and leads to fragmentation of services, as well as service users' needs. Another challenge is that social work as a science and profession is not known because it is new, such as in the case of Burundi.

Social workers face various challenges on child protection among stakeholders responsible for protecting children. Limited capacity among stakeholders, a lack of information, or possibly ignorance, but also inadequate willingness and involvement by government institutions, are serious concerns in underscoring children's value. For example, some police officers treat children who are in conflict with the law as if they are already convicted of a crime, even though not found guilty or sentenced. Social workers have to protect children by referring such matters to the provincial office, and specifically to the person working with child justice, so that errors can be corrected and service delivery not affected. Further, institutionalisation of children reduces their dignity and ability to grow within the family setting, as confirmed by Browne (2009) and Csaky (2009) who identify the risk of harm to young children in institutional care. Poor working conditions, such as lack of adequate office space, affect the privacy of service users and violate the ethical conduct of social workers to protect their dignity. The lack of teaching material on human rights, social justice and other areas of social work, and teaching equipment like projectors and audio systems to facilitate proper student learning, pose huge challenges on human dignity of educators, students, field placement organisations, and service users. Another personal challenge is the lack of resources to undertake research to better understand some of the social issues in order to derive an effective intervention.

Advocating human rights can be risky for organisations such as the Law Refugee Project whose work can be misinterpreted, for example work with male survivors of conflict related violence has been seen as a promotion of homosexuality and has brought the organisation under close legal scrutiny and isolation, and even a suspension of activities in

the recent past. Prioritising people's dignity is influenced by a lack of adequate resources including material aid, vehicles and office space; leading sometimes having to alternate vehicles to follow up a variety of cases and use outside space for interviews. Insufficient funds impacts on service delivery such as education programmes and professional morale. Further, large caseloads result in not providing interventions of a very high standard. In addition, lack of supervision to determine whether a social worker is 'on the right path', poses a serious challenge in promoting human dignity. Beyond sufficient funds and other resources, time is always an issue which makes it very difficult to uphold the rights of children; hence undermining their needs. Challenges also extend to a personal level, when professionals are not being paid adequately, and opportunities for career development are limited.

Service fields such as corrections, pose challenges for promoting human dignity. In corrections, security of the inmates takes precedence so any activity which is suspected to compromise this is discontinued even though it is for the good of the inmates. The high inmate population compromises the ability of providing adequate rehabilitation programmes. Inadequate facilitation affects one's ability to effectively implement rehabilitation programmes especially in the area of reintegration.

Social workers are hugely challenged by working with the bureaucracy of governments and sometimes the lack of support from international organisations working in a country. It seems as if these international organisations form alliances and partnership with governments and are then reluctant to work with grassroots organisations that are doing the actual work. Also, there is a lack of commitment from some governments to engage grassroots organisations despite efforts to reach out to them. Continuous follow-ups result in discouraging responses, as they do not guarantee financial or moral support from the government or international organisations.

Cultural challenges constitute another impediment to promoting human dignity. There are still some communities who believe for example that girls do not deserve to go to school or that women should be empowered to be part of the mainstream economy. Other cultural obstacles in promoting human dignity relate to talking about 'taboo' topics. For instance, issues associated with the menstrual period and sexuality are not easily discussed in public. Yet, these have a serious effect on the dignity of women and girls in various settings. Cultural rigidity is also

seen as a challenge where people's perceptions and attitudes have been biased by longstanding experiences of exploitation, discrimination, suppression and political marginalisation where the values of people have not been respected. Transforming or changing these perceptions is no easy task, as norms, values and practices are embedded in people's cultures and wellbeing.

Not all students realise the importance of treating all people with dignity, and the learning process towards this end, takes longer with some students. Furthermore, because it is not easy for all human rights to be observed, students have many questions on how exactly social workers are to make sure that peoples' rights are upheld. Higher tertiary institutions are also faced with high student numbers. In addition, some students enrol for the social work programme just to get a job, as opposed to what the profession entails. This is exacerbated by government bursaries with low academic entry levels. A further concern is the increased commodification of education, with neoliberal influences, where the focus is on quantity, rather than quality of education. Also, in the words of a respondent 'the extremely complex relationship between agency (the freedom to think) and structure (the impact of dominant discourses and systems on our thinking) makes this kind of education very challenging. Social work education has to be brought down to practical examples for students to connect with the philosophy underlying it'. This relates to a remark of another respondent that the social work programme is too self-centred around the teacher whereas the preference is that some themes be co-taught for sufficient sharing of experience and be more practical. Students want to share in lived experiences and practice realities, which in some instances do pose their own challenges, when students face serious psycho-social or structural problems. On the other hand, security for field placements poses challenges for some schools where they wish to go to the field but because of security issues, field placements are simply ignored, or cancelled. Lack of funds also prevent training institutions from having sufficient community services as well as effective supervision of students during internship that would otherwise bolster the value and promotion of human dignity by students.

Comparative studies in promoting human dignity (N=54)

The question covered whether the respondent/institution or organisation is involved in any comparative studies, including international student placements, *and/or* collective actions/forums in promoting human dignity and human rights. Of 54 responses, 29

(53.70%) said yes and provided information on the nature thereof while 25 (46.30) said no.

Collaborative initiatives include international student exchange programmes and internships, co-publishing, and lecturing. National, regional and global networks such as Avaaz and Amnesty International provide a platform for sharing ideas and are used as vehicles for change. International campaigns are undertaken to strengthen advocacy organisations on issues such as women refugees, child rights governance, and economic development. International and regional networks are strengthened through membership in international and regional organisations such as International Federation of Aging, the International Association of the Schools of Social Work, and Association of the Schools of Social Work of Africa. Student platforms such as Guild Councils are used to advocate the rights of students. Forum meetings are undertaken among NGOs and communities to discuss challenges and how to overcome them in order to provide adequate services to clients. Exchange programmes are mostly outside the borders of Africa, including Austria; Sweden, Canada, Finland, and Norway. The partnership project on Promotion of Professional Social Work in East Africa (PROSOWO) is making a significant contribution to develop social work in East Africa, but also in broader Africa. Celebrations are shared on events such as World Social Work Day when students engage in awareness raising programmes on campus.

Conclusion

The examples shared in this report reflect commitment, best practices, but also challenges in promoting human dignity. Awareness about human dignity may be a good starting point in promoting people's worth, but in itself it will not change anything for vulnerable people and their dignity. Unless awareness turns into commitment, and commitment into action where 'I' and 'we', and 'us' (together) become central to effecting social change, vulnerable people will remain on the margins and excluded, even though they may get some services and support.

Best practices shared in this report, show that treating people with respect starts from within; with a personal commitment and approach. Learning about dignity must be a lived experience by challenging one's own prejudices, oppressions or privileges, worldviews and how these possibly impact on how service users, including clients and students, are approached and valued. Further, dignity must be role modelled, in real

life practice contexts. Educators cannot inspire students to treat people with dignity if they do not demonstrate human dignity to them by approaching them in a way that makes them feel valued and appreciated; further, giving them the opportunity to experience that among themselves during class assignments and also in real life practice contexts. Likewise, educators, practitioners, students, researchers and policy makers cannot approach and work with communities and vulnerable people if they do not show them respect in a way in which they experience that they are first and foremost valued as a person/peoples, and worthy to engage in changing their circumstances through advocacy, policy, development and social services. That is the only secure route to show unconditional respect for human dignity, and to ensure that social work practitioners, educators and students are empowered to advocate people's rights, expect communities and vulnerable people to participate in their own development, and to hold duty bearers accountable to deliver on policies and services.

One measure for treating people with dignity is through the lens of equality. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) states that all human beings are born free and are equal in their dignity and rights. Dignity and equality go hand in hand. No resources and time are required to show respect to people. It is in the moment, in the opportunity, and it is either visible or non-existent. It is the process of restoration of dignity that will take time, resources, and strategies in building dignified lives in partnership with vulnerable people.

In promoting human dignity in the Africa region, findings indicate that, amidst successes in targeting vulnerabilities that impact people's dignity, there are challenges that undermine these efforts. Among others, the lack of supportive systems of protection of human rights, poor infrastructure and inadequate resources limit social workers from reaching the most poor in the rural areas. Further, the profession itself needs advocacy for recognition of its role and position in contributing to social change. The importance of having the right attitude and approach, in addition to knowledge and competencies, stand out as an area where educators, practitioners and students need continuous shaping to ensure that they role model human dignity.

In promoting dignity and worth of all people, findings indicate the golden thread between practice, education, policy and research. Hence, the challenges for practice in promoting human dignity are equally the challenges for educators, policy makers and researchers; the uniting

force in their efforts towards ensuring a just society. If it is not demonstrated within and across all levels, e.g. by the educator to the student; between practitioners and educators, social work researchers' relationship with other researchers, it seriously questions effective social work education and practice in the region.

Therefore, the following challenges in going forward in promoting human dignity should be a united initiative from educators, practitioners, students, and organisations in collaboration with service users:

- Human dignity as defined in this report, should be adopted as the core professional commitment for practice, teaching and policy in building a more just society, and upholding of human rights. This includes commitment to equal treatment of people in all areas of service delivery.
- Thorough self-analyses of intentions, viewpoints, influences, stereotypes, biases, and attitudes which inform own approaches and practices. If social workers have a clearer grasp of how they think society operates, it will assist them to gain a fuller understanding of the origin of the problems faced by service users, and of their lived experiences (Lombard, 2015). The way in which social workers construct people's problems and the professional interventions they offer depends largely on social workers' view of how the world they live in operates which raises the issue of the political nature of social work (Sheedy, 2013). Adopting an approach of critical Self-awareness, implies adopting the 'personal' as 'political'. Hanisch (1969, quoted in Sheedy 2013:89) states: "Nowhere is the link between agency and structure more succinctly expressed than in the phrase 'the personal is political'."
- Creating local, and national forums for open dialogue on themes related to human dignity, and identifying areas for joint advocacy and awareness raising.
- Monitoring and challenging government statements, and policy implementation that impede on people's dignity. This includes advocacy for action. Rwanda serves as a case example, where government through parliament, has created a special budget in ensuring that human dignity for people who are disabled, poor,

and minority people is catered for through uplifting their life standards. People must feel that their rights and freedoms are protected and respected in practice and not just on paper (ElBaradei, 2015).

- Show case achievements in promoting human dignity by sharing the testimonies of people in case studies, in the media, classrooms, conferences, government submissions, funding applications, and scientific publications.
- Develop partnerships among NGOs to strengthen lobbying efforts in promoting human dignity, and to engage international and national organisations in strengthening local and regional collaboration on vulnerability areas. ElBaradei (2015) points out that because most significant global threats today, including poverty, climate change, communicable diseases, are threats without borders; they need international co-operation to make an impact. This underscores the importance of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development committing IASSW, IFSW and ICSW to continue collaboration in tackling injustices on a global and regional level.
- Encourage development of national associations of social workers in uniting them to promote social work in the country and region. Joining regional and international networks such as IASSW, ASSWA and IFSW will further strengthen local efforts. National associations play a critical role in linking the local with the global initiatives. It also provides a platform to benchmark attitudes, motivations, approaches, interventions and in particular the engagement of vulnerable people as partners. Referring to the attitudes and motivation of social workers, Sims, Chenu and Williams (2014) emphasise passion, empathy and a mindset aimed at working together for change with service users as equals.
- Practice placements of students should create opportunities to observe human dignity in action, but also for them to practice showing human dignity in the work they do.
- Human rights and social justice should underscore all teaching in social work and social development as this is core to social

work. In strengthening initiatives such as PROSOWO, more deliberate efforts should be made in the region to collaborate. Exchange students and lecturers should be just as important within Africa as with the rest of the world. African universities should assist one another with teaching material that can promote human dignity and human rights. This implies more exchanges in Africa in promoting social justice and human dignity. Existing efforts in Africa on collaborative research and organising conferences should be extended. Debates on human dignity and human rights in the Africa region are vital in showing solidarity towards vulnerable people and violations of their dignity and human rights.

- What remains an amazing observation when faced with the adversities that people daily face, is their resilience to keep going, despite all odds. This makes people participation the strongest link in all efforts to promote their dignity. What they need are professionals who treat them with respect, assist them/build their capacity to advocate their rights, and create opportunities where they can act their role and responsibilities in achieving dignified lives. This includes social work agencies treating people in a dignified manner; not as beggars but as rights holders. When service users have to make numerous journeys to get a service, wait in long queues, and are not given adequate explanations, it does not promote their dignity or acknowledge their worth.

Being on the upheaval in terms of economic growth and its wealth of assets and resources, ElBaradei (2015:para27) argues that the Africa continent has all the potential to undergo the cultural transformation of 'peace based on human dignity, social justice, compassion and solidarity'. However, 'this will require the right set of political measures and economic and social policies, together with an environment based on inclusiveness, equity, trust and dialogue; an environment that constrains the human impulse for violence and adjusts our mind-set to understand that we are the same human family, irrespective of our superficial differences of religion, ethnicity or race' (ElBaradei, 2015:para28). Many countries in Africa are signatory to international treaties, declarations and covenants which in addition to country constitutions and laws, provide international standards of political, economic, social and cultural human rights which pave the way for advocacy for vulnerable people. ElBaradei (2015) observes that too often a plethora of laws,

plans and visions for development exist across the Africa continent, but only on paper. Practitioners and educators can contribute in turning 'words into deeds and address the issue of implementation' (ElBaradei, 2015). However, campaigning for peoples' dignity and rights is only possible if educators, practitioners and students know these documents, and if it is included in social work curricula so that students learn and use them in advocacy practice. A role for social work and social development in using these documents for awareness raising and advocacy is further strengthened by the African Union's Agenda 2063 which visualises Unity, Prosperity and Peace as the '*Future we want for Africa*'.

Commitment to the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development (2012) provides the platform to unite practitioners, educators, policy makers and researchers to advocate the universal implementation of international conventions and other instruments on social, economic, cultural and political rights for all peoples, and for social strategies that build cohesive and peaceful societies (Lombard, 2015). Furthermore, it provides a united front to hold governments accountable for policies and statements that support human dignity and services that uphold people's human rights and basic freedoms.

Finally, the Global Agenda commits practitioners, educators, policy makers and researchers to contribute to the United Nations *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The Global Agenda is a call for action, and its achievement will be determined by whether it can, but also how, it delivers on its commitments. In the case of the theme, *Promoting human dignity and worth of all peoples*, success can only be measured to the extent that peace, development and justice prevail on the Africa continent. The benchmark is embedded in recognition of the inherent dignity and the equality and rights of people as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world (UN, 1948).

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Asia Pacific Region

This summary has been compiled from the records taken of the two workshops held at the International Federation of Social Workers Asia Pacific Regional Conference in 2015 and some supplementary material provided since that time. The editors apologise for any inaccuracies due to the low quality of audio recording and at times the limited amount of information provided. However the editors hope that the essence of this summary reflects the key issues on this topic from our region. This not an academic paper but captures some of the work being undertaken in our region related to the Global Agenda Theme – *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples*. We also acknowledge the role of several colleagues from the region in supporting and sustaining this work, including the organisation of the conference.

In October 2015, members of the International Federation of Social Workers Asia Pacific Region (IFSW – AP) and the Asia Pacific Association of Social Work Educators (APASWE) gathered together for their joint regional conference in the city of Bangkok, Thailand. A major focus of the gathering was on Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People as the current topic of the Global Agenda. A one day pre-Conference workshop on 20 October 2015 was dedicated to the very important issues of Child Labour and Children of Migrant workers as fundamental issues of concern when considering the topic of Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People. Mr M V Sriganesh from India, Dr Bala Nikku from Nepal, Mr

Habibur Rahman from Bangladesh and Mr Sompong Srakaew were guest speakers at this workshop. A further workshop on the 22 October broadened the focus of this Global Agenda topic and included a range of perspectives from several of our member countries across the region.

The Asia Pacific region is the largest geographically and arguably one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse regions of IFSW. Although child labour is not an issue in every country, we are united in our concerns about the high rate of child labour in many places and the consequential multiple negative impacts on child labourers and children of migrants as some of our most vulnerable people.

Speakers from Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Thailand informed the gathering at the pre-conference workshop of the multiple layers of complexity attached to this issue, of the variety of ways this issue manifested itself and of some of the ways this is beginning to be addressed.

All cultures recognise the importance of childhood experiences as forming the basis for positive and productive adulthood. Mr Sriganesh MV from India invited a moment of reflection for participants to reflect on a happy memory from childhood which served as a poignant reminder that for many child labourers or migrants, no such happy memories existed. Dr Bala Nikku from Nepal noted that one impact of child labour is to destroy their childhood which is supposed to be free, pleasant, secure and protected.

Mr Sriganesh defined child labour as “Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity and that is harmful to physical and mental development.” Dr Bala Nikku from Nepal noted the important distinction between reasonable childhood chores or ‘work’, undertaken in all cultures to promote belonging and social development and child ‘labour’ which is exploitation and the focus of our attention.

Internationally, in addition to documents such as the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, there are conventions from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which include Convention 138 which determines the minimum age and Convention 182 identifying the worst types of child labour. However despite these conventions, the number of children engaged in child labour continues to increase. Not all countries have signed up to these Conventions and all speakers noted that whilst their countries have many layers of policies and various Acts

which apply to child labour there are also exemptions, difficulties with enforcement and in some instances, political disinterest in addressing the problem. Mr Habibur Rahman from Bangladesh noted the strong lobby from business persons to maintain the status quo retaining the use of cheaper child labour as well as a lack of motivation for change by politicians as their own personal experiences are so distant from the realities of families for whom child labour is a necessary component of the family income.

Sectors commonly exploiting child labour include factory industries (including apparel and carpet), mines and quarries, agriculture, domestic service, shop work, transportation (producing and assembling vehicle parts) and the construction industry. In addition the exploitation of children in the sex industry is a major concern. As well as the psycho-social impacts, many of these industries also pose significant risk of serious physical injury or death and / or mental injury and abuse. In India the Factories Act does not allow factories to engage a child under the age of 14 and a child between the ages of 14 – 18 must have certification to work in the factory industries.

In Nepal 2% of children are forced to work in the worst forms of child labour and 5% are waged child labour. However a further 26% are economically active children and 41% are working in some way. In Bangladesh Mr Habibur Rahman reports that in the age band 5 – 17 years, there are 7.4 million working children, 3.2 million child labourers, 1.3 million children engaged in hazardous labour and 421,000 child domestic workers.

The broad approaches for addressing the issue of child labour include Education – enabling children to attend schools; and Poverty – finding ways of supporting families so that they have their basic needs met without the need for children to work. A recent amendment in the legislation in India includes the right to education for children until the age of 14 years. Parents have an obligation to send their child to school and they can be prosecuted if they do not comply. Schools cannot refuse a child – they must admit a child into their school. State governments in India are expected to create the necessary infrastructure to ensure children have this opportunity. However one complication in India is that the Gross enrolment of children in schools is around 50% and the presumption is that if they are not in schools they are engaged in child labour activities.

When families live in poverty – many living on \$2 per day - children are regarded as an asset and the ability to work regarded as an essential economic commodity to enable the family to survive. Dr Bala Nikku noted that if the family was provided with a cash incentive to send their children to school they would be able to stop sending them to work and instead send them to school. He also noted that although statistically 89% of children attend school, this may not be an accurate picture. Mr Rahman also noted that various psychosocial factors such as the death of the earning family member, parental divorce, health problems in the family and being a child who is abandoned can have major impacts on whether a child is able to remain in education or is forced by the circumstances of their family to work.

Dr Nikku noted that one of the consequences of Nepal's geographic location as a 'land link' between India and China, is child trafficking and migrant children. Mr Sompong Srakaew from Thailand further expanded on the issues related to migrant children. In Thailand in 2014 there were more than 1.6 million migrant workers including children – many of these are now second generation migrant workers. Many migrant workers and their families face problems such as having to pay bribes for work, sexual exploitation, accidents at work – they are unable to access health care – or living with the consequences of addictions – commonly a gambling addiction. Registering for a work permit can be a lengthy and difficult process and consequently many migrant workers do not hold such documentation, thereby increasing their risks of exploitation and inhibiting their ability to access any support systems.

Social workers play key roles in dealing with the consequences of child labour with many working within their counties to lobby for ways to both address poverty and enable them to attend schools. The use of media to promote the issue and some solutions should not be overlooked. Social workers also work directly with the children who have suffered from the consequences of child labour. In Nepal promoting a social work discourse based in human rights will provide the basis to eliminate the issue of child labour.

Mr Sompong Srakaew from Thailand is a strong advocate against child labour and human trafficking. He spoke of the work of his agency – the Labour Rights Promotion Network (LPN) – providing many examples of social work practice. The LPN established labour centres more than 10 years ago which work with Migrant workers to ensure their basic human rights, education, health and labour rights are met. In addition to the

Labour centres the LPN holds Sunday learning centres, hosts a multicultural centre and assists migrant children to access Thai government schools in many provinces. They also support migrant workers to develop their own cultural centres. Through the use of an app for smart phones, migrant workers can receive news and access key helping agencies when needed. The LPN links with other NGOs in neighbouring countries to work together on the issues of migrant children and migrant workers.

At the conclusion of this workshop the following was drafted as a remit to go forward to the IFSW General Meeting in Seoul in 2016:

“That the General Meeting acknowledges that in all corners of the world, child labour is an unacceptable exploitation of the Rights of Children and that such exploitation seriously and negatively impacts on their long term health and wellbeing. We call upon IFSW to develop a position or policy statement against child labour policies and practices.”

A further workshop held on 22 October 2015 during the Conference in Bangkok brought together a smaller group and after an overview of the purpose and development of the Global Agenda several speakers shared what was happening in each of their countries. We received presentations from India, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Nepal and South Korea. As a joint APASWE and IFSW gathering there was also an opportunity for a brief overview of social work in each of these countries. For some such as Australia and Japan the profession of social work has been established for many decades whereas for others such as Bangladesh, social work is a volunteering activity and in Nepal the profession has mostly developed over the last two decades with the establishment of formal education in 1996. Some countries have state regulation of the profession whilst others have a form of self-regulation through the professional body. Many speakers also reported on their promotion of the global agenda theme at Social Work Day events earlier in 2015.

Whilst a range of topics were traversed at this workshop, the three central themes specifically relating to Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People, were Poverty, Mental Health and Disasters. In separating these out as three topics it is also recognised that often (but not always) there is a strong linkage between some or all of these. Across our region

Indigenous issues also feature highly with many indigenous peoples faring poorly in all three of these areas. Many of the speakers noted the importance of collaboration across the whole social work system – education of social workers, social work practitioners’ professional ethics and standards, and social service providers – to align their work to address the issues arising from these themes. Hong Kong has a strong collaboration between their Council of Social Services, Social Work Association and School of Social Work. Speakers also noted the importance of working at the micro (individuals and their families), meso (community development) and macro (nationally and internationally) levels in order for these issues to be accurately promoted and addressed. The use of media and the importance of strong lobbying of all layers of political influence was recognised. The Australian Social Workers Association has developed a number of position statements on a range of social justice issues promoting the dignity and worth of people. Some examples of position statements include violence against women, children in immigration detention and the death penalty. They also make many submissions to their government on issues such as the decision to prevent people under 25 year of age receiving a benefit for 6 months when they became unemployed, thereby contributing to this policy being revoked.

Re-enforcing the discussions of the pre-conference workshop, the link between poverty and child labour was re-iterated as being a high priority in many countries. Project HELPME (health, education, life protection, monitoring and evaluation) in the Philippines is an interagency collaboration aimed at minimising (if not eliminating) the child labour problem. Another example of seeking to break the cycle and address poverty, is the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in India. This is a residential institute for 25,000 indigenous children that provides free accommodation, food and health care as well as employment following the completion of their education. In the Philippines there are a number of community development initiatives and whilst each of these responds to the particular needs identified in their respective communities, many of these are actively working to address poverty. The Sustainable Livelihood programme of the Department of Social Welfare in Indonesia caters for up to 723,000 families. The participants in this programme actively contribute in the workforce by using available local resources to meet identified needs in accessible markets.

In Hong Kong, poverty is the number one priority in the government's agenda and they have established a Commission of Poverty. This government led initiative is drawing all the parties together to look at this issue, beginning with defining who are 'poor' and addressing issues such as the lack of social protection following retirement. Hong Kong also noted that at times there can be a tension where social workers advocating for social justice can also be blamed for leading a social movement which may disrupt a sense of order and harmony. In some cases this has led to the prosecution of social workers who take a lead in such movements. A study in India by Sheeja Karalam, George and Kimura, regarding the status of women in developing countries examined the empowerment of women in the context of a community development project at the Centre for Social Action (CSA) in Bangalore. The CSA has undertaken a number of initiatives including improved access to education, better care and nutrition in early childhood and opportunities for community work. In one example a young woman had completed her early education but rather than being able to pursue further education she was found a life partner by her parents and became a housewife and mother. She was confined to indoors (aside from grazing cattle or fetching water) and her world was limited only to her family. Through talking with other women when they were grazing cattle together, she became aware of one of the CSA's Self Help Groups and by enrolling onto this, she was able to gain more education, build social connections and develop new skills. This person has gone on to be an executive committee member of an ongoing group which was formed following the ending of the CSA funding and continues to provide services to the local community.

The issue of mental health was highlighted as a priority issue across the region. In Indonesia high rates of mental disorder, drug abuse and suicide together with low numbers of psychiatrists and limited ability to access psychiatric treatment and rehabilitation services, leads to poor outcomes for people affected by mental health problems. A new Mental Health Act passed in 2014 sets out the roles of social workers in psycho-social rehabilitation and mental health services. The Indonesian chapter of the World Association for Psycho-social Rehabilitation links with international networks bringing professions together for seminars and workshops and they are actively involved in drafting government regulations related to mental health and psychosocial rehabilitation. Social workers are also actively engaged in working to eliminate stigma and discrimination against people with a mental health disability and working towards the elimination of restraining people with a mental

illness. Japan also spoke of mental illness as an issue citing the example of the “Bright Future Foundation” which was established by social workers to work with people with mental disorders supporting them to live within the community. Another Non-governmental organisation links people with a mental disorder into physical team activities enabling them to learn a new sport, make new social connections and build confidence. Through these contacts, people have been able to go on to gain employment and live a stable independent life. Japan also acknowledged the increasing prevalence of dementia and social isolation noting that their government has a strategy of respecting the elderly, promoting awareness and support for people with dementia. One example is where someone with dementia is introduced to the neighbourhood including key people such as the police and supermarkets so that they recognise these folk and collectively look after them. Social workers have been integrally involved in community work to develop these and other types of community supports. Social workers in Malaysia joined with their National Mental Health Association to celebrate world mental health day with the theme of dignity in mental health.

Disasters – especially natural disasters - are all too prevalent in our region. Many countries are on the “Pacific Ring of Fire” and consequently are affected by earthquakes, tsunami, flooding, mud slides and /or droughts. Japan – who recently led the project on social work in disasters for IFSW Asia Pacific – spoke of the 3 ‘S’ (Security, Safety and Stability) project providing accommodation for the victims of the major earthquake of March 2011. The Japanese Association of Social Workers has established an emergency headquarters and sent social workers to the worst affected area. They have categorised disaster recovery into three phases – the first 2 years dealing with the immediate effect of losing their family, friends and acquaintances and coping with any illnesses or diseases that have occurred as a result of the disaster. The next 2 years the cause of the stress was what could be termed as ‘secondary stressors’ with the many environmental changes and general disruptions to daily living and the third phase is dealing with the massive longstanding changes and losses with respect to relationships, employment and property as a result of the disaster. In the 3 ‘S’ project, social workers were involved in undertaking a needs assessment of people affected, linking them with existing services and for those with multiple problems they organised a regional alliance committee to collaborate in resolving the issues. They also worked in communities to promote an environment of acceptance of people with problems

providing information and education to these communities. Social workers in New Zealand have been involved in several ways following their earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. Most recently this has seen them working within a multidisciplinary team delivering school based mental health services as the after effects of the quakes, especially the secondary stressors, continue to impact people's lives – especially children and young people. Nepal's 2 major earthquakes in 2015 saw many social workers engaged in responding to victims of the disaster. Students from the school of social work worked with children from the community alongside other organisations. The school became a place for people to come to and get some help.

In addition to the KISS programme (India), Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia noted the particular vulnerability of indigenous peoples in all areas - poverty, mental health and disasters. Australia supports initiatives such as the Reconciliation Action Plan promoting better relationships between the Aboriginal peoples and Others that was developed from the International First Nations Social Work Conference held in Australia. Aotearoa New Zealand has the Tiriti O Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) as the foundation document between their indigenous peoples, the Maori, and the government and social workers are required to demonstrate their commitment to this Treaty through their bi-cultural practice in their work. The concept of indigeneity or what it means to be indigenous, including such elements as the importance of customs and cultural practices, language, traditional lands and places of significance in order to preserve the dignity and worth of indigenous peoples, is a continuing discourse in Aotearoa New Zealand. In Malaysia their professional body is partnering with a private corporation (Glaxo-Smith-Kline) to manage the Horlicks "School Journey Initiative" for a group of Orang Asli children who live on an island only accessible by boat. This programme aims to "champion the cause of making the often difficult path to an education easier for children around the world". They have employed a social work manager and an Orang Asli teacher to work with 30 Orang Asli children of varying ages for an initial period of 2 years.

Hong Kong notes the significant number of ethnic minorities mostly from India, Pakistan and Nepal, many of whom are second and third generations living in Hong Kong. They are urging the government not to ignore these ethnic minorities and are working to support these groups of people.

In Aotearoa New Zealand social work research into the often overlooked demographic of those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) within the older population seeks to examine how the quality and quantity of social connectedness impacts on their sense of wellbeing. This will provide new insights into promoting the dignity and worth of these often marginalised older persons.

This paper summarises the many and varied ways that the profession of social work – inclusive of educators, practitioners, social service providers and our professional bodies – promotes the dignity and worth of people across our Asia Pacific region. Through engaging in activities including political actions, community development projects or individual and family interventions, social workers make a positive difference in the lives of people we work with. The Editors wish to sincerely thank all presenters and contributors at our regional gathering in Thailand as well as those who have submitted further material since that time, which have enabled the compilation of this summary.

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European Region

Kerstin Svensson⁴

Foreword

The report before you is the result of the joint efforts of the ENSACT partners, who worked together to collect the contributions from all over Europe. It is also the result of the thorough approach by Kerstin Svensson who did a great job in analysing and arranging the contributions. I would like to thank them all for their valuable help in producing this European observatory report⁵.

We will share this European report with the members of the ENSACT partners and hope that it will contribute to a better understanding of the good practices that are taking place all over Europe to promote the dignity and worth of people. The digital version of this report includes links to all the materials received, so you can also learn more about individual good practices.

The report will also serve as the European input for the Global Agenda Observatory report that will be presented in Seoul, Korea, later this year.

⁴ Lunds University, Sweden

⁵ The full report including links to all the projects and material submitted including videos and posters can be found at <http://www.ensact.com/node/4>

I hope you will enjoy reading it and that it will inspire you to contribute to future European observatory efforts.

Thea Meinema

President, European Network for Social Action

ENSACT partners

The members of the European Network for Social Action (ENSACT) have worked together since 2007 to promote the human rights based approach of social work, social work education and social policies, in line with the objectives of the global social agenda but with a view to producing practical solutions at the local and regional level. The partners are:

- European Association of Schools of Social Work EASSW
- European association of training centres for socio-educational care work FESET
- International Federation of Educative Communities FICE Europe
- International Council on Social Welfare ICSW Europe
- International Federation of Social Workers IFSW Europe
- PowerUs, service users in social work learning partnership
- Social Work and Health Inequalities Network SWHIN

Introduction

The origins of social work can be regarded as a response to the emergence of 'the social question' in the context of the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. Through the fundamental changes in social relationships, caused by economic dislocation and revolutionary challenges to political power structures, ensuring the coherence of societies became a 'project' which had to be attended to, organised and shaped according to principles which came to be central reference points of modern social life such as liberty and equality (Lorenz 2016).

The quote above contains the first sentences in an article by Walter Lorenzi. In the article, Lorenz points out the contemporary challenges

for social work. I want to highlight some main issues for this report through the quote. Social work in Europe has been closely related to 'the social question', industrialism and social relationships in the specific forms of societies we have seen during the 20th century. One of the conclusions that are to be presented in this report is the importance of 'projects'. Lorenz points at social work as a project aiming towards the coherence of societies. In this report the focus is on how social work can promote the dignity and worth of people. Doing that is also a project, and as Lorenz says above, it has 'to be attended to, organised and shaped according to principles'.

This report is built on European examples of projects on how social work can promote the dignity and worth of people. The examples are given by voluntary contributors who recognised their practice as a good example worth sharing. "Good" is thereby defined by those who submitted the examples. This means that the collection is more spontaneous and less structured than it would have been if this was a research project. We cannot know why these contributions were sent in and others not, so that question has to be left aside. What we have is a collection of contributions of examples of practices those involved regard as good examples of promoting the dignity and worthy of people. That is all we know and all we need to know as long as we do not expect this report to tell a 'truth' or show the right thing to do. The aim of the report is to make the examples accessible and to start a reflecting discussion on the possibilities and difficulties in social work where it concerns promoting the dignity and worth of people.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank ENSACT for giving me this task and letting me work with this material. It has been very interesting to meet social work in different forms and contexts in this way. I would also like to thank Caroline Lundström, a social worker and master student in social work at Lund University, Sweden, who contacted me and offered to contribute to the work. It has been very valuable to share and discuss our impressions of the material. Last, but absolutely not least, my warm gratitude goes to CSA, *Centralförbundet Social Arbete* (in Swedish), with the English name 'National Association of Social Welfare'. The financial support given by this organisation has facilitated my work as it has enabled me to participate in meetings with ENSACT and in the IFSW European conference. I am sure the work has benefitted from this.

Social work in Europe

Social work is a varying practice. It is dependent on the context in which it is performed as well as on the people who perform it and the people who benefit from it. Nevertheless, there is something in common, something that makes it possible to talk about the concept social work in different contexts and for different kinds of actions. International organisations have formulated standards for social work practice and education as well as ethical principles.

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) recognised that the past and present political, economic, cultural and social orders, shaped in specific contexts, have unequal consequences for global, national and local communities and have negative impacts on people. Consequently, they felt compelled to advocate for a better world order which makes a reality of respect for human rights and dignity and a different structure of human relationships. (The Global Agenda 2012)

The commitments are guided by and consistent with the organisations' core statements on the definition of social work and the ethical principles of social work. Here, it is stated that 'social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversity are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing' (IFSW 2014)

These definitions and statements are global and therefore also very general. When we understand them in a European context we also have to be aware of the contemporary situation in Europe. It is in this context that the practices presented are taking place. Today Europe is in a situation where solidarity is questioned and differentiated. We are facing situations where the boundaries between the deserving and non-deserving are in place, causing people to be excluded from resources; offers of help focus more on individualised responses and coaching than on social and human rights. There are many challenges in this for social work. Lorenz (2016) argues: 'Modern societies require new forms of social contracts which social workers can pioneer in their daily

encounters with those individuals and groups most threatened with total bond disruption, abandonment and exclusion.'

The global agenda and the observatory

When the international organisations for social work (IFSW, IASSW and ICSW) started to advocate for a new world order in reaction to the contemporary situation, they set out the Global Agenda. They committed themselves to "supporting, influencing and enabling structures and systems that positively address the root causes of oppression and inequality." (The Global Agenda 2012) Their efforts were aimed at the following areas:

- Promoting social and economic equalities
- Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples
- Working toward environmental sustainability
- Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships

One of the steps in the Global Agenda process is to gather information on good practices and share those between social workers all over the world. The purpose is to gather evidence about the activities of social workers, educators and social development practitioners, in order to give visibility and credibility to their contributions and to promote further action. This is what "the Global Agenda Observatory" is about.

During 2010-12 the first area was in focus. The observatory report on promoting social and economic equalities was presented as a supplement to the International Social Work journal. The European contributions showed that social workers had been able to develop and improve services even in times of austerity. Examples of innovative methods in practical social work as well as of ways to influence policy making and decision-makers were given and an image of the creativity within social work was presented.

The present report is the European contribution to the second phase of the Global Agenda Observatory. This report will be published as a stand-alone version, and will also be the European contribution to the Global Agenda Observatory. In other regions of the world, observatories are also actively collecting and analysing good practices, but each region in the world has chosen its own way to gather examples. In 2016 the Global Agenda Observatory will present a final report of global examples on good practices on promoting the dignity and worth of peoples. It will also

be presented at the international conference on social work and social development in Seoul, Korea, in June 2016.

Methods and materials

This report is based on contributions given by social work organisations in a wide sense. Contributions represent a wide variety of organisations, as well as a wide variety of materials. It is a collection of examples given by people and organisations that were informed about the observatory and that would and could present these. We cannot know why some social workers sent their contributions, and other did not. What we have is glimpses of the wide variety of how social work is organised and executed in Europe. Nevertheless, the examples given vary to an extent that gives valuable insights in different practices of social work. The examples can inspire and challenge other practices in their development. Therefore it is relevant to structure this report as a catalogue of examples.

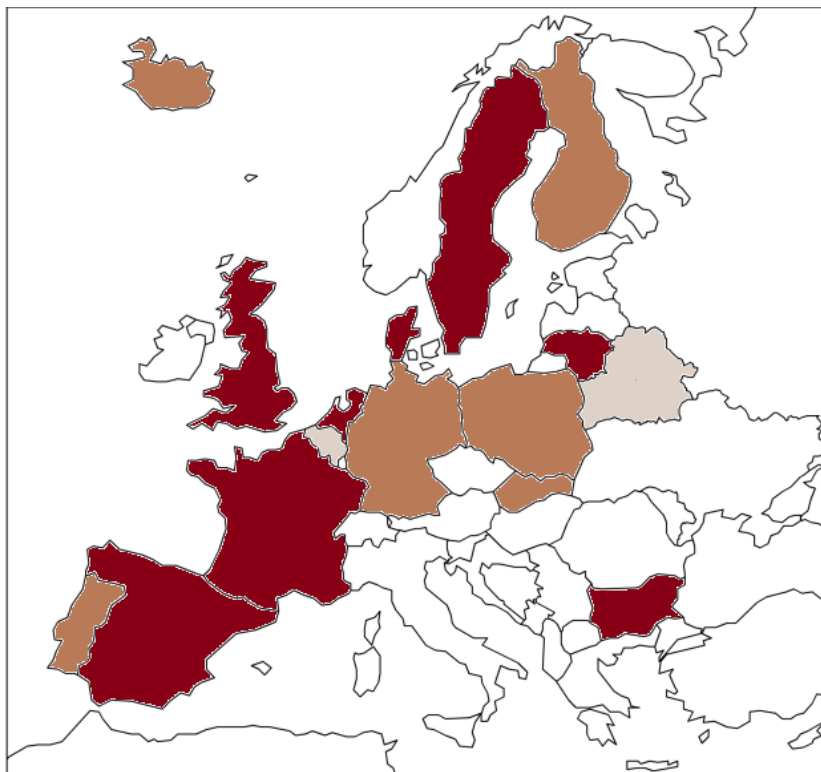
The submitted contributions

The examples have been gathered mainly through a website that was open for submissions from May to September 2015. Information about the observatory and the website were spread through the ENSACT organisations in various ways. The submissions should be in English and specific questions were to be answered (see appendix 1).

Throughout the collection of examples we had an open attitude, so that every submission was accepted. Some came a bit late, some came as emails instead of through the website and some contributions were sent in several times, as several attachments were submitted and the questions were answered several times. This open attitude has made it more difficult to describe the material. To this we can add the fact that some organisations sent in more than one example and that some of the submissions concerned several organisations, or several countries. To make it easy we can say that we had a little over 30 examples submitted from 16 countries, while more organisations and countries were involved in the activities presented.

The submissions were to be defined as representing Practice, Education or Policy. It was possible to choose more than one perspective, and most contributions actually indicated that they concerned more than one of the perspectives.

The map below shows the countries that were represented in the submissions.



The darker countries: Sweden, UK, Denmark, the Netherlands, Lithuania, France, Spain and Bulgaria had more than one submission. The lighter countries: Iceland, Finland, Portugal, Germany, Poland and Slovakia had one submission each. Belarus and Belgium were represented through contributions sent in from other countries. In addition two submissions were more general for all, or most, European countries.

The submissions contained different forms of descriptions: 16 articles, six films, four posters and 18 other forms of presentations were submitted. "Other" means reports, descriptive texts, tool kits, guidelines, leaflets, links to web sites and pictures. By this it is clear that it is not only the practice that is wide and varying, the ways to present what is being done also take very different forms and shapes.

This report is one of a number of ways in which 'social work and social development practice and policy to promote the dignity and worth of peoples' have been addressed in Europe. The theme has been the focus of regional conferences and activities associated with the two most recent World Social Work Days. The theme has also been explored in many local and national initiatives. This report focuses on the materials formally submitted to the ENSACT process.

The problems addressed

As the submissions are examples of good practice, most contributions presented methods, describing how the work takes place. They gave examples of developing social work practices and employees' competence, gap-mending in social work education; mobilization of service users in practice development; working with students to influence future social workers; working in direct contact with people to fight against loss of social ties in society and to finding methods for supporting independency.

The target groups for the activities are also wide and varying. Children and young people, adults with intellectual disabilities or mental health problems, former drug users, refugees and asylum seekers are groups mentioned. These categories of people are described as being in many different social situations. Exclusion from employment, cultural diversity, foster care, homelessness, intergenerational reproduction of poverty, violence against women, sexual abuse in institutions as well as anti-malnutrition programmes are situations dealt with in the contributions. Even if this does not give us the ultimate full picture of social work, it still gives us an interesting glimpse of the width of the practice.

The report and further reading

This report aims to build a framework for the examples and a way for the reader to look closer into practices that those who presented them find interesting. There is no analysis of the practices as such, but in the end, the overall impressions from working with these examples are discussed in a summarising section. The main reflection is not about the practices themselves, it is about the form of practice that is submitted – *the Project*. All submissions came from some kind of project, not from traditional everyday practice in continuous work. This finding fostered reflections that are highlighted and introduced in a short discussion at the end of the report.

The analysis of the submissions was made through reading and categorizing the material. I have read all material, watched films etc. Parallel to my reading, a social worker and master student in social work, Caroline Lundström, did the same. We met and compared our understanding and analysis of the material, and in this way we could determine that the impressions came from the material, not from our own ideas. This way of working could be regarded as the concept 'interrater reliability' in methodological literature. This way of working is a way to ensure that perspectives taken before, or on grounds other than the material, do not interfere with the understanding. The report should be representing the submitted practices, not the preferences of the author. Through dual analysis we hope to have limited this bias. The questions put and the themes that emanated from the analysis determine how the report is structured.

The following presentation is organized firstly on the basis of the three main areas policy, practice and education. None of these are in reality separated from the others, they are rather continuously integrated. The idea behind the analytical separation is that the areas provide different perspectives on the same issues. In the report, the contributions are sorted into one of the areas each, even though most contributions were said to concern more than one of the areas. Each contribution is presented only once, but they are present also in the more overarching parts of the report. All contributions that have been sent in have been used for the analysis and all contributions are presented. In the text there are links to the presentations given from the contributors as only shorter examples and descriptions appear in the text. The links lead to submissions that most often are presented in English, but there are also several submissions in the language in the country from where the examples derive. The running text includes sentences directly taken from the submissions in the part where different actions and projects are described, but the text is mainly rewritten by the author of the report.

Each chapter (policy, practice and education) has a structure provided by the kinds of examples that are submitted, but starts with an introduction where the examples are summarised and contextualised, and ends with a short concluding section. The involvement of the people is an important aspect in promoting the dignity and worth of people and therefore it is presented under a specific title in each chapter. In many cases this is mentioned as 'service user's participation' but as we do not necessarily talk about any 'service' to use, I have chosen to use the generic term 'people'.

Policy

The submissions, in which examples of policy work were presented, indicated that they also concerned either practice or education. That is obvious, policy has to be about something and in this case it is about social work practice or education.

The problems being addressed in the cases could be summarized as projects with the aim to influence policy so that people will have a better life and situation. The examples are about integration of specific groups of vulnerable adults either in direct work with them or in advocacy or policy work on a more structural and general level. The link with promoting the dignity and worth of the person could in brief be named *respect*. To advocate for respect for people can have many different meanings. It could be a way of talking about people, as well as talking with people. It could be a question of arranging for people as well as is said from one project, of “making the person an actress of her life plan”.

Policy work in different levels

The stories about policy work often come from doing something beyond what is normally done in ordinary practice. One example is a submission from the Danish Association on Social Welfare that had a campaign to raise public awareness. They engaged homeless people and artists to prepare for a one day happening in a park in the city of Aarhus and contact the media. The campaign was made under the name “*Fuck the Poor*” and received attention in Danish media.

Another one day event was arranged by a social work student organisation in France, *Erasmix*. With the aim to raise awareness of the public sector and promote social diversity, they arranged a festival as a way to gather people. Local associations from the social sector got a chance to show themselves and do activities together with the general public and in the evening there was a party with DJ's and dancing. The festival gave the opportunity to show and share information in a positive atmosphere. The organisation concludes their event with the quote “Alone we can do so little, together we can do a lot”.

Policy work is about changing, but it is hard to change how institutions work. In one of the example changes were even said to be one of the hardest parts of the project as there was reluctance from the already employed staff to work in a new way. In that sense, policy is not

something that only exists on a structural level. Policy is also about how to perform in everyday practices.

In Greater Manchester Local Authority, UK, a residential home where seven adults had lived for the past 30 years was due to close and the people who had lived there had to move. The project submitted concerned adults with intellectual disabilities who do not always use verbal skills to communicate. Nevertheless, they were involved as much as possible by developing communication techniques. In order to meet them with respect a humanistic approach on reciprocal communication called '*Total Communication Approach*' was used. Each person was regarded as unique and was met in his or her individual style of communication. It could be through speech, images, signs, objects, or in other ways. Two examples given are about using images in the communication. One way of getting knowledge on things the residents found important to bring along when they moved was to let them take pictures with a disposal camera. Another way was to show pictures already taken to learn how the person valued things.

The examples above show different ways of raising awareness and showing respect. In the first case, it is about a specific situation: homelessness, where action was taken together with the people it concerned. The second example highlighted social engagement in a wider sense and an organisation to reach the public. In the third we can see policy work on micro level, through practical work. Together these three examples show that policy work can be both specific and generic, both structural and practical.

Involvement of people

In some of the policy actions no specific persons or users are involved, as for example when it concerns raising general awareness. In the case above, with homeless people organising a happening, there is a high degree of involvement of those who are in the specific situation.

In a Spanish project '*The campaign*' social workers from The Spanish General Council of Social Work aimed to get awareness for the need of public social services. First people who were affected by the austerity measures were interviewed. Following this a session was organised at the European Parliament in Brussels, where people from different parts of Spain were invited to explain how social cuts were affecting them and their families. The social workers argue that by coming together with the people who are affected, the message got through in a better way.

Parallel to the action as such, the organisation made a documentary about it, which made it possible to show it on World Social Work Day and have a debate open to a wider audience.

In the examples about policy actions, it is evident that the involvement of people was of great importance. On the one hand the people who are concerned are activated to influence their own situation. On the other hand the action becomes more reliable when those who are concerned are also involved. Making policy *with* people has greater influence than making policy *for* people. It is a way to show how stimulating democracy and participation could be used as a tool in the fight for respect for people.

Outcomes

The outcome of policy work can be hard to measure. In some cases the aim is to change a social situation, but this kind of changes takes time. The same goes when the aim is to raise awareness, it is also very hard to measure, even if it could be seen in for example the number of new members who engage in an organisation or activity. In one of the submissions the outcome is very clear as the action had direct influence in the way the police worked.

This example comes from an action in Iceland, *Operation Big Sister*. Here a story is told about how Icelandic feminists took action against prostitution. The law in Iceland forbids buying sex and regards it as violence against women; still there is a large amount of prostitution. Ads for prostitutions are forbidden, but they also exist. But almost no one is sentenced. The organisation 'Stigamót' is a free individual counselling centre for survivors of rape, sexual molestation, sexual harassment, pornographic exploitation and prostitution with services for both women and men. Women working for Stigamót and Icelandic feminists decided to act upon the stories they were told in their counselling work and to make prostitution visible. Operation Big sister was planned and completed by 85 anonymous women who announced themselves on websites and in newspaper ads. After having had several conversations with men who aimed to buy sex, the media and the police were contacted and given lists of names, phone numbers and email addresses. At the press conference about 50 women participated, dressed in burkas to stay anonymous. To the press conference they had also invited the buyers they had been in contact with, but under the name of 'The Icelandic model agency'. At the conference they showed the results of their investigation and demanded that the laws should be applied and

that further action should be taken to stop trafficking and prostitution et cetera. The Big Sister campaign received a lot of attention and was also criticised for acting unethically. The police announced that they would not use the information to prosecute. A short time thereafter the Icelandic police got considerable funding to investigate prostitution and in a short time more than hundred buyers were found and prosecuted.

Conclusion

Policy measures are linked to both practice and education. Policy work for promoting the dignity and worth of people puts respect in focus. The aim varies from raising awareness to making a change. The examples are taken from both structural and micro level activities, as well as from activities both for and with the people they concern. It is evident though from the stories told that working with the people it concerns is both more meaningful and more effective.

Practice

Most submissions concerned practice. This is not surprising, as social work primarily is practice. The problems being addressed in this practice ranged from preventive health measures to rehabilitation of former drug users. The contributions dealt with homelessness, men at risk, parents with children in foster care, migrant families, children and youth, mental disabilities, sexually abusive behaviour and care leavers. All in all they represent very varying practices.

The links to promoting the dignity and worth of the person in these examples are more or less of two kinds. Some of the projects enhance the importance of working in partnership with the persons the work concerns. By doing that valuable knowledge is unlocked. The other projects tell stories about how their practices have facilitated integration and re-integration, enhanced quality of life and supported people on their way.

The purpose of the actions has in some cases been to systematically organise the practice and give tools to professionals. In others the focus is on those who receive services and their empowerment, rehabilitation or quality of life. To reach this the work is done through support, care or actions for facilitating and creating a supportive environment.

The following overview has the three sections: tools, initiatives by social workers and initiatives by people. Social workers are of course also

persons, but here they are regarded in their professional role and the group called 'people' are those who live in marginalised positions, confronted with social and other problems.

Tools

In the complex practices of social work today there is a great call for models and tools to use in work. Among the submitted examples six different tools are presented.

The first one is a tool, or rather guidelines, to use for people with chronic illness or disabilities. IFSW Europe has participated in a European project, the *ENS4Care Project* coordinated by the European Federation of Nurses. The project was arranged to promote the use of Information Communication Technology by social workers and nurses to empower people affected by illness or disability to live as independently as possible. Guidelines on prevention as an e-tool were developed in cooperation between professionals, service users and carers. The guidelines give people access to information that could facilitate a change in lifestyle which could be more effective than medication. This is talked about as 'social prescriptions' that could be given by nurses and social workers.

While the first tool aimed widely at all European countries, the second one is developed in the Netherlands and has slowly started to also reach other countries. As a reaction on the fact that many shelters worked problem-based, Movisie in the Netherlands developed a toolkit, '*The Eight Steps Model*'. This toolkit frames a strengths based integrated model for working with homeless youth. Then they realized that homeless youth were provided with bed, bath and bread, but there was also a need for counselling. During a one year project a toolkit was developed in one shelter and could be spread to other shelters. The toolkit gives an overview of the model and provides samples of documents to use in the process when you are working with homeless youth. The model supports more goal oriented help, better communication and understanding between social worker and service users.

Yet another project from the Netherlands is *The flag system*. This is a tool developed and used in institutions in the Netherlands and Belgium in order to facilitate assessment of the sexual behaviour of children and young people. The idea is to teach young people positive sexual behaviour where it is important to have and to give consent based on

free will and equality. Following these three basic criteria, there are three additional ones: age appropriate, context appropriate and self-respect. Each criteria was judged with flags from green (perfectly acceptable), to yellow (slightly inappropriate) to red (seriously inappropriate) to black (severely inappropriate) and from this, a 'flag diagram' was made. The diagram serves as a structure for the more extensive normative list where examples are connected to knowledge from literature. The flag system is both a pedagogical and an ethical intervention.

The two mentioned projects from the Netherlands show tools aimed at supporting and organising social work. Some models for supporting the work itself are also presented. A tool in working with youth was developed by the organisation FICE in the Netherlands. The tool is 'Lifebook for youth' The idea behind the lifebook is that 'if we know where we came from we better know where to go' and is aimed at children with difficulties in their history. The purpose is to facilitate their development into healthy, strong and self-determined individuals by making them aware of all their positive aspects and characteristics, good events as well as positive encounters with people in their lives.

The social organization '*Atspirtis*' in Lithuania works with individual support for former drug users. Those who join the project have a wish to change their lives. Many of the people who work as volunteers in this project are former drug users. The project runs a salad bar with two purposes: to provide high quality catering and to have socially useful activities. Working in this salad bar is one of the stages in the organisation's rehabilitation programme; other parts are for example accommodation and consultations with social workers, psychologists or other professionals. Taking part in the work in the salad bar promotes the dignity and worth of people as they feel they are doing something 'real' that is part of ordinary society and not just training. The salad bar has twice won the title 'Vilnius' most hospitable café'.

The last example comes from Finland and is more structured than the other examples mentioned. In cooperation between several organisations in Finland a tool for the systematic organisation of information in social work with individual clients was developed, '*the RSA-model*'. The aim was to analyse the clients' problems in relation to certain cultural contexts so that the practice developed in a direction that matched the clients' goals. In a follow-up study they could use data collected with the tool and therefore show the amount of time people

have been service users, but they could also demonstrate a very strong correlation between motivation and success in case management with substance abusers. The obstacles occurred in structural areas, e.g. problems of getting a job and an income.

These six different tools show ways to structure either the organisation of the work or the work itself.

Initiatives by social workers

The projects in which social workers, volunteers or others help people are built on cooperative collaboration between the parties involved. The workers and volunteers aim to facilitate and support people by organising places to meet and discuss. One such project is presented by a master student in health anthropology at the University College Copenhagen, Denmark. This student made a project together with a church and a group of volunteers where they created a room of 'togetherness'. The focus was on 'men at risk' that visited the church. Many of the men had a history of unemployment, psychiatric problems as well as alcoholism. During half a year the volunteers provided the visitors with dinner in the church. They ate together and socialized around seeing a movie, playing a game of chess or talking about news or the weather. One of the experiences described by the student is that it was easier to relate to the men if you focused on similarities. She, being a woman, couldn't identify with them as men, but she could relate to living a single life in Copenhagen and benefitting from free possibilities.

Some projects aim wider, for instance to reach the whole family. A Lithuanian welfare society for persons with mental disability '*Viltis*' worked with psychosocial rehabilitation of people with mental disabilities and their families to create an atmosphere of equal opportunities through arranging festivals and camps. The activities also engaged people from Belarus. As the service users and their parents participated in the arrangement they raised their competences parallel to the possibilities to share experiences and knowledge.

In Sweden, in a municipal social service unit, '*Slussen*' made a project with families in order to analyse the situation for newly arrived migrant families. In this activity parents and children participate together in activities during four weeks, while teachers map the children's skills and abilities. During the four weeks they focus on information about Swedish society including norms, laws and traditions. By working together with the whole family the social services provide a safe environment and

possibilities to get a good start in the new country. At the same time, it saves time for all the involved professionals to be in the same place and to be able to share information.

The last example here comes from France. It was estimated that 141 500 people were homeless in France in 2012, an increase of 44% in 11 years. The right to housing remains nothing but a promise for tens of thousands of applicants. In this context, *the Maison Goudouli project* was created to offer to people in precarious situations a roof and medical and social support. These people are very fragile: they lived in the street for many years and have a life expectancy of 47 to 50 years, serious health problems and complex social situations. For over 15 years, social workers in charge of support for people in precarious situations deplored the lack of a structure adapted to accommodate these people. Before the creation of Maison Goudouli, this group of people was not considered, or at least existing provisions did not take sufficient account of their specificities and needs: centres opened during nights only, alcohol consumption prohibited, pets not allowed. In fact, people in precarious situations were excluded from key provisions.

In one of the submitted examples they stress that their participants are named students as they are in a process of learning. That comes from *Kofoed Skole*, a training school in Denmark for jobless and socially marginalized groups that aims to free their students from their dependent client status.

The projects initiated by professionals and volunteers have very different foundations. We can see some connected to the church, some to public social services and some to other kinds of organisations, while one was initiated by a student for her thesis.

Initiatives by people

When the people concerned create their own projects, they take a slightly different form and shape than when social workers do it. It is a question of whether it is arranged for 'us' or for 'the others'. Both examples given that describe initiatives from people concern children leaving home, but for very different reasons. The first case is about involuntary separation between children and parents and the second one about the situation when young people leave care as they turn 18 and then have to find ways to live their own life in society.

The *Dandelion Parent Association* in Sweden emphasises that no parents have a right to their children, but all children have a right to their parents – to the highest extent possible. They have organised ‘future workshops’ with parents whose children are taken into custody and placed in foster care. The workshops are led by persons with the same experiences, with training in leading this kind of workshop. The Future workshop is a participatory model for empowerment. During the workshop the participants work with the barriers they experience, and from that they start pointing out needs for change. In the end they formulate wish lists of activities that ought to be included in the process of separation between children and parents. In the wish list we see issues such as the need for support for the parents by an external support person, support in parenting skills, clear action plans for reunification and more equal views regarding mothers and fathers in custody issues.

A project with a totally different formation comes from the Netherlands, where the organisation *FICE* has submitted an example of their work with care leavers. The project emanated from an initiative taken by young people themselves as they found that they needed help in their everyday life after they turned 18 and ought to provide for themselves in their everyday life. The idea was to develop an app explaining where they could find information about everything that needs to be arranged and is going to happen when you live on your own.

The two examples show how different kinds of projects can facilitate people’s lives in very different situations. Both concern information and how it makes life easier if you are included and informed.

Outcomes

In the submitted examples on practice the outcomes of the projects are seldom mentioned explicitly. Only a few submissions show results from evaluations of practice. One of them is an evaluation of reports from social workers in mental health. In England, social workers have a key responsibility under Mental Health legislation to write social circumstances reports for Review Tribunals. Tribunals are held as a response to service users appealing against their detention in hospital. The social worker gathers evidence and information from service users, their families and carers. In an action by *St Andrew's Healthcare* the quality of social workers’ reports was compared before and after a new template was introduced. There was a significant improvement in the quality of social circumstances reports written by social workers after the introduction of the new template. Therefore service users had better

quality information submitted to the Tribunal on which to consider their legal status under Mental Health legislation.

One of the few stories told about the success of the action directly by the people the actions concern comes from The Salvation Army in Denmark, *Frelsens Hær*. This organisation received sponsorship for taking poor families and children to holiday camps and amusement parks. 7 500 children and parents took part in this during 2015. In their example they quote a letter from a mother who had taken part in a one day trip to an amusement park together with her daughters of 14 and 17 years old. In the letter one part is (translated from Danish):

I think I have heard them say thank you for this day more than ten times. But I am not the one to be shown gratitude. They are so happy! And everything has been so perfect. Your arrangement was just what all three of us needed and I think that it is absolutely wonderful that we have had this chance. It gave my girls the right, the time and the desire to be just ordinary young girls again. Our days can be filled with conflicts, and today, there has not been a single one. It is therefore not only the girls who have put so much value in this day, but certainly also their mother. I have had the most beautiful day with them, and have been able to put economic concerns, as well as mental, far away and just been able to go and be together in a really nice way.

Conclusion

The examples from practice show different tools and methods for practice. All the examples aim to accommodate the people the practice concerns, whether it is a question of prevention or intervention. There is a pervading perspective based on the importance of partnership and understanding for the people involved, and the ideas presented are about structuring the work, giving people access to resources and information, and working in partnership.

Education

The problem being addressed in education concerns general issues around making it possible for social work students to understand the perspectives of the people they will work with. There are some projects that more specifically focus on mental health, poverty, refugees and intercultural issues. Mostly the promotion of dignity and worth of the

person has a wide focus in education and highlights service users in varying services, people of different cultures and social marginalisation amongst youth in Europe. It could also be phrased as emphasising the human rights perspective in social work education.

The link to promoting the dignity and worth of the person is reached through integration of service users in education, letting people tell their own stories about their situations and solutions in order to build respect and acceptance. The methods used aim towards interaction, exploration and awareness. In conclusion it can be said that the methods take their starting point in sharing experiences to provide perspective.

The purpose of the action overall is to bridge the communication gap. It is about encouraging and strengthening openness to meet “the other” and to work without discrimination. The methods used are mainly collaborative work, where perspectives are intertwined both in the process and as outcome of the projects.

Films

Films could be regarded as tools for education as they contain stories told that provide a common base for discussions in educational settings. The films focus on issues which the producers want to highlight for students, or for social workers. The submitted films are made in cooperation between teachers, students and service users. The first example comes from the United Kingdom, where a film was made about problems with communication, *Mending the communication gap*. It is a film made by refugees and asylum seekers based on their direct experiences with professionals’ poor communication. The idea behind the film was to mend the communication gap between service users and professionals by sharing people’s experiences and promoting cultural understanding.

Another film was made in cooperation between education and service users’ organisations: *Mend the gap - A challenge for social work education*. It shows a way to combine education for service users and social workers. The film was sent in by Power Us that has practices in several countries. In the film service users are interviewed about their experiences of participating in education.

The third film shows another way of sharing experiences and focus on the communication gap between social worker and service user, *Mending the communication Gap. Between service users and professionals*.

The film is made to enhance professionals' knowledge about how service users from other cultures can experience social workers.

At Esslingen University of Applied Sciences, Germany, service users and students of social work participated in a two-day weekend seminar devoted to reflection on the question "*What is good social work practice*". The main aim of the seminar and the film developed from it was to show both students groups how user competence and professional competence can complement each other in order to better understand perceptions of social work practice. One main focus in the course was to empower service users by providing a platform where students of social work and service users were able to interact on an equal basis. Using a number of different approaches (one-on-one discussion of personal experiences, group discussions, world café), service users were encouraged to voice their experiences.

All films mentioned show how social work is perceived by service users and aim to share experiences. The films are mainly made for students and social workers by service users and others and they endeavour to enlighten social workers with the perspective of the people they meet. In the fourth example we get a description of a context that could generate a film.

Involvement of people

Apart from making films, service users and participants from different organisations and from community in a wider sense can participate together with social work students also in other ways.

The organisation *Qualificar para Incluir* in Portugal established cooperation protocols with the Social Security Agency that enable them to conceive and implement social insertion programmes for 450 families under the umbrella of the Social Insertion Income policy. The project was run by staff connected to the Social Work School as either social worker or student on internship. The project aimed at enhancement of knowledge on the social, economic, cultural and political rights of individuals (particularly single mothers) affected by persistent poverty and social exclusion, transmitted from generation to generation and in a context of highly unsuitable housing conditions; to prevent and repair family ruptures and breakdowns; assure the children's right to grow up in educational contexts free of social and cultural discrimination. With this aim the organization has invested in the organisation of cultural events, involving users in theatrical plays, music concerts and poetry

readings. In the last four years, in partnership with a theatre company they promoted three public events around the work of Bertold Brecht. In 2012, they started a new effort in the promotion of social, economic and cultural rights of young women, most of them single mothers: the development of a social enterprise that provides job and training opportunities in the hotel, cleaning and catering market. After participation in the projects many families found jobs, studies and children found support in activities that enhance their well-being.

In Bulgaria, the Department of Public Health and Social activities at University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” engaged in “*Together for cultural diversity, tolerance and non-discrimination*” for inclusion of students in social work, related to intensive intercultural dialogue with representatives of various ethnic minority communities from their direct environment and from society, and with information about their culture and experience in integration and discrimination. Students and teachers participated in discussions with representatives from six ethnic minority communities. The students prepare their own productions for each discussion (panels, posters, brochures, presentations and essays) and present their positions on the announced topic. The students of social work were from different ethnic backgrounds and were motivated and actively involved in the preparation and conduct of the discussions. For the production, a guest was invited to the discussions (the creator of the first Museum of comics in Bulgaria), who prepared and presented comics on diversity, tolerance and non-discrimination at his own initiative. The project was evaluated through a survey that demonstrated the importance of building an educational environment in which persons and professionals are educated and trained with skills and behaviour consistent with the values and principles of tolerance and non-discrimination.

The HEI Inter-Professional module, is a three year project where marginalized youth, practitioners and students work together. It is based on collaboration between five universities and universities of applied sciences (HEIs) from five different countries and four local practitioners from each country with vast expertise in working with marginalized youth in practice. Furthermore, marginalized youth from these institutions are involved in the development. In this project the participants co-created teaching materials based on listening to the narratives of the marginalized youth and practice partners. Through the project knowledge is exchanged between the national participants as well as between the countries involved.

The Viadem Service-Learning project in Denmark is a project that strives to involve reciprocal collaboration between students, faculty/staff, community members, community organizations, and educational institutions to fulfil shared objectives and build capacity among all partners in a “social laboratory”. The social laboratory is aimed at providing students with a voluntary learning environment as a supplement to their other learning activities. The partnership agreement stipulates that the School of Social Work in Aarhus recruits 15 – 30 students willing to develop their knowledge and skills of community development through commitment to and participation in projects. The students receive supervision and guidance and the individual concrete projects can be located within civil society or in public sector initiatives. The students together with the practice field have ownership of the activities and projects and gain hands-on experience and learning of the challenges and forms of community development, experiences and knowledge that can be developed through other activities such as bachelor thesis or be embedded within the 3rd year 15 ECTS optional module.

The four examples presented show different innovative ways of bringing wider perspectives into social work education and allowing room for perspectives given directly from people about their own life and situation.

Facilitating education

The problems social workers deal with are sometimes problems “others” have, but sometimes they can be problems and issues that also exist within the group of students.

One of the submitted examples for education concerns awareness on mental health and is aimed towards both students and staff. The aim of the training is to increase the awareness about the specific situation of students with mental health difficulties among the university students and academic staff. The *Institute for Therapy and Social Education – Association (ITIES)* in Poland has organized two training cycles in cooperation with the University of Cracow. One cycle was arranged for the faculty and the university administration and one for students. Each of these cycles consisted of three or four meetings. These included the necessary introduction to mental health issues, as well as separate meetings to bring the participants closer to the different types of disorders or mental illnesses. The meetings topics related to specific mental difficulties people experience, psychiatric treatment possibilities

reconciling with the requirements of academic life, experienced discrimination by university staff and other students, as well as methods to support students with mental health difficulties.

Widening perspectives

The projects in education most often concern raising awareness in a more general sense or in the education of students becoming social workers. Two of the submitted examples aimed at more specific awareness, awareness through specific knowledge that widens the perspectives for students and social workers. The first one concerns knowledge about international social work and the second education of social workers in practice.

A project at *St Elizabeth University of Health and Social Work* in Slovakia was aimed at health care for marginalized people (mostly with HIV) and decreasing malnutrition. It is a worldwide project where foreign and local staff work together with the help of Slovak experts, students, volunteers and local students offering education, shelter, food health care for marginalized and handicapped groups (e.g. children). The University organised the pilot, was sole financial supporter or looked for cooperation, and was often directly involved in management and implementation. The University had the initiative role in projects proposals and selection. There was a strategic partnership with national, local or international partners, because resources and possibilities of the University are limited and not enough for 102 projects and programmes in 35 countries. University staff and students played an initiating role, prepared local people, cooperated with partners and sometimes were only involved. In this way education and practice were united in the same project and raised awareness, global sympathy and humanity, not only among students but in society at large. In this way students are better prepared to work in a globalized society.

Outcomes

Education is about bringing knowledge and awareness further, but its results are hard to measure. In the submitted examples the recurrent outcome is that projects enhance awareness. As all education has that aim, there has to be something special that motivates the projects. In the examples given we can see tools, films and forums for exchanging perspectives in non-traditional ways as well as new themes in education. From that one could reflect on whether the non-traditional teaching methods promote awareness better than traditional teaching. We cannot prove it, but it is worth thinking about.

Conclusion

The projects presented in education all concern bringing other people into education, live or in films. Whether they are service users, representatives from organisations, volunteers or professionals, the key issue is about changing the perspective and breaking the traditional pattern that is inherited in the teacher-student relation. Bringing other people in, with other perspectives, changes the traditions in education and creates openings for new ideas and new ways of thinking.

Concluding discussion

The emphasis in the given examples could be summarised in a few words:

Respect, Awareness, Perspectives, Facilitation and Partnership.

The examples are filled with stories about understanding and respecting the perspectives of people who live under hard circumstances. There is an aim to promote better lives for people, either by direct interventions, or indirectly through raising awareness and added perspectives for social work students, practitioners or even the general public. Just like social work does in general, all examples are about facilitating people to find ways to better lives, in one way or another. The actions taken in the projects show different ways to work in partnership, especially in partnership with people who are concerned about the issue focused on in the action. A wide variety of methods are presented; they range from tools for practice and education to descriptions of special events that have been held. Irrespective of the form of the action, the descriptions are made in a way that they can both inspire and be transferred to and used in other contexts.

The examples come from many different forms of social work in different contexts. In this report they are categorised into the three areas policy, practice and education. We could relate the examples to Malcolm Payne's (1996) three well known views of social work: the reflective-therapeutic, socialist-collectivistic and individualist-reformist view. The reflective-therapeutic view sees social work as seeking the best possible well-being for individuals, groups and communities by promoting and facilitating growth and self-fulfilment. The socialist-collectivistic view is about facilitating people to take part in processes of learning and cooperation and thereby creating institutions which can be owned by and participated in by all. The individualistic-reformistic view meets

individuals' needs and improves services so that they can work more effectively. Looking at the examples given to the Observatory, we can see that irrespective of what perspective one takes on social work, you can find examples in this report representing all of these views. It is indicative of the width of the examples, but it also says something about the core ideals and ideas in social work.

Promoting the dignity and worth of people is one of the core issues in social work. That is why good examples about it are collected to be distributed widely. Through the given examples we see the enhancement of the importance of *regarding people as people*, not as roles or representatives of categories. This is central in promoting dignity and worth and this recurs in the stories told about good practices. The basic principle is asking people about their situation instead of telling them what to do.

Another important aspect in social work is *time*. It is about having time to engage with others and to take the perspective of the other, regardless whether it is a person in need or a person who represents another organisation. Time is also important as time to reflect.

Further, the examples show that there is still room for creative work and innovation in Europe. Austerity, hard times, questioned solidarity as well as tightened bureaucratic regulations tend to dominate the discussion about social work in many contexts. Yet there is room to move beyond normal practice and to find new ways for social work. The examples in this report demonstrate this. Lorenz (2016) writes about "the social question" and the role of social work in safe-guarding society, but also that society could be seen as a project that needs to be attended to, organised and shaped according to principles.

The examples presented here are based on 'projects'. Projects that all have their specific focus, but that in a wider sense are part of the project of keeping society together. Projects are characterised as being something not to be taken for granted as they are not permanent. Often there are discussions about making projects into permanent practice, but it is worth looking at social work from the opposite perspective. Maybe there is a reason for presenting ways to promote the dignity and worth of people in the form of projects. In projects we have to continuously negotiate and re-negotiate what we are doing, who are and should be involved, why we are doing this and which perspectives are to

be taken into consideration. These basic components in social work risk to be forgotten in the systematic schedule in traditional practices.

The aim of this report is to make these examples of projects in which dignity and worth of people are promoted accessible and to raise a reflecting discussion on the possibilities and difficulties in social work when promoting the dignity and worth of people is concerned. One of the main discussions should perhaps be how to organise social work so that it can build on projects to a wider extent?

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Organisation or consortium making this submission

Participating organisation(s)

Country

Contact person

Email

This example shows good practice in:

- Education
- Practice
- Policy

Tick all those which are relevant

Type of submission:

- Article
- Film
- Audio
- Poster
- Other

Tick all those which are relevant

What is the problem being addressed in this practice?

What is the link to promoting the dignity and worth of the person?

What was the purpose of the action?

Describe: what are the roles of organizations and participants involved in this action

How were service users involved?

What did you do?

What was the outcome?

By submitting this information I give permission for analysis, reproduction and publication. Tick box: Yes

Appendix 2: Contributing organisations

The organizations that contributed were (in alphabetic order):

- Atspirtis, Lithuania
- Dandelion Parent association, Sweden
- Danish Association on Social Welfare
- Department of “Public Health and Social activities”, University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”, Bulgaria
- Dept of Social Work, VIA University College, Denmark
- Erasmix, student organization, France
- Esslingen University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Social Work, Health Care and Nursing Sciences, Germany
- FICE, The Netherlands
- Frelsens Hær, Denmark
- Institute for Therapy and Social Education – Association (ITIES), Poland
- International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), European Region
- Kofoed skole, Denmark
- Kristianstad Municipality, Department of child education, Sweden
- Lithuanian welfare society for persons with mental disability "Viltis"
- Maison Goudouli, CRFMS-ERASME Toulouse, France
- Movisie, The Netherlands
- National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland
- PI Social Support Projects, Lithuania
- Power Us, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom
- Qualificar para Incluir Associação de Solidariedade Social, Portugal
- Social Work Area, Law Department, Spain
- Spanish General Council of Social Work
- St Elizabeth University of Health and Social Work, Slovakia
- The Icelandic Association of Social Workers
- UCC Professionshøjskolen, Denmark
- University of Salford, United Kingdom
- VIADEM, Denmark

Appendix 3: References

Lorenz, Walter (2016) Rediscovering the social question. *European Journal of Social Work*, vol. 19, no 1, pp 4-17.

Payne, M (1996) *What is professional social work?* Birmingham: Venture Press

Latin America and Caribbean Region (Spanish)

Summary in English

This report brings together examples of professional experiences and practices of social work, related to the promotion of the dignity and worth of persons, as defined in the Global Agenda. A qualitative methodology was used, including a guide of questions with open answers. The following dimensions were examined: a) social problem on professionals involved; b) linking professional practices to the promotion of dignity and worth of persons / peoples; c) organisations involved; d) place occupied by the subjects in the intervention process; e) methods, techniques and procedures used; f) frameworks in which professionals practice and g) outcomes from professional practice.

Professional practices aimed at promoting dignity and worth are distinguished by the centrality of the subject in the professional intervention process: the subjects (people) who work with social workers and play a leading role in the process of professional intervention. The foundation of the professional approach is the concept of the person as a "subject of law", starting from their human and cultural diversity, taking as a basis the historical, cultural and political contexts in which these individuals build networks of social relations

This defines a concept of professional practice where the construction of subjectivity is prioritised and the autonomy of the subjects and their active participation in the process of empowerment is respected. This view is opposed to models based on aid or 'clientism', which neglects the centrality of subjects.

Thinking of social subjects as major players in the process of professional intervention is a concept based on a paradigm of rights.

The presentation of this selection of good professional practices implies a major challenge for our region, exploring how to continue to promote professional social work on the path of social commitment and from a human rights perspective, situated in specific historical contexts in which people live and survive daily.

The answer to this question can only occur in so far that our region continues to work steadily and expanding the number of countries who join the Federation; Latin American and Caribbean Social Work still has much to say in international contexts and have assumed that our active participation is essential to achieve the necessary changes in the Federation

The Global Agenda and the achievement to have concluded this first work of our Observatory mark a path of possible impact of social workers on mechanisms that decide and discuss social and economic policies, and show the contributions that social workers in our region are constantly doing to promote the dignity and worth of persons

Introducción

Este informe incluye los temas de la Agenda Global para el período 2014-2016. Fue elaborado con aportes de Silvana Martínez y Rodolfo Martínez, Presidenta y Vocal de la Región América Latina y El Caribe de la Federación Internacional de Trabajadores Sociales (FITS-ALC); Amelisse de Jesús Dávila tesorera suplente de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Enseñanza e Investigación en Trabajo Social (ALAEITS); Luz M. Cordero Vega, presidenta de la Asociación Nacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social (ANAETS) y representante del Colegio de Profesionales del Trabajo Social de Puerto Rico (CPTSPR); Nilsa Burgos, presidenta de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Enseñanza e Investigación en Trabajo Social (ALAEITS) y Juan Omar Agüero, director del Instituto de Estudios Sociales y Humanos del Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas

y Técnicas y la Universidad Nacional de Misiones (CONICET-UNaM). Queremos destacar la participación de Esterla Barreto Cortés, catedrática de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, a quien agradecemos el diseño de la encuesta utilizada para relevar los datos que sirvieron de insumo para la elaboración del presente informe, y su permanente apoyo y compromiso con las tareas de la Federación en la región.

Metodología

A los efectos de este informe, se relevaron experiencias y prácticas profesionales vinculadas al área, acerca de la *promoción de la dignidad y el valor de las personas*, según lo definido en la Agenda Global. Se utilizó una metodología cualitativa y se confeccionó una guía de preguntas con respuestas abiertas, que debía ser contestada en formato electrónico. En la misma se incluyeron las siguientes dimensiones: a) problema social que abordan los profesionales; b) vinculación de las prácticas profesionales con la promoción de la dignidad y el valor de las personas/pueblos; c) organizaciones que participan; d) lugar que ocupan los sujetos en el proceso de intervención; e) métodos, técnicas y procedimientos utilizados; f) marcos teóricos en los cuales se inscriben las prácticas profesionales y g) resultados de las prácticas profesionales. Esto para aunar esfuerzos al objetivo de aportar al debate global del Trabajo Social, visibilizando las experiencias exitosas de prácticas profesionales en nuestra región. La convocatoria para la participación en este estudio fue difundida a través de organismos profesionales y lo/as trabajadores(as) sociales de la Región ALC han respondido a la convocatoria informando sobre sus prácticas profesionales en diversas fuentes de documentación, incluyendo ligas o enlaces.

El punto de partida para el análisis fue la definición de la promoción de la dignidad y valía de las personas, según la *Agenda global de Trabajo Social y Desarrollo Social: compromiso para la acción* (2012):

La aplicación universal de los convenios internacionales y otros instrumentos sobre derechos sociales, económicos, culturales y políticos para todos los pueblos, incluyendo, entre otros, los derechos de la niñez; mayores; mujeres, discapacitados(as) e indígenas, migrantes documentados(as) e indocumentados(as), y el fin de la discriminación por motivos de raza u orientación sexual. Esto a través de la promoción de estrategias sociales para la prevención y resolución pacífica de conflictos y el cumplimiento de los acuerdos internacionales que puedan reducir la violencia y

sus consecuencias y la reducción y eliminación del tráfico humano.

En relación con los criterios de selección de los casos estudiados, de un total de 162 casos presentados, se seleccionaron 28 para fines de análisis, los que: (a) informaron sobre prácticas profesionales innovadoras que pueden vincularse con la definición presentada sobre la promoción de la dignidad y valía de las personas; (b) demostraron las maneras en que sus logros corresponden a dicha vinculación; (c) describieron la aplicación de los fundamentos teóricos señalados en sus prácticas y (d) evidenciaron con enlaces o ligas, entre otros, las prácticas profesionales innovadoras que promueven la dignidad y valía de las personas.

Contexto Regional

En la década de 2000, nuestra región ha transitado por un período que algunos intelectuales denominan “Primavera Latinoamericana” (Gonzalo Abad Ortiz, 2011:12). Esta denominación se debe a factores tales como: mayor grado de autonomía de los países, políticas sociales basada en el enfoque de derechos, recuperación de la política como instrumento de transformación social, centralidad de los Derechos Humanos como política de Estado, integración de bloques regionales como la CELAC y la UNASUR, entre otros. Los años de crecimiento económico y la aplicación de políticas de distribución del ingreso, sobre todo en algunos países, permitieron reducir niveles de pobreza y un mayor acceso de la población a los servicios de educación y salud.

Sin embargo, estos logros son aún insuficientes y no están presentes de igual manera en todos los países. Además, la calidad de los servicios sociales no alcanza los estándares necesarios. Con excepción de Haití, en las publicaciones de los organismos internacionales los países latinoamericanos y caribeños aparecen clasificados como países de renta media. No obstante, esta categoría no da cuenta de las notables diferencias en la distribución del ingreso que existen en la región, lo cual se expresa en la persistencia de problemas como la falta de educación, el insuficiente acceso a los sistemas de salud, el desempleo y la precariedad laboral, entre otros. El final de esta década estuvo enmarcado en la marcada desaceleración económica, el aumento en las deudas públicas nacionales, la influencia y afluencia de capital corporativo multinacional, así como la persistencia de conflictos políticos no resueltos- como el caso colonial de Puerto Rico.

En la década de 2010, y principalmente en el período que comprende este informe (2014-2016), la situación se vuelve más difícil y compleja en nuestra región, además, por el regreso de gobiernos neoliberales en algunos países. Las políticas públicas puestas en marcha por estos gobiernos favorecen de manera directa o indirecta, abierta o encubierta, a los grupos económicos concentrados, perjudicando a grandes sectores de la población. En este período, desde FITS-ALC hemos trabajado fuertemente en varias acciones orientadas al logro de los siguientes objetivos: a) fortalecimiento de las organizaciones miembros de la Región ALC –FITS; b) aumento de la participación de nuestras organizaciones en la Asamblea Mundial, democratizando la información y la toma de decisiones; c) mayor injerencia en las políticas públicas de nuestros países; d) fortalecimiento de los canales de comunicación; e) mejoramiento de las condiciones laborales de los(as) trabajadores(as) sociales; f) participación activa en la propuesta de reforma de la Constitución de FITS; g) realización de actividades celebrativas del Día Mundial de Trabajo Social y h) aporte al debate global de Trabajo Social, visibilizando las experiencias exitosas de prácticas profesionales. En relación a este último objetivo, hemos convocado a los(as) trabajadores(as) sociales de la región a participar en el logro del mismo, dando cuenta de sus prácticas profesionales en los diversos contextos y ámbitos laborales.

Caracterización general de las prácticas presentadas

Se relevaron 162 experiencias profesionales de toda la Región. Se obtuvieron respuestas de Puerto Rico (54), Colombia (34), México (16), Chile (11), Uruguay (10), Argentina (8), Costa Rica (6), El Salvador (5), Honduras (4), Venezuela (4), Bolivia (3), República Dominicana (2), Brasil (1), Ecuador (1), Guatemala (1), Nicaragua (1) y Perú (1). La mayoría de quienes se presentaron tienen el título de Trabajador Social, siendo los demás estudiantes avanzados de Trabajo Social. Las áreas principales en las cuales desempeñan su labor profesional son, entre otras: educación primaria, media y superior; salud; investigación; acción y movilización social; salud mental; desarrollo comunitario; seguridad y protección social; promoción socioeconómica; violencias sociales; infraestructura social y calidad de vida.

En cuanto a las poblaciones principales con las cuales trabajan son: niñez y adolescencia (37); adultos (27); comunidades (25); familias (21); adultos mayores (10); mujeres adultas (7); organizaciones territoriales (4); movimientos sociales (1); y otros (30).

Por otra parte, 87 personas informantes poseen el título de grado (licenciado o bachiller), mientras que las otras 71 poseen el título de posgrado (maestría o doctorado). El tiempo de trabajo de quienes se presentaron es significativo: 41 informantes tienen 21 o más años, 32 informantes entre 6 y 10 años y 25 informantes menos de 5 años. Sin embargo, el mayor número sobre el género corresponde al femenino, para un total de 135 informantes. Este asunto del género reafirma la continuidad de la tendencia histórica de la feminización del Trabajo Social.

Esto se vincula con la división sexual del trabajo y de las profesiones, donde “lo social” y las tareas que de ella se derivan, continúan estando a cargo de las mujeres, situación que desde nuestras organizaciones y desde la Región América Latina y Caribe seguimos denunciando como injusta y reproductora de un orden social y económico que impide una vida con dignidad para todos y todas.

Prácticas profesionales vinculadas a la promoción de la valía y dignidad de las personas en la Región ALC

Del total de las prácticas presentadas por los y las profesionales del Trabajo Social, unos 28 casos cumplieron con los criterios de selección para ser analizados. Una de las características principales que surge de éstos es la diversidad y pluralidad de tipos y modos de prácticas profesionales de los y las trabajadores(as) en América Latina y El Caribe. Se observó, en relación a esto, la gran diversidad de ámbitos y problemáticas de intervención profesional, por ejemplo: becas en universidades, derechos de los consumidores, salud mental, violencias, comunidad, docencia universitaria, seguridad social, discapacidad, vivienda, desarrollo local, servicios básicos, *bulling*, escuelas, conflictos armados, infraestructura social, pequeños productores, personas transgéneros, organizaciones comunitarias, salud, salud comunitaria, interculturalidad, escuela-comunidad, estudiantes universitarios, mujeres indígenas, trata de personas, entre otros.

Prácticas profesionales innovadoras en la promoción de la valía y dignidad de la persona

En los casos seleccionados se advierte muy claramente que prácticas profesionales dirigidas a la promoción de la valía y dignidad de la persona se distinguen por la centralidad del sujeto en la intervención profesional. Los sujetos (población) con los cuales trabajan los(as)

trabajadores(as) sociales, ocupan un lugar protagónico en el proceso de intervención profesional. En la mayoría de los casos, la concepción de la cual se parte o que sirve de fundamento para el abordaje profesional, es la concepción del ser humano como “sujeto de derecho”, partiendo desde su diversidad humana y cultural, tomando como fundamento los contextos históricos, culturales y políticos en los que esos sujetos construyen redes de relaciones sociales.

De esta forma, las prácticas innovadoras adscriben una noción del problema social abordado como uno vinculado a las violaciones de derechos humanos en los sistemas de provisión de servicios dirigidos al bienestar social. A continuación, expresiones analizadas al respecto:

El problema principal, pero no el único, es la dificultad para el acceso a centros de tratamiento por adicciones de las personas transexuales. Específicamente la internación de personas trans en centros de tratamientos por adicciones público. El sistema de salud pública en Uruguay no logra incorporar a las personas trans en los centros de salud.

Esto se vincula directamente con la dignidad humana, en tanto derechos humanos, primero a la salud y al acceso a ella. En segundo lugar en tanto derecho a cambiar y dejar su consumo que sea tenida en cuenta la necesidad de esta población. El derecho a la dignidad y valor de las personas en tanto seres humanos que se les respete su decisión personal de cambio de género y vivir de acuerdo a sus valores. En tercer lugar, como agentes públicos, tenemos el deber de realizar acciones tendientes a que todas las ciudadanas y ciudadanos puedan ejercer efectivamente sus derechos. (Participante 90)

El problema social que presento es la situación de vulneración del Derecho a la Salud que los niños, niñas y adolescentes de la ciudad de Pando vienen soportando desde hace un par de años especialmente en las áreas de Oftalmología y Salud Mental. Se vincula con la dignidad en el sentido que si un niño, una niña o un adolescente necesitan la atención en salud (en cualquier área) y no la recibe se va haber perjudicado en su vida cotidiana, se va a sentir mal, disminuido y no podrá alcanzar su desarrollo integral,

por lo que se verá desfavorecido. Esta problemática se repite en varias familias, las más humildes no tienen forma de alcanzar la atención en salud especializada que sus hijos/as necesitan, comenzando a naturalizar con el tiempo que las cosas son "así" y debemos aceptarlas de esta manera. Esperando meses para ver a un oculista y luego buscar como comprar los lentes, etc. Las personas pierden el valor real del Derecho a la salud, el ver bien... deja de ser el objetivo deseado, por parecer inalcanzable deja de ser posible. (Participante 114)

Así, se destaca la importancia de que se trabaja “desde” y “con” los sujetos y no “para” los mismos. Radica la importancia en que la práctica profesional se aboque a la defensa de los derechos humanos, principalmente de sectores sociales excluidos, en acciones colectivas organizadas:

Somo[s] una profesión que apostamos a trabajar con los excluidos, con los que tienen sus derechos sus derechos vulnerados. Como colectivo se reforzó la idea de afianzar una práctica con sentido de justicia y a la construcción de una sociedad más justa con sus ciudadanas y ciudadanos. (Participante 90)

Iniciativas estudiantiles de Acción Social forma parte de la Vicerrectoría de Acción Social de la Universidad de Costa Rica, en este programa trabajamos con las y los estudiantes en procesos de acompañamiento para la gestión de proyectos de Acción Social crítica, con colectivos sociales en temas diversos como derechos LGTBI, fortalecimiento local, discapacidad, juventudes, género, derechos de la niñez y la adolescencia, arte, cultura, deporte [...] (Participante 35).

Esto delimita un horizonte de prácticas profesionales donde se prioriza la construcción de subjetividad, la autonomía de los sujetos y su participación activa en el proceso de fortalecimiento (“empoderamiento”). Esta visión se contrapone al asistencialismo y el clientelismo, prácticas estas donde la entrega de cosas reemplaza y deja de lado la centralidad de los sujetos. Pensar en los sujetos sociales como protagonistas principales del proceso de intervención profesional es una concepción basada en el paradigma de derechos. En este sentido, en las prácticas analizadas se observa que los(as) trabajadores sociales

abordan las diversas problemáticas desde la perspectiva de los Derechos Humanos. Este enfoque configura las prácticas profesionales con una significación muy específica y propia del Trabajo Social, que lo diferencia de otras profesiones y de otras prácticas profesionales. Somos articuladores, defensores(as) y acompañantes(es).

Se estima que un Trabajador social debe ser un Profesional como articulador de saberes teórico - prácticos además de contar con una actitud abierta y habilidades para retroalimentación permanente entre intervención y docencia. Se promueve capacidad de dialogo reproduciendo simetrías necesarias que son base para la justicia y democracia en un contexto discriminador de no respeto y desvalorización del concepto de Pueblo Indígena. Valoración ética y militante respecto a profesional del área en ejercicio en este contexto. (Participante 115)

En los casos seleccionados también se advierten claramente concepciones teóricas y epistemológicas muy diversas e incluso antagónicas entre sí. Ésta es una característica que proviene de la heterogeneidad de la formación de los Trabajadores Sociales en América Latina y El Caribe. En los casos analizados se observa que las prácticas profesionales se basan en una diversidad de concepciones teóricas y epistemológicas, por ejemplo: teoría crítica, teoría sistémica, teoría general de sistemas de Luhmann, fenomenología, cosmovisiones de pueblos originarios, conductismo, teorías feministas, teoría de la administración, gerenciamiento social, perspectivas decoloniales, entre otras. Por un lado, esto explica en gran medida la diversidad y pluralidad de tipos y modos de prácticas profesionales a los que hicimos referencia anteriormente. Sin embargo, llama la atención la contradicción planteada entre la fundamentación filosófico-teórica de ciertas prácticas profesionales y el compromiso con la defensa de los derechos humanos. Se pone en evidencia la fuerte y estrecha relación que existe entre el tipo de formación y el tipo de práctica profesional. Son dos caras de una misma moneda, dos dimensiones que siempre están presentes y son configurativas de las prácticas profesionales. Un desafío para nuestra profesión que requiere de nuevas miradas al proyecto de formación profesional:

Necesidad de instalación en Universidad de curriculum que recoja ejercicio de derecho a la cultura propia en consecuencia con

DDHH. Trabajo Social como espacio dialogante con territorialidad y cosmovisiones particulares. (Participante 115)

Sin embargo, se identificaron dos casos que utilizaron dos teorías contemporáneas, tales como:

La teoría general de sistemas autopoieticos o de observación de segundo orden (de Niklas Luhmann) Principalmente nos basamos en las distintas políticas públicas de carácter preventivo y de apoyo en caso de violaciones de los derechos del niño, al igual que las políticas públicas de carácter participativo del ministerio de educación chileno. Las intervenciones están basadas sobre todo en la práctica de la educación popular freiriana, al igual que la definición de "política" de Aristóteles, y los principios filosóficos de Hannah Arendt. Los logros alcanzados se pueden verificar en los distintos espacios participativos, como la resolución pacífica de Conflictos, la problematización de lo social en el colegio y el cómo el mismo puede aportar en la creación de un país más justo. (Participante 17).

Otras teorías utilizadas fueron la teoría social crítica y teorías feministas. En el proceso de formación profesional las materias que imparto, están ligadas al tratamiento de problemas sociales, derechos sociales y políticos que afectan a poblaciones diversas, por tanto, el conocimiento teórico se enlaza al análisis de poblaciones como, mujeres, indígenas, niñas, adultos/as mayores, entre otras. Considero y es uno de los aspectos en los cuales incido mucho; sin embargo, no es una política de la Carrera en la cual me desempeño, es el tratamiento de la dimensión política de la acción del Trabajo Social; es necesario realizar este trabajo, para ampliar el ejercicio profesional y dimensionar con más claridad nuestra intervención. (Participante28).

Por otra parte, en los casos analizados se observa una combinación entre la dimensión subjetiva y la dimensión normativa en las prácticas profesionales de trabajadores(as) sociales de América Latina y El Caribe. Por un lado, se trabaja con las normas, los derechos y las condiciones materiales de la vida social, pero por otro lado y al mismo tiempo, las prácticas profesionales apuntan también a la promoción del ser humano, la construcción de valores, la recuperación de la dignidad, la autoestima y el desarrollo de la conciencia histórica, aspectos estos que tienen que

ver con la búsqueda de la emancipación y la justicia social. Así los sujetos destinatarios son sujetos activos dentro de la actuación profesional:

[L]os destinatarios o beneficiarios han venido participando en los procesos a través de aportes y la vinculación a los ejercicios de análisis y reflexión de sus realidades, permitiendo con ello una mayor apropiación y por consiguiente la construcción de estrategias conjuntas con los profesionales acompañantes (Participante 100)

Participan en la construcción de asignatura y de espacio final de disertaciones relevando la identidad mapuche. Exploración de saberes personales de sus contextos familiares y comunitarios a aportar en aula recreando espacio de trawün o reunión mapuche. Estudiantes aportan alimentos culturales a poner en común mizawün. Se abre espacio de aula a universidad en esta actividad. Estudiantes se visten de acuerdo a tradición. En este espacio se comparte resultado de dialogo con agentes comunitarios en temas contingentes desde la promoción humana y desarrollo. (Participante 115)

Aparecen también aquí dos dimensiones que en la realidad están fuerte y estrechamente vinculadas entre sí. La consideración de estas dos dimensiones es fundamental para la “promoción de la dignidad y el valor de las personas”, ya que no hay sujetos sociales sin condiciones históricas y, a su vez, no hay ejercicio efectivo de derechos sin sujetos sociales y sin determinadas condiciones materiales.

En los casos analizados se observa que el diagnóstico es el punto de partida de la intervención social: la capacidad de articular saberes teóricos y prácticos. Por supuesto, no se observa una sola forma de diagnóstico sino varias: situacional, normativo, comunitario, participativo. Esto depende del tipo de población con la cual se trabaja y también del marco teórico o perspectiva teórica que fundamenta la intervención. De todas maneras, sea cual fuere la forma de diagnóstico utilizada, en todos los casos lo que buscan los profesionales es conocer la situación problemática con el fin de diseñar y desarrollar la estrategia de intervención más adecuada. Estas estrategias por supuesto no dependen sólo del diagnóstico sino de muchos otros factores como el tiempo y los recursos disponibles, el contexto histórico e institucional y la formación de los propios profesionales, entre otros. En algunos casos

se utilizan diagnósticos estratégicos, basados en postulados y técnicas de administración estratégica. En otros casos, diagnósticos más sociológicos o psicosociales. En otros, se construyen diagnósticos historiográficos o basados en historias de vida de los sujetos sociales.

Por último, en los casos analizados se puede observar que los y las profesionales utilizan una variedad de instrumentos de intervención profesional, por ejemplo: talleres, jornadas, capacitación, investigación-acción, trabajo en red, proyectos, seguimiento, monitoreo, evaluación institucional, entre otros. A su vez, cada uno de estos instrumentos se utiliza de diferentes maneras o con diversas modalidades. Así, por ejemplo, los talleres, las jornadas y la capacitación pueden ser breves o más extendidos en el tiempo, abiertos y participativos o más cerrados, intensivos o con más tiempo de desarrollo, con evaluación o sin evaluación. En la mayoría de los casos se observa trabajo en red, con actores y organizaciones que desempeñan tareas como provisión de fondos, contactos, información, infraestructura, equipamiento, intercambio de experiencia, entre otras. La construcción de proyectos a partir de diagnósticos es un instrumento muy utilizado en la mayoría de los casos analizados. Los proyectos son de diversos tipos: comunitarios, sociales, grupales, familiares, institucionales, productivos, entre otros. El alcance territorial, la población involucrada, la temporalidad, los recursos utilizados y el modo de participación en la formulación o ejecución, generan una diversidad de formas de proyectos. Un ejemplo de este tipo de iniciativa se recoge en la siguiente expresión:

El diseño de carretera e infraestructura pública a través de procesos de participación, inclusión social, considerando la identidad de las áreas intervenidas por las obras. Infraestructura desde el desarrollo humano. El derecho a tener una población planificada por la gestión técnica y política para el acceso, la movilidad humana. Estos aspectos traen valor agregado al desarrollo de los pueblos, mejora la calidad de vida, el

comercio, empleabilidad, comunicación. Es una investigación a través de una metodología cualitativa. (Participante 15).

Conclusiones

La presentación de esta selección de Buenas Prácticas Profesionales implica un desafío importante para nuestra región: ¿cómo continuar

impulsando el trabajo social profesional por la senda del compromiso social y desde una perspectiva de derechos, situada en los contextos históricos concretos donde las personas viven y sobreviven diariamente?

La respuesta a esta pregunta solo podrá darse en la medida que nuestra región continúe trabajando en forma sostenida y ampliando el número de países que se integran a la Federación; el Trabajo Social latinoamericano y caribeño tiene aún mucho por decir en los contextos internacionales y hemos asumido que nuestra participación activa es fundamental para el logro de los cambios necesarios en la Federación.

La Agenda Global y el logro de haber concretado este primer trabajo de nuestro Observatorio marcan un camino de posibilidad de incidencia de los trabajadores sociales ante las instancias que deciden y debaten políticas sociales y económicas, y muestran las contribuciones que trabajadores y trabajadoras sociales de nuestra región hacen constantemente para promover la dignidad y el valor de las personas.

Observatorio sobre Buenas Prácticas Profesionales 2016

Sistematización de Buenas Prácticas presentadas

Pais	Argentina
Contacto	Melina Lucia Actis, actismelina@gmail.com
Problema social	salud de la población en el territorio
Metodologías	diálogo, las entrevistas, las visitas domiciliarios, los talleres, los circuitos institucionales e interinstitucionales
Pais	Bolivia
Contacto	Jimena Freitas Ocampo, jimena.freitaso@gmail.com
Problema social	derechos sociales y políticos que afectan a poblaciones diversas, por tanto, el conocimiento teórico se enlaza al análisis de poblaciones como, mujeres, indígenas, niñas, adultos/as mayores, entre otras
Metodologías	metodologías comunitarias y de atención individualizada

Pais	Chile
Contacto	Javier Oyaneder, javier.oyaneder@hotmail.cl
Problema social	promoción y el respeto de los derechos del niño/a y los derechos humanos en general, desde la prevención de conductas de riesgo y la vinculación con instituciones ligadas a las mismas temáticas
Metodologías	popular freiriana, al igual que la definición de "política" de Aristóteles, y los principios filosóficos de Hannah Arendt
Pais	Chile
Contacto	PAULO VILLABLANCA, paulovill@yahoo.es
Problema social	Asimetría en la relación Sociedad chilena - Pueblo Mapuche Incompetencia profesionales asociadas a un dialogo intercultural Ausencia de prácticas
Metodologías	Sistematización de experiencias alimentadas desde vinculo con ONG infancia mapuche Participación de equipos comunitarios con otros colegas en miras a reforzar elementos culturales en prácticas profesionales desde la identidad mapuche Constructivismo y epistemologia descolonizada en cuanto busca dialogo de conocimientos y ciencia social con saberes cosmovisión mapuche Técnicas vivenciales, pensamiento crítico develamiento de prejuicios y análisis de contextos. Descubrimiento de discriminación y etnocentrismo instalados que podrían influir en practicas futuras de trabajo social. Puesta en práctica de la etica intercultural como principio de fondo y articulador de paradigmas y Trabajo social

Pais	Chile
Contacto	Lenka MARANGUNIC, lenkmarangunic@gmail.com
Problema social	práctica de la educación falta de información sobre el sistema actual de pensiones en Chile, en la comunidad en general y en mujeres y jóvenes en particular.
Metodologías	técnicas de difusión principalmente, en reuniones, visitas o acceso a salones de clases en universidades, en coordinación con otros servicios públicos. Entrevistas individuales a casos pesquisados en terreno. Entrega de folletería, volantes, merchandising
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	DAYANNA ISABEL LORA SANTA , dayannats92@hotmail.com
Problema social	falta de participación de los jóvenes en miras de que se reconozcan como sujetos de derechos
Metodologías	talleres sobre proyecto de vida
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Jenifer Juliet Pernet Cañas, jenifer_pernett@hotmail.com
Problema social	fortalecimiento de la cadena fruticola, radica principalmente en las situaciones problemas que existen al interior de las familias que se encuentran inscritas
Metodologías	caracterización social de las familias de los productores - Gestión institucional en materia de salud, educación y recreación
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Luisa Muñoz, lufermupu06@gmail.com
Problema social	participación política de las mujeres, para la restitución de derechos y construcción de la paz en la región del Magdalena Medio
Metodologías	Trabajo Social de Grupo

Pais	Colombia
Contacto	LINDA MAURA AGUILAR PEREZ, lynmupez@yahoo.com
Problema social	restablecimiento de los derechos humanos vulnerados por el conflicto sociopolítico y armado
Metodologías	Metodología de grupo -promoción de los derechos humanos -técnicas performativas - metodología de familia
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Decci Beatriz Duran Ortiz, tsdecciduran@gmail.com
Problema social	prevenir, mitigar, corregir, y/o compensar los impactos para las comunidades del área de influencia directa del proyecto vial
Metodologías	reuniones mensuales, rendición de informe del Equipo Local de Seguimiento en los foros de auditorias
Pais	Costa Rica
Contacto	José David Camacho Quirós, cadajo1992@gmail.com
Problema social	derechos LGTBI, fortalecimiento local, discapacidad, juventudes, género, derechos de la niñez y la adolescencia, arte, cultura, deporte
Metodologías	Talleres participativos, reuniones de seguimiento, giras de seguimiento para conversar con las contrapartes de los proyectos, para considerar sus apreciaciones sobre el mismo y la forma en la cual lo facilitan las y los estudiantes. Campañas de comunicación social
Pais	México
Contacto	Laura Rangel Rosas, laura_rangel78@hotmail.com
Problema social	La falta de oportunidades para generar ingresos económicos, la poca preparación académica y la falta de capacitación para desempeñar alguna actividad
Metodologías	intervención comunitaria

Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Mayra I. Benjamin Rivera, hectorymayra@hotmail.com
Problema social	acoso escolar el cual atenta contra la dignidad, los valores y la vida del estudiantado, la familia y la comunidad
Metodologías	modelo reflexivo que le permite al participante auto- evaluarse, refuerzo positivo; monitoreo frecuente; modificación de conducta; terapia de la realidad; modelaje; "role playing"
Pais	Uruguay
Contacto	Verónica Silva Ibarra, vero.silva81@gmail.com
Problema social	acceso a centros de tratamiento por adicciones de las personas transexuales
Metodologías	entrevistas individuales, coordinaciones con el Ministerio de desarrollo Social y otros organismos públicos; internación de la paciente
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Sthefanie Reyes del Río, sthefaniereyesdelrio@gmail.com
Problema social	bajo rendimiento en matemáticas, lenguaje y ciencia en pruebas internacionales
Metodologías	proceso de formación de aproximadamente mes y medio donde se priorizan las metodologías experienciales y dialógicas. En paralelo se está realizando un proceso de acompañamiento donde se aborda estudio de caso por institución educativa
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Sergio Miguel Estepa Vargas, sergioestepa14@gmail.com
Problema social	La baja capacidad de gestión e incidencia de las organizaciones sociales ubicados en zonas de conflicto armado
Metodologías	Trabajo Social con Comunidades

Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Cindy Paola Reales Vásquez, paolareales1@gmail.com
Problema social	fortalecimiento a la convivencia escolar y formación para el ejercicio de la ciudadanía, en derechos humanos y derechos humanos sexuales y reproductivos
Metodologías	de caso o individualizado, grupo, comunidad, integrado, alternativo, investigación
Pais	Colombia
Contacto	Xiomara Gallego Carballo
Problema social	formación de los y las estudiantes en el manejo adecuado de los recursos naturales permitiendo a partir de las experiencias reconocer la importancia del cuidado del medio ambiente
Metodologías	Investigación acción participativa
Pais	Costa Rica
Contacto	Cristian Otey Águila, oteyaguila@gmail.com
Problema social	diseño de carretera e infraestructura pública a través de procesos de participación, inclusión social, considerando la identidad de las áreas intervenidas por las obras.
Metodologías	Auditoría social, Trabajo comunitario de información y sensibilización de los afectos y afectados con las obras
Pais	Honduras
Contacto	Alma Maribel Suazo Madrid, maribelsuazo4@yahoo.com
Problema social	prevención en servicios de salud
Metodologías	implementación del modelo descentralizado de salud

Pais	México
Contacto	Maria Antonieta Robles Barja, ccdhtij@gmail.com
Problema social	debilidad de la democracia mexicana
Metodologías	diagnósticos participativos, prevención del crimen mediante el diseño ambiental (CPTED), cabildeo, mesas de trabajo, foros de consulta, capacitación a funcionariado, capacitación a la ciudadanía, fortalecimiento y profesionalización de OSCs, elaboración de anteproyectos de ley, reuniones plenarias, difusión en redes sociales, coordinación general de proyectos sociales, talleres comunitarios, convivencias comunitarias, representación en comités
Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Marinilda Rivera, marinilda.riveradiaz@upr.edu
Problema social	acceso a los servicios de salud y salud mental y la falta de reconocimiento del derecho a la salud
Metodologías	educación con la comunidad y diversas actividades de cabildeo y abogacía por el derecho a la salud
Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Luz M. Cordero Vega, luz.cordero@upr.edu
Problema social	pobreza y la asistencia como un derecho humano
Metodologías	Investigaciones tradicionales e investigaciones no tradicionales
Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Mabel Lopez Ortiz, mabel.lopez2@upr.edu
Problema social	Invisibilidad de la situación de las personas LGBT en adultez mayor
Metodologías	Investigación social, diseño de métodos mixtos: entrevistas y cuestionarios.

Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Doris Pizarro Claudio, d.pizacl@gmail.com
Problema social	Situación de desigualdad, pobreza, implicaciones de los procesos del capital (colonialismo, desempleo) que afectan la calidad de la educación pública en comunidades empobrecidas
Metodologías	Fomentar la construcción de ciudadanía desde la escuela, a partir de las políticas educativas, fomentar la diversidad, construir nuevos significados para la autonomía educativa y la descentralización, desde una perspectiva ciudadana. Integrar formación de destrezas sociales y comunitarias
Pais	Puerto Rico
Contacto	Alejandrina Ortiz, restaurandoportillos@gmail.com
Problema social	maltrato infantil y violencia de género
Metodologías	investigación con medición longitudinal; técnica educativa ECA (exploración, conceptualización y aplicación)
Pais	Uruguay
Contacto	María del Carmen Rodríguez Uberti, mdelrou@hotmail.com
Problema social	vulneración del Derecho a la Salud que los niños, niñas y adolescentes de la ciudad de Pando vienen soportando desde hace un par de años especialmente en las áreas de Oftalmología y Salud Mental.
Metodologías	acción participativa, realizando entrevistas con los referentes de los niños y niñas
Pais	Uruguay
Contacto	Cecilia Cortalezzi Plá, ccortalezzi@hotmail.com
Problema social	inclusión social de personas con discapacidad
Metodologías	participación de diferentes colectivos qu no conocen la temática acercándolos a través de la danza (técnica Danceability)

Día Mundial del Trabajo Social 2016

Registro de actividades realizadas en Argentina, Panamá y Puerto Rico

Saludo de representantes de la región



International Federation of Social Workers

Latin América and Caribbean Región

Greeting by the World Day of Social Work

March 15, 2016

The International Federation of Social Workers, from Latin América and Caribbean greets social workers, teachers and students from Latin America and the Caribbean who daily are fighting for a social work committed to his time, in the search for a just and dignified society, work, health, housing and education for everyone.

We denounce than our areas of practice is violated by precarious working conditions, salary and contract on which develop our activities, so we call the conscience of each one of us to reclaim and fight for our rights as workers, and to demand together with our organizations transform these conditions.

We continue demanding quality training, critical and ethically compromised, and we protest against the virtual instances in undergraduate training and all those spaces that have commodified permanent training and updating professional.

For a Social Work fighting for social justice and the dignity of our people ...
Happy Day to all !!

Silvana Martínez

Presidenta regional

Rodolfo Martínez

Vocal

Argentina: Federación Argentina de Asociaciones Profesionales de Servicio Social

Conferencia de prensa de la Federación Argentina de Asociaciones Profesionales de Servicio Social (FAAPSS) y la Federación Argentina de Unidades Académicas de Trabajo Social (FAUATS)



Panamá: Asociación de Trabajadores Sociales de Panamá



INVITACIÓN A:

• Trabajadores(as) Sociales del país
• Grupos Organizados que trabajan sobre la base de los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres, de Niños y Niñas y Adolescentes, de Adultos Mayores, Grupos Étnicos, de los trabajadores(as) entre otros. Igualmente a los que están involucrados en la defensa de la ecología.

Lugar

Plaza de la Democracia – Nuevo Tribunal Electoral de Panamá.

Objetivo

Conmemorar el día martes 15 de marzo de 2016 el día Internacional del Trabajador y Trabajadora Social, fortaleciendo el Lema "Trabajadores Sociales hacia una Humanidad Unida".

¡Los Esperamos!





Latin America and Caribbean Region (English)

Introduction

This report includes the themes of the Global Agenda for the 2014-2016 period. It was developed with input from Silvana Martinez and Rodolfo Martinez, President and Member of the Latin America and Caribbean Region of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW-LAC); Amelisse de Jesus Davila substitute treasurer of the Latin American Association for Social Work Teaching and Research (ALAEITS); Luz M. Cordero Vega, President of the National Association of Schools of Social Work (ANAETS) and representative of the College of Social Work of Puerto Rico (CPTSPR); Nilsa Burgos, president of the Latin American Association for Social Work Teaching and Research (ALAEITS) and Juan Omar Agüero, Director of the Institute of Human and Social Studies of the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research and the National University of Misiones (CONICET-UNAM). We would like to highlight the participation of Esterla Barreto Cortés, professor of the University of Puerto Rico, who we thank for the design of the survey used to gather the data that served as input for the preparation of this report, and for her continuous support and commitment to the work in the region.

Methodology

For the purposes of this report, experiences and professional practices will be presented concerning the *promoting the worth and dignity of all people*, as defined in The Global Agenda. A qualitative methodology was used and a guide of questions with open answers was developed, which had to be answered in a digital format. It included the following areas: a) social problem addressed by the professionals; b) linking professional practices with promoting the dignity and worth of all peoples; c) organizations involved; d) place that the subjects have in the intervention process; e) methods, techniques and procedures used; f) theoretical frameworks for professional practices and g) results of professional practices. This to join efforts with the goal of contributing to the global debate of social work, showing the successful experiences of professional practices in our region. The call for participation in this study was disseminated through professional bodies and the social workers of the LAC region have responded to the call by reporting on their professional practices in various sources of documentation, including leagues or links.

The starting point for the analysis was defining promotion of worth and dignity of all people, according to *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: Commitment for Action* (2012):

The universal application of international agreements and other instruments on social, economic, cultural and political rights for all peoples, including the rights of children, elderly, women, handicapped and indigenous people, immigrants with and without documents, and the end of discrimination due to race or sexual orientation. This through the promotion of social strategies for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts and the fulfillment of international agreements that may reduce violence and its consequences and the reduction and elimination of human trafficking.

With regards to the selection criteria of the cases studied, out of a total of 162 cases submitted, 28 were selected for analysis purposes, which: (a) reported on innovative professional practices that can be linked with the presented definition on the promotion of worth and dignity of individuals; (b) demonstrated the ways in which their achievements correspond to said relation; (c) described the application of the theoretical foundations outlined in their practices and (d) demonstrated through relationships or links, among others, the innovative professional practices that promote worth and dignity of individuals.

Regional Context

In the decade of 2000, our region has gone through a period that some intellectuals called "Latin American Spring" (Gonzalo Abad Ortiz, 2011:12). This designation is due to factors such as: a greater degree of autonomy of the countries, social policies based on focusing on rights, recovery of politics as an instrument of social transformation, centrality of human rights as a State policy, and the integration of regional blocks such as the CELAC and UNASUR, among others. The years of economic growth and the implementation of policies of income distribution, especially in some countries, helped to reduce levels of poverty and greater access of the population to education and health services.

However, these achievements are still insufficient and are not present in the same way in all countries. In addition, the quality of social services does not reach the required standards. With the exception of Haiti, in publications made by international agencies, the Latin American and Caribbean countries are classified as middle-income countries. However, this category does not account for the notable differences in the distribution of income that exist in the region, which is expressed in the persistence of problems such as the lack of education, inadequate access to health systems, unemployment and precarious labor, among others. The end of this decade was framed in the marked economic slowdown, the increase in national public debts, the influence and inflows of multinational corporate capital, as well as the persistence of unresolved political conflicts - such as the colonial case of Puerto Rico.

In the decade of 2010, and mainly in the period covered by this report (2014-2016), the situation becomes more difficult and complex in our region, due to the return of neo-liberal governments in some countries. Public policies put in place by these governments directly or indirectly favor, whether in an open or covert manner, the dominant economic groups, hurting large sectors of the population. During this period, FITS-LAC has worked hard on several actions aimed at achieving the following objectives: a) strengthening of the member organizations of the LAC - FITS region; b) increasing the participation of our organizations in the World Assembly, democratizing information and decision-making; c) increasing involvement in the public policies of our countries; d) strengthening communication channels; e) improving the working conditions of the social workers; f) actively participating in the proposed reform of the Constitution of FITS; g) holding celebration activities on World Social Work Day and h) contributing to the overall debate of social work, making visible the successful experiences of professional practices. Regarding this last objective, we have convened the social workers of the region to give account of their professional practice in the various contexts and fields of work.

General characterization of the practices presented

162 professional experiences of the region were presented. Responses were obtained from Puerto Rico (54), Colombia (34), Mexico (16), Chile (11), Uruguay (10), Argentina (8), Costa Rica (6), El Salvador (5), Honduras (4), Venezuela (4), Bolivia (3), Dominican Republic (2), Brazil (1), Ecuador (1), Guatemala (1), Nicaragua (1), and Peru (1). The majority of the people presenting have a degree as a social worker, and the remaining are advanced students of social work. The main areas in which respondents conduct their professional work are: primary, middle and upper education; health; research; social mobilization and action; mental health; community development; security and social protection; socio-economic promotion; social violence; social infrastructure and quality of life. The main populations with which they work are: children and teenagers (37); adults (27); communities (25); families (21); older adults (10); adult women (7); territorial organizations (4); social movements (1); and others (30).

87 informants have a degree (bachelor or licentiate), while the other 71 have a postgraduate degree (Masters or Doctorate). The working experience of those who participated is significant: 41 informants have 21 or more years, 32 informants between 6 and 10 years and 25 informants less than 5 years. The majority of respondents were women (135 informants). This reaffirms the continuity of the historical trend of a predominantly female dominance of social work.

This is linked with the sexual division of labor and professions, where the "social" part and the tasks that derive from it, remain as a responsibility of women, a situation that we continue to denounce, from our organizations and from the Latin America and Caribbean Region, as unjust and which promotes a social and economic order that prevents a life with dignity for all.

Professional practices linked to the promotion of worth and dignity of individuals in the LAC Region

Of the total of the practices presented by professionals in social work, approximately 28 cases met the selection criteria to be analyzed. One of their main characteristics is the diversity and plurality of types and modes of professional practices of male and female workers in Latin America and the Caribbean. The great diversity of areas and issues of professional intervention is notable, for example: university scholarships, consumer rights, mental health, violence, community, university teaching, social security, disability, housing, local development, basic services, *bulling*, schools, armed conflicts, social infrastructure, small producers, trans gender people, community organizations, health, community health, inter-culture relationships, school-community, university students, indigenous women, trafficking of people, among others.

Innovative professional practices in the promotion of worth and dignity of all people

In select cases, a clear warning is made that professional practices aimed at the promotion of worth and dignity of individuals are distinguished by the centrality of the subject in professional intervention. The people (population) with whom the social workers work, occupy a leading role in the process of professional intervention. In most cases, the starting conception, which serves as a basis for the professional approach, is the conception of the human being as a "subject of law", starting from their

human and cultural diversity, taking as a basis the historical, cultural and political contexts in which these individuals build networks of social relations.

In this manner, the innovative practices see the social problem being addressed as one linked to violations of human rights in the systems of provision of services directed to social welfare. This is seen in the following examples:

The main problem, but not the only one, is the difficulty of access for transgender people to treatment centers for addiction, specifically for transgender individuals who are inpatients in public treatment centers for addictions. The public health system in Uruguay fails to provide for transgender individuals in health centers.

This is directly linked to human dignity and human rights, firstly to the right to health and access to it. In second place, in both the right to change and to quit consumption, the needs of this population should be taken into account. The right to dignity and value of people as human beings should be respected in their personal decision to change gender and live according to their values. Thirdly, as public officials, we have a duty to perform actions designed to ensure that all citizens exercise their rights effectively. (Participant 90)

The social problem that I am presenting is the situation of violation of the right to health for children and adolescents in the city of Pando, which they have been suffering from for a couple of years, especially in the areas of Ophthalmology and Mental Health. It is linked with dignity in the sense that if a child, a girl or a teenager needs health care (in any area) and does not receive it, their daily life will be negatively affected, they are going to feel bad, looked down upon and will not be able to achieve their integral development, for which they will be at a disadvantage. This problem is repeated in several families, the most humble have no way of reaching the specialized health care that their children will need, and it begins to seem that things are "well" and we must accept them like they are - waiting for months to see an eye doctor and then finding a way to buy glasses, etc. Individuals lose the real value of the right to health, to see well... It ceases to be the desired

*objective since it appears unattainable, it ceases to be possible.
(Participant 114)*

Thus, emphasis is made on working "from" and "with" the subjects and not "for" them. The importance lies in devoting professional practice to the defense of human rights, especially of excluded social sectors, in organized collective action:

*We are a profession that is committed to working with the excluded population, with those who have their rights violated. As a group, the idea of strengthening practice with a sense of justice and of building a more just society with its citizens was reinforced.
(Participant 90)*

Student initiatives of Social Action is part of the Vice-Rectorcy of Social Action of the University of Costa Rica; in this program we work with the students on accompanying processes for managing projects of critical Social Action, in social collectives, on diverse topics such as the rights of LGBTI, local strengthening, disability, youth, gender, the rights of children and adolescence, art, culture, sports [...] (Participant 35).

This delimits a horizon of professional practices where the priority is the construction of subjectivity, the autonomy of the person and active participation in the process of strengthening ("empowerment"). This vision is opposed to the welfare and clientelism, practices in which the delivery of things replaces and leaves aside the centrality of the subject. Thinking of people as the main actors in the process of professional intervention is a concept based on the paradigm of rights. In this sense, it is noted in the practices analyzed that the social workers address the various problems from the perspective of human rights. This approach sets professional practices within a very specific and proper meaning of social work, that distinguishes it from other professions and other professional practices. We are articulators, defenders and companions.

It is estimated that a social worker must be a professional who articulates theoretical knowledge–practices, in addition to having an open attitude and skills to permanently provide feedback between intervention and teaching. The capacity for dialog is promoted by reproducing necessary symmetries that are the basis for justice and democracy, in a discriminatory context which disrespects and devalues the concept of indigenous people, adopting an ethical and militant assessment of professional practice in this context. (Participant 115)

From selected cases, there is also evidence of epistemological and theoretical concepts that are very diverse and even antagonistic among themselves. This is a feature that comes from the diversity of training models provided to social workers in Latin America and the Caribbean. The analyzed cases show that professional practices are based on a variety of theoretical and epistemological conceptions, for example: critical theory, systemic theory, general theory of systems of Luhmann, phenomenology, world views of indigenous peoples, behaviorism, feminist theories, administration theory, social management and decolonial perspectives, among others. On the one hand, this largely explains the diversity and plurality of types and modes of professional practices already mentioned. However, it is interesting to note the contradiction between the philosophical-theoretical rationale of certain professional practices and the commitment to the defense of human rights. The strong and close relationship that exists between the type of training and the type of professional practice is revealed. These are two sides of the same coin, two dimensions which are always present and configure professional practices, a challenge for our profession that requires new angles to the vocational training project:

The need to use a curriculum at the University level that includes the exercise to the right to a culture in accordance with human rights. Social work provides a space for dialog including specific world views and space. (Participant 115)

However, two cases were identified that used two contemporary theories:

The general theory of autopoietic systems or second order observations (of Niklas Luhmann). We mainly rely on different public policies of a preventive nature and support in the event of violations of the rights of a child, as well as the participatory public policies of the Chilean Ministry of Education. Interventions are mostly based on the practice of popular Frey education, like the definition of "policy" of Aristotle and the philosophical principles of Hannah Arendt. The achievements can be verified in the various participatory spaces, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the social problems at school and how it can contribute to the creation of a more just country. (Participant 17).

Other theories used were critical social theory and feminist theories. The training materials which I impart are linked to the treatment of social problems, social and political rights that affect diverse populations, therefore the theoretical knowledge is bound to the analysis of populations such as women, indigenous people, girls, elderly, among others. This is one of the aspects which I take seriously; however, it is not a policy of the setting in which I participate, it is the treatment of the political dimension of social work activity; it is necessary to carry out this work, to expand the professional exercise and more clearly define our intervention. (Participante28).

On the other hand, in the cases analyzed, there is a combination between the subjective dimension and the normative dimension in the professional practices of social workers of Latin America and the Caribbean. On the one hand, work is done with the standards, rights and material conditions of social life, but on the other hand, and at the same time, professional practices also point to the promotion of the human being, the construction of values, the recovery of dignity and self-esteem and the development of the historic consciousness; these aspects have to do with the search for emancipation and social justice. Thus the people are active subjects within the professional performance:

The recipients or beneficiaries have been participating in the processes through contributions and linking to the exercises of analysis and reflection of their realities, thereby allowing a greater ownership and therefore the construction of joint strategies with the professionals as companions (Participant 100)

They participate in the construction of the subject and final space of dissertations making explicit their Mapuche identity. Exploration of personal knowledge of their family and community contexts is shared in the classroom, recreating trawün space or a Mapuche meeting. Students bring cultural food to share mizawün. Classroom space is opened up in the university during this activity. Students wear traditional clothing. The results of dialog with community agents concerning topics related to the promotion of human development are shared in this space. (Participant 115)

Two dimensions, which in reality are strongly and closely interrelated, also appear here. The consideration of these two dimensions is fundamental for the "promotion of worth and dignity of individuals", since there are no social subjects without historical conditions and, in turn, there is no effective exercise of rights without social subjects and without certain material conditions.

In the cases analyzed, it is noted that diagnosis or assessment is the starting point of social intervention; the ability to articulate knowledge and skills. There is not a single form of diagnosis but several: situational, regulatory, community, and participatory. This depends on the type of population which is being worked with and also the theoretical framework or theoretical perspective which underpins the intervention. Whatever the form of diagnosis used, in all cases what professionals seek is to know the problematic situation in order to design and develop the most appropriate intervention strategy. These strategies do not depend only on diagnosis but also on many other factors, such as the time and resources available, the institutional and historical context, and the training of the professionals themselves, among others. In some cases, we use strategic diagnostics, based on principles and techniques of strategic management, in other cases, diagnoses that are more sociological or psychosocial, whilst in others, diagnostics are built-based or historiographic life stories of social subjects.

Finally, in the cases analyzed it can be seen that the professionals use a variety of instruments of professional intervention, for example: workshops, symposia, training, research-action, networking, projects, follow-up, monitoring, institutional evaluation, among others. Each of these instruments is used in different ways or with various modalities. For example, workshops, conferences and training can be brief or more extended in time, open and participatory or more closed, intensive or with more development time, with or without evaluations. In the majority of cases, work in networks is observed, with individuals and organizations that carry out tasks such as provision of funds, contacts, information, infrastructure, equipment, exchange of experience, among others. The construction of projects from diagnostics is a widely used tool in most of the cases analyzed. There are various types of projects: community, social, group, family, institutional, productive, among others. The territorial scope, the population involved, the temporality, the resources used and the mode of participation in the formulation or execution, generate a diversity of forms of projects. An example of this type of initiative is reflected in the following:

The design of roads and public infrastructure through processes of participation and social inclusion, take account of the identity of the areas disrupted by the works. Infrastructure development is linked to human development, respecting the right to technical and political planning to facilitate access and human mobility. These aspects bring added value to the development of peoples, it improves the quality of life, trade, employability and communication. It is an investigation through a qualitative methodology. (Participant 15).

Conclusions

The presentation of this selection of good professional practice implies a major challenge for our region: how to continue to promote professional social work including social commitment and from a perspective of rights, located in the specific historical contexts where people live and survive on a daily basis.

The answer to this question can only be to the extent that our region continues to work in a sustained manner and to expand the number of countries that are part of the Federation; Latin American and Caribbean Social Work has much to say in the international contexts and we have

assumed that our active participation is essential for achieving the necessary changes in the Federation.

The Global Agenda and the achievement of having conducted this first work of our Observatory creates the possibility for social workers to have an impact on the authorities which make decisions on social and economic policies, and to show the contributions that are constantly made by social workers of our region to promote the dignity and worth of peoples.

North America and Caribbean Region

The North American and Caribbean region has experienced tremendous changes since its last Global Agenda report. Policies and key players changed in various regions and have contributed in a positive way to the 2016 Global Agenda theme: *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples*. The three regions grappled with the complex issues of climate change, immigration, aging and legislation affecting same-sex marriage. Canada elected a new left of center Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, ushering in a more diverse and inclusive government, closely mirroring the 2008 election of Barack Obama in the United States (US). The rights of women, children, and minority groups became the focus of the national conversation in Canada. Police brutality, primarily against African American males, has gained visibility in the US media and has led to the development of the #BlackLivesMatter movement bringing national attention to this problem.

In 2015, the US Supreme Court made the historic decision to make same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states. The 2016 US presidential election began to gain momentum with a particular focus on immigration and migration, always a divisive political matter. The US and Canada are close neighbors that have strong economic connections and also face similar issues, such as addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. Both

countries have opened its borders to accept refugees escaping the war in their homeland, which has created controversy in some segments of the population.

Like their neighbors to the North, many countries in the Caribbean held elections. The Caribbean region also has close ties to Canada and the United States through its diaspora communities. A frequent trend is people migrating from the Caribbean to the US and Canada for better economic opportunities while leaving young children in the care of relatives back home. A lot of money is exchanged between the regions through remittances, where Caribbean migrants living in the US and Canada send money to their relatives in the Caribbean. Countries in the Caribbean region also face similar issues like its neighbors to the North, such as aging populations, youth development, and lack of economic opportunity to name a few. A new public health problem, the mosquito borne chikungunya virus, affected countries in the region. Parts of the region were also struck by Hurricane Erika bringing disaster management into focus.

Regional Conferences

The social work communities within all three regions have addressed *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples* through a number of conferences. In 2015, the Canadian Association of Social Work Educators held a conference in Ontario, Canada titled *Social Work at the Intersections of Ideas, Language and Culture*. Other conferences held in Canada addressed issues of homelessness, hospice care, and families.

In the US, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) held its Annual Program Meeting (APM) with the theme *Social Work on the Frontier of Change*. This conference contained numerous educational tracks that give a voice to underrepresented populations. Other conferences held in the US were *Forensic Practice: Promoting Social Justice for All Through Policy and Practice Reform*, and the annual *Global Well-Being* conference focused on the exploitation of women and children. There were other additional conferences in the US addressing religion and spirituality.

NASW National Conference 2014: NASW-USA hosted a national practice conference, *Social Work: Courage, Hope & Leadership* on July 23-26, 2014 convened 2000 social workers to discuss important social work and social welfare issues.

NASW's 60th Anniversary 2015: Celebration of NASW's 60th Anniversary and Forum on Ethics, Family Well-Being and Equity, 2015

NASW National Conference 2016: Leading Change, Transforming Lives (emphasizing equity, ethics, and evidence), June 22-25, 2016. The meeting of the profession conference tracks include: The Power of Leadership, Innovation in Practice, Promoting Social Equity and Justice, Upholding Excellence in Ethics and Advancing Clinical Social Work Practice, with expected attendance of 2,000+.

World Social Work Day / Social Work Day at the United Nations (NY, USA): NASW-USA continues to proudly support Social Work Day at the United Nations both with a financial contribution and the attendance of several NASW leaders and staff. NASW CEO, Dr. Angelo McClain was a keynote speaker in 2015 and the theme was "All People Matter." NASW participated in April 2016 and the theme was "*Refugees and Displaced Persons: Ensuring Dignity and Worth.*" NASW-USA each year also asked members to support World Social Work Day through social media and other efforts.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and CSWE have worked collaboratively and were awarded a grant to improve the delivery of health care services in the United States. Each year, NASW and CSWE organized Social Work Day on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC to allow the opportunity for social work practitioners and educators to speak with their state representatives and advocate for their communities.

The Association of Caribbean Social Work Educators held its biennial conference with the theme *Supporting Sustainable Social Change and Social Justice: Scholarship, Policy, and Emancipatory Human Services* in Grenada. Another conference, *Toward Social Integration: Rights, Roles, and Recognition of Persons with Disabilities* was held in Trinidad and Tobago.

Regional Resources

Regional resources on the theme, *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of People* were collected and organized by CSWE. Social work practitioners and educators and those in the social development community were invited to submit materials through e-mail blasts. Requests were sent to contact persons at various organizations and the North America and

Caribbean Schools of Social Work (NACASSW) listserv, which is managed by CSWE. The current NACASSW President, who is based in the US, assisted in promoting the initiative. He attended several of the major social work conferences in Canada, the Caribbean, and the US in 2015 and was able to inform meeting attendees about the resource collection process that was taking place. We received resources from all three regions, with the majority coming from the US. The types of resources received included: syllabi, dissertations, workshop proceedings, organizational statements and reports, photos, governance documents, accreditation standards, reports, PowerPoint presentations, website links, conference literature, fellowship information, and an edition of a Caribbean social work journal. Several resources involved international collaborations.

Canada

The social work community in Canada contributed a variety of resources which include media alerts, reports, websites, dissertations, and published articles highlighting their work being done in promoting the dignity and worth of people. These resources call attention to the rights of many of Canada's vulnerable and marginalized populations.

Violence Against Women

A media release was issued by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education – Association Canadienne pour la Formation en Travail (CASWE-ACFTS) in collaboration with its Women's Caucus. This release brought attention to violent crimes against women, including Aboriginal women who have been murdered or reported missing. It called on the Canadian government to promote woman-positive policies, conduct a federal investigation into the murder and disappearance of Aboriginal women, and conduct more studies on violence against women and children, allocate more resources to women, and increase affordable child care.

Gender Identity

A joint statement was released by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE-ACFTS) and the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) on gender identity. The statement was drafted by members of the Queer Caucus on the CASWE-ACFTS. It clarifies the two associations' position on social work education, practice and research in relation to gender-diverse children and youth. The statement affirms the

right of gender-diverse youth to choose their own identities. Principles of respect for diversity, treatment with dignity and worth, support for self-determination and non-discrimination were identified as critical in guiding education, practice and research.

Solidarity with First Nations Peoples

The two Associations have also been responding to challenges faced by **First Nations Peoples** in Canada. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission completed its report on the impact of the Canadian residential school system on Aboriginal children, families, and communities. The report contains 94 recommendations (i.e. Calls to Action). In its media release, the CASW affirmed all of the recommendations and pledged to support Aboriginal communities and organizations in implementing them. The CASWE-ACFTS supported a student-led movement to require mandatory inclusion of indigenous social work contents within the national accreditation standards.

Proposed Social Care Act

The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) released a policy paper in March 2016 proposing a new Social Care Act for Canada that calls for a guaranteed annual income for all Canadian citizens. This Act was proposed to bring consistency to the delivery of social support services provided by government and the nonprofit sector. The Act is based on 10 principles: 1) public administration 2) universality 3) accessibility 4) effectiveness 5) rights and responsibility 6) comprehensiveness 7) portability 8) fairness 9) accountability and transparency and 10) comparability.

The cornerstone of a proposed Social Care Act would be a guaranteed annual income for every citizen in Canada. As far back as 1971, a Special Senate Committee on Poverty recommended such a guaranteed annual income financed and administered by the federal government. CASW has completed an in-depth analysis of the 1974-1979 'MINCOME' experiment, when the Governments of Canada and Manitoba funded the Manitoba Basic Guarantee Annual Income project. They were able to confirm the amazing potential of addressing the social determinants of health on the economy and the labor market. The province of Ontario has announced its intentions to pilot a guaranteed annual income project within the next year. Support for such a project is growing

and coming from both the social activists as well as the economic and political sectors.

CASW has proposed this guaranteed annual income as a dignified means to come to the aid of the millions of children and families in Canada who continue to live in poverty. Notwithstanding the fact that Canada does have advantage over many other nations as there is access to national, provincial and municipal publicly funded social safety nets, these programs all have gate-keeping measures to determine who is deemed 'deserving' of assistance in its various forms. The private sector is increasingly being called upon to provide several social supports, typically through non-profit organizations such as food banks or homeless shelters. The reliance on inconsistent charitable services contributes to the loss of dignity for many whose basic rights are not upheld.

A new **Social Care Act for Canada** will serve to change this by acting as a social policy lens or framework to support the delivery of equitable services and preserving the dignity and worth of all populations across Canada.

Disaster Management and Response

We also received the link to a website which contains information about the project *Rebuilding Lives Post-Disaster Project*, based in Canada. The project brings together social work educators and practitioners from North America, Asia, and Australia to develop long-term community-based disaster mitigation strategies; its aim is to enable communities to become more resilient when disasters strike. Participants are intended to be representatives of the social work community, NGOs, academic institutions, and government who would contribute to the development of a vast body of resources that can be applied internationally.

Articles on Refugees and Conflict

The submissions from Canada included a doctoral dissertation, *Continuum of Success: A Case Study of Colombian Refugee Women in Canada*. The study presents women refugees as change agents and survivors. It explores how they were able to rebuild their lives in Canada and the various forms of resistance they displayed before leaving their homes in Colombia. Another set of articles received address the Rwandan genocide and explores the collective healing and reconciliation

approach and how it has led to personal and social transformation (King, survey feedback).

Caribbean

The contributions from the Caribbean region for the second Global Agenda report came from practitioners and educators based in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and also the United States. Resources collected include the June 2015 edition of the Caribbean Journal of Social Work (reviewed in the youth, elderly, and migration sections below), a PowerPoint presentation, photographs, articles, and reports. All of the resources collected address a wide range of issues affecting the Caribbean.

Disaster Management

Disaster management is a frequent issue affecting the Caribbean region. Many of the island nations are vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes. Pictures of the recovery efforts in Dominica from the 2015 Tropical Storm, Erika, were submitted that depict psychosocial support given to the storm victims.

Youth

The article, *How Do Jamaica's Unattached Youth View Their Career Prospects and Life Skills?* examines the problems that youth, an often neglected segment of the population, face. The article provides a preliminary assessment of the situation and describes the challenges the researchers experienced in conducting the study. For instance, it was often difficult to determine whether or not the youth were actually unattached. In addition, this youth population is described as transient (Caribbean Journal: 55). The authors recommended further research with this marginalized population. They contend that greater attention should be paid to the two-tiered education system that leads to inequality in the education of youth (Caribbean Journal: 83).

Another article, *Domain Risk Factors and Childhood Victimization in Guyana*, examines the risk factors that contribute to the victimization of children. The authors identified the need for increased collaboration between social work practitioners, family counselors, policy makers and member of civil society in developing programs that can assist children. They recommend the licensing of social workers, empowering them to advocate for child welfare (Caribbean Journal: 134).

The article, *Ambiguous Loss: A Conceptual Framework for Addressing the Needs of Caribbean Children*, examines how youth cope with having migrant parents; that is, parents who leave their families to work overseas. The author provides recommendations on interventions to help children cope with the loss of their migrant parents and discussed the importance of developing policies and resources that address the needs of these children.

In the article, *Towards Modernising Residential Care in the Caribbean: Lessons from Trinidad and Tobago*, the authors focused on housing for children without parents or guardians. They assessed the various types of homes available in rural and urban areas of the country for. They reported that level of care differs from facility to facility due to factors, including lack of funding, varying level of staff training and/or lack of standards for facilities. They recommend improving the level of skill of professional staff, and the systems to encourage family reunification. They also proposed increased government support to improve the quality of care of children.

Stigma and Discrimination

The themes of stigma, discrimination and marginalization were emphasized in two of the resources submitted. The Caribbean region tends to be conservative and deeply religious. Consequently, people who don't fit into societal norms face discrimination. An article and slide show were submitted gave a voice to marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised communities in Trinidad and Tobago. Students from the University of West Indies-St. Augustine participated in the project demonstrating advocacy and raise social consciousness in their community.

A second article, submitted from Guyana, focused on a United Nations Development Program- led HIV CITIES project that addressed discrimination by the police against the LGBT and sex worker communities. Social justice and human rights frameworks were used to address sexual diversity issues, a source of conflict. These populations, which previously had limited contact with each other, were brought together along with other stakeholders within the community through a series of workshops. All of the communities learned to cooperate with each other, and these friendlier relationships led to increased access to HIV services among the populations who were excluded.

Elderly

The article, *Needs of the Older Population in St. Vincent and the Grenadines*, examined the changing role of family care-giving and the availability of social services. The authors identified a lack of resources and decreased social networks due to migration as factors affecting the care of the elderly. They recommended the strengthening of family and community structures, and proposed the creation of additional services that enable the elderly to age in place; this is, to remain at home in a familiar environment. The authors also encouraged social workers to advocate for increased government involvement in programs and services, including public health education, for the elderly population.

Migration

Migration is an important issue in the Caribbean. One article, *Rights and Reintegrating Deported Jamaicans for National Development*, focuses on the organization, the National Organization of Deported Migrants (NODM) and its activities. The aim of NODM is to use a community development approach to help migrant Jamaicans who had been deported to adjust to life back home. The organization helps deported migrants develop skills and combat the negative stereotypes, as they are often labeled as criminals. They prefer using the term *deported migrant*, which they feel is more empowering.

United States

The United States is a diverse country comprised of people of various religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds; it is home to immigrants from all over the world. The submissions from the US reflect this diversity. The social work community has also done a lot of work to promote the dignity and worth of peoples through various initiatives, including developing teaching resources and governance standards. Also, several research studies were submitted. They include research conducted domestically as well as internationally. Some of them were conducted through intra-regional and international collaborations.

12 Grand Challenges

One of the most comprehensive, integrated social work initiatives related to promoting human dignity and worth in the US is the *12 Grand Challenges for Social Work*. This initiative is being led by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare. Its purposes are *to promote individual and family well-being, strengthen social fabric, and create a just*

society (AASWSW website). The 12 grand challenges identified in this initiative are as follows: 1) Ensure healthy development of all youth; 2) Close the health gap; 3) Stop family violence; 4) Advance long and productive lives; 5) Eradicate social isolation; 6) End homelessness ;7) Create social responses to a changing environment; 8) Promote smart decarceration; 9) Harness technology for social good; 10) Reduce extreme economic inequality; 11) Build financial capability for all; and 12) Achieve equal opportunity and justice for all. This new effort calls on members of the social work community along with their colleagues in allied professions to work collaboratively to provide interventions and solutions to the Grand Challenges.

Promoting the Profession

- Support of the Social Work Reinvestment Act which is designed to address challenges of the profession. Areas of focus include fair market compensation, high social work educational debt, social work workforce trends, translating social work research to practice, social work safety, the lack of diversity in the social work profession, and state level social work licensure (as it implicates social work service across state lines), and the impact these issues have on the areas of aging, child welfare, military and veterans affairs, mental and behavioral health and disability, criminal justice and correctional systems, health and issues affecting women and families
- Celebration of Social Work Month, 2015 “All People Matter,” and 2016 Social Work Month “Social Work: Forging Solutions Out of Challenges.” The theme is promoted by NASW, partner organizations, NASW’s 55 state chapters, and internationally with a special logo and numerous public announcements.
- Celebration and Promotion of World Social Work Day. In 2016 alone Facebook posts generated 67,517 impressions (views) and 119,990 reactions (comments). The World Social Work Day poster was posted on Twitter
- Social Work Speaks published with updates on major social work policy statements, 2015

Accreditation Standards and Guidelines

The foundation of social work education and practice in the US is established through its standards and Code of Ethics. In 2015, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), which governs social work education, updated its educational policies and accreditation standards

(EPAS), particularly in the areas of human rights and environmental justice. New social work competencies were added. All graduates from accredited social work programs in the US and its territories will be prepared with competencies in these newly integrated areas. In addition, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), which governs social work practice, contributed its *Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*. These standards and indicators are also incorporated in the curriculum requirements. They were created in response to demographic changes occurring in the US. They provide guidance on social workers' interaction with their colleagues as well as their increasingly diverse clients.

NASW Code of Ethics Review Task Force

In 2015, NASW established the NASW Code of Ethics Task Force to review various aspects of the current NASW Code of Ethics, focusing on ethical responsibilities when using various forms and types of technology. These responsibilities include informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, conflicts of interest, competence and record keeping. The Task Force was also charged to make recommendations regarding the current language in the Code that might be inconsistent with any proposed changes or additions related to technology issues. The changes/updates will become effective in 2017. In October 2015, NASW celebrated the 55th anniversary of the NASW Code of Ethics, assembling a panel of experts to discuss future directions in social work ethics. NASW also honored six pioneering social workers for their contributions to social work ethics.

Human Rights

Contributions from the US social work community also demonstrate an emphasis on human rights. A number of publications, articles and syllabi submitted address human rights, dignity, and marginalized communities locally and globally. Examples include:

- Presentations and articles focusing on how to work with people who immigrate to the US from countries and societies that do not value human rights.
- Syllabi addressing human rights and social justice.
- A PowerPoint that addresses using group work for counseling, advocacy, and education with a Muslim women's group in New York.
- An information brief that addresses social work advocacy

- against solitary confinement.
- A publication that discusses using a rights-based approach to social work through examining the practice areas of children, older adults, health and mental health.
- A syllabus that teaches students compassionate and empathetic social work through addressing mental, emotional and behavioral disorders.
- A publication on promoting cultural understanding, learning and how to be a global citizen.
- An international social work syllabus on topics such as globalization, advocacy, the role of the United Nations and the Millennium Development Goals.

During this period NASW- USA took a very active role on political issues related to human rights and promoting the dignity and worth of people. The NASW Action Center on the NASW website provides information on pending legislation that NASW supports, opposes or monitors. Members are provided with specific information about the bills and ways to take action.

The following is an overview of some of the pending legislation, as well as activities that NASW-USA supported:

Political Rights/Human Rights

- Provided statement to the US Senate on consideration of Voting Rights Act, 2014
- Prepared statement on Syrian Refugee Crisis, 2015
- NASW provided support for US Supreme Court ruling on Affordable Care Act subsidies
- NASW provided support for US Supreme Court ruling legalizing same sex marriage throughout the United States, 2015
- *Social Justice Brief: Unaccompanied Migrant Children: Overview and Recommendations*. Important discussion on what social workers can do to address this crisis, 2016
- NASW partnered with other organizations on an *amicus* brief to the Supreme Court in support of a US Circuit of appeals ruling that block President Obama's executive order to expand immigration deferred action program.
- NASW supports group to urge States to reject legislation that discriminates against transgender youth, 2016
- NASW supports President's Obama's Executive Action to reduce gun violence, 2016

- Immigration order/policy, 2016
- NASW supports strengthening protection against housing discrimination through the Fair Housing Act, 2015
- NASW signs onto Fiscal Year 2016 Humanitarian Funding Letter, 2015
- NASW joins other national organizations to protect safety-net programs from major cuts in funding due to Sequestration, 2015
- Publication of Practice Perspective on *Multiculturalism - Implications for Culturally Competent Social Work Practice*, 2014
- **Participated in the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Forum on Global Violence Prevention**

On August 9, 2014, an unarmed black teenager was shot and killed by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. This event became a catalyst for our country to again closely examine the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve, and as with any significant event, emotions have run high—throughout our nation—as we all struggle with how to move forward. A lot of work must be done to ensure that minorities and people of color are not systematically discriminated against in our law enforcement and criminal justice systems. NASW-USA covered these events, and other tragic events in Baltimore, New York City and Sanford, FL. The notion of race and its impact on the differential treatment of African Americans and other populations by law-enforcement officers and private citizens have captured national attention.

Criminal Justice

- Support of bill to secure the Federal voting rights of persons when released from incarceration, 2016
- Support of bill to provide evidence-based and promising practice related to juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity prevention and intervention to help build individual, family, and community strength and resiliency to ensure that youth lead productive safe health gain-free and law-abiding lives, 2016
- Section webinars have included: Ending Mass Incarceration: The Role of Social Workers in Criminal Justice Reform and the Supportive School Discipline Initiative: Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline, 2014-16

HIV-AIDS

- NASW-USA collaborated to create Mental Health and HIV/AIDS

Training Center, 2014

- Supported the appointment to the White House Office of National AIDS Policy, 2015
- Received new 5-year federal subcontract for SAMHSA's Mental Health Care Provider Education in HIV/AIDS and Mental Health Initiative (2015-19) to train social workers in best practices in working with clients with HIV/AIDS.

Violence Against Women

- NASW-USA signed onto the FY2017 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Request on Gender. This bill is a reauthorization and request for more "robust" gender language and updated language on the following: the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security to ensure congressional oversight, accountability, and transparency; an increase in funding for efforts to combat gender-based violence; and new language on the Office of Global Women's Issues.
- NASW-USA participated in the Gender-Based Violence Coalition, 2016
- NASW-USA represented at the Roundtable Discussion "Female Genital Mutilation Cutting: Strategies for Education and Prevention," 2016

Mental Health

- Sponsored and participated in the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Study and Report, Psychosocial Interventions for Mental and Substance Use Disorders: A Framework for Establishing Evidence-Based Standards, 2015
- Key role in the "Improving Access to Mental Health Act of 2015", which supports Federal policies to ensure Mental Health Equity for Medicare Beneficiaries by ensuring full access to Clinical Social Workers and supports Medicare reimbursement rate parity for Clinical Social Workers, 2015-16

Aging

- Received John A. Hartford Foundation grant to bolster services to older adults, 2015-18
- Publication of Practice Perspectives on *Elder Abuse Neglect and Exploitation*, 2014
- Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act- Support Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) and the vital role of social workers in caring for the elderly

Health

- Support of bill to allow Americans to earn paid sick time so that they can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families, 2016
- Joint grant awarded to NASW-USA and CSWE to position more social workers to improve US health care delivery, 2015
- NASW-USA signs on to ad-hoc letter urging the Senate to oppose a proposed 42% cut in funding for the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs, 2015
- Publication of Practice Perspective on *Affordable Health Care Act: What Impact this Law Has Had on Those We Serve*, 2014

Military/Veterans

- Support of bill to amend title 10, US Code to provide an individual with a mental health screening before the individual enlists in the Armed Forces or is commissioned as an officer in the Armed Forces and the other purposes, 2016
- Social and Economic Justice & Peace Section issue featuring “The Importance of Assessing Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in a Health Care Setting: An Emphasis on LGBTQ Veterans” and articles on “Military to Civilian Life” 2015

Social Work Models and Frameworks

Various resources submitted examined educational programs, models and frameworks that promote the dignity and worth of people. Examples include:

- *The Spiritual Diversity and Social Work Initiative*, based at the University of Kansas and the CSWE Clearinghouse on Religion and Spirituality. It examines social work from religious and nonreligious perspectives, promoting tolerance, human rights and global justice.
- A PowerPoint presentation, *The Afrocentric Perspective in Social Work: An Integrative Lens in Social Work Practice*. It provides an Afrocentric perspective, which strongly emphasizes community and embraces harmony, equality, non-exploitation and humanistic values.
- The Community, Organization, Business Innovation (COBI) fellowship. This fellowship is being launched to bring innovative approaches to old problems and create social change. The goal is to make an impact at the local and global level.
- A report on pedagogical methods used in the classroom to

facilitate the use of one's whole self (bio-psycho-social spiritual self) to engage others.

Immigration and Migration

The issue of migration that was discussed in the Canadian and Caribbean sections also carries over the United States. Many resources submitted examine a variety of issues that immigrants and refugees face and the ways in which they are able to cope in a new environment. These include:

- A journal article about transnational parenting. The authors advocate for the reunification of children living in the Caribbean with their parents living and working in the US or Canada.
- Research studies on housing instability of immigrant in Minneapolis/St. Paul area of Minnesota. The importance of community outreach is emphasized.
- A study on using indigenous problem-solving to combat alcohol and drug abuse in Karen refugees from Southeast Asia.
- A study using community-based social interventions to deal with acculturation stress in South Asian communities in New York City.
- A student field work and research project with immigrant populations to encourage community-building and social entrepreneurship.
- Articles and research that address improving mental health in refugee communities through addressing and healing post-traumatic stress, holding focus groups, and addressing mental health stigma.

International Collaborations

A large number of contributions for promoting the dignity and worth of people involved international collaborations between social work educators and practitioners in the US and colleagues abroad. Many of the projects and programs contribute to community development and capacity building initiatives in partner countries. Examples include:

- *The Southeastern Europe Initiative* was designed to develop leadership capacity among early career social work academics in Southeast Europe. These new academics are expected to serve as future leaders in educational reform in the transitional countries.
- Social work educators at the University of Minnesota conducted research on the violation of widowed women's rights to own

- and control property in Ghana.
- Studies of the relationship between health literacy and health disparity in Korea and initiatives to build an interdisciplinary team to conduct research.
- Promoting health empowerment in the Asian community through education and addressing the cultural barriers of modesty and embarrassment.
- Utilizing women-focused HIV interventions in Kenya.

Conclusion

Migration, immigration, disaster management, and the rights of vulnerable populations are a few of the overarching issues that link the North American and Caribbean region. Canada and the US, in particular, attract people from all over the world due to their tolerance and respect for human rights, which are reflected in many of its governing documents and laws. However, there is still a tremendous amount of work to be done in the region to promote the dignity and worth of people. The region continues to experience increasing economic inequality as well as dealing with gender, racial, sexual orientation, and religious discrimination that continue to be prevalent. The social work community through education, research, community and individual outreach have shown the various ways it is able to *promote the dignity and worth of people* through its activities. The regions should continue to utilize its intraregional and international networks to work collaboratively to empower the marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised to benefit society as a whole.

Submissions

'The Afrocentric Perspective in Social Work', USA, Submitted by Darrin Wright.

'Caribbean Journal of Social Work Volume 11 June 2015', USA, Submitted by Tamarah Moss.

'COBI Fellowship', USA, Submitted by Melissa Singh, Dan Hester, and Tory Cox

'CSWE Clearinghouse on Religion/Spirituality', USA, Submitted by Andrea Bediako;
<http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/CurriculumResources/507>.

'Community-based Disaster Migration', Canada, Submitted by Julie Drolet

Psychosocial support for those affected by disaster, Barbados, Submitted by Letnie Rock.

'Community Based Participatory Research - reducing drug and alcohol use in refugee communities', USA, Submitted by Jennifer McLeay

'Continuum of Success: A Case Study of Colombian Refugee Women in Canada', Canada, Submitted by Marleny Bonnycastle.

'CSWE 2015 EPAS', USA, Submitted by Andrea Bediako.

'Cultural Understanding and Promoting Human Rights', USA, Submitted by David Okech.

'Healing and Reconciliation-longitudinal community based study', Canada, Submitted by Regine Uwibereyeho King.

'HIV Cities Project: Engaging Local Government as Critical Allies in Addressing Discrimination Against Key Populations', Guyana, Submitted by Paulette Henry and Latoya Harris.

'Grand Challenges for Social Work', USA, Submitted by Andrea Bediako,
<http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/>

'Human Rights and Social Justice' syllabus, USA, Submitted by Shirley Gatenio Gabel.

'Identifying and Promoting Group Work Strategies in Actualizing the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development', USA, Submitted by Carol Cohen.

'Immigrants and Minority Experience in the US Pertaining to Acculturation and Health: Using a Strengths-Based Perspective in Cultural Context and References', USA, Submitted by Gauri Bhattacharya.

'International Social Work: Understanding Social Work, Social Welfare Policy, Advocacy, and Social Action from a Global Perspective', USA, Submitted by Beverly Sealey.

'Mental, Emotional, & Behavioral Disorders', USA, Submitted by Kia Bentley.

'The Message is Dignity', Trinidad and Tobago, Submitted by Karene-Anne Nathaniel.

'NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice', USA, Submitted by Susan Rubin and Bob Arnold

'A New Social Care Act for Canada', Canada, Submitted by the Canadian Association of Social Workers.

'Practicing Rights', USA, Submitted by David Androff.

'Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples Through Teaching, Research and related activities', Canada, Submitted by Dixon Sookraj and Mary Anne Murphy.

'Research for the Common Good 2015-2016', USA, Submitted by University of Minnesota School of Social Work.

'Refugee Community Empowerment', USA, Submitted by Barbara Klimek.

'Responsibilities of Being a Global Citizen', USA, Submitted by Caren J. Frost, Ruth Gerritsen-McKane, and Delva Hommes.

'Reunification of Transnational Families: African Caribbean Mothers' Narrative', USA, Submitted by Christiana Best.

‘SEE Academic Women's Leadership Initiative’, USA, Submitted by Julia Watkins and Barbara Shank.

‘Social workers being able to use their whole selves in order to engage the full selves of others’, USA, Canada, Germany, and Australia, Submitted by Loretta Pyles.

‘Solitary Confinement: Social Workers Call for an End to this Tortuous Practice’, USA, Submitted by S. Megan Berthold

‘Spiritual Diversity and Social Work Initiative’, USA, Submitted by the University of Kansas, <http://spiritualdiversity.ku.edu>.

Appendix I:

The Partner Organisations

The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development is the product of a collaborative initiative undertaken by three international organisations representing social work practice, social work education and social development. All three of these international bodies were founded in 1928 and have held formal consultative status for many decades with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and other UN and related agencies.

The International Association of Schools of Social Work is an international community of schools and educators in social work, promoting quality education, training and research in the theory and practice of social work, administration of social services and formulation of social policies. IASSW speaks on behalf of 2,000 schools of social work and 500,000 students.

Visit <http://www.iasw-aiets.org>

The International Council on Social Welfare is a global, non-governmental organisation which represents tens of thousands of

organisations around the world that are actively involved in programmes to promote social welfare, social development and social justice.

Visit www.icsw.org

The International Federation of Social Workers is the global federation of national social work organisations in more than 116 countries representing over one million social workers. IFSW is striving for social justice, human rights and social development through the promotion of social work and best practice models and the facilitation of international cooperation.

Visit www.ifsw.org

Appendix II:

History and Process

The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development is the product of a collaborative initiative undertaken over more than a decade by the three international organisations representing social work practice, social work education and social development. These three international bodies were founded in 1928 and have held formal consultative status for many decades with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and other UN and related global and regional agencies.

The Global Agenda was affirmed at the Hong Kong 2010 joint world conference (International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Welfare et al. 2010), revised following consultation in 2011 (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work et al. 2012), presented to the United Nations and other global and regional bodies in March 2012, including a statement of commitments, and reviewed at the Stockholm 2012 world conference (Jones and Truell 2012).

The first pillar of the Agenda, *Promoting Social and Economic Equalities* provided the focus for the following two years, including World Social Work Days (WSWD) in 2013 and 2014, the first Global Agenda report and the 2014 World Conference in Melbourne, Australia. The focus of

the next two years and of the 2016 World Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea, is the second pillar, *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples*. The focus on the third pillar, *Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability*, is launched at the 2016 World Conference and will culminate in the 2018 World Conference in Dublin, Ireland. The final pillar, *Strengthening Recognition of the Importance of Human Relationships*, will be the focus from 2008 until the 2010 world conference.

The process is explicitly designed to strengthen the profile and visibility of social work, to develop new partnerships, to boost the confidence of social workers and to enable social workers to make a stronger contribution to policy development (Abye 2014). The Global Agenda process was conceived and designed to reposition the global social work profession, together with social development professionals.

Our commitments

As social workers, educators and social development practitioners, we witness the daily realities of personal, social and community challenges. We believe that now is our time to work together, at all levels, for change, for social justice, and for the universal implementation of human rights, building on the wealth of social initiatives and social movements.

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) (2012), recognised that the past and present political, economic, cultural and social orders, shaped in specific contexts, have unequal consequences for global, national and local communities and have negative impacts on people. Specifically, they recognised that:

- the full range of human rights are available to only a minority of the world's population;
- unjust and poorly regulated economic systems, driven by unaccountable market forces, together with noncompliance with international standards for labour conditions and a lack of corporate social responsibility, have damaged the health and well-being of peoples and communities, causing poverty and growing inequality;
- cultural diversity and the right to self-expression facilitate a

more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence, but these rights are in danger due to aspects globalization which standardize and marginalize peoples, with especially damaging consequences for indigenous and First Nation peoples;

- people live in communities and thrive in the context of supportive relationships, which are being eroded by dominant economic, political and social forces;
- people's health and well-being suffer as a result of inequalities and unsustainable environments related to climate change, pollutants, war, natural disasters and violence to which there are inadequate international responses.

Consequently, we feel compelled to advocate for a new world order which makes a reality of respect for human rights and dignity and a different structure of human relationships.

Therefore

The organisations made the following commitments (2012):

We commit ourselves to supporting, influencing and enabling structures and systems that positively address the root causes of oppression and inequality. We commit ourselves wholeheartedly and urgently to work together, with people who use services and with others who share our objectives and aspirations, to create a more socially just and fair world that we will be proud to leave to future generations. We will prioritize our endeavours to these ends.

We intend during the period 2012–20 to focus our efforts on the following areas:

- Promoting social and economic equalities
- Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples
- Working toward environmental sustainability
- Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships

A commitment to ensuring an appropriate and ethical environment for practice and education runs throughout the process.

The commitments are guided by and consistent with our core statements on the definition of social work (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2014), the

ethical principles of social work (International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) and the Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2005).

Global Observatory for Social Work and Social Development

The three organisations invited proposals for the creation of Regional Observatories (Zelenev 2013; IASSW, ICSW et al. 2014). Different arrangements were submitted from each of the five regions and approved by the tripartite Agenda Coordinating Group. The five Regional Observatories have worked together with the three global bodies to create the Global Observatory for Social Work and Social Development. As intended, the Regional Observatories have contributed to the creation of this global report on the second Agenda pillar and a similar process will result in reports to coincide with and to provide the focus for world conferences in 2018 and 2020 (Truell and Jones 2015).

Conclusion

The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development process involved a brave and ambitious long-term commitment by the three global partners, drawing heavily on the voluntary commitment of individuals in each organisation. It is already evident that the original objective of energising and inspiring the global social work and social development professional networks, set in 2010, has made substantial progress, with the Agenda themes being enthusiastically debated and embraced, as seen in the annual World Social Work Day activities. WSWD now has a momentum of its own, with spontaneous activities in scores of countries involving practitioners, managers, academics, service users, politicians and community representatives, usually focussed on the Global Agenda theme for the year. More than 40 translations of the WSWD poster were notified to the IFSW Secretariat in 2016.

There is however more to do. The vision is to establish self-funding Regional Observatories, attracting new funding to strengthen the capacity of the three global organisations. The intention is that the biennial Global Agenda reports should be more proactive, scanning activity and developments in the region and not relying largely or only

on examples of practice submitted, outcomes from conferences or single surveys. The reports should present a robust critique of policy and practice in the region and highlight professional objectives and priorities, asserting a confident professional perspective to counter the narratives often imposed by economists or politicians. That vision requires commitment and new resources, which need to be found. These are the challenges of the next four years, building on robust foundations.

At a time of grave global social crisis, social workers and social development practitioners have a duty to speak out from experience, using robust evidence and with confident moral purpose.

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Appendix III:

United Nations Conventions and other Instruments relevant to this Theme

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June 2016

Appendix IV:

Agenda Coordinators

GLOBAL PRESIDENTS

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Respect for ‘the dignity and worth of peoples’ is the second pillar of The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development. The concept is at the heart not only of professional ethical codes but also of international conventions and statements on human rights and peaceful coexistence. These aspirations aim to shape environments in which people can live without fear, give expression to their identity and personality as they wish whilst showing respect to others, care for their family and community members, practice their beliefs and religions, participate in and shape their communities through social as well as political engagement and have access to the resources needed for a dignified and secure life.

This is the second of a series of four reports on The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development from IASSW, ICSW and IFSW. It presents the findings of five Regional Observatories that have examined social work and social development practice related to this second pillar of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development. These observations are set in the context of the social, political and economic realities of 2014-16.

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