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# International social work: Bodies with organs

*Mel Gray and Gavin Rennie*

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Many of our colleagues have asked us to write a paper for an Australian and New Zealand audience on international social work and, as we shall see, there are various bodies with vital organs, with apologies to Deleuze and Guattari,<sup>1</sup> which are highly influential in the nature and spread of international social work. This paper discusses the international organisation of professional social work to enhance awareness of social workers in Australia and New Zealand as to how they might engage in international discussions and debates. Information for this paper has been gathered from our experience in international social work, correspondence with colleagues variously involved in these structures and the websites of the various organisations.

The two most prominent international social work organisations are the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), broadly for practitioners and educators respectively. Both organisations hold biannual conferences, sometimes jointly but mostly apart, and are, therefore, known mostly to social work academics and practitioners in this way. For example, the conference in Adelaide in 2004 was a joint conference of the IFSW and IASSW while in 2006 each held separate conferences, the IFSW in Munich and the IASSW in Santiago, Chile. The 2008 conference in South Africa will be hosted by the IASSW since South Africa is not a member country of IFSW. However, from 2010 both organisations, with the International Council on Social Welfare (see below), have agreed to host parallel conferences at the same time and place. The first tripartite conference in 2010 will be in Hong Kong (though the 1998 conference in Jerusalem followed this format, accidentally perhaps).

Both organisations are similarly organised into five representative regions and are sustained financially by membership fees and conference proceeds, but each has a fundamentally different purpose and different organisational base within the five regions, broadly:

- the European region includes Scandinavia and Eastern Europe as a sub-region;
- the African region comprises all of the countries in Africa, including Mauritius, though generally the south-east African regions are the most active;
- the North American and Caribbean region includes the USA, Canada and the West Indies, mainly;

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<sup>1</sup> Deleuze and Guattari coined the idea of 'bodies without organs'. The absence of organs means a lack of organisation or denotes that the 'body' is not broken down into distinct parts but remains a whole entity.

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- the Asia-Pacific region includes New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Phillipines, and is the largest region;
  - the South American region which includes Mexico is the least active in terms of IASSW membership.

There are pockets of new developments in, for example, Middle Eastern, Eastern European and Chinese social work. Israel has been a member of the IASSW for many years and is not generally included in the Middle Eastern region.

Many countries in the Third World, and some in the First World, participate in two related international bodies, namely, the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) and the International Consortium on Social Development (ICSD). Both have strong Australian connections. A former president of the ICSW was Julian Disney from Australia and the current contact person for the Asia-Pacific region of the ICSD is Manohar Pawar from Charles Sturt University in Australia.

## **The International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)**

The IASSW is an association of schools of social work which was founded in 1928 at the First International Conference of Social Work in Paris and established in Berlin in 1929. Initially known as the International Committee, it comprised 51 schools, mostly in Europe.

The object of the Committee of Schools for Social Work (was) to bring about an exchange of opinion and experience between schools of social work and to deal with...problems of international cooperation of these schools, such as the exchange of teachers and students, the organisation of a centre of documentation and information, the formation of international social study courses and the participation in the preparation of international congresses for social work (Protocol of 12 June 1929, <http://www.iassw-aiets.org/>).

The organisation was revitalised following World War II, and its membership expanded to include a wider range of countries. It was renamed the International Association of Schools of Social Work in 1954. The Constitution of the IASSW states its purpose as follows:

Represent, promote and mediate the interests of social work education in an international context; contribute to academic and international development; provide opportunities for participation through an international forum, international seminars and study courses, the exchange of teachers and students, and the collection and dissemination of information relevant to social work education and training (<http://www.iassw-aiets.org/>).

### **History of the IASSW**

The following history can be found on the IASSW website: From its beginnings at the end of the 19th century, international exchange and cooperation were important drivers for the development and establishment of professional social work in Western industrialised countries. However, it was not until the 1920s that a definitive organisation was created due to the increasing recognition of social work as a profession and also the severe setback to international ties after the First World War. Initially a minority among the pioneers of social work attempted to draw conclusions from this experience, including René Sand, the Belgian doctor and Secretary General of the League of Red Cross Societies (1877-1953). He acted on suggestions for an international social work conference, which had been expressed as

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early as 1919 during the American National Conference of Social Work by representatives of Japan (probably Takayuki Namaye, home department, imperial government of Japan) and France, namely Dr Clotilde Mulon. In 1926 an organising committee, comprising representatives from numerous national and international associations, started work. Alice Salomon (1872-1948) was the committee member responsible for training issues. In July 1928 the first International Conference of Social Work was held in Paris with 3,000 delegates from 40 countries. This saw the birth of the IASSW.

The constitution was agreed by 14 representatives of social schools from seven European countries (12 women and two men) and a representative of the International Labour Office at the League of Nations in Geneva (today the UN), who had taken up the invitation to Berlin in June 1929 to sit on the committee. In 1932, 41 schools from 16 countries were members of the committee, including seven schools from countries outside Europe, namely, Canada, the USA, Chile and South Africa. The American Association of Schools of Social Work joined the committee with 26 schools in 1935 and initial informal contact was made with the Catholic International Union for Social Work. An information office was established in Geneva, as was a documentation office in the library of the International Labour Office which collected comprehensive school materials, theses and research. The committee reported on the social commission of the League of Nations. The exchange of students and teachers began, as well as conferences focusing on particular topics which were generally held in conjunction with the International Conference of Social Work – 1932 in Frankfurt, in Brussels, 1935 in the Netherlands and 1936 in London. Additionally, there were summer schools on topics, such as the ‘care of offenders and protection of young people’ and ‘housing issues and town planning’ which were to be held in parallel in all member schools. In 1936 international standards for training were discussed for the first time.

The committee resisted demands by the Nazi regime in Germany in 1933 and 1935 to remove Alice Salomon from the office of General Secretary. Instead it endorsed her, accepted the withdrawal of the German schools and put the topic of ‘professional ethics in social work’ on its agenda. Alice Salomon conducted the survey ‘Education for social work: A sociological interpretation based on an international survey’ which was commissioned by the committee and funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. The survey was based on the materials collated in Geneva and published in English in Zurich in 1937. In the same year, Alice Salomon was expelled from Germany. During her flight, which took her to the USA via England, she resigned from her position, handing over the leadership to Elinor Black, who held the committee together as Honorary Secretary until 1947. The committee’s work was halted in 1939 and revitalised following World War II.

The first conference of the IASSW after the Second World War was held in August 1946. René Sand was elected as the new president and Alice Salomon as the honorary president. The centre of the IASSW moved to the USA. Alongside reconsolidation and enhancing cooperation with the United Nations, one focus of the work was to propagate methods of social work, in particular case work in Europe and especially in Germany, as a means of democratisation. The IASSW subsequently experienced rapid growth and social work training spread around the globe, supported by the IASSW, and countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa became more significant. This process was supported by the establishment of five largely independent ‘continental’ organisations: Asociación Latino Americana de Escuelas de Trabajo Social – ALAETS (1967); Association of Schools of Social

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Work in Africa – ASSWA (1971); Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education – APASWE (1974); the European Regional Group (1980) which is now the European Association of Schools of Social Work – EASSW; and the North American and Caribbean Association of Schools of Social Work – NACASSW (1992). Nowadays the presidents of each of these regions are also vice presidents of the IASSW. The continuities not only include discussions about international standards of training and ethics, promoting the exchange of students and teachers and further training courses and research, but also the question of how to deal with global political conflicts and what the IASSW can contribute to overcoming them.

Member bodies elect a representative to sit on the IASSW board and to serve as the voice for developments regarding social work in their respective region or location. Thus in Australia eligible participants come from a variety of bodies including the Australian Association for Social Work and Welfare Organisation (AASWWE), the Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE) and the Australian Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work (ACHSSW). Present potential participants include the President of AASWWE, currently Karen Healy, and a nominee from ACHSSW, currently Jude Irwin, who is also involved in the Women’s Interest Group. Prior President of AASWWE, Carolyn Noble is now the Vice-President of APASWE and other Australians with a strong history with the IASSW are Janet George who served on the IASSW board in one capacity or another for 16 years, and David Cox, both now retired.

In addition to national or regional representatives, there are members at large who are voted in by individual member schools. They also vote in the standing office bearers, that is, the President, Secretary and Treasurer whose expenses are currently covered for biannual meetings in various locations around the world. Otherwise all participation is voluntary. Each term of office lasts for four years and officebearers can serve two consecutive terms on the board. All other members are required to meet their own travel costs though there is a regional development or solidarity fund to assist members from developing countries like South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana.

#### **Office-bearers**

##### *President of IASSW*

The current President of IASSW, voted into office in Adelaide in 2004, is Abye Tasse from Ethiopia and the immediate Past President is Lena Dominelli who served as President from 1996-2004. All past presidents retain life-time membership. Prior to Dominelli, Ralph Garber from Toronto was the President of the IASSW.

##### *Secretary of IASSW*

The secretary of the international association is Lynne Healy from the USA. She was voted in at the IASSW meeting in Adelaide in 2004. Thus the election of the President and Secretary occur in the same year while the election of the Treasurer occurs in the alternate biennial period.

##### *Treasurer of IASSW*

A new treasurer was voted in at the IASSW meeting in Chile in 2006. Gavin Rennie from New Zealand replaced Shimon Spiro from Israel, who served as treasurer from 1998-2006. Before him Jos Cornelissen from the Netherlands.

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### *IASSW Executive*

The IASSW Executive comprises the President, Abye Tasse from the University of Addis Ababa; immediate Past President, Lena Dominelli from Durham University in the UK; Honorary President, Katherine Kendall from the USA; Secretary, Lynne Healy from the University of Connecticut, USA; Treasurer, Gavin Rennie from Unitec in New Zealand; and Resident Treasurer, Julia Watkins from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in the USA. The five vice presidents and two of the four members at large are also members of the executive. For the time being, the latter are Malvina Ponce de Leon and Gurid Aga Askeland.

### **Member schools**

There are member schools in more than 60 countries, including 50 new school members from China (see Table 1).

### **IASSW structure**

The international association comprises officers – President, Secretary and Treasurer – elected for four years, and two members at large, elected every two years by secret ballot. Election results are announced at the General Assembly held during biannual conferences. The board includes these elected officebearers as well as the regional vice-presidents and up to three representatives nominated from the membership of each regional association. Thus the board comprises national and regional representatives as well as four members at large – two are voted in in each two-year period and serve for four years. All elected board members have voting rights.

All member schools form the General Assembly and each member school gets one vote for electing office bearers or voting on issues raised or proposals put forward relating to the association's activities. Individual members have a one-tenth vote. Regional associations and committees report to the board. There are five regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin-America, and North America and the Caribbean), two established sub-regions (Nordic and Caribbean) and two new sub-regions (Southern and East African, and South East European). Additionally, there are commissions, special interest groups, task forces, standing committees and time-limited projects. In more recent years there has been a concerted effort to work closely on task groups and special committees with allied international bodies like IFSW and ICSW and to produce joint working documents and statements. Importantly, the regional associations have an influence on the IASSW through their vice-president and representatives on the IASSW board, but the IASSW has no representatives and influence on the regional boards (Gurid Aga Askeland, personal communication, 20 September 2006).

### **Regions**

Each regional association encourages cross-country communication, shares educational methods and materials, and promotes faculty development at the regional level. National associations, such as AASWWE in Australia, maintain communication, share curricula among their members, are involved in faculty development, represent membership and education for the profession at the national level, and maintain international links. The five regions are as follows:

#### *African Region*

It has proved incredibly difficult to get an active regional association of the IASSW going in the African region. The Association for Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) is in its

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third reincarnation. The first was based in Addis Ababa, the second in Zimbabwe and the third in Botswana. The current executive is as follows:

- President: Prof Lhengwe Mwansa, University of Botswana
- Vice President: Dr Gidraph Wairire, University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Secretary General: Dr K Nthomang, University of Botswana
- Treasurer: Dorothee Holscher, University of Kwa Zulu Natal
- Representative for Southern Africa: Chris Chitereka, University of Lesotho
- Representative for East Africa: Afia Mugambi, Kenya
- Representative for West Africa: Dr Fumi Ojfolaranmi, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- Representative for Francophone Africa: Dr L Mambo, School of Social Work, Cote d'Ivoire
- Representative for North Africa: position unfilled
- UN Representative: Mutea Rukwaru, Department of Social Work, Kenya
- AU Representative: Recent appointment, details unavailable.

The new ASSWA (third reincarnation) is in its fledgling stages and, as yet, lacks a broad-based, common identity. ASSWA members, like most voluntary participants in all the regions of IASSW, are over-stretched. Many work in extremely under-resourced environments. Currently ASSWA is trying to develop a database of member schools in Africa and to establish the number of schools of social work there, which is a difficult task due to their diversity: some are colleges, some are only doing community development, and some are part of sociology departments. ASSWA's purpose is to:

- Contribute to the development of social work education in the region.
- Provide mutual support for each other in curriculum development.
- Explore, more systematically, how to respond to 'African' issues and local challenges emanating from 'under-development', warfare, droughts, and so on.
- Find responses and reflect on methodological approaches to social problems.

#### *Asia-Pacific Region*

The Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE) is an independent association affiliated to the IASSW. It was established in 1971 to represent schools of social work in Asia and in 1981 was expanded to incorporate the Pacific region. Countries eligible for membership include Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Japan, Singapore, West Coast of the North and South Americas, Bangladesh, China, India, Iran, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and other Asian-Pacific countries with schools of social work. To qualify for membership of APASWE, schools in the Asia and Pacific region should be members of the IASSW or of one of the national associations of schools of social work in the region. The APASWE president, Rajendran Muthu from Japan, is Asia-Pacific Regional Vice President of the IASSW and forms part of the IASSW Board of Directors. The immediate past president was the late Romeo Quieta from the Philippines. Carolyn Noble from Australia is Vice-President of APASWE and is one of the nominated representatives from the Asia-Pacific region on the IASSW board. Jude Irwin is also on the APASWE board and represents to the Australian Councils for Heads of Schools at the IASSW board. Also eligible for membership on the IASSW and APASWE boards is the President of each region's national associations. Australia's national association is AASWWE and the current president is Karen Healy (Carolyn Noble, personal communication, 6 September 2006).

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### *Latin American Region*

The regional association of Latin America, the Asociación Latino Americana de Escuelas de Trabajo Social (ALAETS) comprises three sub-regions, Region Cono-Sur, Region Andina and Region Centro America. The President and IASSW Vice-President for the Latin American Region is Malvina Ponce de León from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago where the 2006 IASSW international congress was held.

### *European Region*

The European Association of Schools of Social Work (EASSW) is the independent European branch of the IASSW which brings together approximately 300 schools, universities and institutions supporting social work education in Europe. Its mission is to promote social development and to develop high quality education, training and knowledge for social work practice, social services, and social welfare policies in Europe. In fulfilling its mission the EASSW adheres to United Nations declarations and conventions on human rights. Members of EASSW are united in their obligation to the continued pursuit of social justice and social development. In carrying out its mission EASSW fosters cooperation, collegiality, and interdependence among its members and with others. The EASSW pursues its goals through biennial European congresses on social work and social development and hosts expert group meetings. It provides assistance for European exchange programmes of member schools, for curriculum development and implementation in new schools of social work in Eastern Europe, and for developing European networks and research projects. It also engages in activities as representatives of social work education at the European Community level and in European NGOs. The EASSW is governed by a General Assembly which takes place biannually and comprises all member schools and the Executive Committee. The President of the Executive Committee is Anna Maria Campanini from Parma in Italy. The regional representatives are Jan Agten, Belgium, and Darja Zavirsek from the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia who received support from the IASSW to launch the Eastern European sub-region. The sub-regional representative from the Nordic Committee of Schools of Social Work is Helle Strauss from Den Sociale Højskole in Denmark. The EASSW publishes a newsletter twice a year (<http://www.eassw.org>). The EASSW holds an annual European conference on social work education. The next EASSW-IFSW conference, Social Changes and Social Work, is in Parma, Italy, in 2007.

### *North American and Caribbean Region*

The North American and Caribbean Association of Schools of Social Work (NACASSW) comprises schools of social work in Canada, the United States and the English speaking countries of the Caribbean, including Guyana and Belize. The President is Peta-Anne Baker from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. Organisationally, NACASSW is linked to the Association of Caribbean Social Work Educators (ACSWE), the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (<http://www.cassw-access.ca/>) and the US Council on Social Work Education (<http://www.cswe.org/>). NACASSW aims to promote linkages among schools of social work in North America and the Caribbean, to represent regional concerns within the IASSW, and to promote the further development and enrichment of social work education in the region. NACASSW does this through sharing information, sponsoring educational seminars and encouraging connections among schools in the region. Since its inception in 1992, migration has been a priority issue for NACASSW, as there is significant migration of Caribbean peoples to Canada and the USA and a growing incidence of return migration. At the 2003 meeting of the Executive Committee, standards and accreditation were identi-

fied as priority issues for the region. NACASSW plans to consider the regional impact of the Global Qualifying Standards; the strengths and limitations of regional and subregional accreditation schemes, as well as the impact of larger political and economic integration structures on the regulation of social work education in the region.

### Sub-regions

There are also sub-regions, such as the well-established Caribbean region. The President of the Association of Caribbean Social Work Educators (ACSWE) which was established in 1997 is Letnie Rock from Barbados. ACSWE runs biannual conferences which focus on the development of social work education in the Caribbean, and endeavours to contribute to the development of international social work education. It also publishes the Caribbean Journal of Social Work jointly edited by John Maxwell and Lincoln Williams. Currently the ACSWE representative on the IASSW board is Lincoln Williams.

**Table 1.** Distribution of member schools.

AFRICA	24	EUROPE	98
South Africa	18	UK	31
Botswana	1	East	11
Egypt	1	Poland	3
Ghana	1	Estonia	1
Tanzania	1	Hungary	1
Zimbabwe	1	Lithuania	1
Mauritius	1	Slovenia	1
ASIA-PACIFIC	190	Latvia	1
Japan	77	Turkey	1
China	37	Cyprus	1
Australia	14	West	57
South Korea	33	Belgium	12
India	7	Germany	11
New Zealand	6	France	9
Phillipines	4	Netherlands	7
Hong Kong	3	Italy	2
Indonesia	2	Portugal	2
Papua New Guinea	1	Austria	2
Malaysia	1	Spain	1
Thailand	1	Greece	1
Bangladesh	1	Luxembourg	1
Singapore	1	Israel	4
Taiwan	1	SCANDINAVIA	24
Mongolia	1	Norway	7
LATIN AMERICA	5	Sweden	6
Chile	3	Finland	6
Costa Rica	1	Denmark	5
Ecuador	1		
NORTH AMERICA	105	MIDDLE EAST	6
USA	80	Lebanon	1
Canada	23	Kuwait	1
Caribbean	2		

Source: <http://www.iassw-aiets.org/en/Links/schools.htm> Accessed 7 September 2006

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The new sub-regions are the Southern and East African sub-region and the Eastern European sub-region mentioned above. The former is the only active part of the African region as outlined above. Thus the chair of the Interim Association is the current Vice-President for Africa. The newest sub-region is Eastern Europe, proposed by Darja Zavirsek from Slovenia.

Table 1 shows that there are roughly 430 member schools with most in the Asia-Pacific Region (189) followed by the North American Region (105), European Region (99), African Region (24) and Latin-American Region (5). The USA has the most schools (80) followed closely by Japan (77). Scandinavia is the largest sub-region with 24 member schools and the Caribbean is the smallest with two. There are seven member schools in the Middle East if one includes Egypt in this region, with four in Israel. Though only 37 are recorded for China, the report from the IASSW Board meeting in the UK in January 2006 states that there are 50 member schools, that is, a quarter of all schools of social work in China. Interestingly, China has 200 schools of social work but very few jobs for social workers. Given that there are approximately 1,600 social work programmes in the USA, the IASSW does not have much visibility or influence there.

### **Committees**

#### *The Nominations Committee*

The voting and election of office-bearers is managed by the Nominations Committee elected by the General Assembly. The chair is ineligible for key office-bearing positions.

#### *The Human Rights Committee*

The IASSW and IFSW collaborate on human rights issues and have formed a joint committee to work on these. Thus the goals of the IASSW's Human Rights Committee are to: mpartner with the IFSW Human Rights Commission; advocate for the human rights of individual social workers and populations; and educate social work educators and students globally about human rights. Current joint IFSW-IASSW tasks include the development of a joint IASSW-IFSW statement in support of the newly constituted Human Rights Council at the UN, shared with all participants at Social Work Day at the UN and the Council itself in 2006; and revision of the Human Rights and Social Work manual which is planned for 2007. For those who wish to contribute to its work, the chair of the committee is Janice Wood-Wetzel from the USA and committee members include Sylvia Staub-Bernasconi from Switzerland who is the EASSW rep, Elisabeth Reichert and Katherine Van Wormer from the USA, and Lincoln Williams from Jamaica. The committee is currently dominated by the European and North American and Caribbean regions but membership on the committee is still open to others who would like to participate. Regarding the IASSW-IFSW Human Rights and Social Work Revision Plans, the IFSW's Human Rights committee has drafted a plan for the review and rewriting of the Human Rights and Social Work Professional Training Manual which was reviewed and approved by the IASSW chair with minor revisions. The draft leaves much to be developed by both organisations and their supporters.

#### *The IASSW-IFSW Linkage Committee*

The purpose of the IASSW-IFSW Linkage Committee is to foster cooperation between these two international bodies. It is jointly chaired by the Presidents of the IASSW and IFSW, respectively Abye Tasse and David Jones. Committee members include – from the IASSW, Lena Dominelli from the UK and Gavin Rennie from New Zealand and from the IFSW

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Tom Johannesen, the standing permanent secretary of IFSW, from Switzerland where its headquarters are located.

#### *The Katherine Kendall Committee*

Now well into her 90s, and a staunch supporter of IASSW, Katherine Kendall lends her name to a biannual award to an outstanding social work educator for his or her contribution to the development of 'international' social work across at least two regions. Generally, the intent of the award is to recognise distinguished international contributions to social work education. However, it is recognized that award recipients are likely to come from developed western nations or from organisations which provide them with the resources to travel internationally. Like all the other committees, the Katherine Kendall Committee endeavours to have representation from each of the five regions of the IASSW. Past recipients of the Katherine Kendall Award include in 2006 Sven Hessle from Sweden, Professor of Social Work in Stockholm; in 2004 Terry Hokenstadt Professor of Social Work at Case-Western Reserve University in the USA; in 2002 John Maxwell, retired Professor of Social Work from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica; and in 2000 Harriet Jakobson from Sweden.

#### *The Projects Committee*

The IASSW Projects Committee considers proposals for project grants – maximum USD4000 – to further social work education internationally by contributing to the implementation of the IASSW Mission Statement and to the enhancement of cooperation among schools of social work worldwide. It is chaired by Helle Strauss from Denmark with members Lengwe-Kamtembula Mwansa from Botswana, Narda Razack from Canada, Letnie Rock from Barbados and Shimon Spiro from Israel. Proposals for projects should advance social work education. Criteria include direct and meaningful contribution to the philosophy of social work education, curriculum development, the content of specific units, modules or courses, field instruction, teaching methods, technology of instruction, staff development, administration of educational programmes, and community involvement of staff and students. 'The project has to be truly international, involving social work educators from minimally three schools in at least two countries with differing cultures or systems of social work education. The project should be expected to enhance international and cross-cultural collaboration, and may contribute to educational developments through the inclusion of schools of social work in countries where social work education is facing particular challenges' (<http://www.iassw-aiets.org/>).

Projects are required to be creative and innovative with clearly written proposals following a set format. Only proposals submitted by members of IASSW are considered and all participants in the proposed project must also be members of IASSW. Members of IASSW include faculty members of schools who have paid their dues in the preceding or current year. Individual members, who have paid their dues for the current year, may be considered at the discretion of the committee. Proposals are reviewed by the Committee comprising members appointed by the Board of Directors of IASSW. Decisions relating to the recommendations of the committee are made by the IASSW Board. Interim and final reports are required. Examples of projects that have been supported include the following:

1. International Social Work and Political Conflict Resolution Network: A network for enhancing social work education and research on social work in political conflict and post conflict situations (<http://www.isw4peace.org>). The project includes schools from

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Israel, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Australia, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, Bosnia Herzegovina, Jamaica, Zambia, UK, the USA, and Brazil. Project leaders are Jane Lindsay of Kingston University and Shula Ramon of Anglia Polytechnic University in the UK.

2. Indigenous Social Work Education and Practice around the World: This project involves 18 schools in Israel, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New Zealand, the USA, India and Botswana. Project leaders are Mel Gray (University of Newcastle, Australia), John Coates (St Thomas University, Canada) and Michael Yellow Bird (University of Kansas, USA).
3. Development of a Module on Disaster Management for Social Workers: The project involves Kenya, Philippines and England. The project leader is Ralph Firth from the School of Health Community and Education Studies, at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle in the UK.

#### *The World Census Committee*

This committee collects data on the administration, structure, staffing, curriculum and student enrollment of social work education programmes worldwide, and provides information on the development of and trends in social work education. In addition programmes provide data on international activities and their current challenges. Analysis of the World Census 2000 and a reanalysis by region is posted on the IASSW website. Data from the 2000 World Census and the 2005 membership survey is available to members. The next world census is planned for 2010. The committee is chaired by Angelina Barretta-Herman from the USA with members Iris Chi from the USA, Ralph Garber from Canada (who initiated the census), Lynn Healey from the USA and Joan Orme from the UK. Publications of the committee include:

- Barretta-Herman, A. (2002). *Reanalysis by Region: The World Census 2000*. <http://www.iasw-aiets.org/en/Resources/publications.htm>.
- Barretta-Herman, A. (2005). *A reanalysis of the IASSW World Census 2000*. *International Social Work*, 48(6), 794-808.
- Garber, R. (2000). Social Work and Globalization. *Canadian Social Work* 2(1): 198-215.
- Garber, R. (2002). *World Census 2000*. <http://www.iasw-aiets.org/en/Resources/publications.htm>.

#### *Women's Interest Group*

This group convenes at each biannual conference and is open to anyone interested in discussing issues related to gender and social work education. It takes recommendations to the IASSW Board on issues related to gender equity. The convenors take responsibility for organising the gender issues stream – previously a pre-conference workshop – at the conferences. They are Jude Irwin and Natalie Bolzan from Australia. Membership comprises women attending the IASWW Conference. A special edition of the *Women in Welfare Education Journal* in Australia published a selection of papers presented in the Women's Symposium at the Adelaide Conference in 2004.

#### **Membership of IASSW Committees**

Membership is not limited to members of the board. In a number of instances continuing membership of committees has been the vehicle for former board members to continue

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involvement with the organisation. The board is also interested in encouraging new people to join these committees.

In the first instance interest could be addressed to the Treasurer, Gavin Rennie [grennie@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:grennie@unitec.ac.nz)

### **Professional Journal: *International Social Work***

Now published by Taylor-Francis, *International Social Work* is the official journal of, and jointly sponsored by, the IASSW, IFSW and ICSW (International Council of Social Welfare – see below). The journal is designed to extend knowledge and promote communication in the field of social development, social welfare and human services. Its long-time Editor-in-Chief, Dr Francis J Turner, retired in 2005. The Editor since 2006 is now Karen Lyons from the UK. The journal is issued six times a year and a 30% reduction on individual subscriptions is offered for IASSW (schools or individuals within member schools), IFSW and ICSW members.

### **Conferences**

The 2008 IASSW Congress in Durban, South Africa, *Transcending Global and Local Divides: Challenges for Social work Education and Practice*, will mark the 80th anniversary of the IASSW. A joint IFSW/IASSW/ICSW conference is planned for 2010 and will be held in Hong Kong.

### **The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)**

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) links professional social workers around the globe. It represents professional social work organisations from 80 countries with more than 470,000 social workers in all parts of the world. Each association member recognises that social work's common goals transcend borders and that a global voice benefits the profession, and most important, the people it serves. Specifically, the IFSW aims to:

- promote social work as a profession through cooperation and action on an international basis;
- support national associations in promoting the participation of social workers in social planning and the formulation of social policies, nationally and internationally;
- encourage and facilitate contacts between social workers in all countries; and
- present the viewpoints of the profession on an international level by establishing relations with international organisations.

It does this by:

- sponsoring biennial international symposia and conferences;
- developing and publishing policy statements to guide social work practice worldwide;
- advocating for the protection of human rights of practising social workers;
- publishing Principles and Standards for the Ethics of Social Work;
- pairing social work organisations in economically developed and developing countries for an exchange of social work practice experience;
- providing consultation to the United Nations on issues of human development and human rights; and

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- conducting special projects, such as the compilation of professional training manuals (<http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000012.html>).

The IFSW is an association of social work practitioners and has two forms of membership: via professional associations in member countries and through Friends of the IFSW which allows individual members as associates of the organisation: 'An IFSW Friend is a professional social worker, an agency, a corporation or others supporting the social work profession and global social development' (<http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000012.html>).

Australia is affiliated through the Australian Association of Social Workers and is represented on the IFSW board by the President of the AASW, currently Bob Lonne. The organisation has a president elected by member organisations. Imelda Dodds from Australia is the immediate past president and the new President voted in at the last international meeting in Munich is David Jones from the UK. There is a permanent secretary based in Switzerland, Tom Johannesen, while the Treasurer is Fiona Robertson from New Zealand.

### **Organisational structure**

#### *African Region*

Professional associations in the following countries in Africa are members of the IFSW through their national associations of social workers: Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Lesotho and Niger are provisional members. Notably absent from this list is South Africa which has been unable to develop a single, united professional association (Gray and Mazibuko, 2004). The Vice-President for Africa, Charles Mbugua from Kenya, is a member of the IFSW Executive Committee.

#### *Asia-Pacific Region*

Professional associations in the following countries are members of the IFSW in the Asia-Pacific region: Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia, New Zealand, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Provisional members include India, Lebanon and Mongolia. The Vice-President of the Asia-Pacific Region is Justina Leung from Hong Kong and representative on the IFSW Executive Committee is John Ang from Singapore. Mark Henrickson from Massey University, New Zealand is the Treasurer.

#### *European region*

IFSW European Region has 40 member associations in 35 countries, with a total of 165,600 social workers – the membership is representative as it covers all corners of Europe. A number of associations of social workers from the Central and Eastern European countries have been especially welcomed as new members of the Federation. Being the most established organisationally, the European region has its own website at <http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000605.html>.

#### *Latin American and Caribbean Region*

The following countries are full members of the IFSW in the Latin American and Caribbean Region: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Peru and Uruguay. The Netherlands Antilles is a provisional member. The Vice-President for Latin America and the Caribbean region is Juan Manuel Latorre Car-

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vajal from Colombia and a member of the IFSW Executive Committee is Joaquina Barata Teixeira from Brazil.

### *North American Region*

This region comprises Canada and the USA. The Vice-President for North America is Gary Bailey from the USA and the representative member on the IFSW Executive Committee is Veronica Marsman from Canada.

## **Committees**

### *IFSW Permanent Committee for Ethical Issues*

The IFSW adopted the first international code of ethics in 1976. In 1986 this code was supplemented by a declaration of ethical principles. In 1994 the two documents were merged into one base ethical document 'Ethics of social work: Principles and standards'. At the same time, the organisation established the 'Permanent Committee on Ethics' coordinated for a time by Gail McDougall from Canada. From 2001 the committee comprised Arne Groeningsaeter (chair) (European Region), Charles Tuhaise from Uganda (African Region), Gilma Mendez Hernandez from Colombia (Latin American Region), and Richard Hugman from Australia (Asia-Pacific Region). An expert group was established in 2002 to assist the Chair in redrafting the document on ethics. It included Richard Hugman, Sarah Banks from the UK and Bente Moseng from Norway all of whom wrote the draft of the 2004 document, with representation from the IASSW. Consequently, in 2004, the IFSW and the IASSW agreed on and adopted a new ethical statement: 'Ethics in Social Work: Statement of Principles' (<http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000015.html>). At the meeting in Munich in 2006 it was decided to restructure the ethics committee and these two groups were merged and another expert member, Elaine Congress from the USA (North American Region), joined the committee (Richard Hugman, personal communication, 6 September 2006).

### *IFSW / IASSW Human Rights Commission*

The IFSW / IASSW Human Rights Commission was established to implement its human rights agenda. It publishes statements on human rights issues and related matters and raises awareness within the profession about its human rights commitment. The IFSW has adopted an International Policy on Human Rights describing its commitment and giving guidance to social workers and social work organisations on human rights policy matters. Together with the IASSW and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the IFSW developed and published a Manual on Social Work and Human Rights. IFSW has also published a Manual on Social Work and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The IFSW also acts in the human rights field by supporting and defending the human rights of individual social workers, social work educators and students through appeals and demand for fair and transparent legal process and humane conditions in detention and imprisonment. The IFSW opposes capital punishment, torture or cruel and inhuman punishment of any social workers detained (<http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000014.html>). The Human Rights Commission, convened by past president Elis Envall, has expert members Jim Ife from Australia and Evelyn Balais Serrano from the Phillipines. Regional members include Charles Tuhaise from Uganda (African Region), Justina Leung from Hong Kong (Asia-Pacific Region), Juan Manuel Latorre Carvajal from Colombia (Latin American Region), and Veronica Marsman from Canada (North American Region).

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## **The International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW)**

The International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), founded in Paris in 1928, is a non-governmental organisation which represents national and local organisations in more than 50 countries throughout the world. Its membership also includes a number of major international organisations. Member organisations collectively represent tens of thousands of community organisations which work directly at the grassroots with people in poverty, hardship or distress. Almost all of them are independent organisations working in their own communities rather than branches of organisations based in other countries. Many have been established by people who are themselves experiencing hardship. Within their own communities, the ICSW's network of organisations provides help for a wide range of people who are poor, ill, disabled, unemployed, frail or oppressed. They help young people, older people, families, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees and others who are experiencing special hardship or vulnerability (<http://www.icsw.org/introduction.html>).

The ICSW's constitution and by-laws make it a fully democratic and accountable organisation. The governing body, the Committee of Representatives, is elected by members and comprises more than 100 people. It elects a President, Treasurer and Executive Committee to take responsibility for detailed implementation of its programmes and policies. Similar governing structures apply in each of ICSW's nine regions – Central and West Africa, East and Southern Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, North East Asia, South and Central Asia, South East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and North America. Currently, the ICSW headquarters are in Holland, its President is Solveig Askjem from Norway, and its Executive Director is Denys Correll who is Australian. The ICSW also has special representatives to the United Nations in New York and Geneva. Its activities are funded by membership fees as well as grants from private foundations and from governmental or intergovernmental sources. Current major donors include the governments of Finland, Norway and Sweden (<http://www.icsw.org/introduction.html>).

Occasionally the international conferences of the three organisations are held simultaneously as happened in Jerusalem in 1998. Currently ICSW has made a commitment to hold its 2010 Conference in Hong Kong in conjunction with IASSW and IFSW. The Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) is a member of the ICSW.

## **The International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD)**

The International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD) – formerly the International University Consortium for Social Development (IUCISD) – is an organisation of practitioners, scholars and students in the human services jointly involved in social development processes which aim to empower people to bring about economic and social improvement in their lives. Often this involves institution-building and structural change. The ICSD serves as a clearinghouse for information on international social development. The Consortium fosters collaboration among personnel of organisations, such as the United Nations, World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF as well as among professional associations in human services and institutions of higher learning. ICSD is a well-established and widely recognised international catalyst for sharing ideas among many nations and across many cultures (<http://www.iucisd.org/>). The President of ICSD is Frank Raymond.

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Individual membership is permitted and a member receives the organisation's journal *Social Development Issues*. It is published in cooperation with the Center for Social Development (CSD) at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St Louis. The Editor is Michael Sherraden from CSD. This is the leading journal on social development in the welfare field and is a valuable resource to educators, practitioners and students in social work.

There are two regional branches in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. The latter was established in 2003 at the ICSW symposium in Mumbai, and the contact person for the region is Dr Manohar Pawar from Charles Sturt University in Australia.

International symposia are held biannually. They provide a forum for scholars, professionals, international agency representatives, government officials and others to come together to share professional papers, exchange views and work toward the Consortium's goals. Sessions are held in accessible, low-cost locations to encourage attendance. Since the inaugural symposium in Hong Kong in 1980, people representing over 60 nations have gathered for ICSD symposia in Great Britain (1982), Canada (1984), Japan (1986), Finland (1988), Costa Rica (1990), United States of America (1992), Sri Lanka (1994), Portugal (1996) Egypt (1998), South Africa (1999), Turkey (2001), India (2003) and Brazil (2005). The latest symposium was in Hong Kong in July. The theme of this symposium was 'Seeking Harmony and Promoting Social Development in a World of Conflict' (<http://www.iucisd.org/symposium.htm>). The first Asia-Pacific Regional Conference was in Pattaya, Thailand in 2006 (<http://asia-pacific.icsd.info/asia/icsdasia.htm>).

## Conclusion

This paper has provided an overview of international social work organisations which determine the face of social work worldwide and which offer social workers a range of platforms from which to engage in professional issues and debates and to spread awareness of social work in their home country.

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