

ASIAN AND PACIFIC ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (APASWE)
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK (IASSW)
JAPAN COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK ASIAN CENTER FOR WELFARE IN SOCIETY(ACWeIS)
JAPANESE ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL WORK(JASSW)

INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Date: 4 November 2010

Venue: Japan College of Social Work (Room A101), Tokyo

Is it necessary to revise the present IASSW/IFSW social work definition or not? If necessary, which part must be revised and “why and how”?

Has the present definition fitted us, our practice, thought, and value?

The examination is to be made both at the conceptual level and the empirical level.

Let's change (scattered, unorganized)mutters to an Asian & Pacific(integrated, organized)voice.

<Opening>

9:30 Welcome Shigehiro Takahasi, President, Japan College of Social Work
Welcome & Project Outline Tatsuru Akimoto, President, APASWE

<National Workshop Reports>

Chair: Robyn Mason, Representative, Australian Association for Social Work and Welfare
Education (AASWWE); Monash University

9:45– 10:05 Bangladesh Muhammed Samad, Secretary General, Bangladesh Council for Social
Work Education (BCSWE); University of Dhaka
10:05 – 10:25 China Yongxiang Xu, Vice president, China Association for Social Work
Education (CASWE); East China University of Science & Technology
10:25 – 10:45 Indonesia Fentiny Nugroho, President, Indonesian Association for Social Work
Education (IASWE); University of Indonesia
10:45 – 11:05 Japan Ritsuko Watanabe, Special Committee Members, Japanese Society for
the Study of Social Work (JSSW); Kansei-gakuin University
11:05 – 11:20 Coffee Break
11:20 – 11:40 Korea Seonmee Hong, Education & International Exchange Committees
Member, Korean Association for Social Work Education (KASWE);
Hanshin University

(PTO)

- 11:40 – 12:00 Nepal Bala Raju Nikku, Founding Director, Nepal School of Social Work; Kadambari Memorial College of Science and Management; APASWE Board Member
- 12:00 – 12:20 The Philippines Mary Lou Alcid, President, National Association for Social Work Education Inc. (NASWEI) Philippines; University of the Philippines
- 12:20 – 12:40 Thailand Sopa Onopas, Secretary, Social Work Association of Thailand; Huachiew University
- 12:40 – 13:00 Malaysia Azlinda Azman, Executive Committee Member, Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW); Universiti Sains Malaysia

13:00-14:00 Lunch Break

<Discussion>

Chair: Zulkarnain Ahmad Hatta, Acting-Secretary, APASWE; Universiti Sains Malaysia

14:00 – 14:15 Summary Report of the morning session Zulkarnain Ahmad Hatta

14:15 – 15:15 Small Group Discussion (3-4 groups)

15:15 – 15:55 Small Group Report (10minutes X 3-4groups)

15:55 – 16:30 Plenary Discussion

<Closing>

16:30 – 16:40 Conclusive Summary I

Soung-Yee Kim, Immediately Past President, APASWE (Korea); Ewha Womans University.

16:40 – 16:50 Conclusive Summary II and Thank you from APASWE

Mark Henrickson, Treasurer, APASWE; Representative of Council of Social Work Educators Aotearoa New Zealand; Massey University

16:50 Closing & Thank you from Asian Center for Welfare in Society

Kenichi Nakajima, Director, Institute of Social Research, Japan College of Social Work

Language Interpretation

All sessions except for the Small Group Discussion in the early afternoon:
English and Japanese

The Small Group Discussion in the early afternoon:

Group A: English, Japanese

Group B: English, Chinese, Japanese

Group C: English, Korean, Japanese

(Group D: Japanese only)

[17:15-18:15 The 2nd National Association+ Meeting]

[18:30-20:00 Welcome Party]

(11 October 2010)

APASWE/IASSW INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK REVIEW PROJECT

IASSW=IFSW International Definition of Social Work was adopted by IFSW and IASSW in May 2001, and they were “committed to a 10 year cycle of review for” it. Two thousand ten (2010) is the year for the revision. (“Introduction to the joint IFSW and IASSW document”, *International Definition of the Social Work Profession; Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles; Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession*, Supplement of *International Social Work*, Sage)

The IFSW and the IASSW are behind schedule. The APASWE decided to take the lead at its first national association+ meeting in June 2010 in Hong Kong—for each national association to hold its national workshop with its mother tongue hopefully by around 20 October 2010, and for the APASWE to hold a regional workshop at the beginning of November 2010 and the summary conference at the 21st Asian and Pacific Social Work Conference in 2011.

In a country in our APASWE Region, the definition is now part of a law, and in many countries, the definition and two other documents above (i.e. *Ethics Statement* and *Global Standards*) which include the definition in them have been used as a yardstick to promote the standardization of competency and curricula and the social work profession itself. A voice is heard: “Convergence is inevitable and necessary.”

Wherever we go, however, similar criticisms and complaints have been heard—“It is the West’s”. For example:

- a. Is “social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being” appropriate as aims and activities of social work?
- b. Is the dichotomic way of thinking, e.g. people vs. environment, acceptable?
- c. Is the individualism or the individual-centered way of thinking, including “to develop their full potential”, suitable?
- d. Aren’t the stability of society, the harmony in human relations, the respect of others, the emphasis of unique tradition and culture, the emphasis of responsibility, and the importance of family kin and community core elements for social work? (cf. Footnote 2 of *Global Standards*)
- e. How about inserting a non-English word, e.g. “*kyōsei*” (Living together interdependently; Co-existence; cf. symbiosis), in the definition?
- f. Don’t you have any objections to designate human rights and social justice as the fundamental principles of social work?
- g. Between lines, Western democracy, Christianity and modernism would be read.
- h. The element of spirituality is missing.

Another voice is also heard: More fundamentally, “It is a “developed” country model.” “Is it OK to begin with ‘Social work profession promotes....?’” “Is social work a profession? What we need first is the definition of social work—before the definition of social work profession—, don’t we?”

Is it necessary to revise the definition or not? If necessary, which part must be revised and “how” and why”? The examination is to be made both at the conceptual level and the empirical level.

(Tatsuru Akimoto, APASWE, 24 September 2010)