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International Council on Social Welfare

September 2023

Working Together for a Better ICSW



Professor Antonio López Peláez,
*Executive Director of ICSW and Professor of Social Work
and Social Services at the National Distance Education
University (UNED) (Spain)*

Dear ICSW members, friends, and interested readers,

Welcome to the September 2023 issue of our newsletter.

This September 2023 has been a very special month for ICSW, and I am honored to share with you all the successes achieved, thanks to the collective work of the entire ICSW. The international seminar organized in Namibia by ICSW on 28-29 September, entitled The ICSW International Seminar on Social Policy and Social Protection in Africa (with the support of the Namibian government), has had an exceptional outcome: the ICSW Windhoek Declaration on Social Policy and Social Protection in Africa. It is an important document for the development of social protection in Africa, endorsed by the Namibian government and supported by the African Union.

You can consult the text in this newsletter, and on our website. With this declaration, the product of a participatory process led by our colleague Petronella Masabane, president of the ICSW East and South Africa Region, ICSW is making a decisive contribution to the debate on social protection policies in Africa. I would like to thank all participants for their commitment and support throughout the deliberative process that has led to this statement.



ICSW President Dr. Suh and the Deputy Minister Hon. Dr. E. Muinjangué, at the signing of the ICSW Windhoek Declaration

As documentation for the work of the conference participants, we also publish in this Newsletter the report on climate change in Africa written by Dr. Javier Vide, past Chairman of the Spanish Committee of the World Climate Research Programme.

In addition to the relevant information on the ICSW International Seminar in Namibia, in this issue of the Newsletter we publish the contributions sent

to us by the ICSW North America and Caribbean Region. Thank you very much for the interesting contributions you have sent us to the Newsletter. And finally we publish an article from our Turkish colleagues, who have joined as new members of the ICSW. In this case, it is an article written by Ramazan YÜKSEL, President of Association of Social Workers in Türkiye. We are honored and challenged to have new members join our organization, and we thank them for working with us, and for their interesting analysis of the Turkish welfare state and the challenges facing Turkish workers.

As I highlighted in the previous August newsletter, in a few months we will be holding the ICSW, IASSW and IFSW World Congress in Panama (<https://swsd2024.org.pa/>). It is a great opportunity to meet, discuss and set priorities for ICSW in the coming years. I encourage you to register and participate, since 1928 the ICSW, IASSW and IFSW world congresses have contributed to the debate and improvement of welfare systems, giving voice to the concerns and projects of welfare professionals and social workers.

I hope we can meet in Panama in 2024.
Take care and stay healthy!

ICSW WINDHOEK DECLARATION ON SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION IN AFRICA

ICSW Africa Region convened local and global social scientists and professionals from state and non-state agencies together in Windhoek to deliberate on social policy and social protection issues in the African Region and to draft a road map towards accelerated progress in achieving the SDGs in the Region. The participants concluded that social policies and social protection programmes are a necessity for human, social, and economic development and ecological sustainability and issued the following declaration:

Social protection is a right - not an act of charity.

“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom. The steps that are needed from the developed nations are clear.” (President Nelson Mandela, at the launch of Make Poverty History - campaign, 2005)

Social policy and good governance are key tools for realizing human rights for all.

Social protection is a high priority in reaching *the Africa we want*; need, strive for -and will get. The AU Strategy 2063 and the supporting Social Agenda aim at providing Member States a vision and guidance to use the transformative powers of social protection to achieve development for all.

Social protection including social assistance in cash or kind, social work services social insurance and labor market policies are effective tools for redistribution of wealth, reaching equality and equity,

and for strengthening inclusion and social cohesion that is necessary for mobilizing the productive potentials of nations.

ICSW strongly supports the social protection strategies and human rights instruments of the African Union.

The coverage and adequacy of social protection in the African Region is still too low to ensure eradication of poverty and for achieving inclusive development. There is a need to find ways to address the predominance of informality and to expand decent work that provides adequate livelihoods and rights at work, including social insurance. ICSW strongly supports the UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transition (2021) and the advancement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Universal Social Protection (USP) adapted to regional and local conditions.

Social policy is a necessary element in advancing sustainable development goals.

Social protection is decisive instrument for realizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of (1) Eradicating poverty (Goal 1), Ending hunger (Goal 2), Good health (Goal 3), Quality education (Goal 4), Gender equality (Goal 5), Decent work (Goal 8), Reduction of inequalities (Goal 10). It is also a necessary facilitator/enabler for achieving most of the other SDGs.

COVID-19 revealed structural weaknesses and demonstrated the importance of social protection systems and social work for recovering from the mental, social and economic shock. However, the shadow of COVID-19 will be long because it increased poverty and exclusion and especially many children and young people were left further behind.

Social policies and social protection will help in reaching the African Union vision of *silencing the guns by 2030* in the Region.

Peace and human security continue to be challenged by global, regional and national inequities, poverty, institutional failures and natural calamities. Equity -oriented social policies and social protection measures are necessary instruments for prevention and mitigation of such risks and for helping people to cope with the consequences and for promoting promote social cohesion and peaceful cooperation.

Action Points

1. Include social policy in general and social protection, in particular, in development policies

Social policy is a corner stone for nation building, human, social and economic development. It is an investment in the future of people and nations. It has a price tag, but should not be accounted as a cost, but as an investment in people and the future of society with a high rate of return.

Social protection should be understood as part of broader, developmental, comprehensive social policy that aims at including access to human rights to all and includes social values in all sector policies. Such developmental approach calls for a Whole-of-Government – approach to development policies, as for example Namibia has done.

Facing complex and interconnected social challenges such as multidimensional poverty, inequality, healthcare disparities, education gaps, and lack of decent jobs, a holistic “*Whole-of-Government*” - approach is particularly relevant in the African context characterized by a high degree of informal economy.

The superdiversity of our societies (ethnicity, gender, age, language, etc.) makes it necessary to develop participatory methodologies. Citizens' participation is a prerequisite for the design and implementation of a sustainable and legitimate social policy and social protection system. ICSW networks in Africa advocate for a *Whole-of-Society approach* aimed at involving all people through civil society organizations and networks.

2. Advance "Smart welfare" making full use of cost-effective ICT.

In the context of 'sustainable development', we recommend a more innovative approach to social security and welfare issues in the spirit of 'smart welfare', which includes not only the full utilization of ICT but also more efficient and effective ways of devising welfare policies and programs. In this respect the international community should make more efforts in exchanges and accumulation of the information on successful experiences of 'smart welfare.'

Public administrations, companies and citizens must respect the digital rights of citizens. ICSW recommends promoting participatory and inclusive digitization processes, reducing the digital divide. A high priority should be accorded to making available digital skills training for all citizens, including the elderly, and for social welfare professionals, in particular.

3. Strengthen the resilience and elasticity of social protection systems.

Since the pandemic started, countries made massive innovations in providing emergency

cash transfers to hundreds of thousands of people using mobile money and other technologies.

One of the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic is that our societies must be prepared to address present and future humanitarian catastrophes. To this end, ICSW highlights the need for specific training of social welfare professionals, greater coordination between public administrations and the private sector, and increased investment in social protection systems.

4. Be also aware of slow emergencies, such as climate change.

Climate change is a slow emergency with potentially disastrous impacts. It has already affected drastically the African region – that has been least responsible for the emergence of climate change. ICSW supports the initiative to establish Damage and Loss Compensation Funds and implement them through existing social protection systems.

5. Gender responsive system includes men, as well as women.

Expanding and investing in universal gender-responsive social protection, including income support, as well as contributory and non-contributory social protections systems to not only increase women's and children's resilience but also to be inclusive of men as critical stakeholders. Furthermore, the pandemic has exacerbated the mental health challenges of men. The emerging mental health epidemic calls for a broad bio-psycho-social-cultural-spiritual framework to understand holistic conceptions of human beings and for meeting adequately the mental health challenges of women, men, boys and girls.

6. Promote a 'Well-being Economy,' - approach that puts people's wellbeing at the centre

The aim of sustainable development is to improve the well-being for all people and the planet. Economic indicators of development and well-being should be replaced with more multi-dimensional, and human centered indicators in the context of limited physical/natural resources. The interdependent and mutually reinforcing connections between the economic and the social dimensions of development require more attention to the interactive dynamics of development instead of treating social and economic development and ecological sustainability as separate sectors.

7. Put children at the center of sustainable development policies.

Sustainable development means taking care of the needs of today's people without compromising the possibilities of future generations to cater for their needs. The first future generation is already here: today's children. Thus, children belong to the focus of sustainable development discourse and action. All policies should thus be evaluated by 'child impact assessment'. ICSW supports the Universal Child Grant for equalizing the opportunities of children for a better life and future for all children.

8. Encourage Corporate Social Responsibility commitments.

In the spirit of 'Who Cares Wins,' the international business community should develop new ways of cooperating with NGOs and the local community in the field of social welfare and social development. In this respect, we recommend that each country should develop its

own way of encouraging CSR activities by business firms including appropriate regulation, once needed.

9. Fight tax avoidance and evasion

The adverse impact of tax avoidance and evasion on African government revenues means less funds for social protection, including essential social services, COVID-19 recovery, and urgent climate action.

We call for the enactment of progressive wealth taxes at global and national levels through a legally binding UN Tax Convention to curb the outflow of resources from Africa and the growing concentration of wealth in the hands of an increasingly powerful few. This is necessary in order to increase public spending to end poverty and to achieve the goals of Agenda 2023.

10. Promote the Social Summit 2025

ICSW supports strongly the convening of the 2025 Social Summit, as proposed by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, in view of deteriorating global political, social and economic conditions.

Reaching a consensus on social development principles and action will be very difficult in current conditions of increasing discrepancies and antagonisms. This is exactly why a new global Social Summit is necessary.

ICSW proposes that higher priority should be accorded to the views of the 'Global South' that is the lower- and middle-income countries. Convening the Summit in one of those countries would facilitate the voice of them to be heard better. Co-financing by higher income countries would enable the hosting of the Summit by any of the country that will best be able to facilitate

the voices of the less resourceful countries to be heard.

Promotion of wellbeing for all and the extension of social protection in Africa requires the mobilization of all resources: those of families and communities, those of the public sector as well as the private sector. Furthermore, it is in the interest of the international community to promote and help finance the development of appropriate social protection systems in the African Region. Most importantly the African Region must take the role and position that it is entitled to. Equal participation and fair Global, regional and national cooperation are keys to sustainable development.

"Let me repeat, this is an era of partnerships, Government's cannot do it alone. The UN cannot do it alone and, I am afraid, NGOs cannot do it alone, and business can't."

– UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002."

Climate Change and Global Social Policy. (A dodecalog created by a climatologist)

Javier MARTIN-VIDE, Professor of Physical Geography, University of Barcelona (SPAIN)

1) Global warming is undeniable and clearly evident in Africa; this calls for urgent action within the social system in order to adapt this to the new climatic conditions.

Global warming, the most noteworthy manifestation of climate change, constitutes a new reality on our planet, particularly on the African

continent. The situation is of great concern – we are already witnessing the negative effects of rising temperatures and the resulting extreme events, which will continue to occur in the coming decades. All this has led to the formal declaration of a climate emergency by governments, institutions, academies, etc. across the planet, as well as by organisations belonging to the United Nations, such as the UNEP (<https://www.unep.org/climate-emergency>). This is not a time for talking or speculating on whether or not climate change exists, or if it of anthropic origin. Science has clearly shown that it is real and that it has been caused by humans. This is the moment to act, also within the social context.

2) In Africa, climate change does not only involve temperature increases, but also a modification of the pluviometric patterns (Monerie et al., 2021), with especially critical repercussions in ecosystems, agriculture and water resources. Consequently, rational and fair management of the water supply, and consideration thereof as a common asset, should constitute basic principles.

Temperature increases, even with an amount of rainfall similar to the present time, will cause our water resources to diminish as a result of evapotranspiration, even more so in certain regions, if rainfall decreases. Access to drinking water and sanitation, in line with the SDG6, are human rights that have not been achieved throughout vast areas of the African continent. Whatever may be the case, in the immediate future there is a need to set up systems for shared management of water resources among neighbouring countries, and to establish transnational water boards in order to address conflicts in this sense (some of which are secular), with emphasis upon the basic concept of water resources as a public right.

A change in the spatio-temporal pluviometric patterns in some parts of Africa that present little rainfall or very marked seasonal rainfall, such as the Sahel and the monsoon zone of Western Africa, could be particularly critical. The terrible drought of the 1970s and 1980s of the XX century in the Sahel and neighbouring areas involves one of the worst climate catastrophes in history, with hundreds of thousands of people dying of thirst and hunger, monoculture crops destroyed and millions of heads of livestock perishing. Other droughts in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere have been equally devastating. Conversely, torrential rainfall, some of it associated with tropical cyclones, affecting Madagascar, Mozambique and other countries in the vicinity, have also had deadly consequences. These catastrophes should warn us of the eco-social fragility of many regions of Africa, thus obliging us to design special land management plans for supporting and protecting people.

3) Air temperatures in Africa will continue to rise at least until 2050, and the measures to be taken are therefore urgent; they should address future perspectives and in particular, they should be aimed at preserving human health.

The measures and actions to be taken to adapt to the new climate conditions are urgent with regard to reducing the threats posed by a hotter continent. The first of these risks to be considered involves the negative impact of excessive heat on human health, especially in the aged or people suffering from chronic diseases, and in children and the poor. In this sense, the endemic poverty in some African countries or regions makes people seriously vulnerable to the effects of climate change. This continent shows that climate change is a global process which, however, is unequal and "unjust" because it has

a much more negative effect upon the more economically and socially disadvantaged societies.

4) Climatic extremes will be more frequent and intense in the coming decades; in Africa the most critical ones will involve heat waves, droughts and episodes of torrential rains. Consequently, there is a vital need for warning systems for protecting citizens.

Heat waves and rainfall extremes, whether excessive (torrential rainfall) or insufficient (droughts), are perceived as the most frequent and intense climatic extremes African countries will have to face in the coming decades. This calls for early warning and civil defence systems, which could save thousands of lives. Importantly, these services will not ensure that citizens are protected unless they are fully operative and made up of experts and people qualified to deal with natural hazards.

5) Africa's remaining glaciers on Kilimanjaro, Mount Kenya and in the Ruwenzori Mountains will very likely have disappeared by the mid-2000s; this should be a real "red light" for the planet.

Glaciers in Africa serve as highly useful indicators, not only for the continent, but also for the whole planet, of global warming and changes in pluviometric patterns. A glacier does not advance (or retreat) as a result of one good (or bad) year of snow and temperatures. Rather, its dynamics respond to decades of climate evolution. The likely disappearance of Africa's glaciers in approximately twenty-five years ought to act as a warning for the planet and a reminder that Africa is in dire need of support from the rest of humanity.

6) The geographical diversity -natural and climatic, human, social, political and cultural- of the African continent calls for *ad hoc* adaptation measures for all countries and regions, which should adjust to each specific reality.

The collective impression much of the world has of Africa is of a homogeneous unit, which is not the case at all. Africa is an extraordinarily diverse continent, and therefore calls for measures to adapt to climate change which are designed to reduce the level of vulnerability to the negative effects thereof and to boost resilience; these actions must be tailored to the natural, human, cultural and socioeconomic realities involved. Otherwise, certain measures would not have the desired effect or might even be counter-productive. In particular, there is a need to respect the secular cultural traditions of each community. It is highly likely that these ancient cultures will provide useful insights in relation to sustainability in order to address the challenges posed by climate change. It ought to be remembered that Africa is the cradle of humanity.

7) The negative effects of climate change will exacerbate the physical, social and economic vulnerability of African communities; there is a particular need to focus on protecting women, children, the elderly, the sick, as well as populations dwelling in more rural isolated areas and lacking direct access to water and health clinics; pockets of urban poverty should also be considered.

Those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are the most disadvantaged: children, the elderly and people with delicate health, serious or chronic illnesses. In this sense, women stand out, as they suffer from discrimination in many

African regions, as occurs in many other parts of the world, bearing a heavy domestic workload as well as working outside the home; moreover, they are often subjected to sexual violence. Additionally, the more isolated rural areas, with limited access to water or basic health services, are extremely vulnerable to climate change, which will gradually modify their natural environment. All these citizens are in urgent need of specific attention and protection.

8) Territorial, political and religious conflicts in certain parts of Africa constitute a serious hindrance with regard to the formalisation, implementation and efficiency of the measures for combating climate change; consequently, there is a vital need for a continental pact in this sense.

As a result, an extensive continental pact should be approved which promotes first and foremost the idea that the big "enemy" is not your neighbouring country, or other peoples' culture or religions; rather, it is the threat posed by global warming and its negative effects. The response by the countries of the African continent must be unanimous, consensual and have no partisan schisms as resulting from political, cultural, religious or other circumstances.

9) Africa's big cities present pockets of extreme poverty and inequality, a situation that will be exacerbated by the effects of climate change; there is therefore a pressing need for specific healthcare and social support aimed at improving living conditions for the urban population in general and, very specifically, for people residing in poor neighbourhoods.

The last few decades have seen a spectacular

growth rate in African cities -inhabitants in 2023: Lagos (Nigeria), 9.0 M; Kinshasa (Republic of the Congo), 7.8 M; Cairo (Egypt), 7.7; this is giving rise to population densities in many quarters of numerous big cities which do not meet the basic requirements for physical safety or health, a fact that endangers the lives of the citizens. New pandemics will surely emerge as a result of overcrowding, rising temperatures, more intense urban heat islands and, in some cases, a lack of drinking water or contamination thereof. There exists an urgent need for specific social and healthcare programmes for the inhabitants of these cities in order to attenuate the hazards of these extreme urbanisation processes. Furthermore, state and Local administrations ought to employ the most efficient and cheapest land and town planning implements in order to ensure a just, balanced and sustainable distribution of land uses.

10) Climate change will seriously jeopardise food production in much of Africa as a result of thermal and hydric stress, and all State plans should therefore prioritise the fight against hunger in line with the SDG2 in an effort to ensure food security.

Climate change will severely impact agriculture and food production, particularly in countries with single-crop systems, like some African states that, in line with colonial practices, substituted their traditional crops with certain monocultures, which were apparently more profitable. Moreover, some commercially valuable agricultural food products, such as coffee or cocoa, were badly affected by rising temperatures in their production niches, which caused a drop in income from exports.

Each State is responsible for prioritising and complying with the SDG2, but regional agreements

should also be implemented in order to facilitate collaboration in the marketing of this produce and to provide food for the whole population, especially in times of food crises.

11) Climate change constitutes the most serious process of global change; it is transforming the planet at a startling speed, and in this sense we must enhance our knowledge of the environment, of traditional and modern cultures, as well as make technological advances for our personal and social development. This also provides us with the chance to drastically reduce illiteracy in African countries.

Some African countries, especially sub-Saharan ones, present the planet's highest rates of illiteracy; consequently, in today's changing and globalised world, with its multiple challenges, particularly climate change, it is time to provide the whole population, young and old, with a suitable level of education for their personal and social advancement in a rapidly changing world.

12) Climate change is a global process affecting the whole planet, and the developed countries are mainly responsible for this due to their abundant emissions of greenhouse gasses over many decades; consequently, African countries' social agendas should be strongly financially supported by the developed nations without interfering in their affairs or patronising them in any way.

The financial aid established in the last COP ('Conference of the Parties') to be provided by the developed countries to the developing ones for them to adapt to climate change should be immediate, just and ongoing in relation to the African countries.

Messages from the Regional President Patricia Martin-O'Meally



Patricia Martin-O'Meally, LICSW, CPM, Chair, ICSW-US and President, North American and Caribbean Region

Hello Colleagues and Friends,

The North American and Caribbean Region will share the activities that we have been involved in over the past several months. As we emerged from our virtual pandemic methods of operating, we have had at least two in-person Board Meetings. Our gracious host and partner, the Salvation Army's Office of the National Social Services Secretary arranged for in-office meetings this past spring. It was great to be together, however we are finding that time and distance limits more of such gatherings. For example, Board Member Joyce Higashi has relocated to Hawaii and has been able to be with us remotely through our virtual access. New Board Member, Dale Masi, Ph.D., President and

CEO of Masi Research Consultants, Inc. is now joining us remotely from Massachusetts and we are looking forward to her working with us on new projects and as we develop educational and advocacy programs for the professional and lay community.

Dr. M.C. "Terry" Hokenstad continues to serve on the Board remotely from Ohio. Terry has released the 2nd Edition of his book Lessons from Abroad: Adapting International Social Welfare Innovations, Edited by Amy Restorick Roberts and M. C. Hokenstad.

Ms. Tanya Brown, our Membership Chair has been appointed to the Tulane D.C. Alumni Board and will soon host her first event in that position in November.

Lt. Col. Margaret Davis, Salvation Army, National Social Service Secretary has been remarkably busy organizing and putting on the Army's April Annual Conference held in Dallas Texas this year. Most importantly, the Salvation Army's National Office has been working to provide aid and assistance to victims of disasters such as floods and tornados across the country over the past several months.

Membership: Ms. Tanya Brown continues as an active Chair of Membership and reports new membership applications through our email address over the past few months. In addition, the committee and new member Ronald La Fleur is already hard a work looking at ways to engage in-person with ICSW- US and Regional members using virtual platforms and finding meeting space located close to public transportation for those living in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. Those at a distance will continue to connect from across the country virtually. The committee continues to encourage new members especially in schools and universities with international

programs and or programs related to the 2030 Global Initiatives.

We are pleased to see new membership applications coming in recently.

Several students from the Caribbean in school in NYC and New Jersey attending the Social Work at the UN program made contact with North American and Caribbean Regional Members and it is hoped that this will result in viable connections with future new members.

Membership contact information:

New member application –

(<https://forms.office.com/r/FTGYr56C4t>)

phone number 202-336-8274

and email address – (icsw_us@socialworkers.org)

Program: Mrs. Sara Lee has led the Program Committee for two years and has guided the work we have invested in, related to the “incarceration of innocents.” She has been instrumental in engaging the work of Dr. Margaret Simms and Dr. Charles Betsy, two nationally known economists who have many years of experience working with and understanding the related cost and problems to society associated with persons who have lost many of their productive years due to incarceration. We will continue to work to develop the program to meet the needs of the community, to work with and understand the multi-layered losses sustained by the client, their families and the larger society.

The Committee is also open to new ideas and topics related to the 2030 Global Initiatives that the ICSW-US and or the Region might pursue in our capacity as advocate, or in partnership with other organizations with similar interests as we plan for future Community Education Programs.

North American and Caribbean Region On The Move:

Patricia Martin-O’Meally, Regional President of ICSW North America and the Caribbean

The 39th Annual Social Work Day at the UN Program:

On March 31st, 2023, the ICSW-US members, Dr. Cudore Snell, Board Member and ICSW Management Committee Member, Ms. Tany Brown, Board Member and Chair of the Membership Committee and Patricia Martin-O’Meally, Board Member and Chair of ICSW-US and President of the North American and Caribbean Region, held a dinner meeting in New York with our ICSW Colleague and friend Sergei Zelenev, ICSW Management Committee Member and Consultant to the 39th Social Work Day at the UN Program Committee including members of IASSW, IFSW and ICSW.



Dr. Cudore Snell, Patricia Martin-O’Meally, Dr. Sergei Zelenev, and Tanya Brown at the UN

It has been the practice of the ICSW-US members traveling to New York to utilize the day before the UN meeting to have an opportunity to gain first-hand information and ideas about issues related to international topics being addressed by the Global

Organization. During the program Dr. Zelenev's contributions to the planning and development of this year's program were recognized as substantive and highly regarded. Those remarks made our ICSW Members immensely proud. We also appreciate and applaud the work of colleagues at Fordham University and Monmouth University who were on the Planning Committee and who worked so hard to make the 39th program a success.



Social Work Day at the UN Planning Committee Members

April 3rd, 2023, **Social Work Day at the UN 2023 – Creating a More Inclusive World: Overcoming Barriers to “EnAble” Environments.** The program was sponsored by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and the Permanent Mission of Finland and the UN. The program put a spotlight on removing barriers to the daily living of persons with disabilities in countries around the globe. There were two specific presenters that shared their personal family stories that informed their work as advocates for persons with disabilities in

the United States. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted under the George H. W. Bush Administration, July 26, 1990. Its provisions applied to individuals in the workplace, but additional provisions for the rights to public accommodation went into effect in 1992. Many legal battles ensued and in 2008, President George W. Bush signed the ADA Amendments Act.

For those working to advocate for consumers, family members and care givers, the presentations at the UN Conference provided insightful and useful perspectives on approaches to identifying barriers to rightful services and the ability to meet needs of persons with disabilities. There were two speakers that I would like to highlight. First was Walter X. Kalman, the Executive Vice President of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, an advocate for their families and those in the field who provide services. Mr. Kalman, a social worker, spoke passionately about his adopted children, one with an intellectual disability and the other with multiple sclerosis, and about former foster children residing in his home. Mr. Kalman spoke of the barriers to access to school and educational activities. Persons with disabilities are often isolated without a strong and dependable transportation program. Also, during the program, information about the Global Inclusion Office established at the UN in 2019 was identified and the Global lead on disability taken by UNICEF with the Disability Inclusion Policy Strategy of 2022 with initiatives advancing the early interventions and systems improvements so needed by services to Children.

Another speaker I would like to highlight was Dr. Patricia Saleeby, Ph.D., and social worker who (as stated in the program literature) was “recognized internationally for her work promoting the International Classification of Functioning, Disability

and Health (ICF) for use in clinical practice and the application of the Capability Approach as an alternative framework for better situating disability. "It was her personal understanding of the functionality her sister, who has a disability, but also has many capabilities and the reality that the disability is only one part of the person. She helped the audience to see that focusing on disability gave only a partial picture of the total individual. She encouraged the audience to look for the many abilities that the individual client or family member has and cautions that using the deficit model as the focus is often the tendency for those making an assessment or classification will often do. This is the beauty of the ICF because it moves the picture to a more wholistic view of who the provider is working with and gives the client an opportunity for a much brighter outcome.

Our time in New York was concluded with an opportunity to network at a luncheon with colleagues from the host organizations. The Social Work at the UN Program was excellent again this year and we look forward to the 40th Social Work Day at the UN next year.

Dr. Cudore Snell: Travels to the Republic of Namibia, Oporto Portugal and McGill University in Quebec, Canada

Dr. Cudore Snell, ICSW-US and ICSW Management Committee Member

I participated in the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) Seminar on Social Policy and Social Protection in Africa hosted by the Ministry of Health and Social Services, Government of the Republic of Namibia on 28th and 29th September 2023 in Windhoek, Namibia.

The Seminar was opened by Hon. Dr. E. Muinjangu, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services and Dr. Sang-Mok Suh, ICSW Global President.

I am grateful to President Sang-Mok for the invitation to be able to return to my homeland of South Africa and first time in Namibia in particular, for the opportunity to attend such a groundbreaking seminar on social protection to assist in the drafting of a policy statement on social protection for Africa.

The major purpose of the seminar was to draft a statement on social protection for Africa to be fashioned into a Declaration developed for dialogue among our African stakeholders and to be signed by the Deputy Minister and the Global ICSW President.

Several presentations were made by our stakeholders about critical current social protection issues faced by African countries. The key note address titled: Social Policy, Social Protection and Social Welfare in Africa, was delivered by the Deputy Minister. Topics at the seminar on the first day included: Social Policy and Social Protection in the context of Agenda 2063;

Global Social Policy: Quo Vadis?; Social Welfare and Social Development in Africa after the pandemic; Economics of Wellbeing; Sustainable Development and Smart Welfare; Social Inclusion amidst a pandemic; Substance Use Disorders and Social Development; Strategies to improve family welfare and social policies in the Global South: Lessons from Latin America and Chile. A roundtable/ panel discussion on the Regional perspectives on Social Policy and Social Protection in Africa by the 4 ICSW Africa Regional Presidents concluded the day.

Topics on the second day included: Perspectives on Namibian Social Policy; Social Protection Policy and Programmes in Namibia; Social Policies in Africa: Through the lens of civil society; Policy and Action Triumphs: Namibia's win against HIV and AIDS; a plenary discussion on social welfare challenges in Africa and possible remedial action; presentation, discussion and launch of the Windhoek Declaration on Social Policy and Social Protection in Africa. The day and seminar closed with a vote of thanks.

The launch and signing of the Declaration were the result of intensive and interactive discussions over the one and a half days of the conference. The process to arrive at the Declaration was an inclusive and democratic participatory one. Feedback and input were received from the audience and informed the composition of the Declaration. A meeting with the Management Drafting Committee, led under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Petronella Masabane, Deputy Executive Director and ICSW East and Southern Africa Regional President was also held to consolidate the contributions from all participants. ICSW members who attended as part of the delegation and drafting committee included: Global President Dr. Sang-Mok, Executive Director Dr. Antonio Lopez Palaez, Dr.

Sergei Zelenev, Dr. Ronald Wiman, Mr. Christopher Dapaah and Ms. Yunji Kwon.

The Declaration will be used to influence dialogue and action in the social policy and social protection spheres globally and will be presented to the United Nations Commission for Social Development in February 2024 and to the UN Global Summit on Social Development in 2025. The Windhoek Declaration was anonymously affirmed and duly signed to great applause by the attendees at the seminar.

Take-away messages from the seminar included: the need for a systematic approach for the social welfare sector; the importance of digitization of/for the social welfare sector; the need for a social protection data system; adoption of a Smart Welfare approach; inclusion of social services in health responses; the contributions of corporate social responsibility; the necessity of reintegration of embedded social protection structures and the viability and utility of the ICSW Windhoek Declaration.

The visit was a memorable one, touched by the gracious reception and warm hospitality we received. We truly felt at home. There were several opportunities to engage in networking with attendees. We also enjoyed communal meals and visiting the natural sights in the area. We look forward to great excitement and a next visit to Namibia! Our partnership is strengthened by our mutual respect and opportunities for future collaborations.

I also attended the European Conference on Social Work Education in Oporto, Portugal to participate as a co-facilitator of a workshop/ special interest group session titled: The Time for Groupwork: Bringing Together our Local and Global Experiences to Advance Groupwork in Social

Work. The theme of the conference was: Diversity and Social Work Education: Building Bridges for Sustainable Futures. The other two

facilitators included a colleague from Spain and the Netherlands. Migration and technology were important current topics discussed.

I visited McGill University in Quebec Canada with a delegation of students and faculty from Howard University School of Social Work to participate in a symposium titled: Black Transnational Perspectives on Social Work, co-organized by the two institutions. Faculty and students presented their research projects and professional activities related to the theme of the symposium. We learned much about our commonalities and unique experiences from Black perspectives in Canada and the USA.

Concluding Messages from the Regional President

ICSW-US and the North American and Caribbean Region continues to have a heavy work load and could use more hands to assist us. We look forward to increasing our activities and involvement with partnering organizations in work that reflects our mission and goals. We plan to increase our outreach to bring in new members willing to join our efforts to make life better for those in our communities and globally.

We expect to see you all at the SWSD International Conference in Panama in April 2024! **“Respecting Diversity through Joint Social Action” – April 4th to 7th Panama City, Central America**

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN TÜRKİYE

Ramazan YÜKSEL, President of Association of Social Workers in Türkiye

Social welfare services in Turkey include interconnected multi-factorial services to provide individuals and society with better lives within the perspective of economic and social realities.

These services include healthcare, education and housing, as well as social assistance, social care and support services for individuals, families and groups who do not have access to adequate food, employment and livelihoods.

Social workers should have role in developing policies at macro, mezzo and micro levels related to these services and in the intervention, planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring processes of service delivery.

In the provision of social welfare services, the inadequacy of the resources allocated to these services is as one of the main reasons for the problems experienced by social workers. Difficulties in accessing existing social welfare services for people and groups in need, bureaucratic obstacles in service delivery, and centralized management approach are another group of problems.

Social workers are affected by the negative approaches of public administrators towards objective social work practices. They have been working with vulnerable groups in stressful and challenging conditions because there are not sufficient number of social workers available for the services. Besides, instead of the discipline of

social work, the employment of people with different education from other professional disciplines, such as sociology, family and consumer sciences, in the same position with social workers, and the lack of respect given to professional knowledge and experience, adversely affect the necessary harmony and teamwork in the working environment.

On the other hand, it is observed that the social and economic policies implemented negatively affect the provision and development of social welfare services. With the increase in inequalities in income distribution, the increase in the poverty level of vulnerable groups, especially children and women, and the decline in living standards, the increase in crime rates, the inability of individuals in need of social services to benefit from services in a timely and adequate manner are seen as other important problems.

It is observed that the implemented social and economic policies adversely affect the provision of social welfare services. All vulnerable groups, especially children and women, experiencing declining living standards and increasing poverty; it is seen that they cannot benefit from the services they need in a timely and adequate manner.

Child Protection Services and Problems related to Welfare of Children

As an important social problem in the country, *the "problem of poverty"* remains increasingly relevant. Income distribution balances draw a curve in a negative direction against people with low-income groups. It is observed that children from low-income families are mostly affected by these aggravating problems. Accordingly, unmet of basic needs such as "*healthy nutrition*", "*a safe housing environment*", "*the right to access*

education and health services", which are vital for children, *can leave very negative and irreparable effects on children.*

Thus, it is necessary to design policies and practices to prevent poverty and eliminate its possible consequences. In addition, authorities should strengthen the qualified social services management with more social workers in the public social services, specifically in the regions of the country which are disadvantaged and have priority in development.

On the other hand, as a result of the increasing cost of living depending on economic indicators in the country, it is observed that many children have to work for supporting their families. These children do not fully enjoy their education; their school attendance is interrupted, or they drop out from the full-time formal education system. They are exposed to risks, especially on the streets or in unregistered, informal working environments. These environments often cause children to work in unsuitable physical and social conditions, and these situations need to be carefully considered as they carry risks such as substance abuse, being dragged into crime, being abused, endanger their life safety, being away from their peer groups, etc.

The problem of forced and early marriages of children was exist, but it has been a growing problem with the increasing migrant population in Türkiye. it is important to raise awareness of parents and children about the biopsychosocial effects of the forced and early marriages on the lives of children. Children and their families should be empowered to prevent juvenile delinquency, children involve in a crime or being a victim of a crime, use of drugs, substance and alcohol. Therefore, public institutions, local governments, civil society organizations, and universities should collaborate and should provide effective social

services. Authorities need to make legal arrangements and take realistic measures to ensure school attendance of children who have difficulties accessing education or whose education interrupted.

Association of Social Workers and academics from the social work departments of several universities requested Ministry of Education to integrate "school social service" system into the education system and employ social workers at the schools. There have been initiatives but unfortunately no progress has been observed in terms of employment of social workers yet.

Problems Related to Welfare of Women

Violence against women is one of the most important problems faced by women and girls in Turkey. Law No. 6214 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence Against Women was adopted as a result of women's long-term struggles.

Türkiye is the host country of Istanbul Convention - Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210) which was entered in force in 2014.

Withdrawal of the Government from the Istanbul Convention *lead difficulties in the implementation of preventive measures issued under the 'Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence Against Women'* aimed at ensuring women's welfare. The difficulties that arise in terms of management make it difficult to carry out effective social work professional intervention processes in the field.

Throughout Turkey, there are not enough shelters

called "Women's Guest Houses" that serve women and their children who are victims of domestic and other types of violence for a limited time. Functional social supports are not enough for a woman to rebuild her life after the emergency asylum process. Women and children who do not gain economic independence may have to return to their violent spouses/families.

In order for our country to implement the sanctions stipulated in the Istanbul Convention, a change in policy is necessary for our country to re-enter the Convention. In addition, increasing social services for women's empowerment throughout the country and organizing feasible and sustainable support services for women in need stand before us as a priority issue.

A vital issue in the efforts to increase women's welfare and to strengthen them economically and socially is the issue of "*women's employment*". This is also an important social problem. It is important to increase women's employment, starting from the relatively disadvantaged regions of the country. However, gender-based inequalities make it difficult for women to achieve the right to work as a social right, causing them to have difficulty finding suitable work environments in which they can work, or to face gender-based discrimination.

Problems Regarding the Welfare of Persons with Disabilities

Turkey is among the first countries to sign the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The law and many other regulations have been made regarding the rights of disabled people and the services they will benefit from. There are developments in community-based care and support services in service delivery. However, with the financial support of private sector

care organizations in particular, it is seen that since 2006, in violation of the Convention, the institutionalization of persons with disabilities instead of deinstitutionalization has increased.

Besides, "Home Care Support" is provided to the caregiver family member who undertakes the responsibility of caring for approximately 550 thousand disabled individuals at the country level. Mothers constitute 90 percent of the caregiving family members. Caregivers are not entitled to retirement in return for their labour. Although this support enables the disabled person with disability to stay in the family environment, the need for community-based services continues. Community-based care and support services need to be available at the country level. Social workers should advocate on this issue.

Care facilities that provide permanent or temporary care services to people with disabilities are quantitatively and qualitatively inadequate. The lack of appropriate care services in social environment of people with disabilities who need care may be placed in the institutions in other cities. Because of their family ties and sense of trust could be damaged, they may refuse to be placed in the residential care institution.

There are not enough day care facilities for persons with disabilities. This causes the family to request that the disabled person, who cannot stay alone at home during working hours of their family members be placed in a residential care facility.

According to the Law on Persons with Disabilities, which entered into force in 2005, there is a provision to make public buildings, means of transportation and public places accessible within

7 years. Although there are regulations on accessibility, this obligation has been constantly postponed over the last decade.

Transportation infrastructure is not accessible for persons with physical disabilities. There is no necessary equipment for the disabled in public transport. Public and private buildings do not have features that facilitate the access of the disabled. In terms of urbanization, it is seen that the infrastructure that prioritizes the needs of persons with disabilities is still below the acceptable level.

Problems Related to Elderly Welfare

In terms of the population pyramid, it is seen that welfare of elderly people and institutional care services are insufficient in parallel with the rate of increase in the elderly population. In addition to the institutional care needs of elderly individuals, there is a need to increase the efforts to develop different service models other than institutional care, such as support in the family. It is seen that pensions, which are supposed to be relatively social security, are far from being able to maintain the minimum standard of living of incomes. Policies to increase employment should be developed in order to ensure fairness in income distribution and reduce unemployment.

It is obvious that increasing employment rates by taking socio-economic and other factors into consideration, opening/increasing working areas suitable for geographical region, climatic conditions, local socio-cultural characteristics will play an important role in solving the unemployment problem. It can also be foreseen that this will protect young people, especially those of working age, from social risks and dangers such as substance abuse and crime.

Immigration and Refugee Problems

Due to its reservation of the Geneva Convention, Turkey only grants refugee status to asylum applications from Europe. Persons from other countries remain in the country temporarily as irregular migrants or to go to a third country with international protection. People fleeing the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, remain in the country with temporary protection status. 3 million 284 thousand 679 officially registered¹ Syrians are in Turkey. It is also estimated that the unregistered Syrian population is high. Persons applying for International Protection to go to a third country are also in the country.

Asylum seekers, especially those coming through Syria and Iraq, are scattered throughout the country, especially in the provinces close to the Syrian border. The refugees, estimated to number close to ten million, live with social problems such as housing, education, health, nutrition and unemployment. School-age children of asylum seekers who have language and social adaptation problems experience difficulties in accessing education and training services and may be exposed to discrimination in schools.

International and national humanitarian organizations that benefit from significant amounts of international funds to solve problems of immigrants and refugees' accommodation, education, employment, do not seem willing enough to employ social workers in the provision of services. They prefer to outsource the roles and duties of social workers to employees from other disciplines. They also provide misleading reports to the centres from which they receive funding, stating that they

employ social workers. This misleading practice can be seen in public institutions as well as non-governmental organizations.

The "Ministry of Family and Social Services", which is currently at the highest level of social services management, and many accredited non-governmental organizations that undertake projects funded by European Union organizations, employ many different undergraduate graduates, starting from high school graduates, under the "social worker" title, which they unilaterally use is being observed.

This situation is an attack on the theoretical and practical specificity, autonomy, ethical principles and values, professional authority and power of social work; it interrupts the process of correct professional intervention in a timely and timely manner. At the same time, *it negatively affects the "right to access social services" for service recipients and the employment of social workers.* This situation, which is known to be contrary to the European Social Charter and European Union Law, must be taken by the institutions and organizations that provide funds to the implemented projects in Turkey to take measures to prevent this practice. It is foreseen that this will contribute to the development of social services in our country.

Challenges that Social Workers Face

1. Underemployment of Social Workers and giving their professionals duties' to other professional groups

Rising unemployment rates also apply to social workers. Although there is a need in the public and local governments, the employment of social

¹ Population under Temporary Protection Status as of 21.9.2023 <https://www.goc.gov.tr/gecici-koruma5638>

workers is not sufficient. The absence of legal regulations that prevent the work and duties of social workers from being performed by people from other disciplines also causes the personal rights and professional status of experts working in the field to decline.

The duties of social workers who have the competence to work with vulnerable groups, to empower them and to bring them together with social resources are outsourced to other professional groups and individuals. The protection of the originality, competence and limits of each profession is a scientific and ethical responsibility. The fact that social workers perform their professional duties by members of the profession such as sociologists and psychologists is a situation that does not comply with the principles of professionalism and disrupts the labour peace and leads to a conflict of interest.

The Ministry of Family and Social Services assigned the duties of social workers to psychologists, child development specialists, sociologists, and graduates of family and consumer sciences. Unfortunately, an employment policy is being followed to devalue the social work profession.

This situation is also experienced in the field of forensic social work. The one-way administrative title definition in the Ministry of Justice legislation and the practices related to the definition of "*Social Worker*" and the "*Family and Social Support Personnel*" practices in the Ministry of Family and Social Services allow professional groups, each of which is special and valuable in itself, to do the same job and replace each other. The logic of substitutability paves the way for professional corruption. It is deemed beneficial to establish solidarity and cooperation

with the members of the union (ICSW) to eliminate this wrong employment policy.

It is very important that discipline of sociology to identify and make suggestions about social problems by conducting scientific research and investigation in the field of poverty. Instead, working with vulnerable groups, despite not having the competence (knowledge, skill and competence) to work with individuals (Case Work), which is a social work method, prevents vulnerable groups and individuals who benefit from the services from receiving a qualified service, and their right to access social services is not fulfilled. This situation is the same for sociologists who are allowed to work with children and individuals who are neglected and abused. These practices open the door to professional corruption, and are also subject to international law, e.g. adoption, protection of children in divorce and separation, etc. It has the potential to lead to grave consequences, including illegal preparation of social investigation reports prepared in judicial activities, questioning their validity, and more importantly, making wrong decisions that may pose a risk to people in the future.

For all these reasons, the duties of professional groups working in the field of social services should be determined and clarified with the participation of relevant professional organizations, taking into account their competencies, methods and techniques, while preserving the originality of each of them. The policy of substituting professions for each other should be ended. At a time when the number of social work undergraduate graduates in Turkey exceeds thirty thousand, there is no shortage of social workers. Three quarters of the graduates are unemployed.

2. Social Work Education

In 2011, the opening of the social work program in the Faculty of Open Education, the provision of social work education by undergraduate completion and distance education; In many newly opened social service departments, the fact that the academic staff does not have a social work background, and that the departments are opened uncontrolled and without infrastructure, are the most important problems of social work education.

Social service departments providing non-formal education in the open education faculty should be closed immediately. Open and distance education of an applied discipline and profession is not possible. In the social work departments of universities providing undergraduate education, the conditions of having a minimum of social work undergraduate lecturers should be complied with.

3. Professional Law: Chamber/Union of Social Workers

The legislative proposal for the Chamber/Union of Social Workers was prepared by SHUDER. Adoption of this proposal will ensure that social work practices in our country are carried out within the framework of universal professional ethics.

4. Employment not Based on Competency

As a result of appointments and staffing that are not based on competence in public administration in recent years, labour peace is disrupted and may prevent work that is in the best interest of service recipients. Competency-based appointments will make professional work more effective and increase institutional development and public benefit.

**More Activity at ICSW
- Save the Date!**

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SWSD

THE JOINT CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WORK, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PANAMA 2024



*Respecting Diversity
Through Joint Social Action*

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Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development 2024 will be hosted in **Panama City, Panama**, from **April 4 to 7**. The SWSD2024 will be jointly hosted by International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Federation of Social Workers and International Council on Social Welfare.

SWSD 2024 will be a **hybrid conference** with both online sessions and face-to-face sessions in Panama. If you wish to register for either online pass or in-person pass, please visit the below link for register online.

[Registration – SWSD 2024 – Panama](#)

The Early-Bird price for registration will be valid until December 31st, 2023.

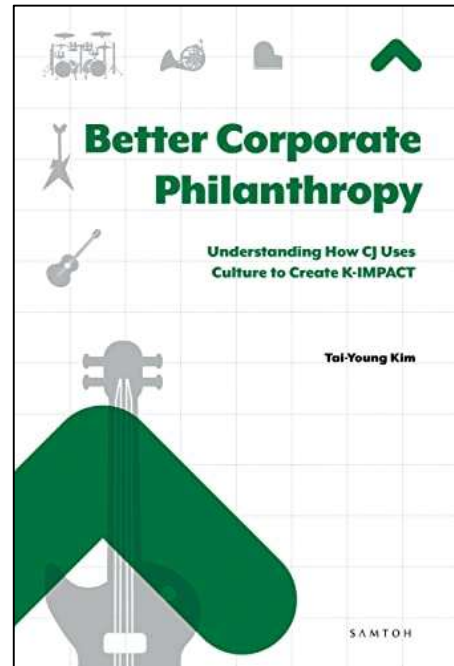
The theme of SWSD 2024 is "**Respecting Diversity through Joint Social Action.**" And there are 17 sub-themes you can participate in for your presentation. The types of presentation can be 'oral paper presentation,' 'symposium(in-person only),' 'workshop(in-person only),' 'poster presentation' and 'creative performing arts.'

17 sub-themes are as follows:

- 1) Democracy, Human Rights, Peace-building and Eco-social Justice
- 2) Ethics in Social Work and Social Development
- 3) Social Movements, Social Activism and Advocacy
- 4) Poverty and social inequalities
- 5) Inclusive social policies and legislation
- 6) Climate Change, Social Work and Social Development
- 7) Postcolonial/Decolonial/Indigenous/Emancipatory approaches
- 8) Ethno-cultural, religious and national diversities
- 9) Gender and Diversity
- 10) Diversity and Psychosocial Responses in Disaster Situations
- 11) Post Pandemic Social Work and Social Development
- 12) Digital Technology/Artificial Intelligence in Social Work and Social Development
- 13) Social Media: Constraints and Opportunities to Diversities
- 14) Social Work, Social Policy and the Sustainable Development Goals
- 15) Innovation, Social Entrepreneurship and People's Economy
- 16) Social Service Workers' Working Conditions
- 17) Social Work/Social Development in Designated Fields

For any inquiries about the conference, you may contact the conference secretariat at info@swsd2024.org.pa

Books to Read!



South Korean pop culture, especially K-Pop, K-Cinema, and K-Musical, has recently become a global cultural phenomenon, represented by icons like the band BTS which has a worldwide fan base, Bong Joon-ho, director of the movie 'Parasite' which won four Academy Awards, and the creative musical 'Brothers Karmazo' which received acclaim in China. K-Culture is rapidly expanding beyond Asia and influencing culture around the world. It is a well-known fact that the emergence of the K-Wave was supported by government, companies, media, fans and the public. Many would agree that especially at the center of the K-Wave has been the CJ Group. This book is about CJ Group's Philanthropic efforts. CJ Group has taken the lead in popularizing South Korean culture globally by effectively running its businesses in culturally rich industries such as food, film, music, and media, and operating the MAMA AWARDS, the country's largest music awards ceremony. In addition to culture-based businesses,

CJ Group has long promoted the importance of culture in the non-profit area of social welfare. In doing so, it has transferred the K-Wave from the for-profit sector to the non-profit sectors by offering differentiated social welfare activities through cultural programs focused on marginalized and economically challenged children, adolescents, and young creators. Furthermore, CJ Welfare Foundation (Nanum Jaedan: Nanum in Korean means sharing) and CJ Cultural Foundation (Munhwa Jaedan: Munhwa in Korean means culture; collectively, "CJ foundations") offer customized cultural programs tailored to fit the stage of childrens' development and skill of the aspiring artists. Collectively, these efforts based on culture can produce global value and what the author terms: K-Impact. This book introduces CJ Group's K-Impact efforts and highlights the unique social welfare programs for children, adolescents, and young creators by examining specific examples and stories from the perspective of various stakeholders such as artists, teachers, directors, heads of Child Welfare Centers, and the employees of CJ foundations.

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**Contributions to the newsletter are
welcome!**