PROMOTING COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development: Third Report

Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability

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International Association of Schools of Social Work
International Council on Social Welfare
Interational Federation of Social Workers

Foreword

Annamaria Campanini, Eva Holmberg-Herrstrom and Ruth Stark

The Global Agenda is a central part of the strategy and activity of our three global organisations (IASSW, ICSW and IFSW). We are grateful to all those who have contributed to this third global report on social work and social development. We recognise the significant contributions of many organisations and individuals around the world who have shaped *The Agenda* process and helped create this report, including many practitioners, experts by experience, local communities, educators and researchers. The work undertaken was based on the realities of practice and the enthusiasm and voluntary commitment of them all. Our three organisations are very grateful to you all.

The Global Co-ordinating Group has steered this process, translating *The Agenda* vision, shaped in the 2010 Hong Kong conference and subsequent consultations, into a worldwide movement with unlimited potential to achieve a healthy balance between social, economic and environmental well-being underpinned by social justice and human rights. This was only possible thanks to all those involved in the Regional Observatories and others who facilitated the regional consultation processes and reports. The names of global and regional coordinators are listed in Appendix 1. We are grateful to them all.

We are grateful to David N Jones, who agreed to co-ordinate this process on behalf of our three organisations. He has liaised with the regional coordinators, received and edited the regional reports and, with Rory Truell and Meredith Powers, worked on the global overview report. Pascal Rudin prepared the text for publication online and in printed form. The online PDF download is available at no charge.

IASSW, ICSW and IFSW also acknowledge each other's contributions. Since 2010 the governing bodies of each organisation have upheld the vision for *The Agenda* and had the faith to pioneer new ways of joint working, not only with each other but also with many organisations all around the world. The three organisations remain committed to the ten-year *Global Agenda* process and will work with the Regional Observatories to develop

and strengthen the process for compiling the next report on 'strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships', a core element in understanding the role of social work and social development.

The Global Agenda process is central to the strategies of our three organisations as we work together to promote the contribution of social work and social development locally, nationally and internationally. A key part of our workplan is taking *The Global Agenda* and helping our professions to promote the knowledge that we have about what works, not just on World Social Work Day or in our special days at the UN, but in our day-to-day work locally, nationally and internationally. In the challenging times facing the world today, our expertise is now as crucial to world peace and development as it has ever been. The Global Agenda process is therefore hugely significant, not only for our professions but also for the world community. It provides a platform from which to take that knowledge into the wider community, to civil society, policy makers and politicians.

We can see in this third volume that the challenges involved in taking account of the environments in which we all live and work are extremely diverse and complex. The four pillars are interconnected and are building up to make the complete four volumes of this agenda for change. Over the next two years we bring the four elements of *The Agenda* together in the final phase, as we examine personal and professional skills of social work and social development in being catalysts for change through the relationships we build.

We are grateful to all those who have sustained the vision, contributed to this report and helped to achieve recognition, not only for *The Agenda* process but also, more importantly, for the worldwide contribution of social work and social development.

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David N Jones, Meredith Powers and Rory Truell

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Introduction

Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability is the third pillar of *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development (The Global Agenda)(International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Welfare and International Federation of Social Workers 2010)*.

This is the third in a series of four reports on *The Global Agenda* from IASSW, ICSW and IFSW which presents the findings of five Regional Observatories that have examined social work and social development practice related to this third pillar of *The Global Agenda*. It is not an exhaustive review of the literature or a comprehensive review of current practice. It does aim to reflect on global and regional trends affecting social work and social development and to stimulate further discussion and collective action towards sustainability. The observations in this *Third Report* are set in the context of the social, political, economic and environmental realities of 2016-18.

The report draws on the outcomes from World Social Work Days in 2017 and 2018, is published simultaneously with a special issue of *International Social Work* journal (Jones 2018) and feeds into the 2018 world conference (SWSD 2018), all of which are devoted to the same theme.

Social work has always been concerned with the health and wellbeing of people in the communities and the environments within which they live and move; the significance of community has long been at the centre of social work thinking and practice. The link between wellbeing and the physical environment was already evident in the work of many social work pioneers of the 19th century, such as Octavia Hill (Wohl 1971) and Jane Addams (1902; 1930); protecting and improving the physical environment was seen as intrinsic to improving the circumstances and wellbeing of the mass of people living in poverty.

In more recent times, some social workers have drawn attention to the neglect of the physical environment and the need for social workers to develop more sustainable approaches (Weick 1981; Hoff and McNutt 1994; Besthorn 2002; Alston 2015; Nöjd 2016; Mason, Shires, Arwood et al. 2017; Ramsay and Boddy 2017). Despite the fact that community and environment have been part of the historical professional agenda, the explicit focus on the **physical** environment (both natural and built) alongside the **social** environment was, for some, the most surprising

element of *The Global Agenda* to emerge from the Hong Kong 2010 consultation process.

This reaction possibly reflects the increasingly individualistic approach of Western models influencing mainstream social work and social development (Veal, King and Marston 2016) alongside the wider expectation that public services demonstrate positive outcomes including measures of effectiveness, to show that social work and social development make a difference and justify investment. 'Risk management' and 'new public management' styles adopted by many social service agencies frequently focus on the individual characteristics of service users rather than the impact of wider social systems (Kirkpatrick 2005; Gummerson 2006; Bradley, Engelbrecht and Höjer 2010; Engida and Bardill 2013; Vincenti 2018). These models tend to draw on post-modern, industrial growth perspectives, which are founded on more human-centric worldviews (i.e., humans being outside of or over nature) (Powers 2016).

The management and dominant practice models of social work in Western cultures have, arguably, lost contact with this history. 'Person in environment' is the guiding framework used in social work practice, but its meaning has tended to include only the social, political, and economic environments, and sometimes the housing and built environment, but has generally ignored connectivity with the physical environment. As one social worker in Africa commented in response to the regional survey, reflecting many comments heard during this process:

> *'I've really never thought about green issues in social work until the global agenda came out. And I've not really given it much thought even since then. It feels rather peripheral to my understanding of our profession and I'm not sure what it means for us. I'm sure this is terribly short-sighted and stupid. But that's where I am at the moment'.*

Nevertheless some have continued to explore the inextricable links between people and place, in practice and in theoretical reflection, as is evident in the regional reports which follow (Hoff and McNutt 1994; Coates 2005; Zapf 2009; Gray, Coates and Yellow Bird 2010; Jones 2010; Besthorn 2012; Gray, Coates and Hetherington 2013; Powers 2016; Veal, King and Marston 2016). It has been suggested that the guiding framework should be reconceptualised as 'person *with* environment'

(Besthorn 1997) or 'people as place' (Zapf, 2009) in order to shift thinking about the connections.

From the perspective of 2018, this professional focus on people as connected to both their physical and social environments now appears appropriate and critical to the wellbeing and survival of both people and planet. The mainstream perspective on the world is indeed changing and social work and social development practice and theory are evolving to reflect that change (Hugman, Drolet and Todd 2018). So, by exploring these themes, the profession is also rediscovering its roots – and the reality that social work has to take a holistic approach if we wish to understand people and support them in responding to their circumstances and difficulties.

One objective of this *Third Report* is to highlight and make room for the debate about the challenge of identifying the practical and policy responses for social work and social development arising from this third pillar of the *Global Agenda*. The Regional Observatory reports illustrate, in different ways, the differential impact of climate change, the evolution of communities and the reality of environmental concerns and injustices. The challenges, inherent in integrating the promotion of sustainable communities and environments within social work and social development practice, are considered and some of the benefits which can be achieved are proposed.

This overview chapter makes links with international conventions and professional values, summarises the history and process of the Global Agenda, examines the global context and identifies some of the common themes from the regional reports, drawing on activities by the three global partner bodies over the past two years aimed at *Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability*. Finally, conclusions and next steps are presented, anticipating the next two years focusing on the fourth and final pillar and beginning the process of consultation about *The Global Agenda* for the next decade.

International conventions and professional values

Social work and social development education, practice and research takes place within the global context of myriad UN Conventions, other global and regional agreements and professional ethical principles (see Appendix III).

The ethical principles of social work and national ethical codes refer to individual and social rights and responsibilities. However, scrutiny of some

ethical documents finds that references to ethical principles or policies concerning the physical environment are limited or absent (Zapf 2009; Bowles, Boetto, Jones et al. 2016). Some examples of the codes and policies of social work organisations that do include references to the environment are included in Appendix IV.

Mainstream recognition of the significance of the physical environment as well as the social, economic and political environments, that all make up 'community', has been an emerging theme within the global professional bodies of social work and social development over the past decade, as recognised in the Hong Kong conference in 2010. With the adoption of the Global Agenda, the professional bodies have made explicit their commitment to ensuring that these considerations are embedded in policy and action by global and national bodies (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Council on Social Welfare 2012).

The history of The Global Agenda

The 2010 Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Hong Kong[1] (Jones, Yuen and Rollet 2008; Sha 2010) was the first fully integrated, joint conference organised by the three global bodies in recent times and the result of several years of negotiation and planning. The pre, during and post-conference consultation processes culminated in the identification of four pillars (or themes) for *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development*:

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

The *Global Agenda* is not only a statement but also a process which has energised and united social work and social development around the world. This framework has guided the work programmes of the three global bodies throughout the decade, providing a focus for World Social Work Days, including Social Work Days at the United Nations (e.g. Clark 2012), and the global and regional conferences (Hall 2012; International

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[1] http://www.swsd2010.org/en/welcome.html

Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Council on Social Welfare 2012; Jones and Truell 2012; Jones 2013; Bailey 2014; IASSW, ICSW and IFSW 2014; Truell and Jones 2015; Zelenev 2015a; Abye 2016; IASSW, ICSW and IFSW 2016; Lombard 2016; Nadkarni and Lombard 2016; Jones and Truell 2017). Reports on the first two pillars were launched at the world conferences in 2014 and 2016 and this third report is launched at the 2018 world conference in Dublin.

The work on *The Global Agenda* has continued alongside and has interacted with other activities of the three global organisations, including work on The Global Definition of the Social Work Profession (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2014), The Statement of Ethical Principles (International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) and the Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession (International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Federation of Social Workers 2005).

The *Global Agenda* process itself and its themes have been examined and critiqued in articles and publications, some examining its implications for local and regional practice and policy and others examining the global issues. This is the debate which the three global organisations had hoped to provoke and is very welcome (Chenu, Sims and Williams 2012; Gamble 2012; Hadorn 2012; Hall 2012; Horton 2012; Levická and Levická 2013; Gray and Webb 2014; Healy and Wairire 2014; Lombard and Twikirize 2014; Nikku and Pulla 2014; Raniga and Zelnick 2014; Sims, Chenu and Williams 2014; Spolander, Engelbrecht, Martin et al. 2014; Costello and Aung 2015; Lombard 2015; Palattiyil, Sidhva and Chakrabarti 2015; Sogren and Nathaniel 2015; Truell and Jones 2015; Bowles, Boetto, Jones et al. 2016; Ioakimidis and Dominelli 2016; Jayasooria 2016; Mafile'o and Vakalahi 2016; Mugumbate 2016; Närhi and Matthies 2016; Pawar and Weil 2016; Stark 2016a; Watkinson and Rock 2016; Matthies and Närhi 2017; Rinkel and Powers 2017; Jones 2018).

The history of *The Global Agenda* process is presented in more detail in Appendix II.

The Global Agenda process 2016 - 2018
The Regional Observatory structures which had been created in the five regions were invited to continue the work for this third report. In a new

development, the three global bodies invited them to respond to the following questions:

1   What are the main/key/core social problems related to community and environmental sustainability affecting your country/region now?
2   What in your professional view are the essential policies that will effectively address these problems?
3   What do people with whom you work want to see changed?
4   Who are the actors/stakeholders/partners currently involved in addressing these issues and who should be involved?
5   What are people doing about these problems? What is the evidence that social work and social development interventions are having a social, economic and/or political impact?
5.1   Statistical evidence – quantitative - what are the indicators of the progress and what are they telling you?
5.2   What are people doing about it – qualitative – what are the examples of good practice – not only new projects or practice models but also evidence from mainstream/core practice?

It was not the intention to ask for new research studies into these questions but rather to encourage Regional Observatories to identify the solutions to social challenges which are emerging from professional practice and to refer to existing research and reports, such as reports prepared by regional bodies like the European Union and the African Union.

These were demanding questions, bearing in mind that *The Global Agenda* process is not funded and all involved were working voluntarily. The questions posed quantitative and qualitative questions and sought the views of practitioners and service users as well as policy analysts. The regional reports answered these questions in different degrees and in diverse ways.

 A key challenge was the request to report 'the views of people with whom you work' and 'what they want to see changed'. The regional reports illustrate the different approaches to the involvement of people, referred to in the literature variously as service users, citizens, consumers, partners or beneficiaries (Harris 2004; Beresford 2009). Social movements have had an undeniable impact on environmental discourses and are challenging economic structures. The service user/consumer/client movement in

health and social services differs in the strength of its influence according to the national context, but is increasingly accepted in mainstream practice as a key partner in shaping services. Traditional models of practice, based only on recognition of professional expertise, are evolving to recognise that people are the experts in their own lives. The case for active partnership and 'co-production' involving people alongside professionals and service providers is now irrefutable (Whitaker 1980; Beresford 2009; Yeates 2015; Beresford 2016; International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Welfare and International Federation of Social Workers 2016; Dolan and Frost 2017; Hoe, Wahab, Bakar et al. 2017). The global bodies recognise the local and global challenge which follows from this transformation of practice and the process of internal change which is needed.

The regional reports responded to the questions posed by the Co-ordinating Group in different ways, making comparison difficult. The questions point the way towards a more robust approach to evaluation of the impact and value of social work and social development and as a guiding framework for the final report on this *Global Agenda* process in 2020.

Global context – the main social problems

Much has changed in the global context since the first ideas for *The Global Agenda* were discussed and even in the eight years since the SWSD 2010 Conference in Hong Kong when the process was launched in public. This section of the report reflects on the findings from the regional reports in the global context and what these developments mean for the role of social work and social development in *promoting community and environmental sustainability*, while remembering that the four pillars of *The Global Agenda* are inter-connected.

This chapter therefore explores themes identified in the regional reports related to this the third pillar, within the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the critique of neo-liberal economics, the rise of nationalism and populism, the global migration crisis, the global environmental crisis, the rights of indigenous peoples and workforce factors. These social problems relating to community and environmental sustainability were identified as affecting practice in each region in different ways and to different degrees.

Sustainable Development Goals

The adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs in 2015 (United Nations 2015b; United Nations 2015a) created possibly the most comprehensive global statement on development, explicitly linking economic and social development with sustaining the natural environment and including many elements of direct relevance to social work policy and practice (Lombard 2015; Healy 2016; Jayasooria 2016; Midgley and Pawar 2016; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2016; Jones and Truell 2017; Lima 2017; Truell, Jones and Fernandez 2017).

Whilst the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations 2010a) were seen as primarily focused on development in those countries with weaker economic histories, and therefore less relevant to daily social work practice in the countries with more developed economies, the SDGs in contrast adopt a global perspective, aiming to shape development in all countries and all economies, as seen in the report from the European Region describing initiatives taken by the European Union, such as the European Pillar of Social Rights. The SDGs offer an integrated approach to economic and social development especially driven by the recognition that environmental issues and many social and health challenges know no borders. The SDGs therefore have relevance for people and social workers throughout the world. The regional reports show that this is understood differently in the five regions, with the SDGs having little impact on daily social work thinking and practice in much of the developed world.

However, the preamble to the SDGs mirrors much of the scope of *The Global Agenda*:

> People
> We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

> Planet
> We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

Prosperity

We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

Peace

We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

Partnership

We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realized. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

(United Nations 2015b)

There is now a considerable literature on the practical implementation of the 17 SDGs, exploring the relationship between the different elements. In many cases this highlights the significance of multi-professional work and of the delivery of social services and the promotion of social development. For example, the UNRISD report on *Policy Initiatives for Transformative Change* (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2016) specifically identifies realizing the transformative potential of care programmes (chapter 3) as a key element contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

'Framing public care services, basic infrastructure, labour and social protection policies under the umbrella of care policies is a game changer. It promotes gender equality, allows for policy complementarity and coordination, improves the situation of care workers and has visible positive macroeconomic impacts.

> Transformative care policies emerge if a human rights–based approach to care policies is adopted, when broad political alliances are formed, and when evidence is used in an innovative way to inform policy design and monitoring'.
>
> (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2016 p13)

There is clearly significant common ground enabling social work to engage with this global dialogue, sometimes taking a leading role in implementing the SDGs.

Whilst the SDGs do offer a comprehensive and globally accepted framework for sustainable development, recognising the interconnected elements of 'Dignity, People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnerships, and Justice' (Clark 2015), they have also been criticised as limited in ambition with a risk that they will result in a rigid, minimum baseline which will become the norm. They articulate minimum standards but do not address the social and economic dynamics which create and perpetuate inequality and poverty (Plagerson and Ulriksen 2016; Truell 2016b; Zelenev 2016), such as restrictive trade regulations and corruption. For example, the effective power of multi-national corporations to decide where they pay taxes has large social consequences; the taxes paid by these corporations far exceed the amount of development aid transferred to the whole of Africa (Oxfam 2015; Oxfam 2016).

As the SDGs were being finalised, Helen Clark, then a senior United Nations leader, observed:

> *'Overall, inequalities have grown in the majority of the world's countries, with very few exceptions. Wealth, opportunity, and ultimately power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the few. High levels of inequality limit the political will to address poverty, and they tear at the very fabric of our societies. Political exclusion, and a lack of hope for young people, has contributed to the rise of sectarianism and violence.'*
>
> *'The challenges of poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, and human insecurity are sadly not new, but effective responses to many challenges, old and new alike, have been slow in coming. The architecture of key multilateral institutions from the UN Security Council to the International Monetary Fund is frozen in time.*

> *'Yet my sense is that we don't have a lot of time. The scientific consensus is that we don't have time to delay on tackling climate change. The economic evidence in heavyweight reports like that of Lord Stern prepared for the British Government in 2006 is that the longer action is delayed, the more costly it will be to try to avert catastrophic and irreversible climate change impacts.'*
>
> *(Clark 2015)*

ICSW, IASSW and IFSW have all supported the campaign for a social protection floor (Correll 2010; International Labour Organisation 2011; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2015; Zelenev 2015b; Stark 2016b). It is argued that social protection, as mentioned in the SDGs, should be about more than poverty amelioration (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2015). 'Social protection systems must be understood as instruments for social transformation, democracy and creating social just societies' (International Federation of Social Workers 2016a).

The SDGs offer a universal platform for integrated development and an opportunity for social work engagement which is too valuable to ignore, but *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development* demonstrates some of the limits of the SDGs, particularly in the context of adverse social and economic policies, and the need to reaffirm respect for human and community rights and dignity.

The challenge to neo-liberal economic approaches
The critique of the neo-liberal approach to economic management has been persuasively argued and is increasingly accepted by global institutions, but it remains the dominant economic model (World Bank 2010; World Health Organisation 2011; International Labour Organisation 2013; United Nations Development Program 2013; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2016; World Bank 2018).

Neoliberal economics is usually understood to advocate individual freedom and to involve a heavy reliance on market mechanisms to regulate social and economic life, reductions in taxes and government programmes, outsourcing to private companies or entities of services which have traditionally been provided by governments, and emphasis on individual responsibility for recovering from personal problems with minimal financial and other support from the state (Scholte 2005; Sewpaul 2015). This approach to public sector finances has been applied for many years in

less developed countries, frequently at the behest of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

The damaging social impacts of the imposition of these 'neoliberal' policies have been well documented in reports from the United Nations, other public bodies and academic researchers and reflected in the earlier reports in this *Global Agenda* report series and academic studies (e.g. Scholte 2005; Ferguson and Lavalette 2006; Wilkinson and Pickett 2009a; Wilkinson and Pickett 2009b; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2011; Barr, Taylor-Robinson, Scott-Samuel et al. 2012; Parada, Saracostti and Reininger 2012; Stiglitz 2012; Behring 2013; International Labour Organisation 2013; Lewis 2013; Gray and Webb 2014; Harris 2014; Spolander, Engelbrecht, Martin et al. 2014; Bamford 2015; Dorling 2015; Ferdman 2015; Jönsson 2015; Pickett and Wilkinson 2015; Xaba 2015; Calder, Banks, Barnes et al. 2016; DeLuca-Acconi 2016; Hermann 2016; Humber 2016; Lorenz 2016; Marmot 2016; McKnight, Duque and Rucci 2016; UNICEF Office of Research 2016; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2016; Yan, Chun-Sing Cheung, Tsui et al. 2017).

For many developed countries, but not all, the financial crash of 2008 (Guillén 2009; Kingsley 2012) has resulted in a decade of 'austerity', driven by neo-liberal economic management theory (International Federation of Social Workers 2013; O'Hara 2013; Carmona 2014; Truell 2016a; Lima 2017; Truell 2017a). In common with many less developed countries in earlier decades, they have seen sudden and severe reductions in government expenditure resulting in significant pressure on social programmes and a widening of the gap between the richest and poorest within and between countries (United Nations 2010b; United Nations Development Program 2013; Sewpaul 2015; United Nations Development Programme 2017). Some of the most severe consequences of austerity economics have been seen in southern European countries (Lima 2011; Ioakimidis, Santos and Herrero 2014; Truell 2015; Kokaliari 2016; Teloni and Adam 2016; Lima 2017), but the effects have been felt worldwide (United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs 2011; Anthony 2015; Vaughan-Whitehead 2015).

Resistance to austerity policies has become more visible in Europe over the past two years, reflecting earlier movements in other regions, notably Latin America. Some social work associations, academics and civil society groups have become involved in campaigns to highlight the damaging

impact of austerity policies, such as in Spain, UK, New Zealand and Greece (Lima 2011; British Association of Social Workers 2017b; British Association of Social Workers 2017a; New Zealand Public Service Association 2017; Truell 2017a).

The regional reports illustrate some of the tensions arising from the implementation of neo-liberal economic approaches, including austerity policies, by some national governments. Social workers in those countries frequently find themselves responding to the adverse social consequences of those policies for the people and families with whom they work (Sjöberg, Többe-Schukalla, Singh et al. 2016).

Nationalism and populism

Previous *Global Agenda* reports in this series have highlighted the widespread concern about increasing inequality within and between countries and warned of the significant social crisis which this was fuelling. This has been in the context of economic globalisation and neo-liberal economic models (see above), resulting in major shifts of industries and employment from the developed, Western economies to Asia and to a lesser extent to other developing countries, resulting in unemployment and social dislocation in former Western industrial areas (Hurrell 2003; International Federation of Social Workers 2004; Ferguson and Lavalette 2006; Deacon 2007; Lyngstad 2008).

Those reports did not speculate about how the social crisis might evolve, but history suggests that the consequences would vary according to local cultural, environmental, and political contexts. Whatever the specific reaction, increased social exclusion and conflict is predicted (Bingham 2012; International Federation of Social Workers 2013; O'Hara 2013; Nolan 2014; Robb 2015; Sewpaul 2015; Calder, Banks, Barnes et al. 2016; International Federation of Social Workers 2016b).

Classic studies of the rise of populism, and its evolution into tyranny in the 20th century, documented the conditions which created those movements:

> 'What prepares (people) for totalitarian domination in the non-totalitarian world is the fact that loneliness, once a borderline experience usually suffered in certain marginal conditions like old age, has become an everyday experience of the ever-growing masses of our century.'

> 'Hating people can become "a means of self-definition" that "restored some of the self-respect (people) had formerly derived from their function in society'.
>
> (Arendt 1951)

In general terms, the period since the financial crisis of 2008 has seen a resurgence of ideas and movements in the West and elsewhere which have resonance with that 20th century experience and which can be collectively termed nationalist or populist. These movements can be characterised as expounding overt or covert racist views about migrants and minorities, economic protectionism and opposition to perceived intellectuals and elites (Andrews 2017; Hope not hate 2017; Muir 2017; Gayle 2018). Some forms of populism embrace public services as a way to build support from the populace, as seen in Italy in the 1930s (Thane 1996), but more frequently such movements do not recognise structural inequality, preferring to blame individuals for their own misfortunes. The result is resistance to financing services for minorities and those who are perceived as 'weak'. This appears to describe the context for social work practice in much of the Western world and contrasts with the internationalist and more left-leaning political movements seen in the 20th century.

Politicians invariably appeal to the self-interest of those with powerful, financial backers and/or voters not only as individuals but also as groups. This collective appeal can be to class or race, tribe or caste, region or nation. Risks emerge when the political appeal is presented as rallying support of the 'legitimate' population against 'undeserving' or 'threatening' minorities and external threats. The period covered by this report has seen the electoral success in countries such as Philippines, USA, Hungary, Italy, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of politicians who can be described as 'nationalist' and 'populist' (Molloy 2018). Some see similarities between these movements and the European politics of the 1930s which saw the rise of fascism. Given the impact these developments are having on social policies and welfare programmes and the environment, it is appropriate to consider their impact on social work and social development.

Both 'nationalism' and 'populism' are concepts that have been ill-defined and are nebulous, often used pejoratively by critics and rejected by the individuals and movements the words are intended to describe. Müller argues that at populism's core is a rejection of pluralism. Populists will

always claim that they and they alone represent the people and their true interests (Müller 2014; Müller 2016). Albertazzi and McDonnell define populism as an ideology that 'pits a virtuous and homogeneous people against a set of elites and dangerous 'others' who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity, and voice' (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008).

Moffitt argues that 'populist politics' is still based on the classic divide between 'the people' and 'the elite'. However populism's reliance on new media technologies, its shifting relationship to political representation and its increasing ubiquity have seen it transform in nuanced ways. He contends that populism is not one entity, but a political style that is performed, embodied, and enacted across different political and cultural contexts (Moffitt 2016). Inherent in the style is the creation of a pervasive sense of crisis, deliberate behaviours which challenge the perceived norms of good behaviour and constant opposition to the 'established elite'. The strategy also tends to highlight the 'national' or group interests of the core group and to oppose internationalism, globalisation, open borders, free trade and welfare support for minorities.

Arendt's study of 20th century populist movements (1951) concluded:

> 'Antisemitism (not merely the hatred of Jews), imperialism (not merely conquest), totalitarianism (not merely dictatorship) - one after the other, one more brutally than the other - have demonstrated that human dignity needs a new guarantee which can be found only in a new political principle, in a new law on earth, whose validity this time must comprehend the whole of humanity.'

These features of populism appear to be in opposition to the humanitarian values of social work and *The Global Agenda* pillar of promoting community and environmental sustainability. Practice examples presented in some elements of the regional reports suggest that social work can make a significant contribution to nurturing stable and inclusive societies, to counter the spread of hatred and to uphold Arendt's new political principle, reflected in the UN Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 1948; Truell 2017b).

Global Migration Crisis
The period covered by this report has seen growing awareness of the pressures resulting from, what has been described by some as, the largest

volume of human migration in the history of the world and the challenges this presents to social work (Arnold 2011; Chen, Wub and Sung-Chan 2012; Hossain 2014; Quinn, Joyce and Gusciute 2014; Danso 2015; Jones 2015; Köngeter, Altissimo, Jakoby-Herz et al. 2015; Wilding and Dembour 2015; Androff 2016; King and Grant 2016; Mapp and Hornung 2016; Noyori-Corbett and Moxley 2016; Lin and Wiley 2017; Lovato-Hermann 2017; USA Department of State 2017).

> *'The number of international migrants worldwide (people moving for all reasons including for work and family reasons as well as war and disaster) has continued to grow rapidly in recent years, reaching 258 million in 2017, up from 220 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000….. In 2017, two thirds (67per cent) of all international migrants were living in just twenty countries….. In 2016, the total number of refugees and asylum seekers in the world was estimated at 25.9million...... The responsibility for hosting refugees and asylum seekers is far from evenly distributed; for example, six countries host around 40% of all refugees.'*
> (United Nations Dept of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) 2017).

Climate change is a contributory factor to migration, as people are forced to move from areas which become flooded by rising sea levels or dried out by advancing deserts (International Organization for Migration (IOM) n.d.). Those most vulnerable to environmental degradation and/or disasters are those who are the most likely to lack resources for reconstruction and therefore have to migrate rather than rebuild their lives, creating further environmental injustices (Bradshaw 2004; Inter-Agency Standing Committee 2006; Gaillard, Sanz, Balgos et al. 2017). Some see future world conflicts resulting from the struggle for basic resources, especially water (Dominelli and Hackett 2012; Oloruntoba 2012; Zetter 2012; Cronin and Jones 2015; International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2015; Singh and Singh 2015).

The continuing reality of slavery and trafficking in people within countries and around the world is also increasingly recognised as contributing to migration, both within and between countries, now sometimes termed 'modern slavery'. Social workers can become involved in supporting those affected (Bernata and Winkellera 2010; European Commission 2012; Eurostat 2013; Greenbaum 2014; Hodge 2014; Roby and Bergquist 2014; Jones and Florek 2015; USA Department of State 2017).

This global movement of people affects social work practice in many ways, both personally and professionally. Social workers can themselves be migrants, or can become involved with migration issues for reasons of personal interest or employment or as members of communities forced into migration (Lyons and Littlechild 2006; Beddoe, Fouché, Bartley et al. 2011; Moriarty, Hussein, Manthorpe et al. 2012; Fronek 2013; Brown and Strauss 2014; Danso 2015; Bartley and Beddoe 2018). Some countries, such as the United Kingdom, rely on social workers who qualified overseas to sustain core services because of a shortage of locally qualified staff (Carson 2006; Improvement and Development Agency 2006). Migrant social workers are likely to experience the same public attitudes and discrimination as other migrants (Tinarwo 2017).

The climate of antagonism towards migrants which has developed in several countries (see 'nationalism and populism' above) tends to make it difficult to secure funding for services to support refugees and asylum seekers, making it more difficult for them to find a settled environment and to be able to support themselves. Migrants are also targets of violence and hatred and some become victims of crime. In some cases, social workers and others working with migrants can themselves become targets for 'hate crimes'.

There are significant social consequences to this migration to the extent that, 'in response to the large movements of refugees and other migrants, the UN General Assembly adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016. The Declaration calls for the development of two global compacts, both to be adopted in 2018. A proposed refugee compact is being developed under the auspices of the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) and will be presented in 2018 for consideration by Member States, whilst the development of the migration compact is being led by the General Assembly' (United Nations Dept of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) 2017).

The rights of Indigenous peoples
The third pillar of *The Global Agenda* can be seen to have particular resonance for consideration of the rights of indigenous peoples. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations 2007) recognises that indigenous communities generally hold a worldview that values the interconnected relationships between individuals, their communities and their environment (Mafile'o and Vakalahi 2016). Social

workers working to promote sustainable communities and environments can gain useful insights by drawing from the wealth of knowledge and practice of indigenous peoples.

This strength of indigenous knowledges, along with the specific needs and interests of indigenous peoples, is recognised in the IASSW/IFSW *Statement of Ethical Principles* (International Federation of Social Workers and International Association of Schools of Social Work 2004) and is reflected in a growing literature (e.g. Weaver 1999; Cheung and Liu 2004; Kee 2007; Gray, Coates and Yellow Bird 2010; Nikku 2010; Fejo-King 2012; Parada, Saracostti and Reininger 2012; Gray, Coates, Yellow Bird et al. 2013; Blackstock 2015; Palattiyil, Sidhva and Chakrabarti 2015; Chong 2016; Mafile'o and Vakalahi 2016; Hertel 2017; Reamer and Nimmagadda 2017; Wark, Neckoway and Brownlee 2017; Barry Ibrahima and Mattaini 2018).

The *Statement of Ethical Principles* for social work and the UN *Declaration of Human Rights* both recognise the right of all **individuals** to self-determination (Robinson 2015). However many non-western and indigenous cultures place more emphasis on mutual responsibilities to sustain community. Truell has argued that, 'as a global profession – based in ground up realities – that seeks to transform social systems to end oppression, marginalization and disadvantage, it is time for social work to develop a comprehensive framework of Rights, based on the profession's principles of social justice, dignity, valuing diversity and sustainable communities' (Truell 2016b). It is argued by some that this rights based framework should extend to the natural world, something that is fully acknowledged by indigenous peoples. The third pillar challenges social work and social development to reflect on the implications of this approach for professional practice.

Workforce factors
The Global Agenda included not only the four pillars already mentioned but also an over-arching commitment to 'ensuring an appropriate environment for practice and education' (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Council on Social Welfare 2012).

The regional reports do not specifically refer to workforce issues but they are implied in some examples cited. The global context is one of continuing pressure on the social work and social development workforce.

The nature of the pressures vary in different countries and regions. The issues can include:

- Lack of consistent and reliable workforce data at national, regional and global levels (Roby 2016)
- Shortages of trained and qualified staff in social work, social care and social development in the context of growing demand for services in many countries (World Health Organisation 2006; Roby 2016)
- Qualified and experienced staff moving from less developed countries to more developed to gain experience and better remuneration, but leaving significant gaps in the country of origin (Kingma 2007; Pittman, Aiken and Buchan 2007)
- Ageing workforce with an inadequate supply of younger qualified and experienced professionals to replace those who retire
- Inadequate arrangements for field placements and supervision of students and supervision of staff
- Evidence of past or recent abuse of service users, beneficiaries or public by professionals, social development workers or peacekeepers, resulting in loss of confidence in public agencies (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action 2017; United Nations 2017; International Committee of the Red Cross 2018)

These factors all present significant challenges for countries, managers and the professions involved.

Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability – what does this mean for social work and social development?

This report, and much of the literature cited, illustrates the work being done in every region by social workers and social development practitioners, addressing issues at the nexus of community and environmental sustainability. Whilst community work and awareness of community development has long been an element within social work, concern for the inter-relationship with the physical environment has not been a mainstream concern for many agencies and practitioners, especially in many developed economies (Marlow and Rooyen 2001). However it **is** a policy concern for all national and local governments, who employ many

social workers, many having signed up to the UN Agenda 21 (United Nations 1992a) and a concern for social work and social development agencies everywhere.

Awareness of the vulnerability of the natural environment and the impact of human activity on the planet, and on urban and rural environments, is not new. It is found in traditional and indigenous cultures, established religious thinking and cultural references and there are references in social work experience and literature since the 19th century.   The issues were identified by the United Nations in the 1980s and Gro Harlem Brundtland was invited to chair a World Commission whose terms of reference, in retrospect, look disturbingly similar to that of the group which proposed the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. The foreword to the 1987 report observed:

> 'Many critical survival issues are related to uneven development, poverty, and population growth. They all place unprecedented pressures on the planet's lands, waters, forests, and other natural resources, not least in the developing countries. The downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation is a waste of opportunities and of resources. In particular, it is a waste of human resources. These links between poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation formed a major theme in our analysis and recommendations. What is needed now is a new era of economic growth - growth that is forceful and at the same time socially and environmentally sustainable.'
>
> (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987).

The report was seen as an urgent call to action and was followed by a major United Nations conference in Rio de Janeiro (United Nations 1992b) and Agenda 21 for action (United Nations 1992a) but, despite this, environmental problems and injustices, and social inequalities have continued to grow in the subsequent generations. Further evidence has emerged about the impact of climate change, which most now recognise is closely related to human activity. There is an increasing acknowledgement of the impact of disasters, both natural and the result of human activity, which are seen as frequently related to the influence of climate. These factors all have impacts on people in communities and are therefore relevant to social workers and social development actors.

The growing awareness of the impact of environmental changes on people includes concerns about food insecurity, water shortages, vulnerability to natural disasters, rising sea levels, desertification, and housing pressures, including the rapid growth of urban informal settlements (slums) (Brown 2008; Orr 2009; Brown, Deane, Harris et al. 2010; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2015; International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2015; Cook, Oreskes, Doran et al. 2016; Schenck, Blaauw, Viljoen et al. 2017). Environmental pressures are stimulating and sustaining major conflicts and wars and contributing to the largest migration of peoples in the history of the world, according to some (see above Global Migration Crisis).

Sufficient concern has arisen about the numbers of people migrating for environmental reasons that the IOM has issued the following statement:

> 'People migrating for environmental reasons do not fall squarely within any one particular category provided by the existing international legal framework. Terms such as "environmental refugee" or "climate change refugee" have no legal basis in international refugee law. There is a growing consensus among concerned agencies, including UNHCR, that their use is to be avoided. These terms are misleading and could potentially undermine the international legal regime for the protection of refugees.
> 'All persons moving for environmental reasons are protected by international human rights law. In addition, persons displaced within their country due to natural or human made disasters are covered by provisions laid out in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.'
>
> (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2015)

The reshaping of the balance of the world economy is also having a long-lasting effect on public finances and services, and on the rapid growth or decline of communities, with slow or stagnant growth in the Western economies and faster development in Asia (Anderson and O'Brien 2006; Economist 2012; Massa, Keane and Kennan 2012), alongside a growing reluctance in many countries to fund general services through taxation and a retreat from communitarian principles. There is not space in this chapter to develop this analysis but these trends, if sustained, will influence the

future shape of social work and social development, with significant differences between countries and regions.

Several books and articles now focus on 'environmental' or 'green' social work and environmental and ecological justice issues (Coates and Gray 2012; Dominelli 2012; Gray, Coates and Hetherington 2013; Alston 2015; Matthies and Närhi 2017; Dominelli 2018). IFSW issued a policy statement on environmental issues in 2004 (International Federation of Social Workers 2004) and has published a workbook series intended to be a tool for international social work practitioners, students and educators to help advance *The Global Agenda* theme of "working toward community and environmental sustainability", including chapters with short lessons accompanied by exercises to help apply the lessons (Rinkel and Powers 2017; Powers and Rinkel 2018). This first volume is a broad sampling of social work practices. Two further volumes focus on indigenous knowledges and eco-therapeutic practices (Powers and Rinkel 2018) and a third in preparation on social work roles to help implement the UN Sustainable Development Goals .

There is a growing, international, online network of social workers interested in these issues: the 'Green/Environmental Social Work Collaborative Network' operating on a listserv platform. This is a collaborative network for sharing ideas and resources, asking questions, and building solidarity among those who care about ecological issues and are seeking to address them within the social work profession[2]. There are also social media groups, such as the Facebook group: 'Ecologically Conscious Social Workers' for social workers around the world who are committed to ecological justice.

The social, ecological and political challenges inherent in the current global situation can easily appear overwhelming; some suggest there is a new syndrome of eco-grief among those working in this field or especially sensitised to the challenges (Hutner 2015). Others (e.g. Boddy, O'Leary, Tsui et al. 2017) assert that social work has a key role in inspiring hope, even though 'its unique, critical and temporal role has not been well mapped in social work theory'. Some suggest that people report developing hope through connectedness with the natural environment (Narusson, Geurden and Koo 2018). These resources offer conceptual

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[2] To join the Green/Environmental Social Work Collaborative Network email the Network's founder and administrator: MCFPowers@uncg.edu.

framework which 'highlights the richness of hope, its application in social work practice and its position in social work relationships', something which seems relevant in this context.

The global debate about promoting sustainable communities and environments in social work and social development since the launch of *The Global Agenda* in 2010, building on foundations laid in earlier work and literature, has both reflected the growing realisation of the environmental crisis and helped to shape a broader professional awareness. Examples in the regional reports are perhaps trailblazers, pointing the way for others to develop relevant practice and analysis.

The challenge remains of how to systematically connect daily social work practice to this awareness of the importance of promoting sustainable communities and environments. This is especially challenging in the more individualistic, Western practice cultures.

- Are new skills and interventions required and appropriate to address these concerns (Jones 2018)?
- Is it sufficient for senior managers to focus on developing environmental policies for the city and community without considering the implications for daily professional interventions?
- How should every social worker and social development practitioner give expression in their professional life to the concern about sustainability of community and environment?

The regional reports provide some pointers. The mainstream profession is only at the beginning of this exploration, but there is a need for more urgency as Brundtland (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987) argued in 1987 and Clark had to repeat almost 30 years later in (2015).

The environmental crisis and pressures on communities are real and urgent. Individual and collective human behaviour must change before it is too late.

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Chapter 2

Africa: Promoting Community & Environmental Sustainability

Antoinette Lombard and Janestic Twikirize

Contents

Introduction

The realisation that the planet's resources are not infinite and must be used sustainably in meeting the needs of the present and future generations is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [hereafter 2030 Agenda] (United Nations [UN], 2015). The 2030 Agenda, launched in 2015, underscores the importance of environmental sustainability in realising meaningful development. Environmental sustainability permeates through all the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN 2015). Besides its determinant role in ending poverty and advancing peace and prosperity, access to a safe and clean environment is a fundamental human right.

The theme, *promoting environmental and community sustainability*, cut across all the SDGs, and is the theme that best captures the interrelatedness of the four themes/ commitments of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development [hereafter Global Agenda] (2012). Sustainability has three dimensions, namely social, economic and environment (UN 2015). It emphasises the interrelatedness of social, economic and environmental justice since the impacts of the unsustainable use of the environment as well as access to environmental resources are often unequally and unfairly distributed among different categories of the population, with the poor and marginalised communities bearing the blunt. Environmental justice is about social transformation directed towards meeting basic human needs and enhancing our quality of life— economic quality, health care, housing, human rights, environmental protection, and democracy (EJNF 1997 cited in McDonald 2002). Sustainable communities promote social, economic and environmental justice by focusing on interventions that eradicate poverty and combatting inequality while preserving the planet (UN 2015:5).

The vision for Africa is spelled out in the 2063 Agenda of the African Union. The Sustainable Development Report on Africa III (n.d.) reports on sustainable consumption and production for sustainable growth and poverty reduction in the region. Although many studies have been done and reported on in Africa pertaining to the environment and sustainable development, not much has been done specifically in relation to social work. In order to give an authentic social work and social development perspective on promoting environmental and community sustainability in Africa, this report includes the voices of 39 participants from six countries, including Ghana, Gambia, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The Qualtrics platform was used to pose a few questions pertaining to the key areas that are reported on in this report. The link was distributed through the list server networks of the Association for Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) and the Association for South African Schools of Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) and through the regional representatives of IFSW and ICSW in Africa. The questions were mostly open-ended which created in-depth qualitative responses.

Although a small study was conducted, participants were balanced in representation, between practice (16) and education (18). The other participants included one student, three from advocacy and one from policy. Because the study was qualitative in nature, numbers are not important, but rather the voices of participants which are presented as 'P', linked to the respective number of the participant, where applicable. In addition, three case studies of best practice are presented and discussed. The report will first present an overview on social problems related to environmental and community sustainability, followed by policies relevant to the theme. Next the partners involved or who potentially should be involved will be presented. Examples of projects will follow, ending with three case studies of best practice. A brief overview on education for environmental sustainability will be presented before conclusions will be made and a way forward suggested.

Social problems related to environmental and community sustainability

Whereas climate change is affecting virtually every country of the world, the poor and vulnerable people are being affected the most. The 2030 Agenda (UN 2015) singles out African countries as part of the developing world that require special attention with regard to environmental sustainability, due to its unique contextual and developmental challenges. The global climate change risk index (Kreft, Eckstein & Melchior 2017) which analyses to what extent countries have been affected by the impacts of weather-related loss events (for example, storms, floods, heat waves) reiterates the fact that developing countries are most affected. The report singles out Africa as severely affected by climatic events, with four countries ranking among the 10 countries worldwide most affected in 2015 – Mozambique (1st), Malawi (3rd), Ghana and Madagascar. Africa as a continent lags behind in key environmental indicators. Whilst 72% of the population are reported to have access to managed safe water services, just 39% of the population has access to safe sanitation services (African

Development Bank [ADB] 2017). The ADB report (2017) further indicates that just 27% of the population have primary reliance on clean fuel and technology, with renewable energy constituting only 25.1% of the total final energy consumption by 2012. Further, more than a half of the urban population in Africa (52.8%) live in slums (ADB, 2017) implying unsafe and unsustainable human settlements, contrary to the SDG aspirations.

The high risk and exposure to environmental catastrophes in Africa, including hazards related to climate change, have been attributed to its low adaptive capacity due to low economic development and a high exposure to the effects of global warming (Kreft, Eckstein & Melchior 2017). Other factors have been identified as rapid population growth, rising levels of poverty and inappropriate development practices as well as the impact of drought and other natural disasters, disease, ineffective development policies, unfavourable terms of trade and the debt burden (New Partnership for Africa's Development [NEPAD] 2003).

The country specific problems listed by participants in the study related to their experiences in social work and social development including: prolonged drought, floods, landslides, deforestation, land degradation, veld fires, famine, pollution, fracking, plastic materials, poor waste management, unemployment, poverty, overpopulation, drought, drug abuse, lack of infrastructure (e.g. sanitation, housing, transport), substance abuse, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, child neglect, teenage pregnancy, absent fathers, crime, corruption, internal displacement, unplanned settlements, urban migration, internal displacements, land conflicts, unregulated mining, and corruption.

Some of the implications of these social problems are found in the following statements of participants:

1. '*Water and sanitation…Most affected group of people are those living in the rural areas. The vulnerable groups being women and children, they are expected to fetch water and manage households. 2. [L]ittering. Most of our communities are a health hazard due to dirt lying everywhere in the communities needs to be empowered to keep their communities clean. 3. Lack of housing. [L]iving conditions in most communities are not safe for human beings to live in. they are exposed to natural disasters, e.g. flooding and fires*'. P36

'*Informal settlement associated with no access to clean water which lead to health challenges. Currently there is an outbreak of Hepatitis E in one of*

the informal settlements due to poor hygienic environmental conditions. High rate of unemployment causing community self-reliance and sustainability. Deforestation'. P6

'*Inadequate sharing of the National cake, mineral regions don't get a fair share despite being the major contributors to GDP. This has affected the environment hosting the mines and community sustainability'*. P10

The impact of structural injustices and the challenges for social work to promote the dignity of people by engaging them in promoting environmental and community sustainable is underpinned in the following quotes:

'*Inequality, underdevelopment of infrastructure and resources, corruption that deprives communities from essential resources and support, poverty'*. P11

'*In most cases you will find that when government is implementing projects in rural communities, community members are not included or consulted and in light of the environmental changes such as climate, environmental degradation. I find that to be a problem*'. P17

'*There is a lack of developmental resources within the community to empower members of the community to become independent*…' P27

The social problems listed by participants indicate that they understand the interrelatedness between environment and community sustainability and how it impacts on both people and the physical environment. It also shows the link between social and economic development and the importance of the macroeconomic and political contexts for sustainable communities and environments.

Policies that will effectively address social problems

In Africa, the right to a generally satisfactory and safe environment is guaranteed in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Article 24). Yet, community and environmental sustainability has continued to be one of the daunting challenges globally and regionally. Extreme climate change and subsequent desertification especially sanctioned by deforestation and greenhouse emissions, declining access to clean and safe water, poor sanitation and environmental hygiene, and the receding of arable land for agriculture continue to afflict millions of communities across the globe.

Joint efforts to promote sustainable development in Africa are evident in various regional treaties and other legal and policy frameworks in Africa. The African Union Act (2000), for example, is explicit on member countries taking joint action in a diverse array of areas, including not only foreign trade but also specific aspects of environmental sustainability such as energy, industry and mineral resources; food, agricultural and animal resources; livestock production and forestry; water resources and irrigation; and environment protection. The African Economic Community, besides its focus on economic, social and cultural development, has a specific objective to ensure the harmonisation and coordination of environmental protection policies, among the States Parties. The 2003 Maputo Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, 2003 is the most comprehensive treaty on environmental protection in Africa (Ruppel 2016). The main objective of the Convention is to enhance environmental protection, to foster the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, and to harmonise and coordinate policies in these fields with a view to achieving ecologically rational, economically sound and socially acceptable development policies and programmes (Ruppel 2016).

There are other issue based conventions that provide frameworks for action. The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, which entered into force in 1998, provides a framework for strict regulation of the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes to and within Africa. Others include the Maritime Transport Charters (1994), The African Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (2009) and the Phyto-Sanitary Convention for Africa (1967) which aimed to control and eliminate plant diseases in Africa and prevent the introduction of new diseases (Ruppel, 2016). Another related treaty, specifically linking environmental and community sustainability is the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which was adopted in Kampala in 2009 and entered into force in 2012. The Convention is the first regional legal instrument in the world containing legal obligations for states with regard to the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons (Ruppel 2016) and explicitly refers to displacement caused not only by conflict and human rights violations but also natural or human-made disasters.

National governments across Africa also have specific policies and plans for environmental sustainability whilst at the same time, they commit to building sustainable communities through their respective national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. The Sustainable Development Report on Africa III (n.d.) indicates that many countries in the region have made progress in relation to initiatives and programmes, formulation and adopting of policies, strategies and legislation to foster sustainable development. Initiatives include laws and policies in the broad area of environmental management as well as in sectoral areas such as mining, energy, agriculture and health. Many African countries have also ratified major chemicals and wastes related conventions as well as other Multilateral Environment Agreement (MEAs), including in the mining sector. There is also evidence that some progress has been made towards policy and programme integration, mainly within the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) and national sustainable development strategies. Structures and frameworks have been put in place to enhance regional cooperation in a wide range of areas, including the AU/NEPAD (African Union/New Partnership for Africa's Development) programme as well as other regional frameworks (Sustainable Development Report on Africa III, n.d.).

Through the lens of participants in the study, it appears that there is a broad awareness of policies, national plans and programmes related to sustainability matters. Some participants could list very specific legislation and policies, while some could not mention one.

Participants indicated that national constitutions can often be drawn upon to protect the environment and communities. Policies, acts and national plans which are in place include in the areas of national environment management; national climate change, water, national wetlands management, wildlife, fisheries, land policy, environmental impact assessment, illegal mining, forestry and tree planting, agriculture, policy reduction, social assistance. Some participants indicated that their countries have some of the best policies in place, but that there is need to support them with appropriate Acts to enhance accountability and transparency and to reach people on the grass roots level.

In terms of what policies and national plans should be in place, suggestions included; a comprehensive food security policy, policies on youth development, job creation and entrepreneurship, and social responsibility; a complete ban on all plastic materials; regulating disposable waste as well

as recycling of sewage waste to feed grazing land or generating bi-carbon fuels; re-planting trees (for every tree cut, plant two) and reclaiming gulleys; making education on the environment compulsory on lower grades so that children are conscious of protecting the environment at an early age.

The television, radio and social media were suggested to be more used for awareness programmes on sustainable environments and communities. Awareness campaigns for children should be more child friendly by using games and competitions.

Youth empowerment programmes should be presented in communities at no cost and should include skills development training, especially for destitute families, and sports and recreational programmes. Local municipalities should be involved to promote economic and educational development for the youth and women.

The need for a multidisciplinary approach was pointed out to fill the huge gap between community sustainability and environmental justice. For this, '*We need workable policies on sustainable human and environment interactions and rewarding of good environment practices at community levels: public private partnerships within corporate social responsibility*'. (P33)

What is important for a sustainable environment and community is the integration of social and economic policies as aptly captured in the following statement: '…*a policy specifically linking household economic strengthening and social assistance seems to be lacking. The social protection grants that are available fail to empower individuals with skills to become self-sufficient*'. (P39)

Whilst social work has been historically identified with working with vulnerable individuals, groups and communities to enhance social functioning and promote resilience, through adopting the person in environment perspectives, little focus has been placed on the physical environment both in education, practice and research. The next section will look at social work and sustainable development.

Social work and sustainable development
Social work has a vital role to play in shaping an effective global response to the environmental crisis and to the human rights issues that accompany it due to its historic focus on a social systems theoretical perspective, as

well as its advocacy-based and action-oriented framework for practice (Hawkins 2010). There exists a symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment, since the ecosystem is both a source of livelihood resources as well as catastrophic outcomes, especially due to degradation (Mathende & Nhapi 2017). Historically, social workers intervene at the intersection between people and their environments and increasingly it has become realized that this environment has to go beyond the social to the physical and the whole ecosystem. In line with this, 'the Global Agenda commits social workers and social development practitioners to aligning their activities and programmes with development initiatives that integrate the environment with human dimensions' (Lombard, 2015:487). Nhapi and Mathende (2017) rightly observe that sustainable natural resources management remains an enduring powerful transformational tool for community development outcomes and poverty alleviation and hence, initiation of robust, pro-poor, rural development interventions should remain an agenda for social workers who serve as frontline development professionals in rural, indigenous communities.

In Africa, social workers and social development practitioners work with marginalised communities to address a diverse range of challenges that relate to poverty, destitution, disease, lack of access to basic services, violence and other rights violations. Most of these are inextricably linked to environmental issues either as a result of the negative impacts of the misuse of the environment, lack of access to productive resources for a living; public health issues resulting from degraded environments; as well as conflicts over the control of productive resources such as land, all of which constitute environmental injustices. Nhapi and Mathende (2017), identify a critical role of social workers in Africa as change agents working with rural poor communities, in promoting community and environmental sustainability. Chiwara and Lombard (2018) made a similar conclusion on a study on drought in Namibia, suggesting that the green social work model of Dominelli (2012) be adopted for his purpose.

Contributing to sustainable development requires partnerships (UN 2015). Participants indicate who are already working on sustainable development issues and who they see as possible partners.

In the six countries involved in the study, government is involved on national, provincial/regional and local levels, including traditional authorities and leaders. These include government departments responsible for human settlement, water and sanitation, housing, health,

education, environmental affairs, policing, and social development. Furthermore, policy specialists are engaged as well as regional and ward councillors.

From the business sector, recycling waste and other private and mining companies are involved. Civil society engages through community based organisations (CBOs), faith based organisations (FBOs) and NGOs. NGOs include social services and social development organisations but also specifically NGOs focusing on the environment, such as WoMin (African Women Unite against destructive Resource extraction) and SAFCEI (South African Faith Communities Environmental Institute). International companies engage in different contexts, including funding, expertise and volunteer internships.

Civil society also engages as individual or community volunteers through local churches, schools and other concerned interest groups such as 'green groups' and also UN agencies. Universities engage in different capacities such as community engagement and research. Other research and children institutions also contribute.

On the question who else should be involved in addressing environmental and community sustainable issues, teachers, social workers, community nurses, doctors, and community members were pointed out as role players who understand sustainable development issues. The overall view of participants' views can be summarised in this quote: '*Basically everyone [should be involved] as it [is a] shared responsibility and not government or NGOs alone' which include community leaders, key informants, the private sector, children, and service users'*. (P39)

The Department of Health was singled out because communities need education on the importance of hygiene while the Department of Environment Affairs has to educate people on the importance of sustainable environment and the harm that individuals contribute to the ozone layer. The Department of Police Services should run crime prevention programmes and be visible within the community. Parliaments and hence political leaders are important as they are responsible for legislative laws to protect the environment. NGOs and FBOs should engage more, as '*They are closer to where the incidents are taking place'* (P26).

The role of the general public was emphasised indicating that all citizens, both in cities and rural areas, should be involved because everyone is

affected. Communities and families in particular must engage. The following statements support this:

'*People need to realise that creating a sustainable environment is everybody's responsibility*'. (P11)

'*Environmental matters require concerted efforts and therefore every member of the community should be mobilised and equipped with knowledge and skills to address these issues because*'. (P5)

'*…It takes a village to raise a child. Less me and more WE. Recycling for example*'. (P16)

'*Communities should be involved because they tend to benefit more on improvements of environments'.* (P20)

'*Family members in particular should get involved because they are the beneficiaries and therefore every household should be encouraged to live carefully by taking environmental issues into account.'* (P8)

The role of education and educators stood out:

'*Educators should address sustainable issues by including it in the school curricula and corporate agencies contribute towards environmental degradation and should actively participate in preventing and addressing environmental issues*'. (P5)

'*Children are the future leaders and as the adage goes "Catch them Young"*'. (P20)

The role of religious institutions was highlighted because they are in contact with the community and they can influence them when people believe in them. The involvement of local farmers and youth were noted as important, because

'*Youth are largely involved in illegal mining and pollution of water bodies and the forest out of impunity. Farmers involved in bush burning and cutting of trees for charcoal without replacement*'. (P13)

A pertinent role for social workers was indicated in relation to droughts, water security, advocacy, they focus on both people and the environment, they work with marginalised people and engage them, and because they are change agents. These roles are captured in the following statements:

'*Social workers should play a role, particularly with regards the drought that is impacting the Western and Eastern Cape [South Africa]. Water*

security has a profound impact on general community well-being/anxiety, and on the livelihoods and lives of particularly poor, older, and young people'. **(**P24)

'*Social workers should be involved because they play a big role in advocacy. Social workers as educators also would play a big role in educating the masses about the dangers or [of] deforestation and other unfriendly environmental practices. Social impact assessments need to be written by social workers'*. (P32)

'*Social Workers! This is because they are in a profession that looks into the "fit" between people and their environment and mechanisms the community can come up with to mitigate the social issues faced. If the social workers in Uganda came up and together linked with the above mentioned stakeholders social change would be realised'*. (P34)

'*Social workers are in the best position to defend the marginalised, and hence should be at the centre of every project implemented on behalf of communities as social change facilitator'*. (P17)

'*Social workers – to advocate for the plight of the homeless and disadvantaged population; educate communities Community members – to be part of decisions that impact on their lives'*. (P6)

Interestingly one participant mentioned social workers and politicians in the same breath of importance: '*Social workers and politicians. Social workers have the best position to help people and politicians have a lot of power for government and policies'*. (P25). The role of government stands out as duty bearers and being responsible for enacting laws that clearly show how the distribution of resources are supposed to be done. To this end, '*policies are not enough because they are not binding. We need Laws not only in revenue collection but also in distribution'*. (P10)

Evidence of social work and social development interventions

Much is written about the role and contribution of social work in the environment and disaster management in different parts of the world. However, there are not many studies and literature on the impact of social work and social development on sustainable development in Africa. However, it does not mean that nothing is happening in this emerging field of study in Africa.

Many participants could not indicate any specific evidence of best social work or social development practice that shows a social, economic and

environmental impact. However, this was acknowledged, as something that should be rectified as stated by one participant:

'*I am not aware of any. I am not proud to say this, because I should be playing my role as social worker.*' (P36)

Another participant (P8) attributed it to social work unfortunately often being reactive in the light of overwhelming problems and limited social workers.

On the other hand there are good examples of impact across the participating countries in the study.

In Zambia:
'*Social work and social development interventions are helping to improve the wellbeing of people living in extreme poverty and vulnerable persons affected or infected with HIV/AIDS. Over 70% of the population live in the rural area of which about 71% are extremely poor. NGOs and in some parts of the country Mining Companies have strong[er] presence on the ground than Government. Thus, poor and vulnerable groups are receiving more support from these agencies in terms of provision of basic services such as education and health facilities*'. (P10)

In Ghana:
'*Government and social workers - NGOS/CSOs - work together on the Advocacy and education of people on climate change issues. Now there are policies and laws safeguarding the environment and illegal mining*'. (P13)

In South Africa the adoption of developmental social work post-apartheid, informed by the social development approach, shifted focus to a humanistic and human rights-based approach where '*every individual is entitled to the services that the government have*' (P17). As a result, '*The education of social workers and other social service professionals have [has] shifted to include a strong focus on holistic development and therefore professionals are being introduced into the field of practice with an empowerment mandate to break dependence on the welfare system*' (P39).

This shift emphasises human development through empowerment and strength-based strategies which strengthens communities to develop sustainable projects. The placement of children in need of care and protection in stable family environments promotes social inclusion. Two organisations that 'are covering good ground' are Future Families and

Epilepsy SA. (P25) The importance of human development and social inclusion is also evidence in '*Community work projects in [the] field of child protection, youth empowerment, skills training for adults*' (P15).

In Zimbabwe, initiatives include,

'*Educating communities on how to re-cycle the many by products that we would through [throw] away like plastic and cardboard paper. Providing alternative to undegradable waste material; re-forestation programs, safe disposal of chemical waste; using non emitting fuels like solar and gas energies for powering industry. Hydro generation of power, Minimizing burning of forests*'. (P20)

In Uganda:

'*Poverty prevalence has reduced from 56% in 1995 to 19% in 2017. Whilst this is due to some macro-economic policies interventions, social work and social development practitioners have contributed towards this by mobilizing individuals, households and communities to meaningfully participate in income generating activities and programmes. HIV/AIDS, which threatens community sustainability, has reduced in terms of prevalence from over 20% during the 1990s to 6.9% by 2016*'. (P5)

Participants in Uganda also emphasised the role of social workers in families and with children which contributes to sustainable communities.

'*Practitioners in practice with family and children's service have done much to support dysfunctional families regain their functionality; those in community practice have helped empower such as Karamoja appreciate proper human waste disposal*'. (P31) This includes, curbing domestic and gender based violence contributing to '…*a bill in parliament called marriage and divorce bill pending hoping someday it will pass*'. (P4) Ugandan educators, '*teach green social work to our students and many are at the forefront of NGOs DEVT [development] work to restore environmental vitality*'. (P33)

The Promotion of Professional Social Work towards Social Development and Poverty Reduction in East Africa (PROSOWO) project in Eastern Africa has done much to promote professional social work in this sub-region, but also in the broader Africa region. Flowing from the project, the launch of the Centre for Research Innovation in Social Work (CRISOWO) is a tangible evidence of the inter-relatedness of research, education, practice and policy for sustainable outcomes. Educators, practitioners, students, policy

specialists and researchers have the opportunity to meet at the conferences to strengthen partnerships and develop professional social work and social development in the region. Conferences in Uganda (2014), Burundi (2015), Zambia (2017) and Rwanda (2018) on social work and social development included a theme on environmental sustainability. Through these initiatives, African scholars writing skills are developed and they get an opportunity to do research and publish. The impact is evident in the voice of an educator in Uganda:

'*In the recent years there has contextualised literature in social work addressing issues like poverty and highlighting some of the models that are essential for Uganda, East Africa and Africa in general. I believe this is a big step towards progress. Policies and frameworks like the Social Sector Development Plan under Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development are an indicator or progress towards environmental conservation and activities that improve the welfare of the masses*' (P32).

As in the case of Rwanda, who has a national policy on banning plastic, in Gambia, '*There was a ban on the use of plastics in the country. Plastic bags were also band for sale and the effect on the environment was seen everywhere positivel*y'. (P29)

The following three case studies, respectively from South Africa, Malawi and Uganda, present three scenarios of social workers' involvement in interventions that promote and advocate environmental and community sustainability.

The **first case study from South Africa** is an example of a social worker working far and beyond the boundaries of traditional social work, challenging international and national injustices that threaten both people and planet.

John, G.I. Clarke has written and published extensively about his work with the Amadiba Coastal Community on the environmentally sensitive Pondoland Wild Coast in the Eastern Cape, and it is from that localised bottom up perspective that he has sought to illuminate the social problems that mining engenders among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. The AmaDiba Coastal Resident and the Royal Family of AmaMpondo comprise the client system with whom he has been working.

'My focus has been on the impact on rural communities of mining and the extractive industries. South Africa is hugely endowed with mineral wealth,

across a range of minerals. However, because minerals are non-renewable natural resources, mining is essentially a wasting industry, and prudence requires that the[y] be used with a far-seeing eye to the interests of both present and future generations'.

'…the combination of my historical and environmental awareness with my professional social work code of practice (which obliges the promotion of the Bill of Rights, including environmental rights) my practice has been geared to assisting mining affected communities to anticipate and respond to risks and threats of new mining ventures so as to avoid and prevent the generally undermining effect that mining has had on local resilience and quality of life'.

In his work, he has been developing relationships within government, including the Department of Mineral Resources, the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs, the Department of Land and Agrarian Reform, South African National Roads Agency, Department of Tourism, Mbizana Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Provincial Government and the Office of the Presidency. He has also established relationships with the mining company and the mining industry, the media, international and national NGOs civil society organisations, and funding agencies. In addition to these stakeholders, he wishes to engage the United Nations, the OECD and other international organisations. This is important, as 'The Amadiba's story has become the emblematic narrative of mining affected communities throughout the world, and unless human rights acquire meaning there, they do not acquire meaning anywhere. The forward survival of the human species pivots on how we manage to use non-renewable resources, and develop technologies for extracting them, so as not to prejudice the interests of future generations'.

With regard to policies in place to support his work, the South African Constitution, adopted in 1996, was the first in the world to entrench the right to environmental protection and conservation in the Bill of Rights, as the supreme law. The Constitution obliges "justifiable social and economic development" that protects and conserves the environment for the benefit of present and future generations. 'The Mining Charter and Mineral and Petroleum Development Resources Act pay lip service to that ideal, but successive attempts by the State to ensure sound practice in the award and monitoring of mining rights has been dismal. Insofar as there has been some good news, it has been thanks to the work of Civil Society

organisations. The Courts and the SA Human Rights Commission and the Office of the Public Protector have provided some recourse to justice, and the judiciary and the Constitutional Court has been the only domain where progress has been made. But this has left a considerable residue of distrust and adversarialism between the State, business and civil society. Mining companies have started to resort to SLAPP suit tactics (Strategic Litigation against Public Participation) to intimidate. I personally face a R5 million defamation suit brought by the Australian mining company who have not taken kindly to my intervention, despite the fact that I have been scrupulous in staying well within the Code of Practice and Ethics of social work'.

In terms of what training prepared him for his practice, he highlights systems theory, as enabling him to model the complexity of the situations he found himself in. His thinking and understanding on sustainability 'has large been shaped by a systems thinking economist mentor, Professor Manfred Max Neef', in particular 'his transdisciplinary theory of Human Scale Development'. Furthermore, the core values of social work 'have enabled my intervention to produce some outcomes that the strict legal adversarial approach would never have achieved (despite what my lawyer friends might say), because I have kept true to the basic premise "in development, there are no such things as problems, only people with problems"'. He singles out the value of social work to value the individual, and show respect for peoples' dignity.

With regard to successes, he contributes to anecdotal evidence and, insofar as this is valid, 'I have been encouraged by the growing number of enquires and interest I have received as the Amadiba story has become publicly known…I have not come across a single case study anywhere in the world, of an example of a rural community like the Amadiba that have been left better off after the mining of their ancestral lands…It is my impression that the negative impact of mining generally leads to regress for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Asbestos mining has now ceased for that reason. Will the mining of other minerals eventually go the same way? My impression is that if the current frameworks and practices prevail, thing are going to worsen. In the mining industry the correct nomenclature should be what are the "least worst" options, because there is no evidence of a "good practice" as far as rural mining affected communities are concerned'. In his view, '…given what is now known about the negative social and environmental impact of mining, one would

have expected social workers to be sought after by mining companies and Government departments to ensure the social and labour plans (that are a requirement of any mining licence application) are sound in terms of sustainability and well-being criteria'.

This case study shows the far reaching impact that a social worker's commitment and involvement could have in promoting sustainable development. It indicates how the values and knowledge base of social work can be used and complemented by application of acts and policies in search for solutions and sustainable outcomes. The case study shows the relatedness between social, economic and environmental justice and the link between justice and human rights. It presents an example of advocacy practice within the boundaries of ethical practice, and the risks involved in standing up for ecojustice. The roles of various stakeholders are displayed and, in particular, the approach emphasises the role of people/community involvement as fundamental for sustainable development outcomes. The role of education, training, knowledge and skills, and how to draw from theories for social work and social development practice is evident. The role that research and publication play in building a case and creating public awareness is central for sustainable outcomes.

John Clarke's blog[3] gives more background to his initiatives, successes and struggles in the pursuit of justice and sustainable development. He regards his book, 'The Promise of Justice: King Mpondombini Sigcau's struggle to save the Kingdom of Mpondo from unjust developments' which gives a 400 page narrative, could be prescribed reading for social work students.

The **second case study from Malawi** is on environmental social work as presented by Christopher Ndaona.

Our surrounding is vital to our health as such, caring for the environment means caring for our own lives. Environment that we live in has been degraded by [hu]man's activities hence environmental challenges are social problems. It is a common proof that the landfills in our towns and cities are full of [hu]man-made items such as clothes and bottles. Social workers have responsibilities to incorporate issues of environmental care in their activities as I did in this case.

Mangochi, a district in the Eastern Region of Malawi, is one of the areas experiencing problems of deforestation. The cutting down of trees is done

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[3] www.icosindaba.co.za

at a faster rate than reforestation. Unfortunately, most activities in district plans do not put emphasis on environmental conservation issues. The social welfare office in the District has a lot of activities that involve deforestation. The construction of Community Based Childcare Centers (CBCCs) for example, flourish at the expense of soil degradation through moulding bricks and deforestation for brick burning and timber for roofing. Worse still, the CBCC programme incorporates a nutritional programme where porridge is prepared for the children. This also flourished at the expense of environmental degradation through firewood.

Figure 2.1: Mother support group preparing porridge at Nangalamo Primary school

In August, 2016 I was conducting field placement in partial fulfilment of my BSc in Human Science and Community Services. I was placed in Mangochi - Campaign for Female Education (Camfed) office. As part of the assignment, my supervisor Mr. Richard Chiwaula gave me a programme to plan and implement. The programme was on monitoring of school feeding programme. During monitoring at Nangalamo and Kaloka, I observed that the Mother Support Group was cooking porridge using a huge amount of firewood.

When I was coming down the hills of Chowe, the bare land that has started taking shape struck me that something was very wrong with our planning of activities and this was our environmental blindness. It felt that in our trainings with Mother Support Groups, issues of environmental

conservation should be part of the discussions. The inclusion of training in afforestation, where mother support groups were sensitized and trained in tree planting, was proposed and mother support groups were trained in issues of afforestation. Monitoring that was conducted after the training observed that 4890 trees were planted and weeded at Mpitilira, Namisi, Kamundi, Mtimabi, Msasa, Kaloka, Mandimba, Nangalamo, Majuni, St Joseph, Lungwena, Kabudira, Khungwa, Nalikolo, Maundu, Mtuwa, Mtendere and Matope primary schools. Gradually, the community is understanding the need to conserve the environment and they don't work for national-set afforestation period to plant trees. It is become part of life.

This case study is a good example of how a social worker looked more broadly than her brief to monitor a feeding scheme. She observed the environment and the impact, identified the role players and looked for solutions that can be sustainable for both the earth and the people. It also serves as an example of how to integrate environmental issues into traditional practice. Mother support groups, linked with tree planting and protection of the land and the forest, was not only a solution, but intended to 'become part of life'. It demonstrates that involvement and participation of communities are fundamental for sustainable development. What also stands out in this case study is the importance of placing students in community settings where they can observe gaps and learn what can be done to promote sustainable practice with positive outcomes for both the physical environment and people.

Case study three from Uganda, Grow, Train, Make, Sustain: Social Work Innovation in East Africa via Bamboo for Good (B4G), is presented by Dr Janestic Twikirize

Launched in September 2016, Bamboo for Good (B4G) reflects innovative partnerships among public and private institutions working together to mobilize bamboo resources to address critical social needs and serve as a catalyst for social empowerment, economic vitality, and environmental health. B4G is an initiative of Makerere University Department of Social Work and Social Administration (Uganda), Rwanda Bamboo organization, and Pacific Bamboo Resources (USA). The team leaders are all Social Work educators working in partnership with local institutions to promote social, economic and environmental justice.

B4G's mission is to provide leadership for uniting regional bamboo resources with institutional partnerships to create innovative bamboo

industries and products, new workforce and economic development opportunities, and related educational programs, to address critical urban and rural quality-of-life conditions across East Africa. Bamboo for Good (B4G), combines traditional sustainable development intentions with strategic use of the valuable bamboo plant as a catalyst for innovation to address critical humanitarian and wildlife habitat issues in East Africa. B4G has for the past two years been working with communities neighbouring Bwindi-Mgahinga National Park in South Western Uganda to build their capacity for bamboo propagation and processing thereby enhancing livelihoods while at the same time protecting the environment. The Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Area (BMCA) is a rain forest that is home to more than half of the Mountain Gorillas in the world. However, the human population around the area is about 331 people per square kilometre, a high density which exerts significant pressure on the park resources by neighbouring communities seeking their daily livelihoods. The communities are at the same time frequently exposed to danger and loss of life as they seek resources, including bamboo, from the conservation area. To reduce such pressure and promote harmonious co-existence between biodiversity, B4G embarked on building the capacity of the communities to utilise alternative methods and resources of propagating and managing bamboo growing outside the park. B4G does this through partnering with local community organisations including currently the Mgahinga Bamboo Conservation Programme (MBCP), Uganda Wildlife Authority, National Forestry Authority, district and sub-county administration and Change a Life. The programme has been supported by the International Bamboo and Ratan Organisation (INBAR).

Our current and future strategy is to support (a) growing and harvesting bamboo to complement existing agriculture and agroforestry efforts among communities in fragile environments, such as those neighbouring conservation areas, (b) provision of skill training and workforce development to support sustainable cultivation and (c) new bamboo product creation and industries to meet critical needs, all aligned via (d) strategic planning to sustain programs and partner relationships for durable beneficial impacts.

This is a best practice example of innovation in social work and social development to maintain a balance between humans and the planet. Rather than take an adversarial stance against communities surrounding conservation areas, the project aims to provide alternative livelihoods that

promote community sustainability while at the same time preserving the physical environment essential for wild life and the whole ecosystem. The power of partnerships and leadership in mobilising community-based initiatives are evident in this case study. It emphasises the importance of using what is indigenous in communities. Not only is it instantly available, but because communities know the product, they can apply their indigenous knowledge, which in turn strengthens their involvement and participation. The case study presents a good example of integrating the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Through the project, and its potential to expand, communities can have a better future for themselves and the planet.

Role of education in being prepared for sustainable practice

There are promising initiatives in the region to integrate environmental justice and sustainable development issues in the social work curriculum at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Universities of Makerere (Uganda), Pretoria (South Africa), Zimbabwe and Namibia are some examples. The topic is also prioritised as research foci by training institutions. Research in this study field is increasingly undertaken by students in masters and doctoral studies.

Some participants in the study had no exposure to training in environmental sustainability while others had some training in undergraduate or postgraduate studies. Some learnt about the link between environmental and community sustainability through continuous professional training, while others learnt because of self-interest in sustainable issues and own development.

What is important, is that there is increasing acknowledgment that social work and social development should include the physical environment. One participant captured it as follows:

'…*Social work is all about justice, and as the marginalized and poor are being impacted the most, it has become essential that social workers are prepared for this work*'. (P28)

Training and readings that have prepared participants, or which they regard as important in preparing them for interventions that focus on the environment and sustainability issues, include:

- Developmental social work
- Community and group work

·   Realities of sustainability
·   Community activism and engagement
·   Social problems and poverty and how it links with environmental sustainability
·   Gender studies
·   Advocacy
·   Introduction to the Global Agenda
·   Environmental management

They obtained knowledge in these areas either through formal training or continuous professional training through workshops and conferences.

The shift to developmental social work, which is embedded in social development, by many African countries, is fundamental in being prepared for sustainable development practice as reflected in the following quote:

'*Social work education through developmental social work addresses practical social problems and it not only creates awareness of the environmental and community sustainability challenge but also challenges me as a social work[er] to create sensitization about the importance of natural resources and also do advocacy. Gender studies also enlighten me about the gender perspective and impact of gender in environmental and community sustainability because it's important for both women and men to participate in environmental and community sustainability practices*'. (P32)

Although a focus on community is an important aspect of being prepared for sustainable community practice, it should go beyond this method to include other focus areas in social work. However, it is a problem that not all social workers want to work in community settings or find it attractive as captured in the following statements:

'*Training and exposure to developmental social work and also community work was mentioned as important links to shift to a focus of environmental sustainability. That however, was mentioned as a challenge because for most social workers community work is a last choice while it is in fact 'our communities which needs development and resources*' (P16).

'*I feel that not enough focus was placed on promoting environmental and community sustainability. The introduction of the modules have [has] not managed to spark interest amongst students and to a great extent these*

concepts are only linked to the community work method, of which it encompasses more'. (P39)

The challenge is to make theoretical training in sustainable development relevant for practice as shown in the following statements:

'*My masters programme has equipped me with a lot of information but I feel lost it in practice*'. (P25)

'*Yes they have because the theories that I was taught is [are] integrated in practice and I am able to have more insight by also identifying strengths within the community which can be used as an intervention strategy towards the problem*'. P27

The Global Agenda was an important mechanism to create awareness of sustainable development, however, it requires guidance on implementation:

'*I've really never thought about green issues in social work until the global agenda came out. And I've not really given it much thought even since then. It feels rather peripheral to my understanding of our profession and I'm not sure what it means for us. I'm sure this is terribly short-sighted and stupid. But that's where I am at the moment*'. (P24)

As was shown in case study one above, research, expansion of practice settings, and advocacy were also highlighted as relevant to contribute to sustainable development by a participant from Zambia:

'*I am able to conduct professional research studies, analyse issues and provide guidance (solutions). I have gone beyond practicing social work in non-profit organizations but also in the corporate world working for multinational mining companies*'. (P10)

It is important to remain mindful that sustainable development is about social and economic development that takes the environment into account:

'*Yes it has done by training in alternative livelihoods for communities that are sustainable and environment friendly.*' (P20)

The following quote provides a summary on being prepared for sustainable practice:

'*Through a module on contemporary social problems in Uganda, I was equipped with knowledge of the multiple and complex problems that*

people are confronted with in the communities and how social workers need to partner with communities to address such problems. I also appreciated the inter linkages between poverty and environmental sustainability. This has prepared me to mainstream sustainable development in my work with people at the grassroots through for example the promotion of climate resilient sustainable agricultural practices. When working with the poor and vulnerable to improve livelihoods, it is important to promote diversification of sustainable livelihoods. The social work training also equipped me with knowledge and skills for work in emergency situations sanctioned among others by natural disasters such as land slides'. (P5)

Conclusion

The Global Agenda and celebration of international World Social Work Day on the theme created awareness among social workers of the importance of environmental and community sustainability.

It is evident in this report, that social work and social development educators and practitioners in Africa are well positioned to contribute significantly to the promotion of environmental and community sustainability (IASSW, 2016). But to perform these roles, social workers and social development practitioners must have a firm appreciation, knowledge and skills in social ecology, community health, sustainable rural and urban development, social impact assessment, and corporate social responsibility among others (Nhapi & Mathende 2017). This requires a realignment of the social work curriculum to incorporate natural and physical environmental sustainability and environmental justice. Social work training institutions have made progress in this regard. Social work students should be in field placements where they can observe the link between people and the environment. As the study for this report and case studies have demonstrated, many social work organisations and individual practitioners are already contributing towards these goals.

To increase the impact, it is important for social work and social development practitioners to draw on relevant legislation, policies and national plans and strategies that are relevant for sustainable development practice. However, being informed is not only important for intervention purposes, but also to know the gaps and influence policy and legislation. Social workers and social development practitioners can play an important

role in awareness campaigns that promote user-friendly sustainable development strategies.

There should be a more concerted effort by all stakeholders at different levels to mobilise resources and share expertise in promoting environmental and sustainable development. Social workers, environmentalists, economists, gender experts, lawyers, health and educational experts, among other, all have an important role to play in sustainable development. At the local level, we need 'leaders involved in supervision of natural resources, at national level we need strong policies that are put into action and the international level we require policies that back the domestic policies' (P32). Involvement of politicians is also important as they have power and influence. Government, as duty bearer, is instrumental to enact laws and should be held accountable.

Community participation is central to sustainable development initiatives. Vulnerable people are proportionately more affected by environmental issues and see the reciprocal impact of a degraded environment on them, and at the same time contributing to further degradation of the environment. Social workers can engage them in managing their environment that both the environment and people benefit. They can also engage them in advocacy practice to resist land invasion and degradation by developers.

Research and advocacy are fundamental for social work and social development practice.

Way forward

There is a revival of social work in Africa which is supported by initiatives such as The Promotion of Professional Social Work towards Social Development and Poverty Reduction in East Africa (PROSOWO) and The Centre for Research and Innovation in Social Work (CRISOWO). These initiatives need to be further developed with an emphasis on sustainable development through collective initiatives and platforms. Joint research and publications to promote sustainable social work practice in Africa must be prioritised. Furthermore, best teaching and practice models can be shared through student and staff exchange initiatives. Conferences in different African countries should continue as a platform to develop professional social work in Africa.

The regional structures for collaboration in Africa, such as the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) must be

explored as avenues for social work and social development practitioners and educators to exert their influence in contributing to the SDGs. The region should continue to be connected through the commitments of the Global Agenda and engage in going forward with the fourth theme, but also for the period beyond 2020 when the first phase of the Global Agenda in terms of its four commitments come to an end. For this purpose, collaborations between social work practitioners (IFSW), educators (IASSW), and organisations (ICSW) will be treasured and strengthened.

An important principle underpinning the commitment to promote environmental and sustainable development is the acknowledgement that social work and social development educators and practitioners are first and foremost human beings who are all dependent on the planet for their survival. This is an important building block in committing themselves as professionals to incorporate the physical environment in their teaching and practice. A true commitment to protect the environment must be felt by the heart and purposefully adopted so that it can become visible in one's own way of living. Only with such conviction, will social development educators and practitioners convincingly search for social and economic models that incorporate a focus on the environment. There is no social justice without environmental justice. Social workers are compelled to act on environmental injustices because of their ethical mandate to address social injustice (Erickson, 2012:184). This is the only way going forward if social workers want to contribute to sustainable development.

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Chapter 3

Asia Pacific: Promoting Community & Environmental Sustainability

Rose Henderson

Contents

Introduction

This summary has been compiled from attendance at and the records from the Global Agenda Workshop held at the joint International Federation of Social Workers Asia Pacific and Asia Pacific Social Work Educators Regional Conference in Shenzhen, China in September 2017, as well as some supplementary material provided since that time. The editor apologises for any inaccuracies due to language difficulties but hopes that the essence of this summary reflects the key issues on this topic from members of our region. This is not an academic paper but captures some of the work being undertaken in the education, practitioner and social service provider settings across our region in relation to the Global Agenda Theme – Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability.

In September 2017, members of the International Federation of Social Workers Asia Pacific Region (IFSW – AP) and the Asia Pacific Association of Social Work Educators (APASWE) gathered together for their joint regional conference in the city of Shenzhen, China. A workshop on 28 September 2017 had as its focus, presentations from member countries demonstrating the ways each country evidenced the Global Agenda theme of promoting community and environmental sustainability. The Asia Pacific region is the largest geographically and arguably one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse regions of IFSW. This diversity was reflected in the rich array of presentations providing examples ranging from how social work education programmes were embracing the need to include environmental sustainability in their courses, to how practitioners were working in ways to build community capacity and capability and how some countries faced pressures, practices and policies threatening the sustainability of the social work profession itself.

Speakers at the workshop represented perspectives from Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Palestine, Malaysia, China: Macau, South Korea, Japan, India, China: Hong Kong, China, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Written material was also received from Bangladesh and Iran. Beginning with the host country for this workshop, other presentations are listed in alphabetical order. Further information on any summary may be obtained by contacting the relevant contributor whose names and emails are listed at the end of this chapter.

China

Our host country China spoke of the impacts on the early development (0 – 3 years of age) of 'migrant' and 'left-behind' children and the involvement of social work in helping to develop a sustainable community of the future with respect to these children. Migrant children in this context are defined as those children impacted by urbanisation whose families have moved from rural areas to cities for employment and other opportunities. However these families have no 'city identity (City Hukou)'[4] and had frequent changes of residence disrupting their ability to develop their identity and social connectedness. There are reportedly 18 million children regarded as such 'migrant' children in China. 'Left-behind' children refer to those children who remain in their hometown – often with aging grandparents or others whilst their parents travel to the cities for work and business opportunities. It is reported that there are 60 million children in this situation.

The parents of both cohorts are facing the multiple pressures of living in big cities resulting in them having very limited capacity for giving their children time, companionship or in some cases even adequate nutrition. For those children being cared for in their rural homeland, their grandparents often continue with traditional concepts of parenting and education with little ability to support the children's preparation for living within a contemporary environment. Further problems present if the caregiver becomes unable to continue providing care for whatever reason.

Data to date is showing that both of these very large cohorts of young children experience poverty and malnutrition and are reportedly experiencing a low quality of parenting. One study has also shown that infants living in rural areas have cognitive and linguistic delays compared to the children living in urban areas. Results from the studies are signalling concerns for the capabilities and capacities of a large number of China's future generations.

In response to these issues the State Council has targeted strengthening the child's potential through the development of early education for

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[4] Hukou (Huji), or Household Registration, is the official system that identifies a person as a resident of an area and includes other personal information. Hukou determines whether a person is eligible for public benefits in a place or not . Children who migrate with their parents often cannot access all essential health, education or other social benefits.

children aged 0 – 3 years. They have also promoted the establishment of 'Childcare Centers' with social workers working in these. Another initiative to address these issues has been the development of teams to provide education and household services for the poor and left behind children in rural communities. Social work educators and practitioners have been involved in a social work pilot project involving a large number of social service agencies working with these children and their families with good results. Activities have included family guidance with weekly parent education specific to the age and stage of development of the child, monthly parent – child activities and six-monthly community activities to help vulnerable families and build community support networks. The pilot has been evaluated using a number of tools with improvements in attention, positive emotion, activation, improved temperament and speech in the pilot group compared to the control group. Parents felt more happy and confident in their parenting and there was an increased community awareness with improved social integration and community harmony as a result of the work of the pilot study.

Aotearoa New Zealand

The presentation from Aotearoa New Zealand acknowledged the negative impact of air pollution and the discharge of industrial and farming waste into our waterways as being of concern to all peoples, with special significance to indigenous peoples given the importance of their relationship with the natural environment.

The presentation then focussed on sharing some significant challenges currently being faced to the sustainability of the social work profession itself. One example of this is the government's post-modern and neo-liberal thinking and their use of economic language and drivers. This has resulted in many social services experiencing a disparity between demand and capacity with social work practitioners struggling to maintain their professional and ethical standards of practice and being exposed to unrelenting and at times unrealistic demands. Consequently, many practitioners are leaving the profession as the tension between limited resources and increased demands creates stress levels that become unmanageable and intolerable.

There is also a view that social services are not the responsibility of central government but rather the act of benefactors. This in turn, has a detrimental effect on the recognition and 'value' accorded the profession

and practise of social work. An example is the proposed amendment to the Social Work Registration Act seeking mandatory registration. Voluntary registration has been available to social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand since 2003 and it is agreed that it is timely to progress towards Mandatory registration which seeks protection of the title 'social worker'. However, the major concern of the current Bill before parliament is how social work is to be defined. It enables employers – whose mission is to make a profit – to rename a social work role with a different title, albeit that the employee would use their social work skills, knowledge and experience in that position, thereby escaping the financial and accountability requirements of regulation. In situations where there are various occupations that are closely related to social work, it is suggested it will be for employers (or contracting agencies) to decide whether they will require employees to hold and use the title 'social worker'. This facilitates cost cutting measures to be accomplished without necessarily diminishing service delivery. Having legislation which devolves the authority to employers to decide what social work is, significantly undermines and devalues the profession. This represents a major assault on social workers and the social work profession. It embeds a misunderstanding of and disrespect for social work as a unique and skilled profession.

The social work profession in New Zealand is united in its lobby against these sections of the proposed Bill and both social work professional associations argue strongly that communities and families will be more vulnerable should this Bill be passed in its current form. In the face of these threats to the sustainability of the profession, raising awareness, making submissions, lobbying and political activism remain key strategies both locally and nationally.

Australia

The presentation from Australia focussed on two aspects - their Reconciliation Action Plan and Environmental sustainability. In June 2017 the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) published their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which aims to demonstrate their commitment to core social work values and the objectives of their Association related to addressing past and continuing disadvantages imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes a particular focus on building meaningful relationships and working together for a more 'just' Australia. The goals include:

- strengthening relationships to work collectively and address the challenges of overcoming the legacy of past injustices and to shape a future society that upholds the richness of diversity;
- building trust through greater appreciation and respect for indigenous cultures, beliefs and their relationship with the land; and
- improving opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participation in the actions and initiatives of the professional body.

AASW will monitor their progress towards achieving these goals. Some of the practical applications of the RAP include National and branch responsibility to recognise Indigenous peoples and reconciliation in all aspects of our work together, holding events to recognise National Reconciliation Week, collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups on policy projects, encouraging and supporting Indigenous members' participation in national and branch representative bodies and publishing dedicated Indigenous editions of national publications.

Environmental sustainability in Australia has significant challenges as a large and dry continent which experiences periods of long drought with major financial and social consequences. Additionally the economy is dependent on 'dirty' energy, and is experiencing the consequences of climate change including losses to Australia's biodiversity. AASW is supporting a number of initiatives to build capability regarding environmental sustainability. These include social work educators raising awareness across the profession through mandatory inclusion of eco-social work in the social work education curriculum and through AASW hosting a "Green Social Work Network" practice network. This practice network has goals of highlighting the different dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental, ethical, historical, intergenerational and economic); promoting sustainable ways of living and practising as social workers; advocating the need to embed sustainability and spirituality in the social work curriculum; identifying the consequences of violence and ways macro, meso and micro social work practice can bring about social change; and promoting the decolonisation of social work practice.

Some of the ways the AASW will be monitoring the effectiveness of their goals with respect to both of these dimensions of community and environmental sustainability include achievement of the goals of their

Reconciliation Action Plan; growth in Indigenous membership and leadership of the AASW; stronger links between the AASW and dedicated Indigenous and environmental agencies; total compliance with eco-social work inclusion in education curriculum; increased integration of environmental awareness in activities of the AASW; and the Growth of the Green Social Work Network.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has been working towards becoming a middle-income country by 2021. 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' (Sustainable Development Goal 11) is now a main goal of municipalities. A study on Sustainable Urban Community and Social Work has as its aims to explore the community problems of Dhaka City; to explore the needs of the people from all walks of life in the community and to explore social work interventions and the transformation to a sustainable community. Some of the community problems include illiteracy, traffic jams, adolescent pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, drug abuse, ethnic conflicts, HIV/AIDS, hunger, unemployment, lack of affordable housing, lack of clean drinking water and public toilets, transgender issues and environmental contamination. The very recent concern is the Rohingya influx to the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh which creates local community imbalance and crisis.

The findings of the study revealed that most people were not aware of the different rules and regulations of city life and there were no awareness campaigns available; almost everyone wanted to live a decent life in a planned, hassle free and environmentally friendly space; respondents wanted expanded roads, over-bridges and more affordable public transport options to overcome traffic jams and they wanted low cost housing and more community clubs, playgrounds for children. During the study it was observed that people became more motivated and more positive as they responded to social work led research. The Government in Bangladesh is working to address social problems and their work to eradicate poverty, improve education and address the Rohingya crisis is acknowledged.

Whilst there is huge scope for social work practitioners to provide social services to address community problems in Bangladesh, social work in Bangladesh is an academic discipline with limited numbers of practitioners. In addition to front line social work, community education, public

awareness campaigns, community meetings and advocacy would all be beneficial in supporting the government and urban municipalities to achieve their goal of a sustainable city and communities.

Hong Kong, China

The presentation from Hong Kong, China focussed on three aspects of sustainability – social and economic equality, wellbeing through sustainable relationships and promoting an appropriate environment for social work practice and education. Two examples of promoting social and economic equality are promoting a social solidarity economy and advocating for older persons income protection. With respect to the social solidarity economy, a number of non-governmental and grass root organisations in Hong Kong have been actively engaging residents at different localities to organise alternative market places accessible to their people. In 2016-2017, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service engaged social service organisations to organise more than ten such market places as a form of a social solidarity economy. Residents designed and produced their own kiosk and sold goods. These market places not only provided affordable products but also were supportive environments for women and other disadvantaged groups to find employment opportunities and served to connect people resulting in their becoming more organised. The organisations involved have formed themselves into a network to explore other social economy possibilities. Consequently the Hong Kong government more recently has been receptive of the ideas and is now willing to provide some support for these activities.

The social service sector in Hong Kong organised a sector wide campaign to advocate for a Universal Pension scheme as the basic income for Older Persons. Working at the community level they engaged people of all ages to advocate for the universal pension and at the institutional level they lobbied stakeholders and policy makers. Although the government did not agree to a universal pension at this time, a strong social movement was created and the sector will continue to advocate for a pension as well as other measures of reform for a better retirement protection system.

Promoting wellbeing through sustainable human relationships has included an Elder Service Programme Plan and promoting the use of technology referred to as 'Gerontechnology'. Together with non-government organisations, the government's 'Elderly Commission' has completed developing the Programme plan which seeks to project the needs of the

older people in Hong Kong and plan service provision to meet their needs. The Plan is regarded as the first long term plan since the welfare planning exercised in the 1990's. Although there remains room for further improvements, it does provide some directions and projections for long term service developments for the aging society.

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service engaged the whole social service sector, government and other stakeholders to stage the first 'Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit' in Hong Kong. This massive event saw 43,000 community members engaged to understand how latest technologies could be utilised to promote the wellbeing of older persons.

The work of social workers in Hong Kong seeking reform of the "Lump Sum Grant" which is the major welfare financing system implemented in 2000, is an example of promoting an appropriate environment for social work practice, the development of social services and social work education. Whilst the implementation of the Lump Sum Grant has enriched the sector over the intervening years, it has also created many problems which have negatively affected the practice environment in Hong Kong. After years of lobbying the government is now willing to consider reform. Lead social work stakeholders will launch a sector-wide consultation to solicit opinions from service users, front line workers and agencies to identify how the system can be reformed. Work has also focussed on increasing the social work sector capacity in research and advocacy. Many social workers are now paying more attention to research and advocacy as part of their practice. In all of these ways the social welfare sector and social work practitioners in Hong Kong are working to promote community sustainability.

India

India presented on some of the social work interventions to influence communities and local governments on Environmental Sustainability. Problems faced in India include the scarcity of water, the depletion of trees resulting in desertification, land degradation and raised temperatures and traffic congestion on urban roads. These issues impact on both urban and rural settings and affect agriculture, domestic life and industry. Social workers have an important role in protecting the planet and have formed partnerships with various groups and individuals to raise awareness and engage in social action for environmental sustainability and social equity. India noted that almost all 17 of the United Nations Sustainable

Development Goals require social work interventions but noted some specific social work attention to Goal 6 'Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all' and Goal 15 'Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss'.

Through the extension of agriculture, mega projects, industries, urbanisation, mining and waste mismanagement, water bodies are disappearing and this combined with erratic rainfall leads to water scarcity, poor sanitary practices and increased pressure on urban areas. A massive 54% of India faces High to Extremely High water stress resulting in water being a State subject and causing several inter-state frictions on water sharing. Multiple initiatives to respond to this crisis have been developed and implemented by government and non-government organisations in India. Social workers have raised awareness and linked with government and non-government agencies, schools and industries to engage in the work required.

Some specific social work led examples include 'Green for Breath' which involved educating and involving youth in water and environmental conservation and tree planting (more than 10,000 saplings over 2 years) as well as a march to demand eucalyptus free forests. 'Kin of Mother Earth' involved social workers leading a cultural revolution, working with schools, communities and organisations as well as field interventions for water conservation and the environment through street plays, singing and promoting attitudinal change towards water, trees, waste management and the protection of natural resources; and being involved in the social movement for the revival of the River Arkavathi.

As a result of the social work interventions, community led transformations are progressing - stakeholders have been made aware of and empowered to own the problem, programmes to re-afforest government lands have been supported and the work to rejuvenate the river Arkavathi at its source has been undertaken. Using social work methods, stakeholders have been involved to enable optimal solutions and rural youth and the wider community have participated in identifying and resolving the problems. It is planned to document the experiences and seek to replicate the models in other communities.

Iran

Two projects social workers in Iran are involved in that relate to community and environmental sustainability are what is known as the 'Community Stations' and 'Social Emergency' programme. The development of inefficient urban neighbourhoods as informal settlements on the fringes of large cities has resulted in more than 19 million people living in such settlements. Without legal approvals for construction, governments have not offered health, social or other support services to the inhabitants many of whom have no official identity, are seasonal workers and / or are of differing cultural identities. Since 2000, social workers, using a community social work approach have developed 'Community Stations' where needs and priorities are determined and interventions undertaken. This social work has included providing literacy education, vocational training, community based poverty alleviation, women's self-help groups, therapy and other self-help groups such as addiction reduction.

Facilitating people to access the social, health and / or education services they need and supporting them to form various neighbourhood support groups has led to increased levels of education, social solidarity and greater advocacy for the human rights of these citizens. It has also helped to overcome the stigmatization of people living in these settlements and a greater integration with the rest of the city. Further social work research to continue to improve the services for those accessing Community Stations is planned.

Social Emergency programmes have developed out of concerns for the increasing presence of social problems such as marriage and family breakdown, abuse of women and children, child labour, homelessness, family violence, those stigmatised by gender diversity, runaway children, suicide and other crises. In the past the most usual way of dealing with such problems has been through the judicial system and law enforcement processes. In 1999 the Social Emergency programme was founded by Seyed Hasan Mousavi Chalak, the head of the Iran Association of Social Workers with the aims of identifying common social problems; replacing judicial and law enforcement interventions with social work interventions; offering timely social work services and working towards crime prevention. The programme was designed to provide public access to professional and timely social work services through establishing a 'Hotline' of "123" one-

two-three; Community Stations; individual, family and community crisis intervention centres and mobile social emergency services.

As a result of the successes of these programmes, Social Emergency programmes are now a major social service in Iran, the role of social work has been accepted and included in social policy and national regulations, a Bachelor of social emergency social work has been established and Social emergency programmes have been established in all cities in Iran with a population of more than 50,000 people.

Japan

The presentation from Japan shared their social work experiences following the Great East Japan earthquake of 2011 focussing on the support provided by social workers for victims of the tsunami. Since the devastating earthquake huge clean-up and redevelopment work has been completed with one of the most affected cities, Ishinomaki being rebuilt and revitalised such that in 2017 a summer festival and cycle 'Tour de Tohuku' attracted many tourists.

The work of social workers has included supporting those that required temporary accommodation – many being elderly and those described as living in a state of 'self-neglect' including those experiencing mild - moderate mental health problems and / or social isolation and those with limited social skills. If such people do not accept the support provided by the local government or community organisations, they will be referred to a social worker who will provide outreach services. Their work focusses on establishing reliable relationships not only with the social worker but also building their links into the community to strengthen their connectedness and integration into the community in which they live. Through this the person's isolation and dependence can be transformed into their engaging with others and developing a greater sense of wellbeing. This in turn enables them to lead a productive and independent life and contribute to building the sustainability of these communities.

Korea

The speaker from Korea provided two examples on this topic – the first being strengthening community sustainability through the recent development of making community based service delivery more accessible and effective. This has included moving public community centres away from administrative and civil affairs centres to neighbourhood community welfare services. Local residents offer practical informal aids especially to

high-risk households and contribute to building local community support networks. The City of Seoul together with district governments and non-profit social service providers have launched joint projects that encourage resident participation through volunteering services and organising community activities.

The project's main goal is to create neighbourhood ecosystems led by local residents who are the most knowledgeable about their area and enable them to resolve their own issues. The "Small Community-Centred Welfare Ecosystem Construction Project" aims to identify local community leaders, connect residents with shared interests, develop small neighbourhood networks and develop service delivery policies according to residents' initiatives. To enable the community centre to become the hub of its neighbourhood, community centre buildings have been specially designed jointly with the City's architects and local residents and are now convenient resident-led communal spaces. Additionally a human network project has enabled any resident to share their academic / work related / emotional skills in self-help volunteering activities.

The second topic from Korea is their 'Green Space Project' jointly undertaken by the Korean Association of Social Workers, the Korea Forest Service and the Lottery Fund. Creating green spaces within welfare services was expected to improve the emotional stability and physical welfare of both service users and employees. In addition it has also had a positive effect in reducing the prejudice of neighbouring residents about welfare facilities and through creating neighbourhood forests it has also provided a better living environment for the whole community. Green spaces were customised to the needs of each welfare service and education on the utilisation and management of the green spaces was also provided. Supporting various community activities to utilise the green spaces has enabled positive interactions between service users and local residents. This work has built both community and environmental sustainability in new ways.

Macau, China

The presentation from Macau, China spoke of the sustainability of the profession and changing the social work environment for a better and more sustainable living environment through their journey to become registered. The profession of social work in Macau started 40 years ago

and there are fewer than 1000 social workers with one third in public service and two thirds working in non-governmental organisations.

In 2012 the government began drafting the 'Draft Law on Social Worker Accreditation/Registration System' and the process of public consultation was commenced. The overall goals of the legislation are the accreditation of social workers; promoting professionalism; enhancing professional development and protecting the rights of service recipients. Social workers would need to achieve their social work qualification and then become registered. The Professional Licensing Committee is made up of the President of the newly established Professional Council for Social Workers, five government appointees (three with a social work background) and five non-government appointees. The responsibilities of this committee are to oversee the screening of applications, conduct professional examinations, investigate malpractice of social workers, enhance and ensure compliance with the code of practice and promote professional development. It is anticipated that the establishment of the registration system will be completed by 2019.

Malaysia

Malaya has a population of about 30 million people made up of many different ethnic groups – Malay (50.4%), Chinese (24%), Indigenous (11%), Indian (8%) with the remaining from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Most of the population is young and very productive currently but by 2030 it is estimated that 15% of Malaysians will be over 65 years of age. Like other developing countries, Malaysia faces conflict between economic growth and the conservation of the environment.

Malaysia has been active in international sustainability activities and within the 'Malaysia Vision 2020' goals, the concept of sustainable development is embedded in their policies, vision, mission and plans. However there are pressures such as pollution, land and wetland degradation, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and depletion of natural resources which threaten future sustainability. Some of the causes of the problem of environmental sustainability include lack of public awareness, lack of community organisations in planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation processes, and the lack of strong institutional frameworks to support co-ordination and implementation responsibilities.

To work towards greater environmental sustainability most universities engage in projects related to community and environmental sustainability

including providing community services and facilities on site. Some universities are equipped with shops and / or linked to shopping malls that can be reached quickly and safely by cycling. Many social work programmes offer subjects related to community and environmental sustainability to enhance awareness, more research is being conducted on this subject and social work institutions at the higher learning institutions provide placements for students to work with indigenous communities. The Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW) has joint projects with corporate bodies to assist Indigenous communities on issues related to community and environmental sustainability. The MASW also conducts ongoing workshops on disaster management, community engagement and organisation pertaining to environmental sustainability.

Whilst the impact of these interventions is long term, social work practitioners and educators continue to play their roles towards enhancing community and environmental sustainability in Malaysia.

Nepal

In June 2017, the Nepal Social Work Symposium was held at the Thames International College, Nepal based on the global agenda theme *"Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability.* The delegates included social work educators, practitioners, students and policy makers. The main objective of the symposium was to provide a platform for people to work towards creating a better community, a better nation, and finally, a better world. On the first day, speakers at the symposium covered topics including the Himalayan Climate Change programme; the role of Renewable Energy in the Sustainable Development of Nepal and solutions for Dhulomandu (the term used for dusty Kathmandu). There was also a panel discussion on the global agenda theme. The second day the speaker presented on Community engagement for sustainability and included also the linkage with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. A number of organisations were also involved in this event through hosting stalls at this event.

Participants and presenters all valued the opportunity to be involved in this event and the bringing together of diverse groups of people who can work for the cause of promoting communities and environmental sustainability was appreciated.

Social work education in Nepal is relatively new with the first Bachelor of social work programme beginning in 1996 with the second following in

2005. In 2005, As Nepal moved through a peace process following a decade of armed conflict, the curriculum developed to focus on the needs of social work professionals in community development, family, child and women issues. In 2015, Nepal was struck by a mega earthquake, which further shifted the focus of social work academics to include environmental and disaster management issues.

In 2016, Purbanchal University upgraded the three year BSW program to four year with the resultant revision of content for both the BSW and MSW. This provided the opportunity to integrate environment and social work courses in the BSW and MSW curriculum. Now, for the first time in Nepal, the BSW curriculum of Purbanchal University has three credit courses on Social Work in Disaster Management, preparing the social work graduates with standard knowledge, skills and research for prevention, mitigation and response to disaster. The Kadambari Memorial College (KMC) is determined to develop its graduates with the competencies to enable them to play their role in promoting sustainable communities and environmentally sensitive development.

In February, 2018, Kathmandu Metropolitan City, Division of Environment has launched a campaign called Clean City Campaign. Forty social work students of KMC are now involved with Kathmandu Metropolitan as internee and campaigners of the Clean City Campaign. Kathmandu Metropolitan City believes that social work students are the right persons to be involved in this campaign as they will take ownership and also have competency to work toward environmental protection. KMC has taken this as an opportunity for students to strengthen their capacity in working for environmental sustainability through linking stakeholder policy with the practice experience of the programmes and identifying the effectiveness and gaps with this. KMC is also running a programme called "Lets Segregate at Source ", a waste management initiative. It aims to form a club of children who will be the key people to segregate recyclable waste in their home. KMC is collaborating with a social enterprise called DoKo Recycle to buy the recyclables and build a children's "Piggy Bank". Students in their internship are the program coordinators of this project.

In March, KMC partnered with Kathmandu Metropolitan City and Community Police to conduct an awareness and advocacy program. Students showcased the development of infrastructures and deforestation. The slogan of "One person One Floral Pot" was disseminated to encourage urban residents to strive for a 'green' Kathmandu. A painting competition

was held among students of different colleges with winner chosen by public vote of those who were present at this event.

The Kadambari Memorial College, School of Social Work has aligned its curricular and co-curricular activities to Global Agenda of Social Work and Social Development Commitment to Action and also with Sustainable Development Goal no 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities. Through this, they have involved students in activities to promote sustainable communities and protect the environment.

Palestine

Social workers in Palestine work under very difficult circumstances facing multiple challenges in a complex environment. The political and social situations including the continuing aggression on the Gaza Strip and the repercussions of that war on all aspects, particularly the psychological and social aspects of Palestinian society are very challenging. In such an environment social workers work to meet people's basic needs whilst also advocating through laws and human rights treaties to achieve social justice. Social workers in Palestine and across the Asia Pacific region through many IFSW statements continue to raise global awareness of these challenges. The torture and death of thousands of innocent people as well as the displacement and poverty of the people continue to be the focus of front line social work and political advocacy.

In Palestine work continues to improve social workers skills which in turn will lead to better social work services. In particular they are working to strengthen social work knowledge and skills to work with Post traumatic stress disorder and other trauma needs in their community. Social workers are also working with children's behavioural problems in Gaza and the West Bank – Jerusalem.

The work to promote justice for all and freedom from oppression continues in Palestine as part of seeking to secure community and environmental sustainability.

Philippines

The focus of the presentation from the Philippines was the threat Poverty poses to community and environmental sustainability. Intergenerational poverty, armed conflicts, tribal disputes, drug problems and the relentless occurrence of natural disasters continue to provide significant challenges to the community and the work of social workers. Lack of employment

opportunities, low educational attainment of adults, inaccessibility of health and school facilities, malnutrition in under 5 year olds, no access to safe drinking water, unsanitary toilets, inadequate garbage disposal, poor home construction, gender disparity and lack of awareness of human rights are all targets of government initiatives to combat poverty.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development is one of the government's social welfare institutions and has implemented 3 core poverty reduction programmes. These include an anti-poverty programme that focuses on education, health and human capital investments known as 'Conditional Cash Transfer'. A monthly family development session strengthens the capacity of family members and helps them to become more socially aware and involved in community development. The session covers topics such as empowering women and gender equality, caring for elderly and persons with a disability, knowledge and respect for Indigenous peoples, disaster mitigation and early childhood care. The 'Sustainable Livelihood Programme' aims to facilitate the economic livelihood of families. Through providing technical – vocational skills training, financial assistance to secure pre-employment opportunities, referrals to employment and seed funding for beginning business enterprises, this programme helps poor families to become technically equipped with employable skills. The 'Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services' is another of the programmes to provide school and health facilities, water and safe walkways. The programme also aims to improve the responsiveness of local communities to community needs and encourage local people to become engaged in community development activities.

The effective delivery of these services are through the collective effort between social work service providers and service users. Through this convergence there is excellent collaboration and the community has intensified its shared work for a common goal – to eradicate poverty, promote social justice, celebrate diversity and stimulate social cohesion.

Sri Lanka

Social workers in Sri Lanka face a number of community and environmental sustainability issues. These include the pollution of waterways, ocean and the air; conflicts and war; refugees; family violence and poverty with about 5% of children in Sri Lanka being described as 'underprivileged'. Other issues impacting on children and families include

child labour, lack of support with urbanisation of their parents and poor nutrition. In addition cybercrime targeting under 18 year olds, limited employment, low income and poor access to good educational opportunities, as well as the impact of communicable diseases across the population. The widespread violence and abuse of children including the use of corporal punishment within schools, child care institutions and juvenile detention centres has also been recognised and alternative non-violent forms of discipline are now being promoted. There are geographical inequities regarding access to services and continued work is necessary to further develop family protection systems for vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

The Tsunami of December 2004 impacted significantly on children with many children dying or losing one or both parents. Although there was public pressure to develop institutions for the Tsunami affected children, government policy instead promoted legal placements with extended family wherever possible and foster care within a family environment in other situations in order to better support these children to have their individual needs met.

Sri Lanka records one of the highest suicide rates in the world – especially of young males aged between 16 and 29 years. This has led to the government appointing a Presidential task force to seek ways of reducing the suicide rate. It is reported that depression and alcohol abuse are two of the main factors in the high suicide rate. In addition to reducing access to the means of suicide – e.g. removal of firearms and limiting access to some medications – social workers are also providing education on the dangers of smoking, alcohol and other substance abuse and promoting awareness for parents, teachers and others in the community. Social workers follow up those who have attempted suicide to develop community supports for these people and they are also involved in developing policies aimed at harm reduction with alcohol and other substances.

To help address the many social issues, work continues to collect data and increase awareness about the size and nature of the problems. Work has also been undertaken to improve community participation through building relationships with communities to identify needs and priorities. Social workers, together with stakeholders, are working together to develop community organisations in response to the needs. Social workers

have accessed resources such as the 'United Nations International Children's Fund' to improve maternal and child health and mortality.

Ensuring the collection of accurate data, accessing international support, providing psycho-education and social work services and providing opportunities for people to participate in the development of their own solutions are some of the strategies social workers in Sri Lanka are using to address social problems and build community sustainability.

Vietnam

The presentation from Vietnam focussed on the impact of the drought in Ninh Thuan which has now developed into the most intense drought in this province for the past 11 years. Droughts occur widely in Vietnam and cause major consequential damage including the lack of running water for people and animals, inability to cultivate crops, forest fires, saline infiltration, land desertification and loss of agriculture, poor water and sanitation in schools and children quitting school – especially older youth as they seek employment opportunities to support their families.

In turn the lack of ability to produce rice as a staple crop and the increase in health problems such as skin disease, fever and diarrhoea especially impact on children.

Families living in these conditions face stress as the adults struggle to provide the basics for their families. There has been instances of domestic violence including against children when the adult has been drinking alcohol and child sexual assaults. Children and young people are often forced to leave their education in order to supplement the family income and the exploitation of children, children begging and child labour is a major concern.

In response to these there are many charitable groups that provide clean water to those in the drought zones and organisations have been providing support to families experiencing difficulties. Child protection workers encourage the families to allow their children to return to school. Efforts continue to be needed to secure safe water, develop employment opportunities for the adults and strengthen the child protection and education systems to enable children and young people to remain in school.

Conclusion

The workshop convened at the joint IFSW Asia Pacific and APASWE regional Conference in Shenzhen, China provided a great opportunity for those present to share the issues, challenges and social work solutions at micro, meso and macro levels related to this global agenda theme across our region. The great diversity of our member countries was reflected in the rich array of presentations and covered examples ranging from how social work education programmes were embracing the need to include environmental sustainability in their courses, how practitioners were working in ways to build community and environmental sustainability and how some countries faced pressures, practices and policies threatening the sustainability of the social work profession itself. Perspectives from educators, practitioners and social service providers shared how social workers have worked together and separately to promote community and environmental sustainability across our region. We can each learn much from each other and opportunities such as this serve to both enhance our regional relationships and understandings as well as build stronger professional connections across the globe.

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Chapter 4

Europe: Promoting Community & Environmental Sustainability

Lola Casal-Sanchez and Thea Meinema

Contents

Introduction

This is the European contribution to the third phase of the Global Agenda Observatory which was established by IASSW, ICSW and IFSW in 2010. The Global Agenda Observatory consists of regional networks or consortia composed of institutions of higher education and professional practice-based organisations that jointly research, analyse, synthesise and report on Agenda activities. The European report is the responsibility of ENSACT, the European Network for Social Action.

This bi-annual report of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development aims to be used as a policy and practice guidance tool – steering social work and social development professions forward and making significant contributions to governments and other international bodies.

The report includes European practical examples that demonstrate the contribution of social work to sustainable development and sustainable communities. The examples have been provided by social work practitioners, educators, policy makers and researchers from social work organisations and social development institutions in Europe. The contributions submitted are related to sustainable communities and economic development in the traditional core areas of social work, but also in other social professions and social actions. In addition, there are several examples concerning environmental issues and social work and examples about using nature as a resource in social work interventions for human wellbeing.

The report has been written by Lola Casal-Sanchez and Thea Meinema at the request of ENSACT. ENSACT, the European Network for Social Action, hosts the European Observatory of the Global Agenda on Social Work and Social Development which aims at monitoring, reporting and disseminating the contributions of social work and social development in building a 'society for all' in which every individual has an active role to play within a fair and just world.

Conceptualisation

The ENSACT partners have invited several experts in the field of sustainability to contribute to the conceptualisation of the theme of promoting sustainable communities and sustainable development.

Aila-Leena Matthies is Professor of Social Work at the University of Jyväskylä, Kokkola University Consortium. She has been publishing about

the ecosocial perspective of social work in Finnish, German and English since the late 1980s. **Kati Närhi** is Professor of Social Work in the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Her main research interests are ecosocial approach in social work, ecosocial transition, community social work, structural social work, participation and user involvement. Together they wrote an article outlining what is social work promoting sustainable communities and sustainable development. They concluded that 'Social work practices that consider environmental and sustainability issues are improving the living environment, infrastructure and facilities as well as ensuring greater participation and influence of people. It can also promote environmental justice, increase awareness of environmental issues and intervene in environmental crises by assessing the impacts of these, negotiating what issues to address and gathering resources with partners in order to address these issues.' The full text of their article can be found on the ENSACT website[5].

Jef Peeters is a Research Fellow at the University of Leuven in Belgium, as well as a member of the Faculty of Social Sciences research group Social Policy & Social Work, with a focus on 'social work and sustainable development'. He works within an international network on 'ecosocial transformation of society'. In his article he states that 'The necessary connection of the various dimensions of sustainability requires an overarching story, a vision of a cultural shift that sets out the expectations and aspirations again, in short a paradigm shift. We need a worldview that redefines the relationships of humans among themselves and with the world. That has many aspects, but the core includes at least the following two elements: connectedness and complexity. As such, it is an 'ecological' – possibly 'social-ecological' – worldview. For practice, that means not just the recognition of mutual dependence, but a positive vision on the interaction with others and with the world as the source of a meaningful life and living together. In addition, in the place of competition, cooperation and sharing come into sight as core elements of a new practice, today recognizable in bottom-up forms of sharing economy, new cooperatives and commons.' The full text of his article can be found on the ENSACT website[6].

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[5] http://ensact.com/node/7#overlay-context=node/6

[6] http://ensact.com/node/8

Both papers were published on the ENSACT website prior to the call for contributions.

Call for Contributions

For this third regional report, ENSACT launched a call for good practices and examples from European social work and social development professions in October 2017. The deadline for submission of contributions was 31 January 2018. At this time 15 contributions had been received from 13 European countries. In addition several European conferences took place in which the theme was also discussed.
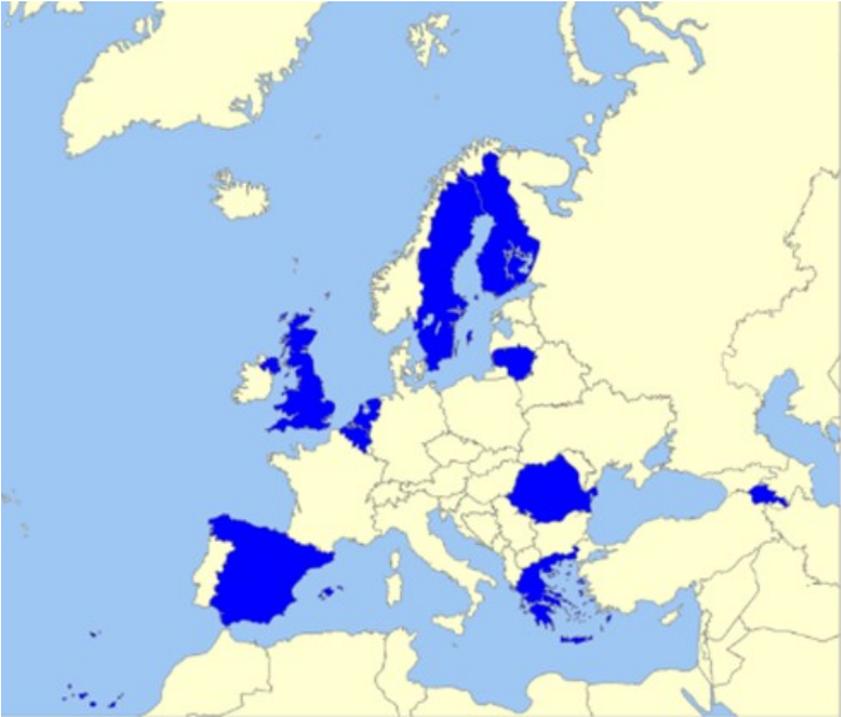
Figure 4.1 Countries which made a submission

Please see Annex 2 for the list of country contributions

The contributions are not representative of the state of the art in Europe with regard to sustainable communities and sustainable development. They are used to highlight and illustrate relevant developments.

Sustainable Development

In 2010, during the Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Hong Kong, the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) agreed on The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development, followed by a joint Commitment to Action on 2012. Four key themes were proposed to guide social work and social development:

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

These four interlinked goals provided social workers with a framework for approaching the new global context of the 21st century. Social work practitioners need to realise the challenges and opportunities of the new global context and identify their role in promoting environmental and social sustainability. To achieve this, social workers need to understand the relationship that exists between individuals, families and communities and their physical and social systems (Dominelli 2012).

Social interventions require a more inclusive and holistic framework of rights, according to the principles of social work, social justice, dignity, diversity and sustainability. It also implies considering the ethical and moral aspects of sustainability, as Robert Lundahl states: 'Nothing is sustainable if humans are not sustainable with each other' (Lundahl 2015). Environmental and social sustainability should be understood as ethical values under such a rights-based framework, and for social workers to be committed to ethical values of participation, self-determination, identifying and developing strengths and treating each person as a whole, requires social actions focused on outcomes that involve both social and environmental sustainability (Casal-Sanchez 2017).

During the last 20 years social workers have discussed their role in sustainable development and how to impact on the wellbeing of individuals, groups and families, by establishing an ecological framework that links individuals to sociocultural environment and individuals to natural environment.

The three pillars of sustainability were established in 1987 in the Brundtland Report 'Our Common Future', which includes three interrelated and interdependent aspects of sustainability (Brundtland & Khalid 1987):

- **Ecological sustainability**, environmental resources can continue indefinitely
- **Social sustainability**, social systems are able meet the social needs of individuals, groups, communities now and in the future
- **Economic sustainability** relates to the capacity of economic systems to achieve a defined level of economic production indefinitely.

These three pillars share two core components that are relevant for social work and related areas.

- The intergenerational principle
  Social work interventions aim to protect and guarantee the needs of the present without compromising the resources and ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Systems in balance
  Sustainable development requires that environmental, social and economic development should be in balance with each other.

Social Development

Sustainable development has been promoted by international agencies such as the United Nations or the European Union. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its Social Development Goals (SDGs) represent a change of paradigm of the international policies on development cooperation to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development globally. It balances the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The Agenda 2030 is an opportunity for European social workers to redefine their role as it focuses on human rights, environment and development and brings an interconnected understanding of human needs and concerns that are economic, social and environmental (Jayasooria 2016). Social workers must address interdependencies between people, their physical, social, political, economic and cultural environments, as part of a holistic response locally and globally (Dominelli 2017 Reykjavik).

At European level, the European Commission has established several key actions and governance elements to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into EU policies and initiatives, with sustainable development as an essential guiding principle for all its policies. The main policy has been the proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) by the Council of the EU, the European Parliament and the European Committee of Social Rights at the Gothenburg Social Summit in November 2017. The EPSR is an instrument that aims to deliver new and more effective rights for citizens and 'to contribute to social progress by supporting fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems' (European Commission 2018). The EPSR sets out 20 principles and rights directly related to the United Nation's SDGs. These principles are divided into three categories:

- Equal opportunities and access to the labour market
- Fair working conditions
- Social protection and inclusion

The most recent step taken by the European Commission (March 2018) to further deliver on the European Pillar of Social Rights has been the proposal for a European Labour Authority to ensure access to social protection for all workers and self-employed. IFSW Europe, in its statement on World Social Work Day 2018 '*Social workers for transformational and sustainable social protection in Europe*' (IFSW Europe 2018) says that 'Building social protection systems that meet the real needs of all people and the realisation of all people's social rights requires the active engagement of social workers' and calls on the European Parliament and the European Council to strengthen the Pillar in the following ways:

- Jobs are not enough.
- Investment in social services is the foundation for sustainable economic development.
- Social Workers' involvement is a condition for sustainable social protection in Europe.

In 2017, **IFSW Europe** launched the project *Social Workers for Transformational and Sustainable Social Protection in Europe* which highlights the social work contribution to a transformational and sustainable social protection in Europe. The goal of the project is to build capacity of the members of IFSW Europe to influence the development and

implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the interest of supporting service users and development of social work services as well as to cover the needs of the social work professionals for proper tools and resources to assist people in need (IFSW Europe 2017).

Primarily, the principles of the EPSR relate to the Euro zone but they may be applicable to all EU Member States wishing to be part of it. The EU is actually working with external partners to launch a multi-stakeholder Platform with a role in the follow-up and exchange of best practices on SDG implementation across sectors, at Member State and EU level.

 The 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs are universal and apply to all countries at all stages of development, based on national ownership and shared responsibility. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are key to the implementation of SDGs. This approach was also pointed out in the conclusions of International Conference 'Human Well-Being, Social Cohesion and Sustainable Development: The Quest for the Responses to Contemporary Challenges', organized by the **International Council of Social Welfare – Europe** in Moscow in May 2017:

- Development of joint international mechanisms of informational, organizational support for ensuring gender equality, promotion of widespread and equal participation of women and men, as well as persons with disabilities, in the activities in labour market.
- Assistance as to formation of international partnership and strengthening the potential opportunities in the sphere of monitoring and managing the implementation of sustainable development issues and development of social protection.

The **Finnish Federation for Social Affairs and Health** submitted the report of **Finnish CSO KEPA** that also highlights multi-stakeholder partnerships as essential to effectively implement SDGs. Finland was one of the first countries to develop a national strategy to implement SDGs and one of the first countries to voluntarily report on its progress at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2030 Agenda meeting in July 2016.

The KEPA report examines the implementation of a national plan to address the new goals for sustainable development. The implementation plan is a follow-up system that was published as a Government Report that involved the active participation of representatives of civil society who discussed sustainable development and issued statements to encourage

political decision-makers to commit to promoting sustainable development in Finland and globally.

The report[7] highlights the need to develop indicators to examine the state of the implementation of sustainable development and provides decision-makers with concrete tools that may assist in achieving the goals for sustainable development as well as in elaborating policy recommendations for global policies, national decision-making and work at the level of municipalities and regions.

The recent economic and environmental crisis in Europe, together with the austerity measures that governments have applied, have directly impacted on social service provision. However, social workers have seen this difficult situation as an occasion to move towards change in terms of re-thinking the role of social services, and "assist the transformation of society, through engaging communities in development and the realisation of all human rights. Beyond providing minimal cash hand-outs and access to limited health services, Social Protection Systems should support all peoples and build community capacity and democracy" (IFSW 2016).

Social workers can relate to this Agenda 2030 at national, regional and global levels. The SDGs bring an interconnected understanding of human needs and concerns that are economic, social and environmental. "In this light, the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda could be seen as a new window of opportunity for the proponents of the Social Protection Floor Initiative, including ICSW, to advocate and push for the reinforcement of social protection policies on the ground in the context of sustainable development." (ICSW 2017).

Over several decades, European governments have prioritized economic interests and economic growth self-evidently, and regardless of the fatal consequences of this one-sided development for the global and local environment and the social wellbeing of humans (Matthies and Närhi 2017).

This method of reducing public expenditure combined with tax reduction for the wealthy reduces state income and fails to achieve balanced economies. This results in the widening of the gap in inequality and increases poverty. Social workers throughout the world witness which

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7   https://www.kepa.fi/sites/kepa.fi/tiedostot/julkaisut/KEPA_Finland-and-the-2030Agenda_FINAL.pdf

policies support people's wellbeing and healthy economic development; they also see which policies undermine social structures and fail people economically and socially (Social Work and Health Inequalities Network 2018).

National and regional conferences are critical for sharing information and learning from the realities of social workers and people that use social work services from across the world. The conferences are also an opportunity to bring together the experiences, analysis and strategic focus of the profession (Truell 2017).

IFSW Europe, together with the **Icelandic Association of Social Work**, held its biennial regional conference in Iceland in May 2017 with the theme: Marginalization and Social Work in Changing Society. More than 550 social workers and people that use social work services from across the world attended the conference to share ideas and participate in discussions that enable the profession to meet the challenges of global social problems that affect all countries. Frequent comments from both speakers and participants were to reinforce and further build the political identity of the social work profession as it is ideally placed to contribute to social policy solutions.

María Rúnarsdóttir, the conference organiser said: 'It's really important for social workers to get governments' attention so that the welfare policies can be proactive rather than reactive. We need to be thinking 20 years ahead when the aim is to build a sustainable society'.

The **Spanish General Council of Social Work** organized its 13th National Conference and Ibero-American Conference with the slogan 'Building Sustainable Communities'. The theme of the Conference 'directly approached the third strategy of the Global Agenda and stressed the need to widen the concept of sustainability to the whole community. During the whole event, presenters demonstrated that sustainability is no longer a question of defining sustainable resources or benefits, but the need of the communities to assume the leading role in this definition. More than 400 documents were received from social services users who answered the question: how can social workers contribute to the achievement of the SDGs?'

As part of the conference, the Spanish General Council of Social Work joined the regional campaign "worthy train" to denounce the lack of transport in the region. Transport is crucial to achieving sustainable

economic development as well as to achieving almost all the SDGs. 1,300 professionals participated in the conference which ended with a statement[8] that stressed the active role of social work professionals to implement and monitor SDGs at regional, national and global levels.

International Council of Social Welfare – Europe held its International Conference '*Human Well-Being, Social Cohesion and Sustainable Development: The Quest for the Responses to Contemporary Challenges*', in Moscow on May 18-19th 2017. The co-organizers of the event were the Moscow City Government, the Moscow Department of Labour and the Social Protection of the Population, the Moscow Institute for the Additional Professional Education of Workers for Social Services (IAPE of WSS) and the International School of Social Work. Around 250 participants from 15 countries of Europe and Asia and more than 12 regions of the Russian Federation took part in the event.

The conference became a platform for sharing experience, comparing approaches to tackling the challenges of society on regional, national and international levels. The results of the conference allow comparison of best practices in solving social protection tasks and evaluation of the importance of their wide dissemination with due regard to national peculiarities.

The conference participants expressed their commitment to the activities aimed to respond to the goals of sustainable development, such as:

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

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[8] http://www.congresotrabajosocial.es/el_congreso_en_los_medios

- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Social Work and Social Development Policies

Speakers and participants at the **IFSW European conference** in 2017 emphasized the importance of social workers being politically active, to contribute to welfare policy in their communities. The conference gave participants a chance to discuss how social workers can attribute to achieving the Sustainable Developmental Goals.

Social workers' knowledge and experience are important in social policy making because social workers know where social actions are needed the most. Social workers have enormous knowledge concerning vulnerable groups, people and society, systems in society, and how to build networks. Social workers know which economic policies make people and societies. They need to stand together, join hands and stand up for vulnerable groups so that every person has a fair chance and the opportunity to fully realize their potential.

Europe's post-crisis response of fiscal austerity, neoliberal structural reforms and expansionary monetary policies has unambiguously failed. Early in 2017, the **British Association of Social Workers** (BASW) decided to organise a walk to campaign against austerity: '*Boot Out Austerity*'. The walk had echoes of Civil Rights Marches, Gandhi's walk to the sea and in the UK 'The Jarrow March' where the unemployed of the Great Depression of the '30s marched on London.

During their 100 mile walk the walkers stopped off to visit community projects to hear from people first-hand about what austerity meant for them. These conversations were both moving and powerful. The statistics were stark too - over a million people in the UK were now using foodbanks, a population bigger than the UK's second city Birmingham: one million people needing food in a country that is generally reckoned to be the fifth richest in the world. Each evening the walkers met together, to hear from local people, to reflect on the day and to plan how their campaign might develop. As they walked, the walkers engaged with the press and public through Twitter, through interviews and films put up on social media.

During the walk a general election was called. It was decided that BASW would write an election manifesto making a series of calls for action to the incoming government and encouraging BASW members to vote and

advising them on how they should engage with politicians. June 2017 saw a new government and a new coalition - this time between the Conservatives and the Democratic Unionist Party. Austerity continued.

Since June 2017 BASW has become more engaged with being anti-austerity, putting in formal submissions to government, making explicit the link between the impacts of poverty and social work practice, lobbying politicians, holding meetings at the main party-political conferences and currently developing an anti-poverty practice guide.

For BASW in 2018, promoting community and environmental sustainability is about tackling austerity, a set of policies that has exposed the most vulnerable by making their lives, communities and environment increasingly unsustainable. Many social workers feel that austerity has made their job almost impossible.

Social workers must play an active role in shaping new social sustainable protection systems, they must advocate for changes in agency policies or new policies and protest unjust policies that do not respect the requirements for sustainable development.

In this respect, the **Finnish CSO SDG** report also recommends including the assessment of the effects of sustainable development in all political decision-making within Finnish borders, as well as looking at development cooperation and responsibilities outside its borders. The report emphasizes the role of social agents and civil society in the implementation of sustainable development and emphasizes the need to guarantee sufficient opportunities and resources and for participation.

Social Work Interventions During Emergencies
Under current conditions, populations in many regions of the world face challenges in ensuring dignity and equality which are common to all, as well as in the organization of social protection answering the purposes of sustainable development (ICSW Russia Conference).

Social workers have the knowledge and capacity to provide a unique understanding in disaster risk reduction and management, because the impact and effect of crises and disasters are encountered in the daily tasks of social workers as well as in social services. Social work professionals excel not only in alleviating the living conditions of vulnerable people, but also in their capacity to enhance social capital and the resilience of communities and individuals. Social workers act as liaison with rescue

services and the police in rescue and search, emergency communication and referral. In many cases, social workers are already a member of the communities and are well connected with the other local disaster management actors (Rapeli 2017).

During the disaster in 2015 in the dancing club in Bucharest, where 64 people died, the **Social Workers Association in Romania** (ASproAS) coordinated the interventions of social workers who were in the front line in providing the necessary support, integrating non-governmental and governmental resources and making the necessary resources available for those in need. Social workers provided emotional recovery support for victims. During this emergency, social workers played a significant role to ensure that families, friends and acquaintances received the necessary support and were connected to the resources they needed. For two months, social workers provided emergency assistance to families and victims in terms of consultancy and guidance.

This disaster was definitely a time for social workers to demonstrate their skills and knowledge and it challenged them to find the most efficient way to put them in practice. The intervention of social workers in crisis or emergency situations with multiple victims with such gravity was not usual in Romania. However, community members and civil society played an active role during this disaster, especially in identifying and collecting resources.

The Romanian government recognised the value of the support provided by social workers and invited ASproAS to be part of a coordination group developing support provided to victims and families. Based on this recognition, the Department of Emergency Situations acknowledged that the need for a functional social support model in disaster intervention was urgent and persistent and needed a qualitative and fast response from the authorities responsible.

In 2016, ASproAS signed a memorandum of collaboration with DSU (Department for Emergency Situations/Ministry of Interior) and CFCECAS. In 2017, social workers from ASproAS were invited by DSU to take part in the National Conference for Emergency and Special Situations, Search and Rescue. For the first time, social workers were invited to prepare, together with firefighters and emergency doctors, a collaborative approach to disaster relief. This was the start of a new rescue and support team consisting of social workers, doctors and firefighters.

As a result of this development, social workers were invited by the World Health Organization to take part in the development of an Emergency Plan for Risk Communication (ERC). The role of social workers was clearly recognized in the activities included in the ERC. Another result of the action is that the Department of Emergency Response has submitted a project to the EU for financial support, based on a concept developed by ASproAS.

The **Spanish General Council of Social Work** have implemented a strategy to develop capacity building among social workers and to create voluntary bodies of social work professionals to act in large emergencies and provide a structural response that helps the victims to recover from circumstances that provoke stress and breakdown in families and in social systems.

Some of the activities developed involved training, launching several publications and participating in national drills. Since this strategy started, more than 1000 social workers have been trained in disasters and emergencies interventions and every year social workers participate in the national drill with the Military Emergency Unit as member of the psychosocial care emergency team.

Three regional Spanish Associations of Social Work (under the General Council of Social Work scheme), have signed official agreements with regional governments and have already intervened during emergency disasters such as the terrorist attacks of Madrid in 2004, and during the plane crash of German Wings in Barcelona. After the earthquake of 2007, the Spanish Council also established an international cooperation with the Chilean Association of Social Work in 2007 and financed seminars on social work and disasters.

Austerity Measures
In Greece, during the economic crisis and during the years of austerity measures that caused serious damage to society, some of the austerity measures resulted in cuts in pension and salaries, restrictions in welfare and health provision and the violation of human rights. Nevertheless, in confronting this, the Greek people developed hundreds of grassroots welfare structures, named the 'solidarity movement (Teloni 2017).

Greek Social Work Action Network Patras actively participated in the struggles of the people in the era of crisis, and also was directly connected with the rising movements that aimed to defend and promote the human rights of the population in Greece (both Greeks and immigrants/refugees)

through new practices of social work based on radical and critical approaches. The alliance with both the users and the social movements were crucial factors for achieving equal rights, mostly through grassroots welfare initiatives. The rise of critical consciousness, community development and community action, but also radical and critical social work, was the goal of these initiatives.

For more than three years the Greek SWAN (Social Work Action Network) has been active in Lefka, one of the poorest areas in the city of Patras, with high poverty and unemployment rates. Based on the principles of community action and radical social work, the purpose was to empower the local populations. There were some solid results such as the restoration of the water supply in the houses, building a playground for children, but also better general housing conditions.

Until 2015, the Greek SWAN was involved in the Solidarity Clinic of Patras, a social action ran by health professionals and users providing primary health care for free, that demanded public health-care provision. Thanks to their intervention, the need for health care provision was answered by the public Health System in 2015 and consequently the Solidarity Clinics closed. Over the years, Greek SWAN supported people in poverty, promoted their social rights, ran a support group for women, facilitated the access of the users to health and education and also intervened at policy level through campaigns, demonstrations, interventions in local authorities and so on.

The Greek SWAN cooperates with several anti-racist organisations in Patras and Athens, and participates in several actions such as: solidarity actions for refugees; campaigns against racism and fascism; announcements; participation in anti-racist festivals; demonstrations against fortress Europe and anti-refugees policies. In addition, the social support to a LBGTQI+ group came up after their demand and therefore their involvement in each of the actions was crucial because they acted together.

One of the ENSACT partners, the **Social Work and Health Inequalities Network**, issued the following statement to proclaim their concern with regard to the consequences of austerity measures for social work and sustainable communities:

Unsustainable austerity policies cannot be overrun by social work interventions. For social work to be able to contribute to issues of

sustainability, policies that reinforce inequalities need to be challenged and substituted with increased social spending.

Our network supports the statement against austerity by the International Federation of Social Workers.

Austerity is a flawed economic theory that increases debt burden, unemployment, homelessness, inequality and causes misery upon the lives of citizens. Social workers work every day with the negative realities imposed on people by austerity. We absorb the pressure of the painful and angry reality of the people most affected.

Thus, in line with the IFSW statement against austerity, we call governments across Europe and across the world to re-evaluate the default austerity policy response and increase social spending as we have seen the increase of inequalities. This is the way towards sustainable communities. It is then and only then that the social work profession will be able to contribute effectively towards the goal of sustainability. Because sustainable communities need sustainable policies.

Access to Services and Empowerment of Individuals, Groups and Communities

In *Social Work Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability* (2017) Professor Dorothy N. Gamble states that human behaviour must integrate equality, opportunity and responsibility, if we want to promote wellbeing for current individuals without harming the resources for future generations. Sustainability of human development requires that people have opportunity or the right and ability to access social, economic and environmental resources.

The capacity of social workers to engage with individuals and groups to develop sustainable and strong communities based on their own needs and strengths needs to be promoted (ICSW 2017).

The **Armenian Association of Social Workers** (AASW) conducted a targeted Sub-Grant Programme (SGP) to strengthen the capacities and role of civil society organisations (CSOs) in local development of the social sector in Armenia. The programme was part of the regional project "Social Workers in Collaboration for Social Change in Eastern Neighbourhood Countries" (SWIC). The project strove to contribute to the social well-being of

vulnerable groups, amongst them families and children at risk, in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova.

Civil Society Organizations involved in the programme aimed to build comprehensive community social work capacities by introducing needs-based family support concepts and models. They also aimed to promote CSO's role in social policy making processes at local, regional and/or national levels through increased community participation and inter-agency, inter-disciplinary partnership. In addition, they endeavoured to encourage the formation of CSO networks on family preservation in order to use synergies and stimulate peer-learning, coaching and peer-mentoring, among others, by improving awareness of, or engaging relevant stakeholders in addressing family preservation programmes. They wished to promote a positive image and credibility of the social protection system.

One strategy of sustainable social, economic and environmental development relates to institution building, especially such institutions that serve the social and economic needs of a community. When social work practitioners focus on programmes that address the opportunities and capabilities of groups at local level rather than possibilities of local expansion, individuals at all levels will experience improved wellbeing. In the case of the Armenian Association, the new social, economic and environmental needs required new institutions and structures that provide more effective interventions. They listed the following goals for new and existing civil society organisations:

- Local CSOs' role in policy-making processes and policy dialogue, and as watchdog and monitoring players is strengthened;
- CSOs have increased capacity and resources to support the production of evidence on key issues on family strengthening policy and service delivery issues on local, regional and/or national level and are able to draft recommendations based on findings;
- Community-based family support concepts and models are introduced/adapted and piloted;
- CSO networks that facilitate co-ordination and lobbying policy on family strengthening policy processes are created and/or reinforced on local, regional and/or national level, and active.

Several good practice examples focus on empowerment of citizens.

PowerUs is an international network of teachers and researchers from schools of social work and representatives from service users' organisations. They state that social work has long neglected the experience of people as an important source of knowledge. This creates gaps between social workers and people in need of social work support. The gaps are evident and hinder people to get the help they need in order to recover. PowerUs created the photo exhibition *Experiences Matter* to show how the experiences of people contribute to valuable knowledge in social work education and practice. Service users that are participating in the education of social workers have been photographed and quoted in this exhibition about why they find it meaningful to use their experiences in social work education. The exhibition has been used in the EASSW conference in Paris in 2017 as well as in several other international conferences, to initiate discussions about the role of service users in social work education.

The **Finnish basic income experiment** is being conducted among 2000 persons between ages 25 and 58, who will receive a monthly basic income of 560 Euro for two years. The basic income is money that the recipients will get unconditionally and without means-testing. It is paid to them automatically every month. The participants' employment situation will be monitored during the 2 year period of the experiment. The experiment will produce valuable information on whether a basic income could increase employment rates and simplify the social security system. The monitoring is primarily based on the utilization of registered data. At the end of the experiment, surveys and interviews focusing on more than just the employment effects of the experiment will be carried out. More information about this experiment can be found on the website[9].

The **Northern Ireland West Belfast Partnership Board**, a broad based social partnership with community, statutory, political and business members dedicated to the regeneration of West Belfast, together with ICP west Belfast, ICP Carer and Service User representatives, in partnership with the Department Of Health Coproduction team (DOH) have established a Citizen Hub (CH) translating coproduction into local action. The Hub is using citizens lived and learned experience to shape the policies that affect their lives.

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[9] http://www.kela.fi/web/en/basic-income-experiment-2017-2018

CH membership is drawn from West Belfast residents and those in traditional occupations such as taxi driver, hairdresser and pharmacist. Membership reflects a range of every day and lived experience including of those living with a disability or life limiting condition. The CH members will be trained in a range of methods for identifying the health impacts associated with the introduction of a policy. Central to this will be weaving lived and work experience into the planning process in order to ensure that the maximum health benefit can be extracted from a proposal. If the possibility that a proposal could potentially harm human health exists, this will be communicated to the Coproduction Design Team (CDT).

The intention to subject a proposal to CH scrutiny is triggered by agreement with proposal decision makers, DOH Coproduction team, WBPB health work stream, ICP service user and carer representatives and proposal sponsors. Decision makers will be offered free of charge the opportunity to submit their proposal to Citizen Hub scrutiny as part of coproduction pathway. Working as partners within the Coproduction Design team they will set the area of interest that relates to their proposal that they would like to gain Citizen Hub insight into. WBPB ICP service user and carer representatives will chair and facilitate the Citizen Hub scrutiny process. A Citizen Hub workshop report will be drafted and presented to the wider CDT members.

Coproduction enables us to genuinely create a system which enables people to play an active role and become invested in improving personal and collective health and wellbeing outcomes. In this way citizens ensure that their voices are heard, but also hope to impact on the quality of their lives and their health.

A citizen powered health and social care system will support the building of people's social capital and recognises the infinite talents and resources of people who use public services

Sustainable Social Work Practices with Groups at Risk

Homeless

The **North Ireland Belfast Met College** presented its long-term engagement to highlight the importance of homelessness as a core social work theme, task and concern. They have annually organized the *Homelessness Awareness Panel Event* for a decade already, with 4 overarching assumptions:

- Homelessness is not taken seriously by the social work profession;
- Social work has a lot to offer homelessness;
- The social work, housing / homelessness sector is a competitive rather than cooperative environment;
- Homelessness is not inevitable and can be eradicated, especially for certain 'vulnerable groups'.

Through the tireless efforts of the main organiser, Gerry Skelton, the Homelessness Awareness Panel Events aim:

- To champion the theme of 'Giving homelessness a home' in social work education, training and practice
- To inculcate homelessness as a fundamental concern for social workers
- To challenge and eradicate the taboo of homelessness
- To provoke social work, housing and homeless organisations, agencies, groups and practitioners to cooperate in a meaningful and purposeful manner
- To highlight, promote and endorse good practice examples
- To touch the heads, hearts and spirits of the invited audience and encourage them to tackle homelessness
- To provide a platform for those who have been or remain homeless: and have their voice meaningfully heard and validated
- To challenge service users to become more active in assuming responsibility to help themselves (and others) towards a better way
- To remind us all that we must 'Never lose the Care in the Caring services'

It has resulted in involvement of students, social work and other professionals, and many homeless service users. Homelessness in social work has been placed back on the social work agenda, with an attendant

raising of its profile to such an extent that, in 2013, Gerry Skelton was shortlisted for a NI social work award in recognition of his work promoting the theme of homelessness in social work. The Homeless Awareness Panel has moved on to draw a mixed audience each year, from the broad social care / work professions, alongside health, media, and students from various disciplines.

Children and Families

The systems of social protection, which are an important part of comprehensive strategies of economic and social development, play a key role in ensuring activities of modern societies. An IFSW Europe statement on WSWD 2018, states that 'Strengthening peoples' resilience and enhancing their capability to react to risks of life require sustainable and transformative social protection' (IFSW Europe 2018).

Social workers can work with people to promote social sustainability by helping to assess the benefits and the options available for local communities to develop their own sustainable social change, and not rely too heavily on unsustainable bureaucracies of social welfare systems.

An essential component of the social work role is to promote the participation of individuals, families and communities in the development of solutions and building up solidarity in communities. Rather than the temporal aspect of social resources which rely on fluctuating financial availability, sustainable communities guarantee that the use of the resources can meet the need of the current residents and make social and economic adjustments to preserve the social and environmental capacity and guarantee that there will be resources available for future generations.

The **Lithuanian Children's Fund** has been working with children and families with social exclusion for almost 30 years and has supported the emergence of alternative forms of childcare for institutional care in Lithuania. They have partnered with Dutch organization Aflatoun and have worked together with 12 municipalities and established 14 family child care homes (families) and contributed to the successful integration of families and children from social exclusion into society, including the labour market. Social workers worked with children and youth and provide them with tools and knowledge on how to become socially and economically empowered. Children are inspired to discover their talents and stand up for their rights, enabling them to make a positive change to their lives.

Prof Harriet Rabb, social worker in Finland, stated that promoting children's rights is a responsibility of every social worker (Rabb 2017), and a principle of intergenerational work. Children are the most vulnerable group affected by climate change and a guaranteed balance and sustainable environments are needed to protect children's human rights (Ohchr.org 2018) To promote the wellbeing of children and clients in general, professionals must consider how children and individuals can reconnect with nature and provide for its long-term sustainability (Rabb 2017).

The **Armenia Fund for Armenian Relief Children's Support Center Foundation (FAR CSCF)** has implemented the programme '*Family Stabilization: Breaking the Cycle of Child Poverty*' to promote dignified childhood of 700+ children coming from poor families of the Berd region of Tavush Marz, Republic of Armenia.

The objectives are:
- 1. To contribute to the stabilization of the social situation of 250 vulnerable families annually;
- 2. To improve the quality of life of children from the poor families (250);
- 3. To develop a model programme replicable for other regions of Armenia.

The Family Stabilization Programme addresses the critical needs of the most vulnerable children and supports their families to stay intact. The number of children under 18 in Tavush Marz is 32,262 (24.0% of the population). In the early stages of the programme a broad range of services and financial assistance was provided to families since there were acute problems in the families (unbearable living conditions, for example) that had to be addressed in the first place, allowing them to deal with deeper problems for the remainder of the time.

The programme has strengthened the relationships between social workers and families and has contributed to an increased level of effectiveness of social work. Social workers have become more expert in counselling, referrals, which are important for families to prevent them having to overcome problems alone in future.

The provision of social assistance through support packages has developed a culture for taking more responsibility in child care among the

families. The Child protection centre is a model to deal with children in conflict with law. There is strong cooperation in place with local stakeholders. New outreach services are in place. Preventive services are developing in the region. The culture of joined case management with government agencies case managers is in place.

Ageing Society and Sustainable Economic Growth

In 2016 the European Union published a White Paper with recommendations for decision makers in the field of *Choices for a Society for All Ages*. The document was the result of a research and cooperation project of the European Union named '*Social Innovation on Active and Healthy Ageing for Sustainable Economic Growth*'.

In the report's chapter on ageing society and sustainable economic growth (3.22), the following two relevant recommendations are presented:

- Life-long learning programmes in socio-economic fields should be conceived at all levels with and for all generations and welcoming persons of all ages in order to promote transmissibility and permeability of ideas, experiences and knowledge between the different age groups and to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation throughout the age pyramid.
- Particular importance should be given to the support of structures and institutions which engage the identification of yet unchartered problems and opportunities of the ageing society and in the research on innovative and effective solutions to address such problems and to benefit from all possible opportunities.

The report describes in around 30 chapters key issues related to ageing in European society and proposes 138 recommendations to decision makers - in various areas and at different levels - having responsibilities in shaping the future of society. The publication exists in 9 languages[10].

Prisoners

Sustainable societies are inclusive societies, in which members can find a place regardless of their background and their history. The **Lithuanian** organisation **Socialiniai paramos projektai** (Social support projects) promotes sustainable communities and sustainable development through the integration of released prisoners. More specifically, the project offers them a professional education that may start while they are still

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[10] http://www.siforage.eu/publications.php

incarcerated. The project 'Cooking4freedom' is supported by Erasmus Plus 2016-2018 and offers prison inmates an opportunity to acquire quality skills to put to use in society after their release. It offers food cooking courses, in cooperation with prison administration and the prison's chef. The first participant in the training now works in the 'My Guru' café. Project network involves Lithuanian, Italian, Portuguese and Turkish NGOs, social enterprises and institutional units.

Ethnic minority groups

As previously mentioned, environmental crises call for more thinking about sustainable wellbeing from a holistic perspective with a focus on planetary boundaries, empowerment of individuals and communities, a move towards a regenerative and collaborative economy, building competencies for a complex world and developing inclusive and adaptive governance.

Individual and group empowerment is also needed to achieve sustainable social, economic and environmental development. Social workers must promote relationships based on equality, opportunity and responsibility.

Since 1994 **The Lithuanian Children's Fund** works intensively towards the integration of the Roma Community, maintaining permanent contacts with the Roma Community Centre that is facing exclusion. In 2013-2014 the Fund, together with partners, developed a network of NGOs to make possible a Roma Community Centre (with funds of the European Economic Area and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms NGO Program). In 2012 the Social and Financial Literature Programme for Children and Youth, '*Aflatoun*', was launched in Lithuania; the fund's volunteer and the regional trainer of the '*Aflatoun*' programme in Lithuania, Loreta Trakinskienė, introduced this programme to the representatives of the Roma Community Centre and organizations working with Roma children and youth.

When social workers involve individuals, families and groups in the process of assessing their access to services, the quality of their lives, and the opportunities for their development, the outcome is that they are usually more willing to engage in opportunities that contribute to their ow wellbeing as well as group wellbeing and accept responsibility for their role in building and protecting sustainable caring communities.

Conclusions

This report does not invite conclusions and recommendations. It is a wide overview that does not suggest to be complete in its brevity. However, the authors feel that some conclusions should be drawn that may be useful to build on.

These are the following:

- Sustainability is a multi-dimensional and flexible concept that is actually too broad and open to interpretation to allow for concise presentation. It would be beneficial for social work to have the use of more focused directions for the various issues related to sustainability of individuals, families, and communities.
- Austerity measures are generally seen as counterproductive and threatening to social work in general and to the sustainability of communities.
- It is important to reinforce and further build the political identity of the social work profession as it is ideally placed to contribute to social policy solutions at local, national and global levels.
- Engaging with individuals and groups to develop sustainable and strong communities can only take place through encouraging their active involvement and on the basis of their own needs and strengths.
- The Finnish NGO monitoring of the Social Development Goals at local, national and global levels is an example worth sharing with other European countries.
- The Social Development Goals might provide a useful tool for social workers to actively implement and to monitor sustainable development at regional, national and global levels.

Resources

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Annexes

Annex 1: Questionnaire for good examples of practice

Organisation or consortium making this submission

Participating organisation(s)

Country

Contact person

Email

This example shows good practice in :

- Education
- Practice
- Policy

Tick all those which are relevant

Type of submission :

- Article
- Film
- Audio
- Poster
- Other

Tick all those which are relevant

What is the problem being addressed in this practice? *

What was the purpose of the action ? *

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

How were service users involved ? *

What did you do? *

What was the outcome ? *

By submitting this information I give permission for analysis, reproduction and publication. *   Yes

Annex 2: Contributing organisations

The organizations that contributed were (in alphabetic order):

1. Armenia - Fund For Armenian Relief (FAR) Children Support Center Foundation   Fund For Armenian Relief (FAR), Berd office; FAR Berd office; Mardigian Child Protection Center, Armenia
2. Armenia + Austria - Armenian Association of Social Workers (AASW) Hilfswerk Austria International (HWA)   Armenia
3. Finland - Basic Income experiment 2017-2018
   The Finnish basic income experiment is being conducted among 2000 persons between ages 25 and 58, who will receive a monthly basic income of 560 Euro for two years. More information can be found here[11].
4. Finland - Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development, a Finnish initiative that takes national sustainability efforts to a whole new level. You can browse commitments given by others, give your own commitment and challenge others to participate on the website[12]. More information about the commitment is available[13].
5. Finland - Finland and the Agenda2030 follow-up reports by CSOs[14].
6. Greece - Greek Social Work Action Network Patras   : the purpose was to defend and promote in the era of crisis, the human rights of the population in Greece through new practices of social work based on radical and critical approaches

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[11] http://www.kela.fi/web/en/basic-income-experiment-2017-2018
[12] https://commitment2050.fi/
[13]
http://kestavakehitys.fi/documents/2167391/2186383/FINAL+Kest%C3%A4v%C3%A4n+kehityksen+yhteiskuntasitoumus+20+4+2016_eng-GBs_Final+-+kielenhuolto_EN_rev+%282%29.pdf/e057e638-507e-464c-a3dd-d3f0826f8950
[14] https://www.kepa.fi/sites/kepa.fi/tiedostot/julkaisut/KEPA_Finland-and-the-2030Agenda_FINAL.pdf

7. Northern Ireland – Belfast Met College   A range of Social Work, Care, Homelessness providers and related organisations across NI   Northern Ireland.
8. Northern Ireland - West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB) West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB), Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), Dept of Health, CDHN   Antrim
9. Lithuania – ICSW Europe   Lithuanian Children fund
10. Lithuania – ICSW Europe   Social support projects ("Socialiniai paramos projektai")
11. Netherlands + Sweden + Belgium + UK – Power Us, Lund University, University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht, Karel de Grote University College, New College Durham
12. Romania – ASproAS (Social Workers Association in Romania) www.asproas.ro
13. Spain – Consejo General del Trabajo Social www.cgtrabajosocial.es
14. Spain – Emergency - Consejo General del Trabajo Social www.cgtrabajosocial.es
15. UK - the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) https://www.basw.co.uk/

Conferences

Iceland	IFSW European conference 2017
Russia	ICSW European Conference 2017
France	EASSW European conference 2017

Chapter 5A

América Latina y el Caribe: Promoviendo Sostenibilidad Comunitaria y Ambiental

Silvana Martínez, Larry Alicea Rodríguez, Juan Omar Agüero, Jorge Arturo Sáenz Fonseca, Gloria Luoni and Nilsa Burgos.

Contenido

Contexto general de la región América Latina y El Caribe

La región América Latina y El Caribe atraviesa por una profunda crisis como producto de gobiernos neoliberales que accedieron al poder por el voto popular o por golpes institucionales de escasa legitimidad o por traicionar a los espacios políticos progresistas a los cuales pertenecían y por los que fueron elegidos. Estos gobiernos responden a intereses extranjeros, de las grandes corporaciones transnacionales y de las élites nacionales que concentran el poder económico y político. Ha quedado muy atrás la llamada "primavera latinoamericana" de la primera década del siglo XXI, donde gobiernos progresistas intentaron disminuir las desigualdades sociales, construir proyectos políticos nacionales y populares, restituir y ampliar derechos ciudadanos y recuperar el sueño de la Patria Grande Latinoamericana.

Nuestros países de la región ya no son escenarios de dictaduras cívico-militares como ocurriera en la década de 1970. El capitalismo financiero mundial ha instalado en la región otras formas de dictaduras, las dictaduras de mercado, que llevan a la explotación, la miseria y la muerte a millones de seres humanos. Este nuevo escenario se caracteriza por los despidos masivos de trabajadores; la represión de las manifestaciones sociales; la manipulación de los medios de comunicación social; la censura y restricción de la libertad de expresión; la estigmatización de los sectores populares; la intolerancia política; la violencia institucional; el ataque a las organizaciones de Derechos Humanos y el asesinato de líderes campesinos, ambientalistas y periodistas con el fin de instalar el miedo como forma de disciplinamiento social.

Se observa en la región un profundo retroceso de los derechos conquistados como producto de luchas históricas. En este sentido, hay un claro proceso de desciudadanización. Esto se agrava con el desmantelamiento del Estado en áreas vitales que garantizaban derechos básicos como la educación, la salud y la vivienda. Las políticas públicas impulsadas por los gobiernos neoliberales se caracterizan por el desmantelamiento del aparato productivo de la economía; la reforma laboral con el fin de disminuir el costo flexibilizando y precarizando aún más las condiciones de trabajo; la reforma de los sistemas previsionales y de protección social; el desfinanciamiento de la educación pública y el abandono del desarrollo científico y tecnológico, entre otros.

Estos gobiernos y políticas han ampliado y profundizado aún más las desigualdades sociales en la región América Latina y El Caribe que, si bien no es la más pobre del mundo, es la región más desigual. En términos económicos, según datos de los organismos internacionales, el 10 % más rico de la población concentra el 71 % de la riqueza, mientras que el 1 % más rico concentra el 41 % de la riqueza de la región. A esta enorme brecha económica entre pobres y ricos, tenemos que agregar otras desigualdades sociales relacionadas con el género, la etnia, la nacionalidad, la religión, la educación, la salud, el acceso a la justicia, entre otras. A su vez, estas desigualdades se potencian aún más al combinarse unas con otras. En este nuevo escenario coexisten una creciente desigualdad y cada vez mayores presiones sobre el medio ambiente y los recursos naturales, con el surgimiento de nuevos polos y poderes económicos, la explosión de las nuevas tecnologías, una rápida urbanización y la mayor importancia de los espacios regionales de integración, entre otras señales. De cara a este escenario y con miras a perfilar un mejor futuro para todos, se necesitan políticas y acciones fundamentadas en la visión holística que implica el desarrollo sostenible.

Si bien este escenario es tremendo y desolador, también es un escenario de confrontación, lucha y resistencia, donde los movimientos y organizaciones sociales no han bajado los brazos proponiendo y generando continuamente acciones colectivas de protesta en toda la región. Las diversas formas de expresión del rechazo a estas políticas incluyen grandes movilizaciones populares, huelgas, piquetes, cacerolazos, ocupación de los espacios públicos, firma y presentación de petitorios a los gobiernos, utilización de redes sociales tanto para la denuncia pública de hechos de violencia y conculcación de derechos, como para realizar convocatorias masivas de protesta y visibilizar las luchas sociales. En estas luchas no han estado ausentes los Trabajadores Sociales y sus organizaciones.

FITS América Latina y El Caribe

La Federación Internacional de Trabajadores Sociales, Región América Latina y El Caribe, cuenta a la fecha de este reporte con 17 países miembros: Argentina, Uruguay, Brasil, Chile, Bolivia, Perú, Colombia, Panamá, Costa Rica, República Dominicana, Nicaragua, El Salvador, México, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Grenada y Haití. Se ha establecido contactos con Paraguay, Honduras, Guatemala y Venezuela para su futura incorporación como miembros. Asimismo, en el período que comprende este reporte se ha trabajado en conjunto con el Comité Latinoamericano y Caribeño de

Trabajo Social (COLACATS) y la Asociación Latinoamericana de Enseñanza e Investigación de Trabajo Social (ALAEITS). En el mes de Julio del año 2017 se llevó a cabo en San José de Costa Rica el V Encuentro de la Región América Latina y El Caribe, donde estuvieron presentes los dos representantes de estas organizaciones regionales al igual que el Secretario General de la FITS.

Se observan cuatro problemas principales relacionados con el ejercicio profesional del Trabajo Social en la región: las malas condiciones laborales de los trabajadores sociales, el impacto de las políticas neoliberales en los servicios sociales, la problemática vinculada a la formación profesional (como por ejemplo: Carreras de Grado o Bachillerato a distancia, programas académicos o planes de estudio no actualizados, educación "terciaria" no universitaria, entre otros) y el surgimiento de organizaciones que mercantilizan los eventos de trabajo social.

En lo que respecta a la *Agenda Global para el Trabajo Social y el Desarrollo Social*, es importante recordar que ésta se articuló en torno a cuatro grandes pilares: 1) la promoción de la igualdad social y económica; 2) la promoción de la dignidad y el valor de las personas; 3) la promoción de la sostenibilidad del ambiental y comunitaria; 4) la promoción de las relaciones humanas (Truell, R., Jones, D., Lima, A. 2017:139).

Cuando, en la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible (Río+20) celebrada en 2012, los países miembros acordaron iniciar un proceso para la elaboración de objetivos de desarrollo sostenible y ligarlo a la discusión sobre lo que vendrá a ser la agenda para el desarrollo después de 2015, se estaban fusionando dos procesos internacionales que, hasta entonces, habían discurrido de manera paralela: la agenda de desarrollo centrada en las personas, orientada por los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio (ODM), y la agenda de desarrollo sostenible, que trataba la compleja relación entre medio ambiente y desarrollo. Esta última fue orientada por una sucesión de instrumentos declaratorios, entre los que se cuentan la Declaración de Río sobre el Medio Ambiente y el Desarrollo de 1992, el Programa 21 y los convenios internacionales emanados a partir de la Cumbre para la Tierra, entre ellos, la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático. La incorporación de la sostenibilidad ambiental como concepto fundamental y transversal en los objetivos de desarrollo que tomarán el relevo de los ODM es un paso fundamental para lograr lo que hace décadas se planteaba como una meta elusiva: la incorporación central de

consideraciones sobre el medio ambiente en las decisiones públicas y privadas relacionadas con el desarrollo.

El presente reporte se basa en el tercer pilar de la Agenda Global para el Trabajo Social para el período 2016-2018 *Promoción de la Sostenibilidad Ambiental y Comunitaria*, y se vincula precisamente con los Objetivos del Desarrollo Sostenible y aspiraciones y prácticas de los trabajadores sociales en todo el mundo respecto a este tema. Hace hincapié en el importante papel de los trabajadores sociales en impulsar comunidades y un desarrollo ambientalmente sostenible. Esto incluye: a) trabajar estrechamente con otras agencias asociadas, incluidas las que van más allá del trabajo social, para crear comunidades de práctica, particularmente en relación con la sostenibilidad ambiental; b) promover la creación de capacidades comunitarias, mediante proyectos sostenibles y respetuosos con el medio ambiente, siempre que sea posible y c) responder a los desafíos ambientales, incluyendo trabajar con las comunidades para aumentar su capacidad de resistencia y recuperarse de los desastres ambientales y naturales y los problemas sociales que se derivan de éstos, así como en relación con los "desastres humanos" que incluyen familias de refugiados que huyen de la persecución o la guerra.

Principales problemas sociales relacionados con la sostenibilidad comunitaria y ambiental que afectan a la región

En América Latina y el Caribe, así como en las otras regiones del mundo, a pesar de que se ha avanzado en la creación y el fortalecimiento de las instituciones y políticas ambientales, en general no se ha cambiado de manera fundamental la forma de hacer las cosas y el modelo económico sigue siendo el mismo. La creciente evidencia sobre los efectos del cambio climático ya muestran sus efectos en la región. De acuerdo con la Organización No Gubernamental *Vitalis* Latinoamérica, la región enfrenta importantes problemas ambientales, determinados principalmente por los patrones de uso de sus recursos naturales, sistemas de producción, hábitos de consumo de las poblaciones humanas y gobernanza ambiental. Si bien estos problemas presentan algunas características comunes, su extensión e intensidad varía de país en país, influenciados por diversas consideraciones sociales, políticas, económicas y culturales.

Entre los problemas ambientales más importantes de América Latina figuran:

- Deforestación de zonas boscosas silvestres y mal manejo de muchas áreas verdes urbanas y rurales.
- Incremento en el número de especies animales y vegetales amenazadas de extinción o con algún grado de peligro.
- Contaminación y degradación de los suelos, incluyendo deterioro por erosión.
- Deterioro del ambiente urbano de las ciudades, en particular por contaminación del aire por elevados niveles de emisiones atmosféricas y sonoras.
- Incremento del efecto invernadero y del cambio climático, con pocos avances en la región para mitigar sus efectos y adaptarse a las modificaciones del clima.
- Débil gestión integrada de los recursos hídricos, que incluye despilfarro en los usos domésticos y agrícolas, y contaminación de los cuerpos de agua por efluentes industriales, agrícolas y domésticos.
- Mal manejo de los residuos y desechos sólidos, incluyendo el inapropiado tratamiento de los electrónicos.
- Incremento de la densidad poblacional con las subsecuentes consecuencias ambientales en el medio natural.
- Poca conciencia ambiental de la ciudadanía. Los latinoamericanos, en general, no incluyen el tema ambiental como un favor fundamental en su calidad de vida (http://www.vitalis.net)

La protección del medio ambiente y de las personas contra los efectos de la degradación ambiental es cada vez más aceptada como parte integrante de cualquier estrategia de superación de la pobreza y la desigualdad intrageneracional. A nivel nacional, los países de América Latina y el Caribe enfrentan numerosos y diversos retos de política ambiental, emanados del desafío común de superar la heterogeneidad estructural y la dependencia en ventajas comparativas estáticas de las industrias intensivas en recursos naturales. La elevada desigualdad y segregación económica de la estructura social, resultante de este camino histórico de desarrollo, condujo a la adopción de patrones de consumo caracterizados por la segregación, con mercados privados de gran desarrollo en el caso de los bienes de alta calidad y, más notablemente, de servicios como el transporte, la salud y la educación (De Miguel y Tavares 2015).

Esta segregación separa a los ricos de los pobres, acentúa las disparidades y obstaculiza la puesta en marcha de soluciones públicas más inclusivas y que contemplen la protección del medio ambiente (CEPAL 2014). Los esfuerzos por erradicar la pobreza y reducir las desigualdades se ven ahora amenazados por el cambio climático, tanto para los países que se encuentran en riesgo inminente de sufrir graves crisis como para los que enfrentan una perspectiva de desequilibrios crónicos, aunque no menos graves, de los ecosistemas y, por ende, de los medios de vida de su población, como los de Centroamérica y el Caribe. En el trabajo de la CEPAL sobre la economía del cambio climático y los efectos de este fenómeno en la costa de América Latina y el Caribe, se han documentado los desafíos que enfrentan al respecto varios países de la región (CEPAL 2010; CEPAL y Universidad de Cantabria 2012).

La amenaza del cambio climático se suma a los costos humanos y económicos de otras formas de degradación ambiental, que a menudo son asumidos por los más vulnerables. Por ejemplo, los pobres suelen estar más expuestos a los efectos de la contaminación del aire, los residuos tóxicos y las aguas cloacales no tratadas, lo que se agrava por su menor acceso a servicios de salud. Los que dependen directamente de la agricultura, la pesca y otras actividades de menor escala basadas en recursos naturales y no pueden recurrir a fuentes alternativas de recursos o ingresos tienen mayor probabilidad de sufrir la pérdida de su medio de vida a causa de la degradación de los ecosistemas. Aquellos que no pueden prescindir del sistema de transporte público se ven más afectados por la congestión de las ciudades y, por lo tanto, afrontan costos más elevados en términos de tiempo de traslado y pérdida de oportunidades de acceso al mercado laboral (De Miguel y Tavares 2015).

En *Argentina*, existe una gran diversidad de regiones agroecológicas, climas y recursos naturales. La vigencia de un modelo neoliberal, basado en la maximización de la renta; la aplicación de políticas extractivistas, con una desconsideración por la sustentabilidad del ambiente y la ausencia del estado en la regulación y manejo de los mismos, conduce a su degradación. El avance de la frontera agropecuaria sobre los bosques; la tendencia al monocultivo; el retroceso de los glaciares por la mega minería; la pérdida de biodiversidad y la generación creciente de residuos producidos por la urbanización acelerada y sin planificación; el cambio climático por el efecto invernadero, son algunos de los problemas estructurales que presenta el país.

La instalación de "pasteras" en la Mesopotamia Argentina, con la consecuencia contaminación del Río Uruguay; de la minería a cielo abierto en la región noroeste del país, con la consecuente contaminación de las aguas utilizadas por las empresas y para las poblaciones circundantes; la desaparición de especies ictícolas en el Mar Argentino, producto de la sobre explotación de la pesca; el monocultivo predominantemente de soja, con la degradación progresiva de los suelos, el uso cada vez mayor de agroquímicos; y el conflicto de los pueblos originarios, en particular los Mapuches, producido por la defensa de la tierra por parte de sus primeros pobladores, (y que hoy está en manos de los poderes concentrados), son ejemplos concretos de la situación ambiental en el transcurso de la segunda década del siglo XXI. Este cuadro de situación, genera contingentes de población que no solo ven dañada su salud por los efectos nocivos de estos mega emprendimientos cercanos a sus hábitats, sino además por la espoliación y apropiación marginal de la que son víctimas.

En *Brasil*, los problemas que afectan el medio ambiente, son múltiples, vastos y de enorme gravedad, perjudicando todos sus biomas. Entre las principales amenazas están la polución del agua, del aire y del suelo, la deforestación, el depósito y disposición de basura en locales inadecuados, la caza y a pesca predadoras, el desperdicio de alimentos y de recursos naturales, y el calentamiento global. Todas ellas tienen su raíz en la explosión demográfica, en la acelerada expansión urbana y agropecuaria, y en el proporcional aumento en el consumo general de recursos, pudiendo actuar en separado, pero en general haciéndolo en combinación, y desencadenando una serie de impactos negativos sobre la biodiversidad, haciendo declinar poblaciones, extinguiendo especies, privándolas de comida y abrigo, y provocándoles enfermedades, reducción en su crecimiento, anomalías genéticas y otros males. Consecuentemente, se desencadenan perjuicios variados para la sociedad, que en todo de la naturaleza depende para sobrevivir, en la forma de reducción de fuentes de alimento y energía, de servicios ambientales, de materiales de construcción, de substancias medicinales, de fibras, aceites, resinas, condimentos y otros recursos. También perjudican a grandes poblaciones de manera directa causándole enfermedades y otros daños a su salud, finanzas y bienestar. Si bien toda la sociedad brasileña siente los efectos combinados de esos problemas, son los sectores más empobrecidos los que más padecen estas problemáticas.

En *El Salvador* los recursos naturales están sometidos a una fuerte presión demográfica; ya que es un país pequeño (20,041 km²) y con alta densidad poblacional (6, 345 millones de habitantes). La zona rural está desapareciendo progresivamente debido al fenómeno de la urbanización, esto implica una mayor demanda de recursos como el agua, también el país enfrenta un alto grado de deforestación en todo el territorio nacional. Además, el fenómeno de la violencia, limita el acceso a las comunidades empobrecidas, tanto urbanas como rurales; y para la aprobación de leyes relacionadas de forma directa con el desarrollo sostenible , como la Ley de Prohibición de la Minería Metálica, se identifica una fuerte oposición de las empresas nacionales y transnacionales. El derecho humano al agua no tiene reconocimiento en la Constitución de la República de El Salvador y no se cuenta con una Ley secundaria que aborde la problemática bajo un enfoque de sostenibilidad, y esto se traduce en la carencia de una política pública. En septiembre del año 2011 la Secretaría Técnica de la Presidencia elaboró una propuesta de Política Nacional del Agua Potable y Saneamiento 2011-2015, que a la fecha no ha sido aprobada. Los factores antes mencionados incrementan la vulnerabilidad del país ante el cambio climático y ante eventos adversos, tales como: terremotos, erupciones volcánicas, tormentas, depresiones tropicales, huracanes, entre otros.

La mayoría de los pequeños Estados insulares del Caribe y de los países de Centroamérica son especialmente vulnerables al cambio climático, al aumento del nivel del mar y a los riesgos naturales y ambientales, debido a su tamaño o su ubicación, a la concentración de población en las zonas costeras dentro de un área de tierra limitada y, en algunos casos, a la falta de capacidad institucional para hacer frente a la crisis (CEPAL, 2013). Al analizar la vulnerabilidad y la exposición de las costas de América Latina y el Caribe frente a las modificaciones que podría originar el cambio climático, se identifican países y territorios donde casi la totalidad de la población se concentra en posibles zonas de inundación, como es el caso de las Islas Turcas y Caicos, las Islas Caimán, las Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada y Dominica. También se identifican grandes áreas de cultivo localizadas en las zonas bajas de posible inundación, lo que torna especialmente vulnerable al sector agrícola en México, el Brasil, Guatemala, Suriname, las Bahamas y las Islas Caimán (CEPAL 2012).

La pequeña isla caribeña de *Grenada* es uno de los países independientes más pequeños del hemisferio occidental. Conocida como la isla de las Especias; es el segundo mayor productor mundial de nuez moscada

después de Indonesia y un importante productor de macis, canela, jengibre y clavo de olor. También cuenta con hermosos paisajes con valles fértiles, bosques lluviosos y lagos de montaña y su clima tropical y excelentes playas son un gran atractivo para los turistas. Granada tiene una multitud de leyes y políticas que abordan todo, desde Adquisición de tierras hasta Protección de playas. Desafortunadamente, existe una gran vacilación en la implementación de estas leyes y políticas. Esto se destacó recientemente en un proceso de consulta sobre una política de uso de la tierra para Grenada.

El consultor, George De Romilly de Caribinvest, un profesional con experiencia en esta problemática, publica un documento que fue considerado por algunos como una perspectiva radical en el manejo de los recursos naturales en Granada, en el que afirma: *"La importancia de los recursos de la tierra del país para el crecimiento económico y el desarrollo, la reducción de la pobreza y la supervivencia y el bienestar de toda la población es bien conocida y no se puede exagerar. A pesar de este conocimiento, la sostenibilidad de estos recursos se ve seriamente amenazada por varios tipos de actividades de desarrollo incompatibles, como la construcción ilegal, desarrollos urbanos y rurales ad hoc y la ocupación ilegal. Estas prácticas de uso de la tierra han resultado en la degradación de la calidad de la tierra, lo que compromete su disponibilidad para usos productivos. Las malas prácticas de uso de la tierra también plantean serias amenazas para la seguridad alimentaria nacional, la salud humana, la resiliencia a la variabilidad climática y la inestabilidad económica y social. La disponibilidad y accesibilidad de los limitados recursos terrestres del país se ven aún más restringidos por su topografía abrupta, altos niveles de precipitaciones, un sistema ineficiente de tenencia de la tierra, precios incontrolables de la tierra y uso no regulado de la tierra, entre otros factores. La creciente competencia y demandas entre los múltiples usuarios de la tierra están aumentando las presiones sobre este recurso limitado y en disminución. Sin intervenciones apropiadas, estas prácticas indeseables de uso de la tierra sin duda seguirían limitando la capacidad de la tierra para proporcionar los servicios y funciones que son tan esenciales para la supervivencia y el bienestar de la población"* [15].

En el documento se refiere a la gestión de recursos naturales como tierra, agua, suelo y arena, plantas, peces y animales, con un enfoque particular

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[15] De Romilly, George "Política de Tierras Grenada"

sobre cómo la gestión afecta la calidad de vida de las generaciones presentes y futuras (administración). La gestión de los recursos naturales se ocupa de gestionar la forma en que las personas y los paisajes naturales/paisajes marinos interactúan. Reúne la planificación del uso del suelo, el manejo del agua y el suelo, la gestión de los recursos costeros, la conservación de la biodiversidad, el control de la contaminación y la sostenibilidad futura de asentamientos humanos e industrias como el turismo, la agricultura, la pesca y el comercio. Reconoce que las personas y sus medios de subsistencia dependen de la salud y la productividad de los recursos terrestres y marinos, y sus acciones como administradores de dichos recursos juegan un papel fundamental en el mantenimiento de esta salud y productividad. El manejo de los recursos naturales requiere información exhaustiva para orientar e informar la toma de decisiones y una participación significativa de los interesados en todos los aspectos de la gestión.

En *Puerto Rico*, otra isla del Caribe, también se han observado violaciones al ambiente y a los recursos naturales. Por ejemplo, se han privatizado algunas playas, a pesar de que existe legislación que las playas son públicas y se han cometido violaciones al Plan de Uso de terrenos. Además, de intentos de explotación minera, lucha con multinacionales en la producción de energía fósil, incineración de basura, depósito de cenizas en terrenos cercanos a poblaciones pobres, contaminación terrenos, agua y aire por industrias contaminantes y contaminación militar en las islas municipios de Vieques y Culebra.

Políticas públicas que deberían apuntar a estos problemas según la visión del Trabajo Social

Las políticas dirigidas específicamente a solucionar problemas ambientales también deben contemplar los desafíos en materia de desigualdad. Se deben poner en marcha mecanismos para garantizar que las políticas y los instrumentos ambientales adoptados en todos los niveles de gobierno no generen una carga adicional para las personas pobres y vulnerables, sino que den prioridad a la protección y el mejoramiento de sus condiciones de vida. Asimismo, es necesario instrumentar mecanismos de seguridad social para proteger a las personas de la pérdida de sus fuentes de sustento. Debe revisarse la estructura fiscal de manera de combinar los incentivos para reducir la contaminación con la inversión en servicios públicos de transporte, agua y saneamiento, desarrollo urbano, entre otros, que sean eficientes, eficaces e igualitarios (De Miguel y Tavares 2015).

Las políticas que contribuirán a la promoción integrada de los medios de subsistencia sostenibles y la protección del medio ambiente abarcan numerosas actividades sectoriales y una amplia gama de protagonistas, desde el nivel local hasta el mundial, y que son fundamentales en todos los planos, sobre todo en los niveles locales y de la comunidad. En los niveles nacional e internacional será necesario adoptar medidas que permitan llevar adelante estas actividades y en las que se tengan plenamente en cuenta las condiciones regionales y subregionales existentes todo ello para propugnar un enfoque de actividades locales adaptadas al país de que se trate.

Tal como lo indica la División de Desarrollo Sostenible del Departamento de Asuntos Económicos y Sociales de la ONU (2016), las políticas deberían: a) Centrarse en aumentar las facultades de los grupos locales y comunitarios en virtud de los principios de delegación de autoridad y rendición de cuentas, con una asignación de recursos suficientes para que cada programa apunte a condiciones geográficas y ecológicas específicas; b) Comprender medidas inmediatas para que los grupos antes indicados resulten menos afectados por la pobreza y puedan crear estructuras sostenibles; c) Comprender una estrategia a largo plazo que tenga por objeto establecer las mejores condiciones posibles para crear, en los planos local, regional y nacional un desarrollo sostenible que elimine la pobreza y reduzca la desigualdad entre los diversos grupos de la población.

En este sentido las políticas deben prestar ayuda a los grupos más desfavorecidos, en particular las mujeres, los niños y los jóvenes de esos grupos, y a los refugiados. Entre esos grupos deben figurar los pequeños propietarios, los campesinos, los artesanos, las comunidades de pescadores, las familias sin tierra, las comunidades autóctonas, los migrantes y el sector de la economía urbana no estructurada. Lo fundamental es adoptar medidas concretas que abarquen a distintos sectores, en particular en las esferas de la educación básica, la atención primaria de la salud, la atención a las madres y la promoción de la mujer.

Cuando se habla de políticas públicas, hacemos referencia a proyectos diseñados desde el Estado, que marcan la voluntad política de omitir o actuar sobre una determinada cuestión de interés público, con el suficiente consenso y legitimidad para garantizar la gobernanza y la sustentabilidad a lo largo del tiempo para su instrumentación. Esta política pública requiere de modo imprescindible en el siglo XXI, de acuerdos entre los diversos actores sociales, políticos, empresariales, y estatales de modo de asegurar

la consecución de los objetivos trazados. En el caso de las políticas socio-ambientales, deben poseer un carácter:

a) Federal: que se construya en base a los intereses de todas las provincias, municipios, regiones.

b) Integral: que considere en su diseño todos los aspectos de la dinámica interrelación entre las comunidades y el ambiente, con énfasis en el carácter interdisciplinario del conocimiento. En este punto es central la incorporación de profesionales del trabajo Social que faciliten la coordinación de las diferentes profesiones y actividades en la dimensión social. Integral refiere también a la implementación no solo de las acciones específicas a los proyectos, sino también al componente de promoción, prevención y de carácter socio educativo, con un énfasis particular en los procesos de evaluación de las políticas.

c) Transversal: implica que su instrumentación atraviese todos los estamentos sectoriales del Estado, sobre todo por el carácter social de estas políticas

d) Participativo: hace referencia a la incorporación de los múltiples actores involucrados, no solo en la consulta sino también en la toma de decisiones.

e) Financiamiento adecuado: Requisito sine qua non para mostrar la voluntad política de los gobiernos. Se refuerza la idea de que sin presupuesto específico no hay posibilidad de implementar una política eficiente, eficaz y sustentable en el tiempo.

f) Institucionalidad: la que debe ser sostenida a partir del fortalecimiento institucional, de su jerarquización, y de la capacitación y formación de recursos para concretar las coordinaciones entre áreas y jurisdicciones.

Una política pública integral, participativa que involucre a todos los actores sociales: Estado, sociedad civil, las empresas privadas, instituciones gubernamentales, no gubernamentales, y la comunidad en todo el proceso de definición y concreción de las políticas públicas a saber: Formulación (Problemática en agenda, diagnostico, diseño, divulgación), Implementación y Evaluación. Asimismo que integre Saneamiento ambiental, recursos hídricos, biodiversidad y el cambio climático, desde el enfoque de la sostenibilidad y el enfoque de derechos humanos y la perspectiva de género. No es suficiente la aprobación de política pública de desarrollo sostenible. Por ejemplo, en Puerto Rico se aprobó la "Ley

sobre Política Pública de Desarrollo Sostenible" Ley Núm. 267 de 10 de septiembre de 2004. No obstante, es muy difícil la aplicación de la misma en un país está en quiebra, bajo un Junta de Control fiscal nombrada por el Congreso de Estados Unidos y enfrentado el desastre que dejó el paso por la Isla del huracán María.

Expectativas de cambios de las personas con las cuales trabajamos

Las organizaciones sociales han modificado su agenda política para orientarla hacia la formación de una ciudadanía cada vez más conocedora de sus derechos y responsabilidades en cuanto al desarrollo sostenible, y que ha puesto a la igualdad en el centro del debate en lo que respecta al derecho a vivir en un medio ambiente sano y al acceso a los recursos naturales, a la información, a las oportunidades de participar y a la justicia ambiental. La complejidad de estos cambios requiere de canales efectivos para que el público participe de manera informada, así como de la cooperación interregional y entre regiones y el intercambio de experiencias.

Una de las principales críticas al proceso de diseño de los ODM se ha referido a la falta de consultas a los gobiernos y la sociedad civil y, en el caso de América Latina y el Caribe, la escasa relevancia de algunos de los objetivos para las necesidades específicas de la región. El marco post-2015 debe adaptarse mejor a las prioridades regionales. Tendrá que potenciar la colaboración interinstitucional y ofrecer más oportunidades para el intercambio transfronterizo de conocimientos y el aprendizaje entre profesionales. La comunidad internacional se encuentra ante una ventana de oportunidad única para fortalecer la implicación a nivel nacional con la consulta de la agenda post-2015, lo que pasaría por fomentar un diálogo efectivo a nivel nacional y regional entre los gobiernos y la sociedad civil, incluidos los grupos indígenas, los jóvenes y las mujeres. Este proceso no es simplemente una consulta, sino una oportunidad para que los gobiernos hagan suyos los próximos objetivos y los integren en sus prioridades y presupuestos nacionales, subnacionales y locales.

En la nueva agenda para el desarrollo se debería asumir una óptica distinta a la actual para establecer metas cuantitativas, de modo que -bajo ciertos criterios generales- sean los países los que las propongan a la comunidad internacional y las adopten en concordancia con la magnitud de los problemas de desarrollo que enfrentan. La visión de criterio único de la agenda de los ODM resultó ser inadecuada para numerosos países de

América Latina y el Caribe. Por ejemplo, la meta uniforme sobre pobreza extrema fue muy exigente para algunos países y muy poco desafiante para otros de mayor ingreso por habitante. Esta es, entre otras, una de las razones de la escasa apropiación de los ODM por parte de los gobiernos de varios países latinoamericanos y caribeños.

Actores que participan actualmente en el abordaje de estos problemas y quiénes deberían participar

El desarrollo sostenible debe lograrse en todos los planos de la sociedad. Las organizaciones populares, las agrupaciones de mujeres y las organizaciones no gubernamentales son importantes fuentes de innovación y de acción en el plano local y tienen profundo interés en promover la subsistencia sostenible, así como una capacidad comprobada en ese campo. Los gobiernos, en cooperación con las organizaciones internacionales y no gubernamentales apropiadas, deben fomentar un enfoque comunitario de la sostenibilidad, que, entre otras cosas, comprenda a) la plena participación de organizaciones sociales en los procesos de adopción de decisiones; b) el respeto de la integridad cultural y de los derechos de las poblaciones indígenas y sus comunidades; c) la promoción o creación de mecanismos populares para que las comunidades puedan compartir su experiencia y sus conocimientos; d) el aumento de la participación de las comunidades en la gestión sostenible y la protección de los recursos naturales locales para aumentar su capacidad productiva; y e) la creación de una red de centros de aprendizaje comunitarios para aumentar la capacidad pertinente y promover el desarrollo sostenible, entre otros.

En *Argentina* los actores y organizaciones que participan en la actualidad son aquellos vinculados directamente con la problemática del medio ambiente y el desarrollo sostenible: Las Empresas, el Estado, y grandes Organizaciones No Gubernamentales que desde hace años están orientadas a la defensa del ambiente, como por ejemplo: Greenpeace, Fundama, Vida Silvestre, entre otras. Sin embargo, debería enfatizarse en la incorporación sistemática de las organizaciones territoriales de base, asociaciones cooperativas, asociaciones profesionales, gremios, pueblos originarios, organizaciones de migrantes, de mujeres, de vecinos, representantes del sector salud etc. que son quienes viven concretamente las consecuencias del maltrato. Un objetivo a fortalecer sería trabajar en la modificación de la concepción de agentes de cambio ambiental por la de

constructores del cambio ambiental, lo que llevaría a asumir un real protagonismo de estos actores.

En *El Salvador* existe una Mesa Nacional Frente a la Minería Metálica y un Foro del Agua que son espacios de coordinación interinstitucional, que agrupan organizaciones comunitarias, centros de investigación, ONGs, grupos académicos y religiosos que se posicionan con respecto a estas temáticas. En contraposición, también se observa que hay actores sociales que toman una posición neutral, posiblemente para no entrar en conflictos con los sectores que manifiestan una clara oposición ante estas luchas, como son las empresas privadas nacionales y transnacionales.

En *Grenada*, si bien el Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Estratégico de 2007 prevé un alto nivel de coordinación interinstitucional en su implementación, un enfoque integrado para el manejo ambiental y de los recursos naturales, aún no es una realidad. Aquí es donde el papel de los trabajadores sociales en las comunidades se ha convertido en relevante por lo que se les pide que influyan y alienten a las comunidades a recuperar su poder, a asumir más responsabilidad sobre cómo sus acciones impactan en su entorno inmediato y, a su vez, su salud y bienestar, abogando por los desarrollos sugeridos en el documento mencionado. Sin embargo, a pesar de la falta de esfuerzo del Gobierno para actualizar una gestión integrada de todos los recursos naturales que asegure la eficiencia en la asignación y uso de recursos limitados (humanos, técnicos, financieros) y la racionalización de los procesos regulatorios y de gestión, algunas comunidades y agencias están avanzando con prácticas sostenibles en relación con la agricultura, la captación de agua y la creación de capacidades para las comunidades.

En *Puerto Rico* son múltiples las organizaciones de base comunitaria que por décadas han luchado por impulsar una agenda de desarrollo autónomo, solidario, sostenible, sensible y respetuoso de los recursos naturales, pero el marco de dominación política y de explotación financiera han ido recrudeciendo en el tiempo. A partir del paso devastador de los huracanes Irma y María, las desigualdades sociopolíticas y económicas en el país se ha recrudecido y la participación de las comunidades vulnerables y desfavorecidas es más crucial que nunca. Sin embargo, dicha participación continúa siendo cuestionada y criminalizada. En una reciente visita a Puerto Rico la reconocida periodista canadiense, Naomi Klein, compartió: "Y los puertorriqueños han estado viviendo la doctrina del *shock* durante mucho tiempo. Así que creo que los puertorriqueños tal

vez se horroricen, les dé ira y se pongan tristes por la forma en que han sido tratados. Pero no creo que haya más *shock* del que habría si esto sucediera, por ejemplo, en California. Lo que se ha tratado de impulsar como secuela del huracán, la privatización de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica, que de inmediato empezaron a hablar de esto, y de la privatización de carreteras y otras infraestructuras, tampoco fue un *shock*. Porque era algo que habían intentado hacer desde antes del huracán. Simplemente están tratando de explotar una crisis económica".

Principales acciones con respecto a estos problemas. Evidencias del impacto político, económico y social de las intervenciones del Trabajo Social y del Desarrollo Social

En este apartado mencionaremos algunos ejemplos de buenas prácticas desde el Trabajo Social vinculados al tema de la Agenda Global para período que comprende el presente reporte.

En *Argentina* se han identificado experiencias exitosas de Trabajo Social. Entre ellas se puede mencionar: a) En la ciudad de Ushuaia, provincia de Tierra del Fuego, se está trabajando con organizaciones de pueblos originarios con el fin de difundir su cultura e identidad vinculada al medio ambiente. b) Apoyo a la organización de movimientos sociales, de carácter local, orientados a la lucha por combatir las consecuencias para la salud de la aplicación de agroquímicos altamente tóxicos, en barrios de la ciudad de Córdoba; c) Programa Nacional del Instituto de Tecnología Agropecuaria "Pro Huerta", consistente en la entrega de semillas seleccionadas a familias vulnerables y el acompañamiento, capacitación y seguimiento a cargo de Trabajadores Sociales; d) Equipos de Servicio Social de nivel municipal que trabajan en la promoción, prevención y asistencia y gestión de la rehabilitación de la población asentada en el emprendimiento petrolero ubicado en el suroeste de la provincia de La Pampa; e) Participación de los Trabajadores Sociales en grandes empresas hidroeléctricas como *Yacyretá*, y *Casa de Piedra*, fundamentalmente en la relocalización de la población afectada por las obras, y la coordinación del desarrollo comunitario en los barrios creados para tal fin; f) Programas de Economía social dirigidos a personas desocupadas, consistentes en la capacitación y apoyo a la creación de cooperativas de trabajo en sectores populares urbanos del Gran Buenos Aires; g) Participación en la aplicación de metodologías participativas en investigaciones sobre temas ambientales, en los que se incorporan aspectos vinculados a la percepción

que tiene la comunidad sobre sí mismos, sus necesidades-problemas, y el entorno comunitario.

En *Chile* existen numerosas iniciativas que ya se están implementando en esta área del quehacer comunitario: a) los huertos orgánicos, las "ollas brujas"; b) el tratamiento de los desechos del hogar; c) el reciclaje organizado, adecuado uso del agua, la prevención de situaciones de riesgos de accidentes de toda naturaleza (de origen humano, catástrofes naturales, construcciones o instalaciones defectuosas), son sólo algunos ejemplos de acciones que son considerados en toda Intervención Social en contexto de las comunidades y su entorno. Fundación Invica, entidad sin fines de lucro que apoya a Cooperativa Abierta de Vivienda Provicoop (construcción de viviendas sociales para sectores sociales de bajos ingresos), ha desarrollado programas consistentes en capacitación para la formación de huertos orgánicos familiares en sus viviendas, como asimismo la auto elaboración de las llamadas "*ollas brujas*" que permiten cocinar con bajo consumo de gas. Junto a ello, se promocionó la instalación de Colectores Solares como fuente de energía en el hogar. En el Centro El Canelo de Nos (localidad cercana a Santiago), un equipo interdisciplinario ha llevado a cabo varios programas de desarrollo sustentable o sostenible, dirigido a pequeños agricultores para apoyarlos en sus procesos de producción de hortalizas y otros productos agrícolas a través de la utilización insumos o medios libres de substancias químicas (insecticidas, pesticidas, fertilizantes no naturales). Nuestro aporte profesional ha resultado ser interesante en términos tanto en los aspectos de promoción y de difusión como de los aspectos formativos y de capacitación de los beneficiarios, lo cual es fundamental para una real integración de éstos a estas modalidades productivas que son importantes para el cuidado y preservación del medio ambiente.

En *Brasil* la profesión de servicio social tiene un amplio campo de actuación, en el área de las políticas sociales, y los/as trabajadores/as ejercen actividades de planificación, gestión, ejecución y evaluación en las esferas públicas municipales, estatales, distritales y nacional. Actúan también en la esfera privada y en las Organizaciones No Gubernamentales (ONG). En casi todos los municipios brasileños (que son 5570), se encuentran trabajadores sociales actuando en organismos públicos, instituciones privadas o ONGs. Enfrentan en la actualidad, una coyuntura de ampliación de la enseñanza universitaria por medio del incentivo irresponsable de la enseñanza a distancia, y desmantelamiento de los

derechos sociales y laborales previstos en la Constitución Federal, de represión y criminalización de los movimientos sociales, lo que los desafía frente al compromiso asumido históricamente por nosotros, trabajadores sociales, con la clase obrera y con la lucha contra el retroceso de los derechos sociales

En *El Salvador* el trabajo principal en el ámbito comunitario se basa en la sensibilización, la educación, la organización y la movilización popular. Por ejemplo, en las comunidades aledañas a la mina El Dorado, en el municipio de San Isidro, departamento de Cabañas, muchas personas simpatizaban con el proyecto minero, puesto que lo veían como una alternativa para generar empleo y mejorar las condiciones materiales de vida de las familias de la zona, sin embargo no eran conscientes del impacto ambiental y lo efectos que esto produciría en la salud de los habitantes, y es por esto que se desarrolló una estrategia de intervención vinculada a la sensibilización – educación sobre los efectos negativos a corto, mediano y largo plazo de la actividad minera, entre ellos, la contaminación del agua. También las comunidades organizadas participaron en actividades para demandar la prohibición de la minería metálica, una lucha que duró 12 años – y en la cual varios ambientalistas fueron asesinados, y no se esclarecieron sus muertes-, pero que ha tenido un gran logro al aprobarse el 29 de marzo de 2017 la Ley de Prohibición de la Minería Metálica en El Salvador.

En este sentido, en El Salvador se ha logrado la concientización, organización y la movilización de las comunidades para demandar la aprobación de leyes relacionadas de forma directa con el desarrollo sostenible. Dos ejemplos claros son la lucha por la prohibición de la minería metálica y la lucha por el reconocimiento explícito del derecho humano al agua en el marco jurídico nacional, ya que en ambos procesos las comunidades organizadas han tenido un rol protagónico.

Por otra parte, en El Salvador en este momento sería difícil evidenciar avances en el desarrollo sostenible, ya que el país se encuentra en una situación crítica que requiere revertir el daño, aumentar la resiliencia ante el cambio climático y la capacidad de respuesta ante emergencias. Se están realizando esfuerzos en la reforestación, puesto que fue uno de los compromisos adquiridos por el Gobierno de El Salvador en el Acuerdo de París, pero los obstáculos están relacionados directamente con los procesos acelerados de urbanización. El Salvador es el único país que

cuenta con una Ley de Prohibición de la Minería Metálica. Ante el estancamiento en el reconocimiento del derecho humano al agua en la Constitución de la República de El Salvador y en la aprobación de la Ley General de Aguas, se ha trabajado en el desarrollo de ordenanzas municipales, como en el caso del municipio de San Isidro, en el departamento de Cabañas.[16]

En *Grenada* existen varias experiencias, por ejemplo:

a) Agricultura climáticamente inteligente: *People in Action* con financiación de GIZ (Agencia Alemana de Desarrollo Internacional). El desarrollo primario del proyecto fue una granja modelo que emplea técnicas agrícolas climáticamente inteligentes basadas en una metodología de diseño de ecosistemas conocida como permacultura. Las plataformas agrícolas de precisión de TIC se desarrollaron para documentar y gestionar el desarrollo de la granja modelo y las granjas de la comunidad. El proyecto involucró a la comunidad agrícola de Mt Moritz, y analizó el desarrollo no solo de sus granjas, sino de la cadena de valor de su agroprocesamiento, desarrollo / gestión comunitaria y negocios comunitarios. También se aventuró a sensibilizar a la comunidad sobre las posibilidades de desarrollar negocios de ciclo cerrado y bajas emisiones de carbono y desarrollar un plan de negocios para la granja modelo integrado en los activos de la comunidad y el interés de las empresas. *People in Action* está ampliando actualmente su programa para ofrecer cursos de agricultura sostenible para estudiantes tanto nacionales como internacionales. Los estudiantes de trabajo social se beneficiarían mucho si participaran en programas similares.

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[16]

www.csj.gob.sv/ambiente/LEYES/ORDENANZAS_MUNICIPALES/CABA%C3%91AS/ORDENANZA_AMBIENTAL_PROTECCION_RECURSO.doc

b) Agua de lluvia en las cosechas: La recolección de agua de lluvia se utilizó ampliamente en épocas anteriores, pero ha disminuido con la mejora del suministro público de agua. Sin embargo, en algunas áreas remotas de alta elevación, donde el suministro público de agua es inaccesible, la recolección de agua de lluvia suele ser la principal fuente de agua potable. Los estanques de captación de agua de lluvia se utilizan en la producción ganadera y, en algunos casos, para la provisión de agua para la producción intensiva de hortalizas (UNDESA, 2012). Blaize, un pueblo en St Andrew fue recientemente equipado con su propio equipo de recolección de agua. El pueblo está a gran altura y no ha sido atendido por la Autoridad Nacional del Agua a través de un sistema de cañerías, se les entregó una entrega de cisterna de agua cada quince días, de ahí el proyecto de recolección de agua. Esto es algo que se lleva a cabo extensamente en la isla hermana de Carriacou, que no tiene ríos ni arroyos, por lo que la gente cosecha todo lo que puede en la temporada de lluvias integrando tanques debajo de sus casas al construir, un gran ejemplo de construcción de resiliencia.

c) Por otra parte, la *Grenada Chocolate Company* ha sido pionera en el cultivo de cacao orgánico, que también se procesa en barras terminadas.

En Grenada, la práctica del trabajo social debe considerar cómo se respaldan los resultados del desarrollo social sostenible dentro de una comunidad y mantener el Desarrollo Profesional Continuo, los niveles de educación y capacitación para reflejar esto. También debe haber, como siempre, un intento de compartir las mejores prácticas y aprender de los demás. La investigación sobre innovación y sostenibilidad sugiere que las dinámicas comunitarias son fundamentales para crear la transformación necesaria para fomentar la responsabilidad personal por los problemas ambientales (Stocker y Kennedy 2009). La extracción de recursos naturales con poca consideración para las necesidades a largo plazo de las comunidades locales y las generaciones futuras crea desventajas para las comunidades más pobres.

Del mismo modo, la falta de políticas coherentes y la falta de implementación de las leyes pueden crear una total indiferencia por el medio ambiente y el bienestar de las comunidades. Esto, a su vez,

desalienta las acciones sostenibles desde el punto de vista ambiental por parte de las personas y corporaciones, lo que se suma a las preocupaciones de las poblaciones vulnerables (Hammond, DeCanio, Duxbury, Sanstad & Stinson 2010). El trabajo social debe aprender del conocimiento existente en las comunidades y mejorar las prácticas que han adoptado para ser resilientes. Esto tendrá que ocurrir cada vez más frente a los cambios globales y particularmente al impacto del cambio climático. El papel de los trabajadores sociales en el apoyo a la agenda de sostenibilidad puede no ser tan obvio. La capacidad de los trabajadores sociales para adaptarse y responder a las necesidades de las comunidades que experimentan problemas de sostenibilidad ambiental es de creciente importancia en los países en desarrollo, especialmente en los pequeños estados insulares en desarrollo como Grenada, que son aún más vulnerables frente a los desafíos del cambio climático.

En *Puerto Rico* el tema de la Agenda Global para el período que comprende el presente Reporte estuvo vinculado a los Derechos Humanos, la Salud y la Educación. Una de las Buenas Prácticas que queremos destacar en este reporte es el denominado *"Colectivo Somos Dignos"* que se gestó en el año 2010 en el marco de los procesos huelgarios de la Universidad de Puerto Rico en contra del desmantelamiento del sistema público de enseñanza en el país. En esta ocasión, los eventos huelgarios desembocaron en violaciones de derechos humanos por parte de las autoridades del Estado. Es así como estudiantes, profesores y profesoras de derecho, trabajo social y otras disciplinas y profesiones, así como activistas, defensores y defensoras de los derechos humanos en Puerto Rico, preocupados y preocupadas por el estado de los Derechos Humanos organizan el Colectivo.

El mismo tiene como propósito educar, defender y promover los derechos humanos y las libertades civiles en Puerto Rico a través de múltiples estrategias, incluyendo la investigación y una campaña nacional por los derechos humanos titulada Trayecto Dignidad. Este proyecto educativo ha sido respaldado por organizaciones profesionales y comunitarias tales como: el Colegio de Profesionales del Trabajo Social de Puerto Rico, la Asociación Nacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social de Puerto Rico (ANAETSPR), la Comisión de Derechos Humanos, Civiles y Constitucionales

del Colegio de Abogados y Abogadas de Puerto Rico, Amnistía Internacional (Capítulo de Puerto Rico), la Unión Americana de Derechos Civiles, el Instituto Puertorriqueño de Derechos Civiles y el grupo Sembrando Conciencia (jóvenes artistas de la Escuela de Artes Plásticas) así como sindicatos del país.

Trayecto Dignidad: campañas nacionales por los Derechos Humanos en Puerto Rico

Emulando la gesta del movimiento de los *Freedom Riders*[17] o Viajeros de la Libertad en los Estados Unidos, tres guaguas escolares recorren simultáneamente el noreste, noroeste y centro de la isla grande y realizan por tres días consecutivos paradas en diversas plazas públicas, balnearios y centros comerciales (véase imágenes 1 y 2).

Imagen 1: Autobuses utilizados para la Campaña Nacional

Imagen 2: Tres rutas de la Campaña Nacional: ruta noreste, noroeste, y centro sur.

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[17] Los *Freedom Riders* fueron jóvenes activistas de derechos civiles y estudiantes de diversos grupos raciales que guiaron autobuses interestatales en el 1961 para retar la no ejecución por parte del estado de las decisiones de la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos que había establecido que la segregación en los autobuses públicos era inconstitucional.

La campaña nacional posee cuatro dimensiones para el logro de sus objetivos a saber: a) Dimensión investigativa, b) Dimensión artística, c) Dimensión educativa, y d) Dimensión acción socio política. La dimensión investigativa se enmarca en la metodología de investigación acción participativa, integrando las demás dimensiones en el logro del propósito de la campaña nacional. Como parte de esta dimensión, se administra una encuesta sobre la materia en derechos humanos que atiende la campaña (ej. Derecho a la salud, derecho a la autodeterminación de los pueblos) a personas voluntarias en cada una de las paradas realizadas (véase imagen 3).

Imagen 3: Administración de encuesta a participante

El instrumento es realizado por diversos actores activistas e investigadores en la materia que ocupa cada una de las campañas. El protocolo investigativo es sometido a procesos de evaluación de Comités para la Protección de Sujetos Humanos en la Investigación. Todos los y las participantes de Trayecto Dignidad reciben una secuencia de tres talleres de capacitación en temas de derechos humanos, ética en la investigación y logística de la campaña (véase imagen 4).

Imagen 4: Capacitación a estudiantes y participantes en general de la Campaña Nacional

En la dimensión artística se integran la música, la actuación y la expresión corporal a través de la pintura para educar en materia de derechos humanos a través de las artes. En cada parada se realizan actividades artísticas de concienciación con la participación del Colectivo Sembrando Conciencia[18] y otros artistas (véase imagen 5).

Imagen 5: Intervención artística por miembro de Colectivo Sembrando Conciencia en Trayecto Dignidad 4

La dimensión educativa consta de la recopilación y preparación de panfletos educativos en materia de derechos humanos en sus aspectos políticos, civiles, sociales y culturales que son entregados a participantes de la encuesta y público en general en cada parada realizada. Organizaciones vinculadas a la defensa y ampliación de los Derechos Humanos en Puerto Rico facilitan el material. Además, se realizan conversatorios en diversos puntos de la isla la primera y segunda noche de la campaña, donde se convoca al público en general (véase imagen 6)

Imagen 6: Conversatorio comunitario de Trayecto Dignidad 3 en plaza pública

La dimensión de acción socio política se refiere a las actividades de divulgación, denuncia, cabildeo realizadas en diversos medios, organismos, instituciones para dar a conocer los resultados de la Campaña Nacional, específicamente los datos recopilados a través de la dimensión

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[18] Colectivo de artistas egresados de la Escuela de Artes Plásticas de Puerto Rico.

investigativa, y el estado de los Derechos Humanos en Puerto Rico (véase imagen 7).

Imagen 7: Manifestación frente al Capitolio de Puerto Rico por Trayecto Dignidad 3

El Colectivo Somos Dign@s ha realizado 4 campañas nacionales por los Derechos Humanos desde 2011. Trayecto Dignidad 1 estuvo enfocado en el conocimiento y percepción del estado de situación de los Derechos Humanos en Puerto Rico; Trayecto Dignidad 2 elaboró una campaña educativa e investigación abordando el tema de racismo y discrimen; Trayecto Dignidad 3 estuvo dirigido al tema del derecho a la salud y Trayecto Dignidad 4 se enfocó en el derecho a la autodeterminación de los pueblos.

La experiencia de Trayecto Dignidad y su naturaleza metodológica ha rendido frutos no solo en el espacio académico creando grupos transdisciplinarios y capacitándoles en metodologías innovadoras para atender el tema de los Derechos Humanos, sino también en los procesos educativos y de concienciación del pueblo de Puerto Rico sobre esta temática y la exigibilidad de los Derechos Humanos en sus aspectos políticos, ambientales, civiles, sociales y culturales. Más de 300 estudiantes y profesores y más de una veintena de organizaciones profesionales y comunitarias han participado de las Campañas Nacionales. Además, alrededor de 3.200 personas han participado de las encuestadas de Trayecto Dignidad y más de 8.000 personas se han beneficiado de las actividades artísticas y educativas, así como de los materiales provistos. Los resultados investigativos de las diversas campañas han sido materia de estudio en diversos cursos académicos, y divulgados a través de conferencias de prensas, seminarios, congresos locales e internacionales y artículos profesionales (véase imagen 8).

Además, proyectos de legislación han sido aprobados gracias al apoyo de la Campaña Nacional de Trayecto Dignidad. Tal es el caso del Proyecto de la

Cámara 1185, hoy Ley 235 de 2015, que abogaba por la creación del primer consejo multisectorial para estudiar la viabilidad de un sistema universal de salud para Puerto Rico, cuyos miembros fueran electos de forma democrática por los organismos a los que representa. Es importante destacar que la Presidenta de la Región América Latina y El Caribe, Dra. Silvana Martínez, ha podido participar de esta experiencia en su visita a Puerto Rico.

Imagen 8: Conferencia de prensa para la divulgación de los resultados preliminares de Trayecto Dignidad 4 en el contexto de la huelga de la Universidad de Puerto Rico en abril 2017.

Además del excelente trabajo del grupo Som@s Dignos, diversos profesionales del trabajo social en PR ha estado ligados a movimientos comunitarios de lucha por la protección de recursos naturales del Archipiélago: limpieza de contaminación por desperdicios militares en las islas de Vieques y Culebra, lucha en contra de la privatización de las playas con el movimiento Playas Pal Pueblo, luchas en contra de la contaminación de suelo a través de los movimientos en contra de la incineradora de Arecibo (municipio en el norte) y de depósitos de cenizas de carbón en Peñuela, entre otros. Además, se han apoyado los esfuerzos por el re uso y reciclaje de materiales, com (municipio al sur) o deber ético, contenido en el Código de Ética de los/as profesionales del Trabajo Social en Puerto Rico. Por otro lado, tenemos colegas que laboran en proyectos de organización comunitaria que han colaborado en el desarrollo y mantenimiento de huerto comunitarios. Finalmente, el Colegio de Profesional del Trabajo Social de Puerto Rico ha desarrollado una guía socioeducativa para conmemorar el día mundial del Planeta[19]

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[19]   http://cptspr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/EN-DERECHO-GUIA-SOCIOEDUCATIVA.pdf

En México se destaca como Buena Práctica ante Catástrofes Naturales, como el terremoto ocurrido en este país, una Práctica Regional que se llevó en conjunto con la Escuela Nacional de Trabajo Social de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, quienes trabajaron una propuesta de fortalecimiento del entorno saludable y la cultura barrial para el Barrio de "Tepito" durante el año 2017. El proceso general de la Práctica Regional que realizaron de febrero a mayo de 2017, consistió en una investigación regional y el diagnóstico sobre Entornos Saludables con los siguientes indicadores: a) Vivienda, b) Salud, c) Cultura y convivencia barrial y d) Medio Ambiente

Con los sismos del 7 y del 19 de Septiembre de 2017, reorientaron la labor académica hacia la identificación de afectaciones en el *Barrio de Tepito*, modificaron el enfoque a las necesidades y problemáticas de la emergencia que se desencadenaron en el Barrio de Tepito y como parte de la formación profesional, pusieron en práctica conocimientos teóricos y metodológicos, habilidades y actitudes. En la práctica regional, nos enfocamos a construir un objeto de estudio e intervención a partir de las características específicas del problema en un ámbito territorial, el cual se define por la presencia y cualidades de los indicadores que determinamos como parte del problema que estudiamos regionalmente.

Nuestro proceso de intervención inicia en el primer semestre de la práctica con una serie de talleres donde ponemos en común las bases teóricas y metodológicas con las cuales el equipo desarrolla su proceso de aprendizaje en un ámbito territorial. En nuestro caso, las bases teóricas y metodológicas comprenden 4 áreas o aspectos:

Al mismo tiempo, realizamos recorridos de reconocimiento y apropiación del territorio inicial de práctica, que en nuestro caso es el Barrio de Tepito, ubicado en el segundo cuadro del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México capital, caracterizado por ser un centro comercial dinámico y por el estigma de la violencia construida por los medios de comunicación, para el control de los liderazgos vecinales y del comercio fuertemente establecidos desde la década de los ochentas del siglo pasado.

Mapa de territorialización del grupo de practicantes de la licenciatura en Trabajo Social en el Centro Histórico y Barrio de Tepito, febrero-abril 2017

Primer recorrido de inserción del Grupo de Práctica Regional Tepito 2017

Los indicadores del problema observados en territorio, se registran de igual manera en un mapa de geolocalización, herramienta que nos permite tomar decisiones sobre las acciones que habrán de desarrollarse, los actores sociales que habrá que convocar, etc., como base para la plantear

alternativas de intervención y estrategias de organización y gestión social en una siguiente etapa del proceso de la práctica.
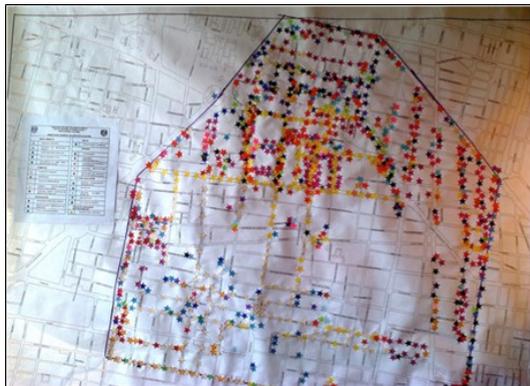

En el transcurso de un año, las y los profesionales en formación practicantes de la Licenciatura en Trabajo Social, pueden vivenciar el proceso metodológico de la intervención regional en un tema y ámbito territorial, adquiriendo los conocimientos las habilidades y la ética profesional que nos caracteriza como gremio al servicio de las causas del pueblo.

Como resultado de este primer semestre, tenemos un diagnóstico regional sobre las condiciones de los Entornos saludables en sus 4 vertientes:

a) Vivienda

b) Trabajo

c) Infraestructura sanitaria y medio ambiente

d) Educación, cultura y convivencia barrial

Conforme a este diagnóstico, las y los practicantes desarrollan un programa de intervención regional que atiende el problema ahí donde se requiere y con los actores sociales directamente vinculados al problema y de acuerdo con los recursos con los que cuenta el mismo grupo de practicantes y las comunidades.
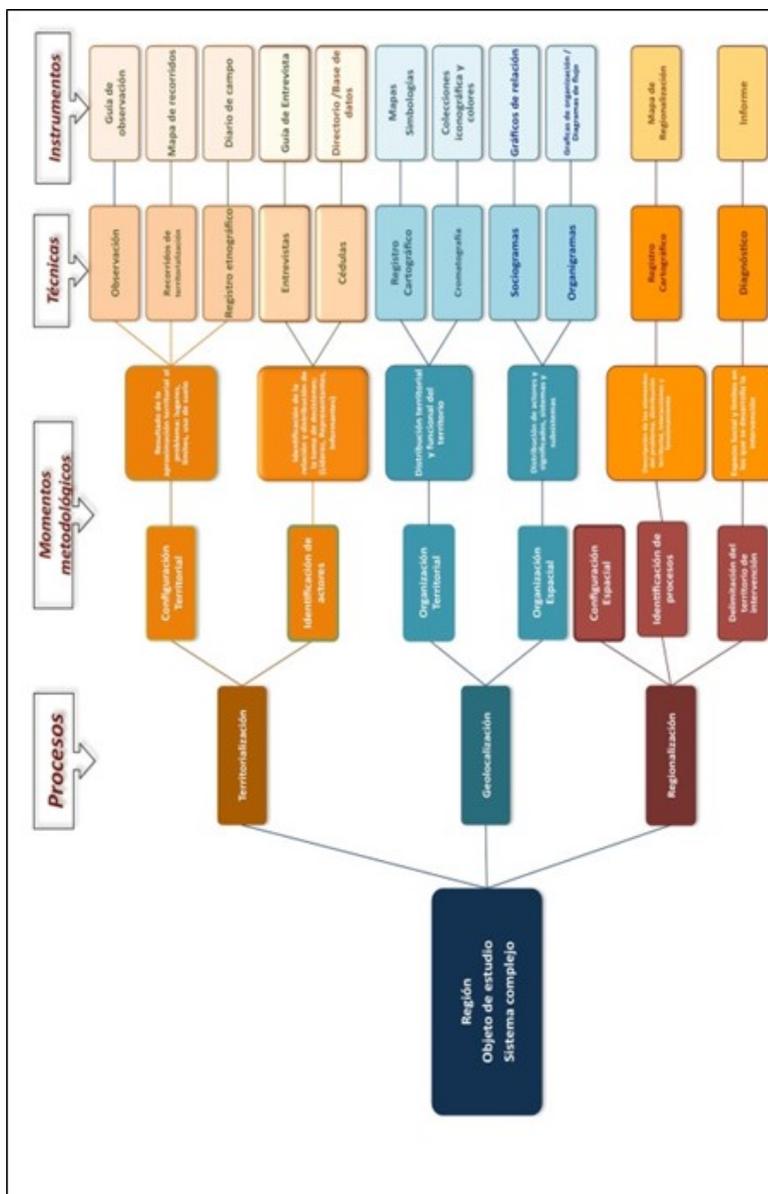
La propuesta se presenta a las comunidades en una reunión y se llegan a proyectos concretos en fechas específicas, sobre las siguientes áreas.

Consideramos que las 4 áreas son componentes del mismo sistema complejo de los Entornos Socioambientales en el barrio de Tepito, donde existe un alto índice de enfermedades crónico degenerativas, con una carga de género significativa y abuso de sustancias psicoactivas y de alcohol, abiertamente y sin restricciones, promovido por la misma actividad comercial del tianguis, que confronta a vecinos con comerciantes, y entre vecinos, comprometiendo el desarrollo y la seguridad de niños, niñas y jóvenes, y afectando la convivencia barrial.

Después de los sismos del 7 y 19 de septiembre.

Con los sismos de septiembre, el diagnóstico y la propuesta de intervención cambió radicalmente generando un estado de emergencia en donde cada practicante eligió colaborar como brigadista retirando escombros, o bien en la recopilación de agua, comida y demás requerimientos para las poblaciones afectadas. Así, las y los compañeros nos sumamos a las labores de emergencia en diferentes frentes, tanto en

la Ciudad de México como en los estados de México y Morelos, atendiendo en especial a la población indígena rural y urbana.

Las principales actividades fueron las siguientes

1) Recorridos de identificación de afectaciones en el barrio.
Realizamos recorridos de identificación de afectaciones donde tuvimos oportunidad de entrevistarnos con los habitantes del barrio.

La actividad comercial durante los primeros días disminuyó, así como la presencia de trabajadores del comercio y visitantes, lo cual nos permitió entrevistar a las personas

afectadas y cumplir con el objetivo de identificación de afectaciones.Con la información de los recorridos de observación y entrevistas, construimos un mapa de afectaciones para el cual nos planteamos presentarlo a las comunidades para que con esa base, se tomaran las decisiones que más convinieran a sus intereses, entre ellas la organización vecinal para la atención de inmuebles dañados. Estos procesos incluyen la construcción de mapas y cromatografía para el registro de las afectaciones.
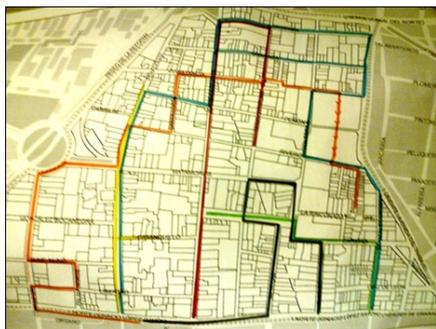
Mapa de territorialización para la identificación de afectaciones en el barrio de Tepito (uso de la técnica de cartografía para el registro de calles, viviendas, vecindades y unidades habitaciones en el Barrio de Tepito)

*Mapa de afectaciones identificadas en el barrio de Tepito. (uso de la técnica de **cromatografía** para designar inmuebles con daño evidente, inmuebles afectados y monumentos históricos sin daño aparente).*

2) Elaboración de una propuesta de intervención a las comunidades: Programa "Somos Tepito"

Con la información recabada y el análisis del papel del gobierno y el ejército en el control de la movilización ciudadana así como en la distribución y manejo del apoyo en especie y financiamiento para damnificados, decidimos convocar a las comunidades afectadas a participar en el programa **"Somos Tepito"**.

Para ello, promovimos la participación de la población en la **Jornada de Orientación y Promoción de Entornos Saludables y Seguros**, así como en los tres componentes del programa Somos Tepito, involucrando a especialistas, con el fin de atender no solo la emergencia del sismo sino generar procesos con implicaciones a largo plazo.

   a) Asesoría Jurídica. Un fenómeno que nos ha llamado la atención es que a pesar de que las viviendas presentan afectaciones evidentes como cuarteaduras en paredes y techos, las personas deciden permanecer a riesgo de que se derrumbe, debido a la incertidumbre de perder la vivienda debido a que no cuentan con papeles que formalicen la tenencia o no tengan cubiertos los pagos de impuesto predial, agua o luz.

   Solicitamos el apoyo del Dr. en Derecho Margarito Martínez Martínez, abogado litigante, padre de una de las practicantes y experto en el tema, quien generosamente ofreció su tiempo y conocimientos para atender las dudas de las y los vecinos en torno a la tenencia de su vivienda.

   Para apoyar este tema, se elaboró un cartel con la información básica de ¿Qué hacer…? y ¿A dónde acudir…? para realizar las diferentes gestiones relacionadas con la regularización de la tenencia y pago de impuestos y servicios.

b) Asesoría Arquitectónica. Estuvo a cargo de los compañeros arquitectos de Barriopolis, A.C., quienes nos han acompañado en diferentes momentos y a la vez hemos apoyado para realizar la vinculación con la población.

Su aportación, además de atender los efectos del sismo en las viviendas, fue un Manual de reparación de muros y la visita específica a los inmuebles.

Programa "Somos Tepito"

Jornada de Orientación y Promoción de Entornos Saludables y Seguros	Organización y movilización vecinal	Vámonos de Paseo

Asesoría Jurídica · Asesoría Arquitectónica · Orientación en Protección Civil · Contención Emocional · Talleres para la promoción de ambientes saludables · informe de afrctaciones · Manual de Organización vecinal · Visita al Parque Bicentenario "Cuando la tierra se movió" · La ruleta de la prevención · Prevención de riesgos · Mejoramiento del entorno · Huertos Urbanos

c) Orientación en Protección Civil. Este tema estuvo a cargo de uno de los practicantes, quien se capacitó a partir de las necesidades de protección civil en el campo, como miembro de una brigada. El conocimiento y la experiencia adquiridos por las y los integrantes del equipo fue de mucha utilidad para atender el tema.

Para apoyar este taller, se desarrolló un cartel donde se proporciona información básica sobre ¿Qué hacer…?, teléfonos de emergencia y la mochila de la supervivencia.

d) Contención emocional y atención de crisis. Esta mesa estuvo a cargo de las compañeras psicólogas que prestan sus servicios en

el Centro de Desarrollo Comunitario Cuauhtémoc, donde además nos proporcionaron las instalaciones para la Jornada de Orientación.

e) Talleres para la promoción de ambientes saludables. Se organizaron y desarrollaron los materiales y la dinámica de los talleres de prevención de riesgos y el autocuidado, dirigido principalmente a niños y niñas, mediante actividades lúdico-recreativas y terapéuticas que permitieran la expresión de la experiencia en torno del sismo, así como de la relación de entre las personas y con la naturaleza.

Para ello, se diseñaron y crearon materiales didácticos relacionados con los temas, como el juego de la lotería, memorama, libros para colorear, el diseño de huertos, la donación de plantas y la germinación de semillas.

3) Promoción de la Organización y Movilización Vecinal

En el marco de la Jornada de Orientación y Promoción de Ambientes Seguros y Saludables, pusimos especial énfasis en la organización y movilización vecinal, que comprendió las siguientes actividades:

a) Reunión informativa sobre afectaciones a inmuebles en el Barrio. Esta primera parte de la jornada consistió en la presentación del informe a las comunidades acerca del trabajo de observación y registro para la identificación de afectaciones en el barrio.

En este punto, se hizo entrega a las y los vecinos participantes, de un tríptico con los resultados de esta intervención.

b) Se convocó a la promover la organización vecinal para la atención de las necesidades de reparación o reconstrucción que se requiera, apoyados con la elaboración de un Manual de Organización Vecinal. La presencia de líderes vecinales y de comerciantes, así como representantes de los Comités de Participación Ciudadana del barrio, fue muy importante debido a que no solo avalaron el manual sino que, conforme a su experiencia, consideraron este instrumento para mejorar y fortalecer sus organizaciones.

4) Proyecto para el mejoramiento de la convivencia y cultura barrial: Vámonos de paseo¡

Este componente de la intervención tuvo como propósito informar y sensibilizar a las y los participantes sobre el autocuidado, la prevención y la convivencia, para fortalecer los vínculos familiares y comunitarios.

Visitamos el Parque Ecológico Bicentenario, que proporciona servicios recreativos, deportivos y de educación ambiental, en compañía de niños, niñas y vecinas, disfrutando de una jornada de convivencia, juegos y aprendizaje, además de recorrer los diferentes ecosistemas con que cuenta el parque y el jardín de orquídeas con su gran variedad de estas flores.

Para el desarrollo de esta actividad, se organizaron juegos orientados a informar y promover medidas básicas de autocuidado, aprender a respetar a los seres de la naturaleza, propiciar el desarrollo de habilidades para la seguridad y evitar riesgos en su entorno, además de la convivencia.

5) Gestión de apoyos

Una habilidad muy apreciada en estos tiempos de emergencia y crisis lo constituye la gestión de apoyos, sin lo cual no hubiera sido posible contar con los especialistas que apoyaron la Jornada de Orientación, la reproducción de materiales, la capacitación, la elaboración de material didáctico. El lugar donde realizamos la jornada, la visita al parque y la reproducción de materiales requirió la movilización de recursos con los que no contamos profesoras/es y practicantes de Trabajo Social, de manera que esta función se traduce tanto en la habilidad de localizar y convencer a las instituciones, organizaciones y profesionales en particular de aportar los recursos técnicos, materiales o financieros que hagan posible llevar a cabo el programa.

En conclusión, la tragedia del sismo nos movió todo y movilizó todo, de hecho ha sido una de las experiencias que más disfrutamos y de las que hemos podido valorar nuestra capacidad profesional logrando participar en muy variados procesos y lugares en un corto periodo.

Profesora del grupo de practicantes: María Luisa Moreno Rivera. **Practicantes:** Lizeth Cabildo Martínez, Jessica Cruz Hernández. Nazareth Cruz López. María Guadalupe Del Razo García, Leticia Figueroa Valdez, Natalia Guadalupe García Vázquez, Jennifer Hernández Manzano, Nancy León Espinosa, Diego Martínez Cázares, Laura Martínez López, Elizabeth

Martínez Montes, Ivvet Quintanilla Ramírez, Rodrigo Eduardo Salinas Flores, Ramsés Tenorio Fonseca

Consideraciones finales

Casi todos los países de América Latina y el Caribe son actualmente muy vulnerables a los efectos del cambio climático (fenómenos meteorológicos extremos, como episodios de precipitaciones intensas y frecuentes fuera de temporada, así como olas de calor, frío y huracanes). Para 2030, la mayoría de los países se encontrarán en una situación de grave riesgo (DARA, 2012). Los considerables costos económicos del cambio climático han quedado claramente demostrados (Stern 2007, CEPAL 2010c). Aunque aún registran bajos niveles de emisiones de dióxido de carbono, los países de América Latina y el Caribe con clima tropical cálido y húmedo se verán seriamente afectados por la intensificación del cambio climático y el riesgo de desastres, con las consiguientes repercusiones negativas en la salud de la población de la región y un aumento de los precios de los alimentos.

En los últimos años, Colombia, el Ecuador y el Perú se han visto gravemente afectados por el fenómeno de El Niño-Oscilación Austral (que provoca una escasez o un exceso inhabituales de precipitaciones). La mayoría de los pequeños estados insulares del Caribe son especialmente vulnerables al cambio climático, el aumento del nivel del mar, los riesgos naturales y para el medio ambiente, debido a su tamaño, ubicación, a la concentración de población en las zonas costeras dentro de un área de tierra limitada, y en algunos casos, a la falta de capacidad institucional para hacer frente a crisis (CEPAL 2012c).

Quienes viven por debajo de la línea de pobreza y enfrentan otras formas de vulnerabilidad (sobre todo mujeres) sufren más las consecuencias de los desastres y los daños ambientales, pues en algunos países de América Latina y el Caribe la escasez de recursos las ha obligado a ocupar progresivamente zonas de alto riesgo y tierras marginales, donde, aparte de vivir en asentamientos urbanos precarios, intensifican la degradación de las tierras y la desertificación. Este proceso no solo amenaza el medio ambiente, sino también la salud y seguridad de estas personas, como hemos observado recientemente en los casos de fuertes lluvias con inundaciones, como las de Colombia y el Brasil, deslizamientos de tierras, o terremotos como el de Haití.

Si no se toman medidas, las amenazas ambientales actuales y futuras podrían poner en peligro el extraordinario progreso experimentado en el

índice de desarrollo humano en los últimos decenios y en los avances hacia el cumplimiento de los ODM, en particular respecto del hambre y la seguridad alimentaria. Hay una urgente necesidad de encontrar nuevas vías de desarrollo que puedan garantizar la sostenibilidad del medio ambiente, de consolidar una economía respetuosa con el medio ambiente y de revertir la destrucción ecológica, a la vez que se intenta procurar una vida digna para todas las personas ahora y en el futuro (CDP 2012).

Para conseguirlo, los patrones de consumo y producción sostenible y la protección y gestión de los recursos naturales como base del desarrollo económico y social deben considerarse objetivos generales a la vez que requisitos esenciales para el desarrollo sostenible. Una economía ecológicamente sostenible será beneficiosa para la reducción de la vulnerabilidad a corto y largo plazo, permitirá generar empleo e ingresos y estimulará el desarrollo de tecnología y la infraestructura para la prevención de desastres naturales al mismo tiempo que se protege el medio ambiente (ONUDI 2010). Además, el manejo de ecosistemas incrementa la resiliencia de los sistemas naturales y las sociedades humanas ante los impactos del cambio climático, sirviendo de base para integrar adaptación y mitigación al cambio climático, la reducción de riesgo de desastres y la conservación de recursos naturales con las estrategias de reducción de la pobreza y de desarrollo sostenible (Munang y otros 2013).

Como ha quedado en evidencia en este reporte, las experiencias de prácticas profesionales en Trabajo Social y Desarrollo Social vinculadas a la Promoción de Comunidades y Entornos Sostenibles son muy diversas en la Región América Latina y El Caribe. No obstante, no podemos dejar de mencionar que es una problemática para la cual no existe una suficiente formación profesional de los Trabajadores Sociales. Tampoco hay un desarrollo en investigaciones empíricas y producción de conocimientos en Trabajo Social. En general se va aprendiendo desde la práctica profesional con la experiencia cotidiana y ante la ocurrencia de casos concretos de catástrofes naturales. Sin embargo, esto no ocurre sólo en el campo del Trabajo Social sino que tiene una inscripción más amplia, ya que -en efecto- hay una insuficiente concientización acerca del problema ambiental en nuestros países, tanto a nivel gubernamental como en diferentes ámbitos de la vida social. Pareciera ser que el tema ambiental se reduce a una cuestión de ecologistas agrupados generalmente en organizaciones no gubernamentales.

La profesión de trabajo social puede tener un papel bien importante en el área de prevención. Puede colaborar en el establecimiento de alianzas entre los diferentes sectores de la comunidad y de los pueblos para el trabajo conjunto, el trabajo en equipo y la organización de redes sociales. Además, podemos ser más proactivos (as) en las denuncias a cualquier daño al ambiente, incluyendo el grave problema de disposición de basura. Los trabajadores y trabajadoras sociales como colectivo tenemos la capacidad de colaborar en la formulación de políticas sociales, en el ámbito de salud y ambiente, que atiendan necesidades identificadas por las mismas comunidades que ayudarían a conservar nuestros recursos naturales y la protección del ambiente.

Reconocemos como muy importante la incorporación de esta problemática en la Agenda Global para el Trabajo Social y el Desarrollo Social, porque nos permite visibilizar los vacíos, tanto en la formación como en las prácticas profesionales de los Trabajadores Sociales. Sin dudas es un tema que tendremos que seguir trabajando en nuestra región muy fuertemente, para instalarlo no sólo en la agenda profesional sino también en las agendas de gobierno y en las agendas legislativas.

Día Mundial del Trabajo Social 2017
En este apartado compartimos algunas actividades llevada a cabo por los miembros de nuestra Región en el marco del Día Mundial del Trabajo Social, el 21 de Marzo del 2017

ARGENTINA

Se trabajó la historia y significado del Día Mundial del Trabajo Social con estudiantes ingresantes a la Carrera de Trabajo Social de la Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Nacional de Misiones.

El Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de La Rioja organizó una Jornada en el marco del Día Mundial de Trabajo Social y la Dirección de Carrera de Licenciado en Trabajo Social de la Universidad Nacional de La Rioja organizaron Jornada por el Día Mundial del Trabajo Social. Recordando que esta fecha conmemora el compromiso, la contribución y la labor de nuestros/as profesionales como conocedores/as de primera mano de la realidad social, líderes del cambio y de la intervención social, e impulsores de la lucha y la garantía de los derechos sociales de la ciudadanía. Se abordaran los siguientes ejes:

1- Trabajo Social, políticas sociales y ambientales; 2- Desarrollo local; 3- Hábitat y Economía Social en procesos de autogestión comunitaria.

GRENADA

Los trabajadores sociales y profesores de la universidad de Florda y la asociación de trabajadores sociales de Granada que celebran el día.

PUERTO RICO

El Martes 21 de se llevaron a cabo conferencias sobre Comunidades, Ambiente y Desarrollo Sustentable. Universidades de todo el país se conectaron al facebook live en donde hubo transmisión en vivo de las conferencias. Luego los trabajadores sociales participaron de las discusiones sobre el tema. Esta actividad fue realizada por el Colegio de Profesionales del Trabajo Social y la Asociación Nacional de Escuelas de Trabajo Social. La actividad contó como conferenciantes a la Dra. Marta Quiñones y la colega Francine Sánchez-Marcano.

COSTA RICA

Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Costa Rica. El viernes 24 de marzo compartieron con las y los colegas de la Filial Occidente la celebración del Día Mundial de Trabajo Social 2017.

MÉXICO

En el marco del Día Mundial de Trabajo Social se llevó a cabo el Séptimo Seminario Nacional de Trabajo Social.

Asimismo se llevó a cabo el Encuentro Nacional de Trabajadores Sociales de México, cuyo objetivo general fue promover la organización y articulación de las organizaciones gremiales de las y los Trabajadores Sociales para el reconocimiento y significación de las condiciones laborales de nuestra profesión frente al marco del proyecto dominante y excluyente que nos amenaza.

PANAMÁ

En el Marco de la celebración del Día Mundial del Trabajo Social se desarrollaron tres acciones importantes:

1. La Asociación de Trabajadores Sociales de Panamá fue llamada para formar parte como asociación de profesionales de la Junta Directiva del Patronato de Nutrición o Asociación conjunta. Se recibió la grata noticia que por decisión unánime fueron elegidos como miembros de la Junta Directiva de dicha instancia lo que los acerca más para realizar acciones con poblaciones indígenas y campesinas.

2. Igualmente hicieron eco de la actividad Plantón Mundial por las niñas que fallecieron en un hogar en Guatemala, hecho este que conmocionó al mundo.

3. Se realizó con gestión de las colegas de Ministerio de Ambiente actividad de riego y limpieza de Plantones del programa Alianza por el Millón de lo cual nuestro gremio continuará estas acciones como responsabilidad social.

EL SALVADOR

CUBA

La Sociedad Cubana de Trabajadores Sociales de la Salud ha celebrado el "Día Mundial del Trabajo Social" reafirmando con orgullo el sentido de pertenencia a la Federación Internacional de Trabajadores Sociales y compromiso social de la profesión. Para lo cual han diseñado una programación de actividades enmarcadas en la celebración de este día, tales como: La divulgación del Día Mundial del Trabajo Social por medios audiovisuales y medios de comunicación social de Cuba. Se elaboró un cartel relacionado con el día mundial del trabajador social. Asimismo se organizó la XXII Jornada Científica Nacional de Trabajo Social y IV Jornada Científica Nacional de Rehabilitacion Sociocupacional *"Desarrollo y perspectivas del Trabajo Social en el mundo de hoy"* que se llevó a cabo el 21 y 22 de marzo del año 2017. En ese evento. Se entregaron certificados a trabajadoras sociales jubiladas con un trabajo activo en la organización y se entregaron certificados a trabajadoras sociales con más de 35 años ejerciendo la profesión de forma ininterrumpida en el sector.

PERÚ

Elaboró un emotivo video que se divulgó a los medios, estudiantes y Trabajadores Sociales de Perú que contiene fotos, y un importante mensaje de la Presidente Lic. Jenny Linares Vera.

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Chapter 5B

Latin America and the Caribbean: Promoting Community & Environmental Sustainability

Silvana Martínez, Larry Alicea Rodríguez, Juan Omar Agüero, Jorge Arturo Sáenz Fonseca, Gloria Luoni and Nilsa Burgos.

Contents

English translation of the original in Spanish (see chapter 5A)

General context of the Latin America and the Caribbean region

The Latin American and Caribbean region is going through a deep crisis as a product of neoliberal governments that have acceded to the power by the popular vote or by institutional coup d'états with little or no legitimacy, or by betraying the progressive political spaces to which they belonged and for which they were elected. These governments respond to foreign interests, large transnational corporations, and national elites that concentrate economic and political power. The so-called "Latin American Spring" of the first decade of the 21st century has been far behind, where progressive governments tried to reduce social inequalities, build national and popular political projects, restore and extend citizen's rights and try to recover the dream of the Latin American great homeland.

Our countries in the region, are no longer scenarios of civic-military dictatorships as occurred during the 1970s. The global financial capitalism has installed in the region other forms of dictatorships, the market dictatorships, which lead millions of human beings to exploitation, misery and death. This new scenario is characterised by the massive redundancies of workers; the repression of social demonstrations; manipulation in the social media; censorship and restriction of freedom of expression; stigmatisation of the popular sectors; political intolerance; institutional violence; the attack on pro-human rights organisations and the assassination of peasant leaders, environmentalists and journalists in order to install fear as a form of social discipline.

It is observed a profound setback in regards rights conquered as a product of historical struggles. In this sense, there is a clear process of dis-citizenship. This is aggravated by the dismantling of the State in vital areas that guarantee basic rights such as education, health and housing. The public policies promoted by neoliberal governments are characterised by the dissembling of the economic productivity; Labour reforms in order to reduce the costs by reducing and disestablishing the working conditions even more; the reforms in pensions and systems of social protection; reductions in funding of public education and the neglect of scientific and technological development, among others.

These Governments and policies have broadened and deepened social inequalities in the Latin America and the Caribbean region which, while not the poorest, it is the most unequal region in the world. In economic terms and according to international agencies 10% of the richest population

concentrates 71% of wealth, while the richest 1% concentrates 41% of the region's wealth. To this huge economic gap between the poor and the rich, we can to add other social inequalities related to gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, education, health, access to justice, among others. In turn, these inequalities are further enhanced by combining with each other. In this new scenario there is a worrying growing inequality and increasing pressures on the environment and natural resources, with the emergence new economic powers, the arrival of new technologies and the rapid urbanisation, among other signs. Therefore and wishing to shape a better future for all, there is a need for policies and actions based on the holistic vision that sustainable development brings.

Although this scenario is bleak, it is also a scenario of confrontation, struggle and resistance, where movements and social organisations have not stopped proposing and continuously generate collective actions of protest throughout the Region. The different ways people have expressed their rejection towards these policies include large popular mobilisations, strikes, demonstrations, pacific occupation of public spaces, signing and presentation of petitions to Governments, use of social networks aiming at reporting publicly the acts of violence and the violation of rights, as well as to make massive calls for protest and making social struggle more visible. In these struggles, social workers and their organisations have been present.

IFSW Latin America and the Caribbean

The International Federation of Social Workers -Latin America and the Caribbean (IFSW - LAC) region, has to date 17 member countries: Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Grenada and Haiti. It has established contacts with Paraguay, Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela for their future incorporation as members. Also, during the period covered by this report IFSW LAC has been working in partnership with the Latin American and the Caribbean Social Work Committee (COLACATS) and the Latin American Association of Teaching and Research in Social Work (ALAEITS). In July 2017 was held the 5th of the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting, where representatives of these regional organisations as well as the IFSW General Secretary were present.

We observe four main problems related to the Social Work Professional Practice in the region: the poor working conditions of social workers, the impact of that neoliberal policies has in the social services, the problems linked to vocational training (i.e.: distance learning degrees, academic programs or non-updated curriculum, etc.) and the emergence of organisations that commercialise social work events.

As for the Global Agenda on Social Work and Social development, it is important to remember that this one was articulated over four big pillars: 1) the promotion of the social and economic equality; 2) the promotion of the dignity and people's value; 3) the promotion of environmental and community sustainability; and 4) the promotion of human relations (Truell, R., Jones, D., Lima, A. 2017:139).

When, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in 2012, member countries agreed to initiate a process for the development of sustainable development goals and link it to the discussion on what will become the Development Agenda after 2015. Two international processes were merging which, until then, had been paralleled: the People-Centred Development Agenda guided by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Agenda for Sustainable Development – which dealt with the complex relationship between environment and development. The latter was guided by a succession of declaratory instruments, including the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of 1992, Agenda 21 and international conventions emanating from the Earth Summit, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The present report is based on the third pillar of the Global Agenda for Social work for the period 2016-2018, the promotion of environmental and community sustainability, and it links with the objectives of sustainable development and aspirations and practices of Social workers around the world on this matter. It emphasises the important role of social workers in driving communities and promoting environmentally sustainable development. This includes: a) working closely with other partner agencies, including those that go beyond social work, to create communities of practice, particularly in relation to environmental sustainability; b) promote the creation of community capacities, through sustainable and environmentally-friendly projects, wherever possible and c) responding to environmental challenges, including working with communities to increase their resilience capacity for a better recovery from environmental and

natural disasters and derived social problems, as well as in relation to "human disasters" including refugee families fleeing persecution or war.

Major social problems related to community and environmental sustainability that are affecting the region

In Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in other regions of the world, despite the progress that has been made in creating and strengthening institutions and environmental policy, there has not been a big change in the way things are done and the economic model remains the same. The growing evidence on the effects of climate change already shows its effects in the region. According to the NGO Vitalis-Latin America, the region is facing important environmental problems, determined mainly by the patterns of use of its natural resources, production systems, population's habits and environmental governance approaches. Although these problems present some common characteristics, there are significant differences between countries that are influenced by social, political, economic and cultural considerations.

- Deforestation of wild wooded areas and poor management of many green urban and rural areas.
- Increase in the number of species that are threatened with extinction or some degree of danger.
- Pollution and soil degradation, including erosion deterioration.
- Damage of urban areas due to air pollution and sound emissions.
- Increased greenhouse effect and climate change, with little progress in the region to mitigate its effects and adapt to climate changes.
- Weak integrated management of water resources, which includes waste in the domestic and agricultural uses, and contamination of the bodies of water by industrial effluents, agricultural and domestic
- Poor handling of residue and solid waste, including the inappropriate treatment of the electronic waste.
- High levels of in population density with the subsequent environmental consequences in the natural environment
- Little environmental awareness. Citizens in Latin America do not include the environment as a fundamental factor within their quality of life (www.vitalis.net).

The protection of the environment and people against the effects of environmental degradation is increasingly accepted as an integral part of any strategy to overcome poverty and intergenerational inequality. At the national level, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean face numerous and diverse environmental policy challenges, emanating from the common challenge of overcoming structural heterogeneity and dependence on static competitive advantages of the intensive industries in natural resources. The high inequality and economic segregation of the social structure, has led to the adoption of patterns of consumption that are characterised by segregation, with the development of private markets for goods and services such as transport, health and education (De Miguel & Tavares 2015).

This segregation separates the rich from the poor, accentuating the disparities and hinders the start up of more inclusive public solutions that contemplate the protection of the environment (ECLAC 2014). Efforts to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities are now threatened by climate change, both for countries at imminent risk of serious crises and also those facing a perspective of chronic imbalances. Although not less serious, of the ecosystems and, thus, of the livelihoods of its population, like those of Central America and the Caribbean. In ECLAC's work on the economy of climate change and the effects of this phenomenon on the coast of Latin America and the Caribbean, the challenges faced by several countries in the region have been documented (ECLAC 2010; ECLAC and the University of Cantabria 2012).

The climate change threat adds to the human and economic costs of other forms of environmental degradation, which are often taken over by the most vulnerable. For example, the poor are often more exposed to the effects of air pollution, toxic waste and faulty and/or non-existan sewage systems, which also aggravates when they do not have to health services. Those who are directly dependent on agriculture, fishing and other activities of smaller scale based on natural resources are more likely to suffer extreme changes in their livelihoods because of the degradation of ecosystems. Those who cannot abstain from using the public transport system are more affected by city traffic and therefore face higher costs in terms of time to transfer and loss of opportunities for access to the labour market (Miguel and Tavares 2015).

In Argentina there is a great diversity of agro-ecological regions, climates and natural resources. The validity of a neoliberal model, based on the

maximization of income; policies ignoring the sustainability of the environment and the absence of the State in the regulation and management of the same, leads to its degradation. The advancement on protected forestry areas; the tendency to monoculture; the retreat of the glaciers by the mining industry; the loss of biodiversity and the growing produced waste as a result of accelerated urbanisation; climate change due to the greenhouse effect are some of the structural problems that the country presents.

The installation of "pasteras" in the Argentine Mesopotamia, with the consequence pollution of the River Uruguay; open-pit mining in the northeast region of the country, with the resulting pollution of waters used by companies and for the communities surrounding; The disappearance of fish species in the Argentine sea, as a result of the overexploitation of fishing; The predominantly soy monoculture, with the progressive degradation of soils, the increasing use of agrochemicals; And the conflict of the native peoples, in particular the Mapuches, produced by the defense of the land by its first settlers, (and which is now in the hands of the concentrated powers), are clear examples of the environmental situation in the course of the second decade of the 21st century. This scenario is resulting in parts of the population that see their health damaged by the harmful effects of these mega-enterprises near their habitats.

In Brazil, the problems that affect the environment are multiple, vast and of enormous seriousness, damaging all their biomass. Major threats include water, air and soil pollution, deforestation, litter disposal in inadequate areas, illegal hunting and fishing, waste of food and bad use of natural resources, and global warming. All of these problems, have their origin in the the accelerated demographic growth, urban and agricultural expansion, as well as in the general consumption of resources. The combination of all of this is triggering a series of negative impacts on biodiversity, declining populations, extinguishing species − by depriving them of food and shelter and causing diseases that affected them. Consequently, this situation triggers further damage to the human society whose survival depends on the nature and its resources.

In El Salvador natural resources are subject to a strong demographic pressure − it is a small country (20.041 km²) with a high population density (6, 345 million inhabitants). The rural area is gradually disappearing due to

the phenomenon of urbanisation; this implies a higher demand of resources (like water), also the country faces a high degree of deforestation throughout the while national territory. In addition, the phenomenon of violence limits the access to impoverished communities, both urban and rural. Also, for the approval of laws directly related to sustainable development, such as the law banning metallic mining, strong opposition from national and transnational companies is identified. The human right to access water has no recognition in the Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador and there is no law that addresses the problem form a sustainability perspective, thus the lack of a public policy. In September 2011 the Presidency Technical Secretariat published a proposal for a national policy on Sanitation and Water for 2011-2015, which to date has not been approved. The factors mentioned earlier are also increasing the country's vulnerability to climate change and to adverse events, such as: earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms, hurricanes, among others.

Most of the small island States of the Caribbean and Central American countries are particularly vulnerable to climate change, sea-level rise and natural and environmental hazards. This is due to their size and location, the concentration of population in small sized areas and in some cases, the lack of institutional capacity to cope with the crisis (ECLAC 2013). When analysing the vulnerability and the exposure of the coasts of Latin America and the Caribbean in facing the possible consequences that climate change could cause, countries and territories identified have almost all of their population concentrated in areas with high possibilities of getting flooded as in the case of the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Cayman Islands, the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada and Dominica. It has been also identified that large agricultural areas are located in the areas of possible flooding, which makes it especially vulnerable to the agricultural sectors in countries like Mexico, Brazil, Guatemala, Suriname, The Bahamas and the Cayman Islands (ECLAC 2012).

The Caribbean island of Grenada is one of the smallest independent countries in the Western Hemisphere. Known as the island of spices, it is the world's second largest producer of nutmeg after Indonesia and a major producer of mace, cinnamon, ginger and cloves. It also has beautiful landscapes with fertile valleys, rain forests and mountain lakes and its tropical climate and excellent beaches are a great attraction for tourists. Grenada has a multitude of laws and policies that address everything from land acquisition to beach protection. Unfortunately, there is a great

hesitation in the implementation of these laws and policies. This was recently highlighted in a consultation process on Land Use policy for Grenada.

The consultant, George de Romilly de Caribinvest, a professional with experience in this problem, has published a document that was considered by some as a radical perspective in the management of natural resources in Grenada. In this document, Romilly de Caribinvest states: "*The importance of the country's land resources for economic growth and development, poverty reduction and the survival and well-being of the entire population is well known and cannot be exaggerated. Despite this knowledge, the sustainability of these resources is seriously threatened by various types of incompatible development activities, such as illegal construction, ad hoc urban and rural developments and illegal occupation. These land use practices, have resulted in the degradation of the quality of the earth, which commits its availability for productive uses. Poor land use practices also pose serious threats to national food security, human health, the resilience to climate variability and the economic and social instability. The availability and accessibility of the limited land resources of the country are still more restricted by its rugged topography, high levels of precipitation, an inefficient system of land tenure, prices uncontrollable of the earth and unregulated use of the earth, among other factors. Increasing competition and demands among multiple land users are increasing pressures on this limited and declining resource. Without appropriate interventions, these undesirable land-use practices would no doubt continue to limit the ability of the Earth to provide the services and functions that are so essential to the survival and well-being of the population*"[20].

In the document it refers to the management of natural resources such as land, water, soil and sand, plants, fish and animals, with a particular focus on how management affects the quality of life of present and future generations (administration). Natural resource management is about managing how people and natural landscapes/seascapes interact. It brings together land-use planning, water and land management, coastal resource management, biodiversity conservation, pollution control and the future sustainability of human settlements and industries such as tourism, agriculture, fisheries and trade. It recognises that people and their

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[20] De Romilly, George "Grenada Land Policy"

livelihoods depend on the health and productivity of land and marine resources, and their actions as managers of these resources play a fundamental role in maintaining this health and productivity.

Environmental and natural resource violations have also been observed in Puerto Rico, another Caribbean island. For example, some beaches have been privatised, even though there is legislation staying that the beaches are public and there have been violations of the Land Use Plan. In addition, there have been attempts at mining exploitation, production of fossil energy from multinationals, incineration of litter, ash deposits in lands close to poor populations, pollution of land, water and air pollution by factories and military pollution in the municipalities of Vieques and Culebra.

Public policies that should address these problems according to the Social Work vision

Policies specifically aimed at addressing environmental problems must also address the challenges of inequality. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that environmental policies and instruments adopted at all levels of government, do not create an additional burden for poor and vulnerable people, but rather give priority to protecting and improving their living conditions. Social security mechanisms are also needed to protect people from the loss of their livelihoods. The tax structure should be reviewed so as to combine incentives to reduce pollution with investment in efficient, effective and equitable public transport, water and sanitation, and urban development services, among others (De Miguel and Tavares 2015).

Policies that will contribute to the integrated promotion of sustainable livelihoods and environmental protection encompass numerous sectoral activities and a wide range of actors, (from the local to the global level) and that are critical at all levels, especially at the local and community levels. Measures at the national and international levels should be taken to carry these activities forward and to take full account of existing regional and subregional conditions in order to advocate a country-specific approach to local activities.

As indicated by the Division for Sustainable Development of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2016), policies should: (a) Focus on empowering local and community groups under the principles of delegation of authority and accountability, with sufficient resources allocated to each programme to address specific geographical and

ecological conditions; (c) Understand a long-term strategy aimed at establishing the best possible conditions for creating, at the local, regional and national levels, sustainable development that eliminates poverty and reduces inequality among various groups of the population.

In this sense, policies should assist the most disadvantaged groups, in particular women, children and young people and refugees. These groups should include smallholders, peasants, artisans, fishing communities, landless families, indigenous communities, migrants and the informal urban economy sector. What is essential is to take concrete sector-specific action, with great focus in the areas of basic education, primary health care, maternal care and the advancement of women.

When speaking of public policies, we refer to projects designed by the State, which mark the political will to omit or act on a given issue of public interest, with sufficient consensus and legitimacy in order to guarantee governance and sustainability over time for its implementation. In the 21st century, this public policy requires agreements between the various social, political, business and state actors in order to ensure that the objectives set are achieved. In the case of socio-environmental policies, they must have a character:

a) Federal: that it be built on the basis of the interests of all the provinces, municipalities, regions.

b) Integral: that it considers in its design all aspects of the dynamic interrelationship between communities and the environment, with emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge. At this point, the incorporation of social work professionals to facilitate the coordination of the different professions and activities in the social dimension is central. Integral also refers to the implementation not only of project-specific actions, but also to the promotion, prevention and socio-educational components, with particular emphasis on policy evaluation processes.

c) Transverse: this means that its implementation must cross all the sectoral levels of the State, particularly because of the social nature of these policies

d) Participatory: refers to the involvement of the multiple actors involved, not only in the consultation but also in the decision-making process.

e) Adequate funding: A sine qua non requirement to show the political will of governments. The idea is reinforced that without a specific budget there is no possibility of implementing an efficient, effective and sustainable policy over time.

f) Institutionality: which must be sustained through institutional strengthening, prioritization, and the training and formation of resources to achieve coordination between areas and jurisdictions.

g) A comprehensive, participatory public policy that involves all social actors: the State, civil society, private companies, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and the community in the entire process of defining and implementing public policies, namely: Formulation (Issues on the agenda, diagnosis, design, dissemination), Implementation and Evaluation. It should also integrate environmental sanitation, water resources, biodiversity and climate change, from the perspective of sustainability and the human rights and gender perspective. The adoption of public policy on sustainable development is not enough. For example, in Puerto Rico, the "Law on Public Policy for Sustainable Development" Law No. 267 of 10 September 2004 was passed. However, it is very difficult to implement it in a country that is bankrupt, under a fiscal control board appointed by the U.S. Congress and facing the disaster left by Hurricane Maria Island.

Expectations about change from the people with whom we work

Social organisations have modified their political agenda to orient it towards the formation of a citizenship that is increasingly aware of its rights and responsibilities with regard to sustainable development, and that has placed equality at the centre of the debate with regard to the right to live in a healthy environment and access to natural resources, information, opportunities to participate and environmental justice. The complexity of these changes requires effective channels for informed public participation, as well as interregional and interregional cooperation and the exchange of experiences.

One of the main critics of the MDG design process has been the lack of consultation with governments and civil society and, in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, the low relevance of some of the goals to the specific needs of the region. The post-2015 framework must be better adapted to regional priorities. It will need to enhance inter-institutional

collaboration and provide more opportunities for cross-border knowledge sharing and learning between practitioners. The international community faces a unique opportunity to strengthen national ownership by consulting on the post-2015 agenda, which would include promoting effective dialogue at the national and regional levels between governments and civil society, including indigenous groups, youth and women. This process is not just a consultation, but an opportunity for governments to take ownership of the next goals and integrate them into their national, subnational and local priorities and budgets.

The new development agenda should take a different approach to setting quantitative targets than the current one, so that – under certain general criteria – it is the countries that propose them to the international community and adopt them in accordance with the magnitude of the development problems they face. The single-criteria vision of the MDG agenda proved inadequate for many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, the target on extreme poverty was very demanding for some countries but no so challenging for others with higher per capita incomes. This is, among other reasons, one of the basis for the lack of ownership of the MDGs by the governments of several Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Current actors involved in addressing these issues and who else should be involved

Sustainable development must be achieved at all levels of society. People's organisations, women's groups and non-governmental organisations are important sources of innovation and action at the local level and have a strong interest and proven capacity to promote sustainable livelihoods. Governments, in cooperation with appropriate international and non-governmental organisations, should promote a community-based approach to sustainability, including, inter alia, (a) the full participation of social organisations in decision-making processes; (b) respect for the cultural integrity and rights of indigenous peoples and their communities; (c) promoting or creating popular mechanisms for communities to share their experience and knowledge; (d) increasing community participation in sustainable management and protection of local natural resources to enhance their productive capacity; and (e) creating a network of community learning centres to enhance relevant capacity and promote sustainable development, among others.

In Argentina, the actors and organisations that participate at present are those directly linked to environmental problems and sustainable development: companies, the State, and large NGOs that, for years, have been oriented to the defense of the environment, such as: Greenpeace, Fundama, Wildlife, among others. However, emphasis should be placed on the systematic incorporation of grassroots territorial organisations, cooperative associations, professional associations, trade unions, indigenous peoples, organisations of migrants, women, neighbors, representatives of the health sector, etc., who are the ones who concretely experience the consequences of abuse. One objective to be strengthened would be to work on the modification of the concept of environmental change agents by that of constructors of environmental change, which would lead to the assumption of a real protagonism of these actors.

In El Salvador, there is a National Comittee on Metal Mining and a Water Forum, which are spaces for inter-institutional coordination, bringing together community organisations, research centers, NGOs, academic and religious groups that take a stand on these issues. On the other hand, there are also social actors who take a neutral position, possibly in order not to enter into conflicts with sectors that are clearly opposed to these struggles, such as national and transnational private companies.

In Grenada, although the 2007 National Strategic Development Plan foresees a high level of inter-institutional coordination in its implementation, an integrated approach to environmental and natural resource management is not yet a reality. This is where the role of social workers in communities has become relevant and where they are asked to influence and encourage communities to regain their power, to take more responsibility for how their actions impact their immediate environment and, in turn, their health and well-being, and to advocate for the developments suggested in the document. However, despite the Government's lack of effort to update integrated management of all natural resources to ensure efficiency in the allocation and use of limited resources (human, technical, financial) and the streamlining of regulatory and management processes, some communities and agencies are moving forward with sustainable practices in relation to agriculture, water harvesting and community capacity building.

In Puerto Rico, there are many community-based organisations that for decades have fought to promote an agenda of autonomous development, solidarity, sustainability, sensitivity and respect for natural resources, but

the framework of political domination and financial exploitation has been tightening over time. Since the devastating hurricanes Irma and Maria, socio-political and economic inequalities in the country have increased and the participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities is more crucial than ever. However, such participation continues to be questioned and criminalized. On a recent visit to Puerto Rico, renowned Canadian journalist Naomi Klein shared: "And Puerto Ricans have been living the shock doctrine for a long time. So I think Puerto Ricans might be horrified, angry, and saddened by the way they've been treated. But I don't think there would be more shock than there would be if this happened, for example, in California. In the aftermath of the hurricane, the privatization of the Electric Power Authority, which immediately began to be discussed, has been promoted.

Main actions in relation to these problems. Evidence of the political, economic and social impact of Social Work and Social Development interventions

In this section we will mention some Social Work examples of good practice related to the Global Agenda theme for the period covered by this report.

In Argentina, successful social work experiences have been identified. (a) In the city of Ushuaia, in the province of Tierra del Fuego, work is being done with indigenous peoples' organisations to disseminate their culture and identity linked to the environment. (b) Support for the organisation of local social movements aimed at combating the health consequences of the application of highly toxic agrochemicals in neighbourhoods in the city of Córdoba; (c) the National Programme of the Pro Huerta Institute of Agricultural Technology, consisting of the delivery of selected seeds to vulnerable families and the accompaniment, training and monitoring of social workers; (d) Social Service teams at the municipal level working on the promotion, prevention, assistance and management of the rehabilitation of the population living in the oil undertaking located in the south-west of the province of La Pampa; (e) Participation of social workers in large hydroelectric companies such as Yacyretá and Casa de Piedra, mainly in the relocation of the population affected by the works and the coordination of community development in the neighbourhoods created for this purpose; (g) Participation in the application of participatory methodologies in research on environmental issues, incorporating aspects

related to the community's perception of itself, its needs and problems, and the community environment.

In Chile, there are numerous initiatives that are already being implemented in this area of community work: a) organic gardens, "witch pots"; b) the treatment of household waste; c) organised recycling, proper use of water, the prevention of accident risk situations of all kinds (man-made, natural disasters, defective buildings or installations), are just a few examples of actions that are considered in any Social Intervention in the context of communities and their environment. Invica Foundation, a non-profit organisation that supports the Cooperativa Abierta de Vivienda Provicoop (Open Housing Cooperative) (construction of social housing for low-income social sectors), has developed programs consisting of training for the formation of organic family gardens in their homes, as well as the self-production of so-called "witch pots" that allow cooking with low gas consumption. In addition, the installation of solar collectors as a source of energy in the home was promoted. At the El Canelo de Nos Center (near Santiago), an interdisciplinary team has carried out several sustainable development programs aimed at small farmers to support them in their production processes of vegetables and other agricultural products through the use of inputs or means free of chemicals (insecticides, pesticides, unnatural fertilizers). Our professional contribution has proved to be interesting in terms of both the promotion and dissemination aspects and the training and capacity building aspects of the beneficiaries, which is fundamental for their real integration into these productive modalities that are important for the care and preservation of the environment.

In Brazil, the social service profession has a wide field of action in the area of social policies, and workers carry out planning, management, execution and evaluation activities in the municipal, state, district and national public spheres. They are also active in the private sphere and in non-governmental organisations (NGOs). In almost all Brazilian municipalities (5570), there are social workers working in public bodies, private institutions or NGOs. They are currently facing a situation of expansion of university education through the irresponsible encouragement of distance learning, and the dismantling of the social and labour rights provided for in the Federal Constitution, of repression and criminalisation of social movements, which challenges them in the face of the commitment historically assumed by us, social workers, to the working class and to the fight against the regression of social rights.

In El Salvador, the main work at the community level is based on awareness raising, education, organisation and popular mobilization. For example, in the communities surrounding the El Dorado mine in the municipality of San Isidro, department of Cabañas21, many people were sympathetic to the mining project, as they saw it as an alternative to generate employment and improve the material living conditions of families in the area, However, they were not aware of the environmental impact and the effects that this would have on the health of the inhabitants, and this is why an intervention strategy was developed linked to awareness-raising - education on the short, medium and long-term negative effects of mining activity, including water pollution. Organised communities also participated in activities to demand a ban on metallic mining, a struggle that lasted 12 years - and in which several environmentalists were killed and their deaths were not clarified - but which has had a great success with the approval of the Law on the Prohibition of Metallic Mining in El Salvador on March 29, 2017.

In this sense, El Salvador has achieved awareness, organisation and mobilization of communities to demand the adoption of laws directly related to sustainable development. Two clear examples are the struggle for the prohibition of metallic mining and the struggle for the explicit recognition of the human right to water in the national legal framework, since in both processes the organised communities have played a leading role.

On the other hand, in El Salvador at this time it would be difficult to show progress in sustainable development, since the country is in a critical situation that requires reversing the damage, increasing resilience to climate change and the capacity to respond to emergencies. Efforts are being made in reforestation, as this was one of the commitments made by the Government of El Salvador in the Paris Agreement, but the obstacles are directly related to the accelerated urbanization processes. El Salvador is the only country with a Metallic Mining Prohibition Law. In view of the stagnation in the recognition of the human right to water in the Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador and in the approval of the

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www.csj.gob.sv/ambiente/LEYES/ORDENANZAS_MUNICIPALES/CABA%C3%91AS/ORDENANZA_AMBIENTAL_PROTECCION_RECURSO.doc.

General Water Law, work has been done on the development of municipal ordinances, as in the case of the municipality of San Isidro, in the Department of Cabañas[7].

In Grenada there are several experiences, for example:

(a) Climate-smart agriculture: People in Action with funding from GIZ (German International Development Agency). The primary development of the project was a model farm using climate-smart agricultural techniques based on an ecosystem design methodology known as permaculture. ICT precision farming platforms were developed to document and manage the development of the model farm and community farms. The project involved the farming community of Mt Moritz, and analyzed the development not only of their farms, but of their agro-processing value chain, community development/management and community businesses. He also ventured to sensitise the community to the possibilities of developing closed-loop, low-carbon businesses and develop a business plan for the farm model integrated into community assets and business interest. People in Action is currently expanding its program to offer sustainable agriculture courses for both national and international students. Social work students would benefit greatly from participating in similar programs.

(b) Rainwater in crops: Rainwater harvesting has been widely used in the past, but has decreased with the improvement of public water supplies. However, in some remote high-elevation areas, where the public water supply is inaccessible, rainwater harvesting is often the main source of drinking water. Rainwater harvesting ponds are used for livestock production and, in some cases, for the provision of water for intensive vegetable production (UNDESA, 2012). Blaize, a town in St Andrew's was recently equipped with its own water collection equipment. The village is at a high altitude and has not been served by the National Water Authority through a piping system, they were given a water cistern delivery every two weeks, hence the water collection project. This is something that takes place extensively on the sister island of Carriacou, which has no rivers or streams, so people harvest as much as they can in the rainy season by integrating tanks under their houses when building, a great example of building resilience.

c) On the other hand, the Grenada Chocolate Company has been a pioneer in the cultivation of organic cocoa, which is also processed into finished bars.

In Grenada, social work practice must consider how sustainable social development outcomes are supported within a community and maintain Continuing Professional Development, education and training levels to reflect this. There must also, as always, be an attempt to share best practices and learn from others. Research on innovation and sustainability suggests that community dynamics are critical to creating the transformation needed to foster personal responsibility for environmental issues (Stocker and Kennedy, 2009). Extraction of natural resources with little regard for the long-term needs of local communities and future generations creates disadvantages for the poorest communities.

Similarly, lack of coherent policies and lack of implementation of laws can create a total disregard for the environment and the well-being of communities. This, in turn, discourages environmentally sustainable actions by individuals and corporations, adding to the concerns of vulnerable populations (Hammond, DeCanio, Duxbury, Sanstad & Stinson, 2010). Social work must learn from existing knowledge in communities and improve the practices they have adopted to be resilient. This will increasingly have to happen in the face of global changes and particularly the impact of climate change. The role of social workers in supporting the sustainability agenda may not be so obvious. The capacity of social workers to adapt and respond to the needs of communities experiencing environmental sustainability problems is increasingly important in developing countries, especially in small island developing states such as Grenada, which are even more vulnerable to the challenges of climate change.

In Puerto Rico, the theme of the Global Agenda for the period covered by this Report was linked to Human Rights, Health and Education. One of the Best Practices that we would like to highlight in this report is the so-called "We are Worthy Collective" that was created in 2010 within the framework of the strike processes of the University of Puerto Rico against the dismantling of the public education system in the country. On this occasion, the strike events led to human rights violations by state authorities. This is how students, professors and professors of law, social work and other disciplines and professions, as well as activists, human

rights defenders and defenders in Puerto Rico, who are concerned about the state of human rights, organise the Colectivo.

Its purpose is to educate, defend and promote human rights and civil liberties in Puerto Rico through multiple strategies, including research and a national campaign for human rights entitled The Dignity Trail. This educational project has been supported by professional and community organisations such as: The Association of Social Work Professionals of Puerto Rico, the National Association of Schools of Social Work of Puerto Rico (ANAETSPR), the Commission on Human, Civil and Constitutional Rights of the Bar Association of Puerto Rico, Amnesty International (Puerto Rico Chapter), the American Civil Rights Union, the Puerto Rican Institute of Civil Rights and the Sembrando Conciencia group (young artists from the Escuela de Artes Plásticas) as well as unions in the country.

Trayecto Dignidad: National Human Rights Campaigns in Puerto Rico

Emulating the *Freedom Riders*[22] movement in the United States, three school buses travel simultaneously through the northeast, northwest and center of the large island and make three consecutive days of stops in various public squares, spas and shopping malls (see figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Buses used for the National Campaign

Figure 2: Three National Campaign routes: Northeast, Northwest, and South Central.

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[22] *Freedom Riders* were young civil rights activists and students from various racial groups who drove interstate buses in 1961 to challenge the state's failure to enforce U.S. Supreme Court decisions that had ruled that segregation on public buses was unconstitutional.

The national campaign has four dimensions for the achievement of its objectives: a) Research dimension, b) Artistic dimension, c) Educational dimension, and d) Socio-political dimension. The research dimension is framed within the methodology of participatory action research, integrating the other dimensions in the achievement of the purpose of the national campaign. As part of this dimension, a human rights survey is administered to volunteers at each of the stops (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Participant survey management

The instrument is carried out by various activist actors and researchers in the field involved in each of the campaigns. The investigative protocol is subject to evaluation processes by Committees for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research. All participants in Trayecto Dignidad receive a sequence of three training workshops on human rights, research ethics and campaign logistics (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Training for students and general participants of the National Campaign

The artistic dimension integrates music, performance and body expression through painting to educate about human rights through the arts. At each stop, artistic awareness activities are held with the participation of the Sembrando Conciencia Collective[23] and other artists (see figure 5).

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[23] Collective of artists graduated from the School of Plastic Arts of Puerto Rico

Figure 5: Artistic intervention by member of Colectivo Sembrando Conciencia en Trayecto Dignidad 4

The educational dimension consists of the collection and preparation of educational pamphlets on human rights in its political, civil, social and cultural aspects, which are given to participants in the survey and the general public at each stop. Organisations linked to the defense and expansion of Human Rights in Puerto Rico provide the material. In addition, talks are held in various parts of the island on the first and second nights of the campaign, where the general public is invited (see figure 6).

Figure 6: Community discussion of Trayecto Dignidad 3 in a public square

The dimension of socio-political action refers to the activities of dissemination, denunciation, lobbying carried out in various media, organisations, and institutions to publicize the results of the National Campaign, specifically the data collected through the research dimension, and the state of human rights in Puerto Rico (see figure 7).

The Somos Dign@s Collective has carried out 4 national campaigns for Human Rights since 2011. Trayecto Dignidad 1 focused on the knowledge and perception of the human rights situation in Puerto Rico; Trayecto Dignidad 2 developed an educational and research campaign addressing the issue of racism and discrimination; Trayecto Dignidad 3 focused on the issue of the right to health and Trayecto Dignidad 4 focused on the right to self-determination of peoples.

Figure 7: Demonstration in front of Puerto Rico's Capitol for Trayecto Dignidad 3

The experience of Trayecto Dignidad and its methodological nature has borne fruit not only in the academic arena by creating transdisciplinary groups and training them in innovative methodologies to address the issue of human rights, but also in the educational and awareness-raising processes of the people of Puerto Rico on this issue and the enforceability of human rights in their political, environmental, civil, social and cultural aspects. More than 300 students and teachers and more than 20 professional and community organisations have participated in the National Campaigns. In addition, some 3,200 people have participated in the Trayecto Dignidad survey and more than 8,000 people have benefited from the artistic and educational activities and materials provided. The research results of the various campaigns have been studied in various academic courses and disseminated through press conferences, seminars, local and international congresses and professional articles (see figure 8).

Figure 8: Press conference to disseminate the preliminary results of Trayecto Dignidad 4 in the context of the strike at the University of Puerto Rico in April 2017.

Furthermore, draft legislation has been passed with the support of the National Dignity Path Campaign. Such is the case of House Bill 1185, now Law 235 of 2015, which called for the creation of the first multisectoral council to study the viability of a universal health system for Puerto Rico,

whose members would be democratically elected by the bodies it represents. It is important to note that the President of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region, Dr. Silvana Martínez, was able to participate in this experience during her visit to Puerto Rico.

In addition to the excellent work of the Som@s Dignos group, various social work professionals in PR have been linked to community movements fighting for the protection of the natural resources of the Archipelago: Cleaning up military waste pollution on the islands of Vieques and Culebra, fighting against the privatization of the beaches with the Pal Pueblo movement, fighting against soil contamination through the movements against the Arecibo incinerator (municipality in the north) and coal ash deposits in Peñuela, among others. In addition, efforts have been made to reuse and recycle materials, such as (municipality to the south) the ethical duty, contained in the Code of Ethics for Social Work Professionals in Puerto Rico. On the other hand, we have colleagues working on community organizing projects who have collaborated in the development and maintenance of community gardens. Finally, the Professional Association of Social Work in Puerto Rico has developed a socio-educational guide to commemorate World Day of the Planet[24].

In Mexico, a Regional Practice that was carried out in conjunction with the National School of Social Work of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, which worked on a proposal to strengthen the healthy environment and neighbourhood culture for the "Tepito" neighbourhood in 2017, stands out as a Good Practice when facing results after Natural Disasters, such as the earthquake that occurred in this country. The general process of the Regional Practice, which took place from February to May 2017, consisted of a regional research and diagnosis on Healthy Environments with the following indicators: a) Housing, b) Health, c) Culture and neighborhood coexistence and d) Environment.

With the earthquakes of September 7th and 19th in 2017, they reoriented the academic work towards the identification of affectations in the Tepito Neighborhood, modified the approach to the needs and problems of the emergency that were unleashed in the Tepito Neighborhood and as part of the professional training, put into practice theoretical and methodological knowledge, skills and attitudes. In regional practice, we focus on building

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[24]   http://cptspr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/EN-DERECHO-GUIA-SOCIOEDUCATIVA.pdf

an object of study and intervention based on the specific characteristics of the problem in a territorial setting, which is defined by the presence and qualities of the indicators we determine as part of the problem we study regionally.

Our intervention process begins in the first semester of practice with a series of workshops where we share the theoretical and methodological bases with which the team develops its learning process in a territorial environment. In our case, the theoretical and methodological bases comprise 4 areas or aspects:

CORE ELEMENTS
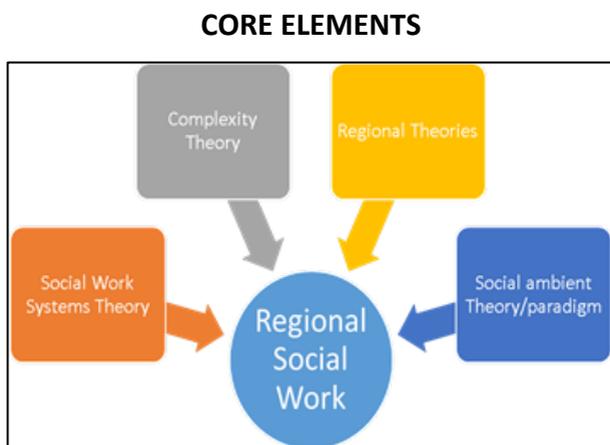
At the same time, we carried out tours of recognition and appropriation of the initial territory of practice, which in our case is the Barrio de Tepito, located in the second square of the Historical Center of the capital city of Mexico City, characterised by being a dynamic commercial center and by the stigma of violence built by the media, for the control of the neighborhood leaderships and trade strongly established since the eighties of the last century.

Map of the territorialization of the group of practitioners of the degree in Social Work in the Historical Center and Neighborhood of Tepito, February-April 2017

Primer recorrido de inserción del Grupo de Práctica Regional Tepito 2017

The indicators of the problem observed in the territory are also recorded in a geolocation map, a tool that allows us to make decisions on the actions to be developed, the social actors to be convened, etc., as a basis for proposing intervention alternatives and strategies for social organisation and management in the next stage of the practice process.

In the course of a year, the professionals in training who are studying the Bachelor's Degree in Social Work can experience the methodological process of regional intervention in a subject and territorial environment,

acquiring the knowledge, skills and professional ethics that characterise us as a profession at the service of the causes of the people.
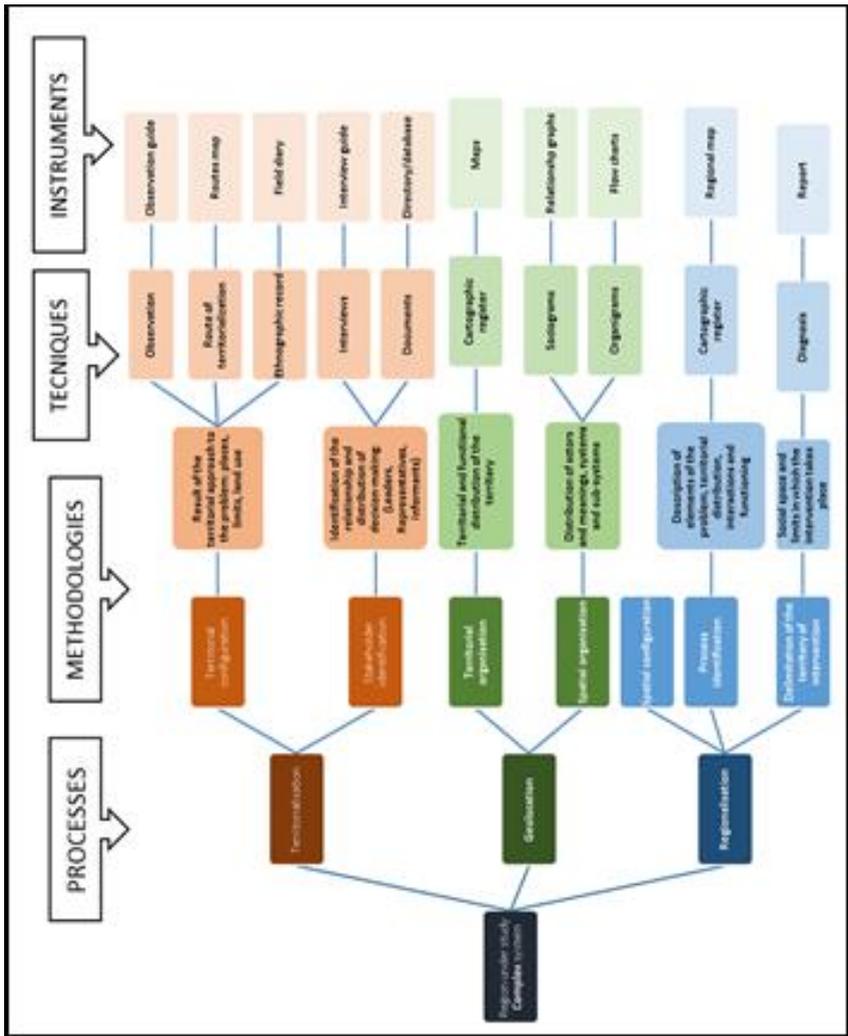
As a result of this first semester, we have a regional diagnosis on the conditions of Healthy Environments in its 4 aspects:

(a) Housing

(b) Work

(c) Health infrastructure and environment

d) Education, culture and community coexistence According to this diagnosis, practitioners develop a regional intervention program that addresses the problem where it is needed and with the social actors directly involved in the problem and according to the resources available to the same group of practitioners and communities.

The proposal is presented to the communities at a meeting and concrete projects are reached on specific dates, in the following areas.

We consider the 4 areas to be components of the same complex system of the Socio-environmental profile in the Tepito neighbourhood. Here there is a high rate of chronic degenerative diseases, with a significant gender burden and abuse of psychoactive substances and alcohol. This of general knowledge and its carried out without restrictions, - even promoted by the same commercial activity of the tianguis, that confronts neighbors with merchants, and between neighbors, compromising the development and safety of children and young people, and affecting the communal coexistence.

After the earthquakes the 7ᵗʰ and 19ᵗʰ September Earthquakes

With the earthquakes of September, the assessment and the intervention proposal changed radically, generating a state of emergency in which each practitioner chose to collaborate as a brigade to remove rubble, or in the collection of water, food and other requirements for the affected populations. Thus, the comrades joined in the emergency work on different fronts, both in Mexico City and in the states of Mexico and Morelos, especially serving the rural and urban indigenous population.

The main activities were the following:

1) Identification of the consequences on the neighbourhood
We carried out tours of identification of affectations where we had the opportunity to meet with the inhabitants of the neighborhood.

*Map for the identification of effects in the Tepito neighborhood (use of **cartography** techniques for the registration of streets, houses, neighborhoods and housing units in the Tepito neighborhood)*

The commercial activity during the first days decreased, as well as the presence of trade workers and visitors, which allowed us to interview the affected people and meet the objective of identifying the effects of the earthquake.With the information from the observation tours and interviews, we constructed a map of effects for which we planned to present it to the communities so that they could make the decisions that would best suit their interests, including the neighborhood organisation for

the care of damaged properties. These processes include the construction of maps and chromatography to record the effects.

Map of affectations identified in the Tepito neighborhood. (use of the chromatography technique to designate buildings with obvious damage, affected buildings and historic monuments without apparent damage).

2) Creating a proposal of intervention to the communities: The "We are Tepito" Programme

With the information gathered and the analysis of the role of the government and the army in the control of citizen mobilization as well as in the distribution and management of in-kind support and funding for victims, we decided to call upon the affected communities to participate in the "We are Tepito" programme.

We promoted the participation of the population in the **Orientation and Promotion of Healthy and Safe Environments Day**, as well as in the three components of the "We are Tepito" programme, involving specialists, in order to not only attend to the emergence of the earthquake but also to generate processes with long-term implications.

a) Legal Consultancy. A phenomenon that has caught our attention is that even though the dwellings have obvious effects such as cracks in walls and ceilings, people decide to remain at risk of collapse, due to the uncertainty of losing their home due to the fact that they do not have papers that formalise tenure or do not have property tax, water or electricity payments covered.

We asked for the support of Dr. Margarito Martínez Martínez, a litigator, father of one of the practitioners and an expert in the field, who generously offered his time and knowledge to attend to the doubts of the neighbors regarding the tenure of their home.

To support this theme, a poster was produced with the basic information on What to do...? and where to go...? to carry out the different procedures related to the regularization of the possession and payment of taxes and services.

b) Architectural Advice. It was in charge of the fellow architects of Barriopolis, A.C., who have accompanied us at different times and at the same time have supported us in making the link with the population.

Its contribution, in addition to attending to the effects of the earthquake in the houses, was a Manual for the repair of walls and the specific visit to the buildings.

c) Civil Protection Orientation. One of the trainees, who was trained on the basis of civil protection needs in the countryside, was in charge of this topic as a member of a brigade. The knowledge and experience acquired by the team members was very useful in addressing the issue.

To support this workshop, a poster was developed providing basic information on What to do when..., emergency phones and the survival backpack.

d) Emotional support and crisis management. This table was in charge of the psychologist colleagues who work at the Cuauhtemoc Community Development Center, where they also provided us with the facilities for the Orientation Day.

e) Workshops to promote healthy environments. The materials and dynamics of the risk prevention and self-care workshops, aimed mainly at children, were organised and developed through recreational, recreational and therapeutic activities that allowed the expression of the experience of the earthquake, as well as the relationship between people and nature.

To this end, educational materials were designed and created related to the topics, such as lottery games, memorama, coloring books, orchard design, plant donation and seed germination.

3) Promotion of Neighborhood Organisation and Mobilisation
Within the framework of the Safe and Healthy Environments Orientation and Promotion Day, we placed special emphasis on the organisation and mobilization of neighborhoods, which included the following activities:

a) Informative meeting on the impact on real estate in the Neighborhood. This first part of the day consisted of the presentation of the report to the communities on the work of observation and registration to identify the effects on the neighborhood.

At this point, a triptych with the results of this intervention was handed out to the participating residents.

b) A call was made to promote neighbourhood organisation to meet the needs for repair or reconstruction that may be required, supported by the preparation of a Neighbourhood Organisation Manual. The presence of neighborhood leaders and businesspeople, as well as representatives of the neighborhood Citizen Participation Committees, was very important because they not only endorsed the manual but also, based on their experience, considered it an instrument to improve and strengthen their organisations.

4) Project for the improvement of coexistence and neighborhood culture: Let's go for a walk!
The purpose of this intervention was to inform and sensitise the participants about self-care, prevention and coexistence, in order to strengthen family and community ties.

We visited the Bicentennial Ecological Park, which provides recreational, sports and environmental education services, in the company of children and neighbors, enjoying a day of coexistence, games and learning, in addition to visiting the different ecosystems of the park and the orchid garden with its great variety of these flowers.

For the development of this activity, games were organised to inform and promote basic self-care measures, learn to respect the beings of nature, promote the development of skills for safety and avoid risks in their environment, as well as coexistence.

5) Support management
Specially in the current climate of emergency and crisi, the management of support is a very valuable skills that without it, it would not have been possible to count on the specialists who supported the Orientation Day, the reproduction of materials, the training, the elaboration of didactic material. The place where we held the day, the visit to the park and the reproduction of materials required the mobilization of resources that we did not have teachers and social work practitioners, so that this function translates into the ability to locate and convince institutions, organisations and professionals in particular to provide the technical, material or financial resources that make it possible to carry out the program.

In conclusion, the tragedy of the earthquake moved us all and mobilised us all, in fact it has been one of the experiences that we have most enjoyed and from which we have been able to value our professional capacity, being able to participate in very varied processes and places in a short period of time.

Teacher of the group of practitioners: María Luisa Moreno Rivera. Interns: Lizeth Cabildo Martínez, Jessica Cruz Hernández. Nazareth Cruz Lopez. María Guadalupe Del Razo García, Leticia Figueroa Valdez, Natalia Guadalupe García Vázquez, Jennifer Hernández Manzano, Nancy León Espinosa, Diego Martínez Cázares, Laura Martínez López, Elizabeth Martínez Montes, Ivvet Quintanilla Ramírez, Rodrigo Eduardo Salinas Flores, Ramsés Tenorio Fonseca

Final reflections
Almost all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are currently highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change (extreme weather events, such as intense and frequent off-season rainfall, heat waves, cold and hurricanes). And by 2030, most countries will be at serious risk (DARA

2012). The considerable economic costs of climate change have been clearly demonstrated (Stern 2007, ECLAC 2010c). Although, they still have low levels of CO_2 emissions, Latin American and Caribbean countries with hot and humid tropical climates will be seriously affected by the intensification of climate change and disaster risk, with consequent negative impacts on the health of the region's population and raising the prices for basic goods.

In recent years, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru have been severely affected by the El Niño-Southern Oscillation phenomenon (which causes an unusual shortage or excess of precipitation). Most small island states in the Caribbean are particularly vulnerable to climate change, sea-level rise, natural and environmental hazards due to their size, location, concentration of population in coastal areas within a limited land area, and in some cases, lack of institutional capacity to cope with crises (ECLAC 2012c).

Those living in poverty and facing other forms of vulnerability (especially women) suffer more from the consequences of disasters and environmental damage, as in some countries of Latin America and the Caribbean resource scarcity has forced them to progressively occupy high-risk areas and marginal lands, where, in addition to living in slums, they intensify land degradation and desertification. This process not only threatens the environment, but also the health and safety of these people, as we have recently seen in the cases of heavy rains with floods, such as those in Colombia and Brazil, landslides, or earthquakes such as that in Haiti.

Without action, current and future environmental threats could jeopardise the extraordinary progress in the human development index in recent decades and in progress towards the MDGs, particularly with regard to hunger and food security. There is an urgent need to find new development paths that can ensure environmental sustainability, consolidate an environmentally friendly economy and reverse ecological destruction, while seeking to provide a decent life for all people now and in the future (CDP 2012).

To achieve this, sustainable consumption and production patterns and the protection and management of natural resources as a basis for economic and social development must be considered as general objectives as well as essential requirements for sustainable development. An

environmentally sustainable economy will be beneficial in reducing vulnerability in the short and long term, generate employment and income and stimulate the development of technology and infrastructure for the prevention of natural disasters while protecting the environment (UNIDO 2010). In addition, ecosystem management increases the resilience of natural systems and human societies to the impacts of climate change, providing the basis for integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk reduction and natural resource conservation with poverty reduction and sustainable development strategies (Munang et al. 2013).

As evidenced in this report, the experiences of professional practices in Social Work and Social Development linked to the Promotion of Sustainable Communities and Environments are very diverse in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region. However, we cannot ignore the fatct that this is a problem for which there is not enough professional training for social workers. Neither is there any development in empirical research and knowledge production in Social Work. As a general rule, colleagues end up learning from professional practice derived from their daily experience and before the occurrence of specific cases of natural disasters. However, this is not only the case in the field of Social Work, since there is insufficient awareness of the environmental problem in our countries – both at the governmental level and in different areas of social life. It seems that the environmental issue is concerns only ecologists that are generally part of dedicated NGOs.

The social work profession can play a very important role in the area of prevention. It can collaborate in the establishment of alliances between the different sectors of the community and the people in order to work jointly towards the organisation of social networks. In addition, we can be more proactive in reporting any damage to the environment, including the serious problem of litter disposal. The social workers as a group have the capacity to collaborate in the formulation of social policies, in the area of health and environment – which addresses the needs identified by the communities themselves – that would help to conserve our natural resources and protect the environment.

We recognise the importance of highlighting this issue in the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development, because it allows us to make visible the gaps, both in the training and in the professional practices

of Social Workers. Without a doubt, this is an issue that we will have to continue working on with a stron emphasis in our region, in order to place it not only on the professional agenda but also on the government and legislative agendas.

World Social Work Day 2017

In this section we share some activities carried out by the members of our Region in the framework of the World Social Work Day the 21st March 2017.

ARGENTINA

The history and significance of the World Social Work Day was discussed with students entering the Social Work Career at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the National University of Misiones.

The Association of Social Workers of La Rioja organised a conference as part of the World Social Work Day and the Career Management of the Graduate in Social Work of the National University of La Rioja organised a conference for the World Social Work Day. Remembering that this date commemorates the commitment, contribution and work of our professionals as first-hand connoisseurs of social reality, leaders of change

and social intervention, and promoters of the struggle and guarantee of social rights of citizens. The following axes will be addressed:

1-Social work, social and environmental policies; 2 - Local development; 3- Habitat and Social Economy in processes of community self-management.

GRENADA

Social workers and professors from the University of Florida State University, the Grenada Social Workers Association and the Association of Social Workers who celebrate the day.

Student sociäl workers & professors from Florida State University College of Social Work and Grenada Assoc. of Professional Social Workers celebrating World Social Work Day

PUERTO RICO

On Tuesday 21st March various conferences on Communities, Environment and Sustainable Development were held. Universities across the country connected to the live facebook where the conferences were broadcast live. The social workers then participated in the discussions on the subject. This activity was carried out by the Association of Social Work Professionals and the National Association of Social Work Schools. The activity counted as lecturers Dr. Marta Quiñones and colleague Francine Sánchez-Marcano.

COSTA RICA

The Association of Social Workers of Costa Rica. On Friday 24th March, they shared with their colleagues from the Western Branch the celebration of World Social Work Day 2017.

MÉXICO

The National Meeting of Social Workers of Mexico was also held. They met under the objective of promoting the organisation and articulation of social workers' trade unions in order to recognise the significance of the

working conditions of our profession in the face of the dominant and discriminatory colleagues have to endure every day.

The VII National Seminar on Social Work was held as part of the World Social Work Day.

PANAMA

In the framework of the celebration of the World Social Work Day, three important actions were developed:

1. The Association of Social Workers of Panama was called to be part of the Board of Directors of the Patronato de Nutrición or Joint Association. We received the gratifying news that by unanimous decision they were elected as members of the Board of Directors of this body, which brings them closer to carrying out actions with indigenous and peasant populations.

2. They also echoed the World Stand Up activity for the girls who died in a home in Guatemala –an event shocked the world.

3. It was carried out with the management of the colleagues of the Ministry of the Environment, watering and cleaning of the seedlings of the

program Alianza por el Millón, of which our union will continue these actions as social responsibility.

EL SALVADOR

CUBA

The Cuban Society of Social Health Workers celebrated World Social Work Day by proudly reaffirming the sense of belonging within the International Federation of Social Workers and the social commitment of the profession. To this end, they have designed a programme of activities within the framework of the celebration of this day, such as: The dissemination of the World Social Work Day by the use of audiovisual and social media in Cuba. A poster related to World Social Work Day was produced. The XXII National Scientific Conference on Social Work and the IV National Scientific Conference on Social and Occupational Rehabilitation "Development and perspectives of Social Work in today's world" were also organised on March 21 and 22, 2017. At that event. Certificates were awarded to retired social workers with an active job in the organisation and certificates were

awarded to social workers with more than 35 years of uninterrupted employment in the sector as well.

PERU

They produced a moving video that was released to the media, showing students and social workers in Peru with various pictures, and an important message from President Jenny Linares Vera.

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Chapter 6

North America: Promoting Community & Environmental Sustainability

Julie Rhoads

Contents

Introduction

The first paragraph of the Preamble of the *NASW Code of Ethics* clearly states that 'fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living'. Social work emphasizes the person-in-the environment. The environment consists of both the natural and social environment. To ensure human rights, both environments must be considered with special attention to the needs of ethnic minorities and indigenous people. The right to a clean, safe and healthy environment is a human right for all. Social work is based on the respect for the equality, worth, and dignity of all people.

Natural and built environments have a direct impact on people's ability to develop and reach their potential. The environment is a key component of the social determinants of health and wellbeing. Social, economic and environmental factors are intertwined.

As an industrialized region, the North American and Caribbean region has been negatively impacted by numerous threats to the environment. Many of these threats, varying degrees depending on the region, are human made. These threats include global warming, deforestation, loss of land and water rights, waste disposal, the use of pesticides, overuse of natural resources. The 2017 hurricane season was devastating to the region including catastrophic hurricanes in Texas, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and recovery is still underway.

In 2016, the United States elected Donald Trump as President. His campaign included pulling back regulations on global warming and reducing safety net services that protect the most vulnerable. President Trump's divisive campaign targeted women, people of color, and immigrants. The election served as a catalyst to prioritize and outline social justice priorities in a changing political environment.

Canada's current federal government was elected in 2015 on a platform of social and economic reform. Issues related to the government's role in environmental regulation continue to a problem with respect to the transportation of fossil fuels from the producing area across other provinces.

What are the main/key/core social problems related to community and environmental sustainability affecting your country/region now?

Equity, environment and the economy are the key issues that are affecting the region related to community and environmental sustainability.

Although, the global environmental crisis affects everyone, the poorest and most vulnerable are disproportionately affected by environment injustices. This includes indigenous populations, immigrants, people of color, and those in rural areas. There is a demonstrated link between the environment and well-being therefore environmental justice is social justice.

The Caribbean Region faces significant threats due to global warming, rise in sea levels, more intense weather systems, destruction of coral reefs and coastal erosion that threaten the tourist industry which is a major economic activity for the region. Additionally, the fishing industry has declined across the region, which has also threatened community way of life. The widespread displacement of communities during the last Atlantic hurricane season is testament to the vulnerability of the region, and the economies are so fragile that they have been unable to support relief efforts without external assistance. Trinidad & Tobago has not suffered the direct impact of hurricanes, but there have been other problems with pollution and oil spills killing marine life, coastal erosion, deforestation and indiscriminate quarrying for purposes of development causing flooding in low lying areas and destruction of agriculture.

The core problems related to environmental sustainability for the United States are primarily human made such as: fracking, water pollution, and urbanization. Profit driven decisions have led to damage to the ozone layer, reliance on nonrenewable natural resources, unregulated land use, and a contaminated water supply. The 2017 hurricane season was extremely harsh for the United States and the Caribbean and the recovery efforts are still ongoing. At the same time, the Trump Administration withdrew from the 2015 Paris Agreement, cut back U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations, and reinstated pipeline projects that had previously been put on hold including the Dakota Access Pipeline, a controversial project near a Native American Reservation.

Canada faces environmental sustainability issues mainly caused by the negative effects of human activity on the ecology. A recent project

received federal approval despite the opposition of one province where there would be a substantial impact from the passage of a second province's product. The lack of rigour of federal environmental reviews of economically beneficial projects balanced against the considerations of lasting environmental damage remains an issue of concern. Indigenous people have expressed their own concerns ranging from the importance of new jobs in their communities to a history of negative experiences with the shipping of some products across their lands or shipped from the seacoast of their traditional lands. Canada's continued reliance on the sale of natural resources includes controversy over allowing Canadian water to be sold as a commodity. There is also increased concern over the purchase and control of Canadian natural resources by foreign countries.

Environmental injustice is a Public Health Concern and the impact of the environmental injustices on population health manifest in the form of health disparities. Examples of health conditions that are directly related to the social environment include: lead poisoning, high rates of asthma, and higher rates of upper respiratory ailments, cancer and heart disease. These health conditions disproportionately impact communities of color in urban areas (mostly African American and Hispanic), low-income households in all settings, and Native Americans. Several cases of environmental injustice gained national and international attention.

One case of environment injustice was the Flint Michigan Water Crisis. Flint is a mid-sized city of about 100,000 residents. Six out of 10 residents are African American or Hispanic. It is one of the United States' poorest cities. One of the most significant statistics, given the nature of the environmental hazard is that 27.3% of Flint's population is under 18 years of age and 8% the city's total population is under 5 years of age. This was a case of environmental injustice when looking at the race/ethnicity and socio-economic status as variables.

A September 20, 2017 article in the *Washington Post* 'Study: Fetal deaths rose in Flint amid water crisis' highlighted long term effects of the April 2014 decision by Flint officials to take its public water supply from the Flint River, a strategy to save costs while the city worked on a permanent pipeline project to Lake Huron. Residents were reassured by city officials that the water, which was of concern because of the odor and color, was in fact safe to drink.   In some cases, residents immediately complained of odor and color of water. City assured residents that the water was safe to

drink. However high levels of lead were found in the water. In some cases, dozens or hundreds of times as high as the levels deemed safe by the Environmental Protection Agency. Harmful effects of lead exposure on children's health is well documented, such as cognitive deficiencies, increased antisocial behavior, lower educational attainment—and other issues affecting the brain, kidney and liver.

Environmental public health issues in Canada include years of 'boil water advisories' in predominately indigenous communities; an election promise was to eliminate these by 2021. The federal government announced in early 2018 that the list of communities with long term boil water advisories had increased. The current investment by the federal government in improving water systems has been estimated to be insufficient to end all advisories. For most communities, at issue is a lack of modern water treatment systems and problematic water storage and delivery systems.

A shift in the Canadian budget for public health research, in part due to an increase on prevention initiatives, has reduced funding to community organizations for environmental public health research on issues such as the impact of urban design on improving the health of residents by encouraging and maximizing active lifestyles.

The North American and Caribbean region continues to struggle with managing the effects of globalization. In the Caribbean, the global economic decline continues to affect communities in the region through loss of livelihoods and under-employment. Large scale industrial manufacturing has been reduced in the United States due to new technology and jobs moving overseas. This has caused economic stress and instability. The U.S. continues to struggle with addressing social inequities including poverty, access to health care, immigration, gun violence, housing and drug and alcohol abuse. Discrimination against minority groups continues in public policies as well as an outgrowth of hate speech and crimes.

In Canada, globalization also has a direct impact on the patterns of available employment; the salaries paid also impact the ability of Canada to manage and regulate its own economy. Significant losses have occurred in the manufacturing sector of so-called 'good jobs' with living wages and benefits. The loss or relocation of Canadian manufacturing jobs does not transfer corresponding wages and benefits to workers in the receiving economy as globalization works to drive costs and wages down.

Additionally, the production of inexpensive goods has led to an increase in consumption rates of products, (i.e. the 'replace it, don't fix it' cycle). Increased consumption puts stress on the environment and impacts the ecological cycle while the loss of jobs impacts quality of life when equivalent or better jobs do not take their place.

The interconnected trends and patterns of migration affect the entire region. Like other nations around the globe, the region continues to debate policies and procedures regarding immigration, migration and refugees. Social workers have recognized the intersection between immigration and environmental sustainability. As individuals compete for environmental resources, conflict erupts and forces people to migrate. The global refugee crisis is growing as well as an anti-immigration sentiment. For example, the Trump Administration has hardened the country's policies on immigration including the travel ban and decision to rescind The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Canada has seen an increase in illegal immigration by US visa holders crossing into Canada through areas with little or no police presence in part due to concerns about their future in the USA and the portrayal by Canada's Prime Minister of Canada as a nation with easy access to citizenship. What was not explained was that Canada enforces its immigration laws on the acceptance of immigrants. Canada remains committed to orderly immigration from other countries, including refugees displaced from their home countries.

The recent mass shooting in Las Vegas – the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history--underscores the need for federal and state health officials to declare gun violence a national public health crisis. NASW supports recommendations such as the use of population-based social determinants of health models to develop prevention messages and the removal of all gag rules that apply to clinical encounters so patients and providers can freely discuss any issue, including gun safety. In the aftermath of the Las Vegas shootings NASW renewed its call for gun violence to be declared a national public health emergency. Gun violence affects every demographic group and geographic area in America. It is a preventable national public health emergency that results in more than 30,000 deaths and more than 75,000 non-fatal gun-related injuries in the U.S. annually.

The situation in Canada is changing as gun violence, often gang-related, increased in recent years. Large urban centres report an increase in the use of guns particularly in relation to the drug trade. While Canada's gun homicide rate remains below that of the USA, a comparison to Europe is disturbing, with Canada having the fourth-highest gun homicide rate after France, Germany and Italy. The crime severity index is increasing slowly across the country, most notably in metropolitan areas while, reportedly, the danger index does not increase. In an effort to reduce the burden on the justice system of charges for marijuana possession, Canada is legalizing the use and possession of marijuana within federal and provincial guidelines. Efforts are also underway to increase access to safe injection sites and to decriminalize the personal use and possession of opioids. It is hoped that this will result in harm reduction to users and a decline in crimes associated with obtaining or trafficking drugs.

What in your professional view are the essential policies that will effectively address these problems?

Our profession must advocate for an increased recognition of the need to address the physical environment and its interaction with social problems across the world. There is a need for policies that support reducing carbon emissions and other activities that contribute to global warming including pollution, energy, over-population and nature conservation. Federal budgets must prioritize the needs of the environment, health and education. We must ensure that the most vulnerable are protected from the civil rights and environmental laws that have been put in place over the last decade. Institutionalized racism toward indigenous people in Canada has been identified as a major contributor to the poverty, disparity and interpersonal violence experienced by indigenous people, indigenous women in particular.

Social justice is strung throughout NASW's code of ethics, mission, and curriculum. As advocates for the needs of the most vulnerable, social workers must work towards a human rights approach to environment management and disaster relief. Additionally, some of the statements that were made in the aftermath of the 2017 hurricane season speak to a need for a change in political attitudes and ideology around environmental justice.

The NASW Policy Statement on the Environment specifically notes that social workers have a special concern for and responsibility to vulnerable

populations who suffer because of dangerous environmental conditions. The environment, both natural and built, have an impact on health and human wellbeing. 'Social work, with its focus on political advocacy, can be an important force in addressing environmental issues. Social workers can be engaged in strategies to organize and confront environmental injustice through grassroots organizing, political action, and populations, including people who ae poor, people of color, women, and children, who are disproportionately at risk.' The policy outlines specific recommendations.

Social justice is a focus of CASW's code of ethics; an ongoing revision will focus on reconciliation with Canada's indigenous peoples as a tenet of social work in Canada. In the CASW Scope of Practice, the global vision of social work is a world consistently working toward social justice and well-being for all citizens with a person-in-environment focus. To work effectively and efficiently, CASW is a member of alliances for social justice, mental health, poverty reduction, health care and other national organizations. In addition, CASW works with Canadian social work educators and regulators to bring an inter-sectoral focus to the practice of social work in Canada.

Social work educators must aim to build effective social work practice methods at all levels that recognize the important of environmental sustainability. These issues must be explicit and teachable, universalized, and threaded through our field programs. An inter-professional approach is needed to connect across professions particularly with those in the field of science. Social work programs must place emphasis on environmental sciences and ensure that students are graduating knowledgeable about environmental sustainability. Our profession must work with the United Nations and with social work schools across the globe adequately address the issues of environmental and community sustainability.

The United States 2016 Presidential Election served as a catalyst to prioritize and outline social justice priorities in a changing political environment. It is essential that social workers work collectively to stand up to injustices at the local and global level. Social work is needed at all levels to ensure that we influence policy, support individual communities and prepare the next generation of social work leaders for the complex challenges they face.

With the election in 2015 of a centrist federal government in Canada, Canadian social workers worked to strengthen relationships with

politicians at the federal level to pursue social justice, poverty reduction and reconciliation with indigenous people. The previous 10 years of conservative government were marked by significant challenges in policy directed toward equity, gender parity, access to health care and policy integration across the country.

What do people with whom you work want to see changed?

People within the region want safer and healthier communities that are equitable and inclusive. Our communities include historically marginalized groups who want to be heard, respected, and included in decisions and policies. Access to affordable health care and improved basic standard of living, including jobs that provide financial security, would strengthen communities within the region.

Additionally, people want a stronger social and economic safety net in times of crisis. As evidenced by the many recent natural disasters including Hurricane Maria's devastation in Puerto Rico and the surrounding area, people are dependent on government assistance. In Canada, government is expected to take a role assisting citizens in recovery from natural disasters (e.g. flooding, forest fires) and also to participate in mitigation efforts shared by the various levels of government.

Social workers must continue to work collaboratively to increase recognition of the need to address the physical environment and its interaction with social problems across the world. In terms of the environment, communities in our region would like to improve air quality, preserve our nature land, and reduce our carbon and garbage footprint. Access to healthy foods and education about healthy lifestyles will support the well-being of generations to come.

Who are the actors/stakeholders/partnerships currently involved in addressing these issues and who should be involved?

To adequately address community and environmental sustainability it is essential that organizations, individuals, policy makers, professionals, and community members work collectively. There is an increased focus on working inter-professionally and in collaborative networks with non-traditional partners including businesses and the private sector. Social workers are well equipped to scale up these partnerships and collaborations and work to include diverse viewpoints.

NASW (U.S.) is active in coalitions and working groups including Eldercare Workforce Alliance, Leadership Council of Aging Organization, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Coalition on Human Needs, the Open Society Foundation/Justice Roundtable, Criminal Justice Coalition, Coalition to Stop Gun Violence and the Mental Health Liaison Group.

The Council on Social Work Education (U.S.) collaborates with organizations and coalitions within the field of social work and beyond. CSWE public policy priorities are quality health care, workforce development and loan forgiveness. CSWE has long standing relationships with the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD) Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE), National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD) St. Louis Group of Excellence in Social Work Research and Education, and the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR). CSWE is an active member of several inter-professional coalitions including Federation of Associations of School of the Health Professions (FASHP) and Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Health Care. In 2016, CSWE welcomed a partnership and collaboration with the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) to promote the impact of social work research and the importance of federal investment in social and behavioral sciences research. Together, CSWE and SSWR crafted social work research principles to guide and influence federal and congressional policy makers throughout their legislative, regulatory, and oversight processes. Furthermore, CSWE continued to leverage relationships with the National Institute of Health Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research.

Internally, CSWE officially launched the Committee on Environmental Justice in February 2015 jointly sponsored by the CSWE Commission for Diversity and Social and Economic Justice and the CSWE Commission on Global Social Work Education. The charge of the committee is to make recommendations to the commissions about the ways in which social work education should consider integrating issues of environmental justice into the social work curriculum.

The 2016 presidential election in the United States served as a catalyst for an increase in grassroots efforts to mobilize common citizens to protest, advocate and lobby for policies that support community and environmental sustainability. For example, when U.S. lawmakers attempted to appeal the Affordable Care Act, people with disabilities and

pre-existing conditions led large protests, rallies and demonstrations in support of the health care law.

Until recently, grassroots movement organizations were the main actors in addressing environmental sustainability. These organizations and coalitions are becoming more formalized in nature to adequately address environmental sustainability. Non-profit organizations, community groups, social activists, coalitions, and associations continue to address these issues both at the direct service level and through advocacy, education and policies.

In the Caribbean, the CARICOM Heads of Government have had some conversations about how to address environmental issues, but concerns about the economic recession and regional security have dominated the agenda in recent years therefore environmental justice has taken a back-seat. In Trinidad and Tobago there are some activists, such as Fishermen and Friends of the Sea, Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) and Environmental Management Agency (EMA). In the North-Eastern districts, the Local Government Councillor for the area actively engages in crisis response to communities and families in the provision of basic amenities and shelter. There should be a greater active involvement of social work agencies such as Community Development workers.

The Canadian Association of Social Workers is active on many social policy and social action fronts as an organizational member of national coalitions[25]. CASW works in alliances for mental health, for harm reduction, and other aspects of health care, policy and practice. Additionally, CASW has been active with the 'Faces of Mental Health' promotion in which Canadians with mental health issues are featured nationally in discussions of mental health. These 'Faces' include athletes, artists, business people, educators and young people in addition to Canadians from other professions and walks of life. Our stakeholders are service users, social workers providing services, other helping professions and the people of Canada including government at various levels.

Social workers at the United Nations are advocating for increased recognition of the need to address the physical environment and its interaction with social problems across the world. They advocate for attention to the needs of the most vulnerable and toward a human rights

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[25] A list is available at www.casw-acts.ca

approach to environmental management and disaster prevention, mitigation and response.

What are people doing about these problems? What is the evidence that social work and social development interventions are having a social, economic and/or political impact?

Within the region, social workers have worked on the ground level in practice through disaster and crisis management. Primarily, social workers have played a reactionary role assisting individuals and communities in the aftermath including training first responders in crisis response to deliver appropriate intervention to communities.

The region is very good at responding to calls for assistance during natural disasters. In the Caribbean, the military has been responsive and troops have gone in to build temporary shelters, assist with evacuations and distribution of items, faith-based organizations and other institutions have mounted charity drives for food, water, clothes, medicines and other necessities. In some of the territories, including Jamaica, St Lucia, where community practice in rural areas is more structured and robust, the mobilisation of community resources and support systems may have been more effective. This type of response is typical of natural disaster mitigation in Canada as well.

In response to the devastating hurricanes in the U.S., NASW Chapters including Florida and Texas have organized resource lists encouraging members to *Become a Disaster Mental Health Volunteer* with the Red Cross. Links to applications were included as well as information on how NASW members from out of state, who wish to volunteer, could obtain additional information. Comprehensive resource lists on relief efforts were also included.

NASW established the Social Work Disaster Assistance Fund to assist those affected by disasters such as September 11, Hurricane Katrina, the Indonesian tsunami, the devastating earthquake in Haiti in 2010, Japan in 2011, the Ebola Crisis, the Louisiana flooding in 2016 and the hurricanes in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in 2017. Donations go directly to organizations that provide help to those who have experienced loss and need assistance due to a disaster. Preference is given to assisting social workers who in turn can help others.

NASW Michigan Chapter responded to the Flint, Michigan water emergency with 'a call to action' to mobilize its members to work with the city of Flint resident public officials to provide volunteer services. The chapter requested that its membership contribute their clinical skill crisis counseling and their macro skills to coordinating relief efforts and collaborate with other agencies to link those at-risk to needed services. More than 160 social workers volunteered. Social workers, through the coordination of the disaster relief group Crossing Water, made home visits to provide filter installations, education, water and to connect Flint residents to other needed services such as medical and mental health professionals, social workers and people with good people skills willing to help their neighbors.

Social workers are also working at the mezzo level through organizing communities, education and prevention work, fundraising and securing resources for projects that strengthen communities. For example, in the face of hate speech and violence in Charlottesville, VA, social workers organized vigils and worked with communities to advocate for the removal of confederate statues. Additionally, social workers are creating and utilizing models that foster sustainability and evidence-based interventions including Asset-Based Community Development.

As advocates, social workers are active in policy work as it relates to community and environmental sustainability. Social workers are leading in this area by organizing campaigns on tax mining companies, advocating for relevant policies including affordable housing, ensuring access to education, health care and policies that protect the environment. NASW (U.S.) works with other organizations, coalitions, and working groups to press for social justice reforms including those under the umbrella of the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, the Open Society Foundation, Justice Roundtable, the Criminal Justice Coalition and the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. CASW (Canada) has similar affiliations with social justice coalitions and organizations working to create change and to petition government to act positively in its areas of responsibility. CASW members also participate in social action as citizens and as members of coalitions at the local, provincial, territorial and national level.

In the U.S., The Grand Challenges Initiative was developed, led by the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, to champion social programs powered by science. It is a call to action to work together to tackle our nation's toughest social problems. The 12 Social Work Grand

Challenges were developed to create meaningful, measurable progress in solving urgent social programs within a decade. The Grand Challenges include; Ensure healthy development for all youth, Close the health gap, Stop family violence, Advance long and productive lives, Eradicate social isolation, End homelessness, Create social responses to a changing environment, Harness technology for social good, Promote smart decarceration, Build financial capability for all, Reduce extreme economic inequality, and Achieve equal opportunity and justice.

Grand Challenges states: 'The environmental challenges reshaping contemporary societies pose profound risks to human well-being, particularly for marginalized communities. Climate change and urban development threaten health, undermine coping and deepen existing social and environmental inequalities. Climate change and urban development threatens health, undermine coping, and deep end existing social and environmental inequalities. A changing global environment requires transformative social responses; new partnerships, deep engagement with local communities and innovations to strengthen individual and collective assets.'

Social workers have participated in many social activism movements that support social justice. NASW (U.S.) joined millions in the U.S. and around the world during the *Women's March on Washington*, January 21, 2017 promoting human rights and social justice. The March for Science in Washington, D.C. on Earth Day April 22, 2017 was part of a series of rallies and marches held in more than 600 cities across the world. The March for Science champions robustly funded and publicly communicated science as a pillar of human freedom and prosperity. Additionally, NASW hosted advocacy events on Capitol Hill including *Social Work Day* on Capitol Hill, March 2017 titled 'Social work and Civic Engagement in the Trump Era' and *Student Advocacy on the Hill*, March 2017 which included more than 350 students from 40 schools of social work. Canada also saw participation in cities for the *Women's March* and for the *March for Our Lives* in support of the 17 students and staff killed in the Parkland shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School.

Social Workers Stand Up! – was NASW's Social Work Month 2017 theme. The campaign focused on educating the public about how social workers stand up for others, including some of the most vulnerable people in our

society, and make positive contributions to society.   Radio interviews and public service announcements ran more than 150 times.

NASW's current focus on Capitol Hill includes the following legislative policies: Improving Access to Mental Health Act, Social Workers Safety Act, Older Americans Act, Child Welfare, Social Work Reinvestment Act. NASW prepared *Advancing the American Agenda, NASW's transition document to the Trump Administration*. The document includes- Ensuring Child & Family Well-Being, Fortifying the Social Fabric, Building a Just Society and Strengthening the Social Work Profession.

NASW also advocates for immigration reform, including the DREAM ACT 2017, a bipartisan bill that would provide a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who came to the U.S. as children.   'Social workers are committed to the values and principles expressed in the *NASW Code of Ethics* that reminds us of the dignity and worth of all people… we continue or legacy of welcoming, protecting and caring for our immigrant brothers and sisters'. Angelo McClain, *NASW News*, May 2017, p. 3.

Within social work education, programs are beginning to teach about environmental justice to ensure that the next generation of social workers understand how addressing environmental issues is in the purview of our profession. Centers and concentrations are emerging to support this area, for example the University of Denver has created a MSW concentration in Sustainable Development and Global Practice. Programs have also highlighted this issue by bringing in experts or speakers, hosting conferences and symposiums and other educational events. Programs are also promoting research in this area, conducting social impact studies.

Many social work educators are re-focusing their work to directly engage their profession, students, and clients in political processes. For example, interest in the Nancy A. Humphreys for Political Social Work at the University of Connecticut has recently exploded, and NASW is now in the process of streamlining the Voter Engagement Model and Campaign School for Social Workers training in a way that allows maximization of impact.

The Council on Social Work Education's (U.S.) Committee on Environmental Justice has been exploring the history of environmental justice and its connection to social work. Its charge is to make recommendations about the ways in which social work education should consider integrating issues of environmental justice into the social work

curriculum. The Committee has created a definition of environmental justice which has been included in the CSWE glossary. In 2015, the Committee conducted a Faculty Development Institute, Teaching Environmental Justice Across the Curriculum: 2015 EPAS and Beyond.

The CSWE Board of Directors received and discussed a report from the Environmental Justice Committee at its March 2017 meeting. The report provided recommendation about the ways in which social work education should integrate issues of environmental justice into the social work curriculum. To follow up, CSWE has been working to connect the report to several different parts of the organization. The report has been forwarded to the chairs of the Commissions on Educational Policy and Accreditation, respectively, as they begin the process of thinking about the next iteration of the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards. In addition, there are possibilities for curricular resources and publications. The report was also forwarded to the Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice and CSWE's Division of Education and Communications and Marketing.

CSWE's 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) guides the accreditation process for social work education programs in the U.S. It outlines nine competencies that guide curriculum. The third competency, Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice, states 'social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected.'

Canada's social workers collaborate nationally on the Intersectoral Committee which focuses on social work education (CASWE), regulation of social work practice(CCSWR) and on the national association of social workers (CASW) to build, improve and sustain the profession in Canada.

The International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work continue to host Social Work Day at the United Nations in conjunction with World Social Work Day. The 34th

Annual event in 2017 theme was 'Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability'. Speakers at the event highlighted current environmental sustainability issues including fracking, and Indigenous Peoples issues including Dakota Access Pipeline at the Standing Rock Reservation. In 2018 the 35th Annual Social Work Day at the UN continued the theme exploring the topic: *Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Social Work Practice*.

Although person-in-environment is central to the social work perspective, historically little attention has been paid to the physical and natural environment. The paradigm is shifting to fully embrace environmental sustainability as a core component of social work practice and education. Global perspectives are being integrated into the curriculum as well as a focus on how global issues are now local.

Natural and built environments have a direct impact on people's ability to develop and reach their potential. The environment is a key component of the social determinants of health and wellbeing. Social, economic and environmental factors are intertwined.

Chapter 7

Looking forward

David N Jones

Contents

Introduction

The *Global Agenda* process, including the World Social Work Day celebrations and the many activities linked to the theme (conferences, publications, seminars, informal discussions, etc.) has involved hundreds of thousands of social workers, social development practitioners, service users and individuals around the world. This theme has opened up a necessary debate about the role of social work and social development at a time of threat and opportunity in a context of major global change.

This report, including the global overview and regional reports, cannot do justice to this wide range of activities but has drawn on the commitment and voluntary time of scores of people who have had the courage to reflect on and share their experience in written and other forms. This process illustrates the international interconnectedness of our professions, the range of activities undertaken, the diverse range of people and partners involved and the great potential for learning and influencing the global environment, in its broadest sense.

The next steps

The two years leading up to the world conferences in 2020 will see two parallel strands of work on *The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development*.

The first will focus on the fourth pillar, 'strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships'. This will be the theme of World Social Work Days in 2019 and 2020 and a core element of the 2020 world conferences. It is also intended that this should be an element within regional conferences in 2019 and research activity by national social work associations, universities and civil society bodies. This pillar speaks to a central element of social work and social development practice but something which can easily be overlooked in the context of bureaucratically driven assessment models and risk management.

The four pillars of *The Global Agenda* are interwoven and equally important; there is no way to help those in social, economic, and/or political peril without also looking at their physical environment, both natural and built. Recognising the importance of human relationships, for instance, must take in to account the physical environment, how the need for limited resources may create competition or cooperation, or the need to migrate to find more resources, thus rupturing family and community connections. Human relationships can only flourish when the individuals

in the relationships can enjoy well-being (emotional, spiritual, physical and mental health), all of which need a healthy connection to the physical environment to flourish (Wilson 1986; Kellert and Wilson 1995; Cajete 1998; Powers and Rinkel 2018).

The second focus will be on preparing for the launch of a new Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development for the following decade 2020-2030, remembering that the original intentions of *The Global Agenda* process were:

- To claim/reclaim the priority of 'political' action, develop a collective voice for social development and social work practitioners and social work educators
- To start a collective process of elaborating and setting a common agenda for years to come that can unite those involved in social work and social development
- To strategise around mechanisms for the implementation of common actions and the development of modalities for monitoring our efforts

The Global Agenda is not only a statement but also a process. The three bodies have begun discussions about how The Global Agenda process can be enlarged to involve a wider spectrum of professional interests and service user groups in shaping, owning and promoting *The Global Agenda for 2020-2030*. This will be demanding and almost certainly lead to a different shape to the process, but the prize of an even wider social movement that unifies all who take up its call is hugely attractive in a world of increased social tension and deepening social problems.

The three organisations will need to reflect on the effectiveness of *The Global Agenda* process, including the arrangements for monitoring developments which had been proposed (International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work and International Council on Social Welfare 2012).

- Has *The Global Agenda* process enhanced the global political profile of social work and social development?
- What have been the benefits and difficulties arising from the partnership of the three global bodies?

- Have social work and social development achieved stronger profiles in the United Nations and other global and regional fora?
- Do others recognise the value of having social work at the table when formulating global social policies and strategies?
- What positive outcomes can be identified?
- Could more have been achieved and if so, what are the implications for the strategies for the next decade?
- What strengths and weaknesses can be identified in *The Global Agenda* process?
- How do we attract new resources to strengthen the capacity of the three organisations to engage in these tasks?

These and other questions will form part of the consultation and evaluation to be launched by the three global bodies.

Conclusion and thanks

This process was seen from the beginning as one of slow construction, laying foundations and building new structures to strengthen the capacity of the social work profession and of social development to draw on our knowledge and experience and to share that with the world. We have insights which deserve to be heard in this time of conflict and anxiety.

The experience in this first decade of the *Global Agenda* process conveys confidence that ambitious dreams can bear fruit and that our professions have the capacity to create bold and influential achievements, which are the result of shared commitment to local, regional and global action. The three global bodies extend their appreciation and thanks to all who have contributed and will continue to do so and invite our worldwide community to participate in the next stages of this global process.

Appendix I

The Partner Organisations

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

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

The International Council on Social Welfare is a global, non-governmental organisation which represents tens of thousands of organisations around the world that are actively involved in programmes to promote social welfare, social development and social justice. Visit www.icsw.org

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

History of The Global Agenda and The Agenda Process

The 2010 world conference on social work and social development in Hong Kong (Jones, Yuen and Rollet 2008; Sha 2010) was the first fully integrated, joint conference organised by the three global bodies for several decades (2010 Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development[26] and the result of several years of negotiation and planning. It was proceeded by a global consultation process informed by discussion papers disseminated by the three global organisations (International Federation of Social Workers 2010). The emerging ideas were explored and developed during the conference, culminating in the identification of four pillars for an agenda for social work and social development, which were endorsed in the final plenary by acclamation. These were subject to further global consultation and refinement, concluding with the following pillars:

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

The 2010 conference was held as the first reviews of progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals were published (United Nations 2010a; World Bank 2010). The synergy between the Millennium Goals and *The Global Agenda* was noted and welcomed by UN leaders and others (Sha 2010; Clark 2012). The debate about what should follow the Millennium Goals continued through the early years of *The Global Agenda* process (Fukuda-Parr 2012; High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda 2013). It is significant and encouraging to note that, whilst the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987) had linked environmental concerns with sustainable development, *The Global Agenda* process

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[26] http://www.swsd2010.org

explicitly connected social development and environmental sustainability before this surfaced as a significant feature in the mainstream debate about what should be the shape of the Sustainable Development Goals (Dominelli and Hackett 2012; High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda 2013; United Nations 2015a; United Nations 2015c) (see *Sustainable Development Goals* below).

The 2012 conference in Stockholm (2nd Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development 2012: Action and Impact[27]) reviewed, refined and reaffirmed the four pillars proposed at the Hong Kong conference (Dominelli and Hackett 2012; Stockholm World Conference 2012) and laid the foundation for the second phase of the process linking each pillar in turn to the global and regional conference themes, the focus of World Social Work Days and the publication of regional and global reports. For this second stage, the three global organisations invited bids or proposals for leadership of five Regional Observatories (Zelenev 2013). It was hoped that this process would not only identify organisations and individuals who would take on the research challenge of gathering information about practice across those regions but also that they would attract new resources to underpin and strengthen the process. Bids were received from all regions and Regional Observatories and lead people were identified. The final regional structures were very different from each other. These structures subsequently agreed to take on the responsibility for collating regional reports on each of the pillars. As the process continues, more work is needed to identify resources to provide robust, sustainable structures to undertake the full remit of Regional Observatories on Social Work and Social Development.

The Regional Observatories gathered information from across their regions to illustrate how social work and social development are addressing each pillar in turn. They chose to do this in a variety of different ways, sometimes in different configurations: organising a regional conference which examined the pillar and its implications for practice, a qualitative on-line survey, a call for direct submissions of practice examples and/or relevant studies or publications, and a consultative process between national or regional groups of associations and/or academic institutions. The regional reports drew on published and unpublished papers, videos, poster presentations, course syllabi, website links and conference

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[27] http://www.swsd-stockholm-2012.org/

literature, ranging in scale from very local community projects to ambitious national strategies and political lobbying by a professional association.

The 2014 conference in Melbourne (SWSD 2014 - World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development 2014) focussed on the first pillar ("promoting equalities") including the launch of the first report (Bailey 2014; IASSW, ICSW and IFSW 2014). Activity during the two years leading up to the 2016 conference in Seoul (Joint World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development 2016[28]) focussed on the second pillar ("promoting dignity and worth") with the launch at the conference by the three Presidents of the second report (IASSW, ICSW and IFSW 2016; International Association of Schools of Social Work 2016; Ioakimidis and Dominelli 2016; Nadkarni and Lombard 2016; Stark 2016c; Stark 2016a; Zelenev 2016). This third report focused on the third pillar advanced during 2016-2018 ("promoting sustainable communities and environments") will be launched at the 2018 conference in Dublin (Social Work, Education and Social Development: Environmental and Community Sustainability - Human Solutions In Evolving Societies[29]).

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[28] http://people-x.co.kr/past_homepage/2016/SWSD2016/eng/sub01_0.php

[29] https://www.swsd2018.org/

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Appendix III

United Nations Conventions and other Instruments relevant to this theme

United Nations (1948) *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. New York, United Nations* http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/ (Accessed on 6 June 2018)

United Nations (1966) *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx (Accessed on 7 June 2016)

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United Nations (2000) Convention against Transnational Organized Crime https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html (Accessed 7 June 2016) including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000) and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea (2000) https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html#Fulltext See explanatory notes https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html (Accessed 7 June 2018)

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(Accessed 8 June 2018)

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Appendix IV

Ethical codes and policies which refer to sustainability

American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare & Society for Social Work Research now has it as one of 12 Grand Challenge: 'Strengthening the Social Response to the Human Impacts of Environmental Change' (Kemp and Palinkas 2015)

http://aaswsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WP5-with-cover.pdf (Accessed 8 June 2018)

Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW)

'Recognizes that social work takes place in a context whereby social systems have a mutually interdependent relationship with the natural environment' (AASW 2010, p 9)

 https://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201 (Accessed 8 June 2018)

British Association of Social Workers (BASW)

Social work 'recognises the complexity of interactions between human beings and their environment, and the capacity of people

both to be affected by and to alter the multiple influences upon them including bio-psychosocial factors'. (BASW 2012, p7).

http://cdn.basw.co.uk/upload/basw_95243-9.pdf (Accessed 8 June 2018)

Council on Social Work Education

The new Educational Standards include environmental justice https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Standards-and-Policies/2015-EPAS/2015EPASandGlossary.pdf.aspx (Accessed 8 June 2018)

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

Social workers 'have a professional obligation to become knowledgeable and educated about the precarious position of the natural environment' (Humphreys and Rogge 2000 *Environmental policy.* Washington DC, NASW: 101-108. para. 2)

Appendix V

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Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability is the third pillar of The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development. Social work has always been concerned with the health and well-being of people in the communities and the social environments within which they live; the significance of community has long been at the centre of social work thinking and practice. Making the practice link between wellbeing and the natural environment seems quite new, although it is evident in the work of many social work pioneers of the 19th century. 21st century social work is rediscovering the reality that protecting and improving the physical environment is intrinsic to improving the circumstances and wellbeing of everybody, including those living on the margins.

This is the third of a series of four reports on The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development from IASSW, ICSW and IFSW. It presents the findings of five Regional Observatories that have examined social work and social development practice related to the third pillar of The Global Agenda. These observations are set in the context of social, environmental, political and economic realities of 2016-2018. One objective of this third report is to open up the debate about how to shape the practice and policy responses for social work and social development arising from the commitment to 'promoting community and environmental sustainability'. What does this mean for those involved in the daily delivery of social work and social development? How should this commitment change education for practice? What does it mean for day-to-day practice? How should social work and social development be contributing to the shaping of local, national and international social policy in a way which takes account of the grave threats to the environment and the undermining of a sense of community in many places?