

Professor Vimla Nadkarni, President, Biographical Sketch

Professor Vimla Nadkarni, Ph.D. has been the President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) since 2012. She retired as Professor, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), India in 2013, having worked extensively in the domain of social work for 42 years. As Chair of the Centre for Enhancement of Quality in Social Work Education at TISS, she set up the National Network of Schools of Social Work in India which led to the formation of the Indian Association of Social Work Education. She is the Vice-President of the Bombay Association of Trained Social Workers.



After heading the department of medical and psychiatric social work at TISS for 20 years, she served as founder Dean of the School of Social Work (2006-2008). She also worked as the Secretary General of the Family Planning Association of India (2001-2002). Her international awards include the Fulbright and Kellogg Fellowships. She was the 2nd Annual Hokenstad International Lecturer in 2008.

Her book “NGOs, Health and the Urban Poor” was published in 2009. She guest edited the first special issue on ‘Social Work Education in Asia: New Horizons’ of the Social Work Education the International Journal published by Taylor and Francis, UK. She is deeply involved in writing on social work education, human rights and allied issues. As President of IASSW, she is invited as keynote speaker in several international conferences around the globe.

Vision for IASSW

“Be the change that you want in the world.”---Mahatma Gandhi

In the face of continuing and challenging change that we are all confronting at a social, cultural, economic and political level, I would like to submit that my own vision for IASSW entails embracing change in order to usher in change.

My vision for a globally effective association of schools of social work entails nurturing and empowering social work educators to attain highest standards of excellence. Networking with other organisations at every level international, regional and national will be vital. I would like to focus on building partnerships in order to influence international policy on social and environmental issues for a better and safer tomorrow. IASSW has been most responsive in supporting social work schools in disaster affected contexts. I would like to strengthen this ongoing commitment to arm educators and students with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to respond with immediacy and confidence to crises. Collaborating with UN agencies so that IASSW has greater policy impact on international issues is imperative and I plan to use all opportunity to increase and establish these collaborations.

With the digital revolution, disseminating information has become easy. Using IASSW website, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn sites, I believe that IASSW can reach out more effectively to all our stakeholders. This would also enable us to provide shared platforms for exchange of ideas on curricula, research and publications. I would like to heighten IASSW’s profile as an intellectual resource hub with open access to social work knowledge.

IASSW has committed itself to capacity building in regions where social work education is struggling for recognition. Developing strategies for capacity building of schools of social work and faculty in these countries in partnership with regional associations is essential. This process has already started in South Asia and will be reinvigorated.

Together with my board and regional associations, we have been working hard to increase our membership base of schools and individual social work educators in IASSW. We will continue to utilise all opportunities globally to make presentations on the vision and mission of IASSW in conferences and through various digital platforms.

Adopting these and other innovative strategies I envisage that IASSW will become more visible and will impact the future of social work as a practice-based profession and academic discipline aimed at social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people.