

# The development of professional social work in China

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# **1.1 A brief historic review of social work development in China**

1.1.1 The import of professional social work at early stage  
(Before 1940s)

1.1.2 The non-professional social work system under the  
“planned economic system” (1950s-1970s)

## **1.2 The gradual development of professional social work in China (1980s-2000s)**

### **1.2.1 The new needs in professional social work after the economic reform**

- The changes of social administration systems in both urban and rural areas after the economic reform,
- The early development of the new kinds of social work services: community services and social organizations (NGOs).
- The emerging needs in professional social work to meet higher needs and deal with more complicated social circumstances

## 1.2.2 The emerge of the new social work education in later-1980s

- Several universities set up social work education in later-1980s

## 1.2.3 The slow development of professional social work in 1990s)

- The background:

- 1. Rapid marketization in economic system and there were much more emphasis on economic development and much less on social development among governments' public policies
- 2. There were commercializing trends in many areas of social services.

# 1.3 The development of professional social work in China (2006-)

## 1.3.1 The background: The new politic environment from the early 2000s

- The introspection of development strategy of previous decades
- The new orientations of “harmonious society”
- More emphasis on social development and people’s well-being

- 1.3.2 The political decision of the CCP’s central commission to develop “a grand social worker team” in China (2006)

- 1.3.3 The orientation of the “professional social work”
  - The discusses of “what are the professional social work and professional social workers”
  - The decisional to develop professional social work system

## **II. The institution building of China's professional social work and the problems**

## **2.1 Two kinds of professional social workers in China currently**

2.1.1 Social workers by higher education

2.1.2 Social workers from the official professional examinations: national and local



## **2.2 Social work education system**

2.2.1 Several tiers of higher social work education in universities/colleges

- The three-year junior professional training programs in the high-technological colleges: about 50 programs currently
- The four year undergraduate programs (BSW) in universities: about 330 programs
- The two-three-year MSW program: 105 programs currently
- PhD social work programs in several universities

## 2.2.2 Teaching models

- The international knowledge / methods and the localization process
- On campus teaching hours and placement / internship

## **2.3 The official social work examination system**

### 2.3.1 The national social work examination system: The examination for social worker's professional level evaluation

- Starting from 2006
- Two levels of diplomas currently: Junior level and middle level, and the senior level will be set up soon
- Three courses: social work theories and skills / social work practices / social work legislations and policies
- More than 300k people take part the national examination a year recently, and

## 2.3.2 The local social work examination systems

- Different kinds of professional examinations in different places, usually with lower professional requirement and thus lower qualification.

## **2.4 Different working places of the professional social workers**

2.4.1 Local communities

2.4.2 Professional social work services (NGOs)

2.4.3 Government-affiliated organizations: trade union, youth league, women federation, disabled people federation, etc.

2.4.4 Other employers: social work services in enterprises, hospitals and schools, etc.

## **2.5 The coordination of the social workers in different organizations**

2.5.1 The different characteristics of social workers in different organizations

2.5.2 The coordination and cooperation between the social workers in community organization and professional social work services (NGOs)

- **2.6 The current tasks of social work's institutionalization**

- 2.6.1 The development of legislation system
- 2.6.2 The national and local standards for social work services
- 2.6.3 The professional regulations for different trades
- 2.6.4 Internal management system
- 2.6.5 The professional evaluation system

# **III. The competence building and the problems**



## 3.1 The current situation of social worker's professional **competence**

### – 3.1.1. For individual social work

- The measurement of social worker's competence
  - Social work theories
  - Professional skills
  - The understanding and application of laws and policies
  - Capacity to communicate
  - Social work values and ethics
  
- The achievements of and challenges to social worker's competence
  - General situations
  - For different kinds of social workers

- 3.1.2 For social work organizations
  - Too much non-professional work for the community social workers
  - The weak capacity in professional and administrative authority for the social work institutes (NGOs)
  
- 3.1.3 For social work education
  - The weak professional background for the faculties
  - The lower professional supervision capacity in the placement

- 3.1.4 For the total social work profession development
  - The number of professional social workers is still very small
    - *By the end of 2016, the total professional social workers with national diploma were just nearly 300,000, and the total social workers were about 760,000 if non-national diploma holders included. Professional jobs were more than 200,000, and social work services (NGOs) were about 6600.*
  - The imbalance between urban and rural and among different regions

## 3.2 The main factors hindering social work development

### 3.2.1 Less public expenditure on social work

- Causing the lower pay for social workers
- Causing a high job changes among social workers as a result
- Further causing the weak competence of social work institutes

### 3.2.2 The “competition” from non-professional workers

- From the community workers who don't have higher education
- From the non-professional workers who have higher education, but not in social work

### 3.3 The goals to increase social work competence

- 3.3.1 The target of social work development
  - 1.45 million social workers by the year of 2020

## – 3.3.2 To improve social work education

- Curriculum development
- Better placement/internship
- More researches on local practices
- More international exchanges
- More focus on the top (PhD) and bottom (three-year diploma) levels of social work higher education

- 3.3.3 To improve professional examinations
  - To have a better examination knowledge/skills
  - To have senior level examination/evaluation
- 3.3.4 To reinforce the on-the-job training program for the social workers
- 3.3.5 To develop two kinds of competences: general practitioners and specialists

*Thanks!*