IASSW AIETS

IASSW President's Update
October 2026

IASSW's engagement activities in October highlight the connections between global, national and local levels in advancing social work education worldwide.

At the Council on Social Work Education conference in Atlanta, I joined IASSW's main representative to the United Nations, Prof Lynne Healy, and representatives Prof Shirley Gatenio Gabel and Prof Rebecca Thomas to present "IASSW's Global Collaborations: Advancing Social Work Education through International Partnerships". The presentation highlighted IASSW's role as non-governmental organisation in connecting local lived realities with global policy development. IASSW's consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), held since 1947, provides a platform to strengthen social work's international profile and emphasise its interconnected role with social development. These international commitments are strengthened through partnerships with the International Federation of Social Workers, the International Council on Social Welfare, and the International Consortium for Social Development, as demonstrated by our collaboration on side events at the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha in 2025.

An invitation from the Center for Social Development (CSD) and the Global Programs Office at the Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis, included events and platforms for purposeful conversations about global social work engagement, challenges and opportunities in shaping the future of social work, and innovations to advance social change. I joined Dean Dorian Traube and Professor Michael Sherraden for a fireside dialogue on the social work profession and co-building global social transformation. This focus aligns with the Doha Political Declaration, adopted at the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025, which emphasises solutions to social and economic challenges to reduce poverty, address rising inequalities and extend social protection. The Global Standards for Social Work and Education and Training identify social, economic and environmental justice as fundamental pillars underpinning social work theory, policy and practice. CSD provides a Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) framework for social work education, research and practice that the global social work education community could draw on to invest in children's futures, to build household assets and promote economic inclusion. In alignment with IASSW's partnership approach, IASSW and CSD will explore opportunities for engaged dialogue, training in FCAB and access to resources in this specialised area to advance economic justice as reflected in the Global Standards.

This update reflects the shared commitment of IASSW, social work associations and schools across borders to advance social work education, research and practice, and to prepare graduates to develop innovative solutions and contribute to social change. It was encouraging to engage with Brown School social work students who expressed an interest in international social work and a desire to participate in global conversations, strengthen learning and solidarity across diverse contexts, and contribute to advancing social work globally.

Antoinette Lombard
President, IASSW