

**South Asian Conference on “Dignity and Worth of Peoples in a Globalised Economy-  
Role of State, Social Enterprises, Corporate and Social Workers”.**  
**27-28 August 2015**

The South Asian Conference of Professional Social Workers was organized by **Karnataka Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPSW) and Department of Social Work, Christ University Bangalore** on 27th and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2015. The theme of the Conference was “Dignity and Worth of Peoples in a Globalised Economy-Role of State, Social Enterprises, Corporate and Social Workers”. The conference was a platform for Social Work Professionals, Government Officials, Social Enterprises, Corporates and Social Work Institutions from India as well as South Asian Countries to have effective interactions and meaningful discussions.



The two day conference started with the welcome address of Prof. Victor Paul, Head, Department of Social Work, ChristUniversity. He elaborated on the changing equations of social work through its course of development with its goals being dignity and worth. Mr.MV Sriganesh, Chairman of organizing committee KASWP gave an overview of the two dayconference and introduced IFSW as an international body of social workers from 116 countries around the world as its representative members, with more than 5 lakh members working globally on policy issues.



The conference was inaugurated by Prof. Mariko Kimura, President, Asia Pacific IFSW and Professor, Women’s University, Tokyo, Japan. She emphasized the need for networking and developing a sense of solidarity that encompasses all the social workers irrespective of their different political and cultural context because of the common values which underlie in Social Work. She also elucidated on the major responsibility of the social work to work with the political system to bring changes and their ability

in making unique solution to problems in globalized issues. The changes could be brought through working collaboratively with different professional bodies.

Professor Gandhi Doss, HOD, Department of Social Work, Central University of Jammu & Chairperson, Conference Advisory Council spoke on the importance of practice and theory and its role in the success. According to him social works association has been voicing the voice of voiceless and is important for bringing in the needful changes.



**Ms Ruth Stark**, President, IFSW in her video message threw light on the need to empower people to take charge of their destiny and find joint solution for the problem through respect for each other, dignity, establishing mutual respect in working relation and thus the theme for the conference find its relevance to social welfare. She also encouraged the young professionals to share and discuss the practice and values and update their knowledge through sharing perspective and contribute to the world through our work to rebuild societies and face community crisis.

**Mr Rory Truell**, Secretary General, IFSW through his message congratulated India for becoming the member of IFSW and expressed the need for a socially just and sustainable world.

The Vice Chancellor of Christ University, **Dr. (Fr) Col. Thomas C. Mathew** in his presidential address stressed the need for blending academics and practice. He mentioned that Indian youth can create a difference through strategic endeavours and encouraged the young social work professionals to make use of technology to bring in revolutionary change.

The inauguration ceremony concluded with the distribution of the token of appreciation to the dignitaries and vote of thanks by **Mr. Santhosh Kumar Rai, President of KAPSW**.

The Key note session was presided by **Dr.Mallika Krishnaswami**, Dean Humanities and Social Sciences, Christ University. She elucidated on how social workers could help to build a society which is just and where people could appreciate each other. **Prof. Sandeep Shastri**, Pro Vice Chancellor, Jain University in his key note address said that, inclusion as a practice must echo the value of welfare and justice so that it is a win-win situation for all in the society. He emphasised on the four important concepts based on the theme of the conference which are dignity, inclusiveness, globalization and people. He highlighted the need of debating and concluding whether “We need a just system with a strong means or a strong system with just means”. He concluded with three D’s namely Human Dignity, Human Development and Human Destiny. The major essence was the need of policies to be converted to action plan to create a just and humane society.

There were four plenary sessions in two days where 18 eminent experts from Government, NGO, corporate and Academia participated and discussed their views and experiences in the areas of “**Societies in Transition**”, “**Transition from Welfare to Human Resource**”, “**Social Policy and Legislation**”, and “**sustainable development and building inclusive societies**”.



*The first plenary session was on the topic* “**Societies in Transition**”. Prof. Gandhi Doss, chaired the session. Dr. Shamini Attanayake, Director, National Institute of social development, Sri Lanka, Dr. K. Sekar, Professor and HOD, Department Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS and President of Indian Society of Professional Social Work, Bengaluru, Prof. Sanjay Bhatt, National Association of Professional Social Workers (NAPSW) were the speakers.

*In the second plenary session on* “**Transition from Welfare to Human resource**”, Mr. D R Nagaraj, Past national President, NIPM and founder Executive VP and CPO, Symphony Service Corporation, was the session chair. The

speakers were Mr. Mahalingam, HR coach and advisor, Mr. Shrihari Udupa, Director Agora Analytics and former president HR Adani group and Ms. Sonali De Sarker, Director HR, NetApp INC.

*The third plenary session* was chaired by **Ms. Santosh Vas**, Chair lady, Janodhya Public Trust Bangalore and **the speakers were Dr. Achyuta**

**Samanta** (Founder, KIIT – Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology and Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), Odisha), **Mr HN Srinivasa**, Vice-president, Skill development programme TATA group, **Mr. Madan Padki**, Co-Founder and CEO, Head Held High Services, Bengaluru.

*The fourth plenary session* on “**Social Policy and Legislation**” was chaired by Mr. Lukose Vallathrai, (IAS ret'd) Public Policy and Transparency Consultant and social worker. The speakers for this session were **Dr. Shalini Rajnish** (IAS) Principle Secretary to Govt, Backward classes Welfare Dept. GOK and **Ms. Nina P. Nayak**, Former Chairperson, KSCPCR and a member, NCPCR, **Dr. Sreelakshmi Gururaja**, Social Development Consultant, Formerly with UNICEF.

Two workshops were also organized as part of the conference. Dr. Bino Thomas, Associate Professor, Christ University, Bangalore conducted a workshop on “Parenting skill development Programme” as an approach to public mental health through trained social workers. Dr. Rameela Shekar, Dean, School of Social Workers, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore has conducted a session on case work where the trainees learned the concept of social work through group activities.

Plenary sessions were followed by concurrent sessions on various sub topics like Human rights, Welfare to Employee Engagement, Economic Growth and Vulnerability, Building skills for Sustainable Employment & Livelihood Options, CSR Initiatives, Importance of Social Enterprises, Clinical Social Work, Social work Practice, Juvenile Justice, Social Welfare Schemes, and Women at work place and Future of Social Work Education in Changed Scenario.



Altogether there were 63 papers selected and presented from total number of 90 papers during these concurrent sessions. There were also two workshops on parenting and case work as requested by the participants. The first day of conference came to an end with a cultural event followed by conference dinner.

**The valedictory function** started with the welcome address by **Mr. MV Sriganesh**, Chairman- Conference Organising Committee of KAPSW who welcomed all the honourable dignitaries to the valedictory function. The dignitaries **Dr. Parthasarathy**, Prof. Dept of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, **Dr. Achyuta Samantha**, Founder of KISS, Odisha and **Dr Linda Pereira**, Prof. and Founder Principle (Retd.) School of Social Work, Roshini Nilayala and Director, Viswas trust, Mangalore were felicitated for their outstanding achievements and contributions to the field of social work by Professor Mariko Kimura, Dr. (Fr). Col. Thomas C Mathew, Dr. Victor Paul, Dr Gandhi Doss, Mr. MV Sriganesh,

Mr.Santhosh Rai, Mr. Vasudev Sharma and Dr.Shobhana Thakrar. The contributions of the dignitaries to the society were read out by Dr.Shobhana Thakrar.

**Dr. Victor Paul**, HOD, Department of Social Work, Christ University, presented a brief report on the two day conference wherein he justified the need for the respective conference which has been attended by 400 delegates, 63 presentations and the plenary sessions.

Professor **Gandhi Doss's** address focussed on need for career guidance of MSW students by continuous interactive sessions with theoreticians and practitioners to bring the cohesion between job skills expectations and soft skills requirements of the market. Professor Doss was of the opinion that rather than conducting seminars we need to create a platform for dialogue where NGOs, CBOs, the Government, social work practitioners and students can meet together and discuss important social issues. He concluded by saying that when social workers win, then the law of the universe wins.

**Dr. (Fr) Col. Thomas C. Mathew**, in his presidential address eulogized on the passion with which the conference was organized which indeed made it unique. He said that even though social workers may be insignificant now, they can be very powerful if they know where they should hit. When social workers have strategies, thinking, policies and passion, they can make significant changes in the system. He encouraged the social workers to strive to become foresters who will work hard and may not live to see their work but their efforts will be enjoyed by many people in the future. **Dr. H M Marulasiddaiah**, a very senior Social Work teacher and practitioner was presented with the token of appreciation by Prof. Mariko Kimura to honour his presence. The Conference came to a conclusion with Mr Pandu Naik proposing the vote of thanks.

The conference was a great success with 400 participants and also met its objectives. It proved to be a platform for open and creative debates and presenters bravely presented effective approaches, ideas and proposals, based on the best experiences in their areas.

