



Annual Report – 2022

Introduction

This report covers the activities of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) for the period **1 January to 31 December 2022**.

ICSW's work during the year was guided by its six strategic priorities:

- Promoting social development, social welfare, and social justice;
- Networking and policy innovation;
- Communication with stakeholders;
- Global advocacy and socially responsible global governance;
- Regional cooperation;
- Knowledge-building, policy dialogue, and capacity development.

Highlights of 2022

The year 2022 marked a period of reconnection and renewal for ICSW as the organization transitioned into a post-pandemic environment. While the lingering effects of COVID-19 continued to restrict in-person gatherings, ICSW effectively adopted a hybrid model, combining virtual and face-to-face engagement to advance its mission.

Key highlights included:

- **Global Conference in Seoul:**
The **Joint World Conference on Social Work Education and Social Development (SWESD 2022)**, titled *“Redefining Social Policy and Social Work Practice in a Post-Pandemic Society,”* was held in Seoul. As ICSW's first major hybrid global event, it brought together international leaders and professionals to reimagine the future of social work and social policy.
- **High-Level Advocacy at the United Nations:**
ICSW maintained a visible advocacy presence at the **60th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development (CSocD)**, submitting a formal statement and co-organizing a side event titled *“Reaching Nutritionally Vulnerable Social Groups: The Quest for a Multifaceted Policy Response”* in partnership with IASSW, IFSW, IFAD, UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland, and the Korea National Council on Social Welfare.
- **Social Work Day at the UN:**
Continuing its longstanding partnership with **IASSW** and **IFSW**, ICSW co-hosted the

annual *Social Work Day at the UN*, a flagship event that strengthens the visibility of social work in international policy discourse.

- **New Leadership and Vision:**

The year welcomed **Professor Antonio López Peláez** as ICSW's Executive Director. His message, "*Working Together for a Better ICSW*," outlined a new strategic direction centered on collaboration, innovation, and engagement.

- **Advancing Social Protection Tools:**

The October 2022 newsletter introduced the **Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions**, launched by the UN Secretary-General. ICSW promoted this as a key policy framework to integrate social protection and employment within sustainable development strategies.

- **Strong Regional Cooperation:**

ICSW's regional networks remained highly active, with particular highlights from **Latin America**, the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**, **Southeast Asia & the Pacific**, and **Europe**, where the **International Congress on Social Policies** was held in Malaga, Spain.

Outcomes

1. Promoting Social Development, Social Welfare, and Social Justice

ICSW's advocacy in 2022 focused on addressing emerging challenges to social justice in a rapidly transforming global environment:

- **Championing an Inclusive Digital Society:** The January newsletter featured "*Digital Transformation and Social Well-Being*," advocating for equitable digital inclusion and the ethical use of technology in social development.
- **Addressing the Mental Health Crisis:** The June issue spotlighted "*Mental Health and COVID-19*," calling for comprehensive, multi-stakeholder responses to post-pandemic mental health challenges.
- **Supporting Migrants and Displaced Persons:** ICSW amplified calls for humane, rights-based migration policies, emphasizing the need for solidarity and protection amid growing displacement crises.

2. Networking and Policy Innovation

The year saw the **revival of in-person collaboration** and the introduction of **new policy tools** to advance ICSW's global mission.

- **The 2022 Joint World Conference in Seoul** provided an essential platform for research exchange, professional networking, and policy co-creation.
- **Social Work Day at the UN** focused on "*Moving Toward Food Security for All: The Role of Social Work*," fostering cross-sector dialogue between practitioners and policymakers.

- **Launch of the Social Protection Simulator:** Featured in the October newsletter, this practical policy tool developed by the ILO and UN regional commissions (notably ESCAP) helps policymakers design and assess social protection systems.

3. Communicating with Our Stakeholders

Under the new leadership, ICSW prioritized **transparent communication** and stronger member engagement.

- **A Renewed Vision:** Professor López Peláez’s message “*Working Together for a Better ICSW*” became a rallying point for the organization’s collaborative direction.
- **Amplifying Member Voices:** Regional presidents and members were regularly featured in newsletters, ensuring their experiences and priorities shaped the global dialogue.

4. Global Advocacy and Socially Responsible Global Governance

ICSW sustained a strong presence in global policy discussions on social development and justice.

- **Engagement at the UN:** ICSW submitted a formal statement to the **60th Session of CSocD**, emphasizing inclusive social development and the need to update the global social policy agenda.
- **Collaborative Policy Events:** The side event “*Reaching Nutritionally Vulnerable Social Groups*” illustrated ICSW’s convening role in promoting coordinated, rights-based policy responses to food insecurity and malnutrition.

5. Regional Cooperation

Regional collaboration remained a cornerstone of ICSW’s global strength.

- **Latin America:** Featured a presidential message highlighting post-pandemic policy challenges.
- **MENA Region:** Provided a thoughtful analysis of social protection systems and governance.
- **Southeast Asia & Pacific:** Shared insights from a comparative study on **Social Welfare Law in ASEAN**.
- **Europe:** Hosted the **International Congress on Social Policies** in Malaga, focusing on the intersection of welfare and human rights.

6. Knowledge-Building, Policy Dialogue, and Capacity Development

ICSW remained dedicated to equipping its members and partners with the tools and knowledge to drive progress in social welfare.

- **Policy Dialogue:** Through its newsletters and global events, ICSW facilitated discussion on critical issues such as digital transformation, food security, and mental health.

- **Practical Tools:** The **Social Protection Simulator** supported policymakers in assessing the costs and impacts of social protection reforms.
- **World Conference Contributions:** SWESD 2022 in Seoul featured hundreds of presentations and workshops, strengthening the capacity of thousands of professionals worldwide.

Conclusion

The year 2022 represented a pivotal moment of transition and renewal for the International Council on Social Welfare. The success of the hybrid World Conference in Seoul symbolized the organization's re-emergence as a dynamic, collaborative global network following the disruptions of the pandemic.

Guided by a new vision and strengthened by regional partnerships, ICSW advanced its agenda of social justice, inclusion, and sustainable development. By combining advocacy, knowledge-building, and innovative tools such as the Social Protection Simulator, the organization demonstrated both resilience and adaptability.

ICSW concluded 2022 with renewed purpose, enhanced visibility, and a clear trajectory toward deeper cooperation and stronger global impact in the years ahead.