

## NEWS AND VIEWS . . . from ICSW

In *International Social Work* 48(5), I outlined in the News and Views section the ICSW global programme which runs until 2008. In this issue, I will outline the implementation of the programme.

### **Social welfare and social development**

To a large extent the social welfare component of the programme is managed by the European region of ICSW, which is the focus of the European regional conferences and of the European regional programme.

In the global conference to be held in 2006 there will be a focus on social welfare and social development. The main theme for the conference is social inclusion: facing poverty and social inequality. Over the three main days of the conference the themes will be poverty and inequality in the century of waste; ethics and solidarity for a fairer world; and global commitment to human and social development. In each of the plenary sessions there will be a speaker taking a global perspective and a second speaker addressing the same subject from a Latin American perspective. The conference is to be held in Brasilia on 16–20 July 2006 (<http://www.cbciss.icsw32.org/>).

### **Networking and linking our work**

Through the global office and global conferences the knowledge that is gathered in one region is transferred to other regions. The global conference is a focus for this networking of knowledge. Emphasis is to be given in 2006 to regional grouping of members developing their linkages and regional policies. As an official part of the programme, members from each of the regions will meet to further develop their programmes. The global conference will generate much new valuable material relevant to the North and the South.

## **Ongoing global advocacy and socially responsible global governance**

The priority theme for the 2006 meeting of the Commission for Social Development is the review of the first UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006). ICSW is preparing a submission that will be distributed to all governments that have representation on the commission. Members in the countries that are represented on the commission will be asked to present the ICSW submission to their ministries for foreign affairs. The submission will use existing ICSW knowledge from regions and sources that have analysed progress on the eradication of poverty.

ICSW is on the International Labour Organization (ILO) 'special list' which entitles the council to participate in ILO conferences. ICSW is looking to a more vigorous involvement in ILO in 2006 and beyond. The main reason for this is the importance of employment as the major way for people to move out of poverty. The ILO has constantly referred to employment as one of the major outcomes of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. Unfortunately employment has largely been omitted from the UN's responses to poverty.

ICSW will be active in the follow-up to the Sixth Global Conference on Health Promotion and the charter arising from the conference.

## **Regional cooperation**

This will be the major part of ICSW project work. A manual has been drafted to assist national committees to function more effectively. National committees that function as umbrella organizations are the core of ICSW membership. In addition to the national committees' manual, a handbook on lobbying government on budgets has been developed by our Australian member for use in the Pacific. The Asian Development Bank sponsored this project. The handbook is applicable to other regions.

The high level of activity in Central and West Africa will continue in 2006 and 2007. The main aim is to bring together society at the national level and then at the regional level. ICSW is developing its relationship with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Further work is being undertaken to build a relationship with the African Union.

ICSW has been forging links with the South Asia Partnership International, which has a well developed programme of interface with governments and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The programme in 2005 built on work of previous years and covered democracy, trafficking, peace and militarization, social security and disasters. ICSW will continue to support this very important regional initiative.

The Black Sea countries are showing considerable progress in building up social organization. Active social organization has been a recent phenomenon. ICSW will continue to support this work.

In South-East Asia, while some countries have well developed civil traditions, others do not, like Laos. Over the next three years, ICSW will be helping this region and the Pacific Rim countries to build up social organization.

Since the 2006 conference will be held in Latin America, ICSW will use this opportunity to strengthen civil organization in the region.

A start has been made in the Middle East and North Africa, but this has not progressed recently. Attempts will be made to recommence this activity.

### **North–South partnerships**

ICSW is generating interest and activity in individual countries for North–South partnerships. For example, the ICSW Finnish committee has developed a partnership with our member in Tanzania, the Tanzania Council of Social Development. This project is supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. ICSW's part is to show other countries the possibilities of North–South partnerships.

The other component of North–South Partnerships is to involve northern members of ICSW in seeking to have their countries increase development assistance.

### **South–South policy dialogue**

The South–South dialogue has both a global and a regional perspective. Over the next three years emphasis is being placed on South actors learning from each other about issues and ways in which these perspectives can be addressed. This will occur in meetings, particularly those of ICSW regional presidents. The regions will transfer knowledge not just across regions but also around the world.

### **Resources**

An increasing number of governments are joining ICSW to provide help for the programme. The governments include those of Finland, Norway and Sweden.

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