



IFSW Asia Pacific Report to IFSW General Meeting, May 2022

Country Members of the region:

Australia; Bahrain; Bangladesh; China; Fiji; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Iran; Japan; Jordan; Republic of Korea; Kuwait; Krygyzstan; Lebanon; Macau, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Aotearoa / New Zealand; Palestine; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Vietnam; Yemen

Names, countries, and positions of the Regional Executive

Regional President: Rose Henderson, Aotearoa New Zealand

Regional Vice-President: Sriganesh MV, India

Secretary: Teoh Ai Hua, Malaysia

Treasurer: Machiko O'Hara, Japan

Communications: Gary Xia, Australia

Immediate Past President: Mariko Kimura, Japan

Name, countries of the representatives in the different commissions

Education Commission: Mariko Kimura, Japan.

Human Rights Commission: Raed Amira, Palestine

Ethics Commission: Hassan Mousavi Chelak, Iran (regional co-ordinator); Yvonne Crichton-Hill, Aotearoa NZ; Sukrita Rai, Nepal.

United Nations Commission

Kae (Wilaiporn) Kotbungkair, Thailand (Regional Commissioner); Yolanda (Zhe) Wang, China; Sug Pyo Kim, South Korea; Sebastian Cordoba, Australia; Jude Douglas, Aotearoa NZ; Suresh Pathare, India; Hamed Olamee, Iran

Indigenous Commission

Carole Tana-Tepania, Aotearoa NZ, (Regional co-ordinator) Dr Ling How Kee, Malaysia; Yangjian (Yvonne) China; Linda Ford, Australia

New member this year: Jordan



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Regional Delegates Meeting 2021:

On 27 February 2021 we held our regional meeting via Zoom. This meeting would normally have been held at the same time as the IFSW General meeting and Biennial Conference but holding it at a separate time and via zoom enabled different participation by members. In the past with face to face only, many of our members had been unable to participate due to the costs and logistics of international travel. In the future we believe hybrid options should be the new normal to make the best of both options.



Asia Pacific regional meeting 2021 via Zoom

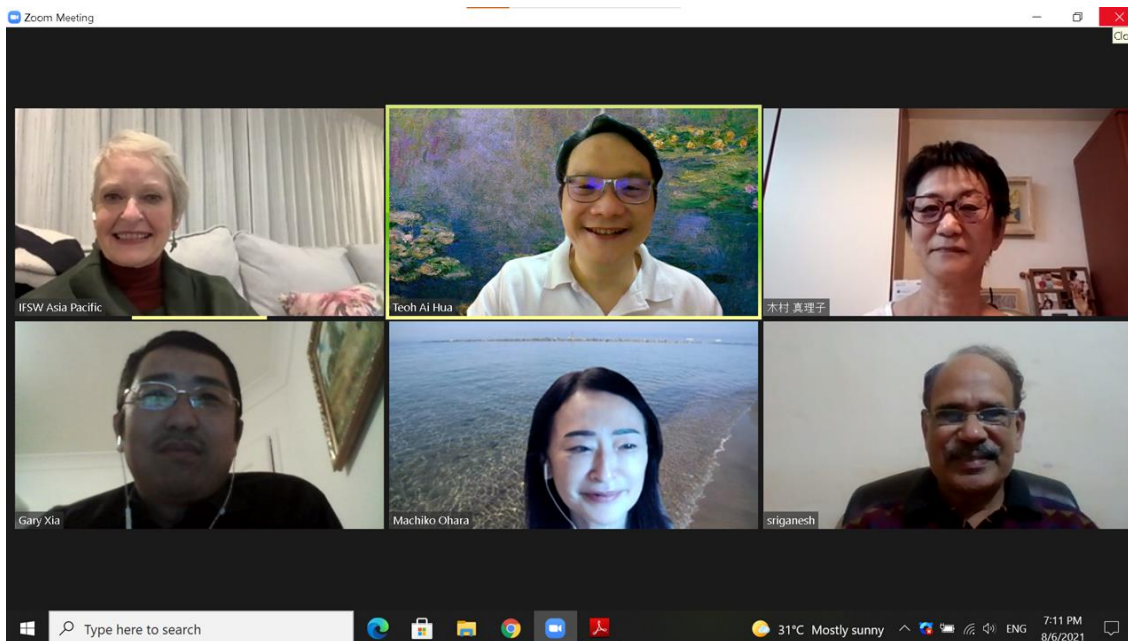
As this was the first regional meeting following the last General meeting there were some changes in personnel with Sriganesh MV from India welcomed as the new Regional Vice-President. We thanked Irene Leung from Hong Kong, China for her work in this role previously. We also acknowledged some changes in our representation on the Ethics Commission with Teoh Ai Hua stepping down and outlined the process for replacing him on this Commission. In January we had completed the process to identify our regional representatives on the newly established Indigenous Commission.



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Whilst at times the work of all of the Commissions varies considerably and ebbs and flows, it is really great that we have many people from across our region willing to participate in the Commissions and through this to strongly represent the diversity our region offers to the global work plans of the Commissions.

In addition to the usual reports from office holders, Commission representatives and member countries, we were able to discuss the plans for the regional development fund, update members on the Global Agenda themes and other global changes and developments as well as update everyone on the plans for the Regional Conference being hosted by Australia later in 2021.



Asia Pacific Regional Executive committee at their August 2021 meeting

Regional Delegates meeting March 2022

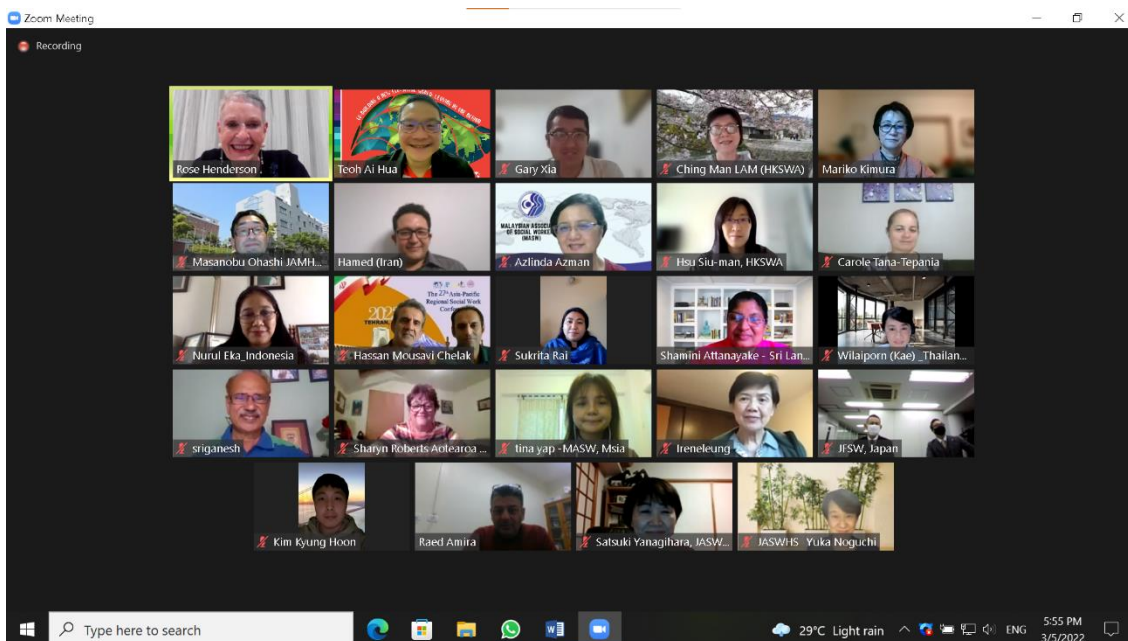
A further regional delegates meeting was held on 5 March also using the IFSW Zoom platform. Again the number of participants able to join this format of our regional gathering was good and higher than what we have traditionally had in face to face formats. In addition to the officeholders reports we had updates from our representatives on the various IFSW Commissions. Members were also provided a brief update on the recently held regional workshop on the revised Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training. We were also able to share with each other the many and varied activities that had occurred over the year as well as share plans they had to celebrate World Social Work Day later in March.



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For various reasons our Regional Development project had not been able to progress as originally planned. However this is now progressing with our Vice President Sriganesh taking a lead role with this.

Of course, this gathering provided another opportunity for sharing learnings and updated models of care as we all experience the continuing COVID pandemic and the ongoing health, social and economic impacts on us and on the communities we serve. We acknowledged the continued great work of the social work profession as we have continued to work with people needing social work services, continued to facilitate training and education for our social workers and other colleagues and continued to provide safe social work services.



Asia Pacific regional meeting 2022 via Zoom

The regional executive have also met virtually during this period to attend to any issues requiring attention and maintain our connections.

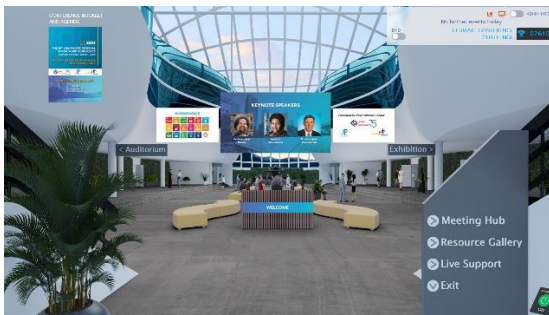


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Report on the Regional Conference 2021:



On 11 – 13 November 2021 our 26th joint regional conference was held virtually, hosted by Australia. Up until earlier this year it had been hoped that we could have held this as a hybrid event but as the ongoing challenges of the global pandemic continued to unfold, the hosts were forced to make the difficult decision to proceed as a fully virtual event.



Lobby area of Conference Virtual platform



Virtual Poster presentations

The overarching theme of the Conference was “**Social Work and the Sustainable Development Goals**” and recognised the congruency that the United Nations sustainable development goals have with the values of the profession and the importance of the SDG’s in the work that social workers undertake with the people and systems we work with.

The subthemes of this event provided ‘something for everyone’ through the broad array of streams and topics for all social workers across our region including the weaving of Indigenous perspectives throughout the programme. We were treated to great keynote addresses and were most fortunate to be able to have a wonderful mix of regional presentations and some global perspectives in the overall programme. Some of our regional commissions presented during the conference enabling the work of these teams to be profiled within our region.



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IFSW Asia Pacific Regional representatives for the IFSW Indigenous Commission as one of the Keynotes at the Regional Conference 13 November 2021.



IFSW secretary general, Rory Truell promoting the upcoming People's Summit in June 2022 entitled "Co-building a new Eco-Social world"

Many thanks to the hosts for the huge amount of work that went into hosting this event. In 2023 our next regional conference is scheduled for Iran.



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Report on General Activities and Achievements in the Region:

COVID -19

Arguably the dominant issue nationally, regionally and globally for the past year has been the very difficult and ongoing challenging circumstances social workers across our region and around the globe have faced as we continue to respond to the covid-19 pandemic. Across the region social workers have been at the forefront of the response to the health, social, educational and financial consequences of COVID-19 and the waves and variants of this virus. As a profession we have adapted the ways we work with people who use our services as well as the ways we educate our students and ourselves. Often these have involved the use of virtual technologies and we have become very accustomed to virtual meetings, classes, symposia, conferences and other events. I am sure the continued improvements of virtual platforms and the way we can evolve hybrid models will have an ongoing impact on the future of our profession and the communities we serve. I acknowledge all social workers and social work educators for the way they have continued to find ways of meeting the needs of the people requiring their services to remain solutions-focused and find ways to continue their work.

I also acknowledge the multiple ways that across the region and globally the profession has shared their learnings and supported each other to benefit from each others experiences. These have been both formal and informal but have time and time again proven the value of the networking that the IFSW family is able to facilitate.

World Social Work Day 2021

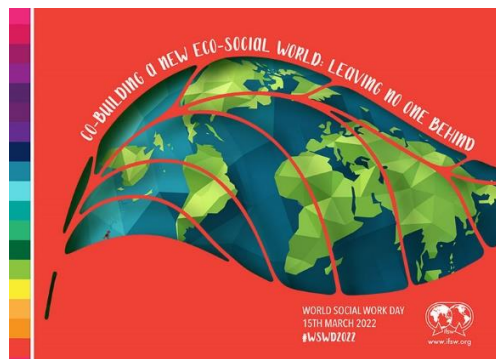
World Social Work Day was celebrated in March 2021 with many of our countries extending the celebrations over a longer period. Our Global Agenda Theme “**Ubuntu – I am because We are**” was extremely well received and promoted across the region. Many members translated the posted into their own language and some adapted the theme to connect with similar principles important to their own culture and context. I was able to connect with many members by sending virtual messages to the various events being held across the region to celebrate this time.



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World Social Work Day 2022

Again many of our members across the region took the opportunity to combine the celebration of World Social Work Day with national and regional events with most of these being virtual or hybrid. The enabled high levels of participation and many opportunities were taken to showcase the theme “Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind”.



National Events across the region.

Many of our member countries have hosted virtual events to bring the profession together and provide opportunities for continuing professional development. As time zones and other commitments have allowed I have been able to join some of these and for others I have been able to send message. Some of these have included Iran hosting their 3rd International Conference entitled “Social work, social observation and social solidarity” in March, and Singapore hosting their conference entitled “Building resilience and Overcoming Challenges in the face of Covid 19”.

In July the China Association of Social Workers marked their 30 Year Anniversary. Unfortunately their plans for celebration were postponed due to severe flooding and the ongoing impacts of COVID. However it was great to note this milestone and send our best wishes to our colleagues in China.

In September the 3rd International forum entitled "Consolidation of CBR structures in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and further professionalization of training in social work using the community-based rehabilitation approach" enabled delegates to explore this aspect of our work.



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In October, the Philippines hosted their National Forum virtually entitled “Social Work in the Midst and Beyond the Pandemic: Pains and Gains”.

Other Regional Events this year

On 22 January 2022 Japan hosted a seminar entitled “Social Action on the International Stage” with Priska Fleischlin as keynote speaker. This provided a great opportunity to expand on the theme of our regional conference and for participants to grow their understanding of our work at the United Nations and in particular our advocacy with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals.

On 19 February 2022 we held a combined IFSW Asia Pacific and APASWE workshop to promote the revised Global Standards for Social Work Education and Training. This included an overview from the Global Education Commissioner as well as speakers from both organisations across our region speaking on how these new standards have been adopted as well as any challenges with implementing the new standards.

On 2 May 2022 a regional workshop hosted by our regional Ethics commission representatives entitled “Beyond the Pandemic; Exploring Social Work Ethics & Values as a Contribution to a new Eco-social World”. This will be an opportunity for our region to participate in global discussions and contribute to continued learning in this space.

I commend member Associations on these and the many other national gatherings that have been convened throughout the year to support the profession and maintain the linkages across their members in what has been another challenging year.

We look forward to joining the IFSW General Meeting in May and the Global Summit in June and regionally we look forward to what we hope will be a hybrid Conference in Iran in 2023

Thank you!

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Region, we take this opportunity to sincerely thank our Global President Silvana Martinez and the IFSW Secretary General, Rory Truell for their leadership of IFSW through these unprecedented times.



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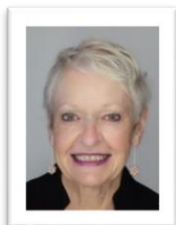
Despite the many challenges we have all faced, IFSW has gone from strength to strength and is now more widely recognised as a key stakeholder in many international forums. Also a huge thanks to all the team in the Global office for all that they do to keep the IFSW family connected and make the organisation function effectively and efficiently.

We especially want to acknowledge the tireless work, passion and commitment that Silvana Martinez has brought to the role of IFSW Global President during arguably some of the most challenging times for the federation in recent times. A huge thanks for all the many hidden hours of work that you do for us all as well as so ably representing us as our President in the many different forums and events around the globe.

Finally I acknowledge with huge thanks the support of my many colleagues across the Asia Pacific Region as I complete my term in the role of Regional President. It has been a huge privilege to serve firstly as Vice President and now as President and Global Vice-President. My thanks to my Immediate Past President Mariko for all the wisdom and support that you have given me. Thanks also to the regional Vice Presidents - Irene and Shriganesh - that I have worked with as well as to all the members of our regional committee – it has been wonderful working with you all. As the Immediate Past President I look forward to continuing to support our region with whatever the new leadership wishes.

Rose Henderson

Rose Henderson, President IFSW Asia Pacific



Shriganesh

Shriganesh MV, Vice President IFSW AP

