

1975

Africa Region

① Newsletter

② Tour by Mrs Martha Menya - Vice
Chair Africa Region.
Nigeria, Senegal, Ivory Coast
Egypt.

③ Statement Ghana Association
re South Africa

AFRICAN TOUR OF VICE CHAIRMAN - FOR AFRICA
AND PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICER -
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL SERVICES -

MRS. M. J. MENYA

MARCH 3RD - 23RD - 1975

In March this year, March 3rd - 23rd, 1975 I toured four African countries with the first objective of trying to promote social work as a profession in countries where national associations do not exist. It was secondly my objective to meet with social workers in countries where there are Associations in order to view their programmes and discuss problems confronting them. With this regard, I visited two none member countries and two member countries being Nigeria, Senegal, Ivory Coast and Egypt.

NIGERIA

Nigeria is in West Africa and a very vast country. It is not a member of IFSW. My heartfelt thanks goes to Mr. Adebabo, from the school of social work at Lagos University, who was my constant colleague and guide.

I first of all met with the Director of Social Services from the Federal Ministry of Labour. In 1974 the Federal Military Government decreed the establishment of a division known as the Social Development Division. Some of the responsibilities of the Federal Ministry is the co-ordination of inter-governmental and inter-state social development activities training of professional social workers and the promotion of legislation at the national level on matters affecting social development, just to mention a few.

One of the problems which hindered the formation of the establishment of a national association at this time was that in Nigeria each of the 12 states are autonomous. To date only 4 states have formed associations. However, it is hoped that by September of this year there will be at least two additional states in membership bringing a total of 6 states having associations and thereby launching the national association of Social Workers in Nigeria.

I also met the charming chairman of the Lagos State Association of Social Workers who is also the Deputy Director of Prisons. She informed me of the formation of the Lagos State branch and their earlier meeting with Mr. Nelson Jackson of the U.S.A. a former Secretary General of I.F.S.W.

I was particularly impressed in my talk with her with the rehabilitation approach to prison service. Indeed after prisoners are confined, most of the punitive nature of prison confinement is dropped and prisoners are taught a trade which will help them in employment once they have been released. However, there is a government regulation that stipulates that reformed prisoners can not be employed as government servants. Therefore it is difficult for the private sector to take them as they wonder why they should employ them when government does not. It was felt that this might be a possible project of the Lagos State Association, i.e. to help Government to see that need of employing such reformed prisoners is certain categories of Government service.

I also met the Deputy Chief Social Development Officer who took us to see an approved school for Girls and one for Boys which were exceptionally well run. Indeed some boys in the approved school attended classes outside the school in primary and secondary levels at times. The schools were very well run and the children seemed most content.

I also had a meeting with the Vice Chairman of the Association of Social Worker in Lagos who was also the Senior Social Welfare Officer of the mental hospital, Yaba. We discussed about the Association and later the hospital. We then made a tour of both the women and men sections. All officers were very concerned about the need to improve the physical surroundings which the relevant authorities were seriously considering improving. However, patients had an excellent medical supply.

We later met the Deputy Chief Social Development Officer, Community Development Division and also afterwards the Senior Community Development Officer Ikeja who both work for Lagos State. Their projects were outlined to me and we also discussed at different meetings the need for a National Association of Social Workers. I later saw a few community development projects Idimu and Egan maternity Centres.

Later in the evening I met with the Association of Social Workers in Nigeria. I outlined the objectives of I.F.S.W. and discussed with the social workers the need for forming a National Association with reference to training, inservice and preservice, its reference to the African situation, the need for qualified social workers in policy formulation, the need for social workers to come together through social action to fight for certain rights of the community or professional social workers, the need for profession workers to discuss common problems and to seek solutions to the same, not only on a local or national level but also at the international level through seminars, exchange programmes and the meetings of the Symposium. I also discussed the need with them for adequate finances.

There were lively discussions on most of these points. We later attended a cocktail party where the Minister for Labour was present. The following day other officers met were the Senior Social Welfare Officer, Lagos City Council, and the Secretary of the Association. After which we visited the temporary camp site for beggars whilst the government was assessing the need to assist them in their own home areas.

This was followed up by a visit to the old peoples home which was very well run and administered. Old destitutes not only had very comfortable accommodation but also adequate recreational facilities.

On the last day of my tour to Nigeria I met with lecturers and the Dean of the school of social work where a lively discussion took place on the need for an active training programme for Social Workers which would be launched through Mr. Adebabo's section. There were also ambitious plans for research projects to be launched in order to assess the needs and magnitude of training and social services to be rendered to people.

SENEGAL

Dakar, the capital of Senegal, is a beautiful African city. Senegal is also a french speaking country. I was therefore glad to see a French/English interpreter when I arrived. Senegal is a member of I.F.S.W.

I was very pleased to meet in Dakar social workers who have their own building where they assist on a weekly bases mothers and children who do not attend government clinics. They are taught nutrition and general child care. I also later visited the Government's maternal and child health clinic, meeting the staff and discussing with the social workers follow up of those released.

I met with the executive committee of the Senegal Association of Social Workers in order to discuss common problems facing the association such as finances, seminars to be held, etc. The committee wondered whether the F.E.S. could deversify its assistance to various governments in order to hold seminars, for example as it does in Ghana. I was also requested to write to the Senegalise government for possible financing of a seminar of an international nature including IFSW member countries and ASWEA. This is being followed up.

I also saw the Island of Goree where former slaves were taken by sea in their voyages to America, etc, to be sold.

The highlight of my tour was in meeting the Minister for Health and Social Welfare and later his senior officers. The Minister was very much in favour of the National Association and its objectives and his ministry would work hard to improve social services generally in Senegal - with the advice of the association. A luncheon and later a reception was held in my honour in the house of the Director of Foreign Affairs. This was hosted by his most gracious and charming wife who is also a qualified social worker working in the School of Social Work in Dakar.

We visited the school of social work and met the Dean who is a former colleague who had attended both the all Africa Seminar of IFSW and also the Symposium in March and July of last year respectively. I met all the lecturers of the school as well as some students. We discussed problems of training as it relates to Senegal Social Workers who serve all over the Republic.

Lastly I was interviewed by the Senegalise news agency on the IFSW and its relevance to Senegal and other African countries

My sincere thanks go to Madame Toure, Madame Tall who was my interpreter who also invited me to meet with her family and also Madame Sese.

IVORY COAST

Ibidjan is one of the most beautiful french cities in Africa. One cannot but help to be touched by its beauty upon entering. Upon arrival I was met by the Dean of the School of Social Work and her two colleagues who were ever at my disposal

We toured the School of Social Work and discussed what social workers were doing in the Ivory Coast. Later I met with the Director for Social Affairs and his Deputy who explained the functions of the Ministry and later the Deputy took me to visit the school for the blind and also the school for the deaf which were both in their initials stages. I met many officers in the ministry, one of which took me to a Maternal and Child Health Clinic where 4 excellent nursery school classes were in session. The highlight of my tour was in meeting the Minister for social affairs who was to declare March 20th Social Workers Day, through the social workers assembly. Indeed social workers would come from all over to brief the Minister on social services needs for the country. The Minister also felt that perhaps through the Government machinery a social worker's building might be constructed for the activities of the association.

I was also very pleased to meet with UNICEF officials in Ibidjan to discuss the project agreed by UNICEF whereby IFSW in liaison with E.C.A. would appoint an expert from IFSW to work as a team member of E.C.A. training trainers to promote better services to women and children.

Although Ivory Coast is not a member of IFSW the social workers, with the launching of social workers day on March 20th, are working towards that end.

EGYPT

Egypt is a member of IFSW. I was met by officers of the Institute of Higher Education in Cairo, members of staff under Dr. Kamal who is also the President of ASWEA (Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa.)

I was taken to meet high officials in the Ministry responsible for social welfare where I learnt that over 30,000 social workers are employed by that Ministry. In fact unlike many African countries unemployment of social workers is not a problem in Egypt.

In the evening over dinner I met the Board of Directors of the association and later before leaving Cairo they entertained me to an evening's reception under the leadership of Dr. Kamal.

I saw the opening of a new Day Care Centre whilst in Cairo which was to have been opened by Madame Sadat but was later delegated to the Minister for Social Affairs.

At the school of social work I lectured to the students working on their P.H.D. and masters degrees on social work in Africa today in relationship to IFSW. I also urged the students to be active, paid up members of the Association in Egypt.

The highlight of my tour was to see the Rehabilitation centre for the Handicapped, where handicapped people were trained professionally in various vocations for three years with the accompanying social services to the trainees such as the provision of doctors, nurses, psychologists, and 22 social workers who also engage in follow up for at least one or two years after trainees are released.

I was most impressed with the Government's decree that at least 1/5 of all employed people must be handicapped. Not only are handicapped people taught carpentry, craftsman-shaft, woodwork, etc., but they also make artificial limbs for the disabled and distribute these free of charge.

In addition to the official visit I had a chance to see other historical attractions.

My heartfelt thanks to the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung for making it all possible, the President of IFSW who has always given her encouragement and the four African countries visited who all accorded me with the warmest receptions imaginable.

M. J. MENYA (MRS)
REGIONAL VICE-CHAIRMAN
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICER

A F R I C A R E G I O N

INTRODUCTION: At last we have been able to put out our first Newsletter for the International Federation of Social Workers, Africa Region.

Many things happened over the last few years which will be highlighted here.

One point of concern is the need for active participation in the National Associations. This also includes the raising of funds, which, as you know, has led to a serious crisis in our own secretariat. Therefore, kindly support your national associations and also the International Federation of Social Workers secretariat in order that the aims and objectives set down under our constitution will ever remain in the fore front of social work development in the Region.....

AFRICA SEMINAR: NAIROBI - MARCH 1974

The seminar focused on the Changing Role of Social Workers in a Changing Society leading into the Symposium later on in the year. Representatives came from 19 countries all over Africa where excellent papers were discussed.

3RD SYMPOSIUM OF THE I.F.S.W. - NAIROBI

The third Symposium of the International Federation of Social Workers was attended by nearly 600 delegates from all over the world. The theme, "The Changing Role of Social Workers in a Changing Society" was fitting as the role of social workers all over the world is changing.

However, there was one point of contention i.e. in the definition of new and old countries. Some countries such as Egypt were considered as a new country in the Symposium when other people have considered Egypt as "The Cradle of Civilization". Perhaps in the next Symposium in Mexico a more suitable definition of countries should be made such as developed and

I.F.S.W. COMMITTEE

HON. PRESIDENT

Miss Litsa Alexandraki
1 Sphocleus Street
Athens, GREECE.

PRESIDENT

Miss Teresita L. Silva
P.O. Box 4550
Manila, PHILIPPINES.

VICE PRESIDENT (AFRICA)

Mrs. Martha J. Menya
P.O. Box 43689
Nairobi, KENYA.

VICE PRESIDENT (ASIA)

Mr. Sayom Ratanwichit
Public Welfare Dept.,
Bangkok, THAILAND.

VICE PRESIDENT (EUROPE)

Mr. Gerhard Mensinga
Frans Halslaan 48
Akersloot, NETHERLANDS.

V. PRESIDENT (N. AMERICA)

Miss Mary Catherine Jennings
HEW South Bldg.
Room 1006 C. Street S.E.
Washington D.C. 20201
U.S.A.

V. PRESIDENT (L. AMERICA)

Mrs. Icyline Seaton
Sugar Industry Labour
Welfare Board
22 Camp Road P.O. Box
Kingston 5, JAMAICA.

TREASURER

Mr. Chauncey Alexander
National Association of
Social Workers
600 Southern Bldg.
15th & H. Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20005
U.S.A.

SECRETARY GENERAL

Mrs. Catherine Chuard
P.O. Box 713 CH 4002
Basle, SWITZERLAND.

developing countries. What do you think?

During the Symposium new countries were added to Kenya and Uganda bringing the total membership countries of International Federation of Social Workers to 11 in the Region.

They include, Mauritius, Madagascar, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Ghana and South Africa with provisional membership.

CRISIS - CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA:

At the last annual National Conference at the beginning of September last year, the Black Social Workers Association decided to withdraw from the Co-ordinating Council. Given this situation the executive committee will discuss later on this year:-

- (a) Whether in view of its constitution the Co-ordinating Committee will now have to dissolve; and
- (b) Whether in view of the constitution of the International Federation of Social Workers, the Co-ordinating committee can remain a member of that body.

However, it is perhaps the general view of the region that unless the Co-ordinating Committee encompasses all people that is the blacks, coloureds and the whites then there is no way it can be considered to be doing its part as a Co-ordinating body and, therefore, should be removed from the International Federation of Social Workers. What are your views?

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING - JULY, U.S.A.

The executive committee of the International Federation of Social Workers will meet in July to discuss general matters pertaining to the International Federation of Social Workers. It will also start discussions on the proposed programme for the 4th Symposium in Mexico. The Vice Chairman for Africa Region and one member of the Executive, Africa Region, expect to attend. Any matters to be proposed will be greatly appreciated. What about topics for the 1976 Symposium?

REGIONAL MEETING:

IFSW had hoped to hold a regional meeting this year. However, because of the lack of funds, this was not forthcoming. It is hoped, nevertheless, that each national association holds at least one meeting per year and submits copies of the proceedings to the

AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS:

Early this year the Regional Office requested member countries to reply to a draft constitution of the "African Association of Social Workers". To date only the Secretary General in Switzerland and our President in Manila have responded. Kindly take the necessary action!

NEWS FROM SOME IFSW MEMBER COUNTRIES:

(a) EGYPT: The Egyptian Association of Social Workers organised a workshop for social workers serving in industrial settings during April 1973.

A second workshop on the same theme as held in February 1974. In May 1974 a training programme was organised for social workers interested in industrial relations. The association organised a training course for some Egyptian social workers serving in family planning programmes, 1973-74. A cultural programme for members was organised as an extension for a similar programme previously held in 1973.

The association is also planning for a second national conference on social work. The first conference was held in 1969. The association is willing to provide any further relevant information you may find necessary.

(b) MAURITIUS: The social workers at the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Board and in the Social Welfare Division are concentrating their efforts in the field of community organisation. This is the method of social work, they believe, which is most needed in the developing countries. The building of sound and stable communities based on fellowship and good neighbourliness are necessary not only in Mauritius but all over African countries, and new techniques have to be evolved. Mauritius thinks this should be the topic for our next seminar.

The theme could be in their view, "Community Organisation: Programmes in search of better living". Mauritius thinks that our associates in the other African countries as well as those from Asia, Europe, etc., would have much to offer to this area.

(c) GHANA: Ghana Association of Social Workers had an excellent annual seminar in September 1974. Participants came from Togo, Mali, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ivory Coast. Any one wanting details should contact Mr. P.A. Addo, P.O. Box 997, Accra, Ghana.

ASWEA WORKSHOP: I did send to member associations copies of my observations on the ASWEA workshop in Addis Ababa last December. It will be particularly helpful for trainers in Schools of Social Work and field work supervisors not only in the schools but also in agencies and Government Ministries.

ECA - INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS PROJECT ON BETTER SERVICES TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AFRICA:

The project is to be started under the umbrella of the ECA where we requested a French/English speaking component i.e. for training trainers to deliver better services to women and children, after consultation with UNICEF who will be financing the International Federation of Social Workers component.

C.D.O.'s ARE SOCIAL WORKERS: There is the feeling of some social development officers, community development officers in particular in many countries not to consider themselves as social workers. This is indeed unfortunate when we consider that community development is one of the main methods of social work along with group work and case work. Let us therefore all join together whether we are social workers, C.D.O. officers, probation officers, medical social workers, etc., in the name of social work development all over the Continent!!

URGENT!!

Can all national associations kindly remit their membership fees for 1974 to the secretariat in Switzerland as we need the money very badly.

Secondly all national associations should send their most recent codes of ethics as soon as possible to Mr. Chaucey Alexander, Treasurer, International Federation of Social Workers, 600 Southern Bldg., 15th & H. Street, N.W. Washington D.C. 20005 U.S.A. so that he can present a draft of an international code of ethics by July 1975 to the Executive Committee Meeting.

AFRICA TOUR - MARCH 3RD - 21ST 1975:

Vice Chairman - Africa Region (See attached report)

M. J. MENYA (MRS)

Youth Leadership Training
Institute, Afienya,
P. O. Box 650,
Tema, Ghana.

rec. 19/6/75
22nd May, 1975.

Mrs. Catherine Chuard,
I.F.S.W. Secretary-General,
P.O. Box 713,
4002 Basle,
SWITZERLAND.

Dear Mrs. Chuard,

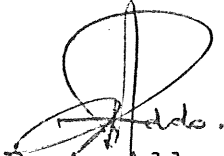
SOUTH AFRICA'S RACIAL POLICY

You will find attached comments made on the South Africa's apartheid issue by the Ghana Association of Social Workers for your serious consideration and necessary action please.

I should like also to mention that I have since April 29, 1975 transferred by mail, an amount of 123.30 Swiss Francs being our registration fee and annual dues to the Swiss Credit Bank, Switzerland as directed.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,


P. A. Addo
Secretary - General
GHANA ASSOCIATION OF
SOCIAL WORKERS

cc: Mrs. Martha Menya,
P.O. Box 43689,
NAIROBI,
Kenya.

GHANA ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS' POSITION ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE
GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA IN THE UNITED NATIONS IN RECOGNITION OF
THAT GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES OF APARTHEID

At the Executive Committee Meeting of GASOW, held on Wednesday 14th May, 1975, the items listed below were discussed:-

(a) Immediate termination of all measures and policies as well as military, political, economic and other activities which enable racist regimes in the Southern part of Africa to continue the repression of the African people: and

(b) Full support and assistance, morally and materially, to the peoples who are victims of apartheid and racial discrimination and to the liberation movements.

2. It was immediately apparent that the Government of South Africa, by

(1) its Apartheid policies in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter in so far as these affect the respect for human rights,

(2) its persistent illegal occupation of Namibia in contravention of the World Court Advisory Opinion at the Hague and subsequent resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations, and

(3) its continued support in various ways of the illegal racist minority white government of Southern Rhodesia,

gives no convincing evidence, even remotely, that it accepts the principles enshrined in the Charter by which the qualifications of the members of the United Nations may be reliably attested. It may be recalled, ironically, that the laudable preamble of the United Nations Charter was incorporated in this excellent statement on human rights of universal application by General Jan Smuts, the South African Prime Minister at the promulgation of the Charter, and it is the government of this very same United Nations member state which, by its violations of human rights on grounds of race, has made it abundantly clear that it does not wish to subscribe to the principles of the United Nations in so far as these principles are applicable to all the races of mankind.

3. The Ghana Association of Social Workers recognizes its commitment in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter. In this recognition, therefore, GASOW can find no way of resolving the conflict in the already tenuous membership of South Africa in the United Nations which appears to be sustained solely by sheer legality which is bereft of the more fundamental foundations of justice and right. Consequently we find ourselves fully in support of all legitimate efforts to induce, promote and sustain respect for universal human rights in South Africa. As an initial step, therefore, GASOW considers it inescapable that the membership of South Africa in the United Nations should now be terminated in the calculated expectation that the resultant isolation of South Africa, which this pre-requisite should imply, should encourage the adoption of a healthy attitude in South Africa in consonance with an honourable membership of the United Nations.

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4. On the moral and material support which may be given to the victims of Apartheid and to the liberation movements which are immediately joined in physical confrontation with the harshness and realities of the practice of racial discrimination, the Ghana Association of Social Workers holds the view that, just as the World Council of Churches and other humanitarian agencies have formulated concrete means of supporting the victims of racism in Southern Africa and the active combatants against this evil system, IFSW should equally manifestly seek positive strategies to do likewise. It should be possible, for instance, for the IFSW to explore avenues for providing education and training at all levels - general, technical and professional - for some persons who are victims of racial discrimination in Southern Africa now and who, in all probability, may have to assume some degree of leadership when the eradication of racial discrimination is achieved.

5. The educational programmes envisaged to meet the needs of the victims of Apartheid may be provided whenever practicable in suitable countries within the African continent. They should be arranged either in relevant institutions in areas contiguous to Southern Africa, or else in a country like Ghana which has already had some experience in all its three universities and other institutions of higher education and manpower training for this kind of much needed service for Southern Africa.

6. For combatant units, schemes should be devised to supply them with medical supplies, relief to areas of occupation where normal conditions of living have been disrupted by warfare, and resources for the promotion of some carefully selected social welfare services. These plans for medical, social and relief facilities should be arranged for all persons irrespective of partisan considerations, the sole test being that the incidence of guerrilla warfare and other kinds of conflict call for such humanitarian services which are of established appeal to an international organization like the Red Cross.

7. As we are now in the United Nations Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, it would seem particularly appropriate that IFSW should not only consider the issues which this decade is essentially intended to spotlight but also encourage suitable actions to eliminate human inequalities. All social workers, during this decade, should be reminded and stirred to become totally involved in legal, social, economic, political and other relevant kinds of reforms for the promotion

of the dignity of the human person without regard to race and other superficial human distinctions. The next IFSW conferences and meetings should make time for some positive and purposeful actions towards these inescapable objectives.


SECRETARY - GENERAL
G A S O W

20/5/75.