Community Development in the context of global Social Work Education

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Global Social Work definition 2014

• “Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people.
• Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work.
• Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing”.

Global Social Work Agenda

- Three global bodies:
  - International Federation of SW - profession;
  - International Association of Schools of SW - education;
    - International Council on Social Welfare – civil society

- Joint agreement on:
  SW definition, ethics in SW, global standards for education and training in SW, SW agenda

- Global SW agenda 2012-2016:
  - Promoting social and economic equalities
  - Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples
  - Working toward environmental sustainability
  - Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships
Social Work as Discourse

• Social work as the interplay of varying ideas, practices, policies, people and groups that are dynamic and contested – constructs what ‘social work’ is.

• Social work as a three way discourse:
  1. Social order
     (welfare services to individuals, social protection)
  2. Therapeutic
     (growth and fulfilment for people)
  3. Transformational
     (transform societies to benefit the oppressed)

(Payne, 2006)
CD and SW alignment

• A CD role that may focus on transformation but still acts to protect and may support the growth of members of a group.
• A SW role that may focus on welfare service provision but supports children’s growth and participates in stopping violence initiatives.
• CD focus of social justice and human rights incorporated within the SW definition and ethical principles.
• CD as a component alongside SW and Counselling constituting the Department of Social Practice, Unitec.
• The BSocP recognised for graduate social work registration
CD and SW alignment

- At the global level there are many examples of community development practice being the primary expression of those who align with Social Work and Social Work Education.
- Example of the India subcontinent where social work is relatively well established and includes significant community development practice.
- Professor Vimla Nadkarni is the President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work and was the founder of the eminent Tata Social Work Institute in Mumbai, India – she writes of the complex context for social work and education, but also the growth of a rights and development focus (Nadkarni and Joseph, 2014).
- A recent edition of the IASSW Social Dialogue journal focused on community development (IASSW, 2014).
References:

• IASSW (2014). Social Dialogue: Community based social economy and community development, IASSW.