

SOCIAL WORK HISTORY NETWORK

COMMONWEALTH HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK

Webinar – 29 March 2021



THEME OF THE WEBINAR

This SWHN¹ webinar (in partnership with COSW² and Madras Christian College (MCC)) will reflect on the development of social work in Singapore, Kenya and the Caribbean with a short input from the IFSW archivist and a broader discussion about social work in Commonwealth countries. The 'history' in this context goes back as far as we have evidence (i.e. early 20th century) through to the 1970/80s (as a rough guide i.e. immediate post-independence). It will be chaired by David N Jones (swhn Steering Group, COSW Board and former IFSW President).

The webinar will be broadcast live on YouTube with no charge for participation. This is the second SWHN webinar to be broadcast and the first to be promoted to an international audience.

The SWHN webinar will be on 29 March 2021 ending World Social Work Month in the UK.

PROGRAMME

Fiona Robertson (IFSW Archivist) and **Nigel Hall** will present the **IFSW archive**, key documents from which are now online. The archive goes back before the Paris conference in 1920, which in effect launched the Federation and the Schools of Social Work as global structures.

Esther Goh (Head of Social Work, National University of Singapore) will lead a discussion with colleagues about the **development of social work in Singapore**, focussing on social work education.

Charles Mbugua (former IFSW Africa President and former COSW Chair) will look at the development of community social work within the freedom movements alongside the colonial social service arrangements and **the evolution of Kenyan social work** after independence.

Letnie Rock (former Head of the Department of Government, Sociology and Social Work, University of the West Indies) will reflect on the history of **social work in the Caribbean** and **Sharon-Rose Gittens** (Chair, Barbados Association of Social Workers) will describe the history of **social work in Barbados** as a country example.

Philip Murphy (Director of the **Institute of Commonwealth Studies** (ICWS) in the University of London and Professor of British and Commonwealth History) will open the live discussion.

Presentations will be pre-recorded followed by open, live discussion with audience questions coming through the chat.

PUBLICATION

SWHN publishes an annual Bulletin which includes academic articles and shorter items which is gathering recognition (<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/scwru/swhn/bulletin/index>). We plan to publish articles linked to this webinar later in the year.

¹ The Social Work History Network (WSHN) has organised 20 years of seminars - usually around 3 a year and held most frequently in London but sometimes in other venues in the UK. It is mainly a UK-based network but there are some people on the network list from other countries. There is no fee to join the network; people who attend the seminars are invited to make a donation towards expenses of £5.00. In recent years the Network has been hosted by Kings College, London University. There is a lot of information on the website www.kcl.ac.uk/scwru/swhn/index.

² The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) was also launched in 2000 and aims to promote the voice of social work within the Commonwealth as one of around 80 formally accredited Commonwealth civil society organisations. COSW is supporting and promoting the seminar. www.cosw.info.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

COSW and ICWS are developing a proposal for a major study of the history of social work across the Commonwealth, involving a partnership of Commonwealth universities. Watch for an announcement about a webinar to be held in November on the development of social work in the Commonwealth; there will be a call for abstracts. This webinar therefore sets the scene for this bigger study, which comes at a significant moment in social work education, as the discourse on 'decolonising' the social work curriculum gathers momentum.

REGISTRATION

Register at: To be confirmed

For queries about the Social Work History Network please email: stephen.martineau@kcl.ac.uk

David N Jones

23 February 2021