

# Expanding our Understanding of Social Work Values and Ethics: News from International Federation of Social Workers

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The International Federation of Social Workers is delighted to become the new publisher for *The International Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics*. We thank the IJSWVE Board for this new partnership and we look forward to realising our joint vision in growing international dialogue and understanding on social work ethics and values. Social work ethics, values and principles have been a constant feature and driving force of our global profession since it was formally launched in 1928. Many of the principles identified early in this 93-year period have remained and a few have been added or specifically emphasised over the decades. What has been consistent is our values of recognising each person's humanity equally, understanding that our social relationships shape who we are, that we can also influence those social structures, and also that social work is a force for a fairer and more socially just world.

Fifteen years ago, an indigenous elder from Aotearoa / New Zealand described to me the cultural ethics as practised in his tribe. He said, 'Cultural terms mostly remain constant, but each generation needs to interpret those values to the changing conditions'. This insight resonates strongly with me when reflecting on the challenges we experience in our global profession. As the world changes, so do our understandings, for example, of 'rights'. Rights are now broadly considered within social work to include human as well as social, cultural, and environmental rights. The latter only being formally adopted by the profession in the last years. This year, the profession has also highlighted 'Ubuntu: I am Because We Are' as a central global theme. This term originating from African philosophy gives us cause to reflect and deepen our understanding of the profession's core values beyond the Western philosophical lens. The theme was selected

deliberately for this purpose in response to growing inequality, the increasing paradigm of 'individualism' dominating Western social services, as well as the need to work toward a shared understanding of our professional values as they are applied in all cultural settings.

The partnership between the IJSWVE Board and IFSW hopes that this journal provides a place for deepening our understanding of social work ethics and values as we face today's challenges and those of tomorrow. We look forward to your contributions.

For readers new to IFSW, we invite you to visit our website ([link](#)) and sign up for the free weekly newsletters which contain information about social work from across the globe. We also ask you to consider becoming an IFSW Friend ([link](#)) so that you as an individual can have a direct relationship with the Federation. Lastly, we would encourage you to visit the 'Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind' website ([link](#)), where you have the opportunity to present your ideas on the ethics and values needed for the future.