



# THE ROLE OF AFRICAN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATORS IN THE WORLD

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<https://asswa.org/>

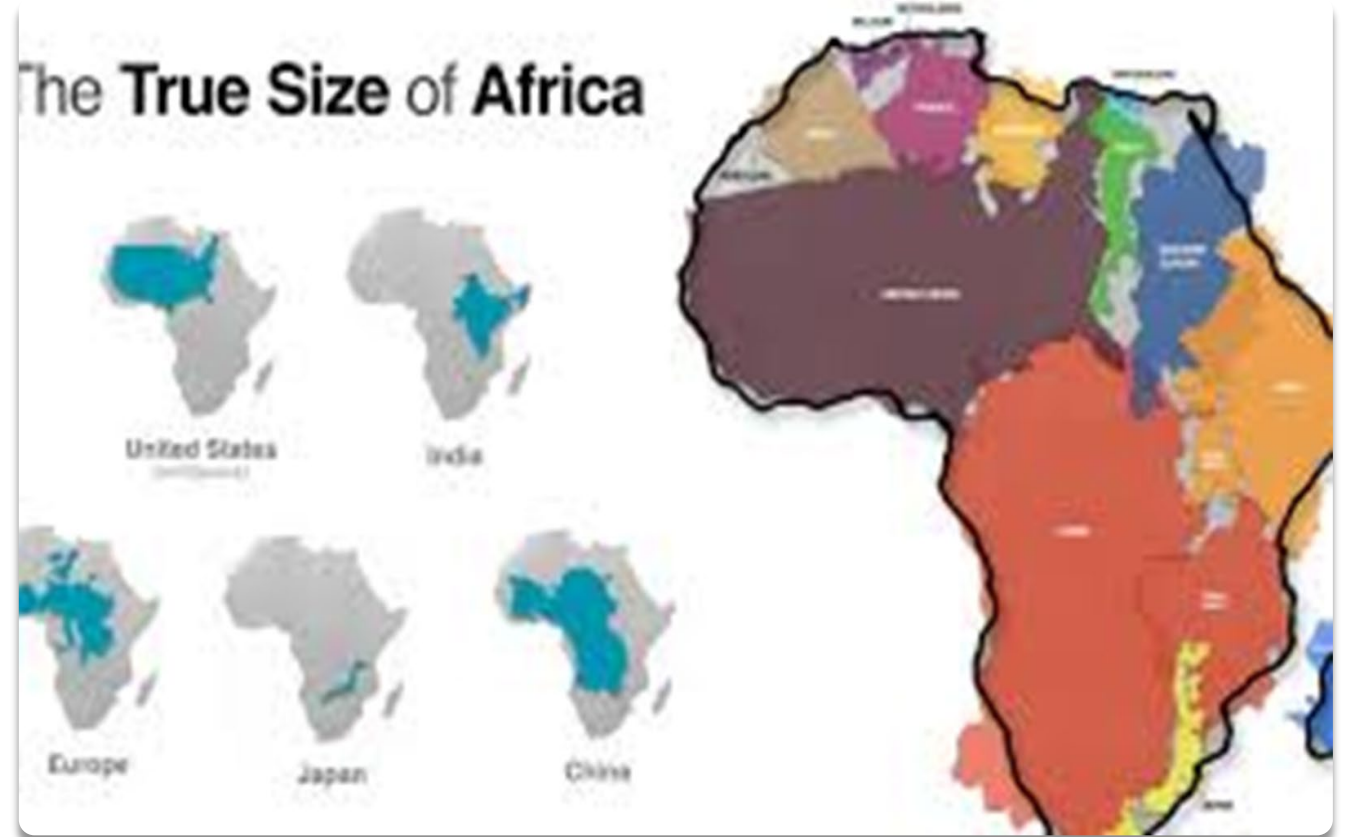


UNIVERSITY  
OF  
JOHANNESBURG

# Remembering late ancestor Nkrumah in commemoration of Africa Day

Dumelang/Sawubona/Habari

**“I am not an  
African because I  
was born in Africa,  
but because Africa  
was born in me”**



# Social Work History of Organizing in Africa

- ▶ The first conference to discuss social issues in Africa was held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in 1954; (Drake & Omari, 1962).
- ▶ BETWEEN 1965 and 1971 various meetings were held to establish the Association for Social Work Education in Africa (ASWEA) – which was formally launched in 1971.
- ▶ In Egypt in 1965 - Sixteen African schools of social work were represented, and the purpose was to “examine the content of training programs and syllabuses and to make a critical survey of existing trends in training for social work” (p. 18).
- ▶ In 1969, the Expert Working Group of Social Work Educators met to further discuss the issue of social work training in West Africa.
- ▶ The Second Expert Working Group met in the same year with the intent of establishing the Association for Social Work Education in Africa (ASWEA) . The Third Expert Working Group, in 1971, formally established ASWEA (Asamoah, 1995).

# ENGAGEMENT OF AFRICAN SCHOOLS

- ▶ At that time already educators were talking about social development, Coloniality, decolonization of education and developing appropriate curriculum for the African context.
- ▶ By the 5<sup>th</sup> ASWEA conference in Ethiopia in 1985 they had a membership of 55 Social development training institutions and 150 social work educators from 33 African countries- which we are struggling to have now in ASSWA despite us having better technology and means of communication now.
- ▶ I am not sure what happened for the 20 years bet 1985 & 2005
- ▶ It was only in 2005 that the Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) was established at the IFSW-Africa's pan-African Congress in Nairobi in Kenya

# Purpose & Objectives of Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA)

1. To promote the interests of social work education in the African region.
2. To provide opportunities for consultation and exchange of ideas, educational resources, faculty and students.
3. To serve as a body for channeling resources to social work educational institutions in the region.
4. To promote inter-regional, regional and international co-operation in social work education.

# International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW)

## **Vision**

To promote and develop 'Excellence in social work education, research and scholarship across the globe, in pursuit of a more just and equitable world'.

## **Mission**

- ▶ To represent and promote social work education around the globe in partnership with national, regional and international associations
- ▶ To create and maintain an engaged community of social work educators and programmes
- ▶ To support and facilitate participation in mutual exchanges of research and curriculum resources
- ▶ To promote educational strategies and policies for a more just and equitable world

# IASSW Membership Benefits & Highlights

- ▶ Right to participate in governance of the association through elections and the General Assembly.
- ▶ Reduced fees for registration at biennial world congresses on social work for all staff members from your Program.
- ▶ Opportunities to apply and benefit from IASSW projects and funds for enhancing social work education such as Regional Resource centre.
- ▶ Access to a worldwide network of social work educators through conferences, seminars, exchanges and listserves.
- ▶ Eligibility to participate in the proceedings of the UN
- ▶ Participation in nominations for honoring social work educators, for example, the Katherine Kendall Award
- ▶ Free access to the IASSW website, Social Dialogue on-line magazine)

# Why do we need to be Active?

- ▶ Since the time of ASWEA and the conference held by the esteemed Nkurumah scholars have been talking about decolonization and Africanization. The issues of whether we are just universities based in Africa, or African universities is not a new discussion. Why are we still having the same discussions? Why are we failing to organize ourselves now when we have technology available to us?
- ▶ The impact of this is that European issues still dominate. IASSW was willing easily to do a statement on Ukraine. But when we wanted to do a statement on Black lives matter or the Palestinian issue we are told that we have a generic statement for all issues or all of these can be lumped into one statement.
- ▶ So European issues can be dealt with separately as a critically important issue, but all others must be lumped into one. Whose lives matter?
- ▶ So if we don't as Africans and Black people and people of the global South start asserting ourselves and taking a stand on our own issues. And if we don't organize ourselves and ensure representation- we will continue to be excluded, silenced and marginalized, even in a profession that claims an interest in social justice and human rights. I guess this depends on who is considered more human. Whose human rights matter? How are we going to engage in future to change this?



## SDG 2- The state of food security and Nutrition in the World (zero hunger by 2030)

- ▶ Estimated that it will be Missed by a margin of nearly 660 million people
- ▶ There is enough food produced in the world, but 811 million people go hungry
- ▶ 60% of these are women & girls

# Food insecurity in the Global South

- ▶ Worsening of food hunger in 2020-
- ▶ a 10<sup>th</sup> of the worlds population – 811 million people undernourished in 2020
- ▶ 2.3 billion people (30%) lacked year-round access to adequate food – moderate to severe food insecurity
- ▶ More than ½ of all malnourished people live in Asia – 418 million
- ▶ 60 million in Latin America and Caribbean.
- ▶ More than 1/3 lives in Africa (282 million). The sharpest rise in hunger was in Africa. 21% of the population- more than double of any other region.

# Vulnerable groups

- ▶ Children pay a high price
  - 149 million under 5 –stunted or too short for their age
  - 45 million wasted or too thin for their height
  - 39 million overweight

## Women

- 1 in 3 of women in reproductive age suffer anemia, a diet related iron deficiency that can cause organ damage if left untreated.
- In 2/3 of countries, women are more likely than men to report food insecurity

# Factors impacting hunger

- ▶ Brutal recessions
- ▶ Climate extremes
- ▶ conflict,
- ▶ economic downturns
- ▶ High inequality

# It is TIME for Africa to LEAD

- ▶ As Africans we need to be involved in our own social development and take the lead on developing theories and curriculum that is Afro-centric and decolonial
- ▶ To do this – we need a strong base- we need to unify across Africa and create a strong ASSWA, IFSW Africa, SWAN Africa
- ▶ We also need to be active in asserting our interests and be active on international bodies to ensure Africa has a voice and space.
- ▶ We need to build solidarity across the global South
- ▶ So that we can challenge Western-centrism
- ▶ We need to lead in this the engagement, and not follow
- ▶ I am very proud of Joachim Mumba who is now the IFSW president. WE wish him well and stand behind him as he leads.
- ▶ Let's also ensure we are strongly represented on IASSW so that the needs and interests of Africa are heard.



Asante Sana  
Kea Leboha  
Thank You  
Ngoyabonga

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