From Western-rooted Professional Social Work to Buddhist Social Work

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Preface

This book is primarily focused on Buddhist social work, which means its subject is strikingly limited, but its range is much wider in fact. Its mission is to contribute to the discussion on social work in the international community from the Asian perspective. For Frederick E. Johnson and his colleagues there was nothing strange to give lectures on “Protestant Social Work Today” or “Jewish Social Work Today” in mid-1950s.\(^1\) There was nothing strange to connect particular religious practice and social work activities. But in recent years, there is a strong impact put on professionalization of social work. In the past, we have witnessed something we may call globalization of social work practice methods or education. Social work was considered as something universal, something beyond social, cultural and religious aspects. One of our goals is to see the essence of the social work through the glasses of practice provided by Buddhists in Asia and to recognize the religious, the cultural, and the social basis of social work. But, the pillar and the main goal of this publication is to build the framework Buddhist social work and to contribute to its further development.

There may be some associations with contemplative monkhood and meditation-based Buddhism in the same way Buddhism has been introduced to the West. A large number of listeners may have an image of Buddha’s followers who are staying outside from the society, devoting one’s life to meditation and religious practice while seeking the Enlightenment. This point of view is probably based on Max Weber and other scholars who “discovered” Buddhism and built its general image in the West. But some contributors of this book are speaking about Buddha as a greatest social worker, point out that the main goal of Buddhism is bringing happiness to all living beings. And this is not only about praying and meditations. Practices, we may (or have to) call social work, are one sort of methods leading to this goal. In many Asian regions you can even see a lot of movements and organizations putting strong impact on so-called Engaged Buddhism; e.g. initiators of the Sarvodaya movement, starting during 1950s in Sri Lanka, suggested that Buddhism is directly connected with society and its values and methods should be applied when coping with social problems.

This book is mainly based on materials presented and shared during Shukutoku University’s 1st Academic International Forum on Buddhist Social Work held in Japan in October 2015, and other issues used as a background of the Forum. During this forum, participants were exploring the “first next” step of research on Buddhist social work. Actually, our journey is just getting started and we are not sure if our claims are already strong enough to be shared worldwide. However, this is another mission of this publication. We hope this will help us to deepen our dialogues, to increase the number of our colleagues involving in discussions and exploring of the Buddhist social work.

Part 1 describes the framework of this research. Yes, this publication is about practices provided by Buddhists and Buddhist temples. No doubt that the prior interest of this book is exploring Buddhist social work, but at the same time we place in the discourse of social work. Researchers from the Asian Research Institute for International Social Work, led by Prof. Tatsuru Akimoto, are trying to grasp the framework, and to provide basic concepts of the Buddhist social work, while questioning the authenticity of Western-rooted social work.

Part 2 is divided in three chapters. Chapter 1 is focused on characteristics of the Buddhist social work. Prof. Herath from Sri Lanka and Acharya Karma Sangbo from Nepal are both pointing out the specific aspects of Buddhist social work in Asia.

Chapter 2 is composed from dialogue between Prof. Herath and Ms. Sopa Onopas from Thailand. Both scholars are discussing the commonalities and differences between Western-rooted social work and activities run by Buddhists.

Also the Chapter 3 is focused on the relation between Western-rooted social work and Buddhist social work. Assoc. Prof. Hoi Loan from Vietnam and Prof. Ishikawa from Japan are exploring core concepts of social work while locating Buddhist ideals and values as a crucially important background of social work.

This publication is the first one of the series mapping the Buddhist social work activities in Asia. The series will be composed from reports and articles describing situation in Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Nepal, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Bhutan. We hope all those publications will be small pieces of a puzzle which will show various Buddhist activities in Asia providing us a new standpoint for
exploring the social work itself.

While being composed by articles written by various scholars from various regions this publication mentions many Buddhist terms. Some scholars use the Pali language, others prefer the Sanskrit terminology. In some cases, even if using the same Buddhist scripts, English transcriptions may differ from country to country. During the compilation and editing process, editors made certain effort to unify the transcription of Buddhist terms, but we admit that there may be some incorrect expressions in this book. Please note that this is not an academic text on Buddhist canonic scripts. This is an attempt to rethink the connection between Buddhism and social work, between religion and social work, and to restart the dialogue concerning this issue. Furthermore, texts in this publication represent the opinion of contributors and don’t necessarily match with the opinion of neither editors of this book nor the ARIISW.

Josef Gohori, Chief Editor
Part 1

Tatsuru Akimoto*

The Globalization of Western-rooted Professional Social Work and Exploration of Buddhist Social Work**

Toward the Third Stage of Social Work, Learning from the Revision of International Definition

* Dr. Akimoto was President of APSWE (Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education), Vice President of IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work), and their Definition Committee members and involved in and closely observed most of the definition revision process except for the last stage of final version drafting for public comment and the general meeting.

** This Part 1 is an edited version of various lectures, presentations and speeches, and articles, by the current author, in past several years. The following are a few of them. Regarding sources of others, see the citations in the body and the bibliography at the end.


“What Social Work Do We Want?—Towards the third stage of social work.” International Conference <Professional Social Work in South East Asia: Education and Qualification> Royal University of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 22 July 2015.

“Research on “Buddhist Social Work” in Asia: Its significance and the place where we are now—From Buddhist “social work” to “Buddhist social work.” The 24th International Seminar on Social Welfare in Asia and the Pacific Rim. JCSW. 12 December 2015.
Social work, as it is recognized today has expanded in stages. It was born in Europe (Stage I), further developed in North America (Stage II), and now is poised to assume a global role (Stage III).

However, social work will fail to become truly global by merely extending Western-rooted Professional Social Work (WPSW) concepts to every corner of the world. This would only be the globalization of social work itself. For this reason, the most recent definitions of social work from the IASSW/IFSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work/International Federation of Social Workers) that stress western concepts, values, and framework are insufficient. The notion that social work equals professional social work and the indifference to language issue are furthermore problematic.

In the process of revising an international definition of social work, interest in the construction of “Buddhist social work” has emerged in Asia. It is not the practice of WPSW by Buddhist temples, monks and nuns, and lay followers (Model A), nor the modification or indigenization of WPSW from the Buddhism side (Model B), but a social work not starting with WPSW but with Buddhist practice and theory of 2500 years. Buddhists themselves do not use the English term “social work” or even have a category for such activities per se. It does not matter to Buddhists whether people translate or name such activities as “social work”, or whether the WPSW side approves them as social work or not. It only matters whether Buddhist temples, monks, and followers can address the difficulties and problems of life people face — how effectively and how much.

From the WPSW perspective, however, the construction of “Buddhist social work” is an issue and requirement in efforts to broaden their goals. The construction of “Buddhist social work” means to put WPSW in a relative position. As social work enters Stage III, encompassing the world, it will be formed for the first time through a synthesis of WPSW and “Buddhist social work” along with other social work such as “Islamic social work,” and “NGO social work”.

This Part 1 will propose a working framework of “Buddhist social work.” The remaining work will be devoted to the future generations. The record and preservation of discussion and its progression till today is intended, especially in Chapter 2 and 3, to aid in the future progress of “Buddhist social work”.

Readers who are only interested in “Buddhist social work” could start with Chapter 3, p.18.
Chapter 1 The Third Stage of Social Work: 
To Make Social Work Something Truly of the World

Social work was born in Europe (Stage I), further developed in North America (Stage II) and now is poised to assume a global role (Stage III).

How will it be possible?

1. Globalization of Social Work Itself

Most social work researchers, educators, and practitioners who claim international interests want to extend the current social work, which was born in Europe and has matured into professional social work over 150-200 years, to every corner of this world. They have endeavored to reach these ends. Some people have already termed current social work as a global profession or want to do so. International social work organizations such as the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and people surrounding those organizations are its most prominent flag wavers.

Social workers generally question globalization and the results it brings, often crying out against them. But they are indifferent to, or even unconscious of, the globalization of social work itself.

Globalization varies in meaning, but at its essence, it is not limited to people, commodities, money, services and information but also applies to various kinds of standards, values, and even the sense of beauty which are extended from the center of the world to the peripherals by force and choice. Kenichi Ohno writes as follows (Ohno 2000: iii):

Globalization does not simply mean a situation where each country intensifies contact and competition through trade, investment, finance, information, and personal exchange. Each period throughout history has had its own geographical and industrial center and implications for the world economy. Globalization is a process, with a clear direction and hierarchical structure. It values and favors systems of the country at the center over other regions, which tend to either follow or are coerced. It is “self-evident” in the central country’s eyes that their civilization is superior. Globalization implies both a sense of superiority and a

1) Cf. e.g. Akimoto 2012b.
sense of mission to extend the benefits to regions which have not enjoyed them yet. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that globalization has shown a pattern where the central country forces other countries to participate in fields where it has already claimed advantages under rules it has laid down, and then perpetuates that superiority on a progressive scale. [Translated by the current author.]

Social work will not become something truly of the world even if we diffuse and spread the existing professional social work born and developed in Western society. It would only mean a Western-rooted Professional Social Work (hereinafter referred to as WPSW) world conquest. Social work is born in people’s lives and the culture of a society. Similarly, it grows in response to their experiences. It follows then that social work will never become global, its third stage, unless there is input from the side of people’s lives and culture of societies where the existing social work was not born and developed.

2. Indigenization

What is the “input”? The current author once used the expression of “enrichment”. (Akimoto 2005) It may be “modification” as a sociological term and “indigenization” in recent popular terminology.

“Indigenization,” which may include a variety of aspects, will not lead social work to becoming something truly of the world. What would we indigenize? From the center, the issue is how its stakeholders can make things of their own agreeable for the peripheries enough to have them accepted. From the peripheries, the issue is how they can make things from the center acceptable or usable to their own societies. The peripheries endeavor to catch up with the “advanced” systems, policies or thought of the center, obtain the authorization that they are at the same level as the center, and get a stamp of approval of that legitimacy. The discourse is identical with that in “internationalization.” (cf. Matsuo 2013 and 2014) What the center internationalizes or indigenizes, or what are internationalized or indigenized by the peripheries, are things of the center—WPSW in this case. The core part will not change. Recall the dissemination and propagation of Christianity in world history. The building of churches or the clothing of clergy may have been indigenized but it did not change the fact that what was diffused was Christianity.


What must we then do to make social work something truly of the world?
How can we lead social work to its third stage? Putting convergence theory and the linear model aside for a moment, not discussing the expansion of WPSW, we need to formulate social work which is purely rooted in and based on people’s lives and culture and societies in each region. By doing this, various social works become plausible. Through the inclusion of various social works, WPSW today will assume a relative existence. In this way, a social work widely accepted by the world will be established. WPSW and other various social works would sit on the second floor. Social work will become truly of the whole world for the first time in history.

Of course, the degree of indigenization or modification in the above section 2 varies. If it reaches a certain level, a thing becomes quite something else. The change in quantity turns into the change in quality. The present mainstream of social work would prefer this indigenization/modification approach. Time and prospects of reaching the point of conversion become issues of concern. Will it reach the turning point someday?

Social work to be expanded the world over must be started with social work itself, not with WPSW. Contempt and anger can be heard in response to change, “Do you intend to reverse 100 or 200 years of history?” Adopting aggressive convergence theory or a linear model invites this reaction. If we understand that WPSW is just one model, developed in Western society and culture, and not the sole social work but one of a variety, progress to Stage III and world acceptance can be achieved. With a variety of social work based on societies and cultures being included, acceptance as a worldwide social work becomes possible.

When social work crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Stage I to Stage II, even between Western societies, “Americanization” was a common word. It had to overcome considerable resistance. Systems for training workers, for instance, were debated. Should there be independent schools or general universities? Should there be master level or standard level education? Should the American inclination toward psychology be employed by Europe? (Kendal 1998) This time, the discussion extends to Asia, Africa, and Latin America whose societies and cultures are very different. In addition, even on convergence theory and a linear model, the developmental stage of industrialization is very different. Is it even possible for example to apply post-industrial theory and practice to societies in the early stages of industrialization? (Chapter 2.1 (2) pp.10-11)
Chapter 2  The IASSW/IFSW International Definition of Social Work: Why Is It Difficult to Be Accepted?  

The recent IASSW/IFSW International Definition and the discussion of its revision to a new Global Definition are good examples for the cogency of the discussion in Chapter 1 above. A definition is an indicator showing what social work is and how the author understands social work. It shows how the leaders of international social work organizations in the world view social work.

1. Old Definition: “It’s Western!”

While a UN survey report whose lead author was “Katherine Kendal, the stalwart of social work,” (Nikku 2011: 28) modestly concluded that “… … the data submitted [from 33 countries] do not lend themselves to a definition of social work that would be accepted in all countries and could thus be put forward as an ‘international’ definition” (UN DSA 1950: 13), her disciples bravely crafted the International Definition of Social Work in 2000 (Box 1).

Box 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IASSW/IFSW INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not small numbers of people—mainly people from “developing countries”—opposed

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2) See Akimoto: 2015 and 2012c. The new definition has problems not only in the content but also in the unorganizational or procedural decision making process.

3) The report does not carry the author’s name while identifying Katherine Kendall’s involvement in the survey. Lynne Heally, 2008, “Katherine A. Kendall (USA), Honorary President since 1978,” Social Work and Sociology International Online Journal, Vol.6, No.1, notes that she was the main researcher of the survey.

4) IFSW had its own definition in 1982 before this version.
this definition or were not persuaded.\textsuperscript{5)} People from the Latin America Region did not agree with it. The Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE) set up its Definition Review Project with a promise to review it in ten years. (IASSW/IFSW 2007: 4)

APASWE organized a meeting of all national associations and their alternative groups in Asia and the Pacific Region during the IASSW/IFSW/ICSW Social Work and Social Development World Congress in Hong Kong in June 2010. More than ten organizations convened.\textsuperscript{6)} Participants agreed to hold national workshops in each country using their own mother tongues and to meet again at a regional workshop to be held in Tokyo half a year later to discuss the fruits of their labors. Box 2 presents the announcement of the meeting, or the prospectus.

Box 2

\textbf{APASWE/IASSW* INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK REVIEW PROJECT}

The IASSW/IFSW International Definition of Social Work was adopted by the IFSW and IASSW in May 2001, and they were “committed to a 10 year cycle of review” for it. This year of 2010 is the year for the revision. (‘Introduction to the joint IFSW and IASSW document’, \textit{International Definition of the Social Work Profession; Ethics in Social Work, Statement of Principles; Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession, Supplement of International Social Work, Sage})

The IFSW and the IASSW are behind schedule. The APASWE decided to take the lead at its first national association+ meeting in June 2010 in Hong Kong, proposing that each national association hold its national workshop in its mother tongue by around 20 October 2010, and the APASWE hold a regional workshop at the beginning of November 2010 and the summary conference at the 21 Asian and Pacific Social Work Conference in 2011.

In countries in our APASWE Region, the definition is now part of the law, and in many countries, the definition and two other documents above (i.e. \textit{Ethics Statement and Global Standards}) which include the definition in them have been used as a yardstick to promote the standardization of competency and curricula and the social work profession itself. It has been said “Convergence is inevitable and necessary.”

\textsuperscript{5)} There would be counterarguments that many representatives from “developing” countries were involved in the review process and agreed. But keep in mind the simple fact that most of them studied in the West, under those who studied in the West, and/or with Western textbooks.

\textsuperscript{6)} Such a meeting was probably the first experience in social work history.
Wherever we go, however, similar criticisms and complaints have been heard—“It is the West’s view”. For example:

a. Are “social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being” appropriate aims and activities of social work?

b. Is a binary way of thinking, e.g. people vs. environment, acceptable?

c. Is individualism or the individual-centered way of thinking, including the concept “to develop their full potential” suitable?

d. Aren’t the stability of society, harmony in human relations, respect of others, emphasis of unique traditions and culture, an emphasis on responsibility, and the importance of family/kin and community core elements for social work? (cf. Footnote 2 of Global Standards)

e. How about inserting a non-English word, e.g. “kyōsei” (Living together interdependently; Co-existence; cf. symbiosis), in the definition?

f. Don’t you have any objections to designate human rights and social justice as the fundamental principles of social work?

g. Between the lines, Western democracy, Christianity, and modernism can be discerned.

h. The element of spirituality is missing.

Other comments are also heard: More fundamentally, “It is a ‘developed’ country model.” “Is it OK to begin with “The social work profession promotes…”?” “Is social work a profession? What we need first is the definition of social work—before the definition of social work profession—don’t we?”

Is it necessary to revise the definition or not? If necessary, which part must be revised and “how” and why”? The examination should be made both at the conceptual level and the empirical level.

(Tatsuru Akimoto, APASWE, 14 October 2010)

* The project originally started as an APASWE project but was later partially financially supported by IASSW.

Most points of discussion raised in the above Chapter 1 are found in it. The (2000) definition “is Western,” and “is from ‘developed’ countries: (1) The terminology, most concepts, the framework, and the social philosophy behind them are Western. (2) The definition assumes the equation: social work = social work profession. (3) It is indifferent concerning the language issue.

(1) Western Thought

The first point is that the terminology, concepts, and social philosophy employed
are Western. Binary or oppositional thinking is pervasive, such as people vs. the environment, or the relationship between human beings and nature. Individualism is a way of thinking that always puts the individual at the center, as is the Maslow-like way of putting self-actualization at the top of the ideal human pyramid. Even if you start with the individual, you may not necessarily have to start with yourself, putting yourself at the center. You may start with others, putting them at the center, or as the subject, and consider of things and relations. There are such ways of thinking in the world. Cannot the harmony of human relations, respect for others, the emphasis of family/kinship and community, the stress of responsibility, the stability of society, and one’s own traditions and culture be core factors of social work?

May we regard social justice and human rights as fundamental principles of social work? Social justice has developed in the Western thought and discourse from Greece, from Aristotle to today’s John Rose. Is the current framework indisputably correct for our social work? How do we understand social justice in colonizing suzerains? How should we consider human rights in societies where they cannot think of self-determination without putting family and community at the center? Can we simply declare that the violation of an individual’s rights goes against fundamental human rights? The matter is not so simple. Clearly, as one would expect, the terms of “social justice” and “human rights” vary in their meanings around the world today. Is it sufficient simply to repeat International Covenants on Human Rights? The voices of many people on this planet have not been heard.7)

The matter of “inner aspect” or belief (e.g. religion, spirituality, and faith) has been entirely left out of the Western definition discussion while the separation of religion and politics, or church and state, is insisted upon.

As soon as the workshop began, mass poverty and social development were added and the relation with state/government,8) hegemony and imperialism of European countries and America, and the voice of indigenous peoples9) were identified. (ACWelS 2011) They should have been included in the announcement or prospectus of the workshop.

The legacy of Western democracy, modernism, and Christianity is felt between the lines. A Buddhist professor in Japan spontaneously responded that it was not the legacy but Christianity itself.

7) See the footnote 5) or p.7
8) “Control” becomes an inevitable topic.
9) The national workshop organized by New Zealand national association after the November APASWE Regional Workshop.
(2) Social Work Not by Professional Social Workers

The second point is to equate social work to the social work profession, the notion being that only professional social work is social work. Is this acceptable?

The old definition (Box 1) was titled as a “Definition of Social Work” and began with “The social work profession promotes……….” It gave a definition of the social work profession, not social work. There seems to be no delineation between the two. The only possible explanation is to conclude that social work and the social work profession are synonymous. Is this accurate and fair?

There are approximately 200 countries and regions on this earth. How many countries and regions are there which have a decent number of professional social workers, besides Western “developed” countries in particular? There are, in fact, few. Can the industrial classification of the social work profession and the job classification of professional social worker be found in countries where industrialization has not reached a certain level? (e.g. Countries in which agriculture, fishery, and forestry share 70 or 80 percent, and countries whose percentage of people entering higher-education is still low, countries in which only 50 percent or 60 percent of children finish elementary school and only a few percent of youth enroll in universities with practically no graduate programs.) The minimum requirement of MSW or even BSW for professional social workers does not seem to be a serious insistence. They are elites in a society, with only a few exceptions. They work for governments wearing suits as senior officers in their futures, or for international NGOs or UN agencies utilizing their English. They do not continue working daily in the field as front line social workers. People in less developed countries continue to have their difficulties, struggles and needs in their life, sometimes similar to those in the developed world, sometimes quite different but equally or even more serious.

What should we do? There appear to be two possible choices. One is to produce professional social workers who satisfy the standards WPSW requires in their societies immediately, or within a few, five, or ten years, and in huge numbers. People would say

10) Many lectures have been delivered by the current author on this topic including those listed in the footnote 1) on p.2.
11) The footnote 1 of Global standards for the education and training of the social work profession states that “All reference to ‘social work’ in this document is to read as the ‘social work profession’, and reference to the ‘social worker’ is to read as the ‘social work professional.’” (IASSW/IFSW 2007: 36)
12) IFSW claims their today’s membership as 120 associations (3 million social workers) as of the end of 2016 (IFSW President at JCSW International Seminar on Social Welfare in Asia and the Pacific Rim 2016), which does not the refute this question.
“It’s impossible!” The other choice is to import professional social workers who are now in “developed” countries. The cry, “Social work imperialism!” or “colonialism!” in such a case, would be heard spontaneously.

What can be done faced with these options? Who can address the difficulties and problems in people’s lives, or care for the people who bear them? There is no need to worry. In these societies, people who can help are there; otherwise, their societies could not be sustained. Social work history textbooks mention neighbors, village people, chiefs and other leaders, lords, kings and other rulers, spiritual healers, religious figures, humanists/philanthropists, ladies of goodwill, volunteers, governmental agencies at various levels and their officers, corporations, gilds, labor unions, NGOs and other elements of society as well as families and kin that have carried out similar social functions as WPSW, or part of or beyond those of WPSW.

WPSW would not term those social activities as social work, or those people as social workers. The logical necessity concludes that social work is not existent for those difficulties and problems or the people who take them on in those societies, as social work must be professional social work and there are no professional social workers. All WPSW could do is at most to describe those people as para-professionals under the above viewpoint.

What entitles the IASSW and IFSW to monopolize social work? Their mission is to promote professional social work. It is the binding duty of professional associations to aim at the advancement of the status of their members, or professional social workers, and the advancement of the service they provide in the society. It seems, however, arrogant for them not to formally recognize what others do as social work.

Football is football. It is football for small elementary kids to kick balls in a vacant lot in an urban slum. It is football for billion-dollar professional star players to kick balls in a luxury football stadium. Generally, professional teams are stronger, and professional players are better. But sometimes a non-professional team may beat a professional team, and some non-professional players are better than some professional players. Social work is social work whether done by professionals or amateurs. For example, in research by the Japan College of Social Work (JCSW) Asian Center for Welfare in Society (ACWelS) with the cosponsorship of APASWE, “(Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives,” in 2012-13, one country identified traditional spiritual healers, another Buddhist monks, another governmental welfare workers, and another volunteers as “its functional alternatives.”

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13) “Functional equivalents” may be appropriate for sociologists, but “functional alternatives” is used here.
team reported that practices by non-professional social workers were often rated as more effective and more satisfactory for clients than those by professional social workers. (Hatta, et.al. 2013: 98-100) Similar reports were made from the field after the March 11, 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake.

Aren’t activities such as volunteers caring for people with problems, for example, social work?

(3) The Language Issue

The third point is the ignorance of and indifference to the language issue: in essence, English dominance. Consider inserting a non-English word in the definition. The announcement of the APASWE Regional Workshop in 2010 (Box 2) proposed that each country insert a word in the definition in its own language. Let’s put in the Japanese word “kyōsei”, for example. “Symbiosis” is not an accurate translation, nor are “co-existence” or “interdependence”. A difference in meaning remains. It is not easy to substitute an English word here. People whose mother tongue is English may have difficulty understanding what the word really means.

Concerning the language issue, one might say this amounts to sensitivity training. People do not become conscious of, or cannot understand the language issue as long as they only use English. A language perspective, English in this case, heavily influences what social work is defined as and what it means in the end as long as it is used exclusively in our discussions. Asking, “what is sushi” or “what is a ninja”, for example, Japanese speakers in this case, would likely enjoy an advantage and have the final say to their definitions. Ultimately the native speakers of the language used claim ultimate authenticity. In addition, all discussion are carried on in English. The way of thinking and the process of thinking are controlled by English. How to define social work is dominated by the English side. That was the reason why the APASWE requested each country organize their national workshops in their mother tongue. The only way people can freely think, express their feelings, and exchange opinions is in their mother language.14)

The language issue always subsists at the base of conceptual thought.

2. New Definition

How has the old definition been revised? To what extent have the problems

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14) Cf. The preface of the IASSW Language Policy, and Akimoto, T. 2010c.
described in the above section 1. been addressed? A revised definition was attained.\textsuperscript{15)}

Diversity and some terminology were added. Some of the additions were voices from the non-Western world, but the framework of WPSW remained. Not only that, the title changed from the International Definition to the Global Definition. There seemed to be neither an awareness nor a questioning of globalization. The new definition appears in Box 3.

\textbf{Box 3}

**IASSW/IFSW THE GLOBAL DEFINITION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION**

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.

The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional level (sic).

\textbf{(1) The Framework of Western Thought}

Regarding the first point in the above subsection 1.(1), i.e. Western ideas, thoughts, and framework, there are some changes; for example, social development, social cohesion, collective responsibility, the respect for diversity, indigenous knowledge, life challenges, etc. were included. The ideas of Latin America, Africa, and other “developing” regions and countries seem to have gained influence in a shift to the macro, with more consideration given to collectives such as families, communities and societies, and the opinions of the APASWE to the insertion of life challenges, humanities, indigenous knowledge, and the amplifier clause, respectively. Many other words and clauses were proposed to be inserted in the whole process of the revision towards the final draft, for example, macro-mezzo-micro, self-determination, participation, equality, citizenship, values, environment, and gender. (Material 1, p.37) Most proposals were made by leading educators, researchers, and practitioners from non-Western countries, depending upon each proposer’s interest and preference, but had been often discussed in the framework of WPSW by Western disputants and writers. On the other hand, there were some words and clauses which

\textsuperscript{15)} Leaders of the IASSW and IFSW did not seem interested in the revision of the definition when the year for the review, every tenth year, was approaching.
were not familiar to typical WPSW language, including harmony, social stability, interdependency, and others. Some of those words and clauses in both categories were included in some interim versions for the duration of the drafting (e.g. Materials 2-1, 2-2 and 4, pp.37-38) but all had disappeared before the final draft.

Little discussion was made on more basic concepts such as social justice and human rights. There was little response to the request by the APASWE Regional Workshop announcement (Box 2) to discuss these matters based on positive evidence.

(2) Social Work=Social Work Profession

The second point: This question was repeated from the outset, “Which shall we define, social work or professional social work (or the social work profession)?” In some interim versions, an effort to distinguish them seemed to have been made, but leaders from Europe and North America, as well as “developing” countries who followed them, drowned out such discussion in the end. The IFSW’s first version (Material 2-1) and the IASSW’s counter proposal (Material 2-2) seemed to aim at a definition of social work. No word of profession was in them. The quasi-final version sent to the IASSW board by the names of two drafters assigned from IASSW and IFSW just before the public comment version had a footnote, “the definition applies to social work professionals and not necessarily to people working in non-professional social work roles”. At the same time, the first sentence started with “Social work…” and the second sentence “Social work profession…”. It seemed to be dual structured definition. (Material 3) The IFSW first draft developed by its Secretariat and Nicolai Paulsen (Material 4) had the same structure. It changed as soon as it went to a small drafting committee. The version submitted for the public comments (Material 5, p.38) abruptly started with the phrase “social work profession” and the final version afterwards, which was adopted as the definition, had in its first sentence “Social work is…profession. The title had been changed to a “Global definition” in the version by the two drafters above.

An APASWE member made a move to change “Social work is…profession.” into “Social work can be (or could be) …profession,” in the general assembly of the IASSW, which approved the original version. “Why do the IASSW and the IFSW have the power to monopolize social work?” was the reasoning. Such a comment was simply

16) The drafters, possibly may not have been conscious of the distinction between social work and social work profession from the beginning.
17) Jan Agten (leading, p.38 the process for IASSW) and Rory Truell (Co-leading the process for IFSW)
neglected.\(^{18}\)

(3) Language Issue

The third point; There is no trace of discussion on the language issue. Why did the APASWE ask all national associations to review the definition in their own languages, and why did it suggest putting a non-English word in the definition? Neither the IASSW nor the IFSW had any recognition of, understanding of, or sensitivity to the language issue.

(4) Amplifier Clause

The largest difference from the old definition was the amplifier clause. The addition of the “respect of diversity” did not satisfy some people (Subsection 2.(1) above).

A definition could or even should be multilayered in structure. Each region and country\(^{19}\) may amplify the global definition. Spontaneously, however, the IASSW and the IFSW put a cap on it—it must be consistent with the Global Definition.

The purity of being Western softened a bit, and the range of tolerance widened a little, but the same WPSW framework persisted. We started with the question whether or not to revise the WPSW definition and, if so, it is inevitable to ask how.

3. Regional and National Definitions

(1) Asian and Pacific Regional Amplification—Reference to the Inner Aspect

The APASWE held a workshop concerning the formulation of the Asian and Pacific Regional Definition, or more accurately speaking, the amplification of that, a few days after the 2014 Melbourne IASSW/IFSW/ICSSW World Congress, which adopted the global definition. Later the APASW invited the IFSW(AP)\(^{20}\) to work together, and adopted a joint regional definition (amplification) at the APASW/IFSW(AP) Asian Pacific Social Work Conference in October 2015, in Bangkok, Thailand. (Material 6, p.39)

It referred to the inner aspect, which the global definition ignored.\(^{21}\) It reads
“Professional social work in the Asia Pacific Region has an emphasis on: Realizing care and compassion of…; Recognizing the importance of faith, spirituality and/or religion …” The remaining items referred to the “peaceful negotiation of conflict,” “research-based practice and practice-based research approaches,” and “the preservation of our environment,” all of which were not found in the global definition.

(2) Japanese National Amplification: Social Work Not by the Social Work Profession

Although the above Asian Pacific version has taken it for granted that it should merely amplify the definition of the Social Work Profession, a national version seems to rebel against the equation of social work=social work profession.

A few countries in Asia and the Pacific have embarked on the formulation of their own national definitions (amplifications). Japan, for example, organized a working group for their national amplification in 2015. Representatives from the Japanese Association of Schools of Social Work and four professional social workers’ associations were its members. They initiated their work based on several agreements, which included the item on the actors of social work (JASSW 2017: 12). They were interested in social work before professional social work:

- The amplification should include the notion that people who are not professional social workers are also engaged in social work in Japan, while the [global] definition has defined the practice by the profession as social work.
- The group recognizes that, to begin with, countries which have established social work as a profession are a minority in Asia.
- The group considers the possibility of developing an expression inclusive of social work in the broader sense.

[Translated by the current author.]

(3) Deviation from the IASSW/IFSW Definition

There are, however, neither challenges to core “Western ideas, concepts and framework”, e.g. social justice and human rights, nor references to the language issue in these amplifications. The Japanese national amplification also has repeated the Western terms, concepts, and framework though it has more concrete and a few unique expressions and is reflective of the country’s history and constitution.

An IASSW and IFSW joint definition committee meeting held during the 2013
Stockholm World Congress agreed that regional definitions should not contradict the global definition. It also made many other agreements—the definition “must be short, simple and easily translatable,” “understood by both lay people (non-social workers) and the lay media,” “free from jargon,” etc. and “should define the uniqueness of social work.” (Material 7, p.39) Most of the agreements have been neglected. Why are only we obliged to observe the “no contradiction (with global definition) clause”? 

In more basic terms, no Region, organization, nor individual has to think of a definition of social work under the umbrella of the IASSW/IFSW global definition. Nobody, regardless of being academicians, university professors, researchers, educators or people of practice, has to be confined to the global definition. The IFSW(AP) may organizationally have difficulty because it is an internal department of the IFSW, but the APASWE does not because it is an independent association, not an internal division of the IASSW. A participant in the 2010 APASWE Regional Workshop already insisted on having the APASWE’s own definition (cf. Nikku 2011: 32). The definition could vary from Region to Region. It could coexist with the global definition, or replace it. The amplifier clause was a sort of political compromise. (See Independent Model C in Chapter 3. below. (section 2. pp.22-23))

The biggest negative impact of establishing an International Definition and a Global Definition is to chill people’s thinking—or bringing debate to a standstill. We had discussed what social work was in the first sessions of classes and in sections of textbooks before we had these international definitions. Now we start our classes with “This is social work...” at least in the case of Japan. A few APASWE members had intended the international definition review project as a part of a process in a mass social education from the very beginning. It could be said there was a hidden agenda for the definition review project.

22) The international definition also certainly contributed to the promotion of professional social work and the advancement of the status of professional social workers, as a sort of “weapon”.
Chapter 3  Interest in Buddhist Social Work

The exploration of Buddhist social work in Asia was engendered in this process of a revision of the International Definition. There are several key players—APASWE, Nguyen Hoi Loan (University of Social Sciences and Humanities-Vietnam National University, Hanoi), ACWelS-JCSW, Anuradha Wickramasinghe (Small Fishers Federation of Lanka, Sri Lanka), and Shukutoku University Asian Center for Buddhist Social Work Research Exchange, Chiba, Japan.23)

This chapter aims at recording the initial development of Buddhist social work to the present, points out one of the products born in its process, the Buddhist Social Work ABC Model, and proposes a working framework for Buddhist social work, the next step of the research development.


As soon as the APASWE 2010 Regional Workshop ended, the President of the APASWE visited some countries whose representatives had not participated in the workshop in order to listen to their views. Nguyen Hoi Loan, Associate Professor of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities-Vietnam National University, Hanoi (hereinafter refer to as USSH), referred to Buddhism in the first meeting, and later sent a research proposal, “The Participation of Buddhism in Social Work,” to the APASWE President. In Vietnam, social work could not function effectively without considering Buddhism. ACWelS-JCSW, which housed the APASWE President’s Office, took on the roles of promoter and coordinator, and Shukutoku University, Chiba, Japan, which was rooted in Buddhism and focused on social welfare studies, became the counterpart of USSH. “The Contribution of Buddhism in Social Work” proceeded for three years as joint research. A Shukutoku University team conducted field research at 21 Buddhist temples and seven other agencies in Vietnam which were engaged in activities seemingly similar to WPSW (hereinafter referred to as “social work” with quotation marks). The USSH team headed by Nguyen Hoi Loan produced several articles for publication. Part 2 Chapter 3 1 in this book is an article of his based on some of activities.

Vietnam society has been a Buddhist society for over 2000 years (Van Kim

23) Now it is housed in Asian Research Institute for International Social Work of the university.
2013: 141). Buddhism has infused the way of thinking and feeling, values, morals, behavior, and customs in every corner of people’s daily lives regardless of being strict Buddhists or not. (Loan 2015: 66-74) In these societies, practicing social work could not be effective or even possible without giving attention to Buddhism.

(2) “(Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives” Research—Buddhist Activities in Sri Lanka

Since the above mentioned 2010 APASWE Regional Workshop, ACWelS-JCSW planned and carried out a series of international joint research collaborations with APASWE in order to contribute to the discussion on the international definition revision: “Religion and Social Work—In case of Buddhism,” “(Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives,” “the Internationalization of Social Work Education in Asia,” “the Indigenization of Social Work Education in Asia,” and “Religion and Social Work—In the case of Islam.”

One of them was “(Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives”, which was triggered by an objection to the equation of social work=WPSW. Fiji, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka participated. Each country team received research questions to answer: “What are professional social workers doing?” (Part I), “Who is doing similar work and how so in areas where there are no professional social workers?” (Part II) “Make a comparative analysis between Part I and Part II.” (Part III). One country picked traditional spiritual healers, another NGOs, another governmental workers, and Sri Lanka considered Buddhist temples/monks.

Sri Lankan researchers interviewed and held discussions with high-ranking Buddhist monks, senior governmental officials, researchers—including university professors—and other people during the research. An idea to set up a college of social-work education for Buddhist monks came up as a byproduct of the research. The purpose was to make Buddhist monk practices more effective by providing contemporary social work knowledge and skills to the monks. As soon as they started discussing social work among themselves, questions arose. While WPSW has been around some 150 years, Buddhist monks have been practicing similar activities for over 2500 years. Even today, there are many examples of “good practice” by Buddhist temples and monks.
(3) “Curriculum Design for Buddhist Social Work Education”: Sri Lankan PBR\textsuperscript{24}

A university researcher (ACWeiS-JCSW→Shukutoku University Asian Center for Social Work Research) from whom advice on the issue was sought, posed the question of what and how Buddhist “social work” has been actually practiced in Sri Lanka and how it has developed over 2500 years. No answers returned besides “good practice” examples.

The researcher limited his role to that of a consultant and advisor as much as possible. He proposed the implementation a Buddhist social work curriculum design project as practice-based research (hereinafter referred to as PBR). First, a census type research of all temples was carried out. Due to human, financial, and time restrictions, the research area was confined to several sub-districts of two Central Provinces, Anuaradhapura and Polonnaruwa, and some 400 temples were visited. The types and extent of “social work” activities by Buddhist temples were recorded. It became clear that almost all Buddhist temples in the area had some Buddhist “social work” practices in various fields.

(4) “Buddhist ‘Social Work’ Activities in Asia”: Five Country Research and Nine Country Publication Projects\textsuperscript{25}

At the same time, Shukutoku University Asian Center for Social Work Research sent out a call for participation in joint research on “Buddhist ‘Social Work’ Activities” to all Buddhist majority countries in Asia whose Buddhist populations mostly exceeded 70 percent of their total populations.\textsuperscript{26} Researchers and practitioners including monks responded from five countries: Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, and Nepal\textsuperscript{27,28}. It was a geographic extension of the above Sri Lankan PBR’s

\textsuperscript{24}Partly funded by a Grant-in-aid for Scientific Research, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

\textsuperscript{25}It was initiated by a Shukutoku University fund, and since 2105, partly funded by a Grant-in-aid for Research Infrastructure Projects, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.


\textsuperscript{27}Bhutan, Mongolia, Cambodia, and Laos were also invited to join the research, but could not participate or finish their reports for various reasons. These countries were included in the 2016-17 research.

\textsuperscript{28}Buddhists in Nepal are minority in the population, but the country was added because of the significance for Buddhism, as the birthplace of Buddha.
interest. Research questions were (1) What “good practice” cases can be identified? (2) How representative are they in the country as a whole? (3) How have those cases actually been practiced and why have the temples and monks been involved in these secular affairs while enlightenment or the inner aspect would typically be the focus in Buddhism?

All subject countries reported many good practices. Concerning national representativeness and how they have been practiced, however, little information was provided. In response to (3), the preliminary answers they gave were beyond the original expectation of the research designer. They mentioned not only scriptures/teachings, but also monk’s personal experiences (e.g. poverty in his childhood, and the Vietnam War), instruction/transfer from master monks, new social problems due to the modernization of society, the lack of social services by governments and others as influences and reasons for promoting Buddhist “social work”. Some potential research themes were also brought to light, for example, the relation with the state/government, the extent of the development of a “welfare state”, the degree and the influence of the infiltration of WPSW, research distinguishing among temples, monks, and lay people, and historical research into changes of services over 2500 years (e.g. the content of the care for orphans and elderly people without families and relatives) and changes in the social context. There might have been social changes as big as or bigger than industrialization. What we should do first is to know of ourselves. (Sangbo 2016: 79)

The second phase of research was planned and implemented focusing on the unanswered questions in the first stage as the Buddhist country social work activities series publication project, adding four other countries: Mongolia, Cambodia, Bhutan, and Laos. It aimed at collecting and presenting basic data and information to be shared by all people who study “Asia, Buddhism, and social work” in the future.


All these affluents which had different fountainheads merged into the International Forum to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of Shukutoku University and its founder’s death, “Buddhist ‘Social Work’ and WPSW—The first next step—”, in Chiba, Japan, in October 2015. All researchers who took part in the above (1)-(4) research convened and exchanged their research results, including the current situation of Buddhist “social work” in each country from the five country research and PBR, and took the first step towards the formulation of the concept of

“Buddhist social work”—what is it? (cf. Chapters below in Part 2) There was also a role-play debate on the commonalities and differences between Buddhist social work and WPSW. (Part 2 Chapter 3)

2. **ABC Model of “Buddhist Social Work”**

One of the results at this moment of the newly found recognition of “Buddhist social work” was a summary in an ABC model. [Figure 1.1]. To date, there are no specific words or concepts of “Buddhist Social Work.” Google Scholar recorded 14,000 searches with the words “Buddhist” and “Social Work”\(^\text{30}\) but only 36 for “Buddhist social work” as a combined term (as of November 2015). NASW Social Work Abstract\(^\text{31}\) found two searches for “Buddhist social work”, and its Social Work, zero.\(^\text{32}\) The Encyclopedia of Social Work 2008 devotes only 10 lines in a paragraph to Buddhism in the item of faith-based social work among 1900 pages of the whole volume, while giving much reference to that of Christianity and Judaism.

Model A is a Copy Model, which accepts the WPSW as it is, and tries to conform itself to it. The differences are only its subjects of action. They are Buddhist temples, monks and nuns, and lay followers. Various Buddhist teachings, values, and concepts

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30) Google hits totaled 526 thousand.
31) It covers some 45 social work-related journals.
32) cf. For “Buddhist”: 43 hits and 38 hits, respectively.
do not contradict or are interchangeable with those of WPSW. It solicits WPSW for an endorsement that its ideas and practices are authentic social work. It is as if Buddhist temples and monks in Western countries learned and copied social work activities by Christian churches, priests, brothers and sisters in their neighbourhoods. (cf. Ishikawa in Part 2 Chapter 3 2. pp.90-92, 96)

Model B is a Modification (or “Indigenization”) Model. Being based on and accepting current WPSW as it is, it seeks certain changes to improve it by making it more complete and more appropriate for their own societies as to methodology, values, concepts, and theories. (cf. Loan in Part 2 Chapter 3 1)

If the degree of modification it seeks exceeds a certain level, however, there is the risk of a denial of WPSW. Unless the modification exceeds a certain level, it can be contended that WPSW could not be usable in a certain society.

Ishikawa’s and Loan’s articles in Part 2 Chapter 3 were written without this A, B, C typology given, but readers might find respective traces of Model A and B, although they do not confine themselves in each model. The former also contained elements of Models B and C, and the latter has provided items to strengthen this typology.

Model C is an Independent Model. It does not begin with WPSW. Buddhist monks have been engaged in practices similar to WPSW, or “social work”, as their Buddhist practices. For example, they go out to villages to see problems and difficulties that people have, to be consulted with, and to be engaged in various works for villagers and villages including social development activities.

Buddhist monks have not named these activities as social work. Each language has its own term for them, or may not have even named any of them. Monks may neither be conscious of, nor categorize them as special practices different from their other Buddhist practices. They conduct morning services, go about for alms, cook and eat meals, sweep and clean temples and gardens, study various subjects, and hold Buddhist services for the departed in temples and houses in villages. “Social work” activities are only part of a series of such Buddhist practices. (Herath 2015:19-20)

Some monks and lay followers wanted to promote consciousness of these activities, categorize them, and serve people better. The progress of Buddhist “social work” could not be possible without boundaries. (cf. Box 4, p.24 and Material 8③, p.40) Some leaders of the Buddhist community seemed to have practical thought:③3) People have lost interest in Buddhism as in other religions, and Buddhism will decline

③3) e.g. A workshop for the founding of the Institute of Social Work Education for Buddhist Monks (Swiss Hotel, Kandy, March 2014).
Observations by a social worker

“PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK” AND “BUDDHIST WORK”
: COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES

What are the commonalities and differences? What “professional social workers” and Buddhist monks are actually doing appear similar, at least on the surface. The fields of activities and jurisdiction/functions seem to be identical. Buddhist monks are actively working in fields of income generation and employment promotion, with orphans, the elderly without relatives, people with disabilities, war victims, disasters victims, community development, etc.—all domains are similar to those [of]……. “professional social workers”. Both Buddhist monks and “professional social workers” support people who have various problems and difficulties in life.

……..[B]ut we have come across several major differences between the two.*

One difference most commonly heard from non-Buddhist observers is that services by “Professional Social Work” tend to be more universal in nature, being institutionalized, systematized, and programmed, partly because of the government’s involvement, while services by “Buddhist social work” tend to more accidental and sporadic, attending to the immediate needs of “clients” who happen to come to monks-temples partly because of an understanding of En** [pratitya]. Less attention seems to be paid to the whole sub-populations within the society that confront the same problems. Another difference often mentioned by outside observers is the “viewpoint of the stance of service recipients” in “Professional Social Work” and the “viewpoint of the stance of service providers, or the top” in “Buddhist work”. These [two] differences, however, may be just incidental phenomena and may not be essential. A Japanese Buddhist monk and researcher, Ryoshin Hasegawa, once emphasized “not for him (the client) but together with him………….” “Professional social work”, too, actually had a “viewpoint ” from the top in the past and even has today.

Third, “Professional Social Work” has its rather clear boundaries of field, activity, and function, and within each of those boundaries, it has further limited territories and jurisdictions, while Buddhist work is more all-inclusive. “Professional social workers” do work as a whole within a limited boundary while monks do those works as part of a whole, or the broader mission.

Partly because of this limit, fourth, “Professional Social Work” develops mindsets of intention, recognition, conceptualization, and theorization of what they are doing, for example, fields, activities, and functions, while Buddhist work does not do so necessarily.

Fifthth, this limit further leads professional social work toward science, which necessitates that it be empirical and objective, and emphasizes recording and documentation. “Buddhist social work” has been doing whatever monks think necessary from Buddhism doctrines and teachings, based on its wisdom and experience. Intermediate
(operationalized) variables between fundamental concepts—which tend to be abstract—and concrete actions may not receive much attention.

Sixth—and contrarily, “Professional Social Work” seems to have lost interest in the inner aspect of workers and of the relation between workers and “clients”, while Buddhist work respects the faith, heart, mind, and spirituality, and that the inner relation preexists before being involved in the service relation between that of providers and receivers. Altruism and compassion are cores of Buddhist work. “Professional Social Work” has forgotten those concepts which were once its cores, abandoning them somewhere in “Professional Social Work”–although there has been a self-reflection from the “post-modernism” view.

The seventh difference is their roots. “Professional Social Work” is a product of industrialization, or Western modernism, to which the orientation towards science above also relates. Its core elements are rationalism, humanism (human-being-centeredness), individualism (individual- or self-centeredness), the separation of government and religion, and human rights and social justice. It is infused with the legacy of Christianity. Buddhist work has its roots in Buddhism doctrines and teachings, and the core elements are compassion \((karumà)\), benevolence \((jihi)\), charity \((maitrī)\), En \((pratītya)\; relationship), etc. (cf. Loan, 2011: 69)

The largest difference comes from the word, “professional”, itself. The work or service provided by “Professional Social Work” must be offered as an occupation or job, or for money, with various conditions. A profession falls among occupations in the Standard Occupation Classification of each country as well as international organizations. That Buddhist work cannot be done as an occupation/job, or for money or compensation with various conditions, which is its essence.

The term “professional” has multiple meanings. It sometimes means that the work or service provided must be 1) high enough in quality and 2) quality-assured or given by persons equipped with certain qualifications in training/education (e.g. degree, certification/license, and registration).…….. The work and services provided by Buddhists could be inferior or superior to those by “Professional Social Work” in quality. Buddhist work has no qualification programs at this moment……..but could have them if it should want such. [Or a robe is the equivalent.]

* “The argument which follows is a hypothetical one because of the author’s ignorance about the efforts of Buddhist monks and Buddhism itself. His understanding is limited to brief observations on practices by Buddhist monks and discussions with them in two recent research projects in which he was engaged: “Religion and Social Work—The Case of Buddhism (Vietnam and Japan)” research, and the Sri Lankan case in the above “(Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives” research.


as other religions do, owing to industrialization and urbanization. It would be difficult only for Buddhism to continue enjoying prosperity.

It is up to each author or scholar which Model —A, B or C— he/she names as “Buddhist social work”, and it is not a matter of which model is correct. Most literature found in Google Scholar would fall into Model A. Recently, however, sheer insistence on Model A may be difficult. Model B, insisting on some modification or indigenization, would be more easily accepted as the most meaningful contributable approach by current mainstream social work in the world. We, however, dare to continue the debate by naming Model C as “Buddhist Social Work” in the next section.


We will proceed to Model C here. The discussion of “Buddhist practice as WPSW’s functional alternative” in Models A and B turns into the discussion of “WPSW as a functional alternative of Buddhist practice” in Model C. (Akimoto 2015b) The discussion of Buddhist “social work” turns into the discussion of “Buddhist social work.” (Akimoto 2015a: 5-9)

(1) Approaches to Formulate “Buddhist Social Work”

How will “Buddhist social work” be constructed? Reviewing 14000 pieces of English literature (cf. p.22) is as well as of that of literature in other languages is of great importance. A subproject has been already assigned for this purpose by the Asian Center for Buddhist Social Work Research Exchange, Asian Research Institute for International Social Work (ARIISW), Shukutoku University. Besides this, the following five approaches are necessary for the moment at least: 1) the continuation and deepening of empirical fact-finding surveys and research on the present situation of Buddhist “social work” including its “how and why”; 2) beyond listing “good practice” cases, the historical review research, which includes the changes and developments of the content of practices in each social context; 3) conceptual and theoretical inquiry; 4) comparative research and analysis with WPSW (through 1, 2, and 3) to find commonalities and differences; and 5) comparative research and analysis with other social works to be constructed such as Islamic “social work”, Hindu “social work”, and “social works” by GOs, NGOs, labor unions (Akimoto 2010a 2010b), private corporations and their employees, and volunteers. Many tenets of Buddhist social work which people have raised as such—e.g. existing for others and for the vulnerable—would be similar to those of other religions and other actors. Participatory observation research would be effective and necessary in 1), 3), and 4).
These approaches, except for the second historical review, have already taken their respective first steps by the following research, most of which were listed in the previous section:

Re 1): Vietnam USSH-Japan Shukutoku University Research, Sri Lankan PBR, five Asian Buddhist majority country research, and nine country research including four other countries.

Re 3): Ditto. And the discussion held in the 2015 Forum, Herath’s study in Part 2 Chapter 1 below, and the ABC Model above.

Re 4): The comparison in a symmetric 10-item table with emphasis on the relation to law, government, and state and the demand from society by Anuradha Wickramasinghe (Wickramasinghe: 2013: 141), a report presented in the Vietnam-Japan research above by the current author (Akimoto 2015a: 133-136) [Box 4][Material 8], and the role play debate in the 2015 50th Anniversary Forum by Sopa Onopas and H.M.D.R. Herath (Part 2 Chapter 2).

Re 5): The 2014-15 and 2015-16 Research with the theme of Islamic “social work”, especially a seminar in December 2015 co-organized by JCSW ACWelS and Shukutoku University Asian Center for Buddhist Social Work Research Exchange. (ARIISW 2016) Regarding social work by NGO and other actors, there are the Indonesian and other country reports34) in (Professional) Social Work and Its Functional Alternatives Research (Sasaki 2013: 58-72, etc.) and the visit to Cancer Solution, Tokyo, a NGO, supporting cancer patients and their families, after the workshop of the research (October 2012).

(2) A Tentative Definition of Social Work

The next step is to formulate two definitions. First is to lay down a tentative definition of social work. Second is to formulate the definition of “Buddhist social work.”

The former, that is, to make a definition of social work, was our original goal. There was no definition of social work while there was only the definition of Western-rooted professional social work in front of us. In order to make the former, we initiated

34) The Indonesian report includes a comparative table of WPSW and Alternative Social Work. Indices used are function, educational background, the nature and method of intervention, and others.
the latter. i.e. to formulate the definition of “Buddhist social work.” In order to achieve the latter, we need the former. We are trapped in a circular argument.

Even if researchers wanted simply to know what social work activities Buddhist temples or monks were doing, they did not know what subjects, fields, and/or functions they should investigate. Without having a definition of social work, even a tentative one, we could neither conduct even a preliminary fact-finding research nor make a comparative analysis with WPSW.

In the research listed in the above section 1., the subjects and fields were generally categorized as activities phenomenally similar to WPSW: “poverty, children, elderly, people with disability, people with diseases, HIV/AIDS, refugees, disaster victims, etc.” Any addition, subtraction, or deviation were left to the discretion of each researcher.

The tentative definition of social work at this stage is as follows:

Social work is human activity to help others alleviate or eradicate difficulties and problems in their life.

Our present explorative journey will proceed on this definition for the time being. This is not a “hypothetical” definition but an assumed one. We need an assumption now, at any rate. The shorter a definition, the more inclusive it is. The more detailed it is, the more exclusive it becomes. While some elements may be lacking, the work considered is inconsistent with the definition. The definition at this level must also stay out of differences in cultures or societies.

The following definition was originally created based on the entire discussion above in this section: the fields, activities and work of the current WPSW with consideration for its history, definitions given by various authors in their research reports and textbooks (e.g. UN DSA 1950 and the Cambodian report in Sasaki 2013: 24-25) as well as the usages, recognition, and understanding among ordinary people on the streets of various countries which the current author learned from his research and daily experiences—although rigid sociological research would be necessary.

Social work is voluntary human activity to help others alleviate or eradicate difficulties and problems in their life, with a mind of caring, compassion, and fairness.

WPSW, which has overcome charity, organizational ultraism, the separation of
church and state, etc., may not be able to accept “with a mind of caring, compassion and fairness,” i.e. the reference to the inner aspect of people. Further, WPSW may not accept the term “voluntary”. As their social work must be carried out as “profession=occupation”, this factor must be excluded. Not in order to pre-exclude WPSW, the above first framework remained as a general definition. Ordinary people would pose such naïve questions as “Could robots practice social work?” and “Would work by government employees, who provide social services without love or hate and without concern under a bureaucratic system, be social work? High-ranking Buddhist monks in Vietnam, Thailand and Sri Lanka coincidently stated positively that they could not serve people as professionals, that is, for money, for a living, or as a job.

Advocates of Model C might also argue, “This tentative definition seems as if it had been adopted by WPSW from the beginning,” and “we were forced to contest it on WPSW’s terms.” But this is an intentional compromise to keep pursue communication with WPSW. The interest in “Buddhist social work” owes something to WPSW. Without the latter, the former could never have been born.

(3) Proposal of a Working Framework

The next step is the formulation of the definition of “Buddhist social work.” We modestly replace it with a proposal for a working framework of “Buddhist social work,” dreaming of a definitive definition in the future.

The framework in Box 5 is mainly from the discussion at the Shukutoku University 50th Anniversary Forum in October 2015 and the seminar in December 2015 held under the co-sponsorship of ACWelS-JCSW and Shukutoku University Asian Center for Social Work Research. This is not the idea or view of the current author or any other specific individual or group of people.

The ultimate goal of “Buddhist social work” (① in Box 5) is to realize welfare of all sentient beings and a peaceful society. This tenet is not to limit the purpose to only human beings, but to encompass all animals and plants. However, the immediate goal of “Buddhist social work” (②) is to alleviate and eradicate a wide range of human sufferings. These sufferings could be operationalized (③) as difficulties and problems of life, namely, in more concrete forms (④), poverty, children and elderly without family ties, disabilities, diseases including HIV/AIDS, disaster victims, and deaths of people, and then to serve people experiencing these difficulties and problems. Conflicts and wars are also sources of immense difficulties and tremendous problems in the lives of human beings.

There are two points to be discussed. Item ② in Box 5 limits this to human beings,
not all sentient beings, and makes “suffering” a keyword. Partly it is a conscious choice to be communicable with WPSW, but keep in mind the ultimate goal (①), objects which Buddhist social work touches (⑩), and the fundamental views of Buddhism behind (⑪), which include sentient beings besides human beings, and gods.

“Sufferings” in English is translated from the word dukka in Pali and duhkha in Sanskrit, but does not fully convey the original meaning. Walpola Rahula, for example, says, “it [dukka] also includes deeper ideas such as ‘imperfection’, ‘impermanence’, ‘emptiness’, ‘insubstantiality’” (Rahula 2006: 17). A Bhutan researcher insists that “Buddhist social work” should include practices of not only negative difficulties and problems but also to increase happiness. (Richen 2016) The current author used to lecture in his classes that “welfare” [fukushi] in Japanese had two meanings, that is, to guarantee minimum standards but also to promote well-being. a step forward from the present level. To what range should “Buddhist social work” confine itself?

The most unique feature of “Buddhist social work” is the way of understanding the causes of these problems(⑤). It recognizes two factors, problems of society on one, and problems of human beings such as greed and selfishness on the other. The former is the result of the latter. It sees capitalism as the cause of social problems, and human factors behind it. Thus, the practice approach addresses both social problems and individual problems, both at the social level and the individual level(⑥).

The fundamental principles of “Buddhist social work”, seen as human rights and social justice in WPSW, are interdependency/coexistence [kyōsei], mutual-help, selflessness, compassion, sustainable benefits, the building and bonding of human relations, etc. with emphasis toward human nature itself(⑦). To the question by a participant in the 2015 October Forum, “What is the core value of ‘Buddhist social work’?”, discussants on the stage responded with the Five Precepts(⑧).

Subjects (Actors) of social work practice are Buddhist temples, monks and nuns, lay followers, and the general population, who practice their work based on Buddhist teachings and principles. There would be a choice to exclude the last category(⑨) . Objects upon which “Buddhist social work” is applied in order to solve difficulties and problems or needs in life are all sentient beings including human beings, gods, human relations, organizations, policies and programs, systems, and others. The work would be made in consideration of the whole—politics, economy, society, and culture(⑩). “Buddhist social work” depends on such basic Buddhist views as cause and Karmic retribution, transmigration (samsara), and the integration of nature and human beings at its foundation(⑪).
Three problems remain if we put the above framework of “Buddhist social work” in a broader context.

First is the relationship between Buddhism itself and “Buddhist social work”. The foremost advantage for “Buddhist social work” is that Buddhism itself on which “Buddhist social work” is based is “a religious philosophy to save people with sufferings,” (Yamazaki 2017: 2) and a teaching of “Monks’ vocation is not selfish and not aimed at attaining a luxurious life. They should travel for the welfare and
happiness of people as much as possible.” (Sutta Nipatha)35) Wickramasinghe 2016: 1) At the same time, the foremost difficulty for the establishment of “Buddhist social work” resides in this very point. Suppose that Buddhism practice itself is to save sentient beings, make them happy, and ease and eradicate sufferings of people, how shall we conceptually and practically distinguish other Buddhist practices in general, and specify and establish “Buddhist social work”? A distinction between research into “Buddhist social work” and research into Buddhism in general becomes difficult or unnecessary. The difficulty comes from the strong intimacy between Buddhism and social work in essence. People often say, “Buddha is the ultimate social worker.” (Sherpa 2016: 69), but let’s put that aside for the time being.

Second is the variation of “Buddhist social work” by country.36) Does the framework here, or the future definition to be formulated, which is the understanding of what “Buddhist social work” is, vary by country?—“No”, although (1) the understanding of Buddhism itself would vary in principle and theory, faith and practice by country, and (2) assuming the understanding of Buddhism is same, the society in which each “Buddhist social work” is deployed varies by country in culture and tradition, to the degree of industrialization and other factors of an economy, political and economic systems and institutions, the kind and extent of people’s difficulties and problems and the “functional alternatives” which work for them— including WPSW37). The “Buddhist social work” which we are trying to construct is a conceptual model, before which factors of each country’s culture and tradition, and societal, economic, and political realities intervene (cf. section 3.(2) pp.28-29). “Buddhist social work” appears in various and different forms in the respective actual society. The relation is equivalent to that between “essence” and “phenomenal forms.”

Third is the language issue for an international common understanding and a discussion of “Buddhist social work”. No Asian Buddhist majority countries are English speaking. Thus the term, “Buddhist social work” to be formulated as a framework here is expressed in each language. Or, as discussed above, such a concept or a term does not exist, and will then have to be created on this occasion (cf. section 2. p.22). Some disputants use, for example, (Buddhist) Attha Chariya or pin veda in Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, and Cong tack sa hoi phat giao in Vietnamese. However, these terms must be translated into Buddhist social work in English as a common language.

35) Buddha’s first advice to disciples.
36) More strictly speaking, a “country” here could be replaced with “local”, “community” (incl. functional community), or “society”.
37) cf. The discussion on Amplifier clause in Chapter 2.
for international discussion and common understanding. Then the meaning and content will be unavoidably distorted and shifted by and towards social work in English, that is, WPSW. (Chapter 2 1.(3) p.12) In order to overcome this, at least among Asian Buddhist majority countries, a common terminology must be created. As far as terms in each language are used, communication is not made, or if made, a discrepancy naturally arises among those terms in meaning and understanding. Masashi Tamiya, Professor, Shukutoku University in Japan, proposed “Mettābhāvanā” in a workshop held in Lumbini in 2014. Pros and cons, arguments, and counter proposals will all begin from now.

Once receiving various inputs through the above five approaches (cf. section 3.(1), pp.26-27), this framework will become richer as it moves toward the formation of a definition of “Buddhist social work”. On the Buddhist side, that’s enough. The interest stops there.

On the social work side, however, the interest continues from there. The formulation of social work besides the existing WPSW will put WPSW in a relative position, unlike the absolute position of today. Through the synthesis and induction of plural social works to be constructed, social work of the world will be the first formulated in history. Social work will be in Stage III someday, hopefully not far in future.

This is the story of Buddhism’s contribution to social work.

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<Acknowledgement> I am indebted to my colleagues of ARIISW (Asian Research Institute for International Social Work), Shukutoku University. Discussion with them has been insightful, particularly discussion on “indigenization with Ms. Kana Matsuo, Head Researcher, and discussion on “Buddhist social work” including the formation of the ABC Model and the working framework with Dr. Josef Gohori, Senior Researcher, Ms. Kana Matsuo, Head Researcher, Dr. Yui Kikuchi, Program Researcher, and Prof. Yusuke Fujimori, Assistant to the Director.
(The emphases in bold and underlined in the following Materials were added by the current author.)

Material 1

Words which appeared in the course of discussions and disappeared later

- State
- Impoverishment; Social and material reproduction
- Oppression
- Autonomy; Citizenship; Participation; Democracy
- Transformation
- Socio-educational actions; Social movement; Fight against social inequalities, violence, oppression, poverty, and unemployment
- Interdependent; Kyōsei
- Harmony; Social stability
- Spirituality
- Values; Ethics
- Micro, mezzo, macro
- Development of social collectivities
- Ecological protection
- Self-determination
- Gender equality
- Resourced and informed people and communities
- Inclusive system
- Capacity building
- Fair society
- Contextually determined

Material 2-1

IFSW’s “a very early draft”, Jan. 2012

Social Work promotes socially just and inclusive systems, capacity-building, human rights, responsible citizenship and fair societies. Social Work addresses the root causes of oppression and inequality. Social Work is based on a body of knowledge and a unique set of principles that enables Social Work practitioners to work alongside people and communities to support their ‘sustainable interdependence’, ‘liberation’ and ‘self-determination’.

Social Work believes that resourced and informed people and communities make the best decisions on (sic) their own wellbeing.

Material 2-2

IASSW’s counter proposal, drafted by the IASSW Definition Committee, Jan. 27, 2012 and accepted by the IASSW Board, Jan. 28, 2012

Social work promotes social changes, harmony, social cohesion and the empowerment of people. Based on bodies of knowledge and a unique set of principles and values, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance
Part 1

wellbeing.

This definition will be amplified and expanded at regional levels.

Material 3

The final joint draft authored by Jan Agten (leading the process for the IASSW) and Rory Truell (co-leading the process for IFSW) and sent to board members by Vimla Nadkarni, APASWE President, on Jan. 8, 2013, before IASSW Los Angeles board, Jan. 21-23, 2013

The Global Definition of the Social Work Profession

[note: “This title reflects that the definition applies to social work professionals and not necessarily to people to people working (sic) in non-professional social work roles.”]

* Regional and national definitions may be more specific taking into account their regional and national contexts.

Social work facilitates social development and social cohesion. Core to (sic) social work is supporting people to influence their social environments to achieve sustainable wellbeing. The Social Work profession is underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, and indigenous knowledge. Principles of human rights, collective responsibility and social justice are fundamental to practice (sic).

Material 4

The IFSW first draft developed by its Secretariat and Nicolai Paulsen, February 2012

Social work promotes socially just and inclusive systems based on capacity building, human refights, responsible citizenship and fair societies for individuals, families, groups, communities and beyond. The social work body of knowledge enables practitioners to work alongside people and communities to support their sustainable interdependence. The profession is guided by the understanding that resourced, informed interdependent people and communities make the best decisions of (sic) their own wellbeing.

Material 5

Proposal for the public comments

The Global Definition of The Social Work Profession

The social work profession facilitates social change and development and 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.

The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional level (sic).

Material 6

APASWE/IFSW(AP) Asian Pacific Regional Definition (October 22, 2015)

(Preamble omitted)

Professional Social work in the Asia Pacific Region has an emphasis on:

- Realizing the care and compassion of our Profession in ensuring that all people are provided with adequate social protection so that their needs are met and human rights and dignity safeguarded;
- Recognizing the importance of faith, spirituality and/or religion in people’s lives and holding respect for varying belief systems;
- The celebration of diversity and peaceful negotiation of conflict;
- Affirming the region’s indigenous and local knowledge and practices alongside critical and research-based practice/practice-based research approaches to social work practice; and,
- Encouraging innovative, sustainable social work and social development practices in the preservation of our environment.

(Titled by the current author)

Material 7


◎ That the definition of social work should be revised
◎ That a new definition should be structured as a “layered” definition

The definition

- must be [short], simple and easily translatable
- must be understood by both lay people (non-social workers) and the lay media, and must be free of jargon
- must be consistent with the Global Agenda
- should include unifying features while also recognizing the diverse contexts in which social work is practiced and taught
- should define the uniqueness of social work
### Differences Between WPSW and Buddhist “Social Work”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WPSW</th>
<th>Buddhist “Social Work”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>① (Services) Universal or Sporadic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• more universal to all people</td>
<td>• more accidental and sporadic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• institutionalized, systematized, business-like</td>
<td>• to respond to needs of people who happen to come to monks/temples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• due to the government involvement?</td>
<td>• the whole populations who have the same needs are not covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “from an understanding of “En”?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>② From the Eyes of “Clients” or Eyes from the Top</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• from the eyes of service recipients</td>
<td>• from the eyes of service suppliers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>————————————————————</td>
<td>————————————————————</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf. the realities in the past and at the present</td>
<td>cf. “Not for him but together with him” (Ryoshin Hasegawa)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>③ With Boundaries or Without</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• clear boundaries of activities, etc. Jurisdiction, various conditions</td>
<td>• all inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• to work as a whole with boundaries</td>
<td>• to work as part of the whole, which has the bigger mission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>④ Consciousness</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• to be conscious of what one is personally doing within the boundaries of fields, activities, functions, etc. (e.g. assessment) Recognition, conceptualization, theorization</td>
<td>• not necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Science Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• orientation toward science</th>
<th>• to do what one thinks should be done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition, conceptualization, theorization</td>
<td>From Buddhist dharma, teachings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical, objective, scientific</td>
<td>Based on wisdom and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records, documentation</td>
<td>• The direct relation between large abstract concepts and small individual concrete deeds—the lack of middle terms (operationalized variables)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Inner Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• the loss of interest in the inner aspect, mind, etc. of workers, and worker-client relation</th>
<th>• the respect for faith, mind, spirituality— the motive to enter into a service relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cf. “post-modernism”</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• industrialization, Western modernization</th>
<th>• dharma, teachings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rationalism, humanism</td>
<td>compassion, loving-kindness, charity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism, individual/subject/self-centric</td>
<td>No conditions, no reward, altruism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights, social justice (social fairness)</td>
<td>$En$ (pratitya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The separation of church and state</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy of Christianity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### From the meaning of “Professional”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>• occupation/job (for money and living)</th>
<th>• cannot not be an occupation/job (not for money, not with labour conditions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cf. service with quality above a certain level</td>
<td>cf. the quality of service could be above or below that of professional social workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The guarantee of its quality by qualification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(education/training, degree, license, registration, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robe (there are no quality assurance programs above robes.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social work has a long tradition in Christianity and Judaism. It is no exaggeration to say that social work has a more than five-thousand-year-old tradition. In Christian theology, using the concept of charity (*caritas*) and altruistic love, helping each other was the expression of love of the God and love of the man, and it has been thought of as one of the most important virtues. Social work, medicine and social care activities were and still are performed by churches, monasteries, and religious organizations. However, industrialization and urbanization have changed traditional communities, and have concentrated people (especially young families) in big cities without the support of a kinship web or a community. These social changes brought Europe poor people, ill people, unemployed people, and vulnerable people unable to solve their complicated situations. No church, no monastery was able to engage in the lives of all these people. It was not technically possible. And that is one of reasons why social work has arisen. We can see how charity activities have changed their scope, definitions of problems, or interpretation of causes. During this period we can see the first professional standards and efforts to establish education of social work as a profession. Using the settlement movement, care works, and other concepts, social work has been developed as a modern, progressive discipline. Being sometimes described as an “art”, including the aspect of science and the aspect of the (social) practice at the same time, social work has established itself as an important part of modern society.

No, this text is not a lecture on the history of social work. Now, let me show my point. In recent years, starting before and mainly after the World War II in some countries, and in the early 90’s in other regions, the concept of social work was “imported” and introduced in Asia. But sometimes the concept of social work and its methods, education and practice doesn’t fit Asian societies. This is because of the different cultural (and social) backgrounds. Virtues, systems of values, but also the concept of family, or the concept of the individual is different from the European (or the Western) one.

French anthropologist Luis Dumont¹) saw the roots of Western individualism in

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¹) Dumont, L. (1985) ’A modified view of our origins: the Christian beginnings of modern individualism’ in
Judaism and Christianity. The relationship between God and man is based on a direct contract: the same as an agreement between company A and company B. According to this contract, man has achieved a lot of privileges and rights. These are fundamentals of the strictly vertical hierarchy you can see in Christianity and in Western society as well. But Asian culture is different. The system of virtues is completely different in societies and communities based on Buddhism and other non-Christian religions. When talking about hierarchy we have to mention the study of Abraham Maslow\textsuperscript{2).} In his work he described the hierarchy of human needs, putting physiological needs and safety needs at its basement, needs for love and belonging in the 3rd floor, while needs for self-esteem and self-actualization were set in the highest point of the triangle. Of course, this is a psychological study, but it expresses individualism and its essence. But some of Maslow’s early critics\textsuperscript{3) showed that this hierarchy of needs is valid only in Western Europe and/or North America. In other regions, needs of belonging, e.g. belonging to the family or the community, are more important than self-actualization or self-transcendence of an individual.

You may not be surprised if I say also that Western-rooted social work is based on the concept of individualism. Of course there is community work and other activities primarily focused on groups or societies, but principles of individualism, and human


rights of an individual are still latently or visibly present in those activities. In the summer of 2016, I visited Cambodia and while talking with some priests of the Social Damma Dana Organization, we were told that one of their activities is a Peace Walk for human rights. When we asked what these human rights in detail were, the priest told us that our right as a human is to be a good person. It means that we have to live according to the Buddha’s teaching, according to the Five Precepts. Our human rights, according to him, are not about what we can or may do. It is about what we must not do. We must not kill, we must not tell lies, we must not steal, we must avoid sexual misconduct, and we must not drink alcohol. If we follow this teaching, the world will be peaceful. This is one of the basic concepts of Buddhism and the way Buddhism interprets the concept of human rights.

The concept of social work and its methods, theories, and practice are based on the same values as the Euro-American culture and its Judeo-Christian tradition. You can find there the same system of values, beliefs, and way of thinking; the same patterns of behavior, principles of individualism, monotheism, concept of God “the Creator”, and hierarchy based on this tradition.

But as I have already pointed out, in Asian Buddhist societies, the axis, the common base, the deep-layer culture is completely different. That is the reason why Western-rooted social work doesn’t work properly here (see Fig.1). Thus, some scholars and practitioners are trying to adapt the professional social work models to a different type of society. We can call it the indigenous model of social work. But we can go deeper. There are activities provided by Buddhist monks, nuns, temples or followers of Buddha’s teaching. The tradition is more than 2000 years old. In the future — and I hope this book is the first and very important step to it — we will be probably able to extract and define the Buddhist Social Work, which uses different axis, based on different principles, using other terms and methods. At the same time, we may see a lot of commonalities. This may be the beginning of exploring the core concept of social work in the world.

This column doesn’t examine if Western-rooted social work is better or not, or if Buddhist social work is much better. This question doesn’t make sense. We have to recognize that there are some commonalities and some basic concepts recognized all around the world. But there is no such thing as a global profession, an almighty theory, almighty method, or globally valid practice. We have to distinguish and see differences between our cultures, societies, ways of thinking, and languages. And we should respect them. Then we will able to share various forms of social work for the next 5000 years.
Part 2

Exploring the Buddhist Social Work

* All articles in this part are based on the respective authors’ oral presentations delivered at the International Forum to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the founding of Shukutoku University and its founders death “Buddhist Social Work and WPSW—The first next step—”, in Chiba, Japan, in October 2015, except for Chapter 2.2 and Chapter 3.1.
Chapter 1  A Rough Draft of the Buddhist Social Work


H. M. D. R. Herath

Buddhist social work is a concept in Buddhism, which differs from other religions dedicated to gods, creators, or miraculous powers. There is no attachment in Buddhism, and this depends on the theory of detachment. Therefore, Buddhism cannot be integrated into other religious groups or categories. We must discuss the Buddhist teaching, dharma, in the paradigm of the relation between cause and effect.

The main objective of this paper is to explore the theoretical and practical aspects of Buddhist social work in contrast to Western social work.

The Buddha’s doctrine is strongly connected to the concept of renunciation, in other words, to “giving up.” Why is renunciation necessary in our lives? It is necessary because we are destined for rebirth. According to the Buddha’s teachings, three afflictions influence our rebirth. The first affliction is attachment or lust (lobha), the second is hatred (dosa), and the last is ignorance or dilution (moha). These afflictions can be eliminated by love, kindness, compassion, and wisdom.

Another core concept of Buddhism is suffering. The truth about suffering can be divided in two categories. The first is physical suffering, the suffering of birth, sickness, aging and old age, and death. When our hair begins to gray, we apply different colors to change it, because we do not accept it. However, our bodies change and we cannot stay young forever. These changes are connected to suffering, and according to the Devadutha Sutta, this suffering is an inevitable aspect of human life. The second category is mental suffering, suffering due to separation from what is dear to us; to contact with what we despise; to frustrated desires; to separate from the people and places we love; experience of floods, fire, famine, persecution, war, and other natural and manmade disasters; and suffering when we cannot receive the things we expect such as a job, car, house, a partner, or other desired objects.

These physical and mental sufferings are directly connected to our human existence. The question is how to obtain happiness. Do we have happiness? Yes, happiness takes the form of an impermanent or temporary phenomenon. It is in your life when you are young, healthy, after marriage, after conducting successful business, after building a house, after getting a car; yes, these are all temporary moments. After an experience of happiness, you try to obtain happiness from a new source.

These happiness experiences are conditioned; therefore, they are impermanent,
and sooner or later, we will embrace suffering.

We therefore have to ask how to reduce suffering. How can we eliminate suffering permanently? What are the causes of suffering? This is the starting point of Buddhist social work. These causes are universal. If we stop or cut the power supply of these causes, we can permanently stop suffering.

There are four noble truths, a basic statement postulated by the Lord Buddha. These are the noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the cause of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Let us briefly overview the historical evolution of Buddhist social work. Lord Buddha said that we have to go through the life cycle (see Figure 2.1), and this cycle is filled with suffering. Our lives are filled with suffering. Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, meeting those we do not like is suffering, being separated from loved ones is suffering, and not obtaining our desires is suffering. Briefly, five groups of attachments are suffering, and suffering is common to everybody. Our lives are directly connected to this suffering.

What is the cause of all suffering? The noble truth of the cause of suffering says that it is craving (lobha), which produces rebirth, accompanied by passionate clinging and seeking delight in various places. This is the craving for sensuous pleasure, for becoming, and for extinction or disappearance. We are attached to our lives and to our lands, wives, properties, jobs, and so on. We try to extend our pleasures and our happiness.

However, the next noble truth teaches us about the cessation of suffering. This is the complete eradication of and withdrawal from that craving, its renunciation and overthrow, and liberation from non-attachment to it. These words are the pillars of Buddhist social work theory:

i. Withdrawal
ii. Renunciation
iii. Overthrow
iv. Non-attachment

These concepts are not easy tasks in human life. Individuals today are the products of many rebirths. Therefore, we must reduce cravings (lobha-thanha) and carefully manipulate our mindsets with social morality and an immeasurable number of rebirths. This is directly connected to meritorious work:
The next noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering is the eightfold path:

i. Right understanding
ii. Right thought
iii. Right speech
iv. Right action
v. Right livelihood
vi. Right endeavor
vii. Right mindfulness
viii. Right concentration

These eight principles are the central points in Buddhism and connected to renunciation. A story written in the Chula Maluka Sutta goes as follows: “If a man were pierced by a poisoned arrow and his friends, companions, and relations called a surgeon, he should say: ‘I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know who is the man who wounded me, what metal it belongs to, what direction it came from, and whether he is a Kastriya, a Brahman, a citizen, or a servant’.”

We must immediately remove the arrow, stop the bleeding, and cure the wound. This is the scientific approach to the situation to control and reduce or eliminate suffering.

I will now try to define Buddhist social work. Lord Buddha said: “Go forth O Bikkhus, go forth on a mission for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, with compassion towards the world, for the benefit, the welfare, and the happiness of men and gods. Let no two of you go the same way. Preach to them, O Bikkhus the doctrine, lovely in the beginning, lovely in the middle, lovely in the end, and full of meaning and distinctive characteristics.” This is the core concept of social work, because the enlightened Lord Buddha taught his disciples to go forth on a mission for the good and happiness of the many with compassion for the world for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of men and god.

The definition of Buddhist social work is permanent and unique, and the principles are directly connected to the eternal truth and how to reduce eternal suffering for all, from small creatures to large human communities. “Sābbe sāththa bāvānthu sukhi thāththa” means all living beings, not only human beings. The animal world is the same as the plant and human world, because we are merely a part of nature. Therefore,
we must have this kindness and love. Universal suffering is not specific to one society such as primitive, peasant, feudal, capitalist, socialist, or other forms of societies. All human beings and animals experience suffering. We were born in numerous rebirths as animals; therefore, in this birth, we must do meritorious work (e.g., social work) and reduce the causes connected to suffering.

The next question is why suffering exists. It exists because of lobha, dosa, and moha, in other words, because of lust, hatred, and delusion. These cause negative actions that lead to attachment, illusions, hatred, and demerits. As humans, we must implement three principles to reduce suffering, namely dāna, sīla, and bhāvanā. Social work activities, gifts, and donations are referred to as dāna. Gifts in Buddhism generally refer to giving materials. Giving is praised in Buddhism, because it gives rise to merit and eradicates craving from the giver’s mind. Material gifts include anything pertaining to the four requisites: cloth, food, accommodation, and medicine. According to Buddhism, the gift of Dhamma exceeds all other gifts (sabba dānam dhamma dānam jinathi).

Sīla means virtue, and refers to the restraint of evil behavior and refraining from unwholesome bodily and verbal activities. This leads to the elimination of defilements. Finally, bhāvanā refers to meditation. There are two types of meditation, namely tranquility serenity (samatha) and insight (vipassana). Concentration gives rise to meditative absorption, making a person’s mind clear, pure, and focused. Insight meditation leads to a clear vision, eradicates defilements, and towards the attainment of Arahat (Dhammasiri 2005:60).

Social work activity is associated with ten meritorious actions in Buddhism, and Lord Buddha clearly stated in Pali Stanza that his teachings are connected to these activities. These activities are “dāna, sīla, bhāvanā, patti, pattānumodanā, veyyāvacca, apacāyana, desnā, sutī, and ditthiju.” I explain each activity according to the ten meritorious actions acknowledged by the Lord Buddha in the 6th century B.C.:

1. Gifts (dāna)
2. Virtue (sīla)
3. Meditation (bhāvanā)
4. Respect (apaciti)
5. Rendering a service (veyyāvacca)
6. Transference of merit (pattanuppāddāna)
7. Devotedly rejoicing at merit (abbanumodāna)
8. Advocating dhamma (desnā, savana)
9. Listening to dhamma (ditthijjukamma)
10. Rectitude views
These actions manifest in more than 150 social work activities conducted in Sri Lankan temples even today on every level, from villages to urban areas.

Social work is associated with the main approach in Buddhism. The Lord Buddha’s doctrine focuses on changing the human mind. All doctrines provide modes of thought to reduce and eradicate temporary and permanent suffering. As a result, monks, nuns, and lay people must change their codes of conduct accordingly.

I again review the historical approach to demonstrate the basic principles of Buddhist social work. Lord Buddha as an enlightened person (sarvagna) would have seen the past rebirths of himself and others. To become a Buddha, he had to have been practicing Bodhisathva paramitha or the ten perfections in his previous lives. The ten perfections are the noblest qualities of a Bodhisattva. Bodhisattva means a being destined for Buddhahood and is an aspiration to Buddha. The Lord Buddha’s previous 550 birth stories include different forms of creatures. In each rebirth stage, he was genuinely devoted to meritorious action, this referring to reducing cravings and other qualities of imperfections. All 550 rebirth stories describe exemplary characters. These are known as Dasa Parami or the ten perfections. The first perfection is generosity corresponding with the virtues Dānapārami and Śīla. Next is renunciation and wisdom (Nekkhammå, panna), and then energy and tolerance, meaning you have Viriya and Khanthi. For truthfulness and determination, there is Saccå, Adhittana, and finally, loving kindness and equanimity (Mettå, Upekkha). We must tame our minds using thousands of rebirths until obtaining these perfections in our lives. These qualities oriented and tamed his mind to become a Buddha. He reduced evil cravings, and used a historical approach in his teachings to change the mindsets of his disciples. All these previous life rebirths are directly connected to meritorious social work.

After reviewing the historical approach, I adopt the case study method to describe the principles of Buddhist social work. The Lord Buddha’s teachings are directly connected to individuals who need loving kindness. He used different research methods to rehabilitate or reduce their suffering.

“When faced with the situation where Kisagotami expected the Buddha to give life to her dead child, he chose to teach her the true nature of life and lead her to salvation. The episode, wherein the Buddha sent Kisagotami from house to house begging for a handful of mustard seeds from a home that had not seen death, reflects his masterly grasp of the inner workings of the human mind.”

The Lord Buddha’s sympathetic teachings selected individual cases such as low
caste people, prostitutes, homicides, attempted suicides, depression, elderly care, and health care. Thousands of individual cases were relieved from ignorance after receiving the dhammic message specific to their individual personalities.

Next, I would like to describe the main suttas (sutras), which include Buddha’s theoretical concepts on society and social welfare. All suttas (sutras) can be found as part of the Buddhist text Diga Nikaya in the Tripitaka. Starting with the path of mindfulness called Satipatthana, the listener may find basic text corresponding to the concepts of society and social welfare in Figure 2.2. These are directly connected to social work, teaching us how to correct human views on society, for example.

Our next topic is the value system. I show that Buddhist social work covers all three worlds, which are part of the entire system, namely the plant world, animal world, and human world. We are now trying to do something about climate change, but let us analyze Western social work associated with the Western value system (see Figure 2.3). In the Western world, god is the creator and situated at the top of a hierarchy, followed by men, women, children, animals, plants, and nature. God can exploit nature or anything else. This is connected to a less fair economy, namely capitalism, which characterizes the current era. Now, let us examine the Eastern value system, where the sun and the moon, and the nature is at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the earth, which symbolizes mother, while the air symbolizes father. Following this are forests, rivers, hills, animals, and finally man, a man with cognition, who is merely part of

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Figure 2.2: Main Suttas (sutras) showing the concepts of society and social welfare (Sharma 1994: 85)
this environmental system. Therefore, we have a type of balance, a mind focused on social work. First, we must protect the plant world, then the animal world, and then the human world. If you can do this, you will have a happy life.

The Eastern concept of social work differs from that of Western social work. Buddhism-based social work programs should be studied separately as the foundations of substantially different social concepts.

Modern Western science is well developed, and modern science creates industries, large cities, large farms, and large banks. However, modern science does not describe how to create good people and ensure their good behavior.

For example, in the US today, how many fathers adulterate their daughters? This is a serious problem in the country and a violation of the incest taboo. We are becoming animals. Why do we not think twice about this? Consequently, they conduct social work activities to address the situation. However, what does not being able to protect our daughters say about our spirituality, about our humanity? We belong to the animal category, do we not?! In Buddhism, five types of livelihoods are discouraged for Buddhists. The first is trading animals for slaughter. Buddhists do not kill animals, as they have their own rights. Buddhism has an old tradition in social work fighting against the violation of animal rights. The second is the trading of slaves, which was common in the West. Western capitalism was based on the slave trade, which is a violation of human rights, which are now included in social work theory.

Next is the trading of arms. Western capitalism produces wars to produce war weapons to generate money. While promoting wars to make money, they donate this money to social work activities. Do you understand?

Figure 2.3 : Western and Eastern Value Systems
The fourth is the trading of poison. Who does this? It is a violation of human and animal rights.

The last is the trading of alcohol and intoxicants, which refers to the problem of drug addiction, a serious issue in today’s society.

These five livelihoods are the disease of society and violate values and the respect for life.

Next, I focus on Western social work, which originated with capitalism in the West 250 years ago. Capitalism, industrialization, individualism, social inequality, and exploitation are factors that changed society and brought social work to the fore as a necessary agent to protect deprived human groups from temporary suffering. Because of capitalism, social work had to protect people needing financial support. In addition, industrialization created the factory system, while individualism and social inequality created family problems, loss of kinship ties, and individual-level problems such as prostitution, poverty, suicide, homicide, and others that emerged in Western society. Social work emerged from these problems. Considering these factors has also implemented new theories, marking the beginning of social work.

There are various definitions of Western social work. For example, social work refers to “processes that develop personality through adjustments that consciously affect individuals and their social environment” (Richmond 1922:98), and “the art of bringing various resources to bear on individual, group, and community needs through the application of a scientific method to help people help themselves” (Stroup 1960:60). Another definition is “the wrecking-crew that attempts to salvage the derelicts produced by our economic systems” (Barnes 1935: 966-67). Finally, the new international definition states, “[The social work profession] ...... promises social changes 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[, which is underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledge ...... to enhance wellbeing.”(2013)

I do not understand why there are more than 50 definitions of Western social work. Why do they systematically adjust the number of words, but do nothing about it. Everything focuses on the developed world. If there are no fundamental principles and theories, perhaps the definitions need to be periodically amended. Why have the definitions changed so many times? As mentioned, there are more than 50 definitions, and these are not connected to a universal theory. Rather, the definitions are vague and changed periodically alongside unpredictable economic development and the market
economic system, which increases relative deprivation and social injustice.

Next, I review the historical background of Western social work. Social work in the US has European roots, which sprouted in the Middle Ages as a religious movement collecting alms for the poor. Second, churches in medieval times initiated religious programs that were involved in social activities. During the next stage of development of social work, welfare became a state responsibility, as manifest in Martin Luther’s ordinance in 1523, the Elizabethan Poor Law (1601) in England, and public welfare activities such as Duke’s laws in the US in 1665 (taxes for poor relief), the Public Welfare Act (“poor farms”) in 1933. There were also other public welfare activities in the US, such as the Local Welfare Needs movement in 1929, London Charity Organization Society COS movement in 1869, the Settlement House movement, casework agencies in 1920, the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA) movement in New York (1933), and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in 1933.

Through legislation and institutional development, Western social work was introduced as professional social work, and has been implemented in other countries in the original version.

In the 20th and 21st century, society has become increasingly complex, and we now face many problems connected to birth and marriage, for example (see Figure 2.4). We see sexual violence in schools, domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, old age, poverty, and problems in the social security system. Everything is temporary, and everything is connected to human suffering, and therefore, common to all. The Western world is suffering, and so is the Eastern world. For example, Bangladesh,

![Figure 2.4: Complex Society in the 21st Century](image-url)
Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan are all experiencing suffering, as is Japan. The consequences are all similar.

Figure 2.5 illustrates the areas associated with modern social work. For example, poverty and security, slavery, victims of disasters, retirement, medical problems, the impact of marital life, domestic violence, empowerment, urban decline, homelessness, crime, drug abuse, and abusive violence (see Figure 2.5). These problems are directly related to Western social work, and have brought about new developments in these activities. They develop theories and train people, motivated by salaries and training. However, I think that these professional activities may be effective, despite being temporary solutions to various types of suffering. The Buddhist social work developed about 2600 years ago leads directly and correctly to the cause of these problems and sufferings. Buddhist social work understands the remedies, namely Metta, Karuna, Mudita, and Upekha—loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and values that create personality sympathetically.

Next, we classify the social problems that social work addresses. Disasters and health problems may be caused by nature, but man causes many social problems as well. We cause our own suffering and problems in our societies. Man causes poverty, marital conflict, domestic violence, crime, drug abuse, and sexual violence. Why do

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**Selected Social Problems**

- Poverty
- Insecurity
- Occupational Safety
- Disaster victims
- Retirement
- Chronic Medical Problems
- The impact of marital conflict
- Domestic violence
- Unemployment
- Urban decline and Family homelessness
- Crime
- Substance abuse
- Adolescent sexuality
- Child maltreatment
- Violence in school

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**Western Social Work**

- Remuneration

**Relief**

- 150 yrs before

**Values**

- Metta (loving kindness)
- Karuna (compassion)
- Muditha (sympathetic joy)
- Upekka (equanimity)

**Buddhist Social Work**

- 2500 yrs before

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**Figure 2.5 : Areas Associated with Modern Social Work**
we not consider our spiritual lives? As human beings, we must train this part of our personalities. In Asia, we must seriously consider the meaning of social work. We will then see that values such as greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong views, doubts, sloth, distraction, or the absence of shame, blame, and fear cause unwholesome actions such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, slandering, harsh speech, frivolousness, gossip, covetousness, ill will, and wrong views. People and their ways of thinking, values, and personalities cause all problems. Therefore, changing mindsets, values, ways of thinking, and behaviors will reduce the number of social problems.

Finally, I explain the difference between the training of social workers. In Buddhist social work, there is no retirement, no salaries, and no degrees. Monks and nuns, despite being considered as social workers, are not professional social workers who have undergone professional training. They change people, as well as their mindsets. In contrast, the concept of Western social work is a limited framework focused on a particular profession characterized by degrees, professional training, a salary, pension, and retirement.

We must seriously consider social work and its meaning. We must consider the real cause of social problems. This is our time, an important period for Asia. The Western social work tradition attempts to settle the current material world (this world),

![Figure 2.6: Comparison between Western and Buddhist Social Work](image-url)

**Figure 2.6** : Comparison between Western and Buddhist Social Work
which is associated with problems, while the Buddhist social work tradition tries to solve material world problems and eternal suffering through social work activities based on spiritual development.

In both, the West and the East, social work tries to reduce human suffering in two different ways and in different forms.

2. Social Welfare by Buddhist Monasteries in Nepal

   Karma Sangbo

   The basis of Buddhist philosophy and its practice revolves around the deeper and profound aspects of freeing sentient beings from suffering. Compassion is the foremost aspect in Bodhi Carya activity, although other aspects are also important such as selflessness and renunciation.

   In present times, social work is directed towards helping destitute and needy members of society to improve the quality of their lives, and can be considered as part of compassion in Buddhism. Compassion and its application is a vast subject for contemplation and beyond contemporary definitions of social work or social engagement. From a Buddhist perspective, addressing the root causes of the suffering of sentient beings and helping them free themselves from such sufferings is a primary concern. At the same time, engaging in solving causative social problems is equally important. Helping those in dire need, as well as contributing to and addressing larger perspectives within social contexts are equally important in social engagement. Engaging in these activities and seeking such opportunities directly benefits society and helps in the accumulation of merit from these selfless services. In addition, these practices help Buddhist practitioners further sharpen the practice of mindfulness or the awareness here and now. From the perspective of interdependence, how can a Buddhist concentrate only on liberating himself and not care about other members of society? How can he or she see things separately? This is not a Samyak (right) view. To understand this, Buddhist practice and social engagement must be viewed together.

   After we consider social engagement, a Buddhist activity that benefits both society and the practitioner, another important aspect to contemplate is whether it is appropriate for Buddhist institutions such as Buddhist monasteries to interact with lay people and engage monks and nuns in social work. Many Buddhist monasteries are

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confined to their premises and reluctant to mix with the outer world. However, direct interaction among monks or nuns and lay people might benefit all. The traditional approach to Buddhism has mostly been to practice within the monastery; thus, there is a reluctance to reflect on the larger issues of society in general. In Buddha’s time, society and its social order differed from the way we live today. Advanced technologies and modernity have changed society. Patterns of thinking, behavior, attitudes, and living standards have changed. Therefore, in modern times, societies can receive positive effects from Buddha’s teachings through monks and nuns. Obviously, the society we live in today is part of Samsāra, and therefore should not be ignored. However, mixing with people in society and helping them may better contribute towards solving social problems. For this, Buddhist practitioners do not need to be involved in political activities. Social engagement should be part of their practice. These interactions with lay people in society will lead to frequent encounters with negative emotions, which for practitioners, could be an opportunity to understand their own minds more clearly in such situations and contemplate accordingly.

Social engagement for a Buddhist practitioner should be encouraged with a modern approach such as counseling people in distress in addition to conventional social services approaches. Looking for ways and taking approaches from a spiritual dimension to contemporary social problems should be part of Buddhist practice. Social engagement for a Buddhist does not mean sacrificing one’s happiness for the sake of others; however, happiness can be accumulated by helping others. All the joy, the world contains, has come through wishing happiness for others.

Buddhism addresses society through engagement using various methods, through helping each man hand-to-hand, and through the practice of mindfulness. In my view, in the practice of mindfulness, social engagement is the most important in Buddhism.

I want to discuss the monastic population, because when discussing Buddhism and social engagement, monasteries and temples or monks and nuns come to mind. This is especially evident when venturing a little out of Buddhist countries, where people thinking about Buddhists and Buddhism visualize only monks and nuns who shave their hair or wear yellow or red robes. For them, these images represent Buddhism or Buddhists, and they are not aware that Buddhists have lay practitioners, as the Buddhist countries do. Some have asked me, “Are you going to be Buddhist all your life?” I respond, “Of course, yeah, what do you mean by ‘all my life’?” This implies that they consider only monks and nuns to be Buddhist.

2) Samsāra is a cycle of repeated birth, mundane existence and death (editor’s note).
Many monks and nuns in Nepal are of Himalayan origin. There are different regions in Nepal, namely the Himalayan area, which is the mountain region, and the plains area. The first is represented by Mahayana Buddhism, which is connected to Himalayan Buddhism, and the second region is represented by the Theravada and Vajrayana communities based in the Kathmandu valley.

Buddhist monasteries in Nepal, Buddhist practice, and social engagement must be viewed together. We do not have any differences. We work with lay people and engage the monks and nuns in social work in two ways. One is spiritual activities, and another is the general social activities we conduct worldwide. For spiritual activities, most of what we think is, as I mentioned earlier, namely that mindfulness activities are about how people can be and work happily even when feeling a negative emotion such as stress or sadness.

Direct interaction between monks, nuns, and lay people might benefit all. We have always thought that mixing with people in society and helping them can better help solve social problems.

Today, many monasteries provide their monastic schools with both secular and religious education. Of course, we receive spiritual and religious education, but monasteries understand that monks should receive both formal and spiritual education, and that lay students must be provided with formal education. For this reason, most monasteries have established schools to provide formal education, to which we add our spiritual and Buddhist philosophies. Many follow the Nepal Department of Education curriculum up to the School Graduation Certificate (class 10), and students learn computer skills, English language, and so on.

I focus on a few monasteries based on my research of their activities. For example, the Thrangu Monastery was established under the Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center. It is located in Boudha, Kathmandu, which includes a Namo Buddha and mountain areas. Here, young monks and nuns attend Shree Mangal Dip, a boarding school, until class 10. Established in 1987 around the Great Stupa of Boudhanath, Himalayan and Tibetan lay children are also able to study here. Ordained sangha learn to clean and cook. I mention this because the tradition of Buddhism is to receive food from lay people as alms; however, today, we train monks and nuns to cook and to sustain themselves, showing them what regular Buddhist people do in their daily lives. Therefore, they hold temporary jobs in which they learn management skills, traditional Tibetan medicine, and astrology. We have our own medicine system, because when society needs certain types of treatments, we try to provide our traditional medicine to heal them. Astrology features in the traditional system of
Buddhist society, not only in Nepal, but in other countries as well. I am not sure if this system is found in Japan. Nevertheless, when people think someone has practiced black magic or that they have been afflicted by negative events, they turn to astrology, and some Buddhist monks consult the charts and advise on what to do. This refers to ritual activities including traditional art and other skills. Furthermore, students learn how to work together as a team, and are provided with opportunities to study Higher Buddhist Philosophy in monastic colleges.

In addition, we have a college system, but rely on informal education in Nepal. We also have a master system. The Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center is a higher Buddhist education center. While there are many monasteries with higher education systems, we established the Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center as a provider of formal education similar to that found in a university. Established by Thrangu Rinpoche’s Monastery, it includes a retreat center, monastic college, and a free clinic for villagers of Namo Buddha. The center is located in the Kavrepalanchok District, where we have a large clinic that provides medicine free of charge. We also have a nunnery that provides Tibetan medicine—the monks and nuns learn acupuncture—where people can obtain free medicine and acupuncture treatments. Finally, another of our social activities are our global dental camp, eye camp, etc.

When considering the contributions of monasteries in Nepal, the activities of Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, a high Lama in Nepal, must be mentioned. He taught that we must perform spiritual activities to benefit society, and that we have two types of truth in the world: worldly truth and ultimate truth. For ultimate truth, we must practice meditation and conduct spiritual activities. For worldly truth, if people get sick or have dental problems, discussing only spirituality will not help them. Thus, we must perform worldly activities as well. He therefore established a social project, namely the surgical unit at Tilganga. Note that Tilganga is the top eye clinic in Nepal. He was engaged with the hospital, and developed a free eye clinic service across Nepal.

The next social project is a program run by the Shechen Monastery, which offers both the monastic and formal education systems. Monks and nuns acknowledge that having only informal education, namely the spiritual education of the monastery, will lead to their detachment from society in terms of communication. In Nepal, we learn Buddhism in the Tibetan or Himalayan languages. If we cannot speak other languages, then we will not be able to communicate with other people, and thus become detached. This monastery also includes an art school.

The Tsering Art School produces art that is renowned in Himalayan Buddhism and in Nepal, Bhutan, and India. We prioritize this art form, because we can preserve
Buddhism through its development. Therefore, the monastery established a special organizational unit to develop and sell the art produced here to raise funds, which contribute towards the free clinic for monks and nuns. Furthermore, the clinic includes a hospice. Most patients here have cancer in the terminal stage and are waiting for death. At the hospice, we serve these patients and make them as happy as possible.

I also researched the Benchan Monastery, which conducts similar projects. We can consider this as Buddhist social work. In the Nepalese language, the word “Rokpa” means “health.” This monastery established a foundation named Rokpa, and their activities focus on providing medical care.

The next organization is Child Heaven International. Most monasteries are conducting similar social activities in Nepal’s Buddhist society.

The main school in Tibetan Buddhism is the Namgyal School. The Sakya community in Nepal has conducted various types of social work including serving kinsman, neighbors, the society they work with, and the country as whole. Social work activities include running an orphanage, opening a school for children deprived of education, looking after neglected senior citizens, donating blood, and leading a campaign against using plastic bags. Regarding the latter, Nepal has faced a serious problem in terms of plastic bag usage over the last two to three years, and through this campaign, we are trying to raise society’s awareness of the environment. Related to the environment, about 20 years ago when I was young, Kathmandu was characterized by mild weather. However, nowadays, the weather has changed. It has become warmer by about 3 degrees Celsius, often reaching 36 degrees in the summer. For this reason, society must be made aware of environmental issues. In terms of the social work we conduct to protect the environment, there are more than 60 magistrates in Kathmandu valley alone, and we tend to bag the things we buy or bring from these areas. In our program, we first encouraged monks and nuns to not use plastic bags, impressing on them the importance of using environment-friendly bags. Furthermore, when our clothes get too old to wear, we recycle them into bags. Through this, they are motivated and participate in our environmental activities. We also train our students, monks, and nuns, and have a school for lay students from outside, whom we encourage to motivate their parents to use environment-friendly bags as well.

Finally, I would like to briefly introduce the activities provided by the Theravada organization in Nepal. I first discussed Theravada monks and nuns because of political reasons. Some monks escaped from Kathmandu to India. We are grateful to the government of Sri Lanka for inviting these monks to the country to train and teach. When they returned to Nepal, they established the Theravada monasteries, of which
Anandakuti Vihar, established in 1941, is the oldest. These monasteries provide same services as us, the Mahayana monks. In fact, we met with Vajrayana, Mahayana, and Theravada school representatives to discuss how we can work together in society spiritually or through our social activities. Furthermore, we have an agreement to work together. I hope that this will continue in the future.

To summarize, Buddhist social work is based on peace, love, loving kindness, and compassion. Buddha himself left the kingdom for society (not for himself), and can be viewed as a great social worker. I consider the Buddha to be the greatest social worker. After enlightenment, he taught 84,000 teachings or dharma-skandkas. He encouraged his monks, stating: “All monks work for welfare and the welfare and happiness of many people with compassion for the world, meaning life and meaningful happiness for gods and human beings too.” Therefore, gods and goddesses are also not free from the world. This is why he left and considers not only human beings, but the gods and all sentient beings as well. Therefore, as the followers of the Shakyamuni Buddha, we must help poor people through loving kindness and compassion.

As a method, we can use the concept of “mettābhāvanā,” as prof. Tamiya mentioned. Mettābhāvanā means loving kindness. We need to help disadvantaged people access health facilities, education, shelters, and employment opportunities, and support poor Buddhists living in the rural areas of the country to develop their skills and become sustainable.

As a Buddhist monk, I discuss this because Buddha himself mentioned that there are few precepts that differ between lay people and ordained monks and nuns. He taught lay people that to live by themselves, they must conduct business. He also developed rules and regulations for this business, guidelines to follow. It maintains social harmony as well as the benefit for the future. Some Buddhist kings in the Himalaya even incorporated such rules in the law.

Regarding our social work, many poor Buddhist people live in the country side, so we must work for them to ensure that they can become self-sufficient. For this, we must work together to create a better and peaceful society. Why do I refer to a better and peaceful society? If there is a gap between the rich and poor, conflict will flare. To remove this conflict, we must think about community and an equal society. Only equal thinking can develop a peaceful society. In other words, the world can never

be a peaceful society. As the Buddha emphasized through his dhamma teachings and meditations, “practice to develop harmony and a peaceful world.”

All living things—including monks and lay people—need medical, social, and education services. These are important in the Himalayan region in Nepal, in my country, especially after the devastating earthquake. Therefore, we, the Buddhist community of Nepal, are trying to help support those who need it. Large Buddhist communities or mostly Buddhist communities live in the Himalayan region of Nepal.

Therefore, we must work towards a world in which poverty is banished, where everyone can achieve a satisfactory level of education, and where all people can dwell in peace and harmony with each other and the natural environment. Buddhism is connected to the environment as well. Profound contemplative practices may support their aspirations to become better people and create a better world.

I cannot say that only Buddhist people can make a better world, but I am sure that the teachings of the Buddha can create a better world. We know that it is more relevant now than in the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. I find the teachings of the Buddha more relevant today than ever before.

We conduct our social work to bring about happiness and see humans flourish. It is an action to create a good community or society. We do our work for humans’ happiness and the happiness of all sentient beings. The philosophy of Buddhist social work deals with interdependency, because the world is interdependent. Monks depend on lay people, and lay people probably depend on monks at times. In Buddhism in Nepal, in Bhutan, and the Himalayan regions of India, Ladakh, and Sikkim—I am not sure of the situation in Japan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand—monks are connected to lay-Buddhist people from birth to death.

It was mentioned that when children are still in the womb, monks are invited to pray for them. When giving birth and when being named, monks are present to name the baby. When people get ill or die, we pray for them. In this way, we are all interdependent. Buddhist social work must deal interdependently with individuals, the economy, the environment, ecology, and morality to ensure individual and social transformation.

Our ideas should be based on awareness and a better understanding of interdependence between individuals and surrounding systems, which are all in unity. Besides, there is a need to work together, to care for each other, and let go of the self. The root of the world’s problems originated from self-egotism. Therefore, Buddha spoke about cutting the problem at the root, not the branches. The root problem is self-egotism. Thus, self and the gift of self-interest is to create dhamma, the welfare of
others, the happiness of the greatest number of people, and finally the peace and good of society. All the misery, the world contains, has come through wanting pleasure for oneself.

Finally, we must develop a strong network. Here I refer to an extra step in Buddhist social work. We must develop a strong network to work together in the future to create a better and peaceful society and share our social activities.

Sometimes it is difficult to bring our thoughts and ideals to practice. However, the teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha are not recited ones, but practical. As Buddha said, “The doctor gave you medicine, but even if you praise the doctor, what a handsome doctor he is, what good medicine he has, it does not help your illness.” Without praising the doctor, you should take the medicine. This will help you and cure your illness. Buddhism refers to practical aspects.

I mean that the Buddha, who was a prince, was going to be a king in the next phase of his life. A king is the top-most rank of the constitution. If he kills someone, there is no law to reprise him in the kingdom. Regardless of what he does, there is no law. He is beyond the boundaries of the law. In the worldly life, Siddhartha Gautama was going to be that person. However, he taught that this is nothing compared to the suffering of sentient beings. Furthermore, he taught that he had to leave his kingship for society, all living beings, and human beings. Therefore, the Shakyamuni Buddha is the greatest social worker.

I was in the UK a few months ago, where we had good discussions with the professors there. We were attending management leadership training. I told the professor that if we attend leadership training and think about leadership, then there are no better leaders than Buddha and Jesus Christ. We must learn from them what leadership is and how to lead people. Shakyamuni Buddha left 2,500 years ago, but we still follow him and he is still our leader. Nowadays, political leaders think of themselves, not society. Therefore, social workers are much greater than these leaders. I took a picture of a quote that reads, “The mind is not a dustbin for anger, hatred, and jealousy, but a treasure box in which to keep love, happiness, and sweet memories.” I like this quote. I also thought that when we talk about social work, our rulers, gurus, lead teachers, and social workers encourage loving kindness and compassion.

Using the example of mothers, children think when they go to school and university that their teachers and professors are good, but forget how their mothers carried them for nine months, gave birth to them, and cared for them with kindness and compassion. We tend to forget this in our eagerness to experience the external world. This is similar in Buddhism. The social work conducted by Shakyamuni Buddha is the
same as that of a mother, who showed us compassion and loving kindness. However, we forget this. I think this is all we need to learn when going through the Tripitakas.

You likely know that Nepal was drafting a constitution. I was asked for comments, to which I replied, “I do not have any comments, but if you write the five main precepts of the Shakyamuni Buddha (the Buddha was born in Nepal), and if everyone follows these precepts, you do not need a constitution. You do not need police, and you do not need gatekeepers.” This is what we have, even though we tend to forget it.

Honesty is an expensive gift; do not accept it from poor people. I have long remembered these words. The teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha and social work are very expensive; thus, it is sometimes difficult to expect it from regular people.

We are all Buddhist, even if we are not Buddhist. I used to say that Buddhism is not a religion, but a philosophy. It guides you on how to live and create a peaceful society. We can forget about liberation, but only if we follow society. If parents follow this ideal, the world would be beautiful. If parents did not drink alcohol, children would learn so many things from that too.

Finally, I want to add that we have beautiful things in Asia, although we tend to forget this in our attraction to the Western world. I do not have negative sentiments of the West. Never. However, we must introduce what we have as well. Therefore, I am happy that we are able to discuss Buddhist social work here in Asia. I will use an analogy to explain what I mean. The musk deer is found in the Himalayan area. It has a beautiful scent in its navel, its stomach, and this musk is often used in perfumes. When the wind blows, the male musk deer delights in this scent, running towards the direction from which the wind is blowing. The deer never knows from where the scent is emanating. The reality is that the scent emanates from the deer’s navel. However, because of the deer’s ignorance, it cannot find the origin of the scent. We, Buddhists are similar to the musk deer. We have beautiful things in our region, but we gravitate towards the other side. There is a great scent in our navels, and we must find it. Therefore, it would be great if we could find social work activities so that we can spread our message worldwide. The Buddha’s teachings in Pali, Sanskrit, and Japanese languages are good. However, young generations are going to forget these languages and learn only English. If they want to learn Buddhism later, they may have to learn in English. In this way, we forget our special thing, our diamond. The diamond inside us.
Chapter 2  Dialogue between Western-rooted Professional Social Work and the Buddhist Social Work

This dialogue between Western-rooted Professional Social Work and the Buddhist Social Work copies the title of international conference on Buddhist social work which was held in October 2015. During this conference prof. Herath from Sri Lanka, and Sopa Onopas, general secretary of Social Work Profession Association in Thailand, were asked to deliver lectures as role-players from the social work’s point of view and from the Buddhist standpoint respectively. This text is based on lectures of both scholars. Sopa Onopas’ claim reflects the present situation of Thai social work and social work theories and practice typical for Thailand, while prof. Herath’s text is an attempt to answer it from the Buddhist side. This dialogue may help us to see the characteristics of social work, and characteristics of Buddhist social work in Asian context.

Editors


Sopa Onopas

Buddhism has been in Thailand since the era of Suvannaphumi, which was under the patronage of King Asoka The Great. India sent monks to propagate Buddhist doctrine. Thai Buddhist tradition is Theravada or Southern School, similar to the traditions of Myanmar, Laos, Sri Lanka and Cambodia. Buddhism in Thailand is strongly influenced by Indian Brahmanic religion, which includes traditional beliefs relating to ancestral and natural spirits. Nowadays, there are two Buddhist sects in Thailand, which are Mahanikai and Dhammyuttika. Monks in both sects observe 227 precepts, and both receive respect from Buddhists. According to the Sangha Act of 1962, the Sangha Supreme Council is the ministry which governs Thai monks. From the statistics of The National Office of Buddhism, in the year 2013, there were 39,276 Buddhist temples, 289,131 monks and 60,528 novices. More than 90% of the Thai population is Buddhist. The temples and monks are centers for many community activities, which include acting as centers which provide assistance to people who are suffering or having problems.
In Thailand, professional social work began in 1942 through the social work training courses at the Council of Women Culture. In 1954, there was a social work program, an undergraduate program at Thammasat University, which was based on Western-based social work programs. Now there are 5 more universities which provide Bachelor degrees in social work, of which two are Buddhist universities. However, Thailand has not yet implemented a Buddhist professional social work program in social workers’ day-to-day practices. Social work is still based on Western know-how; the main reasons for this are as follows:

1. Buddhist social work activity follows the Buddhism doctrine of Phrom Wiharn 4 (Four Principle) which are: Mettā (Compassion), Karuna (Mercy), Mutita (Kindliness) and Aubakkha (Impartiality). Monks and temples arrange social work activities based on Metta and Karuna which is wishing people who are in trouble be free from suffering. Activities arranged by monks or temples are therefore on an individual level and on a short term basis, such as providing educational assistance for children who are poor, providing shelters for children to stay in temples, conducting Buddhism classes during weekends or Dhamma camps during school breaks, building foster homes for children, elders, or chronically ill people. Conversely, Western-based professional social work emphasizes promoting social changes to remedy unfair social structures. rather than providing assistance to individuals or for solving specific problems people are facing. Buddhist social workers, therefore, have no idea how to arrange activities that enable changes in unfair social structure, which are often the critical root causes of social problems.

2. The results of following Buddha’s precepts create individual awareness and inner changes. Therefore, it is difficult to elaborate and disseminate these changes with concrete evidence, to convince those who are suffering that these changes have actually happened. Nowadays people practice Buddhism only by superficially practicing rituals, such as worshipping Buddha images and asking for blessings, instead of practicing the precepts by themselves. As a result, solving problems by practicing Buddha’s precepts is unpopular among people. For these reasons, we cannot see any success among

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1) Author is using her own translation of Four Principles, but usually Mettā is translated as loving kindness, Karuna as compassion, Mutita (or Mudita) as joy, and Aubakkha (or Upekkha) as equanimity. Please refer to p.55. Editor’s note.
disadvantaged people in using Buddhism practices for solving life problems.

3. Western social work practices develop supporting approaches by using scientific principles, and update those approaches to be practical for capitalist systems and using current technology which are quickly disseminated to people, and clearly proved to be sustainably successful in solving the problems of suffering. Western social work practices develop practical models and processes in supporting certain groups that are suffering, such as people affected by HIV/AIDS, child abuse, or drug addiction, or people in other crisis situations. Western practices customize their approaches to specific groups according to their problem conditions and needs. Also, their practices include interdisciplinary expert teams who share their knowledge and expertise in their fields to provide integrative support covering all human needs. On the other hand, Buddhist social work does not include study or research for supporting approaches for specific groups who facing different problems. Buddhist social work still uses traditional approaches which are no longer consistent with complicated changes in current society.

4. Buddhist social work activity basically provides assistance for the four main requisites of food, clothing and necessities, accommodation, and medical care, rather than solving problems more holistically. Buddhist social work activity focuses on assistance for both the physical and mental aspects of suffering people by analyzing the causes of suffering, accepting the situation of what has happened and solving individual problems, rather than protecting rights and analyzing social, economic and political structures that may create unfairness, exploitation, and finally become social problems. Buddhist social work activity therefore cannot sustainably solve social problems.

5. Buddhist social work activity does not emphasize diversity, especially regarding sex and gender. This is because only men are allowed to stay in temples. A woman alone can hardly benefit from temple services since it is not appropriate, according to Buddhism doctrines. According to such doctrines, monks cannot stay alone with women or touch women. Moreover, the Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand does not accept women’s ordination, and becoming a nun is not supported by law. These conditions seriously limit the assistance Buddhist social work can give to suffering women. While Western social work emphasizes respect for diversity in providing assistance, this approach can be better applied to current situations when there is more sexual diversity.
6. Providing social service is not a main requirement for monk practices in Buddhism doctrine, but service is voluntary by any monk who initiates the social work activities, depending on his faith, his physical power, his will power and the resources of individual monk. If the services are initiated by the abbot, there will be other monks in the temple who support running the activities. But if the services are initiated by an ordinary monk, he will need to do the activities by himself. Therefore, this condition will limit any improvement, expansion or continuity of social work activities.

7. Working in teams or interdisciplinary teams is very helpful and effective to serve suffering people in the Western social work approach, but this approach can be hardly applied to Buddhist social work. This is because monks have higher social status than laymen. Monks are normally leaders and gain respect from other professionals who join working teams. Also, monks who have had long years of service may have some limitations in keeping up with the continuously changing world. If monks accept and understand all of these changes, they will be able to work smoothly with others.

8. Most of budget resources are donations from people who have faith with the monk. Most of a temple’s income is therefore inconsistent, resulting in having limited services and causing difficulty in hiring professionals or specialists to work for the program. There will often be only volunteers who cannot work full-time with the program. Although there are some temples which have set up foundations to manage the services, they still lack personnel and continuity. Discontinuous activities affect the effectiveness and quality of services. Service improvement of Buddhist social work is therefore very limited.

9. Buddhist social work activity, as defined by Phra Thep Wethi (Prayudh Payutto) means to collect, gather, put things together, bind ones heart together, have solidarity and social integration or a social cohesion based on SangkahaWathu 4 in the principle of Giving Alms or to sacrifice personal belongings in order to reduce greed and to encourage people in the society to support one another. In practice, those who give alms are rich or middle-class people who wish to receive good deeds, collect merit for their future lives, or show superiority, rather than to actually assist the suffering of people. Without having the disadvantaged people involved in the process, giving alms does not respond to the actual needs of the receivers, and does not show respect in self-esteem and human equality between givers and receivers.
10. At present, most monks become ordained in a short period of time (approx. 3 months) or in less than 30 days. Most temples lack of monks who propagate Buddha’s teaching, so that social programs or services operated by monks and temples are therefore reduced or no longer available. This is since key duties for monks are to propagate on Buddha’s teaching and practices for getting to Nirvana. While western social work is a profession that practitioners need to graduate in social work program, and comply with working standards and code of ethics. There are more social work program increased many countries, and more practitioners increase due to social change. In China and Vietnam, there are plans to increase the number of social workers to keep up with rapid changes in society, politics and economics which require more social workers.

Even though there are two Thai Buddhist Studies colleges which provide a Social Work program focusing on western social work ideas, while the program applies Buddhism into some courses, as we can see from Mahamakut Buddhist University curriculum as follows:

a) Social Work from a Buddhist Perspective: Study and analyze doctrines and practices in Buddhism including both past and current practices related to social work. Exchanging opinions and attitudes in order to provide guidelines to effectively develop Buddhist social work.

b) Buddhism and Social Work: Study Buddhist doctrines and its roles which are collated with social work, emphasizing the roles of monks which affect Thai society from the past to the present.

Course contents demonstrate that there are attempts in developing Buddhist social work. However, courses in Buddhist social work still cannot play important roles in professional social work among monks or temples which have been operating social work activities. Here are the key factors:

1. Thai monks, who rely on years of service from monks or teachers who teach courses in Buddhist Studies colleges, are new generations who have less years of service compared to those monks who have been operating social work activities. Therefore, teaching or sharing opinions in new styles of social work practices are therefore not well-accepted.
2. It is difficult for monks who study a social work program to find organizations that provide internship. This is since monks have different routines which are much different from ordinary students. Also monks are treated in higher status and cannot be close to, or work among social workers who are mostly women. Therefore, there are not so many organizations which accept monks in internship programs. If there are any temples that organize social work activities, there will be places for monks to have their job training. However, this chance is limited because these temples do not normally organize the activities regularly.

3. Monks or temples which organize their social work activities normally organize the events according to their individual interests. They do not gather into networks to develop knowledge or improve the effectiveness of the activities. Buddhist social work activities therefore cannot create a wide impact to society. Nevertheless, nowadays there are some networks among monks who are working on community services, environment, health services and support for patients who are at the final stage of life.

Buddhism encourages people or Buddhists to improve their peaceful minds in individual level. Hoping that once they learn and practice by themselves, they will gain results from the practice; and as a result, society will be peaceful. However, for those who are suffering, only improving their minds to be calm and peaceful is not sufficient, and social work activities are needed to improve their self-esteem, their abilities and their social skills to solve the problems and live well with others. Providing assistance services only for four requisites and not on all aspects of problems holistically, as well as a lack of continuity and the limitation in services and target group diversity, make Buddhist social work which is currently provided by monks and temples unable to respond to overall problems. Buddhist social work cannot create changes in social structure which are unjust and exploitative to the disadvantaged. With all its limitations, Buddhist social work is therefore not considered as professional social work from a Western social work point of view.

2. **Answer from the Buddhist’s Side**

H. M. D. R. Herath

This paper is an attempt to answer some questions raised by my friend Prof. Sopa Onopas in her paper of January 21st 2016, regarding Buddhist social work in Thailand. The term, “social work” is a recently invented term, while “professional
social work” was also invented by Western people after the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century. Basically, these two terms were developed to reduce suffering in different forms in Europe and the USA.

In Thailand, Buddhism was introduced in the 3rd century B.C., and that was integrated with the Thai Central Value System. From time to time there were some fluctuations which were not very important. Since the 3rd Century B.C., Thais were practicing mettā, karuna, muditha and uplekha, Sathara Brahma Viharana as a part of their day-to-day life. The author Prof. Onopas states:

“which (is) wishing people who are in trouble be free from suffering. Activities arranged by monks or temples are therefore on an individual level and on a short-term basis, such as providing educational assistance for children who are poor, providing shelter for children to stay in temples, conducting Buddhism classes during weekends or Dhamma camps during school breaks, building foster homes for children, the elderly people with chronic illness.”

In the first point of her article, it is difficult to understand the meaning of individual level and short-term basis. Those words are mutually contradictory because the central value system in Thailand is directly connected to reduce total suffering, by understanding. It is clearly shown in the following statement.

“Public education in Thailand was formally organized in monasteries, which could be found in almost every village and town throughout the country” (Terwiel 1984:5).

From the ancient period the overall education-based social betterment had became a part of Buddhist formal education. In addition to that, vocational education was also a part of the education at temple, which was started in King Mongkut’s period.

“Apart from literary subjects, it is clear that at least in some of the monasteries, various vocational skills were also imparted. Evidence for this can be found in King Mongkut’s remarks pertaining to the murals of Wat Thong Nopakhun, in which it is mentioned that craftsmanship was a subject taught in monasteries” (Na-Rangsi 1984:5).
The above statement shows that vocational training and economic development of the country were embedded in Buddhism and society in Thailand.

Prof. Onopas argues in her second point,

“Buddha’s percepts create individual awareness and inner changes. Therefore, it is difficult to elaborate and disseminate these changes, with concrete evidence, to convince those who are suffering that these changes actually happened”

Yes, actually practicing percepts is an individual activity that reduces or curbs desires of human beings. Dana is an individual action taken at the individual level or family level, which brings about increased happiness with spiritual development. Without individual spiritual development we cannot reach societal-level salvation.

Further, the author says ”superficially practicing rituals, such as worshipping Buddha images and asking for blessing, instead of practicing precepts by themselves”

Most of the Buddhist rituals are forming collective minds or mode of thought among the people that will finally convert into codes of conducts at the individual level, collective Dana function reducing thānhā (desires). Normally all rituals can be analyzed in two ways. One is as manifest functions, and the other is as latent functions. “Worshipping Buddha images and asking for blessings” is a collective action of Thai society from the very beginning, and it is a part of the central value system in Thailand. But those activities are not found in the western society. We have to promote those activities.

In addition to that, most of the religious programs in Thailand are connected with ritual performances and meditation. Meditation has been a scientifically proven method of controlling human mind.

“It is very important to note how thought process can have a profound effect on the expression of genes and therefore the importance of controlling/purifying the mind through meditation (Kaliman et.al.2014). Mindfulness can alter neural, behavioral and biochemical processes controlled by several relevant genes (Perera 2014:188).

In Thai society, millions of community-based meditation programs are performed. How can we say those are only “worshipping Buddha images and asking for blessings”? 
Our author’s third point elaborates: “western social work practices develop supporting approaches using scientific principles.“ Further, this article says “supporting special suffering groups such as HIV/AIDS affected people, people in crisis situation, child abuse, drug addicted peoples, etc….”

In this regard the author’s explanation is valid in a very limited way, because in Thailand all Buddhist temples are following a humanitarian and supportive approach for Thai people. They are very much concerned about the domestic life of its citizens. Particularly in birth, puberty, marriage and death and such life-cycle activities. They support each other whatever the crisis they have in whatever stage of life.

(1) **Capitalism and the technological support for the Western social work practices**

In this research paper the author explains the importance of Western capitalism associated with scientific research in the prevention process of HIV/ADS etc.

“Western social work practices develop practical models and process in supporting special suffering groups such as people affected by HIV/AIDS, child abuse, or drug addiction, or people in other crisis situations.”

This statement is a totally unacceptable statement, because all of capitalism-associated scientific research and technological development has failed, in regards to HIV/AIDS prevention activities. Now they are searching and testing Eastern medicine and other remedial measures to prevent cancer and HIV/AIDS. In addition to that, those new health problems are mostly related to consumerism and expansion of consumerism to Asian, African and Latin American countries. Further, HIV/AIDS, child abuse, drug addiction and similar problems were virtually non-existant in Thai society in the 1960s and before. These were new introductions in the 1970s, which came with the expansion of international division of labor under Western capitalism. Now they think Asian Leisure World is Thailand. As a result of that,

“An estimated 670,000 Thais are living with HIV/AIDS and 55000 had people died from the disease in 2001 (UNAIDS, 2002).”

“Dealing with the HIV/AIDS issue is a learning curve for Thailand since the emergence of the first case of AIDS was reported when a foreigner brought the HIV virus into country in 1984 (UNDP 2004:7)
After that information reached the Buddhist temples in 1992,

“The monk against AIDS network in Chaing Rai started working on HIV/AIDS in line with the Sanga Metta Project. Its preventive approach mixes the ABC approach with the Buddhist morality percepts. They try to convey to Thai people, through their preaching during the HIV/AIDS crisis, an adherence to the Five Precepts: (1) abstain from taking life, (2) Abstain from stealing, (3) abstain from sexual misconduct, (4) abstain from false speech, and (5) abstain from intoxicants that cloud the mind. The Sanga (Buddhist monk body) has advocated the community-based approach since 2004 (Malikaho 2006:5).”

Further, this article explains that Buddhist monks started social work activities immediately after HIV/AIDS spread to Thailand in 1984.

“PharaAkom started his HIV/AIDS prevention campaign in 1987 when AIDS cases prevailed in Chiang Rai. At that time there were more than 20 people in his village dying of AIDS (Malikaho 2006:11).

In addition to that, there are thousands of temples engaged with prevention of drug addiction and alcohol-associated problems in Thailand (Pichler 2013:195-201), (Newman, Shell, Li, Innadda 2006:1789-1800).

So, how can we say Thai Buddhist institutions have been inactive in the prevention of the AIDS epidemic? There are thousands of Buddhist monks who were engaged with HIV/AIDS prevention activities and some temples became entirely HIV/AIDS preventing centers. Those activities are completely voluntary-based and based on merits. But those so-called Western social workers do not work without monthly payments.

The author argues in her fourth point that Buddhist social work activity is limited to four requirements: food, clothing, accommodation and medical care. She further says that Buddhist social work activity emphasizes assistance to both the physical and mental aspects of those who are suffering, by analyzing the causes of suffering. Indeed, the causes of suffering: all social problems and their causes and consequences help to eradicate the problems. Once you solve individual physical and mental problems, the related societal problems are also addressed and begin to be solved. That is the Buddhist mechanism of solving social problems.

Further, the author argues that regarding Buddhist social work there are no
studies conducted or research which supports approaches for specific groups who are facing different problems, because Buddhism does not require that kind of new research. The reason is that those problems have already been identified as eternal truths and the treatments are very simple. People must practice at least five percepts. That was a part of the Thai Central value system.

The author’s fifth argument is directly connected with women. According to Buddhist doctrine, there are four communities or disciples in the Buddhist society, those are namely, bikku, bikkuni (nuns), upāsāka (layman) and upāsika (lay woman). Without their support, Buddhist society cannot be maintained. On the other hand, unlike other religions, Buddhism does not allow monks and nuns to work at the same place. That is a fundamental principle in Buddhism, because sexual diversity also is often promoting sexual interaction and that promotes life cycle activities in sāmsāra. But there are numbers of Buddhist women’s organizations who help voluntary social work since the ancient periods in Thailand.

The author’s sixth argument says that “providing social services is not a main requirement for monk practices in Buddhism doctrines.” That is a totally wrong interpretation. Lord Buddha’s first statement after the enlightenment,

“Go further O Bikkhus, go forth on a mission for the good of many, for the happiness of the many, with compassion towards the world, for the benefit, the welfare and the happiness of men and gods. Let not two of you go the same way. Preach to them, O Bikkhus the doctrine lovely in the beginning, lovely in the middle lovely in the end full of meaning and distinction”

(2) What Buddha said “ sābbe sāththa bāvānthu sukhi thāththā” (Mahāvagga pali).

Temple-based social work activities basically concentrated on total human development from ancient times. They promoted humanity and tried to reduce all kinds of suffering among human beings without any discrimination

The author’s seventh point is that teamwork and interdisciplinary activities in the Buddhist temples are very weak. Actually, Thailand had faced a number of crisis situations in the past. They have faced them collectively; today there are also alcohol, drug and HIV/AIDS prevention programs that are associated with temples and are operating prominently in a voluntary basis. Therefore, Sanga society has some kind of specialization and training to work hard to fulfill their meritorious goals.

The author elaborates the eight point, saying that the income at most temples are inconsistent and do not promote effective, qualitative services. That is common to
even Western social work programs as well. Most of the Western social work programs and NGO’s also provide financial support and other help to Asian, African and Latin American countries. As a result of that we are becoming victimized. HIV/AIDS, drug addiction and alcoholism all are by-products of cruel capitalism. However, in Thailand “teachings of Buddha are used as a tool to assist persons who are living with HIV/AIDS to understand the sense of what AIDS is, and how to cope…since the Thai financial crisis in 1996, temples have encountered financial difficulties, and the monks are often busy engaged in fundraising activities (Kubotani and Engstrom 2005 vol. xxx11:5). This shows that even in the midst of financial crisis, Buddhist monks try to solve problems in meritorious ways.

The author’s ninth criticism says the Buddhist practice of alms giving, or sacrificing personal belongings to others, does not respond to the actual needs of the receivers; actually the systematization of such activities are obligations of Thai society. Free donations or free alms- giving, or the Sangkahawathu concept itself, was originated in Buddhism. These concepts do not exist in the West at all.

The author’s final comment on Buddhist social work is that Western social workers are professionally qualified graduates, and they try to change society rapidly. All these training qualifications and professionalism are mainly based on allowances or monthly salaries. If we asked them to serve without salaries, perhaps they would not.

Finally, in Thailand, professional social work programs started in 1942, during a period of expansion of the Western social work tradition in Asia. Before that, Thailand had been practicing a very strong temple-based Buddhist social work tradition, which helped develop the country and the nation as a religious state. Instead of a graduate program, Buddhist monks used a robe as a license to practice Buddhist social work since the 3rd century B.C.

In addition to that, we have to understand that Buddhism is a great philosophy in which human beings reach salvation through spiritual development. Buddha also believed that every individual must exert himself to seek the salvation. There can be no proxy in the moral or spiritual world. According to that, the key to Buddhist morality is the control of the mind. Dhammapada says “the mind is the forerunner of all evil conditions, the mind is chief and they are man-made. The mind is directly connected with our action. If our action is prompted by an evil intention, one cannot escape its evil results” neither in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in entering a mountain cave, is found that place on earth, where an abiding one may escape from an evil deed (Dhammapada, Pāpa Vagga: verse 27 ).
Since the 3rd century B.C., Thai Buddhism was engaged in developing individuals, and individual moralities. All social work activities were organized by temple-based citizens’ organizations. That is my conclusion.

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Chapter 3 Exploring the Aspects and Roles of Buddhism in Social Work Activities

1. The Effects of Buddhist Creeds on Practicing and Motivating Resources in Social Work

Nguyen Hoi Loan

(1) Introduction

During the whole process of development, Vietnamese Buddhism has been significantly participating in the economic and social development of Vietnam in many aspects, especially in the field of social work. It seems that Buddhism may be considered as a crucial factor in establishing the norms, values, perspectives and ethnic system in society. In the system of Buddhist belief, we can discover the foundation of meaningful theory for the issue of building a social work profession in Vietnam currently, which contains a national identity while integrating internationally, directing people to the values of truth, virtue and beauty.

While reviewing a religion with the role as a kind of social-consciousness structure which is not dependent on others, it is easy to see that there are many more ideas of ethnicity, including values, norms, ethical ideology... This has been clearly expressed in Buddhism. It can be seen that Buddhism has not only distinct values as protecting religious creeds, but also ethnical norms such as filial respect, truth, humanity, goodness, and prevention of cruelty. All of these mentioned values have been affirmed, expressed in the content of Buddhism’s tenets, which is reflected by two levels of awareness (psychological level and ideological level) and human behaviors in a social environment.

Religious ethics’ characteristics are norms, commandments and prohibitions, which belong to religious tenets. Besides encouraging people do good things, Buddhism also creates the combination of hope and fear when people become involved in deviate things. For these reasons, in the ancient rise and fall of developmental history, Buddhism has played a key role in creating and preserving the traditional cultural values as respect, empathy, politeness, altruism, love, notification, support and so on. It may be fair to say that, in the role of religious, philosophical theory, Buddhism contains many ideas that tend toward educational directions. Furthermore, Buddhism plays an important role in core ethical theory, actively participating in establishing a social ethical system, promoting ethical behavioral structure in society as well as contributing to the foundation of building a social work profession in Vietnam with a
specific, distinctive identity.

(2) Buddhism Impacting on the Awareness and Behavior of Social Workers and People in Social Work Activities.

Before Buddhism was imported to Vietnam, there were some existing religions in Vietnam, such as the Worship of Mother Goddess, the cult of the Dead, and ancestor worship. The basic meaning is, “when you drink water, remember the source” as the tradition of the Vietnamese says. However, along with social development, the importation of Buddhism has revealed questions about idea of being human which still are not answered comprehensively by general social belief. The doctrines of “selflessness and impermanence”, “Karma”, cause and effects theory, “loving-kindness or benevolence, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity”…Buddhism had sharply contributed to meet the requirement of spirituality of people. Hence, Buddhism dramatically established a firm reality foundation for being and developing in Vietnam. Along with this process, the Buddhist code of ethics also penetrated and had some effects on Vietnamese foundation ethics. This has lead to the initial basic onset of charity activities and semi-professional social work practices.

It can be seen that Buddhism has had a significant effect on national traditional belief, thinking, customs and culture. Vietnamese accepted Buddhism not only because of the content of values but also because of the “potential of good activities”, which is relatively close to Vietnamese thinking and emotion rather than a belief in the supernatural. These explained the phenomenon to a part of Vietnamese society who did not fully understand Buddhism’s basic sets of beliefs but still conceived themselves as Buddhists. Almost all Vietnamese people believe that behaving ethically will cause good things to happen, and bad things will happen if they do not (according to statistics of the Government Committee for Religious Affairs of Vietnam, in 2009, 80% of the population believes in Buddhism at some level). It is a fact that the majority of people do not fully know about Buddhist scriptures but do know some sentences for praying such as “Male Model Amitabha Buddha” or “Male Model Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva”. However, they all feel complacent, aiming for the Buddhist belief that all sufferings will be alleviated. This point is affirmed by Professor Tran Van Giau in his book, *Vietnamese Traditional Spiritual Values* – (Social Sciences, Hanoi, 1980) when he writes, “Buddhist belief has been privileged in people. They do not know the ideology of Buddhism beyond the cause and effects theory. Since Buddhist philosophy has become ethics, the ideas of loving-kindness or benevolence, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity are core factors. People
may understand and follow them without believing in the supernatural as an origin of Buddhism. Good activities in this life will cause happiness and peace in the next life” (page 145). This means that Buddhism has assimilated to Vietnamese culture due to an educational function and people find complacency and peace because of Buddhist social ethical values.

Firstly, teaching people that they have a crucial role to play in taking responsibility for their lives is one of the educational objectives of Buddhism. Theory of Cause and Effects pointed out that only people have the right to decide and make choices in their lives rather than be controlled by gods or destiny. These values are promoting self-control of people with their lives, placing people in appropriate positions or roles in society. This leads to helping humans develop their potential capacity, and alleviating their potential problems which may cause disadvantages for individuals, families and communities.1)

This means that Buddhism emphasizes the value of self-confidence of people when they live in terrestrial life. Trying to complete, standing by themselves or looking forward outside supporting when they are themselves. Because if people lose their sense of value, they will be easily fooled by unethical traps, which leads to devious activities. Putting people into the core of ideology, Buddhism also asserts human values contained in its tenets, aiming to liberate people from chaos, sadness, and suffering.

However, Buddhism does not mean to advise people about some fantasy world but rather this terrestrial life. In Buddhism, if people desire to change their life from suffering into peace and happiness, internally transmuting their perception by the Law of Cause and Effect is highly advocated. Buddhism’s goal is instruction, educating people in the best way of exploring their awareness, fortifying feeling, aiming for enlightenment and rescue. Moreover, this ideology of Buddhism is specified in the Vietnamese ethic, showed by Thien Tong Buddhism (Zen school of Buddhism) as liberating people from suffering in terrestrial life, protecting the rights of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” of each other.

The ideology of Buddhism within the Buddha nature of Justice, the idea of being gracious with people has an incisive humanity, having positive values for people and the labor force, and being a foundation to promote and connect social resources in the community supporting vulnerable people – the clients of social work. Vietnamese

1) Carl Rogers’s person-centered view also agrees with this Buddhist opinion. He showed that people also have their own potential capacity for developmental and affective activities and tend to realize this potential
people found in Buddhism the values which are suitable to Vietnamese’s thinking and
tradition about humanity, loving, rescuing from sufferings, increasing the good and
preventing the bad things, which aims to bring peace to people’s lives, ensuring social
security. It can be seen that, thanks to a basically commensurate level between the
Buddhist ethic and Vietnamese’ traditional values, Vietnamese social work still has a
profound role to play in the development of the country, ensuring social welfare and
practicing social justice in Vietnam.

Consequently, Buddhism has become a philosophy for living, changing Vietnamese
people’s realization and activities, from elite classes to other classes in society. It can
be seen that, Buddhism with its values of “selflessness and impermanence”, “Karma”,
cause and effects theory, “loving-kindness or benevolence, compassion, empathetic
joy and equanimity, is totally suitable to Vietnamese traditional belief. Buddhism
conceives that “All people have a Buddha nature”. This means that, people have
equality in terms of karma (personal activities caused good things and bad things: that
motivation is called karma. For example, things we have in this life are caused by our
previous life) samara (the cycle of death and life as an infinite process) regardless of
profession, ethnicity, social position, wealth, age, or sex. People have to be dependent
on karma to decide samara, choice; conditions to reach the results in life are also equal.
This ideology of Buddhism is significantly meaningful when recognizing the Buddha
nature in people. This means that anyone has the chance to do appropriate things,
ethically if they learn the way by training. This also is the psychological foundation
for the principle of promoting internal resources and connecting with external ones
in social work.

However, according to Buddhism, in the process of personal completion, people
have to understand objective procedures, having appropriate activities, abiding
by rules which come with a code of ethics. Precepts are an appropriate means for
people to do the right thing, overcoming suffering, samsāra, and escape. Moreover,
precept is the core factor in Buddhist mediation. Therefore, precept is similar to the
training process for completing the ethic of people. Research on the Five precepts
unraveled Buddhist basic ethical principles. Five precepts have contributed to the
entire thinking, activities, and personality with a Buddhist view. The Five precepts
are (1) abstaining from killing, (2) abstaining from taking what is not given, (3)
avoiding sexual misconduct, (4) abstaining from false speech and (5) abstaining from
fermented drink that causes heedlessness. It can be seen that the contents of the Five
precepts considered has a profound effect not only on encouraging humanity and love
in individuals but also tend to construct a social ethic system, preventing potential
problems which can be harmful to a personal ethic, engendering appropriate activities and developing personality comprehensively. These also contributed to ensure a safe lifestyle, social improvement, preventing something evil, aiming toward the values of truth, virtue and beauty… This is also the foundation for completing professional ethics of social workers and alleviating vulnerable people and social workers’ activities in social work practice.

The perspectives of karma, cause and effect, and samsāra contained educational content and words of warning. Buddhism says that if people do a good thing, they will receive something good. On the contrary, if they do bad things, the commensurate results will come in the future. Hence, Buddhist tenets have contributed to improve personal responsibility and society. Also, this has ameliorated people’s awareness and ethical activities. This applies not only for Buddhists but also has significantly affected others in society, especially through social work. The theory of cause and effects focused on personal responsibility with ethical activities, improving their goodness. Moreover, the Buddhist philosophy of ethics also pointed out that: people have to take responsibility for their activities even when they died, because according to the Buddhist view, death is the end of merely one life. This perspective has had an effect on limiting deviant activities, selfish behaviors, and trying to gain power at all costs. This has contributed to a complete personality, providing advantages to construct an excellent social foundation ethic. And this perspective also is the foundation to connect resources within social work practice.

The increasing gap between rich and poor is rapidly causing an abundance of problems such as “utilitarian lifestyle, controlled by money or power, neglecting the completion of personality.” In this case, Buddhist values have a crucial role to play in encouraging the faith of social workers and the community in social work practice who help vulnerable people.

Loving-kindness or benevolence has a profound effect on educating people for doing good things. This provides a means that helps people escape from suffering in their life for balancing their mental status. Ideas of loving-kindness or benevolence, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity have been applied in market-economy conditions. Buddhist principles are similar to a code of ethics in society, and social work which is adhered to by plenty of people, instructing them in their lives. Moreover, with the approach of “Buddhism with life, life with Buddhism”, Vietnamese believe in Buddhism with respect, creating spiritual strength, helping them to tackle difficulties, reaching life full of joy and peace. While a market-economy mechanism has some disadvantages, a code of ethics with belief becoming the spiritual foundation of the
social work practice of social workers, and people who tend to support vulnerable people with values of loving-kindness or benevolence, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity and selflessness is indeed exemplary in modern society.

Tending toward good Buddhism is one of the goals for humanity; thoughts of justice and peace are compatible with the tendency of unification between the nations of the world in the course of globalization. All of these precious values have a profound effect on educating people, especially social work’s clients who have shown deviant behaviors (criminals, drug-substances, etc.), by helping them in the rehabilitation process for re-assimilating with the community, living good lives and respecting humanity.

Buddha has edified in the book of Majjhima Nikaya: “We are actively in control of our activities, being those who are recognized for that; being borne from our acts which are our prequisites” (re-cited from Andrew Olendzki 2008: 87). Activities and personalities (bad/good) lead to commensurate results and destiny. In other words, a core point of the ideology of karma is the cause and effect theory. This means that if people aspire to preclude undesirable things in the future, they have to do good things. Therefore, in traditional culture, the ancestors have to do good things to create good fortune for their children. The course of samsāra is related with karma: causes in this life lead to effects in the afterlife. These encourage people to try to follow goodness, and to prevent evil things.

The best benefit of the theory of karma is that it helps people recognize the significance of responsibility on the personal and social level. The theory of karma asserts that only people have the right to control their lives. In society, there is an interaction process between individuals and community in many aspects (this ideology is clearly expressed in the theory of systems when we apply this theory in social work practice). People create their society, therefore people are in the position to change it. Individuals have the indefeasible right to choose a life which they will, it may be full of joy or suffering and taking the responsibility for it rather than others. Therefore, the difficulties which are faced by vulnerable people in their lives, have to be solved by their potential rather than depending on others or support of community or the government. These are also social work principles, social workers just support them, not instead their roles.

The theory of karma provides us the chance to believe in ourselves, preventing the loss of life-control, being independent of theocratic force, dependent thought or looking for the support of supernatural forces, or others or based-community. There is no one who has the right to control one’s life and destiny, only ourselves. The
supernatural forces of gods and deities (as in traditional belief) also have no power to change people’s lives. The theory of *karma* also directs us toward the goal of independent living (including social workers), regardless of the role, duty or position, people also have to take responsibility for their activities, and no one could escape form that. Whether a king or a commoner, elite, proletariat, or indigent, all receive the same message.

In life, we may not be in a difficult, sufferable situation because we all know that the worst causes in the past make contributions to the current state of living. Current events are not meaningless because they have a profound effect on solving our problems, building up people and finding a new way of living. The theory of *karma* creates belief and hope for people to achieve a beautiful life and ameliorate current difficult situations.

(3) Conclusion

In conclusion, the contents of the Buddhist tenets have exposed a philosophy of justice, educating people to behave in good ways, doing philanthropic things, preventing cruel or dishonest activities. This is aiming to construct peace in this terrestrial life, supporting vulnerable people by helping to solve their problems in life, which contributes to ensuring social security. Thanks to these tenets, Buddhism has increasingly played an important role in Vietnamese peoples’ awareness, being a confirmed element to construct an ethnic identity of social work of Vietnam.

Social philanthropic activities are considered a symbol of the living incarnation of the Buddha in the course of doing social philanthropic activities, based on the motivation of supporting vulnerable people who cannot solve their problems by themselves. This means that Buddhism is transferring to social work. Buddhism has many advantages in doing philanthropic activities. The development of Buddhist social work (this is a new term, initially presented for discussion at the international conference, attended by six countries: Japan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Nepal. The title of this conference is: Buddhist “Social Work” Activities in Asia, held at Shukutoku University in Chiba, Japan, October, 2015) is a indispensable need, being compatible with the tendencies of Buddhism and social work development. The participation of Buddhism in social work in Vietnam is currently at an early stage. However, Buddhist tenets have promoted its role in social work in Vietnam.

Studying the role of Buddhist tenets with social work activities is definitely necessary. Currently, the research on the role of Buddhism in social work activities is still limited. The majority of these studies just exposed the roles and effects of
Buddhism on the development in terms of social, economic and cultural aspects. There is a lack of research on Buddhist roles in the social work field in specific aspects regardless of the close relationship between Buddhism and social work in Vietnam. It is clear that there are many more issues of Buddhism and social work in Vietnam which are neglected, although, in the ideology and reality of Vietnamese, social work practice is often affected by Buddhism’s tenets. Therefore, the consideration of the government, as well as research on building the model of Buddhism and social work is necessary. This may lead to a new research direction with a distinct identity in Vietnam in particular and other Buddhist countries in general. This also promotes high-level development in terms of the theory and practice of social work in Vietnam, highlighting the role of Vietnam in the course of integrating with social work internationally.

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2. The Role of Buddhism in the Social Work in Asia
   : Building the Common Base of Buddhist “Social Work”

   Togaku Ishikawa

   It is already 100 years ago, when the term “Buddhist social work” was coined. It has been 50 years, or half a century, since the establishment of the Japanese Association for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies, so I think that this is a very opportune timing for us to deepen our discussions.

   The notions of social work have become globalized. On the other hand, there is a need for us to pursue deeper, local discussions, in order to promote discussions on global and also local fronts, we have to switch to “glocal” discussions. “Think globally, act locally” is well known. But we better say: Think globally and act glocally. Even when talking about local issues we should think glocally. I would like to consider about this Buddhist social work from a glocal point of view.

   In Japan, the interaction between the practice of religion and the practice of welfare has been in discussion. And therefore the differences between the practice of welfare, as well as the differences and commonalities in indoctrination have been considered. Indoctrination and volunteer work is implemented by the religious principle practice. And the social work practice will provide fundamental values. What supports the indoctrination is the principle of religious practice, and in this principle of religious practice, when actions are taken, the actions are manifested as religious activities. So most of the welfare activities and indoctrination activities are sustained by welfare activities.

   And as you see from this diagram (Figure 3.1), there are some overlapping areas between welfare practice and religious activities. And we must ask, where does social work fit in? Social work practice must be included as part of welfare practice. The fundamental value of social work is sustained by religious fundamental values. This is the starting point of my discussion.

   Religious volunteer activities are carried out all over the world. In the 1980s, when I conducted some research on volunteer activities, I thought about philosophies and functions. Today, I am mostly talking about philosophies. I wonder if I can divide volunteer into four components, but the word ‘volunteer’ or ’volunteerism’ originated in European society. The first one, is spontaneity or autonomy, or initiative. These are

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2) Record of the keynote speech delivered by Prof. Ishikawa at 50th Annual Meeting of Japanese Assoc. for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies held on October 10, 2015 at Shukutoku University. Published with kindly approval of Association for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies and Prof. Ishikawa.
the most important things. And in order to support those items the second group such as solidarity, altruism, or love of others are important. The philosophy of education of Shukutoku University is symbiosis, and also nowadays, many people are talking about the importance of collaboration.

The third group components are gratuity, mutual benefit, sharing, and continuity. And in promoting first, second, and third group, ultimately the philosophy will lead to public nature and public good. And these items are included as part of philosophy. The notion I had is that these philosophies are supported by religion. And when it comes to functions, of course there are diverse functions. Social work originated in the UK, and social work in UK started from volunteer activities. The volunteer activities became more specialized, and they became more fragmented and more in depth, and at each segment of volunteer activities, specialization developed.

Speaking of functions, there are a number of functions that overlap with social work. So I’m not going to go into detail about those functions. The ideology that supports volunteer activities is explained here. Perhaps the social practice principle of supporting people could be explained by volunteerism. And as long as we are going to use the word volunteerism, we cannot ignore Christianity. I would like to make some comparisons between Christianity and Buddhism. Through this comparison we can have better and clearer understanding of volunteerism in Buddhism.

In the case of Japan, we have Mahayana Buddhism. People stay at home, so basically speaking, they are lay Buddhists. I think there is a certain difference here between Japanese Buddhism and Theravada Buddhism. Maybe there are some difficulties for readers to have an understanding about the nature of Japanese Buddhism. As you know, Christianity is based on faith and caritas, and the notion of Christianity is captured in the declaration that says God is love. That love, in Greek

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**Figure 2.7 : Religion and Social Welfare Practice**

Ishikawa, 1979
terms is ‘agape’; and in Latin words it is ‘caritas’. And caritas is God’s love on people that is manifested by the cross. Based on God’s love, people are supposed to love their neighbors. And so the journey toward God in Christianity is completed by caritas.

But when it comes to Buddhism, we have been supporting the view of the four noble truths, and mercy, and also morals. There are four noble truths, and also the reduction of pain, and enlightenment and the liberation from the four sufferings. In Buddhism, the noble eightfold path instructs how to liberate yourself, or attain enlightenment I do not have time to provide a detailed discussion about these, but I think everybody basically understands the eightfold path. And I think what is at the center of these notions is mercy, and the way in the search of truth. And mercy could be explained as four altruistic states of mind. The idea which embodies the full altruistic state of mind is seeking Nirvana, looking up; and converting others to religion, looking down. However, because most of us are lay Buddhists, we have a view that everybody is merely ordinary men. So the notion that we have here is to try to ensure that everybody goes to Nirvana. So the wish is that everybody together goes to Nirvana.

And this is a visualization of the concept (Figure 2.8). This may be too simple. When I gave a lecture at a Christian school, I was told to make some more improvements, but please allow me to use this diagram. Here on the left side is the philosophy of Christianity. On top of this triangle is God. But what I’m trying to say here in this diagram is that between the lower God and a child, there is a contract. And as long as this contract is valid, the relationship is tightened. And then between human beings, there is neighborly love based on caritas.

On the right side is the relationship according to the philosophy of Buddhism. At the bottom are all living things. Theoretically it is possible for anybody and everyone...
to become bodhisattva. But that is not realistic. All the Buddhist scripts begin with vows to become bodhisattva and Buddha. And a bodhisattva practices Buddhism to help all the living beings. This is a very good role model for all social workers, if I may say. But I believe at least what is practiced by bodhisattva is the ideal way of practicing social work. Although it is very difficult, to work like a bodhisattva is, I think, a very good aspiration.

Now, looking back at the history of Buddhist social welfare practice, I found many scholars involved in this area. And this is my personal view of the formation of a Buddhist welfare activities. The history of Buddhist social work has been conceptualized. Starting from Buddhist charity work at a personal level, and then organized Buddhist social work. The third level is institutionalized Buddhist social work. The last stage is regional and community-based Buddhist social work. But the beginning was very personal-level Buddhist charity work, as Professor Yoichiro Miyagi said. Japanese Buddhist social welfare has been interpreted in relation to the state, but I believe that the very beginnings of Buddhist charity work started by, for example, taking care of sick people at a very personal level. In modern society, Buddhist social work was organized to some extent, and sometimes there was a very sensitive relationship with national politics. And some philosophers say that Buddhist social work philosophy was completely lost during the age of wars, particularly World War II. According to that discussion, it is necessary to rebuild the concept of Buddhist social welfare practice.

After the war, American and European philosophies and systems were introduced to Japan. And today, many people are now saying that Japan has already finished the learning stage. And now it is the time for Japan to develop its own unique way and framework of Buddhist social work. In practicing Buddhist social work, there are common basic concepts. When discussing social work, phrases such as self-reliance, co-existence, public interest, and service to the community are very similar to Buddhist phrases, such as reformatory relief and relief and others. But I would like to set aside these social terms for now, and I would like to go back to the Buddhist philosophies, such as the four noble truths and eight right ways of practicing Buddhism. Coexistence, for example, is the same concept as the Buddhist idea of pratityasamutpada; that is, causes and conditions. And research work is based on the deep repentance of last words, and public interest, and social service approaches have been always influenced by Japan’s social regime, and other conditions.

Let’s discuss the development of social work in Japan in a pre-modern society. First, I must begin with the definition of ‘modern’. The modern age in Japan began
when Japan started emulating Western styles. So in the pre-modern period in Japan, charity work was based on faith and religion, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity. But Japan closed its doors to Christianity in the pre-modern period. However, after the Japanese government opened the doors to the Western world and allowed propagation of Christianity, the Christians actually led the way to social work in Japan. Voluntary work and charity work need a real philosophical guide; otherwise the charity work in Japan would lose a sense of direction. And then in the modern world, Japan was very eager to import everything from the United States of America. This trend became even stronger after World War II. In particular, we were influenced by the United States. The social work textbooks written initially in Western countries, under the Christian influence, were imported to Japan. I personally believe we need to rewrite these social work textbooks. I am expressing my personal view because I hope that such a personal view is allowed. In not very few places, including the Japanese Association for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies. And today, it is necessary to develop a new social work theory that fits the specific uniqueness of Japanese society.

I would like to remember the leaders of Japanese social work. Buddhist social work in the early days tried to modernize our society. Let me introduce professor Watanabe who studied in Germany for ten years. Before the Russian revolution took place, Europe was in chaos and confusion when he was living in Germany. He came back to Japan, and as soon as he returned to his home country, he launched a labor-relief association. This is equivalent to the settlement movement of Christians. His philosophy was to unite Buddhists to improve their social conditions. The following year, he launched the Buddhist Social Work Research Institute. Professor Watanabe was the first scholar who tried to establish the concept and philosophy of human rights under the philosophy of Buddhism. In 1916, he wrote a paper on five guidelines of modern social work. And the concept of *kyosei*, the “coexistence” is one of the key words.

Well, “coexistence” has become a hot topic in recent years. But actually, many years ago, Professor Benkyo Shio started using this word. Not only here in Japan, but also in other countries. I hear that some facilities and institutions in South Korea were founded based on Professor Shio’s concept of coexistence. Professor Ryoshin Hasegawa studied under Professor Shio, and Professor Hasegawa started a school with Watanabe and Yabuki. I hesitate to use the word ‘settlement’ in Japanese because Prof. Hasegawa used a different Japanese word. He translated ‘settlement’ into the word called ‘rimpo.’ *Rimpo* means ‘located in the neighborhood’. *Rimpokan* literally means ‘a house in the neighborhood’. But the nature of a rimpokan is very similar to that
of a settlement. Underlying the philosophy of Hasegawa’s activities was Buddhism. And what he tried to do was to develop a people who practice Buddhism and social work. So Buddhism, social work, and education, according to prof. Hasegawa, should be integrated.

In those days, temples were criticized, and people were trying to destroy those old institutions. A senior official in the interior ministry told that there was an expectation from Buddhist. And Mr. Tomoichi Inoue was also one of those people who promoted the reformatory relief activities in those days. But it seems that his work has not been highly appreciated in his hometown.

The philosophy of education is important. Therefore I would like to look back on the philosophical history and development of Buddhist social work education. During the modernization of Japanese society, the focus was moved from personal to organizational, and institutional education.

Prof. Yabuki and Prof. Hasegawa collected literature on social work from Europe and the United States. The leading social work examples were also collected from European and Christian literature. Unfortunately, this literature was all lost during the war. I think it is very, very sad that all the books and records were lost during the war. Japan experienced an earthquake disaster on March 11. I’m sure if this nun were still alive, she would be the first to get there with her disciples to help the disaster victims. Actually, whenever there was a disaster, she used to rush to the rescue of the disaster victims with a group of disciples, and she visited about 60,000 households in 150 communities. Her concept was then followed by Professor Yabuki. He visited the United States and the UK as a scholar, and when he came back to Japan, he introduced the COS Practice Charity Organization Society to Japanese academic society. He became very involved in education, in addition to academic activities. Then he opened the Minowa Gakuen School as part of his settlement experiment to educate children of the poor, and he also educated women. He was asked by Mr. Inoue to become the head of Tokyo’s social welfare bureau.

Based on this notion, once again I wanted to reorganize the concept, and I wanted to ask “what is the position of the Buddhist Social Welfare?” (Figure 2.9) The social practice based on Buddhist ideology became Buddhist welfare, and historical and social practice became Buddhist “social” welfare. And the word ‘social’ means that you need to have a historical and
social perspective in order to call these practices ‘social welfare practice’. And so the question is, what should be the position of Buddhist social work? I believe that this smaller circle here, out of the three, must be the position of Buddhist social work. And this Buddhist social work is encompassed in the big circle, which represents Buddhist culture. We have to take into consideration the local culture. So I believe there are these circles, a number of circles included in this Buddhist culture (Figure 2.9). In Japan, it is customary to have layers of rice cakes to celebrate New Year’s. This looks just like the New Year’s rice cake. But I think this is the relationship between Buddhist culture, Buddhist welfare, Buddhist social welfare, and Buddhist social work.

In the immediate postwar era, Japan was focused on American social work. But in this period, British social work came to Japan. Cordelia Grimwood, British social worker, came to Japan. Anyway, Grimwood wanted to look at the Oriental notion in order to fill the gap of understanding about social work in the Western world. I believe that Grimwood looked at the Japanese elements. The three elements Grimwood looked at include change, acceptance, and reality. And Grimwood referred to Zen Buddhism to organize these three components of social work.

Acceptance and reality could be translated into different words depending on where you are. And the Buddhism that Grimwood looked at is specifically Zen Buddhism, because I heard that the interviews that Grimwood carried out were mainly the social workers from the Western part of Japan. Well, change is for people to leave their world of doubts, and through reincarnation, acceptance is supported until the achievement of Buddhahood. And acceptance is for people to have open minds and accept other people, and deal with them calmly. And reality, which means the content of experiences right now, right here, by myself. No tensions, and interests are only instantaneously created and vanish.

In the morning, we wash our faces. But at the moment, when we feel the water is cold when we wash faces in the morning, the water is already down in the drain. This is what the reality means. And these perspectives are not written in the conventional textbooks of social work. We have to be inspired by these notions.

By the way, Japan has a national licensing system for social work. There are national licenses called Certified Social Work, or Certified Psychiatric Social Work. After World War II, there were no licensed social workers. So it was decided to introduce an institution to have these certified social workers. And because the certified social worker system was based on a long-lasting legacy system, there is some distortion occurring because all of a sudden, we introduced in 1987 a legal status to certified social workers. And as of the end of March this year, there are 186,000
social workers certified, working in this country. And there is an agency which gives authorization to social workers.

In addition to certified social workers, there are authorized social workers. And in the future, five years later, we expect another license or qualification to be created, which will be called “authorized senior social workers.” The training given is mainly about supervision. And supervision is just like supervision in Western countries. But the supervision in western countries has been between ‘I’ and ‘you’. If so, the relationship between the social worker and the client is somewhat distorted, so I think that we need to organize our ideas again as to what should be the relationship between the social worker and the client. Then, after we introduced the qualification called certified social worker, a different certification was created; that is certified psychiatric social worker. Those psychiatric social workers are especially looking at people with mental disorders. The mechanism of support, the organizational support for those people with mental health problems had been slow. Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare thought that by introducing a law to support a psychiatric social worker certification system, they could create some different mechanisms that are more suitable for people with mental disorders.

Many people who have mental disorders or disabilities are hospitalized, whereas they should not be in hospitals. And there were 68,000 psychiatric social workers. If each psychiatric social worker cared for 1 patient out of a mental hospital, we would not have any people in hospitals. But that did not materialize. There is an association of psychiatric social workers, to authorize psychiatric social workers.

But each of these groups of social workers has different associations, so there are four associations. And those four organizations are participating in the Asian Social Workers’ Association or the International Federation of Social Workers. Japan has so far failed to organize these four kinds of social workers into a single organization. Japan has some Buddhist universities who have always been giving Buddhist social workers education since before World War II. I think we can play more active roles here.

The Japanese Association for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies has created a committee to consider the qualification for authorizing social workers and this committee was established in 2002. At the 37th conference of this association there was a discussion about the possibility of introducing Buddhist social workers. We are already seeing Buddhist social work practice, and many practitioners are practicing Buddhist social work. But now, many changes are occurring and the conventional leader framework could not catch up with these changes. Under these circumstances,
we needed to change the paradigm. So as a mission of this Association, we need to realize the philosophy of the Buddhist social welfare, and as such, the Association should promote the training for practitioners to support the welfare society of the 21 century. The association should make contributions to the establishment of the training programs for the practitioners, as well as the establishment of the curriculum for such training. And, the Association established this committee in order to give consideration as to what can be done to make this authorization more meaningful.

Prof. Yusuke Fujimori took initiative and his group carries out research. However, the university education could not offer appropriate education based on this framework of certification. I chaired this committee and Professor Masashi Tamiya was the vice-chair in this committee. Unfortunately, opinions were divided, and the conclusion was that it was premature for us to start building curriculums and building authorization framework. We can reassess and review the effectiveness of such an attempt. But social work is now globalized, and we have to think about what should be the definition of social work. I’m sure everybody knows about the definition of social work approved in year 2000. Students are supposed to remember this definition. And the new definition was approved last year, and I don’t think that last year’s definition would be incorporated in the tests or examination at university.

Well, I am no longer involved in the examination now. But what’s important is for us to examine and appreciate the new definition. However, it will be problematic if we do not have any discussion at all, or any critical thinking or critical discussion about the old definition. My understanding of this definition is that social work is practice based on a trust relationship. I don’t think social workers and clients should be confrontational. My definition, my understanding of this definition is that social work is a practice based on a trust relationship and respect of humanity, to utilize the power of connection between people and society for mutual cycling. I have taught that it is cycling of society. I included the word ‘respect of humanity’. And this word has to do with mercy. Mercy is beyond the notions of right and obligations. I think that the trust relationship is very important, the five important precepts have to do with this trust relationship. I think the mutual cycling in this situation is important. And cause and conditions have to do with the mutual cycling. The cycling means a spiral up, so this is what I wanted to get across.

In the international definition discussion, ten perspectives were highlighted. I don’t think I need to look at all ten of these perspectives, but I selected eight most relevant points. This is the definition for a professional. And there seems to be the perspective of Westerners. In Asia, we have a different set of humanistic values from
Western countries. Social justice, and the way we view humanity and human rights are also different from Western countries. Therefore I think we needed to bear in mind that Asia has different perspectives. I need to apologize to Professor Tatsuru Akimoto because I know that he has spent a lot of energy and time to establish the international definition, but to me, I’m not still convinced that this is really relevant in the Japanese context.

Instead of revisiting the international definition, I would like to propose the definition of social work from a Buddhist perspective. The Buddhist welfare values should be the foundation of Buddhist social work by leveraging Buddhist concepts and practical knowledge. Then, professional skills and technique should be practically applied, so that we can address welfare challenges in a cycle. Social changes, social development, and social cohesion, as well as empowerment, are still key concepts of social work. But we have equivalent concepts of values in Buddhism, for example change and development are fundamentally the same as *pratityasamutpada* of Buddhism. And cohesion, collective responsibility and respect for diversity, is the same as the Buddhist way of describing coexistence. And empowerment is exactly what is meant by *buddhata*. Professor Tamiya mentioned a Japanese researcher, who was awarded the Nobel Prize. And microorganisms, the Nobel Laureate said, helped me win the Nobel Prize. I was very impressed, because the Nobel Laureate is always aware of the existence of all the living things, even in his scientific research.

Now when we try to establish a regional definition of social work, it is necessary to keep in mind both global and local contexts. Buddhist welfare philosophy must be the foundation of a collaborative model, of a collaborative and circular model. What I mean by collaborative cycle is the collaboration among workers, amateurs, and professionals, so that their unique characters and contributions will be further enhanced under the concept of coexistence, according to Buddhism. In 1997, I proposed the idea of social work. Harmony, according to Buddhism, is very broad. It is more than just collaboration. Sometimes social workers do not understand the real meaning of collaboration and working in harmony. This should be added to the working model of social work. The former representative director, Professor Emeritus Masayoshi Nakagaki said that layman, the word layman, wasn’t really a good word. Then what should I use? How should I say it? Amateur? Amateur is not really the right word. So this is what I came up with. Make it very, very simple, because I had great difficulty in choosing the right words.

There are three important elements for Buddhist social workers (See Figure 2.10). We needed to teach values to social work students. Skills and technique are found
in many places, but the foundation of Buddhist social work is professional ethics and Buddhist welfare values. Based on the Buddhist welfare values, there should be scientific knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom, in Buddhism, is based on a wide range of wisdom and practical knowledge, and the linkage will be able to bring together all the professional knowledge and wisdom. And at the top is the practical application of professional skills and technique. Unfortunately, schools are now teaching only the last piece of this pyramid, technique and skills. But technique and skills should be built upon those two important foundations, according to my idea of Buddhist social work structure. Then we can really create values from Buddhist social work.

Figure 2.10: Structure of Buddhist Social Work
Postscript

Receiving impulses from Dr. Loan’s proposal and Mr. Anuradha Wickramasinghe’s activities, few years ago, the journey called “Buddhist social work” has started from Vietnam and Sri Lanka led by APASWE and Asian Center for Welfare in Society of Japan College of Social Work. As mentioned in Prof. Tatsuru Akimoto’s text, the very first step was influenced by relation between Western-rooted social work profession and Asian cultures, Asian societies, and Buddhism. There was something we may call as sharing the feeling of strangeness when talking about IASSW/IFSW’s international definition of social work discussed in 2000 and IASSW/IFSW’s global definition of social work profession approved in 2014. There are obviously some undoubted similarities of social-work-like activities all around the world, but that’s not the reason strong enough to lock those in the frame of definition which doesn’t reflect also the crucial differences. Exploring the social work in Asian regions brought us completely new topic. The Buddhist social work.

This book is primarily focused on activities provided for many years by temples and followers of Buddhism in Asian countries. In relatively short period of time some after being proposed, the joint research team has launched many surveys in the field of Buddhist social work and the Asian Research Institute for International Social Work and its Buddhist arm, Asian Center for Buddhist Social Work Research Exchange at Shukutoku University in Japan has finally become a hub of these activities for the time being and presently performing as a center of the growing network of researchers and practitioners from various Asian regions. Now, we can clearly say what Buddhists in Laos do for their communities, we can clearly see, how Buddhist monks are involved in social care in Thailand, we can read about activities in Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Bhutan, Vietnam, Myanmar, Nepal, Cambodia and many other Asian countries and regions. A series of volumes by country will follow this book. But this book doesn’t bring the clear definition of the Buddhist social work. Even though we have introduced some field activities, we weren’t able to clearly define the value, theories, and methods of Buddhist social work. Yes, our journey has only just begun. This book helps us to share some issues on Buddhist social work and, at the same time, provide us new perspective of social work.

There is no approved new definition or well-tested and newly verified theory in this publication. This book doesn’t bring clear conclusion. This book tends to bring
questions more than answers. These questions are addressed to two groups of readers. First group is composed by those who are involved in many social activities provided by Buddhists and Buddhist temples. Buddhist social work recognized as a part of Buddhist practice or as a Model C (as mentioned in Part 1) may bring new perspectives and new directions for Buddhism in Asia, showing that this thousands years old teaching is still reflecting today’s society and actual people’s needs. The second group of readers are scholars, practitioners, and all those concerned in social work. This book may provide important impulse for those interested in social work in the world. I guess that readers could share this feeling of strangeness. I guess they could try to grasp something we call Buddhist social work while feeling wooly-headed, while being confused about the global definition of social work and its concepts. I guess readers could perceive that through the perspective of Asian Buddhist social work the new emerging issue in social work has arisen.

After reading this book, we have two choices. We can refuse the Buddhist social work activities introduced in this book. Just because they don’t match to the concept of social work profession. They are different from the Western-rooted social work. Therefore, there is no need to explore them in the field of social work or world social work community. The choice number two is to change our perception of social work. It’s indeed very difficult and anxious to change one’s paradigm. But through the glasses of Buddhist’s experience, we can see that the religion, faith, and system of values based on it, could together form the essential basis of society, could form the framework of everyday life. In some societies and cultures, and in many cases introduced in this book, you can’t just divide the religion from the society. You can’t cut religious practice and beliefs from everyday life. And it’s also impossible to divide religion, as a part of one’s culture, from the social work. This new paradigm helps us to re-think social work. To re-define social work concepts. This may be a new era in the history of social work which has started in small Buddhist temples in Asian region.

Josef Gohori, Chief Editor
Appendix


Edited by Kana Matsuo

Based on *Buddhist “Social Work” Activities in Asia*,
Center for Social Work Research, Shukutoku University, 2015.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Social Work Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>How to Meet Expenses</th>
<th>Nature of Activities and Current Situation</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Crime prevention society</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1) By the temple 2) Police 3) Donations from well wishers</td>
<td>Eight villages. 1) Counseling 2) Lectures 3) Workshops</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Elderly home</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Community (elderly)</td>
<td>Two nurses hired by the temple. Total cost 1800/- per month</td>
<td>Train two nurses, organized all activities for 19 persons</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Peace society</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Government and the Temple</td>
<td>Six villages. Temple-based dispute setting society. With the support of other elderly people in the village</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Eco development society</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Chief monk and Urban contributors</td>
<td>Eight villages. Environment protection programs</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Welfare society</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Mutual contributions made by the temple and the people</td>
<td>Eight villages to complete their necessities. 1) Labour exchange activities 2) Building houses 3) Building Roads 4) Assisting poor people</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Health care society (Ayurveda)</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Chief monk providing money for health facilities</td>
<td>Give medicine to all categories of people in society</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mothers’ association</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Chief Mon provides financial assistance</td>
<td>i. Women and child protection activities ii. Food, clothing and basic materials provided</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Death donation society</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Initial money donated by the chief monk. Society is self-supporting</td>
<td>Eight villages. 1) Money donated on occasion of death 2) Funeral activities prepared by members 3) Temple provides religious and other assistance</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Youth club</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Community (youth)</td>
<td>All youth in the area collected money under monk’s guidance</td>
<td>Eight villages. 1) Sports activities 2) Personality development 3) Moral development</td>
<td>Ven. K. Punnarathna</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Work Activity</td>
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<td>Nature of Activities and Current Situation</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>Place</td>
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<td>“Ranmuthu” Sports Society for Youngsters</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Community (youth)</td>
<td>Sports equipment provided by the temple cost</td>
<td>Seven villages daily (25 males 30 females are participating. 1) Healthy society 2) Social Integrity 3) Avoiding caste Differences 4) Religious consequences</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults Society for Males (Upasaka Samitiya)</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Temple and the resident of villagers</td>
<td>Monthly poya day sil obervers 50 males and 55 females from seven villages. 1) Provide relief when disasters occur 2) Collect raw materials needed for reconstruction</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.23</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Textile Society</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Community (elderly women)</td>
<td>Government social service department and Temple</td>
<td>Unemployed elderly women 10 of them are regularly working. This section is attached to the temple premises.</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young Farmers Association</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Community (young farmers)</td>
<td>Initial cost borne by the Temple, now they have self-sustainability</td>
<td>Six villages, young farmers. 1) Organic agriculture 2) Milk products 3) Traditional paddy variety cultivation</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICTP</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>With the support of the government specially for school levels</td>
<td>Males and females in the six villages. 1) IT Education 2) Modern IT society</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Citizens Society</td>
<td>1988/1989</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>With the support of police station and the G.S. divisions</td>
<td>Benefits go to six villages. 1) Protect villages from terrorists 2) Joint movement</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotary Club</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Initial cost provided by the temple with the Rotary Club</td>
<td>Males and females in six villages: Vocational training activities</td>
<td>Ven. H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Date commenced</td>
<td>Target Description</td>
<td>How to meet expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and current situation</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Sanasa (credit society)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Started initial branch with the support of cooperative credit movement</td>
<td>Six villages. 1) providing credit facilities for the village 2) house constructions</td>
<td>Ven.H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Health clinic</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>disabled persons tribal groups</td>
<td>Temple contributors started</td>
<td>Service to the village level disabled persons tribal groups. 1) providing nutritional foods 2) finger millet-porridge 3) Kola kenda</td>
<td>Ven.H. Saddananda</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Astrological Service</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>self-managed</td>
<td>Providing services for everybody-general public. 1) providing nutritional foods 2) finger millet-porridge 3) Kola kenda</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Youngsters club</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Initial cost borne by the monk</td>
<td>200 Males and 200 Females in the area. 1) Labour exchange 2) Meditation 3) Sport.</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sil observers society (adult)</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Community (Harispaththuwa area)</td>
<td>Temple resources</td>
<td>Monthly training program.</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Self employment foundation</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Community (youth)</td>
<td>Temple has provided and encouraged them to seek different donors</td>
<td>Monthly training program for youth. 1) Candle making 2) Mushroom project 3) Plant Nursery 4) Envelope production</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Leadership training centers for Bikkhus</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Bikkhus</td>
<td>He spends his own funds and gets funds from the government</td>
<td>Leadership training for Bikkhus. How to reduce suffering, how to do com-activities, and how to do social work.</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;Soorya Foundation&quot;, poverty alleviation program</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Unemployed youth</td>
<td>Coordinate with 1) business groups 2) Trade merchant 3) Political leaders 4) Others</td>
<td>Providing different job opportunities training.</td>
<td>Ven.S. Jinasiri</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.25</td>
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<td>social work activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Pre-school</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Community (children)</td>
<td>He gives 50% money from his account, the remainder collected from parents.</td>
<td>35 males and females. 1) Pre-school teaching 2) Moral and personality development activities.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Adult society</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Community (adults)</td>
<td>Temple has a special fund which has evolved since 1930</td>
<td>Seven villages 540 adults. Adult education programs started in 1930. 1) Adult education 2) Counseling 3) Wheelchair programs 4) Providing spectacles 5) Disaster management</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Mother’s society</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Community (mothers)</td>
<td>Seven villagers. 1) Monthly observing sil society. 2) Mutual benefit activities 3) Health program</td>
<td>Village level young males and females organized. 1) Community activities 2) Library 3) Death donation Rs.10,000 per case.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Young’s Buddhists association</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Temple-based money collection. Now there are adequate funds.</td>
<td>First dham school in the Kurunagela District with 510 students and 52 teachers. 1) Labor exchange movement 2) Blood donation camps 3) Sports activities development 4) Annual festival organization.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Sunday Daham School</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Initial cost borne by the temple.</td>
<td>30 boys and girls from Temple villagers. 1) Development of IT knowledge among the village youths.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Instructor paid Rs. 500/-salary by the respondent monk</td>
<td>Annually 150 males and 150 females. 1) Poverty alleviation 2) Water bottles for dry out areas 3) Seed paddy 4) Village development.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Dharmmika</td>
<td>Kurunegala</td>
<td>p.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Welfare society</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Temple resources</td>
<td>100 males and 100 females. 1) Annual food donation programs 2) Women’s welfare 3) Credit service 4) Support to disabled persons.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Vajila</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>”Vijayartha Kalyana” society (Mother’s club)</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Community (Womens and people with disabled)</td>
<td>Initially cost borne by the temple, now collecting contributions</td>
<td>28 monks and 7 teachers. 1) Leadership trainings 2) Dhamma teaching</td>
<td>Ven. M. Vajila</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.28</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social work activity</td>
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<td>Target</td>
<td>How to meet expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and current situation</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Youngsters Buddhists Society</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>The Chief Monk himself bears the costs.</td>
<td>All villages belonging to the temple are beneficiaries. 1) Annually two houses for poor families 2) Organic farming 3) Milk cows distribution 4) Sports development</td>
<td>Ven. M. Vajila</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Health camps</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>The temple resources</td>
<td>Annually 50 people are targeted. 1) Blood donations 2) Wheelchairs 3) Donation of Spectacles for elderly persons.</td>
<td>Ven. M. Vajila</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Sunday Daham School</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Common funds from the temple</td>
<td>100 males and 100 females and 16 teachers. 1) Learning about Buddhist culture 2) Personality development 3) Leadership</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>“Thurumu Saviya” youngsters club</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Community (youths)</td>
<td>All expenses by the adult society</td>
<td>75 males and 80 females. 1) Building houses for poor 2) Building houses for monks 3) Labour exchange program.</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Elderly care unit</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Elderly people</td>
<td>All expenses by the temple and organized contributors and philanthropists.</td>
<td>Annually more than 50 elderly persons get services from the Buddhist monks. 1) Visit elderly peoples houses 2) Cleaning their houses, giving treatments 3) Counseling</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Ladies service “Sasana Sevika Society”</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Expenses borne by temple and the contributors. Temple coordinates the expenses.</td>
<td>At least 350 ladies get support from this society every year. 1) Ladies healthcare 2) Religious counseling.</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Family counseling and health care unit</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Coordinates by the temple. Donors give financial support.</td>
<td>Annually 200 families get support from this program. 1) Family counseling 2) Crisis management 3) Healthcare activities for families 4) Psychiatric cases handling</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Medical service</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>All expenses met through donors.</td>
<td>Annually 100 families are beneficiaries of this program. 1) Blood donation 2) Special donation 3) Wheelchair donations.</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Disaster emergency care service</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Community (victims of disaster)</td>
<td>Temple resources and donors.</td>
<td>Any emergency situation. This program works as the relief work.</td>
<td>Ven. A. Dhammawilasini</td>
<td>Kandy</td>
<td>p.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Social Work Activity</td>
<td>Date of Commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>How to Meet Expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and Current Situation</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Elderly Nursing Home</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Elderly people without spouses or children in the city (137 residents)</td>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>1) Nuns and neighbour ladies help them with meals and care. 2) University students help them as volunteers.</td>
<td>Lam Quang Temple</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
<td>pp.48-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Children Nursing Home</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>90 girls without their parents are living there until the age of 20.</td>
<td>Temple and donation from worshippers and believers.</td>
<td>Volunteers &amp; 6 paid female workers are taking care of girls. They cope with the children’s troubles based on experiences.</td>
<td>Phap Vu Co Temple</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
<td>pp.49-51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>For the Poor, Disaster Victims and the Sick</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1000 people affected by floods, poor patients in two hospitals</td>
<td>Temples and contribution from laymen</td>
<td>1) Support for the poor and flood victims, 2) meal delivery service to two hospitals, and 3) a free clinic</td>
<td>Linh Son Temple</td>
<td>Hanoi</td>
<td>pp.54-52</td>
</tr>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Disabilities and Orphans</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>73 people with disabilities, 20 orphans, 10 older adults, and 20 others.</td>
<td>Run by a believer. (She was the Chair of this administrative district of the government and owner of the property.)</td>
<td>Facility for people with disabilities, orphans and 10 elderly persons without relatives. 22 paid staff live with and care for those people.</td>
<td>Mai am Thien Duyen</td>
<td>Cu Chi</td>
<td>pp.52-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Vulnerable people.</td>
<td>It was launched by Vietnam Fatherland Front. It devotes hundreds of trillions to the society to improve quality of life.</td>
<td>1) accommodation for the poor (2) free hospitals (3) housing for people in remote areas, frontiers and islands.</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City and southern cities</td>
<td>pp.56-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>Donation through the Vietnam Fatherland Front, association has also attracted financial and material share from domestic and foreign enterprises, as well as from people living in Vietnam or abroad.</td>
<td>Charitable housing and clinics, providing accommodation and studying conditions for over 2500 poor students, 1500 orphans, disabled children and fostering thousands of elderly. Community social works such as counseling care, drug supply for people living with HIV/AIDS.</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City and southern cities</td>
<td>p.57</td>
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<td>Social Work Activity</td>
<td>Date of Commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>Central Department of Missionary (Workshop of guide for Buddhists in Hai Phong)</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Poor students</td>
<td>100 gifts and 20 bikes</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>Hai Phong</td>
<td>p.57</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Executive Board and the Central Department of Buddhists’ Guide</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>Lighting up 10000 candles to pray for peace, requiem for martyrs who sacrificed in the wars and people who died due to the flood in the Central Vietnam</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>p.57</td>
<td></td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Sub-board of Buddhist, Local Board of Sponsor and Board of Buddhist Guide</td>
<td>2007-2012</td>
<td>People in the Central Vietnam</td>
<td>Flood relief, scholarship offerings, bicycles offering, road and bridge construction</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>Central Vietnam</td>
<td>p.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>2007-2012</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>Donation: 2879 billions and 432 millions VND for charitable activities.</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhist</td>
<td>p.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
<td>People in disaster-stricken areas, poor people and people in remote area.</td>
<td>Donation: Financial and material assistance 22028 cases of cataract surgery, 200 houses of gratitude, 1876 houses for disadvantaged people, 422 houses of union, 30 classes and 3 kindergartens, fostering more than 100 Vietnamese Mothers of Heroes, constructing 250 concrete bridges, 27000 meters of cement road, 370 dinghis (boat), drilling 1510 clean well-water, offering 1326 wheelchairs, 1000 bikes, 180 computers for students, raising orphans, support for children with disabilities or visual impairment, care for solitary elderly, constructing 2 charitable crematorium, cremation support for more than 2300 cases.</td>
<td>Under the direction of the Central of Association, Local Executive Board, Local Association of Buddhism and nation-wide Buddhists</td>
<td>pp.56-57</td>
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<td>social work activity</td>
<td>date of commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Fostering orphans, children with disabilities, Agent Orange, solitary elderly</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000 classes, 36 part-time kindergartens for the orphans, children with disabilities, with over 20000 children, more than 20 nursing homes for over 1000 elderly people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>For children of Buddhist families, poor families and people with disabilities</td>
<td>Free training classes, free vocational school providing training in garment making, electrical appliances, computers, automobile repair, hairstyling, etc.</td>
<td>Executive Board</td>
<td></td>
<td>pp.58-59</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Vietnam Association of Buddhism</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS prevention and health counseling. 165 offices, hundreds of traditional clinics with the activities of acupuncture, reflexology, physiotherapy, examination and prescription, 10 western medicine clinics or both western/eastern medicine.</td>
<td>Ky Quang Agoda, Dieu Giac Agoda (Ho Chi Minh city), Phap Van agoda, Hien Quang agoda, Thanh AM agoda (Hanoi); Bao Quang agoda (Hai Phong); Quang Ming agoda (Da Nang)</td>
<td></td>
<td>pp.58-59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Associate of Buddhism</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Addresses social problems to stabilize the social welfare in the province.</td>
<td>1) 11 Vietnamese mothers of heroes, granted scholarship for 100 poor students for 5 years. 4000 gifts including: rice, noodles, sugar, salt, clothes, blankets, medicine and cash  2) 2 classes in Thien Hoa agoda (Thuan An) for 50 students and Phat Hoc agoda (Thu Dau Mot) for student. 3) Providing soup for poor patients in the General Hospital and National Medical Hospital of the Province twice a week. 4) 30 houses for disadvantaged people and 20 houses of gratitude. 4) Relief program for people in the Central Vietnam and South West.</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td></td>
<td>pp.59-60</td>
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<td>Social Work Activity</td>
<td>Date of Commenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Local Associate of Buddhism</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Festival of traditional New Year for poor people, gifts for local poor in the Buddhist day, grant for heart surgery, building houses for disadvantaged people in Phu Giao district</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>p.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Local Associate of Buddhism</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>100 houses for disadvantaged people, 1000 bikes, tens of heart surgery and other programs.</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>p.60</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Local Associate of Buddhism</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Donation: 2 billions VND to the Vietnam Fatherland Front of the province</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>Binh Duong Province</td>
<td>p.60</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>Local Associate of Buddhism</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monks have a role to connect with the government. The members of the Vietnam Fatherland Front of the Province, the Executive Committee member of the Provincial Women’s Union, Executive Committee members of Provincial Red Cross, Disability and Children Protection Committee, the Member of the Child Protection Committee, the Committee of the Agent Orange and the Board of Blood Donation of the Binh Duong Province.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>p.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Center of Fosterage for orphans and solitary elderly people</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Orphans (abandoned/orphans) and solitary elderly people</td>
<td>33 children including 18 males and 15 females. The nuns living on site are main caretakers of this center.</td>
<td>Bodd Gaya pagoda, Binh Duong Province</td>
<td></td>
<td>p.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>School for orphans</td>
<td></td>
<td>Orphans</td>
<td>Mobilizing social work knowledge into their activities.</td>
<td>Long Hoa agoda, Dieu Giac agoda, Ky Quang (Go Vap District), Huynh Kim agoda (Go Vap District), Phu Yeo agoda (Nha Be District)</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
<td>p.62</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Cure of drug-addicted people</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Drug users and group of gangsters</td>
<td>Rehabilitation for drug addicted people, 5 free linguistic classes including English, Japanese, Chinese for 250 poor students. Scholarships from the donations of many enterprises.</td>
<td>The monk Thich Nhu Tam of Abbot of Leaves Agoda</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Date of Commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>How to meet expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and current situation</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
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<td>71</td>
<td>Arokhayasala Khampramong Temple</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Hospice for cancer patients (cancer patients with final stage)</td>
<td>Donation from the people nationwide, some non-profit and for-profit organizations contribute medical equipment and to the patient building.</td>
<td>Treatment of cancer patients by using both modern and traditional herbal medicine.</td>
<td>Khampramong Temple</td>
<td>Pannanikom district of Sakon Nakhon province, northeastern region of Thailand</td>
<td>pp.78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Phar Somjit Chutihinno of Kru Nork Temple</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Children with poor families, orphans or abandoned children</td>
<td>Holts Sahathai foundation, volunteers, donation from the temples around it.</td>
<td>Providing shelter and expenses for daily necessities, cost of traveling to school and food for children every day. Teaching to cultivate mushrooms.</td>
<td>Phar Pradang District, Samutprakarn Province</td>
<td>Banbangkru, Phra Pradang District, Samutprakarn Province</td>
<td>pp.82-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Huey Keing Temple</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>People with chronic illnesses and their families</td>
<td>Donations from individuals, staff from the local government, doctors and nurses from San Sai Hospital area.</td>
<td>Rehabilitation center for patients with chronic illness and aging people.</td>
<td>Huey Keing Temple</td>
<td>Mae Rim District, Chaing Mai Province, northern region of Thailand</td>
<td>83-84p</td>
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### 4. Myanmar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>social work activity</th>
<th>date of commenced</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>How to meet expenses</th>
<th>Nature of Activities and current situation</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thamanya Sayadaw</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Donation from individuals</td>
<td>People who are inspired by Sayadaw U Vinaya (Thamanya Sayadaw) offer voluntary services such as yardwork, leveling, bringing water and repairing the Pagoda, installing an electric power generator, a reservoir and water supply pipes and halls. Providing vegetarian meals for visitors.</td>
<td>Thakanya Sayadaw (a monk)</td>
<td>Mount Thamanyas</td>
<td>pp.98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitagu Sayadaw Dr. Ashin Nyanissara</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) The water supply system was initiated in Sagaing Hills to provide clean water to over 800 monasteries and 8000 residents in 1981 2) Hospital with 100 beds, surgical rooms, X-ray machines, an optical surgical unit, an inpatient ward, an outpatient ward, and a permanent staff of doctors, nurses and non-professional workers 3) The International Buddhist Academy 4) Buddha Viha centers in the US 5) Sitagu Missionary Association (eye operations, higher education for monks, publication in English/Myanmar, supporting victims of Cyclone Nargis in 2008)</td>
<td>Dr. Ashin Nyanissara</td>
<td>Bago Region</td>
<td>pp.102-104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home for Aged</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Home for Elderly People</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>She was influenced by Christian Missionary. It targeted elderly people.</td>
<td>Daw Oo Zun or Phar Thu Marlar</td>
<td>Mingun village, Paung Te, Hninzigone and Yangon</td>
<td>pp.104-106</td>
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### 5. Nepal

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<tr>
<th>social work activity</th>
<th>date of commenced</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>How to meet expenses</th>
<th>Nature of Activities and current situation</th>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thrangu Monasteries</td>
<td>mn</td>
<td>Children, young monks and nuns</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a secular education in Shree Mangal Dvip School, both religious and practical education, such as job skills and English.</td>
<td>Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu, Namo Buddha and some mountains areas</td>
<td>p.113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Volunteer and donation, NGO (Global Dental Relief)</td>
<td>1) Monastery, retreat center, monastic college 2) Hospital and medical clinic. Monks who trained in basic healthcare provide medical treatments 3) Dental Camps</td>
<td>Namo Buddha Meditation and Education Center</td>
<td>Namo Buddha, in Kavre District Nepal</td>
<td>pp.115-116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Social Work Activity</td>
<td>Date of Commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>How to Meet Expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and Current Situation</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>Zhereem Lobda</td>
<td>Primary school for young monks</td>
<td>Religious training to recite prayers, sutras and perform Lama dance, basic philosophy.</td>
<td>Shechen Monastery</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu</td>
<td>pp.116-117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Datsang</td>
<td>Religious education for young monks</td>
<td>Religious training to recite prayers, sutras and perform Lama dance, basic philosophy.</td>
<td>Shechen Monastery</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu</td>
<td>pp.116-117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Tsering Art School</td>
<td>Monks and lay students</td>
<td>Education for Buddhist philosophy and more specifically, thangka painting for 10 years</td>
<td>Shechen Monastery</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu</td>
<td>pp.116-117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Shedra</td>
<td>Higher education for young monks</td>
<td>1) Medical clinic for outpatients/inpatients providing various treatments such as dental, hospice, Himalayan indigenous medicine, Direct Observation Therapy (DOTS), homeopathy, reproductive health and pathology Lab, X-ray/ultrasound Lab 2) healthcare programs (Pelvic Organ Prolapse and Malnutrition programs) 3) education for rural areas where the literacy rate is very low 5) solar home lighting systems 6) rainwater collecting system for schools and communities.</td>
<td>Shechen Monastery</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu</td>
<td>pp.116-117</td>
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<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Shechen Clinic &amp; Hospice</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1) Medical clinic for outpatients/inpatients providing various treatments such as dental, hospice, Himalayan indigenous medicine, Direct Observation Therapy (DOTS), homeopathy, reproductive health and pathology Lab, X-ray/ultrasound Lab 2) healthcare programs (Pelvic Organ Prolapse and Malnutrition programs) 3) education for rural areas where the literacy rate is very low 5) solar home lighting systems 6) rainwater collecting system for schools and communities.</td>
<td>Shechen Monastery</td>
<td>Boudha, Kathmandu</td>
<td>pp.117-118</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>Medical &amp; Dental Clinic</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1) Healing treatment (such as, homeopathy, acupuncture, Tibetan Medicine, Ayurveda, chiropractic, massage and other healing arts and dentistry) 2) training on natural treatment.</td>
<td>Benchen Monastery</td>
<td>Swaymbunath, site of the Great Swayambu Stupa</td>
<td>p.118</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>ROKPA</td>
<td>mid-1980s</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>International Buddhist organization. 1) Food camp for homeless 2) medical care for the poor and rented small home for orphans 3) guesthouse 4) religious education 5) education for job-skills such as tailoring, woodworking, artistry skills, designing and sewing.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>pp.118-119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Vajra Varahi Healthcare Center</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1) Healing treatment (such as, homeopathy, acupuncture, Tibetan Medicine, Ayurveda, chiropractic, massage and other healing arts and dentistry) 2) training on natural treatment.</td>
<td>Chokgyur Lingpa Foundation</td>
<td>Chapagon, outside of Kathmandu</td>
<td>p.119</td>
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<tr>
<td>social work activity</td>
<td>date of commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>How to meet expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and current situation</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Ref.</td>
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<tr>
<td>89 Childhaven International</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>203 orphans and 153 poor children</td>
<td>1) Homes for orphans in Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Tibet 2) Child Heaven’s Green Tara School 3) providing clothes and nutritious foods 4) tailoring and crafts workshop for women</td>
<td>Ms. Bonny Cappuccino, Canadian Buddhist</td>
<td>Near Boudhanath, outside Kathmandu</td>
<td>p.119</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>90 Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Various programs for environmental clean up, a release of life program, a blood program, a scholarship, gift vouchers to care home for the elderly</td>
<td>Ven. Jampa Losal Shastri</td>
<td>JamchenLhakhang (Trikal Gonpa), Tharig Gonpa, Tharlam Monastery, IBA Lo Monthhang Gonpa and Vajrayogini Nunnery (Ani Gonpa)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>91 Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>Collaboration with INGOs such as WWF</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>92 Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td>Eye-care camps, health-care clinic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marpha, Tuckche to Lo Monthang, Upper Mustang, Pokhara, Yamja</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93 Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Young monks and nuns</td>
<td>Education—boarding schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mustang, Namgyal Monastic School (Dolpa, Mustang, Walungche, Sholu Khumbi, Gorkha, Manag and Singulpalchowk area), Nyiphuk Monastery, Kag Monastery, Zar Monastery, Zong Monastery, Monthang Monastery and Gemi Monastery in Pokhara and Jamechen Monastery, Tharig Monastery, Tharlam Monastery and Vajra Yogini Nunnery in Kathmandu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>social work activity</td>
<td>date of commenced</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>How to meet expenses</td>
<td>Nature of Activities and current situation</td>
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<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>(various)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peace project</td>
<td>Sakya Monlam for World Peace in Lumbini</td>
<td>Lumbini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Religious education for people. Basic knowledge of Buddha Dharma</td>
<td>Bhyoma Kusuma, Vishal Nagaar and Sakya triyana Dharma Center, Situ Paila</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Pilgrims</td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing lodging and food to the Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims who can’t afford to stay in hotels or guesthouses.</td>
<td>Tsechen Chokhor Ling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Nepal’s Sakya Buddhist Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing houses for people who engage in social work activities.</td>
<td>Sakya Monastery in Jomsun</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Jyotidaya Sangh</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Saturday Theravada classes  2) cleanup campaigns for villagers  3) saving cooperatives  4) public green park management  5) opening schools  6) community leadership training to income generation skill-enhancement.</td>
<td>Shakya Suren</td>
<td>Chapagaon in the Lalitpur district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Buddha Light International Association</td>
<td>nn</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Taiwanese NGO founded by the Master Hsing Yun</td>
<td>Nun Anoja (nun)</td>
<td>Sulakhana Kirti Vihar (Theravada monastery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Buddha Shasna Sewa Samiti</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Primary school  2) care home for elderly people  3) health care clinic  4) meditation center. All institutions have been reorganized and activated independently by monasteries in Kathmandu.</td>
<td>Ven. Sumangala</td>
<td>Ganamaha vihar in Kathmandu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>Charumati Buddhist Mission</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Renovation of stupa, Charumati Stupa, which was built by the daughter of Emperor Ashoka  2) social service activities in local community.</td>
<td>Ven Tapassi (monk)</td>
<td>Charumati Stupa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Contributors (in alphabetical order)

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Prof. Tatsuru Akimoto is Director & Professor of Asian Research Institute of International Social Work (ARIISW), Shukutoku University, and Professor of Emeritus of Japan Women’s University. His research fields are Labor Social Work (Social Work in the World of Work) and International Social Work. He studies Labor Law at Tokyo Metropolitan University (LL.B), Japan, and Social Work at Wayne State University (MSW) under the supervision of Prof. Maryann Mahaffey, President of NASW (National Association of Social Work), U.S.A. Later, receiving Fulbright Scholarship, he obtained the Doctor of Social Welfare (DSW) from Hunter College, the City University of New York. Prof. Akimoto worked for International Labour Organization, United Nations, as Employment Promotion & Poverty Alleviation Expert for 1992-94 leaving his teaching assignment of his university, and also served for APASWE (Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education as President for 2009-13, and IASSW (International Association of Schools of Social Work) as Vice President and Board Members many years. He has written books and numerous articles and presented research papers in national as well as international seminars and conferences.

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