



Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

Welcome

www.cosw.info

Agenda

- Welcome and Commonwealth context
- COSW evolution
- Questions and comments
- Honoured Commonwealth Social Worker Award
- COSW activities
- Questions and comments
- COSW Governance
- Questions and comments
- Next steps



Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

**Introductions and
setting the context**

Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work Executive Board 2021-2022

Sylvia Daisy Romanus (India) – Chair



Monique Auffrey (Canada) – Honorary Secretary



Godfred Boahen (UK) – Honorary Treasurer



David N Jones (UK) – Main Representative to Commonwealth Institutions



Charles Mbugua (Kenya)



Jan Christianson-Wood (Canada)



Sharon-Rose Gittens (Barbados)



Joachim Cuthbert Mumba (Zambia)



K. S. Ramesh (India)



Naomi Spencer (Australia)



Teoh Ai Hua (Malaysia)



Okiria Gerald – Uganda – Chief Newsletter Editor





Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

The Commonwealth and COSW

The Commonwealth



The Commonwealth

Formed in 1949

Voluntary association 56 independent & equal countries

Shared colonial histories - open to all

Home to 2.4 billion people

Advanced economies & developing countries

Amplifies voice of small states & protects the environment

Commonwealth charter promotes prosperity, democracy and peace



CHARTER
of the
COMMONWEALTH

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Elizabeth II', is written over a faint, circular watermark of the Commonwealth logo.

Signed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth,
Commonwealth Day 2013

The evolution of COSW

- 1992 Anthony Tan – C/w Fellowship
- 1994 Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka
- Strong support – steering group
- Engaging with the Commonwealth
- 1997 CHOGM Edinburgh and most since then
- 2000 Constitution agreed - Montreal
- 2005 Company limited by guarantee in London
- 2017 IFCO Steering Group – building networks
- 2020 New website & newsletter
- 2021 Human rights for all



Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings since 1997



Kigalai 2022



London 2018



Social work in the Commonwealth

- Many bilateral connections and influences - governments, universities & individuals
- Diverse networks including south-south and south-north dialogues and influences
- Current discourses about decolonialisation & indigenous perspectives
- Need an honest, systematic history of the good and bad influences on development of social work





Questions and comments



Honoured Commonwealth Social Worker Award

“Made a significant contribution to social work in the Commonwealth working with COSW”



- Anthony Tan
- Terry Bamford
- Fiona Robertson
 - Nigel Hall
- Tan Nghoh Tiong





Commonwealth
perspectives
from social
workers

Activity Report
2021-2022

Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

COSW activities

Intergovernmental Commonwealth

- Accreditation to the Commonwealth
- Engagement with Heads of Government and Ministerial Meetings
- Regular formal dialogue with Secretary-General
- Commonwealth consultations
- Contributing to the Commonwealth priorities & work plan

COSW projects

THE COMMONWEALTH CHARTER FOR YOUNG CARERS



Commonwealth Organisation
for Social Work

Young carers from across the Commonwealth have developed this Charter, grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Young carers in every country look after someone in their family who has an illness or a disability or other condition. Sometimes they look after the whole family. Young carers are children and young people first and should be free to develop emotionally and physically and to take full advantage of opportunities for educational achievement and life success.

"It is important to involve young carers in all aspects of policy making and decision making. We have a voice - listen to us!"

AS YOUNG CARERS FROM AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH WE ASK THAT WE:

Are listened to and our views and culture are respected.

Understand how we feel and what we need.

Do not face discrimination as a carer or for our family situation.

Have our physical health and emotional needs acknowledged and assessed.

Have a right to an assessment of our needs separate from the needs of the person we care for.

Being a young carer can be challenging and sometimes we all need a little support and time out, just to be ourselves and relax.

Have the right support given to the person we care for, so we don't have to provide excessive care which impacts on our own health and wellbeing.

Have practical support and help offered including respite care.

Are protected from psychological and physical harm.

Have the right to education, time to focus on our studies and be offered real choices in accessing further education and future aspirations.

Have the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Adults who work with us should know about who we care for and how it might affect us.

Have a home that is suitable and safe for us and our family.

Young carers should be treated equally... no one should be judged because of their family situations.

It's hard ... trying to find a balance in life - juggling everything we have to do.

We want schools to respect and understand the issues we have to deal with at home!

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) works with others to ensure that social work voices and social concerns are heard in the Commonwealth. Find out more at: www.cosw.info

May 2022

Comparative Histories of the Development of Social work across the Commonwealth

Join us to explore the diverse histories of social work across the Commonwealth as a foundation for a proposed major study.

The event includes context setting contributions from senior Commonwealth and academic figures and several presentations exploring the diverse histories of social work across the Commonwealth.

Register to attend via: commonwealth.sas.ac.uk/events/event/25888



ONLINE

Commonwealth Institute for Social Work | ICSS | INSTITUTE OF COMMONWEALTH STUDIES | SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL



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Families and Survivors of
Tsunamis 2005

Commonwealth partnerships

- Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organisations
- Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance
- Sustainable cities Call to Action
- Children's Cluster (Kigali Declaration)
- Human rights and diversity
- Common Age
- HIV-AIDS

Non-Commonwealth partnerships

- International Federation of Social Workers
Working environment research project
- International Association of Schools of Social Work
- People's Global Summit on an Eco-Social World
- Global Association of Public Health Professionals



Commonwealth
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Activity Report
2021-2022

Questions and comments





Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

COSW governance and constitution

New COSW governance

- Objectives with the new constitution
- Why we need to change
- Challenges for governance
- Key elements in the new structure – Trust model
- Policy members and role of the Policy Forum
- Questions and comments



New COSW governance

Objectives with the new constitution

- Inclusion – recognising all countries and territories
- Transparency
- Efficiency
- Manageability with limited resources
- Respecting existing organisations and structures - proportionate



New COSW governance

Why we need to change

- Improve transparency and accountability – Charter principles and accreditation requirements
- Build in sustainability
- Respond to ambivalence
- Remain proportionate



New COSW governance

Challenges for governance

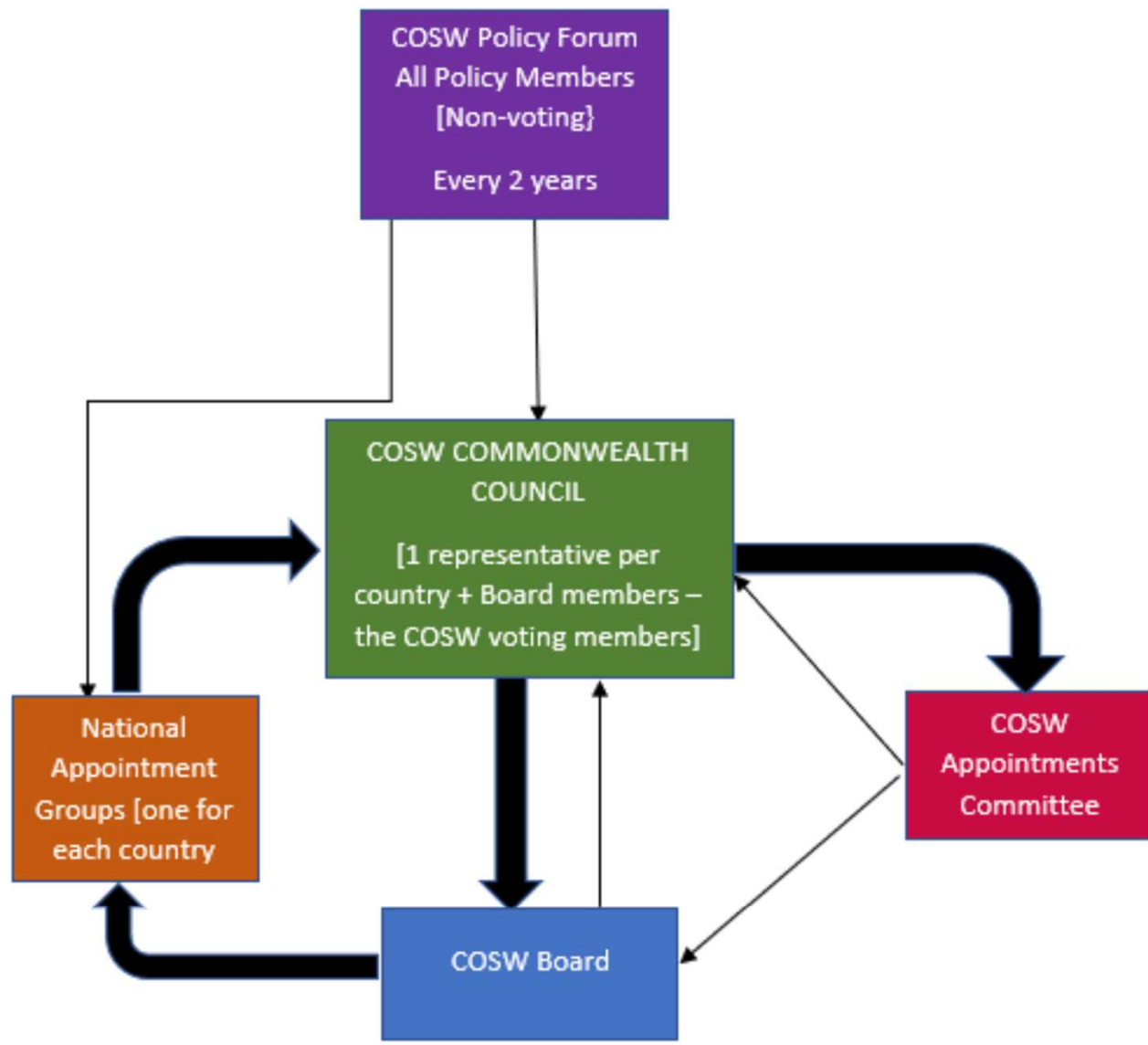
- Potentially global network of individuals, associations and organisations – could be hundreds
- Anticipate growth
- Limited capacity and funding
- Balance inclusion against administrative capacity
- Balance regions, gender, minority groups
- Remain proportionate – not aiming to be the global representative voice

New COSW governance

Key elements in the new structure – Trust model

- Commonwealth Council – voting members
- COSW Board – members Commonwealth Council
- COSW Appointments Committee
- National Appointment Groups
- Policy Members and Policy Forum
- Committees and project groups as required





New COSW governance

October 2022 – March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of formal legal documents • Invitations issued to serve on Appointments Committee appointed by Board in first instance • Consultation with national social work associations and other interested groups about creation of National Appointment Groups and nominations to the COSW Commonwealth Council 	
May 2023	Special General meeting for Voting Members (i.e. Board) approves new constitution for implementation in 2024	
May – October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of National Appointment Groups (NAGs) • Selection of national representatives by NAGs and briefings by Board of the new COSW Commonwealth Council members 	
October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Meeting (Board members) • Commonwealth Council first meeting (briefing and induction) • Policy Forum meeting 	
2024	Hybrid Commonwealth Council and Policy Forum at global conference	
April 2024	Call for nominations for Board members	
September 2024	Appointments Committee finalises recommendation to Commonwealth Council of new Board members	
October 2024	General Meeting Commonwealth Council confirms new Board	



Questions and comments





Policy Forum – 22 October 2022

What next?

<https://cosw.info/newsletter/>

NEWSLETTER



Commonwealth Organisation
for Social Work

3rd March 2022 3rd Issue

HIGHLIGHTS IN THE NEWSLETTER

- CHOGM Date Confirmed 2
- Queen makes 70 years as Head of Commonwealth 3
- World Social Workday 2022 4
- COSW welcomes new Board Member 5
- Commonwealth organisations form children's cluster 6
- BASW supports Covid19 response initiatives 7
- Empowerment & Entrepreneurial Effectiveness (Book Review) 8
- Australian Association for Social Work shares updates ... 9

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND - THE PEOPLE'S GLOBAL SUMMIT

Social Workers and people from many different sectors across the globe are preparing and registering to participate in The People's Global Summit under the theme of Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind which will take place from the 29th June to 2nd July 2022 online. The summit provides a unique opportunity for the social work profession to lead a worldwide movement and share the vision of the world we want after the pandemic, a #newecosocialworld. The summit will also offer space for Social Workers to present the work they develop in different fields.

The People's Global Summit is for everyone and will bring together individuals and communities, people of lived experiences, along with global organisations to co-build a combined global conversation on the creation of globally shared values for a new eco-social world that leaves no one behind. Individuals and community representatives, people with lived experience, ...



We Stand Firmly Against Acts of Aggression

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work joins other national and international social work bodies in calling for an end to wars in Ukraine and elsewhere in the world and respect for international order and multi-lateral institutions. COSW supports the statement on Ukraine issued by the [Commonwealth Secretariat](#).

The Commonwealth was built on the bedrock of an international order which recognised the vital importance of peaceful co-existence based on the shared values of democracy, peace, security, justice, respect for international law, the advancement of the rule of law and the protection, respect, and fulfilment of human rights of all people. These principles run through our Charter and bind our family. However, they are not limited to the Commonwealth; they are universal values that apply to everyone, everywhere. The acts of aggression unfolding in Ukraine are an egregious assault on our fundamental principles and our shared beliefs. They threaten the very core of the integrity of our multilateral architecture. Right Honourable Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations

'Social work recognises that human conflict is a reality in relationships between individuals and groups', said COSW Chair Sylvia Daisy Romanus. 'Dialogue is essential to develop mutual respect and trust in order to reduce conflict and tension. COSW recognises that there are many conflicts around the world. Each one has consequences for individuals and families which are as unacceptable as those facing the people of Ukraine. We applaud the work of the United Nations and other institutions around the world which are working for peace, respect for human rights and support for refugees.

'COSW calls on all national leaders to respect the rights of all peoples, to facilitate respectful dialogue and to promote peaceful co-existence', Sylvia Romanus concluded.

SEE ALSO:

[The Commonwealth stands firmly against acts of aggression. Military Aggression in Ukraine – IFSW statement, IASSW Statement on the Ukraine](#)

NEWSLETTER



Commonwealth Organisation
for Social Work

4th Issue 11th October 2022

More Highlights In The Newsletter

- COSW reports big from CHOGM 2022 3
- New IFSW leaders 2
- People's Charter for an Eco Social World approved 6
- Commonwealth Children cluster 7
- New COSW Constitution proposal on governance 8
- Young Carers charter in advanced consultation 9
- Diaspora Social Workers form advocacy group 11
- Commonwealth Games Ranking 12
- COSW Board Members 14
- Message from Chief Editor 14

OPEN MEETING FOR COSW SCHEDULED FOR 22nd OCT 2022

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW) invites Social Workers in Commonwealth countries, COSW supporters and interested parties to the first wider consultation forum due to take place virtually on Saturday 22nd Oct 2022. Attendees will participate in the policy development process and also be presented with COSW's activities in detail, achievements and plans for the future in an interactive session. COSW executive will unveil the new constitutional structure of COSW that will enable fuller participation of Commonwealth countries. The Policy Forum provides advice and guidance to the COSW Board and the new COSW Commonwealth Council.



The open meeting will also provide a platform for participants to network with other national/international social work associations/ organisations, universities/schools, sub-specialty interest groups and individual practitioners/educators/students.

We look forward to hosting you in this online meeting at 06.00 or 16.00 (UTC) – join [here](#). See www.cosw.info and social media for joining details as we join hands to reshape COSW activities and strategies that reflects real world needs as we make the Commonwealth community a better place for all, leaving no one behind.

King Charles III Succeeds Queen Elizabeth II as Head of Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth community grew cold on the 8th September 2022 following the passing of the Head of the Commonwealth Queen Elizabeth II, King Charles III succeeded as Head of the Commonwealth following a decision of Heads of Government at CHOGM 2018. Rwanda is currently the political lead as Commonwealth Chair-in-Office.



King Charles III and Queen Consort Camilla during the visit to Dunfermline and Edinburgh. Source royal.uk

The Chair of the Independent Forum of Commonwealth Organizations Dr Nicholas S.J. Watts FRSA on behalf of many others in Commonwealth Accredited Organizations sent "heartfelt condolences to King Charles III on the passing of his mother the late Queen." He further noted in a statement that "We mourn the loss of the remarkable leadership the late Queen showed as Head of the Commonwealth and her steadfast commitment to the values that peoples of the Commonwealth share." He also welcomed the commitment King Charles III "...made to sustaining the influence the

And now?

- Board implements constitutional arrangements over 2 years
- Policy membership opens – email interest to coswmember@gmail.com
- Policy Forum in 2023
- Current activities continue
- Newsletter, social media – opportunities for feedback and involvement





Policy Forum – 22 October 2022
Thank you

www.cosw.info
coswmember@gmail.com