

# ***Groupwork's Role in Achieving the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development***

**Carol S. Cohen, Alexis Howard, Sharima Ruwaida Abbas, Erin Nau, Carol Irizarry, Kyle McGee & Ginette Berteau**

*This session will engage World Conference participants in looking at how Groupwork strategies can support the international achievement of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development's goals and objectives.*

*We welcome colleagues to join this project! Groupworkers are invited to collect evidence of exemplary case studies in their area, contribute to future circulation of this material, and support the advancement of groupwork in organizations and communities.*

**World Conference on Social Work, Education and Social Development 2016  
Seoul, Korea  
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# ***Introductions, Overview & Objectives***

- Welcome to the Session
- [Connection of Groupwork and the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development](#)
- Proposed Objectives:
  - Understand the *Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development Commitment to Action*, and its place in international social work.
  - Identify and assess the role of group and teamwork strategies across organizational levels in accomplishing organizational goals and objectives.
  - Expand the use of exemplary case studies in developing knowledge to promote groupwork practice internationally.



# ***The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development***

- History, Signatories, Conceptualization and Progress
  - [Jones & Truell, 2012](#)
  - [International Association of Schools of Social Work](#)
  - [International Council on Social Welfare](#)
  - [International Federation of Social Workers](#)
- Commitment to Action to Achieve Four Objectives
  - Promoting social and economic equalities
  - Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples
  - Working towards environmental and community sustainability
  - Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships



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# ***International Association for Social Work with Groups***

- **IASWG Mission**

- The International Association for Social Work with Groups, Inc. (IASWG), is a not-for-profit organization of group workers, group work educators, and friends of group work who support its program of advocacy and action for professional practice, education, research, training and writing about social work with groups.
- Within this group work context, we believe in the value and importance of diversity to enrich and strengthen our work and its relevance in the broad social environment. We affirm that we aspire to provide equitable opportunities for participation for all members, and that all aspects of the organization will be characterized by respect for, inclusion, and representation of people across all aspects of social identity.
- Committed to social justice, IASWG gives particular attention to people systemically disadvantaged by the power differential inherent in oppressive social structures. As group workers we believe that our common ground unites us and our differences enrich us. The opportunities for collaborative learning online, at local chapter events, and at our annual international symposia make this association an invaluable resource to the global group work community.

- **IASWG Standards for Social Work Practice with Groups: Two Core Values**

- *Respect for persons and their autonomy:* In view of the equality of persons, people are to be treated with respect and dignity. In group deliberations no one person should be more privileged in a group than another, not a worker, a group member or the 3 agency director. In a group this occurs when a worker helps each member to appreciate the contributions of the other members so that everyone's ideas are heard and considered. This principle is stated while recognizing that the worker, by virtue of his or her position in the agency and his or her expertise, is likely to have a great deal of influence. This requires the worker to use his or her influence prudently. A major implication of this principle is a respect for and a high value placed on diversity in all of its dimensions such as culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities and age.
- *The creation of a socially just society:* The group offers an opportunity to live and practice the democratic principles of equality and autonomy and the worker should use his/her knowledge and skills to further this. The worker should be mindful of the quest for a society that is just and democratically organized one that ensures that the basic human needs of all its members are met. This value is presented to the group whenever it is appropriate and reinforced when members articulate it.



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# ***Methods for Connecting the Global Agenda with Groupwork***

- Establishing the Work Group
- Review of the Literature
- Multiple Case Study Approach
  - Organizing by Global Agenda Commitments
  - Identifying Exemplary Case Studies
  - Developing Guide and Conducting Interviews
  - Analysis Within and Across Case Studies
- Working from the Local to the Global
  - Themes Emerging from these Exemplars
  - Dissemination, Outreach and Invitation to Join Work Group



# ***Exemplar:* New York City Administration for Children's Services, US, Alexis Howard**



## **Cómo Reconocer y Denunciar el Maltrato y la Negligencia Infantil**

Las preguntas más frecuentes que hacen los amigos, vecinos y familiares



# ***Exemplar: New York City Administration for Children's Services***

## ***Groupwork's Role in Strengthening Recognition of the Importance of Human Relationships***

- **Location:** Serves NYC's 5 boroughs with multiple sites in all boroughs except Staten Island, New York, US.
- **Mission:** The Administration for Children's Services protects and promotes the safety and well-being of New York City's children, young people, families, and communities by providing excellent child welfare, juvenile justice, and early care and education services.
- **Selection Criteria:** On January 10, 1996, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) was created as the first NYC government agency devoted solely to serving children and their families. Within this context, the agency has become increasingly committed to the well-being of children, the family and the workforce. Within this well-being framework, a recognition of the need for supportive relationships is critical for the growth and development of all the cohorts listed above. Group-team work has increased as the agency focuses on outcomes, professional development and collective problem solving.



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# ***Exemplar:* New York City Administration for Children's Services**

- **Grassroots/client/service delivery/community level**

- Group work on the client level is evolving. For example, case conferencing groups focus on hearing the voices of parents and families, and engaging them in group decision making processes.
- Group work promotes mutual aid, and contains an empowerment component, as clients involved with the public child welfare system are often faced with structural forces which impact individual functioning.

- **Middle management/supervisory/staff level**

- Group work focuses on the professional development of staff creating communities of practice, and supporting transfer of learning.
- Group work approach in staff supervision creates a space for collective problem solving- the *teaming* approach to child welfare practice.

- **Administrative/board/management team level**

- Executive team- formalized team work promotes increased communication across multiple divisions, with an emphasis on outcomes. Group work lessens silo work. Informal team work “brown bag lunches” with executive staff, mid level staff, and frontline staff promotes a caring organization.





# ***Exemplar: Turning Point for Women & Families, Queens, New York, US, Carol S. Cohen***

- **Manhattan to Mecca Project for Young Women: Muslim Women Moving Mountains**



- **Turning Point for Women and Families at the Arise NY! 2014 Interfaith Summit**



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# **Exemplar: Turning Point for Women & Families**

## **Groupwork 's Role in *Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples***

- **Location:** Queens, New York, US
- **Mission and Services:** *Turning Point is a community based, non-profit organization addressing the needs of Muslim women and children through crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, advocacy, outreach, education and training. Responding to the wide gap between needs and services available to the Muslim community, Turning Point offers culturally competent services, especially in the area of domestic violence. In a safe and nurturing environment, Turning Point helps women empower themselves and transform their own lives as well as those of their families and children. In partnership with public, private and religious institutions, Turning Point also aims at mentoring a new generation of social workers trained to address the unique needs of the Muslim community.*
- **Selection Criteria:** Katy Papell, (an IASWG founding mother) became familiar with this organization in her community of Flushing, Queens. She strongly supported its mission, and became a friend of the organization and Executive Director, Robina Niaz.

The agency is committed to team and group based empowerment practice.



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## ***Exemplar:* Turning Point for Women & Families**

- **Grassroots/Client/Service Delivery/Community Level**
  - All program participants encouraged to attend ongoing groups
  - Groups provide sense of belonging and helps take away shame and stigma
  - Groups particularly powerful with survivors and marginalized women and girls
- **Middle Management/Supervisory/Staff Level**
  - Participants become peer leaders, and active agency staff
  - Staff groups include informal, community building elements
- **Administrative/Board/Management Team Level**
  - Teamwork is seen as essential on management level
  - Attention to developing relationships among board members
  - “Organizational survival depends on groups and team work”





***Exemplar:*** **YAYASAN ALBUKHARY STUDENT RESIDENTIAL COUNCIL**  
**Sharima Ruwaida Abbas**





## **Exemplar: YAYASAN ALBUKHARY STUDENT RESIDENTIAL COUNCIL**

### **– Groupwork's Role in *Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships***

- **Location:** Yayasan AlBukhary (YAB) Student Residential Council, Universiti Utara Malaysia
- **Mission:** The YAB Student Council provides the platform for discussing student concerns and ideas. The students are dedicated to develop leadership skills and enhancing co-curricular activities. In addition, this group of leaders is given the opportunity to interact with faculty, staff and administrators. The YAB Student Council is responsible for representing and serving the needs of other students and coordinating student activities.
- **Selection Criteria:** This council is an important group where 26 student leaders form a task group to address concerns, issues and ideas of student developments to the university management. Within this context, the council has become increasingly committed to the ensure well-being of other students in that residential hall and the university activities for student developments. The Group dynamic has become a main strength for them to work together. This group under my direct supervision as the principal.

## ***Exemplar: YAYASAN ALBUKHARY STUDENT RESIDENTIAL COUNCIL***

- **Grassroots/client/service delivery/community level**

- Group work on the student leaders are evolving. Groups are frequently mandated given the nature of the council since it focuses a lot on task groups.
- Group work promotes mutual aide, and contains an empowerment component, as students leaders motivate their peers and helping to solve their peers issues.

- **Middle management/supervisory/staff level**

- Group work focuses on leadership skills and group dynamic development in order task can be achieved on time and the group is committed to assist the students as well as the administrators. This task group is also a communication medium between students and university administrators, therefore, the group cohesion and bond is very important to promote social participation.

- **Administrative/board/management team level**

- University Management where Deputy Vice Chancellor - formalized team work approach with YAB Council through Student Residential Principal Council in order to engage with student leaders. This approach promotes group communication across multiple divisions, with an emphasis on outcomes.



# **Exemplar: UUM SOCIAL WORK STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

**Sharima Ruwaida Abbas**

**(One of the projects: Free Tuition for Underprivileged Kids)**





## ***Exemplar: UUM SOCIAL WORK STUDENT ASSOCIATION***

### ***Groupwork's Role in Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples***

- **Location:** UUM Social Work Student Association, Universiti Utara Malaysia
- **Mission:** The UUM Social Work Association (UUMSWA) is dedicated in making a difference in the lives of others as well as UUMSWA members. UUMSWA strive as a group to bring a strong awareness to social work, and the opportunities it offers, through dedication, compassion, and integrity. UUMSWA also seek to provide information and resources that emphasize our roles and impact as future social workers. UUMSWA are committed to bringing together our peers, our professors, and individuals from our community to promote health and wellness, family, friends, diversity, equality, and many other values that social work has to offer.
- **Selection Criteria:** This association is an important task-group where 15 committee members are working together while engaging their members to promote UUMSWA mission. This group is under my supervision as a mentor for UUMSWA Association. They have been doing a lot of projects through group tasks in engaging themselves with surrounding community and help empower them.



## ***Exemplar: UUM SOCIAL WORK STUDENT ASSOCIATION***

- **Grassroots/client/service delivery/community level**

-Group work on the student leaders are evolving. Groups are frequently mandated with supervision from the mentor given the nature of the association under university law and association mission. Group work promotes social work values and empowerment component, as committee members motivate to assist not only their own members but also community.

- **Middle management/supervisory/staff level**

-Group work focuses on leadership skills and group dynamic development in order tasks can be achieved through designated projects based on supervision from the UUMSWA mentor and Dean of the School of Applied Psychology, Social Work and Policy. The mentor and dean frequently attending meetings and practice development of current social work issues with Department of Social Welfare in order to effectively supervise the student leaders.

- **Administrative/board/management team level**

-University Management where Deputy Vice Chancellor - formalized team work approach with UUMSWA through School Dean and Mentor in order to engage with student leaders. This approach promotes group communication across multiple divisions, with an emphasis on outcomes.



# ***Exemplar: MERCY MALAYSIA***

**Sharima Ruwaida Abbas  
(PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAM)**





## Exemplar: MERCY MALAYSIA (PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAM)

- *Groupwork's Role in*
  - *Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples*
  - *Working towards environmental and community sustainability*
- **Location:** MERCY MALAYSIA (PHILIPPINE PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAM DURING TAYPHOON HAIYAN)
- **Mission:** MERCY Malaysia is an international non-profit organisation focusing on providing medical relief, sustainable health-related development and risk reduction activities for vulnerable communities, in both crisis and non-crisis situation.
- **Selection Criteria:** This The Mercy Malaysia psychosocial team assess the psychosocial needs of the affected communities and create an action plan from there. This group has been assigned to evaluate the needs of the effected communities. Therefore, the group was given the task to do assessment, plan group interventions and working with local group especially those survivors like youth group, village women group and many others.

## ***Exemplar: MERCY MALAYSIA (PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAM)***

- **Grassroots/client/service delivery/community level**

-Group work approaches were focusing on empowering the survivors through their trusted groups such as youth group, village groups and women groups. Through psychosocial activities, we promote social work values through survivors dignity and their worth. The group work approaches manage to empower survivors.

- **Middle management/supervisory/staff level**

-Group work focuses on the dynamic of professional volunteers who came together to support MERCY Malaysia and psychosocial team. MERCY Malaysia has only one coordinator and one board member who focus on psychosocial program. Both of them work closely with other professional volunteers to make decision and plan the appropriate psychosocial program with local groups based on assessment and local contacts. Mutual aid play an important element here for our clients.

- **Administrative/board/management team level**

-Group work approaches for team decision making at the management level where this also involved local stakeholders. Through group, the admin and psychosocial team sit together to develop more complex and larger-scale activities; are significant sites of socialization and education; and provide settings where

relationships can form and grow, and where people can find help and support





# ***Exemplar: North Shore Child and Family Services*** ***Long Island, New York, US, Erin Nau***



☀ Helping children

☀ Helping families

☀ Helping communities



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## ***Exemplar: North Shore Child and Family Services***

### ***Groupwork's Role in **Working Towards Environmental and Community Sustainability*****

- **Location:** Roslyn Heights, New York, US
- **Mission/Purpose:** Dedicated to restoring and strengthening the emotional well-being of children and families.
- **Selection Criteria:** Director and IASWG member and Editor of Social Work with Groups, Andy Malekoff, wrote an article titled *Sandy and Sandy* focusing on the efforts of his organization about the impact of Superstorm Sandy and the secondary trauma of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary on the community. North Shore Child and Family Services provides individual, group and family services. In preparation for possible hurricanes, and after Superstorm Sandy, groups were mobilized to support individuals, and families who were affected by the storm.



## ***Exemplar:*** **North Shore Child and Family Services**

### **• Grassroots/Client/Service Delivery/Community Level**

- Began as a grassroots effort by parents in Nassau County to provide services to people who were not being helped.
- The program is known for helping the community during times of crisis.
- Different community groups were created, families and children separately.
- Weeks after Superstorm Sandy, the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary school occurred, re-traumatizing the affected children.

### **• Middle Management/Supervisory/Staff Level**

- Support groups, Storm Survivors, for staff were created after Superstorm Sandy because many of the providers were also impacted by the storm.
- Staff went to the shelters the day after the storm to help others.
- Staff had shared experiences as responders and survivors.

### **• Administrative/Board/Management Team Level**

- Director created and participated in the Storm Survivor group.
- Board met to debrief after Superstorm Sandy.





# ***Exemplar: The Magdalene Centre*** **Adelaide, AUSTRALIA, Carol Irizarry**

<https://youtu.be/VuzNXeUbQBA>



respect  
recognition  
justice



# **Exemplar: The Magdalene Centre**

## **Groupwork's Role in:**

*Promoting Social & Economic Equalities*

*Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples and*

*Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships*

*Working towards environmental and community sustainability*

- **Location:** In the inner city of central Adelaide, AU, a city of 1 million.
- **Mission:** The Magdalene Centre is a welcoming place, which offers a range of anti-poverty services for disadvantaged, isolated and marginalized people, with the aim of supporting them as they regain control of their lives. They assist with housing advice, legal issues, financial counselling, and emergency relief and financial assistance.
- **Selection Criteria:** The Magdalene Centre has purposeful group engagement at the centre of its operations with staff, clients and management. There is a commitment to using group sessions to make decisions, plan programs, evaluate their mission and promote social justice, inclusiveness and equality.



## ***Exemplar: The Magdalene Centre***

- **Grassroots/Client/Service Delivery/Community Level :** Volunteers help hold frequent group sessions (“Volunteer Voices”) for exploration of issues and innovations. Life-skills groups are led by volunteers and professionals together. All program development and proposed changes are brought to group discussions and community members are frequently invited to attend.
- **Middle Management/Supervisory/Staff Level :** Staff meetings focus on models of work and decisions are made by consensus and staff supervision is held within this group. Policies are written together & submitted for approval. The manager reports more creative solutions from within the group than with one person alone.
- **Administrative/Board/Management Team Level :** All 3 partner organisations are on the Board where decisions are made by consensus. Debate continues until a resolution. The Board proposes a social justice action at each meeting, seeking consensus. The values of reconciliation, non-violence and solidarity are seen to be modeled and reflected in the vitality in all of the group sessions.



# ***Exemplar: Center for Family Life***

## **Brooklyn, New York, US, Kyle McGee**



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## ***Exemplar:*** Center for Family Life

### ***Groupwork's Role in Promoting Social & Economic Equalities***

- **Location:** Brooklyn, New York, US
- **Mission/Purpose:** To promote positive outcomes for children, adults and families in Sunset Park, Brooklyn through the provision of a comprehensive range of neighborhood-based family and social services. CFL works primarily with immigrant families providing family counseling, neighborhood-based foster care, cultural, educational and recreational programs at neighborhood public schools, adult and youth employment programs, and an emergency store front for food and advocacy.
- **Selection Criteria:** Center for Family Life is a tremendously successful grassroots organization that is dedicated to empowering immigrant families. Its Co-Director, Julie Stein Brockaway is a long-time member of IASWG and the entire organizational system is operated in a group work method approach.





## ***Exemplar: Center for Family Life***

- **Grassroots/Client/Service Delivery/Community level**

- Almost all program participants are involved in groups as part of services.
- Worker co-ops: Goal is to create living wage jobs in a safe environment and provide social supports and educational opportunities for members.

- **Middle Management/Supervisory/Staff level**

- Programs are facilitated entirely by democratic processes.
- All staff and supervisors participate in learning communities that focus on professional development through individual and group context.

- **Administrative/Board/Management Team Level**

- All senior management and Board are dedicated to values of representation, integration and promotion of democratic group process through entire agency.
- Use of “Senior Round Table” strategy to operationalize these values for the mutual benefit and involvement of all workers.



***Exemplar: Communauté de Pratique***  
**Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Ginette Berteau**

- This researcher has identified an exemplary case study in Quebec that demonstrates the inclusion of group and team approaches across all organizational environments.
- As with all case studies, she will explore the mission and focus of the organization and connections with goal(s) of the Global Agenda, followed by description of groupwork at the: (A) Grassroots/client/service delivery/community level; (B) Middle management/supervisory/staff level; and (C) Administrative/board/management team level.



# ***Discussion of Exemplars and Participants' Experiences***

- Themes Appearing Across Exemplary Case Studies
- Reflections on Opportunities for Groups and Teams Across Levels of Participants' Organizations
- Supports for Team Approaches Across Levels in Participants' Organizations
- Barriers at Various Organizational Levels to Group Approaches at Participants' Organizations
- Potential Exemplars in Participants' Communities
- Utility of Multiple Case Study Approach in this Inquiry



# ***Take-Aways and Next Steps***

- Looking at One's Own and Other Organizations to Promote the Global Agenda through Group Work
- Interests in Joining This Project Through Collecting Case Studies
- Interests in Participating in Analysis, Dissemination and Advocacy for Group Work Internationally



# ***Thank You***

*We look forward to continuing this conversation!*

## **For more information, please contact:**

- Carol S. Cohen, Adelphi University School of Social Work, New York, United States, [cohen5@adelphi.edu](mailto:cohen5@adelphi.edu)
- Alexis Howard, New York Social Work Education Consortium, United States, [alexis.howard@acs.nyc.gov](mailto:alexis.howard@acs.nyc.gov)
- Sharima Ruwaida Abbas, School of Social Development, Universiti Utara Malaysia, [sharima@uum.edu.my](mailto:sharima@uum.edu.my)
- Erin Nau, Adelphi University School of Social Work, New York, United States, [enau@adelphi.edu](mailto:enau@adelphi.edu)
- Carol Irizarry, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia, [carol.irizarry@flinders.edu.au](mailto:carol.irizarry@flinders.edu.au)
- Kyle McGee, Adelphi University School of Social Work, New York, United States, [kylem.mcgee@gmail.com](mailto:kylem.mcgee@gmail.com)
- Ginette Berteau, School of Social Work, Universite of Quebec at Montreal, Canada, [berteau.ginette@uqam.ca](mailto:berteau.ginette@uqam.ca)



# Questions, Feedback and Suggestions from Session Participants

*Groupwork's Role in Achieving the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social  
Development SWSD 2016*

## Questions:

Why is it groupwork diminishing in social work education?  
What is a group?

### Discussion:

- Organizations using groupwork is increasing, as well as interest in group methods – but while practice with groups is increasing, social work scholars find that groupwork practice by social workers and education in social group work is decreasing.
- Teachers, nurses and other professions are using groupwork methods – other professions are filling gaps left by social workers
- We can continue to broaden view of social work with groups and groupwork to include team work, such as “teaming” approaches – and emphasize the role that trained social group work professionals can contribute to this.
- Exciting question of, “What is a group?” There are many ways to define groups. Social work groups internationally have qualities of “being together” and “doing together” (see: <https://globalgroupworkproject.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/cohen-c-s-doel-m-wilson-m-quirke-d-ring-k-a-abbas-s-r-2012-global-group-work-honouring-processes-and-outcomes-in-honoring-our-roots-nurturing-our-growth3.pdf>)
- One perspective (William Schwartz, 1971) is that social work groups are “a collection of people who need each other in order to work on certain common tasks, in an agency hospitable to those tasks” (p. 7):) (see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_work\\_with\\_groups](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_work_with_groups))

## ***Recap of Study Methods***

- Study approaches – exemplary, multiple case study approach. Qualitative data collection and analysis individually and collectively by research group.
- Case studies identified by local groupworkers, and data collected and organized using a common strategy.
- Importance of reflexive examination, since researchers may be involved with case study organization.
- Materials available for people who would like to join research group and develop local case study to contribute.



## ***Themes in Discussion***

- Leadership – Organizational leadership with vision of groupwork is important in order to incorporate group on all levels
- Idea of organizational hierarchy, as well as more collective, flat organizational models. -- Discussion of how leaders and facilitators can operate with understanding of models of their organizations.
- View of team work as a form of group work – needing expertise for full effectiveness
- Use of Logic Models in illustrating groupwork and in the research design would be valuable
- Importance to look for emerging needs and innovation in groupwork practice.
- Being engaged in group work as part of collaboration
- Self principle: “Take everything you know and apply it to yourself” (Middleman and Wood).
- Importance of groupwork in community/client empowerment
- Group models may be time saving, or time intensive – overall, have potential for greater results in terms of impact/outcomes and processes that support replication.
- Good deal of groupwork across levels of organizations evolve after crisis
- We can nurture ways using groupwork
- Process – we should attempt to document/write about what is happening in and around the group, not just target evaluation on outcomes
- Social Media using groupwork a promising area for study and intervention.

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# Photos: The Assembled Participants *(sorry about photo quality!)*



# Photos: The Presenters



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