Celebrating 50 Years of International Consortium for Social Development: Honoring Our Legacy, Shaping Our Future

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To celebrate the golden jubilee of the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD), this article looks at the origin, formation, and purpose of the ICSD, key leaders who led the consortium, its main activities and achievements, and prospects in the years to come. Drawing mainly on the secondary literature and the author's reflections, the analysis affirms and appreciates that the ICSD was formed on sound grounds and the vision of the leaders who pioneered the ICSD was well thought of as the ideas of social development are increasingly relevant in the contemporary and emerging contexts. Acknowledging the leaders and members who have sustained the consortium for 50 years, it commends its three critical activities: biennial internal conferences; Social Development Issues, a flagship journal of the ICSD; and conceptualizing and theorizing social development, which has contributed to creating and spreading the knowledge of social development worldwide. It also has gradually expanded its activities through its branches. Although there are challenges to articulating its contribution to the theory and practice of social development, ICSD's role in facilitating it, directly or indirectly, at least to some extent, cannot be denied. The article invites us to pose and ponder, whether the ICSD should have done more and or differently. It argues that such individual and collective reflections help us to envision, plan, and act together for the ICSD, fostering promising futures.

Keywords: *International Consortium for Social Development, ICSD, Social Development, Social Work, Social Work and Social Development, Theoris of Social Development. 50th Anniversary*

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Introduction

This article is about wholeheartedly celebrating 50 years of the International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD) by looking at the origin, formation, and purpose of the ICSD; key leaders who led the consortium; its main activities and achievements; and prospects in the contemporary and emerging contexts. It is challenging to review 50 years of work of the ICSD in one article as it is difficult to include everything the ICSD has done in the past. But 50 years of continuous and consistent functioning and contribution to the social development field is a significant milestone in any organization's life, and it well deserves to be appropriately observed. It may not only inspire other organizations and people but also serve as a benchmark for future leaders, when they turn back after another 50 years to reflect on the state and stature of the organization then and now and feel proud of what they achieved for the organization. Looking at the past 50 years, that is what we are doing now. It is just a coincident that I happened to be the president, and our team (see Appendix 1) and members, of the ICSD during this golden jubilee celebratory moments and movements. It is a real honor and privilege to be in this position and to undertake this nostalgic and reflective journey. Observations and analysis in this article are based on my experiences and secondary data/literature (e.g., 46 volumes of the *Social Development Issues*; Hollister, 2015; Jones & Pandey, 1981; Meinert, 1991; Meinert & Kohn, 1987; Midgley, 1995, 2014; Midgley & Pawar, 2017; Paiva, 1997; Pawar, 2014; Pawar & Cox, 2010; Raymond & Cowger, 2012).

The analysis is presented in the following six parts. In the first part, the ICSD's origin, formation, and purpose are discussed along with how its focus and scope expanded from merely based in the US to a global outlook and expansion. In the second part, we pay tributes to ICSD members and leaders who have contributed to building the organization over a period of 50 years. The third part discusses the three main activities of the ICSD: organizing biennial conferences, including branches in different parts of the world; publishing *Social Development Issues*, a peer-reviewed journal; and contributing to the theory and practice of social development. Reflecting on these activities over a period of 50 years, the fourth part looks at the impact of ICSD and poses a few questions for further reflection, and the fifth part contemplates promising future that the members and its leaders can create for the ICSD and through that crucial platform for themselves. Finally, the article concludes by proudly appreciating how the ICSD has sustained for 50 years, which provides a solid foundation and direction for many years to come!

Origin and Evolving Purpose and Scope of the ICSD

Tracing the origin of ICSD may call for recalling some and familiarizing others of the three interconnected historical contexts. First, about 50 years ago, some or most of the world was unfortunately described and understood in terms of the third world, implying the existence of and comparison with the so-called first world, mostly (western) developed nation-states, though some of their

wealth, to put it mildly, came/comes or taken from the so-called third world. Perhaps, at the time the quest was how to change the third world's prevailing socio-economic, political, and cultural conditions like the first world. Second, as part of this process, among others, many social work educators and practitioners gravitated to educational institutions in the West (particularly the US) to receive advanced training and acquire knowledge and skills to change the world. Some of them worked for the United Nations and some continued to work in social work schools in the US. Third, the social work schools in the US at that time were mostly dominated by clinical social work practice curriculum that might have been appropriate at the local prevailing contexts in the US but appeared not fit for the purpose of changing the socio-economic conditions and poverty levels in the so-called third world. A small group of serious visionary social work scholars and educators who were experiencing the mix of the three contexts considered developing and incorporating social development ideas in social work training. As the following brief sketch shows, this is the historical background of the 1970s in which the current International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD) had undergone a gestation period of conceptualizing social development ideas in informal meetings and was born in 1974/1975 and its birth name was Midwest Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development (MIUCISD) (see Hollister, 2015; Meinert, 1991; Paiva, 1997).

Although social development ideas and nomenclature were common in post-World War II development programs and in the United Nations, Hollister (2015) notes that in the early 1970s, it was a new concept to American social work and a few faculty and some deans and directors were interested in it. In fact, in 1971, when Dr. David Hollister joined the new school of Social Work at the Duluth campus of the University of Minnesota, it was called the School of Social Development and its founding dean, John F. Jones (Jack Jones) was keen on developing the school along with the social development concept, instead of traditional social work curriculum, and recruited Rama Pandey, P.D. Kulkarni, Salima Omer (who had the experience of UN development programs), and Gary Askerooth (had community development experience in Mexico and the US).

As Hollister (2015) traces, around the same time, Frank Paiva was appointed as the director of the University of Missouri—Columbia School of Social Work (already faculty in the school), who had also experience in working with the UN development programs and was keen to connect social work to social development. However, Paiva notes that Missouri social work faculty were not that supportive of social development ideas. However, he did receive support from the former director of the Missouri Social Work School, John Moore, a faculty, Lee Cary in the Department of Community Development and another faculty, Mel Blasé in Agricultural Economics at the same university. Paiva, Moore, Cary, and Blasé themselves constituted an ad hoc committee to explore whether other faculty members in universities in the Midwest region were interested in jointly pursuing the conceptualization and practice of social development ideas and their relationship to social work. In 1972–1973, they contacted six university

schools of social work in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota at Duluth, Nebraska, St. Louis University, and Washington University in St. Louis with a questionnaire to explore whether they had any interest in social development and its international implications and in attending a meeting to discuss the following purpose/objectives related to social development (Raymond & Cowger, 2012).

> To discover and refine the knowledge required for social development and to clarify the role of the human service professions in the development process; to explore the development of educational programs and specific curriculum content to reflect the above; to ensure the reflection of the foregoing in the programs of country assistance undertaken by our universities; to initiate and sustain a continuing process of mutual consultation and cooperative action among schools in the mid-west region towards these ends (Paiva, 1977b, cited from Raymond & Cowger, 2012, p. 293).

On receiving positive responses from all of them, in January 1974/1975, an initial meeting was organized at the University of Missouri Columbia, and under the chairmanship of George Nickolaus, associate dean of the College of Community and Social Services, paper presentations, discussions, and recommendations occurred. As a consequence, the action committee (John Moore, Chair; Boyd Faulkner, St. Louis University, Tom Walz, Iowa, Richard Parvis, Washington U – St. Louis, and Frank Paiva, ex-officio, University of Missouri) prepared the report, which included the following objectives of the proposed association.

> Recognizing that the task of human development is both a national and international goal, in the context of increasing interdependency, and that human welfare and the means to achieve it are more satisfactorily definable in international terms, this association of educational institutions seeks the following objectives:
>
>   1. To foster a continuous process of discovering and refining the knowledge required for social development and of clarifying the role of the human service professions in the development process.
>   2. To explore the development of educational programs and specific curriculum content to reflect the above, particularly in the professional programs we represent.
>   3. To ensure the reflection of the foregoing in the programs of country assistance undertaken by our universities.
>   4. To initiate and sustain a continuing process of mutual consultation and cooperative action among schools in the Midwest region towards these ends.
>   5. To secure, as appropriate and possible, the participation of other universities on the international scene in this undertaking. (Unpublished report; pp. 3–4; Paiva, 1997, p. 116–117).

The document produced by the action committee was the basis of a Memorandum of Agreement, which was signed by university-level administrators and by the deans or directors of the seven participating schools of social work. This officially created the Midwest Inter-University Consortium for Social Development (MIUCISD), which eventually became ICSD (Hollister, 2015; Meinert, 1991). The consortium instituted the board of directors and each of the seven participating schools had a seat on the board headed by a Chair. Hollister notes that the chairs in order were Shanti Khinduka (Washington University), Jack Jones (Minnesota—Duluth), Tom Walz (Iowa), Arthur Katz (Kansas), and Irl Carter (originally at Iowa but later in Duluth). Throughout this period, Frank Paiva served as the formally appointed executive secretary (Paiva, 1997).

The MIUCISD kept meeting in their member campuses to discuss and develop social development ideas and their relation to social work/human services. As the board of directors were deans or directors of the schools, they tried to provide a social development perspective in their social work programs. For example, the University of Minnesota at Duluth already had the School of Social Development, Tom Walz, at the University of Iowa provided a social development concentration in the MSW program, and an interdisciplinary doctoral program in social development was established at St. Louis University.

Although in 1974/1975 the seven schools had joined hands to develop social development thoughts (Meinert, 1991, p. 2), its structure appeared exclusionary as it did not include other interested schools which were not in the Midwest region of the US. For example, Dan Sanders from the University of Hawaii School of Social Work was invited to attend the meetings of the MIUCISD but was not a formal member of the consortium (Paiva, 1997). It appears that on Dan Sanders' request/complaint (Meinert, 1991; Paiva, 1997, p. 119; Raymond & Cowger, 2012), a memorandum of cooperation was approved by the membership in 1977 and the name was changed from MIUCISD to Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development (IUCISD) to include scholars and schools beyond the Midwest region (Meinert, 1991; Raymond & Cowger, 2012). University of Minnesota-Minneapolis and the University of Hawaii joined the consortium. In May of 1977, to reflect the changed name, the Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development (IUCISD), an official Memorandum of Agreement slightly amended/refined the above five goals as follows to expand the scope of the consortium beyond the Midwest region. The highlighted are new additions and the original third goal was replaced with the following third goal. Similarly, in the fourth goal, the restriction to the Midwest region was removed.

1. To foster a continuous process of discovering and refining the knowledge required for social development, and of clarifying the roles **and skills** of the human service professions in the development process.
2. To develop educational programs and specific curricula content to reflect the above process, particularly in the professional programs represented.

3. **To ensure participation in the program of social development, with primary emphasis on developing countries.**
4. To initiate and sustain a process of mutual consultation and cooperative action among members of the consortium toward these ends.
5. To secure in this undertaking, as appropriate and possible, the participation of other parties and educational institutions on the international scene (Meinert, 1991, p. 4).

Towards addressing these goals, the first formal consortium conference was organized in Columbia, Missouri in 1978, but most participants were from the US. The theme of this conference was "Conceptualizations of social development", which suggests one of its goals. With Dan Sanders' active participation and his ideas, the consortium was opened up to include individuals and institutions internationally and social justice, peace, and human rights perspectives in social development. In subsequent years, its 23 biennial international symposiums/conferences and 46 volumes of *Social Development Issues*, its flagship journal, which will be discussed in later respective sections, continue to contribute to achieving some of the above goals.

Over the years, the IUCISD drafted its constitution with a clear purpose, spreading the knowledge of social development worldwide, philosophy, goals and the governance structure, which was approved by its members. As the constitution shows, it was periodically reviewed and refined seven times (Sri Lanka 1994; Portugal 1996; Egypt 1998; Brazil 2005; Mexico 2009; Singapore 2015; post-S. Africa Conference 2021) with due approval of its members. It may be noted that in its biennial international symposium held in Recife, Brazil, the IUCISD name was changed to International Consortium for Social Development (ICSD) to make it more inclusive to interdisciplinary colleagues beyond educational institutions and universities, to government and non-government organizations, nationally and internationally.

In keeping with the contemporary local and global developments, the latest version of the ICSD constitution (ICSD, 2021) has articulated the following mission, vision, activities, objectives, and philosophy, which reflect the original goals of the consortium and appropriately refine and expand them (Table 1). To some extent, it also shows the current conceptual development of social development, which will be discussed in a later section.

Among other things, Table 1 shows the expanding purpose and scope of social development to explicitly include global south and north countries (developed and developing) and environmental justice concerns and participation of people. Over a period of half a century, ICSD is evolving with increasing meaning and relevance. As so many dedicated individuals/scholars and institutions have contributed to it, the next section aims to acknowledge and sincerely pay tribute to them.

Tribute to ICSD Pioneers, Members, Friends, and Leaders

In line with my previous colleagues, at the outset, I would like to pay rich tributes to the following first core members, pioneers of the MIUCISD and social development visionaries, whose names are listed in alphabetical order.

Table 1   Mission, vision, activities, objectives, and philosophy of the ICSD

Mission:

ICSD is a multi-disciplinary nonprofit international association of institutions, individuals, scholars, practitioners, and students that is involved in building and spreading knowledge of social development to eradicate poverty, improve standards of living, and promote human equality and ecological sustainability.

Vision:

To be a leading association of international scholars and practitioners devoted to the study and advancement of knowledge and practice about social development.

Activities:

ICSD promotes international collaborations, education, research, and the dissemination of knowledge by asking key questions, specifying theory, conducting research, using evidence to improve policy and practice, teaching, holding professional meetings, organizing international conferences, and publishing an international reviewed journal, Social Development Issues (SDI).

Objectives:

1. Expand and refine the knowledge base of social development within the national and international contexts and use this knowledge to inform policies, projects, and practices in different fields.
2. Clarify the ethics, roles, and skills required by social development practitioners.
3. Assist in the development of educational programs and curriculum content based on the social development approach.
4. Direct efforts and resources to enable participation of both economically developing and developed countries in achieving social development goals.
5. Sustain a process of mutual consultation and cooperative action among individuals and institutional members.
6. Support the creation and maintenance of peace and social, economic, and environmental justice internationally, nationally, and locally.
7. Assist members of global northern and global southern nations in designing, implementing, and conducting evaluation of social development initiatives.

Philosophy:

The ICSD is premised on the conviction that the goals of human realization, equality, human rights, peace, and social, economic, and environmental justice could be reached only through comprehensive, collective, promotional, developmental, and evidence-informed efforts. Traditional clinical approaches directed only toward individuals are insufficient to achieve these ends. The central features that characterize social development and ensure that it is an encompassing approach are identified by the terms that are intersystemic, intersectoral, institutional, normative, participatory, sustainable, and evidence-informed. It is intersystemic in the manner that attention is paid to the relations and impact of social systems on each other. It is intersectoral by focusing on the political, economic, and cultural dimensions within and between social systems. It is institutional by engaging in activities designed to create new institutions or supporting the renewal of existing ones. It is normative in the manner that the values of social/economic/political and environmental justice, peace, and human empowerment provide the structure within which social development takes place. It is participatory by including the maximum participation of the people to be affected. Environmental sustainability is at the core of all dimensions of social development. It is evidence-based in relying on the results and data of solid research. In all facets of its operations, the ICSD seeks gender, racial, religious, ethnic, disability, and cultural inclusion as well as social equity, justice, and addressing hate crimes.

Source: ICSD constitution (2021).

Gary Askerooth (Iowa and later Minnesota-Duluth), Sunny Andrews (Nebraska), Mel Blase (Missouri), Irl Carter (Iowa and later Minnesota-Duluth), Bernard Coughlin (St. Louis U.), John Else (Iowa), Ted Ernst (Nebraska), David Hollister (then at Minnesota-Duluth), Jack Jones (Minnesota-Duluth), Arthur Katz (Kansas), Shanti Khinduka (Washington University-St. Louis), Ezra Kohn (Nebraska), Roland Meinert (Missouri), John Moore (Missouri), Salima Omer (Minnesota-Duluth), Frank Paiva (Missouri), Rama Pandey (Minnesota-Duluth), Dick Parvis (Washington University-St. Louis), Joan Smith (Missouri), and Tom Walz (Iowa) (Hollister, 2015; Meinert, 1991). Inadvertently, if this list has missed any other core members or pioneers, my apologies as my information is based on early publications/documents.

Secondly, I would like to pay rich tributes to the following ICSD leaders who served as chair and/or presidents of the ICSD in their respective periods (Tables 2 and 3). Meinert (1991) notes that during the early formative stage, Arthur Katz, John Jones, Frank Paiva, Tom Walz, and Dick Parvis helped to create the organizational structure.

In his article, Paiva (1997, p. 120) observes that between the Hong Kong meeting in 1980, and the next international meeting in 1982 in the UK, the term "chairman" of the consortium was dropped in favor of the term "president". Thus, Dan Sanders was described as the first president of the ICSD and the other presidents assumed the role as follows during their respective periods (Table 3).

Each of these presidents has dedicated their voluntary time to the ICSD to ensure its effective functioning, and along with their teams, they contributed in their unique ways to build and sustain the ICSD. During this golden Jubilee celebration, it is apt to remember their leadership and services and honor them for their commitment to making this special interdisciplinary body, ICSD, not only during their presidential period but also before and after.

While appreciating all presidents' contributions, I would be failing in my duty, if I did not repeat what others have acknowledged about the first president of the ICSD, Dan Sanders, whose leadership was instrumental in providing a truly international face to the ICSD as its individual and institutional membership significantly increased both nationally and internationally and continued in the 1990s, the foundation for the biennial symposium was laid, and the first ICSD branch in Europe was established under his leadership (see Meinert, 1991; Paiva, 1997; Raymond & Cowger, 2012).

Table 2   ICSD chairs, 1978–1981

Name	Position	Period
Arthur Katz	Unofficial Chair	Until 1978
Tom Walz	Chair	1978–1980
Irl Carter	Chair	1981

Source: Author.

Table 3   ICSD presidents, 1981–2025

ICSD Presidents and period

Daniel Sanders (1981–1989)

Betty Sancier (1989–1990)

James Billups (1990–1998)

Charles/Chuck Cowger (1999–2001)

Shanti Khinduka (2001–2005)

Frank Raymond (2005–2009)

Barbara Shank (2009–2017)

Manohar Pawar (2017–2025)

Source: Author.

Thirdly, hundreds of colleagues have served ICSD in different capacities, informally or formally, whether secretary, associate secretary, treasurer, vice president, chairman, member at large, and so on. It is not practical for me to list all their names, but I would like to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to the ICSD and sincerely thank them. I would also like to sincerely thank current members of the ICSD Executive Council and Board (see Appendix 1) for their support and teamwork.

Finally, the origin and evolving purpose and scope of the ICSD discussed above shows that a large number of scholars and institutions have engaged with, contributed to and gained from the ICSD, and its conferences and journal, *social development issues* for more than 50 years as the idea was germinated and discussed in the early 1970s much before it was given a formal shape in 1974. The ICSD website shows that at the time of writing this article (March 2024), it had over 475 registered members, 1,700 ICSD Facebook members, and over half a million visits to and views of the ICSD website (https://www.socialdevelopment.net/). Over a period of 50 years, many people have become members, some discontinued, some were not able to renew, some remained as friends of the ICSD, some watched it from a distance, and some critiqued it. On this 50th anniversary celebration of the ICSD, I would like to pay my sincere tribute to all of them. They are all important to the ICSD and ICSD values and respects them. Without their support and participation, the following activities of the ICSD would not have been possible.

Main Activities of the ICSD

It is challenging to capture 50 years of activities of the ICSD in one article. Towards achieving its mission, vision, and goals, discussed above, in my view, ICSD has uninterruptedly conducted activities in 3 areas: (1) ICSD biennial international conferences; (2) Publication of *Social Development Issues* Journal and related media; and (3) Conceptual and theoretical contribution to social development. Each one of these will be presented in separate sections below.

ICSD Biennial International Symposia/Conferences

To spread the knowledge and understanding of social development, ICSD biennial international symposia and now called conferences provide a sound platform for scholars to come together, share their research and thoughts, and develop professional and personal networks, nationally and internationally. To effectively achieve the latter, unlike other professional conferences, the size of the ICSD conferences relatively remained small, with about 200 to 300 participants. Many participants from different countries have participated in these conferences and gained insights from them. I certainly have.

Significant negotiations and planning occur before these conferences to develop productive collaborations and partnerships and to collectively mobilize the necessary resources to conduct these conferences successfully. Organizations, generally universities and or similar institutions, submit an expression of interest

to host the conference and the ICSD Executive Council discusses these proposals and carefully chooses them to ensure that the conference venues are spread in different parts of the world so as to reach out to and facilitate the participation of people from particular regions. Compared to similar professional body conferences, ICSD conference fees are kept relatively low to facilitate the participation of people. When resources permit, partial scholarships are provided to a small number of participants from developing countries. These conferences are jointly organized by the ICSD and host organizations by appointing dedicated conference coordinators to represent each organization, respectively. In addition to scholarly exchanges, these conferences generally enhance the international profile of the host organizations and create an atmosphere to think about social development.

Figure 1 shows the organization and spread of ICSD conferences in different parts of the world covering Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America. Over a period of 50 years, ICSD in collaboration with various host organizations has organized 25 international conferences, including the national 1978 conference that was held in Missouri and the 24th one that will be held in Cochin, India in 2025. As most of the work of organizing these conferences falls on conference chairs/coordinators, several organizing committees and their members, I would like to pay tribute to all chairs/coordinators and organizing committee members of these 25 ICSD conferences (see Table 4).

Table 4 shows that social development is the main theme in most of the conferences. In addition to keynote speeches, plenary sessions, focused workshops, and presentation of papers and posters, four important features of these conferences are special lectures to honor our leaders, presenting awards to social development thinkers and practitioners, fundraising through auctions and field visits, and international linkages.

When Dan Sanders, the first president of the ICSD, suddenly passed away in 1989, in his honor The Dan Sanders Memorial Peace and Social Justice Lecture was instituted and it was delivered by well-known scholars in the closing session of every biennial conference.

On the unexpected departure of the third president of the ICSD, Jim Billups, to honor his contributions to the ICSD, with Maria Billups, the ICSD established the James Billups International Social Development Leadership Award, which is presented every year to a person who has made an exceptional international contribution in promoting peace, social justice, and inclusiveness.

In 2010, on the initiative of family members of the fifth president of the ICSD, the Shanti K. Khinduka Lecture in Social Development was instituted (Pawar, 2024). The first one was delivered by Michael Sherraden in 2011 at the 17th ICSD biennial conference held in Bangladesh and this special lecture continues at every ICSD conference.

President also presents other social development leadership awards during the conference to recognize members' contributions to the ICSD. In the conference, during the presidential dinner, an exciting auction of items donated by conference participants is conducted to raise conference scholarship funds for the
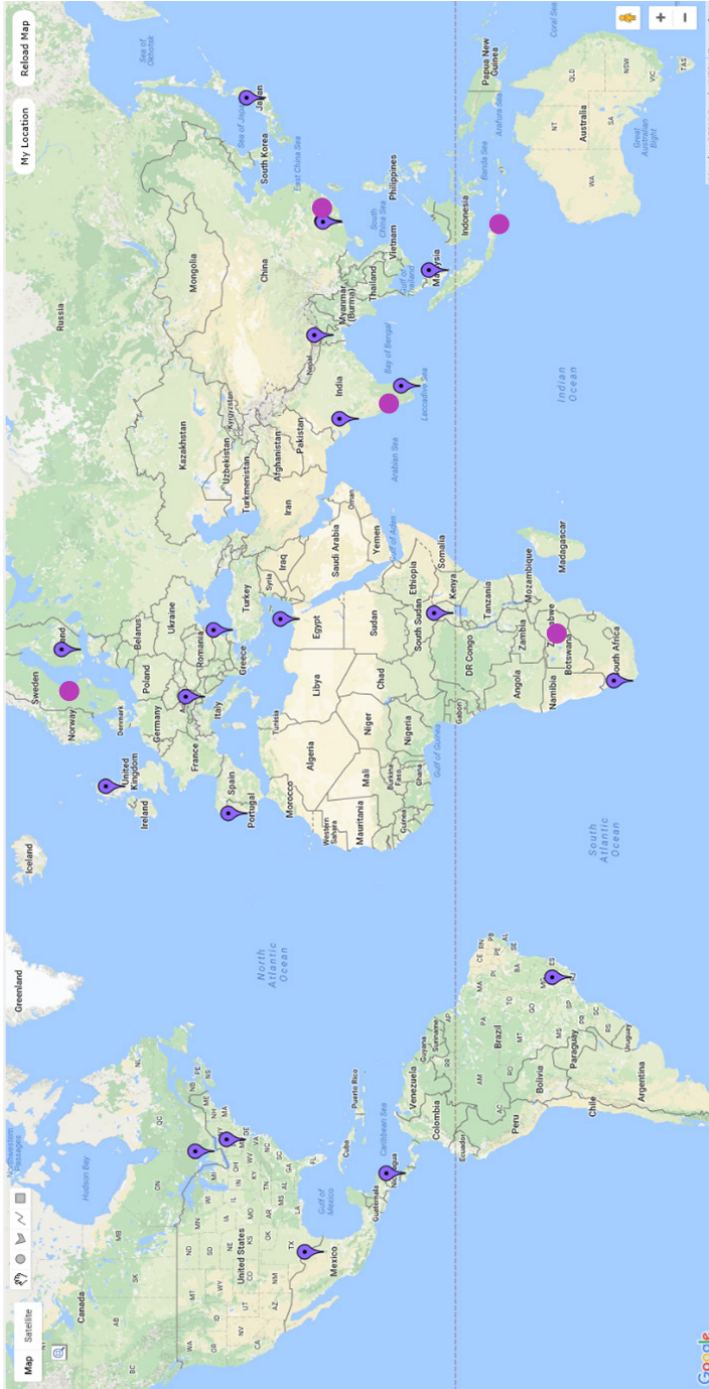
Figure 1   Spotted regional locations of the ICSD biennial international symposia/conferences, 1980–2025.
Note: For details of the specific spotted locations on the map, see Table 4.
Source: Adapted from ICSD.

Table 4 ICSD symposia/conferences, 1978–2025

No.	Year	Location	Chair(s)	Theme
	1978*	University of Missouri Columbia, Missouri	Judith Burke, Alvin Lackey	Conceptualizations of Social Development (Social development state of the Art)
1	1980	The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong	John F. Jones	Social Development: An inventory and appraisal
2	1982	The University of Sussex, Brighton, UK	Dick Parvis, Ezra Kohn	Emergence of Social Development Practice in Turbulent World
3	1984	University of Montreal, Canada	Richard Estes	Social Development: Further Conceptualizations
4	1986	Tokyo Metropolitan University, Hachioji, Tokyo, Japan	David Hollister, Rama Pandey, Shinya Hoshino	Development for Peace: Strategies for Action
5	1988	In cooperation with the Department of Social Work at the University of Goteborg, Sweden, held at Mariehamn, Aland, Finland	Diana Waldfogel, Louise Frey	Social Development in Different Political and Economic Systems
6	1990	University of Costa Rica, San Jose; and University Peace, Costa Rica	Tom Walz	Social Movements in Social Change and Social Development
7	1992	Catholic University of America, National Catholic School of Social Service, Washington DC, USA	Charles Cowger	Strategies of Social Development for Improving the Human Condition
8	1994	The University of Peradeniya and the NISD in Coop. with the Sri Lanka Prof. Social Workers Association Kandy, Sri Lanka	Caryl Abrahams	Critical Factors in Social Development
9	1996	The Higher Institute of Social Work, with the assistance of the Portuguese Association of Social Workers Porto, Portugal	Fernanda Rodrigues, Donald E Maypole	Social Development: Contemporary Realities
10	1998	Social Fund for Development (Egypt), in cooperation with Ministries of Higher Education, and of Insurance and Social Affairs, Cairo, Egypt	Mary Ellen Kondrat, Hussein El Gammal	Poverty, NGO's, and Development: Global Dimensions and New Directions
11	1999	University of Cape Town, South Africa	Gary R. Lowe, Lionel Louw	Social Development for the New Millennium: Visions and Strategies for Global Transformation
12	2001	Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey	Haluk Soydan, Heba Handoussa, Refik Erzan	Social Development, Public Expenditure, and Participation: The Sharing of Social Responsibility

Table 4 Continued

No.	Year	Location	Chair(s)	Theme
13	2003	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India	Goutham Menon, Rekha Mammen	Towards Democratic Pluralism: Challenges for Social Development in the 21st Century
14	2005	Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil	Julie Miller-Cribbs, Ana Cristina-Viera	Social Needs, Global Solutions
15	2007	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong	Ce Shen, Angelina Yuen	Seeking Harmony and Promoting Social Development in a World of Conflict
16	2009	Autonomous University of Nuevo León, Mexico	Kristin Ferguson, Manuel Ribeiro, Raul Lopez	Promoting Social Development and Diminishing Inequality: Who Must be Responsible?
17	2011	University of Dhaka, Bangladesh	Golam M. Mathbor, Nazrul Islam	Good Governance: Building Knowledge for Social Development Worldwide
18	2013	Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda	Hugo Kamya, Dr. Edward Kirumira	Opening New Frontiers in Social Development: Challenges and Opportunities
19	2015	Singapore University of Social Sciences, Singapore	Tan Ngoh Tiong, Corrine Ghoh, Jeremy Tay	Transforming Society: Trends and Models, in Community Leadership and Social Development
20	2017	University of Zagreb, Croatia. ICSD Europe Branch	Gordana Berc	Multidisciplinary Education and Practice for Social Development and Social Good
21	2019	University of Gadjah Mada, Indonesia	David Androff, Janinanton Damanik	Strengthening Social Development to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
22	2021	University of Johannesburg, South Africa	Antoinette Lombard, Leila Patel, Laurence Graham	Poverty, Inequality and Social Development: Innovations Around the World
23	2023	University of Gavle, Gavle, Sweden	Komal Singh Rambaree, Josefin W. Jacobson	Social Development in Times of Crisis - Challenges and Responses
24	2025	Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Cochin, India	George Palattiyil, Kiran Thampi	Innovations in Social Work and Social Development: Uniting Communities across the Globe for Sustainable Change

*The 1978 conference was an important first conference of the ICSD, but the ICSD international symposia/conference began in 1980, so the counting begins from there.
Note: 1978 to 1990 source: Meinert (1991); the remaining, Author.

participants from low-income countries. Along with the conference, field visits are organized to expose participants to local innovative projects. In addition, some participants bring their students to undertake international placements or brief exposure visits before or after the conference and as well as participate in the conference. This practically develops and extends international linkages. So, this ICSD legacy and its conferences achieve multiple goals, though the wider impact of these cannot be captured, measured, and readily shown. However, I believe, that ICSD biennial conferences, big or small, have provided a fertile ground for scholars to think, write, present their research work, and deliver keynote and plenary speeches, leading social development thinkers and practitioners to receive awards, participants to learn from innovative field projects, and cultivate professional and personal international networks, and through that process disseminated and stimulated research and ideas of social development for more than 50 years.

ICSD branches' presidents and conferences

ICSD branches were established as follows: European in 1989, Asia-Pacific in 2003–2004, and Africa in 2021,under the leadership of respective ICSD Presidents. Corresponding branch presidents/conveners/chair (see Tables 5–7) have regularly conducted regional international branch conferences on social

Table 5   ICSD Europe branch presidents

Harald Swedner, Sweden,
1989–1993

Doreen Gibson, UK,
1993–1997

Piotr Salustowicz, Germany,
1997–2005

Lidija Silneva, Latvia,
2005–2006

Roar Sundby, Norway,
2005–2015

Gordana Berc, Croatia,
2015 +

Table 6   ICSD Europe branch conferences

No.	Year	Host University/Organization	Chair(s)	Themes of the conference
1	1989	Heidelberg, Germany	Harald Swedner	Human Services and Human Welfare in a European and Global Perspective
2	1991	Budapest, Hungary	Harald Swedner	The Role of the Non-profit Sector: How Can Our Social Welfare Experiences Be Developed in East and West Europe
3	1993	Farfa, Italy	Harald Swedner	Poverty and Nationalism
4	1995	Prague, The Czech Republic	Harald Swedner	The Significance of Work in Social Development
5	1997	Institute for Economic Research, Lublana	Nada Stropnik	Social and Economic Aspects of Ageing Societies: An Important Social Development Issue
6	1999	European Branch of ICSD, Cracov	Piotr Salustowicz	Civil Society and Social Development
7	2000	Higher School of Social Work and Social Pedagogic, "Attistiba" Riga, Latvia	Lydia Shilneva and Roar Sundby,	Social Work and Social Development: New Trends in a Changing Europe
8	2002	The Dutch Centre for Community Work (LCO), the Hague	Fenny Gerrits, and Piotr Salustowicz	Urban Community Work in the Context of Social Development
9	2004	Graz University, Graz, Austria	Arno Heimgartner	Face of Research on European Social Development
10	2006	The Warsaw School of Social Psychology, Warsaw	Piotr Salustowicz	Social Policy and Social Work – from an International Development Perspective
11	2008	University in Cuza	Dan Sandu	European Societies in Transition, Social Development and Social Work
12	2010	Laesoe, Denmark	Hans Kolstad	Human Rights and Social Development - A Pathway to Sustainability
13	2012	Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Bressanone, Italy	Sussane Elsen	Participatory Democracy and Social Development
14	2014	Høgskolen i Sør-University College, Trøndelag, Department of Social Education and Child Welfare, Trondheim, Trøndelag, Norway	Roar Sundby	The Welfare Society - An Aim for Social Development
15	2017	University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law, Department of Social Work, Croatia	Gordana Berc	20th ICSD conference see Table 4
16	2021	University of Graz, and OFEB-section socialpedagog Graz, Austria	Arno Heimgartner	Criticism and Commitment in Social Work Online
17	2023	University of Gavle, Sweden	Komal Singh Rambaree and Josefin W. Jacobson	23rd ICSD conference, see Table 4

development themes chosen by host organisations. Based on their conference proceedings, the European branch has regularly published edited books (see Appendix 2). In honor of the first chair/president of the European branch, the branch annually presents the Harald Swedner award to a person who has significantly engaged and contributed to social development (see https://www.sozialeforschung.at/ICSD/awards.html).

Since its establishment in 2003–2004, ICSD Asia Pacific branch leaders (see Table 7) have successfully organized 10 regional conferences in different parts of the Asia-Pacific region (see Table 8; Pawar, 2017a, b). In the fourth ICSD Asia-Pacific branch conference, two awards were instituted known as Distinguished Social Development Scholar and Distinguished Social Development Practitioner and they were presented at every branch conference to promote social development ideas and practice in the region. The branch conferences/activities have resulted in several important publications which are listed in Appendix 3.

The ICSD Africa branch was established in the 22nd ICSD biennial conference held in Johannesburg in 2021 and Lauren Graham was nominated as convener for the branch. Under her leadership, its inaugural colloquium was organized in 2023 and first joint symposium is planed in 2024 (see details in Table 9).

Attempts to establish a Latin American branch have not fructified so far, but we are searching for colleagues who are interested in starting a Latin American branch and keen to support them to do so.

Table 10 shows that in addition to the branches' conferences, ICSD had organized six other regional conferences. Three of them were under the leadership of Peter Lee and the remaining were by regional consortium members (Meinert, 1991, p. 6).

Like the ICSD global conferences, these branch/regional conferences in their respective regions call for a lot of collaboration, cooperation, and contribution from universities, institutions, and colleagues, particularly, those who shoulder the responsibility of hosting and organize them with minimal resources. On this

Table 7   ICSD Asia-Pacific branch conveners/president/chair

Neela Dabir,
ICSD Asia-Pacific
Branch Convener 2004–2005

Manohar Pawar,
Convener 2005–2006
President 2006–2016

Asok Kumar Sarkar
Chair 2017–2025

Table 8   ICSD Asia-Pacific branch conferences

No.	Year	Host university/ organization	Conference Chair(s)	Themes of the conference
1	2006	Thammasat University, Pattaya, Thailand	Manohar Pawar, Jitti M.	Globalization, Development, and Human Security in the Asia-Pacific Region
2	2008	Kadambari Memorial College of Science and Management	Manohar Pawar, B. R. Nikku	Social Development and Transition: Paths for Local and Global Partnerships
3	2010	Seoul National University, Seoul, South Korea	Manohar Pawar, Bongjoo Lee	Vision for Social Development in the Globalized Asia: Commonality and Diversity
4	2012	Ministry of Social Affairs, Republic of Indonesia and Bandung College of Social Welfare and ISWC	Manohar Pawar, Toto U. B. Santoso, Sirojudin, Kanya Eka Santi	Envisioning New Social Development Strategies Beyond Millennium Development Goals
5	2015	Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan, India	Manohar Pawar, Prasanta K. Ghosh, Asok Kumar Sarkar	Human Development and Sustainability: Challenges and Strategies for the Asian Century
6	2016	University of Peradeniya, Kandy, Sri Lanka	Manohar Pawar, Sarathchandra Gamlath, Rathnayake M. Abeyrathne	Social Work, Social Development and Sustainable Development Goals
7	2019	Islamic University, Kushtia, Bangladesh	Asok Kumar Sarkar, Mamunur Rahman	Social Unrest, Peace and Development
8	2021	Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan, India and NAPSWI	Asok Kumar Sarkar	Social Cohesion, Collective Responsibility and the Social Work Profession
9	2022	Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand	Asok Kumar Sarkar, Dipendra K. C., Jitti M.	Sustainable Development Efforts in Times of Crises
10	2024	University of the Philippines, Manila, the Philippines	Justin F L VNicolas, Angelito B. Meneses, Yolanda G. Ealdama, Asok Kumar Sarkar	The Fifth Industrial Revolution Amidst Multifaceted Disruptions: Harnessing the Power of Social Development

Note: NAPSWI = National Association of Professional Social Workers in India; ISWC = Indonesian Social Work Consortium.

Table 9   ICSD Africa branch convener and the first and second colloquium details

Under the leadership of Convener, Lauren Graham, the ICSD Africa branch's inaugural colloquium on "When Crises Collide, Social Development Responses to Intersecting Crises in Africa", was held on 14–15 March 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

ICSD Africa branch and the German Academic Exchange Service have jointly planned to organise the first symposium on 'Social Work and Developmental Social Welfare: African Indigenous Knowledge Systems', 14 -15 October 2024, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Lauren Graham,
Convener 2021 +

Table 10   Regional Social Development Conferences

Year	Location/Sponsor(s)	Theme
1981	San Jose, California/San Jose University & Tunghai University	Sino-American Conference on Social Policy
1984	San Jose, California/San Jose University and IUCISD	An Intercultural Exploration: Changing Family Needs and Services in the 1990s
1986	Honolulu, Hawaii/University of Hawaii and IUCISD	International Symposium on Peace and Pacific Development
1987	Goteborg, Sweden. IUCISD and University of Gothenburg	Peace and Development in the Context of Social Welfare
1989	Patzcuaro, Mexico/IUCISD	Social Development in the Americas – In the Shadow of the 21st Century
1990	Taichung, Taiwan/Tunghai University and San Jose State University	Sino-American-British Conference on Social Policy

Source: Meinert (1991).

50th anniversary occasion, in addition to the names listed in these tables, I would like to pay tribute to all of them for their contribution to building and sustaining these branches and actively engaging in their activities.

Social Development Issues Journal and ICSD Newsletter and Other Media

Knowledge building and dissemination are essential foundation and features of any professional body. Towards that end, since 1977, ICSD has been publishing social development ideas in a flagship journal, *Social Development Issues*, which was started and managed in working arrangements with others by the University of Iowa till 1998. As discussed below, in 1999, ICSD took full responsibility for owning and publishing SDI. To communicate with members, it also publishes ICSD newsletters twice a year and ICSD is present in other social media. These are discussed below.

In 2024, ICSD's journal, *Social Development Issues* was running its 46th volume in which the third issue was dedicated to observing the 50th anniversary of the ICSD and that is where this article is published. It is commendable that the University of Iowa and ICSD have proudly and almost uninterruptedly published 46 volumes of SDI so far and I am confident, it will continue to do so in the future. This is not a small achievement for any professional body. Many individuals, ICSD members, the journal managing board members, universities and institutions, publishers, authors and reviewers, and readers have dedicated their voluntary time in contributing, building, and sustaining this journal. My whole-hearted tributes to all of them on this 50th anniversary of the ICSD. It is not possible to state all individual contributors' names, but I must acknowledge some of them who have played key roles in planting, publishing, and nurturing this journal.

Originally, in 1977, the refereed journal, *Social Development Issues: Alternative Approaches to Meeting Human Needs*, was started and published by the School of Social Work, University of Iowa, which provided financial and staff support (Askerooth, 1977) to the journal. In the editorial of the first issue, Managing Editor, Gary Askerooth (1977) states that "The journal staff has had an exciting and difficult time achieving this, but we have had considerable help". His editorial concluded with the following sentence:

> The will to encourage diversity and experimentation in solutions to the problems of social development can, we hope, be combined with the commitment to sharing our knowledge and resources toward new forms of world-wide unity through cooperation.

During its initial years, the journal had "working agreements with the National Rural Social Work Institute, the Community Organization-Administration Symposium (CSWE), and the University Consortium for International Social Development" (Walz & Jacobsen, 1983, p. 6) and it published peer-reviewed papers from their annual/biennial conferences. While reviewing SDI issues, several published papers coming from IUCISD conferences from 1978 onwards can be seen. Walz and Jacobsen (1983, p. 6) in their "Special Thanks" note that "At various times the journal has served as an outlet for publishing "best papers" from these organisations' conferences and working agreements with them have helped to assure a steady high quality supply of manuscripts and a tighter theme for each issue". Further correspondence and a meeting between SDI and IUCISD boards in 1984 in Washington DC resulted in a new SDI editorial policy that emphasized "the need for an international understanding of social issues in order to combat social injustice and to advance development" (Wetzel, 1984, p. 3). In 1985, SDI 9th volume, 3rd issue included IUCISD subscription details and the form and continued to appear in subsequent issues. Some IUCISD conference papers were guest-edited (for example, by Richard Estes, Roland Meinert, Rama Pandey). The SDI published IUCISD conference peer-reviewed papers on a cooperative basis till

1989 as IUCISD did not have any financial responsibility for the publication costs (Meinert, 1991). In 1990, Southwest Missouri State University became a partner with the University of Iowa and IUCISD in cosponsoring and publishing the journal (Meinert, 1991). IUCISD paid for subscriptions for each of its members, took over editorial policy and appointed editors (Raymond & Cowger, 2012).

In 1999, the University of Iowa handed over the publication responsibility of the journal to the IUCISD. The IUCISD board under the presidency of Charles Cowger took on the management, financial, and copyright responsibility for the journal. President Cowger successfully mobilized 10 universities as publication partners to support the publication of the journal. From 1999 to 2002, the University of Texas at Arlington Publication Office produced the journal. Under his leadership, the managing board of the SDI negotiated a new contract with Lyceum Books, a commercial publisher, for the publication and distribution of the SDI. In 2003, Lyceum Books began publishing the journal (Elliott & Mayadas, 2002, p. 1). In addition, in 2013, ICSD entered into a contract with MetaPress to publish SDI online. Later, the Ingenta publishing platform was used to provide online access to the journal. Due to the cost of production and publication (both print and online) and financial sustainability issues, the SDI managing board and ICSD decided to discontinue Lycem Books by the end of 2019 and Igenta by the end of 2020. In 2020, a contract was signed with Michigan Publishing Services, the University of Michigan Press to publish SDI only online on their platform and ePage Imaging Services, India was engaged for copyediting and type-setting services. With this new arrangement by the SDI managing board, ICSD has been able to publish SDI in a self-reliant manner without seeking funds from any and depending on other sources. Given the way the journal has traversed through many arrangements and sustained, this new arrangement is a significant milestone, and it has great potential to do better.

This exceptional achievement for the journal would not have been possible without the support and sacrifice of the chairs of the SDI managing board and its members and ICSD board members for several years, who often remain behind the scenes. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them on this occasion. Most importantly, over nearly 50 years, the journal was edited by more than 12 editors, whose names are listed in Table 11 and the time they have served. The longest-serving editor was Martin B. Tracy, who is grateful to the School of Social Work at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, which supported his editor role when he moved there as director of the program in 1994 (Tracy, 2024). The longest-serving book news editors were James Midgley and Michelle Livermore, though Michelle continued a few more years later. There were also many scholars who guest-edited special issues. Irrespective of the time served, ICSD owes an intellectual debt to all editors who have voluntarily worked hard to read and edit articles to maintain the quality of the journal. Beyond editorship, their intellectual leadership should inspire many social development scholars to follow suit. My special thanks to Brij Mohan who readily accepted the editor role during the critical phase of the journal and brought out all issues on time, including two special

Table 11   Editors of Social Development Issues

Period and position	Name	Total years
1977–1980 Managing Editor	Gary Askerooth	4
1981 Editor	John Else	1
1982–1984 Editors	Tom Walz and Mike Jacobsen	3
1985–1998 Editor	Martin B. Tracy	14
1990–1995 Co-Editor	Roland Meinert	6
1999–2003 Editors	Doreen Elliott and Nazneen S. Mayadas	5
2004–2007 Editor	Michael Sherraden	4
2008–2010 Editor	Joe C. B. Leung	3
2011–2020 Editor	Vijayan Pillai	10
2021–2024 Editor	Brij Mohan	4
2022–2004 Associate Editor	Philip Hong	3
2025+ Editor	Philip Hong	
1994–2007 Book News Editor	James Midgley and Michelle Livermore	14

Source: Author.

issues. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Philip Hong to the SDI Editor role from the beginning of 2025.

Digitization of Social Development Issues

To spread the knowledge of social development worldwide, ICSD initiated a project to digitize all volumes of SDI, 1977–2021. With the help of Ms. Linnea Anderson, Archivist, Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota, where all data of SDI are archived, 45 volumes of SDI were digitized and uploaded on the ICSD website (https://www.socialdevelopment.net/full-article-access-for-members/). The digitized issues were launched by Shanti Khinduka, David Hollister, founders of the ICSD, James Midgley, Brij Mohan, and Ram Ramanathan on 11 December 2021. On the occasion, James Midgley stated (ICSD Newsletter, December 2021):

> "...it is a terrific achievement, which will be widely appreciated by anyone working in social development today. Scholars, students and practitioners alike will be able to access past articles with ease. Articles reflecting both "routine science", as Thomas Khun called it, as well as more substantive, conceptual contributions will be widely available and, I know, will contribute to further scholarship in our field."

While launching the digitized SDI, Shanti Khinduka said, "SDI is a journal of alternatives. It should remain a journal of ideas and not the ideology…"

Overall, even at this 46th volume, SDI reminds me of the first editor, Gary Askerooth's (1977) remark: "The journal staff has had an exciting and

difficult time achieving this, but we have had considerable help". At any reckoning, I would like to celebrate the occasion with Meinert's words:

> Social Development Issues is the only journal in the entire field of human services with a unique focus on the issues related to social development on an international scale. (Meinert, 1991, p. 8)

ICSD Newsletter

To communicate with members, ICSD regularly publishes newsletters twice a year, one in June and another in December. Several ICSD colleagues have submitted their news items and some colleagues have worked as ICSD Newsletter editors. For example, Barbara Shank, Antoinette Lombard, Kala Chakradhar, Wesley Ward, Zhaoen Pan, and Francis Okello coedited with me a few newsletters. I would like to thank all of them for their contribution to the newsletters and ICSD. These newsletters from 2018 may be accessed at: https://www.socialdevelopment. net/news-events/. Previous ICSD newsletters are archived at the Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota.

ICSD Archives at Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota

As noted above, ICSD's all volumes of the SDI journal and ICSD newsletters, including some correspondence, minutes of meetings, and the programs for many (though not all) of the symposia/conferences are archived at Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota. David Hollister helped me obtain some missing information for this article from these archives. ICSD is fortunate to have a professionally managed archive housed at a major university that is open to scholars, students, and others 5 days a week. I am grateful to David Hollister, a founder of the ICSD, for helping to set up this archive for the ICSD. I encourage ICSD members to regularly deposit relevant ICSD documents at these archives and make use of these resources for your research and publications (https://www.lib. umn.edu/collections/special/swha).

ICSD website and social media

The ICSD's first website (https://web.archive.org/web/20000816041032/http:// www.iucisd.org/) was developed by Goutham Menon in 2000. Since access to this website was lost, ICSD purchased another domain (www.socialdevelopment. net/) in 2003, when Goutham Menon was Vice President for Communication. In 2013, the ICSD website was launched with several good features under Menon's leadership, who was Secretary General of the ICSD at the time (2008–2018). To further update the ICSD website, develop the registration and payment portal, and provide resources to members, with the help of Ram Ramanathan, Associate Secretary General for Branches and Linkages, and under the technical

directorship of Vikash Kumar, a new ICSD website was developed in 2020 with several user-friendly features. Now, the members can access governance details, conference information, details of branches, all newsletters, and all SDI issues. They can directly register and pay membership fees online (https://www. socialdevelopment.net/). As of 1 April 2024, the ICSD website has recorded over 600,000 visits and views. In addition, ICSD is also present in the social media. Goutham Menon also set up the ICSD Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/ groups/312544868921873/) which has now 1,700 members. Vikash Kumar opened the ICSD Twitter account in 2019 (https://twitter.com/ICSDOfficial). I've opened the ICSD LinkedIn account in 2022 (https://www.linkedin.com/ company/52459276/admin/feed/posts/). In addition to the technical director, several ICSD colleagues have helped to create and maintain these websites. I would like to immensely appreciate their technical contribution to the ICSD.

ICSD and Theory and Practice of Social Development

This section looks at ICSD's contribution to knowledge/theory and practice of social development over a period of 50 years. As the scope of social development is very broad, it is challenging to articulate it and more so in a section of the article. It is important to note that as social development is multidisciplinary, knowledge creation and publication of social development are not restricted to ICSD and its members. Many other disciplines such as economics, politics, sociology, and multi-disciplinary disciplines such as development studies, political economy, and inter-national development have contributed to social development knowledge. "The contribution of economists like Gunnar Myrdal whose role in shaping a social development agenda in conjunction with economic development was pivotal to the subsequent evolution of the field. In the late 1960s he and a group of econo-mist colleagues influenced the UN's promotion of social development around the world through unified planning and community development" (Midgley, 2024). Other examples include the United Nations Human Development Index and Human Development Reports (UNDP, 2024), Sen's (2000) development as free-dom and capability approach, Oxford University's research on multidimensional poverty (Alkire et al., 2015) and research on social determinants of health (WHO, 2024). These and similar contributions are closely connected to the theory and practice of and relevant to social development. However, such important work from other disciplines/scholars is excluded from the discussion.

Generally, the focus here is whether and to what extent ICSD and its members and other social work and social development-oriented scholars, irrespective of whether they were ICSD members or not, have contributed to knowledge/theory and practice of social development. It is also limited by what the author has read and understood. Thus, the work presented here needs to be considered as exam-ples, rather than entire social development knowledge created by all scholars. The fact that ICSD including its branches have organized more than 50 global and regional conferences and contributed to publishing 45 volumes of the SDI journal

(as of 2023) convincingly suggests that ICSD has provided fertile platforms for social development scholars to create, share, and disseminate social development knowledge, which is its fundamental mission. Some papers presented in ICSD conferences have been published in the SDI special issues or as single articles after due peer review process. Further analysis of these publications is presented in the following section to provide some indication of their contribution to social development knowledge.

Social Development titled articles published in Social Development Issues journal

Rudimentary analysis undertaken shows that over a period of about 50 years (Table 12), SDI has published nearly 900 articles, of which 170 articles (19%) had in their titles a "social development" phrase. This conservative calculation suggests that scholars have researched and published on the social development theme in at least about 20 percent of articles published in SDI. Another trend to note from Table 12 is that in the first 14 years, scholars gradually focused on the social development theme; in the next decade research and publications on social development increased to nearly 30 percent of articles; and in the subsequent decades, there is a gradual decline of such publications with social development titles. Further research is needed to discover why this is so. It may be noted that this basic analysis excludes related articles which have discussed poverty, community organization/development, participation, comparative welfare policies, and international social work and exchanges or one of the dimensions of social development without stating social development in SDI and it also excludes other journals in which social development related articles have appeared. Thus, the above analysis does not mean scholars within and beyond ICSD have not researched and published on social development.

Table 12   Total number of social development titled publications in Social Development Issues.

Period	Total no. of articles published	Articles published with social development titles	Percent of Social development titled publications
1977–1990	284	48	17
1991–2000	207	59	28.5
2001–2010	199	36	18
2011–2023	207	27	13
Total	897	170	19

Source: Author.

Social Development titled books

A social development titled book search on Google Books website revealed that since the 1970s, over 80 social development books and/or titles closely related to

social development have been published. For example, Gore's (1973) *Some Aspects of Social Development* and *Social Development: Challenges Faced in the Unequal and Plural Society* (Gore, 2003); Jones and Pandey's (1981) *Social Development: Conceptual, Methodological and Policy Issues*; Midgley's (1995) *Social Development: The developmental Perspective in Social Welfare* and *Social Development Theory and Practice* (2014); Mohan's (2015) *Global Frontiers of Social Development in Theory and Practice*; Pawar's (2014) *Social and Community Development Practice*; Patel's (2015) *Social Welfare and Social Development in South Africa*; Midgley and Pawar's (2017) *Future Directions in Social Development*, and Pawar and Cox's (2010) *Social Development: Critical Themes and Perspectives.* About 10 books' titles indicated the desire or direction to connect social work to social development. For example, Sanders' (1982) *Developmental Perspective in Social Work*; Midgley and Conley's (2010) book, *Social Work and Social Development: Theories and Skills for Developmental Social Work;* Hugman's (2015) *Social Development in Social Work: Practices and Principles;* and Amadasun's (2019) *Social Work for Social Development in Africa.* There are two handbooks related to social development: *Handbook of Social Work and Social Development in Africa* (Gray, 2017) and *Handbook on Social Protection and Social Development in the Global South* (Patel, Plagerson, & Chinyoka, 2023).

The vast literature on social development, articles published in the SDI and other journals, and in the form of books, has made a significant contribution to our understanding of societal developmental, non-developmental and problematic/uneven/unjust developmental processes and has raised critical awareness of the need to do better, need to do differently and need to look beyond myopic national borders with a global perspective. Admittedly, a challenge has remained as to communicating this effectively to not only social work scholars but also social science researchers generally to gain their traction and generate action. One way of summarizing this literature is in terms of its contribution to broad conceptual development, curriculum development, and theoretical development. These will be discussed in the next section.

Concepts of Social Development

As conceptual development and clarity are precursors to any theory development, many scholars have deliberated on the concept of social development. I do not think any other disciplinary scholars have delved into this area like scholars with social work and social policy discipline backgrounds. These social development concepts try to include the following interconnected variables to discuss and clarify the meaning of social development.

First, focusing on *the goal and purpose*, many scholars suggest that the social development approach helps to achieve welfare, well-being, quality of life, meeting needs, realizing human potential, participation, distribution of resources, creating opportunities, inclusion, eliminating social inequities, and ecological

sustainability (Cox, Pawar, Picton, 1997a; Davis, 2004; Hollister, 1977, 1982; ICSD, 2021; Jones, 1981; Meinert & Kohn, 1987; Meinert, Kohn, & Strickler, 1984; Midgley, 1995, 2014; Mohan & Sharma, 1985; Paiva, 1977, 1982; Pawar, 2014; Pillai, 2017).

Second, purposeful *planning and integration* of, linking or balancing economic and social development is emphasized in the concept of social development by many scholars (e.g., Barker, 2003; Gore, 1973; Midgley, 1995, 2014; Palley, 1984; Pawar, 2014). Although Jones (1981, p. 3) stated that "The shift of emphasis to social development was not, however, intended to suggest a dichotomy between 'social' and 'economic' development." In many nation-states it has been dichotomized to the extent that often social development outlays are perceived as a burden to the state (Midgley, 1995, 2014), though it should be reversed, and consequently many policies and programs have prioritized economic development. It is a critical variable in the social development concept as it has the potential to shift the paradigm of economic growth-focused development to human-focused multi-dimensional and multi-level development.

Third, the social development concept includes varying degrees of emphasis or need to initiate the planned capacity *building of institutions* and or change the structures or building new institutions. The means of doing so also varies from incremental to radical and or from corporation to confrontation depending upon the contexts and social development practitioners (Jones, 1981, p. 3; Mohan, 2010, pp. 205–221; Pathak, 1987; Todaro, 1997, p. 69).

Fourth, *values* as an important aspect of the social development concept, scholars have suggested that human and social rights such as equity, equality and social justice, environmental justice, and collectively, cooperation, freedom from oppression/exploitation, interdependence, global awareness, empathy, honesty, humanism, non-discrimination, open access to information, participation, redistribution, personal freedom/self-determination, self-examination, tolerance, peace, pluralism, healthy human ecology are values of social development (Cummings, 1982, 1983; Falk, 1981, p. 72–75; Farmer, 1983; Farris, 1982; ICSD, 2021; Jones & Pandey, 1977, p. 49; Richardson, Kairys, LaManna, & Krell, 1983; Spaights & Kenner, 1983) (Figure 1).

Thus generally, the social development concept includes values and goals and a planned process of building/changing institutions/structures and balancing overall development and achieving the well-being of the whole population. Beyond these concepts, drawing insights from Hobhouse's (1924) writing on social development, I would like to argue that social development is a philosophy, it is a philosophical concept with ethical connotations (Dean, 2010), and it is an epistemological framework. It is critical to distinguish between facts/knowledge/methods and prevailing reality and consciously unearth the links and delinks between the two and use that analysis for initiating planned change in societies and thereby change in facts. This inherent power and logic in the concept of social development is fascinating (to me).
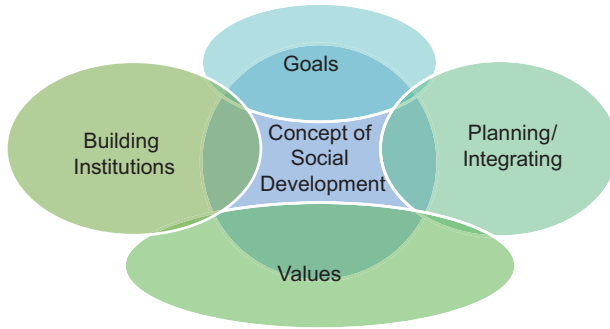
Figure 2   Concept of social development.
Source: Author.

Social development curriculum and training in social work

Along with developing the concept of social development and clarifying it (at least in terms of writing, presenting at conferences, and publishing), many social development scholars have contemplated the issue of how to incorporate the social development curriculum in social work so as to prepare social workers from a social development perspective at graduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels (Cox et al., 1997a; Farris, 1982; Hollister, 1977, p. 17–18, 52; Hollister & Jones, 1981; Midgley & Conley, 2010; Sanders, 1982).

As noted earlier, it is important to acknowledge the significant contributions of John F. Jones (Jack Jones) to the ICSD and social development curriculum. During those early days, Jack Jones was already directing the School of Social Development and took brave steps to reaccredit the MSW program at the University of Minnesota (UM), Duluth as a specialized social development professional program. However, his efforts were not successful at the first attempt because CSWE could not accept anything that diverged from the standard MSW curriculum (Midgley, 2024). While discussing the accreditation report, CSWE asked, "what is this social development" to one of the accreditation commission members, Shanti Khinduka, and was not able to see beyond the dominant social casework/clinical practice model (Khinduka, 2024) at the time. However, CSWE did grant accreditation just 1 year later with essentially the same social development curriculum, and UM at Duluth produced MSWs in social development for many years afterwards (Hollister, 2024).

Such initial resistance and reactions have not discouraged some scholars. According to them, social development curriculum areas tend to include socio-economic, political context, institutional/structural change process; assessing human needs, rights, justice; social theory and social ethics, community organization and development, multisectoral and multi-level focus, policy planning,

programing, implementation, and evaluation (Farris, 1982; Jones & Pandey, 1977, p. 51). There was also a focus on developing social development practice skills among intersectoral workers (Ssenkoloto, 1982) and addressing the inequality of women (Chandler, 1984; Lynch, 1983). Some schools offered a subject or a specialization or a concentration in international social work/social development and a few textbooks were used for that purpose (e.g., Bettman, Jacques, & Frost, 2012; Cox & Pawar, 2013; Estes, 1984, 1998, 2019; Hall & Midgley, 2004; Healy & Thomas, 2021; Hokenstad, Khinduka, & Midgley, 1992; Hugman, 2010; Lyons, 1999; Lyons, Manion, & Carlsen, 2006; Midgley, 2016; Ramanathan & Link, 1999; Tice & Long, 2009). A number of these scholars were associated with the ICSD. Drawing on Pawar, Hugman, Alexabdra, and Anscombe (2017) and Hugman, Pawar, Anscombe, and Wheeler's (2021) work on virtue ethics, ICSD (2022) has developed a Statement of Ethics for social development professionals.

Another important variant in developing social development curriculum in social work is in relation to international social work or international social development, which involves at the minimum exposing social work students and educators to deprived conditions with cultural sensitivity beyond national borders. To achieve this, a range of study abroad programs involving short observation visits, full-length placements, and semester-length courses have been developed. Such programs differ from school to school, depending upon the school's and or individual staff member's interest, commitment, and resources. Some ICSD conferences have facilitated this type of activity, or some scholars have used ICSD conferences as part of such international social work/social development programs (Bell & Anscombe, 2013; Dominelli & Bernard, 2003; Pawar et al., 2004 Pawar, 2016; Ramanathan & Kondrat, 1994). ICSD may not claim full credit for international social work and social development practice activities within professional social work, but it has significantly contributed to it.

Theories of Social Development

Although social work knowledge, skills, and methods are critical and appropriate in some contexts, one of the main theories/hypotheses or propositions of social development is that professional social work's remedial or clinical approach to solving societal problems or meeting needs is inappropriate and inadequate in vast local level contexts globally, and the social development approach provides an effective overall direction for the wellbeing of the whole population and their ecology. Whether this theory is tested or untested, proved, or disproved, I would argue that this is the theory that has birthed the ICSD. It appears this theory is based on the lived experience, insights, and wisdom of many social development thinkers who founded and tried to bring change in the social work curriculum and the profession with varied degrees of success and time, near and far (Hollister, 1977, p. 19). It appears that most of the ICSD founders listed above believed in this theory.

History of the ICSD suggests that MIUCISD appeared to be a brainchild of Paiva, though many colleagues joined hands to create it. So, it is important to consider

his theory of social development. Paiva's (1977) social development theory is based on three prerequisites—political will, an ideology of human focus, caring and relationships, and cooperation—and four core concepts: (1) Inter-systemic integration of social and economic institutions, (2) structural change to distribute and share, (3) development of or altering institutions, and (4) guarding continuously against obsolesce and focusing on innovation. Building on these concepts, Paiva's social development approach includes the development of the capacity of people to work continuously for their own and society's welfare; and the alteration or development of a society's institutions to meet human needs at all levels (pp. 332–333). Paiva's early theoretical conceptualization of social development has influenced the thoughts of many social development scholars.

James Midgley, a long-time supporter of the ICSD, who has been associated with it for several decades, is one of the most influential social development thinkers in the contemporary world. In his social development books (Midgley, 1995, 2014, pp. 212–213) and articles, Midgley has discussed his institutionalism framework for social development, which I rephrase as "institutional theory" of social development. The essence of this theory is that in pluralistic societies there is no sole player in social development. The state, communities, non-government organizations/civil society, and the business/market play critical roles as institutions in social development. The institutional theory requires these institutions to be mobilized and their varied practice strategies to be supported to work together in harmony under the stewardship/leadership of the state to facilitate social development. This theorization may be connected to one of the core concepts in social development, building/altering institutions, or structures, as discussed.

Under the leadership of Shanti Khinduka, one of the founders of the ICSD, then the dean of the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University, St Louis, Michael Sherraden founded the Centre for Social Development in 1994 and directed it from the beginning to continue his research on assets and the poor. His "asset building theory" is based on the assumption that "welfare transfers that stimulate asset accumulation are ultimately more powerful antipoverty measures than those designed for immediate consumption" (Gilbert, 1991, p. XIV). Following the idea of "stakeholding", it focuses on savings, investment, and asset accumulation. To overcome poverty, poor people must accumulate a stake in the system. A stake in the system means, in one form or another, holding assets. This theory-oriented research by Sherraden (1991) has influenced asset-based policies in the US and many other countries. Implementation of asset-based policies has helped over 5 million children in the US and 20 million globally to have child development accounts. Overall, it has enhanced the capacity and well-being of people.

While, at times, most of the social development literature appears to be normative and hortatory, Leila Patel from South Africa is the only scholar in the world, who has validated social development theory through her research on social welfare and social development (Patel, 2015) that has global implications. Her research shows that cash transfers as a social protection mechanism help to

achieve social development of people in terms of enhancing health, education, housing, employment, and poverty alleviation, particularly for children, women, the disabled, and the elderly. Patel's research work has helped to improve the social development theory that in some contexts, merely cash transfers are not enough, and such provisions should be buttressed by additional support and guidance to some individuals and families to make the assistance meaningful to them and thereby enhance their social development (Hunter, et al., 2021; Nnaeme, et al., 2020; Patel, 2015, 2024; Patel & Ross, 2022; Patel, et al., 2020; Patel, et al., 2023). In addition to the state as a prime player, there is a necessity to navigate other institutions to achieve social development (Plagerson et al., 2019), which confirms Midgley's institutionalism discussed earlier.

Brij Mohan is one of the leading critical social thinkers in the social work and social development field. He was the founding Editor-in-Chief of a peer-reviewed journal for about two decades (1984–2005), and it is currently published as *Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy* by Cambridge University Press, running 40th volume in 2024. He was the editor of the SDI. One of Mohan's trilogies encapsulates his critical zeitgeist (ideas and beliefs of a particular period) in the field (Mohan, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2024). In his theorization, Mohan (2010, p. 205, 221) argues for a post-material process of human-societal transformation involving universalization of equality and justice on the one hand, and annihilation of violence, war, and disease on the other to ensure new social development substance, contours, and contents. His theorization hinges on the social development's agenda of universal well-being. Mohan's ideas have contributed to both, the initial construction and later, deconstruction of social development (Mohan, 2010, 2015; Mohan & Sharma, 1985). According to Mohan (2024a), "As European economists and the United Nations helped shape the agenda for Social Development's future, an Algerian philosopher-psychiatrist's explosion unleashed a tsunami of revolutionary consciousness unveiling the violent brutality of colonial exploitation that had far-reaching implications for the decolonization of the Global South". In his preface to Frantz Fanon's classic *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Jean-Paul Sartre wrote:

> "The European élite undertook to manufacture a native élite. They picked out promising adolescents; they them, as with a red-hot iron, with the principles of western culture, they stuffed their mouths full of high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to the teeth. ... From Paris, from London, from Amsterdam we would utter the words 'Parthenon! Brotherhood!' and somewhere in Africa or Asia lips would open" ... thenon! ... therhood!' It was the golden age. It came to an end; the mouths opened by branded themselves; the yellow and black voices still spoke of our humanism but only to reproach us with our inhumanity.... Just look at what we have made of them.! Then, indeed, Europe could believe in her mission; she had hellenized the Asians; she had created a new breed, the Graeco-Latin Negroes. We might add, quite between ourselves, as men of

the world: 'After all, let them bawl their heads off, it relieves their feelings; dogs that bark don't bite.'" (Fanon, 1961: 7–8)

Drawing on such thoughts, Mohan (2024a) contends that *Social Development* grew out of Western guilt and institutional narcissism.

Pawar's ideas are largely influenced by Midgley's (1995, 2014), Gore's (1973), and Cox's (Pawar & Cox, 2010) writings on social development. To translate social development ideas, Pawar's social development approach delineates inter-linked seven composite variables. These are understanding current conditions in a range of social development dimensions, by following certain values and pro-cesses, setting goals, developing plans and strategies, and achieving change in those dimensions as per the goals (Pawar, 2014, p. 22–32). His theorization of social development does not juxtapose social development with economic devel-opment, rather economic development, howsoever crucial, is positioned as one of the dimensions of social development along with other dimensions. This theoriza-tion first calls for change in the cognition of individuals and societies about social and economic development and second altering institutions to value all dimen-sions without domination of any other dimensions to achieve social development. Among the multi-levels, it emphasizes social development at the local level as it has been most neglected (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Pawar & Cox, 2010).

Impact of International Consortium for Social Development

After completing a significant milestone of 50 years, it is important to reflect on the impact of the ICSD as a global multidisciplinary professional body. The above discussion shows that it has successfully engaged with a large number of univer-sities, organizations, and individual scholars and organized more than 50 inter-national conferences in different parts of the world and published 45 volumes of SDI. Over such a long period, both institutions and individuals have engaged and disengaged with ICSD, with some exceptions, which is natural. Despite fluctua-tions in its membership and size, ICSD has maintained consistency in the three activities and respective achievements. This is not possible without making an impact and without engaging others. As per its mission, it has been spreading the knowledge of social development and helping people develop professional net-works, though there is no way to measure it accurately, objectively, and quickly covering the period of a half-century. However, for any ambitious, critical, and optimistic thinker, questions do linger at this juncture. Has it done enough? Whether it should have done more or differently?

There is some evidence to suggest that ICSD has made a significant impact on professional social work, social work bodies/associations, some social work schools, and some social work scholars, whether others acknowledge it or give credit to ICSD is immaterial. In his reflective article, Paiva (1997, p. 117–118) observes that ideas discussed in the consortium meetings "were carried over to

other meetings such as the Council on Social Work Education, the National Association of Social Workers, and the International Association of the Schools of Social Work". Similarly, Meinert (1991, p. 3) notes that under the ICSD pressure, the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education included consortium members' presentations and sessions on international social welfare. Such presentations set a stage for special interest symposia which became a regular feature of Annual Program Meetings.

In 1977, Jones and Pandey (1977, p. 49) observed:

> A number of values—both normative and instrumental—which guide institutional relations and behavior do not receive sufficiently explicit consideration in social work. These include human and social rights such as equity, equality and social justice, collectivity, cooperation, freedom from oppression, interdependence, etc. These values are the cornerstone of social development.

In 2014, the internationally agreed global definition of social work included terms such as "social change and development", "liberation of people", "social justice", "human rights", "diversity", and "structures". Why did it take more than 30 years to introduce such change is another question. Today, many social work codes of ethics include both normative and instrumental values and some social work accreditation bodies require curriculum on social justice, human rights, and international social work (see Pawar & Thomas, 2017). However, one cannot claim that these changes are due to the ICSD's impact. Hollister (2015), one of the founders of ICSD stated:

> …in the 1970s CSWE, IASSW, IFSW, and ICSW did not have very much content on social development in their conferences. That has now changed, due I think in part to the influence of the Consortium on the other international social work organizations. Lynne Healy acknowledges this ICSD influence in her book, *International Social Work.*

In fact, since 2010, International Association of Schools of Social Work/ International Federation of Social Workers/ International Council on Social Welfare (IASSW/IFSW/ICSW) changed their joint world conference name to "social work and social development". In relation to this nomenclature change, metaphorically one may wonder that by and large social work bottle appeared to be changing, but not the wine as it is mostly rooted in clinical practice so far. Although such curriculum change has not occurred, social work scholars are increasingly becoming aware of developmental social work, more so in the global south and many social work programs include some aspects of social development in terms of social policy and planning, community organization and development, self-help groups, microfinance and macro practice focus, and practice

placements in developmental settings. For example, ICSD had made an impact on David Cox's work in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region (Cox, 1995; Cox, Pawar, & Picton, 1997a, 1997b), who propagated the idea of incorporating a social development perspective in social work curricula. Such examples may be identified elsewhere. However, it is difficult to say that such changes are only because of the work of ICSD, though one tends to think that it has certainly contributed to it.

The ICSD has provided an important platform for many scholars to deliver keynote addresses, plenary speeches, conduct focused workshops/presentations, and receive its prestigious awards, and get international exposure. I am sure these opportunities have contributed to enhancing their professional profile and careers. It has certainly enhanced mine. I recall that in 2012, the then minister of social welfare, the Republic of Indonesia, used the ICSD Asia-Pacific conference (hosted by them) occasion to seek more funding for the welfare ministry. Some ICSD events have attracted media attention too. These and similar activities of the ICSD have promoted social development knowledge and practice.

To further reflect on the impact of the ICSD, it is insightful to read two quotes from Paiva (1997, p. 121).

> Sometime before John Moore died he called me and wanted to know whether I was pleased with the way the consortium was going as the founding group conceived it in 1974. I replied: "I think so. Of course it is not proceeding exactly as we thought it would or should. Like parents we gave birth to it. As parents we have 'to let our children go!'"

This powerful quote helps us consider how we have gone, how we are going, and how we need to or should go with ICSD.

Pavia (1997, p. 122) concluded his recount as follows:

> Perhaps one way to know how effective we have been in promoting social development in an international partnership is to ask ourselves the question: Have we 'touched the lives of people oppressed by conditions of poverty and unjust social structures?' If the answer is yes, we continue to forge ahead to serve humbly and well. If not, we have fresh challenges to meet. Could we say that the reality perhaps is something of both?

Social development scholars and practitioners may respond to Paiva's questions differently depending on their lived experiences. In my more than 40 years of professional life experience, have I touched the lives of people oppressed by conditions of poverty and unjust social structures? I doubt. If you are like me or somewhat like me, let us think about how we, ICSD, can meet this challenge. If you have touched such lives, help us do the same "humbly and well" by sharing your knowledge, skills, and wisdom. ICSD is waiting with open arms to welcome both types of scholars and practitioners to plan together to meet this challenge.

Carving the Future of ICSD

ICSD has 50 years of solid ground to carve its future. As the current president of the ICSD, I would like to share some thoughts on the future of the ICSD. First, this carving must be a collective activity of ICSD members and friends. It should not be an individual endeavor. I hope these thoughts will generate collective carving. To John Moore's question above, when ICSD was 23 years old, Paiva (1997, p. 121) recounted:

> In retrospect the success of the consortium may be attributed to a number of factors: leadership, knowledge building, adequate time, appropriate linkages for institutionalizing, as well as good communication at all levels with the resources that could be commandeered.

This is so well said; in fact, it is true with any organization, not necessarily only with the ICSD. But it aptly applies to ICSD now at its 50th year! We must mobilize leadership, members, and institutions, and their unwavering commitment and passion for social development ideas and practice and thereby to the ICSD. I am sure, with commitment and passion, we can mobilize resources and generate social development knowledge. All members are leaders, and all leaders are members, and all leaders are followers, and all followers are leaders. Leaders do not wait; they act. The first step you can take is to join ICSD at https://www.socialdevelopment.net/membership/ and help us mobilize the above-stated resources to continue ICSD activities–biennial international conferences and SDI journal–with more zeal towards the zenith. This is not a marketing strategy; it is a strategy for intellectual exercise, it is a strategy for touching the lives of the people who are oppressed and oppressing globally and for changing the oppressive structures that cause multi-dimensions of poverty. We need to organize and operate better.

Although social work is a good ally for social development, given the goal, broad scope and agenda of social development – universal well-being, targeting the whole population, united peaceful one world – ICSD's activities and measures should not be limited by what social work professional bodies and social workers think, say and do. Social work's action, though critical, is one of the steps toward social development's direction. Some remedial social workers are necessary. Advancement of science and technology on the one hand and its application for development on the other do inevitably produce problems and social work services are vital to attend to those problems. Social development practitioners need to be tasked with planning the process of the application of science and technology and development in such a way that the occurrence of the problems is prevented and if and when they occur they are proactively managed. About a century ago, Hobhouse (1924, p. 15) argued: " ...social development is a phase in the cosmic process of the development of Mind under conditions which it can never abolish, but can and gradually does subdue to its own ends".

From this perspective, ICSD needs to play a critical role in further incorporating social development content in social work schools. As stated earlier, now, only the Joint World Social Work Congress name has changed to "Social Work and Social Development". It is a good beginning, never too late. It should percolate down to, if not all, most school levels so as to change the name of the schools to School of Social Work and Social Development. One may wonder what is there in the name. Language matters and it signifies the explicit commitment to social development ideas. This open commitment in the name is likely to lead to social development-oriented curricula and the preparation of developmental social work practitioners. However, ICSD's work should not be measured and limited by what professional social work does and does not as it is only one of the steps towards the ICSD's goal.

Towards realizing its mighty goal and vast scope, ICSD may explore the potential of forming a multi-social sciences-based independent social development discipline. It is not entirely a new idea (Pawar & Midgley, 2017). There are already social development schools/departments in some universities in a few countries (e.g., in Indonesia and a few countries in Africa). There is also an Indonesian Association of Social Development, which annually meets to bring together all social development schools. Such schools may be helped to design social development work placement curricula to train students. There are also several schools of development studies, though most of them appear to be dominated by economics discipline. However, it is worth pursuing developing an independent social development discipline to address on the one hand multi-dimensions of poverty at multiple levels and on the other to progress towards a united peaceful world and universal well-being.

Despite the sincere efforts of many colleagues over the years, the ICSD's flagship journal, SDI, needs more work. I am sure, many ICSD colleagues have good ideas and plans. Under the current competitive market, the journal needs to achieve relatively comparable impact factor scores and similar indicators. Many colleagues are aware of steps to be taken towards that end and I hope those steps are taken sooner than later. It is a fully free online journal now and we need to ensure that it remains so in a self-reliant manner.

Our legacy summarized in this article shows that ICSD and social development scholars have generated a significant amount of knowledge in terms of conferences, articles, 45 volumes of the journal, and several books. There is no comprehensive way of knowing how this knowledge is accessed and used. One narrow way of knowing this is through citations. We need to reach out to other social sciences scholars, who can build this knowledge further. As per our vision and mission, we need to conduct more research on social development with rigor to attract other social sciences and to increase its use for social development. ICSD should be known as an organization of intellectuals and innovative thinkers. ICSD and its branches should grow, not necessarily in its membership numbers, but in terms of knowledge creation to change and achieve social development.

ICSD needs to create better opportunities for social development scholars and practitioners to work with a range of stakeholders such as UN organizations, the Second World Summit for Social Development in 2025, multilateral organizations, government and non-government organizations, and communities. Since the Copenhagen Social Development Declaration in 1995, goal-oriented and targeted global development throughout the millennium and sustainable development goals seems to be changing the landscape of social development (Midgley & Pawar, 2017b; Pawar, 2017b). ICSD needs to be more active in this landscape beyond organizing development-themed conferences, which we have done in the past. Revolutions in digital technology and artificial intelligence are truly making our global village smaller and smaller and posing new challenges and opportunities for the social development of communities. Innovation for social development needs to be part of the ICSD's future (Pawar & Midgley, 2017).

Finally, ICSD members' views and their suggestions (Pawar & Androff, 2021) and the strategic draft plan based on them (Pawar & Lough, 2021), need to be considered in imagining the future of the ICSD. As stated at the beginning of this section, shaping the future of the ICSD is a joint venture. Based on my own reflection and anticipation, some thoughts presented here may serve as a precursor to our collective carving of the ICSD into new horizons.

Conclusions: ICSD's Legacy and Future

As briefly discussed at the beginning, 50 years ago the socio-economic, political, cultural, and professional conditions in which ICSD was born are not the same now. The language, the "third world" phrase, has changed, but the lust to dominate it in different forms and shapes continues in the current world (dis)order. How should the ICSD prepare itself to fit and act in the current and emerging socio-economic, political, cultural, professional, and technological conditions? To pose and ponder about this critical question, the rare golden jubilee occasion of the ICSD has created a brilliant opportunity for me to familiarize with the rich legacy of the ICSD, reflect on it, and share some of my thoughts about where and how ICSD may lead into the future; a journey known to the unknown is often exciting with fortitude and promise. Having associated with and served ICSD for nearly two decades, while drafting this article, I felt nostalgic, privileged, and proud. Reading the literature on ICSD and understanding the social development knowledge it has created, made me conscious of my limitations, which I must admit here.

First, my views, though based on secondary data and experiences, are biased. As it is a celebratory article, I did not want to take a critical stance in my analysis. I wanted to praise and thank everyone associated with the ICSD. Inadvertently, if I have not acknowledged anyone, left people who have contributed to ICSD or left important details, my sincere apologies. I also wanted to read more and cite more social development scholars and their articles, but given time and space constraints, I have not been able to do so. If I have left any important work, it is not

intentional, but my apologies for such omission. In a few cases, historical details were not available or accessible, or I might have failed to heed them. I have not included ICSD's governance structure, which is stated in the ICSD constitution, and is readily available on the ICSD website. For factual errors and misinterpretations, if any, I am responsible.

This article has summarized the origin and evolving purpose of the ICSD and honored all previous leaders of the ICSD. As I stand on the shoulders of those leaders, I find their work, dedication, and direction to the ICSD inspiring. Over 50 years, ICSD has created an uninterrupted track of organizing its biennial international conferences, including branches, in different parts of the world, publishing 45 volumes of SDI and significantly contributing to social development theory and practice. This sound foundation provides ICSD, its leaders, and its friends to look ahead with confidence and visualize a farsighted future for the ICSD. Towards that end, I have shared a few thoughts relating to mobilizing required resources, working with social work and extending beyond it, focusing on the goal of social development, strengthening the journal, engaging with stakeholders, researching with rigor and making an impact. In the spirit of social development, crafting this future needs to be a collective, collaborative, and cooperative endeavor.

The essence of ICSD is social development. Social development is part of and process of social evolution. While discussing social evolution, Hobhouse (1924, p. 31) in his book, *Social Development: Its Nature and Conditions*, states:

> The one thing certain is that the play is not played out, is so far from being played out that we cannot even say what act we are in at this moment of history, though it would seem to be one of the critical stages of the piece. Furthermore we are not spectators merely, but actors, and our living interests are deeply engaged. Can we under all these difficulties form any notion of the plot? Are we sure that there is a plot at all, and that our play is not a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing?

This significant milestone of ICSD is a critical stage for us in the social evolution of social development. Let us not be merely spectators as our living interests are deeply engaged. Let us not allow others (idiots) to define our play as a tale signifying nothing. Let us act together to signify something.

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Appendix 1: ICSD Office bearers from 2021 to 2025

President	Dr. Manohar Pawar, 2017–2021; July 2021–July 2025, Australia
Vice President for Special Projects	Dr. Heather Walter-McCabe, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, USA
Vice President for Planning and Organization Evaluation	Dr. Komalsingh Rambaree, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, Sweden
Vice President for Public Relations and Communications	Dr. Mithun Mostafizur R., Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, Bangladesh
Secretary General	Dr. Francis Okello, 14 April 2021–15 April 2025, USA
Treasurer	Dr. Benjamin J. Lough, July 2021–July 2025, USA
Associate Secretary-General for Regional Branches	Dr. Chathapuram S. Ramanathan, 2020–2024, USA
Associate Secretary-General for Membership	Dr. Sharvari Karandikar, 2020–2024, USA
Associate Secretary-General for Communication	Vacant
Director of Information Technology	Dr. Vikash Kumar, 2020–2024, USA
President, European Branch	Dr. Gordana Berc, Croatia
Chair, Asia-Pacific Branch	Dr. Asok Kumar Sarkar, India
Convener, Africa Branch	Dr. Lauren Graham, South Africa
Chair, SDI Board of Managers	Dr. Tejaswini Patil, 2020–2024, Australia
SDI Board of Managers	Dr. James, Midgley, Dr. Brij Mohan, Dr. Ram Ramanathan, Dr. Antoinette Lombard

Social Development Issues

Editor	Dr. Brij Mohan, 2021–2024, USA
Associate Editor	Dr. Philip Wong, 2021–2024, USA

Members at Large

Dr. Sarath Gamlath, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, Sri Lanka	Dr. Lakshmana G, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, India
Dr. Brij Mohan, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, USA	Dr. Eleni Papouli, Oct. 2020–Oct. 2024, Greece
Dr. George Palattiyil, July 2021–July 2025, UK	Dr. Marissa Kaloga, July 2021–July 2025, New Zealand
Dr. Liljana Rihter, July 2021–July 2025, Slovenia	Vacant

ICSD conference chairs

22 ICSD Conference Chairs, 2021–2023	Dr. Leila Patel/Dr. Lauren Graham
	Dr. Antoinette Lombard, South Africa
23 ICSD Conference Chair, 2022–2025	Dr. Komalsingh Rambaree, Sweden
24 ICSD Conference Chair, 2024–2026	Dr. George Palattiyil, UK

Appendix 2: ICSD Europe Branch Publications

1. Stropnik, N. (Ed.). (1997). Social and economic aspects of ageing societies: An important social development issue. Proceedings of 5th Biannual European IUCSD Conference, Ljubljana, Sep 25–28, 1997.

2. Salustowicz, P. (Ed.) (2001). Civil society and social development. Proceedings of the 6th Biennial European IUCSD Conference in Krakow 1999, Peter Lang, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt/M, New York, Oxford, Wien.

3. Shilnevy, L., & Sundby, R. (Eds.). (2000). Social work and social development – New trends in a changing Europe. Proceedings, 7th Biennial European IUCSD Conference, Riga.

4. Gerrits, F., & Salustowicz, P. (Eds.). (2003). Urban community work in the context of social development. Proceedings of the 8th Biennial European IUCSD Conference in The Hague 2002, The Hague 2003.

5. Heimgartner, Arno (Ed.) (2006). Face of research on European social development. Proceedings of the 9th Biennial European IUCSD Conference in Graz 2004, LIT-Verlag Wien.

6. Salustowicz, P. (Ed.) (2008). Social policy and social work – From an international development perspective. The 10th Biennial ICSD European Conference at the Warsaw School of Social Psychology, Warsaw 2006, LiT-Verlag, Berlin 2008.

7. Sandu, D. (Ed.) (2010). European societies in transition, social development and social work. Proceedings of the 11th Biennial European IUCSD Conference in Cuza, 2008, LiT-Verlag, Berlin 2010.

8. Elsen, Susanne, & Lorenz, Walter A. (Eds.). (2014). Social innovation, participation and the development of society (Soziale Innovation, Partizipation und die Entwicklung der Gesellschaft).

9. Sundby, Roar, & Heimgartner, Arno (Eds.). (2016). *Welfare society - An aim for social development.* LIT Verlag.

10. Auferbauer, Martin, Berc, Gordana, Heimgartner, Arno, Rihter, Liljana, & Sundby, Roar. (Eds.) (2019). Social development - Ways of understanding society and practising social work. Lit Verlag.

11. Gordana Berc, Arno Heimgartner, Karin Lauernmann, Hannelore Reicher, & Elena Stuhlarrer. (Eds.) (2024). Kritik und Engagement in der Sozialen Arbeit. Lit Verlag.

Appendix 3: ICSD Asia-Pacific Branch activity-related Publications

Guest edited special issue

Pawar, M. (guest editor), (2008). Interventions in Disasters, a special issue of the Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Development, Vol. 18(2).

Articles in journals

Mohan, B. (2009). Professor David Cox lecture on international social work. The entropy of developmentalism: Modernity's challenge to human dignity. *Journal of Comparative Social Welfare, 25*(2), 173–184.

Pawar, M. (2015). Action research on social work knowledge creation and dissemination from the global south. *British Journal of Social Work, 45*(4), 1357–1364. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcv043

Pawar, M. (2023). Culminating crises: Reflections and learnings for sustainable development. *International Journal of Community and Social Development, 5*(1), 10–29. https://doi.org/10.1177/25166026231151619

Books

Midgley, J., & Pawar, M. (Eds.) (2017). *Future direction in social development.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pawar, M. (2010). *Community development in Asia and the Pacific.* New York: Routledge.

Sarkar, A. K., & Ghosh, P. K. (Eds.) (2017). *Human development and sustainability: Challenges and strategies.* New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers.