



# World News

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## #cifgoesaroundtheworld #60Yearscif



The Council of International Fellowship Magazine

## From the Editor's Corner

**D**ear Friends and Colleagues, Members of CIF,

\*The COVID-19 pandemic provides us with the opportunity to conduct a reality check on the state of affairs of international relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. By definition a pandemic will usher in a new chapter in international relations; it upsets the pattern of relations that is taking place as each actor in the international system seeks to crisis manage the health scare in a manner that is least disruptive economically and politically.



The sudden shock that the COVID-19 pandemic unleashed upon the international system has resulted in a nebulous and challenging moment in international relations. This historic development has ushered in a much more fluid, volatile, and uncertain situation in post-Cold War relations. The collapse of the global political and economic order in such a short space of time and lack of coherence on the way forward reflects the “sui genesis” of international relations when historic moments happen. The fact that the post COVID-19 pandemic character and structure of world politics will be radically altered is indisputable. But, it is too soon to interpret whether this new phase will be a transitory or permanent one. Some observers claim that the post-pandemic period will be a temporary phase that may have a negative impact that lasts a few years and will largely consist of trial and error episodes of managing to live with the new normal. Others argue that the new uncertain moment we are in is here to stay as the international system of states comes to terms with the fragility of living in a globalized world of close to 8 billion people. This pandemic has provided us with a real time case study of the transnational nature of security in a world of global mobility. If such a borderless world is to continue to be the landmark of twenty-first century relations what contingency planning and mechanisms are going to be set up to contend with this new reality?

Security is all about planning for the worse and hoping for the best. This has not been the global case though. The time has come to recalibrate security priorities by adopting a much more holistic security framework that places a premium on health care, environmental protection and universal education. Expenditure on military procurement should only focus on resources required to defend one's country.

The lockdown that has been imposed by most governments resulted in a breakdown of the fabric of society and undermined globalization in all sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace at which ICT technology has become an even more fundamental factor in our daily lives, as can be witnessed by the fact that social media has grown exponentially via Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom and other technological platforms. Yet, while technology can assist in making up for the absence of human contact during an emergency it is clear that technology is no substitute to humans being able to interact with one another on a permanent basis. Social interaction is fundamentally important if the mental wellbeing of the people is to be maintained.

One of the basic features of the so called new normal is the principle of “social distancing” which sounds simple enough but in reality means a complete change of lifestyle. A second one is that suddenly geographic distance matters more. Intercontinental trade collapsed rapidly once the pandemic emerged. One should now think of investing in regional supply chains that consists of states that are geographically proximate so as to enhance geopolitical stability in uncertain times. And last but not least, one must rethink economicsof globalization. Should networks of production turn towards regional modalities of cooperation instead of a global system that has dominated since the end of the Cold War? (C.Calleja, S., 2020)



by Maria Christopoulou,  
Editor, *World News*

Perhaps our greatest learning, or should I say confirmation, is how desperately we all need **Social Networking** but how to use it in a constructive way.

### Dear Colleagues,

The COVID-19 pandemic is the most adverse peacetime shock to the global economy in over a century. The economic consequences of this evolving crisis will impact negatively both developed and developing countries for years to come. Strengthening networking, international chats and cooperation among us will be a step forward to a new era. We need to think positively and creatively revalue our goals and objectives and start working towards rebuilding for a new tomorrow.

I would like to congratulate our Executive Committee (EC) that undertook the responsibility to continue our communication and act upon energetically and positively to create the forum for virtual meetings for both EC and BD. More should be done and we should think widely on using social media more, to organize more training seminars, discussion groups, task force groups with open discussions on preset topics of common interest for all of us. We can do this and we can take this opportunity to expand and make our association known to the world as WE can make a difference.

**Maria Christopoulou,**

**President CIF Cyprus, editor CIF World News**

*\*Prof. Stephen C. Calleya (Editor) (2020) Towards a Post Pandemic Euro-Mediterranean Strategy, Med Agenda, MEDAC, Publications in Mediterranean IR and Diplomacy.*

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The sudden shock that the COVID-19 pandemic unleashed upon the international system has resulted in a nebulous and challenging moment in international relations.  
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## CIF International President's Message

**A** quick note to share with you about the first six months of 2020.

Throughout the world we are living a very special year. Our activities stopped overnight – all because of a virus that has spread to every country in the world. Our lives have been turned upside down and we have each put in place means of protection according to the decisions of governments. Contradictory and opposing actions communicated; awareness is not the same, the means to protect yourself either! But, we CIF members want to remain united and move forward with new projects.



**Mireille Boucher,**  
President CIF International

The more or less strict confinement has been put in place: we wear masks or not, but no more hugs; barrier gestures are essential! We can no longer travel although it is slowly coming back in some countries. All the 2020 programs have been canceled; CIF Morocco was the first affected since the first measures were taken when the program was to start this day in March. All the events of our association for this year have been canceled: 60 years of CIF International in Rotterdam in July, Board of Directors (BD) meeting in Marrakech scheduled for November.

We have innovated with an online BD meeting to validate the Annual Activities Report (AAR) 2019 in particular and make decisions for CIF International. It's a first experience for everyone. The Executive Committee (EC) met several times online to prepare for these meetings and organize the work. Now we are looking towards 2021 – CIF INDIA will not be able to organize the conference. We try to collectively imagine the future of our association. We want to be able to organize IPEPs in 2021 but it is difficult to know the conditions of travel and stays in the world in the coming

months.

We will meet again in a few weeks to continue to bring CIF International to life: meetings by internet of course, and we very much hope for face-to-face meetings as soon as international conditions allow it.

I wish everyone to protect themselves well and to take care of those they love. CIF is still there and we will all be united and strong to continue to develop our association. Tomorrow will be a great day. More than ever friendship and solidarity are the words that should allow CIF to continue to build bridges.

With solidarity,

Mireille BOUCHER

President CIF INTERNATIONAL

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## ***IPEP's Manual Revised:* Helping to guide CIF's future**

*By Margit Randaru, IPEP Coordinator*

**The *IPEP Manual* is working guidance for CIF's vital International Professionals Exchange Program (IPEP) activity; so it is periodically reviewed, and where necessary updated.** CIF International's Board of Directors (BD) meeting in 2019 decided that the *IPEP Manual* and all relevant additional documents would be edited, to be approved by the next BD meeting in November 2020. The *IPEP Manual* was revised through a small working group: Dorte Feierabend (convener of the IPEP Standards and Quality Workgroup), Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen (convener of the Committee 2028), Paul Dolan (outside expert) and Margit Randaru (IPEP coordinator).

The revised *IPEP Manual* now in draft emphasises the positive future development of IPEPs. It gives a comprehensive description of the present situation of IPEPs in practice, but it also states that CIF is itself a learning organization. Accordingly, further developments in IPEPs are welcome and to be supported. Fundamentally, for CIF to develop and maintain high-quality IPEPs it is necessary to focus on the main goal of the CIF organization: to promote international understanding and world peace through training, and through exchanging experiences, for professionals in human services.

In the revised *Manual* the underlying principles on which IPEPs are based are listed as cooperation, transparency, openness, flexibility, simplicity and embodying the spirit of CIF: sharing, exchanging, caring, receiving and giving.

The revised *Manual* describes the important stakeholders in IPEPs, and their tasks and responsibilities. The *Manual* is thus not only about organizing an IPEP with individuals, but also the context: about preparing the candidates and dealing with other issues that concern sending branches or contact persons. Also personal data protection requirements are specified.

The changes proposed now appear more significant than the group working on the *Manual* initially expected, so it is important to have comments and statements from all National Branches (NBs) and Contact Persons (CPs) before it is presented to the Board of Directors (BD) meeting 2020.

**Consultation: Issues for wider discussion**

In May 2020 the draft version of *IPEP Manual*, together with identified issues and questions for discussion and feedback, was sent out to all CIF NBs and CPs.

There are some general issues about the draft:

- Is the *Manual* in this form of use/helpful in organizing a successful IPEP?
- Could it leave out or add something specific?
- Is it easy enough to understand it for all who have to do with the organization and conduct of an IPEP?
- Does this *Manual* set the right standards?
- Is this *Manual* supportive for trying out new ways of organizing an IPEP, identifying new target groups, or would it hold back initiatives?

In addition the working group found a few issues that were not easy to resolve by a drafting process on its own. They are summarised here. For further context please see the draft *Manual*.

- **What is the status of this *Manual*?** Are there sanctions if parts are not followed by a National Branch?
- **Role of Contact Persons in the IPEP process.** Can Contact Persons be treated in the *Manual* as if they were National Branches – both legally and practically? Being responsible for holding applicants' personal data, for example. Can they be accountable to CIF in the same way as National Branches? If not, what exceptions need to be made in the *Manual*? Do they need special support in specific tasks? For example, through another National Branch or the CIF EC Coordinator for Contact Persons or IPEPs?
- **Multiple simultaneous applications.** Is it acceptable for more than one application to be made by an applicant, i.e., to different countries? If so, how are such applications to be reconciled, with minimum effort?
- **Reasons for rejecting applications.** How specific can grounds for rejection be? Four reasons are cited, and also grounds for **not** accepting reasons for rejection are cited – discriminatory grounds. Case examples might help identify the key issues in practices, e.g. certain disabilities, and how important and realistic "expectations" might be.
- **Approval of IPEPs by CIF.** A formal process is outlined involving the Board of Directors and the EC (as is stated in the Statutes of CIF International, art. 10). What is recent experience of the process?
- **Personal Data Protection, Consent and Management.** There are **CIF International** data holdings (a database) and there are **National Branch (NB)** and possibly **Contact Person (CP)** records on individuals. The active consent to data processing is addressed in the *Manual*, and a distinction is made between consent for processing data in connection with an IPEP program (which includes forwarding some data, for example to agencies and to host families) and retaining and possibly needing to update data on individuals, for the later development of programs and CIF activity. The issue of retention is therefore one where discussion could help – retention of what data, for what specific purpose,

for how long? How much detail should be in the *Manual* and what CIF forms are needed?

2020 is a very extraordinary year for everyone including CIF – most of the IPEPs planned for this year have been cancelled due to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak. Let us use this crisis, and take time to analyse our programs to think how we want them to be in the future.

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## CIF Annual Report 2019, some highlights

The seventh Annual Report of the Council of International Fellowship (CIF) is available and sent to all Branches and contact persons for further distribution. The Executive Committee (EC) of CIF International, **together with the Board of Directors (BD) and CIF members**, has looked back at the objectives set in 2019 and the progress we have made.

### **International Professional Exchange Programs (IPEP) information**

Organizing exchange programs is the core of CIF. In 2019, 13 National Branches organized 13 CIF International Professional Exchange Programs (IPEPs): Austria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Scotland, Sweden and Turkey. In addition, CIPUSA offers every year exchange programs that range from two weeks to 18 months in duration and span a variety of professional fields.

All 13 National Branches provided information about the IPEPs they completed, by sending a Final Evaluation Report (FER) 2019.

One hundred and thirty (130) applications were submitted for CIF International Professional Exchange Programs in 2019. Sixty-six applications were accepted and 57 participants completed the program. So, only 51 percent of the applicants were accepted in the programs, whereas two IPEPs were cancelled in 2019 because they did not get any or enough applications (Nepal, Taiwan).

The applicants pointed out that they got information about CIF and IPEPs through:

- Friend, colleague
- Internet (incl. CIF International website)
- Local NB
- Local social work association.

Most IPEPs are organized in cooperation with universities/social work schools (only two IPEPs did not have this kind of cooperation) and invited lecturers, mostly for the orientation lectures, lectures about social policy and the country's social system (five IPEPs did not invite lecturers). Seven IPEPs also had cooperation with the local professional associations (visits to local social work associations, some IPEPs got financial support from these associations).

The IPEP orientation program lasts from one day to two weeks; the average is four days long. All programs have agency visits, which are mostly arranged according to the interests of the participants. Programs include group visits as well as individual visits. Agencies include governmental agencies (ministries, state organizations), local municipalities and their organizations, as well as NGOs and different projects in various areas of social work and related fields.

Also, all IPEPs have host family living, making CIF programs unique. In most programs, the participants stay with at least two different host families.

### **Reported participant feedback about benefits of the IPEP 2019:**

- Meeting people, new friendships
- Learning about cultures and traditions of the host country

- Appreciating new approach to culture, history, politics and society of the host country
- Discovering new professional approaches
- Enriching exchange, sharing experiences, international peer group learning
- Living in host families
- Learning to appreciate success and projects in the home country
- Learning about social realities, social welfare systems and services of the host country
- Experiencing the spirit of CIF
- Appreciating the balance between cultural and professional learning
- Best experience ever!

#### **CIF Organization**

The organizational breakdown is described in the Report:

- General Assembly
- Board of Directors
- Executive Committee.
- Tasks and duties of all the EC members are also described.

CIF has a total of 29 National Branches plus CIPUSA in 2019. In a country without a National Branch, there can be a contact person, who keeps in contact with the organization. A CIF Contact Person (CP) is a former participant of a CIF or CIPUSA professional exchange program. The total number of CPs in 2019 is 17.

#### **Committees**

Besides the permanent Financial Advisory Committee and the Election Committee, three special committees are active:

- Public Relations Committee
- CIF 2028
- New Website Working Group.

#### **Meetings**

**The EC came together twice in 2019. The first meeting was held in Madrid, Spain with a great hosting by CIF Spain in March 2019. The second EC meeting and BD meeting took place in June 2019 in St Malo, France, before the CIF Conference. On the last day of the Conference in St Malo, the General Assembly took place.**

#### **CIF International conference**

In 2019, the 33<sup>rd</sup> CIF Conference was held in St. Malo, France. For more information please see the website: <http://cif-france.org/en/conference-lectures/>

The theme of the Conference was: "New Public Management (NPA) in the Social Field: impacts and alternatives."

There were 200 participants from 28 countries present. Attendees came from North and South America, Asia, Africa and Europe. The largest delegations came from Germany and CIF France with the staff. The other countries were: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Greece, India, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kosovo, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Turkey and USA.

#### **David Scheele**

**Vice President, CIF International**

# Input Requested for CIF Guidelines on Fundraising

By Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen,  
CIF International Fundraising Workgroup

*“What does fundraising have to do with the Council of International Fellowship?” somemight ask. The Council of International Fellowship (CIF) is a not for profit organization and its members often make donations: in kind, in money, and in much hard work.*

All this is true and very important. Without its members (and therefore committed donors) CIF would not exist. Nevertheless, in order to develop the organization, to support participation in our programs, to enhance innovation, to cooperate with other organizations with the same goals—CIF needs more money than it now has.

Potential donors, private or public, have their own goals and standards; and to put their own resources into another organization, it is important for them to consider this a trustworthy arrangement in every respect. Donors want to be sure that their resources (usually money) are used in a sustainable way and with significant effects, and that the recipient handles all resources with care, and with ethical standards in all it does.

That is why the CIF Board of Directors, when meeting in 2019, decided to develop guidelines on fundraising. It entrusted the task to Merja Niemelä (convener, Finland), Edna Bar-On (Israel), Elisabeth Fischbacher (Switzerland), Lisa Purdy (USA) and Mani Thapa (Nepal). The group's work makes clear that fundraising involves having the same goals and following the same key principles throughout the whole organization, i.e. not only for CIF International, but also in the National Branches. It also provides definitions of fundraising, and identifies targets and techniques as well as describing communication about fundraising activity.

Based on these draft guidelines there are also some practical tips and advice for all CIF bodies on how to undertake fundraising. It is not an easy task to find money and other resources for our purposes; it demands courage and patience and a clear understanding of needs, not only of our own organization, but also of the donor's.

Our group is looking forward to receiving your comments, proposals, and questions on this draft of Guidelines for Fundraising and the tips and advice. In case you need an extension, just let us know: [merjamarittaniemela@gmail.com](mailto:merjamarittaniemela@gmail.com) or [fischbacher@cif-switzerland.ch](mailto:fischbacher@cif-switzerland.ch). Thank you so much and have a very good summer!



# Symposium Plans Cancelled Due to Pandemic

Dear CIF Friends,

**NETHERLANDS**

Last year, during the Conference in Saint Malo, France, CIF The Netherlands took up the challenge of organizing a Symposium to celebrate the 60 years anniversary of CIF in the context of 75 years freedom after the Second World War. The end of February, the number of registrations indicated that we could give the signal – “it’s on!” However, then the COVID-19 pandemic came in between.

We hoped with postponing the Symposium from early July to late October, that it still could be organized in a safe way. We asked all of the people who registered if they could attend late October. As many uncertainties still remain regarding how the situation will develop in the coming six months, the number of people who were willing and able to attend were too low to go on with the organization. Thus we had to take the decision to cancel it.

We regret this decision very much. Some people proposed to move it to the next year. This might be a good idea, but not for CIF Netherlands. We choose the theme “BUILDING BRIDGES TOWARDS PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING” because CIF’s anniversary coincides with the remembrance of 75 years of freedom after the Second World War. We wanted to hold the Symposium in Rotterdam as this city suffered extremely by extensive bombing. The theme of the symposium was to explore the effect of wars, the upheaval it causes to many lives and what the rebuilding after the war was about. Moving the Symposium would need us to come up with another or adjusted theme and most probably also look for another location or negotiate prices again. We have neither the capacity, nor the energy to start all over again.

For the time being we can take up the invitation of CIF Estonia to go on the CIF walking tour around the world!

**#CIFgoesaroundtheworld, #60yearsCIF**

For now—until we meet again—we hope you are safe and healthy!

On behalf of the Board of CIF Netherlands,

**David Scheele and Mieke Weeda**

**CIF goes around the world! ESTONIA**

To celebrate the CIF’s 60th anniversary this year,  
CIF Estonia invites you  
to a walking tour around the world.

During these difficult times we cannot travel, cannot meet face-to-face with the friends from abroad, cannot organize and participate in IPEPs and we cannot do many other things. However, we still can stay together and make the CIF literally go around the whole world. For doing that all of us – CIF members and friends – need to walk a little bit. It takes 40 075 km to get around the earth, CIF has about 800

members, so it takes ca 50 km for each of us to walk until the end of the year and together we went around the world!

Today, June 14 is a Day of Remembrance and Mourning in Estonia. We commemorate this day because it was on June 14, 1941 that the first mass deportations took place in the Soviet-occupied Baltic states, Poland, Bukovina and Bessarabia. On this day, we honour the memory of thousands of innocent victims of mass deportations.



On the photo: CIF Estonia's board having a "walking meeting" on March 21 2020 at Kloogaranna, Estonia (20kmx4)

I think it is also a good day to remember Dr.Ollendorff's vision to create an international program where youth leaders and social workers from many countries could get together with the goal that the horrors of the Second World War would never happen again.

**So let's stay together and start walking!**

What?	Walking 40 075 km
Why?	To celebrate CIF's 60 <sup>th</sup> anniversary
Who?	CIF members and friends, your families, dogs etc.
When?	From June 14 <sup>th</sup> until the end of 2020
Where?	Anywhere you like to walk (in the forest, at the beach, in your backyard, wherever)
How?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a walking route you like</li> <li>2. Walk and enjoy yourself</li> <li>3. Take a photo</li> <li>4. Post the photo in CIF/CIP Facebook group with <a href="#">#CIFgoesaroundtheworld</a> <a href="#">#60yearsCIF</a> and also note down who was walking where, when and how many kilometres.</li> </ol> <p>If you are not connected to Facebook – it's time to get connected or ask a CIF friend to make the post on your behalf.</p>

Thank you, Leo Heikkilä for the initiative to celebrate CIF 60 years virtually!

# Argentina Social Workers Reflect On the Role of the State in the Pandemic

By Susana García Peñaloza, Mónica Guarino, Silvia Nutter, CIF Argentina

At the last conference in Saint Malo France we presented a report focused on the social situation in our country, Argentina, and the impact of our neoliberalism government on social policies. By analyzing a program for children carried out by the national government, we attempted to show some of the changes in the field of social policies that Argentina experienced with the last administration.

**ARGENTINA**

Since last December Argentina has faced a new political period with a president, Alberto



Fernandez, part of the “Frente de Todos” a left-wing coalition. This administration has shown a strong state role, seeking to get the economy back on track and also expanding civil and social rights following a human rights perspective.

The Covid-19, which started in Argentina in the beginning of March, found us in a very fragile economy, a deprived social situation and a weak public health care system. As we informed in our report, poverty in Argentina had risen to a very high level with more than a third of the population currently considered poor, and almost 50 percent of the children with under-covered basic needs. So, since the very beginning, the pandemic has interacted with an economic crisis and with important groups of the population in poverty. As it occurred in many other regions of the globe, it hit harder among those vulnerable groups, with inadequate living conditions and among the elderly, especially those living in residences. Children living in institutions have been also affected a great deal.

When the crisis started and the outbreak of the virus spread out, the global political leaders assumed different positions, with some more concerned of having the economy moving and others prioritizing the health care. In our country the government, according to the epidemiologist’s recommendations, adopted a mandatory quarantine as a way to flatten the curve, gain time to reinforce the health infrastructure, and have the equipment and human resources to cope with the pandemic. In order to mitigate the economic and social impact, some policy interventions have been implemented to provide resources to strengthen the household incomes, and to support small and medium business. Our country developed a public and expanded system of protection for the whole population.

From our professional standpoint – historical and situational – we endorse the definition of health as an integral concept with social determinations which requires protection systems and economic support for the whole population. In this line we consider social assistance as a right to protect populations and not only problems; for this it is imperative to have an active state which guarantees its implementation.

Social work in Argentina as a discipline has a very strong background in community work, in

the support of community organizations; spaces which we understand promote the development of critical consciousness, social cohesion and strengthen the social citizenship condition. Due to the restrictions imposed by the current pandemic we had to develop new forms of practice. Most of the interventions, except for those who are in the health system and in essential activities, had to be replaced by remote means: telephone and video calls, and internet. This is very complex because of the limited resources, the different standards of accessibility, the loss of face to face interviews and interpersonal contacts, and, of course, the need to safeguard the confidentiality.

Our intervention mainly focuses on those groups who suffer multiple inequalities and demand public and social assistance, where the impact of the virus is higher: people living in poor housing conditions, homeless, with very low incomes, and very limited access to public services. Children without parental or family care living in residential places (some in crowded settings) and women and sexual minorities, victims of gender violence, are also at serious risk under the current circumstances. They all conform as groups who demand special attention from the State.

Finally, recognizing us as public state agents, keeping up the critical perspective of the social work in Argentina—we reaffirm our support of social assistance as a human right. The way societies experience the impact of the pandemic crisis is political; and consequently the answer that the States provide to this crisis is also political. We, as social workers, want to be part of this answer.

<sup>1</sup>“Neoliberal governments and their impact on social policies. Reflections on a social program for children carried out by the National government in Argentina”. 33<sup>rd</sup> CIF International Conference. France, 2019.

<sup>2</sup>Universal Child Allowance. AUH (Asignación Universal por Hijo, in Spanish). It was the only social program which stayed active during the last government

<sup>3</sup>The Cambiemos Alliance, a right-wing coalition. 2015-2019

<sup>4</sup>The first case of Covid-19 in Argentina was confirmed on March 3, 2020

<sup>5</sup>Ana Arias. “Reflections about the intervention in pandemic contexts. Assistance, emergency and, demands” Professional Council of Social Workers, City of Buenos Aires.

## CIF CY Teamed Up with Cypriot Association of Social Workers to Organize Webinars

The Council of International Fellowship - Cyprus branch, teamed up with the Cypriot Association of Social Workers to organise a series of online discussions (webinars) in order to promote CIF's mission, values and exchange programs to the local professionals and discuss current matters that affect them. This new collaborative venture may prove very useful for both parties involved and an important opportunity for professionals.



The first webinar took place online Wednesday the July 8, 2020 in the afternoon, titled “Social welfare in Cyprus in the post-corona era: challenges and prospects.” The three main speakers involved represented the three universities in Cyprus that offer undergraduate and postgraduate studies in social work.

The session began with a presentation from Dr. Maria Christopoulou, associate professor at the European University Cyprus, and president of the CIF Cy branch. Dr. Christopoulou presented the history, mission and values of CIF as well as the importance of Exchange Programs and the biannual world conference.

A representative of the Cypriot Association of Social Workers, Ms Ioanna Georgiou, spoke next, explaining the importance of the initiative and the challenges inherent in the pandemic.

Dr. Stefanos Spaneas, associate professor at the University of Nicosia and CIF Cy member, spoke of the need for and importance of collaboration between public, private and non-governmental not-for-profit services. He highlighted the challenges involved and the significance of developing a collaborative framework. Finally, he raised vital issues to take into

consideration in order to promote partnerships and offered some current examples.

Dr. Eleni Athanasiou, lecturer at the European University Cyprus and CIF Cy member, presented self-care and its amplified importance during and after the pandemic. She spoke of the difficulties faced at the micro, meso and macro level and the heightened need for social work professionals to look after themselves in order to be able to care for service users. Finally, she offered some practical tips on how to develop self-care skills.

Dr. Stavros Parlalis, associate professor at Frederik University, gave a talk on the welfare state in times of crisis. He presented the current reality and challenges. Finally, he suggested a series of supportive measures that could be adopted in order to help alleviate the pressures experienced by various members of the public.

The event ended after a fruitful discussion of some of the issues raised by the speakers. Some participants provided positive feedback regarding the event and the matters discussed within all presentations. The session was recorded and the link, together with the presentations, has since been made available to all who expressed an interest.

The plan is to continue organising similar events in order to attract more professionals and promote pertinent current issues.

## Finland and Turkey Partner to Create a Mini CIF Group Program

**Reporters: Demet Gülaldi (CIF Turkey), Monique Kastermans and Leo Heikkilä (CIF Finland)**



Last year, CIF Finland active members made concrete an idea to learn more about the background of the big and unplanned number of asylum seekers to Europe since 2015, and began to plan a visit to one of the gateways: Turkey. The main idea of the visit was to learn about the Turkish government's refugee policy, especially for Syrian refugees. Their plan was presented to Demet Gulaldi, the president of CIF Turkey, who with other members was delighted to organize the program for Finnish colleagues, with a working name, "mini IPEP." They wanted to visit Red Crescent, a local municipality, NGO's and the social work department at the university. The tourism and cultural part were also planned. After some months of planning, the program dates were fixed to April 25 - May 1, 2019.

The Finnish group consisted of 11 participants (CIF Finland board and other members) and had already experienced CIF as a participant or being host family. On April 24, 2019, they arrived at the new airport in the European side of Istanbul and it took more than two hours to get to the hotel, which was in the Asian side of the city. Their arrival at the hotel took almost the same time as the flight from Helsinki to Istanbul. İstanbul'a hoş geldiniz! Tervetuloa Istanbuliin! Welcome to Istanbul!



The mini IPEP was designed the same as a regular IPEP except without host family living. The group members preferred to stay at a hotel rather than in host families to avoid the potential travel in the huge city of Istanbul. They accommodated in the Kadikoyarea, which is the important hub in Istanbul. During the program, Agency visits to Sultanbeyli Municipality, Refugees Association, Red Crescent, Istinye University Social Work Department, Mirekoc (Migration Research Centre at Koç University) were organized and they met with an international crisis group. All hosting organizations were very pleased to have the Finnish group and provided detailed information about

their work.

There was a lot of discussion and a Q&A session at each visit. Turkish employees and social work students had an opportunity to know more about CIF and Finland's policy on refugees.

Herewith, we from Turkey would like to say that we were very pleased to have our colleagues from Finland – social workers and members of CIF Finland. Their views were very sincere and gave us a chance to compare services for migrants and refugees in the two countries. We hope such visits can be organized between different countries who have National Branches.

On the first day, the group visited an NGO serving therefugees and the day after two refugee centres run by NGOs by the name Refugees Association and Sultanbeyli Municipality serving mainly refugees from Syria. These centres provide health and psychosocial services. In addition, a lunch at the restaurant on the top floor was offered as a part of Turkish hospitality.

Istanbul is a city with 18 million inhabitants (officially), plus a half million refugees from Syria and other countries. There are more than 4 million asylum seekers and or refugees in Turkey. Visiting several organizations who give support services to refugees has been a revelation. We were able to compare the way Finland is providing and organizing services for their immigrants and asylum seekers. One very positive notion is the fact that of all the visits, all levels of services, like social and health care services, language classes and integration programs are organized at one central place, in one building. Clients do not have to sign up at different addresses: like the multi-cultural and community centres. Another observation we made is, the number of professionals employed. According to the Turkish personal opinion, there is still a lack of employees to answer all the questions of the clients and to give them sufficient support. It is also obvious that the need

was great and they were trying to reach out and provide as much service as possible.

Turkey cannot deal with the refugee and asylum related issues alone, therefore they demand support of other European countries. At all institutions we visited, they mentioned that they received financial help from NGO's, donors, universities, other European private organizations. The starting-point of our conversation in all the organizations was that they wanted to intensively support their customers, providing training to improve working, language and daily life





skills, integration in society and support them in finding work and school places for all family members. Different from our system in Finland, the registration system in Turkey is divided according to the districts the applicants lived in. This can cause many problems for those people who want to move from one district to another, or from one city to another and lose their benefits. They are only entitled to receive services in the district they originally registered.

Another observation we had is the fact that immigrants do not receive allowance in cash, therefore they all want to find a job as soon as possible. There is a slight financial support for families with children, which is required by the Social Law and Child Protection Laws. When their children go to school, families with insufficient income can receive a supply of 620 – 1080 TL a month, depending on the number of school-going children in the family. Compared with the financial support for asylum-seekers and refugees in Finland, the laws allow general clients and their kin to receive money allowance to support themselves in daily life.

The Turkish Asylum system differs totally from the Finnish and most other European countries. In Turkey asylum seekers fall under the Law of Foreigners and International Protection, which means they have Temporary Protection. That means the officially registered 4 million Syrian refugees have rights to access the labour market, (*according to the statistics, only 23.000 Syrians officially have a job*) their children are entitled to receive free education, and all the members of their family have access to free social and healthcare services. However, they do not receive an official asylum status. If a person is not registered, he/she will not receive these rights and the entire family members cannot get these free benefits.

There are tensions between Turkish and Syrians due to the fact people think some people think that Syrians are taking their jobs away; Refugees who are not integrated can be violent. Citizenship is mainly based on income; they cannot buy property, because they have no status and are temporarily protected. In Finland the government and Office of Migration give a residence permit to incoming migrants and refugees, this does not exist in Turkey.

Organizations working with refugees have different perspectives of culture in the two countries. Because most husbands do not give permission, their wives cannot work for income; this creates low integration of women. We observe that drop out of their children from schools is huge; as a result the risk of infiltration and exploitations of militant groups, criminality and prostitution. There is a huge need for psychosocial support. Most of the services from the organizations focus on livelihood programs (language courses, socializing, job learning) and empowerment and not on psychosocial needs.



Group "Onbir" (11):

Anita Kytökangas (President; NL-09 and CIP-12), Johanna Hankomäki (Secretary; Scotland-16), Merja Niemelä (Treasurer + EC Member at Large; FR-99, USA-10, NZ-15), Jaana Suokonautio (NZ-16), Tuija Nummela (Japan-15), Erja Lappalainen (Scotland-03), Hanne Puttonen (Gr-15), Sina Stengård (India -12) & husband Matti Tukiainen (hosting for many years), Monique Kastermans (Nepal-17) and Leo Heikkilä (TCIP-88-89, India-97-98).

**CIF Hellas Presents IPEP Experience at Professional Conference**  
**“Comparative presentation of socio-welfare systems in Austria,  
 Finland and Arizona, USA—International Professional Exchange Programs (IPEPS)”**

*By Nikoleta Kyrana, Sociologist, Member of CIF HELLAS, CIF Austria IPEP Participant 2019*



The CIF Hellas Council was established in 1979 as an independent Association and has been implementing the international training exchange programs since 1992 in Greece. Since then, about 56 professional social scientists from Europe, Asia, the United States and South America have participated. Greek professionals have participated in missions abroad.

**HELLAS**

To date, presentation of the evaluation and valuation of this entire achievement has been made public. For this very reason, the Board of Directors of CIF HELLAS—considering that now a public presentation of all this experience could take place—organized and presented at a conference in December 2019, the results of the programs of the same year and the evaluation of the Greek program.

The purpose of this conference was to make the benefits of these exchanges more widely known, to make the program public to a wider audience so that more professionals and scientists can participate in the exchanges, and to make a more extroverted effort to acquaint the public with the goals, objectives and actions of CIF HELLAS through IPEPs and Building Bridges Council of International Programs (CIP USA.) Finally, to give participants in the 2019 program the opportunity to talk in a creative way about their experiences in the countries they have visited.

President Catherine Psarrouli spoke introductorily about the history of CIP, CIF, CIF HELLAS and the programs. In her statements, she referred to the Association’s long history and stressed the value of these Exchange Programs for its own participants and their services, but also societies in general. The president set out from the beginning the goals of this day, which were to inform the general public of social scientists and organizations that provide social care and benefit services about:

**Συγκριτική παρουσίαση των κοινωνικό-προνοιακών συστημάτων σε Αυστρία, Φινλανδία και Αριζόνα, ΗΠΑ- Διεθνή Προγράμματα Ανταλλαγών**

Σύνδεσμος Διεθνούς Συμφιλίωσης  
**CIF HELLAS**

Τμήμα Πολιτικών Ισότητας και  
 Αντιμετώπισης Διακρίσεων,  
 Διεύθυνση Κοινωνικής Αλληλεγγύης  
 του Δήμου Αθηναίων

**ΟΠΑΝΟΑ**  
 Πολιτικός, Αθλητικός  
 Διανοητικός Σύνδεσμος  
 για όλους

**ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ 9 ΔΕΚΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ 2019 ώρα 12-4 μ.μ.**  
**ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΔΗΜΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΩΝ**  
 (αίθουσα Αντώνης Τρίτσης) Ακαδημίας 50, Αθήνα



- The purposes and actions of CIF HELLAS through IPEPs and Building Bridges CIPUSA,
- The benefits of participation for each scientist in the program itself,
- The benefits of exchanging good practices through this experience, and
- Give participants in the 2019 program the opportunity to speak in a creative way about their experiences in the countries they visited.

The event took place in a beautiful and easily accessible area of the Municipality of Athens, and more than 55 scientists and people related to social services responded to the call that became widely known through article posts, a Facebook call page and posters on social services. The bodies represented exceeded 30.

The program had two sections. The first concerned the CIF International Professional Exchange Programs in which the experiences of colleagues who participated in European programs were presented. Specifically, from CIF Austria, Nicoleta Kyrana, Sociologist and Eleni Tsantili, Psychologist presented in detail the structure of the Austrian welfare state in a presentation entitled "Structures of social welfare in Austria from infancy to the third age," and Maria Panagiotidou, Social Worker, outlined Finland's social system "Diving into the 1,000+1 lakes of the Finnish system."

The second part was dedicated to the colleagues who represented the country at CIPUSA "Building Bridges" International Professional Exchange Programs. Our country, after years, participated in CIPUSA and the envoys received a scholarship from the Greek Fulbright Foundation. Theano Pyrovolisianou, Social Worker, and Michalis Ragousis, Social Scientist, spoke about the social services on the other side of the Atlantic, mainly in the management of the immigration issue, with the characteristic title "Building Bridges and Walls." Both participated in the program, CIPUSA in Arizona-USA.

The valuation of the Greek program by the treasurer of the association, Despina Oikonomou, was of great interest. Statistics were presented as well as the evaluations of the participants themselves through the evaluation forms.

Previous members of the Board, a representative of Hellenic Association for Social Workers, a representative of Municipality of Athens, and executives of public services and municipalities that welcome the scientists of the Greek program, took the floor to bid on the value and necessity of the program.

Through such programs, social scientists can observe and exchange experiences and techniques that maximize the performance of measures against social exclusion and in favour of social benefit. The services benefit from the adoption of even small interventions and people are changing and enriching themselves with new acquaintances and social recruitments since. According to Hippolyte Taine, "One travels to change, not place, but ideas."



## *Being a Foster Family In the Time of COVID-19: an experience*

*By Hara Galanou,  
Juvenile Probation Officer  
CIF Participant,  
2008 CIF Norway IPEP,  
member of CIF Hellas*

One day during early March 2020, my four years old son came back from the park where he had gone with his dad to tell me, "Mum the park was closed! And you know who was there?" I was ready to guess from a list of possible answers, but he had the right one. "It was Mr. Coronavirus, Mum, he was just standing at the door!" My husband explained to me that the park had indeed been taped up and sealed as a "no go area" for prevention reasons against COVID-19 and at the main gate a big note referring to the Coronavirus pandemic was signaling the beginning of a string of prevention measures against the spreading of it. Earlier the same month his school had been closed as part of drastic measures against the first confirmed coronavirus cases in Greece. The physical and social distancing had started for our son and for us. Having to explain to a little child what Covid-19 is, can, by itself, be proven challenging and involves a lot of story-telling, creating bookmarks, using puppets, making play-dough, reading relevant e-books. In our case, any activity had to be creative, but also entertaining and educative while sparing excessive details to avoid spreading fear and stress. Additionally, in a foster family's daily routine like ours, any new information and alternations in a child's daily life can be proven destabilizing. I would be lying if I said that there was no unpredictable tension.

Three months of confinement entailed a lot of cooking, sharing chores, exercising at home, outdoor cycling, and gardening in order to make a constructive use of ample spare time without daily schooling. Discovering the use of telly—unknown to us before the outbreak of the pandemic, was inevitable; however we tried to monitor it in terms of duration and exposure.

Luckily the overall experience of staying at home during the pandemic entailed also benefits pertaining to family bonding and connection. All in all we remained positive and avoided being over exposed to the news and the thorough details of the outbreak. The maintenance of a stable schedule helped us a lot and we were additionally supported by video calls with our case worker. We also celebrated our child's birthday in a party of three where we were the sole guests(!) but we tried to remain cheerful and positive and not miss any opportunity for festive moments. We introduced new regular rituals which took place at the same time everyday to create a sense of protection (family cycling every afternoon, baby yoga in one of the bedrooms every Saturday, going out to walk the dog, trying new recipes, short workout sessions in the sitting room, organizing balcony "picnics," etc.) Our kid presented us with new fears and concerns which were also linked to his developmental stage, but the transition was done in extreme conditions which needed to be filtered. We had to derive patience and resilience from within ourselves. We learned to listen even more to our kid's concerns. Not having to commute and leaving the household only for the strict necessary was also helpful for family connection. We felt that our son was given more time and space to

voice his opinion and his feelings. The attachment procedure was indeed facilitated and sped up. However, another side of it was regression and stepping back to previous stages considered to have been completed before the pandemic. For example he wanted to make sure that we, both his parents, were always at home and he was checking in various parts of the house by calling and confirming that we are there (there was nowhere to go anyway!) Excessive clinging on mummy and showing dependency were also pronounced during the pandemic. New emotions needed to be addressed; baby talk was invented by him. Accommodating new needs meant not only being caring and supportive but also responding to newly introduced concerns regarding the interests of all sides, e.g. keeping a balance between establishing deep bonding and also maintaining some degree of privacy for everyone in the family and in the household, keeping up with a virtual social circle by creating e-sessions with school friends for our son and maintaining e-communication via the different platforms available.



We wanted our son to be informed on the pandemic in a language he understood, with simple and precise wording and with honesty. We avoided over indulging in the news and the media. Some things we could no longer do. More precautions were introduced and we had to explain why we could no longer see Granny who was in complete lockdown. Nonetheless, out of sight was not out of mind, we had to explain this as well. Video calls with Granny were not an option, she neither had the technology it takes nor the knowledge to use. We did not want to create more stress to him by losing once again precious ones. We went back to more traditional ways of communication (telephone). More questions were to be answered. We worked a lot on emotions vocabulary and frustration acceptance—for him and for us.

All in all, the lockdown taught us about strengthening family attachment and ties. From the side of parents, private space and time were compromised and not being able to be provided with peaceful moments was a real frustration, but introducing boundaries helped us avoid parent burn out. From the side of our fostered son, excessive clinging was expressed more as an intuitive form of survival but reassurance, care and cuddles helped him form a healthy perception of the (internal and external) environment that surrounds him and to cope with conditions which are rather fluid and changing.

# Lockdown Catches People...Unaware!!!

COVID-19 has led the whole world to come to its knees. Coronavirus or COVID-19 which was first identified in Wuhan, China is now a pandemic globally. Most parts of the world are under complete lockdown to curb and contain the spread of the highly contagious disease. As per the World Health Organization (WHO), COVID-19 has so far infected 6,140,934 people and has claimed 373,548 lives globally and the deadly virus has affected 216 countries or territories or areas so far.

## INDIA

By Natty Lopes,  
Assistant Director, Sakhya,  
member of CIF India

In India, unplanned lockdown has affected the life of people more than death due to virus. As governments around the world try to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, India has locked down its entire population—including about 176 million people who struggle to survive on \$1.90 a day or less. Modi's order allows Indians out of their homes only to buy food, medicine or other essentials. No going to work. No school. No going back to their home towns. India's handling of the lockdown and the ever-spreading virus is a test for the developing world, offering clues to how countries from Bangladesh to Nigeria can fight COVID-19 without forcing their poorest citizens into even worse hunger and further destitution.

“Every state, every district, every lane, every village will be under lockdown for three weeks,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi told the nation on March 24, giving India four hours' notice to prepare, “If you can't handle these 21 days, this country and your family has gone back 21 years.”

*We at Sakhya women's organisation work for gender equality and thus we took a call to respond to the situation.* The national family health survey showed that 85.3 percent of violence is physical and 87.5 percent sexual violence, hence it is aptly emphasised on violence perpetrated by the husband than other perpetrators. According to the data from the national commission for women, it shows that there is steep rise in cases of domestic violence (DV) during lockdown.

We at Sakhya took responded to the immediate need that a woman, being confined 24 hours in the house, makes her an easy target; and the other factor is that today she cannot go out and get any kind of remedy. There is no privacy, no safety. The vulnerability has increased during Lockdown since there are no other services available, so we took the initiative to check whether the helpline



*Understanding the difficulties of adolescent girls 1000pkts of Sanitary Napkins were provided.*



Sakhya reaches out to migrants on highway and on the way home—10,000 electro powder, snacks and water.

181 is functioning. To our surprise it was defunct so we advocated with other Network NGO's to have a special helpline in the state 'Mala Boache Ahe'(I want to speak.) The provision was also made for Number 100 to be used for domestic violence cases.

The telephonic cases were dealt with using an integrated approach with the help of police to lodge the complaint. Since existing shelter's did not have quarantine facilities, one of the survivors had to spend 13 days of lockdown in a neighbour's house with the assistance of police and 14<sup>th</sup> day with the help of protection officer we were able to send her to Alibaug in Raigard District which is four to five hours drive. In one more case where the husband left her with no food and money; after her mother came he ran away and blocked her cell number. We provided her emotional help as well as rations. Her mother had come from UP to see the situation so she had to go back, and with the help of Tehsiladr, the block level administration helped us to send her to Lalitpur, UP.

While doing the relief work at village level, Sakhya had Gender Sensitive Response in 10 communities where women headed families, widows, single women, survivors of DV and families without ration cards and migrants were given priority. This required trying to raise funds to provide rations, kids' food like biscuits, milk powder and sanitary pads.

**Advocacy:** Sakhya along with the Network NGO's like “WE Action” advocating for the cause of women, that *Government must declare the Services for Violence Against Women as essential services and provide protection officer and police personnel during emergency.* This effort has been continued through legal aid network from Delhi too.

**Conclusion:** Along with other governmental and non-governmental organisations, corporate organisations reached out to ease the pain of people who were caught unaware by the Lockdown. Not only has the COVID-19 pandemic affected men and women differently, it has also affected unequally placed women differently. Therefore, *only an approach that recognises the special needs and rights of marginalised and excluded people can have a meaningful and lasting impact on the wellbeing of all our people.*



DV awareness was created while distributing rations.



Reaching out to pregnant and lactating mothers and those do not have ration cards.

## **Pandemic Lockdown Disrupts Access to Elderly Care Services: Experiences from two professionals working in Bangalore and Mumbai**

**By:Ms. Manjushaa Battle, Director Aegis4Seniors (Member of CIF India)**

**Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Khan, Physiotherapist**

This part of the article describes how the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown with a curfew announced by Government of India affected the access to physical healthcare, psychosocial care, and other services for the elderly population during pandemic through the experiences of authors who are physical and mental health professionals working in Bangalore and Mumbai.

Elderly population in India can be categorized as people living in institutional facilities like old age homes/Vrudhashram, living with families, and staying alone.

The enforced lockdown has indeed made access to health care difficult, evident from many newspaper articles. However, when it comes to elderly who have comorbidity conditions like

diabetes, hypertension a regular checkup is needed. Lockdown lead to many private nursing homes closed for a long time:closure due to government order, to prevent infection to physicians, or fear of spread of infection, and sometimes absence of public transport for patients. This in turn lead to many elderlymissing regular checkups and follow up, aggravation of symptoms associated with hypertension, chronic renal conditions and ischemicheart conditions. Similarly, for few weeks when focused entirely on dealing with COVID-19 crisis, the government hospitals were turned into COVID facilities leading manyphysicians and doctors turning their backsto patients who needed health care for non-COVID conditions. Also, the home collection sampling process which helps to determine the severity of conditions due to lab test were disturbed as demand has risenwhich created an uncertainty among many elders.

As loss of jobs increased during lockdown it was felt from the authors own experience that many families were not keen on spending money on health care for the elderly population.

Similarly in the experience of authors from old age homes: during focused group discussion with the old age home authorities, due to the panic associated with the pandemic, old age homes denied permission for regular visitors including lab collection technicians, physiotherapistsas well as other regular visitors considering the high risk associated with the elder group. Such steps not only adversely affected the general health conditions where elderly need to keep their help optimal,especially their mobility, which physiotherapist provides, but also it affected the mental



**Dr. Shakeeb helping Ms Rani Corera for her regular walk.  
Holy Spirit old age home, Bangalore- India**

health of residents as regular visits from a known person help them to keep their spirits high. Many of the residents felt a sense of loneliness to know their kids will not be able to visit them this year due to restriction on domestic and international flights.

When this author visited the old age home as part of providing physiotherapy, the residents greeted him warmly, felt a sense of cheerfulness considering that visit was mostly after two months despite the fact such a visit can put people at risk of COVID. However, all necessary precautions and protocols are being followed while providing therapy.

Along with physical health challenges, mental health concerns of the elderly are at the peak globally, and it has been reflected through many newspaper articles. These issues are more challenging for the elderly who are staying alone: poor, suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia, abused, neglected, and have comorbidities. Considering the severity and a long term impact of mental health on the elderly, the World Health Organization (WHO) has laid down separate guidelines to address psychosocial vulnerabilities. And some of these have been brought to sharp attention by the pandemic such as loneliness, neglect, isolation, and poor nutrition (at institutions as well as at home). There is a lack of support from family and the system for getting treatment for chronic illness. No adequate arrangement to manage increased health care needs and the stigma attached to it. More common cognitive impairments like memory loss, processing instructions, thinking, precautionary measures, and language. People affected by dementia and Alzheimer's' are facing behavioral problems, safety, and wandering issues.

Social distancing was challenging for most elderly, especially for those who are staying in housing societies and entirely relying on domestic help, nurses, and caregivers. Due to no clear guidelines from the state government, some housing societies offered to let the helper come in on the condition that they stay with them in the house until the lockdown in Mumbai lifted.

These restrictions have put the extra financial burden on the elderly, especially if they are dependent on their children or having limited pension money. The scenario of the elderly who are living in densely populated slums of Mumbai is more vulnerable due to lack of space, long queues for using common washrooms, access to medical facilities, and fulfilling their daily needs without any source of income.

Besides, the above vulnerabilities older adults are feeling the fear of their death, losing their loved



Dr. Shakeeb giving leg movement exercises  
to Ms Rani Corera- Holy Spirit old age home,  
Bangalore- India

ones, and catching the infection or being the carrier of the infection could have a long-standing psychological impact on the elderly.

The above causes have aggravated psychological concerns in the elderly such as chronic stress, anger, anxieties, insecurities, depressive disorders, insomnia, and suicidal thoughts.

Since the lockdown began, I have been providing online psychosocial interventions to our elderly clients in the capacity of being a founder member and Director of Aegis4Seniors—a social enterprise. We provide homebased psychosocial care to senior citizens. Our clients above aged 80 years and most of them are staying alone or with their spouses. Here are some of their responses to the pandemic lockdown.

Almost in every call with 87 years, the client says, “They are asking about physical distancing. I stay with my son and his wife, but they don't look after me. My other son stays abroad and he can't come here to help me. My daily help has stopped coming, even after repeated requests the housing society is not

allowing her to come due to the lockdown. I am unable to clean my room, wash clothes and utensils, and do other household chores. I need to do every single work even though I feel tired. Simultaneously, all my outside work such as banking, visiting to doctor, shopping for essential stuff has been stopped. I am missing your social worker's visits and conversation with her, my neighbors, and other people. Uncertainty is making me crazy—now you tell me how I should cope-up with it.”

In another telephonic conversation an elderly 92 years old man says, “We have been lucky having a supportive neighbourhood, as we do not have to step out to buy any essentials items. But what about my social needs? I miss meeting my friends, our daily walk, visiting temples, interacting with various shopkeepers, buying vegetables, and watching movies/shows. Since the lockdown, I am stuck at home, and we both are bored seeing each other. As all my children are aboard, I can only talk to them but unable to see them as cannot operate the smartphones. In this prolonging period of lockdown, I am feeling lonely as our social workers' visits have also stopped.”

A regular conversation with the caretaker of an aged 95 lady is showing how the social distancing and loneliness has affected their mental health. The caretaker says,

“I am scared of being alone with her, and I feel lonely. All the time, I am afraid of dying alone as if I can't leave her alone. For 15 years, I have been taking care of her and promised her I will never leave; now you tell me what I should do? Her nephew stays aboard who takes care of her, but now he can't come, and other relatives are unable to come due to lockdown and physical distancing. I feel like harming myself, I am just unable to bear the thought dying alone, and it is suffocating me.”

The lockdown was unavoidable and no one was adequately prepared, so least the elderly. Adaption of new routine is become a challenge for elderly as they have been confined in their homes.

Some of the approaches I used while addressing their issues are providing intensive emotional support during every call and paraphrasing their emotions, exploring and identifying the trigger points,



*Ms. Karuna Lal enjoying a wheelchair ride after the lockdown reopened at Holy Spirit old age home, Bangalore- India*



regularly sharing facts about COVID-19 in simple language, affirmation to self-worth, and remembering their contribution and achievement in their life. Simultaneously, I helped to identify activities for positive reinforcement and relaxation (yoga, baking, speaking to friends/relatives, music, walking, watching something fun and exercise every day for at least 5 to 10 minutes).

The above responses are from the elderly in the privileged category of the society; however the less privileged elderly are having an immense struggle to manage lockdown challenges. These issues should be addressed not only through an inclusive approach, but with some practical solutions. Building up an efficient community support system through the following interventions could be helpful to some extent.

- Housing societies that can involve youngsters in taking care of their elderly neighbors—to run some errands for buying daily essentials, groceries, medicines, sending reminders to take medicines (if necessary).
- Connecting them to NGO's or helpline numbers for financial help or doctor consultation, as well as to provide adequate emotional support.
- Encourage them to do some regular exercises, maybe walking on their terrace by following social distancing rules and sharing some motivational videos.
- Show them how to video chat with others using smartphones, laptops, or tablets.
- Cooking some food for them.
- Reading some books with them on the phone.

Amidst the challenges and struggles caused by the pandemic, the lockdowns and unlocking that is happening, an empathetic response to the elderly is the need of the day.

## Jordan Meets to Develop CIF Branch and Exchange Program

*Pictured below* are Mr. Bassam Haddad, CIF Contact Person in Jordan, with Fowaz Sharayha and Issam Zawawi meeting in Mr. Haddad's house during this COVID-19 crisis in order to follow the possibilities of establishing the CIF Jordan branch. All are CIF participants and social workers since 1969. They also plan to pay a visit to the minister of social development to activate this matter. In addition, they plan to work on a professional exchange program after having the CIF JORDAN branch in existence—also, looking forward to attending the CIF Conference when it is possible.

**JORDAN**

*By Mr. Bassam Haddad,  
CIF Jordan Contact Person*





# The Council of International Fellowship

## Country: **CIF Morocco**



by Aziz El Boudiri, President of CIF Morocco

Hello CIF members, colleagues and friends around the globe through the CIF World News magazine:

**“We must accept finite disappointment but never lose infinite hope.”**

### PEP2020

How pleased we were trying to prepare as well as possible for our 3<sup>rd</sup> International Exchange Program from 13-25 of March 2020 in Oujda, and while we were finalizing the program and ready to welcome our guests at the airport at midnight on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, tough times begin with my mobile which kept ringing: calls from different heads of districts where the training centers, host families and the address of the CIF Morocco social center are located.



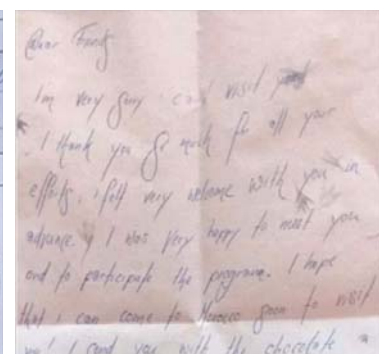
All the calls received had one statement in common, “There are serious instructions to quit all kind of meetings, activities - “please try to cancel your exchange program, otherwise you will be in trouble and you will assume responsibility if there are any infected with corona virus. ”

One hour later, Souad Bouyahi, a CIF friend, and I, had to respond immediately to the convocation of the head district area where the orientation period will take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of March. The authority man was such a nice comprehensive person, but everything was out of his control; he only carries out the orders of his superiors. On our side, we tried to explain to him as I explained to all the others, that it was too late for us since participants are on the way and there is nothing we can do unless airspace borders are closed...

In the afternoon, on my return at home, Maria Elmoubarik (CIF Morocco secretary) who was keeping busy preparing all day everything for the orientation period ceremony, informed me that Dominique from Bern had sent a message from Geneva airport saying she was informed not to carry on the trip, otherwise she shall be blocked in Morocco and that all flights might be cancelled from Europe to Morocco due to corona virus spreading...

What a unique idea of Dominique when she decided not to keep all the gifts she was bringing with her (Swiss chocolates for CIF friends and for children), but send it straight away by posting a parcel which includes a letter of thanks and even sending her pocket money in Moroccan currency!

What a unique idea of some CIF friends who know how to reward others and make them feel special. When we asked her why she did that, she wrote: “Dear friends, I am very sorry I can't visit you. I thank you so much for all your efforts, I felt very welcome with you in advance. I was very happy to meet you and to participate in the program. I hope that I can come to Morocco soon to visit you...” We promised to welcome her again when the COVID-19 pandemic crisis is definitely stable in the country.



## Marrakech BD Meetings 2020:

### “To be, or not to be: that is the question”

The Board of Directors Zoom meeting (13<sup>th</sup> June, 2020) made the decision to cancel 2020 BD meetings to be held in Marrakech, Morocco and replaced it with a virtual meeting instead of postponing it to early 2021.

The corona virus fear, unfortunately, had put BD meeting preparations which started effectively in 2017 up to February 2020 in confusion during the four months of health emergency and confinement. By the 10th of June 2020, the encounter has become entitled under the famous saying of Shakespeare: *“To be, or not to be: that is the question.”*

The organizing committee felt disappointed that all the efforts that had been done since 2017 were not achieved and that 2020 BD meetings face to face were failed and cannot be held due to the Corona epidemic fear.

Apart from the organizing committee members, nobody would know how much this organizing committee was really pleased and happy hosting the EC& BD meetings in Marrakech as voted in Kalamata, Greece in 2017. However, we have to accept the fate and never lose hope and basically respect the BD majority decision which is part of social democracy procedure, hoping we can make up for the meetings in the future. *“Once we choose hope, anything is possible”*

Once again, CIF Morocco regrets that Africa could not embrace one of the important activities of CIF International at this time.

*“Personnellement je souhaitais vraiment un report mais... »* (Personally I really wanted a postponement but ...wrote Mireille (President CIF International).

*“It is really a pity that we can not come to you to Morocco this year. I hope we can make up for the meeting soon”... wrote Astrid (CIF International treasurer).*



Zoom BD group photos

## Towards the renewal of CIF Morocco's board via Virtual meetings:

Efforts are underway to renew the CIF Morocco association office, and we hope this will be possible and be done before the end of the current year 2020, except odd complications.

*“looking for those devoted to do the work and not those who want just to fill the position.”*

**Wishing you good health and peace / Aziz E Iboudiri / President CIF Morocco, 21 June 2020**



2017 PEP photo Rabat 2018 PEP photo Oujda

# Participant from **The Netherlands** Describes the **Swedish IPEP**

**M**y name is Inge Jansen (50) and I work as a process manager Care & Security at the municipality of Borne in The Netherlands. I started my career as a police officer in 1989.

The last six years of my police career, 'till 2008, I participated in a team with specially trained police officers in domestic violence. After a while I noticed that I preferred to work more preventive, so I started social studies at the Saxion University in Enschede. During this study I quit my job as a policewoman and became a social worker at the Raad voor de Kinderbescherming (Child Protection/Ministry of Justice and Security) and continued working with domestic violence families and children who got (emotionally) neglected or abused.

**NEDERLANDS**

By Inge Belderbos-Jansen,  
CIF The Netherlands

I believe it's always important to develop yourself personally as well professionally. As a teenager I spend one year in Los Angeles as an exchange student. Living at a host family, making new friends and going to high school was a great experience which I still cherish. Nowadays my husband and I like to travel and meet different people worldwide. We are interested in other ways of life, work and culture. I am convinced that traveling and meeting other people increases understanding and tolerance.

So, when I heard about The Council of International Fellowship (CIF) I became enthusiastic right away. An international exchange program for social workers, that's amazing!

I chose an exchange to Sweden because the Dutch government copied their youth system in 2015. The Dutch municipalities became responsible for the (youth) care. Besides that, we have the same thoughts about vulnerable people who should participate in the society. Because I work at a municipality in The Netherlands it was very instructive to learn about the way they work in Sweden. When I applied I wrote about my work experiences and my learning targets during my exchange in Sweden. I wanted to learn more about the way Sweden deals with domestic violence situations and complex divorces. In The Netherlands there is a 57 percent recidivism of the domestic violence cases and the number of complex divorces is increasing. Many children get involved in the battle of their parents which is very harmful for the development of children.

On April 26, 2019 I went to Sweden to participate in the Swedish exchange program which took four weeks. The other participants came from India, Romania (2), Germany (2) and Russia.

The first two weeks we spent in Stockholm. During the first weekend we presented ourselves to each other. It was very interesting to get to know more about each other's personal life, work and culture.

During our stay in Stockholm we had visitations at National, region and local level, like the parliament, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the City Hall, the Fountain House, The Hedenbro Institut (using the Dutch Marte Meo method) and the initiatives for refugees and unaccompanied minors. It was very remarkable to see all the effort Sweden makes to treat everybody equal and to enable them to participate in society. In 2015 Sweden got confronted with 35,000 unaccompanied minors. Nowadays it is still a big challenge to place all the newcomers in network homes.

The last two weeks I went to the municipality of Jönköping. There I learned more about my professional goals. The Swedish social workers in youth care experience, just like in The

Netherlands, high pressure and they have to deal with complex and unsafe families. I told them about the 'Tijdelijk Huisverbod' method ('Temporary Home Prohibition'), a sanction from the mayor which ensures that a domestic violence perpetrator has to leave the house for at least 10 days. Social workers, police and the women shelter were very interested in this jurisdiction. Recently I was invited by the Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting (SKL) to give a presentation about the Dutch approach concerning Domestic Violence.

In Jönköping I visited the barnahus (children's house) which is a child friendly, interdisciplinary and multi-agency centre for child victims. The children get interviewed by trained police officers and medically examined for forensic purposes. Justices can watch the interview live in a separate room. During this process the children get assistance from a social worker and a psychologist. All the professionals there work together in one building in the interest of the children.

Complex divorces, parents who fight long and intense, seem less common in Sweden. Maybe the Swedish parents are more peaceful. Parents have together 480 days of parenting leave after a child is born. Fathers are much more involved in the upbringing of the children. Besides that, day care, warm meals at school and parenting courses are free of charge, as well as adult education. Men and women can always continue to develop themselves. After a divorce it's common that parents have a 50-50 arrangement about their children. They hardly know partner alimony and when a parent does not pay the cost of the child, the government will do so and reclaim it later off the parent.

During the four weeks I stayed at four host families who offered me the great opportunity to be a part of the Swedish family life. Swedish families are social, friendly, interested and very much aware of the environment. Children play a lot more in nature and are used to play outside and respect the environment.

It was a great experience which I also cherish. I'm still in touch with my host families and professional information exchange still continues. We keep each other informed and try to develop each other.

## CIP USA Initiates Virtual Programs:

***"A whole new world-going virtual, but staying meaningful!"***

*Creating new ways to build bridges of understanding has been a goal for a while, and sometimes our timelines are pushed ahead for us by things that go on around us, whether we were ready or not. So, as life evolved into sheltered living this spring, the Council of International Programs (CIP) piloted a few new programs-Virtual ones.*

By **Stacy Moreno**, MSW, CIF (Netherlands, 2013)  
CIP Phoenix Office Director, [stacy@cipusa.org](mailto:stacy@cipusa.org)  
Social Work Faculty, Various AZ Colleges and Universities

### **GLOBAL CHATS**

We started piloting Global Chats-connecting the world virtually on topics facing us now. An opportunity for us to bring communities together, from all over the US and the globe, and stay connected. As you know, our mission at CIP is to work toward building bridges of understanding through meaningful cross cultural exchanges. We are excited about the development of Global

Chats as we work to target topics of importance/social issues to a wide audience. It's one way to meet our mission-but virtually! We started with a dialogue featuring past Building Bridges participants from Greece. Both work in different sectors of NGOs, in Athens and in Samos, working directly with refugees and asylum seekers. As a result of direct questions from University students about the asylum crisis in Europe, we used this as an opportunity to assess how Global Chats can work. We were excited to meet colleagues again, and see faculty and students engaged in cross dialogue, and it just felt GOOD to connect! So, we decided that it was a worthwhile venture to continue. We worked on a few more opportunities, and will continue to find ways to build out this new program at CIP.

Next, in April, we realized that not a lot of press gets devoted to the social uprising in Nicaragua (2018). It was not only the second year anniversary, but an anniversary also marked by quarantine and marginalizing an already marginalized community of exiles. Nicaraguan exiles exist with political protection within the borders of Costa Rica, but not always socially accepted and understood. Our ongoing collaboration with VN Abroad, an NGO that was working in Nicaragua and also had to move to reestablish in Costa Rica, was a perfect fit to launch this next Global Chat. VN Abroad is led by a sociologist and social justice advocate with many years of experience and expertise in Latin America; she served as a riveting speaker. This gave context to the Ortega regime, the social uprising, xenophobia and other barriers that exiles experience in Costa Rica, but also the impact of COVID-19 in Nicaragua as well as in Costa Rica. Not only was it an educational experience, it seemed healing for her as well. Talking about the concerns and having an audience to listen can be powerful.

Moving on, we felt it was crucial to continue facilitating comparative looks at social issues, and one issue people across the world face: online schooling. It did not matter what corner of the world you lived in, every school child was no longer experiencing an education in person with peers, and was now thrust into a new environment of learning. Not only were students impacted, but their families and teachers as well. For this reason we invited our colleagues from Finland to speak. They hosted us for part of our Global Learning Program to Scandinavia that CIP offered and I led back in the summer of 2018. I took 20 social work and education students and professionals to learn about "best practices" to many community issues. This small bilingual school in Kauniainen may not look like all schools in our community, or yours, but what we know from much research is that Finnish schools by far surpass many others, whether it's the mentality of the society at large, the credentials of those leading and teaching, the structure and mentality of how teaching is conducted, or a mixture of these things and more. In our third Global Chat they shared with us a bit about the Finnish model and what they think sets them apart, but also the experiences managing online schooling as well as their exit plan.

Most recently we reached out to leaders in global health, right here in my community of Arizona. A medical-home model of care was developed when I was working in the healthcare sector teaching hospital/clinics. To this day they continue to grow and develop better strategies to provide meaningful, linguistically and culturally relevant care to a diverse refugee population in Arizona. We asked them to share their model, as well as how they meet the emergent health needs of a population that is vulnerable for so many reasons. Not only do they have a staff of Cultural Health Navigators, but with their support and a partnership with other community stakeholders, they created many low health-literacy videos, now on YouTube, that teach about hygiene and physical distancing, taking into account the unique needs of refugees and how they live.

Moving forward CIP wants to continue to address topics of relevance, such as community based participatory action, racism and xenophobia, journalism and transparency, and



addressing field/practicum experiences for social work students as well as others in civil society fields when contact is not allowed. We are open to ideas and collaborative projects, so please consider this an invitation to share! For information about CIP's upcoming Global Chats please sign up for our newsletter on our homepage at [www.cipusa.org](http://www.cipusa.org).

### **VIRTUAL YOUTH EXCHANGE**

Like many things I have done with CIP, nothing begins or ends without collaboration. Again, my colleague, and now friend, in Costa Rica, expressed interest in helping to connect local youth virtually to others. Challenge accepted! Through our wider CIF network we engaged in a pilot to see how we can create a virtual youth exchange, to begin in early June for eight weeks, ending July 30. Thanks to VN Abroad, CIF Turkey (Gulcan Uhan), CIF Tanzania (Ignus Kalangola), and my social work summer class at a local Phoenix Community College, we have 40 youth (mostly) that are engaged, actively, from the USA (AZ, CA, OH, VT), Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Peru, Ecuador, Netherlands, Turkey and Tanzania. We are using a private page on Facebook and regular prompts, encouraging participants to share about who they are, where they are from, their community, family, culture, food, traditions, currency, dance, etc. Next, we are moving into learning and sharing about social problems. Small, diverse groups were formed of seven members only, and through WhatsApp they are asked to maintain continuous contact. This smaller, more intimate and immediate facilitation has been encouraging to see!

We also encourage photo and video sharing. Although many speak English, we do not want to be exclusive. Both my partner and I feel that as social workers, faculty, and advocates for justice,

it wouldn't be right to assume that we must conduct ourselves in English and to put a measure of value on one's strength in this language. It felt very egocentric, so to support others we encourage them to use their native language if they want to express themselves (and teach us!) and we can easily use translation apps to decipher what is being said. Still, English is used quite often and it lends us to this ideal of how to continue to conduct meaningful exchanges and not act in an exclusionary way. We have no answers, but will sit with this question as we move forward.

In these small groups we are asking the members to consider social issues, and as a group project they will develop an action plan, a solution, for an issue that impacts them. We hope to open the eyes of those who are new to global thinking so that they can consider how similar we all are. We enjoy seeing diversity not only in geography, but religion, profession and status. We hope that once we get to the salutogenic thinking there will be creativity and a desire to take action on the plans developed. To help encourage this desire within our participants, we schedule weekly Zoom meetings and are engaging with guest speakers who help facilitate talks on relevant social issues, but also methodology for social action change and community empowerment. The "Global Voices" of these youth have been an uplifting opportunity in a time when people and spaces are closed.

It was unclear how long we would be in a travel-less world, and as we move into summer we are living even more in a state of unknown. What has been made apparent is that now more than ever we need to connect with others. Additionally, fear, hate and 'othering' settles into the fabric of the lives of so many, and we need to be active in our work to dismantle it. Lastly, virtual connections by no means replace the beautiful bonds of first hand exchanges, but they do



VIRTUAL YOUTH  
EXCHANGE  
**GLOBAL VOICES**





work. We have felt the impact, heard how they impacted others, seen some moved to donate to causes as a direct result, and have been told about the amazing new awareness of socio political issues and enhanced understanding of diverse communities that have emerged. With every barrier to physical exchange that hits us, we decide to turn and try again, in a ways that we can. It may not be perfect, and we still address emergent challenges as they arise-but we keep going.

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## *CIP Works to End **Systemic Racism!***

By Lisa Purdy, CIP President and Janis Faehnrich, CIP Board Chair

In the U.S., we have been in a state of mourning for every single black life that has been lost to police brutality. The earth-shattering devastation George Floyd's death has wreaked across the world has finally opened the eyes of many who were unaware of the painful depths of systemic racism that have paved the way for this tragedy to occur. Racism is like a weed. The roots are deep and pervasive, and they lurk below long after attempts have been made to tackle what is on the surface. At last, the conversation about how to address longstanding inequality has been brought to the forefront. We must unearth the roots of systemic racism and xenophobia to end this senselessness.

Council of International Programs (CIP) was founded by Henry Ollendorff, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, who found refuge from genocide in the United States. His mission in founding this organization was to promote understanding between Germany and U.S. and bring the citizens of these embattled countries together to surmount the cultural divide that came in the wake of World War II. We strive to meet the challenge of changing minds through every exchange we host, and the in-person, face-to-face opportunities for cross-cultural learning do more to open eyes and hearts than anything else. We have heard many inspiring stories over the years from our participants who learned that the stereotypes they had always heard about Americans as they grew up were nothing but fiction once they finally got to know some on their own. Similar comments have come from our host families and training sites who may have had preconceived notions about people from outside of the U.S. Black Americans are finding that they must change minds and hearts in a similar way by befriending and getting to know people who have never known anything but racist tropes from the shelter of their white communities. We are energized by people like [Daryl Davis, who has persuaded more than 200 white supremacists to abandon the Ku Klux Klan](#), simply by sitting down and talking to them one-on-one.

Face-to-face dialogue is at the heart of our organization. CIP plans to continue the efforts instilled in us by Dr. Ollendorff to continue tough and uncomfortable discussions to gain a better understanding of another's perspective and hopefully allow us to grow as well. To further our mission internally, CIP will be participating in Racial Equity and Inclusion training with industry experts. We want to ensure we are not only believing in our hearts that inequalities must be addressed, but also that we learn how to take action as an organization in programming and different ways. We encourage all of our CIF Family members to also consider how they can make purposeful steps in their communities and the programs they host.

We also look forward to hosting more dialogues on meaningful topics relevant to today's dire realities, using our intercultural work to not only develop our participants as professionals, but to build bridges of understanding across people, communities, and borders. It is clear the program Henry Ollendorff started is relevant now more than ever.

# THE WORKGROUP FOR "NEW WEBSITE" ZOOMS!

The workgroup *New Website* is busy working on revealing the new CIF International website for the world to see in early 2021.

From the Website Workgroup:  
**Ilse Hoffmann-Klee**, Convener

The group consists of **Annica Frank** (Sweden), **Lisa Purdy** (USA), **Szu Hui Ema Huang** (Taiwan) and **Ilse Hoffmann-Klee**, Convener (Germany). **David Scheele** is the liaison with the EC.

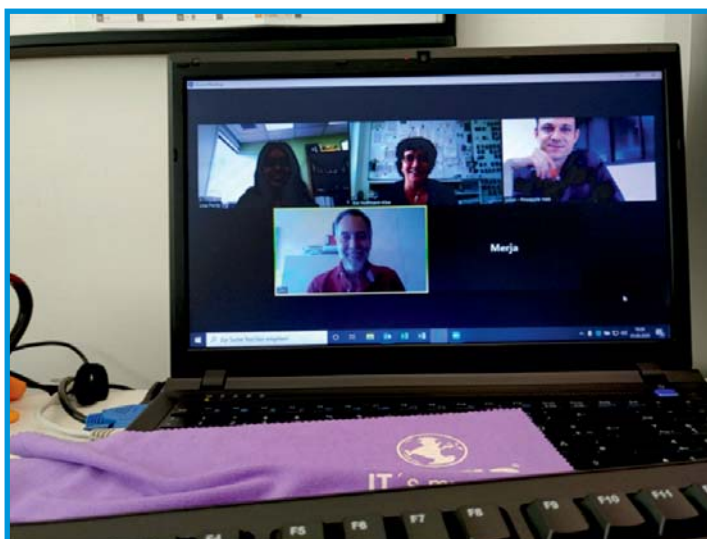
Working closely with the EC and BD, our group selected Pineapple Web, an information technology (IT) company in Taiwan, to design the CIF website. The choice was made after reviewing three different IT company options. Now we are working with them on our ideas for a new design. We are enthusiastically working together and Zoom helps us communicate in different time zones.

In this important phase of decision making for a design, a liaison from the EC joins our meetings, so the connection with the EC allows us to make sure we are heading in the same direction.

During the BD meeting in November, our group will present a first draft of the website and CIF BD members will have an opportunity to comment on the site and propose any changes or ideas they may have. Final decisions and priorities will be made by the EC, based on financial reasons. In this way we are able to make changes to the website before its release in early 2021.

You can help us create a beautiful and engaging website by sending us pictures from your branches of your program activities, reports and comments as slogans which show the spirit and heart of CIF. Please send anything you want to share to this address:

[hoffmann.ilse@gmx.de](mailto:hoffmann.ilse@gmx.de)



## Looking Forward: Executive Committee Nominations

*By Jane Ollendorff, convener of the CIF Election Committee*

With the advent of COVID-19 so many CIF activities have necessarily been put on hold until travel is again safe and possible. Our creativity to manage as an organization through this period of time has been challenged. For example, many interrelated questions must be answered concerning the planned Executive Committee (EC) election in 2021. Will we hold an election in 2021? Should a virtual EC election be conducted? Can or will the present EC continue to lead us beyond their term of office? How many and what positions will be open without an existing EC member to fill the role (we know there will be at least two)? The answers to these questions rest with the Board of Directors (BD) and the EC. We will inform you when answers become available.

As many of you know, our Election Committee began the process of preparing nominations for the EC election to be held in 2021 at the 2019 Conference in St. Malo. For the health of our organization, we must be prepared with new leaders that can step in and keep CIF moving forward when change becomes necessary – in 2021 or at some later date.

At a new event, “Meet and Greet the Candidates” process led by Ilse Hoffman-Klee in St Malo, conference participants offered the names of a number of potential EC leaders. This is a good beginning, and we are following up with those individuals recommended to determine their interest, but we still need additional suggestions from you...

What are some of the basic qualities of persons who might be considered for future nominations to any EC position?

- Passion for the mission of CIF
- Member of CIF in good standing
- Former program participant
- Daily access to computer with ability to send/receive e-mails and access the internet
- Ability to function as project/task leader, but also a cooperative team member
- Follow through on assigned responsibilities
- Past leadership experience (CIF Branch or professional experience) and
- NEW – Ability to work and communicate using virtual methods such as Zoom.

The 2021 Election Committee – Jane Ollendorff (CIF USA) [jane.franko@charter.net](mailto:jane.franko@charter.net) and Ilse Hoffmann-Klee (CIF Germany) [hoffmann.ilse@gmx.de](mailto:hoffmann.ilse@gmx.de) – welcome your suggestions of qualified candidates for the future. Let us know your interest, thoughts and preferences by confidential e-mail at any time during the next few months.

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## In Memoriam Anita Gerdes, CIF-Germany

\* March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1933 † June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020

*Ellen Schnedler, member of CIF-Germany and very close friend of Anita, wrote a marvelous obituary in German for Anita.*

*This is a translation of a part of it especially for the World News of CIF International. (Renate Wisbar)*

Ellen Schnedler, member of CIF-Germany and very close friend of Anita, wrote a marvelous obituary in German for Anita. This is a translation of a part of it especially for the World News of CIF International. (Renate Wisbar)

Anita was born in 1933 when Hitler came to political power as a dictator in Germany. She was the only child of her parents. Her father did not come back from World War II. So Anita had to help her mother very early in earning their subsistence. During the years of hunger after the war, a garden plot, which the family owned in the south of Berlin saved their lives.

After the popular revolt in June 17<sup>th</sup>, 1953 the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) closed the border between Berlin and its surrounding area at midnight, so that the garden from that time was absolutely inaccessible. Anita wanted to leave the garden in order and worked on it stacking up wood and therefore she was too late to pass the border until midnight and was put in jail during the night. This experience had a profound effect for her future life.

Anita decided to become a social worker after having worked as a volunteer with youngsters and also elderly and people with special needs. She specialized in Social Work with young people who have special needs. At the end of her professional career she worked in a leading position in the Government Office for Youth Welfare in Berlin-Schöneberg in the area of support for youngsters with special needs.

As Anita worked very early in her leisure time as a volunteer and developed because of her abilities to a leading position in these groups, she participated in 1956 in the first Cleveland Program which Henry B. Ollendorff founded. Anita stayed – after having finished that program –



one year longer in the U.S. That inspired Henry B. Ollendorff to initiate later an "Extended Program" because of the fruitful experiences he had gained with Anita as an example.

From that time a friendship between Anita and the Ollendorff family arose which should grow and last lifelong.

Later – when CIF was built up as an organization in Germany – Anita was working on that project as a moving spirit. She participated and organized actively, e.g. the CIF Conference in 1975 in Berlin and also 2005 in Bonn. In the beginning she also organized post-tours with Gisela Senssfelder, Elisabeth Beinlich, Ulrike Ness und Marianne Fiedler and others using their private cars. And later on she participated in many CIF Conferences and post-tours. In 2010, she delivered a presentation on behalf of CIF at the dedication of the Henry B. Ollendorff Platz in Darmstadt, Germany. The last CIF Conference she participated in was 2015 in Sweden.

Since that time she was no longer able to travel and she lived in a care retirement home in Berlin. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Anita got back her garden in the south of Berlin and she invited always the CIF colleagues and visitors from all over the world to meet in her garden.

*Ellen Schnedler's obituary (which is here partially translated) ends with these words:*

*"We were a big family and we won't forget Anita not yet awhile and keep her in our hearts."*

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## In Memory of Dieter Bettels

**\*21.08.1935†01.06.2020**

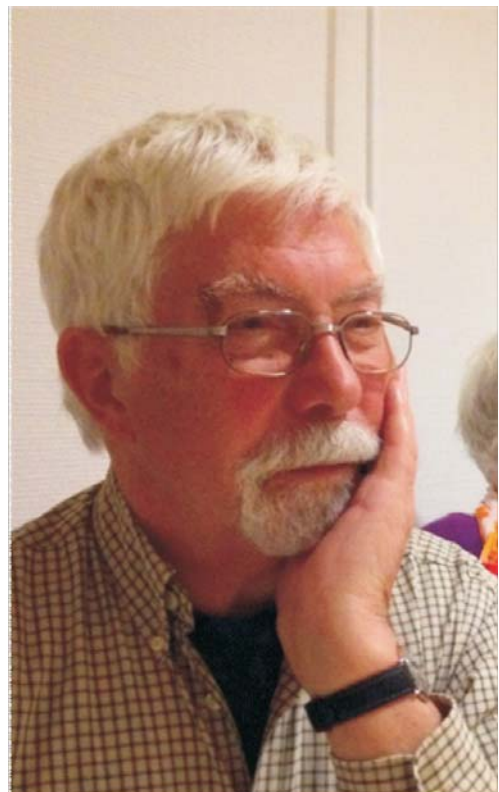
On 01.06.2020, shortly before his 85th birthday, our friend and fellow member of CIF Dieter Bettels passed away. He had been seriously ill for some time.

In 1957 Dieter took part in the *Exchange Program for Youth Leaders and Social Workers* in Cleveland /USA.

At a meeting in 1960 in Hamburg he was one of the founding members of the Council of International Fellowship (CIF).

Many will have known Dieter as a participant in our International CIF Conferences in Jamaica, Sweden, Finland, USA, Italy, Turkey as well as the many years involved in CIF Germany.

For many years Dieter was responsible for developing and maintaining CIF's website in Germany, doing much for public relations of our organization. He was always ready to act as a photographer and, with his photos, kept a lively record for his fellow CIF members.



We will remember Dieter with affection and he will be sadly missed.

Our thoughts are with his family.

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## In this Issue:

Editor's Corner	2
President's Message	2
Annual Report 2019	6
Countries Talk	9
CIP Works to End Systemic Racism!	33
National Branches	35

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