



# World News

MAY 2022



## *Building Bridges*



The Council of International Fellowship Magazine

## From the Editor's Corner

# Life, Challenges and Opportunities in COVID-19 era

Dear CIF members and friends,

With the daily life and social behaviors being shaped by the COVID-19

pandemic and humanity's responses to it, critical insights are more important than ever. The Conference addressed innovative interventions, the best practices which have been enforced by professionals to adapt to the crisis **to services for families and children**. The year 2022 is up and running and things have not yet turned back to "normal". But what is normal? The effects and impact of the pandemic are here to stay. We need to stand up and move forward creating new ways of living and making life good and affordable for ALL. Health issues are still number one in our societies and animosity, fear, instability and uncertainty for the future still at high levels. YES, it might seem as things are much better especially in certain countries but deep in it things are still not in place.

Societies cannot survive without solidarity. A universal, inclusive and redistributive policy approach seems necessary to bridge widening gaps within

and between countries. Alliances with communities are crucial! More collective cultures should be encouraged. Nobody can be safe, if everyone is not safe

(*interdependence*.) We need to share resources and use resources wisely (*sustainability*).

"...social workers are aware that the greatest threat now may not be the virus itself, but its wider and longer consequences on individuals, families, communities and societies." -Truell, R. and Crompton, S. (2020)



by Maria Christopoulou,  
Editor, *World News*

Now is the time for us to act. Each one of us has a job to do — to get fully engaged in CIF, to lead by example and to inspire others to join us. With the use of new technology, our communication borders have widened and now we can share information and good practice from our home, our society, our countries. Boundaries are eliminated so NOW we can! Now is the time to share and be very creative so we can really help to build a better world. Working together,

we will build a stronger CIF — and a better world. **Together, we will Engage CIF, Change Lives.**

Maria Christopoulou  
May 2022



*Now is the time for us to act. Each one of us has a job to do — to get fully engaged in CIF, to lead by example and to inspire others to join us*

## CIF International President's Message

**C** CIF was founded in 1960 and developed in the decades afterwards. This was after times of war, destruction, refugee flight, economic dislocation, hate and misunderstanding. CIF's goals from the very beginning were and still are to contribute to peace and understanding in the world, through professional and cultural exchange between people from different cultures and countries.

It seems to me necessary now more than ever to aim for these goals. We not only have wars and their causes and consequences, hate and misunderstanding; we also have a much greater potential for destruction. The situation is deeply frightening, the more so because it has become more and more clear how much our planetary environment is in danger and there are also, after so many decades of economic development, people still dying from hunger. This too is likely to further contribute to conflict, as it does already in some places.

As individuals, as small groups, it is difficult to know what to do effectively. We can get around without owning a car, we can become vegetarian, we can choose ecological programs for our washing machines, we can

try to use renewable energy sources for heating, we can keep in touch by Zoom instead of travelling. All this is very good and needs to be enlarged, importantly enlarged.

I would love to believe that with one big decision things could be brought in such a positive order overnight. No more CO2 in the

air, due to stopping the use of oil. No more plastic in the oceans, due to eliminating it completely. No more wars, due to wisdom, freedom endorsed by the politicians in charge and by their electors, economic, environmental and social equality of all peoples .... Everything would be in

order, no planet would be in danger, no more people killed in warfare, no more countries destroyed.

A big decision is not what will be made, nor should it. But if billions of people share the content of this dream, and do what is truly possible, take on responsibility, it might begin to become reality. Let's start now. In CIF let's examine the environmental aspects of our own IPEPs and conferences. Let's work more intensively towards peace in our own cultures and countries. There are many possibilities to help save our planet; and to share the will and positive ideas all over the world could be a way to boost the chances of peace.

***A big decision is not what will happen. But if billions of people share the content of this dream, and do what is truly possible, take on responsibility, it might become reality.***

***Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen***

## President's Message

### The Executive Committee 2021-2023 in its first few months

Professionals in social work and closely related fields know how to form groups. They know how to work in groups. They sit together, they talk, they divide work by discussing who has to or would like to do what, they find a next meeting date. They develop or intensify relations with each other, they have good times together, hopefully. The most demanding task might be to find a common language, to understand what is meant, to trust that the group has the same intentions, and wants to reach the same goals. Social workers would hardly consider working together without having been sitting together and talking. This seems ages ago.

The new Executive Committee (EC) of CIF International consists of women from Argentina, Finland, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and Turkey. They have heard from each other before, probably had met some time ago, and three of them have been on the EC before. They were elected online, by a very sophisticated method. The way to find a suitable time for all to have a first online meeting was less sophisticated; simply by an email-questionnaire.

We were lucky. The six individuals soon formed a group. We did not have the possibility to sit together in person and had to find our way by ZOOM in order to:

- Organize the General Assembly 2021—the first time online.
- Support the organisation of the international CIF Conference 2021—the first time online.
- Think about the future of our International Professional Exchange Programs. Two had taken place in 2021 online, organised by CIF Austria and CIF Finland, and nowhere else. We needed an exchange between organizing branches, sending branches and contact persons.
- We are happy and proud of the new attractive website, installed in April 2021. For the first time, we have special pages for members, for the Board of Directors (BD), and for the Executive Committee. But it is also true that we will have to manage very carefully all the documents we consider interesting and necessary, so



ELISABETH FISCHBACHER  
SCHROBILTGEN (SWITZERLAND)  
PRESIDENT



MERJA NIEMELÄ (FINLAND)  
VICE PRESIDENT



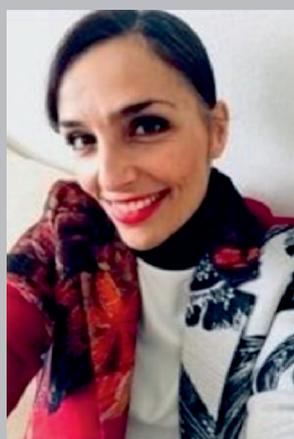
ASTRID SEHMER (GERMANY)  
TREASURER



DEMET GULALDI (TURKEY)  
SECRETARY



SILVIA NUTTER (ARGENTINA)  
MEMBER AT LARGE



MARÍA JOSÉ SÁNCHEZ TERA (SPAIN)  
MEMBER AT LARGE

as not to end in chaos. Luckily Maria José loves media work and has already started to analyze these documents to find useful solutions.

- There were and are themes we felt it is not possible to discuss by Zoom, so we developed the “rolling agenda” where we put all the items which are difficult or just need more time. The one which comes up most often is “Communication:” Website, Facebook, Letter to our members, World News, LinkedIn, YouTube—we need to have

a clear structure in all these possibilities. So, this leads us to really sit together in March in the foothills of the Swiss Alps.

- This EC meeting is also to organize the next Board of Directors Meeting, by Zoom, on April 30, 2022. Before then the Annual Report 2021 and other CIF administrative business will be ready for discussion.

*On behalf of the Executive Committee*

*Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen, President*

## **CIF Cyprus hosted 34<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Council of International Fellowship in cooperation with CIF Switzerland, Israel and Turkey**

*For the first time in the history of Council of International Fellowship (CIF), on 5-7 November 2021 the CIF International Conference was held virtually.* The idea of a virtual conference raised a lot of questions as it was something new and something unknown, but in the end, it was decided to go forward instead of NOT having a conference due to the pandemic restrictions.

**CYPRUS**

*By Maria Christopoulou,  
Annita Koni,  
Eleni Athanasiou*

For the first time, people who never had the chance to participate in any of CIF's International Conferences, either because of financial reasons or geographic location, were now able to attend this virtual conference. This was so exciting to organize and participate. It was inspiring for all participants, but also for us the old members of CIF.

**350** people registered from **46** countries around the globe. Even though not all were present during all workshops, we knew that they would benefit by watching the recordings once receiving the presentations. Maybe the experience was not as satisfying as it would have been had we met face to face, but we met without worrying about any restrictions. We exchanged news, concerns, and opportunities, and allowed access to more colleagues by offering the conference online.

### **The theme of the Conference was:**

**Best Practices in Times of Crisis—New challenges and opportunities in the pandemic era on families and children**

This theme was chosen based on the experiences of the front-line social workers and other professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic and the type of impact it had on social services users and other vulnerable groups. This demanded adaptation of professional practice through

innovative interventions to the pandemic crisis.

The Conference started on Friday at 14.00 pm with the keynote speaker setting the tone of the Conference followed by three workshops with specialized themes:

- Social Solidarity 's response to COVID 19 and the lessons we learned
- Social Support for children and their families in times of pandemic
- The impact of the pandemic on families and children with special needs.

In each workshop there was a presentation on a theme for 20 minutes, followed by two professionals who presented for another 10 minutes the good practices from their own experience in their country. The workshop participants were divided into groups to discuss further.

The Conference ended on Sunday with parallel presentations on different subjects, such as: *IC and Resilience, Youth's climate activism in times of COVID 19, Save our food, Make empathy great again, Helping children and their parents cope and build strong relationships during COVID 19, Pandemic and Resilience. The impact of the pandemic on the practice dimension of social work: The case of the USA and Turkey, Repairing social bonds through social mediation*, as well as the group presentations from the workshops.

Although each community has its own ways of dealing with the effects of the pandemic on health, social, economic, mental, and emotional issues, all participants from all countries had similar experiences of how the pandemic affected families and children.

Overall, the pandemic has led to a deterioration of mental health, an increase in domestic violence and inequalities worldwide, plus affecting the workforce as a whole and increasing the pressure felt by social workers to provide their services in a professional way. Restrictions in movement, the closure of the borders, stopping all cultural and other events have had a great impact on societies. At the same time the cost of food increased while the income dropped, leaving social services users in a strange and difficult situation.

Limited direct contact with clients/service users, caused concern for not being able to access their living environment. Having less support in difficult and frustrating working circumstances led to an adjustment to new methods of working. Working remotely, while children had online lessons was very hard for the parents to handle. There was inadequate knowledge from social workers, on how to be protected during the pandemic, and how to disseminate such knowledge to the service users.

In view of the above, it is obvious that social work skills are most valued. New skills were introduced, things are now working in a different mode and have taken a new direction. We need to apply, to accept, to learn, to see things with a positive viewpoint and look forward. Societies cannot survive without solidarity. All sectors, all stakeholders are significant. Although maybe it is still early to evaluate the impact on the resilience possibilities, we know there will be repercussions on the learning processes, as well as on the mental and emotional development.

We need to do better! A universal, inclusive and redistributive policy approach seems necessary to bridge widening gaps within and between countries. Alliances within communities are crucial! More collective cultures should be encouraged. Nobody can be safe, if everyone is not safe (interdependence). We need to share resources and use resources wisely (sustainability).



**C.I.F.**  
The Council of International Fellowship



# GUIDELINES FOR PEACE PROJECTS\*

Council of International Fellowship (CIF) is a private and not for profit, politically and religiously independent organization. According to its statutes its purpose is to promote professional, cross-cultural, and educational exchange for those working in the field of social services. The learning and sharing generated by the exchange provide opportunities for broadening professional as well as personal development and so contributes to peace and understanding. The organization works in collaboration with other entities sharing the same core values and respecting Human Rights, guaranteeing equal treatment to all as agreed upon in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The purpose of these guidelines is to define what a CIF Peace Project is and to describe how to propose a Peace Project to CIF International for the purpose of financial support for the project through grants.

To promote peace, a National Branch (NB)/Contact Person (CP) can arrange peace projects and those projects can be eligible for grants by CIF International. CIF aims to promote knowledge among people and through contact and relationships to overcome all forms of prejudice and distrust that often represent the obstacle to building trust, and therefore hospitality and solidarity among people.

Sustainable peace is in these guidelines defined as the absence of war, armed violence and military build-up between states or groups, and also when society handles conflicts peacefully and addresses underlying problems that can lead to conflicts.

CIF peace project consists of activities that aim to develop the purpose of the CIF experience. A CIF peace project should therefore also aim to enhance factors that contribute to sustainable peace. These factors are for instance

- Democratization,
- Equality,
- Respect for human rights,
- Actions against discrimination,
- Actions against corruption,

- The development of methods for handling conflicts and
- The development of methods for increased dialogue.

CIF Peace Project can focus on one or several of the factors mentioned above in relation to a specific conflict.

## TYPES OF PROJECTS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE PEACE PROJECT

### 1. CIF PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM ARRANGED AS A PEACE PROJECT

**PARTICIPANTS:** *with experience from the specific conflict and/or participants interested in the program.*

The principal objective of this IPEP is working on the theme of peace with specific peace related activities worked out. The participants share the experiences and reflections within the group. Some may already have been conducted or reflected in their own countries. During the program the group tries to develop new approaches. When returning home the group members have with them more knowledge, contacts and means to work on peace.

Grants can be given for specific expenses for activities related to the issues of peace and all or a part of the travel expenses and program fee for participants from the specific conflict.

### 2. SEMINAR CONDUCT AND PARTICIPATION IN CIF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**PARTICIPANTS:** *Representatives of countries / groups in a specific conflict*

The organizing branch of the CIF conference can invite a person to participate and to conduct a seminar or a workshop, either by themselves or jointly with another person, on the experience of a specific conflict and to

present some experiences of resolving critical issues in a cooperative logic. The seminar or workshop must include dialog or direct participation with the audience. For it to be considered a peace project, the conductor/s must also participate in the whole of or most of the conference to enable further discussions and learning possibilities during the conference. The conductors of the seminar or workshop could be a CIF- member or a representative of organizations/agencies with proven experience in matters of peace and conflict resolution.

Grants can be given for all or part of the conference fees and travel expenses of the conductor/s.

### 3. ARRANGING AN EVENT ON THE TOPIC OF PEACE

**PARTICIPANTS: Representatives of countries / groups in conflict or past conflict, CIF members and representatives of other organizations**

A National branch/CP can arrange an event (a meeting, seminar, or conference) focusing on peace. The event can focus on a specific conflict (ongoing or past) and how peace could be/was achieved. It can also focus on peace looking at different conflicts (ongoing or past) and how peace could be/was achieved. The events are to be arranged for CIF-members primarily but can also be open to other persons/organizations. The events should make it a priority to ensure participation of persons affected by the conflict.

Grants can be given for specific expenses for activities related to the issues of peace and all or a part of the travel expenses and event fee for participants from the specific conflict and representatives of other organizations.

## PROCESSES

### Funds and general aspects

- CIF has funds for peace projects earmarked. The money consists of donations and starting from 2019 five (5) euros per person are added in the conference fees to be included in the funds
- Donations earmarked for peace projects will clearly appear in the annual financial statement
- A peace project grant money is not to cover normal IPEP's costs, only for project needs as described above
- One grant is up to 500 euros
- The same National Branches / Contact Persons may get a grant once in every 6 years
- The board of directors (BD) decides on the peace projects/ approval in line with these guidelines
- The grant may be paid before or after the project is carried out, as requested by the concerned

branch/cp

- Executive committee (EC) works with the organizing branch/CP and monitors the progress of the project plan.

### Application process

The NB/CP has to send the Peace project proposal for approval to the EC one month before the BD meeting.

The proposal must include the following:

- Background
- Objective of the project described in SMART goals, which means that the goals should be as specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time limited as possible.
- Scope of the project
- Activities relating to the SMART goals and clearly related to the conflict at hand. A financial part consisting of:
  - Budget with expenditures and income, including income from other sources
  - What amount the branch/CP wishes CIF International to contribute and what it is to be used for.

Decision: The BD decides which Peace project proposals are approved and gets money for their project from the fund.

### Final Report

NB/CP has to make a report, send it to the EC within two months after the project is finished and to be presented (written report and oral presentations) to the BD.

The report has to be in accordance with the branch's/CP's peace project plan and realization, and consist of a general part and a financial part:

- The general part is a written presentation from start to end including outcome and results related to objective and scope, plus highlights and setbacks.
- The financial part includes a calculation of the project, how much money was received and how much and for what purposes the money was spent, attaching bills and receipts to be reviewed by the treasurer of CIF International.
- If the grant was not used completely, the remaining part has to be paid back to CIF International within one month after submission of the report.

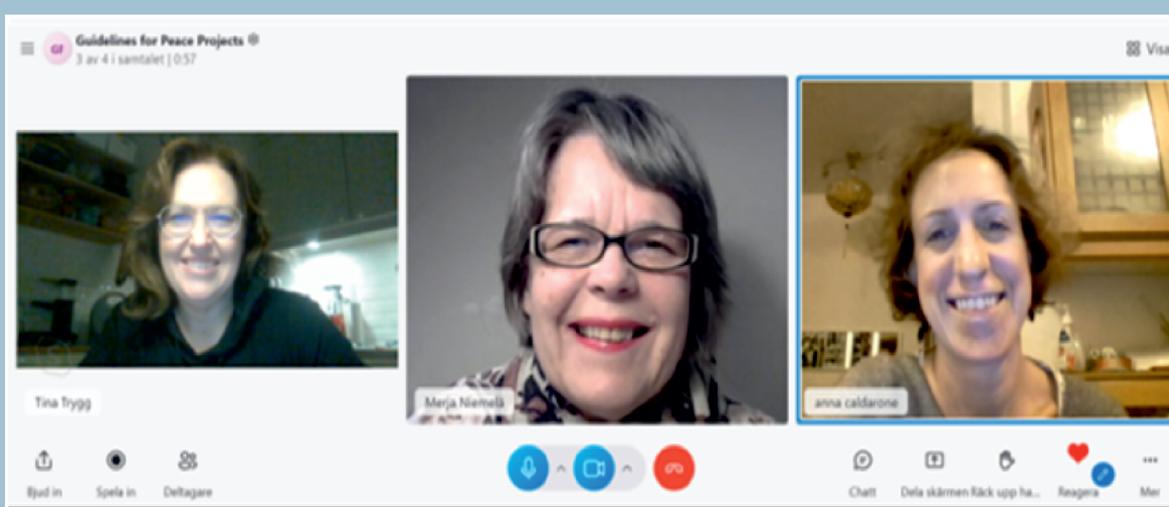
*\*The document accepted by BD at BD meeting in August 2021*

# Guidelines for **Peace Projects** at your disposal!

## Interviewing Anna and Tina of the Peace Projects Guidelines work.

CIF Board Meeting decided in November 2020 to give a task to three persons, Anna Caldarone (CIF Italy), Tina Trygg (CIF Sweden) and Merja Niemelä (EC) as convener to work together as a group and present the Guidelines for Peace Projects in August 2021. And the task was to work on the Peace Project Guidelines putting all together (definition and goals of Peace Project in the line with CIF mission and goals).

The first time the guidelines were accepted in 2015 in Sigtuna and changed since a couple of times.



**Tina Merja and Anna**

In 2019 in St Malo BD decided to give a task to Anna and CIF Italy. They worked hard but more time was needed and the same task was handed over to Anna, Tina and Merja.

These three worked and met via internet for several times. They made a draft that was sent to NBS for comments in February 2021. EC made an amendment by adding that also contact persons may arrange a peace project. The Guidelines was finally accepted in BD August 2021.

The main change in the guidelines compared to the previous one is the definition of Peace. Also some general aspects were added.

In the peace projects fund there is now 735 euros.

## Now I have interviewed the working group and here you are...

It was an interesting and important task. CIF's overall goal is peace. So how do we actually go about working towards that goal, in reality. It was surprising that CIF did not have a clear definition of peace so far. So it was necessary to sit down and try to define what's peace project can be in our organization.

Perhaps there was first a little bit frustration in the air. The work was again on the table. The definition of peace is big and complex. Each time you may find something new. We would be still doing it if we wanted to make a perfect model. Better not to believe in perfection. Then it was so cool to have a group to work with. In a difficult task help is needed.

We wanted to make the guidelines clear and as user friendly as possible. So that it makes sense for everyone; to find a lowest common denominator for a CIF Peace Project.

The work was fun but not always easy. These are difficult questions so for three people with English as a second language, meeting on Skype, it was a challenge. Some of the meetings were very long.

We think that the job we did was well organized. Every time we did what we had planned and promised to do between the meetings. We took the task seriously, split it into parts and then we just started and worked piece by piece. We had to put aside the fact that we do not have enough time.

We had help from Ann Robertson (CIF Scotland) who reviewed the guidelines and made some changes and additions in the English language.

To form a successful working group in CIF one possibility is to include many countries and different generations. It is only natural that people from different parts of the world from different circumstances have different angles to subjects. Maybe it takes more time to get started with the work. Depends also of the theme of the work.

This time we all were Europeans. For us starting was easy. We soon counted how much time we need, how many meetings etc. Then after the first draft was ready all the countries and all the branches were invited to the work. We asked comments to the draft. Of the comments from the NBs we could notice that many branches were willing to work for the best possible result.

When once more thinking of the best way to work: this time a good thing was that the group was invited to work. EC made a plan and Tina and Anna had time to think before promising to work together.

Our dialogue, our willingness to understand each other and find a common ground. We perhaps had different ideas about these guidelines from the start, but we made it through and all stand behind the final result.

Being proud of our work and the result we think guidelines are ready to be put into practice. In a few years, when we've seen how they work, we probably have to revise parts of them, but that is as it should be. Hopefully in the future it is possible that many national branches and contact persons will arrange peace projects. Depends of course also on the funds we are able to collect for these projects.

One thing more:

To regularly get an update on the covid situation in Italy, Sweden and Finland was a definite bonus!

***Merja Niemelä, Vice President, convener***

## CIF FINLAND'S FIRST VIRTUAL IPEP - AN ENCOURAGING LEARNING PROCESS FOR ALL

**O**ur first Virtual IPEP was organized May 8-25, 2021. Beforehand we were a little bit worried how we will succeed but our experience was really rewarding. Of course, working online can never replace the important connection between people which is possible to reach only in real life. Covid-19 gave us limited chances and we used our opportunity in the best possible way.

Our Virtual IPEP participation structure was to collaborate and discuss an online webinar service (Teams - Microsoft) in two weeks' time through writing, streaming own audio, video, and PowerPoint presentations within Moodle learning platform for participant access to the internet with speaker or headphone.

The timings were agreed upon and the schedule was adjusted in the rhythm of time zones, group meetings one ,5-3 hour on week days 12-6 EEST PM according to the participants home base: Japan (+6 h), India (+3,5h), Greece and Tanzania (0), Spain (+1h) and Canary Islands (+2h). Theme for the IPEP was "Welfare – Having Loving Being." The virtual program's first week was oriented to learn more

**FINLAND**

*By Merja Niemelä  
and Jaana Suokonauto,  
CIF Finland*



***Virtual IPEP in Finland participants: Panagiota from Greece, Nozomi from Japan, Rekha from India and Jocelyn and Maria from Spain, Duncan from Tanzania.***

about Finnish welfare, social work, politics and culture. The lectures were presented on a Moodle platform offered by Swedish School of Social Sciences, University of Helsinki. The second week was more practically oriented for individuals with local professionals and agencies. The program and participants' experiences were evaluated during and after the program. There was no registration fee for participating in the program.

Besides facing some technical problems during these two weeks, the feedback from participants was encouraging and the content was interesting, e.g. social work, and especially gender-equality issues and work-life balance. There were challenges with the timetables when some of the participants had to work during the programme. Also the time differences was a challenge. It was important to realize, how much is common between their own country and Finland, as well as the differences. Overall, participants told us it was an amazing challenge to participate and surprising to find that many things in Finland happen online. Moodle was the biggest surprise—an excellent platform to educate about Finnish system. For some this was the first time to participate in online learning, and it was a good chance to communicate and make friends with people online.

About peace, one notion was that Mr. Henry Ollendorff's idea is excellent and commented that peace stems from good relationships. CIF programme is a good base to develop our narrow thoughts, become more open to new cultures, and to learn new practices. Social work is based on the same principles everywhere, such as humanity, support and legislation. It was also seen that there are more similarities between people than differences. It was great to meet people from different cultures online. Different kinds of methods could be used, also, we were open to the wishes that were raised from participants. In future programmes we could involve participants more, e.g., send some links about their countries as well.

The number of participants (six) was ideal as this was the first time for virtual exchange in Finland. We all, participants and organizers, made a gigantic 'digital jump.' Because of facing some technical problems, more guidance and patience were needed from both sides. After all, most of the meetings were successful and there were a lot of interesting discussions.

This first virtual program gave overall understanding for both organizers and participants. Also, Moodle platform could be useful in future live programs. A hybrid model is another potential and could cut extra traveling during the program plus add possibilities to keep on more professional contacts and communication after the program. It offers more chances for local CIF members to be active during the program. Covid-19 has limited our chances to face each other, but on the other hand it has opened other doors to contact additional CIF members and IPEP participants. *Inspirational discussions may also happen online!*



**Learning diary as a tool.**

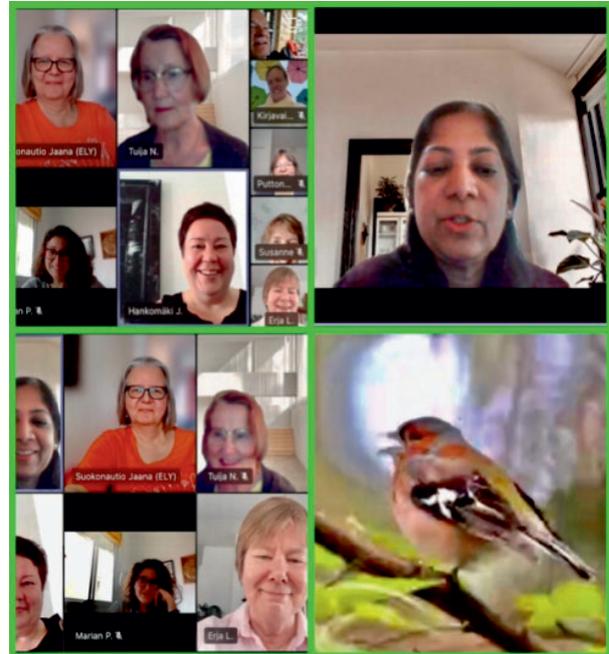
# A Shout-out to CIFs Finland and India!

This is to pen down my experience and fond memories of Finland CIF International Virtual Professional Exchange program held in April 2021. The application process was amazing and I appreciate India and Finland for the great coordination and execution.

## INDIA

By Rekha Shetty (India)

The program paved the way to new relationships, friends, lots of great learnings from different countries. Initially wondering how the program will be managed virtually, but Moodle platform cleared my doubts as through which we were able to access the documents in advance and connected with the CIF team smoothly. Much learning, for example the Finnish way of life (river cottages) which attracted me a lot and Sauna bath—this is not at all common in India, but I would like to visit Finland to experience it. The hot topics on gender programming, protection, peace, etc. were new leaning. Unity among the social workers through unions, and authenticity through license which we think in our country we need to adopt. The common approach was humanitarian work and supporting the poor and vulnerable. The



connection with families made us closer to experience their way of living and overall lifestyle. The CIF committee went out of the way to accommodate and supported us in this program. I am really lucky to get the opportunity.

CIF is achieving its mission of bringing together human service professionals from different countries virtually and fully justified to exchange professional knowledge and experience on a grass root level. It's a life-time experience and especially during pandemic connecting professionals from many countries is a great experience itself. I would encourage professional social workers to be part of such program to gain experience and exchange learning. These programs are made with a purpose of connecting and CIF plays the role of soul connect, equity and diversity. And here's a quick shout-out to EVERYONE who are CIF members! You are doing great work and I have been extremely impressed with the dedicated and hard-working teams in CIF. Thanks again for all the great work you are doing to help professionals!



## CIF France assists with development of a new strategy for professionals working with at risk youth!

Since the 1st of February 2020, CIF France is a partner in a European Erasmus+ project ECCAY with Austria, Spain, Romania and Italy. (ECCAY: Empowering and Co-constructing Agency of Young People at Risk of Social Exclusion).

### FRANCE

By Sonia BLANC-PANAFIEU,  
vice-président of CIF-France

### What is the Solution Focused Approach?

Originating from the movement triggered in the United States with the arrival of brief therapies and developed by social workers Steve De Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg in the 1980s, it was originally used to help people overcome their addictions. The approach was later successfully applied to other behavioural and emotional disorders. Following in the footsteps of the work of the Mental Research Institute (Palo Alto, USA) where the systemic approach originated, and that of John Weakland (Problem Focuses Resolution), the team of Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg of the Brief Family Therapy Center created a psychotherapeutic treatment center to welcome families and all those who presented themselves. Since the participants were most often from an underprivileged background, the team invented a new model of intervention focused on the exploitation of solutions constructed during the interview with the participants. The term Solution Focus Approach (SFA) is thus used to remain in the spirit of this new paradigm of the helping relationship. It is above all a posture, a mindset, a way of relating to clients / beneficiaries who are considered experts in their own situation. The professional is there to help them find solutions. It is a matter of exploring existing personal and contextual resources ("What is already working?") to develop possible steps to achieve the desired goals.

The long-term goal is to develop a C-VET curriculum and learning programme which gives the professionals working with young people at risk of exclusion the knowledge, skills and competencies to develop a solution. A creativity focused mindset allows professionals to empower the sense of agency among their clients/beneficiaries and enhance their inclusion and involvement in society.

Mireille Boucher, president of CIF-France, and I embarked on this project very enthusiastic about the idea of traveling to meet other professionals, discover innovative professional practices and increase our international professional network. But the pandemic upset our plans. The meetings planned in each partner country were successively cancelled, forcing us to work only online. Moreover, this project turned out to be very ambitious, more in line with a research project.

This work context had positive effects as we focused on the project and as we progressed in the exploration of this approach through our readings and exchanges with expert practitioners. We saw the benefits that this practice based on Solution Focus Approach (SFA) can bring to those who work with young people at risk of exclusion, but also for social workers in general. This project was done in the context of the COVID-19 health crisis, which caused massive school dropouts, an increase in precarious situations, and which had a strong impact on professional practices.

The essence of the intervention process consists of getting the person in difficulty to create an image of his/ her situation as it will be when the problem has been resolved and to recognize the events that will enable him/her to move towards this goal. In order to do this, SFA uses specific interview techniques with

projective questions such as the miracle question.

SFA focuses on the processes of change rather than on explanatory processes. It is characterized by the idea that the emergence of solutions is not linked to the analysis of problems. It is this radical approach that allows thinking of the relationship between the facilitator and the person in difficulty in a different way, in the mode of co-construction rather than in the mode of the "expert" facilitator. This approach is above all a posture where the professional accepts to know nothing (attitude of non-knowing) and to be able to do nothing in the place of the person asking for help, except to help him/her to discover what he/she wants and thus to regain control over his/her life. It does this by relying on people's resources rather than on their awareness of dysfunctions, and by constantly evaluating with them their progress and the assessment of the work carried out together. It is this posture, which breaks away from "assistance," that allows for change. The priority is the search for emancipation of the persons accompanied, i.e., the determination to free themselves from all alienation and dependence, and the refusal to take power over the other to impose normative treatments. This is why this approach seems to us to be very relevant to work with young people who have experienced failure and who need to regain their self-confidence to be able to project themselves.

The research that all project partners have conducted in our respective countries (cf.

Compendium of practise of the Solution Focused Approach in working with youth at social risk of social exclusion in [www.eccay.eu](http://www.eccay.eu)) has shown that this approach is not widely practiced in the field of social work and therapy in our countries. It is not our purpose here to understand why. However, the few practitioners interviewed speak enthusiastically about this approach; and more and more coaches are using it in companies. All the professionals questioned during our survey were eager to learn more. The meeting with professionals from a shelter for women victims of domestic violence where the entire team is trained to SFA, allowed us to appreciate the benefits during exchanges with the residents of this establishment.

In the end, the assessment of our participation in this European project, which required a lot of work, is very positive because it enriched us intellectually, made us aware of a relevant tool for social work professionals for the benefit of vulnerable people who need to regain control of their lives, and gave us the desire to share it with others, in the spirit of CIF values. Moreover, the contacts created during our research allowed us to get involved in a Franco-Swiss network of practitioners and professionals interested in this approach. The online meetings once a month on a given theme are very rich.

*This project is scheduled to be completed in July 2022. It will be online in English, Spanish, Romanian, Italian, German and French at [www.eccay.eu](http://www.eccay.eu).*



# CIF Hellas Holds Virtual Empowerment Event - Playback Theatre: HD Stories

During the quarantine period and in the face of the times, CIF Hellas, exploiting the potential of the internet, carried out a series of actions that aimed to educate but also to bring together its members and friends. Nowadays, human relationships are not limited to the here and now but are expanding in the global space of the internet.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2021, CIF Hellas in collaboration with the Playback team held an online interactive performance of improvised Playback (theater).

As the team of Playback Psi informs us on their website (<https://palmas.info/playback-psi-eng/>), Playback theatre is a form of improvisational theatre that is based on people's real life stories, which are enacted on stage by a number of specially trained performers. This non-scripted theatre can be used to strengthen emotional bonds within a community of people who want to express and share their personal life experiences. Playback theatre has been used worldwide in education, for people with special needs, for people with mental disorders or emotional problems, for people who belong to minority groups, for people with a drug dependence, for victims of traumatic events or disasters, for people who want to enforce their business skills, as well as for members of teams, conferences or social and cultural events.

Playback Psi has been first established in Greece in 2004, by a number of performers (actors, dancers, musicians, singers, stage and light designers) who have had special training in theatre improvisational techniques as well as drama-therapy and psychodrama techniques, under the guidance of Lambros Yotis, psychiatrist and drama-therapist, with studies and professional experience in theatre and acting. Its aim is theatre

as a means for social, educational and therapeutic change.

The call was international and we were very happy for the response of friends and associates from CIF USA, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The computer screen was filled with "windows" and the faces that appeared one by one opened a new perspective on our world. Familiar faces and new faces. Their stories began to unfold. Stories from different countries, different experiences but also so common. One story gives the baton to the next. The roles are reversed. Viewers have the "dominant" role as they tell stories from their lives.

The actors on the occasion of the story, improvised, through the movement, the sounds, the expressions, the language, the objects, they represented and brought to life events and emotions so that through the latter we all have identification. This sharing is the required thing. Let us all share the narrator's memory so that he feels relieved.

For us social scientists, members of CIF, this experience has connected us once again with colleagues from other countries, through emotion this time. Because one of the goals of CIF is to unite people from different parts of the earth.

Finally, this tool gave us a new perspective on our work; enriched the tools of our work as theater techniques can be utilized in the way of approaching and supporting our beneficiaries.

*We would like to thank Mr. Yotis and his team for their contribution from here as well.*

*(Mr. Yotis's book, "Playback Psi, Acting in theatre the stories of the world" is also available in the English language)*

## HELLAS

*By: Nikoleta Kyrana,  
sociologist and  
Maria Panagiotidou,  
social worker—CIF Hellas  
Translated to English by:  
Christina Adelfopoulou*



## Thanks to CIF Israel for making available the following CIF International Conference presentation:

### The theoretical framework of working with families and people with special needs in Israel and in the Arab Israel society

**Background of Israel's Arabs:** in the year 2019, the Arab population constituted 19 percent of the total population of Israel. Most of the Arab citizens are living in Arab towns and villages or in neighborhoods for Arabs in mixed cities. Very few of them are living in Jewish places of residence. The elementary and high - school education systems are separate for Arabs. Academic studies are joined.

On average, the socio-economic status of the Arab citizens of Israel is significantly lower than that of the Jewish citizens.

Having said that, approximately 40 percent of the medical staff in the Israeli Healthcare system, 80 percent of the pharmacists and 64 percent of the new doctors are Arabs. They have taken on a significant portion in facing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **The COVID-19 pandemic in the Israeli society**

Presently, Israel is faced with the morbidity of the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Israel began vaccinating its total population as early as January 2021, 2-3 months before most of the developed countries. Currently, Israel is the first country which began to vaccinate with a third vaccination (booster) all citizens 12 years old and older. The decline in the effectiveness of immunity, which was built up due to the vaccine, was demonstrated first in Israel.

The COVID-19 vaccination rates are lower among the Arab society. The two reasons for it are the following:

- a. Lower accessibility to vaccination centers, especially in the southern part of the country.
- b. Reservations and hesitation with respect to the vaccine, as a result of lower accessibility to dissemination of information in Arabic about the vaccine and higher exposure to fake data and information in the social networks. This finding stands in contradiction to the reality where routine vaccination rates among children are higher among Arabs than Jews, 98%-99% versus 95%, respectively.

The State of Israel established a special framework to contend with the COVID-19 pandemic in populations residing in long care facilities. In this institution the rate of vaccination was similar among the two communities.

#### **Dealing with COVID-19 in the case of mentally disabled persons:**

In the early stages of the spread of the pandemic, pressure, anxiety and panic prevailed in the general population due to the uncertainty, which was also due to the information about the extremely violent nature of COVID-19 among special - needs communities living in specialized institutions.

Following is a case study of contending with the pandemic prior to vaccinations

#### **Treatment of COVID-19 patients under conditions of isolation in October 2020 at the Al-Nahda residence**

Al-Nahda residence which was established in 1995, provides service to tenants of the Arab society, inhabitants with Intellectual Disability and challenging behavior. The residence is comprised of a

**By Dr Muhammad Diab (Israel),  
Director, El Nahda Institution -  
residential facility and a school for  
Israeli Arabs with developmental  
intellectual disabilities and with  
challenging behavior**

boarding facility and six apartments in the community. During COVID-19 we prepared two more apartments dedicated to patients who tested positive for COVID-19 from among the residents and the staff.

- At the earlier stages of the COVID-19 crisis, we began performing preliminary acts in preparation for the looming crisis, including:
  - o Designation of the isolation areas
  - o Installation of hand sanitizing devices spread - out throughout the premises of the residence
  - o Distribution of Alcolgel personal bottles to the staff and their family members
  - o Disinfection of the residence by an external company
  - o Extensive purchase of cleaning and disinfection products
  - o Increase of the food and medicine reserves
  - o An additional important adjustment that was performed was the change of daily routines to comply with the COVID-19 regulations and adjust the routines to the tenants
  - o An emphasis was placed on recreational activities and physical movement
  - o Further guidance was provided to the staff and briefs were published in Arabic
- The families were informed about the actions taken by the residence in relation to COVID-19.
- Preparation of the emergency manpower with a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities - emergency coordinator, staff support, families support.
- The staff participated in a pressure handling workshop by the Israel Trauma Coalition, which contributed to the mental resilience, and during isolation, group support was provided via Zoom. The workshop and the services of the Israel trauma Coalition were fully funded by the Haifa and Northern district of the Ministry of Welfare.

#### **Main challenges in dealing with COVID-19**

In October we faced a challenging situation where confirmed COVID-19 patients were diagnosed during a screening test held for the entire residence, who were mostly asymptomatic.

- **Explaining the COVID-19 pandemic to individuals with challenging behavior**

The tenants of the residence were diagnosed with Intellectual Disability and challenging behavior, and for most of them, any deviation from the daily routine might cause extensive confusion and imbalance in the delicate mental situation. The daily schedule and contact with the external environment and the family members are organizing and reinforcing factors for them. The main challenge in working with this population was to mediate the new reality in a way that will not be experienced as a traumatic one. This challenge was addressed by personalized activities. We clarified to the residents the meaning of the disease, why it is important to maintain social distancing and hygiene, and we adjusted the flexible daily routine for each tenant so they could succeed traversing this period. The therapeutic activities were designated to help to maintain their mental condition.

- **Updating the families**

Another challenge was the updating of residents' families about the situation. We chose to handle this challenge by video conferencing and maintaining full transparency. The family had access to the residents, and they could view them from a distance. Keeping an open channel with the family helped in dealing with this period.

- **Staff contracting of COVID-19**

A third challenge was the fact that some of the staff was found and confirmed to be COVID-19 positive. We "turned the lemons into lemonade" and separated the COVID-19 positive residents and COVID-19 positive staff, from the healthy residents and healthy staff. Protective equipment might be seen as threatening by the residents. Therefore the fact that among them, there is a caregiver who tested positive for COVID-19 who does not wear the massive protective equipment, but merely puts on a mask, helped the day-to-day conduct.

- **Mental hardship of the staff members and their families**

In this situation, the caregivers experienced immense difficulties. The way we chose to deal with this challenge was to invest further in the staff. We handed out sweets and food baskets to the homes of the staffs' families while they were still in isolation. This in turn proved itself as helping to maintain motivation and commitment to the workplace and was an inseparable part of the success of keeping the team as an integral part of the residence throughout the crisis period.

- Direct contact with the district manager at the Ministry of Welfare, the supervisor for out-of-home accommodation, the district supervision, and the emergency headquarters within the administration for disabilities, navigated an integrative approach to the event.

**Significant achievements during the COVID-19 period**

- The spread of the virus was curbed, and isolations ended within two weeks. There was no morbidity beyond the residents and staff who were diagnosed during the screening test, and there was a significantly low infection rate.
- Regretfully, one patient who suffered from multiple pre-existing conditions, passed away. She was hospitalized numerous times, and it appears that the reason for her demise was the underlying conditions and not the fact that she tested positive for COVID-19.
- The majority of the caregivers and staff decided to remain with the patients and not leave. They demonstrated a tight bond with the patients, and preferred to be with them in isolation at the residence.
- The residence is located in the city of Tamra which was defined as a "red" city during some of the time. We managed to keep the virus from spreading from the city into the residence, and when the pandemic reached the residence, we succeeded in stopping the outbreak within two weeks, while observing the hygiene rules, wearing masks and working in capsules.

**Preparations and preliminary activities lead us to coping more successfully.**

During this period, we found that anxiety among the staff can also be positive for the handling of a crisis such as the COVID-19. The apprehension contributed to the adherence to maintaining proper conduct and receipt of the vaccines.

Vaccines: the residence acted as the local vaccination center already in late December 2020. We were the first in the municipality where the vaccine was administered to residents, staff, families of residents and to other treatment facilities in the area.

In August 2021 a third dose vaccination campaign was held for all residents and all members of staff, and family members were enabled to receive the vaccine. We encourage family members to be vaccinated to allow residents the option to go on holidays and spend time with their family members with fewer restrictions.

**Summary**

Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities who reside within an institutional framework are especially exposed to a higher risk for extensive outbreaks of COVID-19, to severe disease symptoms for those infected and the risk of fatality. Nevertheless, the morbidity rate in Elnahda was low and fatality was zero. One can attribute the success to the advanced preparation for emergencies, to the openness and transparency with which the management of the residence conducted itself *vis-a-vis* the staff, the residents and the families, and to the moral and practical support provided by the Ministry of Welfare.

*\*This article originally appeared in CIP's July 28, 2021 newsletter and can be accessed at <https://www.cipusa.org/blog/jane-ollendorff-joins-cip-advisory-board>. The below version has been modified for CIF's newsletter. Written by Melissa Zwick and edited by Lisa Purdy.*

## JANE OLLENDORFF JOINS CIP ADVISORY BOARD

As the daughter-in-law of the founder of CIP, Jane's history with CIP and the CIF has been untraditional, but thoroughly immersive.

It was purely by coincidence that Jane would end up making the perfect future daughter-in-law to Henry and Martha Ollendorff to carry on the mantle (and family name) for them in representing the family at CIF conferences and meetings. CIF originated from CIP's first alumni group of social workers, and it just so happened that Jane had found her way into the social work field in a winding and unconventional way right around the time she joined the family.

After high school, Jane became a nurse after a three-year diploma program. It was years later in her 30s when she returned to school to obtain her bachelor's degree that she learned about a full-tuition grant for nurses to get Master's degrees in social work from Washington University in St. Louis. Psychology classes that she took for her bachelor's degree introduced Jane to her passion for social work, and this program presented the perfect opportunity to pursue it. "I felt like the luckiest person in the world! I just had to buy my books and walk to class from my house two blocks away, everything else was taken care of."

Jane graduated in 1980 and married Frank Ollendorff three years later in 1983. Just a few months later, Martha Ollendorff, Frank's mother, insisted that Jane accompany her to what would be her first CIF International Conference in Oslo, Norway. "She was very insistent that I should go with her! She said, 'I need a companion, you're a social worker, I'm buying your ticket.' It was not a decision on my part!"

Jane's first conference was also her first experience getting to know about her late father-



in-law, Henry Ollendorff, who passed away before she was able to meet him. The attendees of the conference, while extremely close with Henry and Martha, had never met Jane before. After seeing Jane's name tag bearing her new surname and that she was traveling with Martha, most assumed she was Henry and Martha's daughter. It being the first conference after Henry's death, emotions were running high among those in attendance.

"People were coming up to me and grabbing my hand with tears in their eyes and saying 'Your father was my best friend.' I kid you not, it was many people using the same words. I corrected a few, but soon realized they needed to grieve and I just accepted what they had to say. How could someone be everybody's best friend? That gave me a tiny inclination as to what it was like to be around Henry."

Jane became a social worker at the age of 40 and began a position in the employee assistance program field. "It's a very American way of delivering mental health services, it's all handled now by insurance companies, which is much different from other countries around the world." Becoming involved in CIF gave Jane a unique way to bring exchanges to the field that she had never seen a way to do before.

"When I explained the employee assistance program, it was really foreign to a lot of participants from other countries. What was truly foreign for most of them was the idea of a for-profit mental health service." Jane and a professor from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland went on tours of a few existing workplace-based mental health services in the Netherlands or Germany when traveling for the conferences, exploring the systems of mental health delivery

there.

Jane has attended every CIF conference since that first one with Martha in Oslo and has made many close international friends along the way. Martha continued to attend into her 90s and then Jane either attended with Frank or by herself. As an impartial, yet devoted, member of CIF, Jane was entrusted with the responsibility of running the Executive Committee elections for CIF. "Every two years I led a small committee. We recruit the nominees and qualify them and make the election happen, including the voting at the [CIF] Board of Directors meeting. There are 30 or 31 people who vote, and they vote on behalf of their country and which candidates they want to see become the leaders of the Executive Committee. It is all voluntary, they have been doing a great job and it's amazing to me how people have stepped up and have been leading the global evolution of CIF."

COVID-19 presented some new and complicated challenges for Jane and the committee this time around, however they were able to provide access to a fair and anonymous system for voting at the last CIF elections. "Elections are important in this international group because in so many countries it is really a privilege to vote. Not everyone is able to vote in an anonymous way, so this system of democracy is something we really try to practice."

As for her history with CIP, Jane and her husband Frank spent a great deal of time and effort working with current President Lisa Purdy and past Executive Director Dorothy Fallor to archive historical records through the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland. "We spent

time with Lisa going through all the archives before the office moved [from downtown Cleveland]." CIP's rich, early history and how it got started, what people did to get involved, and the great impact the program has had to this day are all documented thanks to Jane's contributions to this cause.

As a new member of CIP's Advisory Board, Jane would like to see the relationship between CIP and CIF grow. "I want people to see and feel the connection between CIP and CIF." Additionally, Jane's ideas for CIP include exploring St. Louis as a site for programming on human rights. Unrest in nearby Ferguson following the shooting death of Michael Brown by a police officer in 2014 has made the city a hot spot for activism and public discourse, a potential topic of interest for exchange groups hosted by CIP.

In thinking about the early participants, personally selected by Henry that came through CIP, Jane reflects, "They came on ships and were met in New York by Henry and CIP host volunteers. There was such appreciation; they felt so special to have this unique cross-cultural experience in their lives. That energy from CIP participants continues to fuel the CIF Branches around the world. There's a lot of worry from the older people about what will happen when that energy has all died, when we are all gone, but there are many people involved now who never met Henry and still have that spirit going. He somehow had a real formula for how to be successful in this venture. I know times have changed and things are different in the world now and the programs have to reflect that. I am so impressed by what you all have done at CIP and CIF!"



# First Online CIF Election Held in August 2021

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Committee faced a huge challenge. The Board of Directors (BD) could not be held in-person. How could the candidates be announced without speeches during the Conference? How could the BD vote privately without anyone, including election committee members, viewing their votes?

Our committee worked very hard to solve the problems, during our meetings on Zoom and WhatsApp. Technical innovations included: posting videos of all candidate speeches on the [www.cifinternational.com](http://www.cifinternational.com) website for all members to review; and all branch presidents could vote confidentially without being present at the meeting by using an application called *Choice Voting* to conduct the actual election. The election committee prepared a detailed report of election activities for the 2021 CIF Annual Report and evaluated the process offering suggestions for improvement.

#### *Election Results:*

**32 eligible voters**

31 votes received

28 by Choice Voting

3 by email

1 missed the election

On August 15, 2021, BD members representing 31 branches from 30 countries and five continents elected by majority vote the following EC members to serve CIF International from 2021-2023:

**President:** ELIZABETH FISCHBACHER SCHROBILTGEN (Switzerland)

Vice President: MERJA NIEMELÄ (Finland)

Secretary: DEMET GULALDI (Turkey)

Treasurer: ASTRID SEHMER (Germany)

Member at Large: SILVIA NUTTER (Argentina)

Member at Large: MARÍA JOSÉ SÂNCHEZ TERE (Spain).

This first online CIF election would not have been possible without the cooperation of all the candidates nominated, the CIF executive committee, branches, webmaster, *World News* editor, CIF members worldwide, and especially the closely working team of election committee members: **Ilse Hoffmann-Klee** (Germany), **Mieke Weeda** (Netherlands) and **Jane Ollendorff**, convener (USA).

## CIF International Election Committee Seeks New Member

Jane Ollendorff has told us that after decades of serving CIF in the role as convener of the Election Committee, she will step down from this responsibility. She will try to participate in conferences and other activities and is still with CIF in her established and devoted way. For the immediate future we are pleased that Ilse Hoffmann-Klee (CIF Germany) will take over as convener of the Election Committee, Mieke Weeda (Netherlands) continues, and **we are looking for a new member of the Election Committee**. Nominations are most welcome—the EC would be happy to have one or more nominations soon, because, as the Election Committee rightly says, elections are not one-off tasks, but things to be constantly prepared for between elections. Send your interest or nominations **now** to Demet Gülaldi at [secretary@cifinternational.com](mailto:secretary@cifinternational.com).

## In Memoriam:

### ULLA-BRITT ERIKSSON

One of CIF Sweden's most senior members, Ulla-Britt Eriksson, passed away at the age of 88. Ulla-Britt participated in the CIP Program in 1963 as a youth leader. After her participation in the program she became an active member of CIF—in Sweden as well as internationally. Ulla-Britt was one of the organizers when Sweden arranged its first international conference in Sigtuna 1971. She was a past secretary of the CIF International Executive Committee.



Ulla-Britt participated in several international conferences and in trips arranged by CIF. Many CIF-members and participants in the Swedish program may remember her from the final part of the program in the years that those days were spent at Frigsarve on the Island of Gotland. Ulla-Britt was always there to welcome the participants and make sure that everything worked out as planned.

Ulla-Britt was an employee at The Guides and Scouts of Sweden and at the Swedish Association of Physiotherapists. After that she worked at Gallery X at Karlaplan in Stockholm for some years. Ulla-Britt was a very friendly, loyal and considerate person and she will be missed by many within the CIF family.

*By Birgitta Holm and Iréne Lindén on behalf of CIF-Sweden  
Birgitta Holm and Iréne Lindén on behalf of CIF-Sweden*

### NOELLA ANTAO

*Sorry to inform all that Noella Antao, one of two founding members of CIF India has left for her heavenly abode on March 8, 2022. We will miss Noella, who worked selflessly, hard and enjoyed being a part of CIF. Rest in Peace.*

- o I sent bouquets to Noella's husband and family on behalf of CIF International and CIF India. For the flowers received, her son sent the following message: *"Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers and accompanying note. A PowerPoint of her some of her best memories was made for the visitation, including pictures from CIF trips/conferences/gatherings. Here is a link to the photos and service for Noella."* <https://youtu.be/S0xBPuk58Wg>



The youngest son married on 2nd April after her death. They planned a private small engagement in their home in Mumbai when all of them could be together. She knew she probably wouldn't make it to the wedding. But she planned the son's clothes and all details for the wedding, and she told them that she would be with them spiritually if not physically.

*By Zarin Gupta  
CIF India, past president of CIF International*

- o *I was fortunate to work with Noella, I have known her as a friend since 1972. She was a lovely human being, very upbeat, straight shooter with a strong sense of humour. She worked hard and gave a lot to CIF and the field of social work. Her family and friends will miss her as will CIF India*



**Noella with her husband and sons**



**Family photo including wives of Noella's sons**

*members. I'm sure I will and mourn her passing right around International Women's Day.*

**By Purnima Mane**

**CIF USA, Past President, CIF International**

o **Dear CIF Friends,**

Noella was a very warm friend who helped me to understand life in India ...

She was hardworking, very hospitable, willing to share her life, thoughts, and feelings with her CIF colleagues...

Zarin's message after Noella passed away made me think of all the good memories I carry about Noella and many of our encounters with active CIF members. I wanted to say a few words to each of you:

Over the years, we shared moments of joy with our CIF identity, responsibilities for different roles we had as CIF members. I have learned more about cultural differences and professional services at every meeting, conference, contact we had with each other. I am happy to be part of the CIP - CIF community, and I hope we can continue our contacts over emails and share our thoughts and feelings for as long as we can....

I am now an NGO volunteer who is busy with developing programs and services for young persons in Turkey. All over the world people are trying to cope with problems of power, uncertainty, crisis ... Young people need hope and there are ways we can help them gain self-respect, resilience and provide services to the society they belong to.

I would love to hear from each of you about your present lives. Your interests... Your health... Your contacts with the world in this digital world...

Wishing you health and not to lose your hopes for a better world...

**Nüket Atalay MSW**

**Honorary President, CIF Turkey**

**Honorary President, YORET Foundation**

**Past President, CIF International**

## DIRECTORY OF CIF NATIONAL BRANCHES

May 2022

<b>Algeria</b>	Mr. Hamoudi Hocine	hocinesouk@gmail.com	<b>Morocco</b>	Mr. Aziz Elboudiri	cifmaroc2014@gmail.com cifmorocco.president@gmail.com
<b>Argentina</b>	Ms. Susana García Peñaloza	cif2010argentina@gmail.com suguspepa@hotmail.com	<b>Nepal</b>	Mr. Krishna Acharya	cif.nepal2010@gmail.com cif.nepal2010@gmail.com
<b>Austria</b>	Ms. Gabi Kronberger	cifaustria@yahoo.com	<b>Netherlands</b>	Mr. David Scheele	info@cifnetherlands.nl
<b>Cameroon</b>	"Mr. Harrison Nnoko Ngaaje A."	cifcameroon@gmail.com ajebennoko1972@yahoo.com	<b>New Zealand Aotearoa</b>	Ms. Sue Ross	cifaotearoa@gmail.com mlskross@hotmail.com
<b>Cyprus</b>	Ms. Maria Christopoulou	m.christopoulou@euc.ac.cy	<b>Norway</b>	Ms. Linda Pettersen	lindacifnorway@outlook.com
<b>Estonia</b>	Ms. Margit Randaru	cifestonia@gmail.com margit.randaru@gmail.com	<b>Palestine</b>	Mr. Mohammed Alami	mdalami@gmail.com
<b>Finland</b>	Mrs. Jaana Suokonautio.	info@ciffinland.org	<b>Russia</b>	Ms. Galina Kurganova	cifrussia@mail.ru gkurganova@yandex.ru
<b>France</b>	Ms. Mireille Boucher	ciffrance@orange.fr mirboucher@aol.com	<b>Scotland (UK)</b>	Ms. Anne Robertson	cifscotland.uk.scio@gmail.com annejrobertson@gmail.com
<b>Germany</b>	Ms. Dorte Feierabend	info@cif-germany.de	<b>Slovenia</b>	Ms. Tatjana Prašnikar	tatjanaprasnikarduran@gmail.com
<b>Greece/Hellas</b>	Ms. Oikonomou Despoina	cifhellas@cifhellas.gr	<b>Spain</b>	Ms. Susana Ortiz Soto	spaincif@gmail.com
<b>India</b>	Mr. Ratnakar P Khaire	cif_india@yahoo.co.in khaire_r@rediffmail.com	<b>Sweden</b>	Ms. Kristina Weinsjö	info@cifsweden.se
<b>Israel</b>	Ms. Edna Bar-on	baroned@013.net.il	<b>Switzerland</b>	Ms. Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen	fischbacher@cif-switzerland.ch
<b>Italy</b>	Ms. Barbara Bellotto	cifitalia@cifitalia.it bebarbar@tin.it	<b>Taiwan</b>	Mr. Tung-Ru Jeffrey Shieh	ciftaiwan@gmail.com trshieh@gmail.com
<b>Japan</b>	Mr. Masamichi Sakamoto	cifjapan08@gmail.com	<b>Turkey</b>	Ms. Demet Gulaldi	cifturkey@yahoo.com cifturkey@cifturkey.org dgulaldi@gmail.com
<b>Jordan</b>	Bassam Haddad	bhs.jordan@yahoo.com	<b>CIF-USA</b>	Mr. John George	jgeorge16@comcast.net. turin@embarqmail.com
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	Ms. Aida Illiazova	cifkl@mail.ru ailiyazova18@gmail.com	<b>CIP-USA</b>	Ms. Lisa Purdy	lisa@cipusa.org

## Connect with **CIF Online**

Do you ever wonder about how to get current information about CIF or CIP activities? Where are PEPs active now post pandemic? When and where is the next CIF International Conference, BD or EC meeting? Where are CIF members active all over the world? How can they be contacted?

Do you sometimes want to give a friend or new acquaintance an explanation about the origin and purpose of CIF or how they can become a member?

**GO TO OUR NEWLY DESIGNED WEBSITE:** [www.cifinternational.com](http://www.cifinternational.com).

If you are a CIF member, you can get the access and password codes from your Branch or Contact Person to see the **MEMBER PAGE** for even more in-depth information. There you will find **something new—monthly letters from our president**, Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen, and CIF Annual Reports, meeting agendas, statutes, CIF Archives with back issues of *World News* and much more.

Go to [www.cipusa.org](http://www.cipusa.org) to catch up with CIP activities!

Check out the various CIF Branch websites (*see branch contact list*).

What if you just want to connect with CIP/CIF friends and former participants? Do you want to hear about IPEPs that others have conducted, see photos and greetings from members all over the world, find long lost participant friends? Try the **social media group CIP/CIF** on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

We anticipate even more social media and online connections in the future to help our CIF family continue to hold hands and welcome others around the world!

## Contact Persons for Countries without a Branch Office

<b>Australia</b>	Ms. Li Li	<a href="mailto:LiLi0530@msn.com">LiLi0530@msn.com</a>
<b>China</b>	Ms. Cathy Xi Cao	<a href="mailto:daziquyiheng@126.com">daziquyiheng@126.com</a>
<b>Costa Rica</b>	Ms. Montserrat Succar Guzman	<a href="mailto:monsugu_10@hotmail.com">monsugu_10@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:pepcifcostarica@gmail.com">pepcifcostarica@gmail.com</a>
<b>Kosovo</b>	Mr. Adem Shala	<a href="mailto:ademmd@gmail.com">ademmd@gmail.com</a>
<b>Latvia</b>	Ms. Vinita Vitola	<a href="mailto:ciflatvia@gmail.com">ciflatvia@gmail.com</a>
<b>Lithuania</b>	Ms. Aldona Moceviciene	<a href="mailto:almoenator@gmail.com">almoenator@gmail.com</a>
<b>Madagascar</b>	Mr. Theodoric Rajaonary	<a href="mailto:theo.doric2525@yahoo.com">theo.doric2525@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Pakistan</b>	Ms. Tajreen Midhat	<a href="mailto:tmidhat@gmail.com">tmidhat@gmail.com</a>
<b>Philippines</b>	Ms. Juliet Vergara	<a href="mailto:vergarajuliet@yahoo.com">vergarajuliet@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Portugal</b>	Ms. Fatima Ferreira	<a href="mailto:mfferriraal@gmail.com">mfferriraal@gmail.com</a>
<b>Romania</b>	Ms. Elena Ulmeanu	<a href="mailto:Ulmeanu_elena@yahoo.com">Ulmeanu_elena@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Serbia</b>	Dr. Olivera M. Cirkovic	<a href="mailto:olivera.cirkovic@map.org.rs">olivera.cirkovic@map.org.rs</a>
<b>Tanzania</b>	Mr. Ignus Kalongola	<a href="mailto:ignuskalongola@yahoo.co.uk">ignuskalongola@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Tunisia</b>	Mr. Lassaad Bousbiaa	<a href="mailto:lassaad.bousbiaa@endarabe.org.tn">lassaad.bousbiaa@endarabe.org.tn</a>
<b>Vietnam</b>	Mr. Thang Nguyen	<a href="mailto:amour01vn2000@gmail.com">amour01vn2000@gmail.com</a>

We're on the Web!  
[www.cifinternational.com](http://www.cifinternational.com)



### FACEBOOK USERS

Click on this link to join the CIP/CIF social media group and connect or reconnect with your CIP/CIF family and friends worldwide:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/89002757584/>

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2021-23

#### President

**Elisabeth Fischbacher Schrobiltgen**  
Switzerland  
[president@cifinternational.com](mailto:president@cifinternational.com)

#### Vice-President

**Merja Niemelä**  
Finland  
[contactpersons@cifinternational.com](mailto:contactpersons@cifinternational.com)

#### Treasurer

**Astrid Sehmer**  
Germany  
[treasurer@cifinternational.com](mailto:treasurer@cifinternational.com)

#### Secretary

**Demet Gülaldi**  
Turkey  
[secretary@cifinternational.com](mailto:secretary@cifinternational.com)

#### Member at Large

**Silvia Nutter**  
Argentina  
[ipep@cifinternational.com](mailto:ipep@cifinternational.com)

#### Member at Large

**Maria José Sánchez Tera**  
Spain  
[memberatlarge@cifinternational.com](mailto:memberatlarge@cifinternational.com)

Website  
[www.cifinternational.com](http://www.cifinternational.com)

## In this Issue:

Editor's Note	2
President's Message	3
Executive Committee 2021-2023	4
Countries Talk	5
Online Election	22
National Branches	25

This issue of CIF NEWS was designed and printed in Cyprus by Gregory Hadjimichalakis, e-mail: [hadjimichalakis@yahoo.gr](mailto:hadjimichalakis@yahoo.gr)

read