

## Report on the 9th ARIISW–Shukutoku University International Academic Forum –Moving forward to the next phase in exploring Asian Buddhist social work research: Why can mainstream social work not ignore it?

On February 15, the 9th ARIISW-Shukutoku University International Academic Forum was held at Shukutoku University, Tokyo Campus, Building No.9, entitled “Moving forward to the next phase in exploring Asian Buddhist social work research” The forum was designed to reevaluate what we had accumulated through the research project since 2015. This was a good time for the publication of the Buddhist Social Work Research Series (11 volumes). ARIISW evoked subsequent discussions with participants from Japan and abroad as the next step. We were able to host many participants; 24 people at the venue and 67 online viewers. We would like to thank the Japanese Association for Buddhist Social Welfare Studies and the Japanese Association for Social Work Education for their support, and all those who cooperated and participated in the forum.

At the beginning of the Forum, Yusuke Fujimori, Director of the Asian Center for Buddhist Social Work Research Exchange, set out the aim and purpose of the forum in a talk entitled "A Midway Report on the Journey in Search of Buddhist Social Work." He described the forum's history and expectations for the future.

Specifically, Dr. Abye Tassé, the former President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), gave a valuable keynote lecture, "Deglobalizing «International» Social Work?" This was stimulated by Professor Tatsuru Akimoto, honorary Director of ARIISW, and his book on International Social Work. This was a valuable acknowledgment in exploring the possibilities of how Buddhist social work can contribute to mainstream social work in the future.

In the afternoon session, Professor Josef Gohori, Shukutoku University Graduate School of Integrated Human and Social Welfare Studies, gave his presentation: "What have we seen through the Buddhist Social Work glasses?" Our Director, Professor Noriko Totsuka spoke on "Why is Buddhism so important for the field of social work?" in the latter part of the session. After these presentations, Dr. Shuji Kurita of Ryukoku University and Dr. Yugaku Ikawa of Tohoku University made presentations and comments. In the final part of the session, participants online and in the audience had an active Q & A session with the speakers. Afterwards, Kana Matsuo, Senior Researcher of ARIISW, summarized the entire session, which ended on a high note.