



2021-2024

National Executive Committee Progress Report



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Foreword.



It has been a great honour to serve as NASWU president for the last six years and to make a contribution to a positive transformational change in our country Uganda. I am grateful to have been trusted together with my executive team the responsibility which was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Despite challenges like Covid-19 pandemic that affected many social workers and communities we serve, during our term of office, NASWU has continued to stand tall in promoting the Global Social Work Agenda; promoting system strengthening like setting standards for social work education; supporting social policies, frameworks and guidelines to standardise social work; promoting the Ethical Code of conduct, supported social workers to update knowledge and skills through continuous professional development; creating linkages and enabling cross-learning between Ugandan social workers and the global social work community. NASWU also led advocacy campaigns aimed at ending violence against children and promoting mental health amid increased mental health needs plus responding to negative publication by some politicians through an open letter to the president of Uganda; increased NASWU membership from less than 300 registered members in 2019 to 3700 current members including 30 social work teaching institutions and agencies; prioritised knowledge generation and dissemination and supporting early career professionals through mentorship programs and fieldwork placements for a well-planned, motivated and supported social workforce in Uganda.

Moving ahead, we must build on the strength of her members, social work teaching institutions, agencies and international partners and networks to further strengthen social work education and practice in Uganda. The association also needs to focus on attaining the social work council through an Act of parliament to effectively regulate social work practice and enforce the Ethical code of conduct.

As I pass the mantle to a new leader and executive of our great profession, I pledge to continue supporting the new team and promoting the goals and objectives of our great profession as we empower individuals and transform communities.

I will leave you with this.

“The World hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress” -Charles Kettering.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Michael Byamukama Ntanda'.

Michael Byamukama Ntanda
NASWU PRESIDENT (2018-2024)

Introduction

The National Executive Committee and Management of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU) would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude and admiration to our members and partners for your continued dedication towards strengthening Social Work in Uganda. Between 2021 -2024, NASWU has continued to bring and work together with diverse stakeholders through fostering collaboration and knowledge

exchange, mentorship and capacity building of early career professionals and frontline Social Workers to ensure social workers in Uganda have updated skills and Knowledge along different practice domains.

Key milestones

As we end our term of office, we would love to appreciate all social workers of Uganda for the opportunity you gave us to serve our great profession.

Under our term of service, NASWU has made significant achievements in line with her strategic objectives as summarized below;

Partnership and collaboration

NASWU appreciates the great support and partnership with Government Ministries and



NASWU, UNICEF and USAID engagement on strengthening Social Service Workforce in Uganda-July 2023.

Departments, namely;- our mother Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Sports, Inter-University Council of East Africa, Ministry of local Government, Ministry of Public Service, Kampala Capital City Authority, Parliament of Uganda, International partners including International Federation of Social Workers-(IFSW) where NASWU is a fully subscribed member,

IFSW-Africa Region, Global Social Service Workforce-GSSWA, UNICEF-Uganda, UNICEF-ESARO, USAID, Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau, Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative-REPSSI, Africa Renewal Ministries-ARMs, Cornerstone Development Africa, Child I Foundation among other social work agencies, Social Work teaching Universities, University students associations for the great support and team work during our term of office.

Compliance with Government and International Requirements;

Between 2021-2024, NASWU updated and maintained government requirements at Uganda Registration Services Bureau-URSB, and the Uganda National NGO Bureau under the Ministry of Internal Affairs leading to a five-year (5) renewal of NASWU certificate of registration and permit of

operation numbers **860L** and **9599** respectively. Other updates include NASWU postal address **5070**, Compliance with Kampala Capital City Authority, Financial Intelligence Authority, and paying International Federation of Social Workers-IFSW annual fees up to 2024.

Policy

NASWU has continued to update her members on key social protection policies and Ethical guidelines. A total of 5080 standard policy guidelines including the 2019 Minimum Standards and Competency Framework for Social Work Education in Uganda, https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/29_06_2019_Final-Minimum-Standards-and-Competency-Framework-1-2-1-1.pdf, NASWU ethical code of conduct, <https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CODE-OF-ETHICS-FOR-NASWU.pdf>, Case management tool for child programming in Uganda, the Uganda National Child Protection policy, Para-Social Work Audit Report [https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PSW-Skills-Audit-FINAL-July-21-](https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PSW-Skills-Audit-FINAL-July-21-2017-1-1.pdf)



NASWU together with members of National Mental Health Working Group after meeting the Speaker of parliament of Uganda on matters of mental health policy.

[2017-1-1.pdf](https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PSW-Skills-Audit-FINAL-July-21-2017-1-1.pdf), and supporting the Ministry of Education and Sports to review the MoEs Education White Paper and made strategic engagements to promote mental health. As a result, feedback from social work employers and educators indicate improved quality of social work education and practice.

<https://naswu.org.ug/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/EDUCATION-WHITE-PAPER-NASWU-FEEDBACK-21.pdf>.

NASWU has also put in place and updated her policies including the operations manual, the final policy, ICT policy, child protection and safe guarding policy, Internship and field work support policy, grants management policy, gender policy, Risk management policy, prevention of sexual harassment exploitation and abuse policy, cost allocation policy, procurement policy among others have been put in place and operationalized following NASWU holistic organizational assessment exercise.

Membership

Membership of all categories has increased significantly from 300 individual members as of 2019, to 3700 active individual members as of June 2024. Social Work teaching Universities grew from 6 Universities as of May 2021 to 16 NASWU subscribed social work teaching Universities namely, Africa Renewal University, All Saints University Lango, Kabale University, Uganda Christian University, Bugema University, Makerere University, Kyambogo University, University of Kisubi, Ndejje University, Muteesa 1 Royal University, Nsamizi Institute for Social Development, Islamic University in Uganda-IUIU, Kampala International University, Kumi University, MTAC and Metropolitan International University.

Membership of Social Work agencies has also increased to 30 from 19 registered organizations by 2021. Within the period of three years, social work agencies like Fine Mind Gulu, Redeem International, Africa Renewal Ministries-ARMs, Watoto Child Care, Cornerstone Development Africa, Tutapona, Hands Up Africa Network, Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative-REPSSI, Teen Challenge Uganda, Child i Foundation, and Life House International renewed their membership. This has increased the impact of social work interventions, coordination, advocacy and linkages for field work placement and support and NASWU visibility.



Some of NASWU members after membership registration at NASWU Secretariat in Buziga.

Research, Knowledge Generation and Dissemination



NASWU, Makerere University and MoH, after sharing REFLECT Study findings at Kvegegwa Local government-2021.

NASWU has actively participated in a number of research studies, international and regional learning events and effectively disseminated findings to empower our members and facilitate evidence-based interventions, facilitate evidence based-learning and shared experiences. NASWU participated in REFLECT study – Refugee Lived Experiences, Compliance and Thinking in Covid-19 (2020-2021) in partnership with Makerere University, Uganda Ministry of Health among other partners.

A detailed book chapter is available under the Global Compendium titled “*The Coronavirus Crisis and Challenges to Social Development - The global perspectives*” chapter 11. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-84678-7>. NASWU also contributed to the *International Employee Assistant Program 2024 anthology/ Compendium* Series to cover the Country Uganda with key focus areas on the impact of services during the pandemic, the effects of online/virtual counseling, the role of technology and social media, the efforts toward diversity and inclusion during Covid-19 response and now available on Amazon.

A total of 50 countries shared in this Anthology. NASWU chaired a session at the 7th REPSSI Regional Psychosocial Support Forum - 4th -5th October 2023, shared papers at the IFSW-Africa Regional Conference Kigali Rwanda–November 2021, IFSW-Africa Regional Conference Lagos Nigeria November 2023, the Global Peoples Summit 2022 under the theme: *Co-building a New Eco-Social World: leaving No One Behind*, June 29th to July 2nd 2022, plus presenting at the Joint conference on Social Work, Education and Development in Panama April 2024. This has positioned NASWU as a strong partner in Research, Knowledge generation and dissemination in Africa.

Continuous Professional Development for Frontline Social Workers and Early Career professionals



Students and Staff of Metropolitan International University after the training session on Child-protection, September 2023.

engagement and mobilization and social policy.

Specific training and social work learning events were organized at Kumi University, Islamic University in Uganda-(IUIU), Uganda Christian University Mbale, Uganda Christian University-Arua, All Saints University Lango, Kabale University, Metropolitan International University, Nkumba University, Bugema University, Cavendish University, Ndejje University, Makerere University, Kyambogo University and University of Kisubi. Other Knowledge and skills engagements include the National mental health webinar series 2023, the child protection and safeguarding advocacy campaigns 2021, 2022 and 2023, mental health training for early

The last three years has seen over 5000 frontline social workers and early career professionals supported to update their knowledge and skills in different domains of social work including mental health and psychosocial support, child protection and safeguarding, community

career professionals focusing on trauma-informed care in partnership with Child I foundation and Makerere University 2022.

<https://www.ifsw.org/paving-the-way-for-a-safer-and-more-secure-future-for-children-in-uganda/>



Makerere University students after a membership engagement session, October 2023.

Promoting Cross-learning between Uganda Social Workers and the Global Social Work Community

In line with the Global Social Work Agenda 2020-2030 Theme1- of Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness, NASWU Coordinated cross-learning between Han University-Netherlands and selected Social Work agencies and teaching institutions in Uganda including, Schools of Youth Lira, All Saints University-Lango, Children of Nations Lira, Kyambogo University, Nkumba University, Africa Renewal University, REPSSI, Safe Places Uganda, Dwelling Places and Inclusion Support Uganda. New opportunities for bachelor of international social work internship placement has been build and knowledge exchange links provided to our members.



NASWU Management team after a knowledge exchange session with Israel association of Social Workers-May 2023.

In addition, NASWU together with Project Ten and Jewish Agency for Israel coordinated cross-learning between Israel social workers and selected social work agencies and Universities in Uganda including, Makerere University, REHORE refugee agency, Africa Renewal Ministries, Loving Hearts and Bethany children transitional homes, Project-Ten, Days for Girls Uganda, REPSSI, Butabika hospital, the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda Secretariat and the Parliament of Uganda. <https://www.ifsw.org/cross-learning-between-israeli-and-ugandan-social-workers/>

NASWU also shared knowledge with Devon County Council England-March 2024 on Experience and reflection on Ubutu Values in social work practice, and supported International students and faculty from Haifa University –Israel, and facilitated learning webinar between social workers of Uganda and the Howest University of Applied Sciences-Belgium participated in Common Wealth Heads of Government meeting – CHOGM from June 20th -25, 2022 in Kigali –Rwanda.

Journey to Social Work Council.



NASWU together with the Israeli Union of Social workers engage the Speaker of Parliament on the urgent need for the social Work Council

The National Child Policy (2020) lists the accreditation and licensing of Social work professionals through the National Association of Social Workers (NASWU) as part of SSW strengthening strategies. Since 2010, several efforts have been

made towards providing a regulatory framework for the SSW, including development of an issues paper by NASWU in 2015, and several discussions between NASWU and the MGLSD on the way forward. The 2018 National Symposium on Social Work hosted by the MGLSD in partnership with the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance and NASWU, as well as the International Federation of Social Workers Africa Region Conference (2019).

Our term of office (2021-2024) has facilitated more engagement with MGLSD including agreeing on the strategy where MGLSD will take a leadership role in the presenting the bill while NASWU will provide a technical role of drafting the bill, plus coming up with an MoU with MGLSD that is at its final stage of submission.

NASWU has also had engagement with the office of the Speaker of Parliament, supported the review of the National Framework for Strengthening Social Workforce in Uganda supported by UNICEF together with Global Social Workforce Alliance which further highlights the strategy and emphasises the need to fast track the establishment of a council to regulate the social workers in the country and enforce the professional code of conduct.

System Strengthening

NASWU has made significant contributions in regard to system strengthening of the social workers and social service workforce in Uganda. NASWU is part of the technical working group, supporting the process of rolling out of the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development new National strategy for strengthening the social service workforce in Uganda; and operational framework for social care

and support system in Uganda 2023/2024 –2028/29, supported the technical review process of the National Framework for strengthening the social service Workforce in Uganda where the cardinal role of NASWU is well highlighted in the three strategies of Planning, Developing and supervising the Social Service Workforce.

NASWU is part of the Inter-University Council for East Africa select technical

committee from seven member states including Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda working on benchmarks to standardize the bachelor of social work education in

East

Africa

<https://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/blog/east-africa-region-starts-process-standardizing-social-work-education>



NASWU, REPSSI and mental health stakeholders after the 6th REPSSI Forum –Oct. 2021.

NASWU has collaborated with a number of social work agencies and universities to train their frontline social workers to update their knowledge and skills along different practice domains, <https://naswu.org.ug/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NASWU-International-Social-work-day-report-2023-final-002-1.pdf> supported 10 universities to review their Social Work curriculum in line with Minimum Standards for Social Work Education in Uganda, disseminated up to 1000 copies of the National Child Protection Policy 2020, shared 2000 copies of the Minimum Standards and Competency Framework for Social Work Education 2019, and supported regional upcoming social work associations in South Sudan, Somaliland, Somalia, and Madagascar to start and strengthen their social work associations.

In addition, NASWU is part of the East and Southern Africa community of practice technical team involving government and professional associations, including social welfare, finance and planning ministries, on workforce ratios and costing coordinated by UNICEF regional office (ESARO). The purpose of this platform is to exchange experience and insights on the use of ratios and costing in workforce planning and budgeting, and in turn to strengthen the global guidance with more specific advice, examples and country case studies.

Mentorship of social work students and creating linkages for fieldwork placements and job opportunities



NASWU early career professionals after a mentorship session at NASWU Secretariat.

The three years (2021-2024) has had an intentional focus on supporting early career professionals on life skills, starting community change projects, field work, connecting social work students to NASWU member social work organisations in line with NASWU strategic objective number three of promoting social work education. A total of 270 students from 8 social work teaching universities have been supported with placements and support supervision. NASWU has also supported and continue to receive international students and newly qualified social workers for field Work placement in Uganda from Keele University-United Kingdom, The Han University-Netherlands, and University of Calgary Canada. This has promoted learning best practices and strengthened, networking, practical skills, networking and learning best practices for better social work education outcomes in Uganda.

Coordination and Advocacy

NASWU has been actively involved in key national coordination platforms aimed at promoting mental health and wellness, child protection and safeguarding, holistic education quality, quality community engagement and collaboration. NASWU is a member of the National Child protection Working Group under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, member of the Uganda National Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Working Group (NMHPSS-WG) and worked closely with Ministry of

Education and Sports to review the Education White paper.

NASWU was a co-convener of National Learning events including the 1st, 2nd and 3rd National mental Health Conference 2022, 2023, and 2024 respectively in collaboration with the Ministry of Health-Division of Mental Health and Control of Substance Abuse and Professional Associations like the Uganda Psychiatric Association (UPA), Uganda Clinical Psychology Association (UCPA) Uganda Counselling Association (UCA) to raise awareness about mental

health and highlight the need to prioritize mental health for all in Uganda. NASWU Co-hosted the 6th REPSSI Satellite Forum for children and youth and the Main Forum from 12-14 October 2021 under the theme, "Innovate, Integrate and thrive"

NASWU has led four (4) online national leaning webinar series on child protection and mental health aimed at ending violence against children and promoting resilience of individuals, families and communities amid increased mental health needs exacerbated by COVID-19 and economic challenges today.



National and international Stakeholders shared experience during the National mental health learning Webinar-Series –July 2022.

Maintaining a functional Secretariat and NASWU Regional Coordination teams/Chapters

NASWU has maintained a functional secretariat on the address - plot 3182-Block 273, Buziga Katuuso, P.O Box 5070-Kampala Uganda. The secretariat is headed by a National Coordinator working with six secretariat staff working largely on voluntary basis. The secretariat coordinates the day-to-day running of association in line with NASWU strategic plan and reports to the National executive Committee. NASWU has also established Regional coordination teams/ Chapters to strengthen coordination, partnership and membership, mobilisation, advocacy, and system strengthening of our professional body.

NASWU through her secretariat has continuously supported social workers through issuing membership cards, writing recommendations and support letters to Ugandan social workers seeking opportunities within and outside the country, responded to member concerns and recommendations to ensure client-centered services to our members across the country.

Challenges

- Disruptions by Covid-19 pandemic affected implementation of activities for two years of closure.
- Inconsistence of members in renewing their membership fees.

- Emerging global challenges exacerbated by climate change which has implications on social life and communities.
- Much time taken on cleaning and updating NASWU in regard to government requirements.
- Poor attitude of some members “how can I benefit” instead of “how can we work together for the betterment of our association.”

Looking ahead

NASWU has noted with concern the emerging and escalating social challenges such as the increased intensity and impact of climate change on vulnerable populations, escalation of HIV/AIDS with disproportionate effect on women, children and youth, continued violence against children, burden of mental illness in our communities, poverty and inequality, reports of corruption and human rights abuse, gender-based violence, increased numbers of refugees and forced displacement among other which demand our attention moving forward.

Looking ahead, we must continue to leverage our collective expertise to confront these obstacles and social challenges of our time and ensure a stronger, more resilient and empowered social work profession in Uganda that is able to tackle the most pressing issues facing our communities. We look forward to double our effort and strengthen our partnerships for a stronger social work profession in Uganda.

In the next five years, NASWU will focus on the following

- System strengthening efforts including
- Setting standards for social work practice
- Promote social work education and training
- Professional supervision for those in practice and pre-service
- Promote partnership, collaboration and networking within and outside Uganda
- Strengthen NASWU institutional development
- Advocacy for social work professional and services in Uganda
- Ending violence against children
- Promoting mental health and psychosocial support
- Strengthen NASWU governance and Regional chapters
- Research, Knowledge generation and dissemination
- Deliver a social work council through the Act of Parliament.