

Constitution of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU)

**Adopted by the General Assembly on
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Signed:



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President / NASWU

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PREAMBLE

We, the Social Workers of Uganda recognising ourselves as professionals with a significant role to play in the development process of Uganda;

Noticing with concern the widespread social problems in the Ugandan society, which we have been trained to address, and aware that the Social Work Profession exists to promote Social Development;

Aware further, of our position in this country and internationally as members of the Social Work Profession who should live respectable lifestyles guided by professional values and principles;

Realising the need to work together, with a defined leadership and programme of action, to meet our individual, group and professional goals and national expectations;

Do hereby, through this Assembly sitting on this 12th day of May, 2001, at Hotel Equatoria, Crane Hall, solemnly adopt and enact, this constitution as the Constitution of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU).

This Constitution comes into effect on this 12 day of May 2001 and that of April 1993 ceases to operate on this same day.

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ARTICLE 1

NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION

The name of the Association shall be the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS OF UGANDA and may only be abbreviated as NASWU.

ARTICLE 2

SUPREMACY OF THIS CONSTITUTION

This constitution shall be the supreme document of NASWU and if any resolution, decision or action is inconsistent with this Constitution, this Constitution shall prevail, and the resolution, decision or action shall to the extent of its inconsistency be null and void.

ARTICLE 3

PLACE OF OPERATION

The operation of (NASWU) shall be throughout Uganda and its head office shall be situated in the capital of Uganda.

ARTICLE 4

MISSION OF NASWU

The Mission of NASWU is "*To work together towards a better society for all*".

ARTICLE 5

AIM OF NASWU

The overall aim of NASWU is "*To promote and facilitate Social Welfare and Social Development in Uganda*".

ARTICLE 6

OBJECTIVES OF NASWU

- a) To promote the welfare and development of individuals, groups, families, communities, organizations and the nation at large;
- b) To enhance the welfare and economic development of Social Workers;
- c) To ensure Social Workers in Uganda have required training and skills;
- d) To contribute to development of a law governing the Social Work profession;
- e) To ensure proper licensing of qualified Social Workers;
- f) To ensure Social Workers observe a professional code of conduct;
- g) To advance Social Work knowledge and practice through research, publication and knowledge sharing.
- h) To network with related professional bodies nationally and internationally so as to further the mission, aim and objectives of NASWU.

ARTICLE 7

MEMBERSHIP

1. There shall be four categories of membership of NASWU comprising of;

- a) **Full membership** - to be composed of those holding a Degree or Diploma in Social Work from recognised institutions.
 - b) **Student membership** - to be composed of students who are undergoing courses of training in social work in schools or institutions of social work recognised by the Association; student members are however not entitled to vote.
 - c) **Associate membership** - which shall be open to people who though do not qualify under the provisions of paragraphs (a) or (b) above, are actively involved with and contribute to the Social Work profession and accept to promote the objectives of the Association; but have no voting power.
- 2. Organization Membership** – To be open to organizations whose purpose includes social and economic welfare of individuals, groups, communities and nations and who subscribe to the objectives of NASWU. An organization is entitled to a vote by a representative who is a qualified social worker.
- 3. Application for membership**
- a) Application for membership shall be by filling in respective application forms.
 - b) Approved members shall be issued membership cards after paying the membership fees.
- 4. Membership fee**
- a) The membership/subscription fees shall be due on the 1st October every year.
 - b) The executive committee may from time to time amend the fees and dues, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.
- 5. Termination of membership**
- Membership of the association shall cease;
- (a) On death of a member;
 - (b) On resignation of member;
 - (c) If one becomes of unsound mind;
 - (d) The National Executive Committee may by a resolution, dismiss a member for a very serious breach of the social work code of ethics on the advice of the Ethics Adjudication Committee.
 - (e) A dismissed member may appeal in writing to the NEC for reinstatement, stating grounds for such action.

ARTICLE 8

ORGANS OF NASWU AND THEIR DUTIES

The association shall have the following organs;

1. Annual General Meeting/Assembly:

shall deal with the following:

- a) Be the highest decision-making body of NASWU;
- b) receive and discuss the President's annual report and plan of action for the next financial year;
- c) receive and approve financial reports of NASWU;
- d) elect office bearers if term of office is over or as bye-elections to replace a vacant post;
- e) receive, discuss and approve/disapprove, modify constitutional amendments.

2. General Meeting/Assembly:

a meeting of all the members of the Association of all branches and may be called anytime during the year by the NEC, stating the purpose, issues to be resolved, venue, time and giving members at-least 4 weeks advance notice. It shall discuss issues pertaining to the association.

3. National Executive Committee (NEC):

shall comprise of all the members mentioned in Article 9 (1) and shall be corporately responsible for the following duties:

- a) Provide strategic leadership to the Association,
- b) oversee the day to day National business of the Association,
- c) Planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Program of Action,
- d) Promote or authorise establishment of new branches, projects etc.
- e) Co-ordinate the activities of the branches,

4. National Secretariat:

- a) There shall be a National Secretariat whose functions shall include:
 - i) To co-ordinate the activities of the Association,
 - ii) Day-to-day implementation of the National Program of Action,
 - iii) Provide an information and resource centre,
 - iv) Have custody of and keep an up-to-date register of Members,
 - v) Handle all correspondence,
 - vi) Any other activities assigned by the NEC.
- b) The secretariat shall be headed by a Co-ordinator appointed by the NEC.

5. Board of trustees:

NASWU shall have a board of trustees who shall be the guardians of NASWU and protect its legal and property rights. These shall be five members including the Patron.

6. Branch General Meeting:

a meeting of the members of the branch called as indicated to consider the affairs of the respective branch.

7. Branch Executive Committees:

shall plan and administer the activities of their respective branches according to this constitution and be fully answerable for the success or failure thereof.

ARTICLE 9

OFFICIALS OF THE ASSOCIATION

1. National Executive Committee:

The National Executive Committee shall comprise of the following:

- (a) The President,
- (b) Vice President,
- (c) General Secretary,
- (d) Assistant General Secretary,
- (e) Treasurer, and

Six committee members who shall be elected to represent **six regions** of Uganda as shall be proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the General meeting. A committee member must be within easy reach of the secretariat so as to effectively participate in the Executive Committee meetings some of which may be called at very short notice.

2. Branch Executive Committee (BEC)

There shall be a Branch Executive Committee comprising of the following:-

- (a) Chairman,.
- (b) Vice chairman,
- (c) Secretary,
- (d) Assistant secretary,
- (e) Treasurer,
- (f) Two committee members.

ARTICLE 10

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE OFFICIALS OF NASWU

1. President:

The President shall perform the following duties:-

- (a) Provide leadership and Direction to the Association.
- (b) Preside at the executive committee meetings and general assembly.
- (c) Have a casting vote.
- (d) Be the head of NASWU executive committee

- (e) Have powers to call for emergency meeting.
- (f) Sit on adhoc and sub committees as an ex-official.
- (g) Represent the association in all forums both national and international and uphold a positive image of the association.
- (h) Shall present an annual report to the general meeting at the end of the year.
- (i) Shall be a co-signatory to the association bank account.

2. Vice President:

- (a) Shall deputise/assist the President carry out the above duties.
- (b) May perform any other duties assigned by the President.

3. General Secretary:

- (a) In consultation with the President, to summon all meetings of the association, take and keep all minutes of the same.
- (b) To be the overall in charge of the secretariat of the association.
- (c) In absence of both the President and Vice President, he/she shall be in charge of the association.
- (d) Keep records of NASWU's assets.
- (e) To perform any other duties assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

4. Assistant General Secretary:

- (a) He/she deputises the General secretary in the above duties.
- (b) Perform any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by the General Secretary.

5. Treasurer:

- (a) Shall be the overall in charge of all the association's financial administration.
- (b) Shall collect all monies payable to NASWU and bank it into the Association's account.
- (c) Shall initiate and coordinate all fund-raising activities of NASWU.
- (d) Shall be the principle signatory of NASWU's Bank Account(s).
- (e) Shall pay all monies owed by the association with approval of the Executive Committee.
- (f) Shall prepare and present audited accounts to the annual general meeting.
- (g) Shall perform such other duties related to the work of the treasurer as the Executive Committee may require from time to time.

6. Committee members:

- (a) Attend all NASWU Executive Committee meetings.
- (b) Carry out NASWU's activities as assigned by the Executive Committee.

- (c) To participate in all the activities of the association.

7. Patron:

The duties of the Patron shall be to:-

- (a) Guide and counsel the Association;
- (b) Be a member of the board of trustees.
- (c) Promote the image and activities of NASWU.

8. Duties and powers of branch committees:

The branch Executive Committees shall be corporately responsible for planning and administration of their respective branches in accordance with this constitution and shall prepare and submit quarterly reports to the NEC. The branch officials shall be individually charged with the following duties:

- (a) Branch chairman
 - i) Preside over all branch meetings;
 - ii) Shall provide effective leadership of the branch and be answerable for all activities of the branch to the NEC;
 - iii) Any other duties as prescribed in the national constitution at the branch level.
- (b) Branch Vice Chairman
Deputises the chairman.
- (c) Branch Secretary
Duties as for National Secretary performed at the branch level.
- (d) Branch treasurer
Duties similar to those of the national treasurer but performed at branch level.

ARTICLE 11
MEETINGS

Meetings of the association shall include;

1. National Executive Committee meeting:

Shall be a meeting of National Executive Committee members mentioned in Article 9(1) above and:

- (a) The NEC meeting shall be held at least once in 3 months and shall have a quorum of 1/3 of members present of which one must be the President and/or his vice or general secretary and/or his vice.
- (b) A notice of 14 days shall be given to the members prior to the meeting, specifying the date, venue, agenda and time.

2. Annual General Meeting:

- a) The annual general meeting shall be an assembly of all members of NASWU, and held once within the last three months of each year.
- b) It shall receive, and discuss the President's annual report and Treasurer's financial Report.
- c) The annual general meeting of NASWU shall have the key responsibility of electing new office bearers at the end of term of office or as bye-elections to fill vacant 'electable' posts.

3. General Meetings:

- a) These shall be called when need arises as when there are important issues to decide or that need approval of the General assembly. Members shall be notified of the special convening of the General meeting and the issues to be resolved.
- b) National secretary of NASWU shall give a 21 days written notice of a general meeting to all members, stating the date, time, place and agenda; provided that this shall not preclude addition of a new item on the agenda.
- c) General meetings of NASWU shall have a quorum of 1/3 of total membership to proceed.
- d) All business at the general meeting of NASWU shall be disposed of by a simple majority vote of members who qualify for voting indicated by a show of hands or by secret ballot.
- e) The annual general meeting of NASWU shall have the key responsibilities of electing new office bearers.

4. Extra ordinary meetings:

- a) May be held any time:
 - i) when called by the Executive Committee.
 - ii) when called by a written demand by at least a third of total membership stating the reason for the demand.
- b) If the executive committee fails to respond or call a meeting demanded under the provisions of sub-paragraph (12-4(ii)) of this constitution within 21 days, the members so demanding may appeal to the patron who shall advise and take immediate action to resolve the matter.

5. Quarterly and Bi-annual Fellowship meetings

- a) Shall be held every three months (quarterly) and shall be meant to discuss outstanding social, economic and political issues that affect society and to foster social interaction and cohesion amongst social workers.
- b) NASWU Quarterly Fellowship meetings shall be organised at the respective branches of the association; however the NEC shall organise Bi-annual (2-times-a-year) National Fellowships to discuss cross-cutting and outstanding issues of interest.

- c) Quarterly Fellowship meetings shall be opened to all persons interested in the issues being discussed, provided that the respective Executive Committees reserve the right of invitation of participants and their admission to the Fellowship.
- d) A notice of 21 days shall be given indicating the agenda for the Fellowship.

ARTICLE 12 **ELECTIONS**

1. Types of elections

- a) Elections shall be held during the sitting of the General Assembly.
- b) There shall be two categories of elections:
 - i) General elections - shall be election of a new executive committee, ending the term of office and effect the dissolution of the incumbent committee.
 - ii) Bye elections shall be held whenever an office falls vacant due to:
 - death of an executive committee member;
 - resignation of an executive committee;
 - dismissal of an executive member;
 - if one becomes of unsound mind;
 - any other cause decided by the general assembly.

- c) Before the bye-elections, the executive shall temporarily appoint among themselves a person to take care of the vacant office.

2. Eligibility to vote and to be voted into office:

- a) Only fully paid up members are eligible to vote.
- b) Associate members are eligible only for the office of Committee member on any NASWU Executive Committee.
- c) A person holding any office of NASWU shall not be eligible for another office unless he resigns the previous one before nomination.
- d) Non Ugandan citizens who qualify as full members shall be eligible for election into any office provided they are residents in Uganda, hold valid working permits for the period of their tenure in office.

3. Procedure for election:

- a) The outgoing executive shall be dissolved, a returning officer shall then be elected among the members to conduct the elections.
- b) Nominations for the President, General Secretary, and Treasurer of the NEC shall be by filling in forms provided by the secretariat and

submitted to the secretariat not less than ten days before the date of the AGM.

- c) The nomination forms shall bear the following:
 - i) Name and signature of candidate;
 - ii) Names and signatures of two proposers who are full members of NASWU;
- d) Names of candidates shall be displayed for members to view and candidates shall be given or allowed 30 minutes to address the assembly so as to canvass support (*applicable only to President, General Secretary and Treasurer of NEC*).
- e) The president, General Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Members shall be elected by the Annual General Meeting after end of the term of the current Executive Committee.
- f) The President and the General secretary shall nominate their deputies, (i.e. the Vice President and Asst. General Secretary respectively), whose names shall be presented before the AGM for approval on Election Day.
- g) In case of a tie, the returning officer shall have a casting vote.
- h) The returning officer shall declare the winners after the election.

4. Branch Elections:

The procedure for elections at the Branch level shall be the same as for the NEC (except Nominations shall be done at the sitting of the AGM without ten-day advance submissions)

5. Tenure of office:

- a) The term of office for any NASWU Executive Committee shall be three years.
- b) Election of new NASWU executives shall be held towards the end of the third year of the term of office.
- c) Executive Committee members may be re-elected to the same or different office, but shall not serve for more than two terms.
- d) The quorum for elections shall be as provided for in Article 11-3(c)

6. Hand over and swearing in Ceremonies:

- a) The returning officer shall immediately after the election, organise a handover ceremony to be witnessed by the assembled members and guests.
- b) A Swearing in ceremony of the office bearers shall then follow.

ARTICLE 13

REMOVAL FROM NASWU OFFICE

1. The President, on the advice of the executive committee may suspend an office bearer for reason of an act that may jeopardise the image of the Association or failure to perform expected duties.
2. A Ethics Adjudication Committee shall be asked by the Executive Committee to investigate the incident and report to the Executive within 14 days.
3. The suspension may be upheld if it is believed that the affected member of the executive committee acted with gross misconduct that violates and substantially contravenes the principles and code of ethics of the association and tarnishes the image of the association.
4. The following General meeting shall be informed of the action taken in 11 (a, b, c) and the full circumstances and shall decide on the final action to be taken.
5. The General Assembly may on petition by any of the members, pass a vote of no confidence on:
 - a) Any NASWU executive member;
 - b) President;
 - c) Entire NASWU executive.
6. A vote of no confidence on any member of the Executive Committee other than the president shall be in writing stating the grounds and handed to the president signed by at least 1/3 of members and will be passed by ¾ of the members present at the General Meeting.
7. A vote of no confidence on the president shall be handed over to the patron in writing, stating the grounds and signed by at least 1/3 of members and shall be supported by ¾ of the members present at the General Meeting
8. A vote of no confidence on the entire NASWU executive shall be handed to the patron in writing, stating the grounds and signed by at least half of the registered members and shall be passed by ¾ of the members present at the General Meeting.
9. On receiving the petition, the president shall appoint a neutral team to investigate the allegations and shall take appropriate action on receipt of the findings and recommendations.
10. On receiving the petition, the patron shall appoint a neutral team to investigate the allegations. On receipt of the report, the Patron shall endeavour to resolve any outstanding conflicts/issues in light of the information through mediation; provided that where the concerns cannot be effectively resolved, he/she shall call the general assembly within 60 days of receiving the report to make final resolutions.

11. The accused members shall be given not less than 30 days to prepare defence before the meeting.

ARTICLE 14

FORMATION OF NASWU BRANCHES

1. Guidelines for Formation:

- (a) Branches of the association may be formed in upcountry areas with the approval of the National Executive Committee.
- (b) Such branches shall be established by a warrant issued by the National Executive Committee, which shall define their geographical area.
- (c) Branches shall be governed by the national constitution. They can however make bylaws to guide their specific operations, provided that such by-laws are consistent with this constitution.

2. Withdrawal of a warrant by NASWU:

- (a) The national executive committee shall have power to withdraw a warrant from a branch for serious violation of this constitution.
- (b) The warrant shall not be so withdrawn unless a notice of the intention to do so has been sent to the branch secretary specifying grounds for the withdrawal.
- (c) The branch executive committee shall state in writing the reason as to why the warrant should not be withdrawn and submit it to the national executive committee for consideration within 60 days.
- (d) The General Secretary shall thereafter inform the branch secretary in writing of the executive committee's decision.
- (e) Where the executive committee has decided to withdraw the warrant from a branch, such a branch shall be deemed dissolved within 30 days from the date of receipt of the letter of notification.

3. Reports from branches:

The branch secretariat shall submit "quarterly" reports about their activities to the national executive committee, based on the format developed and circulated by the NEC. The last Quarterly report shall be submitted at least two weeks prior to NASWU annual general meeting.

4. Funding branches

The branches shall be self-financed. They shall raise their funds through membership fees, contributions, fund raising, donations, grants and gifts from well wishers. All of the Membership fees shall be remitted

to the NEC and 50% of the Annual Subscription fees shall remain at the branch.

5. Affiliation of branches to other organisations

A branch shall not affiliate or enter any dealing with any other organisation without the approval of the NASWU National Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 15

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

1. Revenue

The association shall raise revenue from the following sources:-

- Membership fees;
- Fund-raising functions;
- Contributions;
- Donations;
- Grants;
- Gifts;
- Income generating activities;

2. Bank account

- (a) The NASWU bank account shall be opened and maintained in such a bank as the committee shall determine and all monies of the association must be properly banked and payment exceeding 200,000/= shall be paid by cheque.
- (b) Subject to the direction of the general meeting to the contrary all bank cheques under the jurisdiction of the NEC, shall be signed for on behalf of NASWU by the Treasurer and President or the Co-ordinator, while at the branch level, it shall be the Branch Treasurer and the Chairman or the Secretary.

3. Financial year

The financial year of the association shall be from October 1st to September 30th of every year. The Treasurer shall during this period prepare and have a written audit report to present to the AGM.

4. Appointment of auditors

An auditor shall be appointed at the AGM and shall serve until the first sitting of the new executive committee in the following term of office but shall be eligible for re-appointment.

5. Board of Trustees

Shall be appointed at the AGM and shall be the overseer of all the assets, projects and financial undertakings of NASWU.

ARTICLE 16

NASWU DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The NASWU Executive Committees may develop new or run on-going projects under the provisions of this article:

1. All projects shall be introduced by the NEC at the national level after due planning on how the respective project can be replicated in other NASWU branches that may wish to participate in the project and to take account of all the risks that may accrue to such a project and its expansion countrywide.
2. Branches shall be involved in the Project initiation and Planning Process through consultations with their leaders as much as resources can allow.
3. Each project shall have written "Rules of Procedure" bearing the Project Name, Purpose, Specific Objectives, Strategies, Relation to NASWU Goals/Objectives, Funding, Duration, and how it is to be ran and managed to ensure that it does not pose the threat of being a liability to the Association and its members; provided that such rules shall not be inconsistent with this Constitution.
4. Branches may initiate projects relevant to their areas of jurisdiction but shall seek approval of the NEC before proceeding with the proposed project.
5. A project may be discontinued by the NEC at the national or branch level if it persistently fails to realise intended objectives after consultations with the project participants.
6. In any cases of closure, the NEC shall take all the necessary administrative action commensurate with such closure.

ARTICLE 17

CODE OF ETHICS

1. NASWU shall develop a Professional Code of Ethics, which after adoption by the General Assembly, shall be binding on all registered members.
2. The said code shall establish **professional values**, i.e. concepts or beliefs that are held with esteem and respect.
3. The code shall also establish **standards of conduct** expected of Social Workers in different situations such as [but not limited to] the following:
 - a) Personal etiquette,
 - b) Conduct towards Clients and other service users,

- c) Conduct towards Employers,
 - d) Conduct towards Employees (in case of Employers),
 - e) Conduct towards professional colleagues (Social Workers)
 - f) Conduct towards other professions (non-Social Work)
 - g) Conduct towards the public and maintenance of professional image.
 - h) Conduct in Financial procurement and management.
4. The code shall also establish **principles** that should underlie the values and standards of conduct.
 5. There shall be an Ethics Adjudication Committee of 5 people nominated by the President and confirmed by the General Assembly, men and women of exemplary conduct and integrity whose duty shall be to:
 - a) Promote observation of the code of conduct,
 - b) Investigate all allegations of professional misconduct (or breach of the code) and advise the Executive Committee on the course of action.
 6. Any amendment to the code shall take effect only after it has been discussed and adopted by the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 18

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- (a) This constitution may be amended by voting at the AGM of NASWU if one third (1/3) of members is present.
- (b) Proposals for amendment may be sent to the secretary at least a week before the delegates conference meeting/AGM; provided that other proposals may be presented during the meeting.
- (c) Amendment of the constitution shall be a regular item on the agenda of the AGM.

ARTICLE 19

DISSOLUTION OF NASWU

1. The Association (NASWU) or a branch may be dissolved by an AGM.
2. The provisions of the preceeding article regarding the notices to be given in respect of an amendment to the constitution shall apply "Mutatis Mutandis" to the dissolution of the association or a branch provided that where the association is dissolved all branches shall automatically be dissolved.

3. Where the Association is dissolved, the Executive Committee shall within 90 days discharge all the debts and liabilities of the Association and receive all monies owed to the association. The Board of Trustees shall then decide where the assets of the association shall be transferred after discharging all debts and liabilities of the Association such as to other charitable associations.
4. Where a branch is dissolved procedure laid down by this constitution regarding the assets shall be followed, provided that the surplus assets shall be transferred to the association.

ARTICLE 20

CITATION

In this constitution unless the context otherwise requires;-

"Approved"	-means approved by the national executive committee or general assembly.
"Association"	-means National Association of Social Workers of Uganda.
"Committee"	-means the executive committee under the provision of Article 7.
"Officer"	-means a member of the executive committee.
"Social work"	-means a full range of organised activities of governmental and voluntary agencies that seek to prevent, alleviate or contribute to the solution of social problems; or towards improving the well being and or functioning of individuals, groups or communities.
"Branch"	-a group of NASWU members from a defined geographical area.
"Region"	-one of the six geographical areas defined by the NEC and approved by the General Meeting for purposes of electing 'Committee Members' to represent those regions on the NEC as provided in Article 9(1).
"Warrant"	-is a certificate of approval for a branch to operate.
"the Association"	-means NASWU.

APPENDIX

SWEARING IN PROCEDURE

I

Having been elected/appointed to the office of..... of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda, do solemnly swear/affirm to truthfully and faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities assigned to me by this Constitution, the members and the leadership of NASWU. I shall with determination, dedication and integrity uphold and defend the NASWU Constitution and all that it represents to the best of my ability, so help me God.

Sign.....

Position

SAMPLE OF SUBSCRIBERS

[illegible]