



Constitution



Unlocking The Potentials Of Social Workers Practice

Constitution of the National Association of Social Workers of Zimbabwe

Arrangement of Sections

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Preamble

The profession of social work promotes the welfare of human beings and the betterment of the human society through the development and systematic application of scientific knowledge of human and societal activities and social services. Professional social work aims at satisfying the needs and aspirations of individuals and groups at national and international level, while constantly bearing in mind the need for promoting social policy. Their techniques include psychotherapeutic case work, social-dynamic group work and planned community intervention

1. Short Title

This constitution may be cited as the Constitution of the National Association of Social Workers of Zimbabwe.

2. Interpretation

In this constitution:-

"Act" means the Social Workers Act, *Chapter 27:21* or successor legislation, in Zimbabwe.

"Association" means the National Association of Social Workers of Zimbabwe.

"Code of Ethics" means the Social Workers Code of Ethics (by laws, 2012) Statutory instrument 146 of 2012, and as may be amended from time to time.

"Council" means the Council of Social Workers established by the Act.

"National Executive Committee" means the body consisting of the members indicated in clause 8.1.

"Social Worker" means a social worker registered as such in terms of the Act.

3. Establishment

There is established a voluntary, membership based, non-partisan, non-tribal, non-racial, non-discriminatory and not-for-profit National Association of Social Workers of Zimbabwe.

4. Status

The National Association of Social Workers of Zimbabwe shall be a body corporate, capable of suing and being sued, in its own corporate name, and subject to this constitution, of doing anything that bodies corporate may do at law.

5. Objectives

The objectives of the Associations shall be:-

- (a) To establish and entrench the status of social workers as critical professionals.
- (b) To provide an opportunity and a forum for social workers of Zimbabwe to unite, exchange and share ideas, knowledge and experiences.
- (c) To promote adherence to the mission, high ethical standards, values and principles of the Social Workers as may be contained in the Social Workers (Code of Ethics) By-laws, 2012 and international best practice.
- (d) To be a catalyst for social development and the link to the various national, regional and international initiatives and development partners such as the Government of Zimbabwe, the United Nations and its various agencies, the African Union and Non-Governmental Organizations, local or international for coordinated and collaborative efforts.
- (e) To promote the training and development of social workers and promoting research in a culturally sensitive way.
- (f) To promote and foster a culture of working with the service users in society in an accountable and respectful manner
- (g) To represent, at all relevant *fora*, the interests and well being of social workers of Zimbabwe, wherever they may be.
- (h) To promote gender equity and sensitivity and the rights and opportunities of disabled persons in the social work profession and society.
- (i) To do all such things as are necessary for or incidental or advantageous to the attainment of any of the above objectives.

6. **Membership**

6.1 The membership of the Association shall be voluntary and consist of four categories, namely full member, honorary member, associate member and student member, as decided by the National Executive Committee, with approval of a General Meeting.

- (a) **Full member** – only individual social workers registered under the Act, and who are fully paid up, shall be eligible for the status of full member.
- (b) **Honorary member** – shall be by invitation or consent of the National Executive Committee, and given to any individual professional or organization of high integrity and standing and who have contributed significantly to the profession of social work locally or internationally, in the view of the majority of the National Executive Committee
- (c) **Associate members** – shall be open to holders of a certificate of social work, from a recognized institution.
- (d) **Student membership** - shall be open to student social workers, that is, those pursuing studies leading to a recognized social work qualification, that will, on completion, lead to registration as a social worker and, are fully paid up.

6.2 **Membership and Annual Subscription fees**

6.2.1 The membership fee for a full member and an associate member shall be set by the National Executive Committee and agreed by members at Annual General Meeting, and consist of a once off membership fee payable at admission to membership, and an annual subscription fee, as may be applicable .

6.2.2 In default of the National Executive Committee setting the fees, with General Meeting approval, the fees shall be as follows:

(a) A full member shall pay a once off membership fee of \$30 , paid on application, and refundable if the application is not accepted , and an annual subscription fee of \$20.

(b) An associate member shall pay once off membership fee of \$20, on the same terms as for Full Member, and an annual subscription fee of \$15.

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(c) an honorary member shall not be obliged to pay any fee, it being recognized that they may not be social workers, and, more importantly, have already contributed significantly, to the profession.

6.2.3 No member above sixty-five years shall be required to pay any membership or subscription fee

6.3 Rights of Members

Subject to this constitution and resolutions of members at Annual General Meetings, members of the Association shall have the rights and privileges outlined herein.

6.3.1 Full Members

- (a) To be elected or appointed as members of the National or Branch Executive Committee.
- (b) To elect members of the National or Branch Executive Committee.
- (c) To participate freely in the deliberations and proceedings of the Association and participate in all its activities, at national and branch level.
- (d) To discuss and seek clarification on any issues relevant to the attainment of the Association's objectives.

6.3.2. Associate Members

- (a) To be elected or appointed as members of the National or Branch Executive, other than as President or General Secretary, *mutatis mutandis*
- (b) To elect members of the National and Branch Executive Committee.
- (b) To participate freely in the deliberations and proceedings of the Association and participate in all its activities, at national and branch level.
- (c) To discuss and seek clarification on any issue relevant to the attainment of the Association's objectives.

6.3.3 **Honorary Members**

(a) To participate freely in the deliberations and proceedings of the Association and participate in all its activities, at national and branch level.

(b) To discuss and seek clarification on any issues relevant to the attainment of the Association's objectives.

6.3.4 **Student Members**

a) To participate freely in the deliberations and proceedings of the Association and participate in all its activities, at national and branch level.

b) To discuss and seek clarification on any issues relevant to the attainment of the Association's objectives .

6.4 **Obligations of Membership**

Members of the association are expected to observe the following obligations:

(a) work towards the fulfillment of the set objectives of the Association.

(b) attend and participate actively at all meetings of the Association, and, where for a good cause they cannot, give an apology.

(c) pay set annual subscription fees within the time stipulated by the National Executive Committee, failing such stipulation, by 28 February each year.

(d) Uphold the integrity of the social work profession, and adhere to the Code of Ethics.

7. **Branches**

7.1 There shall be established ,association branches, headed by a Chairperson, with each branch being named and covering each province as set by the Republic of Zimbabwe, provided that a branch shall not be established if there are less than 10 members in the province, in which case, the province so not constituting a branch shall be affiliated to the nearby branch designated by the National Executive.

7.2 Each branch may elect at a time and date set by the National Executive Committee, a branch executive committee consisting of the same offices as the National Executive Committee *mutatis*

mutandis, and who shall serve similar terms as the National Executive Committee, provided that the National Executive Committee may authorize a smaller Branch Executive Committee where the small number of members in the branch, warrants it.

- 7.3 Branches shall be entitled to raise funds for their own activities in whatever lawful manner, provided that fund raising from outside Zimbabwe shall only be carried out with the specific consent of the National Executive.
- 7.4 In relation to funds raised from members in a branch, these shall not exceed levels levied at national level by way of membership or annual subscription, unless the National Executive Committee has agreed to such higher fee structures.
- 7.5 For every annual subscription fee paid by a member, the National Executive Committee shall remit to the branch in which the member ordinarily resides or works in at the time of subscription a percentage of the fees set by members in General Meeting, failing such stipulation of percent, which it shall be fifty percent.
- 7.6. The financial matters of branches shall be conducted in a manner similar to that of the National Level, *mutatis mutandis*.

8. **National Executive Committee**

8.1 The Association shall have a National Executive Committee consisting of the following officers:

- (a) A President
- (b) A Deputy President
- (c) A General Secretary
- (d) A Deputy General Secretary
- (e) A Treasurer
- (f) A Publicity Secretary
- (g) A minimum of 2 and a maximum of 9 committee members, who shall be Chairpersons from branches which do not have a member occupying any of the above posts.
- (h) The Immediate Past President, unless there is an objection by more than half of the members indicated in (a) to (f), on account of past unsatisfactory performance, in their absolute discretion

9. Functions and Duties of the National Executive Committee and its Members

9.1 Functions of National Executive Committee

The functions of the Committee shall be as follows:

- a) To implement all policy decisions, functions and directives of the Association as agreed at Association meetings and as set out in the Constitution.
- b) To initiate and direct the activities of the Association in line with the Association's objectives.
- c) To supervise and manage the affairs of the Association, including approving membership categories.
- d) To monitor and ensure proper accountability of the Association's funds and resources
- e) To submit reports to Association meetings
- f) To organize fundraising events for the Association
- g) To call meetings of the Association
- h) To publicize Association activities.
- i) To fill casual vacancies in its membership, arising between General Meetings of Association, which appointments shall require ratification at the next General Meeting.
- j) To remove from its membership or that of the Association, or otherwise discipline members who persistently fail to meet the expectations of the Association, as may decided by it on two thirds majority of those present at the meeting at which such a decision is taken, after affording the member a fair hearing, and seek ratification at a General Meeting.

9.2 Duties of National Executive Committee Members

9.2.1 **The President shall**

- a) Chair all meetings and preside over all activities of the Association unless otherwise decided by him/her, or the National Executive Committee.
- b) Ensure that the goals and objectives of the Association are pursued and achieved.
- c) Have a casting vote in the event of a tie at the National Executive Committee meetings.
- d) Be the official spokesman of the Association, unless otherwise decided by him/her, or the National Executive Committee.
- e) Have the overall responsibility for supervising the implementation of all decisions of General and Executive Committee meetings.
- f) Authorise, in consultation with the General Secretary and the Treasurer, all disbursements of the association's funds.

- g) Mediate and attempt to resolve all conflicts that may arise between members
- h) Perform other duties that may be assigned to him from time to time by the National Executive Committee or the General Meeting.
- i) Give reports at the General Meeting and at the end of his or her term of office.
- j) Consult with the Deputy President on matters requiring his/her attention.

9.2.2 **The Deputy President shall**

- a) Chair all meetings in the absence of the President
- b) Deputize and assist the President in the performance of his/her duties including being consulted by the President on important matters.
- c) Perform any extra duties as may be assigned to him/her by General Meeting, the National Executive Committee, and/or the President.
- d) Perform all the duties of the President with all the powers conferred on the President under this constitution in the event of the death, resignation, or removal from office of the President, or any other case concerning the inability by the President to perform his/her responsibilities, and shall hold office until such time that a co-option is conducted by National Executive Committee to fill the vacancy.

9.2.3 **The General Secretary shall**

- a) Perform all administrative functions of the association as required.
- b) Take minutes at the General and Executive Committee meetings, and all other official meetings and activities or functions of the Association.
- c) Take custody of all documents and records of the Association. Except those relating to Finance and shall properly index them for the transfer to the in-coming National Executive Committee.
- d) Be responsible for all correspondence for and on behalf of the Association.
- e) Be responsible for all secretarial functions of the Association.
- f) Perform any additional duties as may be assigned to him/her by General Meeting, the National Executive Committee, and/or the President.
- g) Keep a record of all members of the Association.

9.2.4 Deputy General Secretary shall

Deputize and assist the secretary in all secretarial duties

9.2.5 The Treasurer shall

- a) Collect and account for Association funds.
- b) Account and disburse funds as required by the Committee
- c) Keep a record of all assets of the Association and have overall responsibility over them.
- d) Keep all documents and proper records of financial transactions of the Association.
- e) Prepare and present a budget proposal to the Annual General Meeting and financial statement to all General and National Executive Committee meetings.
- f) Perform additional duties assigned to him/her by the Annual General Meeting, the National Executive Committee and/or the President.
- g) Be responsible for all financial matters of the Association including the collection of dues, financial contributions of any form and disbursement of any money.

9.2.7 The Publicity Secretary shall

- a) Publicize the Association activities.
- b) Perform public relations functions of the Association.
- c) Perform any other duties that may be assigned to him/her by the President, the Executive Committee of the General Secretary.

9.2.8 The Committee Members shall

- a) Carry out duties as may be assigned by the President
- b) act as the link between the branches and the National Executive Committee

10. Election and Term of Office

- 10.1 The National Executive Committee shall be elected by paid up members in a General Meeting.
- 10.2 The term of office of the National Executive Committee and its members is 2 years, provided that a member may be elected for a single additional term of 2 years, such that no person shall serve, for more than 4 continuous years in one post.

- 10.3 Members in General Meeting, and on two weeks notice by any member to the National Executive Committee, remove any member of the executive committee by a two thirds vote of those present and eligible to vote.
- 10.4 For the purpose of this Constitution, a year shall correspond to the time in between Annual General Meetings, such that if elections in one year are held earlier in the year than the next Annual General Meeting, the holders shall continue in office, even if twelve months have elapsed.

11. Subcommittees

- 11.1 For the proper discharge of its functions, the National Executive Committee may establish subcommittees in various areas of interests, provided that such committees shall have set terms of reference, and their establishment shall not divest the National Executive Committee of its powers and responsibilities.
- 11.2 A disciplinary subcommittee shall be established by the National Executive Committee, with the main mandate of adjudicating on disciplinary matters and making appropriate determinations.

12. Power to Establish a Secretariat

The National Executive Committee, may, subject to approval of a General Meeting, establish a full time secretariat on such terms as it deems fit, and at such place as it may decide, bearing in mind always, the interests of members.

13. Meetings and Quorum

13.1 The Association shall have the following meetings:

- (a) an Annual General Meeting, held every year, by the end of April, called by the National Executive or the Branch Executive Committee, as the case may be.
- (b) Extraordinary General Meeting, called at any time by the National Executive or any three branches, to consider special or extraordinary business which cannot wait for the Annual General Meeting, but requires the involvement of members in General Meeting.

(c) Ordinary National Executive Committee meeting, held at least once every six months or emergency National Executive Committee meeting, called by the President or General Secretary or any 3 National Executive Committee members, in writing.

- 13.2 The Agenda at an Annual General Meeting shall include receiving a report of the National Executive Committee (presented by President) on the operations of the National Executive Committee, financial statements, reports of auditors thereon, reports from branches, any other matter deemed pertinent by the National Executive Committee, or a member as notified at least two weeks in advance to the National Executive Committee, ratification of any National Executive Committee appointments or decision, and every two years, the election of the National Executive Committee.
- 13.3 The President, or the Chairman as the case may be, shall chair all general meetings, and in his/her absence, the Deputy, and in both their absence, any other National Executive Committee member or Full member selected by the members present.
- 13.4 Resolutions proposed or decisions sought, unless otherwise stipulated herein, shall be voted on by a simple show of hands and decided by majority vote, except in matters relating to election or the recall of any member or if members resolve, in which case a secret ballot shall be conducted with any acceptable independent person being the returning officer.
- 13.5 The notice of meeting shall be 21 days for any General Meeting, whether an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting, 7 clear days for an ordinary National Executive Committee meeting and 24 hours for an emergency National Executive Committee meeting.
- 13.6 The quorum at any General meeting shall be ten percent of the Full Membership, provided that a meeting may proceed with only 10 members if an earlier attempt done, had failed for want of a quorum. Where a quorum has not been established the meeting shall be deemed postponed to a date and time fourteen days from the original date, or as may be publicized by the National Executive.
- 13.7 The quorum for a National Executive Committee shall be any 4 members.
- 13.8 The provisions of this section shall apply *mutatis mutandis*, to meetings of the Branches.

14 **Financial Matters**

14.1 **Income of the Association**

The Association's activities shall be financed mainly from the following resources:

- Membership and subscription fees
- Donations from members and well-wishers
- Fundraising initiatives

14.2 **Bank Accounts and Signatories**

The Association shall maintain accounts with reputable commercial banks and the Association, through its National Executive Committee, shall establish the signatory arrangements for bank transactions.

14.3 **Accounts, Expenditure and Audit Procedures**

14.3.1 Proper books of accounts shall be maintained for income and expenditure as per accepted accounting practices. Such a statement shall be approved by the General Meeting of the Association.

14.3.2 When financially able to do so, auditors shall be appointed at an Annual General Meeting for a period to be determined by the General Meeting, preferably at the recommendation of the National Executive Committee.

14.4 The financial year of the association shall run from 1 January to 31 December.

14.5 These financial provisions shall apply to branches, mutatis mutandis

15 **Amendment of Constitution**

15.2 No amendment of this constitution shall be valid unless a resolution to that effect has been approved by two thirds of eligible members at a General Meeting.

15.3 No resolution to effect a constitutional amendment shall be voted on at a General Meeting unless the proposal has been circulated at least 21 days before the General Meeting by the National Executive Committee at the before the General Meeting by the National Executive

Committee at the written instance of the proposer of that amendment, together with a brief justification.

16 Dissolution of the Association

- 16.2 The Association including branches shall only be dissolved by a two thirds vote of members at a General Meeting or Branch AGM in the case of branches, following the procedure for a constitutional amendment, *mutatis mutandis*.
- 16.3 The assets of the Association shall, if the Association is duly dissolved, then be deemed donated to the Council of Social Work.

17 Advisory Committee

There shall be a committee, to be called the Advisory Committee, appointed by the National Executive Committee with the approval of members in General Meeting, which shall consist of at least 2 and at most 5 people of integrity and standing, whose function shall be to give any advise and resolve difficult disputes in the Association as may be required or appear necessary to it, sparingly, and to clarify on any unclear area of the constitution or to decide on any fundamental issue not covered by the Constitution, and on resuscitation of the association or structure , or take appropriate measures to so resuscitate the association in the event that any or all of its structures have ceased to function, or has clearly abandoned its functions or the Annual General Meeting has not been called or held when due. Term of office, of the Advisory Body shall be three years.

18. Transitional Arrangements

- 18.1 The National or Branch Executive Committee in place shall continue in place until the next General Meeting, to be held by 30 April 2013, but will , immediately be expanded to include all branch chairpersons into the National Executive Committee, with all vacant or new posts being filled by the expanded National Executive Committee from its members.
- 18.2 The first term of office under this constitution shall begin at the next General Meeting ,with current members of the Executive being eligible to stand for election.

Passed by General Meeting held onat....., effective immediately.

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President

General Secretary

Witnesses

- 1 Branch Chairperson (Harare)
- 2 Branch Chairperson (Manicaland)
- 3 Branch Chairperson (Midlands)
- 4 Branch Chairperson (Masvingo)
- 5 Branch Chairperson (Mashonaland Central)
- 6 Branch Chairperson (Bulawayo)