

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE GAMBIA (TASWIG)**

## **PREAMBLE**

This is a charitable, non- religious and non- political association formed by social work practitioners in The Gambia. This initiative emanated as result of the felt need of social workers in the country and the unprecedented rise in the number of complex social problems that seem to have far reaching impacts on all the fabrics of our dear Gambia.

The ultimate mission of the association therefore, amongst other things is to foster understanding and togetherness among social workers, to better understand these sophisticated social problems in order to formulate strategic plans to prevent and minimize their impact or thoroughly eliminate in The Gambia and even the wider world.

The smooth existence of this Association principally depends on the cohesive relationship among members, and their utmost resolve to ensuring that the rules and regulations of the Association are observed and adhered to by all members.

## **ARTICLE 1. THE NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The name of the association shall be called The ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS" in The Gambia (TASWIG)

## **ARTICLE 2. ADDRESS OF TASWIG:**

TASWIG shall have its headquarters at Sankung-Sillah Bulding Fajara Opposite War Cemetery

### **ARTICLE 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASWIG:**

The existence and the continuity of TASWIG is hereby recognized by this constitution as by law established, TASWIG shall have rights, interests, duties and aspirations which shall not be inconsistent with any law or laws in force in The Gambia as from the date of its coming into force.

### **ARTICLE 4. LEGAL STATUS**

a. TASWIG shall be an independent, voluntary, non-partisan non-discriminatory, non-religious and non-profit association for Gambian Social Workers duly incorporated under the Society Act of the laws of The Gambia.

b. TASWIG shall apply all its property and income towards the promotion of the objectives of TASWIG. No part of that property or income to be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of TASWIG, except in good faith in the promotion of those objectives,

c. TASWIG shall be a legal entity in its own rights as a corporate body with powers granted to it by this constitution.

d. TASWIG may enter into contract; acquire hold and dispose of any real and personal property; sue or be sued; invest its money in any security in which trust funds may be invested; appoint agents to transact any business of TASWIG on its behalf for reward or otherwise.

### **ARTICLE 5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims and objectives of TASWIG are:

- I. To further and safeguard the interests of Social Work practitioners in the Gambia

- II. To educate Social Workers in the Gambia about their rights and responsibilities;
- III. To raise awareness of the rights of Social Workers and their responsibilities in the society;
- IV. To provide a channel for representation and advocacy for the rights and interests of Social Workers;
- V. To provide a forum for advocate groups and sympathizers in solidarity with social work profession
- VI. To influence those who make decisions that affect Social Workers by proving them with authoritative and expertise opinions of interests and concerns of Social Workers and their clients;
- VII. To become the premier advocate for Social Workers, the social Work profession, and their clientele;
- VIII. To strive to influence the legislature and other competent authorities to enact effect laws and regulations, and formulate relevant policies and programs for development and practice of Social Work in The Gambia;
- IX. To ensure that vulnerable groups and communities are provided with social services fit for purpose, safe, and of acceptable quality and standards;
- X. To foster mutual understanding and cooperation among social workers;
- XI. To ensure clients and communities with special needs access all public services without discrimination ;
- XII. To ensure that providers of social services for the vulnerable group and communities conform to statutory health, safety, environmental, and professional standards;
- XIII. ;
- XIV. To assist government, civil society and the private sector (stakeholders) in effectively responding to need and aspiration of the vulnerable group and communities, their relative, friends, sympathizers;

- XV. To advise and assist vulnerable group and communities in getting adequate redress in the event their rights and dignity are infringed;
- XVI. To be partner of The Gambia government, development partners, civil society organizations, and private sector interested in the rights and welfare of the vulnerable groups and communities;
- XVII. To collaborate and co-operate with government in the implementation of international conventions and agreements relating to the rights of the vulnerable groups communities;
- XVIII. To be an effective member of the international community and civil society organizations with the common aim of enhancing the welfare of the vulnerable groups and communities;
- XIX. To promote fair and ethical service delivery practices in all sectors in the interest of the vulnerable groups and communities;
- XX. To form clubs of service and beneficiaries and sympathizers at the community level,
- XXI. To train, support and promote the training of social workers and welfare assistants;
- XXII. To contribute to the development of social work knowledge.
- XXIII. To do such other things as may be conducive to the attainment of aim and objectives of TASWIG

**ARTICLE 6 FUNCTION:**

The function of TASWIG in furtherance of the forgoing aims shall be:

- I. To conduct service providers education, awareness raising and advocacy programs and projects;
- II. To undertake or support research and collate and analyze information on the vulnerable groups, and Social Work practice;
- III. To lobby and influence the legislature, central and local authorities to improve service accessibilities laws/regulations and strengthen enforcement of such laws;

- IV. To provide complementary basic social services to the vulnerable groups and communities whose rights have been infringed;
- V. To act as a forum for consultation, communication and promoting understanding and co-operation between the vulnerable groups, communities and service providers ;
- VI. To assist the government and the private sector in making The Gambia responsive to the needs of vulnerable groups and communities;
- VII. To collaborate with national, local, and international organizations, and individuals in the realization of the above named aims and objectives;
- VIII. To co-operate with government agencies, development partners and other stakeholders to raise public awareness of the rights and responsibilities of the vulnerable groups and communities;
- IX. To work with the government and private sector to explore the possibilities of attracting donors in support of the vulnerable groups and communities;
- X. ;
- XI. To collaborate with government agencies, development partners and organizations of/for vulnerable groups and communities to make The Gambia "A Gambia Fit for All"
- XII. To undertake activities gear towards removing barriers that hinder the attainment of equal rights and equal opportunities for the vulnerable groups and communities;
- XIII. To advocate and facilitate flow and exchange of information concerning the vulnerable groups, communities, and Social Work among stakeholders and interested parties;
- XIV. To participate in voluntary services meant to prevent, reduce or eliminate social problems;

XV. To do such other things as may be conducive to the attainment of the aims and objectives of the association

#### **ARTICLE 7 MEMBERSHIPS :**

The categories of membership of TASWIG are as follow

1. Associate Members
2. Ordinary members
3. Honorary members
4. Student member

Both Associate and Ordinary members are full members of TASWIG who shall enjoy full rights as accorded by this constitution and by TASWIG Rules and Regulations.

#### 7.1. Eligibility and Rights

Only individual persons are eligible for TASWIG membership. No institutional memberships will be accepted.

Associate members - are all founding member of TASWIG whose names are as set out in the schedule attached hereto. All Associate Members who are up-to-date with their financial obligations are eligible to one vote at the Annual General Meeting. All Associate Members are automatically members of the National Board and shall qualify to occupy any position in TASWIG.

Honorary member - are individuals whose contributions are specially recognized by members of TASWIG and accepted as such upon the decision of the Executive Council. Honorary members are nominated by the National Board shall have no voting rights but may be appointed by the National Board in any appropriate committee or working group. Student members - upon payment of the required annual fee, the secretary will admit students enrolled in

approved Social Work course as student members of the Association. A student member is eligible to vote at the Annual General meeting but cannot hold office in the Association.

All members who are up-to-date with their financial obligations shall also be entitled to;

- I. Take part in the realization of TASWIG activities;
- II. Be informed about TASWIG and its activities;
- III. Sit in ordinary and extra-ordinary general meetings;
- IV. Have access to service/advice provided by TASWIG
- V. May use the letter TASWIG after their names to signify membership of the association
- VI. All advantages and privileges of membership.

### 7.3 Responsibilities

All admitted members should:

- I. Be bounded by the provisions this constitution, and rules and regulation promulgated by TASWIG
- II. Be conform with the payment of such fees and subscriptions as may be fixed by TASWIG
- III. Play active role in the realization of TASWIG aims and objectives; Uphold and defend the moral and material rights of TASWIG
- IV. Not use their membership rights of TASWIG to further personal or financial interest.

### 7.4 Membership

#### 7.4.1 Eligibility for membership

A person is eligible to become a member if:

a) That person has successfully completed an educational program approved by the requirement for achieving a qualification for the practice of Social Work; or.

C) That person is enrolled in approved Social Work course as a student.

#### 7.4.2 Membership Subscription

A) Each member of the Association is required to pay an annual membership fee

Commencing from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December annually B) The Executive will set the membership fee and may permit members to pay it in

One sum or by installment;

C) The Executive also permits new members to pay membership fee on a pro rata

Basis, the amount being relative to the time of their joining the Association7.5 Termination of membership and re-admission7.5.1 Termination

Membership of TASWIG shall be terminated by any or a combination of the following:

- I. Persistent failure to actively participated in the affairs of TASWIG
- II. Involvement in any actively incompatible with the aims and objectives of TASWIG
- III. Failure to pay membership dues on time;
- IV. Upon the determination by two-thirds of the executive committee that member's action/conduct is deem incompatible with the ideals of TASWIG;

- V. If following admission the membership found out that a person is ineligible, that person's membership ceases immediately;
- VI. Written voluntary resignation when approved by two-third of the executive committee,
- VII. Any person who ceases to be a member remains liable to the association for all monies owing by that person to the association at the time of his/her cessation of membership.

#### 7.5.2 Re-admission

- I. To reinstate membership to a person who has shown cause that he/she should be reinstate
- II. The Executive is not obliged to reinstate membership to any member who has resigned from the association at a time:
  - A) When the member has been the subject if a complaint arising out off an alleged breach of code of ethics
  - B) The complaint is subject to investigation by the association;
  - C) No resolution has been reached until the Board is satisfied that matter has been resolved and the former member has either being exonerated or has adequately dealt with the finding of the association.

The term and conditions of termination and sanctions shall be defined in the Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations of TASWIG

## **ARTICLE 8 STRUCTURE OF TASWIG**

TASWIG shall be made of the following bodies/organs:

- a) The General Assembly;
- b) The executive Council;
- c) The technical Committee;
- d) The Secretariat.

The specific functioning of the various committees and all TASWIG bodies shall be Defined in the By-laws, Rules and regulations.

## **ARTICLE 9 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The supreme authority of the TASWIG shall be vested in the General Assembly who shall

Meet once a year at Annual General Meeting (AGM).

a) The General Assembly shall consist of all voting members of TASWIG. The General

Assembly meet every year at the Annual General Meeting which shall be held within

Eighteen months of the registration of TASWIG and annually thereafter.

The Agenda of the AGM shall include:

To receive, review and adopt the following:

1. Annual report of the Executive Council
2. Statement of Audited Accounts
3. Annual Budget

#### 4. Annual Work Program

- a) To appoint auditors;
  - b) To elect members of the Executive Council upon the expiration of their tenure;
  - c) To determine annual membership fee,
  - d) To endorse or amend the constitution, By-laws, Rules and Regulations;
  - e) To deal with motions submitted by the Executive Council.
- f) 30 days notice of the Annual General Meeting Shall be given to all members informing them of the date, time and venue of the AGM and requesting for nominations and Motions for discussion and any amendments to the constitution. Any nomination, Motion and/or proposed amendments to the articles must be in written signed by a Proposer and seconder and must reach the Executive Council not later than three Weeks prior to the day of the AGM. Nominations, motions and amendments need not To be circulated to members who have voting rights.
- g) Not less than four days notice must be given for members for any motion,

nominations and/or proposed amendments to the constitution to be tabled at any

General Meeting . Such notice shall be deemed properly sent if they comply with the

Provisions of this constitution.

h) The quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be one-third of the total voting

membership. Voting on decision is by simple majority of full paid-up member.

Voting on decisions to amend the constitution shall be by two-third majority of full

Paid-up members.

i) The General Assembly shall convene either in ordinary Annual General Meeting or

extraordinary meetings.

j) The chairperson at the request of General Assembly or the Executive Council shall be

empowered to invite as registered observers local, regional and/or international

organizations and individuals to attend meeting of the AGM and Subsidiary bodies

of TASWIG. Observer shall have no voting rights.

K) Summons to General Meetings and procedures for conducting them shall be defined in

provisions of the By-laws Rules, and Regulations.

## ARTICLE 10 NATIONAL EXECUTIVES

The National Board shall be the policy, strategy and decision-making body of TASWIG.

It shall direct TASWIG activities and shall equally supervise and monitor those activities

It shall be accountable to the General Assembly.

The National Board shall consist of 11 members of whom 5 shall be from the Associate

Members and 6 from the ordinary members. The Associate Members shall nominate 6

Ordinary members for the first five years of the existence of TASWIG. The National Board

Shall be comprise of:

- I. President
- II. Vice President
- III. Secretary
- IV. PRO
- V. Treasurer
- VI. Coordinator
- VII. 5 other members

Any member of the executive committee shall be competent person with the capacity

To head specific sectoral or thematic portfolio within TASWIG areas of concern both in the

Gambia and abroad.

Executive member shall be elected or selected according to laid down criteria of personal

Or professional standing and a track record of social contribution.

Elections, meetings, terms of termination, remunerations, sanctions, indemnifications,

And specific functions of the Board members are defined in the By-Laws, Rules and

Regulations.

The term of office for Board members shall be two years and the Chairperson, Vice

Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer and treasurer shall for three years.

#### **ARTICLE 11 FUNCTION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVES**

The main functions of the National Board of TASWIG shall be the following:

- I. Formulate the policy of TASWIG
- II. Carry out strategic planning for TASWIG
- III. Mobilize resources and build partnerships and network for TASWIG
- IV. Advise the General Assembly and submit to it a programs of work and relevant project budget.
- V. Ensure the implementation of decisions and of decisions and resolutions taken by the General Assembly meetings.
- VI. Employ, dismiss and remunerate administrative and other staff of TASWIG. Such employees shall have no voting rights TASWIG.
- VII. Monitor and oversee the secretariat and the Technical Committee.

- VIII. Direct the activities of GASWA and oversee the management of TASWIG 'S materials, human and financial resources.
- IX. Propose Bylaws rules and regulations for the functioning of TASWIG in accordance with the ideals, principles and purpose of TASWIG as espoused in the constitution for enactment by the General Assembly.
- X. Establish committees or structures they see fit in the furtherance of the aims and objectives of TASWIG.
- XI. Represent TASWIG in all its external relation within and out of The Gambia,
- XII. Such other things as may be in the best interest of TASWIG

### **ARTICLE 12 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**

The regular meeting of the National Board shall be held at least once every three-month With half the total members (excluding the Chairperson) present constituting a quorum.

Any member shall be deem present for purposes of determining whether there is a quorum.

If such member is able to participate in the discussions at such meetings either through

Telephone, video electronic means a real time basis.

### **ARTICLE 13 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

TASWIG shall establish a technical committee that will be in-charge of all technical matters as and when the need arises. The term of establishment, composition, functions and meetings of technical committee shall be define in the by-laws

### **ARTICLE 15 GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE SECRETARIAT:**

The general functions of the Secretariat shall be the following.

- I. Day-today running and administration of the affair of TASWIG.
- II. Convening of TASWIG's meetings.
- III. Management of all TASWIG events including education, awareness campaigns, advocacy, and training programs.
- IV. Provision of support and services to the vulnerable groups and communities.
- V. Preparation of project proposal for funding and implementation.
- VI. Co-ordination of communication between TASWIG member, service beneficiaries, service providers, and sister organization and management of resources.
- VII. Such other things as may be in the best interest of TASWIG

The procedures and human management resources of the Secretariat and specific function of the staff shall be defined in the Rules and Regulations.

## **ARTICLE 16 FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

### **16.1 FUND**

Funds for the operation of TASWIG and its various institutions and programs shall be raised **as follows**.

- I. Membership dues - all members of TASWIG shall be required to pay registration and annual membership fees determined, as when needed, at an Annual General Meeting.
- II. Grants Gifts, and Donations - TASWIG shall actively seek grants from development agencies, government agencies, private sector, foundations and NGOs.

- III. Income-generating Activities -TASWIG shall undertake income-generating activities such as musical shows, competition.
- IV. Special contributions from members.
- V. Resources from other appropriate legal sources.

#### 16.2 Management of TASWIG Finance

- I. TASWIG shall put in place a transparent financial and accounting system.
- II. The Administrative Secretary shall be responsible for incurring and accounting for expense made with regard to the operation of TASWIG with the limit of approved budget.
- III. The financial and contribution period of TASWIG shall be the calendar year.
- IV. All funds of the organization shall be deposited into an account in the name of TASWIG at such recognized bank as the Executive Council may determine.

##### 16.2.1 Trustees/signatories to the accounts

The trustees/signatories to the organization accounts shall be:

1. The president, the Secretary and the Treasurer.
2. Any two of the three signatories can sign for the withdrawal of money from the Accounts after the approval of president who shall be a principal signatory the terms for the management of financial resources and physical asset shall be defined In the By-laws.

#### 16.2. BUDGET

The budget shall be prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Executive Committee for review and approval.

### 16.3 AUDITS

- I. Reputable auditor or firm of auditors shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to audit the Annual Accounts of GASWIG.
- II. The accounts of TASWIG shall be audited in time for the presentation of auditor' report to the Annual General Meeting of TASWIG.

### 16.4. QUARTERLY REPORTS

The Secretariat shall present quarterly statements of accounts and financial statement to the Executive Committee.

### **AARTICLE 17 CODE OF ETHICS AND BY -LAWS**

TASWIG shall have and adopt such bylaws, rules and regulations as be needed for its proper and efficient operation.

TASWIG must also maintain written Code of Ethics that set out for the promotion and maintenance of principles, procedures for dealing with matters of Ethical and professional standard copies which are made available to members free of charge, and to the general public on moderate fee. The Association will review theof Ethics at least once every seven (7) years and the review will be presented to the General Assembly for approval.

### **ARTICLE 18 AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION**

This constitution may altered, amended, or revoked according to the following procedures:

- I. Members/s send proposal in writing to the First Secretary of TASWIG.
- II. The proposal/s is included in the agenda for Annual General meeting.
- III. The proposal shall be at the Annual General Meeting, and individual members shall vote it.
- IV. No proxy votes are allowed in votes on the constitutional amendment.
- V. A proposal is passed if two-thirds of the votes cast in favor of it.

## **ARTICLE 19 PROHIBITIONS**

a. TASWIG shall not indulge in any political or religious activities or allow its funds, property and/or premises to be used for political or religious purposes or for purposes of any public or private institutions, except in instances where provisions of TASWIG's strategic partnership policy indicates otherwise.

b. Members are prohibited from acting as agents, lobbyist of organizations or private individuals who whose values incompatible with the aims objective of TASWIG

c. Executive Committee members and Secretariat staff members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not be involved in decision-making affecting transactions between TASWIG and the other party and should not refrain from disclosing their association with that party.

A conflict of interest policy, strategic partnership policy, procedures for awarding contracts and agreements, and terms of acceptance of

gifts, donations and subsidies shall be defined in the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations.

## **ARTICLE 20 DISPUTES AND THEIR SETTLEMENT**

The National Board whose decision shall be final shall adjudicate any dispute or differences between TASWIG members or TASWIG and another party arising from the interpretation and application of the constitutions.

## **ARTICLE 21 DISSOLUTION**

The dissolution of TASWIG shall be conducted using the following procedures.

- I. TASWIG shall be dissolved when two-third of the individual members agree at an exordinary meeting to its dissolution.
- II. If upon the dissolution of TASWIG there remain any assets and monies after the satisfactions of all debts and liabilities of TASWIG such remains thereof shall be transferred to another NGO or Civil Society Organization having the same or similar aims and objectives as TASWIG.
- III. In the event there are many NGOs legible to receive the remaining assets of TASWIG, individual members will vote on which Civil Society origination/s will be given the remaining assets of TASWIG.

## **ARTICLE 22 TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

The associate individual Members who have signed the attached schedule shall promulgate this constitution of The Association of Social Workers in The Gambia.

## **APPENDIX**

**BY-LAWS:** rules and regulations made by the National Board for the administration and management of TASWIG.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS AGM**

TASWIG will hold AGM at least once very calendar year. The AGM must have a purpose, be held at a reasonable time and place, and be conducted using any method that gives the entire membership a reasonable opportunity to participate.

To call an AGM the National board must sent a notice to all members by any appropriate method. The members must receive the notice at least twenty-one (21) days before the meeting. In the notice I must be indicated the date, time and venue of the meeting, the agenda and resolutions to discuss, etc.

### **EMERGENCY GENERAL MEETING**

The National Board must call and arrange to hold and emergency general meeting within twenty-one (21) days on the request of 2/3 of the General Assembly. The request for a general meeting must be in writing, stating the purpose, signed by the members making the request, and deposited with the CEO. If the National Board failed to call the meeting without any reasonable excuse, the members requesting meeting can continue mobilizing members for another meeting in which they will need 70% of the voting membership to be present to make it legal, and TASWIG will pay the reasonable expenses incurred.

### **APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

To apply for membership, a person will submit to the Chief of Executive officer or the Administrative officer. Completed application form together with a copy of the his/her Social Work qualification or Transcript Declaration by the applicant that she/he will adhere to the code of Ethics of the Association.

### **ADMISSION OR REFUSAL OF ADMISSION**

Admission - as soon as possible after the National Board approves an application, the CEO will notify the applicant in writing and request him/her to forward his/her first year's membership fees. On receipt of the fees, the CEO will enter the person's name in the register of members to be kept by him/her.

Refusal - the National board is not obliged to approve the membership of any person, even if she/he meets the eligibility criteria, when that person has been the subject of a complaint arising out of an alleged breach of the Code of Ethics or found to have breached the Code of Ethics, or is convicted of a criminal offence carrying custodial sentence.

### **Power and Functions of the Members of the National Board:**

#### **PRESIDENT:**

- He/She will be the head of an organization and the national board answerable to the general Assembly;
- He/She will oversee the general functioning of the organization
- He/she will preside over all General Assembly and National Board Meetings
- He/She shall have the prerogative to convene meeting/s in consultations with the National Board and when deemed necessary
- He/She shall together with secretary prepare the agenda of all meetings

- He/She shall be the principal signatory to accounts with either the chief Executive officer or treasurer
- He/She shall be responsible for the approval and disbursement of all funds, in his absence the Chief Executive Officer
- He/She Shall serve as member of the advisory committee

#### VICE PRISIDENT:

- He/She Shall act in the absence of the president
- He/She shall laise with the Chief Executive Officer to draw the agenda of meetings
- He/She shall assist in all other functions of the organization
- He//She shall debutize for the President when he/she is busy
- He/She shall take up any other assignment assign to him/her by the President or National Board
- In case of the President's resignation or dead he/she shall be in charage up to the term of the incumbent president

#### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

- He /She Shall notify all National Board Members of Meetings through their contact addresses
- He/She shall, in consultation with the president, Prepare the agenda of the meetings
- He/She shall be responsible for the maintenace of records, correspondents and mails
- He/She Shall be responsible for the taking of minutes of meetings and their distribution to members
- He/She Shall perform any other official activities assigned to him/her by the president in the best interest of the organization
- He She shall be signatory to the accounts

#### NATIONAL TREASURER :

- He/She will be responsible for maintaining records of all financial transactions of the association

- He/She will prepare and submit to the National Board and the General Assembly, quarterly and Annual financial statements of the accounts of the association
- He/She will be responsible for collecting subscriptions and funds from donors
- He/She shall be signatory to all accounts etc

#### VACATION OF OFFICE OF NATIONAL BOARD:

The position of a National Board Member is vacated if the person holding the office :

- Is convicted of criminal offence
- Is mentally and/or terminally ill
- Becomes a subject of academic enquiry or disqualification





























