



2022

# WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY CELEBRATIONS -UGANDA



**THEME: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN CO-BUILDING A NEW  
ECO-SOCIAL WORLD-LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



NASWU extends her gratitude to all social workers in Uganda for the commitment to change and empower lives of the most vulnerable population and communities in our country. Special thanks to social workers at the frontline of addressing challenges related Covid -19 through promoting resilience of individuals, families and communities amid global health catastrophe and challenge of our time

NASWU would love to acknowledge our partners, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), Ministry of Health (MoH), USAID, UNICEF, REPSSI, Africa Renewal Ministries (ARMS), Watoto Watoto Child Care, Cornerstone Development Africa, all participating Social Work teaching institutions and agencies, International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), Global Social Workforce Alliance (GSWA) for financial and technical support, strategic guidance, sharing best practices, reports and latest publications which has enabled NASWU to remain focused on the government policy direction and on the Global Social work agenda and making the world social work day celebration .

Special thanks to NASWU regional coordination teams, NASWU - National Executive Committee Members, NASWU secretariate team, Africa Renewal University AfRU, Uganda Christian University (UCU-ARUA) and Islamic University in Uganda-(IUIU) for organising and hosting the 2022 World Social Work Day celebration. May our good Lord reward you abundantly.

**Michael Byamukama Ntanda**

President National Association of Social workers of Uganda-(NASWU)

## ABOUT NASWU

The National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU) brings together professional Social Workers in Uganda, Social Work Teaching Institutions and Social Work Agencies. It operates under the oversight of the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development. NASWU works closely with the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Educations and Sports in promoting and facilitating social welfare and social development, promoting professional practice and shaping social policies while minimizing social risks and harm and ensuring the delivery of high-quality social services in Uganda's key stakeholders to ensure a well-planned, empowered and organised social workforce in Uganda as envisioned in chapter seven (7) of the National Development Plan three (3) and National Child policy 2020. <https://www.ifsw.org/uganda-association-pubshesannual-report/> NASWU is a member of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) <https://www.ifsw.org/> and a member of the Global Social Workforce Alliance

## ABOUT THE WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY CELEBRATIONS

World Social Work Day 2022 aimed at highlighting the achievements of social work, raise the visibility of social services for the future of societies, and to defend social justice and human Rights. Every year, World Social Work Day is observed on the 3rd Tuesday of March. It is a celebration that has become a high point in the social work calendar with social workers all over the world celebrating and promoting the contributions of the profession to individuals, families, communities and the wider society

### 2022 WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY THEMES

The 2022 World Social Work Day theme is 'Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind.' The theme coincided with the theme of the People's Global Summit that took place from 29th June to 2nd July 2022. The theme for Uganda was "The role of Social Workers in Co-building a New Eco-Social Uganda: Leaving No One Behind."

The theme presents a vision and action plan to create new global values, policies, and practices that develop trust, security, and confidence for all people and the sustainability of the planet. World Social Work Day 2022 was an opportunity for the social work profession in Uganda to engage all our networks and the community we work with and appreciate their contributions to the values and principles which enable all people to have their dignity respected through shared futures.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE CELEBRATION

- To celebrate the unique achievements of individuals and institutions within the social work fraternity who have worked tirelessly to co-build sustainable fair and just communities to the benefit of the most vulnerable.
- To advocate for the strengthening of social welfare systems and peaceful co-existence between different individuals, groups and communities and the environment.
- To create a platform for the free exchange of ideas among early career professionals and practitioners to dialogue and build synergies for Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind for future generations in Uganda.
- To join the global social work community in commemorating World Social Work Day to raise global awareness and advocacy for all governments and development partners to Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind.

## WELCOME REMARKS: MR GERARD OKIRIA- MASTER OF CEREMONY/ NASWU TREASURER



Welcomed all students from 12 Social Work teaching Universities, their lecturers and stakeholders from social work agencies and thanked all for coming. He also thanked Bugema University for hosting the 2020 World Social Work Day which happened before the Covid-19 lockdown.

The prayer was led by Pastor Steven Setimba from Africa Renewal Ministries one of the Christian Based Member Organisation of NASWU. The Uganda National Anthem and East African Anthem were led by Bugema University.

Mr Okiria said that the World Social Work Day Annual event is celebrated every third Tuesday of March every year and it is a great day for all social workers in the world to showcase what they are doing in communities, share best practices and engage stakeholders for increased interventions, research, improve on policy and funding to better the wellbeing of all people, more so the vulnerable groups and communities along the continuum of social protection and care.

Mr Okiria also noted that all students, lecturers and all social workers need to pay and renew their membership to allow the professional body to organise learning events and continuous capacity-building training to equip them with key skills and knowledge required for the current job market.

He noted that in Uganda the World Social Work Day students conference is rotational with each year NASWU selecting a hosting University that meets the selection criteria as he expressed his joy in being a social worker.





The Management team of AfRU led by the Vice-Chancellor Dr David Fuguyo, together with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Dr Denis Kilama, Mr. Vincent Byamukama the Academic Registrar and the Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences Mr Bernard Wanambwa. The team welcomed all social workers from 15 social work teaching universities, representatives from social work agencies, lecturers and different administrators that accompanied students and thanked NASWU for choosing AfRU to be the main host University.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that Africa Renewal University was started with a major objective of training Christian leaders who can transform society- which is directly connected to what social workers do.

He observed that the location of the AfRU in Buloba Village has holistically transformed the lives of people, in all aspects of life including being an example of protecting the environment and planting more trees making Africa Renewal University among the top green Universities in the country, a sign of promoting environmental justice for an Eco-Social Uganda and the World at large.

Dr Fuguyo mentioned that even though he has a background in Theology, Social Work is in his blood, and in the blood of the AfRU. He further encouraged all social workers to strive to alleviate people's sufferings, fight injustice, and transform and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in their respective communities.



*Dr David Fuguyo, Vice-Chancellor Africa Renewal University*

*Talking to participants during the main celebrations at AfRU*



John Mary Ssekate the National Coordinator-NASWU appreciated the secretariate team including Sebuuma Ben, Geoffrey Ochwo, Doreen Kyampeire, Doreen Kemigisha and Juliet Muhumuza plus the organising teams for eastern, northern and central Uganda and the support from NEC members for making the world social work day 2022 celebrations colourful.

John Mary reminded all participants of the ethical principles and the need to apply them at all times and at all levels of social work practice, including recognition of the inherent dignity of humanity, promoting human rights, promoting social justice, promoting the right to self-determination, promoting the right to participation, respect for confidentiality and privacy, treating people as a whole person, ethical use of technology and social media, and professional integrity. <https://www.ifsw.org/global-social-work-statement-of-ethical-principles/>

He noted that NASWU is at the frontline of shaping social policy, capacity building of frontline social workforce including responding to covid-19 and post covid-19 related social risks

<https://www.ifsw.org/uganda-association-pubshesannual-report/>, and called all social workers to do something at the individual level in their communities to promote resilience of individuals, families and communities to ensure an eco-social world with no one left behind.

NASWU through its mentorship program is supporting all early career professionals who intend to start change projects in their respective communities say community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations including social entrepreneur projects. A total of 30 fresh graduates have been technically supported and started organisations in their communities as a strategic move by NASWU to address increased unemployment and social ills.

NASWU is disseminating the Minimum Standard and Competence Framework for Social Work Education in Uganda of 2019, sharing the Uganda National Child Policy of 2020 as amended, plus NASWU ethical code of conduct <https://www.ifsw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CODE-OF-ETHICS-FOR-NASWU.pdf> to all social workers in Uganda and social work agencies in conformity with NASWU strategic objective number three of ensuring social workers in Uganda have required social work knowledge and skills.

NASWU is encouraging creative writing, research and publication. Up to 30 social work, students participated in the student's essay challenge focusing on co-building a new eco-social world and each participant was awarded books – Social work practice in Uganda, Social work practice in Africa and empowering Vulnerable Youth. NASWU has also contributed to the global publications -The Corona Virus crisis and challenges to social development <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-84678-7>



# PRESENTATIONS FROM KEY NOTE SPEAKER, DR SENKOSI BALYEJJUSA



The 2022 world social work day theme by both the IFWS and NASWU is important and comes at a very critical time since the social work profession has had a longstanding declared focus on the people and environment in its 'Person-in-Environment' model by Mary Richmond in 1922.

Climate change and global warming are real in Uganda, from 2001-2020, Uganda has a 12% tree cover loss, poverty- of 21.4% (UBOS 2020) inequality (Gini coefficient 0.48-2012), etc. hence the need to co-build a new eco-social world.

The role of social workers should be looked at on two levels, that is, primary social work practice (direct practice) and secondary social work practice (indirect practice).

For direct practice, social workers must work with their clients as partners in building a new eco-social world in Uganda while indirect practice, social workers must work with those who may benefit from their advocacy, social policy, social action, etc.

He proposed a framework for practice that address the twin problems of increased consumption and production (needs-based production and consumption) to ensure that no one is left behind (in building the eco-social world) and that the 'welfare' of both the people and the natural environment is taken care of (Balyejjusa 2019; Brock 2005)

He recommended that Ugandan social workers must rethink the models and frameworks used during social work practice that ensure fair utilization of the natural resources, that are familiar with Ugandans rather than foreign or western frameworks and reframe the dominant social work perspective of the Person-in-Environment or Person with the environment to Person of the environment or Person with or a person of the environment.

Social Work Process				
Engagement	Assessment	Goal setting	Implementati on	Evalua tion and End
Presented social Needs (presented social problems/social solutions)	Analysed social Needs (social problems, social solutions and desired resources)	Desired social ends (wellbeing and social functioning)	Deployment of resources (framed as social rights)	Evaluati on of attainm ent of desired social ends



# MESSAGE FROM UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY – (NORTHERN UGANDA CELEBRATIONS)



The team was led by Mr Kasule Kibirige, the Head of the Department for Social Work who also represented the Dean of Social Sciences, Rev Dr Omona, and was accompanied by Rev Julius Tabi Izza, a Principal at UCU Arua and Piter Okiria, the District Community Development Officer -Nebbi District and staff. Mr Kasule encouraged students to put God at the centre as a foundation of their knowledge and academic success. He encouraged the students to apply the knowledge, skills and theories of social work objectively and subjectively to address the challenges of our time including climate change and other social ills like drug abuse, increasing street children and negative cultural practices and behaviour among youth and support them to be reintegrated in the society.

He further encouraged participants and all social workers to regard themselves as Special, as not many have reached their level but encouraged them to use the opportunities, knowledge and skill gained at the university to be at the frontline of mobilizing communities to take part in climate change modification and adaptation in a holistic manner including integrating the indigenous knowledge in their interventions.

Mr Kasule referred to himself as an example of a person who started as a para-social worker supporting children in a missionary organization and is now a Head of the Department of a leading Christian University in Uganda. He appreciated NASWU for putting regional structures and choosing Uganda Christian University to host the 2022 World Social Work Day celebrations for Northern Uganda.

He called on the government to work towards strengthening the professional body of social workers towards the realization of the social work council to regulate social work education and practice in Uganda for better service delivery.

On his part, Rev. Julius Tabi Izza Principal of UCU Arua thanked NASWU for the opportunity given to UCU-Arua to host the World Social Work Day and encouraged all students to use the celebration to interact, exchange ideas, register with the professional body and actively take part in continuous professional development organized by the professional body even when they finish studies.



# MESSAGE FROM ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY IN UGANDA (IUIU) – (EASTERN UGANDA CELEBRATIONS)



*Dr Halima Wakabi Akbar the Academic Registrar of IUIU Mbale, delivered her message to participants at IUIU Mbale.*

The team was led by Dr Halima Wakabi Akbar the Academic Registrar of IUIU Mbale who also represented the Rector of IUIU, Prof. Ismail Simbwa Gyagenda. Plus Mr Ayub Namigugu the Head of Department Social Work for all IUIU Campuses and Mr Timothy Akampurira NASWU Coordinator-Eastern, Mr Moses Eiligat the Head of Department Social Work UCU-Mbale, NASWU Coordinator Eastern, and Mr Ocean Ismael from UNESCO- Karamoja.

Dr Wakabi expressed that World Social Work Day is a great opportunity for the exchange of best practices between students and those in the field which helps them to connect theory with practice.

She emphasized that social workers need to support vulnerable groups within their communities as per the Islamic practice of giving Zakat which is used to help the poor and the vulnerable and also support communities and quoted Surat Islam 3:11 which gives more view on the provision of the welfare of people.

Social workers need to be at the frontline of addressing poverty, fighting corruption, being creative, promoting an able environment, child protection, stop early marriages she added.

## MESSAGE FROM MR ISMAIL OCEN - UNESCO KARAMOJA

On his part Mr Ismail Ocen, the UNESCO Programme Manager Local and Indigenous Knowledge System- Karamoja noted that social workers are so needed in the Karamoja Region a region adversely affected by effects of climate change like prolonged droughts, environmental degradation, poverty, hunger and insecurity. He added that the UNESCO resilience project is doing great work but a lot needs to be done.

He also noted that Uganda has enough policies and guidelines that social workers can use to be champions of climate change modification and adaptation to ensure an eco-social world.





Eco-Social World - theme is linked to the ecological systems theory which looks at a person in the environment and a person's interaction directly with the environment. Social workers should be active participants but not passive. The interaction with the environment should be looked at both mezzo and micro and macro levels integrating culture and indigenous knowledge for effective climate change modification and adaptation, **Mr Namigugu Ayub the Head of Social Work Department at IUIU** noted.

Mr Moses Ailigat a lecturer at UCU added that the theme is connected with the System theory giving, an example of the trees and human beings that trees breathe in carbon dioxide and human beings oxygen, so he concluded that human wellbeing is related to the ecosystem.



Mr Timothy Akampurira the Head of Social Work Department UCU-Mbale explained the dimension of the environment and how transactions between the person and neighbourhood, community including culture, and institutions available like hospitals and he urged that a social worker is concerned with the provision of social services. He called on social workers to promote activities that promote a conducive environment for the people to overcome the challenges they face for a better Eco-Social World.





I am not a trained social worker but my calling is all about social work. I have been involved in this area of social work all of my pastoral life. My journey of helping people began when the Lord called me to a small village of Ggaba to pastor a small flock of God's people. I was so overcome and overwhelmed by the people's needs that I did not know what to do.

The pain and suffering of the people in our community moved me to go beyond a common pastor's work. I realized that we could not preach to people who were hungry or just look on while kids were not going to school.

The Social Work profession is one of the greatest professions there is; It is a people business.

Many people look at it as an education that you get so that you can have a job, get cash and go enjoy life. You can never be fulfilled in life if your only motivation is money. There are people out there whose future is dependent on you, who were made in the image of God.

He reminded all social workers of the people they are called to serve including the broken like the poor, single-parent families, polygamists, those battling with abuse and addictions, those affected by hunger and organized crimes common in Uganda today plus tackling ignorance which has led to many younger people being messed up

### **SOCIAL WORKER'S RESPONSIBILITY**



**Healing:** Healing from their painful past, and emotions, restoring their self-image and self-esteem. Helping such people reconcile with relationships that were broken, helping them to break from their past addictions, but as social workers, you need God's help to do this. Social workers are like us pastors. You need to engage the supernatural help for the Lord to help people.

**Advocacy:** Society is full of potential heroes, people with gifts, talents and hidden abilities. What they need is someone who will lift their hands, fight and speak for them. The society also has people with means and resources but who do not know whom to help, an advocate is that person who rises and says I know someone, and I also know you can help this person.

*Proverbs 31: Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute, speak up and judge fairly, and defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Empowering: We all come in as raw materials, we often do not realize the potential we have.

Empowering has something to do with: unchaining, setting someone free from their past. It has to do with freeing someone from the issues of the mind. Our responsibility is to show people a bigger vision for life. To be their cheerleaders, to give them the tools that they need to thrive in society.

Life skills. Many of the people we serve never grew up in healthy homes. They do not have what it takes to live a normal life. We, therefore, work hard to get them to catch up on what they missed:

Work ethics: Time management, truth-telling, being tidy, general etiquette, money management, respect for elders, obedience etc).

Building character: The basic summary of character is found in the 10 commandments, and the great commandment. Character is what keeps society together. Institutions have concentrated on academic excellence and forgotten about the most important asset for human flourishing. It is character. Great nations were founded, and they thrived on character, and great nations have always collapsed when those in leadership abandoned this important asset.

We all know that today Uganda's biggest problem is corruption. We have great minds, very skilled, and educated but so low on character. If this does not change, Uganda is soon becoming a failed state. We have seen impunity at the highest level: from stealing of the HIV/AIDS money, to the purchase of rotten helicopters, to the stealing of the NSSF money, and now to the embezzling of the COVID funds.

You now have a calling to change that situation. And it will start with you. Help them discover their God-given potential talents and (help them to sharpen their skills). This will help them with self-discovery and also provide real help to get the skills they need







Pr. Kasirivu also called on all social workers to be Servant leaders with integrity that can be trusted with high moral standards, an empathetic heart sensitivity towards another person's situation and ready to take action.

To be listeners: A social worker should be a good listener, and try to understand what is going on and why. They should not assume a solution. They should seek to understand rather than be understood.

They should have humility and be approachable: Willingness to identify yourself with the suffering of the people is important.

Jesus was the greatest example of service: He washed the disciples' feet. Being humble does not take away your status, it enhances it.

Service is action: The temptation we have in society is always learning and not doing. It is holding meetings and conferences but not having something on the ground to show.

Social workers should be selfless: This is the opposite of being selfish. You think of yourself less and more of the other people. We have seen so much corruption lately, greed, self-enrichment, etc. This is usually the result of not realizing that there is enough for everybody.

*Social workers should Love: Matthew 22:37 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself."*

They practice the great commandment. Loving God and loving their neighbour. It is feeling and action.

He ended his message by giving an example of Africa Renewal Ministries where he is a team leader and Pastor, and how he found a broken slum community of Ggaba with high drug abuse, sex workers, witchcraft, biting poverty, organized crimes and the key interventions. Ggaba Community Church has spearheaded to support of children, youth, and women to regain hope and meaning in life and many turn to Jesus Christ.



## A PANEL DISCUSSION BETWEEN STUDENTS, LECTURERS, PRACTITIONERS AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS ON THE THEME



*Frontline social workers from partner social work agencies sharing best practices and promising stories with participants at the main conference.*

- Social Work Organisations that shared with students their practice experiences during the World Social Work Day celebrations in relation to the theme.
- An interactive discussion on co-building a new eco-social world between representatives of key social work agencies was one of the key ingredients of 2022 World Social Work Day celebrations in Uganda.
- Frontline Social Workers and teams from key organisation put a practical meaning of the theme by sharing what they are doing, different models of interventions/best practices and promising stories on co-building a new eco-social world along the continuum of social protection and care.
- Practitioners shared the skill gaps among early career social work professionals and the need to retool, re-learn, un-learn and accept to be mentored as indicated in the table below.



## SUMMARY OF SOCIAL WORK AGENCIES THAT SHARED DURING OUR CELEBRATION.

SN	ORGANISATION	AREA OF SHARING/SUPPORT
1	Regional Psychosocial Social Support Initiative-(REPSSI).	All Regions
2	Africa Renewal Ministries-ARMS	Central Region/Main Conference
3	SDA-Central Buganda Conference	Central Region/Main Conference
4	Compassion International	Central Region/Main Conference
5	Mustard Seed Community School-Mubende	Central Region/Main Conference
6	Ishaka Adventist Hospital-Bushenyi	Central Region/Main Conference
7	Development Communication and Learning	Central Region/Main Conference
8	Watoto Child Care	Central Region/Main Conference
9	UNESCO- Indigenous Knowledge System-Karamoja	Central Region/Main Conference
10	Office of the President-(RCC) Mbale	Eastern Region/IUIU-Mbale
11	Restoration Center Mbale	Eastern Region/IUIU-Mbale
12	Nebbi District Community Development Office	Eastern Region/IUIU-Mbale
13	TPO Uganda	Central Region/Main Conference



*Ms Lydia Komugisha, Executive Director, Ishaka, ASDA Hospital; on behalf of NASWU President*

Ms Komugisha noted that social work profession is growing, contributing to change in lives of many in Uganda and the world at large, and World Social Work Day celebration 2022 was intended to highlight social work achievements, increase visibility of social services and defend justice and human rights.

World Social Work Day is a high point in our professional calendar, with social workers globally celebrating and promoting the contribution of this noble profession to individuals, families, communities and society at large.

She noted that the 2022's theme "Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind" comes at a time when social welfare systems are overstretched and, in some instances, non-functional or dysfunctional.

She also observed that Uganda has just started recovering from Covid-19 pandemic, yet its effect on health, education, economy, family, youth, children, environment and the general eco-system remain highly compromised, affecting the wellbeing of all people in Uganda, more so the vulnerable groups.

Whereas the government of Uganda is rolling out programmes including Parish Development Model, youth empowerment programmes, 'Emyooga', mid-term access to NSSF; the stimulus packages such as Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (UBOS, 11 Jul 2020) show that:

41% of Uganda's 41.6 million people still live under the poverty line, only 53 % of Uganda's children completing Primary education, only 33% of the 41.6 million people having account in the bank.

Ms Komugisha further noted that the theme carries a powerful message and requires concerted effort and solidarity at all levels of communities, societies, and globally. It is a message that our future depends on the recognition that all people's involvement in co-building a sustainable, fair, and social just future generations, and directly linked to the 17 SGDs.

She observed that the 2022 World Social Work Day presented a unique opportunity for a collective discussion, dialogue, building synergise for collective advocacy, system strengthening, and taking the message deeper into communities to raise awareness of social work contribution; the need for further action to co-design and co-build sustainable communities for inclusive social transformation in Uganda – leaving no one behind.



To our cherished Social Work Students: You made the right choice to study Social Work, a noble profession like no other. So, feel proud, and have a purpose for your life, regardless of your current financial state ---Today’s challenges are not permanent Have passion excellency, just do your best even when no one is seeing, the angels are watching and certainly, God will bless you.

“Success is simple. Do what is right, the right way, at the right time” – Arnold H. Glasgow  
“Keep on going, and the chances are that you will stumble on something, perhaps when you are least expecting it, I never heard of anyone ever stumbling on something, sitting down” – Charles F. Kettering

## Summary of World Social Work Day Participation

SN	UNIVERSITY	NO.OF PARTICIPANTS	REGION OF PATICIPANTS
1	Africa Renewal University	28	Central Region (Host)
2	Bugema University	67	Central, Eastern and Northern Uganda
3	Kampala University	56	Central Region
4	Nkumba University	40	Central and Eastern Uganda
5	Uganda Christian University	60	Northern Uganda (Host) and Eastern
6	Kyambogo University	95	Central Region
7	Kampala International University	48	Central Region
8	Makerere University	28	Central Region
9	University of Kisubi	20	Central Region
10	Metropolitan International University	45	Central Region
11	Islamic University in Uganda-(IUIU)	100	Eastern Region (Host) and Northern
12	Ndejje University	06	Central Region
Total		593	12 Social Work Teaching Universities

The number of participants includes both students and their lecturers in the three regions of Uganda

# Students Essay Report



Best essay students were awarded the latest social work books during the celebrations. All social work students were eligible to participate and composition stories were written along the following sub-themes;

- The role of youth in Co-building a New Eco-Social Uganda: Leaving No One Behind.
- Climate change prevention and adaptation a pillar in Co-building a New Eco-Social Uganda: Leaving No One Behind.
- Prioritizing Child Protection and participation as a foundation of Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind.
- Mental health and psychosocial support a key strategy of Co-building a New Eco-Social World: Leaving No One Behind.
- Strengthening social welfare systems, a pillar to Co-building a New Eco-Social Uganda: Leaving No One Behind.

The assessment was based on how a candidate connects the topic with the theme and the use of social work language and local examples. The assessment team was made up of social work educators and researchers rooted in different domains of social work practice.

Thirty (32) students from 10 social work teaching institutions of Africa Renewal University, Bugema University, Makerere University, Islamic University in Uganda, Uganda Christian University, Kabale University, Kampala International University, Metropolitan International University and University of Kisubi took part in the essay challenge.

The University of Kisubi had the best essay from Sr. Grace Kitinisa and all participating students were awarded the latest books in social work titled; Empowering Vulnerable Youth in Uganda, Parenting Initiatives in Uganda-by Prof. Eddy Walakira, Dr Luwagula; Social Work Practice in Uganda by Prof. Janstic Twikirize. A total of 40 latest social work books were given to students as a professional strategy to promote creative writing, reading and research among early career professionals.

# ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2022 WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY CELEBRATION IN UGANDA



*Dr Halima Wakabi Akbar the Academic Registrar of IUIU and Mr Namigu Ayub led students in a tree planting exercise at IUIU Mbale.*

The celebration strengthened NASWU regional coordination teams in central, northern and eastern Uganda as they took lead in planning, organising and sharing with participants in their respective regions but also giving feedback on the unique social work concerns in their respective regions for collective action.

World Social Work Day celebration 2022 facilitated the recruitment and subscription of 400 new members mostly students to the professional body and all were added to the NASWU database.

The celebration brought NASWU national executive committee members and management team close to the academic institutions and social work students. NASWU-NEC members and the secretariat team interacted with participants and answered questions relating to membership, continuous professional development, mentorship and internship placements. A total of five NASWU board members and six secretariate team members were available to interact and answer questions from participants.

The celebration brought frontline social workers from different social work agencies closer to social work students and academia to freely exchange ideas, best practices on the appropriate interventions, models, and latest research evidence to shape effective co-building a new eco-social world leaving no one behind.

World Social Work Day 2022 provided a unique opportunity for students to network with their counterparts from different social work teaching institutions to reflect on the theme, academics, and ideas on starting change projects in their communities a capitalistic factor needed in modern learning and practice of social work.

The day created a greater opportunity for advocacy on co-building a new eco-social world, taking the message deeper into communities through different activities like planting trees in Eastern Uganda, and creative writing on different topics relating to the Eco-social world with over 30 students from 10 social work teaching institutions taking part in the easy challenge.

The event highlighted the unique skillset, knowledge and capabilities of social work youth reflected in their creative writing, poetry, advocacy, aggressive listening and exchange of ideas on inter-generational approaches to co-building a new Eco social world and addressing challenges of climate change.

The activities of the World Social Work Day celebration were complementary to government efforts in achieving National Development Plan three (3) chapter seven (7) of transforming the social development sector.



# Communique/ Resolutions of Students and Practitioners

The Social Workers of Uganda comprising of students from 15 social work teaching intuitions, frontline social workers from 10 social work agencies, government, cultural and religious leaders, met on March 9, 2022, at Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) in Eastern Uganda-March 12, 2022, at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Northern Uganda on March 15, 2022, and at Africa Renewal University (AfRU) in Central Uganda to commemorate the World social work day 2022 under a national theme; 'The Role of Social Workers in Co-Building a New Eco-Social Uganda-Leaving no one behind,' and resolved as follows.

The social workers of Uganda expressed deep concern about the increased suffering of vulnerable groups and communities due to the effects of climate change as witnessed by constant floods and landslides in the Elgon region and Kaseke, prolonged drought and food insecurity in the Karamoja sub-region leading to the death of children, elderly, and adversely affecting those with underlying diseases like people living with HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, maternal, neonatal and child ill-health, and creating acute food and water shortage for both humans and animals execrated by COVID-19, and insecurity in Karamoja sub-region.

Recognised the need to continue working together - social work teaching institutions, government ministries and departments, social work agencies, religious, and cultural leaders, media and the professional body of social workers-NASWU, in research and evidence generation, advocacy, policy and programme interventions to address the effects of climate change through climate change modifications and adaption strategies where community members live in harmony with nature to effectively address the global challenge of our time- Climate change.

Committed to mainstream Ubuntu values, values and principles of social work in creating workable and appropriate community interventions that create harmony between people and planet earth for a sustainable eco-social world leaving no one behind.

Acknowledged the need to put youth/ early career social work professionals at the frontline of creating an eco-social world, supporting them with the appropriate skill set and knowledge through NASWU's continuous professional development and mentorship programmes to sustainably engender an eco-social Uganda and leave no one behind.

Integrate life skills including patience, time management, integrity, communication skills, hard work, respect for elders, ethical use of technology and social media, proper dressing, table manners and putting God at the centre of whatever they do as a foundation of shaping their desired life goals and Co-Building a New Eco-Social World.

## Conclusion

The World Social Work Day 2022 was a success story in Uganda, an opportunity for social work teaching institutions, social work agencies, government officials and the leadership of the National Association of Social Workers of Uganda-NASWU to freely exchange ideas, listen aggressively to each other, strengthen regional coordination teams and coming up with a key resolution to first truck implementation of the theme. It was a time to reflect on interventions and constructively critique policy and research about the theme. It was a time to network, retool, advocate, membership mobilisation and connect with the global social work family to commemorate a very important day in our professional calendar.



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