



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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World Social Work Day 2026: A Harambee Call to Unite a Divided Society

World Social Work Day 2026 will be commemorated on **17 March 2026**, with a global celebration hosted by the United Nations in Geneva on 18 March 2026. This year's theme, "*Co-Building Hope and Harmony: A Harambee Call to Unite a Divided Society*", draws inspiration from the African philosophy of Harambee, meaning "pulling together."

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) proudly joins the international community in affirming the vital role of social workers in rebuilding trust, strengthening cohesion, and fostering inclusive, resilient communities.

The Meaning of Harambee

Harambee embodies the spirit of collective effort—an "all for one" approach that transcends divisions and calls on every member of society to contribute to the common good. In the South African context, it resonates deeply with our shared history of struggle, resilience, and unity in diversity.

The Role of Social Workers and Social Auxiliary Workers

Social workers and social auxiliary workers stand at the forefront of this Harambee call. Their work is rooted in:

- Active participation: Empowering individuals and communities to take part in shaping their futures.
- Social justice: Advocating for fairness, equality, and the protection of human rights.
- Belonging and inclusion: Creating spaces where all people feel valued, respected, and supported.

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NON NOBIS – Not for ourselves

A Global Celebration

World Social Work Day is not only a day of recognition but also a call to action. The SACSSP encourages all professionals, partners, and communities to embrace this theme by working together to co-build hope and harmony in our society.

As the world gathers in Geneva and across local communities, let us reaffirm our commitment to the values of compassion, solidarity, and justice. Through Harambee, we can unite across cultures, systems, and borders to create a sustainable, peaceful, and just future.

The SACSSP extends its gratitude to all social service professionals who embody this spirit daily, reminding us that hope and harmony are possible when we pull together.

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 ("the Act") with the purpose to regulate the social service professions; and has two Professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. The SACSSP, in conjunction with its Professional Boards, regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration (entry to the professions); education and training (qualifications); professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with standards for professional practice. By regulating the professions, it protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. To safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with the SACSSP in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practicing social work and child and youth care work. Registration is a legal requirement for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, learner social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers and student child and youth care workers.

