



International Social Work and Social Development Conference

Call for Abstracts

Extended Deadline for abstract submission | Conference registration now open!!

Theme: Building Resilient Communities to Promote Equity and Social Inclusion for the attainment of *Sustainable Development Goal* (SDGs)

16th to 18th June 2025, Makerere University, Kampala Uganda

Makerere University's Department of Social Work, in partnership with the East African Social Work Regional Resource Centre (EASWRRC) and the Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) will host an International Conference on social work and social development from 16th -18th June 2025 at Makerere University, Kampala. The Conference seeks to galvanise academic knowledge, debate and critical inquiry and engagements on the topical issues of equity, social justice and inclusion within the framework of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while foregrounding practice knowledge as experienced by development actors across the globe. This conference is organised under the auspices of the NORAD-supported RESILIENT Project, implemented since January 2021 by a consortium comprising Makerere University, the University of Rwanda, the Institute of Social Work, Tanzania and the University of Agder Norway. The project seeks to enhance the participation of the vulnerable and marginalized members of society in the south in the development process itself. For more details on the conference and the ongoing project please visit the following website: <https://resilient.uia.no/about-resilient/>.

The Conference further seeks to enhance local content and scholarship through the applicability of generated knowledge to addressing local and regional development problems, within the confluence of the greater agenda for social work and social development and its emphasis on social change. This no doubt has ramifications for the application of good practices in social development interventions in other contexts within Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas and contributes to the evolution of global social work/social development practice which promotes contextual specificity and relevance without removing the need for international networking and collaborative engagement.

We are now pleased to invite you to submit abstracts to be presented at the International Social Work and Social Development Conference. We are particularly interested in



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presentations and contributions that reflect perspectives on social justice, equity, and inclusion within the framework of attaining the SDGs within developing countries.

Conference Justification

The proposed conference is conceptualised within the indigenisation and decolonisation model of social work which seeks to promote social development through culturally and contextually relevant interventions from the grassroots. The major thrust of the indigenisation and decolonisation perspective is based on the notion that the process of social development can only be meaningful and effective if it provides context-specific and tangible responses to the given social problems in a particular local or regional context (whether it be Africa, Asia, Latin America or any other setting). These responses must be related to the socio-cultural realities in that region (Twikirize and Spitzer, 2019¹). The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007²) unequivocally recognises that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment.

The Declaration of the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, and their successor SDGs in 2015³ all call out the need for role players such as social work and social development practitioners to review their strategies in addressing social injustices, poverty, social exclusion and inequalities. Within this context, social work is well positioned to explore more innovative ways to reach out to the poor and vulnerable and in doing so contribute more efficiently to addressing social exclusion and social inequality and to directly contribute to the realization of several SDGs (3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17). Moreover, SDG progress monitoring reports seem to suggest that much work needs to be done to attain these targets by 2030 (Halkos and Gkampura, 2021⁴).

¹ Twikirize, Janestic and Spitzer, Helmut (2019) Social work practice in Africa: indigenous and innovative approaches. Kampala: Fountain Publishers

² https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

³ See <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

⁴ Halkos, George & Gkampoura, Eleni-Christina, 2021. "Where do we stand on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals? An overview on progress," *Economic Analysis and Policy*, Elsevier, 70(C), pages 94-122.



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Conference objectives

The conference aims to:

1. Bring together social work and social development practitioners, researchers, students, educators and policy makers in order to interact, learn and share each other' experiences on pertinent social development issues.
2. Generate topical resolutions that can be utilised by local and central governments and institutions in the global South and North to further advance the debate/efforts regarding the attainments of SDGs.

Conference Themes

We welcome submissions on any of the following themes, broadly conceived:

1. Child Wellbeing and Child Protection
2. Youth Participation and Inclusion
3. Older Persons, Social Protection and Socio-economic Participation
4. North-South and South-South Partnership and Collaborations in Social Development
5. Green Social Work and Environment
6. University and Community Engagement/ Role of Universities in Community Transformation
7. Migration, Refugees and Development
8. Civil Society, NGOs, Social Work and Development Practice
9. The role of Social Work in Emergencies, Pandemic Crises and Conflict
10. Climate change
11. Rights Equity and Social Justice
12. Technology and social development
13. Mental Health
14. Creative features, languages literature and social transformation

Conference level

This is an International Conference targeting academics, development practitioners, policy makers, students, researchers and the general public from all continents across the global North and South. We however strongly encourage participants from the global South and the Africa region to submit abstracts and papers for the conference.

Specific instructions to authors:

- The abstract submitted should not be more than 250 words



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- Nature of presentation: Poster presentations, oral presentations, panels and workshop formats
- All abstracts should be submitted in Microsoft word format
- The font type should be Times New Roman 12pt, 1.5 spacing
- The presenting author should be presented first and **underlined**
- Indicate the institutional affiliation and the country
- Indicate the email address of the presenting/corresponding author
- All abstracts should be submitted in English
- Themes of the submission should also be indicated.
- Abstracts can be sent via Email to: resilientconference2025@mak.ac.ug copied to ainembabazi.dorynn@gmail.com or submitted online at <https://resilientconference.mak.ac.ug/submit-abstracts>

Potential benefits and impacts of the conference

- International networking and benchmarking on social development issues generally
- Opportunity to influence social agendas within the global development landscape and social programming through impacting the regional and international social work associations and the United Nations agencies .

Conference Keynote Speakers

1. **Prof. Antoinette Lombard**, IASSW President and Professor of Social Work at University of Pretoria
2. **Prof. Jeannette Bayisenge**, former Minister of Gender and Family Protection in Rwanda and Professor of Gender Studies, University of Rwanda.
3. **Prof. Ann Christin E. Nilsen**, PI of the RESILIENT project and Professor of Sociology at the University of Agder, Norway,
4. **Dr. Zena Mnasi Mabeyo**, Head of the Department of Psychology at the Institute of Social Work, Tanzania.

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Registration

Online: <https://resilientconference.mak.ac.ug/conference-registration>

Or in person: With \$100 registration fees for non-Africa-based participants; Students \$10 or UGX 30,000; National applicants \$30 or UGX 100,000.
For Registration

Extended Deadline for abstract submission: 30th April 2025

Date for confirmation of acceptance of abstracts: Given on a rolling basis effective 15th of March 2025. This will continue up to the 15th of May 2025.

Chair Local Organizing Committee

Prof. Eric Awich Ochen

Tel: +256 772 352 887

Email: eric.ochen@mak.ac.ug

Conference Secretariat

Ms Doreen Ainembabazi

Tel: +256 774 468 902

Email: ainembabazi.dorynn@gmail.com and

Ms Prisciline Aciro

Tel: +256 778 549 669

Email: resilientconference2025@mak.ac.ug



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