

CONSTITUTION OF THE GHANA ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS (GASOW)

PREAMBLE

Social Work as a functional social institution has become entrenched in the social structure of the Ghanaian society. It promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at the point where people interact with the environment. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work. It has developed methods and skills based on experience and on scientific knowledge about individuals, groups and communities and their inter-relationships, and depend upon a systematic application of these methods and skill for effective service.

Deriving from the above objectives, it becomes necessary that those who are engaged in social work everywhere should not only acquire the requisite training but should also approach their work with that sense of vocation which results only from a dedication to a profession. It is chiefly on this ground that it has been deemed necessary that there should be an association of social workers in the country as a basis for a concrete and meaningful profession under which alone social workers can approach their functions guided by a code of ethics. By such an association they can also achieve recognition as a body in the service of the nation.

ARTICLE 1

NAME

The name of Association shall be the “Ghana Association of Social Workers (hereinafter called the “Association”)

ARTICLE 2

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- (1) The aims and objectives of the Association shall be:
- a) To promote, develop, and sponsor activities appropriate to the strengthening and unification of the social work profession.
 - b) To promote the highest standard of social work and maintain the ethical conduct and discipline of the profession
 - c) To promote the exchange of information and experience in social work among social workers in Ghana and in other countries through exchange programmes, conferences and publication of papers and professional journals.
 - d) To promote and cor-ordinate training, research and the practice in the various fields of social work, both statutory and voluntary in Ghana.
 - e) To uphold the principles of Universal Human Rights in collaboration with other National and International organizations, and to encourage all social workers to assume their full responsibility of citizenship.
 - f) To establish, and maintain relations with National and International Organizations relevant to social development and welfare
 - g) To present and promote the point of view of the social work profession to International and National Organizations carry out social, planning, social development, social action and welfare programmes.

ARTICLE 3

HEADQUARTERS

The seat of the Association shall be in Accra; it may be transferred elsewhere by a decision of the General Meeting.

ARTICLE 4

MEMBERSHIP

- (1) Full Membership – This shall be open to social workers who have completed an accredited course of study in social work leading to at least a diploma in social work or its equivalence.
- (2) Associate membership- This shall be open to
 - (a) Holders of certificate in social work or its equivalence
 - (b) Persons with a Bachelors degree in social work related subjects or allied professional with at least 2 years social work experience in any recognized social work or welfare organization upon the recommendation in writing by at least two full members of the Association in good standing.
- (3) Student membership – This shall be open to students who are undergoing a course in social work leading to at least a certificate in social work or its equivalence at any accredited institution.
- (4) Honorary membership - This may be conferred by the General Assembly on anybody who had made significant contribution to promote the profession of social work upon recommendation by the national executive council.
- (5) Corporate Membership – This shall be open to any duly registered company limited by guarantee (NGO) whose activities promote and compliment social work upon the recommendation of at least 5 members with full membership status and of good standing.

ARTICLE 5

ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

Admission to membership shall be by qualification as laid down in article 4 (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) upon the payment of the prescribed membership registration fee;

ARTICLE 6

SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND REINSTATEMENT

- (1) Membership of the Association lapses automatically with non-payment of annual subscription for one year,
- (2) Any member who violates any of the professional Code of Ethics or in any other form seriously counteracts the basic interest aims and policies of the Association may be suspended by the National Executive Council or expelled by the General Assembly upon

the recommendation of the National Executive council PROVIDED that the individual member shall have the right to be heard by the Association before a decision is made.

- (3) A suspended member of the association may be reinstated to membership by the General Assembly. Evidence that grounds for suspension no longer exist shall be provided to the National Executive Council by or on behalf of the suspended member. Such evidence shall be considered by the National Executive Council for the reinstatement of the member.

ARTICLE 7

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- (1) The General Assembly is the supreme governing policy and decision making body of the Association. It shall consist of all members of the Association.
- (2) The ordinary General Assembly shall meet once every year. In addition, extraordinary meetings of the General Assembly may be convened, either by a decision of a two-thirds majority of the members of the National Executive Council voting in person or at the request of half of the members of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 8

FUNCTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- (1) It shall be the responsibility of the General Assembly to further the aims and objectives of the Association.
- (2) The General Assembly shall determine the general and financial policies of the Association, and shall review the Associations activities and accounts.
- (3) The General Assembly shall elect the officers of the National Executive Council.
- (4) The General Assembly shall elect an Elections officer to carry out such duties as it may decide, subject to the constitution.
- (5) The General Assembly may delegate any of its powers to the National Executive Council except the power to alter, amend or add to the Articles of the constitution.

ARTICLE 9

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (1) The officers of the Association shall consist of the following:
- National President
 - First Vice President
 - Second/Vice President
 - Secretary-General
 - Assistant Secretary-General
 - Three Executive Members
 - Regional Representatives
 - Administrative Secretary

DUTIES OF OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

(a) National President

- (1) The National President shall be the Chairman of the National Executive Council and may attend other sub-committees' meetings as an office member. He shall preside at all meetings of the National Executive Council, the National Executive Committee and the General Assembly except in such cases as he otherwise may direct.
- (2) In the event of vacancy in the office of the National President or his inability to serve, his duties shall be assumed by the First Vice President or in the absence of the latter, by the Second Vice President until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

(b) The Secretary – General

The Secretary – General shall be responsible for the implementation of decision of National Executive Council. He shall be assisted by the Assistant Secretary General and in the event of vacancy in the office of the Secretary-General act as Secretary General.

(c) National Treasurer

The National Treasurer shall collect, receive and have charge of all funds in a bank designated by the National Executive Council and shall pay account with the limit of the budget adopted by the General Assembly. Any expense outside this budget shall be incurred only with the written consent and authority of the National President and shall prepare Annual Financial Statements and Budgets.

(d) Regional Representatives

There shall be Regional Representatives for each Region of the country. The Regional Representative shall be the presidents of the Regional branches of the Association

(e) Administrative Secretary

The Administrative Secretary shall be appointed by the National Executive Council and shall be responsible to the National Executive Council.

ARTICLE 10

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

(1) The National Executive Council shall be the executive body of the Association. The Council shall be charged with the general business and administration of the Association between meetings of the General Assembly. The National Executive Council shall consist of the National Executive Committee, Regional Representatives and the Administrative.

ARTICLE 11

THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall consist of all members of the National Executive Council except the Regional Representatives and the Administrative Secretary and shall be elected by the General Assembly for a period of 3 years.

The Executive Committee shall be charged with general business and administration of the Association between meetings of the National Executive Council provided that decision at the Executive meetings shall be ratified by the National Executive Council at its next meeting.

ARTICLE 12

MEETINGS OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(1) The National Executive Council shall meet at least once in three months. Special meeting may be convened either by the National President or at the request of two-third of the members. It shall itself determine the place of meeting. Resolutions shall be passed by simple majority of members voting in person. The National Executives Committee shall meet at least once in a month.

ARTICLE 13

COUNSELORS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (1) The National Executives council shall have the power to co-opt in consultative capacity as “Counselors of the Association” certain persons who on account of their technical competence or their interest in social work, have rendered special services to the Association. At least one of the counselors shall be: a lawyer
- (2) The counselors of the Association shall have no voting rights.

ARTICLE 14

SUB-COMMITTEES

The National Executive Council shall appoint the following sub-committees-

- Ethics Sub-Committee
- Public relations Sub-Committee
- International Relation Sub-Committee
- Finance Sub – Committee
- Admission to Membership ‘Sub Committee
- Disciplinary Sub-Committee and such other committees as the National Executive Council may deem fit.

ARTICLE 15

RULES OF PROCEDURE AT ALL MEETINGS

1. Voting

All questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting thereat. No member shall exercise more than one vote, but in case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

2. Quorum

One third of the members shall form a quorum at all meetings

3. Minutes

Record of Minutes shall be kept by the Association. The National Executive Council and Committee shall be expected to keep record of all transactions at meetings.

ARTICLE 16

RULE AND REGULATIONS

The National Executives Council shall have the power to issue rules and regulations for the regulations for the management of the Association and such rules and regulations shall come into operations immediately provided always the such rules and regulations shall be subject to ratification and shall not be inconsistent with provisions of the constitution.

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ARTICLE 17

FUNDS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (1) Funds of the Association shall be provided by annual subscription, subsidies, grants, gifts and legacies and fund raising activities.
- (2) The fiscal year of the Association shall be 1st January to 31st December. The amount of annual subscription and registration fees for members shall be decided by the General Meeting of the Association, upon recommendation of the National Executive Council.
- (3) The President, Treasurer and Secretary-General shall have authority to sign cheques on behalf of the Association, any two in conjunction.

ARTICLE 18

THE AUDITORS

- 1) The General Assembly Meeting shall appoint
- 2) Their term of office of the auditor shall be one year
- 3) The auditors shall submit a report to the General Assembly after they have controlled the accounts of the Association.

ARTICLE 19

AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

- (1) The present constitution may be amended by a decision of the General Assembly requiring a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting

- (2) Any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be circulated in writing to the members at least six weeks before the General Assembly meets to deliberate on the proposed amendments.

ARTICLE 20

DISSOLUTION

- (1) The General Assembly may decide the dissolution of the Association
- (2) A decision to dissolve the Association shall require a three-quarter majority of members present and voting.

ARTICLE 21

DISPUTES

Any disputes or lawsuits arising from the present constitution shall be submitted to the laws of Ghana.

ARTICLE 22

This constitution shall be adopted by the Regional branches of the Association mutatis mutandis.