



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

MEDIA STATEMENT

REF: 7/6/3

16 March 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

16 March 2021

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY 2021

World Social Work Day (#WSWD2021) is celebrated across the globe on the 3rd Tuesday of March (16 March in 2021) under the lead of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and this year's theme is: **"Ubuntu: I am because we are – Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness.** This is also the first theme of the *2020 to 2030 Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development* (available here: <https://www.ifsw.org/2020-to-2030-global-agenda-for-social-work-and-social-development-framework-co-building-inclusive-social-transformation/>) that focuses on the interconnectedness of all people and their environments, which is shared in the co-building of a sustainable, fair and socially just society today and for future, locally, regionally and internationally. *"Social workers have a major role to play in demonstrating the importance of social justice and equality and inclusive transformation and interconnectedness with other stakeholders in organisations and communities in order to deal with these challenges"*, says Dr Maria Mabetoa, President of the South African Council for Social Service Professions.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) does not only have an obligation but is also committed to ensure that social workers and other social service professionals also recognise the value and importance of indigenous knowledge and wisdom, while working towards the decolonisation of social work. It is important that the Higher Education Institutions focus their programmes for social work and other social service professional qualifications on the aforementioned, while at the same time social workers and other social service professionals who are working in the sector embrace a decolonised philosophy and approach through continuing professional development (CPD).

A year on, since the COVID-19 pandemic hit South Africa in 2020 and the national state of disaster was announced, the importance and value of people and communities' interconnectedness were evident in the work of social workers and social auxiliary workers in the frontlines dealing with individuals, families and communities in distress. *"During this pandemic, social workers truly embraced the spirit of Ubuntu and demonstrated their ability to co-create and co-design with current and new partners. Every day social workers put aside their own fears and anxieties and risked their lives for the individuals, families and communities who depended on them because they know it matters; that what they do, matters"* says Sharon Follentine, Chairperson of the SACSSP's Professional Board for Social Work.

On World Social Work Day, SACSSP highlights the role of social workers supported by social auxiliary workers in facilitating social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people; the vital role every social worker plays in assisting society's most vulnerable people, and challenging and addressing the systemic and structural issues that create inequality, injustice and discrimination in our society and across the country. The work these professionals do is rewarding, gratifying, sometimes physically and mentally draining, yet often unnoticed by the wider population.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions recognise this day as 36,991 social workers and 12,352 social auxiliary workers registered with it in terms of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978, together with the 14,636 student social workers and 11,609 student social auxiliary workers. The SACSSP's Professional Board for Social Work oversees and regulate the practising of the social work profession (including social auxiliary work), which include, amongst others, registration, standards of professional conduct, minimum standards of education and training, continuous professional development and the registration of specialities in social work.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions, the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work salute all social workers and social auxiliary workers in our country and are encouraged on this day and every other days when they and other social service professionals live our motto, **NON NOBIS – Not for ourselves.**

For more information on World Social Work Day visit the:

SACSSP website: www.sacssp.co.za (and download the WSWD 2021 posters in all 11 South African official languages)

IFSW website: www.ifsw.org

ISSUED BY: SACSSP Communications

ENQUIRIES:

Lungelwa Mbuzo

(060) 983 3839

LungiM@sacssp.co.za

ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two Professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its Professional Boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practicing social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory 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.