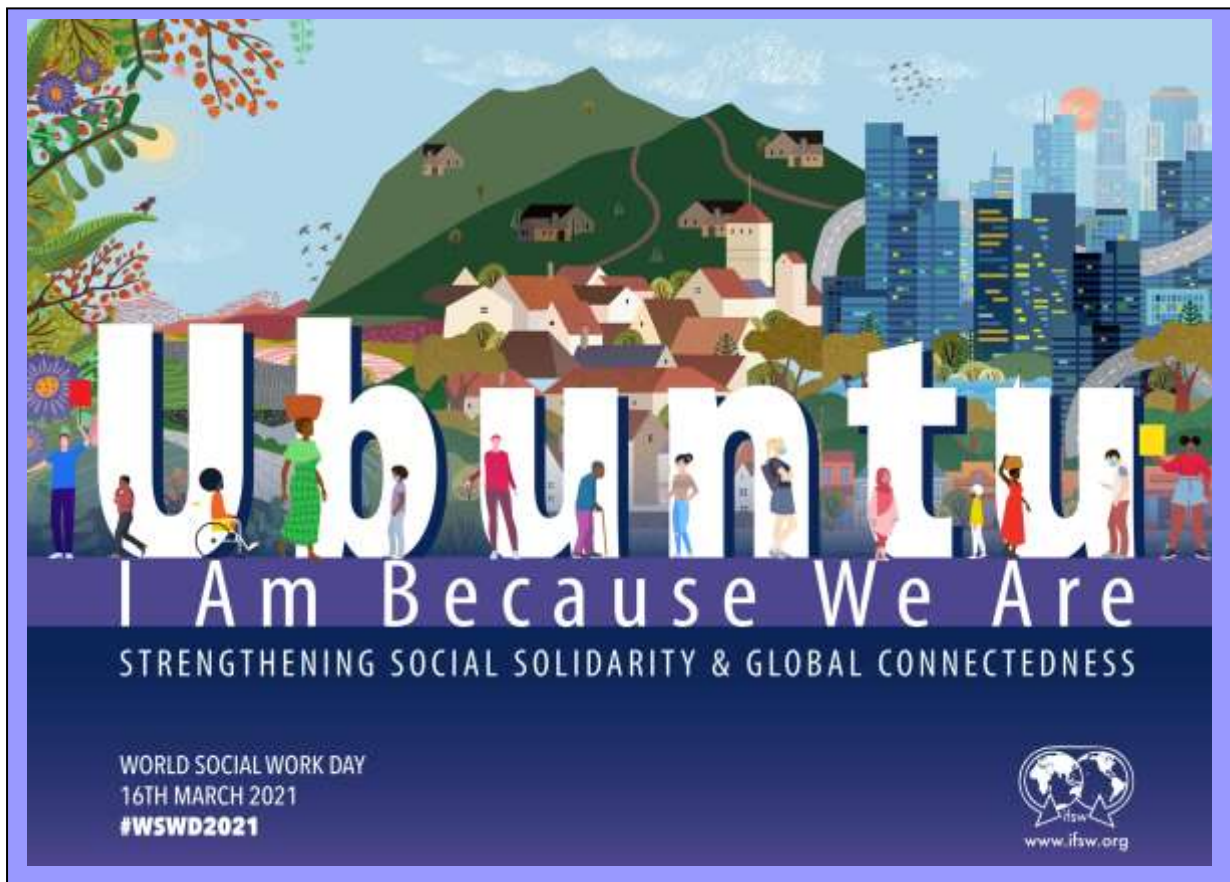


INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK DAY

TUESDAY MARCH 16TH 2021

The World Social Work Day is a celebration that aims to highlight the achievements of Social Work, raise the visibility of social services for the future of societies, and defend social justice and human rights. It is the key day in the year that social workers worldwide stand together to advance a common message globally.”. Every year, World Social Work Day is celebrated on the third Tuesday of March.

The initiative of celebrating World Social Work Day was approved by the member organizations of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) in 2004. The first World Social Work Day was celebrated in 2007 under the theme “*Social Work -Making a World of Difference*”. This year, the 2021 World Social Work Day Theme highlights **Ubuntu: I am Because We Are: – Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness**. This is the first theme of 2020 to 2030 Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development.



Ubuntu is a compact term from the Nguni languages of Zulu and Xhosa that carries a fairly broad English definition of “a quality that includes the essential human virtues of compassion and humanity”. It is a concept and African philosophy that resonates with the social work perspective of the interconnectedness of all peoples and their environments. It speaks to the fact that we are all connected and that one can only grow and progress through the growth and progression of others.

The credit to popularising, and embodying, the philosophical concept of ubuntu to its fullest, was South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Tutu maintained that, by ubuntu, democratic South Africa was right to deal with apartheid-era political crimes by seeking reconciliation or restorative justice”. “We are different so that we can know our need of one another, for no one is ultimately self-sufficient,”

The Kenyan literary scholar James Ogude says that Ubuntu is rooted in a relational form of personhood, basically meaning that you are because of the others. As a human being, our being, our personhood—is fostered in relation to other people.

Nelson Mandela, South Africa’s first democratically elected president, in a preface to Richard Stengel’s *Mandela’s Way: Fifteen Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage* (2009), encapsulated the many interpretations by calling ubuntu an African concept that means “the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world, it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievements of others”.

Silvana Martinez, President, International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) President comments “.....At a time when global politics has retreated into nationalism, Ubuntu is a powerful message on the need for solidarity at all levels: within communities, societies, and globally. It is a message that all people are interconnected and that our future is dependent on recognizing all people's involvement in co-building a sustainable, fair, and socially just future. It speaks to the need for global solidarity and also highlights indigenous knowledge and wisdom.

On this dear friends, let us remind ourselves of our commitment as Social Workers through the Social Workers pledge that calls for engagement with people, communities; need to recognize interdependence and strengthen social solidarities, and build partnerships that resonate with the theme **Ubuntu: I am Because We Are**

I request each one to kindly unmute and say the Social Workers pledge with me.

I pledge to step out of my area of comfort so I may meet people, listen to their lives, grow and remain open to their full humanity

I pledge to be critical and ask questions in order to cast doubt, inquire and prompt social change and transformation.

I shall self-reflect to examine my own biases, clarify my beliefs and take stances.

I shall strive continuously to advance knowledge about people, issues, and social work profession.

I pledge to contribute towards turning our institutions into genuinely transparent, accountable, and fair communities of action.

I promise to defend freedom of expression, to being open always to dialogue and listening.

I shall be consciously inclusive towards all people and act to promote diversity, equality, mutual respect, justice, and reconciliation.

I give a promise to walk with marginalized voiceless, and people who have been forced to silence.

I promise to myself to engage people and structures to address life challenges and enhance their wellbeing.

From this day I am aware that I am part of a community of change agents. I, thus, pledge to act ethically, in compassion, with thoughtfulness, conviction, passion, honesty, perseverance and humility.

Dear friends, please mark 23rd March 2021 in your calendar. A joint webinar to commemorate the International Social Work Day will be organized on the theme "Challenges for Social Work Education and the National Council of Social Work Bill a way forward" by the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan (Autonomous), Mumbai, and Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore on 23rd March 2021 from 3 pm to 4.30 pm for students and Faculty Members of both the Institutes. Our esteemed speakers for the event are Prof. Vimla Nadkarni and Prof. Helen Joseph and the moderator of the session Dr. Nilima Meht.

References:

1. <https://theculturetrip.com/africa/south-africa/articles/understanding-the-meaning-of-ubuntu-a-proudly-south-african-philosophy/>

2. <https://www.ifsw.org/social-work-action/world-social-work-day/world-social-work-day-2021/>

Thank you GOD BLESS.

Tuesday 16th March 2021

IQAC