



# Mainstreaming Gender in the PROSOWO Project

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appear in practice 3: Ugandan Experiences. The art of pursuing gender equity

**appear**

Austrian  
Development Cooperation

# Project overview

## **PROSOWO: “Promotion of Professional Social Work towards Social Development and Poverty Reduction in East Africa”**

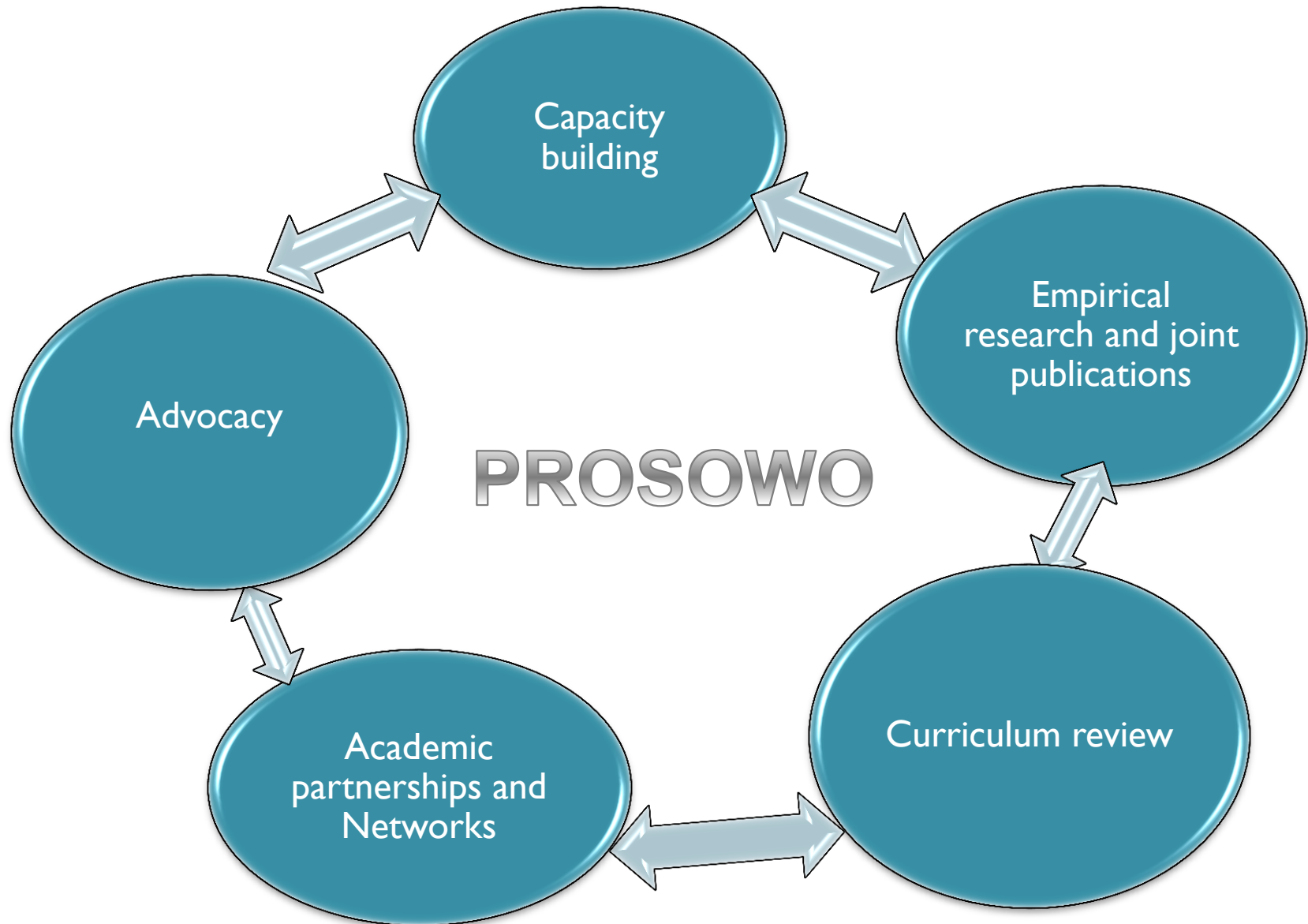
5 Partner Institutions in five countries

- **Makerere University**, Kampala, Uganda  
(Department of Social Work and Social Administration)
- **University of Nairobi**, Kenya (Department of Sociology and Social Work)
- **Institute of Social Work, Dar es Salaam**, Tanzania
- **National University of Rwanda** (Department of Social Sciences/Social Work Option)
- **Carinthia University** of Applied Sciences; Austria

# Overall objective

To promote professional social work  
education and practice  
to more effectively contribute towards  
social development and poverty reduction  
In East Africa

# Interrelated project components



# Achievements

## I. Research & joint publications

- ✓ Empirical research on the role of social work on poverty reduction and the realization of the MDGs completed in 4 partner countries:
  - First of its kind in East Africa: material for teaching, practice and policy ref
- ✓ 4 country specific reports
- ✓ Successful dissemination: workshops, regional and international conferences, media

## ❑ Joint publications

- 1 Book published– (Online and print)
- Joint journal articles
- 16 conference papers – to be published
- Forthcoming publication: “Handbook on social work in East Africa” – 2014

## ❑ Capacity strengthening

- ✓ Three students on PhD programme
- ✓ Scientific literature – Social work textbooks,
- ✓ Equipment - laptop, projector, printer, camera, digital voice recorders.

## Enhanced Academic partnerships and networking

- PROSOWO consortium –first ever concrete partnership of social work institutions in East Africa – opened up dynamic exchanges between involved institutions
- All 4 institutions now members of the Association of Schools of Social work in Africa :ASSWA
- Representation on the IASSW board from East Africa

# Advocacy for regulation of social work profession

- Strengthened ties with National Association of Social Workers for a united voice : bridging gaps between educators + practitioners.
- Ongoing dialogue with Government through line Ministry – represented in workshops, involved in upcoming conference: increased visibility + recognition
- Initial steps with NASWU + line ministry regarding regulation of social work



# In pipe line

- Planned International Social Work conference: March 2014
  - [www.socialwork2014.org](http://www.socialwork2014.org)
- Finalization of field work manual
- Political advocacy / discussion paper towards regulation of profession
- Capacity building esp. in scientific writing

# Gender Mainstreaming in the project

SW promotes **social change** and has core values of social justice and equality, dignity and worth of every individual. So gender mainstreaming has to be at the core of social work education and practice

- **In the PROSOWO project**, gender was mainstreamed at different levels and in major project components:
  - Research and publications
  - Equal opportunities for academic advancement for both men and women –PhD programme
  - Personnel /opportunities for participation in the project
  - Curriculum review /development
  - Upcoming social work conference

## □ Research and publications

- A whole section on empirical study was devoted to gender and the role that social workers can play
  - Views of social work clients, practitioners, educators, students and policy makers obtained and documented
  - Each of the four publications has a **chapter on gender and social work** : raises the profile of gender issues in social work education and practice
  - Title of a key forthcoming publication deliberately coined to reflect a gender perspective: i.e. **Professional social work in East Africa: towards social development, poverty reduction and gender equality** (cannot achieve SD without gender equality)

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- Personnel /employment /opportunities for participation in the project
    - Consortium – 2 females, 3 males
    - Senior researchers – mix of females and males
    - Research Assistants/Administrative assistants –mainly female
    - The participation has provided opportunities for capacity development in research and education for both men and women
  
  - Curriculum
    - Current MSW programme has incorporated a course unit of gender and social work, same at the University of Nairobi
    - Gender has also been deliberately incorporated in the curriculum of the ongoing Master's programme in social sector planning and management

- **Social work Conference 2014**
  - **Sub-theme** on “sexuality, gender and social work – has attracted the highest number of abstracts so far- 17
  - **Key note speakers** carefully balanced to include 1 man and 2 women (SW usually has more females than male academics and practitioners, so males are underrepresented

# Challenges

- Different academic and personal perspectives on gender amongst the consortium. Team of individuals from different contexts and cultural orientations
- Female students did not make use of provided opportunity for academic advancement due to demands from reproductive roles
- Historical gender imbalances in the academic units e.g.
  - Out of 22 academic staff, 6 are women
  - Out of 16 men, 12 have PhDs, 3 are enrolled, 1 MA
  - Out of 6 women, 2 have PhDs, 2 enrolled, 2 have MAs

# Prospects

- Affirmative action in favour of girls entering University
  - At university –gender mainstreaming division
  - By different sponsorship agencies
- With emphasis on gender in the curriculum social workers will have better skills and competences to mainstream gender in their work and programmes and play a more proactive role in promoting gender equity and equality within the communities.

Thank you!!