

IASSW INTERNATIONAL PROJECT – FINAL REPORT

Title of Project: Collaboration to design and develop an Ubuntu-inspired virtual learning and teaching platform with multiple digital resources.

Project duration: 2 years (Jan-23 – December 2025)

Submitted by: Janestic Mwende Twikirize, PhD (PI)

Executive Summary

The [Ubuntu Digital Platform](https://ubuntuplatform.ushahidi.io/map) was collaboratively developed in 2024 by a team of social work educators as a one stop centre for information about Ubuntu for social work, human services and development institutions, students and academics. Funded by the IASSW, the *Ubuntu Digital Platform* (<https://ubuntuplatform.ushahidi.io/map>) is a dedicated virtual learning and teaching platform with multiple digital resources. The platform, freely accessible through [Ushahidi platform](https://ubuntuplatform.ushahidi.io/map), contains, in an engaging interactive manner, videos, lectures, photographs, audios, illustrations, stories and other resources. Since its development more than 500 resources have been uploaded with over 1762 new users accessing the platform since its inception and with indications of increasing access. It is envisaged that the designed platform will contribute to both learning, teaching and practice by making available engaging and interactive Ubuntu-inspired resources on one place, digitally.

1.1 Background, rationale and purpose of the project

There is evidence that the philosophy of Ubuntu can play a significant role in transforming and decolonizing social work learning, teaching and practice. Ubuntu is one of the themes of the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development 2020 to 2030 which specifically featured in *2020-2022: Ubuntu: Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness*. The agenda was set by the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW). This is an important development, however, there have been inadequate resources to illustrate how Ubuntu is being applied or can be applied in social work learning, teaching and practice.

Purpose: This project aims to collaboratively design an Ubuntu-inspired virtual learning and teaching platform with multiple digital resources. The platform is a dedicated website that contains, in an engaging interactive manner, videos, lectures, photographs, audios, illustrations, stories and other resources.

1.2 Expected contribution and outcomes of the project

The designed platform will contribute to both learning, teaching and practice by making available engaging and interactive Ubuntu-inspired resources on one place, digitally. This will make it easier for students, lecturers and practitioners to access these resources. There will also be academic journal articles for reference by practitioners, students and academics.

This report details the achievements and progress.

1.3 Project Achievements

1.3.1 Development and hosting of the Ubuntu digital platform



Platform address:

<https://ubuntuplatform.ushahidi.io>



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Working together with the [Africa Network for Social Work and Development](#), the platform was developed in 2024 on the [Ushahidi platform](#), a knowledge crowd sourcing application developed in Kenya. Funded by the IASSW, the *Ubuntu Digital Platform* (<https://ubuntuplatform.ushahidi.io/map>) is a dedicated virtual learning and teaching platform with multiple digital resources. The platform, freely accessible through Ushahidi, contains, in an engaging interactive manner, videos, lectures, photographs, audios, illustrations, stories and other resources. It is a one stop centre for information about Ubuntu for social work, human services and development institutions, students and academics.

The platform was officially launched by the IASSW President, Prof Antoinette Lombard on 14th June 2024, during an online students social work and social development conference co-organised by the Africa Social Work and development Conference and the Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa ([ASSWA](#)).

1.3.2 Resources developed and uploaded until December 2025

The resources uploaded to the Ubuntu Digital platform between include: Ubuntu Discussions (Ubuntu maJadiliano), Ubuntu Lectures (Fundo yaUbuntu), Ubuntu Interviews (Hojiano), Ubuntu theories, Higher Education Institutions in Africa (Social Work and Development), Ubuntu proverbs, Names of Ubuntu philosophy, Associations in Africa, Ubuntu events, Ubuntu Songs, and videos on how to add resources and use this platform. All these uploaded resources were made easy, interactive and simple for the

audience that would interact with the platform. Subtitles were also provided for each of the uploaded resources to make it easier for the platform's users.

List of Ubuntu Resources on the platform

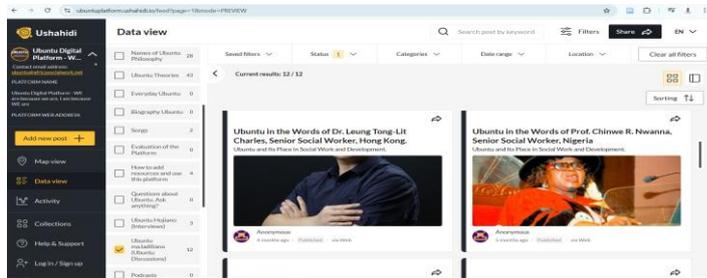
Ubuntu Resources/Surveys	Number uploaded
Higher Education Institutions in Africa (Social Work and Development)	294
Associations in Africa	35
Ubuntu proverbs (Tsumo)	78
Names of Ubuntu Philosophy	28
Ubuntu Theories	43
Songs	2
How to add resources and use this platform	4
Ubuntu Hojiano (Ubuntu Interviews)	3
Ubuntu ma Jadiliano (Ubuntu Discussions)	12
References, Lists and Bibliographies	1
Events (Ubuntu): Dissemination	1
Ubuntu lectures/Fundo ya Ubuntu	3

1.3.3 Ubuntu Discussions (Ubuntu maJadiliano)

Twelve (12) Ubuntu discussions were conducted online with various Ubuntu experts from around the world. The educative discussions are longer and last between 45 and 60 minutes. These discussions were interactive in nature and had a moderator,. They covered multiple themes relevant to Ubuntu, such as:

- The early understanding of Ubuntu
- Ubuntu in African tongue and cultural practices
- Ubuntu in everyday life
- Ubuntu in development
- Ubuntu justice
- Ubuntu History
- Ubuntu shaping education
- Ubuntu's usefulness in research
- African renaissance, the future of Ubuntu
- Ubuntu globally

The experts interviewed during the Ubuntu discussions were senior social workers from around the world, and their interviews were moderated by a research assistant, Eriya Turyamureeba via online zoom meetings. The videos were edited, trimmed, rendered to high quality, and uploaded to the platform.

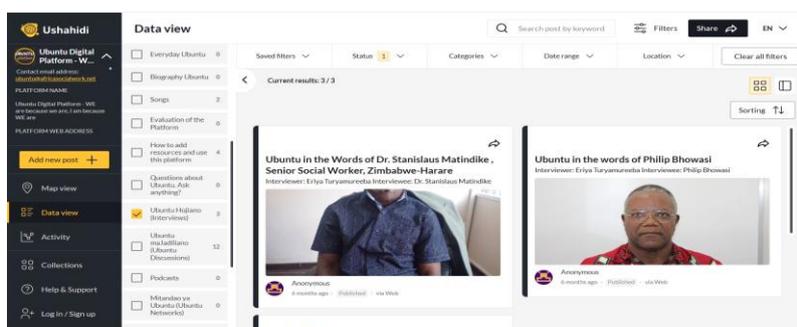


Ubuntu Discussions by country and expert designation

Country	Designation	Number of Interviews
Zimbabwe	Senior Social Workers	3
Rwanda	Senior Social Worker	1
Tanzania	Senior Social Worker	1
Uganda	Social Worker Student	1
Kenya	Professor of Social Work	1
Nigeria	Professor of Social Work & Senior Social Worker	2
Burundi	Senior Social Worker	1
South Africa	Professor of Social Work	1
Hong Kong	Senior Social Worker	1
	Total	12

1.3.4 Ubuntu Interviews (Hojiano)

Three (3) Ubuntu interviews were conducted with selected experts from across Africa. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes and was held online in a question-and-answer format, differing from Ubuntu discussions that typically involved a moderator and were longer in duration. The interviews were guided by the Ubuntu themes shared earlier. After editing, the videos were transformed into interactive video interviews and uploaded to the platform.

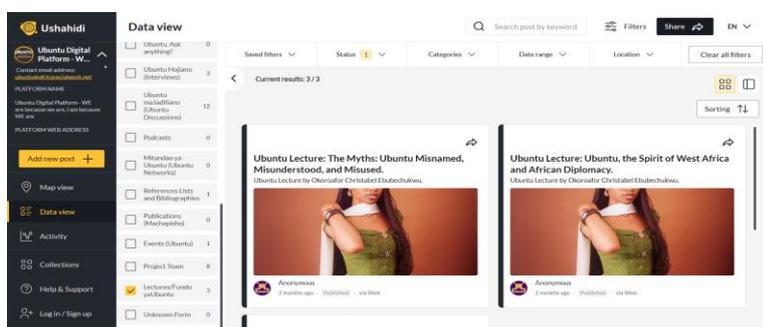


Ubuntu interviews list of experts

Country	Designation	Number
Zimbabwe	Senior Social Workers	2
Sierra Leone	Senior Social Worker	1
	Total	3

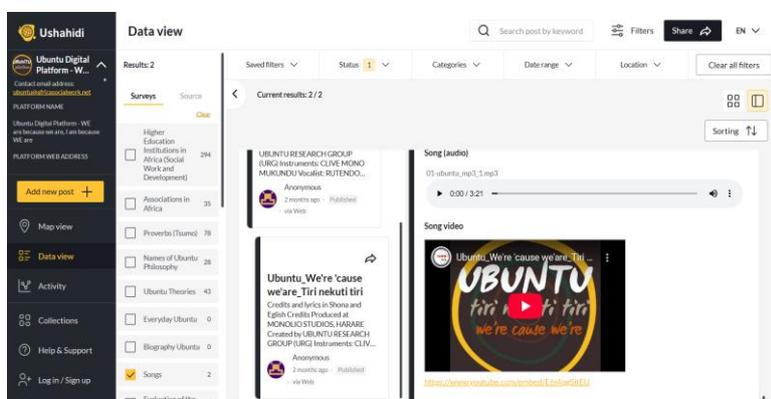
1.3.4 Ubuntu Lectures (Fundo yaUbuntu)

Three detailed lectures on Ubuntu have been uploaded to the platform. These lectures cover important topics such as: *"Understanding Ubuntu," "One Continent, Different Lives," "The Myths: Ubuntu Misnamed, Misunderstood, and Misused,"* and *"Ubuntu: The Spirit of West Africa and African Diplomacy."* The lectures were presented by Okoroafor Christabel Ebubechukwu, and the video editing and upload were done by Eriya.



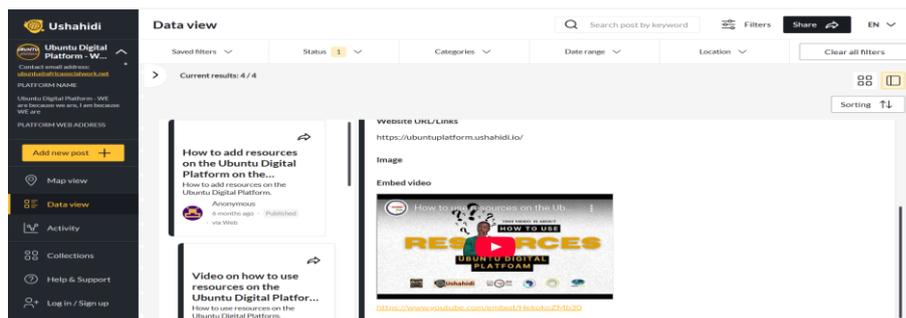
1.3.5 Ubuntu Songs

Two songs have so far been composed underlining messages and meanings from the ubuntu philosophy and how this relates to social work. One of them is already uploaded on the platform.



1.3.6 ‘How to’ Resources

To enhance the user experience for newcomers to the platform, we uploaded a series of instructional videos that clearly demonstrate how to effectively use and contribute resources. These videos cover a variety of topics, including navigating the platform's interface, accessing different features, and understanding the available resources. By providing these visual guides, we aim to simplify the onboarding process and ensure that users feel comfortable and confident as they explore the platform. This initiative is designed not only to familiarize new users with the tools at their disposal but also to encourage engagement and interaction within the community.



1.4 Dissemination Activities

1.4.1 Launch of the platform

The 2024 launch of the platform targeted a [students' conference](#) which was attended by more than 150 people including students, educators and practitioners, thus giving a strong start to the Platform's visibility.

1.4.2 Conference presentation

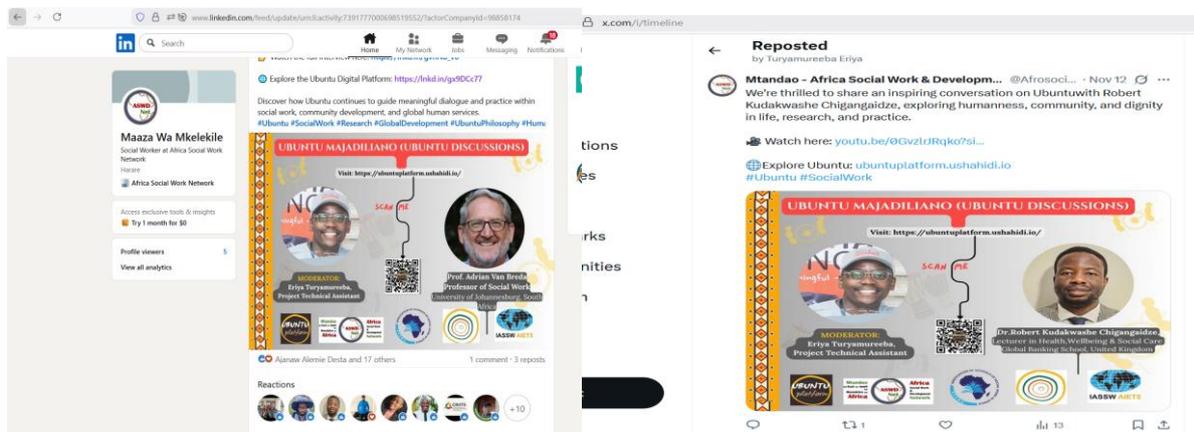
In June 2025, the team presented the Ubuntu Digital Platform at the International Social Work and Social Development Conference held at Makerere University from June 16th to 18th, 2025. This conference brought together social workers and key stakeholders in social development from around the world. The presentation was delivered by Prof. Janestic Twikirize and Eriya Turyamureeba, who provided an extensive overview of how the platform functions and how individuals globally can contribute by using and adding resources related to Ubuntu on the platform. The video for this presentation was also uploaded to the platform.



Ubuntu presentation during the International Social Work and Social Conference

1.4.3 Social media engagement

The team initiated a social media campaign to promote the platform's content to the public, aiming to attract new users. This involved utilising various social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and Facebook. This campaign successfully brought in new users and increased the platform's visibility and engagement.



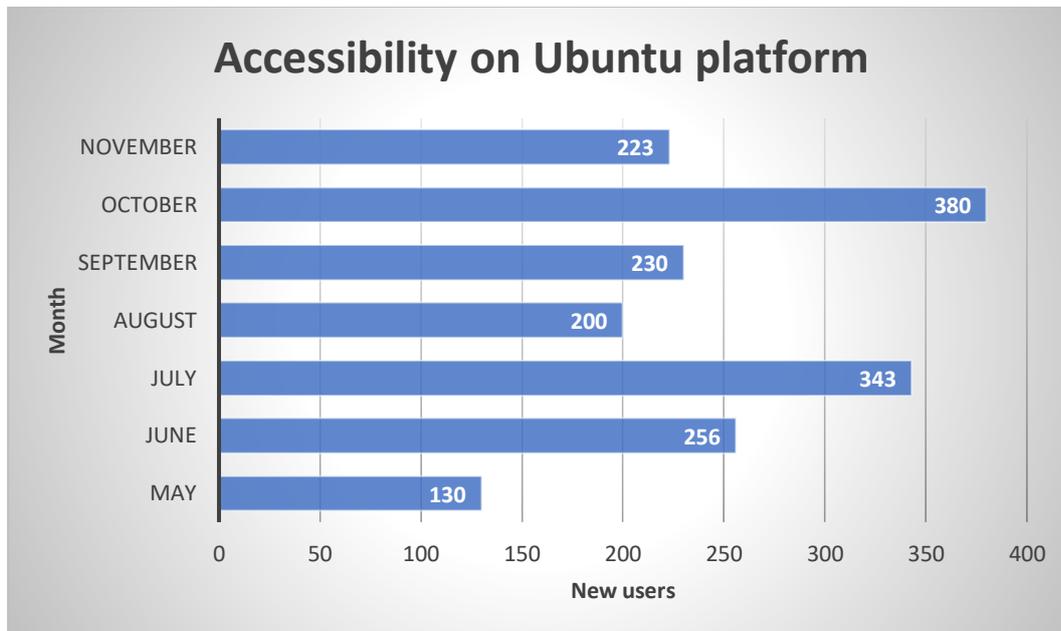
1.4.4 Upcoming events

The Ubuntu Team submitted an abstract for the SWSD conference 2026 which has been accepted. We shall present on the Ubuntu Digital Platform during the 2026 Joint World Conference on Social Work and Social Development (SWSD 2026). This event will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from June 26 to 29, 2026. The conference theme, “Harambee for Sustainable Shared Futures.” closely intertwined with the principles of Ubuntu, is particularly relevant at a time when the Ubuntu Digital Platform has been established.

1.4.5 Statistics on accessibility of the platform

The platform has experienced a significant rise in its user base over recent months. This remarkable growth can be attributed to the high relevance and practicality of the content being shared on the Ubuntu digital platform, which resonates with a wide array of users. Many

individuals have expressed that the resources and information provided enhance their experience and meet their educational needs on the concept of Ubuntu. Additionally, the platform offers a wide array of resources about Ubuntu from around the world which explains the increased utility of the platform. To provide further insight, I have attached a graph that illustrates the varying levels of utility experienced by different user groups on the platform. This data underscores the platform's positive impact and the reasons behind its increasing popularity.



1.5 Transferability

The Ushahidi project is freely accessible online and can therefore be of benefit to any interested academics, students, policy makers, practitioners and researchers anywhere in the world. The idea of a digital platform is also easily transferable using comparable principles.

1.6 Future Plans

- Wide dissemination for increased visibility, access and utilization
- Continuous mobilization and uploading of relevant resources on the platform
- Submit 2 articles for publishing in scientific journals
- Organise a follow up online webinar on the platform
- Conduct a survey to assess usage and accessibility among academics.

1.6 The Research Team

	Name	Role in project	Affiliation
1	Prof Janestic Twikirize	PI	Makerere University, Uganda

2	Dr Rugare Mugumbate	Co-PI	School of Health and Society, University of Wollongong, Australia; Convenor ASWNet
3	Dr Sharlotte Tusasiirwe,	Co-PI	Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA); School of Social Sciences, Western Sydney University
4		Team member	
5	Tanatswa Silvanus Chineka	Team member	Department of Social Work, University of Zimbabwe
6	Professor Mandla Mfundo Masuku,	Team member	School of Built Environment and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
77	Professor Vincent Mabvurira	Team member	School of Psycho-social Health, North-West University, South Africa
8	Eriya Turyamureeba	Technical assistant	Makerere University, Uganda
9	Erina Nyahwema	Project assistant	Chitungwiza, Harare, Zimbabwe
10	Zoe Primrose	Project Assistant	Harare, Zimbabwe