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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Sixth Annual Conference of the Association for Research on Civil Society in Africa (AROCSA)

DAKAR, SENEGAL

September 7 - 8, 2022

Theme: “The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Safeguarding and
Supporting Human and Environmental Health in Africa”

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: July 15, 2022

This Call is an invitation to interested parties to submit abstracts for contributions to the 6th Annual AROCSA Conference to be held at the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal, from **September 7 – 8, 2022**.

About AROCSA

Established in 2015, the Association for Research on Civil Society in Africa (AROCSA) is a membership-based organisation that seeks to create a platform for meaningful engagement of African civil society stakeholders, with the goal to generate knowledge and its dissemination to civil society by African scholars and practitioners, reflecting global excellence standards and propelling development on the continent. AROCSA was set up with funding from the Ford Foundation, West African Regional Office, and mentorship from the Association for Research on Non-Profit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA).

The AROCSA 2022 Conference

Now in its sixth iteration, the 2022 AROCSA Conference will be the first in-person conference for African civil society researchers and practitioners to come together, exchange knowledge, and interact since 2019. The return to some semblance of pre-pandemic normalcy offers a unique opportunity to refocus attention on numerous pressing issues confronting the African continent. The 2022 event will however be hybrid, allowing participants to join physically in Dakar and those unable to travel to Dakar to join virtually. This will enable the conference to achieve maximum reach.

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Since its inaugural conference held in May 2016, in Lagos, Nigeria, AROCSA has explored a number of themes in its annual conferences. These include ‘Africa in a Changing Global Context: People, Production and Politics’ (2017), ‘Understanding and Navigating Regionalism in Africa’ (2018), ‘Leveraging Technology for Effective Government and Civil Society: A Review of Africa’s Digital Renaissance and Innovations in Civil Society’ (2019), and ‘Towards a more Sustainable Civil Society in Africa: Inclusion, Governance, and Impact’ (2021). The 2020 conference was postponed due to the COVID pandemic. While these previous themes no doubt remain relevant in Africa’s developmental discourse, there are other equally pressing issues that present existential threats to African communities and ecosystems that require urgent attention.

Against this background, the sixth annual AROCSA conference interrogates the role of African civil society in safeguarding and supporting human and environmental health on the continent in the face of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which exposed the fragility of health infrastructure across Africa, as well as the increasing menace of climate change and how it threatens the existence of not only whole communities and ecosystems, but also how it impacts physical and mental health, livelihoods, food security, biodiversity, resource governance, and economic development on the continent.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” This definition, according to Hanna and Coussens (2001), should serve as a reminder that redefining the view of environmental health and the natural environment requires many shifts in thinking, as well as a willingness to pursue diverse approaches.

Individuals do not exist separate from their environment and advances in the field of environmental health have taught us much about human health hazards. We are a lot more aware of how (global) climate change is likely to fuel the spread of infectious diseases, for instance. This latter point brings into sharper focus the nexus between human and environmental health. While the trend on COVID infection and death rates in Africa has remained relatively low to date in comparison with other regions of the world, reference to dealing with infectious diseases such as COVID-19 especially given the issues of vaccine inequity and double standards when it comes to vaccine distribution and production on the continent is key to a proper elaboration of the conference theme.

In 2015 the UN launched the SDGs with the promise to ‘leave no-one behind’ in achieving sustainable development by 2030. Given the traditional role civil society organizations have played in Africa’s development, there is need for increased engagement with government and private sector in order to achieve this goal. Unforeseen events such as the pandemic have stalled progress. But the challenges we face, unfortunately, including the threat of climate change have not abated during the intervening period. In many respects, they have actually grown even worse.





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Thus, these twin threats demand more active and imaginative civil society, state, and non-state collaborations in order to find long term solutions. They require African civil society organisations to be more active in advocating for and working with state actors to establish climate friendly policies that protect both human and environmental health, and ultimately remove barriers to achieving sustainable development for all Africans.

Therefore, AROCSA welcomes proposals connecting these contextual issues in the themes and sub-themes without necessarily excluding work on other key civil society related agenda.

Sub-themes

- Human and environmental health in the context of climate change: Exploring the One Health approach
- Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness and Response in Africa
- The role of state and non-state actors in disaster preparedness and response in Africa
- African civil society advocacy agenda for sustainable development and climate change
- Technology and research agendas to inform development in a changing climate
- Poverty, climate change and biodiversity in Africa
- Female farmers, resilience to climate change and weather variability in Africa
- Regional organizations, resource governance and the African strategy on climate change
- Pandemic, essential health service delivery and primary health care system in Africa
- Health and safeguarding needs of women and children in contexts of humanitarian emergencies in Africa

General Information

Forms of Participation: Papers, Panels, Roundtable, and Posters

Contributions may take the form of a paper, a panel, a roundtable, or a poster. Please indicate your choice of presentation when you submit your abstract. The conference organizers are especially interested in innovative formats and presentations.



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Abstract Submissions

To be considered for review, an abstract must include:

A working title.

- A statement of the empirical or theoretical concern.
- A short summary locating the research problem within literature.
- A concise account of the empirical or theoretical methodological approach.
- The main arguments of the paper and an indication of the supporting evidence.
- A statement of the main conclusions and their relevance to an international audience.

The abstract must be less than 500 words in length. Referencing to follow APA format. References are not included in the 500-word count and can be listed in the 'Additional Information' section of the online submission portal. Abstracts not meeting these requirements will be declined by AROCSA Conference Committee.

Please note: Abstracts will be accepted in both English and French. The primary language of the conference is English, and there will be some presentations conducted in French.

*Submissions for Panels, Papers, Roundtables and Posters

All panel, paper, roundtable and poster proposals for the Conference must be submitted using AROCSA's online submission service. You will be required to choose one of the conference (sub) themes which best fits your abstract.

To submit your paper or poster abstract using this service, go to the AROCSA website – arocsa.org/CONF2022/ and follow the link for 'Submit a Proposal.'

*Special Note on Panel Submissions

A panel submission is a proposal for a coordinated set of papers (usually 3 or 4 in number) on a particular topic or issue. Please note that panel proposals require an abstract identifying and justifying the theme of the panel as well as a full abstract for each panel paper. Panel proposals that do not include full abstracts and author information for each paper will not be considered. The person submitting the panel proposal must be willing to act as the panel coordinator and ensure that all proposed paper presenters commit to attending the conference.



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Please note that papers which are part of a submitted panel cannot be submitted separately as an individual submission. If the submission is submitted twice by the same author, it will be rejected.

Special Note on Posters and Poster Submissions

A poster proposal is an alternative to presenting a full research paper. New researchers in particular are invited to share work-in-progress by means of a poster if they wish. This is an opportunity to display a poster about completed and/or ongoing research. Posters will be displayed throughout the conference and a designated session will be scheduled in which participants can meet with authors to discuss their work. Full instructions on poster formats will be provided to those accepted for presentation.

Special Note on Roundtable Submissions

Roundtables encourage discussion and interaction among delegates. The roundtable format offers short (max. 10 minute) presentations around a common theme, with ample time for discussion. Proposals should include details on the theme or topic of discussion and its relevance, along with the names of the organizers/participants. Roundtables can include no more than five (5) participants. Please describe what each participant is expected to contribute to the discussion.

Review of Submissions

All submissions will be subject to a blind review by at least two independent reviewers.

Authors will be advised by the end of July 2022 whether their abstract has been accepted or not.

AUTHORS MUST REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE BY AUGUST 30, 2022, TO HAVE THEIR PRESENTATION SCHEDULED IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM.

The completed paper must be submitted to the session moderator by August 19th, 2022, to allow adequate time for moderators to read the paper. In addition, authors are requested to send their paper to programs@arocsa.org by August 19th, 2022 for access to all conference participants.



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Post-Conference Publication and Working Paper Opportunities

Following the conference, authors may be invited to revise their papers in light of conference feedback in view of subsequent submission to the AROCSA Journal and as well as other peer-reviewed journals published by AROCSA partners in the field. Kindly note that publication decisions are at the sole discretion of the publishers of such journals as AROCSA does not participate in the editorial decisions on such submissions

Questions

Any questions on abstract submissions for papers, panels, and posters, and any other aspect of the 6th Annual AROCSA Conference should be directed to AROCSA at:

E-mail: programs@arocsa.org

Telephone: +234 9090 900 025

PLEASE REMEMBER: THE DEADLINE FOR PAPER SUBMISSION IS JULY 15, 2022

Detailed information on travel arrangements, accommodation, and the conference schedule will be available on the conference website arocsa.org/CONF2022/