



NEWSLETTER

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AFRICA REGIONAL GROUP

OCTOBER, 2024



Empowering Occupational Therapy Across Africa: Addressing Challenges, Fostering Collaboration, and Building the Future”

Message from the Chairperson

As we reflect on the journey of occupational therapy across Africa, it is a time to celebrate our shared achievements and look to the future with renewed determination. Occupational therapy has grown steadily across the continent, and our work has had a profound impact on individuals, communities, and healthcare systems.

I am particularly excited about the upcoming OTARG Congress in Tanzania under the theme, “Taking Stock: A celebration of the past, present, and future practice of occupational therapy in Africa.” This Congress will provide us with the opportunity to reflect on our collective progress, share innovative practices, and collaborate on how to strengthen OT in Africa for generations to come.

Our past has laid a strong foundation, and our present is filled with dynamic change. The future of occupational therapy in Africa holds great promise, and with your continued dedication

and passion, we will continue to shape it together. Let us remain steadfast in our efforts to promote holistic, culturally grounded practices that meet the needs of our diverse communities.

As we prepare for the year ahead, I encourage each of you to embrace collaboration, innovation, and leadership in your practice. Together, we will continue to elevate the profession and contribute to a brighter, more inclusive future for OT in Africa.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to occupational therapy. I look forward to celebrating with you at the OTARG Congress and to the many successes that await us.

Warm Regards,



Matumo Ramafikeng

President, Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group

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Occupational Therapy for All



Harnessing the Power of Social Media in Occupational Therapy: OTARG's Efforts to Inspire Change

In today's digital age, social media has become a powerful tool for sharing knowledge and fostering community. The Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG) recognises the potential of these platforms, using its Instagram account @otafrika to inspire and inform occupational therapists across Africa.

Through the "What's Happening in Africa" posts, OTARG shares updates on sociopolitical and economic developments, encouraging OTs to theorise about how these shifts impact occupations. These posts offer more than just news; they invite therapists to critically think about how events across Africa influence their practice and the occupations they support.



African proverbs are also featured regularly, providing cultural wisdom and inspiration to both seasoned practitioners and students. These proverbs, along with inspirational messages, remind OTs of the deep cultural roots that shape occupational therapy in Africa, offering daily motivation and insight into holistic approaches to well-being.

OTARG also uses Instagram to promote vacancies, research opportunities, and events organized by member countries. This helps keep the OT community connected, informed, and engaged with the latest developments in the profession across the continent.

By blending cultural insights with professional opportunities and knowledge-sharing, OTARG is actively using social media to inspire a new generation of African occupational therapists to think critically and engage with their practice in ways that reflect the ever-changing African landscape.



Occupational Therapists on Social Media

In this edition, we celebrate African occupational therapists who are leveraging social media platforms and YouTube to educate, inspire, and engage communities in occupational therapy discussions. Follow these incredible professionals and learn more about their valuable work in advancing the field across Africa.

Darren Fredericks YouTube Channel



Darren shares insightful content on occupational therapy, covering practical techniques, tips for therapists, and educational videos. A great resource for OTs and students looking to expand their knowledge.

WATCH ON  YouTube

Therapy Plus Instagram Channel



OT Aika focuses on promoting occupational therapy, sharing content that highlights OT interventions, exercises, and techniques to support individuals' independence and well-being. Their posts offer educational tips for both therapists and clients, making the page a valuable resource for the OT community.

 Follow on Instagram

Occupational Perspectives Podcast



This podcast features discussions on various aspects of occupational therapy, offering listeners valuable insights into OT practices and personal stories from the field.

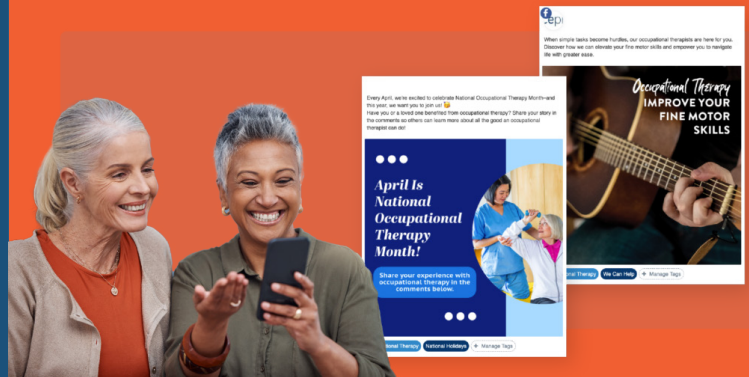
LISTEN ON  Spotify

These accounts offer educational content and practical guidance, perfect for staying updated and inspired in the field of occupational therapy!

Get Featured!

Are you an occupational therapist in Africa using social media or YouTube to share your OT journey?

Reach out to us at newsletter@otarg.org to be featured in the next newsletter!



Upcoming Events and Conferences

OTAG Annual Scientific Conference 2024

In celebration of World Occupational Therapy Day, the Occupational Therapy Association of Ghana (OTAG) is excited to announce the 2024 edition of its Annual Scientific Conference.

The conference will be held virtually on October 19th, 2024, under the theme: "Positioning Occupational Therapy for Social Transformation"

This virtual event will bring together practitioners, researchers, educators, and students from diverse regions to explore how occupational therapy can drive social change and improve lives across communities.

Conference Details:

Date: October 19th, 2024

Time: 10:00 AM GMT

Format: Virtual

We invite all stakeholders in the field of occupational therapy to attend this important event. Don't miss out on the opportunity to engage with thought leaders, share insights, and be part of this transformative discussion.

Registration Information:

To attend the conference, please complete the registration form using the button below. We look forward to your participation.

EVENT SCHEDULE



9:00AM
19
OCTOBER
ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE
VIRTUAL

9:00 AM
25
OCTOBER
PUBLIC LECTURE ON DEMENTIA, SCREENING AND EXPO
UGMC - SIMULATION AND TRAINING CENTER AUDITORIUM

OTHER MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

- MEDIA ROUNDS
- MEMBERS RECORD A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN OT/OTT OR STUDENT OT/OTT
- MEMBERS EDUCATE OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN THEIR HOSPITALS AND SCHOOLS ABOUT OT

OT MONTH 2024

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)



Exploring Occupational Disruption among Somali Refugees with Disabilities in Dadaab

A recent study by Lizzie Andare sheds light on the compounded challenges faced by Somali refugees with disabilities living in the Dadaab refugee camp. Using an intersectional and occupational lens, the research explores how the intersection of disability and refugee status creates profound occupational disruptions, limiting their ability to engage in meaningful activities.

Key findings from the study revealed:

- **Uncertainty and Agency:** Many refugees face ongoing uncertainty regarding their future, which hinders their long-term engagement in occupations.
- **Creating Stability:** Despite the fragmented and restrictive context of the refugee camp, some refugees strive to find stability by adapting their occupational roles.
- **Feeling 'Stuck':** The camp's environment leaves many refugees feeling "stuck," unable to participate in meaningful occupations that foster identity and community engagement.

The study underscores the importance of designing inclusive interventions that address these unique challenges, enabling full participation and improving quality of life for refugees with disabilities. It calls for occupational therapists and policymakers to adopt intersectional approaches to better serve displaced populations with disabilities.

This research highlights the critical role of occupational therapy in promoting occupational justice and ensuring meaningful engagement for all, regardless of the challenges posed by displacement and disability.

Read Lizzie Andare's full master's thesis on [OTARG's official website](#).

Occupational Rights Violations in the Gaza Strip

In Gaza, the prolonged Israeli Colonial Regime (ICR) has led to severe occupational rights violations, restricting Palestinian citizens' ability to engage in meaningful occupations. Dr. Moussa Abu Mostafa outlines the consequences of these restrictions, particularly since October 2023, when intensified conflict forced mass displacement. Thousands of citizens fled to underdeveloped areas such as Mawasi, where basic infrastructure, healthcare, and education are inaccessible.

The situation in Gaza reflects a state of occupational deprivation and imbalance, with displaced individuals engaging in survival activities like collecting water and firewood instead of meaningful, purposeful occupations. Dr. Abu Mostafa describes these daily survival efforts as "daily acts of resistance" that, although vital, fail to address the deeper occupational needs of the population. He highlights the term "occupational apartheid", which refers to the systematic exclusion of Palestinians from participating in meaningful occupations due to ICR's control and the destruction of essential infrastructure like homes, schools, and hospitals.

Dr. Abu Mostafa calls on occupational therapists worldwide to advocate for occupational justice, urging them to support the people of Gaza by demanding an immediate ceasefire, ensuring the delivery of humanitarian aid, and raising awareness of these injustices. He also emphasizes the need to rebuild Gaza's infrastructure and restore the population's rights to health, education, and meaningful participation in society.

Through his analysis, Dr. Abu Mostafa underscores the critical role of occupational therapists in promoting justice, rebuilding communities, and restoring dignity to individuals deprived of their fundamental occupational rights in Gaza.

[Read full article](#) by By Dr. Moussa Abu Mostafa, Chief Occupational Therapist at Hamad Rehabilitation Hospital, Gaza Strip, Palestine

Research Highlights

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities: Challenges and Possibilities

The **Maisha Outreach Therapy Organization (MOTO)** has been making remarkable strides toward the inclusion of children with disabilities in Tanzania. Despite the challenges posed by stigmatization, lack of access to rehabilitation services, and financial constraints, MOTO has been dedicated to ensuring that children with disabilities are provided with quality therapeutic interventions, social support, and educational opportunities.

MOTO's approach includes identifying children with disabilities through population-based surveys and referrals, conducting thorough assessments using standardized tools, and implementing community-based rehabilitation interventions. Over the years, MOTO has worked to increase awareness and reduce stigmatization around disability, providing wheelchairs and assistive devices, and empowering caregivers through education and training.

In 2022, MOTO conducted 15 home visits, provided 11 wheelchairs, and organized four awareness training sessions. In 2023, the organization increased its outreach, conducting 25 house visits, mobilizing communities, and delivering 19 assistive devices to enhance the social and functional activities of children with disabilities.

Additionally, MOTO contributed to the development of Tanzania's first National Rehabilitation Strategic Plan 2021-2026, focusing on improving access to rehabilitation services and assistive devices. Through these initiatives, MOTO is playing a key role in advocating for the rights and inclusion of children with disabilities, fostering a holistic approach to improving their lives.

This important work highlights the need for continuous community education and policy support to create an inclusive society where children with disabilities can thrive.


Find the full article by Aika Wilfred on [OTARG's official website](#).
















Member Achievements





Celebrating Our Members' Successes

Recognize OTARG members who have received awards, completed significant projects, or made a meaningful impact in their communities.

MEET RWOTASU ELECTED COMMITTEE 2024-2025



 President N. Valentin	 Vice-President I. Didier	 Secretary I.B. Pamela	 Treasurer N.K. Denys
 C. Officer J.D. MUHIRE	 Events Org S.M. Shalom	 Events org U. Violette	 R,E& Project Director N. Patrick
 R,E&Project Director B. Gilbert	 Advisor H.L. Fidele	 Advisor I. Adrien	 Arbitration M. Fred
 P&I Relation M.J. De Dieu	 P&I Relation T.M. Honorine	 Auditor I.M. Alice	

   
@rwotasu



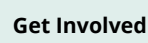

Introducing the New OTARG Website: A Hub for Connection, Knowledge, and Growth

We are excited to announce the launch of the new Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG) website, designed to better serve and connect occupational therapists across Africa. The new site, accessible at www.otarg.org, offers an enhanced experience for members, students, educators, and professionals who are passionate about advancing OT practices across the continent.

What's New on the Website?

 <p>User-Friendly Design</p> <p>The updated website features a sleek, modern design that makes navigation easy and intuitive. Whether you're looking for information on upcoming events, research opportunities, or OT resources, the site's clear layout ensures quick access to all key sections.</p>	 <p>News and Updates</p> <p>The News section keeps members informed about the latest developments in occupational therapy within Africa and globally. Stay up-to-date with newsletters, announcements, and OT news from across the continent.</p>	 <p>Events and Congress Information</p> <p>One of the highlights is the dedicated space for information about upcoming OTARG events, including the OTARG Congress 2025 in Tanzania. Members can access details about event schedules, registration, and opportunities to volunteer or submit papers.</p>	 <p>Professional Resources & Opportunities</p> <p>The new website offers a comprehensive library of resources, including research publications, best practices in OT, and links to educational materials. You can also find job vacancies, fellowships, and research collaboration opportunities that support OT development in Africa.</p>	 <p>Interactive Community Engagement</p> <p>The website serves as a central hub for the OTARG community. The Blog and Discussion Forum sections will be launching soon, providing a platform for members to engage in conversations, share knowledge, and discuss pressing issues in occupational therapy.</p>
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What's New on the Website?

 <p>Stay Connected</p> <p>The updated website features a sleek, modern design that makes navigation easy and intuitive. Whether you're looking for information on upcoming events, research opportunities, or OT resources, the site's clear layout ensures quick access to all key sections.</p>	 <p>Access Research and Learning Tools</p> <p>Whether you are a student or a practising therapist, the website's extensive library of OT materials is an invaluable resource for professional growth.</p>	 <p>Get Involved</p> <p>From calls for papers to volunteer opportunities at the upcoming OTARG Congress, the new website is the go-to place to find ways to contribute and collaborate.</p>	
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Why Visit the OTARG Website?

The new OTARG website is more than just a source of information—it's a space for building the future of occupational therapy in Africa. As the field continues to grow and evolve, OTARG's online presence will serve as a beacon of collaboration, learning, and professional development.

Explore the new website at www.otarg.org and stay engaged with the incredible work being done to advance OT in Africa!

Introducing the New OTARG Website: A Hub for Connection, Knowledge, and Growth

The 13th Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG) Congress will be held in Arusha, Tanzania from June 24 to 27, 2025, and we are thrilled to invite you to this important event! Under the theme “Tafakari ya kina: Mafanikio ya Tulikotoka, Tulipo na Tunakoelekea katika kutoa huduma za Tiba kwa Vitendo barani Afrika” (Taking Stock: A Celebration of the Past, Present, and Future Practice of Occupational Therapy in Africa), this congress aims to reflect on our journey, celebrate our progress, and strategize for the future of occupational therapy (OT) in Africa.

The pre-congress workshops will take place on June 23, 2025, and will provide an immersive learning opportunity for participants to engage in hands-on sessions and skill-building activities.

The main Congress will run from June 24 to 27, 2025, featuring keynote speakers, workshops, panel discussions, and poster presentations, all designed to inspire, educate, and foster collaboration.



Call for Abstracts: Shape the Future of OT in Africa

We invite all occupational therapists, researchers, educators, and students to submit abstracts for presentations, workshops, and posters. This is your opportunity to share your knowledge, research, and innovations with the OT community across Africa.

Key Dates:

- **Abstract submission deadline:** November 30, 2024
- **Notification of acceptance:** February 15, 2025
- **Presenter registration deadline:** April 30, 2025
- **Late registration begins:** May 1, 2025
- **Late registration closes:** June 9, 2025

Submission categories include:

- **Oral presentations** (15 minutes plus 5 minutes for Q&A)
- **Workshops** (2 hours)
- **Panel discussions** (1 hour with Q&A)
- **Poster presentations** (7-minute summary with a question time)

The congress encourages submissions on sub-themes such as:

- Policy, Advocacy, and Leadership in OT
- Practice: Strengthening rehabilitation in health systems, reducing inequalities, and more
- Education: Innovative OT education, curriculum

development, and research-led teaching.

To submit your abstract, visit [OTARG Congress 2025 Submission Form](#).

Why Attend?

The OTARG Congress 2025 is a unique opportunity to connect with occupational therapists from across Africa, exchange ideas, and participate in critical discussions about the future of OT on the continent. Whether you're presenting your research, attending workshops, or networking with fellow professionals, this congress will deepen your understanding of OT's role in improving lives.

For more information on the event and registration, visit the official [OTARG Congress Website](#).

Let's come together to celebrate the growth of occupational therapy in Africa and continue building a brighter future for the profession!

Get Involved

Volunteer and Collaboration Opportunities

Why Visit the OTARG Website?

As the Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG) continues to grow, so do the opportunities for our members to collaborate, volunteer, and contribute to the field of occupational therapy across Africa. Here's how you can get involved and help make a meaningful impact:

1. Join the Editorial Team for OTARG's Newsletter and Blog

We are looking for passionate occupational therapists to join the editorial team and help produce OTARG's newsletter and blog for the newly developed OTARG website. If you enjoy writing, content creation, and sharing knowledge, this is your chance to contribute to the OT community while connecting with fellow professionals across the continent.

Role: Write articles, contribute to blog posts, and assist in curating content that highlights the work of OT practitioners in Africa.

How to Apply: Email us at newsletter@otarg.org to express your interest and learn more about the role.

2. Volunteer at the OTARG Congress 2025

Volunteering with OTARG not only enhances your professional skills but also connects you to a network of passionate OT practitioners across Africa. You'll have the opportunity to gain leadership experience, make lasting contributions to the OT community, and be a part of transformative events and projects that shape the future of occupational therapy in Africa.

For more information on these opportunities, please contact vp-programmes@otarg.org. Let's work together to continue advancing occupational therapy across the continent!



Together, we can continue to drive forward occupational therapy in Africa and create meaningful change!

Join the OTARG Virtual Community today!

Get instant updates on all OTARG activities and updates, interact with OT's across Africa & the world beyond. OTARG seeks to build a massive hub to foster cooperation, knowledge sharing, the promotion of all things OT. Get on, you'll fit right in.

Follow us on



- Follow [@OTARG_](https://twitter.com/OTARG_)
- Turn on post notifications & use [#OTARG](https://twitter.com/OTARG_) in your posts.

