

[View this email in your browser](#)



## Eastern and Southern Africa regional learning platform on care reform

Monthly update - January 2023

---

### Introduction

Welcome to the monthly update from the regional learning platform on care reform in Eastern and Southern Africa. The platform is an opportunity for policy makers and practitioners in Government, UNICEF and NGOs to exchange learning on care. The platform was established by UNICEF and Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC) and is supported by the consultancy firm Child Frontiers. Explore our past webinars and resources [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). Watch our 10 minute videos on [introducing care reform](#) and [lessons learnt from COVID-19 on care reform](#).

---

### Announcements on the platform

- **Webinar: Keeping Care in the Family- Strategies for Preventing Child-Family Separation.** Join us to hear about strategies for building strong families and communities and preventing child-family separation in the region. A moderated panel will share approaches for preventing double separation among teenage mothers in Kenya, family preservation and empowerment strategies in Zambia, and the work of UNICEF Rwanda in family strengthening and community-based support for the care of children with disabilities, followed by a discussion on lessons learned and priorities for preventing separation in the region. **Thursday the 26th of January 3-4.30pm Nairobi time.** The zoom link can be found [here](#). Meeting ID: 811 5466 6641 Passcode: 824547
- **Webinar recording - Supporting the reintegration of children with disabilities in Rwanda:** With UNICEF support, the government of Rwanda are in the final phases of their care reform programme. Having returned the majority of children from residential care back to families and communities, they are now working on the reintegration of children with disabilities. In this webinar we heard from policy makers and practitioners on how this has been done and key lessons learnt. A recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).
- **Help us improve the learning platform.** This month we are planning for the third year of the platform. We would love to hear from you are about

complete this [short form](#). We also want to reach more people. Do you know of anyone else who might want to join our mailing list? Please ask them to complete this [short form](#) or email [blutome@childfrontiers.com](mailto:blutome@childfrontiers.com) with name, organisation, country and email address. We are especially keen to reach more social workers and others working directly with children, and more government staff.

- **Helpdesk.** As part of the platform, we have set up a Helpdesk for UNICEF country office staff and government counterparts. For guidance on any aspect of care reform, please contact Emily Delap of Child Frontiers ([edelap@childfrontiers.com](mailto:edelap@childfrontiers.com)) or Mona Aika from the UNICEF regional office ([maika@unicef.org](mailto:maika@unicef.org)).



## Case study: Supporting effective family reintegration in Uganda

Attim (not her real name) is a 54-year-old grandmother from Eastern Uganda. Attim lost her husband 10 years ago, and three of her four children have also died. She is currently taking care of her three granddaughters aged 8-14 years and her nephew Allan. Attim's granddaughters came to live with her after their parents died while her nephew joined the household after spending five years in an orphanage where he was placed after his parents separated.

The family has a small piece of land where the children farm while Attim works on other farms to earn extra income. Usually, they are able to manage in this way, although Attim has to occasionally ask her brother for assistance.

Caring for four children has not always been easy. Her granddaughters joined her when she was still grieving the loss of her own children and worried about how she would cope.

*"I cried every day and was depressed, while also trying to be there for my grandchildren. To survive, I work on other people's farms, and they pay me. But being the main breadwinner and now that I am aging, I don't know what the future holds."*

Life for the family was difficult especially during the COVID lockdown when Attim could not leave home for work. Therefore, caring for adolescent girls held particular fears for her at this time:

*"I was barely able to provide even the basic needs for my grandchildren. Many girls in the community became pregnant. I was constantly worried that the same would happen to my girls. It was tough."* says Attim

Despite these struggles, Attim was happy to bring Allan into the family after she was approached by government social workers and a local NGO in 2021, who requested her to take care of the boy. She says:

*"I wanted the child to know his other relatives and they also get to know him. I didn't want him to grow up in an orphanage."*

months visiting and interacting with her nephew before he came to live with her. Allan received clothes, a mattress, a solar-powered lamp, and a cow when he joined the family. The Social workers are conducting follow-up sessions and support through regular visits to make sure that the family is still doing well.

Allan is pleased to be living with a family once more. He says:

*"I feel so happy living at home because home is the best. ....[My aunt] treats me well. And she encourages me to study hard. I am treated like another child at home. And my auntie listens to me when I want to go and play."*

Social workers in Uganda acknowledge that placing children with extended family members is the most appropriate option for children leaving residential care:

*"Our work is basically to restore connections which for one reason or the other are broken. We encourage our kinship carers to do what we have traditionally done; to do what in our culture we have always done."* (NGO Project manager)

They have learned that successful reintegration from residential to kinship care requires preparing families well so that they have realistic expectations around the challenges that they may face. Kinship caregivers should also be prepared how to manage relationships especially if their parents are alive. It is also important to capacity-build caregivers so that they no longer rely on the support of the government or NGOs since it might take several years before they receive the support.

*This case study was developed by Emily Delap and Ismael Ddumba-Nyanzi of Children Frontiers, with the support of UNICEF Uganda, the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, and the NGO Arise and Shine.*

---

## Other news and resources

- Transforming Children's Care is a global community of practice on care reform. On this platform, you can join working groups to share learning on various care related topics or view webinar recordings on subjects such as foster care, trauma informed approaches to care and transitioning residential care. Find out more [here](#).

**Want to share resources or advertise a webinar or event on care reform in Eastern and Southern Africa?** Please contact Bertha Lutome of Child Frontiers: [blutome@childfrontiers.com](mailto:blutome@childfrontiers.com)

---

The learning platform was established by UNICEF Eastern and Southern African Regional Office (ESARO) in collaboration with Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC) and has been made possible by funding from USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund through UNICEF ESARO.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Copyright © 2022 UNICEF

Photo credit top image: ©UNICEF/UN0306257/Soko  
Photo credit second image: ©UNICEF/UN0691171/Wamala

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

[Translate](#) ▼

[RSS](#)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
Child Frontiers · 7A Princes Rise · Lewisham · London, London SE13 7PW · United Kingdom

