

THE STATE OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE 2018

TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING THE WORKFORCE



GLOBAL
SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE
ALLIANCE

Improving the workforce. Improving lives.



The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance

Mission and Vision

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance envisions a world where a well-planned, well-trained and well-supported social service workforce effectively delivers promising practices that improve the lives of vulnerable populations. The mission of the Alliance is to promote the knowledge and evidence, resources and tools, and political will and action needed to address key social service workforce challenges, especially within low- to middle-income countries.

Our History

The Alliance marked its official launch as a network in June 2013. The development of the Alliance is a direct result of participant feedback and expressed needs arising during a global conference held in 2010 to highlight the challenges facing the social service workforce and to explore strategies for addressing these challenges at a country and global level. The conference brought together teams from 18 countries to review this body of knowledge, share experiences and promising practices, and develop concrete action plans for strengthening the workforce. The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance was proposed to facilitate ongoing support and dialogue for strengthening the social service workforce.

Our Members and Volunteers Supports

The Alliance is an inclusive network of more than 2,200 individual members across 136 countries. They represent NGOs, government, UN agencies, donors, academic and research institutions, and professional associations. A 13-member Steering Committee oversees and guides the direction and development of the Alliance. These leaders and members volunteer their time and expertise in support of strengthening the social service workforce, including through participation in four thematic interest groups. The Alliance Secretariat is comprised of five staff. As a non-profit, non-governmental organization, the Alliance is currently funded by GHR Foundation, supported by UNICEF Headquarters and UNICEF Regional Offices, and is hosted by the Tides Center. Additionally, the Alliance is a member and expert-contributor to several working groups and boards, including the INSPIRE Implementation Working Group, Early Childhood Workforce Initiative Advisory Group, ChildHub Advisory Group and Case Management Task Force under the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

Our Impact

We strengthen systems that improve health and well-being for children and families facing adversity. We advocate for workforce-supportive policy reforms. We advance knowledge and generate evidence on best practices in workforce strengthening.

For more information on ways to become involved as a member or to support our work through a donation or collaboration, please visit www.socialserviceworkforce.org

IMPROVING THE WORKFORCE, IMPROVING LIVES.
For more information, please visit socialserviceworkforce.org

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	ICSW	International Council on Social Welfare
BASW	Bachelor of Arts in Social Work	IFSW	International Federation of Social Work
CO	Country Office of UNICEF	MSW	Master of Social Work
CNASR	National College of Social Workers Romania	MENA	Middle East and North Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization	NGO	Non-governmental Organization
CTG	Country Task Group	PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
DACUM	Develop-A-Curriculum	RO	Regional Office of UNICEF
EAP	East Asia Pacific	SA	South Asia
ECA	Europe and Central Asia	SCE	Samtse College of Education, Bhutan
FICE	International Federation of Educative Communities	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GASW	Georgian Association of Social Workers	SSWS	Social Service Workforce Strengthening
GSWSEP	Global Social Work Statement of Ethical Principles	UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HRIS	Human Resources Information System	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IASSW	International Association of Schools of Social Work		

FOREWORD

What would our world look like with a well-defined, well-resourced, and highly functioning social service workforce and system? What steps have been taken toward making that world a reality?

Every year, as the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance prepares the annual State of the Social Service Workforce report, we contemplate these questions. The first report was released in 2015 and was envisioned as a first step among many other global, regional and national efforts to better describe, depict and analyze efforts to strengthen the social service workforce. Our hope was and remains that more and better data would become available as country-level workforce mapping efforts spread, as more national governments invest in systems to license and register social service workers and manage their human resources data, and as donors propel measurement of progress against common workforce strengthening indicators.

And we have come a long way. Over four years, the Alliance, with financial and expertise support from countless workforce advocates, has engaged in mapping and assessment exercises in 41 countries, contributing greatly to the availability of workforce data, dissemination of standard indicators and development of workforce strengthening strategies. The Call to Action, released in May 2018, has rallied support for key country- and global-level actions, with 35 organizations signing on in support and 12 country task groups forming

to undertake workforce assessments and develop national workforce strengthening strategies. UNICEF has acknowledged the importance of strengthening the social service workforce in its five-year strategic plan and recently published *Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection* to fast-track and guide Regional and Country Offices' programming in coordination with national and regional partners.

This year's report draws on mapping and assessment data from 36 countries across four regions. Data collection in Iran is not yet complete, and data from Iran are not reflected in this report. Although many of the same challenges related to available workforce data remain the

same, the commitment of country governments, academic institutions, donors, and other stakeholders to better understanding and raising the profile of the social service workforce has steadily grown over the years. And we at the Alliance are delighted to be a part of these important global efforts.

We have come a long way since the Alliance was officially launched in 2013, and there is increasing momentum for strengthening the social service workforce. We remain committed to increasing the number of advocates so that a well-planned, well-trained and well-developed social service workforce is realized.

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1

VISION FOR STRENGTHENING THE
SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE



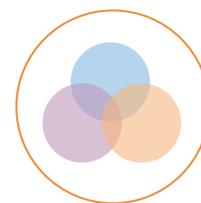
Huda Snintine interacts with youth at the Children's Complex in Tozeur, Tunisia.
@UNICEF/UN0212912/Noorani

Development challenges faced by the world today are immense. A total of 736 million people, or 10% of the global population, live on less than USD1.90 day, concentrated among younger, rural and less educated populations and requiring even more advanced targeting of poverty reduction efforts.¹ Moderate to severe physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse was reported by over 1 billion boys and girls globally in 2014, with immediate and long-term effects on their health, well-being and overall development, and ever-present concerns around underreporting.² Nearly half of the world's population lacks access to essential health services³, with almost 1 million children living with HIV/AIDS not receiving antiretroviral treatment, and 264 million children, adolescents and youth out of school.⁴ A total of 50 million children have been uprooted from their homes, more than half due to conflict, and the number of children separated from their families and filing claims for asylum has tripled in the span of a year.⁵

At the same time, there is a global commitment to change, as UN member states seek to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. These goals are intended to guide country efforts toward ending poverty and improving people's lives through increased access to health, education, and protection from violence, among others. SGD 3 sets targets for ensuring healthy lives and improved wellbeing for all. Five of the SDGs relate to preventing and responding to violence against children (4, 5, 8, 11, 16) and two (10, 16) speak to reducing inequalities and improving access to justice. Many of the policies and investments related to achieving these goals are a shared responsibility across levels of government and cut across different sectors, including social services. It has been estimated that 65% of the 169 targets underlying the 17 SDGs will not

be reached without engaging and coordinating with local and regional authorities responsible for social services.⁶ A strong, locally-based social service workforce is key to successfully achieving these goals.⁷

In 2018, the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance (referred to as the Alliance throughout this report) released a Call to Action for Strengthening the Social Service Workforce to Better Protect Children and Achieve the SDGs. It makes recommendations at the country and global levels for governments to initiate, lead and engage in dialogue with partners to strengthen the workforce and improve the lives of children and families. To date, 35 organizations have signed on to show support for the Call to Action (See page 33.) a recent survey of Alliance members, 52% of respondents reported using it as



It has been estimated that 65% of the 169 targets underlying the 17 SDGs will not be reached without engaging and coordinating with local and regional authorities responsible for social services.⁶

part of their advocacy efforts, and the Alliance is now beginning to collect specific examples of resulting actions. The Call to Action recommends workforce assessments to establish

“We must work together to improve protection, health and well-being outcomes for children, youth, families and communities as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals. These outcomes will only be achieved with a strong social service workforce backed by political, financial, technical and moral support. We, the undersigned, call on national and local governments, in coordination with national and global partners, to strengthen the social service workforce.”⁷

a baseline of information and data on the status of the social service workforce in each country that would then guide and assist country-level action plans toward strengthening the social service workforce. To date, 12 national-level, government-led leadership groups have formed or been re-engaged in workforce strengthening efforts, most notably in assessing workforce data.

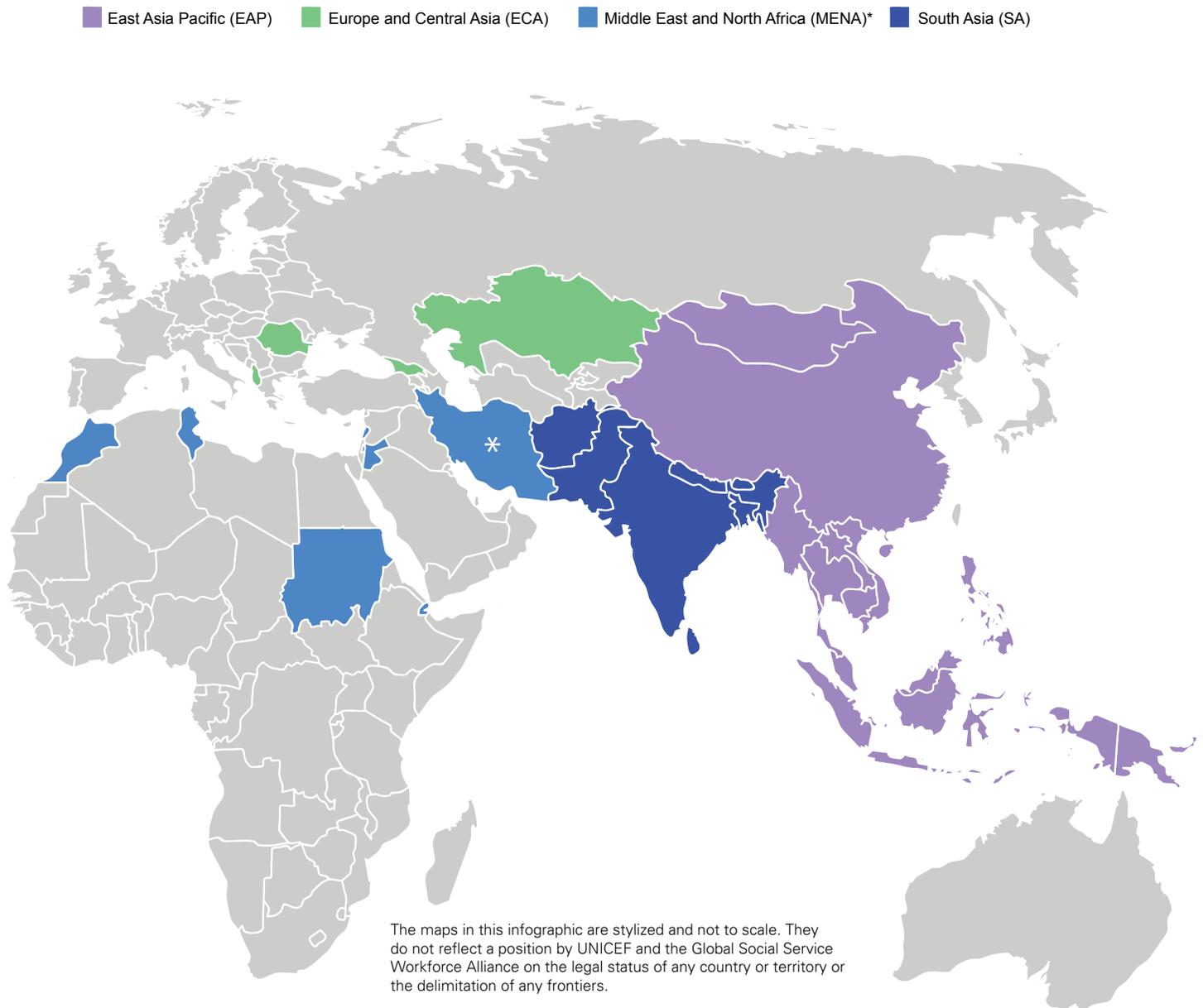
In 2015, the Alliance produced its first annual State of the Social Service Workforce Report to shed light on key social service workforce data and trends, showcase innovative and effective workforce strengthening initiatives, and highlight the impact of a lack of data in this fairly new area of focus. The first annual report was envisioned as a first step to better describe, depict and analyze efforts to strengthen the social service workforce. Reports have been subsequently released in 2016 and 2017 that include both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the current workforce and make recommendations for strengthening this frontline workforce.

This year’s State of the Social Service Workforce Report focuses on the importance of data-driven workforce planning through an overview of workforce data from four regional workforce assessments or mapping exercises conducted from 2017 to 2019. Workforce mapping exercises have been led by the Alliance in 32 countries across the East Asia and Pacific (EAP), South Asia (SA), and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions and additional regional mapping has been led by Oxford Policy Management in Europe and Central Asia (ECA), all with support from UNICEF Regional and Country Offices.⁸⁻¹⁵

Social Worker Phon Chanthorn speaks to a teenage girl near her home in Ponhea Leu district, Kandal province, Cambodia. The teenage girl lives in a household affected by domestic violence.

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FIGURE 1. Map of Countries Included in 2018 Report

*At the time of publication, Iran data collection is not yet complete to be included in this report.

By reviewing the data and findings from the four regions, this report aims to provide a multi-regional picture of the social service workforce, with a focus on four major areas: 1) size and composition of the workforce; 2)

education and training; 3) professional associations; and 4) workforce-supportive policies and legislation. Where available, data on workers' perceptions of their professional environment, specifically supervision

and opportunities for continued development, are incorporated into the above areas. The report concludes with a reflection on common issues across the four regions and related recommendations and priority actions.

2

OVERVIEW OF THE
SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE



A para professional worker in rural India provides a range of education and prevention services to younger women in the community.

© 2012 Meagan Harrison, Courtesy of Photoshare

The social service workforce is an inclusive concept referring to a broad range of governmental and nongovernmental professionals and para professionals who work with children, youth, adults, older persons, families and communities to ensure healthy development and well-being. Informed by the humanities and social sciences, indigenous, discipline-specific and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, and ethical principles, the social service workforce focuses on preventative, responsive and promotive services. Social service workers engage people, structures and organizations to facilitate access to needed services, alleviate poverty, challenge and reduce discrimination, promote social justice and human rights, and prevent and respond to violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation. This definition of the workforce informed all the mapping exercises. At the launch of each mapping, country-level stakeholders worked to further contextualize this definition, a step which greatly influenced the data collected and available for inclusion in this report.

Increasingly, country governments, donors, and researchers are recognizing the importance of this workforce in achieving desired development outcomes, such as those reflected in the SDGs. In terms of global priorities like the HIV/AIDS response, a joint 2017 report by UNAIDS and International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) describes social workers as the “conscience of the AIDS response.”¹⁶

The importance of the workforce has been underscored by UNICEF in its new Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021). The Strategy acknowledges that the workforce must be strengthened as an integral part of the child and social protection systems to achieve Goal Area 3: “every child is protected from violence and exploitation” and Goal Area 5: “every child has an equitable

chance in life.”¹⁷ In collaboration with the Alliance, UNICEF Headquarters has developed *Guidelines to Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection* to fast-track and guide regional and country offices’ programming in coordination with national and regional partners.¹⁸ Investment in workforce strengthening will not only facilitate achievement of UNICEF’s Goal Areas 3 and 5 and contribute to progress toward related SDG targets, but will most importantly improve child and social protection systems to keep children safe from harm and prevent, reduce and eliminate the multiple economic and social vulnerabilities they face.

“Social workers are the conscience of the AIDS response. They are peer educators, researchers, and decision-makers. They work at the center and the margins of communities. Taking a life-cycle approach, social workers accompany people through their life journey — connecting them to services and making services work for them. They make connections every day.”¹⁶

“No system can function effectively without the individuals who make that system come to life”.¹⁸

The evidence-based strategies and interventions included in the Guidelines are presented according to three key areas of workforce strengthening — planning, developing, and supporting — based on the Social Service Workforce Strengthening Framework (Figure 2).¹⁹

To measure progress on strengthening the workforce, the Guidelines put forward a results framework and related indicators in alignment with the SSWS Framework, as seen in indicators. Figure 3

Related to these indicators:

A basic overview of the context for **workforce planning**, including:

- Relevant policies and regulations related to the social service workforce,

including statutory frameworks and the administrative structure of services

- Financial and other resources currently dedicated to hiring, employing and training social service workers
- The number of social service workers responsible for child protection per 100,000 children, according to type (governmental and non-governmental) and vacancy rates where available
- Certification, registration and/or licensing requirements and practices

A basic overview of the context for **workforce development and training**, including:

FIGURE 2. Social Service Workforce Strengthening Framework

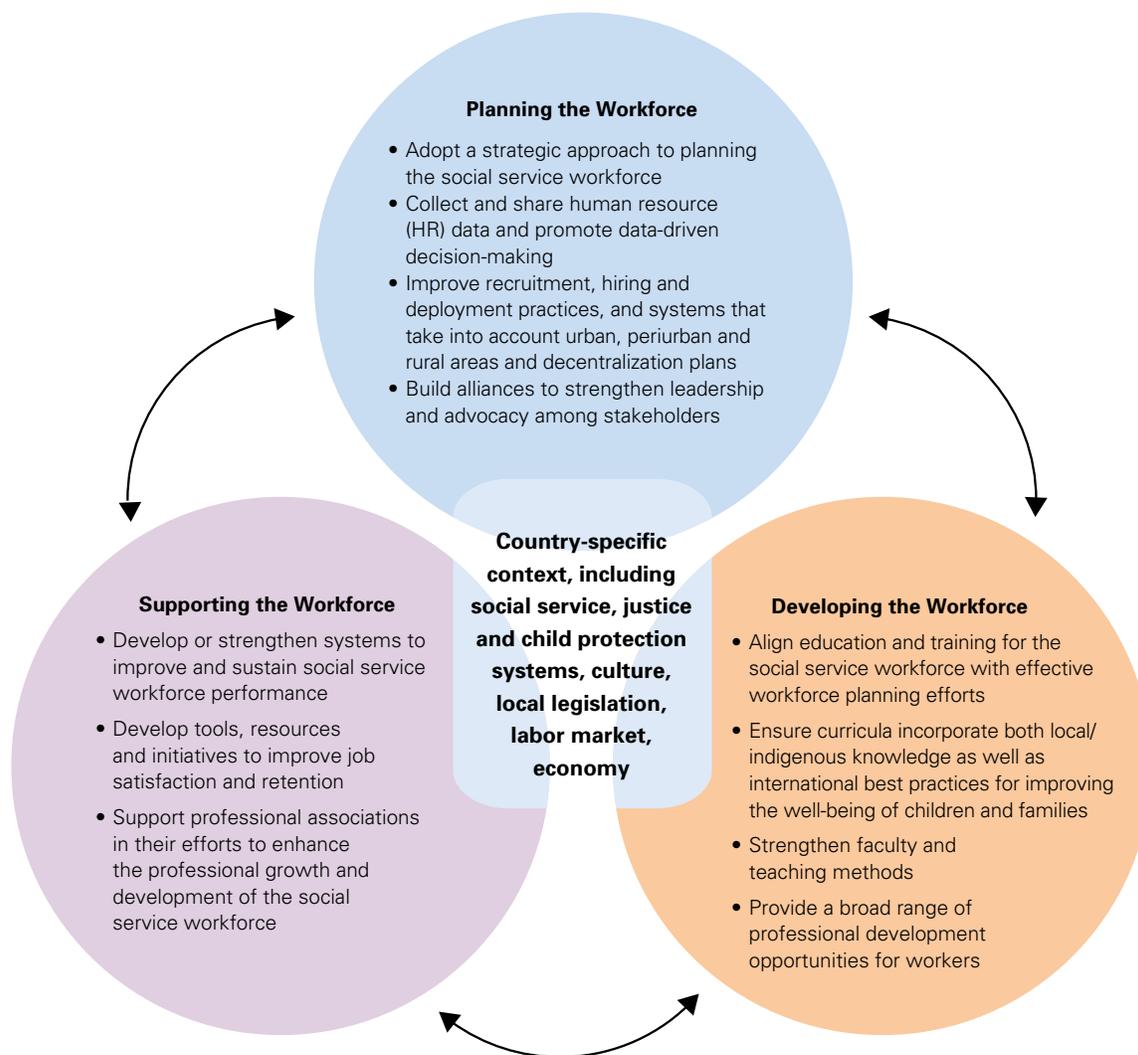


FIGURE 3. UNICEF Strategic Plan Output Indicators



- Availability of different levels of education, training, and field placements/ practice learning
- Workers’ perceptions of the availability and accessibility of ongoing professional development opportunities

An overview of the context for **workforce support**, including:

- Workers’ perceptions of challenges and opportunities, supervision and career paths
- The presence, role, size and effectiveness of professional associations

- Identified implications and recommendations for social service workforce strengthening to be integrated into national strategic frameworks or action plans

3

REGIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE
MAPPING AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

Children attend a “My Space” ECD program at the UNICEF-supported centre in Mafraq, Jordan. The center provides a comprehensive approach to service provision by linking educational learning support services, community-based child protection and early childhood development.

© UNICEF/UN0253306/Herwig

In the Call to Action, the Alliance urges countries to assess the status of workforce data and need for workforce mapping. It is only with reliable data that countries will be able to measure their progress in strengthening the social service workforce and make effective planning decisions in response to their needs. Such data should include the number of professional and para professional workers, their level of education, qualifications, their perceived needs and strengths, the legislation and policies that recognize them, and the professional associations that support them.

The methodology and tools used to inform data gathering on these and other topics related to workforce strengthening vary across countries and regions as they are tailored to the context, stakeholders and available resources. The Alliance, with support from UNICEF, is currently developing a toolkit to assist countries in undertaking workforce mapping exercises, which will be released in May 2019 and is informed by its experience facilitating such exercises in 41 countries from 2015 through 2019.

Ideally, workforce mapping exercises are overseen by a national-level workforce leadership group or country task group (CTG), as they were in a third of the countries (12 / 36) featured in this report. In-country leadership is crucial to customizing the methodology and tools, identifying key informants and ultimately generating the most actionable recommendations. Two of the regional mapping efforts (EAP, MENA) used a three-phased methodological approach, with phase one as the formation or



Integrated social services are provided at Doftena Community Center in Romania.

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engagement of an existing country task group as recommended in the Alliance's Call to Action. Phase two consisted of a desk review of grey and peer-reviewed literature, internet and websites. Based on the desk review, phase three involved developing and circulating questionnaires to stakeholders across government, donors, NGOs, CSOs, educational institutions and professional associations to gather the latest available data on the workforce. In the SA and ECA regions, only phases two and three were pursued.

The Alliance, with support from UNICEF, is currently developing a toolkit to assist countries in undertaking workforce mapping exercises, which will be released in May 2019 and is informed by its experience facilitating such exercises in 41 countries from 2015 through 2019.

Similar methodological approaches used among the four regional workforce assessments yielded some common data points enabling cross-country and/or regional aggregation or comparison for this report. At the same time, key differences in methodology, tools, specific questions, and availability of information in each country, limit such straightforward analysis. In these situations, regional reports with comparable data points are presented together and otherwise information from one region or country is highlighted. For example, the EAP and MENA mapping teams deployed an in-person or electronic worker survey to solicit individuals' perceptions

of work environment, professional supervision, job satisfaction, professional development, incentive systems and career paths, which adds a compelling layer of qualitative data to the final analysis and serves as the sole source of information on these topics for this report. Similarities and differences between the regional report methodologies are summarized in the table below.

Similar challenges were encountered across all the regional mappings. As expected, information on the workforce was difficult to obtain, as it is rarely readily available and housed in a centralized location but rather spread across multiple

government ministries that each hire social service workers. Workforce mapping at this stage requires original data gathering from sources that are often outdated or incomplete and may be less representative of workers posted outside of the capital or other large urban areas. Lastly, due to the varying definition of the social service workforce in different countries, some tools that were modified to fit the context resulted in data that is not comparable across regions. There were also overarching successes, such as the momentum created by the mapping exercises towards legislative recognition of the workforce, such as in Indonesia, or to the role of a main professional

FIGURE 4. Overview of Methodological Approaches

East Asia and Pacific (EAP)	Europe and Central Asia (ECA)	Middle East and North Africa (MENA)	South Asia (SA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTG leadership (five of the seven in-depth analysis countries only) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTG leadership (seven of the eight countries only) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review (of 16 countries, seven countries self-selected for in-depth analysis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review (of 21 countries, four countries selected for case study) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review (nine countries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review (eight countries)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder questionnaires and in-person interviews (in-depth analysis countries only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder questionnaires and in-person interviews (in case study countries only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder questionnaires and in-person interviews (in eight countries only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder questionnaires and in-person interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worker survey (in-depth analysis countries only) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worker survey (in eight countries only) 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data included from World Vision's "Children's Voices" consultations with children in three village-level locations in Bangladesh and four locations in India

association, such as in Iran. Some countries in SA have moved forward with further data collection at subnational level from areas previously not investigated, while another undertook a functional review. These, and many other successes, are discussed in more detail as part of the next section on key findings.

The mapping and analysis efforts resulted in many overarching successes, such as the momentum created by the mapping exercises towards legislative recognition of the workforce, such as in Indonesia.



With the assistance of social workers at the Child and Family Support Service Centre in Indonesia, Atikah was able to reunite with her son.

CJ Clarke / Save the Children

4

KEY FINDINGS



A child and his family visit the Development Counselling Unit in Leskovac, Serbia, for child-friendly and family-friendly counselling services.

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This section presents an overview of results and specific highlights from the four regional reports, providing a multi-regional picture of the workforce with an emphasis on those data points that allow for cross-country or cross-regional comparison. It is organized by four broad areas of workforce strengthening drawn from the planning, developing and supporting action fields of the SSWS Framework — human resources data on size and composition of the workforce, education and training, professional associations, and workforce-supportive policies and legislation. Each of these areas is first described at a global level. Then related findings from the regional reports are included. Links to recommended country-level actions in the Alliance’s Call to Action are underscored wherever possible.

DEFINING THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE

By its very definition, the social service workforce includes a wide range of workers who perform a variety of roles and functions in their work with people facing adverse and difficult circumstances. Globally, social workers are often considered the leading professional cadre of the social service workforce. However, in many countries, the term “social worker” is used in the generic sense, without someone having professional qualifications through training, registration or licensing.

Social service workers can be employed by government or work outside government with civil society, faith-based, or other non-governmental groups. Each country’s specific context, including its laws, culture, labor market and economy, directly influences its social and child protection systems and the workforce

engaged to operate them. A country’s determination of who should be included and thus counted as part of the social service workforce greatly influences its estimated size and resulting worker to population ratios, composition in terms of employment by or outside of government, key roles and functions, and titles used.

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE

To estimate the size of the workforce, all the regional mapping exercises relied on human resources information available through government ministries. Data on the non-governmental workforce was requested in each country but was often much more difficult to obtain, as no country had a system or structure established to gather this type of data across different NGOs and civil society groups. However,



Shipa Rani Chanda, a community educator, speaks with a family on child survival interventions in Sunamganj, Bangladesh.

© UNICEF/UNI125261/Khan

By its very definition, the social service workforce includes a wide range of workers who perform a variety of roles and functions in their work with people facing adverse and difficult circumstances.

it is broadly recognized that in many countries the non-governmental workforce, including community-based workers, is a critical component of the social service workforce and greatly outnumbers those workers employed by the government.²⁰ Data on government workers were obtained from key stakeholder questionnaires, interviews, and/or previous workforce assessments captured in the desk review. In EAP and MENA, non-governmental workers could participate in the survey, but there was no means to ensure consistent representation in the results. Non-governmental workers made up close to half of survey respondents in only two countries (Cambodia – 45%; Philippines – 45%). Only in Lebanon did they represent the vast majority of respondents (87%), possibly due to the government’s openness to NGOs’ and CSOs’ involvement in social service provision and the ongoing multi-country refugee crisis in the region. Engaging with non-governmental groups was regularly cited as a challenge in the mapping process, notably the fact that there is often no organized

Non-governmental workers made up close to half of survey respondents in only two countries (Cambodia – 45%; Philippines – 45%). Only in Lebanon did they represent the vast majority of respondents (87%).

entity to respond on behalf of non-governmental groups involved with social services at the country-level and provide an aggregated or accurate number of workers.

Ratios of Social Service Workers to Child Population

Using mapping data to estimate the ratio of social service worker to child or population in need of services can help indicate whether there are sufficient human resources within the system to ensure availability and responsiveness of its workers. Having an adequate number of workers in place can also increase the likelihood of reasonable caseloads and workers’ ability to provide quality services. Comparing these ratios longitudinally within a specific country can provide important evidence of progress in recruiting and retaining workers and inform workforce planning decisions.

Figure 5 provides a geo-located depiction of the country ratios, with darker, larger circles indicating a greater number of workers to population and lighter, smaller circles showing areas with fewer workers to population. It is important to note that countries’ contextualized workforce definitions determined who should be counted and resulted in very diverse groups of social service workers included in this ratio. For example, Thailand and the Philippines considered qualified and registered social workers in their estimates. MENA had the smallest range (47.8) of ratios, in contrast to SA where the most extreme differences between country with lowest ratio (.3 per 100,000 in West Bengal, India) compared to highest (781.2 per 100,000 in Maldives) could be seen. EAP showed a similar trend in regional

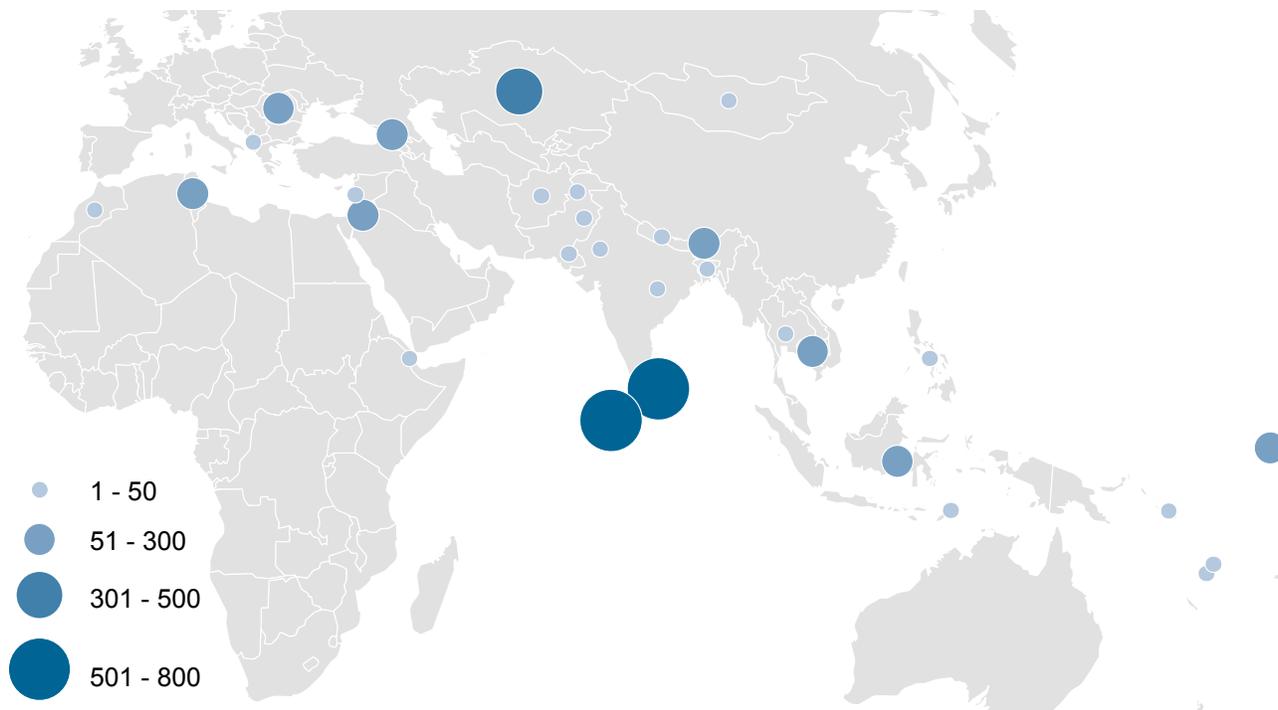
range. In both EAP and SA, this trend can be attributed less to differences in workforce definition and more to differences in population sizes between ultra-populous countries like China and India versus sparsely populated island nations like Vanuatu and the Maldives in each region, respectively. Constructing proportionate samples was not possible. Furthermore, cross-country comparisons of these ratios are not recommended due to variability in how the workforce is defined, the accuracy of data available, and the interplay of geography, population density and other contextual factors. For these same reasons, developing a globally recommended ratio, such as that developed by the World Health Organization for the health workforce,²¹ remains an aspirational goal. (see Annex 1.)

Government Ministries with Social Service Workers

In most countries, the main responsibility for social service provision rests with the government and is often spread across more than one ministry. All countries reported more than one ministry employing social service workers. As seen in Figure 6, ministries of social affairs, followed by ministries of health and ministries of law or justice, were the most common employers of social service workers.

Ministries and their respective departments assume different functions in each country. Whether authority for social service provision, in addition to related functions such as recruiting and hiring needed workers, has been decentralized can make a sizeable impact on obtaining workforce data. For instance, in India and Pakistan where services are

FIGURE 5. Ratio of Social Service Worker to 100,000 Child Population*



* Note that countries' contextualized definitions determined who should be counted as part of the workforce and resulted in very diverse groups of social service workers included in these ratios

FIGURE 6: Number of Countries Reporting Government Social Service Workforce by Type of Ministry

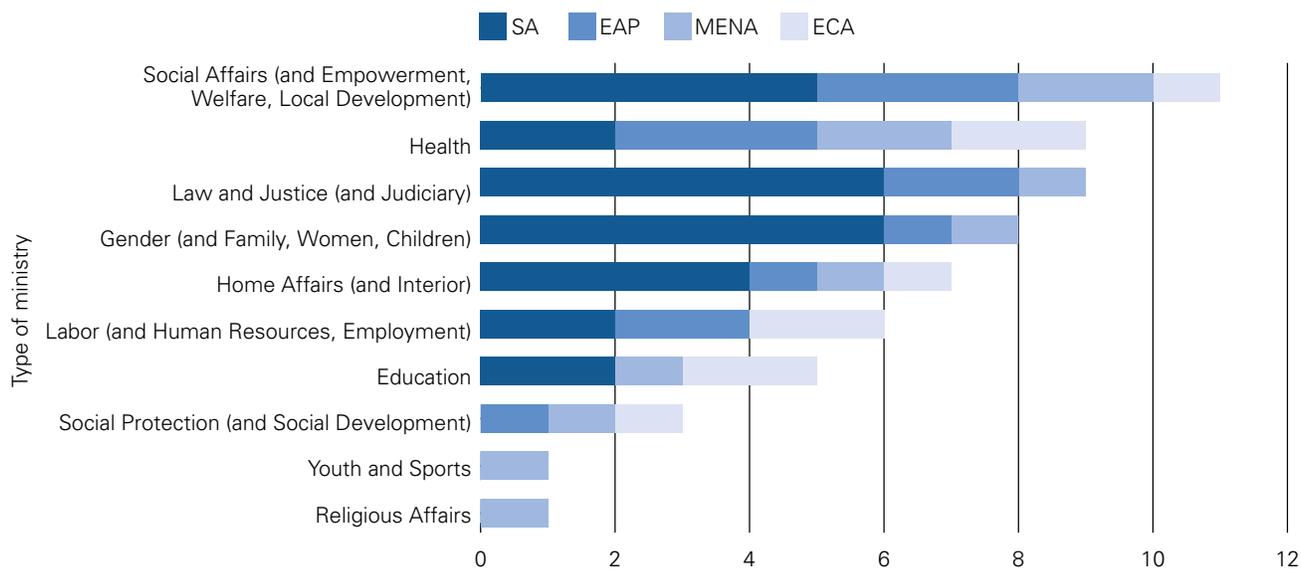


FIGURE 7. Nepal: Key Ministries, Functions, Roles, Social Service Workforce Positions and Numbers⁹

Ministry	Department	Social welfare service mandate	SSW Position*	Number of Staff	Function and roles
Women, Children and Social Welfare	Department of Women and Children	Responsible for formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes, studies, training and coordination related to children and protection of orphan children, welfare of children, adoption, Child Welfare Homes	Chief Women Development Officer	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement women's empowerment programme Address gender-based violence; run shelters for women and girl victims of violence; and GBV watch-groups Respond to trafficking issues Run Paralegal Committee (PLC) Programme
			Women Development Officer	69	
			Child Protection Officer	14	
			Child Protection Inspector	52	
			Women Development Inspector	214	
			Assistant Women Development Inspector	267	
	Central Child Welfare Board	Formulate, review, evaluate and mobilize resources; implement policies, plans, programmes and activities for the protection of rights and interests of children and their physical and mental development	National Programme Adviser	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces annual reports on programmes and services for children Promote child rights with public awareness events Monitor Child Care Homes and Welfare Homes Establish District Child Emergency Funds and local resource mobilization to respond to cases of children at risk Rescue and provide emergency response for reported child protection cases Establish coordination and referral mechanisms (DCPC and VCPC/ MCPC) Registration and orientation of Child Clubs Manage the National Centre for Children at Risk
			Child Rights Resource Person	8	
			Programme Manager	1	
			Project Coordinator	1	
			Child Protection Officer	1	
			Project Officer	1	
			Programme Officer	2	
			Programme Assistant	7	
Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development	Local Governance and Community Development Programme	In charge of ensuring domestic violence and caste-based discrimination cases are fully resolved or prosecuted	Social Development Officer	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive cases of domestic violence and caste-related discrimination Attempt to resolve cases Ensure appearance of alleged perpetrators for judicial proceedings
Ministry of Labour and Employment	Department of Labour	Ensures that National Plan of Child Labour is fully articulated, coordinated and implemented	Factory Inspector	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct unannounced child labour inspections Prosecute and impose punishments on child labour complaints Ensure removal of children from labour situations

* Social Service Workforce position title and numbers of staff data obtained from questionnaires and follow-up emails

largely decentralized, data could only be collected from a few districts or provinces in each country. Details that mapping assessments can produce on key ministries, departments, mandates, role and functions, and positions involved in social services are included using an example from Nepal in Figure 7.

Titles in the Social Service Workforce

The diversity of titles used for social service workers has been examined in several contexts, at once illustrating the range of roles and functions these workers are expected to assume and the competing recommendation to standardize titles to increase recognition and to professionalize.²²⁻²⁴ In SA, 127 unique titles were reported among eight countries; in EAP, 39 unique titles among five countries; in MENA, 58 unique titles among four countries, and in ECA, 17 titles among four countries. Across all four regions, social worker including senior social worker was the most frequently used title (25), followed by child protection officer or worker (13). Figure 8 depicts all the reported titles in a word cloud where size relates to frequency of use.

Para Professionals in the Government Workforce

The social service workforce is comprised of professional and para professional workers. Professional workers have completed a relevant, accredited diploma or degree program, such as social work, child and youth care social, pedagogy, or counseling. Para professional workers work next to or supporting a professional in the field. They do not typically have a relevant degree or diploma but have completed recognized training of less duration, including certificate courses,

short-term pre-service or in-service training. Some governments directly engage para professionals as part of the social service workforce, such as in Kazakhstan where 85% of Ministry of Labor and Social Protection staff are para professional ‘home carers,’ providing services to adults with disabilities and older persons. In EAP, it was noted that all the countries’ governments, except for the Philippines and Thailand per the emphasis on qualifications in their definition of the workforce, rely heavily on para professionals. More information was generated on para professionals when resources allowed for travel to community level where these workers are most likely to be based and surveys could be delivered in person (see text box on Cambodia).

Gender and the Social Service Workforce

In 12 countries, information were gathered on the percentage of male versus female workers via the worker survey or key stakeholder questionnaire to approximate overall workforce gender composition. Among those countries for which data were available, only Indonesia showed a higher (albeit negligible) percentage of male than female social service workers (50.45% male vs. 49.55% female). All the other countries’ data indicated a majority female workforce, ranging from 53.6% female in Cambodia to 86.2% female in Lebanon. Such a finding was expected, given similar trends in nursing, education and social work, often referred to as “caring professions,” worldwide. In Lebanon, this gender imbalance may be further skewed by a Ministry of Social Affairs’ Organizational Decree which lists the titles of civil servants that can be employed and only notes the title

“social worker” in its feminine form in Arabic implying that only women can be employed as social workers. As such, when a male social worker applies for a social work position at this ministry, they cannot be employed because of this perceived gender requirement.

The unique questions around professionalization and gender as well as lessons learned from raising the profile of other female-dominated professions should be explored. For example, are the opportunities for upward mobility the same for women and men? In Morocco, the research team called attention to a related 2011-2012 finding that women are more likely to be students in training programs for frontline or less technical positions (“qualification and specialization”) than higher-level training programs preparing them for leadership or other senior roles. Among the five countries for which gender data on the CTGs leading the workforce mappings were available, female representation ranged from 32% to 50%. What does it mean for workforce development if those making planning decisions are mostly male when the workers are female? Which issues will be prioritized and what funding choices will be made? How much is working in the social service sector seen as an extension of the private domain (i.e., caring for children, family), as noted in Djibouti, a form of labor that is rarely as valued and could pose stumbling blocks for achieving meaningful recognition, remuneration and protections?

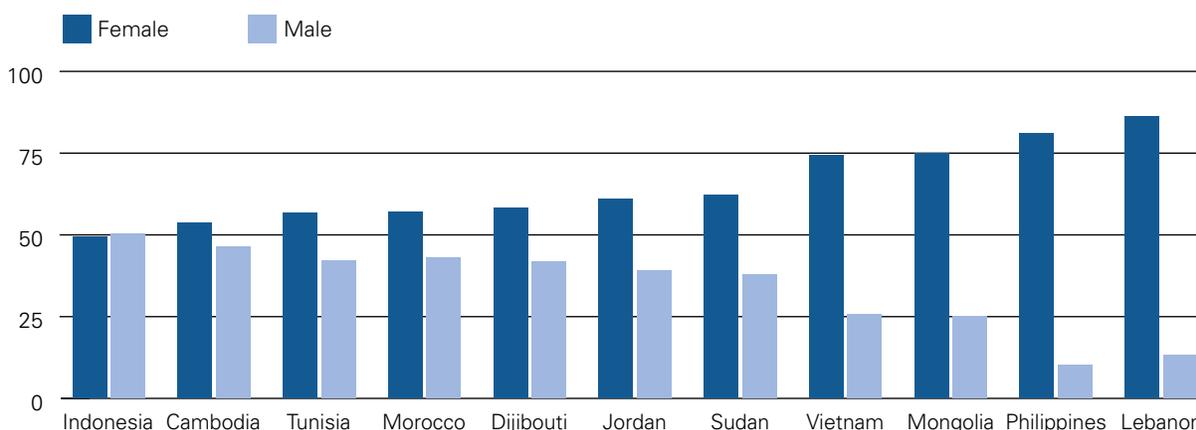
At the same time, as an employer of predominantly women there is great potential for the social service sector to contribute to gender equality

Gathering Data on the Para Professional Workforce in Cambodia

Like many low- and middle-income countries, Cambodia relies on para professionals, or individuals without professional qualifications but with some level of training, orientation and oversight, as their frontline social service workforce. Often volunteers, these workers identify vulnerable children and families from within their own communities and seek to connect them to services provided by the government, non-government or civil society partners. Yet reliable data on their numbers, where they are located, their roles, capacity building needs and work environment are sparse. Members of the CTG alongside Soksophea Suong who helped coordinate the national mapping exercise were committed to learning more about these workers. They also recognized the technology limitations in areas outside the capital, Phnom Penh, and decided to invest the time and resources to take the mapping directly to them.

There is currently no definition of what it means to be a para professional within the social service workforce in Cambodia. To identify para professionals in the field, Soksophea liaised with government and NGOs engaging volunteers and was able to meet with groups of village volunteers already coming together for scheduled community meetings. Some of these village volunteers had received additional training and were considered “community social workers.” Overall, four provinces were visited with responders from 19 villages and from 14 other provinces including the capital city, involving a number of government provincial staff to accompany data collectors, facilitate contacts at the community level, and arrange transportation. For example, the Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) focuses on social welfare and child protection, as well as organizing awareness raising efforts on early childhood education, maternal and child nutrition, and parenting support through mother’s and father’s groups. They are usually unpaid or receive a small stipend. They were unclear as to the meaning or purpose of a supervisor beyond someone providing them with direction on their duties. Despite these challenges, these volunteers, like a female member of a CCWC who Soksophea met in Prey Veng province a few hours from Phnom Penh, are committed to doing something on behalf of their neighbors. “I love this job, it has no money, but I want to help the community. With the current structure, it is unlikely that this reliance on para professionals will change in the short term. However, with an improved understanding of these workers, it is hoped that steps can be taken to better recognize and equip them for their essential role within the system.

FIGURE 9: Percentage of Male vs. Female Social Service Workers in Selected Countries Based on Worker Survey



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Opportunities for social service workers to build the skills and competencies needed to provide direct services to and oversee programs span a continuum of approaches. They include university-based, multi-year degree programs, and shorter, more focused courses resulting in diplomas. In some cases, an individual may pursue a diploma to substitute for a degree or a certificate which requires less time to complete than a diploma and can enable official recognition of a worker's specific knowledge and abilities. Data from each of the four regions presents a more detailed understanding of the pre- and in-service training and continuing professional development options available to individuals working in the social service sector.

Degree Programs

Degree programs include bachelor's degrees which are usually three to four years in duration, master's

degrees which require one to two years of additional study, and doctoral / PhD programs. IASSW's Global Standards for the Education and Training of the Social Work Profession are intended to provide international guidelines and were noted as informing accreditation and other requirements in the countries reviewed. Figure 10 shows the total number of degree programs by type and region. EAP reported the greatest total number of degree programs (747), though more than half are in China.

Data presented for ECA and MENA regions are not exhaustive and likely an underestimation of the number of degree programs. This likelihood is high especially given that 1) three out of four countries included for ECA have legislation requiring a degree or recognized certificate to practice social work and 2) in the MENA region, the percentage of workers reporting a bachelor's degree or higher ranged from 49% in Djibouti, where the University of Djibouti's department

of social work recently ended its only program '*Carriere Social*', to 80% in Morocco, 95% in Lebanon, and 97% in Tunisia, with 44% or more in all these countries describing their degree specialization as social work or social assistance. Figure 10 also highlights a greater number of bachelor's (760) and master's (569) level programs compared to doctoral (31) programs. The limited availability of PhD-level training in social work or another related field has implications for a country or region's capacity to train future cohorts of social service workers and produce high-quality, local research to inform social policies or social work curricula.

Field Education

Field education is a cornerstone of social work education. It is intended to prepare students for their future work through practical application of their classroom-gained knowledge and skills in a functioning social service agency or other institution. It also builds stronger relationships between universities and social

FIGURE 10: Number of Degree Programs by Type and Region

	Bachelor's Social Work	Bachelor's Other**	Master's Social Work	Master's Other**	PhD Social Work	PhD Other**	Social Work Degree Programs – Level Unspecified	Total
EAP	539	N/A	199	N/A	9	N/A		747
ECA*	5	N/A	6	2	3	N/A	18 universities in Kazakhstan and 21 universities in Romania offering social work degrees, levels not specified	55
MENA*	9	N/A	4	N/A	1	N/A	35 different social work-related degree programs reported in Morocco, levels not specified	49***
SA	178	29	318	40	14	4	N/A	583
Total	731	29	527	42	27	4	96	1,434

* Breakdown of degree programs not available for all countries reviewed in ECA and MENA regions, likely resulting in underestimation of the number available

** Data only reported consistently on related degrees "other than social work" in SA region

*** Does not include programs in Iran

Bhutan Introduces First Bachelor's Degree Program in Social Work

Ganeshman Gurung, PhD, Head, Center for Educational Innovation and Professional Practice, Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan

Samtse College of Education (SCE) will introduce a bachelor's degree in social work (BASW) in 2019 which will be first of its kind in the country. The BASW program will help in further promoting and professionalize social work practice in the country through higher education offerings, research and dissemination.

The Royal Government of Bhutan is the largest service provider and there is a need for human resources with the right knowledge, skills and attitude in its social service agencies to provide important services that contribute to empowering societies, communities, groups and individuals to improve the conditions in which they live. Many CSOs have also been established in the country. However, the majority of the professionals working in social service agencies and CSOs are currently working based on their accumulated work experience over long years of service but without any formal education in a relevant field of study such as social work.

I was appointed as the Program Coordinator to take forward this initiative. The program will launch in July 2019, when the first cohort of 35 students and five faculty members will report to the college. Enrollment and the number of faculty members will increase in the subsequent cohorts. The program will also have two mandatory block fieldwork placements, constituting 25% of the overall credits of the program, reflecting the importance of linking classroom learning and real-life practice.

The social service sector of the country will benefit immensely because the program is anchored on the profound philosophical vision of "right view, right contemplation and right action which will together lead to right fruition." This vision will enable the program to prepare the next generation of social work professionals.

service agencies, NGOs, and CSOs, facilitating understanding and coordination of services provided by government and non-governmental entities. IASSW's Global Standards require field education to be supervised and jointly assessed by the school and the partner agency or organization. In EAP, all countries reported three-month field placements with supervision and assessment as required by IASSW, although respondents in China noted that the quality of field placements was variable. Only 64% of programs in SA reported requiring a field placement. In MENA, data were only available for Palestine

(9 out of 9 social work programs, or 100%), Morocco (2 out of 35 programs, or 5%) and Lebanon (3 out of the 7 programs documented at two institutions offering degrees, or 43%). Field education was cited as a key component of diploma programs in Morocco, whereas it was considered optional in academic degree programs. Similarly, in ECA, data presented on this criterion were inconsistent, although the challenge of providing quality field placements where students could be guaranteed to observe best practices at work was cited in Georgia and a key recommendation in the regional literature review.

'Indigenization' and Social Work Education

A common criticism resulting from countries' use or adaptation of Western-based social work theory, practice and training curricula is that they do not fit the context or meet the needs to which social service workers must respond. IASSW's global standards recognize the importance of developing or integrating existing social work education and practice from a country's different traditions and cultures, provided they uphold human rights. In ECA, the European Union and partner universities in Romania and Hungary developed

intensive learning programs including site visits to contextualize the social work role of fighting discrimination and aiding students in combating their own prejudices against marginalized Roma communities.²⁷ In SA, Kabul University in Afghanistan used the DACUM (or Develop-A-Curriculum) ethnographic and participatory research approach in cooperation with Hunter College School of Social Work in New York to blend local knowledge and wisdom with Western methods and standards and develop new national qualification standards and BA- and MA- program curricula. A later partnership with India's Tata Institute of Social Sciences further strengthened community-based social practice aspects of the materials within the Afghan context.

Diploma and Certificate Programs

The quality and extent to which focused, shorter trainings or courses are available is vitally important to developing the workforce. These options include diplomas, offered by universities, training centers, or vocational schools and can substitute for a degree along with experience. Certificate programs typically take less time than a diploma and allow for participants to continue working full time while completing them. Stakeholder questionnaires used for mappings in EAP and MENA aimed to gather data on recognized certificate programs that help demonstrate a worker's qualifications and progress on a career path. In SA, a total of 40 diploma programs were reported in five countries and 40 certificate

programs in seven countries in the region. Data for countries in the other three regions were not collected or presented consistently. In EAP, workers surveyed reported having taken advantage of diploma or certificate programs, but there was no uniform understanding of what these programs entailed, and exact numbers and analysis were not pursued. In MENA, institutions responding to the questionnaire reported diploma courses in Morocco (15), Jordan (1) and Lebanon (2), whereas certificate programs were not quantified. In ECA, where there is significant progress being made to legally protect the social work profession and require a degree for those working as social workers, diploma or certification courses can

Certification for Non-Degree Social Workers in Georgia by 2020

In 2018, the Georgian Parliament passed the Law on Social Work, which represented a major step in advancing and regulating the profession. Among its many provisions, the law stipulated an 18-month grace period for non-degree social workers to become certified to practice. This deadline reflected the importance of academic qualifications in improving the social service system, a belief held strongly by government as well as a key recommendation of the Georgian Association of Social Workers (GASW).

Several certificate programs were available and recognized by the government in the past. One prominent example was a 30-day intensive course in child welfare social work developed by EveryChild, a UK-based international NGO, and later revamped and taught in six blocks interspersed with practical assignments from 2000 – 2012 as part of the EU Child Welfare Reform project. It was later replaced by a one-year 60 credit university-based course offered to practicing social workers with support from the European Union and UNICEF. The course was phased out as more qualified social workers were graduating from bachelor's and master's level programs established in 2006 at Tbilisi University and Ilia State University.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport is coordinating the national certification process as mandated by the new law. With key academic institutions, a six-month social work certificate program with four specializations (children and families, education system, healthcare, and justice system) is under development, with plans to roll out in Tbilisi and regions of Georgia. "The GASW will support eligible social workers in preparing for the certification process, as well as play a role in monitoring the quality of the certificate program and its rollout," shared Natia Partskhaladze, GASW board member and Senior Technical Advisor with the Alliance.



During a country task group meeting in Tunisia, participants use mapping findings and recommendations to develop a road map for social service workforce strengthening.

© Alliance staff/2018

aid workers seeking to meet interim registration or practice requirements (see text box on certification in Georgia).

Continuing Professional Development

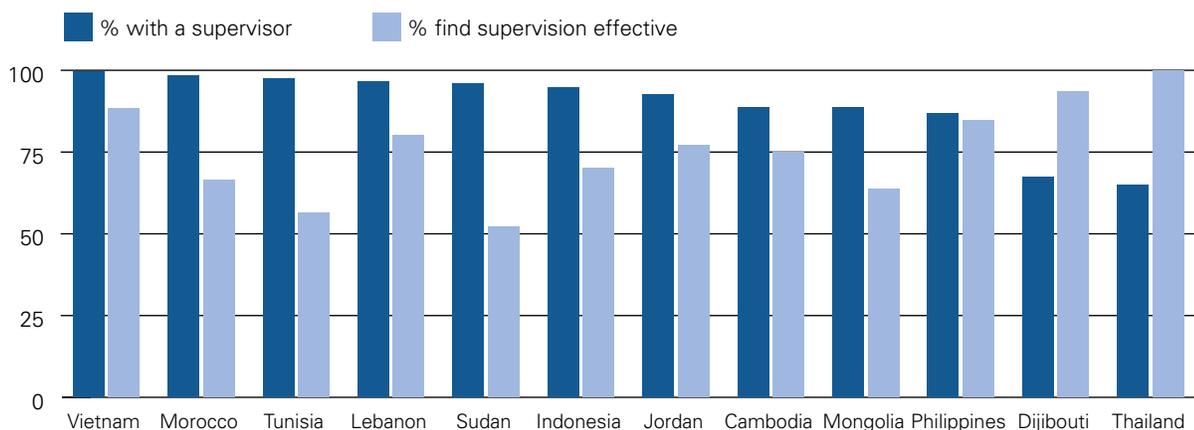
In-service training provided by employers or continuing education credits required or offered by professional associations provide ways for workers to remain up-to-date on emerging evidence and best practices in their field. It also provides the opportunity for promotion or progression up a career ladder, if it exists. Lack of such opportunity can demotivate workers and make recruiting and retaining talent difficult. For social service workers in teaching positions, IASSW states that schools should ensure that staff are provided with continuing professional development opportunities. In seven out of nine countries for which data were available in EAP and MENA, 80% or more of workers reported a need for additional training. In all nine countries, 50% or more of workers were satisfied with the in-service training options available, apart from Tunisia (19.8%). In ECA, continuing professional development is often mandated by legislation or other government standards. Albania’s Law on the Order of the

Social Worker requires continuous education as part of license renewal. In Kazakhstan, training for social workers in health and social protection is required every five years, but budget and options for meeting this requirement are limited, courses are not accredited, and quality is questionable particularly for social protection course offerings. In Romania, the National College of Social Workers (CNASR) offers different options for licensed social workers to earn their required 10 points of continuing education yearly, including attending training, supervising, overseeing students in practice, research and, producing a book or article.

Supervision

Supervision is a key part of any workplace, as it enables senior staff to assign and oversee the execution of tasks, track performance and build teams. In the context of the social service workforce, however, supervision is expected to go beyond these administrative functions and serve a continuous professional development and support function.

FIGURE 11: Percentage of Workers Surveyed for Whom Supervision is Available and Effective



When conducted individually or in a group, on a regular basis and with an experienced supervisor trained in a relevant discipline, professional supervision should hone a worker's professional knowledge and skills, allow for consultation when ethical dilemmas arise, and help mitigate the risk of burnout and improve retention. Among 10 out of the 13 EAP and MENA countries with worker survey data, more than 80% of workers reported having an immediate supervisor. In all 13 countries, more than half of the workers stated that the supervision they received was effective and responded to their needs.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Outside of government, professional associations play a key role in supporting the workforce and its development. Such associations can be understood broadly as "a body of persons engaged in the same profession, formed usually to control entry into the profession, maintain standards and represent the profession in discussions with other bodies."⁹ When functional, these associations support individual workers through activities to raise visibility of and public appreciation for the profession, generate cohesion among workers and a valued professional identity. They promote the profession by establishing and disseminating a professional code of ethics, standards of practice and/or training, and processes for certification and credentialing. Partnering with or seeking recognition from international associations such as the International Federation of Social

Workers (IFSW), IASSW, International Council on Social Welfare and/or International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE) can provide national associations access to global examples of professional codes of ethics and practice and/or education standards to which they can evaluate or align their own. In some countries, professional associations also oversee registration and licensing depending on the legal framework in place, but this function can also be assumed by a separate entity. Finally, professional associations can provide backing for policies aligned with social work values and the latest research.

Of the countries included in the regional mapping exercises, 75% (27 out of 36) had evidence for at least one professional association for social service workers. Based on available data, the earliest-formed and still active association was the Philippine Association of Social Workers founded in 1947, whereas the most recently established was the Association of Professional Social Workers Cambodia in 2015. Of the total reported associations, 47% (22 out of 48 associations) were members of IFSW per a review of its website.^{28,29}

Nine countries reported more than one association, possibly reflecting the formation of separate associations for more specialized professionals or para professionals and the ongoing discussion in many countries on how to define the social service workforce and whether to include these workers in primarily 'social work' associations. One example of successful coalition building among several professional

associations and related partners is the Indonesian Social Work Consortium. Formed in 2011, the consortium acts as a "forum to discuss, design and drive strategic agenda for development of social work."⁸ In addition to the eight associations included in Annex 2, the consortium also includes other key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Accreditation Body of Social Welfare Institutions, the Certification Body of Social Workers, and the Indonesian Psychosocial Rehabilitation Network. Most significantly, the Consortium has leveraged the expertise and networks of all its member organizations to draft and educate the public on policy, and is now advocating for legalization of the Law on Social Work Practice by the parliament.

Data on professional codes of ethics were either reported by the association directly or gathered by worker survey. A code of ethics sets out a profession's values and principles, which for social work usually includes upholding human rights, social justice, and client-centered practice, along with expected behaviors such as maintaining professionalism and confidentiality. What is contained in a code of ethics alone is usually too broad to provide specific guidance on minimum required knowledge and skills, and thus standards of practice are recommended as a complement. In some countries, particularly those without specific legislation or a regulatory framework on the workforce establishing standards of practice, a code of ethics is all that is available to guide practice. A total of 50% of associations reported having a code

of ethics or a majority of workers surveyed reported knowledge of such a code. It should be noted that among workers surveyed there may have been confusion as to whether they were reporting knowledge of a professional code of ethics or rather an employer code of conduct. A code of conduct differs from a code of ethics in that it specifies behavior expected of all employees regardless of their profession, position or responsibilities.

Establishing and disseminating a professional code of ethics appeared to be a more common role for professional associations than acting as a certification, regulatory or licensing body. To be clear, licensing refers to the act of being legally recognized as a professional

practitioner. Registration is usually linked to the act of submitting information to be included as part of a professional registry and can be legally required, while certification reflects a certain qualification or level of training for provision, there are significant cost implications. To oversee such processes effectively, a professional association needs legal recognition, often linked to a budget allocation, as well as the authority to issue consequences for non-compliance. The number of countries with specific legislation defining the workforce and establishing such a body are few (see following section on workforce-supportive legislation and policies). In Romania, legislation on the status of social workers (466/2004) and the national social assistance

system (47/2006) underpins the profession and its regulation via CNASR. Per Law 466/2004, all social workers must register with CNASR before they can practice. If they do not register or pay the annual fee required, then their data is removed from the National Register of Social Workers, which is maintained and made publicly available by CNASR. All social workers are expected to adhere to the Professional Code of Ethics also established by Law 466/2004, enforced by CNASR's Deontologia (Ethics) Commission which hears cases and makes decisions such as revoking licenses and other corrective actions. The Philippines and Thailand are the only other countries highlighted in the regional reports for having a professional association with

The Importance of a Professional Code of Ethics and the Role of Associations

Vishanthie Sewpaul, Former Chair, Global Ethics Taskforce, and Alliance Steering Committee Member

Having adopted a new Global Definition of Social Work in 2014, which challenges Western hegemony, we believed that a revised Global Statement of Ethical Principles was required. The new Statement recognizes the global nature of the social work profession and reflects a conceptual shift to understanding the inter-dependent and inter-subjective nature of ethics, human dignity and human rights. While under-scoring the importance of core principles such as confidentiality, self-determination and respect for cultural diversity, the Statement problematizes these by challenging taken-for-granted assumptions, and it responds to calls to decolonize social work.

In recognition of the fact that no code — whether global, regional or national — can make social workers ethical, the IASSW emphasizes that the Statement “is designed to facilitate social workers’ aspirations towards the highest possible standards of ethical practice, through processes of constant debate, self-reflection, willingness to deal with ambiguities, and to engage in ethically acceptable processes of decision-making to achieve ethical outcomes.” In making explicit social worker’s commitment to the core values and principles of the profession, the Statement is designed to ensure multiple levels of accountability — most importantly accountability towards the people with whom social workers engage. National professional associations are expected to benchmark their codes of ethics against the Statement and have mechanisms in place to receive complaints and undertake appropriate investigations and actions when social workers do violate the code of ethics.



A social worker in Georgia supports the reintegration of three children with their parents.

© UNICEF Georgia/Daro Sulakuari

a legal registration or licensing role. In Indonesia the Association of Professional Social Workers oversees required registration of social workers, a process initiated in 2016 and supported by the government, with currently 2% of the estimated workforce now registered as part of the pilot.

Workforce-Supportive Policies and Legislation

Public-sector policies and legislation form the basis for workforce strengthening, defining its mandate, structure, roles and responsibilities within the larger social service system. They can establish a national regulatory framework or body, training and practice standards. They can determine budget allocations and even sanction large-scale investments like in human resources information systems (HRIS), formal registration or licensing requirements, which together can address the need for resources, data for effective planning decisions, and quality assurance across the sector. When such laws and policies are clearly articulated and widely disseminated, the identity and status of social service workers are elevated and stakeholders in workforce strengthening are better able to coordinate implementation.

All the regional mappings reviewed country-level policy and legislative frameworks gathered through desk-based research or supplemented with key informant interviews.

Analysis focused on 1) countries with laws or policies defining the social service workforce in place; 2) countries with a social service workforce-defining law in progress; and 3) countries with laws, policies, or strategies that provide a basis for social service provision or reference the workforce or a specific cadre's role (e.g., child welfare and protection, gender-based violence, justice, social assistance) protection, gender-based violence, justice, social assistance). A specific breakdown of this analysis is included in Figure 12 below.

Examples from across the four regions were chosen based on availability of information to illustrate each of these categories and are detailed below:

LAW IN PLACE

Philippines: Specific laws recognizing and organizing the social work profession have been in place as early as 1965, when the Social Work Act was passed in the Philippines. It set out a legal definition of social work, established social work as a profession, and

FIGURE 12. Status of Workforce-Supportive Policies and Legislation by Region

Region	Countries with law or policy defining the social service workforce	Countries with social service workforce-defining law in progress	Countries with laws, policies or strategies that provide a basis for social service provision or reference the workforce or a specific cadre's role (e.g., child welfare and protection, gender-based violence, justice, social assistance) only
EAP	2 – Philippines and Thailand	2 – Indonesia, Malaysia	14 – All but Philippines and Thailand (which have social service workforce-defining law)
ECA	3 – Albania, Georgia, Romania	1 – Albania (reopened 2014 law for amendments)	1 – Kazakhstan (others have social service workforce-defining law)
MENA	0	1 – Morocco	4 – Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia
SA	0	0	8 – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
	13.89%	11.11%	75%

protected the title of social worker. This law was followed by the Magna Carta for Public Social Workers in 2007, which outlined legal rights and privileges to social workers, such as detailed terms of employment and ethical standards for the profession. Most recently, the Act Regulating Sundry Provisions Relative to the Practice of Social Work passed in 2015 reducing the registration age for social workers to 18 years.

Georgia: Adopted in 2018, Georgia's new Law on Social Work defines social work as a "practice-based profession that aims at enhancing public welfare through strengthening individuals and promoting their free development and integration into society." It outlines a legislative framework for direct service providers or practitioners, including principles, functions, rights and responsibilities, interventions, maximum workload, required qualifications, benefits, and expectations for supervision, promotion and disciplinary action. Importantly, the law makes "social worker" a legally-protected title which can only be used by those with formal education or other training in social work identified by the law. An action plan to facilitate implementation of the law has been issued with responsibility for carrying out tasks falling to various state entities.

LAW IN PROGRESS

Indonesia: As of the completion of the mapping in 2018, the draft Law on Social Work was before parliament and is in early 2019. Once in place, it will define and recognize both professionals and para professionals, as well as establish

a mandate and increase authority of social work. It is also expected to require all social service workers in child welfare to sign a code of ethics as part of improving quality of practice in this area. The Indonesian Social Work Consortium's main focus has been the drafting of, education and advocacy on the law as it goes through the legalization process.

Morocco: The Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development has already initiated a *Projet de Loi des Travailleurs sociaux*, or policy which will define the legal status of the profession and establish a regulatory body. Through the law or bill, this new regulatory body would be charged with setting standards of practice, certification and credentialing guidance, and requirements for continuing professional development. It would be provided with legal authority to oversee licensing and degree examinations and develop criteria for working conditions (e.g., standardized job descriptions, pay rates, and equal opportunities).

LAW OR POLICY FRAMEWORK

Bangladesh: There are more than 35 laws related to child protection and development in place in Bangladesh. Of these, the Children Act of 2013 officially recognizes the role of social workers in the realm of child protection at the community level and under the Department of Social Services. Child Welfare Boards are instituted as statutory bodies to oversee conditions of Child Development Centers and Care Homes and that provisions of the Best Interests of the Child are met within its jurisdiction. Forming these boards is required by the Act

at the Upazilla and District levels, with specified roles for the Deputy Director of the District Social Services Office, Upazilla Nirbahi Officer and Probation Officer.

Tunisia: Tunisia's Ministry of Social Affairs' Decree #2013-304 represents another form of recognizing the legal status of social workers and social work, outside of formal legislation or policy. Article 2 describes social workers as a "specific and specialized workforce that engages with individuals, families, groups and local communities, as well as in social service-related administration, training and research." Social workers are expected to play a role in developing, implementing and monitoring social development, social protection and other related policies. Article 3 defines social work as a "range of professional care and support activities...guided by ethical rules and guidelines and carried out by various levels of social workers" for individuals and groups in and outside the country.

5

COMMON ISSUES AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS



Para professional workers in Cambodia discuss community sensitization campaign strategies.

© Juan Daniel Torres, Courtesy of Photoshare

The end goal of each mapping exercise was to facilitate countries' formulation of data-informed recommendations for inclusion in a national workforce strengthening strategy and to spur implementation of interventions to strengthen the workforce in line with this strategy. These national

strategies, to be developed by the countries as recommended in the Alliance's Call to Action, are meant to specify which aspects of the workforce to strengthen in the short- and longer-term and ensure representation of a diverse workforce of professionals and para professionals at all levels.

This section aims to distill common issues of the social service workforce based on the data from all the available reports presented under key findings. Organized by action field of the SSWS Framework, each common issue is accompanied by related, action-oriented recommendations that can be pursued at the country and/or global level.

CALL TO ACTION: STRENGTHENING THE SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE TO BETTER PROTECT CHILDREN AND ACHIEVE THE SDGS

The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance released this Call to Action in May 2017. The full two-page statement includes national and global recommendations for strengthening the social service, and 35 organizations have added their logos in agreement and commitment to these actions.



PLANNING	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates of workforce size and composition rely on data of government workers alone, which may not accurately reflect workers engaged at the community level or by non-governmental entities. Human resources data were reported from employee registries or other records via the key stakeholder questionnaires or derived from a previous workforce assessment, and rarely, if ever, from an electronic HRIS which could provide more up-to-date, reliable results. Reliance on such fragmented data limits confidence in its accuracy. It also makes it difficult to estimate the number of para professionals and volunteers involved in social service provision, since they are more likely to work at the community level for which data is even more unreliable, especially in countries where social service provision is decentralized. Understanding of the non-government workforce is further constrained by the cited lack of country-level entities to respond on behalf of social service workers employed or engaged by NGOs, CSOs and other non-governmental groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, investment in adapting and using HRIS for the government and non-government social service workforce should be explored. Having such a system with standard operating procedures and secured resources in place for routine updating will enable national or sub-national stakeholders to make evidence-informed workforce planning decisions on a regular basis, rather than having to rely on the results of one-off mapping exercises that may occur every few years and potentially vary in scope and methodology despite efforts to standardize approaches in the upcoming mapping toolkit. There is a great opportunity to learn from experiences using HRIS for the health workforce, as well as examples of such systems being employed for cadres of social service workers in Malawi and Tanzania. Implementing an HRIS can often propel efforts to standardize job titles or act as a catalyst for introducing and enforcing licensing requirements. Once functioning, it can flag areas of inequitable workforce distribution or mismatch of worker skills and population needs. Even small-scale HRIS implementation, for example, among member organizations of an NGO network to track volunteers or of a specific cadre of workers within government, such as those responsible for child protection, can prove useful for day-to-day HR planning and management and in demonstrating the feasibility of using HRIS. Country should be at a national level or more comprehensive scope. All said, it is important to note the time- and resource-intensiveness of customizing and maintaining an HRIS; countries should be well-aware of the investment and infrastructure needed and global guidance should be developed to help inform decision-makers on the relative advantages, disadvantages and realities of implementation. • Efforts should be made to ensure NGOs and other non-government entities involving social service workers are engaged in the mapping process at the national level in collaboration with government and understand the benefits of gathering workforce data. These entities need to be engaged to explore the purpose of mapping exercises and the value they bring to their work. More advocacy is needed to rally robust and representative non-governmental participation in these exercises, as well as more investigation into the reasons why these entities are not engaged, i.e., competition, lack of a coalition or unified body to speak on their behalf, and how to address them.
DEVELOPING	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training opportunities are available, varied and growing, with some countries reporting most workers having bachelor's degrees or higher, although not always in relevant fields. However, PhD programs, quality field education placements, and formally recognized certification programs or short courses are limited. Such limitations may challenge the sustainability of existing education and training programs and the potential for further contextualization of curricula to meet countries' unique needs. A sufficient number of higher-level graduates must be produced and available to work as instructors and researchers. Limited educational or training offerings also do not respond to the needs of a diverse workforce or support professional development and career paths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives aimed at developing the workforce, i.e., broadening and enriching options for education and training, should pursue a holistic approach. Such an approach should reflect the understanding that a degree or higher education is not always required or the ideal scenario for all involved in the social service workforce, as some researchers have shown a greater connection between workers and families when the worker has a similar background and level of education as the families he or she is supporting. In-depth knowledge of population needs and the skills and competencies workers should have to work alongside them is essential to guiding the creation and strengthening of wide offering of various degree, diploma and certificate programs. • Field education should be conducted as a built-in opportunity to contextualize or 'indigenize' social work theory and practice in real time. Even in Western countries where social work has been long taught and practiced, students must apply generalist knowledge gained in the classroom to specific client populations and grapple with the intersection of race, gender, ability and sexual orientation, among others. The field education requirement, as stipulated by IASSW and followed in many of the countries included in this report, can enable students to emerge with experience and understanding of social work practice contextualized to the environment in which they were placed, and bolster other, more direct efforts to indigenize curricula.

SUPPORTING	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional associations are widespread, but their capacity may be limited by lack of formal or legal recognition and a narrow view of who they represent. Most countries had at least one professional association to represent at least social workers and their role. From the data available, it was clear that having formal or legal recognition was an indicator of an association's strength, as was its issuance of a code of ethics and other professional standards, and that these factors could contribute to higher visibility and likelihood that workers were aware of the association, its actions on behalf of workers, and the benefits of membership. However, few associations included in the review had legal authority to oversee registration or licensing of workers, set standards of training or practice, and/or make other contributions to quality assurance within the sector. • Although most workers report having a supervisor, far less are satisfied with the supervision they receive. From the worker survey responses alone, it was hard to deduce how workers understood the role of supervisor and their expectations around supervision. In some cases, workers viewed a supervisor only as someone overseeing their duties or assigning tasks and not a resource for constructive feedback or facilitating their professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal recognition by governments of professional associations and their roles, either through legislation or other formal means, is critical to legitimizing and enabling their unique contributions to supporting the workforce. Such recognition empowers associations to set professional standards, provide opportunities for continuing professional development, and monitor progress against those standards, leading to registration or licensing as needed. Case studies documenting the impact of government recognition on an association's ability to play an effective support role, such as in Georgia with the setting of training requirements or in Indonesia with a coalition approach to promoting workforce-defining legislation, would be welcome additions to the global knowledge base. They would also be motivating for countries seeking to establish new or revitalize existing professional associations that represent social workers or incite expansion of these associations to represent other vital social service workers outside of just social workers. • Guidance on supervision, clarifying its educational, administrative and supportive functions, would be an opportune resource, particularly as governments or regulatory bodies seek to set standards or strengthen current practice. Effective supervision not only serves an important quality assurance and monitoring purpose but contributes toward the greater aim of enabling workers to develop as competent and ethical practitioners. Whatever its form, this guidance should help counteract misconceptions around supervision and underscore its importance for professionals and para professionals alike.
CROSS CUTTING	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the countries studied for this report, women made up most of the social service workforce, which has unique implications for professionalization efforts. Given that gender composition data was only available via basic demographic questions in the worker survey in a subset of countries, more in-depth analysis or conclusions could not be made. • Few countries have legislation or policies that specifically define the social service workforce. While such laws do not have to be in place for investment and interventions to strengthen the workforce to be successful, they are a key building block. They can ensure that the workforce and its roles are allocated, standards are set, and adequate resources are allocated, among other important elements, when fully implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of the gender dynamics at play in decision-making on behalf of the workforce and how the majority-female workforce can contribute to economic development and increased gender equality should be a global, if not country-level, priority for investigation. Global actors, including networks like the Alliance, donors, and professional groups like IFSW, should consider focusing strategic resources and expertise among their staff and members toward a better grasp of the role of gender in social service workforce strengthening and further refined actions that can be taken to promote gender equality in line with SDG 5. Questions for further investigation could include: are there differences in upward mobility and opportunities for advancement for men versus women? Are male social service workers more likely to occupy supervisory or managerial roles than female social service workers? Are they more likely to have higher degrees? Is there an interplay of gender and age in the composition of the workforce and what further opportunities might this finding present for youth employment and economic development in addition to gender equality? • Country task groups, national leadership groups or other representative stakeholder groups can facilitate the development of this definition to be enshrined in legislation. Using a participatory process backed by available workforce data can help ensure development of a definition that is appropriate to the country's context and specific population and development needs. This definition should consider specifying the mandate and functions of the workforce, who or which types of workers are included, and minimum qualifications, training and practice requirements or standards. It can also provide an opportunity to institutionalize funding, expectations around recruitment, remuneration and caseloads, worker protections from risks encountered in practice, and support for interagency or government/non-government collaboration.

ANNEX 1. RATIOS OF SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS TO CHILD POPULATION ^{8,9,12-15,30-35}

Country	Estimated Total Number	Type	Ratio	Population
EAP REGION				
Cambodia	3490	social service workers	59.6	with responsibility for child protection per 100,000 children
Fiji	80	estimated government social service workers	26.4	per 100,000 child population
Indonesia	68745	social service workers	80	with responsibility for child protection per 100,000 children
Kiribati	26	estimated government social service workers	55.3	per 100,000 child population
Mongolia	2856	social service workers	280.8	with responsibility for child protection per 100,000 children
Philippines	5423	social workers	13.8	with responsibility for child protection per 100,000 children
Solomon Islands	13	estimated government social service workers	4.7	per 100,000 child population
Thailand	3008	social workers	20.1	with responsibility for child protection per 100,000 children
Timor Leste	90	estimated government social service workers	13.9	per 100,000 child population
Vanuatu	7	estimated government social service workers	6.1	per 100,000 child population
ECA REGION				
Albania	223	child protection workers	33.8	per 100,000 child population
Georgia	800	social workers (with and without degrees)	91.4	per 100,000 child population
Kazakhstan	18088	social service workers across social protection, health and education sectors	325	per 100,000 child population
Romania	32933	child protection workers	89.8	per 100,000 child population

Country	Estimated Total Number	Type	Ratio	Population
MENA REGION				
Djibouti	198	reported government and nongovernment social service workforce staff	18.7	per 100,000 child population
Jordan	2753	reported government social service workforce staff	140	per 100,000 child population
Lebanon	195	reported government and nongovernment social service workforce staff	11.2	per 100,000 child population
Morocco	2699	reported government and nongovernment social service workforce staff	21.7	per 100,000 child population
Palestine	3848	reported government social service workforce staff	177.2	per 100,000 child population
Tunisia	1862	reported government and nongovernment social service workforce staff	59	per 100,000 child population
SA REGION				
Afghanistan	110	reported government social service workforce staff	0.6	per 100,000 child population
Bangladesh	3454	reported government social service workforce staff	6.1	per 100,000 child population
Bhutan	248	reported government social service workforce staff	94.9	per 100,000 child population
India-Chhattisgarh (2011)	362	reported government social service workforce staff	1.4	per 100,000 child population
India-West Bengal (2011)	307	reported government social service workforce staff	0.3	per 100,000 child population
India-Rajasthan (2011)	10162	reported government social service workforce staff	14.8	per 100,000 child population
Maldives	914	reported government social service workforce staff	781.2	per 100,000 child population
Nepal	670	reported government social service workforce staff	6.0	per 100,000 child population
Pakistan-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	81	reported government social service workforce staff	0.6	per 100,000 child population
Pakistan-Sindh	240	reported government social service workforce staff	1.3	per 100,000 child population
Pakistan-Punjab	396	reported government social service workforce staff	0.8	per 100,000 child population
Sri Lanka	31750	reported government social service workforce staff	527.4	per 100,000 child population

ANNEX 2. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS BY COUNTRY^{8-10,12-15,28-36}

Country	Number of Professional Associations	Names	Year Formed	Code of Ethics	Number of members	Member of IFSW
EAPRO REGION						
Cambodia	1	Association of Professional Social Workers Cambodia	2015	In progress	40	No
China	2	China Association of Social Workers	1991	Yes		Yes
		China Association for Social Work Education	1994		450	No
Fiji	1	Fiji Association of Social Workers		Yes		Yes
Indonesia	8	Indonesian Social Work Consortium (KPSI)	2011			No
		Association of Professional Social Workers (IPSPI)		Yes	1421	Yes
		Association of Social Work/Social Welfare Education (ASPEKSI)				No
		National Council of Social Welfare (DNIKS)				No
		Association of Social Campaigners (IPENSI)				No
		Association of College Student of Social Work/Social Welfare (FORKOMKASI)				No
		Association of Social Workers for Children and Family (APSAKI)				No
Association of Social Workers for Drug Addiction (APSANI)				No		
Malaysia	1	Malaysia Association of Social Workers		Yes		Yes
Mongolia	4	Mongolia Association of Social Workers	1997	Yes		Yes
		Association of Health Social Work Development	2006	No		No
		Association of Social Welfare Organizations		No		No
		Association of Social Work Managers		No		No
Papua New Guinea	1	Papua New Guinea Social Workers Association		Yes		Yes
Philippines	2	Philippine Association of Social Workers (PASWI)	1947	Yes	15,000	Yes
		National Association for Social Work Education	1965	No		No
Thailand	3	Thailand Association of Social Workers	1958	Yes	2,360	Yes
		Thailand Association of Social Work and Social Welfare Education		No		No
		Social Work Professions Council Associations of Social Workers	2013	No		No
Vietnam	1	Vietnam Association of Vocational Education and Social Work	2013	No		Yes
ECARO REGION						
Albania	1	Albania Association of Social Workers				Yes
Georgia	1	Georgian Association of Social Workers	2004	Yes	650	Yes
Romania	2	Romania Association of Social Workers (ASproAS)		Yes		Yes
		National College of Romanian Social Workers	2004	Yes	8000	Yes

Country	Number of Professional Associations	Names	Year Formed	Code of Ethics	Number of members	Member of IFSW
MENA REGION						
Djibouti	1	Djibouti Association of Social Workers				Yes
Iran	1	Iran Association of Social Workers	1961	Yes	3862	Yes
Jordan	1	Jordan Society of Social Workers				No
Lebanon	2	Syndicate of Social Workers in Lebanon	1997		220	
		National Association of Social Assistants in Lebanon			40	
Morocco	1	Moroccan Association of Social Assistants	1993			Yes
Palestine	1	Palestinian Union of Social Workers and Psychologists				Yes
Sudan	1	Sudan National Association of Social Workers				Yes
Tunisia	3	Tunisian Society of Social Workers				No
		The Scientific Society of Social Work				o
		The Society of Child Protection Delegates				No
ROSA REGION						
Bangladesh	1	Association of Social Workers Bangladesh	1997	No	1275	Yes
Bhutan	1	Bhutan Board of Certified Counsellors		Yes	150	No
India	7	Bombay Association of Trained Social Workers (BATSW)		Yes		No
		Karnataka Association of Professional Social Workers		Yes		No
		Kerala Association of Professional Social Workers (KAPS)		Yes		No
		Maharashtra Association of Social Work Educators (MASWE)		Yes		No
		National Association of Professional Social Workers in India (NAPSWI)	2005	Yes		No
		Federation of India Network of Professional Social Workers Associations (INPSWA)		Yes		Yes
		Indian Society of Professional Social Work	1970	Yes		No
Maldives	1			Yes	169	No
Nepal	1	Social Workers Association of Nepal (SWAN)		Yes	40	Yes
Sri Lanka	1	The Sri Lanka Association of Professional Social Workers		No	80	Yes

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Email: contact@socialserviceworkforce.org

Website: www.socialserviceworkforce.org

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