THE STATE OF THE
SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE
2016 REPORT

A REVIEW OF FIVE YEARS OF WORKFORCE STRENGTHENING

GLOBAL
SOCIAL SERVICE WORKFORCE
ALLIANCE

Improving the workforce. Improving lives.

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Improving lives.

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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CPF	Child Protection Fund (Zimbabwe)
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group (Uganda)
CYCW	Child and Youth Care Worker
DCWPS	Department of Child Welfare and Probation Services (Zimbabwe)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DSD	Department of Social Development (South Africa)
DSS	Department of Social Services (Zimbabwe)
ESSSWA	Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists (Ethiopia)
FM	HIV Global Fund (Côte d'Ivoire)
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (South Africa)
IGPP	Interest Group on Para Professionals
INFS	Institut National de Formation Sociale (Côte d'Ivoire)
ISCISA	Higher Education Institute for Health Sciences (Mozambique)
MGCSA	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action (Mozambique)
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development (Uganda)
MOLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (Ethiopia)
NACCW	National Association of Child Care Workers (South Africa)
NASWU	National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (Uganda)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (USA)
PLHIV	Persons Living with HIV
PNOEV	National OVC program (Programme National des OEV) (Côte d'Ivoire)
PSW	Para Social Worker
REPSSI	Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative
SACSSP	South African Council for Social Service Professions (South Africa)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (Switzerland)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Corporation (Sweden)
SSW	Social Service Workforce
SUNRISE OVC	Strengthening Uganda's National Response for Implementation of Services for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (Uganda)
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training Colleges (Ethiopia)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (USA)
WEI	World Education Incorporated
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The social service workforce is increasingly being recognized as essential to meeting the needs of vulnerable populations throughout the world. This report assesses the evolution of the social service workforce over the past five years by examining efforts to strengthen and diversify the workforce in eight countries. These countries all participated in a Social Welfare Workforce Strengthening Conference in Cape Town in 2010.

The conference aimed to support country teams in developing plans to strengthen their national social service workforces. Since 2010, significant progress has occurred in terms of the introduction of policies and implementation of strategic plans to strengthen the social service workforce. Greater attention is being paid to mapping and monitoring shifting needs and capacity, thus enabling more effective service delivery. Efforts have been made to provide culturally and contextually appropriate training and education through in-service programs, on-the-job training and college or university curricula. Accreditation in the form of certificates, diplomas and degrees has been expanded. Professional associations and/or regulatory bodies have been launched or revitalized. Broad partnerships comprised of state, NGOs, civil society, academia and develop- ment partner representatives have contributed to the transformation that is taking place. While much has been achieved, social service workforce developments have not necessarily been even among countries and critical challenges remain.

This report captures what has been accomplished and highlights areas for future intervention. Progress made to strengthen the social service workforce within these countries is useful when reflecting on global trends and ways forward.

① OVERVIEW

This is the second annual State of the Social Service Workforce Report produced by the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance. These annual reports aim to highlight social service workforce strengthening data and approaches by examining and analyzing unique initiatives in particular countries and identifying common challenges and trends. The reports contribute to building a stronger evidence base that will enable more effective interventions and more persuasive advocacy efforts to improve the quality of care provided to vulnerable children and families.

This year's report highlights the workforce strengthening efforts that have taken place since 2010 in eight of the countries that participated in the Cape Town Conference. The significant progress that has occurred illustrates the potential value of joint consideration and analysis of critical workforce issues for individual countries. The analysis of these eight countries mirrors global trends toward development of the social service workforce. Reflecting on the nature of these developments allows policy makers and practitioners to note lessons learned and identify a contextualized, feasible path forward.

The following eight countries responded to the request for information: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

◄ Beneficiaries of Child Protection Case Management intervention by UNICEF Malawi. Some of the children who dropped out of school have now gone back to school in Machinga district after case management was introduced in the district.
© Malla Mabona, 2015, UNICEF Malawi

◄ Homework time with the support of a Child and Youth Worker.
© NACCW, South Africa

Vulnerability assessment, Uganda. ►
© TPO Uganda

Papers being signed for kinship foster care placement in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
© David Tobis, 2012, Maestral International

Overview of the Cape Town Conference

Noting the significant numbers of vulnerable children, families and groups across the globe and recognizing that strengthening the social service workforce contributes to a more robust social welfare system and stronger services for children and families, PEPFAR/USAID, under the auspices of the Technical Working Group for Children Orphaned and Made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, hosted the *Social Welfare Workforce Strengthening Conference: Investing in Those Who Care for Children* in Cape Town, South Africa in 2010. The goal of the conference was to identify mechanisms to further strengthen both the social service workforce and social welfare systems that serve children and families, especially those made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Additionally, the conference aimed to add to current knowledge, use a systems perspective to examine workforce issues, specify promising practices, identify needed resources and articulate next steps (Bess, López and Tomaszewski, 2011). The conference was part of an effort by PEPFAR/USAID and other donors to highlight the importance of and attract resources for longer-term workforce strengthening.

Eighteen country teams attended the conference. Participation included donor organizations, government ministries of social welfare, training institutions or professional associations and NGOs. Country teams developed action plans to address workforce challenges

and identify longer-term goals for workforce strengthening. Participants identified the areas of research, data analysis, coordination and advocacy as essential areas of focus on the global level. Coordination and advocacy were desired at the regional and national levels. Participants also requested support regarding access to resources, technical assistance and information sharing as these would strengthen individual workforce strengthening efforts.

Overview of the Social Service Workforce Strengthening Framework

The social service workforce is defined as being comprised of the variety of workers that contribute to the care, support, promotion of rights and empowerment of vulnerable populations served by the social service system. A social service system is understood as one that addresses both the social welfare and protection of vulnerable populations and includes elements that are preventative, responsive and promotive. The system and workers within it create protective environments for healthy development and well-being by alleviating poverty; reducing discrimination; facilitating access to needed services; promoting social justice; and preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation.

At the Cape Town Conference, participants helped to refine a conceptual framework for strengthening the social service workforce. It was developed
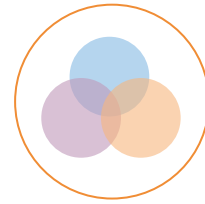
The social service workforce is defined as being comprised of the variety of workers that contribute to the care, support, promotion of rights and empowerment of vulnerable populations served by the social service system.

to highlight a multi-faceted range of strategies to enhance the planning, development and support of the social service workforce. It is important to note that the framework is intended only as a guide to support country efforts to strengthen the social service workforce and systems and is meant to take into account dynamic and unique country contexts.

Key Workforce Needs and Challenges Identified at the Cape Town Conference

As reflected in the *Investing in Those Who Care for Children: Social Welfare Workforce Strengthening Conference Report* (Bess, López and Tomaszewski 2011), participants at the conference identified potential ways forward and shared innovative, tested approaches.

A number of challenges and needs related to maintaining a strong social service workforce were identified throughout the Cape Town Conference and were outlined under the categories of planning, developing and supporting the workforce in the conference report. These are summarized as follows.

Planning
Contextual Issues

- Clarity around the usage of terms, such as social welfare and social services was needed. The term 'social service' was seen as best reflecting the ways that various countries work to address the rights and needs of vulnerable populations.

- Greater understanding was needed regarding the impetus for shifting workforces; existing social welfare needs and best potential responses;

worker profiles and mandates, including eligibility criteria; educational agendas; and career pathing. Clarity in these issues would facilitate a clearer definition of the social service workforce.

- A shift from issue-based interventions to systemic, holistic interventions was desired.

- Greater attention had to be paid to the global rights agenda.

Strengthening the Social Service Workforce

Planning the Workforce

- Adopt a strategic approach to planning the social service workforce
- Collect and share human resource (HR) data and promote data-driven decision-making
- Improve recruitment, hiring and deployment practices, and systems that take into account urban, periurban and rural areas and decentralization plans
- Build alliances to strengthen leadership and advocacy among stakeholders

Country-specific context, including social service, justice and child protection systems, culture, local legislation, labor market, economy

Supporting the Workforce

- Develop or strengthen systems to improve and sustain social service workforce performance
- Develop tools, resources and initiatives to improve job satisfaction and retention
- Support professional associations in their efforts to enhance the professional growth and development of the social service workforce

Developing the Workforce

- Align education and training for the social service workforce with effective workforce planning efforts
- Ensure curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge as well as international best practices for improving the well-being of children and families
- Strengthen faculty and teaching methods
- Provide a broad range of professional development opportunities for workers

Participants of the Cape Town conference in 2010.
© USAID, 2010, South Africa

- There was a call for greater community involvement in determining local social service workforces.

- Strengthening of a unified international voice regarding the development of a coherent social service workforce was required.

Funding

- Ensuring upfront funding was identified as critical. Uncertain and inadequate funding fundamentally undermined the recruitment and management of a social service workforce and potentially led to tasks shifting to lesser trained social service workers.

- Increased advocacy for appropriate budget allocation processes was recommended.

- The implications of relying on inter-national donor funding needed to be fully considered.

Collecting and sharing human resource data

- A large gap in availability of useful HR data was identified. Documenting existing human resources and identifying gaps was noted as essential to define the extent and the urgency of the problem and to lobby governments and other partners for appropriate financing.

- Noting the lack of cohesion and communication amongst potential stakeholders, more workforce mapping was needed as a means of engaging key stakeholders to better understand and describe the composition of an effective and appropriate social service workforce and to then utilize the data gathered for joint planning.

- Due to the workforce being diverse and workforce data being located in many places, broader engagement of the relevant actors was needed to obtain a comprehensive picture.

Increased advocacy for appropriate budget allocation processes was recommended.

Developing

Strengthening faculty and teaching

- Pre-service education required improvement through increased interaction between universities and social service agencies in order to better prepare students for work.

- Lack of access to relevant and indigenized curricula reduced the effectiveness of programming and greater sensitivity to indigenous responses was needed.

- Barriers to education existed, particularly for workers in rural areas. It was thus necessary to find ways of increasing accessibility to education.

Aligning education and training with effective planning efforts

- Education and training opportunities available were inadequate to meet demand and thus needed to be increased. With so few graduates of social work programs, countries were beginning to rely more heavily on more quickly produced para professional workers to fill gaps.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- In addition to formal tertiary institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were making important training contributions but the training was not always nationally recognized or accredited.

- Certificates earned through in-service training were not necessarily recognized by the state regarding employment opportunities, or by bodies setting qualification standards. Efforts to facilitate the standardization and formal accreditation of training were needed.

Supporting

Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- Social service personnel often had poor work conditions at both government and NGO levels. Remuneration was inadequate. Job demands (unreasonable caseloads and hours, multiple roles) were high. Social service workers were dealing with highly charged, stressful situations. Recognition within and outside the sector was low. These poor conditions led to significant turnover, with many social service personnel leaving the sector, and needed to be urgently addressed.

- Significant turnover in addition to high vacancy rates led to few experienced personnel. Institutional memory was absent. Retention efforts needed to be enhanced.

- Supervision and professional development opportunities needed to be expanded because novices did not receive adequate mentoring or on-the-job training.

- More support to supervisors and increased access to continuing education opportunities were needed to help social service personnel remain up-to-date and stimulate job satisfaction and retention.

Supporting professional associations/regulatory bodies

- While professional associations existed in many countries, they were often underfunded and needed

A social worker assists a victim of violence to provide her testimony through the CCTV system at the Federal Court in Addis Ababa.
© Ethiopia, 2015, Federal Supreme Court Child Justice Project Office

to be revitalized in order to better support members and the profession.

- Ethics and codes of conduct were needed to facilitate quality service delivery and protection of service users.

Prior to the Cape Town Conference in 2010, country team leads were asked to identify the top challenges facing the social service workforce in their country. The same question was posed to country representatives assisting in the preparation of this report. The chart below identifies responses as percentages. Although plagued by a number of challenges, the primary

concerns in 2016 appear to be the sector being poorly resourced; poor assessment of workforce needs and planning for the workforce; and poor work conditions and facilities. Comparing the 2010 and 2016 responses, the increase in the number of countries identifying poor assessment of workforce needs may reflect a growing awareness of the importance of human resource data as a foundational aspect of workforce planning. The decrease in the number of countries identifying low knowledge and skills and lack of clarity in roles as top challenges may represent positive shifts in access to training.

Through the SUNRISE program in Uganda, a teen mom is supported by her family and community to stay in school.
© Tash McCarroll for USAID

Challenges Identified in 2010 and 2016 (Responses by Percentage)

■ 2016   ■ 2010

Reclaiming indigenous games.
© NACCW, South Africa

The Formation of the Alliance

Participants at the Cape Town Conference identified a need for a platform to continue dialogue across and within countries as a key strategy toward strengthening the social service workforce. The concept for a global network began to take shape. An interim Steering Committee was formed soon after the conference and on June 6, 2013, the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance was formally launched. Through this global network, members are able to exchange promising practices, resources and advocate across borders in support of strengthening the social service workforce locally, regionally and internationally.

Alliance Achievements Since the June 2013 Launch

Convening

The Alliance serves as a convener for an inclusive, representative network for discourse and collective learning. Since 2013, over 900 individuals have joined the Alliance from over 85 countries. The Alliance has brought people together, led and participated in a number of learning events worldwide, including through:

- *21 webinars* to advance knowledge and increase dialogue on themes central to strengthening the workforce. Webinars have covered a myriad of topics including case management, workforce mapping, multi-disciplinary teams, recruitment and retention and licensing.

The Alliance has since grown to include members from over 80 countries.

Alliance Vision, Mission and Approach

VISION
The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance works toward 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.

MISSION
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

APPROACH

Serve as a convener	**Advance knowledge**	**Advocate**
for an inclusive, representative network of stakeholders to create a forum for disclosure and collective learning	by deriving, organizing and disseminating critical evidence-based research, resources, tools, models and best practices	for workforce policy reforms at the global and national levels

The Alliance hosted 21 webinars to advance knowledge and increase dialogue on themes central to strengthening the workforce.

- *Annual symposia* hosted by the Alliance to bring attention to innovative practices and trends affecting the social service workforce. The symposia bring together diverse stakeholders to exchange knowledge and discuss ways to strengthen the planning, developing and support of this workforce.

- Organization of and participation in dozens of *events,* conferences and panel presentations.

- The Alliance's *website,* through which members can directly engage with each other and participate in discussion topics as well as share upcoming conferences, resources, blogs and other updates relevant to this workforce.

Assessment in the community.
© TPO Uganda

Advancing Knowledge

The Alliance aims to advance knowledge by deriving, organizing and disseminating critical evidence-based research, resources, tools, models and best practices. The following are a few examples of resources and reports on promising and innovative efforts underway in workforce strengthening undertaken at the country level as well as regionally and internationally:

- *The Composition of the Social Service Workforce in HIV/AIDS-affected Contexts* captures the typical functions, titles, and levels and types of education and training that have been used in various country contexts.

- *The Para Professionals in the Social Service Workforce: Guiding Principles, Functions and Competencies* report prepared by the Alliance Interest Group on Para Professionals in the Social Service Workforce (IGPP) outlines a set of guiding principles for working with para professionals to form a base from which to develop programs and activities related to how these workers can be trained, developed, deployed and supported. The group also developed a competency framework for para professionals that outlines the functions and competencies of para professionals and can be used to provide program guidance, accountability and ultimately inform both training and supervision. The document presents these two tools, which have evolved out of much discussion and input from the many members of the

IGPP and others over the past year. The sets of competencies were reviewed with local para professionals and supervisors in Kenya and Uganda. Currently, additional sets of competencies specific to para professional social workers and community development workers are under development.

- The *Building Evidence Interest Group* of the Alliance has undertaken a review of evidence available to support workforce strengthening and monitor the impact of workforce strengthening efforts–both the impact on the social service workforce as well as the impact on the system and ultimately on vulnerable populations. The evidence review meeting in June 2016 will review the existing evidence as well as identify measures for addressing gaps in available data and a resulting report will highlight priority areas identified for future research.

- The first *State of the Social Service Workforce 2015 Report* was released during the Alliance's 2nd Annual Symposium in June 2015. The report, which reviewed data and trends affecting the workforce in 15 countries, featured a review of education and training, availability of government and non-government workers, existence of workforce-supportive legislation and professional associations or regulatory bodies. The report was meant to better describe and analyze efforts to strengthen the social service workforce in order to contribute to global, national and local planning and advocacy for effective

implementation of programs for vulnerable children and families.

- *Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Faculty— A Multi-Country Review* documents challenges and effective strategies for faculty recruitment and retention.

- *The Role of Social Service Workforce Development in Care Reform* working paper produced with Better Care Network explores the topic of social service workforce strengthening in the context of care reform by drawing on case studies from three countries in very different stages of care reform and each with unique contexts: Indonesia, Moldova and Rwanda. The Alliance has also been involved in country consultations in Cambodia and Zambia on the workforce role in care reform and the importance of strengthening families and caregiving networks.

Advocacy

The network of members in the Alliance helps to advocate for workforce-supportive reforms, including through the following activities in 2015:

- *Social Service Workforce Week in 2014 and 2015* helped raise awareness and increase engagement and interest in workforce strengthening initiatives.

- Throughout the year, *worker profiles and stories of change* and our many *blog posts* emphasized important efforts of social service workers, such as their key role in *eliminating violence against women and girls.*

- The Alliance has also joined other advocacy efforts, such as those advocating for the *inclusion of all vulnerable children when monitoring the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators,* in order to elevate the importance of integrating workforce strengthening into efforts aimed to improve the lives of vulnerable populations.

Those interested in learning more or supporting these efforts are invited to join the network at www.socialserviceworkforce.org.

RESOURCE　　BLOG　　WEBINAR　　DISCUSSION

4 REPORT METHODOLOGY

The Alliance, as part of its mission to promote information exchange and support social service workforce strengthening, aimed to gather information on the ways in which the sub-Saharan countries represented at the Cape Town Conference had proceeded with the workforce strengthening agenda over the past five years. Each member of the 18 country teams participating in that conference was approached to complete a short, structured questionnaire, identifying the ways in which planning, development and support of the social service workforce have been advanced. It was understood ahead of time that certain people would no longer be in their position and that where possible, their replacements would participate. It was also anticipated that the full complement of persons could no longer be reached and not every country team would be motivated to respond. A qualitative approach was adopted to allow for full exploration of highly contextual data. Content analysis was employed to identify common themes and categories in the responses. Where countries submitted supporting documentation, this was reviewed to elicit further themes or to complement the existing themes and categories.

Psycho-social support workers meeting with community workers following post-election crisis in 2011.
© Anouk Delafortrie, Ivory Coast, 2013, EC/ECHO
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MAJOR MILESTONES

Out of the original 18 countries attending the 2010 Cape Town Conference, the following eight countries responded to the request for information: Côte d'Ivoire; Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Each country identified the most significant milestone reached over the past five years.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

The development of an orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) program spearheaded reforms in training and curriculum at the Institut National de Formation Sociale (INFS).

ETHIOPIA

The adoption of a new National Social Protection Policy and Strategy.

RWANDA

Capacity development of para professional volunteers; strengthening interventions at the local community level.

UGANDA

The strengthening of sustainable child protection mechanisms across 80 district and associated lower local government levels.

MALAWI

The professionalization of social work by building practitioner capacity at all levels.

ZIMBABWE

The strengthening of sustainable child protection mechanisms across 65 districts and associated lower local government levels.

MOZAMBIQUE

The approval of the National Social Protection Strategy.

SOUTH AFRICA

The ongoing review of the 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare is reassessing existing institutional and human resource areas and the potential for realigning these in light of anticipated service delivery change and improvements.

Community volunteers work with children to create a garden at a daycare facility.
© Denise Phelps, South Africa, 2014

Out of the original 18 countries attending the 2010 Cape Town Conference, the following eight countries responded to the request for information. In some instances (as indicated within parenthesis), more than one completed questionnaire was received: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia (2), Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa (2), Uganda (2), and Zimbabwe (3). Please see the acknowledgements section for more detail.

It must be underlined that the data gathered represent the respondents' particular views on developments in their country. These perspectives are potentially colored by their organization's priorities, and may not provide a comprehensive reflection on all movement in the social service workforce over the last five years. This process reflects the lack of an identified entity in each country responsible for gathering human resource data and information about social service workforce strengthening initiatives underway throughout the country. A further constraint is that the research outcomes are limited to sub-Saharan countries on the African continent.

Nevertheless, these data provide a useful overview of social service workforce strengthening among a selection of African countries. The country profiles included in this report may be useful as case examples for other countries as they develop social service workforce strengthening efforts.

The data is presented on a country-by-country basis, in terms of aspects related to planning, developing and supporting the social service workforce in all eight countries. Human resource data are not yet evenly collected across the countries; each documented some attempts through mapping exercises, but also through professional registration with regulatory bodies. The workforce has been expanded in all eight countries, both by cadres and number. All of the countries reported improved partnerships involving government, NGOs and educational institutions. In terms of education and training, each country is making attempts to align education and training with workforce planning efforts. Curricula reflect indigenous approaches to supporting vulnerable community members. Efforts are made to strengthen faculty and teaching. These tend to be either professional level (social work or child and youth care work) or para professional training, but not always both. Some form of in-service training is offered everywhere. Improving job satisfaction, retention and social work performance seems to be an area requiring attention. Some efforts have been made, but these appear to be piecemeal. While there seems to have been significant movement regarding the establishment of professional associations/regulatory bodies, this is not consistent across the region. A further, detailed analysis is provided at the end of this report following the country profiles.

While there was significant progress in all areas, all 8 countries now report initiatives in these categories:

- Adopting a strategic approach to planning

- Building alliances and partnerships

- Aligning education and training with effective workforce planning

- Ensuring curricula incorporate both local and international best practices

- Providing a broad range of in-service professional development

- Developing systems to improve workforce performance

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CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Collecting and sharing human resource data
- The Institut National de Formation Sociale (INFS), a public social work training institute, in conjunction with the Ministry of Families, Women and Social Welfare, mapped the social service workforce.
- Due to the apparent budgetary restrictions no government social service positions were created after 2010.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment
- The Ministry of Families, Women and Social Welfare developed the Standards for the Provision of Quality Services for OVC, integrating community counselors into the social service workforce.
- 1,315 social work assistants were trained by the INFS after 2010. Due to a lack of state openings, these individuals were deployed through NGOs.

Building alliances and partnerships
- Partnerships with PEPFAR, UNICEF, and FM (HIV Global Fund) allowed for advocacy efforts regarding OVC.

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The development of an OVC program spearheaded reforms in training and curriculum at the Institut National de Formation Sociale (INFS)

The INFS offers certificate, Masters and doctoral programs

Standards for the Provision of Quality Services policy advanced national, competency-based social work practice

New programs for child protection and child trafficking control created NGO employment opportunities for the social service workforce

The European Commission supports Côte d'Ivoire's efforts to restore social services to its people.
© The European Commission. CC BY-ND 2.0., 2013, Cote d'Ivoire

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- The INFS incorporated new modules pertaining to OVC care and support, monitoring and evaluation, child protection and project management.
- The INFS also now offers certificate, Masters and doctoral programs.
- The Ministry of Families, Women and Social Welfare developed an OVC Care and Support Reference Manual; OVC, gender-based violence and child protection data tools; and a tool for evaluating social service workforce capacities.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- Best practices and collaborative platforms relating to OVC were implemented.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- The Clinical Training Skills and Standards-based Management Recognition were utilized at the INFS to strengthen teaching methods focused on supporting OVC.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- A broad range of in-service training opportunities were offered to those working with OVC through the INFS.

### Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- Administrative and pedagogic/academic reforms included:
  - ▶ The Standards for the Provision of Quality Services policy, which advanced national, competency-based social work practice regarding OVC.
  - ▶ New programs for child protection and child trafficking control, which created NGO employment opportunities for the social service workforce.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- There are four professional social service organizations for different cadres of workers: Social Assistant (2,000 members); Specialized Educators (600); Preschool Educators (800); and the Scientific Association of Social Workers (50). However, these were not viewed as a priority and were not supported. As a result, the associations are weak and strategic partnerships with social workers in Africa and globally were lacking.
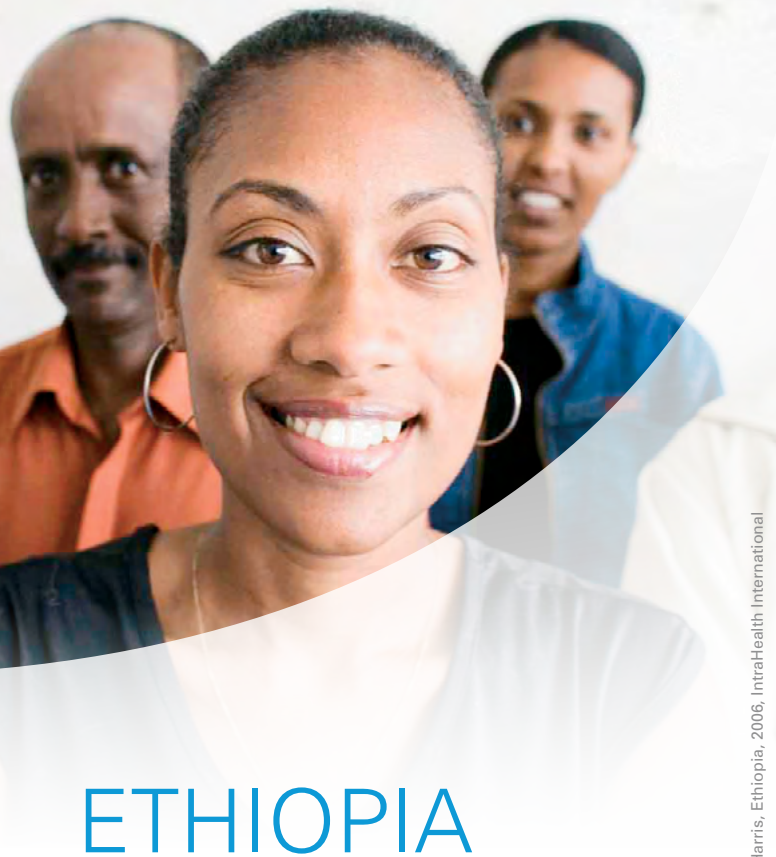
© Charles Harris, Ethiopia, 2006, IntraHealth International

ETHIOPIA

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The adoption of a new National Social Protection Policy and Strategy

Certificates, diplomas and degrees in social work are offered

The National Association of Social Workers is being established

Coordination, regulation and resourcing of social welfare officers has occurred

Collecting and sharing human resource data

- In 2013, an assessment of the public sector social service workforce was funded by PEPFAR/USAID. It found that approximately 1,500 degreed social workers serve a population of 90 million.
- In 2014, the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) developed a joint action plan to build the capacity of professionals at all levels, expand training competencies and develop microenterprises.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment

- As part of a new National Social Protection Policy, the government is developing a system for the workforce and for training and deploying para-social workers (PSWs).
- New cadres have been added to the social service workforce since 2010. Demand was created by the need for social services for people affected by HIV/AIDS and to children without parental care.

Para social worker expansion:

- National Occupational Standards for community service workers were developed. The identification of and development of standards for other social service occupations will occur in 2016.
- 2,070 PSWs were trained and employed by the state. The Ethiopian Health Extension Model was applied to help develop this new cadre.
- PSWs mobilize the community in support of OVC and PLHIV. They take on case management, strengthening bi-directional referral linkages, advocacy, awareness raising and coordination of resources for vulnerable populations. They also supervise and support community volunteers and lay case workers (who typically have limited training).
- PSWs are responsible for about 1,000 cases each that are often highly complex, and often take on other duties and administrative work. There are few incentives and high burnout.
- MOLSA, together with the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists (ESSSWA), local universities and vocational institutes aim to ultimately train 4,000 social service workers by 2017.

Social work expansion:

- UNICEF supported the deployment of 166 social workers in the social welfare and justice government departments at town and woreda (district) levels through supporting schools of social work, providing technical and financial support and advocating with government.
- As part of a drought emergency response, UNICEF will offer technical, training and financial support for the deployment of an additional 180 social workers and para professionals to address child protection issues at kebele (ward) and woreda levels.

Building alliances and partnerships

- A National Social Protection Platform/Social Workforce Development Platform was created and is chaired by MOLSA and the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and made up of a range of key stakeholders including government, development partners and civil society, and advocates for social protection and appropriate policies.
- MOLSA, the Ministry of Education and the Technical Vocational Education Training Colleges (TVET) collaborated to enable PSWs to upgrade their training toward a social work qualification. This training is financially supported by PEPFAR/USAID.
- UNICEF brought together community service organizations such as Save the Children, Plan International and World Vision to strengthen leadership and advocacy in the child protection arena.

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- UNICEF and PEPFAR/USAID are currently supporting the identification, standardization and projection of the social services workforce, which will include curriculum development.
- An assessment is underway to identify and standardize social service occupations within the Ethiopian National Qualification Framework and determine the capacity of training institutions. Accreditation of training institutions will follow.
- TVET provided technical assistance in the development of the Social Protection policy.
- PEPFAR/USAID enabled 34 vocational educators (national level assessors) to complete the Certification of Competency.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- Amhara province and the capital, Addis Ababa, revised their social work curriculum to better fit local needs and international standards.
- Using the technical assistance provided by PEPFAR/USAID, the government intends to revise the social work curriculum throughout the country.
- UNICEF and PEPFAR/USAID will support the Ministry of Education and TVET to ensure the incorporation of local perspectives and content, while aligning the social work education with the competency levels of international standards of social work.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- PEPFAR/USAID supported the development of instructional skills of faculty at nine TVET and two university-based schools of social work.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- UNICEF supported universities in the development of in-service professional training materials for social workers deployed in the justice sector, particularly in the Amhara and Somali regions.
- USAID/ESSSWA supported TVET in the development of in-service professional training materials and provided trainings for 56 trainers in Oromya, SNNP, Addis Ababa and Amhara regions.

Social service workers engage children in a group counseling session using collage as a medium for exploring their dreams and hopes for the future.
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Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- Job satisfaction and retention needs of social workers and para professionals have not been formally investigated.
- PEPFAR/USAID and UNICEF supported capacity development within MOLSA, professional association and relevant educational institutions. However, resources are minimal, reflecting the early stages of the implementation of the new social development strategy.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- PEPFAR/USAID and UNICEF supported different conferences that contributed to the operational capacity of ESSSWA. They are now a key player in promoting the expansion of the social service workforce.

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MALAWI

Collecting and sharing human resource data
- The Social Welfare Department had, in 2009 (prior to the period under review), performed a qualitative and quantitative assessment of human resource capacity.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment
- A National Social Welfare Policy was recently submitted to the cabinet for approval. This document prioritizes coordination, regulation and resourcing of the social welfare sector with particular attention paid to developing an adequate corps of social welfare officers.
- A recognition of the lack of qualified social workers led to the use of volunteers and para social workers in implementing social services

Building alliances and partnerships
- A technical work group brought together government, civil society organizations and development partners implementing social welfare programs for discussions pertaining to social welfare and social service workforce issues.

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The professionalization of social work by building practitioner capacity at all levels.

Joint action plan implemented to build capacity at all levels, expand training and develop microenterprises to support workers

Government pays the salaries of trained para social workers

National Occupational Standards were developed

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- PEPFAR/USAID, UNICEF, and the National Association of Social Workers worked closely with the Chancellor and Magomero Colleges. In 2014 a degree program for social workers was introduced at Chancellor College, geared to civil servants.
- Magomero College will offer a one-year certificate in social work as well as a two-year diploma in social work. The students can then transfer to Chancellor College for a four-year degree.
- 80 social welfare assistants are undergoing a four-year degree course offered by Chancellor College, supported by UNICEF and PEPFAR/USAID Malawi.
- Magomero College developed a diploma course, which recognizes the prior knowledge of students, and is reviewing a Social Welfare Certificate Course.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- The degree and diploma courses incorporate global standards and generally accepted principles of social work practice and used case studies to consider the local context.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- Magomero College is working with partners to develop cost estimates regarding the implementation of the certificate and diploma courses.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- In-service training was set up for social work assessors, targeting instructors who are conducting field placement assessments.
- Social service workers accessed the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI) distance learning course.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- The National Association of Social Workers is being formally registered. In 2015, with the support of UNICEF, an interim governing committee was elected and a constitution and code of ethics were developed.

Children playing Draughts game at Lusalumwe children's corner, Malawi.
© Laura Kastner for USAID/ASSIST/URC

MOZAMBIQUE

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Collecting and sharing human resource data
- The ratio of social workers to the population was 1:15,645. There are currently only 429 social action technicians or early education agents in the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action (MGCSA), too few to meet the needs of around 2.1 million OVC, respond to other national social challenges or implement the 2016-2024 National Social Protection Strategy.
- PEPFAR funded a capacity assessment in the Sofala and Niassa regions that led to inclusion of this information in the provincial Social and Economic Plans.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment
- MGCSA introduced a five-tier system of qualification linked to remuneration packages for social service workers.
- Qualified social workers supervised community volunteers and engaged in referral, case management and placement for OVC and PLHIV.
- 151 social action technicians and 25 early childhood educators graduated between 2011 and 2014.

Building alliances and partnerships
- The Social Action Working Group coordinated action among development partners (including PEPFAR/USAID and DFID) and partners with PEPFAR/USAID regarding pre-service as well as in-service training of social workers.
- UNICEF was active in the design of the Operational Plan for Social Action (2015-2019), which involved defining the approach, activities, results and costs of intervention with OVC.

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The approval of the National Social Protection Strategy

Expanded education opportunities are available at multiple levels

The new Social Protection Strategy aims to enhance social service workforce performance

The introduction of Level 2 community social workers will provide the statutory link to community-level case management for more complex child protection cases

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- MGCSA and the ISCISA (Higher Education Institute for Health Sciences) aim to streamline the Social Action university degree course into a 'requalification' curriculum and gear this to social action technicians.
- A university degree in Social Action is being rolled out by ISCISA and is funded by UNICEF. 40 students are expected to graduate in June 2016.
- In conjunction with the REPSSI and with UNICEF support, curricula were designed for community social workers (Level 2), who will handle case management of complex child protection matters at the community level. This curriculum, having been validated by the Sectorial Technical Committee and the Validation Board, is awaiting endorsement by the Ministry of Science and Technology. It will be aligned with the vocational education reform as well as with the qualifiers for the government career and remuneration system in Mozambique.
- PEPFAR/USAID is supporting the training of Levels 3 and 4 social action personnel at district and provincial levels. These courses are awaiting endorsement by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Higher and Professional Education.
- Training for provincial social action personnel at Level 5 is being implemented on a pilot basis in the cities of Maputo, Sofala and Niassa.
- Hiring has been put on hold due to resource constraints.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- Local knowledge pertaining to the care of children and families affected by HIV/AIDS was incorporated into the Level 2 community social worker curricula.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- PEPFAR/USAID supported the development of facilitation guides to strengthen teaching methods as well as a competency-based curriculum for social workers, which includes an evaluation component and follow-up with graduates to improve workforce planning and training.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- In Sofala and Niassa, PEPFAR/USAID funded short-term training in 2014 for 52 public servants on strategic human resource management; planning and budgeting; assets management; budget management and auditing; and monitoring and evaluation.

Nampula, Mozambique. ▶
© Stig Nygaard, Mozambique, 2007, CC by 2.0

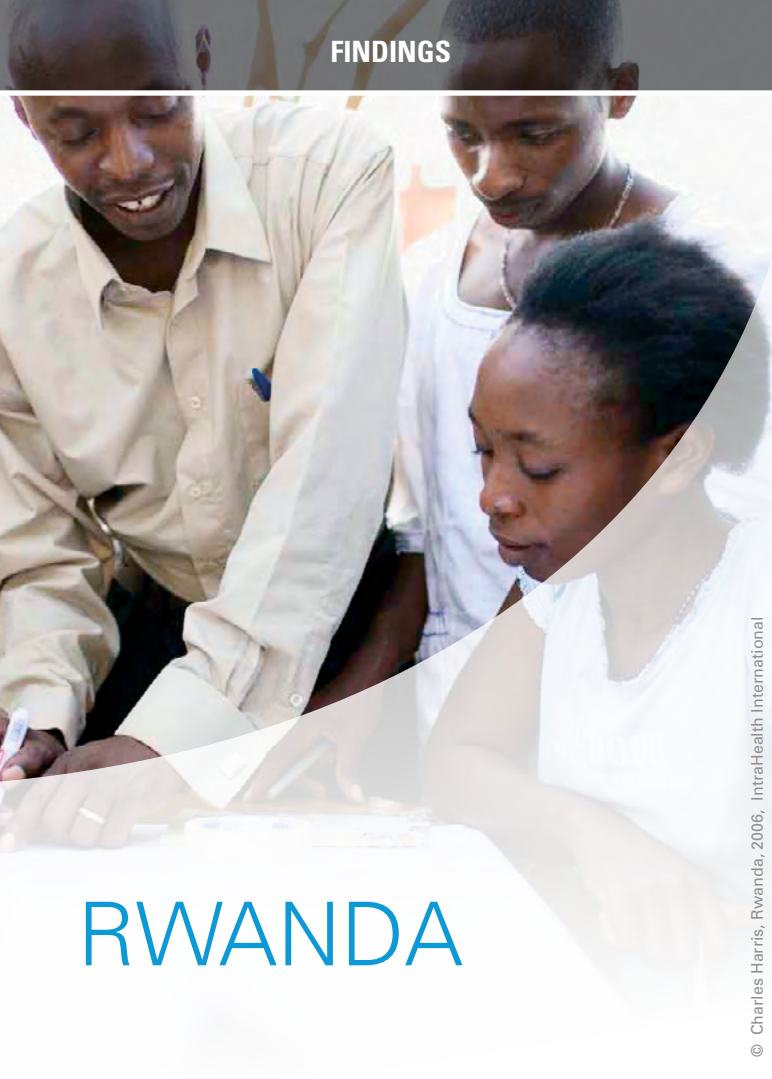## Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- The adoption of the new Social Protection Strategy was identified as a key mechanism toward improving and strengthening social service workforce performance.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- Due to historical underinvestment in social work, the poor understanding of the potential role of social workers as well as the limited number of trained social workers in the country, no professional association has been established.
- UNICEF plans to support the requalification curriculum and to host a national conference that will consider workforce strengthening issues and the launch of a social work association.

RWANDA

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Collecting and sharing human resource data

- In 2015, the University of Rwanda (Department of Social Sciences) assessed employment opportunities for social work graduates. Graduates were employed in the public sector or civil society, most in child welfare positions. This has led to the development of a new concentration in child and family welfare as part of a new Masters of Social Work program.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment

- Since 2013, 70 social workers and clinical psychologists were deployed to 30 different districts in the welfare sector to implement the child care reform process. They supervised para professional volunteers (Inshuti z'Umuryango: Friends of the Family).
- The volunteers carried out child protection interventions at the district, sector, cell and village (Umudugudu) levels.

Building alliances and partnerships

- The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Government, coordinated to serve OVC.
- The University of Rwanda initiated a Center for Social Work Education and Practice. The Center is guided by an advisory committee that includes representatives of public and civil society organizations.
- Alliances with donors and international NGOs (including PEPFAR/USAID, UNICEF, Care International and WHO) resulted in the emergence of the para professional volunteers referred to above and trainers.

MAJOR MILESTONE:
Capacity development of para professional volunteers; strengthening intervention at the local community level.

In-service training keeps social workers informed of "home-grown solutions"

Para professional child protection workers at the community level are unpaid but receive incentives from the government.

Since 2013, 70 social workers and psychologists have been deployed to 30 districts to implement a new care reform process

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Aligning education and training with workforce planning
- Degrees, certificates and diplomas in social work are offered.
- A child and family welfare concentration is being developed as part of a new Masters of Social Work program at the University of Rwanda.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices
- Rwandan and Canadian academics are identifying relevant processes for synthesizing indigenous and international social work theory and practice in Rwanda.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods
- University of Rwanda (Department of Social Sciences) intensified its collaboration with social service agencies and the government regarding practicum placements.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities
- In-service training that keeps professionals informed of 'home-grown solutions' was offered by a range of organizations, often in collaboration with the line ministries.

Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention
- Para professional volunteers were encouraged to organize locally. Incentivized by government, such groupings initiated small income generation projects.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers
- A proposed constitution for a National Association of Social Workers, after submission to the Rwanda Governance Board, is being refined.

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SOUTH AFRICA

MAJOR MILESTONE:
The ongoing review of the 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare is reassessing existing institutional and human resource areas and the potential for realigning these in light of anticipated service delivery change and improvements.

There are an increased number of trained social workers and CYCWs at professional and auxiliary levels

Supervision capacity is being prioritized

Policies are being aligned with developmental social welfare goals

Collecting and sharing human resource data

- Department of Social Development (DSD) annually measured provincial employee statistics against employment equity targets.
- The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) tracked registered practitioners, showing increases over the last 5 years for social workers and auxiliary social workers, and tracked Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCWs), who as of 2015 had to register with the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Workers under the SACSSP.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment

- DSD has aligned workforce planning with the results of a ten-year review of the implementation of the 1997 White Paper for Social Welfare.
- DSD has led the alignment of new state policies toward developmental and transformational service delivery and promoted strategic workforce planning including:
  - ▶ The Framework for Social Welfare Services (2013)
  - ▶ The Human Resource Model for the Social Welfare Services Sector (2011)
  - ▶ The Generic Norms and Standards for Social Welfare Services (2013)
  - ▶ The Five-year Sector Human Resources Plan, as well as an intended Demand and Supply Model
  - ▶ The Policy for Social Service Practitioners (Draft 8), which extends the Social Services Professions Act 11 of 1978 (amended in 1998)
  - ▶ The forthcoming Child Care and Protection Policy.

Building alliances and partnerships

- DSD consulted widely and accepted submissions from non-governmental organizations including National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) and faith- and community-based organizations; for example, regarding the White Paper Review, amendments to the Children's Act, and a Sexual Offences Bill. NACCW also engaged with the SACSSP regarding a social services regulatory bill.
- The Isibindi collaboration developed and strengthened relationships among the DSD, NACCW, and faith- and community-based organizations.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- The South African Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) Sector Skills Plan (2014-2019) aligned the sector-based skills needs with the government's economic and social development priorities. HWSETA provided learnerships, internships, short course skills programs and bursaries.
- DSD continued to offer a Social Work Scholarship Program and appointed two thirds of those on scholarships into DSD upon graduation.
- The Accredited Supervision Program for Social Service Practitioners, crafted with academia and civil society, capacitated supervisors, ensured professional social service practices and provided guidelines for on-site curriculum and assessment of content development.
- The accredited CYCW qualification at Level 4 was offered as the training framework for the Isibindi model. 5,540 CYCWs completed or are currently in training.
- A Competency Framework was being developed to revise the 15 social service occupational classifications and guide a revised Skills Development Plan.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- DSD in partnership with HWSETA initiated short-term exchanges as well as skills and knowledge sharing between South Africa and the United Kingdom.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- NACCW ensured that its trainers can register as accredited trainers and assessors with the HWSETA. Training policy documents clarified criteria for selection and training. NACCW established a hierarchy of workers, trainers/mentors/moderators/supervisors and senior mentors for quality assurance purposes.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- DSD instituted an accredited continuing professional development program for its social workers.
- The SACSSP required registrants to demonstrate ongoing professional development.
- The Isibindi project offered educational modules focusing on disability, early childhood development and youth development.

SUPPORT

Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- The Social Work Indaba (2015) developed resolutions regarding management, supervision, retention, multidisciplinary practice and ethics. This has been finalized and is being presented to DSD management structures for approval.
- The Supervision Framework and DSD's Supervision Policy (the latter to be rolled out in 2016/17) develop supervisory capacity.
- The Guidelines for Management and the new Customized Performance Management Development System provide support to managers.
- Social work salaries were revised in 2011. Social workers in the non-profit organizations were subsidized at 75% of those in government.
- The draft Induction Program has been developed and reviewed by stakeholders within the Social Development sector and will be piloted in the current financial year.
- NACCW offered a limited Caring for Caregivers program to support workers in dealing with occupational demands.
- Pact South Africa implements the PEPFAR/USAID-funded Government Capacity Building and Support Program that strengthens DSD capacity regarding the management of OVC community care service structures; strengthens inter-sectoral integration; improves timely data on program performance and OVC indicators; and strengthens child protection response frameworks.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- NACCW offered its members peer support and in-service training through its regional chapters.
- Other categories of workers such as community development workers, faith-based youth workers and early childhood development workers are working toward formal recognition with the Council.

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UGANDA

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The strengthening of sustainable child protection mechanisms across 80 district and associated lower local government levels

Training and education reached more with better quality, and is sustainably funded

National Association of Social Workers of Uganda (NASWU) offered courses in social work ethics

Social service workforce staffing levels increased from 47% in 2011 to 65% in 2015

Collecting and sharing human resource data

- Since 2011, the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (MGLSD) has led local and national government initiatives to conduct quarterly reviews of social service workforce data and facilitate workforce planning.
- The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) maintains a database of trained social service workers within local government working on child protection matters.
- SUNRISE OVC (Strengthening Uganda's National Response for Implementation of Services for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children), funded by PEPFAR/USAID, conducted a community mapping exercise in 72 districts. Knowing there were 1.5 million vulnerable children informed further activities.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment

- SUNRISE OVC built leadership capacity within local government through a practice-oriented Professional Certificate Course in Child Protection. This course was funded by the Oak Foundation and developed through collaboration among MGLSD, REPSSI, TPO (Transcultural Psychosocial Organization) Uganda and Makerere University. This is a certificate course from Makerere University that is accredited by the National Council for Higher Education.
- Social service workforce staffing levels increased from 41% in 2011 to 57% in 2015.
- Local governments created new administrative structures and accordingly increased their staffing rates. Social service workers have moved out of the roles of community development officers into better paying sub-county chief positions within local government structures. The extent has not been quantified and recruitment ceilings set by the government limited the number of appointments. Additionally, once some social service workers received additional training, they moved out of the field into better paying but unrelated occupations.
- The SUNRISE OVC Project, funded by PEPFAR/USAID, trained 9,808 community-based para social workers.

Building alliances and partnerships

- MGLSD, Makerere University and NGOs developed the child protection course. The input of practitioners strengthened the curricula and increased the quality of the offered courses. This led to government and donors being more willing to financially support such initiatives.
- The Strengthening Decentralization Systems Project (funded by PEPFAR/USAID) coordinates United States Government (USG)-funded partners and facilitates district-level coordination among non-USG funded partners.

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- MGLSD streamlined training programs to ensure national standardization among all local government social workers. This facilitated the development, accreditation and institutionalization of professional training curricula.
- Universities such as Makerere and Nsamizi now integrate the Professional Certificate Course in Child Protection into their entry level and graduate social work programs.
- A post-graduate diploma in Social Justice was introduced.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- The delivery of child protection training was locally contextualized and responsive to indigenous conditions, drawing on the expertise of local academics and practitioners as guest facilitators. This course was also peer reviewed by global experts in the sector.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- The Child Protection course and Social Justice Diploma were vetted and accredited by the local faculty.
- Input into the field practica was provided by the SUNRISE OVC project.
- There are also research mentorship schemes led by AFRICHILD in partnership with the CPWG and NASWU.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- Numerous in-service programs related to child protection were available. While these were advantageous to the child protection sector, areas such as HIV/AIDS, OVC and social protection remain under-resourced.
- A core team of national accredited trainers, registered on a TPO Uganda database, provided child protection in-service training. Having trainers in each of eight regions increased access to training.

Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- Coordinated service delivery enhanced the recruitment of degreed social workers in the NGO sector. At local government level this occurred through peer review at OVC service providers' quarterly coordination meetings, and at the national level, through the CPWG.
- Uganda identified local government as an important partner in promoting job satisfaction and worker retention. Regular performance reviews were standard procedure within the public service. In some districts, bylaws were introduced to prevent excessive mobility between departments by social workers. Additionally, staff whose education was state-funded were bonded for the same number of years they were supported.
- NASWU identified a code of conduct for social work practitioners.

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- NASWU, which has been revived, includes professionals with a diploma or degree in social work. Once regulation is introduced, the title 'social worker' will be limited and will not refer to all social service workers as it currently does.
- Through regular seminars and social work fairs, NASWU actively promoted social welfare career opportunities. Social workers were linked to prospective employers for internships and hiring opportunities.
- NASWU offered courses on ethics in social work.
- NASWU is a member of the CPWG. Several agencies attending CPWG meetings signed up with NASWU for recruitment and mentorship support.

Social workers walk in the 2015 World Social Work Day event.
© Michael Byamukama, Uganda, 2015
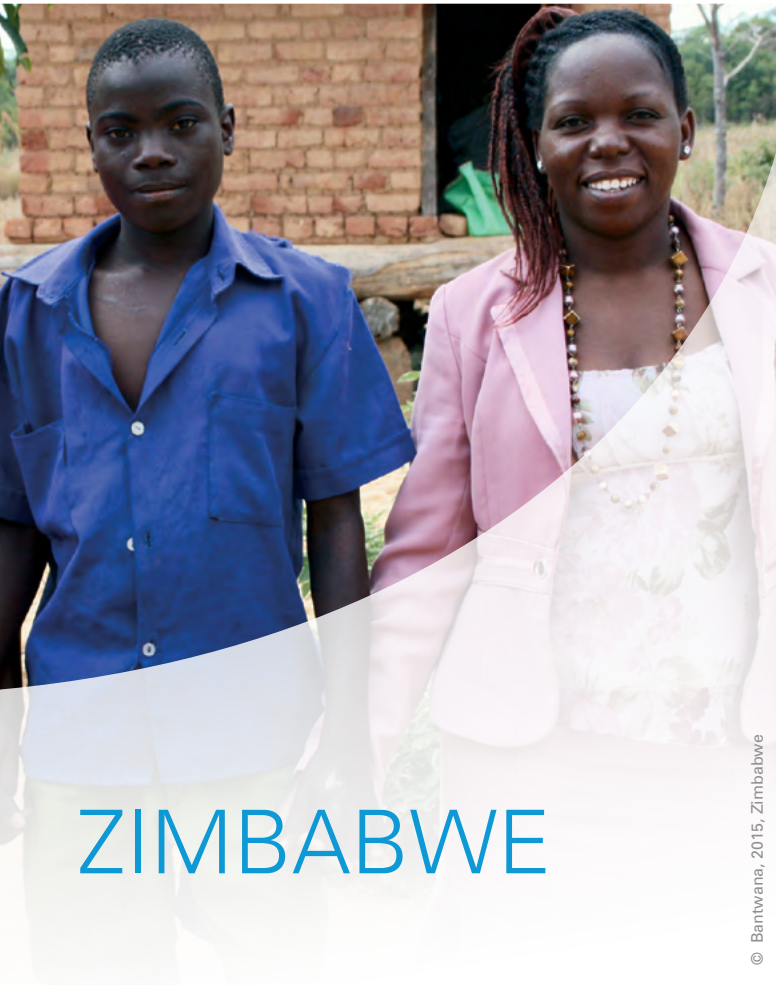
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ZIMBABWE

MAJOR MILESTONE:

The strengthening of sustainable child protection mechanisms across 65 districts and associated lower local government levels

Schools of Social Work increased from one to three

The Council of Social Workers, the National Association of Social Workers and the Schools of Social Work were strengthened

A national case management framework opened 10,000 new community case care worker positions

Strategy

- State policies have been introduced to advance workforce planning and strengthening, including:
  - ▸ A strategic plan, developed with PEPFAR/USAID to address human resource recruitment, retention and professional development
  - ▸ The National Action Plan (OVC 2) (2010-2015) expanded the social service workforce
  - ▸ The Public and Private Probation Officer Statutory Instrument of 2012 extended the right to deliver probation services to private social workers, potentially increasing resources within the short-staffed public probation system
  - ▸ The Social Workers Act was amended in 2013 to include other workers
  - ▸ Civil service recruitment was unfrozen as of 2013
  - ▸ In 2013 the Department of Child Welfare and Probation Services (DCWPS) was created parallel to the Department of Social Services (DSS)
  - ▸ The Zimbabwean Council for Social Workers was constituted with a fulltime secretariat and registrar in 2012.

Collecting and sharing human resource data

- DSS continued to monitor the ratio of social service workers to the population.
- The Council registration requirements provided an indication of the number of practicing and qualified social workers.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment

- The creation of DCWPS allowed for deployment in the child protection arena. 30 social work graduate interns were, as an interim measure in 2014-15, seconded to DCWPS, particularly in high-burden districts, such as the rural areas. This program, including stipends for transport costs and other incidentals, was sponsored by World Education Incorporated (WEI). The creation of the Department of Child Protection opened opportunities for employment as 65 district heads, 10 provincial heads and 5 national officers were appointed.
- A national case management framework for OVC was piloted and then adopted in 2015. This expanded the corps of child protection community case care workers across all districts to almost 10,000 workers. Government intends to pay these salaries, but the Child Protection Fund (CPF) was temporarily employing and deploying these community case care workers.
- Over the last five years, 294 social workers and 65 case management officers were recruited by the government.
- 25 graduate officers were encouraged to complete social work qualifications.
- The Zimbabwean Council for Social Workers is responsible for monitoring suitability for practice and improving recruitment, hiring and deployment practices and systems. In 2012, it set up Minimum Standards for the training of community case care workers.

Building alliances and partnerships

- The case management framework was funded by CPF (which includes several international donors such as DFID, SIDA, and SDC), WEI, PEPFAR/USAID, UNICEF, Save the Children, and United Methodist Committee on Relief.
- Alliances between the state (Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare), the National Association of Social Workers and the Council enhanced opportunities for advocacy.

Aligning education and training with workforce planning

- The Ministry of Public Services, Labor and Social Welfare has a Core Team guiding the roll-out of the child protection-focused case management approach. A curriculum is being developed in collaboration with the three Zimbabwean schools of social work.
- Social welfare assistants were able to upgrade their skills through a new social work certificate.
- Sociologists and psychologists could now complete a post-graduate diploma in Social Work in order to practice as social workers.

Ensuring curricula incorporate both local/indigenous knowledge and international best practices

- Curricula were audited in 2014 allowing for the insertion of context-relevant modules such as social protection, gender issues and climate change.

Strengthening faculty and teaching methods

- The Zimbabwe schools of social work remained vulnerable because of the difficulty of retaining qualified and experienced teaching personnel who emigrated. Indeed, the Masters of Social Work program had to be terminated. The only two individuals who gained doctorates in Zimbabwe teach outside of the country.

Providing in-service professional development opportunities

- PEPFAR/USAID and CPF ensured that diplomas and certificates were offered to both professionals and para professionals across different ministry grade levels

Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

- The Council wrote a manual for those supervising junior social workers and other care staff. A code of ethics was adopted as a statutory instrument.
- Zimbabwe (as of 2014) offered post-graduate diplomas as a retention mechanism.
- It was hoped to retain staff in the case management system by improving work conditions (e.g., provision of fuel and computers).

Supporting professional associations to enhance professional growth and development of the workers

- After community case care management was launched in 2011, the registration of social workers increased.
- The Child Protection Fund and USAID supported development of the Council's organizational capacity, thus strengthening regulatory mechanisms, facilitating recruitment and expanding continuing education opportunities.
- The Council is advocating for a Bill on Social Work as a regulatory framework for community-based workers so that they are recognized as community-based protection agents.
- Zimbabwe also has a National Association of Social Workers, which is being revived to take leadership in social work mobilization.

A social worker supports a family during a visit.
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6 EMERGING ISSUES
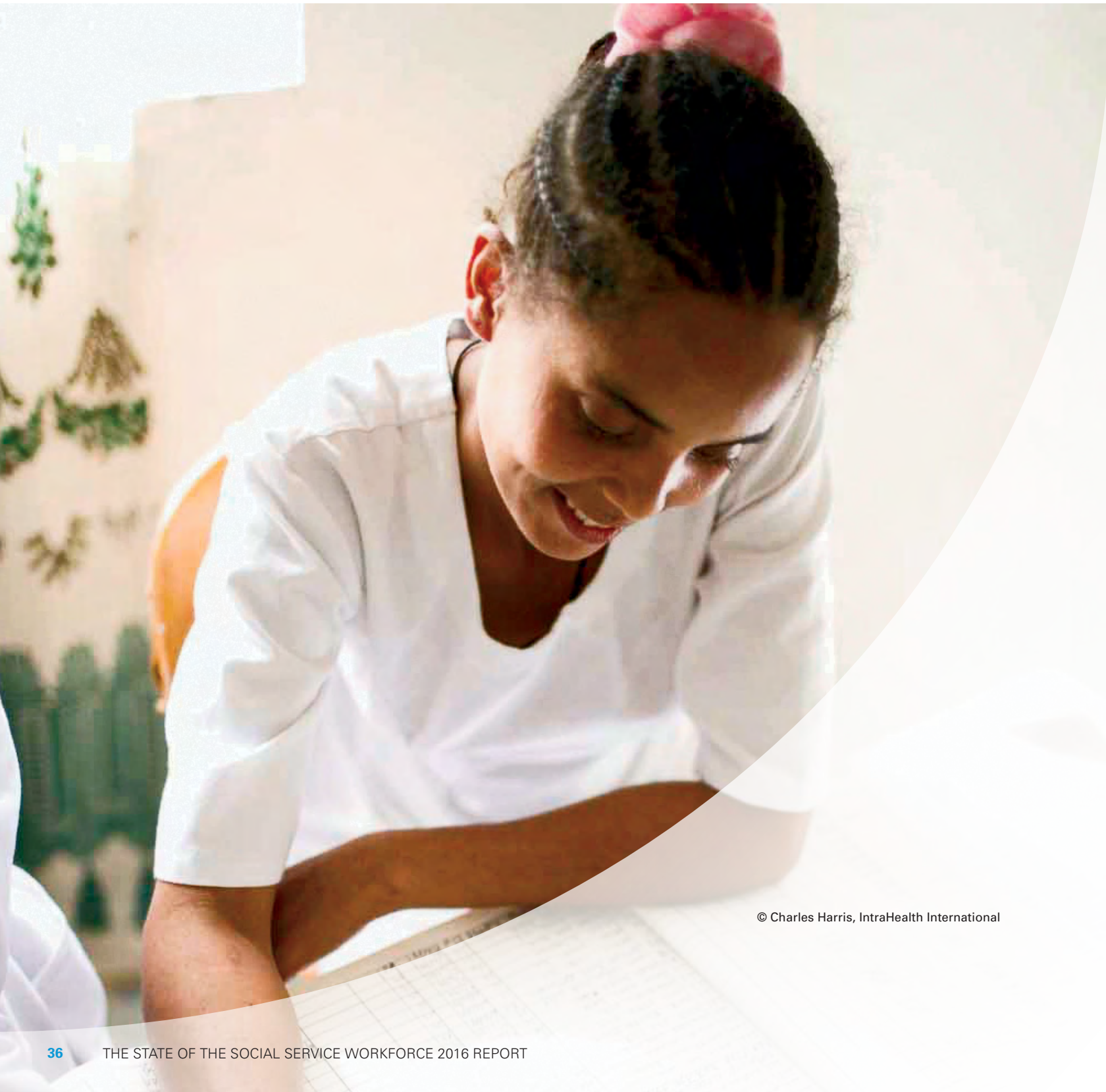
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This section examines common issues that have emerged across these eight sub-Saharan countries as they have put in place mechanisms to strengthen their social service workforces.

Planning

Adopting a strategic approach to planning the social service workforce

Over the past five years, the most important change strategies implemented by these eight countries included developing social welfare policies, accessing funding, restructuring ministries and identifying and engaging champions.

In seven countries, a range of national policies regarding workforce strengthening has been introduced.

Policies set the context and direction for implementation and signal political orientations and political will to support particular approaches and programs (Von Gliszczynski and Leisering, 2016). Accordingly, Zimbabwe, for example, has ensured that various legislation is in line with the constitution, while South Africa has invested significant effort in re-aligning policies with a developmental social welfare orientation. Ethiopia has introduced a National Social Protection Policy and Strategy; Malawi a National Social Welfare Policy; Mozambique a National Social Protection Strategy; Rwanda a National Care Reform Program Protection Strategy; and Uganda, a cabinet paper regarding investment in OVC.

While most countries experienced an increase in funding for social service workforce efforts over the past five years, whether from national government or international donors, underfunding remains a serious constraint. Over the past five years, the injection of funds through development partners such as UNICEF and PEPFAR, has supported a broad range of efforts to strengthen the social service workforce. However, workforce strengthening is a long-term undertaking, requiring a long-term vision. Several country strategies have taken into account national government funding of workforce cadres, such as child and youth care workers in South Africa. Zimbabwe intends to pay the salaries for para social workers. At the same time, severe resource shortages have inhibited the expansion and effective deployment of a social service workforce in Côte d'Ivoire. In Mozambique, new professionals cannot be absorbed due to resource limitations. Governments and local advocates that anticipate funding changes will be better positioned to ensure medium and long term provisions for the sustainability of programs.

The analysis across these eight countries has shown that shifts in the names and types of ministries overseeing the social service workforce influence priority-setting and resource allocation and ultimately the roles and make-up of a social service workforce. In 2013, in Zimbabwe, the Department of Child Welfare and Probation Services

In South Africa, from 2010 - 2015, there was a 49% increase in the number of CYCWs trained; a 70% increase in social workers and a 44% increase in social auxiliary workers registered.

(DCWPS) was created parallel to the Department of Social Services within the Ministry of Public Services, Labor and Social Welfare (DLSA). Respondents suggested that restructuring departments and creating one with a specific focus on child welfare led to the strengthening of child protection. The disadvantage identified, however, is that other areas of need were potentially overlooked. In Ethiopia, social service delivery is part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, among other ministries, and the social service workforce is also engaged in supporting the development of microenterprises. In 2010, it was also suggested that the decentralization of social service workforce management could be advantageous. Many countries, including Mozambique and Uganda, are building capacity on a regional basis and advocate for a localized approach. Indeed, Uganda emphasizes that offering regional training for public workers increases access to such training and led to higher retention of those workers.

A further strategy identified at the Cape Town Conference was identifying and engaging champions to advance the cause for a strong, diversified social service workforce. NACCW in South Africa, INFS in Côte d'Ivoire, and the universities in Uganda might be seen as taking on this role. In other countries, such as Zimbabwe, university professors and professional association leaders have successfully affected change.

Collecting and sharing human resource data
The 2010 conference emphasized the importance of workforce mapping to advance an understanding of human resource capacity. Governments needed to be engaged to define the extent and the urgency of social service workforce issues. In the last five years, most of the eight countries have actively gathered data either through mapping activities or the monitoring of registration with professional associations or regulatory bodies. However, such data collection was not consistent or comprehensive across the social service sector. This report highlights that few countries have ongoing and comprehensive methods of collecting data. Establishing and maintaining an ongoing human resource database requires a consistent human resource and financial investment.

Improving recruitment, hiring and deployment practices
The workforce has diversified and expanded in all the respondent countries. Concerns about addressing the needs of PLHIV have served as a vehicle for workforce mobilization in a number of countries, including Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In all countries, multiple layers of the workforce collaborated to ensure a continuum of care for vulnerable children and families. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, community counsellors are members of civil society who are trained in care and support modules and are supervised by social assistants, who are professionals with three years of training at INFS. They work together to support vulnerable populations and address HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, poverty and social integration. In Mozambique, where there is a five-tier system of workers, qualified social workers supervised community volunteers and engaged in referral, case management and placement for PLHIV.

Issue-based recruitment, hiring and deployment assists with identifying relevant personnel, streamlines funding, and supports curriculum development and has become an approach international organizations typically rely on for mobilization. However, relying on an issue-based program may create limitations. As noted above, for example, in Zimbabwe, the newly-established corps of community case care managers potentially marginalized other fields of social welfare.

Another issue arising from the analysis of these eight countries pertains to the type of employer carrying out the recruitment, hiring and deployment of a workforce. Differentiated resourcing between the government and non-profit sector can lead to competition and uneven service delivery. In South Africa, active state recruitment with attractive benefits has left the local NGO sector under-resourced. In other countries, the opposite occurs when international agencies offer higher salaries and draw workers away from public sector positions.

Building alliances and partnerships to strengthen leadership and advocacy
Across all countries, partnerships that successfully included government (national, district and local), academia, practitioners, and local and international NGOs and donors seemed to be essential to changing national social

service landscapes. In countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe, continued or additional government engagement has resulted in the introduction of social welfare and protection policies. These partnerships function at local, regional and national levels. The likelihood of policy and funding shifts being sustainable is higher where government has been involved.

At the Cape Town Conference, workforce mapping was identified as a useful tool for bringing together key stakeholders to build alliances, develop communication and form a coherent view regarding the composition of an effective and appropriate social service workforce. It also was seen as facilitating collective action for future planning, which is typically more successful than intervention by single stakeholders. Although workforce mapping was reported as useful in several countries, the degree to which this process led to increased collaboration to enhance the workforce is not known and requires further consideration.

Developing

Aligning education and training with effective planning efforts

A concern highlighted at the 2010 conference was that social service training institutions typically were unable to produce sufficient graduates. Ways of attracting students and of facilitating access were discussed and distance learning was raised as a potential option.

Since then, educational opportunities have been both strengthened and diversified. In all the countries studied,

persons can access formal and accredited educational opportunities both as para social service workers and as social workers, though the extent of educational opportunities is not clear. Training is offered through community-based training programs as well as through tertiary institutions. Diplomas and degrees are increasingly being made available. In-service continuing education programs are being expanded. Working professionals can in some instances access part-time opportunities eliminating the opportunity cost of studying full time. In Malawi, the prior knowledge of prospective students is credited, affirming the experience students bring into their learning and creating opportunities for older students.

Training in many countries is portrayed as being in sync with identified development goals. In Uganda the introduction of a Professional Certificate Course in Child Protection and the Social Justice diploma are seen as meeting a range of goals including strengthening faculty, increasing retention of district government workers and widening the options for continuing education. It is useful when training can address a range of targets. In doing so, though, it is important to ensure that a comprehensive rather than parallel approach to educating and strengthening the workforce is adopted and that resources are not directed primarily toward one cadre of social service personnel.

For effective and efficient use of personnel, career opportunities and training must be linked to each other. The report highlights situations in which current graduates struggle to

In Mozambique, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, has taken proactive steps to strengthen its staff in terms of numbers and qualifications and introduced a five-tier system of qualification linked to remuneration packages for social welfare workers. Level 2 community social workers are linked to community committees and provide the statutory link to case management at the community level for more complex child protection cases. Levels 3 and 4 social action personnel work at district and provincial levels and Level 5 workers are social action personnel at the provincial level.
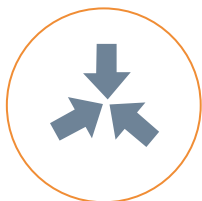
Mutual support and solidarity are needed to reduce hierarchies and the possibilities of stigmatization of certain cadres of social service workers.

achieve social service employment or be retained, such as in Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique. This may in part be related to inadequate budgets and compensation, particularly at the government level.

Countries reported that educational strategies such as bursaries or scholarships, decentralized training and distance education aided in recruitment and retention.

Coordination among different categories of social service personnel is needed to facilitate cross-cadre synergies. Hierarchies need to be interrogated. NACCW, for example, had to convince social workers that the professionalization of child and youth workers would not undermine social work in South Africa as child and youth workers were doing qualitatively different work. Mutual support and solidarity are needed to reduce the possibilities of stigmatization of certain cadres of social service workers.

Grounding curricula in indigenous contexts
Delegates at the Cape Town Conference wished for greater indigenization of the social service workforce curricula. All the countries contributing to this report implied that curricula developed over recent years were adapted to the local context by taking into consideration local needs. The degree to and processes by which indigenization is occurring were not highlighted, including, for example, the insertion of research by local scholars into curricula.

Strengthening faculty and teaching
Information gathered from these eight countries shows that training emphases over the last five years have been on certificate and diploma qualification. Social work curricula have also received attention and have been reviewed to ensure they are current. Child protection concentrations or modules have been introduced. While in Zimbabwe the Masters of Social Work program had to be shut down, due to lack of qualified teaching staff, in other countries training now includes certification, diplomas, Bachelors degrees, Masters degrees and post-graduate diplomas. In some countries, such as Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe curricula had input from government, educational, NGO and development

Child and Youth Care Worker in a study program in South Africa.
© NACCW, 2007, South Africa

partner representatives. The Rwandan situation illuminates the potential role of university departments in driving social service workforce strengthening. Educational institutions should be involved from the outset in data gathering, research and curriculum development as has occurred there.

The country reports demonstrated that training was delivered either through formal tertiary institutions or non-profits. In some countries such as in Uganda and Ethiopia, certificates earned through in-service training were recognized by the state (regarding employment opportunities), or by bodies setting qualification standards. In other countries, coordination across various ministries or cadres did not result in accreditation of the curriculum. This lack of recognition may affect the career path of social service workers and influence retention.

Various training models cited suggest that one can effectively establish a corps of trainers to educate a large number of students using a train-the-trainer model. When using this model, some caution must be exercised to ensure that pedagogical skills also are imparted (Bax, 2002). Being an effective child and youth care worker, for example, does not necessarily translate into being a skilled teacher. A further issue has to do with recognizing trainers as educators. Accreditation typically focuses on those trained, rather than the trainers. Such assets must be institutionalized by formal recognition of their training competencies and their role as educators. Trainers in Ethiopia, South Africa and Uganda have been formally recognized as vital educational resources to their nations.

Recognition of these trainers may act as a retention mechanism.

At the Cape Town Conference, various models of providing social work students with pre-service experience were discussed. The interface between universities and social service workers' employers was touched on. Since then, a number of countries have ensured that educational planning includes education providers as well as other stakeholders such as NGOs. Curricula have been reviewed for fit-for-purpose as demonstrated in Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Mozambique where competency-based frameworks are being utilized. The foundational training is often reinforced through in-service training.

Providing broad range of professional development and in-service training opportunities

Over the last five years, in-service training options, often supported by international donors, were offered by government and/or local training or educational institutions, depending on local contexts and level of training. Training opportunities expanded across all types of workers. In Côte d'Ivoire, 1,315 social work assistants have been trained by INFS and social workers have access to on-the-job training in monitoring and evaluation, child protection and project management. In Ethiopia, MOLSA, the Ministry of Education and the Technical Vocational Education Training Colleges (TVET) collaborated to enable para social workers to upgrade their training. UNICEF supported universities in the development of in-service professional training materials for social workers
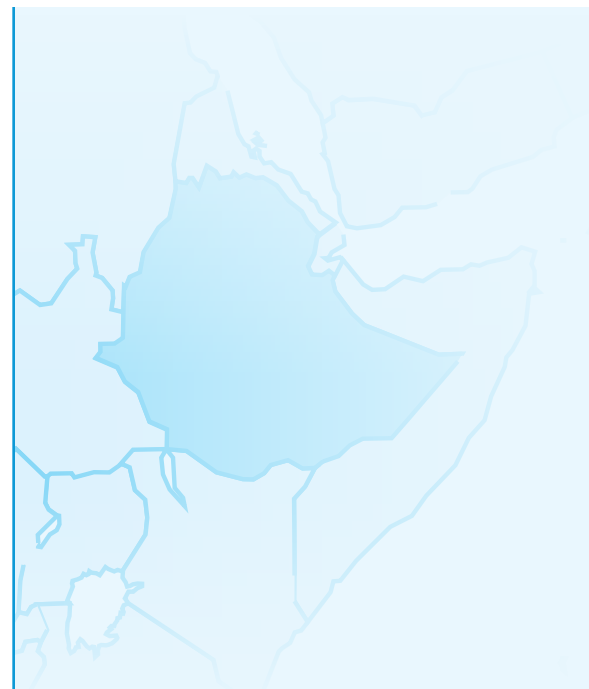
In Ethiopia, with the support of PEPFAR/USAID more than 2,000 para social workers have been trained and employed by the government. Currently, these PSWs play a critical role in social services mainly for OVC and PLHIV. They also support and supervise community volunteers and lay case workers. A policy shift by the government gives more emphasis to workforce development and government is willing and committed to pay PSWs' salaries. Additionally, there is a system to upgrade their education to university level.

Both supervision and the provision of continuing education help social service personnel remain up to date and stimulated.

deployed in the justice sector, particularly in the Amhara and Somali regions. In Malawi, in-service training was provided for field placement instructors and for para professionals who attended the REPSSI distance learning course. In Mozambique, PEPFAR/USAID funded short-term training in 2014 for 52 public servants on strategic human resource management; planning and budgeting; assets management; budget management and auditing; and monitoring and evaluation. In South Africa, ongoing professional development is required in order to maintain registration with SACSSP and DSD began an accredited professional development program

for its social workers. In Uganda, trainers were accredited to provide the Professional Certificate Course in Child Protection that was made available to public sector workers. Workers at different levels of the DCWPS have access to diploma and certificate programs through funding from PEPFAR and CPF.

Supporting
Developing or strengthening systems to improve and sustain worker performance

Over the past five years, a variety of actors, including government ministries, educational institutions and professional associations or regulatory bodies, took responsibility for performance management and development of qualification standards. This includes Cote d'Ivoire, which introduced the Standards for the Provision of Quality Services; South Africa, which has strengthened previous monitoring by introducing supervision and management policies, introducing the registration of CYCWs, and NACCW having clear quality assurance guidelines; Uganda, which has regular performance appraisals within the state sector; and Zimbabwe, which has strengthened regulatory mechanisms.

The Cape Town Conference highlighted that social service workforce novices did not receive adequate mentoring or on-the-job support. In the intervening years, supervision has been strengthened, recognizing that both supervision and the provision of continuing education help social service personnel remain up to date and stimulated and enable them to provide quality services.

Social workers visit a family as part of a pilot project to enhance access to basic services.
© UNICEF, 2016, Ethiopia

South Africa has, for instance, put in place policies and introduced manuals to assist managers and supervisors, and has plans to continue strengthening this area.

Developing tools, resources and initiatives to improve job satisfaction and retention

Concern was expressed at the Cape Town Conference about the poor work conditions for social service personnel at both government and NGO levels. This led to significant turnover, with many social service personnel leaving the sector. There were high vacancy rates, insufficient numbers of experienced personnel available and institutional memory was lost.

In the intervening years, issues of job satisfaction and retention received some attention, though poor work conditions continue to be identified as a common challenge. Offering educational opportunities and short-term exchanges between countries were discussed as ways to facilitate knowledge exchange and act as an incentive for practicing social workers. In Zimbabwe, the intention is to retain community care workers by providing them with adequate work resources.

The issue of staff retention is typically viewed as keeping qualified personnel within the social services sector. In Uganda, newly-trained personnel often found better-paying jobs within government but outside the social services sector. The Zimbabwean feedback demonstrates that qualified personnel within academic institutions move internationally where job conditions and quality of life are more alluring. The issue of brain drain or skills flight to other sectors or indeed other countries is a significant one and how to promote meaningful retention becomes a pertinent, though practically and ethically challenging question (Kalipeni, Semu and Asalele Mbilizi, 2012; Kasiram, 2009; Sager, 2014).

Professional associations/ regulatory bodies

The Cape Town Conference noted that professional associations play a vital role in shaping appropriate policies, promoting accountability and enhancing performance. Ethics and codes of conduct were needed to create a framework for quality service delivery and to help the public hold workers accountable. Over the past five years the establishment or rejuvenation of professional associations was an important strategy in a number of countries. These include the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists, the National Association of Social Workers in Malawi, National Association of Social Workers in Rwanda, the South African Council for Social Service Professionals and the National Association of Social Workers in South Africa, the National Association of Social Workers Uganda, the Zimbabwe Council for Social Work and the National Association of Social Workers in Zimbabwe.
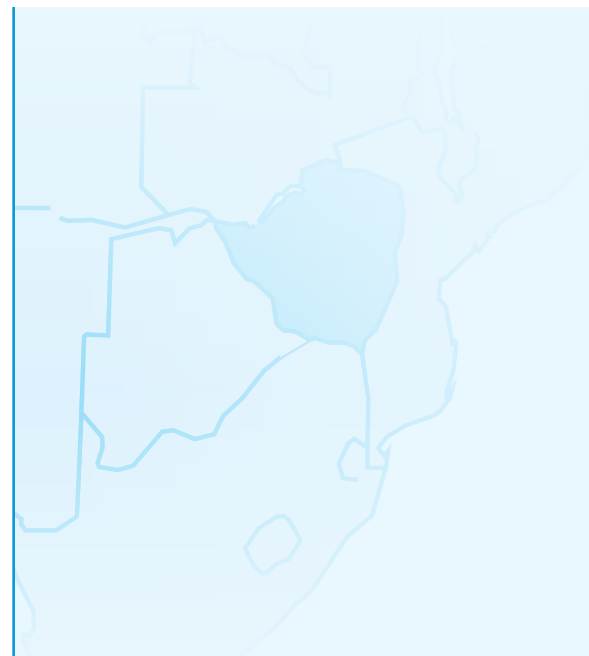
In Zimbabwe, the Council of Social Work (CSW) acts as a national regulatory mechanism for social workers in the country. Through support for increased outreach activities, the number of registered social workers has increased since 2011. CSW has supported the development of the broader social service workforce. They have been mobilizing social workers and partners to lobby for a regulatory framework for a large number of community-based workers such as CCWs. They have also been advocating for the implementation of a statutory instrument to enable non-state, qualified professional social workers to be able to carry out probation work (as per the Children's Act).

CYCW worker with children in a Safe Park.
© Nicole Brown, 2015, South Africa

As outlined in the previous sections, over the past five years there has been meaningful workforce strengthening progress in each country reviewed, under each of the categories of planning, developing and supporting the workforce. This section draws from the analysis of progress and ongoing challenges in these eight countries and offers a broader perspective to identify key areas of future consideration for the field of social service workforce strengthening. This section takes into account an awareness of global trends in the sector and how the social service workforce will become ever more relevant and essential in the context of a changing and diverse world experiencing poverty, disaster and conflict, migration and other global issues that have individual and societal impact.

The following are a selection of key areas outlined by the Alliance (roughly following the general categories of planning, developing and supporting the workforce) that we suggest be considered in future efforts to strengthen the social service workforce:

1 Identifying national coordination mechanisms to develop and implement social service workforce plans and initiatives

The process of compiling social service workforce data and information across multiple countries for the past two State of the Social Service Workforce reports has pointed to a major gap in the area of social service workforce strengthening. Human resource mapping exercises within specific countries have run into a similar issue. In no country studied has there been an identified entity responsible for planning, gathering data and tracking information on social service workforce strengthening initiatives underway throughout the country and across multiple stakeholders, such as government ministries, NGOs, universities, professional associations, civil society, bilaterals and multilateral agencies.

A coordinating mechanism at the national level has the opportunity to bring all stakeholders together to build a shared understanding of context and interventions and identify the most useful strategies and approaches. This type of mechanism can help facilitate the regular identification, collection and analysis of key human resource data as a foundation for planning. The group can identify comprehensive and strategic approaches to address workforce gaps and needs. Moreover, implementing these approaches often requires multi-stakeholder cooperation and there is a higher likelihood that this will happen if there is a mechanism for input and agreement. Regular distribution of data and updates on progress made in implementing the strategic plan will help to engage a broader diversity of stakeholders and the public. A key aspect of this work also includes strengthening the management capacity of leaders to effectively facilitate the implementation of workforce strengthening plans, workforce policies, standards and guidelines and to regularly monitor progress. Engagement of a broad group of stakeholders is also useful when reviewing implementation and recommending shifts in planning as needed. This process will help decrease overlap of efforts and be a useful tool in lobbying for resources.

2) Positioning workforce planning in the wider political, economic, legal and social context

Over the past five years, much progress has been made in terms of setting social service workforce strengthening within the larger framework of social service systems and child protection systems. However, even broader contexts have influence on the social service workforce and vice versa. The extent to which the political, economic, legal and social climate has a direct impact on the nature and thus the strengthening of the social service workforce cannot be understated. Planning efforts should take into account push and pull factors such as global crises, significant demographic changes, displacement or migration, economic fluctuations, urbanization, prevailing political agendas, dominant welfare discourses and priorities set through international collaboration such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These internal and external factors influence conceptualizations of the goal of social service interventions. This in turn affects issues such as recruitment and retention, work settings and conditions, as well as beliefs regarding professional identity.

As noted above, having social service workforce coordinating mechanisms in place will allow for advance alerts of impending crises and more nimble, efficient and effective responses when crises or opportunities arise, as decisions about workforce shifts can be made with the cooperation, energy and ownership of multiple stakeholders.

3) Generating stronger evidence, highlighting what we know, what we don't know and what we must know in order to strengthen the social service workforce.

The challenges facing the workforce have been well documented. It is now time to generate stronger evidence about effective interventions to strengthen the social service workforce. Although there is an increasing interest in best practice models regarding planning, developing and supporting the social service workforce, the evidence is scattered and tends to be anecdotal, program-specific, or observational in nature (Global Social Service Workforce Alliance 2016a). These pieces of information are helpful since in most development efforts, workforce development is location specific and measured at the program level. However, there is also a need to organize the current state of information generated by empirical evidence in order to better understand what we know and what we don't know about what workforce strengthening strategies work, what doesn't work, and the impact of workforce strengthening on children and families. In addition, the body of academic research in this field does not adequately reflect the substantial recent changes that have occurred regarding social service workforce strengthening. It would be useful for the material that has been gathered by development partners and other actors to be shared more widely and expeditiously, including publication in academic journals, sharing emerging lessons at key conferences, and so on.

4 Increasing political will and financing for workforce strengthening

While much progress in terms of increased political will has been made over the past five years alone, particularly as realized through the introduction of new workforce-supportive legislation (Global Social Service Workforce Alliance 2016b), there is still much to be done to support longer-term sustainability of workforce strengthening efforts. Strategic plans backed by increased evidence of the positive effects of workforce strengthening will enable stronger advocacy for funding resources. More research on the broader socioeconomic impacts of social service workforce investment will also be useful in attracting new resources to this field. The balance between the significant involvement of development partners and inputs from national governments can be more closely analyzed. It is incumbent on governments and local advocates to anticipate funding changes and ensure medium- and long-term provisions for the sustainability of programs. There is room for growth when engaging the private sector.

5 Recognizing that efforts to strengthen the social service workforce will be critical to achieve the aims of the SDGs

The introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals offers the opportunity to bring partners together around key issues of recognized, critical importance. In particular, Sustainable Development Goal 16 is "dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels" (UN 2015). Target 16.2 aims to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. This goal and target, as well as others such as SDG targets 5.2, 8.7 and and 16.1 related to violence against women and girls, trafficking and child labor are aligned with the role of social service workers. The attainment of these targets will depend on workers' trained ability to create protective environments for healthy development and well-being by tackling poverty; reducing discrimination; promoting social justice; ensuring protection from violence, abuse, exploitation, neglect and family separation; and providing needed services. The SDGs can act as a mobilizing factor to generate political will and financial resources and provide a real opportunity for increased collaboration to strengthen the workforce to affect positive change in the lives of children and families.

6 Promoting a multi-faceted workforce comprised of different cadres to provide a comprehensive continuum of care

Most countries currently rely on multiple cadres of workers to deliver a comprehensive array of services to children and families. However, more efforts are needed to effectively bridge the different layers and disciplines within the social service workforce to encourage cohesiveness of support to vulnerable children and families. Countries are identifying useful coordination mechanisms among different types of social service workers to promote a stronger continuum of care. These need to be studied and assessed to promote lessons learned and promising practices that can be shared more broadly. These efforts can contribute to combatting the encroachment of a system of hierarchy within the workforce and prevent the rise of a siloed approach. It is important to recognize the complementarity of different categories and qualifications of social service workers required to implement strategic plans and meet the diversity of population and service delivery needs. Approaches that simultaneously develop the full range of professional and para professional social service workers can also have a positive impact on retention, career path development and effective supervision.

At times when an individualized approach to providing care seems most appropriate, effective case management and referral mechanisms rely upon the smooth interaction and collaboration among different cadres of the social service workforce, whether at the community, district or national level and whether engaged by civil society and NGOs or government. Community-based workers, often linked with a civil society organization or NGO, when faced with statutory issues such as concerns involving child sexual abuse, need links to district-level government officers to refer cases. Workers and families also benefit when clear linkages are established with other service providers, such as for health referrals, enrollment in school, cash transfers or social protection programs, economic household strengthening programs and positive parenting programs.

A social service worker talks to school children about the dangers of life on the street.
© Retrak Ethiopia

7 Aligning education and training with workforce needs and strengthening recognized in-service education based on national standards

While availability of both pre-service and in-service education has increased over the past five years, efforts to update training or produce more workers in a particular field need to be based on both service delivery needs and worker competencies required for social service workers to perform at their best. There is also great potential for educational and training institutions to connect data about the current workforce, human resources and training gaps to devise programs that meet these needs and produce sufficient and adequately distributed and qualified workers. Where training is conducted outside of tertiary institutions, accountability must be reviewed to identify who is ultimately responsible for the quality of training and the associated protection of the service user. This is particularly pertinent where no regulatory bodies exist.

In-service training remains less regulated and standardized than pre-service education, which is more often provided in tertiary institutions and overseen by a regulatory body. At times, this is because in-service training is focused on community-based workers who need contextualized, short-term, specific courses that help them brush up on

certain emerging areas of work, such as positive parenting approaches or working with victims of abuse and neglect. On the other hand, this type of in-service training often offers workforce professional development opportunities that then are not recognized or able to assist in career growth or career paths. Improved case studies are needed to document effective ways to accredit and recognize training.

In-service training additionally raises questions about the difference between volunteer and salaried para professionals. Volunteers (persons who receive no remuneration or sometimes a stipend) often do the same or similar work as employed service providers. Issues regarding collaboration, recognition, reimbursement and retention may arise, particularly in impoverished communities (Liao-Troth, 2001; Schmid, 2012; Schneider, Hlophe and Van Rensburg, 2008). Questions need to be considered further, such as whether volunteers be reimbursed, how incentives influence retention, how per diems for training and sitting fees affect training outcomes and if training of an expanded core of volunteers expands capacity and has an impact on the salaried workforce.

8 Assessing and supporting the most appropriate formations of professional associations, councils and regulatory bodies to support workers and their accountability to vulnerable populations

As described earlier in this report, professional associations continue to be active or have been revitalized in a number of countries. Additional capacity building of professional associations and regulatory bodies deserves attention and consideration as to the most effective approaches. The role of professional associations versus regulatory bodies also merits further scrutiny. While each country needs to develop a locally effective model, there are advantages to separating regulatory and professional support functions. A professional association has greater freedom to represent and advocate on behalf of the profession's interests (and where appropriate for the interests of service users) when it is not also engaged in standard setting and executing discipline. Resource constraints may point to developing a body that includes both regulatory and professional representation functions. More research in this area might provide valuable guidance, particularly when countries consider the types of regulatory bodies that need to be established to meet local demands.

Regional associations that support social work education, such as the Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa, can also help to promote the profession of social work and systems for certification and licensing. They also provide a useful networking and knowledge sharing outlet. At the international level, the International Association of Schools of Social Work supports educational institutions or national councils of social work education that establish standards and accredit social work training programs. The International Federation of Social Workers supports national associations of social work, helps to develop agreed on global definitions of social work and produces policy statements. These two entities, together with the International Council on Social Welfare, developed the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development, and agreed on a set of objectives to meet aspirations for social justice and social development.

9 Strengthening systems to improve performance, job satisfaction and retention

As this report documents, improvements have been made over the past five years in multiple countries in terms of introducing stronger supervisory and mentoring support that can help workers address secondary trauma and burnout. However, country respondents report that poor work conditions and facilities remain an ongoing challenge and a hindrance to the provision of quality services. Overburdening workers, particularly underpaid community-based workers, also remains an issue. High caseloads added to low salaries and poor support quickly lead to job satisfaction and retention issues.

In order to address these issues, more initiatives are needed to enhance team dynamics and introduce more supportive supervision, peer mentoring, community feedback and recognition and workshops on secondary trauma and psychosocial well-being. On a more general and long-term level, further studies on adequate caseloads as well as worker-to-population ratios need to be developed to guide workforce planning and provide more supportive and realistic work conditions for the social service workforce. Currently, ratios provided offer a confusing mix of denominators reflecting all children, vulnerable children or total population. Numerators are usually either government workers only, or a mix of statutory and civil society actors, with the latter being far more difficult to track and count in the absence of a coordination mechanism tasked with gathering data as mentioned in the first point of this section.

10　Coordinating with and learning from other sectors

Multi-sectoral collaboration is essential. The health workforce is a vital partner to the social service workforce and strengthened connections contribute to stronger health and social service systems and enable all parties to become better positioned to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable populations. Synergies that emerge from cooperation across such sectors as welfare, health, education, economic, agricultural and legal allow for holistic and robust interventions. Sustainable development occurs where there is interdisciplinary exchange and learning. Interaction and collaboration should occur at all levels, from policy level to community level. This frequently occurs at the community level where collaboration takes place between community health workers and para social workers or members of a community child protection committee.

As mentioned at the Cape Town Conference in 2010, this sector can particularly benefit from knowledge developed in the field of human resources for health. Evidence from this field is more robust, provides the potential for cross-application and helps the social service sector anticipate some issues that have not yet risen to the surface. Specific work from the health sector on incentives, HR analyses and retention schemes could be adapted or applied to the social service sector. At the same time, it is important to consider where knowledge transfer from one sector to another is appropriate and where it may cloud the unique realities of a specific sector (Morley, 2004).

This report highlights that much is happening in these eight sub-Saharan countries. The Global Social Service Workforce Alliance looks forward to continuing to contribute to bringing people together for the dynamic exchange of information, developing new knowledge and advocating on behalf of this critical workforce. The Alliance will continue to support and track progress on each of these key areas to strengthen the social service workforce. For example, the Alliance, through its previously mentioned work on the evidence review process, will be producing a review of the existing evidence and is bringing experts together to identify measures for addressing gaps in available data and priority areas for future research. This will be an important first step toward the development of a research agenda and the engagement of an ever broader group in the generation of new knowledge to guide future workforce strengthening interventions. At the same time, the Alliance will continue to emphasize implementation of emerging promising practices by publicizing and disseminating them to colleagues at all levels. While continued research is important, social service workforce leaders also need more immediately accessible case studies and promising practice reports, particularly given the urgency of coordination to realize the new SDGs. In terms of increasing political will, the Alliance will continue to produce information that will be useful to country-level advocacy and will soon be launching an Ambassador program that will provide resources and mutual support to social service workforce strengthening leaders and advocates. The Alliance Interest Group on Para Professionals will continue to refine and disseminate the resource *Para Professionals in the Social Service Workforce: Guiding Principles, Functions and Competencies* to help guide users in developing education and training programs, to inform certification processes, and to link skills and knowledge gained with post-training sustainable jobs and roles. The Alliance will also act as a connector between those interested in social service workforce strengthening and global workforce efforts in other sectors. To learn more and to become engaged in efforts to strengthen the social service workforce, please join us here: www.socialserviceworkforce.org

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