



# Lintle Letsika Founder and Director, Footprints of Hope, Lesotho



***“To see hope on the faces of vulnerable children is my passion. My vision is one of hopeful communities, hopeful futures”***



## Overview

“I’ve lost family to HIV/AIDS. The situation in Africa is either that you’re infected or affected,” said Lintle Letsika, Founder and Director, Footprints of Hope. “I’ve seen children who think they have no future. We can’t afford to ignore them; we need to give them every chance. They deserve to be given all the support as when they have parents.”

## Training and skills development

Lintle started Footprints of Hope in her home community of Maseru, Lesotho, in 2013. The faith-based organization has provided training to 70 community volunteer caregivers in 14 villages who are helping 1,000 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). Some of the caregivers have gone on to receive additional training in order to become village paraprofessional social service or health workers. Among the support these caregivers receive is counselling and psychosocial support training to address the mental health needs of children affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. The organization advocates to the national government for the needs of vulnerable children.

## Experience in addressing HIV/AIDS

Trained in HIV/AIDS counselling, HIV/AIDS response and sociology, Lintle has applied all of these skills her various roles to help vulnerable children. Prior to launching Footprints of Hope, she worked for the Lesotho Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship HIV/AIDS Unit and World Vision’s country office. She has been strengthening the capacity of community-level workers helping OVC impacted by HIV since 2001.

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## International experiences

In June 2015, Lintle joined a team of 11 individuals from throughout Lesotho who attended the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) Biennial Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. The group met with representatives from NACCW to learn how they might replicate the Isibindi program in their home country. Over five years, the Isibindi program aims to train 10,000 child and youth care workers to help children and families from their local communities.

A key component of the program is development of Safe Parks, a safe place where children can play and be children, at least for that moment, away from stigma, danger or the worry they face outside the parks in their daily lives.

She also learned more about the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance during this conference and joined as a member.

“To see hope on the faces of these vulnerable children is my passion. My vision is one of hopeful communities, hopeful futures,” she said.



**“Improving the workforce.  
Improving lives.”**

### Who is the social service workforce?

While capturing any one definition of the social service workforce is challenging, it can be broadly defined to describe a variety of workers – paid and unpaid, governmental and nongovernmental – who staff the social service system and contribute to the care of vulnerable populations. The social service system is comprised of a set of interventions, programs and benefits that are provided by governmental, civil society and community actors to ensure the welfare and protection of socially or economically disadvantaged individuals and families.

### What is Social Service Workforce Week?

During this week, advocates will bring attention to and build support for the social service workforce as well as raise awareness about promising workforce strength-ening efforts supported by stakeholders around the world. Organized around daily themes focused on areas of practice, the week will allow Alliance members and the public to engage in a dynamic platform of information exchange and advocacy through various forms of social media.

### What is the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance?

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. Launched in June 2013, the mission of the Alliance is to promote the knowledge and evidence, resources and tools and political will and action needed to address key social service workforce challenges, especially within low- to middle-income countries.

The Alliance is funded by PEPFAR/USAID and the GHR Foundation. IntraHealth International acts as host and fiscal sponsor of the Alliance.

### Learn More

Learn more about Lintle and other social service workers! Join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #SSWWeek, on our Facebook page and at [www.socialserviceworkforce.org/SSWWeek](http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/SSWWeek).