



Shelton Tshuna Child Care Worker, Zimbabwe



***“Working with
the community
is important.”***

***Shelton on the
right***



Overview

Shelton Tshuna has been a child care worker for only 1.5 years, but he’s already making a difference in his local community of Chinotimba, Zimbabwe. “Working with the community is important,” he says. Shelton is a volunteer. He’s one of 21 part-time child care workers in his area involved with the Bantwana Initiative.

Bantwana Initiative

The Bantwana Initiative began in Zimbabwe but has since spread to four additional countries in southern and eastern Africa. Bantwana is supporting the Zimbabwean Department of Social Services to update its national case management policy and standardize the response to vulnerable children through a formal referral network. Child care workers are paired with vulnerable children, staying with them until services are no longer needed. The program unites community and government service providers to act in the best interest of vulnerable children and will assist more than 30,000 children by 2017.

Fighting HIV/AIDS

A particular case that’s near and dear to Shelton’s heart is that of uniting a 13-year-old boy with his grandfather, after the child lost both parents and a younger brother in 2014 to HIV/AIDS. The boy also tested positive for HIV but was not receiving ART drugs and was not currently attending school. After moving across the country to take up residence with his grandfather, Shelton helped him to resume ART treatments, enroll in school and receive counselling. Shelton is currently helping him to get a birth certificate and enroll the family in a food grant program. “Now, he has lots and lots of friends.”

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In Zimbabwe, each year, 1 in 11 children die before age five due to an HIV-related illness, yet in 2013 only 42% of children received ART drugs, according to the National Strategic Plan for Eliminating New HIV Infections in Children and Keeping Mothers and Families Alive. Virtually all new HIV infections among infants in Zimbabwe are due to mother-to-child transmission.

Training and skills

Shelton has received a number of training courses to help in assessing family needs and referring them for additional services, but he admits he's eager to build upon his skills in social development, communications and counselling through additional training. He looks forward to helping even more children and families in his immediate community.



“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 strengthening 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 **Shelton** and other social service workers! Join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #SSWWeek, on our Facebook page and at www.socialserviceworkforce.org/SSWWeek.