



Sowedi Kitanywa Senior Probation and Welfare Officer, District of Kasese, Uganda



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Overview

Mr. Sowedi Kitanywa is the Senior Probation and Welfare Officer in the district of Kasese, Uganda. Armed with a university degree in Adult and Community Education, a Master's in Project Planning and Development and a diploma course in Law, Sowedi embraces his role as a child advocate within the district level government system. Sowedi knew from a young age that he wanted to be in public service and was supported by his family to pursue his dreams. Beginning his work in community development with the Diocese of South Rwenzori, Sowedi was able to implement his skills and knowledge to help empower communities to address issues that affected children and families. Later he joined local government as a Community Development Officer (CDO) which oversees social welfare issues at sub-county level. His dedication was quickly recognized by superiors and he was promoted to the district level Probation and Social Welfare Officer, a position he has held for the past 10 years.

Typical Tasks and Responsibilities

Sowedi is the legal representative for children in juvenile justice and child abuse cases for the District. In his District, he explains, "When a capital child abuse case is reported, it will find itself in court." He conducts visits with the child and his/her family and completes a report that he then presents to the court. Sowedi credits the course in law with his ability to use the right legal language, policy and legal framework to successfully represent children's interest within the court. Sowedi is also responsible for tracing and reintegration of children outside of family care; a significant issue in Uganda where approximately 50,000 children live in residential care.

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Sowedi also counsels in cases involving conflict, domestic violence and arbitration. He has been successful in intervening and preventing cases of child marriage. In one particular case, Sowedi was able to trace and return a girl of 14, who had been abducted for child marriage between her home and school, and taken to another district 120km away. The abductor was successfully prosecuted.

Sowedi spends a significant part of his work week advocating for children's issues within district level government. His role as the Secretary for the District OVC Committee helps him advocate for vulnerable children across sectors and organizations working in his district, ensuring child-focused interventions are prioritized within other sector's development plans. In addition, Sowedi is responsible for supervising 13 Assistant Community Development Officers and 29 Community Development Officers throughout the district.

Why he loves his job

Sowedi loves the case management part of his job, especially when it results in a child being placed in a safe and healthy family. He likes to work and coordinate with partners and feels successful when local government is able to find solutions and provide resources to children's issues.

He says that validation comes when he walks down the street and an elderly woman recognizes him and exclaims "Ah, young man, you helped me! Thank you!"



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