



Ssentamu Abdul Case Care Worker, Mayuge District, Uganda



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Overview

For the last three years, Ssentamu has served people living with HIV/AIDS, including youth and children in Kityerera Sub-County, Mayuge District, Uganda. In his words, Ssentamu noted, “I felt the need to come out and support people living with or infected with HIV. It gives me pride when I am able to support an HIV infected person, especially children in one way or another.” Because of his passion for children and young people, he was selected by local council leaders and the Community Services Department trained him as a case care worker with support from World Education Inc (WEI)/Bantwana Initiative. He has also been trained by Strengthening TB and HIV&AIDS Responses in East Central (STAR-EC) in Home-Based HIV Testing and Counseling (HBHTC), adherence counseling and referrals.

Typical tasks and responsibilities

As a Case Care Worker, Ssentamu works closely with village health teams (VHTs) at the community-level to support children identified and assessed to be in need. At the health facility, he assists young people and their caregivers in accessing a number of health services from various departments within the health center. He provides physical escorting or active linkage to the next service point. Based on other identified needs, Ssentamu refers vulnerable children and their caregivers to different service providers like the Community Development Officer (CDO) and Community-Based OVC service providers for more support.



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“Health workers generate a list of children and their caregivers who have missed their appointments. They hand over the list to me. I conduct home visits to these particular caregivers, provide information on adherence and ensure that they reschedule a day to come for their refills,” he said. Ssentamu delivers drugs to the children when they are not able to make it to the clinic, and encourages them not to skip appointment days.

During home visits, he identifies children who are at risk of abuse or who have been abused and need child protection services. He links them to service providers based on their identified need. “We work closely with several organizations like MUCOBAD, which links children in my community to scholastic materials, Child Protection Committees and local council leaders. For complicated cases of abuse, I refer them to the Community Development Office, Probation Office and Police and follow up later to find out whether the child or caregiver was helped.”

Favorite aspect of the job

“I am happy and proud that through my efforts, I have been able to extend services to the suffering children in one way or another through counselling, home visiting, linkages and referrals.” For example, he supported a disabled boy in Kityerera Sub-County who was in poor health because he was abandoned by his family. Ssentamu encouraged him to be tested, found him HIV+ and referred him to Kityerera HC1V. He was started on treatment and later reunited with his family. He is now healthy and strong.

Similiarly, several other children are being helped by Ssentamu to access other wrap around services in the 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 Ssentamu and other social service workers! Join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #SSWWeek, on our Facebook page and at www.socialserviceworkforce.org/SSWWeek.