

## “I use myself as an example to solve gender based/ domestic violence.” Apollo



### Apollo says...

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### Introduction

In Amoni village, there was an issue of domestic/ gender based violence that was reported to the para social worker. A husband who always returned home drunk turned his frustrations to the wife and children and set out to beat them over no reason. The family who are peasant farmers hardly had enough money to take care of their basic needs and all this burden lied solely on the lady in the house. The woman on several occasions had to sleep out of the house with her young children in order to avoid the beatings from the drunk husband. “My husband only becomes abusive when he drinks, but short of alcohol he is a very calm man.” Explained the wife.

Aseu Apollo the para social worker attached to this village took up the case and organized a joint visit with the local authorities to the family. The woman explained the frustrations the husband was putting her through and it was unanimously agreed that the husband was in the wrong. The husband apologized to the family and explained that his drunkenness was sparked by the loss of his mother a while ago.

Apollo counselled the family and advised the husband that drinking only worsened his situation and put the lives of his family in danger. The husband agreed to counselling as a way of coping



with the mother's death and he promised to quit drinking alcohol. "We are now happy and more united, we talk about any issues that come up in our homes and we don't fight anymore." Said the husband.

Apollo, has for the past one year handled such cases as a para social worker on behalf of the BETTER OUTCOMES project. It is a service he prides in and he feels there is no greater joy than that derived from helping. He shares his story with us below.

### **Typical day at work**

"No day is similar to the other, every day comes with its challenges and even when the problems seem the same they may need to be handled differently." He says. However, on many cases, Apollo's work consists of following up or visiting the already enrolled households that have been identified as vulnerable and assessing the progress, they are making and identifying any issues that arise from the community. He handles all the cases within his means and often refers those he may not be in position to handle.

### **Motivation**

Apollo derives his motivation from the fact that the work he does is appreciated and recognized. "Every time you visit us and give us trainings, it means that you are recognizing our work and you appreciate us," he says. He adds that the Para Social Worker stipend and the other items given to them to ease their work such as the bicycles to ease transport, the bags, the pens and booklets motivate him to put more efforts in his work.

### **Qualities of a good para social worker**

Apollo explains that some of the qualities that govern their work are; Confidentiality, being approachable, problem solving and empathy. "we always get to be told a lot of issues by those who trust us, it is important that we don't disclose this information anyhow. It is also necessary to be approachable because the people with challenges would find it easy to talk to you. Empathy helps you put yourself in the shoes of the person with the problem." He explains.

### **What do you consider when approaching a case?**

"I always use myself as an example. I am a very old man now, I am 69 years old and I have been through most of the situations disturbing families. I was once a drunkard and I know its dangers; I therefore use myself as an example while advising people in the different situations."