



Jennifer Kaberi

National Coordinator for Children Agenda Forum, Founder of Mtoto News, and Global Social Service Workforce Alliance Ambassador, Kenya



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Why social work?

Jenny attended the University of Nairobi with the intent to study law, but fell in love with social work and pursued a Bachelor's of Social Work. "I was born in a family where giving back was a norm. Having experienced the challenges children go through, I made up my mind to work toward improving the lives of children at a young age."

Advocating for children

Between school semesters, Jenny volunteered with several organizations providing services to children. Upon graduating, she accepted a one-year position in a rural town in Kenya working with street children, helping in the development of different programs including an early childhood development project.

She then traveled to Malawi as a VSO volunteer at the height of the AIDS epidemic and saw the effects of the disease on children. In her role as an OVC technical advisor to the government seconded by UNICEF Malawi, she saw firsthand the relationship between child wellbeing, health systems and policies. She also witnessed the importance of taking care of child carers to achieve positive outcomes for children.

Jenny returned to her home country of Kenya and has spent her career working to strengthen child protection systems. In her current role as coordinator of the Children Agenda Forum, she is working with 140 child-focused CSOs to advocate for stronger national and regional policies that protect children and emphasize the key role of the social service workforce in carrying out these protective programs. Her work includes advocating for increased budget allocations in support of a better trained, planned and recognized workforce.

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Working in a variety of roles with the government of Kenya, Jenny has been involved in the development of many national policies, including the Psychosocial Support Guidelines, National Plan of Action on Children, and she is currently working on drafting language for a new Children's Act that more clearly articulates the critical role of the social service workforce as a key actor in implementing programs that protect children.

To increase the visibility of children's issues, Jenny founded Mtoto News in 2017 as an online platform for news, information and resources. Mtoto News is a venue for creating discourse and prioritizing children's issues. Mtoto News also supports organizations working on child-related campaigns.

The importance of this work

"I believe that children live in a system, where everyone has role to play. The social service workforce is a key actor working to advocate for and strengthen the different levels of support around a child," said Jenny. She also believes that social work training, in addition to having an understanding of what children experience, has helped her to develop the skills to look at policies from a child's perspective. She has incorporated her early interests in legal affairs into advocating for children's rights and justice for children. As a mother of two young children, Jenny aspires for all children in Kenya to live a life free from violence.



**"Improving the workforce.
Improving lives."**

Who is the social service workforce?

The social service workforce is defined as being comprised of a variety of workers - government and non-government, paid and unpaid - who contribute to the care, support, promotion of rights and empowerment of vulnerable populations served by the social service system.

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, the week is an opportunity for Alliance members and the public to engage in discussions and exchange ideas. Daily blogs, worker profiles and resources provide tools and innovative approaches for strengthening the workforce.

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. The Tides Center acts as host and fiscal sponsor of the Alliance.

Learn More

Learn more about Jenny and other social service workers! Join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #SSWeek, on our Facebook page and on the discussion boards on our website at www.socialserviceworkforce.org.