



Update from the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance

Advocacy Continues after World Social Work Day

Organizations and individuals around the world celebrated World Social Work Day on March 16 and throughout the month of March. The 2021 theme was Ubuntu: I am Because We are – Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness. The theme celebrated the interconnectedness of all peoples and their environments. It speaks to the need for global solidarity and also highlights indigenous knowledge and wisdom.



Each year, the day is an opportunity for social workers and others in the social service sector to celebrate their achievements as well as to raise awareness and support for the important role that social workers play in the lives of vulnerable families and communities. The day calls attention to the need for further planning, development and support to the profession and social service sector.

One day is not enough to recognize the important contributions of the social service workforce. World Social Work Day may be over, but the need for sustained advocacy remains. Tools, resources, event recordings and promotional materials are [available on the Alliance's website](#) to support continued efforts. A promotional toolkit includes infographics and social media messages.

The day saw the largest number of visitors ever to the Alliance's website and many messages of support and calls for action on Twitter. [Revisit some of these Tweets](#). UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa also authored a [series of blogs](#) to time with World Social Work Day on the need for advocacy to recognize the essential role of the social service workforce for child protection during COVID-19. ASEAN,



with the support of UNICEF East Asia and Pacific, launched the *#StandTogetherforSocialWorkers* campaign to raise awareness of the social service workforce's critical role in the lives of children, families and communities in the region.

Secretariat News

This past month has been one of many changes to the Alliance Secretariat in terms of staffing and grant activities.

New Grant Awards

The Alliance is excited to begin two new grant projects this month:

- Working with UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office and in partnership with Oxford Policy Management, the Alliance is supporting implementation of the Ha Noi Declaration on Strengthening Social Work Towards Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community. The Declaration lays out [11 steps and goals to strengthening the social service workforce within the region](#). This work will include developing and implementing a roadmap in 2021 toward implementation of the declaration. This work builds on the Alliance's work with UNICEF EAPRO in 2019 to map and assess the size, scope and structure of the [social service workforce in 15 countries](#) as well as document policy development, legislative reform, professionalization, education and training, and steps to strengthen the child protection system.
- This month the Alliance begins new work with UNICEF Uganda to develop a national framework for strengthening the social service workforce under the operational framework for social care and support services in Uganda. The purpose of this project is to support the government of Uganda to develop and implement a national framework to strengthen the social service workforce, including clarifying roles and responsibilities of the workforce at national and sub-national levels and developing job descriptions and supervision guidelines.

Staff Updates

We say goodbye to two long-serving staff members and welcome to a new grants manager.

Amy Bess concluded her work with the Alliance last month but she plans to remain involved as

a supporter of our work. Many of you have worked with Amy during her many years leading and advising the Alliance and know she is a fierce advocate for the social service workforce. Amy was integral to the founding of the Alliance in 2013 and served as Director and Senior Advisor over the last seven years. You may also know she helped to organize the 2010 conference in Cape Town where the Alliance was first conceived. We are thankful for all her expertise and passion in charting the course for the Alliance's success.

We say goodbye to **Nicole Brown** this month. She is currently the Communications and Advocacy Manager but has also served in a number of roles during her six years with the Alliance. As the first communications manager, she established many of our communications channels for members to actively engage in this important work. We will miss her and wish her well in her new role. She plans to remain involved as an advocate for the workforce and member of the network.

We welcome **Marie Diop Goumballa** who has recently joined the organization as the Grants Manager. She provides part-time support in budgeting, grants management and financial reporting as well as operational support. She brings valuable experience in supporting both private and non-profit organizations with tracking and oversight of foundation and government grants.

Opportunities

The Alliance is currently recruiting for two roles. The full details including how to apply can be found on the Alliance's website.

Communications and Advocacy Manager

We're seeking our next great staff member to join the team full-time and provide strategic direction and implementation on communications and advocacy activities. This is a fully remote role with great benefits, though applicants must be based within the United States. Applications will be reviewed until the role is filled, with **priority review by April 23**. [Review the full job description](#).

Consultancy to develop a technical note on the optimal role of the social service workforce in child protection in school settings

We are seeking a consultant to develop a concise but well evidenced technical note on the optimal role and functions of the social service workforce in schools in child protection, as part of our work with UNICEF Child Protection Section, Programme Division, New York Headquarters. The technical note will analyze and summarize the main approaches and models in this field of work. It will also highlight the key ingredients of promising practice in this area of work, from a range of contexts, in particular low- and middle-income countries in development contexts, with a focus on government-run schools (under the responsibility of Ministries of Education). This will help to guide and inform education sector policy makers and program managers. **Applications close on April 19**. [Please review the full scope of work and application process](#).

Consultant Support

The Alliance's current work is supported by a robust team of expert consultants:

- Welcome back to **Natia Partskhaladze**, who previously served as Senior Technical Advisor of the Alliance. She will be providing technical consulting for projects in India, Uganda and ASEAN as well as global initiatives over the next several months.
- We are thankful to consultancy support from **Jini Roby** and **Alex Collins** for work within the Eastern and Southern Africa region with UNICEF ESARO. They provided technical support in several areas, including technical support to five country teams from Jini and scoping of normative frameworks in the region from Alex. **Doreen Alaro**, a consultant with Maestral International, is now supporting final portions of this work to analyze case management mechanisms.
- **Janestic Twikirize** and **Jini Roby** will lead our work to develop a national framework for strengthening the social service workforce under the operational framework for social care and support services in Uganda with UNICEF Uganda.
- Work to develop the 2020 State of the Social Service Workforce Report is underway. **Elena Ghanotakis** is the consultant leading the analysis and writing for the report.
- A technical note on the role of the social service workforce in social protection across the life course is being developed by **Julie Drolet** as part of the Alliance's work with UNICEF Headquarters, Child Protection Section, Programme Division.
- **Sunil Jha** is the national coordinating consultant for our project with UNICEF for mapping and assessing the child protection workforce in India. He is leading a team of five state-level coordinators. We will soon be engaging additional consultants to develop training modules on case management for this workforce.

New Blogs

[Recognizing the essential role of the social service workforce for child protection - In March and everyday](#)

The social service workforce for child protection plays a central role in promoting social justice; reducing discrimination and root causes of inequality; challenging harmful behaviours and social norms; preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation; tackling harmful practices such as



child marriage and female genital mutilation; and addressing family separations especially among migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons. They also support poverty reduction initiatives, including social protection and cash transfer programs, and respond to humanitarian crisis situations. [Read how UNICEF](#) continues to join with practitioners, organizations and other groups in celebrating the many ways this workforce has provided essential services during COVID-19 while calling for greater investments from government to develop supportive policies.

[Advocacy and innovation in social service provision in Eastern and Southern Africa](#)

Despite significant challenges during COVID-19, social service workers for child protection have swiftly adapted how they provide essential services to ensure continuity of quality care. They have committed to maintaining social solidarity and connectedness in the communities where they work during this challenging time. In this World Social Work Day blog, Mohamed M. Malick

Fall, UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, shares some of the ways UNICEF has supported efforts to strengthen the social service workforce for child protection in the region and worked alongside other groups to ensure service continuity through advocacy to governments, policy makers and others so that the social service workforce is considered essential service providers during COVID-19. [Read about some of these national and regional successes.](#)



[Transitioning Colombia's National Positive Parenting Program, Mi Familia, to Virtual Delivery During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Colombia's National Positive Parenting Program, Mi Familia, swiftly shifted from a visiting program to virtual service delivery during COVID-19. The comprehensive parenting program called is a psychosocial-based family support program that seeks to strengthen parents' and caregivers' ability to parent in positive, developmentally appropriate ways with the end goal of preventing violence and unnecessary separation. With support from USAID's Human Resources for Health (HRH2030) program and Maestral International, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute's Families and Communities Directorate adapted both in-person service delivery and in-person training to a remote model. Survey findings show that the program was effective in doing so and was able to reach groups previously unable to access services. [Read the blog to learn how.](#)



[How Digital Data Can Help Safeguard the World's Most Vulnerable Children](#)

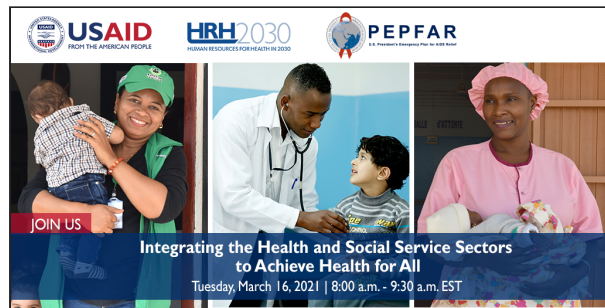
To protect a child's best interests, the reunification process needs to be carefully planned and managed, with effective and sustained family preparation, strengthening, monitoring, and other support to ensure the child isn't left in a more vulnerable situation than where they started. A well-designed, digitised, web-based platform can help social services, case managers, guardianship authorities, service providers and ministries manage data on children-at-risk, with tools that facilitate case management and longitudinal tracking, and integrating information from different agencies that manage child protection data. The Data for Impact team at Palladium [shares lessons learned](#) in Uganda in this blog and considerations to streamline and integrate vertical data in a digitised case management information system.



Online Learning

Integrating the Health and Social Service Sectors to Achieve Health for All

As part of World Social Work Day, the Alliance presented on a webinar organized by HRH2030 and with the World Health Organization, USAID, FHI360 and World Vision. [Listen to the recording](#) and review the presentations for examples of how a more integrated, more inclusive health and social service workforce is playing a key role in protecting and investing in communities' health and well-being.



Adapting Child Protection Programming during COVID-19

A second edition of the online course on Child Protection Programs in the Context of COVID-19 and Other IDOs begins on April 12. The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action has updated this Massive Open Online Course with new material on adapting child protection programming to support the well-being and development of children during COVID-19. This includes a recorded message from the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance on how the social service workforce is adapting and innovating service delivery. [Register now](#) for this free online course. This course is designed for child protection professionals around the world rising to the challenge of finding creative ways to continue services.

Promoting Permanency during COVID-19

International Social Service - USA will launch a new free online training on Promoting Permanency during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The use of remote assessments in permanency planning. This 90-minute training will cover emerging best practices in creating policies that protect the health and safety of staff and clients, engaging with families in virtual work, and technical tips for reporting. The presentation will also cover legal and ethical considerations in remote assessment work and implications for future work. [Register for the training](#) to be held on April 14 at 13:00 EDT.

INSPIRE: Response and Support Services

This webinar is the seventh in a series of eight webinars covering the INSPIRE strategies. It will present the strategy "Response and support services" in more depth and will include reflections on how they can be adapted for implementation in the time of COVID-19. INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children technical package is a collection of evidence-based recommendations on how to prevent and respond to violence against children in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 16.2. [Register now](#) for the webinar to be held on April 13 at 14:30 CET.

Harnessing Social Protection

The Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS co-hosted a webinar in February on Harnessing Social Protection to Improve HIV Outcomes for Children and Adolescents. The webinar explored eight game-changing innovations from the Positive Action Challenge winners that have improved HIV outcomes amongst vulnerable children and adolescents, by combining social protection with

biomedical support. Watch the webinar [here](#).

Resources

Resource Database

Visit our website for [COVID-19 resources and tools](#) on topics relevant to the roles of the social service workforce, including mental health and psychosocial support, child protection, case management, alternative care and separated children, gender-based violence, working with communities, communications/key messages and webinars. If you have a new resource to share, [please contact us](#).

[Adapt. Imagine. Innovate. Child Protection during COVID-19: a catalogue of innovations and adaptations](#)

Save the Children, 2021

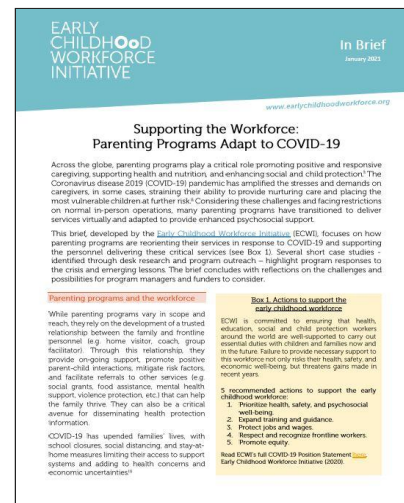
This catalogue showcases many promising innovations and adaptations in child protection services by Save the Children to ensure continuity of services during COVID-19. It shares examples lessons learned as good practice that can inform others on adapting services in future health crises but also as consideration for long-term implementation to achieve child protection progress.



[Supporting the Workforce: Parenting programs adapt to COVID-19](#)

Early Childhood Workforce Initiative, 2021

Facing challenges of delivering parenting programs during COVID-19, many programs shifted to virtual service delivery and adapted to provide enhanced psychosocial support. This brief focuses on how parenting programs are reorienting their services in response to COVID-19 and supporting the workforce delivering these critical services. As parenting programs rely on a trusting relationship between families and frontline providers, it has been necessary to shift how that relationship is built during COVID-19. Several case studies offer examples of program response and emerging lessons as well as five key recommendations for funders and program managers to consider in order to support the early childhood workforce.



[Position Paper: Collaboration across child protection in humanitarian action and education in emergencies](#)

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2021

Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies are highly complementary areas of humanitarian response. This paper aims to interrogate the argument

that integrated and joint programming gives added value, not just to the beneficiaries, but to service providers and donors. Based on the research, this paper summarizes the available evidence supporting collaboration and integration between the sectors, providing a rationale for cross-sector working grounded in child wellbeing and holistic development. Subsequent sections synthesize evidence, including a summary of challenges and opportunities, and draw out clear recommendations charting the way forward for systematic and planned collaboration.

[The Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Access to Justice](#)

UNICEF, Division of Data, Analytics, Planning and Monitoring, 2021

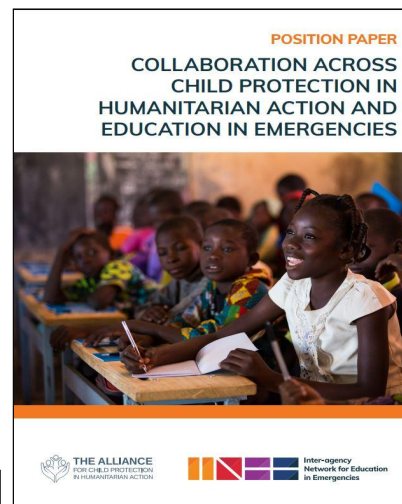
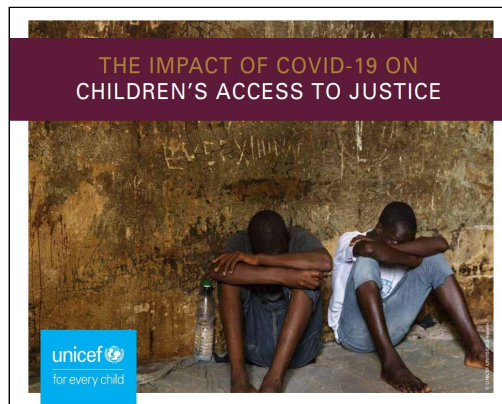
Evidence from the

COVID-19 pandemic – along with previous infectious disease outbreaks – suggests that existing child protection violations are exacerbated, and new risks emerge, in times of crisis. In addition to the adverse impacts of detention and incarceration on their well-being, children risk contracting the virus when detained in confined and overcrowded spaces. They are also more vulnerable to neglect and abuse, especially if staffing levels or care are undermined by the pandemic or containment measures. Children in detention facilities often have inadequate access to clean water and sanitation, nutrition and medical care, creating conditions where the spread of infectious diseases such as COVID-19 are rife. Disruptions to child protection services and the justice system due to lockdowns can also cause delays in court proceedings and to legal aid and representation. It may also mean that children face long periods deprived of liberty and separated from their families. For child victims, abuse, violence and exploitation could occur with impunity, as could a child's re-traumatization in seeking justice. Understanding the current status of justice for children is therefore essential to calling attention to immediate and long-term measures that need to be put in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all children amidst the pandemic's continuing fallout.

[Release and Reintegration of Children Deprived of Liberty in the State of Palestine in Response to COVID-19](#)

UNICEF, Palestine, 2021

This report shares examples of good practice in pivoting existing coordination mechanisms and services in Palestine. In 2016, important changes were initiated in the criminal justice system for children with the adoption of the Juvenile Protection Law in the State of Palestine. Critical changes included introduction of alternatives to detention, including mediation and diversion. The quick release and reunification of 85 per cent of the children in detention was



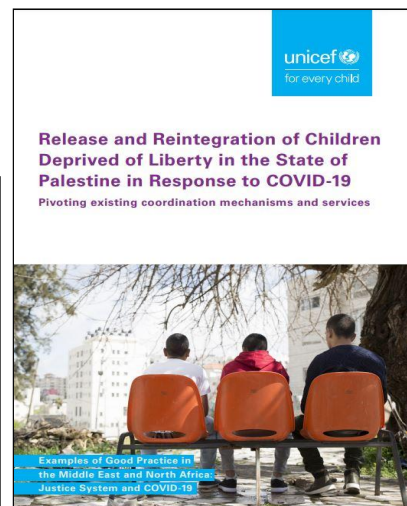
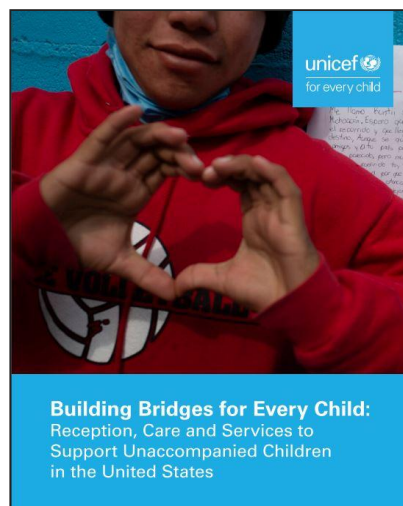
facilitated by various factors, all demonstrating the importance of government leadership combined with pre-existing resources within the child protection system.

[Building Bridges for Every Child: Reception, Care and Services to Support Unaccompanied Children in the United States](#)

UNICEF, United States, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, 2021

This report offers recommendations for strengthening child-sensitive reception, care and services

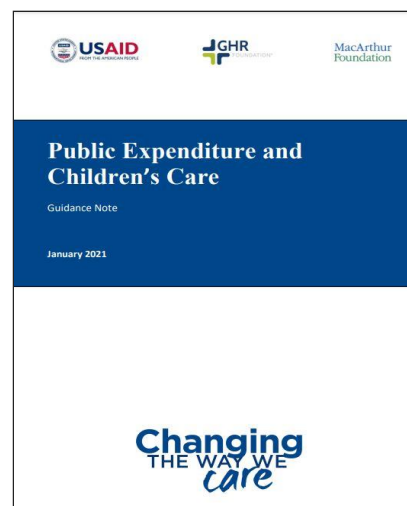
for unaccompanied children in the United States. Drawing on UNICEF's global experience, international guidance, and the insights of key stakeholders, the report intends to offer a constructive, solutions-oriented vision for addressing the challenges related to child-sensitive reception and care within the U.S. The report highlights the important features that make a reception and care system for unaccompanied migrant children child-sensitive: an organizational culture centered around child rights, dignity and care, as well as reception processes that incorporate child welfare principles and engage qualified child welfare professionals to screen and interview children, provide clear information, assess their needs, and take a leading role in decisions that affect them.



[Public Expenditure and Children's Care - Guidance note](#)

Maestral International and Changing the Way We Care, 2021

This guidance is designed to strengthen the capacity of government agencies in low resource settings to prepare a sound budgetary framework for policies, programs and services that aim to keep children in safe and nurturing family environments. It further outlines a methodology for making the investment case for a family-focused continuum of care to the broader government, development partners and external donors. It makes recommendations and offers considerations for investments in the social service workforce. Budgeting for care reform has never been more critical than during the COVID-19 pandemic.



[Counting Pennies 2 - Analysis of official development assistance to end violence against children](#)

World Vision, Ludwind Zamudio and Pratima Kollali, 2021

Girls and boys the world over have been devastated by COVID-19's aftershocks. Before the pandemic, more than one billion children experienced violence every year. As the crisis unfolded, up to 85 million more children found themselves at risk of violence at home, online and in their communities. Without adequate investment, there is not much that evidence-based policy and practical action alone can achieve. Practitioners and policymakers all agree that adequate and effective investment in ending violence against children is vital. This report details needs in investments and data to realize change.



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