



Update from the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance

## Policy and Funding Support for the Essential Role of the Social Service Workforce in the COVID-19 Response

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on individuals and communities, particularly those that have been historically marginalized. National social service systems in many countries have been stretched to respond. As a result, there is increasing recognition of the important role of social service workers, particularly in the areas of child protection,



family strengthening, psychosocial support and mental health. To meet the heightened call for a range of services, many governments and non-governmental organizations have increased funding to hire and train more workers and have passed legislation to ensure continuity of services.

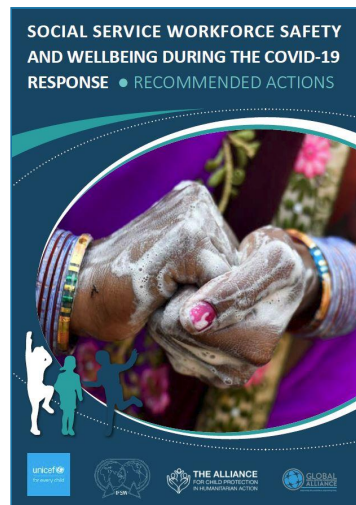
[Read our latest blog](#) to learn about global advocacy for recognition as essential service providers, examples of national policy support, increases in workforce capacity and numbers, integration of health and social services and new resources to increase support. Then, share with us wins your organization or association has helped to achieve so others can learn from these successes and together, we can jointly advocate for continued change.

Photo: Tirusew Getachew is a social worker at a quarantine centre in Ethiopia, where her work includes needs assessment, family tracing and family reunification. UNICEFEthiopia/2020/NahomTesfaye

## Translations Now Available

### Social Service Workforce Safety and Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Response: Recommended Actions

Spanish, French, Arabic and Serbian translations of the recently released technical note are now available, in addition to English. Additional languages are currently being translated. The technical note on the [Social Service Workforce Safety and Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Response: Recommended Actions](#) is intended to provide guidance on how to support the social service workforce and empower them to safely serve children, families, and communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.



A webinar was held on May 14 to review the technical note and learn from country-specific examples. [The full recording, written summary and presentations are now available.](#)

The technical note was jointly developed by the Global Social Service Workforce UNICEF, International Federation of Social Workers and Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

## Social Service Workforce Strengthening Course and Toolkit

NOW LIVE: Check out the [new online course](#) from UNICEF on social service workforce strengthening. Amid the ongoing global pandemic of COVID-19, the important roles social service workers play in responding to children's needs and ensuring they are cared for and protected is more critical than ever.

This course aligns with the inaugural global [Guidelines to](#)



### Welcome New Members

The Alliance network now includes 2,700 members across 141 countries. [Invite a colleague to join.](#)



### Follow Us on LinkedIn

For the latest news from the Alliance as well as updates you can share to your personal page to encourage support from global colleagues, [follow us on LinkedIn.](#)



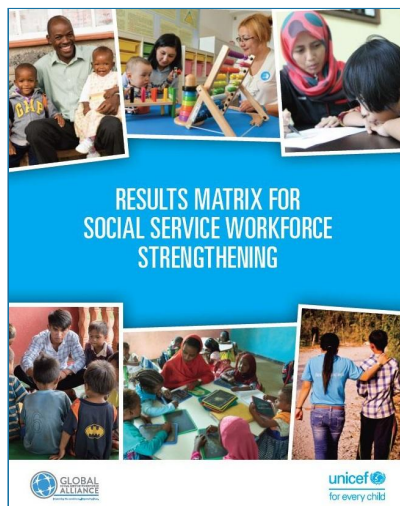
### Join the Conversation

Follow us on Twitter and [Facebook](#) to share relevant news and join the conversation.

### [Strengthen the Social Service Workforce for Child Protection](#)

issued by UNICEF in 2019 in collaboration with the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance, and the inclusion of SSW strengthening in UNICEF's Strategic Plan as a priority area of investment in child protection. In just one hour, it introduces strategies for how participants can support national efforts and advocate for government investment in strengthening the social service workforce.

The Guidelines are a part of a toolkit developed by the Alliance and UNICEF to support national social service workforce strengthening efforts. A new component of the toolkit is now available: [Results Matrix for Social Service Workforce Strengthening](#). This results matrix is meant to guide the measurement of progress



toward strengthening the social service workforce, a key component of a well-functioning child protection system. Applying this results framework and measuring progress against the indicators below can help increase understanding of the impact of efforts to strengthen the social service workforce and of areas that need more attention.

Other [components of the toolkit](#) include a Mapping Toolkit and a Compilation of Resources to Strengthen the Para Professional Social Service Workforce.

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## New Course: Adapting Child Protection Case Management during COVID-19

A new free, three-week course is available to enhance understanding of the heightened protection risks and vulnerabilities that children are facing around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The course will review how to adapt child protection case management and discover why it's vital that child protection caseworkers and other service providers work in partnership to make sure there is a collective response to protecting a child. The course will also review examples of promising practice and will stimulate the exchange of ideas and experience between learners around the world.

This course has been made possible by the COVID-19 Case Management MOOC Taskforce and will be offered through FutureLearn. [Register now to join the next session starting June 29.](#)

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## Resources

### COVID-19 Resources

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. We are adding new resources to this list daily as more interagency work is published. If you would like us to add a resource, [please contact us](#).

We invite you to share with us how you are helping to address COVID-19. [Share your stories and experiences on our discussion board](#).

### Alternative Care and Child Protection

#### [The De-Institutionalization Debate and Global Priority for Children's Care](#)

Multiple factors stand behind low global priority for children's care, including the limited power of affected children and families, the issue's multi-sectoral nature and competition for attention with other social welfare issues. This paper reviews those issues as it relates to prioritization of de-institutionalization overall to make recommendations for future progress. A brief has been developed to highlight top-level findings.

[Alternative Care for Children Around the Globe: A desk review of the child welfare situation in all countries in the world](#)

This report is a compilation of four years of research from desk reviews to try to determine numbers and current situation of children in alternative care by country.

### [Child Protection Workforce Strategy 2017-2020](#)

This child protection workforce strategy from Australia aligns with the department's Strategic plan 2017–2018 and People strategy 2020. It draws on a broad range of data and insight. The consultation approach and analysis of data has provided the evidence base for our strategic aim for the child protection workforce, as well as underpinning the child protection workforce strategy framework. This strategy flags the department's intent to deliberately invest in building a child protection workforce that is best placed to deliver on the reform agenda and to meet the future needs of the community head on.

## **Supervision**

### [Evidence-Based Management: Origins, Challenges, and Implications for Social Service Administration](#)

Evidence-based management is emerging in the helping professions in response to heightened demands for public accountability and organizational performance. This paper defines evidence-based management and reviews its origins in the U.S. health care and business sectors and its recent incorporation into the social work profession. A case study describes the efforts of one social service agency to use evidence-based management to improve the performance of its child welfare and mental health programs.

### [Ethical Guidelines for Social Work Supervisors in Rural Settings](#)

Little research literature exists integrating ethics, supervision, and rural/small community practice. This paper reports results of a study conducted by a joint student-faculty team. The study engaged supervisors in rural and small communities in two Midwestern U.S. states in semi-structured interviews. Interview data were then used to develop guidelines for BSW students about what constitutes ethical supervisory practice in rural environments.

### [Supervision, Support and Mentoring Interventions For Health Practitioners in Rural and Remote Contexts: An integrative review and thematic synthesis of the literature to identify mechanisms for successful outcomes](#)

This review includes 43 papers that evaluated support strategies for the rural and remote health workforce. Interventions were predominantly training and education programmes with limited evaluations of supervision and mentoring interventions.

[The Surprisingly Weak Evidence Base for Supervision: Findings from a systematic review of research in child welfare practice \(2000–2012\)](#)

The objective of this study carried out in the U.S. is to ascertain what is known about the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of supervision in child welfare in relation to outcomes for consumers/service users, staff and organizations. The evidence base for the effectiveness of supervision in child welfare is surprisingly weak. An agenda for research based on a framework for the development and evaluation of complex interventions is proposed.

[Sustaining Tensions in Practice Supervision](#)

This qualitative research assesses the impact of a new supervision policy at Wigan Social Services Department in the UK over the first year of phased implementation. Results of 40 staff interviews suggest that the major difficulties centered on the relationship between managerial and professional agendas and the nature of both vertical and horizontal communication within the organisation. With hindsight it is thought that some of the initial tensions were partly responses to the process of change itself.

[From Supervision to Organisational Learning: A typology to integrate supervision, mentorship, consultation and coaching](#)

Supervision is recognised as one of the major determinants of the quality of service to social work clients, the advancement of professional development and social workers' level of job satisfaction. However, educational and supportive roles of supervisors have been constrained by administrative obligations. It is envisaged that the future path of supervision will be a new form of organisational learning. This paper aims to integrate supervision within the UK with three other kinds of organisational learning: mentorship, consultation and coaching.

[Training, Supervision and Career Development](#)

A home visiting needs assessment tool has been developed with several key areas of focus, including on training, supervision and career development. This tool includes

questions as an opportunity to reflect on the accessibility and relevance of existing training and supervision for home visitors and supervisors in the program, along with career advancement opportunities.

## **Core Competencies**

### [Core Competency Framework for the Protection of Children](#)

This Core Competency Framework has been developed for all disciplines, professions and staff groups undertaking a clinical role within NHS Scotland. The twin aims of the framework are (1) to describe the key areas of child protection work that are common and core across all disciplines, professions and staff groups with a clinical role, and (2) to describe the recommended core knowledge and understanding necessary to support these areas of work.

### [Training of Child Protection Actors on Key Competencies in Caring for Children in Adversity and their Families: A guide for trainers and child protection actors](#)

This guide has been designed to strengthen the competencies of child protection actors. The first part of the guide is intended for those who train child protection actors and is based on a child protection competency matrix. It presents the training methodology to strengthen essential knowledge, attitudes and skills, including the information and tools needed to facilitate the learning and development of child protection actors.

## **Development and Retention**

### [Endline Program Evaluation of the Strengthening Public Sector Social Services Systems in Ethiopia Project](#)

This report presents the endline performance evaluation of the Strengthening Public Sector Social Services Systems in Ethiopia (SPSSSE) project, funded by USAID and implemented by the Ethiopian Society of Sociologists, Social Workers and Anthropologists (ESSWA). This evaluation contributes to understanding of mechanisms and results in context of SPSSSE efforts to support improved quality, reach, and effectiveness of social services through workforce development.

### [Factors Influencing Retention of Child Welfare Staff: A systematic review of research](#)

Child welfare agencies need to identify and implement effective strategies to recruit and retain well-qualified staff that has the knowledge, skills and commitment to provide

services to our nation's most vulnerable children and families. Synthesized results across studies, practitioners, researchers, educators, policymakers and administrators in the child welfare field in the U.S. are intended to increase the retention of a competent child welfare workforce.

### [Models of Workforce Development](#)

This paper provides a selection of models and approaches to workforce development that are of relevance to NSW Australian non-government community sector (the sector). The intention is to provide a brief summary of existing options to assist us in developing a preferred model for the development of a workforce development strategy for our sector. In this respect this paper aims to provide a descriptive summary (rather than an analysis) of current models, as well as stimulate thinking and discussion.

### [Social work in East Africa: A mzungu perspective](#)

Social work in East Africa is confronted with myriad social and structural problems. The heritage of imported theories and concepts from the West is still affecting education and practice. The profession lacks resources and has only limited influence on social policies. Since 2010, a multi-phase, research-focused project called PROSOWO has been running in order to bring the professionalization of social work on the agenda. In this article, empirical data are discussed with regard to developmental and indigenized social work in these countries.

### [Taking Care of Yourself](#)

Child welfare work is hard so it is necessary to implement a protective cares framework for taking care of self and others.

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