



# Situational Analysis of the Twinning Center Para-Social Worker Training Program in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CapacityPlus conducted a situational analysis of American International Health Alliance's (AIHA's) Twinning Center's para-social worker (PSW) training program in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Nigeria to a) provide a descriptive "snapshot" of the evolution and current status of each program; b) identify lessons learned and promising practices across all three programs, especially those that might guide possible program scale-up or replication; and c) to the extent possible, provide input to inform a possible future evaluation that is more extensive. The team conducted a desk review of available literature; phone interviews with US-based stakeholders; and traveled to the field to conduct in-person interviews with country stakeholders.

### Para-Social Work and Twinning

The PSW twinning program is founded on the precept of capacitating southern institutions to solve southern development challenges. To that end, all three PSW programs have partnered northern institutions with solid southern institutions in each country to not only create a new cadre of para-professional social workers but to strengthen each country's schools and institutions of social work to make this program sustainable. Likewise, as a result of this twinning, South-South partnering ensued, making the results of partnering even more highly impactful and tailored to context.

PSWs are para-professional volunteers who have received training in foundational skills in basic social service delivery. Currently, this cadre is being utilized in Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Tanzania to help address the human resources crisis in delivering social services to vulnerable populations, including vulnerable children.

### Country Profiles

Each country's PSW program has been profiled with a description of the evolution of each program; significant accomplishments achieved to date; and programmatic challenges. Likewise, country-specific recommendations are included for each program at the conclusion of each profile.

Overall, Tanzania employs the most comprehensive PSW training program, and other PSW countries have adapted and modified Tanzania's structure to their own specific context. The Tanzanian model trains not only PSWs but also PSW supervisors, thereby allowing for PSW refresher training as well as supervision during PSWs volunteer tenure. Furthermore, having the oldest of the three PSW programs, Tanzania has trained the highest number of PSWs and supervisors and has had the broadest geographic reach.

### Cross-Cutting Programmatic Accomplishments and Challenges

When looking across the Twinning Center's three PSW programs, there are both discernible accomplishments and challenges shared across all.

Clearly, the core PSW training model is adaptable to a range of contexts, with local training staff making the program sustainable. Given its adaptability, the training model does serve to meet the immediate need of providing foundational social welfare services to vulnerable populations and, particularly, vulnerable children. The program's participatory methodology has proven highly impactful, and the course content and design is strengthened through twinning—both North-South and South-South. As a result of this twinning and this program, southern institutions are being strengthened, and the visibility of social work and social welfare service provision is being raised in national awareness in all three countries.

Conversely, in all three programs, the concept of volunteerism, both for trainers and PSWs, has proven challenging. PSW retention rates in urban centers of Tanzania suggest that having unpaid volunteers may lead to higher attrition. Likewise, Ethiopia has struggled to field qualified volunteer trainers. The twinning priority of strengthening southern partner institutions seems to have received less emphasis over time, with a focus instead on the need to produce numbers of PSWs to meet donor requirements. And, with an increasing donor mandate and expanding twinning portfolio has come decreased donor funding, compromising the quality and breadth of the PSW programming. Scheduling of partners has proven challenging with both northern and southern partners balancing work elsewhere while maintaining commitments to the PSW program. Partnering has proven challenging at times, with the inherent power differential as well as donor/recipient element playing into relationships. Finally, there is also a lack of specific monitoring and evaluation data in all three programs that offers concrete evidence of impact.

### Cross-Cutting Promising Practices and Lessons Learned

Review of all three PSW programs suggests clear promising practices for any country wanting to establish a PSW program through twinning. Adapting the PSW training model to local context; ensuring the use of participatory methodology, delivery, and materials in local language; and use of local trainers are key. Programmatic sustainability is linked to several variables, including initially investing in partnering and strong collaboration with local institutions; establishing early and ongoing government buy-in; and ensuring continual cross-cultural sensitivity to partnering dynamics. Finally, strategic North-South and South-South exchanges are critical both to institutional strengthening and quality programming.

Alternatively, any country looking to adapt a PSW program through twinning should be mindful that the political landscape—from governmental to organizational to programmatic aspects—is always a potential challenge and needs to be monitored assiduously. By being apprised of the political landscape, PSW programs can preemptively problem-solve and position themselves strategically.

### Cross-Cutting Recommendations

This situational analysis validated that the twinning PSW model is adaptable and should be used when wanting to build a cadre of PSWs at the local level. The cross-cutting promising practices and lessons learned should inform program design and implementation, ensuring that there is an eye toward meeting country-specific needs and designing in sustainability.

Likewise, data on PSW impact would prove useful in many ways. The program was not designed as a service delivery program but instead as a training program. Therefore, to do an impact assessment would call for a serious resource investment and completely new metrics. If the decision is taken to pursue this, we would support doing this in Tanzania where there is the most programmatic support—take a baseline in a region prior to PSW training; use a small sample size of vulnerable children and caregivers with metrics designed to align with the PSW training content, as well as the quality guidelines for most vulnerable children service provision adopted by the Government of Tanzania; and reassess 12 months later.

A range of other recommendations surfaced from the situational analysis, and we hope that they will strengthen current programming as well as PSW programming to come.

## Conclusion

This situational analysis provides the needed data to continue promoting and funding twinning practices and the creation of PSW cadres as an emergency human resources response to serving children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Hopefully, the data offered will catalyze dialogue regarding the viability of a more formal study of impact on both vulnerable children and their caregivers. Ideally, findings will be disseminated broadly to offer guidance to other countries curious about pursuing the creation of PSW training through twinning. And, we believe through capacitating southern institutions through twinning while concurrently equipping PSWs at the village level, a human resources response that has the hope of being both sustainable and immediate is possible.

## ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AIHA	American International Health Alliance
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FHI	Family Health International
FSSW	Federal School of Social Work, Enugu
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
GoN	Government of Nigeria
GoT	Government of Tanzania
HCSSW	Hunter College School of Social Work
HIV/AIDS	human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
HRIS	human resources information system
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration
HUSSW	Howard University School of Social Work
IP	implementing partner
ISW	Tanzanian Institute of Social Work
JACSW	Jane Addams College of Social Work
LGA	Local Government Authority
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MATEC	Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MSW	master's of social work
MVC	most vulnerable children
MVCC	most vulnerable children's committee
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NRD	non-research determination
OVC	orphans and vulnerable children
PASONET	Para-Social Network of Tanzania
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLHIV	people living with HIV/AIDS
PMO-RALG	Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government
PSCW	psychosocial care worker
PSW	para-social worker
SitAn	situational analysis
SSW	School of Social Work
SWA	social welfare assistant
SWW	social welfare workforce
TASWO	Tanzanian Association of Social Workers
TESWEP	Tanzania Emerging Social Work Education Programmes
THRP	Tanzania Human Resource Capacity Project
TOT	training-of-trainers
TRG	Training Resources Group, Inc.

TWG	technical working group
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNN	University of Nigeria, Nsukka
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEI	World Education International

## OVERVIEW

As HIV/AIDS has swept across parts of the African continent in the last 30 years, leaving devastation in its wake, one critical consequence has been an exponential increase in the number of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). According to UNICEF, by 2010, in sub-Saharan Africa an estimated 15.7 million children had lost at least one parent due to HIV/AIDS.

Often the care of children orphaned by HIV falls to the extended family, with grandparents, aunts and uncles, or older siblings heading ever-expanding households. Today, most orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV live in some type of family setting rather than in institutions and require a continuum of care that can include health and psychosocial support, protection, education, nutrition, and more. This increasing burden has begun to fray the indigenous social safety nets of most African countries, creating a crisis of care.

Theoretically, a country's national social welfare system should be able to fill the breach, providing basic services needed by OVC and their caregivers. Yet, in sub-Saharan Africa, most social welfare systems are rudimentary at best, and the social welfare workforces of most African countries are both under-skilled and under-resourced.

In 2008, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was authorized to increase the number of health care professionals and para-professionals in countries receiving aid; among these are para-professionals trained to work in social services. These lay workers, para-social workers (PSWs), receive specialized courses, giving them foundational skills in basic social service delivery with a focus on OVC services. Consequently, in order to meet the needs of an over-burdened social welfare system and a growing population of vulnerable children, several African countries have pursued growing this cadre. The PSW training models consist of a series of short courses and field experiences rather than lengthy formal academic training; therefore, PSWs can be quickly produced and can access communities effectively to provide needed services.

## SCOPE OF WORK AND METHODOLOGY

Since 2007 the American International Health Alliance (AIHA) Twinning Center (a PEPFAR-funded initiative through the Health Resources and Services Administration, or HRSA) has initiated working partnerships between US- and Africa-based schools of social work to design and implement PSW training programs in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. At the request of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) OVC Technical Working Group (OVC TWG), *CapacityPlus* was asked to conduct a situational analysis (SitAn) of the Twinning Center's PSW training program. The SitAn would address the following objectives: a) provide a descriptive "snapshot" of the evolution and current status of the program; b) identify lessons learned and promising practices, especially those that might guide possible program scale-up or replication; and, c) to the extent possible, provide input to inform a possible future evaluation that is more extensive.

This SitAn included two phases: a beginning phase involving a desk review and telephone interviews with US-based partners, and a second phase including field visits to gather information in each of the three countries with Twinning Center PSW training programs.

**Phase 1 (August – October 2011):** The desk review entailed examining existing documentation on the Twinning Center’s three PSW programs in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. (For a full list of documents reviewed, please reference appendix A.) This desk review process also included a number of informal program discussions by phone or in person with key US-based stakeholders. Sixteen stakeholders were contacted, and conversations were had with nine of them. For the question protocol, please consult appendix B.

**Phase 2 (June 2012 – August 2012):** With the acquisition of CDC’s (Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s) Non-Research Determination (NRD), the SitAn moved its data-gathering to the field. Over the course of three months, the *CapacityPlus* team conducted week-long visits in all three countries and met with Twinning PSW stakeholders and partners as well as conducted focus group discussions with PSWs, PSW supervisors, PSW trainers, and PSW facilitators. For the NRD-approved field protocol, please reference appendix C.

To fulfill this scope, *CapacityPlus* fielded a team of three consultants: Dr. Nathan Linsk, professor emeritus of the Jane Addams College of Social Work (JACSW) Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center (MATEC), University of Illinois at Chicago; Ms. Dana Singleton of IntraHealth International; and Ms. Laura Guyer of Training Resources Group (TRG).

Since Dr. Linsk and Ms. Guyer both had previous experience with the Twinning Center’s PSW program, the team ensured data-gathering would be as objectively reported as possible by adhering to the following guidelines:

- In each country, it was determined who would be the most objective team member to lead each interview or focus group.
- Each day, the *CapacityPlus* team members reviewed the data gathered and offered feedback to one another regarding the process of ensuring objectivity.
- Where the team has insights that differ from the reported data, it will be specifically noted as a varying perspective.

For the full scope of work, please see appendix D.

## **PARA-SOCIAL WORK AND TWINNING**

In a North-South partnership, the notion of “twinning” implies that partners will collaborate to build the capacity of the southern partner organization. Drawing from AIHA’s extensive history with twinning in the health sector, US-based (or “northern”) partners agree to commit resources of time, expertise, staff, and knowledge, and deliver their development agenda through capacitation of the southern partner, rather than direct service delivery.

Another notable feature of twinning is how the southern partners are involved from the inception of the project, to ensure that the project's goals, objectives, and work plan are primarily country-driven. The desired end result is to build sustainable organizational capacity in these countries, with the technical assistance offered by the northern partner being tailored to meet the needs and context of southern partners.

In this particular program, the Twinning Center's focus for social welfare workforce capacitation was on para-professional social workers defined broadly as follows<sup>1</sup>:

"The term *para-professional social work* is used below to include work by community-level people who have been trained in basic social service modalities to work with vulnerable children and families, but lack professional-level education and training for independent work as social workers. These workers may have a range of names, including para-social workers, social work assistants, social extension workers, psychosocial care workers, etc., and the actual position title may need to be adapted to the local cultural and policy context."

AIHA's Twinning Center has a presence in each country and serves as a coordinating body for the northern and southern institutions. In this document, when referring to the Twinning Center program we mean the AIHA Twinning Center with program duration being defined by the donor, the host institutions, and AIHA. Similarly, when we reference the Twinning partnership, we are including AIHA, the northern and southern institutions, and other in-country partners. When using "twinning" in the lower case, we are referring to the methodology.

It is important to note that the partners and institutions involved in twinning were defined by both the country and the context. Twinning partnering changed over time, and partners had more or less emphasis depending on the country program's needs and development. Therefore, there is no one definition for a Twinning partnership in this context. Instead, it is a construct that has both flexibility and adaptability to be tailored to meet the needs of the host southern institution.

Building on this, the Twinning Center began its work in Tanzania, piloting the core program that has become the para-social worker training model.

## TANZANIA COUNTRY PROFILE

As a result of Family Health International's (FHI's) 2006 assessment<sup>2</sup> of Tanzania's social welfare system, the Social Work Partnership for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Tanzania was established. This partnership was initiated among the AIHA HIV/AIDS Twinning Center, Tanzania's Institute of Social Work (ISW), and Chicago-based JACSW/MATEC at the University of

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Conviser, Training Para-Social Workers to Expand Africa's Human Resources for Health, quote by Dr. Nathan Linsk and Lucy Steinitz, pg. 6 (Global Health Policy Partners, Fall 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Lucia Correll and Tim Correll, Family Health International Trip Report, (FHI, February 2006).

Illinois at Chicago. The aim was to build the capacity of the ISW in terms of faculty development and degree programs while addressing gaps identified in providing social welfare services to Tanzania's most vulnerable children (MVC), as well as creating a pool of skilled social workers to manage the MVC at all levels. The Tanzanian government uses the term MVC rather than OVC and is appropriate to use when analyzing the Tanzanian program.

Initially, the Twinning partnership trained social welfare officers to focus on best practices in MVC psychosocial care, child development, reporting, and service delivery. The focus was a "just in time" approach to equip community-level volunteers who didn't have a social work background with additional knowledge and skills to fill the human resources (HR) gap in providing service to vulnerable children at the village level. In time the program grew into a training program aimed at strengthening the social welfare system by creating a new cadre of para-professionals, many just out of school, who could serve as front-line providers of basic social welfare services to vulnerable children as an immediate stop-gap response to social welfare's HR crisis at the village and ward levels.

Originally, a ten-day curriculum was designed by JACSW and ISW and piloted in Temeke District of Dar es Salaam, as well as Iringa District in July of 2007, providing foundational knowledge and skills to support the MVC, particularly those affected by HIV. The community-based workers were named PSWs and were to draw upon existing experienced volunteers throughout the country. In this pilot, a competency-based curriculum taught skills under the following training chapters:

1. Outreach and Identification
2. Engagement of Orphans and Families
3. Assessing Needs and Strengths
4. Developing a Plan of Care: Networking and Identifying and Referral to Other Resources
5. Providing Support and Services within the Context of Your Organization
  - Helping HIV-Affected Orphans and Vulnerable Children
  - Counseling MVC and Their Families
  - Developing Support Structures for MVC and Their Families
6. Ongoing Case Management, Advocacy and Follow-up.

The first trainings were offered in various districts around the country. Participants were initially recruited in collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) as well as local organizations. At the request of USAID, the focus shifted to participants selected from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or other local organizations during this pilot period. Over the course of the first year and a half, the Twinning Center partners trained over 500 para-professional social workers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Nathan Linsk and Laura Guyer, Background on Para-Social Workers in Tanzania (JACSW & TRG, September 2010)

At the conclusion of the pilot, lessons learned suggested strengthening the program in a range of ways. These included adding a supervisory component for oversight of PSWs and offering a second phase course following six-months of PSW supervision. USAID and CDC supported operationalizing these lessons as well as exploring mainstreaming this cadre into the local government structure to ensure eventual sustainability.

In 2008, USAID directed the AIHA Twinning Center to work with the Capacity Project, a USAID-funded partnership led by IntraHealth International, to expand the target numbers further to over 2,500 participants and focus on integrating the PSW cadre into the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) to ensure the training was owned by the government of Tanzania. This new partner collaborated with the Twinning partners to coordinate and plan trainings and to focus advocacy efforts.

In March of 2009, a “Lessons Learnt” stakeholder meeting brought together representatives from USAID, the Twinning Partnership, Capacity Project, UNICEF, the Prime Minister’s Office for Regional and Local Government (PMO-RALG), and the DSW to review the program to date and formulate recommendations for program revision. This meeting coalesced with the development of a scheme of service for the DSW that included a new cadre of social welfare assistants as future employees, and the partnership was charged with developing a one-year course for them. Because the PSWs have less training, they were deemed not eligible for government employment. It was decided that PSWs would be volunteers working at the village level and receiving no donor stipend; therefore, local governments, MVC committees (MVCCs), and village councils have had to take responsibility for resourcing the work of PSWs.

A strategic decision was taken by USAID to train an entire region at a time rather than disparate districts around the country. This would enable looking at data comparatively as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) was done over the course of the project, and this would allow PSWs and supervisors in a geographic area to network with one another and create a support system. PSWs are selected in conjunction with local government and must have completed a minimum level of education (form 4 leaver—equivalent to completion of grade 10 or 11; those who are admitted at the college or university level complete form 6 or equivalent).

Likewise, in early 2009, a four-day supervisory training was designed and piloted immediately following the initial PSW training delivery with PSW supervisors who were already working at the ward level where they would have oversight over a number of PSWs in villages within their respective wards.

At the request of the DSW, the five-day Phase Two course was developed in 2010, *Para-Social Work II: Practice Skills to Intervene with Vulnerable Children and Families in Special Circumstances*, and the course was delivered for PSWs after six to eight months in the field with an accompanying one-day additional content for PSW supervisors. This course focused on more advanced skills, including case analysis based on PSW experience to date, and other topical areas such as stigma reduction; HIV disclosure; working with HIV-infected children and families;

working with the local government; the Law of the Child; child protection; and using the Child Status Index as an assessment tool.

Currently, the comprehensive PSW Training Model is a program with different interventions that take place over the course of 8-12 months including:

- Introduction to Para-Social Work Training (Phase I)—nine-day, competency-based
- Introduction to Para-Social Work Supervision I—PSW participants identified as potential supervisors complete the initial PSW I course and take part in an additional four-day training in supervisory skills.
- Supervised field experience (six to eight months)
- Para-Social Work Follow-up Training (Phase II)—five days plus an additional day for PSW supervisors
- Continuous monitoring, support, evaluation, and technical assistance
- A para-social work update has been implemented on a pilot basis for continued training to occur one year after the completion of the earlier qualifying modules.

The Twinning Center partnership has also trained more than 100 trainers, who are drawn from community-based organizations or DSW including some ISW faculty; most are trained social workers. These trainers have been trained to deliver the Introduction to Para-Social Work course. Likewise, a number of trainers have also been trained to deliver both the supervisory and PSW II courses.

A focus of the PSW program has been to provide an eventual career path for PSWs who excel. The Twinning Center, in collaboration with the Capacity Project (and subsequent Tanzania Human Resource Capacity Project, or THRP), has worked closely with key line ministries to advocate for and support the creation of a new civil service role for social welfare at the ward level—the social welfare assistant, as mentioned previously. PSWs and PSW supervisors can be fast-tracked to be considered for this government job (which was approved by Tanzania’s Civil Service Commission in 2009) and the Twinning Center partnership is working in concert with the DSW and ISW to utilize the ISW certificate program, with learning activities tailored to the needs of social welfare assistant-specific requirements that qualify candidates for the role. Beginning in 2010, USAID funded 35 scholarships each year for promising PSWs and PSW supervisors to attend the ISW certificate program, with the promise of employment in the new role of social welfare assistant upon completion. Beginning in 2012, these scholarships have mostly shifted to directly supporting tuition costs of those in a dedicated social welfare assistant (SWA) certificate program. This career path focus is also reflected in the agreed-upon criteria for participant selection in PSW training: the education requirement to enter the PSW program was raised, and the maximum age was lowered to align with the criteria for civil service.

“The program has created a cadre of people to respond within the community and have the possibility of professional growth to a higher level of social worker. Even those taking the certificate course are also thinking of going on for diplomas.” —DSW staff member

From 2008 – 2011, a review of the Twinning Center’s yearly work plans reflects an expanding scope, both in design and delivery of the PSW training as well as other objectives regarding strengthening the systems and capacitation of not only the ISW but also helping re-establish the Tanzania Social Workers Association (TASWO) and providing support and technical assistance for a consortium of emerging social work programs (now done in collaboration with TASWO). TASWO changed its constitution to support the inclusion of PSWs, showing an in-country acceptance of multiple levels of SW cadres. Other implementing partners have recently added PSW activities to their program and are collaborating with the Twinning partners. Additionally, a PSW network was developed called PASONET that is a tool for advocacy, mobilizing resources, and networking. The Twinning Center’s Tanzania portfolio increased in work and complexity yearly, as PSW training expanded from region to region, with phases of PSW training, PSW supervisory training, and M&E increasing exponentially.

## Program Accomplishments

**Number of PSWs trained:** Since 2008, The Twinning Center in partnership with the THRP has trained 3,406 PSWs in PSW I and 1,712 PSWs in PSW II. These PSWs are now skilled volunteers at the village level, helping to address the HR gap where there are no professional social workers. The MVC are receiving services where they were not before, particularly psychosocial services and referrals. Many PSWs are also involved at the ward level and with MVCCs which ties them in with the local government system.

**Number of trainers trained to deliver PSW I; PSW II; and PSW supervisory courses:** A total of 103 trainers have completed training for at least one of the three designated courses; most of the trainers are now equipped to train all three of the primary courses. In addition to ISW lectures, the partnership has trained an additional eight facilitators who can provide in-depth content expertise and clinical experience and who can help coordinate and both mentor and support the trainers on-site. ISW social workers and faculty have strengthened their abilities to design, deliver, and facilitate all PSW curricula and are now delivering the trainings independently of northern trainers.

**PSW training model:** The partnership has designed and delivered a participatory PSW training methodology using adult learning methods that has been used as a model in two other countries and that can be adapted for use in other African countries.

**Social welfare assistant role:** The Twinning partnership participated in advocating for and creating a paid government role for social welfare at the ward level; likewise, the partnership provided extensive curriculum input in designing and enhancing the existing ISW certificate program to meet the specific needs of DSW social welfare assistants.

**Career path:** The PSW program has a career path development focus with criteria reflecting eventual civil service employment, which is a major incentive. It was cited that the ISW has seen an increased number of applicants in their certificate program since the PSW program has begun, and a number of them have been trained as PSWs (more data on this has been requested, but thus far has been unavailable). Likewise, the first class of social welfare assistants are all from the PSW program.

**Visibility:** The program has raised awareness in government of social service issues and the need in the country for these services. Ministry officials cited an increased understanding of what social welfare and the social work profession is. The establishment of a social welfare strategy and an increase in budget (central and districts) for social welfare issues has been linked back to the program. The government-led social welfare assistant program grew out of this effort.

**Strengthened institutional capacity at the ISW:** Many of the faculty members at the ISW have been involved in the program and have benefited by learning participatory training skills and methods from the real world examples and experiences of those providing services in the field.

“It gives the trainers an opportunity to learn from the participants. The best experience for me is the first day of PSW II when we hear from the PSWs what they have been doing over the last six to eight months, what they have done for the children, his or her success stories, how the training was implemented, how the clients have benefited. We didn’t just train in vain; we trained and something happened. It really touches me.” —Trainer

Faculty members have also benefited from exchange visits with the northern and southern partners, and from mentoring from northern partners. Also, there is increased awareness of the institution and an increased number of applicants. The MVC modules have been mainstreamed into the ISW program, adding content on child protection and HIV to the curriculum.

**South-South exchanges:** In 2008 this partnership came together with the Addis Ababa University (AAU) School of Social Work to create the Triangle Project, which has included adaptation for the para-social work program to the needs of people living with HIV who require psychosocial support in Ethiopia. The Tanzanian partners benefited from AAU’s experience offering a master’s degree program in social work, and plans have been developed to expand the ISW’s program to include a master’s degree in social work, either independently or in collaboration with other universities. In the past year, the partnership has provided assistance in creating a South-South exchange for professional development and capacitation of ISW trainers with colleagues from the Federal School of Social Work in Nigeria and the University of Nigeria Social Work Department.

**Approach for sustainability:** The program has advocated for a significant amount of government involvement for buy-in at all levels (national, regional, district, village) at each phase of the project. PSWs are selected in conjunction with local leaders and are often linked up with community groups and MVCCs at the LGA after becoming PSWs. At the same time, there are

concerns over lack of other sources of income and lack of incentives. Some programs are training their volunteers on a group income-generation activity so they can stay in the villages providing services and not need to go outside to earn income.

**Expanding roles for support and coordination:** As activities have emerged with PASONET, TASWO, and TESWEP (Tanzania Emerging Social Work Education Program), the partnership team has provided leadership and coordination, engaged in start-up activities, and seeks to remain involved as these become further developed under the Twinning Center. AIHA has noted that expansion within Tanzania toward reaching the objectives of their portfolio has come with minimal expansion of funding, which in turn has placed a heavy burden on existing Tanzania and US partners to reach the intended goal.

**Use of data in the ongoing iteration of PSW curricula:**

The pre- and post-test data as well as input from key partners in the field accrued by the partnership were used in the iterations and revisions of the curricula over the life of the program.

## Program Challenges

**Addressing expectations of participants and communities given the level of training received and funding available:**

With the PSW training where participants are now form 4 leavers (the minimum education level required for entry-level civil service work), managing the expectations of obtaining a government job expeditiously is difficult. Additionally, some of the trainers expressed concern that sometimes PSWs believe themselves to be more fully qualified to offer social services than they are and that they see themselves now as trained professionals. That said, well-performing PSWs do have an advantage over other candidates applying for the SWA certificate program, as the training is taken into consideration in the acceptance process.

“Some consider themselves as professionals, they say, ‘We are the ones, we know what to do, we are the social workers.’ It was so exciting to see they have confidence in themselves. I didn’t want to discourage them, but I wanted to put a little leash on their necks, I told them, ‘Look up the ladder, you have the potential to go there. As long as you are engaged you have a lot of opportunities.’” —DSW staff member

**Monitoring and evaluation for impact:** There have been challenges in both the development of adequate tools to monitor the training as well as the accurate completion of the M&E tools (documentation forms) by PSWs in the field. PSWs use forms to report on the number of MVC who have been supported and what services were provided. The forms go to the supervisors, then the district social welfare officers, then to the regional social welfare officer, then to PMO-RALG and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. Training on the tools has been instituted with PSWs and supervisors; however, PSWs report not having enough forms or access to photocopy machines; not having transport to deliver forms to supervisors at the ward level; and not having clarity on deadlines to ensure data is being submitted in a timely way.

Pre- and post-knowledge assessments and participant evaluations are conducted in association with all PSW trainings, and statistically significant positive changes are occurring, although the day-to-day significance of these changes needs further consideration. Follow-up protocols have more recently been put in place including site visits and several stakeholder forums to document participant suggestions about the program. Currently an effort is underway to determine the feasibility and appropriate steps to more systematically document program achievements, including trainee impact as well as reported changes in the service system and the lives of vulnerable children and their families.

Follow-up visits to the PSWs are being made by ISW and THRP jointly. These visits are used as an opportunity to check in with PSWs, refresh them on some of the techniques learned in the training, review how they are completing the forms, and track the number of MVC that PSWs are serving each month. The partnership is attempting to conduct follow-up visits with 25% of PSWs trained as a representative sample and works with the LGAs to facilitate the meetings and identify whom to follow up with.

The need was expressed to track those trained as they move out of the PSW roles. If they are continuing to provide services in other roles, such as social welfare assistants, or by transfer to other districts, or if they seek further education in the field, this would not be seen as a loss but rather as career growth.

“In Mwanza City, we have a high dropout rate because most of the PSWs have gone on to further studies. They go for a certificate in social work. When they become trained about para-social work it becomes the one catalyst to further their studies. This is a blessing, not a problem. We are building the social welfare workforce.” —Ministry of Health and Social Welfare staff member

A human resources information system (HRIS) has recently been put in place to capture and track PSW data (demographic data, where PSWs are located, and what training they have received). This will help a great deal in making training decisions and gathering attrition information.

**Supervision and monitoring by PSW supervisors:** PSW supervisors have varied in terms of their ability to provide adequate supervision and support as well as monitoring and reporting on the supervision of PSWs for a variety of reasons. There are inconsistent levels of supervision: some PSWs are in contact with their supervisor by phone, some in person, some monthly, some as needed, and in some cases not at all. Supervisors are selected from promising PSWs; some are selected by ward committees. Many PSW supervisors are ward employees who already have a different portfolio of work, often serving as the community development officer or municipal executive. Because PSW supervisors already have a full workload, overseeing new PSWs is not a high priority. Likewise, transport to villages to observe PSWs is challenging, as is documenting supervision using the M&E tools provided. Without photocopying and stationery support, supervisory documentation is sparse and difficult to validate.

**Coordinating the schedules of Twinning partners:** Given the expanding portfolio of work and deliverables expected, and with a training calendar arrayed with trainings in numerous regions, coordinating trainers, logistics, M&E, and training-of-trainers has become a challenging proposition. Likewise, all Twinning partners are balancing PSW training with other full-time commitments, making achievement of PSW goals difficult. This has become even more complex as other countries (e.g. Nigeria, Ethiopia) have called upon partner leadership for consultation and direct training. The ISW has incorporated the training program into the academic calendar, holding trainings during semester breaks so faculty are able to facilitate trainings and not miss classes. Additionally, delivering trainings outside of the institution's course schedule is part of their performance expectations. However, many of the trainers are employed in government, NGOs, or elsewhere, and often the trainers need more notice than what is given to get time off. Trainers frequently have to use their vacation time to deliver the trainings.

**Capturing Year 1 PSWs trained:** In spite of having created a plan with the THRP to trace Year 1 (2007) PSWs trained prior to the addition of PSW II, it has been difficult to locate these participants to assess if they are still providing services—much less to weave these participants into the new PSW model including supervision and refresher courses.

**New implementing partners tasked with delivering PSW training:** In the last year, USAID's MVC portfolio has been divided among four new United States Government implementing partners (IPs) collectively known as Pamoja Tuwalee—PACT, Africare, FHI, and WEI—each of which has been designated to deliver PSW training in their assigned regions, thereby scaling up the PSW cadre. To assure a shared approach to training, the DSW has decreed that no PSW training will occur unless it is using the Twinning Center/ISW curriculum and Twinning Center/ISW-trained trainers. IPs are moving into PSW training at different rates and with different understandings of the model, which puts added stress on the schedules and commitments of the ISW's limited trainer pool; furthermore, this results in PSWs being utilized inconsistently across the country. To date, collaborative PSW I and supervisor trainings have been implemented by PACT in several regions, but there are no funds to continue to offer the training model beyond this. As a result, these PSWs will only receive the first part of the training. PACT has been utilizing PSWs in their work with the village MVCCs and has found them to be advantageous because of the skills they already possess. Africare is hiring trained PSWs through their sub-grantees, which provides them with a source of income. Unfortunately, this creates a system where PSWs working with Africare receive stipends, and PSWs in the same region working solely with local government do not receive stipends. FHI is working in areas where PSWs have not been trained and does not currently have plans to offer PSW trainings as they are tasked with other training priorities. WEI has modified the advocacy module and is using it to do advocacy for MVC at schools.

**Inconsistency across donor programs:** In addition to the Pamoja Tuwalee partners offering only parts of the PSW training model, other donor programs have provided volunteers in the same regions with additional incentives than those received by PSWs (e.g., bicycles or cash incentives). This has created some feeling of inequity among volunteers. A common agreement on how volunteers are supported is needed.

**Fiscal and resource challenges:** The Twinning Center plays a direct role in program implementation, so the Center itself serves as a partner as well as a funder and contractor. Considerable development occurred to equip the ISW to manage its own sub-grant including supporting staff salaries, exchanges in the US for the director of finance, and onsite technical assistance by both AIHA and MATEC/UIC consultants. The recent change in the ISW's leadership resulted in restructuring the sub-grant so more of the programmatic expenses would be implemented centrally by the Twinning Center country office, which may be modified as new leadership and program agreements are put in place. AIHA notes that at the time of the situational analysis field visits, there were challenges in relation to payment of partner coordinators. Since then, however, ISW has been re-issued its sub-grant from AIHA, and the aforementioned payment issues have been rectified. The twinning methodology considers capacity building on both programmatic and financial terms to be of complementary importance—both of which are necessary for south partners be a direct grantee/implementer of a funder.

However, an equally great concern among the Twinning partners and primary program partners (e.g., THRP/IntraHealth, TASWO, DSW, etc.) has been the need for additional resources to sustain program expectations. The expanding scope of services has meant that funds are increasingly stretched, and it has been difficult to achieve transparency in what funds are available to achieve the annual work plan. This will continue to be a challenge as new programs, both degree programs and the social welfare assistant program, are put in place. The government must also be able to absorb the new social welfare assistants being produced.

An additional challenge is to equip the ISW, TASWO, and other local partners to obtain funds through other sources, both from the Tanzania and US governments, South to South, and from the private sector to continue these programs on an ongoing basis.

**Retention:** There is a need to conduct both follow-up and replacement training for PSWs and supervisors to both keep the existing PSWs up-to-date (a one-year follow-up program post-completion of PSW II) and to replace those lost through attrition. One effect of having modified the educational and age criteria to qualify for training is that PSWs are now selected from a younger, less experienced candidate pool, who tend to have higher career goals. This is believed to have led to higher attrition rates in urban areas as the PSWs continue their education or move to other careers. Other reasons cited for attrition were lack of an allowance, volunteer status with no pay, poor supervision, and too large of an area to support.

## Tanzania-Specific Recommendations

**Scale-up:** Scale-up will require further funding and should take a multi-pronged approach:

- Create a "maintenance plan" and replacement strategy for PSWs in place in Dodoma, Mwanza, Iringa, and Mtwara.
- Deploy the full model in subsequent regions with a focus on regions with the highest HIV prevalence rates and the highest numbers of the MVC.

- Have a clear schedule of trainings laid out so facilitators and trainers can schedule far in advance. Send a formal request to the trainers' workplace for the time off.
- Work with Pamoja Tuwalee partners to adopt and implement the full PSW model.

**Capacitation:** Explore ways to increase the pool of qualified trainers; continue to provide refresher trainings for trainers and supervisors.

**Career path:** Continue to support scholarships for promising PSWs to take the SWA certificate course and ensure an absorption plan is in place for graduates to gain employment at the ward level.

**Absorption of social welfare assistant role:** A strategic plan needs to be successfully implemented for the role of social welfare assistant. This should ensure that positions are established and budgeted for at the ward level and that supervision is in place. As this is an immediate end goal for PSWs to develop professionally, the government's ability to grow and absorb the capacitation of this cadre is critical.

**PASONET and TASWO:** Continue to strengthen and provide support to PASONET and TASWO overall in their efforts to advocate for the role of social workers and PSWs. PASONET is well-positioned to advocate for, and help sustain, the program at the village level.

**Retention/attrition:** Collect data on reasons that PSWs are leaving and where they are going. Clear guidelines are needed on the life course of the PSW, including how long the PSW is expected to serve, and a replacement plan should be in place. For example, many programs expect volunteers to commit to a time period of 18 months to 2 years. After that timeframe has passed, the PSWs should graduate; if PSWs desire to continue volunteering, they should reconfirm their commitment and receive refresher training.

**Integration and strategic alignment with government:** The PSW program must continue to work with Tanzania's government to integrate the PSW cadre into the National Social Welfare Workforce strategy, which can help in the systematic support of the PSWs with scholarship provision, as well as recognizing their role in the Law of the Child regulations. It is critical to continue advocacy efforts at the village, ward, and central levels and with the MVCCs. Continue to invite government officials to the trainings so they gain firsthand knowledge and take on more ownership.

**M&E:** Develop progress indicators for both service delivery and training that can be measured on a consistent basis, and track data beyond anecdotal data. This will require multiple stakeholder engagement.

## Success Factors Particular to Tanzania

Tanzania has proven to have trained the largest numbers of PSWs, supervisors, and trainers and has had the most success of the three PSW Twinning programs in moving local government to

mainstream social welfare positions. The following factors have enabled Tanzania's success in this regard:

- The Tanzanian ISW is a solid institution for capacity building, with a long history and a state-sanctioned bond with the Government of Tanzania.
- The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the DSW were involved in the Tanzanian program from its inception and have been full partners at each step of the process.
- Engagement of Tanzania's LGAs helped support at the local level. This occurred because the USAID-funded Capacity Project (now THRP) worked specifically to complement the PSW Twinning program with a commensurate focus on sensitization and advocacy of the Tanzanian regional secretariats and district governments. This has paid off in local LGAs welcoming PSWs and, in some measure, supporting them either officially or at the community level.
- Swahili is a unifying language. The PSW core model can be easily replicated as Swahili unites all of Tanzania. Therefore, there is no need to translate materials into a range of tribal languages.
- The government reflects a socialist focus. Social work and volunteerism at the village level is accepted as a government service. Julius Nyerere ensured that social welfare officers and the provision of social welfare services were an integral part of the Government of Tanzania from its inception. The idea of systemic social welfare and service to the community has been part of Tanzanian governance for decades. The challenge now is advocating for resources for a function that is already there.

## ETHIOPIA COUNTRY PROFILE

In early 2008, Ethiopia's AAU joined the Twinning partnership with JACSW and Tanzania's ISW with the goal of improving services to those affected by HIV/AIDS through developing and strengthening AAU's social work education programs. This "triangle" partnership was a way to foster South-South exchanges between Tanzania and Ethiopia in a continuing partnership with the US-based JACSW/MATEC, already working with both schools. Initially, the partnership conducted a needs assessment of the psychosocial needs of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in seven regions. This assessment included looking at community providers' perceptions of gaps in services which AAU's social work programs could address in training providers to meet these needs. The assessment findings indicated the need to provide training in psychosocial and mental health issues across the lifespan of HIV.

While the Triangle Partnership was the first to directly export and adapt the Tanzania para-social work model, Ethiopia's focus differed from Tanzania's in a range of ways. Although the original mandate was to adapt the program as an OVC effort, the findings from the assessment pointed to the need to provide psychosocial care to the entire population affected by HIV/AIDS, not just to vulnerable children. Another difference is that it focuses on training master's in social work (MSW) students at AAU, who then deliver the training to psychosocial care workers (PSCWs) in the field. PSCWs, also referred to as grassroots workers, are of a similar level as Tanzania's PSWs;

however, PSCWs are often affiliated with an organization in a variety of roles including home-based care, adherence counseling, outreach work, etc. The training they receive augments and strengthens the skills they already have. Likewise, their PSCW supervisor is the supervisor they have already at the organization with which they are affiliated. The Twinning program works with the regional health center to identify organizations in the region providing home-based care already. In each region, 120 training slots are divided among those organizations identified, with each organization responsible for choosing the candidates they will send to PSCW training.

Between October 2008 and March 2009, the Twinning partnership developed both the PSCW training curriculum and the training-of-trainers (TOT) curriculum for MSW students. Ethiopia was able to adapt core concepts and training models from Tanzania's recent experience in PSW training, making it applicable for PCWs within the Ethiopian context. Curriculum development was also informed by exchange visits between faculty members from AAU, faculty at JACSW, and faculty at the Tanzania ISW. A five-day curriculum retreat was held in-country and included participants from partners in all three countries. PSCW training topics included all those in the Tanzania PSW program, with additional particular emphasis on the following:

- Dispelling stigma
- Providing counseling
- Obtaining socioeconomic support for those affected by HIV/AIDS
- Ethical/human rights issues in providing care to PLWHIV
- Case management
- HIV knowledge: education and addressing beliefs; identifying people with HIV and their psychosocial support needs
- Engaging clients and families, values, and attitudes
- Relationship building with PLHIV
- HIV-related crisis intervention
- Identifying social supports and networks
- Assessing clients' bio-psychosocial-spiritual needs
- What is case management? Developing a plan of care and support
- Networking, referrals, and follow-up; documentation and recording
- Client advocacy at client, family, and organizational levels.

In June 2009, the PSCW training curriculum was piloted with MSW students. After feedback was provided, the curriculum was modified accordingly. Following that, the MSW students participated in a five-day TOT program to teach them to teach the curriculum.

Following the TOT, selected MSW students conducted a 12-day training in August 2009 for 25 PSCWs—from a variety of backgrounds and positions in hospitals and NGOs—who worked with

PLHIV in some capacity. It was noted that higher numbers of women were being recruited into both the TOT and the PSCW training. Materials were translated into Amharic, the national language. For each course, participants were given a pre- and post-training evaluation aimed at measuring knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as feedback on the training, adapting the format used in the Tanzania training. Some gains were observed, but the overall difference was not statistically significant. Participants rated the training itself between very good and excellent.<sup>4</sup>

In February 2010, the Triangle Partnership conducted a second workshop for MSW students during a six-day TOT.

Following the TOT, US, Tanzanian, and AAU partners worked with selected MSW students and conducted a second 12-day training for 24 PSCWs. This training added multiple approaches to the training evaluation (skills workbook, Likert scale questions, and open-ended questions) to gather trainees' perceptions of and satisfaction with the overall training. Participants demonstrated statistically significant gains in knowledge.

In April 2010 the PSCW curriculum was revised to incorporate feedback from TOT participants and colleagues at JACSW. The Twinning Center's partnership scope of work expanded to include enhancing networking and dissemination of information among community care providers, which developed infrastructure for programs on psychosocial care for community-level workers. Trainings were conducted for NGOs and faith-based organizations. PhD students from the School of Social Work began participating in the TOT to help ensure sustainability of the program.

In the period from October 2010 through March 2011, the PSCW trainings were held in the cities of Adama/Nazret, Awassa, and Bahir Dar. This marks the first time the trainings were offered outside of the capital. Three additional trainings were planned for September 2012 and are being held in Dire Dawa, Gambella, and Mekele. Additionally a PSCW supervisors' manual, written only in English, was adapted from the Tanzania materials. This required that supervisors enrolling in the training be proficient in English. This differs from previous materials which are also available in Amharic.

## Program Accomplishments

**Number of PSCWs trained:** Through June 2012, 83 MSW students had been trained as trainers; likewise, 420 PSCWs had been trained by the MSW trainers as well as Twinning colleagues.

**Sustainability:** Select MSW graduates are continuing to participate in the training with support from the Triangle Partnership. Some MSW and PSCW graduates may also be providing training or orientation to this content on the local level.

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<sup>4</sup> Nathan Linsk, Serkalem Bekele, Meseret Kassahun Desta, [Partnership Quarterly Progress Report](#) (Twinning Center, September 2009).

**Visibility:** Ethiopia does not have a formal social welfare system; however, this program has raised awareness in government of the value of social work and social welfare services. There is a new focus on developing a social service strategy and creating a social service workforce. Some of the SitAn participants noted that the PCSW program has helped call attention to these needs, and AAU partners are actively involved in the development of the strategy.

“We worked on integrating into the existing system. And that had to be civil society. We had to attach this support to what existed already to make it work.” —PCSW program staff member

**Strengthening the AAU curriculum and faculty:** The Partnership has provided curriculum content that has been incorporated into the AAU MSW and bachelor of social work curricula as well as has brought visiting faculty to co-teach and mentor with faculty on specific courses. In addition, AAU faculty members report their own professional development has resulted in more course offerings and a new degree program at AAU.

“Some of our staff went to Chicago and Tanzania for experience sharing and to co-teach with professors there and to learn from MATECH staff who are well-experienced in the area of HIV care. Through the help of this project, we have opened a new master’s program: a master’s of social work in health care systems.” —AAU faculty member

**Services delivered by enthusiastic and committed PCSWs and supervisors:** We consistently met both supervisors and PCSWs who were thoroughly engaged with the program.

“We offer a friendly approach...we can assist and help him or her know their [sic] status. I will raise awareness so they can be ready to be tested...I show myself as an example, and I tell all my experience, the advantages I have gotten from being tested, and the direction s/he has to go. Then they will take the initiative and learn from my experience...they will be able to change everything. They will take responsibility of taking care of themselves...What is important is to love them. To share our stories. There are lots of things to learn from our experience. Many people are desperate when they come, but they totally change their attitude. Our psychosocial care is as needed as the medicine. Some people say, ‘After I learned my HIV status, I started to build my life goal.’” —PCSW

## Program Challenges

**Trainings outside of the capital:** An emerging challenge in delivering the training outside of Addis Ababa was the selection process and logistics in delivering the training, as well as ensuring training participants had the required education and literacy skills to understand training materials.

**MSW students as trainers:** The Triangle Partnership uses MSW students who have taken the TOT to deliver the training to PCSWs. This can cause scheduling challenges with the academic calendar and in the availability of students to travel.

**Resource and fiscal issues:** The Partnership has presented ambitious work plans which have had to be addressed based on existing resources. The AAU and Twinning Center's finance administration has sometimes been challenging to access in a timely manner. Issues about per diems, reimbursement, and effective sub-grant management have also sometimes led to program delays. AIHA has noted that AAU manages its own sub-grant that is designed to manage costs mentioned; as a result, the specific problem is an internal AAU issue within the institution, which creates a challenge for payments on various activities.

**Leadership and location issues:** The AAU School of Social Work (SSW) has had an acting dean for the past two years, with the project coordinator often taking on administrative functions for the school, which has been advantageous as well as challenging. The SSW has moved four times in eight years and was functioning independently at a remote location for the past three years; it has now been brought under the College of Social Sciences with one of the SSW's graduates and former technical coordinator as associate dean. These shifts have made it difficult at times to maintain the program focus.

**Coordination with other OVC and para-social work programs vis-à-vis the emerging national framework for the social welfare workforce:** While the Triangle Partnership was the first to utilize para-professional social work programs in the country, there is significant overlap with other developing programs. As Ethiopia moves to develop a national framework for building the social welfare workforce, overlaps between para-professional cadres will prove challenging. More recently a very large OVC program has been launched by PACT-Ethiopia; there is a memorandum of understanding between PACT and AAU focusing primarily on faculty sharing and assessment activities facilitated by the partnership; however, there are no agreements about shared curriculum or training opportunities.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** While the project is based in a comprehensive baseline assessment, the only solid data to date are the pre- and post-assessments of trainee knowledge and attitudes. A side Ph.D. dissertation project by an AAU student has emerged using concept mapping to identify the best practices that have emerged from the partnership. Likewise, AAU is preparing to conduct an additional follow-up evaluation of both TOT and PSCW participants within the next six months; the protocol has been submitted and is awaiting a CDC project determination approval.

## Ethiopia-Specific Recommendations

**Further funding:** To leverage and reinforce the work done to date, investing in creating and deploying the full PSW model would be wise. This would include the development and delivery of the PSCW II and Supervisors II course with commensurate TOTs to capacitate Ethiopian trainers.

**Creating a PSCW network:** A group of PSCWs had plans to create a PSCW network; however, due to logistical challenges and a lack of resources, this network never was active. AIHA has noted that AAU was unable to move this forward due to funding constraints. Similar networks in Nigeria and Tanzania have proven to be powerful incentives and an efficient way to

communicate, provide updates, and track members. This should be reactivated and resourced through AIHA.

**Integrating into and complementing the emerging national social welfare workforce strategy:** The Government of Ethiopia is currently working collaboratively with UNICEF to map and assess its social welfare workforce in order to strategically commit resources to its strengthening. The PSCW program needs to ensure this cadre is figured into that overall equation; likewise, PACT, using the Yekokeb Bevhan Program, is training social welfare extension workers to serve 500,000 vulnerable children over the course of the five-year project. Investigating how PSCWs and supervisors can complement and support the work of this new cadre would heighten the impact of services offered as well as visibility of the program overall.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** Metrics for M&E should be explored further in conjunction with colleagues at AAU. Building on work done to date by AAU students, current research should be reviewed (see work done on the Triangle Partnership), as well as M&E being done on other similar programs (see study being done on the Yekokeb Bevhan program at <http://www.childresearchpolicy.org/evaluationstudies/ethiopia.html>).

**Financial infrastructure:** The AIHA Twinning Center needs support and an effective infrastructure to ensure its financial resources are reaching its programmatic staff in a timely way. This includes the new practice of paying PSCW trainers (and this practice should be adopted as standard procedure henceforth), as well as paying the salary of programmatic and partner staff.

## NIGERIA COUNTRY PROFILE

In August of 2008, the AIHA began working with two Nigerian partners, the Federal School of Social Work, Enugu Nigeria (FSSW), and the Social Work Department at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) as well as a consortium of three US-based partners: led by Hunter College School of Social Work of the City University of New York (HCSSW), but also including Howard University School of Social Work (HUSSW), and the Nigerian Social Workers Association in the US. The FSSW provides diplomas in social work whereas the University of Nigeria, Nsukka produces bachelor- and graduate-level social workers.

The goal of the partnership was to strengthen the capacity of Nigerian social work educational institutions to provide knowledge and skills necessary to ensure the provision of comprehensive social services for orphans and children made vulnerable by HIV in Nigeria. Increasing the Nigerian partners' capacity to provide PSW training was one element of their approach. An initial visit was conducted by US partners and AIHA for an official orientation to the Twinning Center and AIHA. In December of 2009, representatives from the UNN and FSSW traveled to the United States to observe and learn from social work and OVC structures and systems at the partner universities. In January, representatives traveled to Tanzania on an exchange visit to attend a PSW I and a supervisor training conducted by the Tanzania Twinning partnership.

A five-day preservice and a five day in-service curriculum and a TOT were developed by the partners, and in August 2009 two preservice trainings were delivered in Abuja and Enugu to a total of 126 people. Two versions of the curriculum manual were developed for the trainings: one for participants and one for a TOT. Pre- and post- test evaluations were conducted.

In October 2009 the partnership was reconfigured so that the Nigerian Social Workers Association, Hunter College School of Social Work, and Howard University School of Social Work no longer had a major role. This was due to a range of reasons, including concerns over the five-day curriculum needing to be more Nigeria-specific, a shift in donor priorities from institutional capacity building to production, and a desire to further leverage the South-South exchange with the Tanzania partnership. In November, independent consultants affiliated with the Tanzania program were brought in to develop a draft operational framework and memorandum of understanding (MOU), and in December of 2009, a stakeholder meeting was held where operating principles and the MOU were approved. The process of adapting and revising the PSW I curriculum began. The program was to be refined to incorporate Nigerian OVC data and to adapt it to the specifics of Nigerian culture.

It was also decided that one curriculum would suffice for both preservice and in-service, in that the preservice and in-service trainees would benefit from each other's perspectives and would have access to each other's knowledge base. The in-service trainees would have a more experienced perspective while the preservice trainees (MSW or bachelor of social work students) would bring a perspective from a more formalized education. Based on qualification or experience, the PSW trainees would be chosen for supervisory training.

As Nigerian partners began to conceptualize adapting the program to the Nigerian context, they felt volunteers were needed and that they wanted to engage people who would return to their communities to provide services after the training. The Tanzania curriculum appeared more relevant than the Hunter model which was developed primarily in the US. US-based expertise and Tanzanian partners collaborated to help modify the curriculum, work with stakeholders, and implement the training. Likewise, it was important that the Nigerian team participate in adapting and modifying the curriculum to ensure ownership. AIHA's perspective on the consortium's departure was largely due to the programmatic change of focus led by US Government priorities from institutional capacity building to scaling up of training.

Like the Tanzanian model, the program uses a facilitated trainer approach. Trainers are people who do the actual training process, teach the course, and come from the PSW pool. Facilitators moderate the training; address issues that arise; fill in what is beyond the ability of the trainers; and serve as a kind of coach. In short, facilitators are there to guide trainers and to add the depth of knowledge.

In January 2010 the partners signed the MOU, and the curriculum was further refined. An M&E structure was also planned, and an interim supervision process was put in place in February, using the partner faculty members as supervisors, and partner and facilitator trainings were done at that time. The first draft of the PSW I and TOT for PSW I curriculum was finished and

was field-tested and further revised in March and April 2010. The final revision of the PSW I curriculum occurred in May 2010 along with the presentation of the PSW I TOT.

The Nigerian PSW program now reflected the Tanzanian structure of an initial training followed by six months of field supervision followed by a second training. Specifically, PSW I would be eight days, followed by six months of supervised field work, followed by a five-day PSW II training. After completing PSW II, the participants would be certified as PSWs. This model would depend on getting agreement from the government accreditation agencies; as part of the Nigerian educational and health system, PSW training must be credentialed by the National University Council, and any certificate program must be approved by the academic senate of the UNN.

In determining how PSWs fit into the larger OVC care system, one possibility being considered would be for PSWs who completed the PSW I and PSW II trainings to be eligible for a one-year social work assistant certificate program. This would stipulate that recruits for the PSW program would need to have the educational background to be eligible to enroll for a university education.

At the beginning of 2011, a strategy was put in place to focus trainings in Enugu State for PSWs and TOTs so that participants could develop community-based networks.

The three primary partners—the two schools of social work and AIHA—oversee the selection of training participants. Likewise, the Federal Ministry of Women and Social Development also works with local government and traditional leaders to identify possible participants, emphasizing the passion of the participants for work with vulnerable children and likelihood of continued service as criteria. Uniform selection criteria for PSW training participants was developed that included:

1. Education level (preliminary secondary school, about grade 10)
2. Ability to learn in English
3. Focus on grassroots-level volunteers who have demonstrated a commitment to work with vulnerable children in their community
4. Geographical proximity
5. Recruitment through government and community leaders
6. Gender and age balance
7. Prospects for retention at the village level as a consideration.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Educational criteria for selection: have to have two credit passes in exam (general certificate of education ordinary level). Requirement to enter university is five credits. The project reduced that to get people to be involved more or less equivalent to high school.

## Program Accomplishments

**Number of PSWs trained:** Since the program's beginning in January 2009, 640 PSWs have been trained, with 50 supervisors among them. There are 25 qualified trainers.

**A strong training portfolio:** Training curricula have been developed that include PSW I, supervisory guidelines for a six-month PSW practicum period, PSW II, and PSW supervisory training. Likewise, another achievement is clearly defined roles for facilitators, trainers, and master trainers, as well as a PSW TOT curriculum. There are also clear and consistent selection criteria for recruits, and a comprehensive M&E plan for training.

**Career ladder:** A clear PSW career trajectory has been mapped out, with the goal of establishing a one-year social welfare assistant program in the future. There are paid social welfare assistants, with varying degrees of training at the community level within the social welfare departments. The PSW program is perceived as providing training to those who want to do the work but haven't had any training. Some of the participants are then able to move into the social work field (after further training). The PSW skills taught are perceived as very valuable. In addition, schools report that completers of the PSW program are now applying for diploma programs, which will qualify them for higher level jobs in the social welfare system. Some see the training as a stepping stone to other activities; the certificate they are given may help them to get employment at NGOs. Also, some see it as stepping stone to gain admission into colleges, especially into schools of social work. AIHA had offered a different perspective that the career ladder is not an explicit goal of the program, but conversations have been had on how this might be feasible.

**South-South exchange:** Staff of the Nigerian Twinning Center worked extensively with colleagues from the Tanzanian ISW and their Twinning partners.

**Navigating challenging partnership dynamics:** The initial composition of the Twinning partnership changed after some challenging dynamics arose in Year 1; the newly configured partnership went on to embrace the South-South exchange with colleagues from Tanzania with help from the US-based partners involved in the Tanzanian partnership, creating Nigerian-specific PSW training.

**University-based program oversight and collaboration:** The partners established a twinning model that makes the universities responsible for implementation, oversight, and content while the operational elements are conducted by the country office. (This may be challenging for scale-up as it is spread to other states.) In addition, the collaboration between the two universities is a notable accomplishment.

**Expansion and sustainability potential:** The university/community model may be adaptable to be expanded to other states; current partners are eager to assist in nationalizing the program. Other schools have interest in adapting the Para-Social Work Program in their states. Specifically UNN staff indicated the University of Jos and the University of Benin (in Nigeria) and possibly

others have come to see how the program works. PSWs also indicated the need for additional trainings as periodic updates.

**Integration with local government and traditional rulers:** As noted by one of the partner interviews, local chiefs are involved in participant selection as well as seeking feedback about program participants. The project team meets in an advocacy event with local rulers, local government, and other stakeholders to involve them and enlist them in selection of participants. The team attends a regular meeting of chiefs and local government and provides forms for them to use for selection. Chiefs are invited by local government chairmen, etc.

**Selection of participants for sustainability:** Selection of participants is based on passion for the work as well as established criteria. Further, PSW participants have been the source for selecting the trainers and supervisors, ensuring that all have a common base of experience to enhance the program.

“To date, [the] dropout rate is not significant from our informal reports. The supervisor model is working well as we take people from [the] PSW program and select them to work at the community level. Both supervisors and trainers are selected from PSW training.” —UNN faculty member

**Positive program response:** A number of respondents described the strong commitment and enthusiasm on the part of PSWs, trainers, supervisors and well as partner faculty.

“From my perspective, our ability to get to the grassroots level and try to have people who love it and who enjoy at the grassroots [is an achievement]. This is a government program—and we know there’s a need for the local government to own this...that’s an accomplishment.” —Twinning Center staff member

**Integration of program content into university curriculum:** Program content has been incorporated as modules into their other courses, presumably preservice level. The team has tried to infuse OVC curriculum into UNN’s curriculum as a subject/course. Students now are required to take this course.

**Faculty development:** Team members spoke to improved capacity of schools’ faculty to teach. All have completed PSW training.

**Development of a strong PSW network/association:** A focus group participant reported PSWs decided after being trained “to come together, that is why we began the Association of PSWs. The determination that we can do it and the passion is critical.”

**Increasing social work visibility:** There is increased excitement about social work as a profession, and the need for this work is better understood. Furthermore, PSWs in Nigeria may have future options for career development in the social welfare system, which in fact runs

counter to the goal of selecting participants who will be sustained at the community level over time.

**Perceptions of the PSWs:** There is a very strong understanding of the para-social work role as articulated by PSW interview participants. Similarly, PSW supervisors had clarity on their role as well.

## Program Challenges

**Participant model and incentives:** The idea of volunteerism was cited as a challenge. PSWs want to know how this benefits them. There is a need for extrinsic motivation of participants. Respondents suggested the Twinning Center re-visit the concept of volunteerism for the PSWs.

“Most of the people trained don’t have other sources of income, and it makes it difficult for them to do the job to the best of their ability. [The PSWS] need to have funds for transportation and expenses if [the government] can’t pay salaries to them or some [other] kind of incentive. [They] need to have recognition.” —UNN faculty member

**Ongoing funding:** Ongoing funding for the program is a major challenge, which leads to constraints in terms of activities that can be performed.

**Technology skills:** It was cited that faculty and staff members are in need of training in basic computer and Internet skills, which may be a problem in maintaining the integrity of the curriculum. AIHA adds that a significant investment (both financially and programmatically) was made in the establishment of the learning resource centers in both institutions. Partners have been trained on computer skills and have access to evidenced-based information geared toward their respective profession of social work.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** An M&E plan has been developed that includes: 1) pre- and post-test evaluations; 2) field follow-up with graduates of PSW I; 3) evaluation of training and trainers by the trainees; 4) evaluation of trainers by facilitators and master trainers; 5) field-based follow-up with supervisors; 6) quarterly partnership assessment of the curriculum; and 7) focus groups with all stakeholders. However, this program is relatively new, and the M&E system has yet to be fully implemented.

**Professional status of social workers:** Nigeria lacks a nationally sanctioned professional social work role. There is no scheme of service describing community-level social workers.

**Replication:** Due to Nigeria’s size and cultural diversity, the curriculum will need to be adapted to the specific site context before it can be applied. Expansion to other areas beyond Enugu State and Abuja will prove challenging because states are autonomous and can determine what kind of social welfare provision is provided. The curriculum would need to be culturally adapted to each state respectively. The chance of national replication with a set standardized curriculum is highly problematic. There are significant issues of diverse culture, languages, and religious

practices as well as organizational issues.

**Location:** The Twinning Center location in Enugu separates the project from other national-level activities (e.g., the technical working group, social welfare system strengthening efforts, possible alternative funding opportunities, networking with ministries).

**Potential for partner exhaustion:** Current partners may be or become overextended in terms of supervision, networking, etc. Schools indicate that faculty can participate in the program, if faculty members are able to arrange their regular teaching load.

**Potential PSW exhaustion:** Participants may burn out/turn over, lacking future incentives (career ladder). Respondents noted the lack of allowances/stipends for the PSWs. In addition, respondents indicated that the caseloads were high, and often there are not sufficient PSWs workers to meet the demand.

“We put a lot of effort into carrying out these activities, especially in communities. It is time-consuming, and we also sacrifice both our time and sometimes our money to be sure the program continues.” —Para-social worker, Association of PSW leader

**Leadership development:** There is an ongoing need for more strategic development of relationships with the wide array of stakeholders both from the Twinning Center country level and from partner leadership. The Twinning Center office now takes ongoing responsibility for program logistics and arrangements, which may inhibit the country director’s ability to fulfill necessary networking and stakeholder roles due to location as well as overextension in programmatic activities. In fact the country director also serves as program director as well as liaises with funders, with the DC office, and with the partner institutions.

**Needed infrastructure to scale up:** Program expansion will require an infrastructure that can effectively procure resources, network with other stakeholders, arrange program logistics, secure materials, and coordinate needed contractual arrangements as well as coordinate reporting and M&E activities. Currently, most of these functions are provided directly by the Twinning Center’s staff of two. For program expansion, resources need to be allocated to address these issues, either by expanding Twinning Center staff and facilities or by subcontracting to other organizations.

**Resource needs:** A number of respondents indicated that referral resources were scarce or easily exhausted and that there is a need to provide some tangible goods or services to clients. PSWs also stressed the lack of resources, insufficient numbers to cover their areas, as well as the large demand for services. PSWs also asked for cameras to document their work and computers to send documents. In addition, the lack of payment or incentives was noted.

**Sustainability issues:** Respondents report that increased funding will be necessary to expand or sustain the program. While aspects of the preservice programs may be sustainable within the academic institutions, ongoing funding will be necessary to sustain the community-based training.

**Partnership development:** University colleagues expressed the need more institution-to-institution involvement; the absence is difficult, and there is a great deal to learn from others.

“What is lacking now is exchange visits to provide updates of what is happening in the [social work] field. [The] visit to NY/DC was very helpful and allowed for interaction with other social workers and [seeing] the school. This helped to acquire new knowledge. This time around, this is not happening.” —UNN faculty member

“AIHA is sponsoring the partnership directly. We lack the institution-to-institution partnership. It now looks like a consultancy rather than a partnership.” —UNN faculty member

**Monitoring and evaluation:** Both the University Learning Resource Centers and the Twinning country office have regular reports of PSW activities. Staff members indicate they do not yet have strong M&E implementation: “We have a plan, but it’s not enough. We follow up with the PSWs from time to time; the PSW network makes it easier for us to connect. We need to do more in this area. The supervisory form depends on the situation and the supervisor’s needs. It ought to be the UNN group track[ing] this information. Since the shift and change in the direction of the program, they need to adjust to do this. We are responsible for the data,” said one Twinning Center staff member. However another respondent—a staff member from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs—indicated the need to localize M&E: “When you M&E, collection of data is a problem—you have to know how you have progressed and [are] getting to the grass roots, not urban areas. True impact can only be measured in the village.”

## Nigeria-Specific Recommendations

- Secure further funding as scale-up will require this. Also, establish similar coordination centers with other educational institutions within other states.
- Initiate program expansion selectively, beginning with the states that appear to have the greatest chance at success.
- Establish guidelines for training and supervision structures as well as a curriculum template. Note that the curriculum may need to be tailored to specific state contexts on a limited basis; however, the template should indicate those parts of the curriculum that need to be kept intact.
- Continue to support the para-social work network members and engage them in program reviews, curriculum revisions, and helping to track program achievements and needs.
- Develop progress indicators to assess impact beyond success stories and anecdotal data.
- Relocate the country office to or establish a satellite location in Abuja.
- Develop a technical assistance workshop with other potential university partners as well as willing representatives of other states and LGAs to implement the PSW program.

- Consider some exchanges of key faculty to supplement knowledge for purposes of future curriculum revisions (South-South and North-South). Note that the partners requested this kind of university exchange.

## Para-Social Worker Training at a Glance

	Tanzania	Ethiopia	Nigeria
Program start date	April 2007	April 2008	January 2009
Program focus <sup>6</sup>	Expand SWW to address MVC needs by creating career opportunities at the ward level (e.g., SWA)	Provide supplemental training to existing volunteers and staff at the community level to enhance psychosocial services to PLHIV	Develop a cadre of volunteers to work with vulnerable children and families emerging from local communities
PSW selection criteria	Criteria designed by local government to ensure possible civil service employment: below age 35 and complete form 4	Broad outreach to community organizations, working with health officers to identify trainees	Selection made by traditional leaders collaboratively with LGAs; should be over age 18 and have completed secondary school—but ideally should remain in the community
PSW I training duration	9 days	10 days	8 days
Supervisor I training duration	4 days	3 days	5 days
Support between PSW trainings	6 months' supervision	There is no PSCW II training; however PSCWs are being supervised	6 months' supervision
PSW II training duration	5 days	N/A	5 days
Supervisor II training duration	1 day	N/A	N/A
Supervisor structure	Trained LGA extension workers; soon to be the new cadre, SWA	Supervisor in PSW's host community organization	Overseen by the SSW
TOT duration	5 days	7-12 days	5 days
Number of qualified trainers	103	83	25
Number of trained PSWs	PSW I – 3,934 PSW II – 2,150	420	640
Number of trained supervisors	PSW I – 601 PSW II – 403	72	50
Incentives/support	Career path, training: incentives provided by LGA and community and PASONET	Training w/ transport fees—provided by host institution/local organization	Career path, continued education—provided by host institution/local government, PSW association and schools of social work

<sup>6</sup> "Strengthening Social Welfare Workforce Capacity in Sub Sahara Africa through Para Social Work Twinning Partnerships Strengthening" Linsk, PPT slide 17, XIX International AIDS Conference, July 2012.

	Tanzania	Ethiopia	Nigeria
M&E data: pre- and post-training test	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other M&E	<p>An M&amp;E plan, including field follow-up with graduates</p> <p>Numbers of MVC receiving services captured</p> <p>THRP has demographic data and anecdotal success stories and challenges from the field for PSW graduates and local government buy-in data.</p>	<p>An M&amp;E plan for field follow-up with trainees has been developed.</p>	<p>Has an M&amp;E plan for field follow-up with graduates. Supervisor reports and service plans and assessments are monitored through the Learning Resource Center.</p>

## OBSERVATIONS

Reflecting on data gathered from each of the three Twinning Center PSW training programs, several accomplishments and challenges were noted that were true in all three countries.

### Cross-Cutting Programmatic Accomplishments

**The core training model (PSW I, PSW II, supervisor training, TOT) is adaptable to local context.** The core PSW training program has proven useful in various ways in each of the three countries; however, its utility and impact is closely hinged to its ability to be tailored to each country’s specific cultural and political context. When asking stakeholders about the viability of replicating the PSW program in other countries, one quote summed up most reflections: “It’s not about replication; it’s about adaptation.” A successful replication requires on-site participation by all partners and cannot be done remotely. The process of revising the curriculum for the cultural context is an extremely valuable learning process for the partners in and of itself.

**Local training staff supports programmatic sustainability.** The use of existing faculty as facilitators and local individuals from the community as trainers adds to the sustainability of the program as well as provides authentic contributions based on the local context.

**The training model is tailored to address an immediate HR shortage.** It should also be noted that the training model does not in and of itself comprise a service delivery model; to some extent, this was under-appreciated when these programs were launched. The training provides the knowledge and skills base for para-social work, and to some extent follow-up training provides additional support. However, a service delivery program requires administrative and structural arrangements, ongoing funding for services including basic materials and incentives, M&E, and an ongoing quality improvement program.

**The participatory methodology is well-received by participants.** Uniformly, stakeholders cited the participatory methodology of PSW training as a key factor in its success, irrespective of the country in which it was being delivered. Using community-based trainers, using interactive and problem case-based learning methods, and using a competency skills approach appear fruitful and were innovative within these contexts.

**The twinning framework draws colleagues, both from the North and South, with passion for the work beyond their full-time positions.** Several interview participants cited the quality of colleagues participating in the twinning partnerships as a critical component of success. Both northern and southern partners bring not only a high level of expertise to this work, but passion and commitment to go beyond, often working long hours on top of their full-time positions elsewhere.

**Southern academic institutions are being strengthened.** Conclusively, all three countries' host institutions reported that by participating in the PSW Twinning Center program, their own institutions had been strengthened in increased faculty capacitation; expanded teaching methodologies; and in course offerings.

**Increased visibility and awareness of the role the social welfare workforce plays nationally.** The PSW training programs have played a role in heightening the awareness of social work and social welfare service provision in each of the three countries. Currently, each country is creating a national social welfare workforce strategy, and this program has strengthened SWW advocates' voice in the creation of that strategy.

## Cross-Cutting Programmatic Challenges

**The foundation of volunteerism in the program needs to be revisited.** The PSW program has been predicated on the concept of volunteerism, both for PSWs, supervisors, and, in some cases, trainers. This has met with varied success and is now proving to be a reported challenge that invites reconsideration. In Ethiopia, PSW trainers have been volunteers, which has made staffing the trainings challenging. In Tanzania and Nigeria, PSWs have served voluntarily and rely upon local government and their communities to incentivize and provide resources for their work. PSW attrition rates in Tanzania suggest open-ended volunteerism may not be cost-effective in the long run.

**The twinning priority of capacity building has shifted from a primary focus on building the capacity of southern partner institutions to one of turning out numbers of PSWs to meet an indicator and provide a quick solution to a large and complex HR challenge within the social welfare workforce.** Some interview participants felt that the shifting priority of the PSW program has had a detrimental effect in overall impact for long-term sustainability. Meeting United States Government indicators for numbers trained, clarifying distinctions between "preservice" vs. "in-service," and responding to other donor-driven priorities has pushed the PSW program to focus primarily on churning out PSWs; sometimes this occurs before local institutions are prepared to absorb them into ongoing activities, although the projects all do excellent "awareness" or "advocacy" programs to engage local government and

other stakeholders. The para-social work program should not substitute for effective emphasis on building the capacity of local institutions.

**United States Government cuts in program funding are seen as affecting quality.** Not surprisingly, many interview respondents shared that the programmatic quality is being affected by programmatic budget cuts, increasing numbers beyond allocated funding resources, coupled with expanding mandates and a desire to scale up. There is special concern in Nigeria that the program will remain viable, as key northern and southern trainers do not have the needed funding to return and finish training their Nigerian counterparts.

**There is a lack of assessment data beyond number counting and anecdotal data.** While there is a pre- and post-test done for each PSW training, as well as plans for some follow-up, valid indicators and methodology to measure program impact have not been fully developed or implemented. Currently, there is no solid M&E data for any of the three countries to fully demonstrate the services delivered on behalf of vulnerable children and their caregivers and how these services make a difference in their lives and have community impact. In Tanzania, the THRP has done the best job in gathering baseline data and tracking numbers trained, retention and attrition rates of PSWs and supervisors, and success stories from the field. Yet, even THRP's tools have been plagued with the complications of validation from the field. The Twinning Center has also developed a set of vignette stories showing how the program works and how stakeholders respond positively. The Ethiopia program has only pre-/post-test data and a planned follow-up yet to be implemented late in the partnership. The Nigeria program has incorporated process data on service plans and assessment into the Learning Resource Center program but also does not have evidence-based follow-up data. Therefore, although the program is promising, results are hard to verify at this point.

**There needs to be standardization of reporting, and currently there is a lack of documentation.** Interestingly, there was no standardization in reporting results across all three countries, and the amount of documentation available varied greatly. Tanzania had the most documentation, with regular quarterly reports by the Twinning Center and many supplemental reports provided by the THRP. Likewise, as it is the oldest program, the amount of documentation is naturally greater. However, reporting for both Ethiopia and Nigeria spanning the life of the project was not as easily accessible.

**By having partners engaged in full-time work elsewhere, scheduling trainings and other partnership activities became very challenging.** By having some of the best minds and greatest expertise participating in the Twinning program, from both northern and southern institutions, there is also the commensurate challenge of synchronizing schedules as most all participants have full-time commitments elsewhere. The Twinning program demands a level of engagement and partnering that suggests a significant time investment, and often partners struggle to create a schedule that meets everyone's needs.

Furthermore, in all three programs, many PSW trainers are employed elsewhere and must take personal vacation time to deliver training, or, if they get permission to take time as part of their

work assignment, this means other responsibilities are postponed until they return. Advanced scheduling and institutional agreements are critical, and without these there can be a shortage of trainers, causing events to be rescheduled. However, the schools of social work to varying degrees see community trainings as part of the host institution's mission and that they must be coordinated and scheduled in tandem with the academic calendar.

**Twinning partner relationships have their challenges, too.** Inherent in twinning is a power differential, often between northern and southern partners or donor/recipient dynamics that can lead to challenges. Building capacity in a culturally appropriate way is critical; likewise, maintaining a clear development perspective by providing enough technical assistance to ensure eventual in-country sustainability is key as well.

In addition the Twinning partnerships are inherently time-limited, presuming ongoing sustainability following a period of about three years. At least one of the programs (Ethiopia) will be "graduating" in October of this year. However, the higher the success ratio, the more demand there is for ongoing collaboration, joint program development, and more durable institutional relationships. In Tanzania, where the project has been extended into the sixth year, a number of additional programs have spun off including revitalization of the national social work professional association, development of a consortium of emerging social work education colleges, a web-based resource hub, as well as the desire to expand the PSW program to other locations (e.g., Zanzibar) and cadres (corrections officers, police, extension workers, even the social welfare assistant program). These efforts have in fact competed with the PSW program for both staff time of partners and Twinning Center staff and financial resources. Similar competitive or overlapping programs have developed in Ethiopia while at present the United States Government agencies see the AIHA program as the model to be implemented. For long-term sustainability, a clearer development of sustainability plans (including national and local financing) and ongoing collaboration and the like need to be considered.

## CROSS-CUTTING PROMISING PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

In addition to the accomplishments and challenges shared across the three counties, there were promising practices and lessons learned that can be used in program adaptation.

### Programmatic Promising Practices

**PSW training:** When queried what made the PSW training particularly successful, uniformly participants cited three key elements:

- Using a participatory training model for delivery of a tailored curriculum
- Translation into local language (as appropriate)
- Using local trainers and educators trained in using a participatory training methodology.

Having skilled trainers that have learned participatory training as part of the TOT is critical. Many of the trainers cited the PSW program as having improved their skills as trainers. Respondents

also felt that by having training materials in local languages and delivered by local trainers, training content was far more accessible to PSW trainees and, thereby, creating greater impact. A possible next step to validate this would be to analyze pre- and post-course knowledge across all three countries.

**Sustainability:** Available documentation and interview data suggests that programmatic sustainability is directly linked to four elements:

- Investing in partnering upfront
- Getting early and continual government buy-in and ownership
- Collaborating with viable local institutions
- Ongoing sensitivity to partnership dynamics cross-culturally and developmentally.

In each of the three countries, examples of each these factors played heavily into the success to date, with Nigeria even making a course correction at the behest of the southern partner institutions. Particularly, government buy-in and treating government as an equal partner has proven fruitful. Likewise, focusing on a *viable* local institution, preferably state-sanctioned, and creating an agenda for institutional capacity building vis-à-vis PSW training has been key to program sustainability.

**South-South exchanges:** A marvelous practice evolving from the organic growth of the Twinning Center PSW program has been the South-South exchanges that have strengthened all three programs. More specifically, reports and interview data speaks to:

- Ongoing South-South exchanges with highly qualified colleagues
- Facilitating regional PSW meetings, proving to be invaluable for cross-fertilization of ideas and practices.

Consistently, the data suggests that the South-South exchanges that have occurred strengthened impact immeasurably. Whether it was the Ethiopian team visiting Tanzania, the Tanzanian team visiting Nigeria, or all the teams gathering at conferences, the African-specific exchange has proven vital. It is an important function of the Twinning Center to facilitate this exchange.

**North-South exchanges:** Uniformly, interviewees in all three countries reported that the exchange with northern colleagues had proven to be a critical factor in program success. Identifying a qualified and enthused northern institution is critical in ensuring the capacity building of a southern institution occurs while concurrently adapting the PSW program to a new country context.

## Programmatic Lessons Learned

**Knowing and participating in the political landscape (organizational/institutional/governmental):** When queried on lessons learned, several interview participants spoke to how

important it is to keep one's finger on the political dynamics surrounding the PSW program—be they organizational, institutional, or governmental. While each specific country is different, all three programs have had a range of obstacles to navigate because of the changing and challenging political landscape. Furthermore, it was noted that this is not a static dynamic. The program needs to constantly gather new intelligence to stay abreast of the ever-changing political landscape and ensure that problems are identified early and solutions crafted to manage them as effectively as possible. Finally, in all three countries it was emphasized that program leadership, including the Twinning Center country director and lead partners, need to have the skills and networks to not only gather political intelligence but engage effectively. Advocating for the PSW program, ensuring resources, and strategically representing the program at all levels is a success factor that cannot be ignored. This sphere of influence should range from the donor to the academic institutions involved to the host government at all levels.

**The need to follow up on recommendations from the 2009 Regional PSW conference and convene periodically:** As mentioned previously, several stakeholders recalled the usefulness of the regional PSW conference held in Dar es Salaam. A list of recommendations emerged from that conference, yet there has been limited direct follow-up on how or if those recommendations have been implemented and, if so, with what impact. Ideally, there would be some coordinating mechanism that would take responsibility for oversight of these recommendations and help create the possibility of building on them in future meetings.

## CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the challenges identified and the strengths on which to build, a number of recommendations were easily identifiable.

**1. The Twinning Center PSW Program is adaptable to other country contexts and, therefore, should be used when wanting to build a cadre of PSWs at the village level.** This SitAn was asked to recommend if the PSW Twinning program merited replication in other countries. As mentioned previously, the data suggests that it is not about replication, but instead, possible adaptation. However, a number of factors need to be in place before a country should engage in starting its own Twinning PSW program.

- Country context is everything, especially around local language, and cultural norms around children, volunteering, and more. For example, while Nigeria adopted the core of the Tanzanian PSW training program, it had to be highly tailored to fit a Nigerian context. In Ethiopia, they don't use the term "para-social worker" but instead use "psychosocial care workers." On a country-by-country basis, it is also important to have a periodic review and update of the curriculum, especially the HIV-specific content that will need to shift as the epidemic shifts and the needs of sub-populations shift (e.g., adolescents, particularly young adult males).
- Identifying a host institution capable of working collaboratively in partnership and that can take on the additional work of twinning in PSW training is key. Without a viable host institution, the PSW Twinning program will fail. Therefore, ensuring that the selected

institution has the needed faculty, requisite expertise, and political will is critical. The current model of housing these programs in schools of social work has worked well and has had positive effects on building curriculum and program capacity at the schools as well as creating more community involvement and visibility.

- Capacity building for sustainability needs to be an objective from the beginning. Country partners need to be assisted to develop administrative, finance, programmatic, and evaluation capacity to equip them to apply for funding as independent entities in the future.
- Continuation of North-South and multilateral twinning partnerships is an effective way to jumpstart these programs and develop ongoing capacity.
- Having a governmental framework amenable to integrating this cadre is important. In order for this program to be sustainable, this function and cadre will need to be mainstreamed at some point into a larger governmental framework. To that end, exploring how best to fit this role into the governmental structure that exists is key. Nigeria is particularly challenging as each of its 36 states and the federal capital has almost complete autonomy from the overarching federal government. Therefore, each state's particular political and social culture will dictate how possible government buy-in is or not.
- High-level government buy-in and support are still important. Political will and support at the highest levels can open doors; conversely, when high-level government ministries and departments are not included, not consulted, and not invited, programmatic initiatives can suddenly creep to a standstill. Investing upfront relationship building with key national government stakeholders will bear long-term dividends for programmatic success. Of course, it is worthy to add one caveat: even with this upfront investment leading to program progress, subsequent leadership changes can provide additional roadblocks down the road.
- Appropriate funding to execute the program fully is vital. If a donor is willing to put resources toward this, the investment needs to reflect a long-term commitment to capacitation rather than a short-term reaction to manage an immediate social welfare workforce gap. This includes financial resources to support the North-South/South-South exchange, developing an adapted curriculum for PSW I, supervisors I, PSW II and supervisors II as well as a TOT for host-country trainers, with additional trainer and curriculum updates and refresher trainings as legislation as well as HIV knowledge and practices change.
- Programs should start small and, if appropriate in the country context, deploy the full PSW training model and grow the program thoughtfully.
- The Twinning Center country director plays a critical role, and ensuring s/he is politically savvy, an excellent cross-cultural communicator, and adroit at building and sustaining partnerships is key. Strategic leadership skills are imperative in stewarding this process over time.

- Clear expectations are needed about PSW length of service, job descriptions, supervision structures, data, and reporting.
  - Likewise, the program needs to have an infrastructure that supports the logistical aspects of delivering the twinning program. More specifically, the financial processing of sub-grants and funding needs clarity and the ability to ensure payment is made in a timely way to twinning program staff.
  - Ongoing programs should be conceptualized as service delivery programs rather than based solely on short-term training models. This means a supervision and monitoring and support structure needs to be in place, as well as a mechanism for performance review, complaint resolution, and ensuring quality assurance and improvement functions.
  - PSW trainers should be paid. They are professionals and deserve to be treated as such. Additional activities they engage in should be tracked as volunteer time.
  - Sustainability should be considered from the beginning and designed into the program from its inception.
  - Training schedules should be made in advance so that trainers can plan with their employers.
  - Selection criteria for participation in the PSW training should involve the local government or community body that will have the closest connection to the PSWs. Literacy in the language of the course is mandatory. Criteria should also be determined by reflecting whatever contextual level of education is needed to collect data and report accordingly—this should be determined in collaboration with local government colleagues.
  - Basic materials (forms, stationery, etc.) and pragmatic resources (e.g., transportation) need to be available to the PSWs, so they should not be expected to contribute this personally.
  - The program needs to be harmonized with other programs on the ground in the country. In particular, disparate programs with differing incentives and underlying objectives funded by the same agency should occur only in a mindful way and ensure parity and equity on behalf of participants.
  - These programs have the potential to generate increased visibility for social service and social welfare programs as well as spin off of other projects including other cadres and other locations. Resource needs and organizational commitment need to be considered as programs face expansion, as well as the likelihood of local or national funding supporting these programs in the future.
- 2. Assess impact of the PSW program on OVC.** This SitAn was also tasked with determining whether it made sense to invest more heavily in a public health evaluation of the PSW Twinning program, specifically to assess impact. To that end:
- This program was designed as a training program, not a service delivery program. Therefore, any data gathered to date have been process evaluations rather than impact.

It would be appropriate to measure impact on the trainees as direct outcomes; however, any attempt to document outcomes for children, families, and the community needs to be seen as secondary outcomes.

- As mentioned previously, the THRP has longitudinal data from 2009 on numbers trained and some demographic data on the PSW cadre, as well as a growing bank of qualitative data from success stories. Likewise, with colleagues from ISW, THRP has collected growing patterns of challenges that lead to attrition among the PSW ranks. However, there is no commensurate data we have found in Ethiopia (Nigeria has not gotten far enough in its program to produce such data), nor is there any impact data on vulnerable children and their caregivers (see above).
  - Since the three programs are so singular and tailored to their cultural, political, and policy context, doing any kind of comparative analyses will prove difficult and may be of limited use.
  - Even in the best situation, getting valid data will be both laborious and complex. Should a public health evaluation move forward on the PSW program, validating impact data will prove very challenging, as reporting has been spotty, tools have been flawed, and it will take a significant upfront resource investment and time to surface verifiable impact data.
  - If an impact assessment is to be conducted, the following would be advisable:
    - Conduct the evaluation in Tanzania, as it has the most programmatic support available.
    - Do the assessment in a region prior to PSW training being delivered. Use a small sample size of vulnerable children and caregivers for a baseline with metrics designed to align with the PSW training content, as well as the quality guidelines for MVC service provision adopted by the Government of Tanzania.
    - Return 6 to 12 months after PSW training to assess impact.
- 3. Explore PSW peer networks.** Nigeria and Tanzania both offer examples of PSW networks that incentivize PSWs. It would be wise to explore what options are possible in Ethiopia to establish a similar network when designing and adapting the PSW training program in other countries.
- 4. Develop a programmatic M&E system, and start with standardizing process fields.** Currently, there is no standardization of programmatic M&E among PSW programs. In spite of each program being tailored to its specific country context, there are process fields that each program shares and that could be monitored cross-programmatically. For example:
- Length of service
  - Numbers and frequency of clients served
  - Number of assessments done
  - Numbers of referrals initiated and completed

- Documented service plan and whether service plan is being fulfilled.
5. **Capacitate M&E as part of Twinning.** Part of the Twinning program should be to grow the capacity of in-country M&E specialists concurrent with faculty and trainers at the host institution. Historically, M&E has been a weak part of the Twinning Center PSW program, and building the capacity of this critical aspect would be useful.
  6. **Create a defined length of service for volunteering.** Currently, all three programs have open-ended service as PSW volunteers. It would be wise to revisit the terms of service and explore having defined times. For example, initial service is for one or two years with the option to renew, provided PSW service has been satisfactory. This would allow for more accurate attrition rates to be tracked and a more conclusive plan for training replacements to be planned and budgeted for.
  7. **Develop an international standard template for PSW curricula that could be easily tailored to a country's context.** This template would include nonnegotiables, parts that must be included, and areas where countries should adapt. Currently each country has its own curriculum, although the Tanzanian model and content has been utilized in transferring the program to Ethiopia and Nigeria, and materials developed in those countries have since been integrated into subsequent Tanzania materials (PSW II and revisions of PSW I). The Twinning Center has posted an earlier draft of the PSW I curriculum on its website, but this is not easily accessed. What is needed is an international standard curriculum template that clearly identifies what is considered universal content (human development, case management, and current HIV information) and specifies content that needs to be specifically adapted to the country context (specifically the legal/political material, epidemiology, and materials specific to the social welfare and health structures within the country). We recommend AIHA develop this template and use it as a basis for technical support to other countries who are interested in the PSW approach.
  8. **Develop an advocacy strategy with the government** which ensures the following:
    - The PSW program is aligned with the country's overarching national social welfare workforce strategy (where appropriate).
    - The PSW partnership is well-regarded politically and liaises effectively with the national and local government, as well as the community.
  9. **Create definitional clarity and guidelines.** Currently, the term "para-social worker" is being used broadly for volunteers performing a range of duties vis-à-vis social service delivery in a variety of capacities. It would be helpful if USAID endorsed an agreed-upon definition for the role of the PSW with training aligned behind that role. Also, guidelines should be developed for the use of para-professionals at various levels, for the needs for incentives, for supervision, and for M&E.

## Conclusion

It is our hope that this SitAn will provide the needed data to continue promoting and funding twinning practices and the creation of PSW cadres as an emergency HR response to serving

children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Likewise, we trust the data offered will catalyze dialogue regarding the viability of a more formal study of impact on both vulnerable children and their caregivers. We hope our findings will be disseminated broadly to offer guidance to other countries curious about pursuing the creations of PSW training through twinning. We believe through capacitating southern institutions through twinning while concurrently equipping PSWs at the village level, an HR response that has the hope of being both sustainable and immediate is possible.

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## APPENDIX B: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR US STAKEHOLDERS

1. What has your role been?
2. Describe the role of your organization. How has it collaborated with the in-country partners (what are the different roles)?
3. How did the para-social worker training program(s) start and how did it grow? What have been some of the similarities in the three programs or distinctions that would be noteworthy?
4. From your perspective, what appear to be the major accomplishments and challenges of the training program(s) that you want to highlight?
5. What are some key lessons learned and promising practices? Are there any lessons on what to do differently?
6. What observations do you have about potential for the program(s) being either scaled up or replicated in other countries (or both)?
7. How were countries selected for PSW program? How might additional countries be added? What conditions make PSWs a good solution for a country?
8. How is M&E addressed in (each) country?
9. What might be some issues regarding financing, resource expenditure, and sustainability? What is required to make such training financially viable once PEPFAR is over?
10. What are your thoughts on the South to South model?
11. How are lessons learned being shared between the three twinning partnerships? What can be done to improve cross partnership sharing to accelerate para-professional institutionalization?
12. How do you perceive current and future roles of para-professionals and their relationship to professional social workers; is this a temporary solution/an entry-level step/or a new cadre of community-social workers?

## APPENDIX C: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR FIELD INTERVIEWS

### Core Questions

1. Describe the Twinning Center (PSW or PSCW) program in your country. What's the program supposed to do? How does it happen?
2. How are you connected to the PSW or PSCW program?
3. Tell us about the development of this program from your perspective.
4. What appear to be the accomplishments of the program?
5. What appear to be the challenges?
6. How has the program contributed to strengthening the social welfare structure/system within the country? What impact has it had on vulnerable populations?
7. Is scale-up of this program occurring? What are the plans for scale-up of the programs in this country? What would be the barriers?
8. Have there been other ways this model has been used to serve in need populations (other cadres)?
9. What are some promising practices?
10. What's being done to monitor progress (M&E) or outcomes?
11. What will it take to make this cadre sustainable?
12. Who owns this program (what organization makes programmatic decisions, created the vision)? Tell me why you think X owns this program.

### Ministry Questions

1. Where does this cadre fall organizationally in the provision of social welfare services to OVC or other populations (e.g., people affected by HIV)?
2. Is there the option of this cadre eventually moving into an official position at the local government level? Please comment on what has been done in this regard and what are the opportunities and challenges for this.
3. Who are the stakeholders and partners in the program, and what do they do?

4. What's the ongoing management information system and M&E system for the training? For service delivery?
5. Are there program or policy developments in the government that will affect how PSWs/PSCWs can be involved in strengthening the social welfare workforce?

## Educational Institution Questions

1. How has your school been involved in PSW/PCSW education and training?
  - a. How has it contributed to or limited the social work education function of the school?
  - b. What accommodations has your school made/have yet to make?
  - c. How does the program correspond with other educational programs—both ongoing academic (preservice programs) and continuing education (in-service programs)?
  - d. How does the continuation and sustainability of PSW/PSCW training fit into the priorities of your school?
  - e. How have you dealt with grants management and funding issues?
2. What are your thoughts on the North to South Model? The South to South Model? How helpful has it been?
3. Where do you feel the institution's capacity was increased in the delivery of the program in regard to technical support? Resources allocated?
4. Where do you feel the institution needs additional support from your northern colleagues? From your southern colleagues?
5. In what ways, if any, are lessons learned being shared between the twinning partnerships? What can be done to improve cross-partnership sharing?
6. How is your institution meeting the capacity needs of providing qualified trainers for the various program trainings? What challenges are you facing?
7. What's the ongoing management information system and M&E system for the training? For service delivery?
8. Who are the other stakeholders and partners in the program, and what do they do?

## AIHA Questions

1. Who are the stakeholders and partners in the program, and what do they do?

2. What are AIHA/Twinning Center's roles in the program?
3. What's the ongoing management information system and M&E system for the training? Service delivery?

### Focus Groups Questions

1. Describe the role of a \_\_\_(PSW/supervisor/trainer).
2. What kind of support do (PSWs/supervisors/trainers) receive from the program?
3. What was the best part of the training? Why was this part the best?
4. What advice would you give to strengthen the training? How would this advice strengthen the training?
5. What are some of (PSWs'/supervisors'/trainers') greatest achievements in this role?
6. What are the greatest challenges for (PSWs/supervisors/trainers)? How might these challenges be overcome?
7. How do you connect with others doing related work (community organizations, faith-based organizations, local government, etc.)?
8. What kind of supervision do you receive? What could be done to make this supervision more helpful?
9. (PSWs/PSCWs) What are your plans for additional training? How do you continue to improve yourself professionally?
10. (Trainers) What did it take to become a qualified trainer for the program?
11. (Trainers) Do you feel you have what you need to deliver the program (explain)? Is there anything more that you need?

## APPENDIX D: TWINNING CENTER PSW PROGRAM SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS SCOPE OF WORK

### Overall Goal

Analyze the Twinning Center's para-social worker program in order to determine promising practices, challenges, and lessons learned for possible future replication in other countries.

### Phase One: Desk Review

#### Objective:

Review existing documentation to describe the evolution of the Twinning Center's para-social worker program and current status; and identify any key cross-cutting themes, promising practices, challenges, and lessons learned.

#### Methodology:

- A. Desk review of project documents for each Twinning Center activity, including:
  - a. Scopes of work, objectives, target populations and program models for each of the programs including in-country assessments that led to these efforts
  - b. Regional Para-Social Worker Report from 2009, quarterly program reports, related publications and presentations as well as country program descriptions
  - c. M&E data that has been produced by the Twinning Center in general, or in each of the three OVC Twinning country programs; from the OVC TWG, from AIHA and others, or in any of the individual countries
  - d. Other

Questions that desk review will mainly address:

- How did the TC para-social work program start its work, and what growth has occurred? What were original scopes of work, and how have they changed (if they have)?
  - What program descriptions have been produced and disseminated? How up-to-date are they? How well do they match the original scope?
  - What kind of M&E data exists or is planned? How do these appear to have been used or disseminated? What does the data suggest about trends in recruiting and deploying PSW in the field, both in regard to successes and challenges?
  - What programmatic successes and challenges have been identified?
- B. Informal program discussions by phone or in person with key US-based and some in-country stakeholders, to be identified with the OVC TWG. Possible discussions might include Dr. Nathan Linsk, colleagues from AIHA, Renee DeMarco, Elizabeth Lema, and others as determined.

Questions that this phase of stakeholders interview will mainly address:

- What appear to be the accomplishments and challenges of the three Twinning Center models (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania)?
- What are some key lessons learned and promising practices?

**Deliverable:**

The report for the desk review might include the following sections:

- a. History and growth of each Twinning Center para-social work model
- b. Achievements as documented by existing assessment data, other assessment documents
- c. Challenges
- d. Beginning list of questions for a more extensive evaluation in the future (list to be completed after field work).

**Timeline:**

June 2011: Desk review and data gathering from informal program discussions

Early July: Phase I Report

## Phase Two: Twinning Program Situation Analysis Field Visits

**Objectives:**

- Gather specific field data regarding the Twinning Center para-social worker programs in Nigeria, Tanzania, and Ethiopia to further augment the findings of Phase 1 and produce recommendations regarding promising practices for further scale-up within these countries.
- Provide a basis for a future, more formal evaluation, drawing lessons learned and promising practices to inform future evaluation questions, specifically in regard to PSW impact in the delivery of foundational SW services to OVC.

**Methodology:**

Stakeholder meetings in country

Questions that this phase of stakeholders interview will mainly address:

- What appear to be the accomplishments and challenges of the three Twinning Center models (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania)?
- What are some key lessons learned and promising practices?
- Based on their perceptions of the progress so far, what observations do stakeholders have about potential for the para-social worker program approach being either scaled up or used in other countries, or both?

**Deliverable:**

The final report would build on the previous report from Phase One, and would add:

- a. Lessons learned/promising practices as seen from the field

- b. Recommendations and limitations related to program scale-up
- c. Recommendations for follow-on evaluation.

**Timeline:**  
Fall 2011



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