

Key Points and Actions from Wazee Day Webinar, 2023

Social Work and Development Work with Older People

1. Government role to be strengthened, **advocacy required** for services, resources **political action. Who: social workers and development workers.**
2. Research – more research needed on training needs, care models, developmental models. **Who: research students including PhD, academics, organisations** and government.
3. Family approach – the mainstay of care for older people, suits Africa’s philosophy of Ubuntu and values, **government and organisations to strengthen families.**
4. Community approach – suited to Africa’s philosophy of Ubuntu and values, **government and organisations to strengthen or introduce new community programs**, building on already existing community-led initiatives like mutual aid, cultural, faith-based initiatives.
5. Caregivers' role is important, to be recognized, to be skilled e.g. home help/maids, caregiving as a profession. **Social workers and government to work with families to produce guidelines to compensate and train caregivers.**
6. Mental wellbeing and resilience – awareness, understanding of mental health (cultural), Health and disability – train health workers, **governments to ensure access to Primary Health Care centres, caregivers and families to increase physical activity of older people.**
7. Social work and development worker skill gaps – **training institutions to review curricula.**
8. Community centres, day care centres and halfway homes – needed to relieve caregivers temporarily, **communities and government should initiate and maintain.**
9. Psychosocial services – new skills, work sheds, social interaction, counselling, Friendship bench model, support groups. **Training institutions to develop or review training for older people service providers:** social workers, development workers, counsellors, community workers, geriatric workers, cultural workers, religious workers.
10. African Union and regional bodies – continental policy work,, **AU to ensure governments accountability based on its of older people policies** align social work and development education and training to AU policies and plans,
11. Resources – **look within for resources:** families, communities, private sector and government, to avoid dependents on donors who comes with different philosophies.
12. Economic means and livelihoods – **take a developmental approach** as opposed to welfarist approach.

