Job Aid for Referral Counselling Messages in Zambia

User's Guide

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Acknowledgements

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FS	Field Supervisor
LIFT II	Livelihoods and Food Security Technical Assistance II
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NACS	Nutrition Assessment, Counselling and Support
OHA	Office of HIV and AIDS
OIRE	Office of International Research Ethics
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
RN	Referral Network
RV	Referral Volunteer
TA	Technical Assistance
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	United States government

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Introduction

The Livelihoods and Food Security Technical Assistance II (LIFT II) project was initiated by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of HIV/AIDS (OHA) to provide technical assistance (TA) and strategic support to United States government (USG) agencies, their implementing partners, and other public, private and civil society partners to improve the food and livelihood security of vulnerable households, with a particular focus on people living with HIV and AIDS (PLHIV), orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and their caregivers. To do this, LIFT II facilitates linking vulnerable individuals to a range of existing health, social and economic strengthening services in their community, through the creation and support of referral systems. In Zambia, LIFT II is working at two sites (Kitwe and Mkushi Districts) to support the implementation of such referral systems. The Kitwe District Referral Network launched in June 2015, and the Mkushi District Referral Network launched in December 2015.

In its provision of TA to the referral network members, LIFT II has particularly emphasized the need to make appropriate referrals. An appropriate referral is made when:

- A client and service provider honestly discuss the client's need/s,
- The client is counseled on services available from referral network partners,
- The client has an opportunity to ask questions about the different services available, and
- The final referral choice is made by the client with guidance from the service provider, who checks an updated referral network service directory to ensure the client meets all eligibility requirements.

This process is necessary to ensure that the referral is relevant to the client; the client is eligible to receive the service to which they have been referred; and when a client arrives at their referral destination, they can efficiently receive the needed service, which, in turn, can increase client trust in local institutions. A critical component in the referral process is client counselling, the effectiveness of which can be improved through the use of tools, such as job aids.

Therefore, the LIFT II team undertook a qualitative assessment to develop and refine a job aid to support service providers in delivering a standardized and comprehensive referral counselling experience for clients. This guide is intended to serve as an accompaniment to that job aid. Beginning with an explanation of the purpose of the job aid and the intended users, the guide moves on to provide a summary of the process by which the job aid was created and an explanation of what is included in the job aid. The guide then provides users with detailed instructions and best practices for use of the job aid.

What is the purpose of the job aid?

The job aid is designed for use by 1) LIFT II referral volunteers (RVs) and field supervisors (FSs), 2) staff at NACS sites, and 3) the staff of organizations within the LIFT II referral networks (RN). ***The primary objective of the job aid is to improve the quality and consistency of referral counselling offered by service providers within the LIFT II RNs in Zambia.*** The job aid also provides a graphic description of the referral process, which can support clients in understanding the steps in receiving and completing a referral.

Specifically, for service providers, the job aid is designed to support the provision of appropriate referrals by demonstrating the essential steps in the referral process; prompting providers with guiding questions that they can use to assess client needs and identify appropriate referral options; and providing key information about common services to which clients can be referred within the network. For clients, the job aid is designed to serve as a visual reinforcement of the referral process, which can reduce fear and confusion around receiving and completing a referral, and empower the client to ask informed questions about the referral process.

Who should use the job aid?

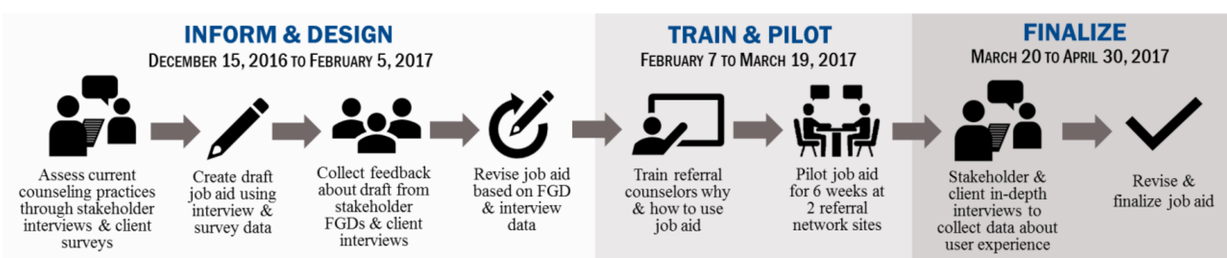
The job aid can and should be used by **any individual involved in making referrals** within the LIFT II RNs in Zambia, regardless of their experience or comfort level with the referral process. Those who are new to making referrals, or who make referrals infrequently, are encouraged to use the job aid as a tool to remind them of the steps involved in making a referral, and to reinforce best practices related to the referral process. Those who are experienced in making referrals can also benefit from the job aid as a prompt, ensuring that steps in the referral process are not skipped; as one Kitwe District RN service provider stated during a focus group discussion (FGD), *"Sometimes we leave out certain things. But **this aid shows that we have to do things in a systematic way**. We just cruise through at times."*

Also, while service providers may be comfortable with the referral process, many clients will not have received a referral before and may be uncertain about what it means to receive and complete a referral. Therefore, all service providers are encouraged to use the job aid as a tool to support the client in understanding the referral process as it is explained to them.

How was the job aid created?

The job aid was created as the result of a qualitative assessment, implemented by the LIFT II project in Kitwe and Mkushi Districts from December 2016 through April 2017. The assessment took a user-centered approach to developing the job aid, capturing insights from end users through surveys with clients and service providers, FGDs with service providers, and direct observation of job aid use. Each of these activities provided data and feedback, which fed into the step-wise process of job aid design and refinement, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The job aid was designed and piloted over the course of four months from December 2016 through March 2017, with client and stakeholder input informing multiple iterations of the job aid design until completion in April 2017.

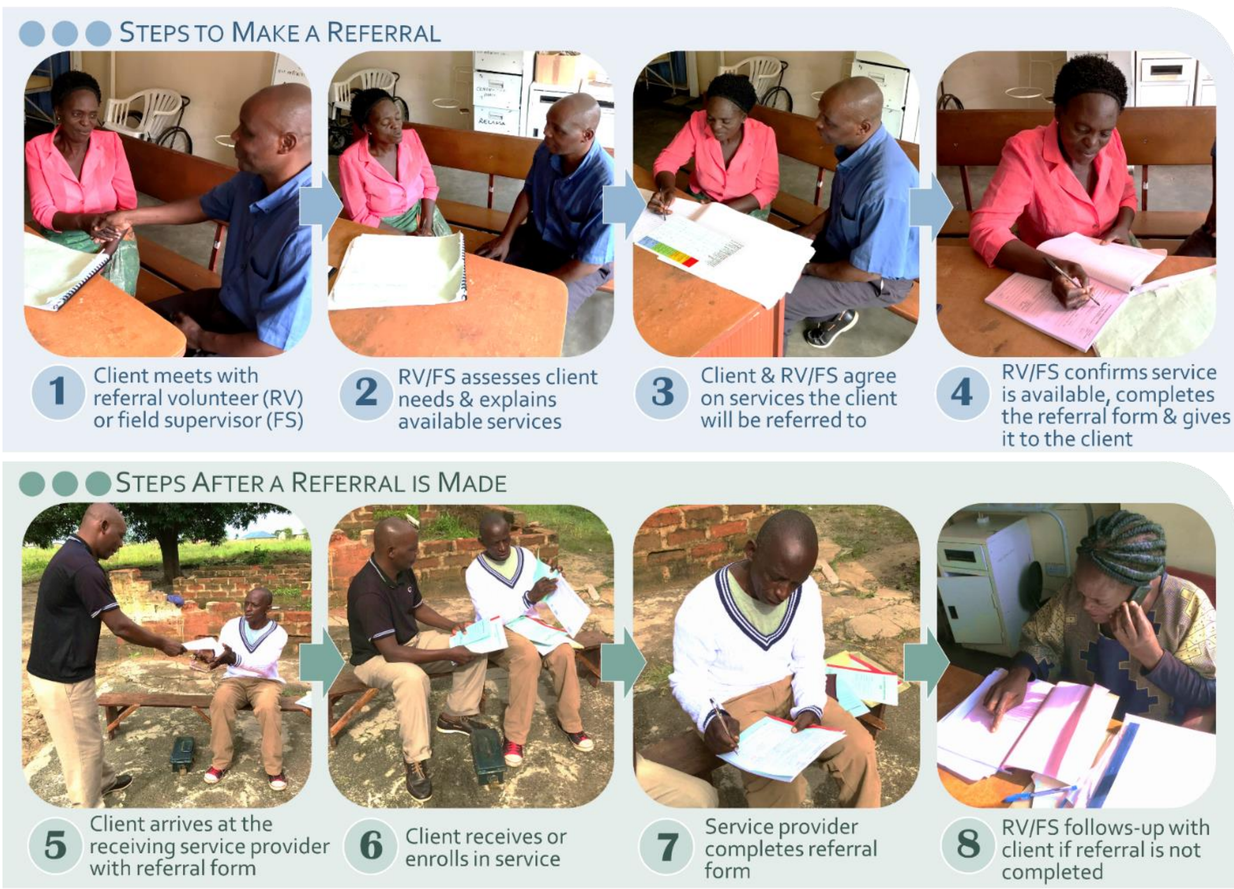


What is included in the job aid?

The job aid is a double-sided, laminated, paper-based tool, designed to be easily utilized in one-on-one referral counselling sessions between a service provider and a client. A copy of the job aid can be found in Annex 1.

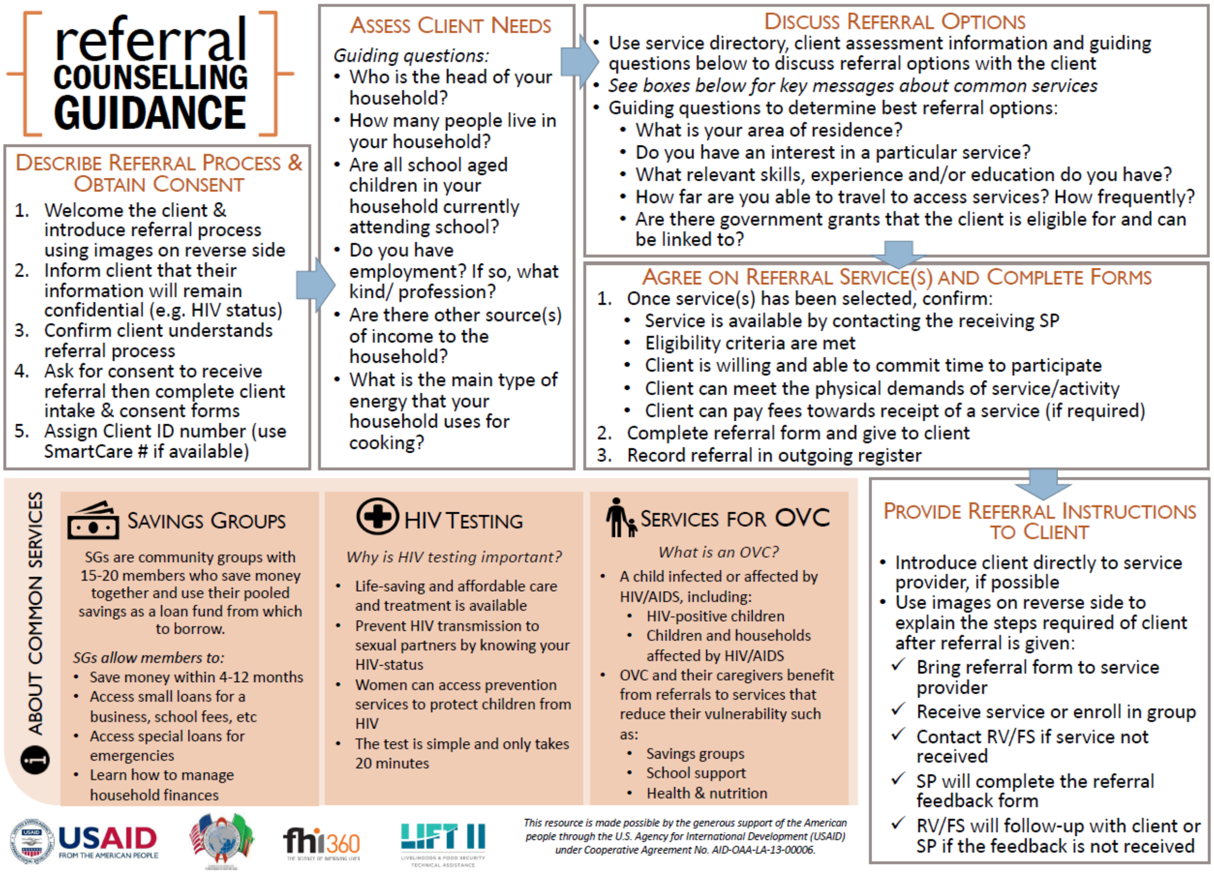
On the front, client-facing side of the job aid are eight images, depicting the primary steps in the referral process (Figure 2). The top row of four images show the steps a RV or FS will follow to make a referral. The bottom row of four images show the steps that will take place after a referral is made i.e. the steps that will be taken by the client and receiving service provider to complete the referral process.

Figure 2. The front, client-facing side of the job aid



On the back, provider-facing side of the job aid are a series of text boxes containing guidance for the service provider to use during referral counselling. Arrows between the boxes indicate the order in which the guidance should be used, beginning with describing the referral process and obtaining consent, and moving through subsequent steps to the final stage of providing referral instructions to the client. The orange-shaded boxes at the bottom of the page provide key information about common services to which clients can be referred within the referral system.

Figure 3. The back, provider-facing side of the job aid



referral COUNSELLING GUIDANCE

DESCRIBE REFERRAL PROCESS & OBTAIN CONSENT

1. Welcome the client & introduce referral process using images on reverse side
2. Inform client that their information will remain confidential (e.g. HIV status)
3. Confirm client understands referral process
4. Ask for consent to receive referral then complete client intake & consent forms
5. Assign Client ID number (use SmartCare # if available)

ASSESS CLIENT NEEDS

Guiding questions:

- Who is the head of your household?
- How many people live in your household?
- Are all school aged children in your household currently attending school?
- Do you have employment? If so, what kind/ profession?
- Are there other source(s) of income to the household?
- What is the main type of energy that your household uses for cooking?

DISCUSS REFERRAL OPTIONS

- Use service directory, client assessment information and guiding questions below to discuss referral options with the client
- *See boxes below for key messages about common services*
- Guiding questions to determine best referral options:
  - What is your area of residence?
  - Do you have an interest in a particular service?
  - What relevant skills, experience and/or education do you have?
  - How far are you able to travel to access services? How frequently?
  - Are there government grants that the client is eligible for and can be linked to?

AGREE ON REFERRAL SERVICE(S) AND COMPLETE FORMS

1. Once service(s) has been selected, confirm:
   - Service is available by contacting the receiving SP
   - Eligibility criteria are met
   - Client is willing and able to commit time to participate
   - Client can meet the physical demands of service/activity
   - Client can pay fees towards receipt of a service (if required)
2. Complete referral form and give to client
3. Record referral in outgoing register

ABOUT COMMON SERVICES

SAVINGS GROUPS

SGs are community groups with 15-20 members who save money together and use their pooled savings as a loan fund from which to borrow.

SGs allow members to:

- Save money within 4-12 months
- Access small loans for a business, school fees, etc
- Access special loans for emergencies
- Learn how to manage household finances

HIV TESTING

Why is HIV testing important?

- Life-saving and affordable care and treatment is available
- Prevent HIV transmission to sexual partners by knowing your HIV-status
- Women can access prevention services to protect children from HIV
- The test is simple and only takes 20 minutes

SERVICES FOR OVC

What is an OVC?

- A child infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, including:
  - HIV-positive children
  - Children and households affected by HIV/AIDS
- OVC and their caregivers benefit from referrals to services that reduce their vulnerability such as:
  - Savings groups
  - School support
  - Health & nutrition

PROVIDE REFERRAL INSTRUCTIONS TO CLIENT

- Introduce client directly to service provider, if possible
- Use images on reverse side to explain the steps required of client after referral is given:
  - ✓ Bring referral form to service provider
  - ✓ Receive service or enroll in group
  - ✓ Contact RV/FS if service not received
  - ✓ SP will complete the referral feedback form
  - ✓ RV/FS will follow-up with client or SP if the feedback is not received

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How should you use the job aid?

At the beginning of a referral counselling session, you – the service provider – should place the job aid in such a way that both you and the client can see the job aid, with the client able to follow the referral process images on the front side of the aid. Explain to the client that the job aid shows the main steps in the referral process, some of which will occur at the time of making the referral (steps 1-4) and some of which the client must take to complete the referral (steps 5-8). It will be helpful, as you move through the steps in the referral process, to point to the corresponding image on the job aid, both to aid the client in understanding the process, and to confirm that you have not missed a step.

The back, provider-facing side of the job aid – titled "Referral Counselling Guidance" – is designed to be used as a reference for you during each referral counselling session. The key messages and guiding questions related to steps in the referral counselling process, as well as the information about common services, are included so that you can provide consistent and complete referral counselling to every client. Each of the boxes on the back side of the job aid relate to a step, or steps, in the referral process depicted on the front side of the job aid, as follows:

- **Describe referral process and obtain consent (step 1):** After warmly welcoming the client and making them feel comfortable, you should use the images on the front side of the job aid to educate the client about the steps you will go through to give them a referral, confirming that they understand the process and allowing them an opportunity to ask questions. The guidance also reminds you to inform the client that personal information they share with you will remain confidential, which is very important in building trust and openness between you and the client. You should then ask the client whether they would like to receive a referral – i.e. obtain consent – before completing the client intake and consent forms, and assigning the client an ID number.

- **Assess client needs (step 2):** In order to make an appropriate referral, you should know information about the client and their household, and the needs that they have. The guiding questions provided on the job aid are *suggestions* of questions that may help you to better understand the needs of the client and their household. You may also want to ask follow-up questions that you think would help you to better understand the needs of your client.

- **Discuss referral options (step 2, continued):** Once you have gathered information on the client's needs, you can use this information and the service directory to begin identifying possible referral options and discussing these with the client. In discussing the client's options, you should use the guiding questions in this box to help you further determine which services would be most appropriate for the client. For example, if a client does not have an interest in a particular service, it is unlikely that they will complete a referral to that service. Or, if a client is only able to travel 5km to access a service, you should not make a referral to a service that would require the client to travel 15km to access it.

  The information about common services *(see orange boxes on the lower left of the Referral Counselling Guidance)* can also be used to provide clients with key messages about these services. You are not restricted to providing referrals only to these services; however, they are some of the most common referral destinations within the RNs, and the messages provided can be helpful when discussing those services with clients.

Best Practices for Using the Job Aid

- Ensure both you and the client can see the job aid during the referral counselling session
- Use the images on the front of the job aid to reinforce the steps in the referral process
- Pause regularly to ask the client if s/he has any questions
- Even if you make referrals frequently, refer to the job aid during a counselling session to confirm that you are not skipping steps
- The job aid is only one of the tools available to support you in making referrals.
  Using the job aid in combination with the referral forms and service directory will help you to make the best and most appropriate referral for your client.

- **Agree on referral service(s) and complete forms (steps 3 and 4):** You and the client should then agree on the service, or services, to which the client will be referred. Once the service(s) has been selected, you should confirm:
  - Is the service available? *(This will require you to contact the receiving service provider)*
  - Does the client meet the eligibility criteria for the service?
  - Is the client willing and able to commit time to participate?
  - Can the client meet the physical demands of service/activity?
  - Can the client pay fees towards receipt of a service, if required?

  If the answer to any one of these questions is "No", the service selected may not be the best option for the client and you should discuss with the client whether a different service would be more appropriate or beneficial. If the answer to all of these questions is "Yes", you can proceed to completing the referral form, giving the completed form to the client, and entering the details of the referral in the outgoing referral register.

- **Provide referral instructions to client:** Before completing the referral counselling session, you should use the images for steps 5-8 on the front side of the job aid to explain the steps the client must follow to complete their referral. This includes:
  - **The client should take the referral form you have given them to the receiving service provider (step 5).** Encourage the client to access the service as soon as possible to reduce the likelihood that they will forget about or fail to complete the referral, or will lose the referral form. Also, be sure to provide the client with clear information about where to go to access the service, ensuring that they understand where the receiving service provider is located and when the service is available e.g. the clinic is open Mon-Thurs every week.
  - **The client will then receive or enroll in the service (step 6).** Some referrals will be to one-time services that the client will receive immediately when they go to the receiving service provider, for example HIV testing. For other types of services, such as savings groups, clients will be enrolled in the service by the receiving service provider and then will receive the service over a longer period. As part of step 3 (above) you should have discussed this information with the client to ensure that they are willing and able to commit the time necessary to participate in the service.
  - **The receiving service provider will complete their portion of the referral form (step 7).** Receiving service providers should remember to fill out all the fields on the feedback portion of the referral form. Project staff will collect the forms from service providers as part of routine referral network management visits and will identify any referrals not completed. Information on incomplete referrals will be shared with the referring service provider.
  - **If the feedback form is not received/the referral is not completed, you (the referring service provider) will follow up with the client (step 8).** Inform the client that you will follow-up with them if their referral is not completed in order to remind/encourage them to access the service to which they were referred.

  If possible, you should introduce the client to the receiving service provider directly. This can make the client more comfortable and reduce the likelihood that they will fail to complete the referral. Once you have reviewed these steps, you should confirm that the process is clear to the client before they leave.

Annexes

Annex 1. Referral Counselling Messages Job Aid

STEPS TO MAKE A REFERRAL

1 Client meets with referral volunteer (RV) or field supervisor (FS)

2 RV/FS assesses client needs & explains available services

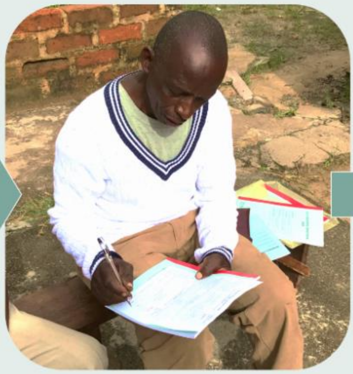
3 Client & RV/FS agree on services the client will be referred to

4 RV/FS confirms service is available, completes the referral form & gives it to the client

STEPS AFTER A REFERRAL IS MADE

5 Client arrives at the receiving service provider with referral form

6 Client receives or enrolls in service



7 Service provider completes referral form

8 RV/FS follows-up with client if referral is not completed

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