Strengthening Child-Caregiver Relationships: Linking Evidence and Practice

Pamoja Tuwalee

"Strengthening Child-Caregiver Relationships: Linking Evidence and Practice
Pamoja Tuwalee program/FHI360 Culturally relevant and competent parenting interventions

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

• Introduction
• Introduction: Pamoja Tuwalee Program
• Pamoja Tuwalee Program/FHI 360 Design
• Specific methods/interventions related to cultural relevant and competent parenting
• Challenges
• Recommendations
INTRODUCTION

- In Tanzania like elsewhere in Africa, OVC traditionally were cared for by close relatives and neighbors without government intervention or support.
- In recent decades, this traditional community safety net has been stretched beyond its capacity by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, chronic poverty and social/family disintegration.
- Among OVC households, more than half are headed by aging grandparents who struggle to make ends meet. Twelve percent of OVC live in child-headed households.

INTRODUCTION: PAMOJA TUWALEE PROGRAM/FHI360

- Pamoja Tuwalee program is a five year USAID OVC program implemented by four partners in four zones.
- FHI360 implement the program in Coast Zone.
- Pamoja Tuwalee program/FHI360 was designed to respond to the needs of OVC and restore some of the traditional elements in OVC caring.
**INTRODUCTION: PAMOJA TUWALEE PROGRAM/FHI360 Cont..**

**Goal and Objectives**

1: Increase the capacity of communities and local governments to meet the needs of OVC and their households in an innovative, efficient and sustainable manner.

2: Increase the capacity of households to protect, care for and meet the basic needs of OVC in a sustained way by improving their caretaking, livelihood and health-seeking skills.

3: Increase OVC household access to comprehensive, high-quality, age-appropriate and gender-sensitive services by creating integrated community-level referral networks that strengthen the continuum of care.

4: Empower OVC, particularly females, to contribute to their own well-being by improving their resilience, as well as their livelihood and self-care skills.

**PAMOJA TUWALEE PROGRAM/FHI360 DESIGN**

Apart from the government and community members, we specifically work with

- Grandparents, Single parents, Child headed households); Children
- Both men and women

Addressing cultural issues is part of the program design

Our strategic approach: Empowerment and Integration (strength Based Approach)
SPECIFIC METHODS/INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CULTURAL RELEVANT AND COMPETENT PARENTING

- Caretaking skills training to caretakers/caregivers

Cultural issues: talking about death

- Reactions of orphans after death of their parents per age category
- What might happen if not assisted during that period
- How to build the attachment: listening and talking to distressed children
- Coping mechanism between the caretakers and the child
### Specific Methods/Interventions Related to Cultural Relevant and Competent Parenting

- Caretaking skills training to caretakers/caregivers
  
  Cultural issues: Rights of the child, communication between the caretakers and the children
- Equal rights of children
- Child Protection - the importance of reporting child abuse even if by a close family member
- Development stages of children: eg how to assist youth during their adolescent stages
- Life skills for youth

### Use of Children Clubs Forum

Cultural issues: Talking about Death, Sexual Reproductive Health, sexual organs, HIV prevention
- Understanding Death
- Addressing emotional needs of OVC
- Building Resilience
- Helping children to set Goals for their future
- Self Protections: discussing the cultural boundaries
- Youth: Sexual Reproductive Health: How do we cope, HIV/AIDS prevention
SPECIFIC METHODS/INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CULTURAL RELEVANT AND COMPETENT PARENTING

- Memory Work
  Cultural issues: Rights of inheritance, will writing, talking about death
- Story telling: family background, cultural beliefs,
- HIV/AIDS status disclosing if relevant
- Wishes of parents/wishes of children- under hero books
- Inheritance and Will writing
- Attachment Building
SPECIFIC METHODS/INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CULTURAL RELEVANT AND COMPETENT PARENTING

- Provision of equal opportunity to both women and men on issues related to different cultural beliefs
- Cultural issues: power - girls/boys, resources ownership, rights
- Empowering both men and women but providing more opportunity and support to vulnerable group - women/girls
- Entrepreneurship skills building
- Saving groups: opportunities for women to increase their income
- Enforcing partnership in decision making
- Education support
SPECIFIC METHODS/INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CULTURAL RELEVANT AND COMPETENT PARENTING

- **Modelling**: using vivid examples to build the case and challenge some negative cultural beliefs: Examples:
  - Rights to education between girls and boys,
  - Beliefs that boys are good in studying science or difficult subject than girls
  - **Boys have the right to family inheritance unlike girls**
SPECIFIC METHODS/INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CULTURAL RELEVANT AND COMPETENT PARENTING

- Meetings/discussions forum, Example
  - Bringing men and women together to discuss issues of development
  - Providing equal opportunity to provide inputs on the plan or decision
  - Targeting directly the weak group to contribute on certain issues

CHALLENGES

- Open minded: How to balance the program target and the new learning
- Program Flexibility to accommodate the new proposal
- The time it takes to change the mind-set of the individuals
- In some cases you need experts not just volunteers
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Let caretakers/caregivers know that behaviour and character of an individual is a direct product of the manner in which children are nurtured and socialized from the early stage
- Be open minded: be ready to learn from the community
- Start where they are to build the case
- Be creative and make sense when proposing some changes

THANK YOU

ASANTE SANA