Strengthening the power of the OVC platform to achieve epidemic control through community linkages

April 25, 2018

The webinar will begin momentarily; during the webinar, please type your questions for the speakers in the Chat box.
Welcome from the Webinar Moderator

Victor Boguslavsky, MD
Deputy Director
USAID ASSIST Project
University Research Co., LLC
Today’s presenters

Diana Chamrad, PhD
Improvement Director, Vulnerable Children & Families, Mental Health
USAID ASSIST Project, URC

Juliana Nabwire
Senior Quality Improvement Advisor
USAID ASSIST Project, URC

Tiwonge Moyo
Team Leader, Malawi and Tanzania
AIDSFree Project, EnCompass LLC
The Orphans & Vulnerable Children (OVC) Platform

- Children 0-17 years and their caregivers
- Community, schools, households
- Direct services & linkages
- Holistic interventions:
  - Health: HIV, TB, adolescent sexual & reproductive health (ASRH), nutrition
  - Household economic strengthening: village savings and loans, resources to meet family needs
  - Education: enrolment, attendance, performance
  - Psychosocial: violence, exploitation, neglect, parenting
  - Childhood development: nutrition, immunizations, brain health
  - Legal protection: birth registration, property rights
OVC program strategies for achieving 90-90-90

- Target those most vulnerable to HIV
- Increase linkage to testing & treatment
- Increase disclosure of HIV status
- Enhance community support & monitoring
- Provide support to HIV-positive mothers
- Prevent/reduce risk of HIV – mitigate risk factors
Improvement at the community level

1. Work in teams
2. Decide what you want to achieve
3. Develop a simple measurement plan
4. Understand the current situation
5. Develop some options for possible solutions
6. Test solutions on a small scale
7. Implement the successful solutions
8. Share our learning

USAID Applying Science to Strengthen and Improve Systems
Strengthening Community Systems to Serve the Vulnerable in Uganda
Strategies applied by ASSIST in Uganda

1. Support civil society organizations to use QI to address gaps in service delivery for improved outcomes for OVC and their families.

2. Support and strengthen community participation at village level through formation of village child protection committees (VCPCs) to identify, manage and link OVC to services of need.

3. Build capacity of Ministry structures, community OVC and institutional care programs to assess, monitor and improve adherence to standards and use QI to address gaps identified.
Opportunities in OVC programing

- OVC programs implement education and household economic strengthening activities
- When OVC and health programs are integrated, then a vulnerable child identified by either programs benefits
- OVC structures essential to find vulnerable children (girls/boys) link them to health services, follow up, and build capacity in households
Cross-sector engagement

Other ministries such as Education → Ministry of gender labour and social development → Ministry of health

District
- Supervision
- Resource mobilization and allocation
- Reporting

Community Based Organization
- Capacity building
- Advocacy
- Resource mobilization
- Service delivery

Community Development Office
- Community mobilization
- Supervision and mentorship
- Service delivery
- Reporting

Village child protection committee
- Identify & register OVC
- Link and follow up

Health Facility
- Identification & linkage
- Service delivery
- Reporting

Household
- Identify and prioritize needs
- Participate in resilience building activities

11
Improved linkage of identified OVC to needed services (7,804 OVC)

Changes tested
- Engage sub-county to prioritize registered OVC on government programs
- Refer and submit list of OVC to service providers
- Home visits to counsel OVC/caregivers
1st 90: Reaching HIV-positives by using screening tool in the community

% of children, Adolescents 15+ yrs & caregivers identified and referred who tested as new HIV +ve in 38 communities

Tested tool in 3 communities; finding children who are sickly and or malnourished, whose parents HIV +ve, parents died of HIV

195 (0-14 yrs) and 269 (15+ adolescents & caregivers) HIV +ve

% of children (0-14 yrs) identified and referred who tested HIV +ve
% of adolescents 15+ & caregivers identified and referred who tested HIV +ve

Cum no. of eligible children (0-14 yrs) identified and referred for HIV testing
Cum no. of eligible adolescents 15+ yrs & caregivers identified and referred for HIV testing
How OVC platform contributes to risk reduction among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW)

- Implemented DREAMS Initiative in Northern Uganda
- Reached over eligible 40,000 AGYW 15-24 years
- Provided and linked a range of services based on need
- New HIV infections registered 53 among AGYW in 2 yrs
- Twenty four (44%) are girls who gave birth before age 15
- Limited school time and economic opportunities greatly contribute to increased risk
- Economic and social empowerment of the vulnerable AGYW and their communities can reduce HIV risk
Reducing vulnerability and access to HIV services in Malawi
What services did we seek to improve for vulnerable children and their families in 7 districts?

1. Academic performance
   - Reducing the vulnerability of boys and girls through academic performance

2. Household economic strengthening
   - Building capacity of OVC families in HES
   - Linking guardians to viable HES

3. Access to HIV services
   - Improving access to HIV diagnosis
   - Promoting ART adherence and psychosocial support for PLHIV
Composition of community QI teams

- Agriculture Extension Development Officers & Lead Farmers
- Health Surveillance Assistant
- PLHIV support Groups
- Village Savings and Loans Groups Chairperson
- Area Development Committee & Village Development Committee
- Parents Teachers Associations, School Management Committee & Volunteer mother Groups
- Community Home based Care volunteers
- Early Childhood Development Caregivers
- Child protection Workers, Community Victim Support Units, Child protection Committees
How did we support vulnerable children with education services?

- Mobilized multisectoral QI teams to work with primary schools and children to improve their termly academic performance
- Trained and mentored the QI teams to work with local leaders, guardians, and stakeholders to support the improvements of academic performance
- Continuously tracked the academic performance of targeted primary schools and facilitated quarterly reviews of various teams to share lessons
How did we support vulnerable families with household economic strengthening?

- Supported community QI teams to build the capacity of vulnerable families to participate in viable food security and economic activities to reduce vulnerability of children and promoting an AIDS-Free population.
- Facilitated linkages of vulnerable families to other HES implementing partners and government structures to support their agricultural, livestock productivity, and economic wellbeing as primary caregivers for children.
How did we support vulnerable families with household economic strengthening?

QI teams building capacity of OVC and families & facilitating linkages to HES

Vulnerable families

- VSLAs, small businesses
- Livestock production
- Food & cash crops production
- Linkages to Farm Input Subsidy Program, cash transfers, NGOs
How did we support vulnerable children to improve access to and uptake of HIV services?

- Leveraging the OVC platform to improve HIV diagnosis at the community level through linkages with service delivery partners for HIV testing services.
- Utilizing existing community structures to promote ART adherence and psychosocial wellbeing among infected vulnerable family members.
Results: Vulnerable beneficiaries linked to HTC services and HIV status disaggregated by age

Number of vulnerable beneficiaries linked to HTC and HIV + status disaggregated by age, Jan-May 2017
Results: Linking 68 ART defaulters back to care in one ASSIST-supported community

- **June 2016**: Team collected list of all defaulters from health facility
- **July 2016**: Use of HIV support group volunteers
- **September 2016**: - Support clients to establish kitchen gardens - Linked clients to food relief
Commentary and Discussion

Participants should use the chat function to post questions (send to “All panelists”). Responses to questions not addressed during the webinar will be posted afterwards on the ASSIST website.

Jacqueline Calnan  
USAID Uganda

Diana Chamrad  
USAID ASSIST Project, URC

Tiwonge Moyo  
AIDSFree Project, EnCompass, LLC

Juliana Nabwire  
USAID ASSIST Project, URC
Lessons Learned
Lessons learned in Uganda

• Integrate health and OVC services
  - Build capacity of community structures to use data and prioritize areas for improvement
  - Use and share data across sectors for programming to identify where to invest and monitor progress
  - Collaborate and plan together
Lessons learned in Malawi

• Building the capacity of existing community structures to support vulnerable families was highly commendable

• Mobilizing multiple stakeholders working in the same communities helped in efficient use of limited OVC resources

• OVC interventions should intensely focus on interventions that empower vulnerable families as primary caregivers for evidence-based impact

• Consistent monitoring of education outcomes pushes schools to remove educational barriers thereby encouraging boys & girls to complete their education
Lessons learned across ASSIST-supported OVC programs

• OVC programming is a powerful community-based platform for improving HIV outcomes through linkages to clinical services and promoting healthy behaviors

• The OVC platform also addresses the multiple factors that increase the risk of HIV acquisition: education, household resource stability, exposure to gender-based violence, maternal access to services

• Community members work as effective improvement teams, to develop locally appropriate solutions to improve outcomes related to HIV and the factors that reduce risk of HIV
Closing Remarks

Victor Boguslavsky, MD
Deputy Director
USAID ASSIST Project
University Research Co., LLC
Resources to learn more:
https://www.usaidassist.org/content/legacy-webinar-series-strengthening-orphans-vulnerable-children-platform-epidemic-control
Upcoming webinar: Lessons from strengthening district health systems in India and Uganda

Wednesday, May 30, 2018 9:00-10:00am

Register at:
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3ckh1TPIQdKLk7y0UZwXTg