



Mainstreaming Psychosocial Care and Support into Economic Strengthening Programmes

For practitioners working with children and families affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict



Psychosocial Wellbeing For All Children

REPSI is a regional non-governmental organisation working with partners to promote psychosocial care and support (PSS) for children affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict in East and Southern Africa.

THE REPSI PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING SERIES

Through this series, REPSI strives to publish high-quality, user-friendly, evidence-based manuals and guidelines, all characterised by subject matter that can be said to address the issue of psychosocial wellbeing. Within the series, different publications are aimed at different levels of audience or user. This audience includes: 1) community workers, 2) a variety of social actors whose work is not explicitly psychosocial in nature, but in which it is felt to be crucial to raise awareness around psychosocial issues, 3) caregivers, parents, youth and children, 4) specialised psychosocial and mental health practitioners. Apart from formal impact assessments, towards further developing the evidence base for our tools and approaches, we welcome user feedback around our materials.

The standardised feedback form and a full list of all the titles in the series can be downloaded from www.repspi.org

Jonathan Morgan

Editor, REPSI Psychosocial Wellbeing Series



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Foreword

REPSSI is a regional non-governmental organisation working with partners to promote psychosocial support (PSS) and care for children affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict in East and Southern Africa.

REPSSI advocates that services, programmes and policies designed to support vulnerable communities need to respond holistically to the needs and rights of communities and children. It is important that psychosocial care and support programmes are not only specialised stand-alone programmes.

Instead, REPSSI advocates for the social and emotional needs of children and their caregivers to be addressed in an integrated manner. This can be done by mainstreaming psychosocial care and support into all types of programmes designed to support vulnerable communities, including economic strengthening projects and programmes.

Economic strengthening (ES) programmes focus on supporting vulnerable communities to access skills and/or resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Beneficiaries of economic strengthening programmes are often adult caregivers, many of whom may be senior citizens, and vulnerable children. In some

countries children from the age of ten may participate in some aspects of economic strengthening programmes.

Communities may be vulnerable because of economic hardships and poverty, the impact of HIV and AIDS, natural disasters or the effects of conflict and war. Children and their caregivers are often the most affected group in such communities. Caregivers, both adult and children, are placed under enormous pressure as limited resources need to be spread amongst an ever-increasing pool of children that have either been orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS in particular. Increasing pressures in vulnerable communities point to the urgent need to provide more holistic services, including psychosocial support. These guidelines provide practical steps to mainstream psychosocial support into your economic strengthening programme.



Noreen Masiwa Huni
Executive Director,
REPSSI, May, 2009



“The REPSSI vision is that all children affected by HIV and AIDS, conflict and poverty benefit from stable, affectionate care and support.”

What can I expect to find in the guidelines?

In the guidelines you can expect to find a step-by-step guide to mainstreaming psychosocial support (PSS) into economic strengthening (ES) programmes. These steps can be used to implement a programme of PSS mainstreaming in your project. Alternatively, these steps can be used alone. Each module or step has:

- a. Background information
- b. Case studies
- c. Activities for use by your organisation

References for further reading, tool kits and useful websites are found in the appendices.

Who are the guidelines for?

The guidelines are written for individuals working in or supporting economic strengthening programmes targeting vulnerable children and their caregivers.

These may be:

- Directors
- Project Managers
- Trainers
- Fieldworkers
- Donors

How were the guidelines written?

The guidelines were written after consultation with REPSSI practitioners, and a range of REPSSI partners working in economic strengthening programmes. A two-day consultative workshop was conducted in August 2008, aimed at finding out from practitioners working in economic strengthening programmes what they understood by psychosocial support, and how they felt PSS could be best integrated into economic

strengthening programmes. The workshop was designed to explore the meaning of psychosocial support, to identify where psychosocial support may already exist in economic strengthening programmes, where it doesn't exist, and of possible ways in which these programmes could expand to include psychosocial inputs. For example, the box below highlights one of the questions explored in the workshop at the start of the consultation process.

Practitioners working in Economic Strengthening (ES) Programmes were asked: **How can economic strengthening projects in communities be encouraged to play a bigger role in psychosocial support (PSS)?!**

“As organisations we should avoid looking at these things in silos. Then we can motivate that ES and PSS are a more integrated type of programme strengthened from each other.”

“ES projects are using PSS activities and tools successfully we can all learn from this experience.”

“It is difficult to separate PSS and ES because if people are empowered economically then you have already empowered them psychosocially. I often think about this as an ES practitioner.”

“ES should be integrated into PSS programmes as well as vice versa!”

“When working with donors we need to consider how we might get around existing deliverables that do not integrate PSS with ES. We overcome this when we know that when working in communities things are not so separate for the beneficiaries and we need to find indicators that measure our impact both in ES and PSS.”

“We can promote coming together as a network of ES partners. We can provide opportunity in our own network to discuss how do we deal with softer issues like when a child is grieving.”

These guidelines were developed using a participatory approach by involving practitioners working at the forefront of economic strengthening programmes together with REPSSI, as well as through reviewing the relevant and current literature in the fields of economic strengthening and psychosocial support.

Who was involved in writing the guidelines?

The guidelines were written by REPSSI in collaboration with Sarraounia Public Health Trust after consultation with REPSSI partners working on economic strengthening (ES) programmes in various countries. A consultative workshop was held to find out how ES practitioners felt that psychosocial support could best be integrated into their programmes. The workshop tried to explore relevant definitions of psychosocial support and tried to draw on existing ES initiatives that enhance psychosocial support.

These are some of the people that were actively involved in developing the guidelines:

Writing: Nancy Coulson and Nirvana Pillay from the Sarraounia Public Health Trust

Project Liaison: Faith Mmola from REPSSI

Pretesting: Nancy Coulson, Nirvana Pillay *et al.*

Editing: Berenice Meintjes from Sinani

Series Editor: Jonathan Morgan from REPSSI

Design and Layout: Candice Turvey from Spiritlevel

Illustrations: Helga Megan Hoveka

The partners involved in the consultative meeting were:

- Evaristo Maanya – Care, Zimbabwe
- Faith Mmola – Repssi
- Gad Tukamushaba – Africare, Uganda
- Eric Motau – Repssi
- Cleopas – Youth in Action, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund
- Lurdes – Save the Children, Mozambique
- Linda – Repssi
- Mandla Mazibuko – Save the Children, Swaziland
- Bheki – Care, South Africa
- Charity Mamathuba – Nelson Mandela Children's Fund

The partners involved in the pre-testing of this guide were the following members of Fanang Diatla:

- Mme Agnes Qwabe
- Smenda Mathabath
- Portia Kgagago
- Mathona Chauke
- Mabohle Mokgoghi
- Linda Mokgophi
- Motlbejaha Motlarepula
- Peter Kgabago

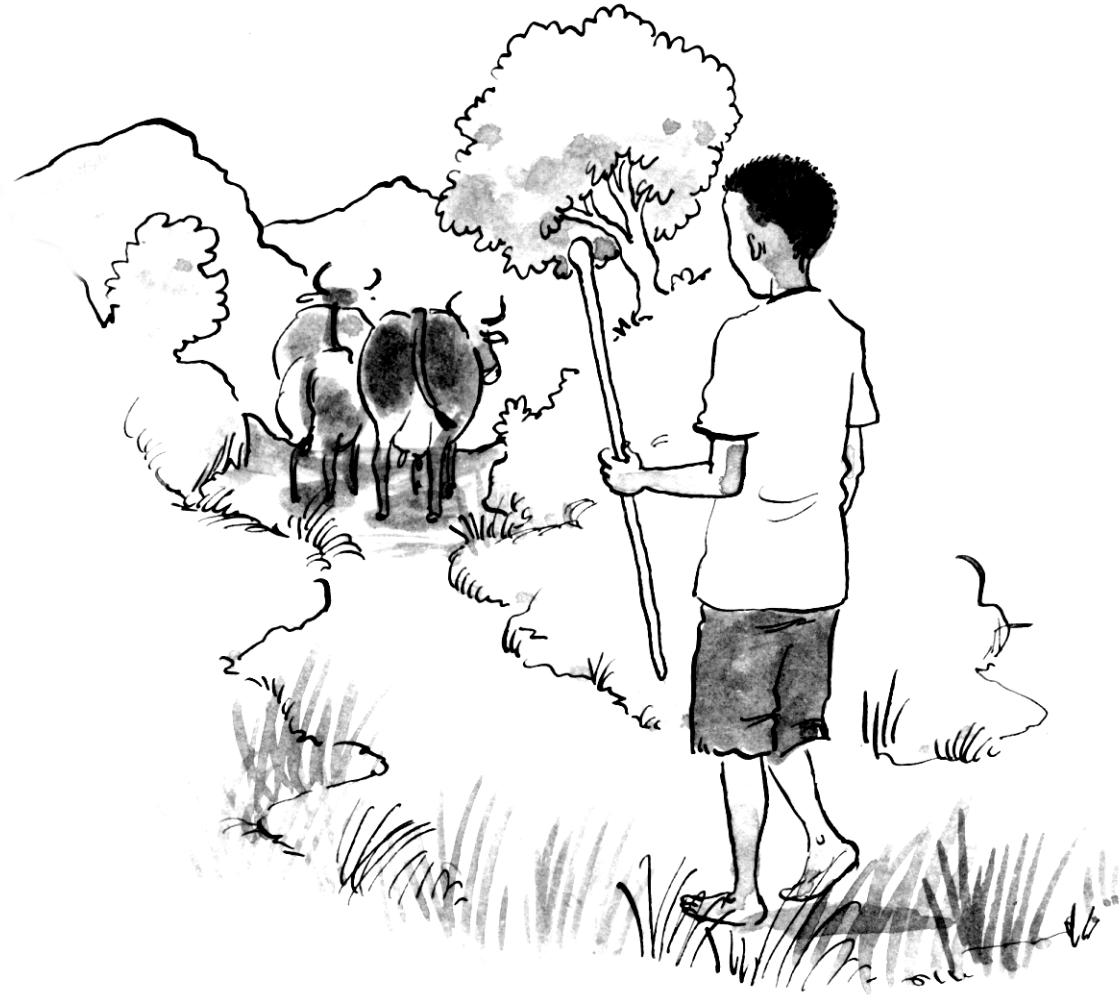
The partners involved in the second pre-testing of this guide were the following teachers and school principals from Swaziland:

- S'thembile Dlamini
- Ncamsile Dlamini
- Hazel Dlamini
- Futhi Gwebu
- Bongwiwe Khumalo
- Lwazi Khumalo
- Ndumiso Mamba
- Tenele Mamba
- Thab'sile Mamba
- Nelile Mamba
- Lucky Mhlanga
- Celiwe Mnisi
- Nomsa Msibi
- Mbongeni Ndlangamadla
- Pholile Ngcamphalala
- Mgcineni Nhleko
- Sanele Nhleko
- Vusi Simelane

Key messages in this guide

The main points that we hope you will take away from this guide are that:

- Mainstreaming psychosocial support means considering the emotional and social needs of children in all areas where your economic strengthening activities are taking place.
- This is largely about developing caring, respectful relationships with children and caregivers linked to your programmes. It involves listening to children, encouraging child participation and building better relationships between caregivers and their children.
- This does not necessarily mean doing everything yourself, but may involve linking with other organisations in your area so that you are able to contribute towards the wellbeing of all children.
- Using specialised tools to promote psychosocial support can enhance your economic strengthening activities.



Step 1: Enhancing the scope for psychosocial support (PSS) in economic strengthening (ES) programmes

Adopting a mindful approach to psychosocial support in an economic strengthening environment

There are many types of economic strengthening activities. For example, access to credit, insurance and savings options is particularly important for vulnerable households, where a small and timely loan or cash transfer can often help a vulnerable household to manage their livelihood or cope with an emergency. A recent review of economic strengthening

programmes involving vulnerable children² showed that many ES initiatives do not run to scale, although there is excitement about the potential sustainability of group saving and loan schemes and the potential of poor communities to save. In general, very few ES programmes target vulnerable children directly, and there still remain some misconceptions about older children's ability to engage in economic activities. Children (both in and out of school youth) who find they are heading households are most likely to be involved with

projects such as vocational training schemes or rearing small livestock. In Uganda, children and youth who have lost their parents are involved in an economic strengthening programme called the SUUBI Initiative save and manage individual child development accounts to save for their secondary education. Older caregivers may benefit from social welfare grants or saving schemes. The box below lists a range of economic strengthening activities.

Categories of economic strengthening interventions³

Social Assistance	Asset Growth & Protection	Income growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset transfers Food aid Social grants and pensions Public works programmes (developed by governments to encourage greater employment opportunities) Social grants (for the elderly and disabled) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings Insurance (life, disability, health, loan and agriculture) Legal services for asset protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills training and access to tertiary education Income generating activities (IGAs) Job creation Market linkages (creating links between individuals and markets so that they are able to sell their products) Business loans

2 & 3: USAID, Save the Children, AED Economic Strengthening for Vulnerable Children: Principles of Program Design and Technical Recommendations for Effective Field Interventions, Feb 2008

Why is it important to consider psychosocial support in economic strengthening programmes?

1. Caregivers and children experience their needs holistically. There are no clear distinctions between children's emotional and social lives at home, school or in their communities. An adult working in a community co-operative during the day and who has to leave a sick child at home perhaps with an older sibling does not "forget" that there is a sick child at home. Nor is it possible for caregivers to leave behind the pain when they know they have hungry children at home, or that their children have no uniforms to go to school. The vulnerability, sadness and pain felt by those in distress affects every part of life.
2. Economic strengthening programmes often involve caregivers and children coming together to address their economic vulnerability. Many such programmes in themselves help to build social networks between participating individuals. Some of the most successful ES programmes are those designed around savings groups. There is great potential to enhance psychosocial support within such settings.
3. Negative social dynamics around economic strengthening programmes - especially where there is a context of deprivation and scarce resources - have the potential to disrupt and sabotage even the best programme. Thus psychosocial aspects need to be embedded in economic strengthening programmes.

4. Economic strengthening programmes may themselves contribute to aspects of psychosocial distress during their implementation. For example, a child with a learning difficulty may find vocational skills training challenging. Alternatively, getting a micro-business off the ground may not run smoothly and participants may experience anxiety and failure.
5. Sometimes the people who gain access to economic strengthening programmes are not the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the community. Researching and considering the psychosocial support needs of the community may open possibilities for reaching people who need economic support the most, for example, elderly caregivers of children who have lost their parents.

The purpose of step one in the guidelines is to encourage economic strengthening programmes to adopt a "mindful" approach to PSS when working in an ES environment.

Thinking about psychosocial support

What is psychosocial wellbeing?

Psychosocial wellbeing is about the positive connections and mutually beneficial and supportive relationships between individuals in a community that creates the "social". It is also about how each person, adult or child, feels and thinks about him or herself and about life ("psycho"). It is often linked to the African concept of "ubuntu" - "I am because we are, and we are because I am".

Such wellbeing includes many different aspects of our lives, such as physical and material aspects, and psychological, social, cultural and spiritual aspects. Meeting material and physical needs links economic strengthening activities to psychosocial wellbeing. The focus of psychosocial wellbeing is not just on the individual, but on households, families and communities.

What is psychosocial support?

As an individual or organisation interested in PSS, it is helpful to develop a working understanding of PSS. You may wish to discuss and add to these definitions provided below. Think about which of the statements in the box below hold most value or relevance in the work that you do. It is not necessary to choose one. You may find that several of the statements are useful.

.....

PSS is about helping children, families and communities to improve their psychosocial wellbeing. It is about encouraging better connections between people, and building a better sense of self and community.

PSS is expressed through caring and respectful relationships that communicate understanding, tolerance and acceptance. It is about promoting everyday consistent care and support in the family and community.

PSS can be as big or as little as you want it to be. It can range from providing specialised services like counselling

and therapy, to providing basic services like food, shelter, health and education.

PSS can mean speaking with kindness, and listening with care to what children and their caregivers have to say. Most importantly, providing PSS means that children and communities are treated with dignity and respect, and acknowledged as agents of their own decisions and future.

.....

On page 28 of this guideline you will find a diagram summarising the range of activities that contribute to psychosocial support. PSS ranges from advocacy around policies affecting children and caregivers to specialist counselling and psychiatric support for severely traumatised children and caregivers.

Economic strengthening is a form of psychosocial support

Many economic strengthening interventions that are not planned or conceived as psychosocial interventions can have significant psychosocial impact - for example, welfare grants and nutritional support. By removing significant stressors, such as hunger, general wellbeing including psychosocial wellbeing is likely to improve.

The aim of psychosocial intervention is to address issues and needs in a holistic manner and to place psychosocial interventions inside wider developmental contexts such as education or health care. This will create an integrated developmental approach to promoting psychosocial wellbeing.

ES programmes inherently provide PSS because they facilitate access to basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, health and education – all of which contribute to wellbeing, of which psychosocial wellbeing is a critical part. Evaluations of ES programmes indicate that these programmes take this one step further. Beneficiaries of ES activities often identify elements of personal development and wellbeing as attributable to ES activities. The box below gives examples from ES practitioners of PSS outcomes emerging from their ES programmes. This tells us that ES programmes, in and of themselves, are already achieving PSS outcomes.

.....

Practitioners working in Economic Strengthening Programmes were asked: *What are some of the PSS outcomes of your ES programme?*

- It gives people a sense of purpose.
- It makes people feel human in a context where poverty often dehumanises people.

- It gives people a sense of happiness and achievement.
 - It encourages people to create and operate in a social network.
 - Children feel complete and normal when their caregivers can provide for them like other children.⁴
-

Remember that the PSS outcomes may not always be positive. Caregivers or children participating in ES activities may feel stigmatised by being part of ES activities. Children may feel excluded from sport and play after school as they devote their time to ES activities, and hence may feel “cheated” of “normal” childhood activities. Caregivers may also feel uncomfortable about the dependence they may have on ES programmes.

The aim of mainstreaming PSS into ES programmes is to deepen the scope of PSS so that ES programmes can better support the needs of vulnerable children and their caregivers in a more holistic way. It does not mean that the focus of your ES programme needs to change, just that by mainstreaming PSS you broaden the scope of your response to the needs of vulnerable children and their caregivers.

PSS can also be used to enhance ES activities. Some organisations working on ES programmes have found that ES projects were often derailed by conflict, people’s traumatic

4: 25-26 August 2008. REPSSI Workshop: Mainstreaming PSS into ES programmes Randburg, South Africa.

experiences and loss, as well as power struggles. Practitioners found that introducing a stronger focus on PSS helped to unite the groups within the ES projects, thus increasing cooperation, giving more space for reflection and engaging leadership more constructively.

What are the opportunities for psychosocial support in economic strengthening programmes?

Going beyond basic needs

The concept of vulnerability is complex and meeting basic needs is only part of the equation. Other parts of the equation are about building resilience and self esteem. PSS is built on respectful relationships between adults, between adults and children and between children themselves. Talking and listening characterise these relationships. This is easier said than done. Many children, for example, experience schools as hostile and uncaring environments. Corporal punishment, abuse of students by teachers and by other learners, high levels of violence and experiences of stigma and discrimination are not uncommon. Families infected and affected by HIV and AIDS can experience isolation and rejection by neighbours and the community.

Social networks formed through ES activities, such as savings groups, are an excellent opportunity to deepen PSS. Although women dominate many of these groups there is also opportunity within these groups to explore issues related to men as caregivers.

Schools can be a critical space to link economic strengthening and psychosocial support for children

ES programmes often target both in- and out-of-school youth. Most schools also strive to go beyond teaching the “3 Rs” (reading, writing and arithmetic) and include life skills or life orientation. Schools provide an important opportunity for children to form a supportive social network of friends and to experience consistency of care from adults who work there. An important contribution can be made via the economic strengthening of households so that school-aged children can

continue to exercise their right to attend school regularly and not have to spend that time seeking employment, looking after younger children, tending livestock or engaged in food production. Thus a child's right to education may be realised.

Many schools are realising the value of integrating care and support for children into their school ethos and activities. Schools are increasingly becoming sites of ES activities. For example, many schools are working with children to grow food gardens. In Swaziland, at a school programme supporting



vulnerable children, vocational skills learning has been adopted by a teacher who then supports learners involved to run an income-generating project at the school⁵. Integrating PSS activities into these ES activities at schools provides an excellent opportunity to reach children. Schooling in terms of education and skills development is also a key focus of ES as it is a significant contributor to breaking the cycle of poverty.

Economic strengthening creates psychosocial support challenges for some children and caregivers

ES activities can in themselves create PSS challenges for children and caregivers. These challenges can be found in all steps of programme implementation from the selection of participants, to attendance at training programmes and to the sustained implementation of economic activities.

For example, biological children may get prioritised for support over adopted children when households are resource constrained. Periods of illness may interrupt the participation of caregivers in ES programmes, and access to antiretrovirals and other home-based support then becomes important. As will preparation for death in some homes. Children may need help to access formal identity documentation in order to access services and grants.

Economic projects may often be challenging and small businesses and other economic activities can go wrong. Frustration and failure are part of the experience. Caregivers participating in saving schemes may experience challenging relationships. There is some evidence that, generally, savings groups should not be convened externally or be formed from groups that were originally designed for other purposes, such as support or training.⁶

Dynamics around money and resources, especially in under-resourced environments, have the potential to derail and undermine the best planned programme. Although ES interventions specifically address financial and/or livelihood issues, there may be a further need for directly addressing human relations and psychosocial dynamics within the group. This is also an argument for mainstreaming PSS into ES. Below are some guidelines on how to do this.

Introducing psychosocial support principles in your economic strengthening programme

Five psychosocial support principles

REPSI advocates the use of five PSS programme principles. These principles will help guide your programme towards mainstreaming and deepening PSS in your ES activities. The five principles are:

- **Attitudes.** This implies promoting respectful ways of interacting with children, families and communities. Building a sense of dignity is important in developing a sense of wellbeing.
- **Participation.** This involves consulting and speaking to children and families about what types of support would be appropriate and helpful, and asking them how they could be involved.
- **Social support.** This means that existing cultural, social and spiritual ways of coping need to be drawn on and enhanced. It means fostering connections and building a sense of self and community.
- **Family support.** This principle suggests drawing on and enhancing existing family relationships and ties, instead of bringing in external help. For children it could mean enhancing one caring relationship with an adult who is able to provide consistent care in the child's life. It aims to promote within the child and the family a sense of control (as opposed to helplessness) during difficult times.
- **Emotional support.** This involves promoting stability and routine in the child and caregiver's life, especially during difficult times. It can also involve promoting the use of safe spaces for reflection on past experiences, as a way of learning from and growing from these experiences. It could mean focusing on positive achievements to build a

5: Personal communication Mandla Mazibuko Save the Children, Swaziland, 2008

6: USAID, Save the Children, *AED Economic Strengthening for Vulnerable Children: Principles of Program Design and Technical Recommendations for Effective Field Interventions*, Feb 2008, p42

sense of self. In relation to children, it could be achieved through giving children enough time to play and participate in sport, as this contributes to a child's social integration and emotional and cognitive development.

If you would like to assess the extent to which you currently use PSS principles in your ES programme, REPSSI has a short assessment tool you can use. You can find this tool on pages 42-47 of the guidelines.

Ideas for deepening the scope of psychosocial support activities in economic strengthening programmes using psychosocial support principles

The table on this page provides ideas about how to deepen PSS activity within an ES programme by using PSS principles.

The table explores a few ideas and options to deepen the scope of PSS. What the table helps to show us is that by introducing a few additional PSS activities, an ES programme can take considerable steps towards mainstreaming PSS, and making the programme deal more holistically with the care and support of vulnerable communities.

Using PSS Principles to deepen to the scope of PSS in ES activities

ES Activity	Using the PSS principles	Deepening the scope for PSS by including PSS principles in your work
Cash transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and emotional support • Participation 	<p>Group-based ES projects may enhance social support, especially if opportunities are created for personal sharing, informal communication and fun times together.</p> <p>Arranging after-school play and homework groups for children relieves caregivers for a few hours after school</p>
Vocational training for older children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and emotional support 	<p>Arranging sports days and events so children can have fun, relax and be distracted relieves them from the stress of having to be providers for a while.</p>
Group-based savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation 	<p>Encouraging adults to listen to what children say about where and how money could best be spent, or to look for new entrepreneurial opportunities</p>
Income-generating activities (IGAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Social and emotional support 	<p>IGAs planning for after-school care to encourage older children to participate, increase the number of children reached and to encourage children and adults to connect with one another</p>



CASE STUDY

Case Study

The case study below looks at an ES programme in Tanzania. The recent evaluation shows clear PSS outcomes. It confirms the idea

introduced earlier that ES programmes inherently have PS outcomes. These outcomes came out of careful and mindful mainstreaming of PSS into ES programming.

One of the few ES programmes to have measured the PSS outcomes of its ES activities for its beneficiaries, is the KwaWazee project in Tanzania's Kagera region, which began in late 2003.⁷ This ES programme provides pensions in the form of cash transfers to grandparents and children. Regular cash incomes in the form of pensions and child benefits were provided to poor and vulnerable people over the age of 60, including those caring for children without parents.

The project began in late 2003 with a few dozen of the most vulnerable older people in the Nshamba villages in the Muleba district. By the end of 2007, nearly 600 people were being supported. In addition to providing regular cash incomes, psychosocial support groups were set up. Grandparents and grandchildren met separately to share their experiences.

Older people receiving the pension, report the following psychosocial benefits:

- Feeling less anxious about the future
- Feeling less stressed, and less lonely
- Having fewer sleeping difficulties
- Feeling more confident about coping with the challenges of their lives
- Feeling less worried about meeting the children's needs
- Improved relationships between the generations as a result of being better able to meet children's needs.

Children from homes where grandparents were receiving the pension, reported the following psychosocial benefits:

- More time to play, study, read and talk to friends
- Improved school attendance and progress
- Less depression than children from homes not receiving pensions
- Improved relationships between children and grandparents because the pension reduced stress
- Feeling more loved when grandparents could meet their material needs.

A careful programme evaluation like this is extremely important as the findings could influence government policy. In Tanzania, this programme has helped make the

case for greater social protection in the form of social pensions.

The success of this programme was a direct result of careful and mindful programming. A sense of caring and space was created for participants to share their experiences of daily life. Pensions were not simply handed out.

Participants went through a process where:

- They identified that one of the most vulnerable groups in their area was elderly caregivers looking after children who had lost their parents
- They piloted a process of gaining grants for child care with these caregivers
- They used the time together for discussing the grants to offer further psychosocial support to the stressed caregivers, some of whom were looking after many children.

This pilot has been successful and they are now looking into advocating for a wider roll-out with the government and other bigger international NGOs.

7: Hofman, S; Heslop, M; Clachery, G. and Kessy, F. 2008. *Salt, soap and shoes for school -Evaluation Summary*. The impact of pensions on the lives of older people and grandchildren in the KwaWazee project in Tanzania's Kagera region. www.helpage.org, www.repssi.com, www.worldvisionministry.org, www.sdc.or.tz





ACTIVITY: Understanding the link between psychosocial support and economic strengthening

This is a short activity that can be done in two hours in your organisation, as you begin to reflect on ES and PSS. It can be facilitated with programme staff, management and/or field workers.

- Split the group into small groups of about 3 to 4 people, and ask each group to draw a comic strip-type drawing of your organisation's ES programme. Remind participants that it should be clear who the beneficiaries are, the role of your organisation, and any other organisations in your network. (30 minutes)
- When participants are finished, discuss the various drawings in plenary. (15 minutes)
- With the whole group together, ask participants to reflect on what PSS means to them. Write down the range of responses on a flipchart or board. (15 minutes)
- Refer to the list to remind participants of what PSS is. Then ask participants to go back to their drawings, and this time to look at possible ways to introduce and integrate PSS activities into the existing programme. Looking at ways to integrate PSS into existing programme activities means making sure that you always **see** the child and caregiver holistically in the project. (30 minutes)
- Allow each group to discuss their ideas of how they would like to introduce PSS into the programme.
- Summarise. (30 minutes)

Step 2: “Seeing the child” in Economic Strengthening Programmes

As children are beneficiaries of ES programmes, you may want to look at new ways of involving and including them. This section explores the particular place that children occupy in ES programmes and the possibilities of involving and including children in your ES programmes. It highlights ways in which you can **see** children in your day-to-day work and ways of making sure that children’s voices are heard and their presence is felt in your programme.

The psychosocial outcomes of involving and including children

The more individuals actively participate in decisions and activities that govern their own lives and future, the greater their self-confidence and self-esteem will be. The same applies for children. This is not always easy for adults to absorb, as many cultures believe that children do not have any rights in decision-making, and tend to believe in the idiom of “children should be seen and not heard”. It takes time to convince communities that involving and including children in programmes will benefit not just the individual child, but also the community as a whole.

The improved psychosocial wellbeing of children as a result of greater involvement and participation is being explored in many development programmes across the world. For example, an evaluation of children’s participation programmes in India, Kenya

and Ecuador⁸, found that children’s participation had an impact at different levels. This included impacts at the personal, family and community level; and within institutions, such as school. The diagram on page 14 summarises the main findings of this study.



8: Ackerman, L; Hart, J and Newman, J. November 2003. Evaluating Children’s Participation: A draft discussion document based on field research in India, Kenya and Ecuador. Plan UK/Plan International. p6-15

Ackerman, L; Feeny, T; Hart, J; and Newman, J. October 2003. Understanding and Evaluating Children’s Participation: A review of contemporary literature. Plan UK/Plan International. p14-21

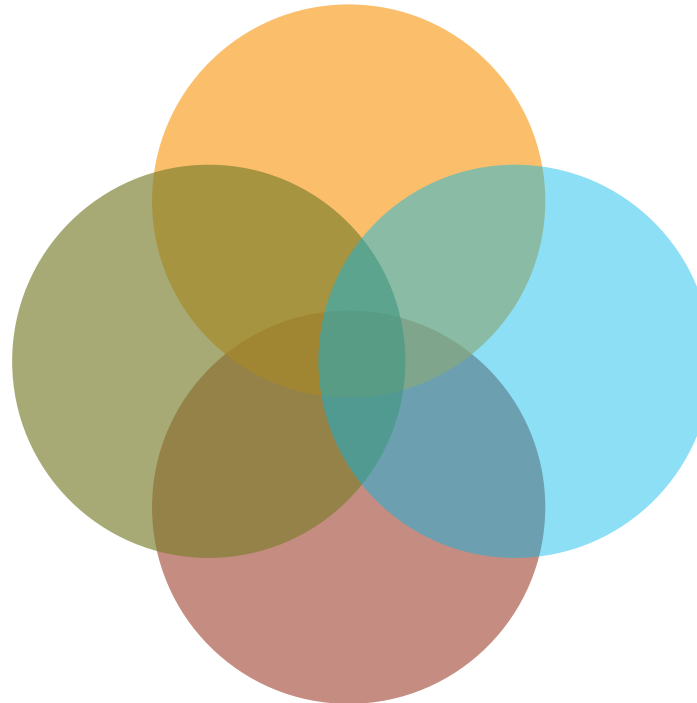
The psychosocial outcomes of children's participation in development programmes in Kenya, India and Ecuador⁹

Benefits to the child:

- Increased self-confidence
- Increased knowledge and awareness
- Enhanced personal and social development
- Expanded social networks

Benefits to the organisation:

- Improved school attendance, better school performance
- Enhanced processes and institutions of governance due to improved school attendance and participation of learners



Benefits to the family:

- Improved family relations
- There may sometimes be negative PSS impacts, such as less time and energy devoted to family responsibility, and conflict of interests between child-led initiatives and those of the parent or guardian

Benefits to the community:

- Increased community awareness and concern for children's issues
- Improved status of children within the community
- Enhanced community development

9: Ackerman, L; Hart, J and Newman, J. November 2003. Evaluating Children's Participation: A draft discussion document based on field research in India, Kenya and Ecuador. Plan UK/Plan International. p6-15

Ackerman, L; Feeny, T; Hart, J; and Newman, J. October 2003. Understanding and Evaluating Children's Participation: A review of contemporary literature. Plan UK/Plan International. p14-21

Such studies suggest that ES programmes are able to achieve greater psychosocial wellbeing for children by encouraging and supporting them to participate in the programmes that affect them.

Which children can be involved?

Many programmes for vulnerable children tend to focus on younger children, often overlooking the needs and concerns of older children (10 to 18 years). Older children or youth, are most often at the forefront of supporting families that are vulnerable, and become caregivers at an early age. Children on the Brink, 2004, Unicef estimates that about 55 percent of all orphans are aged between 12 to 17. Older children or youth can be involved in economic strengthening programmes and are the key target group for greater participation.

Involving children and youth in programme activities can, however, be complex and difficult. Involving children is dependent on the nature of the programme and its activities.

The right to participate

Involving or including children and youth is often referred to as child participation. Many of the studies concerning ES programmes suggests that older children are typically involved in activities such as rearing livestock, gaining vocational skills

(carpentry, hairdressing, tailoring, sewing) or in growing food gardens.

Child participation proposes a step further than merely offering children and youth livelihood opportunities. It requires that we **see** children as masters of their own destinies. It suggests that adults support and encourage children and youth to make decisions and choices around their livelihoods and their future. Adults offer support by providing them with skills, knowledge, opportunities and resources. It also implies involving children and youth and having them share in decisions even if they are not directly the target of an ES programme. It implies communicating with children and youth in an open and honest manner.

.....
“Children’s right to participation, their right to exert influence, is not only about having the right to freely express their opinions, feelings and needs; children should also be shown respect, and adults should take account of children’s views when making decisions which affect them.” (Save the Children, Sweden)¹⁰
.....

One of the breakthrough documents endorsing the importance of children’s participation is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC). The following articles endorse and support issues of child participation:

- Article 12 – The right to be listened to and taken seriously. It states that a child has the right “to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account, in any matter or procedure affecting the child”.
- Article 13 – The right to freedom of expression. It is the child’s right to obtain and make known information, and to express his or her own views.
- Article 15 – The right of the child to meet others and to join or set up associations, i.e. the right to freedom of association.
- Article 17 – The right to information.¹¹

The UNCRC is a comprehensive document that outlines the rights of children. It is important to appreciate and advocate a rights-based approach to working with children. In different countries, the rights of children are realised uniquely. For example, legislation and policies affecting child labour and school attendance will be country specific.

10: <http://www.rb.se/eng/Programme/Childrens+participation>

11: Children’s Rights Information Network (CRIN) Newsletter. October 2002. “Children and young people’s participation.” Number 16.

Ways of involving and including children

There are various ways in which children and youth can be involved and included in ES programmes. While it is possible to include children, it is not always possible to involve children at **all** levels of programme activity and decision-making. The nature of participation varies depending on the level at which one wants to involve children in the programming.

Children and youth may be included in programme activities by involving them in consultative processes, in participative initiatives or in promoting self-advocacy. Each of these has the following characteristics listed in the table below:

The case study of the Humuliza VSI initiative in Tanzania, detailed on page 20, is an example of children promoting self-advocacy. This kind of participation is usually best suited to older children of between 12 and 18 years of age.

The 'Circles of Support' project documented by Health and Development Africa (HDA) on their website - www.hda.co.za - has valuable information on talking and listening to children, and on child participation in the Circles of Support project.

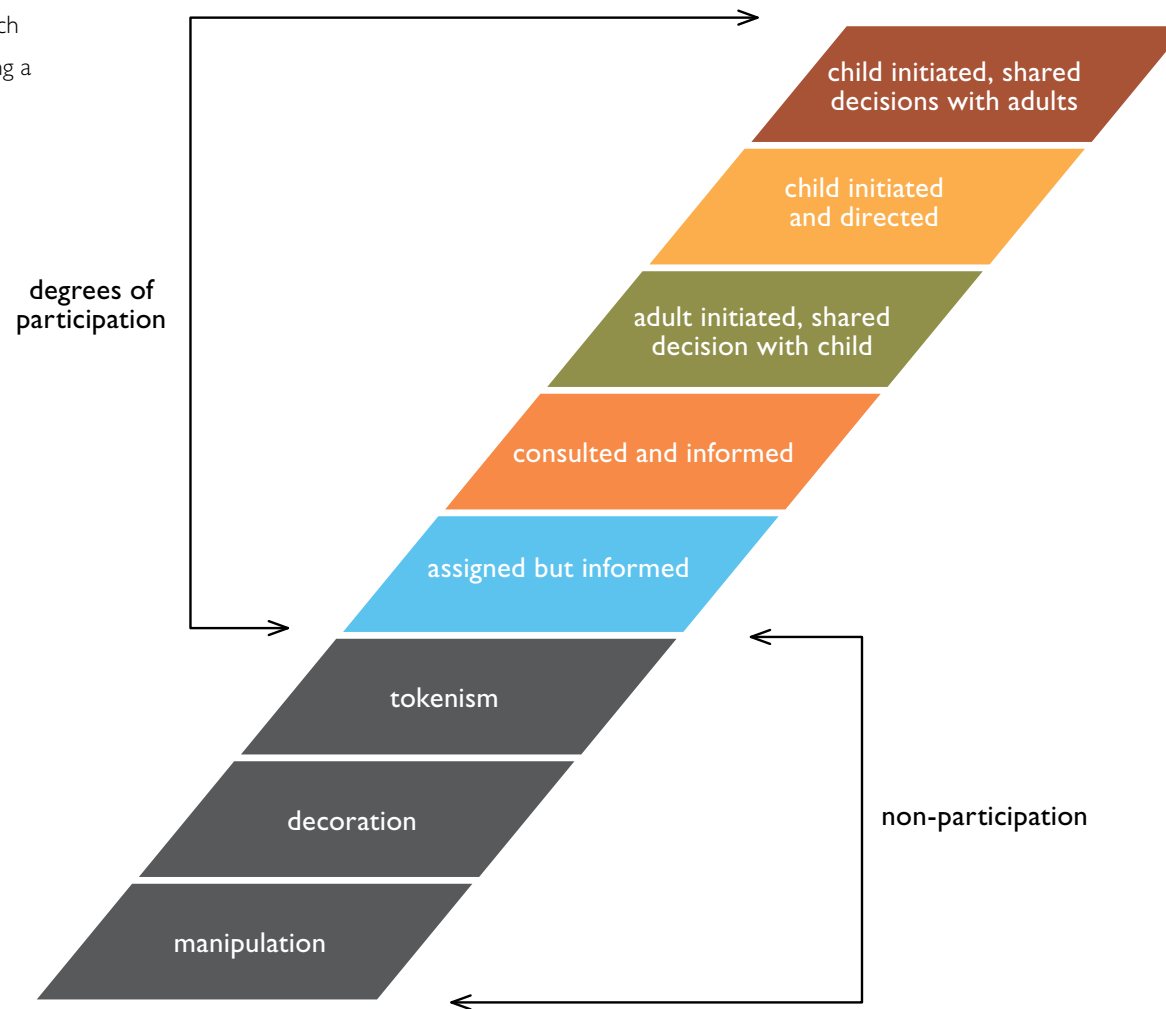


Involving and including children in ES programme

Consultative processes	Participative initiatives	Promoting self-advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult-initiated • Adult-led and managed • Children have no control over the outcomes • Children may be provided with opportunities for organising together, acquiring skills and confidence and contributing towards influencing outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiated by adults • Involve collaboration with children • Involve the creation of structures through which children can challenge or influence outcomes • Usually involve children taking self-directed action once the project is underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issues of concern are identified by children themselves • The role of adults is to facilitate, not lead • Children control the process¹²

12: Lansdown, G. 2001. *Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision Making*. Unicef, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy; p16-29.

Hart (1997) describes a "Ladder of Participation" which summarises the levels or options for participation along a continuum of participation.¹³



"Ladder of Participation" Hart (1997)

13: Hart, R. (1997) *Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*. London: Earthscan

Building child participation in economic strengthening programmes

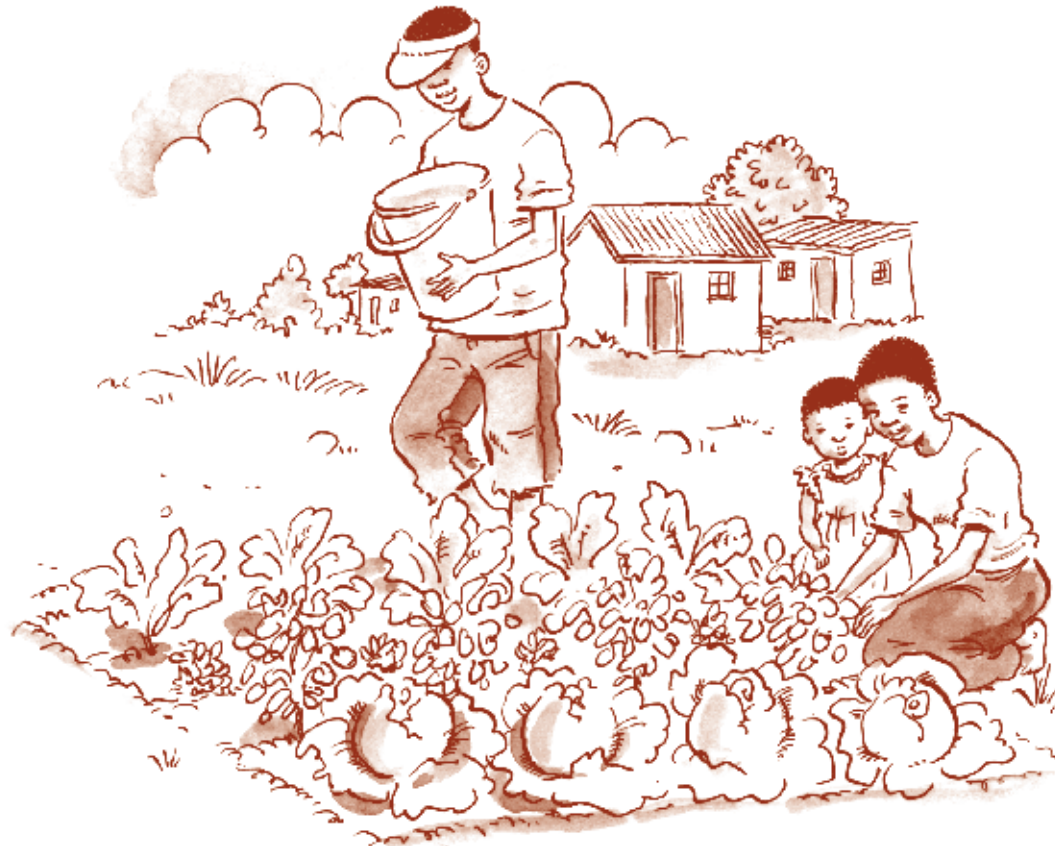
Understanding how participation works or the levels of child participation is the first step towards thinking about why and how to include and involve children and youth in your ES programme. As stated earlier, it is important to keep in mind that involving children can be difficult and requires a commitment to making child participation work. Organisations have to think carefully about their capacity, strengths and constraints, and assess how they can best begin the process of child participation. The first question your organisation or programme needs to ask is **whether** you want to involve children.

When working with children, it is better to start small and be effective, than to attempt large-scale participation that is likely to fail.

The following considerations are important for your programme to think about before embarking on any child participation initiatives:

- Be prepared to listen to children's priorities
- Be clear about what you are trying to achieve
- Be clear about the boundaries of the proposed activity
- Do the necessary research
- Be willing to consult with children on methods of involving them

- Remember that children are not a homogenous group
- Be prepared to make the necessary time available
- Make available the necessary resources
- Remember the importance of working with adults as well as children
- Be prepared to be challenged
- Don't underestimate children
- Develop indicators or goals for effective participation in collaboration with children
- Be prepared to make mistakes and get it wrong!¹⁴



14: Lansdown, G. 2001. *Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision Making*. Unicef, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy, p10-16.

The table below is similar to the table on page 10 of these guidelines, but provides more focused ideas about possible child participation activities in different types of ES activity.

Ways of involving children in ES activities

ES Activity	Ways of involving children	Activities for children in the ES programme
Cash transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative • Consultative • Self advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulting children and youth about the way in which the money is spent • Being transparent about the household budget and where the money goes to • Allocate a small portion of the money to older children to pursue some livelihood project of their own
Vocational training for older children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative • Participative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soliciting children and youth's opinions on vocational skills they think are needed in the community • Involve children and youth in the training and mentoring of children entering the programme
Group-based savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative • Consultative/participative • Participative/self-advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin group savings schemes with older children to encourage a culture of saving • Encourage children and youth to offer ideas of how and where money saved can be used to improve their educational outcomes • Start a dream club where children and youth put a small amount of money towards the first step of their dreams
Income generating activities (IGAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage children and youth to start their own IGAs and give them the responsibility of running and managing their own small business (see case study on page 20)

Ethical considerations when working with children

In developing programme plans and policies for your organisation, the following ethical considerations are highlighted with particular reference to involving and including children and PSS:

- Try to prevent exposing children to suffering, rather than only focusing on alleviating the suffering of those already exposed.
- Respect privacy and avoiding stigmatising children affected by particular situations.
- Be sure that you have the consent of caregivers and relevant authorities before implementing any programmes affecting children and youth. This is particularly important in ES programmes to ensure that children and youth are not exploited in any way.
- Refer children for specialised support where needed. Children involved in ES activities are likely dealing with a range of social and economic challenges which places them at increased health and psychological risk. These children need to be monitored carefully and referred for specialised support when necessary and if needed.
- Have reflection processes to ensure that resources used by the organisation are directed to maximise the benefits for children.



CASE STUDY

Case study

Children participating in design, implementation and decision making

The Humuliza Project in Tanzania¹⁵ was set up to develop a practical instrument to enable teachers and caregivers to support orphans psychologically and to develop the children's own capacity to cope with the loss of their caretakers. Once teachers and trainers had completed their training, the question of what could be done to provide ongoing support for the children was asked.

Seventeen children who had lost their parents and were participating in the project were brought together in a workshop to help answer this question. At the workshop the children spent time identifying their existing strengths, i.e. what they had learnt and could do well because they were orphaned children. They also talked about where support from others would be helpful. They identified areas in which they could support each other, which ranged from practical support such as helping each other with agricultural activities to emotional support such as consoling each other. The children also discussed the possible functions of an orphan's organisation.

Subsequent to this, VSI or the "Vijana Simama Imara – VSI" (Youth standing upright firmly), an organisation for orphans,



was formed. At the end of the workshop, five groups, each with an action plan, had been formed in order to start the VSI orphan organisation. VSI grew from 39 members in 2000 to 1 300 members by 2004. VSI is run by the young people themselves through elected committees. Humuliza provides training and monitoring.

Initially, VSI catered for children aged between 13 to 18. This expanded to include the younger brothers and sisters and led to the creation of the Rafiki Mdogo (Little Friends) in 2002. These younger children meet once a week for games and activities at a meeting run by older VSI members.

The structure of the VSI is influenced by the concept of "protagonism" – an idea most widely applied in children's

15: Clacherty, G. and Prof. Donald, D. 2005. *Impact Evaluation of the VSI (Vijana Simama Imara) organisation and the Rafiki Mdogo group of the HUMULIZA orphan project*. Nshamba, Tanzania

projects in Latin America and India. Essentially, protagonism means that the children become proactive social actors who have a right to participate in whatever matters to them. Protagonism moves beyond the typical forms of participation that we see in many children's programmes. Within the frame of protagonism, participation can be placed at the highest point of Hart's "Ladder of Participation." The activities are child-initiated and child-directed; children make the decisions supported by adults.

VSI also focuses on a number of ES activities, which include:

- Slip payment: a child is assigned to a pensioner to help with tasks, the pensioner records and signs off on this and the child then receives a stipend from Humuliza.
- VSI bank: set up by VSI to support orphans to save and expanded to providing small interest-free loans.
- Income generating activities (IGAs): which include raising chickens for their eggs, selling fish or running a small kiosk.
- Auctions: VSI members auction foodstuffs once a month. Money raised is used to set up an OVC fund available for emergencies.

PSS outcomes for the VSI members were found to include:

- Increased social networks
- Increased confidence
- Income generation

- Decreased emotional stress
- Increased survival knowledge (e.g. around HIV and AIDS)
- More certainty of, and ability to plan for, the future
- Better coping skills and increased resilience.

Prior to this project, VSI members described experiencing three main, interrelated areas of stress: grief and depression; social isolation; and worry about coping and their future.

Four themes emerged in their descriptions of how joining the VSI had helped them to overcome these stresses:

"The group activities (meetings, training sessions, playing and singing together, etc.) provided not only a sense of acceptance but also confidence, a common identity and a sense of purpose which relieved much of the grief and stress.

The wide range of friendships and the strong social co-operation they found in the organisation provided a sense of self-respect and social acceptance, and could also be seen as feeding into identity and purpose.

Similarly, the practical and income-generating skills they learned not only reduced worries about coping and the future but could also be seen as feeding into a sense of competence, confidence and purpose.

Finally, the resources that became available, through the organisation and its income earning activities, (meeting school costs, buying new clothes, repairing a house, etc.) provided a sense of security and dignity which again could also be seen as feeding into competence, confidence and social acceptance."¹⁶



16: Clacherty, G. and Prof. Donald, D. 2005. *Impact Evaluation of the VSI (Vijana Simama Imara) organisation and the Rafiki Mdogo group of the HUMULIZA orphan project*. Nshamba, Tanzania. P98



ACTIVITY: Ways of involving children in ES programmes

Within your ES programmes, set some time aside and reflect on the questions below before you begin on any child participation activity.

The questions are:

- Which children should be involved in child participation activities? Is it all children or vulnerable children only?
- Should only older children (ages 10 to 19) be involved, or all children?
- How will I make sure that the child participation activities do not further stigmatise vulnerable children?
- How deeply do I believe children should be involved in ES activities? For example, do children have a role to play in decision making?
- Who will lead the process of starting child participation activity in my ES programme?
- What are the benefits of child participation, as set against the risks?

Step 3: Practical Action to Mainstream Psychosocial Support in your Economic Strengthening Programme or Project Cycle



THOUGHTS ABOUT MAINSTREAMING

Take a learning approach: It involves planning, trying out new ideas, learning from experience. There is no 'correct' way, no leap from 'non-mainstreamed' to 'mainstreamed'.¹⁷

What is psychosocial support mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming may sound like an elaborate process that touches on all aspects of how a project operates. Many people talk about mainstreaming as having a special "lens" such as a PSS lens or a gender lens through which to examine the impact and method of your work. From this, you then consider how to incorporate or grow aspects of PSS or gender into your programme.

REPSI describe PSS mainstreaming as being about looking at all aspects of programming, policy development and organisational development and always keeping in mind children's and caregivers' psychosocial wellbeing. It involves incorporating PSS elements into:

- Vision and mission
- Policies and procedures
- Programme design and activities
- Planning and budgeting
- Capacity building and human resource development
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Networking with government sectors and institutions.

It is important to make mainstreaming a manageable process. Otherwise mainstreaming can feel overwhelming. This is because once one aspect of a programme changes, then this has implications for others. For example, if policies change, then procedures may need revision, staff may need different training, additional resources may need to be found, etc. Mainstreaming does have a significant impact on a programme during the period of implementation.

17: Care Southern and West Africa HIV and AIDS Technical Brief 2 A Learning Approach to Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Livelihoods, Oct 2003

Start with talking and listening

We start this section with some key learning from Care Southern and West Africa experiences of mainstreaming HIV and AIDS into livelihoods work. Take a moment to reflect on this.

THOUGHTS ABOUT MAINSTREAMING

“work with” and not “work for”

Start with participatory development: talk with and learn from people living with HIV, those affected, those at high risk, not only with healthy adults – in this way you learn how to “work with.”¹⁸

Like all processes in development, talking and listening is always the best place to start. This is so for mainstreaming. Make time in your programme to meet with children and caregivers supported economically by your programme. Find out what is working for them in the project and what can be built on further. Find out more about how your programme supports the emotional and social world of your beneficiaries and how this work can be strengthened. You may also find out some instances when perhaps your economic strengthening work makes the social and emotional environments of your beneficiaries more difficult. You will need to be open to hearing this. For example, a child with a

learning difficulty might find a vocational training programme very challenging, or savings groups may have some implications for how participating individuals are seen by the broader community. Use these discussions to inform your ideas for mainstreaming PSS.

You may also decide to talk to fieldworkers and project staff working on your programme. They will have insights into the value of strengthening PSS in your programme. They may also tell you about how their work in economic strengthening impacts on their emotional and social worlds. They may have ideas about how best to meet their own PSS needs. This can sometimes be an important first step because it is easier to support others when your own emotional and social needs are acknowledged and met.

The activity on page 30 provides you with ideas about how to structure a discussion around mainstreaming in your organisation.

What type of psychosocial support activities can we get involved with?

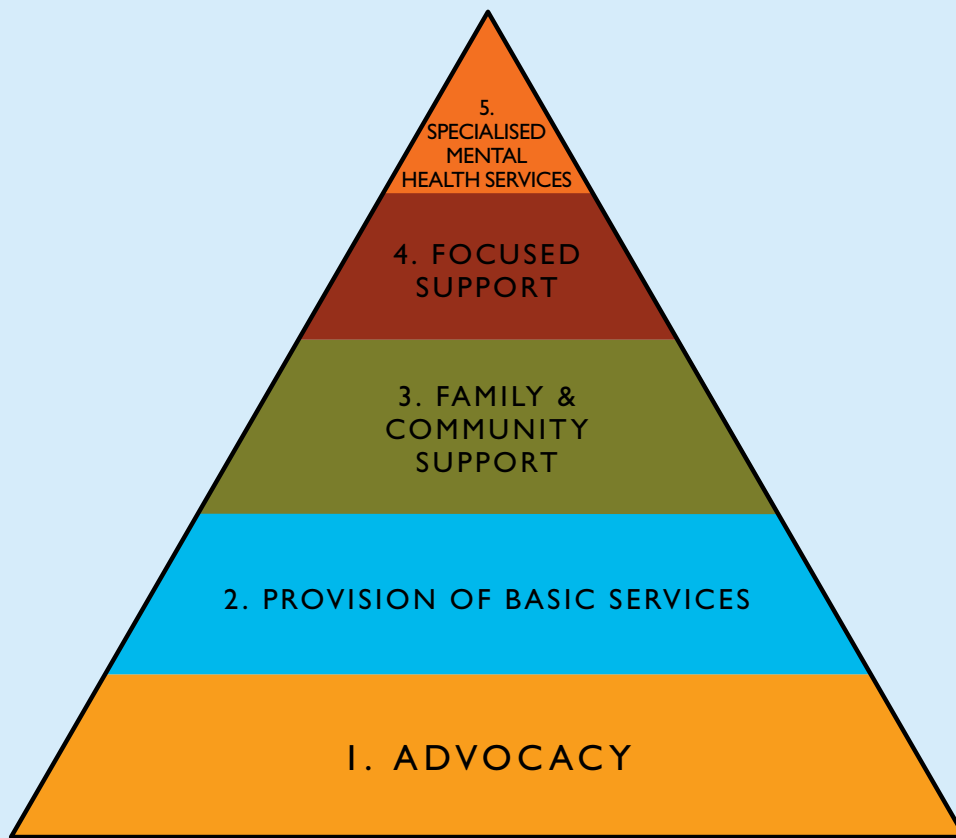
There are many different forms of psychosocial support. REPSSI uses a pyramid model (see page 25) to show the different forms of PSS. In fact, many organisations think that psychosocial support is only about offering support to children

who are showing clear signs of distress and are not coping. However, the more organisations are prepared to focus on the lower levels of the pyramid, the more impact one has collectively on more children.

A recent survey by REPSSI showed that many organisations offering PSS are focusing their work on levels 3 to 5 of the pyramid. You may decide in your ES programme that there are resources and services with which you can network for specialist PSS support. Having organisations with which you network for referrals and for other types of support is an important component of mainstreaming.

REPSSI is encouraging more organisations like yours, to focus on what can be done at pyramid levels 1 and 2 to mainstream PSS. That is, to mainstream PSS into basic services and to impact on policies affecting children and caregivers. The mainstreaming tools discussed in the next section provide ideas and help your programme think about how to mainstream PSS into the economic strengthening services offered by your programme. Step 4 of these guidelines specifically discusses how to get involved with advocacy.

18: Care Southern and West Africa HIV and AIDS Technical Brief 2 *A Learning Approach to Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Livelihoods*, Oct 2003



Multi-layered, integrated psychosocial support

There are many different forms of psychosocial support. These may be offered at different levels to support children, families and communities. The following model may be used to consider the various levels at which PSS may be structured.

Levels of Psychosocial Support (PSS)

5. Specialised Mental Health Services:

Psychiatric, clinical psychological, specialised traditional healer services for the few children with more severe responses

4. Focused Support:

Additional non-specialised support for children who are not coping and who are showing signs of distress

3. Family and Community Support:

Everyday care and support provided by caregivers, friends and community members

2. Provision of Basic Services:

Shelter, food, health and education, into which PSS needs to be mainstreamed, to reach many children and support ways of coping

1. Advocacy:

Influencing policy and changes to the social conditions that affect the wellbeing of millions of children

The more one focuses on the lower levels of this pyramid, the more impact one has on more children.

Tools that economic strengthening programmes can use to support mainstreaming psychosocial support

In step 6 on page 42 you will find tools that support an economic strengthening programme to develop an approach to mainstreaming PSS. There are four tools that make up the assessment process. These tools will help you to assess how far your organisation has gone with mainstreaming PSS. The assessment tools have been adapted for economic strengthening programmes from a generic assessment exercise developed by REPSSI. The tools can be completed easily (in less than 10 minutes) and lend themselves to being used in small group discussion.

Each of the tools covers a slightly different area of mainstreaming activity. This means the tools can be used in a series of different group discussions to work through the issues related to mainstreaming. The tools can also be used to assess the progress you are making over time. Completing the tools again 6 or 12 months after the start of your commitment to mainstream PSS can help you do this. To find out about each tool read the table on this page.

Psychosocial support: Are we working pro-actively or reactively?

Your responses to the assessment tools will hopefully give you a basic indication of the steps that you have begun to take or still need to take in mainstreaming PSS into your programmes for children and caregivers.

Once you have worked through the assessment tools, you will probably find that your PSS focus is still developing. This is to be expected. In a recent survey by REPSSI it was found that most partners needed more support to develop their PSS focus. The assessment may also show you that in general your PSS work is reactive rather than proactive. This means that

your programme mostly waits for a problem to arise before responding. For example, a child attending a vocational skills programme is finding it hard to concentrate and is disruptive in class. This becomes such a challenge that eventually the programme decides to ask for support from a local counsellor or social worker. Alternatively, the project could routinely decide to introduce a PSS learning approach to assist children entering the vocational programme to identify personal strengths, to provide the opportunity to process difficulties and make the appropriate referrals where necessary.

Name of Tool	Purpose of the Tool
Tool 1: How is our PSS focus developing? (Page 44)	This tool assists ES programmes to think at the level of strategy, programmes, methods and skills how well they are doing at mainstreaming PSS.
Tool 2: How familiar is our ES programme with PSS principles? (Page 45)	The principles of PSS are discussed in Section 1 of the guidelines. This tool assists ES programmes to consider how familiar they are with these.
Tool 3: The PSS Networking and Advocacy Tool (Page 47)	Networking and advocacy are important activities to reach many children and caregivers. This is a short tool focused on these areas.
Tool 4: The PSS Skills and Knowledge Tool (Page 48)	PSS mainstreaming partly depends on the skills and knowledge of programme staff. This short tool focuses on this area.

Psychosocial support mainstreaming and the project cycle

It can be useful to approach mainstreaming by thinking about the project cycle. This is because, as discussed in the introduction to this section, mainstreaming impacts on all levels of programme functioning. For mainstreaming to be sustained within a programme it needs to become part of the usual cycle of programme development. PSS mainstreaming should be considered during programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and redesign phases.

PSS mainstreaming however should not take attention away from the core business of strengthening livelihoods. It should not be an “add on” activity. Rather PSS mainstreaming must also contribute to your ability to effectively deliver economic strengthening. See the following comment from Care’s experience of HIV and AIDS mainstreaming.

THOUGHTS ABOUT MAINSTREAMING

Modifying core business vs. adding on: New work like passing HIV awareness messages should not take attention away from the basic question: “How can we do our core livelihoods work to better address the causes and consequences of HIV and AIDS?”¹⁹

Psychosocial support mainstreaming and monitoring and evaluation

Once you commit to PSS mainstreaming you may need to consider how you describe the purpose and approach of your programme. You will need to ask yourself what changes you want to see in the characteristics of your beneficiaries and how the impact of your programme will be measured. In particular, it is especially valuable for economic strengthening programmes to think about adopting both ES and PSS indicators because some of the existing evidence is that economic strengthening activities in themselves offer considerable psychosocial support.

It is important to develop a monitoring and evaluating (M&E) plan with PSS indicators during the planning stages of any programme. This plan should include procedures for collecting

data that can demonstrate how the different beneficiary groups have benefited. Given the close relationship between care and support and gender, it will be important that data that is collected about beneficiaries can be broken down or disaggregated by sex and age. Although ES programmes often tend to focus on collecting output indicators²⁰ that measure the immediate results it is important that outcome and impact be considered. Outcomes measure the change in the desired direction and whether this change is related to the success of a specific programme. The table on the next page gives examples of ES and PSS output and outcome indicators. Outcome indicators track the long-term effects and are measures of the improved socio-economic status and wellbeing of vulnerable children and their families and caregivers.

In summary, when mainstreaming PSS for monitoring and evaluation you will need to:

- Revise your monitoring and evaluation plan
- Review the tools you are using to collect data
- Have PSS indicators
- Make sure that data is collected
- Think about how the beneficiaries are participating in M&E activities and how information will be fed back to beneficiaries (this is particularly important in relation to the programme principles for PSS as discussed in Step 1).

19: Care Southern and West Africa HIV and AIDS Technical Brief 2 *A Learning Approach to Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Livelihoods* Oct 2003

20: USAID, Save the Children, AED *Economic Strengthening for Vulnerable Children Principles of Program Design and Technical Recommendations for Effective Field Interventions*, Feb 2008

ES indicators		PSS indicators	
Output	Outcome	Output	Outcome
No. of out-of-school youth completing vocational training programme over the period of a year	Percentage of youth who one year after completion of a vocational training programme are earning income from skill/s learnt	No. of ES staff attending training including a PSS component	Percentage of ES practitioners in a given district who demonstrate use of PSS techniques
No. of savings groups established for caregivers over the period of a year	No. of caregivers active in saving groups for one year and who report being able to pay school fees	No. of out-of-school youth attending PSS sessions during vocational training courses	Percentage of trained youth who have returned to school within one year of course completion
No. of granny-headed households with children engaged in income generation over a year	No. of granny-headed households with children able to meet their basic needs from income generation proceeds	No. of granny-headed households with children engaged in income generation trained in PSS	Percentage of children in granny-headed households engaged in income generation accessing PSS
No. of people living with HIV & AIDS involved in livelihood projects over one year	No. of people living with HIV & AIDS involved in livelihood projects reporting able to meet basic needs of children	No. of people living with HIV & AIDS involved in livelihood projects trained in PSS	Percentage of children living with people living with HIV & AIDS involved in livelihood projects accessing PSS
No. of child-headed households receiving grants/involved in livelihood projects over one year	No. of child-headed households receiving grants/involved in livelihood projects reporting able to access basic services	No. of child-headed households receiving grants/involved in livelihood projects trained in PSS	No. of child-headed households receiving grants/involved in livelihood projects accessing PSS
No. of internally displaced people receiving grants over one year	No. of internally displaced people receiving grants reporting able to meet their basic needs	No. of internally displaced people receiving grants trained in PSS	Percentage of internally displaced people receiving grants reporting accessing PSS



CASE STUDY

Case study

In 2005²¹ HUMULIZA commissioned an external evaluation of the VSI programme. The evaluation was undertaken by Glynis Clacherty and David Donald.

One of the indicators of positive impact success used in the evaluation was that emotional stress was decreased for children. "Income generation" was used to measure reduced stress as the assumption was made that a shaky economic situation is generally an important stressor for orphan children.

In the focus groups, young people involved in the VSI project were asked what they typically did to earn money, how much they earned through these activities in the last month and what they spent it on. This information was compared with the children in the control groups. (The evaluation with the tables can be downloaded from <http://www.humuliza.org/evaluation.html>). The results showed that the income in the three Project groups was more than three times higher than in the three control groups (212 600TZS vs. 62 455TZS (TZS = Tanzanian Shillings)). The evaluators then analysed how the money was spent in terms of capital items such as a goat or a chicken that would create more income, savings, and household and personal expenses. The results of this analysis are presented in table below.

Expenditure categories for Control vs Project focus groups

Groups	Capital	Household/ personal	Savings	Total
Control groups				
Ihangiro 1	2,000 (8%)	20,350 (82%)	2,480 (10%)	24,830
Ihangiro 2	11,300 (60.4%)	7,400 (39.6%)	0 (0%)	18,700
Kibanga Bumiro	3,000 (15.8%)	9,625 (50.9%)	6,300 (33.3%)	18,925
	16,300 (26.1%)	37,375 (59.8%)	8,780 (14.1%)	62,455
Project groups				
Kishanda B	57,800 (48.84%)	50,550 (42.71%)	10,000 (8.45%)	118,350
Kabirizi	4,000 (16.4%)	11,550 (47.2%)	8,900 (36.4%)	24,450
Bugarama	15,900 (22.8%)	37,300 (53.4%)	16,600 (23.8%)	69,800
	77,700 (36.55%)	99,400 (46.75%)	35,500 (16.7%)	212,600

All monetary units in Tanzanian Shillings (TZS), US\$1=TZS 1,400

As the Project group was able to spend more money on capital and savings than the Control group, their overall prospects for maintaining and even growing household income were considerably improved.

When all the different indicators used in the evaluation were put together it was clear that orphan children who were part of the VSI project carried less emotional stress than those in the control groups. One major reason cited by children for the reduced stress was the fact that their worries about everyday basic needs had been reduced.

It was also clear that being able to earn money and contribute to the household income gave children and young people a sense of agency and confidence in themselves that they then applied to other areas of their lives. The evaluation shows that the cash transfers and loans and savings programme contributed significantly to psychosocial wellbeing.

21: Case Study lifted from REPSI Series "Tools to Enhance Psychosocial Wellbeing" No3 Children and Money Loans, Savings and Cash Transfer to Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Nshamba 2006



Activity: Getting started with mainstreaming

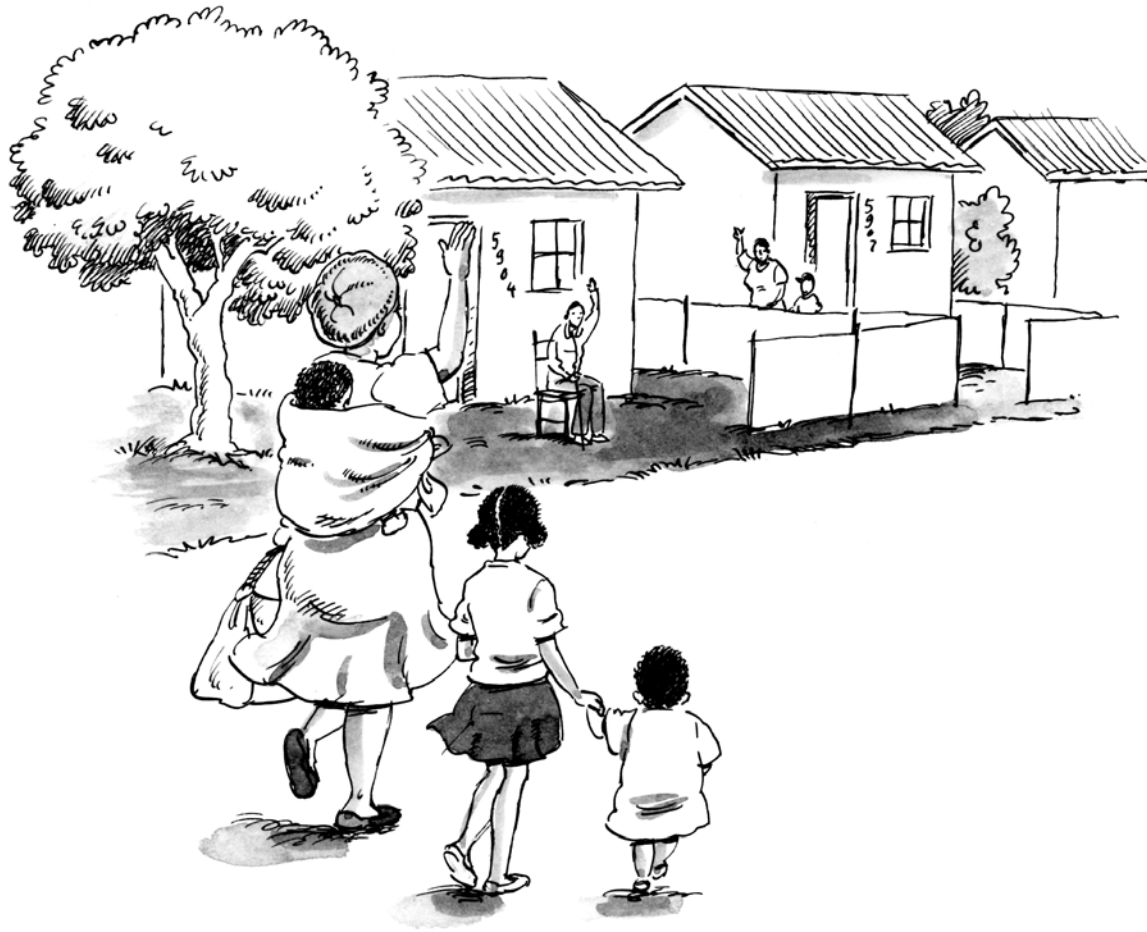
Before you start to mainstream, engage your organisation on **why** and **how** PSS could be included in your ES programme activities. You may repeat this discussion with different groups within your organisation such as the Board, management team and with field staff.

This activity encourages groups of staff working in ES programmes to brainstorm and discuss the reasons for mainstreaming PSS into their work. It also allows staff to identify where there is a best fit between their existing ES work and PSS activities.

Working in groups of between 4 to 5 people, brainstorm and discuss the following questions:

- Of what value would it be to our beneficiaries to offer PSS?
- What do we want to achieve by taking on PSS activities?
- Are we already offering PSS in the ES programme? If so what kind of support is being offered?
- If not, are there areas where we can introduce PSS activities?
- What are we already doing well in our ES programme that our PSS activities can build on?
- Do we need additional skills or resources to do this?
- How will we “take this on” within our existing work?

Step 4: Networking and Advocacy for Psychosocial Support in Economic Strengthening Programmes



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“Many parents and guardians initially resist some of the messages on psychosocial needs of children, particularly on children’s rights. People say that such efforts are alien to African culture. However with ongoing advocacy at community level, people have become more receptive and things have changed gradually.”²²

.....

Like many community leadership initiatives that need leadership, success often hinges on one or two key people. A key motivator in driving psychosocial support interventions is the personal experience of the leaders, perhaps as an orphan or a widow, and sometimes under great stress.”

What do we mean by networking and advocacy?

Networks form between individuals and organisations sharing similar values and goals and who identify common purpose in coming together. Sometimes networks draw organisations and individuals from the same geographical area. Networks often facilitate people working together to grow a shared interest.

Advocacy is a set of targeted actions directed at decision makers in support of an important issue. There are some important advocacy issues in both ES and PSS programmes. The case study on page 35 provides a few examples. REPSSI is currently developing an Advocacy handbook to support organisations wishing to increase this focus. The activity on page 36 is designed to take your programme through the process of planning an advocacy activity to mainstream PSS into ES activities.

Networking and advocacy are important components of mainstreaming PSS in economic strengthening programmes. There are three main reasons why networking and advocacy are significant skills for PSS mainstreaming.

1. You may encounter resistance to PSS. The quote at the start of this section is a good example of some of the resistance you may encounter when starting to mainstream PSS. Sometimes this resistance may also come from other departments or sections within your organisation or the Board of your organisation.
2. It is very important to network with other organisations offering PSS for referral and support. Being in a network with other organisations will help your organisation to develop confidence and skills in this area.
3. Advocacy work that target policies and government services is an important strategy that helps us to reach large numbers of children with PSS.

Dealing with resistance

There are two possible sources of resistance you may encounter when you begin to mainstream PSS. You may encounter some resistance in the community where you are working. For example, in some communities where death and dying are not easily spoken of, especially with children, PSS activities such as memory books and boxes would need to gain acceptance. Secondly, you may encounter resistance to mainstreaming PSS amongst colleagues in your organisation and from funders who are not convinced of the connection between economic strengthening and psychosocial support.

There is no one way to tackle resistance. However, it is always important to listen to what is being said so that you are able to reflect on what people's concerns are. Here are some ideas about why it may be difficult for people to focus on PSS.

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO FOCUS ON PSS?

- **Many of us come from families where emotional and social things are not usually spoken about. There may be an attitude of “Let’s rather move on than dwell on the past,” or “We don’t air our dirty linen”**
- **Many of our traditional cultural practices do not make space for psychosocial healing - the focus is often to seal off feelings or to give limited time for recovery**
- **Many people believe that children do not see and remember some things that have happened. They feel**

that it might be better for the child to pretend that it did not happen.

- **Many people don’t know how to talk to children about emotional and social aspects of life**
- **Some people are worried that If one starts talking about difficult things, one may become too upset**

These are real concerns which may be discussed collectively. It is better not to push people to do something they don't feel comfortable with, and rather to find ways of working together that are locally appropriate. People usually find their own solutions if given the space to discuss things and make constructive decisions.

Finding psychosocial support champions

In general it is also easier to start working where you have some support. Find other individuals who support your ideas. They could be from your programme or from the local community. These individuals can then be part of an informal network of supportive individuals who can help take the ideas about PSS forward. For example, you may decide to take members of your informal support network to meetings where there is opportunity to talk through ideas about PSS. You can also share the guidelines with others. Take time to work through the activity at the end of this step. It takes you through a process to design an advocacy strategy to talk to decision makers about PSS in your work environment.

At a community level, it is also important to start working with individuals who have expressed an interest in PSS. These individuals can support you in encouraging others to get involved. For example, some people only become open to PSS activities when they hear about the benefits from neighbours or others who have completed a PSS process.

“Word has gone around the compound about the memory books and many more people are approaching the caregivers to introduce the concept into many households that are experiencing problems with pending death, how to relate to orphans, preparing children for the death of a parent, etc.”²³

Being a member of a supportive network of organisations

Networks can be quite large and more formal or they can be informal. We have already discussed the value of a local informal network. As the scope of your PSS work increases, it is valuable to network with other projects and organisations working in the field of PSS. This type of networking encourages learning between organisations. It can also provide support and training for fieldworkers working in the area of PSS for the first time. In addition, it can help establish an effective referral network for children or caregivers who are in need of more specialist support.

Practitioners working in economic strengthening programmes when asked at the consultative workshop used to formulate the guidelines how PSS could play a bigger role in their programmes suggested that there is value in coming together as a network of ES organisations to explore the “soft issues”, such as how to respond when a child is grieving.



Being strategic: Reaching a large number of children

An area of PSS mainstreaming that requires both advocacy and networking skills is learning to work strategically. This is an important level of working because work at this level can help us reach much larger numbers of children and their caregivers. The pyramid on page 25 shows us the value of approaching PSS work so as to reach large numbers of children rather than approaching PSS as a specialised service offered to a small number of children who are severely affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict.

REPSSI have identified some important “strategic leverage principles” for mainstreaming PSS. Strategic leverage principles deal with ways to maximise the impact of PSS through advocacy and networking. These principles have been adapted for economic strengthening programmes to illustrate how working strategically within an ES environment allows more children and caregivers to be reached with PSS.

23: Case Studies of Success in SCOPE-OVC Project: A guide to Assist OVC Programming, July 2004 FHI and USAID p53

Psychosocial support strategic leverage principles and economic strengthening programmes

PSS principles	ES programmes
Try to design programmes and policies so that they reach the majority of children, rather than investing too many resources in a few children	Many ES projects are small-scale initiatives. It is important to consider when programmes are scaling up the value of mainstreaming PSS. Changes in government policies, like child support grants, may assist many children for many years to come.
Focus on changing public/governmental services that affect many people	Working with schools is an important mechanism to influence the approach to working with large numbers of children.
Identify and use existing policies and programmes to promote children's wellbeing	There are many programmes trying to reach children especially in areas where poverty and the HIV and AIDS epidemic are having an impact. Programmes such as "caring schools", home-based care initiatives and youth projects work directly with children and caregivers. The approach, policy and tools of these programmes can be used or promoted in your ES programme. This helps build cooperation between projects and avoids reinventing the wheel.
Critically analyse existing policies, plans and instruments to see if a stronger focus on PSS is necessary	Revisit the plans of your ES programme. You may need to introduce new PSS indicators and result areas. You may also need to revise your monitoring tools.
International conventions, regional commitments, and national policies on children should be used as frames of reference for PSS mainstreaming	There are many international conventions and commitments on children. See appendix one for advice about these.
Promote collaboration between different organisations and departments to ensure that children's different needs are met	This can happen between organisations and between different sections within one large organisation. Set up a committee or forum to understand how practitioners in ES and PSS can work together.
Identify and form strategic partnerships to make specific changes	ES projects may be in a position to work with other organisations and/or government services to negotiate ways to support vulnerable children. For example, many vulnerable children struggle to meet payments for school fees, the purchase of uniforms and stationery. Local business can be approached to support the development of markets for produce developed to support the economic strengthening of vulnerable households.
Mobilise the support of influential people	A local school principal, spiritual or faith-based leader may be an important ally in understanding the relationship and value of linking economic strengthening and PSS.



CASE STUDY

Case study: Advocacy issues that make the link between psychosocial support and economic strengthening

Advocacy Issue: Universalising education

Legislation and policy that mandates that poor families no longer have to pay school fees is a powerful economic strengthening and psychosocial support intervention. This ensures that children realise their right to education despite their economic disadvantage. It also assists poor families to meet other basic needs by making available resources that would otherwise have been used for school fees. Universalising education through the elimination of schools fees, as well as ensuring protection, relevant learning opportunities and essential care and support within the school setting is a priority identified by UNICEF, UNAIDS and the World Health Organisation. Schooling is an important component of psychosocial support for many children. An important measure of development is whether orphans are as likely to be in school as other children.



Advocacy issue: Scaling up economic strengthening programmes for vulnerable households

Vulnerable children living in homes where there is some economic support show improved psychosocial wellbeing. In South Africa²⁴ it was demonstrated that orphaned children in child-headed households are performing as well as orphaned children living with caretakers but only if they are economically supported and if the stigma that they are exposed to is managed and reduced. The KwaWazee²⁵ impact assessment in Tanzania noted a significant difference in psychosocial wellbeing between grandchildren whose grandmothers receive a monthly pension, and grandchildren from the control group whose grandmothers are not yet in the programme. Similar conclusions on the psychosocial impact of economic deprivation are suggested in three studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi²⁶. In these studies they found a strong sense of hopelessness and fatalism amongst the adolescents with a lower economic status, less so among the affluent. The rise in food prices and general living costs will certainly increase the pressure on children and households affected by HIV and AIDS.

24: Lucie Cluver *Caregiving arrangements and psychological distress amongst children orphaned by AIDS in South Africa*, 2007

25: Stefan Hofmann *et.al: Salt, soap and shoes for school-Evaluation Summary* 2008

26: Safaids News 1998 Vol 6/4



Activity: An advocacy activity to mainstream PSS into your ES programme

Use the template below to plan an advocacy activity to mainstream PSS into your ES programme. The purpose of this activity is to encourage decision makers within your programme or funding environment to understand and support the mainstreaming of PSS into ES programmes.

Complete the following for your ES programme :

- What do we want to achieve from this activity?
- Who is the target audience?
- Who are the influential people?
- Who are our allies?
- Who might not want to support this?
- What is the key message we want to put across?
- What information or research do we need to back up our key message?
- How will we deliver this message?
- What action do we want the audience to take?
- Have we briefed our allies? Yes / No

Step 5: Human, Financial and Material Resources for Mainstreaming Psychosocial Support

Deciding to mainstream PSS does have resource implications. All programmes require resource inputs to achieve revised project goals and results. The significant resource requirements for mainstreaming are human, financial and material.

Human resource development for psychosocial support

PSS mainstreaming encourages you to think how you can improve what you are already doing to better support the holistic needs of children and caregivers where you are already working. This does not mean that your team needs to become specialists in PSS. It does however mean you may want to think about a few core skills and knowledge you would like your team to have about PSS. Should you decide that you would like to introduce more complex PSS activities, then it will be necessary to identify individuals with the appropriate qualities to be trained further in PSS. Alternatively, you may want to approach other organisations or professionals working in your area who are able to lead and support PSS work for your programme.



Eventually as your commitment to PSS becomes more embedded within your organisation and programme, you may want to consider whether your staff is able to train others.

The Assessment Tool 4 on page 47 of the guideline provides a useful start to thinking about human resource development within your organisation.

Training and workshops

To develop the PSS knowledge and skills in your organisation you may want to think about training or workshop opportunities for your team. You may decide that you want to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of a few team members to lead the PSS mainstreaming initiative. Alternatively, you may want to provide training opportunities for your whole team. In the appendices you can find information about training programmes and manuals that could assist you with this.

Training can be offered in workshops or through more formal training programmes. In some areas you may be able to identify an organisation to provide mentoring for your team in this area. Such an organisation may help with supervision and provide on-the-job learning opportunities for staff keen to get involved with PSS.

Developing psychosocial support champions

In order to start the process of mainstreaming within your programme it may be helpful to identify a few key staff members who can be developed to lead or champion this role within your team. These individuals should have a natural passion and inclination for PSS work. It is likely that they have a reputation for working well with children and that they are already known for good communication skills. It is also essential that the individuals are able to respect confidentiality and other aspects of working ethically with children and caregivers. Take a look at the points below for ideas about the qualities needed by individuals for PSS work. Finally, individuals selected for PSS mainstreaming must also be committed to passing on their skills and knowledge to others.

Qualities needed by PSS champions²⁷

- Passionate about helping children and caregivers.
- Good listening and communication skills.
- A leader who can motivate others to get involved.
- Strong and courageous.
- Understands how to work ethically.
- Good at starting a task and seeing it through to the end.
- Able to accept feedback from others.

- Good at making decisions, problem solving, prioritising and planning.
- A person who works from the heart.
- Consistent in what they say and do.
- A person who perseveres to get things done.

Building internal staff awareness

You may decide that you would like to start or strengthen a process of PSS mainstreaming by working with all the staff in your ES team. Experience of HIV and AIDS mainstreaming in Care demonstrated that internal staff awareness was the basis to addressing HIV and AIDS mainstreaming in programmes²⁸. To do this, you can work through the guidelines with your team. The activities at the end of each section will help structure this process for you.

In the appendices you will find the outline of a three-hour workshop session called "Talk and Listen to Children." This module is adapted from a programme called "Circles of Support." The module was developed to support adults already working with children to develop their communication skills with young people. Working through this with your team can help build awareness about PSS.

27: List adapted from the Soul City Guide *Schools as Nodes of Care and Support*

28: Care Southern and West Africa HIV and AIDS Technical Brief 2 *A Learning Approach to Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in Livelihoods*, Oct 2003

Keeping gender in mind

As stated earlier in this guide, traditionally care and support are associated with women. As you embark on a process to develop human resources for PSS in your ES programme it is important to reflect on who is getting involved with this work. To mainstream PSS effectively it is necessary for everyone, both men and women, to internalise the value and importance of PSS for adults and children. Take care to ensure that it is not only women working in your ES programme who are involved with PSS mainstreaming. Men and women need to be involved in PSS mainstreaming at all levels - from outside technical support to programme managers, field workers and volunteers.

Financial and material resources

Before embarking on your mainstreaming exercise, it is important to consider the financial implications for your programme. Mainstreaming new ideas such as PSS requires the commitment of team members. This involves time in meetings, attendance at workshops and/or training and the development of new policies and procedures that reflect the commitment of your ES programme to PSS. All of this requires financial support. As your programme of mainstreaming develops, you may have new result areas in your programme plan that also need additional funding. For example, you may decide to run PSS workshops for children attending vocational training.

Psychosocial support materials

REPSSI and its partners have documented and collected some of the innovative materials being used in psychosocial support work with children.

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Introducing one or two of these tools into your ES programme is a powerful way to mainstream psychosocial support. All of these materials do require that facilitators using them have some skills and orientation to PSS. For example, staff should have a background in social work, counselling or in another caring profession. To introduce these materials into your programme you may need to find another organisation with appropriately trained staff who can do this for you.

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The table on the following page provides a simple introduction to six PSS tools that can be adapted and used within an ES environment. All of these tools are available at REPSSI and you can visit their website on www.repssi.org.za to find out more.

Table of Psychosocial Support Tools

Tool	Focus	Use	Adaptation for mainstreaming PSS into ES
Body Maps	Body Maps have been used to help children and adults describe their health and responses to medication	Used in group settings; a very powerful method to address issues arising in relation to being HIV+	Participants in ES project do body maps with a strong ES and psychosocial theme. Participants are encouraged to identify an economic goal in the future, but he or she can be asked what kind of ES, as well as PSS, they feel they need to reach that goal.
Hero Books	Hero Books lead groups of children through a series of autobiographical storytelling and art activities to find solutions to personal and social challenges they face	This tool may be used with children and youth living in situations of conflict or affected by loss such as death of parents and caregivers.	The tool could be adapted to describe solutions that individuals have found to economic survival under difficult circumstances.
Journey of Life	This is a community mobilisation tool to enhance community support for children. It uses drama, art, songs and discussion to develop new skills.	The tool may be used with caregivers and community based structures. It may be used with people with varying levels of education.	Participants can come up with action plans that include ES ones
Memory Books and Memory Boxes	Memory books and boxes may be used in helping children to gently prepare for the departure of a parent and processing feelings around living with new caregivers. It can include life stories of parents and ancestors, letters, photographs and drawings.	Memory books may be used with children facing loss or affected by the loss of someone close to them. They may also be used with children who are taking regular treatment. Memory approaches may be used with children and youth facing loss or affected by the loss of someone like a parent.	Can focus on family stories of livelihood and economic survival, in addition to psychosocial issues which are covered in the manual
Tree of Life	This is a storytelling tool for helping people who have experienced hardships in their lives to step into stories of hope, celebrating life, the relationships and gifts that they have.	This is a therapeutic tool that requires facilitation by an experienced counsellor. It may be used with children, youth and adults who have been through difficult experiences.	Can focus on stories of livelihood and economic survival, also making sure to address psychosocial issues already covered in the manual
Mobilising Children & Youth in their own Child- & Youth-led Organisations	Forming children's groups or organisations of children helping one another is a powerful PSS tool.	This may be started with youth and even younger children who are dealing with similar challenges in life, such as having lost their parents, living in situations of poverty etc.	The relevant chapters in the 'Mobilising Children' manual are chapter 5 on "economic strengthening" and chapter 8 on "agriculture."



Activity: Selecting a PSS champion

Brainstorm with your programme staff the following questions:

What are some of the qualities needed by individuals involved with offering PSS to children and caregivers?
Compare your list with the list found on page 38 of these guidelines. Are there other important qualities on this list that you can add to yours?

Ask each participant to select one or two qualities that he or she has and give an example of how they use these qualities in his/her work.

Step 6: How to Support Psychosocial Support Mainstreaming in Economic Strengthening Projects

In this section you will find four assessment formats to support PSS mainstreaming. All the formats are short and can be completed within 10 minutes. The assessment formats lend themselves to being completed as part of small group discussions on PSS mainstreaming within your organisation. The formats are:

Assessment 1: How is our psychosocial support focus developing?

Assessment 2: How familiar is our programme with psychosocial support principles?

Assessment 3: The Psychosocial Support Networking and Advocacy Format

Assessment 4: Psychosocial Support Skills and Knowledge Assessment

Assessment 1: How is our psychosocial support focus developing?

Organisational Focus Area	Limited PSS Focus	Emerging PSS Focus	Innovative & Extensive PSS Focus
1. Strategic Leverage	In our ES work with children and caregivers we only sometimes find PSS services for children and families who are struggling	In our ES work with children and caregivers we refer children and families for specialised PSS	In our ES work we have regular interaction and referral with other organisations focusing on PSS and on particular needs of children and families
	Our ES programme does not address policy changes affecting children.	Our programme raises policy changes with government and donors during meetings	Our project has joint advocacy work with other organisations to address policy changes affecting children
2. Programming	Our ES programme plans do not focus much on PSS and we have no guiding policies or commitment to PSS	Our ES programmes are familiar with PSS programming principles and refer to these in the design of some programme plans and policies	Our ES programmes are designed around PSS and ES principles and there are clear policies promoting PSS in all ES programmes
3. Project methods & tools	Not much use is made of PSS methods and tools in projects by our ES programme	Some PSS methods and tools are used, but these are a bit outdated or used now and then	Updated PSS methods and tools are applied systematically for various situations during the implementation of our ES programme
4. Skills & knowledge	Very few staff on our ES programme have an understanding of PSS	Some staff have a solid understanding of PSS and guide others in the organisation	All staff members have a basic understanding of PSS and there is specialised staff to support others in their PSS work as needed

Assessment 2: How familiar is our programme with PSS principles?

Here are some questions for assessing the extent to which you use PSS principles in your ES programmes.

Respond to the checklist by indicating Yes or No or Sometimes to the given questions.

Focus Area	Questions About PSS Programming	Yes/No/ Sometimes
Attitudes	Do your staff deal with all the children you work with in a respectful way that builds their dignity?	
	Do your staff deal with all the adult caregivers you work with in a respectful way that builds their dignity?	
Participation	Do you involve the caregivers you work with in planning and feedback about all the activities they and the children are involved in for your ES programme?	
	Do you involve the children you work with in planning and feedback about all the activities the children are involved in for your ES programme?	
	Do you facilitate child or youth participation activities, e.g. children's committees, saving groups, children's or youth organisations, etc. as part of your ES programme?	
	Do you facilitate caregiver groups or forums as part of your ES programme?	
	Do children get the opportunity to make decisions about ES activities or other aspects of their lives through your programme?	
	Do caregivers get the opportunity to make decisions about ES activities or other aspects of their lives through your programme?	

Focus Area	Questions About PSS Programming	Yes/No/ Sometimes
Social support	Does your approach to ES activities support connections being made between people or improve the social environment of children's lives? E.g. Families come together, caregivers come together, children come together.	
	Does your approach to ES draw on existing constructive cultural, social and spiritual ways of coping?	
	Does your ES work help build the capacity of community-based structures (e.g. CBOs, child care structures) to support children and caregivers in their community?	
	Does your ES work involve work with schools?	
	Do you encourage children and youth to support one another?	
	Do you encourage caregivers to support one another?	
Family support	Does your ES activity focus on strengthening the capacity of families to care for their children?	
	Is your approach to ES one that you try to keep families together, unless there is clear evidence of harm or danger within a family?	
	Does your ES activity actively build linkages between children and their families at all times, so as to strengthen safety nets for children?	
Emotional	Do you provide opportunities and a safe space for children to talk about their experiences, thoughts and feelings related to their involvement in your programme, their lives and circumstances?	
	When you work with children and caregivers do you focus on the strengths and resources of the child and family (their achievements and positive assets)?	
	As part of your programme are children given the opportunity to play?	

Assessment 3: PSS networking and advocacy format

Here are some questions for assessing the extent to which you are involved with PSS networking and advocacy.

Respond to the checklist by indicating Yes or No or Sometimes to the given questions.

Focus Area	Questions About PSS Strategic Leverage	Yes/No/ Sometimes
Networking	Do you belong to any networks or groups of organisations focusing on the wellbeing of children?	
	Do you belong to any networks or groups of organisations focusing on the wellbeing of caregivers?	
	Do you regularly contact other organisations working with children on PSS or ES to discuss ways of working together?	
	Do you regularly contact other organisations working with caregivers on PSS or ES to discuss ways of working together?	
	Do you exchange materials with other organisations working with children and/or caregivers?	
Advocacy	Are you trying to change any particular government policies or programmes which affect children's wellbeing, such as school fee policies, social protection for children and older caregivers like grandparents?	
	Do you support others involved in policy development and advocacy work? For example, do you support business development strategies, micro-finance and other strategies to strengthen household security?	
Holistic Focus	Do you in your ES programme already refer people to other organisations supporting the basic needs of children and caregivers (e.g. safety, shelter, education, health care, nutrition)?	

Assessment 4: PSS skills and knowledge assessment

Here are some questions for assessing the extent to which you have updated PSS skills and knowledge in your organisation.

Respond to the checklist by indicating Yes or No or Sometimes to the given questions.

Focus Area	Questions About PSS Skills and Knowledge	Yes/No/ Sometimes
Staff Training	Does your ES programme offer systematic PSS training for all ES staff and volunteers?	
	Does your ES programme support ES staff to attend further specialised PSS training courses, workshops and exchange meetings?	
Mentoring	Does your ES programme offer mentoring and support for ES staff involved in PSS work? This support can be within your own programme or from an outside agency with whom you partner.	
Staff Competence to Deliver Training	Do you have as part of your ES team or in a partner agency others who are able to train ES staff and volunteers in PSS approaches?	

Appendix I: International Declarations and Child Development

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) articulated four principles, namely:

- Non-discrimination;
- The best interests of the child;
- The right to life, survival and development; and
- Respect for the rights of the child.

Related to the UNCRC, is the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), which interprets a range of children's rights within the African context.

In 1990, world leaders met at the World Summit for Children and drafted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, with commitments to take political action at the highest level in order to ensure the well-being of the child.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000) form the basis for a global development plan with the broad aim of halving the number of people living in absolute poverty by the year 2015. Four goals of significance are:

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Goal 4: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Within the SADC Region, the Maseru Declaration (2003) called for Member States to address HIV and AIDS "through multisectoral interventions aimed at poverty eradication". This approach, now referred to as mainstreaming requires all sectors to act, based on their comparative advantages

to contribute to the national effort to prevent new HIV infections and mitigate the impacts of the epidemic. SADC Southern African Development Community has a SADC Strategic Framework and Programme of Action (2008-2015) for comprehensive care and support for orphans, vulnerable children and youth (OV CY) in the Southern African Development Community.

EXTRACT FROM THE UNGASS DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

Nations must:

65. By 2003, develop and by 2005 implement national policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, family and community capacities to provide a supportive environment for orphans and girls and boys infected and affected by HIV/AIDS including by providing appropriate counselling and psycho-social support, ensuring their enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition, health and social services on an equal basis with other children; and protect orphans and vulnerable children from all forms of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, trafficking and loss of inheritance

66. Ensure non-discrimination and full and equal enjoyment of all human rights through the promotion of an active and visible policy of destigmatisation of children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS;



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