

Evidence-based HIV&AIDS and Child Protection Intervention : An Overview

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Content

- Vulnerability of HIV & AIDS affected Children to abuse and exploitation
- Evidence
- Earlier Interventions and responses- non statutory involved cbos and fbos, inadequate referral system.
- Child protection services
- Prioritise prevention and early intervention strategies : examples
- Integrated Interventions
- Recommendations /issues to address

Impact of being an OVCY

- Psychological trauma
- Poverty: Loss of income and other support which impacts on their basic needs such as food, shelter, education and other basic needs.
- Stigma
- Placement with relatives or non relatives or in residential care or child headed household
- Child abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Vulnerability to contracting HIV&AIDS

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Vulnerability of Orphans to Abuse and Neglect : Research Evidence

- Research confirms that orphans are more susceptible to abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- In their study R Kiddman and Parlemo 2015, of 14-15 old adolescents girls in 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to test for an association between orphanhood and parental absence.
 - Approximately 10% of adolescent girls reported past experiences of sexual violence;
 - a third of those victimized were 14 years or younger at the time of their first forced encounter
 - A third of those victims were orphans and
 - the findings suggested that the lack of a father in the home (due to death or absence) places girls at heightened risk for childhood sexual abuse;
 - The findings also indicate that abuse often starts at an early age; thus programs should be adapted for younger age groups and rigorously tested.

Vulnerability of Orphans to Abuse and Neglect : Research Evidence

- A longitudinal study conducted by Cluver, et al. (2011) found that children orphaned as a result of HIV & AIDS or who are under the care of sick caregivers are more likely to have experienced transactional sexual exploitation or some form of emotional and physical abuse when compared to children living with healthy caregivers and orphaned adolescents living with ill caregivers from non-AIDS causes .

Vulnerability of Orphans to Abuse and Neglect : Research Evidence

- A study by Gray et al 2015, indicates that orphan boys are as much vulnerable to abuse as girls. Therefore the authors recommend that programmes targeting the protection of orphaned and separated girls should also be extended to boys. No child left behind.
- Other studies have found that children living with extended family members, or in institutional care, experience more discrimination within the home, higher rates of neglect and exploitation, and higher rates of emotional, sexual and physical abuse (World Vision/UNICEF, 2016).
- Research by Birdthistle et al 2008, has found a direct link between childhood sexual, emotional and physical abuse and HIV infection later in life. This is for both men and women living in areas with high HIV prevalence, and is linked to an increased risk of early sexual debut, alcohol and drug use, and violence.

Vulnerability of Orphans to Abuse and Neglect : Research Evidence

- **Studies, from diverse South Sahara African countries, reported similar forms of maltreatment among orphaned children and youth:**
 - experiences of intra-household discrimination;
 - material and educational neglect;
 - excessive child labour; exploitation by family members and
 - psychological, sexual and physical abuse.
- **The perceived risk factors were poverty, living with a non-biological caregiver, stigma and alcohol abuse.**
- **The findings of the included studies suggest that awareness, prevention and intervention initiatives aimed to curb child abuse and neglect within communities in SSA are needed and should be coupled with efforts to promote education and reduce poverty and stigma.**

Impact of Child Abuse on OVCY

- Life-long intergenerational consequences,
- It goes beyond the physical scars
- lasting impact on the child's self-esteem,
- Psychological and emotional development,
- Learning ability,
- Employment prospects and life expectancy,
- Can lead to risk taking and violent outcomes.

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Earlier Interventions

- **Earlier interventions and strategies : priority was to deal with the crisis by establishing community based care programmes to address urgent material needs and access to education.**
- **Interventions pertaining to psychosocial support were introduced later.**
- **Provision of child protection services was dealt with through referrals. Not prioritised nor integrated within programmes.**
- **Main child protection intervention for OVCs: foster care**
- **The weak link between policies and new demands for service impacted on integration.**

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Interventions to Address Child Abuse and Neglect on OVCY

- Intensified child protection services especially prevention and early intervention efforts are needed to protect and mitigate against abuse and neglect,
- Integrate with community-based programmes to reduce poverty, school absenteeism and dropout, alcohol abuse and stigma associated with orphanhood.
- Government services, community-based organizations should escalate their child protection efforts.

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Child Protection Services

- Child protection services include services that
 - support proceedings of the Children’s Court,
 - implementation of children’s court orders,
 - prevention services, early intervention,
 - placement of children in alternative care and adoption.
 - reunification services,
- These measures include, assessments, counselling, prevention and therapeutic programmes, protection, care, rehabilitation, family reunification and after care services.

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Prevention and Early intervention

- Research confirms that prevention rather than response driven approach alone is critical to the eradication of child abuse and neglect as well as violence at a community level.
- Prevention programmes should be planned, budgeted and implemented at government level rather than focus on response services only.
- Strong Intersectoral collaboration and adopting a public health and social ecological approach.
- Primary prevention at societal, community, family and individual level.
- Implementation of strategy developed by DSD.
- Examples of programmes:
 - One Man Can – Mobilising men to end violence
Wessel van den Berg (Sonke Gender Justice)
 - *Isibindi Isibindi* safe parks – Creating safe spaces for children to play
Moefeeda Salie-Kagee (National Association of Child Care Workers)
 - *Parenting programmes Cluver et al (2016) piloted the effectiveness of a parenting programme on parents and their adolescent children*
 - *Clowns without borders SA*

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Integration of Orphaned Children Into Extended Families

- Recommendations by Nziyane, 2010:
 - Prepare extended families for the responsibility
 - Assess and screen relatives
 - Facilitate social grant application
 - Supervise and monitor family placements
 - Provide psychological support to OVCs
 - Provide psychological support to extended families
 - Provide parenting programmes to primary care givers

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