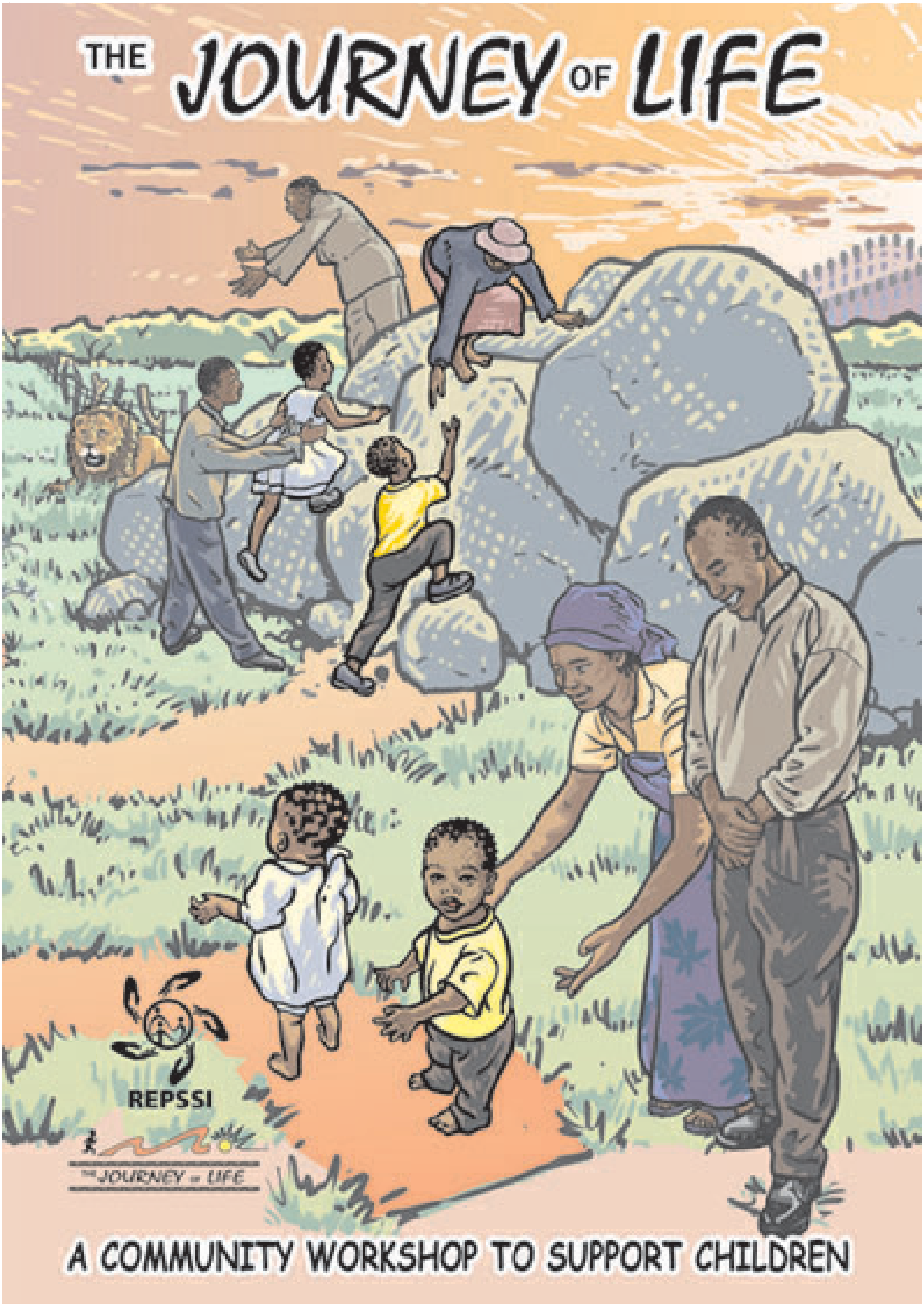
THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
REPSSI
THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
A COMMUNITY WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT CHILDREN

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THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

A community workshop to support children

The Journey of Life is a workshop designed to raise awareness of the problems and needs of children. It provides guidelines on how the community can find solutions.

Acknowledgements

Our journey began in 2003, inspired by Stefan Germann of REPSSI, to develop a workshop for grassroots communities. This workshop, known as the Journey of Life, seeks to address the increasing psychological and social needs of children affected by HIV/AIDS, war, and displacement.

We would like to thank the many participants from southern and eastern Africa who devoted their time, energy, and inspiration in developing this workshop.

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We are grateful to the children of Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Tanzania. Through drawing and sharing stories about their "Trees of Life," they highlighted important issues concerning children and their problems, showing that with courage and grace children can face these challenges.

We appreciate the assistance of those who pre-tested the workshop in urban and rural communities: Mambo Chiluwe (CHIN), Sibenga Desmas (CINDI), Patrick Hachintu (Chikankata), Mayke Huijbregts (UNICEF), Mark Kluckow (REPSSI), Boniface Masolo (SAPSSI), Joyce Minsi (Salvation Army), Grace Mokon (Hope World Wide), Daphne Moloi (Hope World Wide), Julio Mwemba (Every Home for Christ), Karesma Mushi (REPSSI), Gerson Nambora (River of Hope), Clarah Ngomane (Hope World Wide), Steve Njembo (CAFO), Berengardes Rukero (CAFO), Olga Sabado (World Vision), Robert Sihubwa (Christian Alliance for Children), and Alex Tigere (REPSSI).

And many thanks to the individuals who kindly volunteered their time to review the workshop manual: Gretchen Bachman (Family Health International), Jennifer Inger (International Red Cross), Barbara Kaim (TARSC), Sian Long (Save the Children-UK), Doreen Mukwena (Child Protection Society), Marianne Olivier (Phillipi), Dr. Greg Powell (Capnek Trust), Sandy Naidoo (Sinosizo), Mary Simaisiku (SCOPE), Gail Snettro (Save the Children-USA), Lucy Steinitz (Catholic AIDS Action), Kathy Bond-Stewart (Africa Community Publishing and Development Trust), John Williamson (Displaced Children's Fund), and Brenda Yamba (Save the Children-USA).

This publication was made possible by REPSSI through the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

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Foreword

Our Journey

Twelve people from southern and eastern Africa – all of us having worked with children or HIV/AIDS for much of our professional lives – came together for five days of intense discussion. We knew we wanted to create a workshop that would sensitize youth and adults to the needs and problems of children. What we didn't know was how we were going to go about doing this and what the final product would look like.

Using a pictorial method called the 'Tree of Life', we began by sharing the stories of our own lives and how we grew up. We heard stories of growing up in poverty, in wealth, stories of suffering and of being surrounded by love and caring. From these stories we learned that all of us as children had moments of courage, strength and wisdom. As children, when we became overwhelmed by life, we survived because there were people in our lives who cared about us.

As we talked, a range of themes emerged describing various aspects of children's lives and the roles played by individuals and communities in meeting children's needs.

These themes needed to be further explored with children and youth to confirm their validity. And, so, the Community Information and Inspiration Team (CIIT), as we now called ourselves, adapted the 'Tree of Life' and returned to our home countries to meet with groups of children and youth living in institutions, rural areas and urban settings. Over one hundred children from Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and South Africa told us their life stories.

This new knowledge helped us to understand that in many ways our adult recollection of childhood was very similar to what children were experiencing in the present day. However, the magnitude of death, loss and family disintegration that these children experienced was far greater than our childhood recollections. In our minds, this confirmed the need for a community response, as no individual standing alone could cope with such a burden.

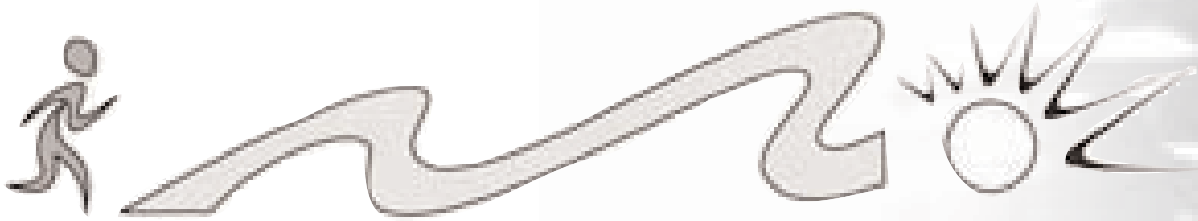
This is how the concept of the Journey of Life began. In subsequent meetings the Community Information and Inspiration Team composed, revised, pre-tested, and rewrote The Journey of Life workshop – the manual you are now holding in your hands.

With this workshop, we have completed one part of our journey. There are six skills workshops still to come in the Journey of Life series. It has been an inspiring experience and one that we could not have done without the enthusiasm and dedication of the many people who participated in this process.

May children and communities find inspiration, hope and guidance in these pages.

Dr. Jonathan Brakarsh
Team Leader, Journey of Life Project

June 2004



THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

Section 1: Facilitator's Guide

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Introduction

To grow from a child into an adult is a journey – the journey of life. Along the way, children face problems. Often they are strong enough to continue their journey without help. For example, many children take care of their brothers and sisters or look after sick relatives. But sometimes the problems are too many or too difficult for children. When children are overwhelmed by life's problems, the community can use its strength to support the child.

The Journey of Life is a workshop designed to help youth and adults to become more aware of the needs and problems of children who live in difficult circumstances. This is the first workshop in the Journey of Life series[1] -- aimed at those adults and youth who already help children or want to help them.

This manual is divided into two sections. The first section is a Facilitator's Guide to help you organise the workshop and learn how to use this manual. The second section provides you with the content of the Journey of Life workshop -- it presents the information and activities of the workshop.

[1] There are also six skills workshops in this series that help participants learn HOW to help children. These workshops are: 1) Caring and Communication; 2) Life Skills for Children; 3) Community Parenting; 4) Community Mobilisation; 5) Bereavement Counselling; and 6) Roles and Responsibilities of NGOs and Stakeholders.

The estimated time for the workshop is eight hours, with half an hour for lunch and two 20 minute tea breaks. This workshop can be done in one day, but it means that you would need to limit discussion time with the participants. We've given a sample workshop agenda for a one day workshop. However, it is recommended, time and resources allowing, that you spread this workshop over 1 - 2 days. If you do this, it would be useful to start each day with a brief reminder of the issues that have already been covered.

An alternative is to remove certain activities which would then allow more time for discussion. See Annex I for a guide to an abbreviated one day workshop.

The Journey of Life workshop can be held in any setting such as a community hall, or even under a tree. Participants can include a mixed group of adults and youth. Try to have a good gender balance (that is, equal numbers of men and women).

Outline of the Workshop

The Journey of Life workshop provides an opportunity for participants to share ideas and information, ask questions, raise debate and discuss issues, and develop an action plan for their community.

The workshop has eight parts. These are:

Part 1 **Welcome** – welcomes and introduces participants to each other
Part 2 **Introduction to the Journey of Life** -- introduces the Journey of Life concept and our lives as a journey
Part 3 **Meeting Children's Needs** – shows that it does not cost much to provide for children's needs
Part 4 **Understanding Children's Problems** – helps participants understand that children are quite resourceful, but they can be overwhelmed by problems and sometimes need help
Part 5 **Identifying Children Who Need Help** – enables participants to recognise when children are struggling with problems
Part 6 **Building Children's Strengths** – empowers participants to help children develop their strengths and find solutions to their problems.
Part 7 **Get Involved!** – guides participants to develop a community plan that will support children.
Part 8 **Evaluation and Closing the Workshop.**

Materials Needed

The workshop requires the following extra materials:

- A drawing of the Journey of Life (using the sample provided in the Picture Pack). Your drawing could be done on the ground, on a piece of flip chart paper, or in any other way you feel this could work well, and allow participants to see it clearly.
- Flip chart paper or sheets, marker pens, crayons
- Sticky tape or sticky stuff for putting paper onto the walls, or drawing pins for use on trees
- A notebook and pen for you to make notes
- A sack/bag for the "strong child" demo, stones
- Props for Closing the Workshop activity -- candles, songs, certificates[2] or whatever you feel is appropriate.

[2] See sample certificate in the Picture Pack

SAMPLE WORKSHOP AGENDA

8.00 Part One: INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME
8.20 Part Two: INTRODUCING THE JOURNEY OF LIFE
Demo: Drawing your Journey of Life
8.40 Part Three: MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS
Build A Child
9.05 Discussion: The Cost of Meeting Children's Needs
9.30 Part Four: UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS
Discussion: The Problems Children Face
Demo: Even the Strongest Child can be Weighed Down by Problems
10.30 TEA
10.50 Part Five :IDENTIFYING CHILDREN WHO NEED HELP
Discussion: Children with Difficult Lives
11.20 Role Play: Children's Problems Are Everyone's Problems
12.00 Discussion: The Road of Danger
12.30 LUNCH
13.00 Part Six: BUILDING CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS
Discussion: The Characteristics of A Strong Child
13.30 Discussion: Building the Inner Strength of Children
13.55 The Gift Box
14.35 Discussion: Practical Ways to Support Children
14.50 TEA
15.10 Part Seven: GET INVOLVED!
Discussion: Community Support, Game: Circles of Support
15.55 Discussion: Developing a Community Plan
16.40 Game: The River Crossing Game
17.00 Part Eight: EVALUATION
17.15 Closing the workshop

USING THE MANUAL

Introduction

Throughout the manual, you will see Objectives, Activities, Purpose, Steps, Tips, Lessons Learned, Summary of Key Learning Points and Timing. There is also a Script Logo, and information about when to use the Picture Pack (a separate guide with pictures to help you with the workshop). Each of these sub-titles is represented by a symbol that you can see below.

Objectives

Each part of the workshop has **Objectives** that help you to focus your attention on a certain issue. (*Note for facilitator:* The Objectives are for your use only, please do not read them out to participants.)

Each activity has a section called **Purpose** that provides guidance and key reasons for doing each activity.

Activities

Each part of the workshop has several **Activities** that help participants learn, contribute to the discussions and stimulate ideas. Activities include:

- Discussions (when participants discuss issues, with your guidance by asking them questions)
- Demos (when you ask a participant/participants to show/explain something to the group)
- Role-plays (where participants will act out a situation), and
- Games (helps to energise participants as they learn and discuss issues).

Steps

Steps contain the main points for teaching and discussion. Each Step is numbered and can be used as a guide to carry out an activity.

Tip

Tips provide quick information on how to organise the activity, or key points that you need to emphasise.

Lessons learned

This section helps participants summarise what they have learned from each part of the workshop.

Summary of key learning points

These are brief summaries of **key learning points** for each part of the manual. The facilitator can include these points if participants have omitted any of them.

Timing

Timing shows you how much time it takes to complete each session, for example, the Road of Danger takes 40 minutes. The estimated time for each activity is located by the activity title, seen on the right hand side of the page. Participants may take longer or shorter to complete each session, so it is useful to use the time given as a guide.

Script Logo

A **Script Logo** indicates words that the facilitator may use to highlight important issues throughout the workshop. These words appear in quotes (" ").

Picture Pack

A **Picture Pack** has been developed for use together with this manual. It contains a series of pictures that are designed to communicate key messages to benefit child caregivers in the community. For example, grandmothers will better understand messages through the use of pictures, as this does not require a high standard of literacy. The picture that accompanies each part of the workshop is listed at the start of each section.

HOW TO FACILITATE THE JOURNEY OF LIFE WORKSHOP

The following guidelines will help you facilitate the Journey of Life community workshop. These guidelines discuss key facilitation issues and include an overview of how participants learn. Also included are tips for organising the workshop, running the sessions, and keeping records.

Your role as facilitator

1. The facilitator's role is to guide and encourage participants to share ideas, information and experience.
2. Participants learn by doing, so if the whole group can participate in the activities and discussions, they will all benefit.

Who can facilitate the workshop?

The workshop is designed in an easy to follow way, and the following people can facilitate if they have read this manual and/or have attended a training session:

- Participants who have experience in working with communities
- Participants who have experience in working with children
- Those with approximately Grade 7 education and above
- Community members with a talent for facilitating workshops.

Who may attend the workshop?

The workshop is designed to benefit the following groups: community carers, youth and youth leaders, community leaders, members of community-based committees for children, community-based

professionals (teachers, nurses, policewomen/men, social workers, health workers), parents and guardians, religious leaders, representatives of community institutions (such as children's homes) and organisations (such as community-based and faith- based organisations).

Organising the Workshop

Before the workshop

Use the following suggestions to help you organise the Journey of Life workshop:

- Choose a time and place that makes it easy for participants to attend. If you are providing food and drink, make sure that it is organised beforehand.
- Engage community-based co-facilitators if possible because they add value to the discussions through sharing of real life experiences.
- Ensure you have invited influential participants who can improve the lives of children. It is a good idea to have community leaders, caregivers and youth together to talk about "our children".

- Read this manual through a few days before the workshop, so you become familiar and comfortable with the objectives and activities. You can adapt the activities and discussions to suit the needs of your environment. For example, placing the findings of each group during an activity onto a tree rather than a wall.

- Find out what community members know about caring for children and get to know their experiences. This will increase your understanding of the community environment during the workshop.

During the workshop

The following points will help you run a successful workshop:

- Allow participants to sit in their most comfortable positions, but try to avoid classroom-style seating with participants in rows and the facilitator at the front. (It might be a good idea to encourage participants to sit in a circle).

- At the beginning of the workshop, tell participants that you want to hear from everyone in the group. Their contribution is important. In the Journey of Life workshop, everybody learns from each other.

- Make sure you encourage shy participants, especially women and girls, to talk and participate, even if they feel nervous.

- As well as encouraging shy participants to speak up, you may need to gently prevent the stronger participants from dominating the workshop.

- Listen to all participants and thank them for their contributions. Acknowledge all comments, even if you think they might not be relevant. You want everyone to feel involved and talk about key issues. Treat everyone as an expert, and acknowledge that the community knows best about what happens in its area.

- Lead the workshop with passion, excitement and commitment. Make sure you are enthusiastic about everything you say and do -- and everything participants say and do. This will make the discussions livelier, and encourage full participation.

- Be careful not to impose your beliefs and values on the group. For example, if participants feel that children need regular beating and you disagree, explore the topic carefully. Ask them why they feel that way, and whether there are other ways to discipline children. Ask if they remember being beaten as a child and if it helped them to improve their behaviour. If you tell participants that they are wrong, they will stop listening to you. Instead, you want to lead them to make up their own minds, having considered the views of the other participants.

- If participants request any religious activities (such as saying opening or closing prayers), ask them to lead the process. Do not impose your personal views or opinions on the group.

- Try to use local examples for new ideas so that participants can relate to what you are saying. Also, explain issues in a simple and clear way, adapting suggestions from the manual that participants can relate to and understand.

- One way to get participants to discuss new ideas is to link traditional proverbs and songs to new ways of thinking.

- Respond to the feelings and mood of the group. For example, if they seem tired, introduce a game or energiser[3] to change the pace of the workshop.

- If someone asks you a question, allow participants to discuss it first before you respond. For example, ask, *"Well, what do you think about that?"* or *"Does anyone else have something they want to say about this?"*

- It is important to encourage questions and discussion at any time during the workshop as this helps participants to better understand what they have learned. Do not move to the next activity; participants always need time to debate, discuss and review ideas before putting them into practice.

- If someone raises an issue that ties into an activity or discussion later in the workshop, let him or her know that you will address the issue later. Remember to ask for the comments or questions again when you reach the appropriate activity. (You could pencil yourself a reminder in your workshop manual).

- Emphasise that parents, caregivers and the community are all responsible for looking after "our children."

- Gently challenge participants if they feel that children should be silent and not participate in making decisions or running their own lives. For example, ask: *"How do you talk to children?"* or *"When you were a child, what sort of decisions did you have to make?"*

- *If there are youth participants in the group, ensure they get enough opportunities to contribute to the discussions as well.*

Taking notes and making pictures

In this workshop, there will be a mixed group of participants. Some will be able to write and others will not. Although note taking is useful, encourage participants to use pictures and symbols so that the whole group may benefit.

- Ask participants to help you draw or think of pictures for things they have said. This approach adds more fun to the workshop, and moves participants away from the school-like approach that is based on writing.

- If you are using a flip chart, write your notes in large print (using dark colours such as black or dark blue) so that it is easy for participants to understand. You can ask a volunteer from the group to help you with this.

- Keep the Journey of Life drawing as simple and clear as you can -- be careful not to overcrowd it.

[3] A list of energisers/games is available at the end of the manual

HOW PARTICIPANTS LEARN[4]

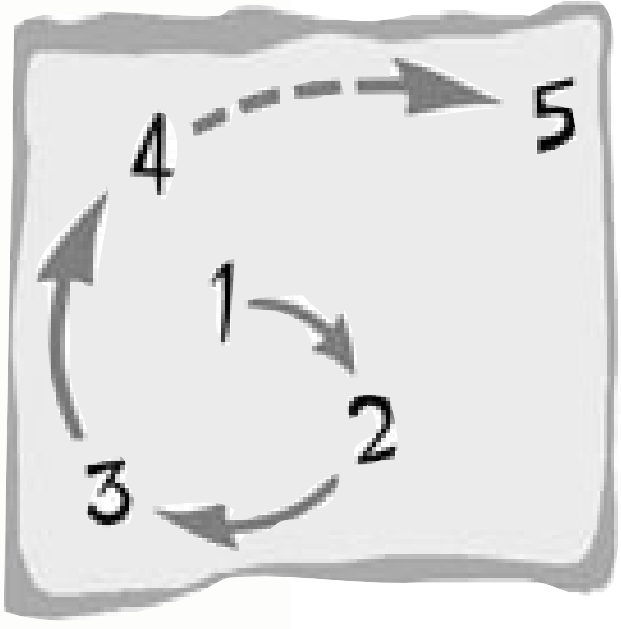
Participants learn effectively when:

- They see what they are learning as valuable
- They have clear goals
- The experience of all participants is valued and drawn upon
- New knowledge and skills are connected to what participants already know
- They get direct and frequent feedback
- They share/debate/discuss what they are learning with others
- They feel respected/listened to
- They have a say in how the teaching and learning happens
- Differences in identity and experience are acknowledged and accepted.

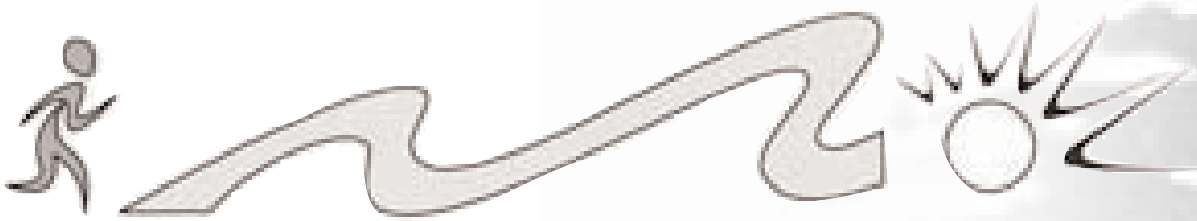
The Spiral Model[5]

One useful way of thinking about how to help participants learn is The Spiral Model. The illustration below explains how the Spiral Model works to bring about effective learning.

1. Start with the experience of participants -- make sure you are aware of what they know, and that you can understand their experience.
2. Look for patterns in their experiences – note common experiences and note different ones. (Remember to respect all comments because everyone is an expert in their own right).
3. Be creative with new information -- build on participants' knowledge and experience.
4. Help participants to practice new skills, and plan for action.
5. Apply lessons they have learned in action (after the workshop, participants can use these new skills and knowledge in their daily lives).



[4, 5] Educating for a Change: Arnold, R. et al, 1991.



THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

Section 2: The Workshop

Workshop Objectives

- To help adults and youth think about the impact of HIV/AIDS, war and displacement on children
- To help those who care for children to understand their social, emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual needs
- To help identify children living in difficult circumstances
- To understand that when children have problems, it can change their behaviour
- To help participants understand that children have strengths and if united with adults, they can help build these strengths
- To encourage community groups to develop ways to improve the lives of their children so they can be healthy, happy, and productive adults able to respond to the challenges of life.

Notes

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

20 MinS

Objectives

- To welcome participants to the workshop
- To help participants get to know each other.

Welcome

5 MinS

PURPOSE: To welcome participants to the Journey of Life workshop.

Steps

1. You could say "*Hello, I'm* _(name)_____ *from* ___(organisation)_____ *in* ____(town)____.
Thank you for coming to the Journey of Life workshop today. We will be talking about children and how to help them face the challenges of life. By children, we mean a person up to the age of 18. Children are strong enough to handle many problems, but sometimes the problems become either too big or too many, so they need our help. It does not take much. Many needs of children can be solved without money. The community can use its strength to care for and support children until they learn to cope with the challenges of life."

Activity 1: Getting to know each other

PURPOSE: To help participants introduce themselves and to get to know each other and their interests.

Steps

1. If your group is **small**, try this:
   Meeting each other.
   Ask participants to pair up with someone they do not know, and tell each other what they like to do in their spare time. Each pair then joins another pair they do not know. Within these groups of four, everyone sings to each other a bit of their favourite song. Now each group of four joins up with another group of four. In these groups of eight, everyone shows each other their favourite dance.

2. If your group is **large**, try this:
   EITHER
   Making Friends: People all over the world greet each other in many different ways. Using as many different languages and methods possible, greet as many participants as you can in the next few minutes.

Tip: The facilitator can show different ways of greeting – bowing, kissing on the cheek, hand shakes, etc. Stop the activity after several minutes.

OR

Buses: *"We all take buses to get to places. You take a bus to get to a capital city or a village. Everyone on the bus has something in common; you are all going to the same place. You have something in common with everyone here – we are all here to discuss the Journey of Life. So our bus could be the Journey of Life Bus. Let us pretend we are taking buses according to what we have in common. We will start with a woman's bus and a man's bus – the man's bus is over here and the woman's bus is over there – go to the one that you belong to."*

Continue to ask participants to get together in buses as quickly as possible as you call out other ideas for buses. These ideas could include buses according to the colour of shirts participants are wearing, their jobs, or buses according to the number of children they have. Participants can come up with their own ideas for buses.

Tip: This game helps the facilitator to understand the background of participants.

PART 2: INTRODUCING THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

20 Mins

Objectives

- To introduce the Journey of Life concept
- To help adults better understand children by describing their own journey of life.

Activity 2: The Journey of Life

PURPOSE: To introduce the Journey of Life picture and some of the key issues covered during the workshop.

Steps

"We can think of life as a journey that begins when we are born and continues as we grow and develop. Things can happen to children as they walk along the road of life. Some are good things and some are bad things."

1. The facilitator presents the picture of the Journey of Life (using the Picture Pack) and asks each participant to think about his or her life as a journey.

2.The facilitator then asks participants to draw their own Journey of Life, including two important events that happened during this journey.

"Think of your life as a journey from childhood to adulthood. Draw your life as a journey and show two significant events, good or bad that happened to you".

3. Ask participants to think about what they needed for their journey of life.

4. The facilitator makes a list of needs that have been identified.

Summary of key learning points

- We can think of our lives as a journey that we begin when we are born and continue with as we grow and develop
- There are many experiences and lessons that we learn as we travel on our journey of life. We can draw upon these experiences to help children grow and develop.

PART 3: MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

55 Mins

Objectives

- To help participants understand what children need for healthy growth and development – socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and intellectually
- To help participants appreciate that some needs of children can be met without money.

What do children need to grow?

"We have identified what we needed in order to grow into healthy adults. Now let us talk about what children need in order to enjoy their childhood, to cope with the difficulties they experience and to grow into strong and responsible adults."

Activity 3: Build A Child

PURPOSE: To help participants appreciate what children need for their development, and explain that children's needs are children's rights.

Steps

1. Ask participants to look at the baby maize plant drawing. The facilitator uses the picture of the baby maize plant to illustrate the next point.

2. Say: *"Children are like maize plants. They need to be cared for. If you take good care of your maize, you will have strong plants and a good harvest. It is the same with children, if you look after them, they will grow strong. Our harvest is the next generation of children who will grow up to respond to any challenge as well as help the community."*

3. *"Now we are going to look at what a child needs to grow into a strong adult. Lets draw a picture of a child together. With every need we think of we will draw another part of the child's body."*

4. *"Let's start with the head."*

5. Ask them to call out things children need to grow. Every time participants call out a need, you acknowledge it ("yes, they need food") and draw in the next part of the child.

6. Choose a volunteer to write down or draw a picture representing the needs. If you are in a less literate group, ask participants to remember what they call out so you can write it down afterwards. (You will use this list in the next activity).

Tip: Make sure that examples of the following needs are mentioned: physical (food, shelter); intellectual (education), spiritual (a belief in a higher being); emotional (love), and social (sense of belonging to a family or community).

7. In the group, discuss:
   (a) Are children entitled to these needs?
   (b) Which needs are they entitled to?
   (c) What can children do to make it easier for families and communities to meet their needs?

Tip: Help participants understand that children are human beings and that children's needs are children's rights. They have rights that should be protected. For example, children have the right to be kept safe from harm, the right to receive adult care, and the right to education.

Activity 4 Discussion: The cost of meeting children's needs

PURPOSE: To help participants understand that the many needs of children can be met without money.

Steps

"Let us look at the list of needs we created in the activity, 'Build A Child' and see how we can provide for these needs. For each need, let us look at what it requires – money or people."

1. Use the list of needs you have just developed to create the table below. Draw three columns – one for needs, and two smaller columns to indicate whether people play a major role or money plays a major role in providing for the need. Tip: See the table below for an example. You could use symbols or pictures to represent the needs for a less literate group. Make the table using flip chart paper or a large sheet of paper, and write in large print or pictures.

2. For each need, ask whether it requires money or people. In the "MONEY" column, record the number of participants who answered MONEY. In the "PEOPLE" column, record the number of responses saying, "PEOPLE".

3. Count the number of needs that can be met by people, and those that can be met by money.

Tip: If 3 participants note that PEOPLE play a major role in meeting the needs of children with regard to food, for example, then write the number 3 as an entry, and so on… To get the total number of needs for each column, count up the number of entries. Our example below shows that in the PEOPLE column, there are 4 entries. You can point out that from the exercise, PEOPLE rather than MONEY meet the needs of children.

Children's Needs List what participants say in the column below	People play major role	Money plays major role
Food	3	3
Clothing		3
Love	3	
Sense of belonging	3	
Protection	3	
Total Number of Needs	4	2

Lessons learned

5 MinS

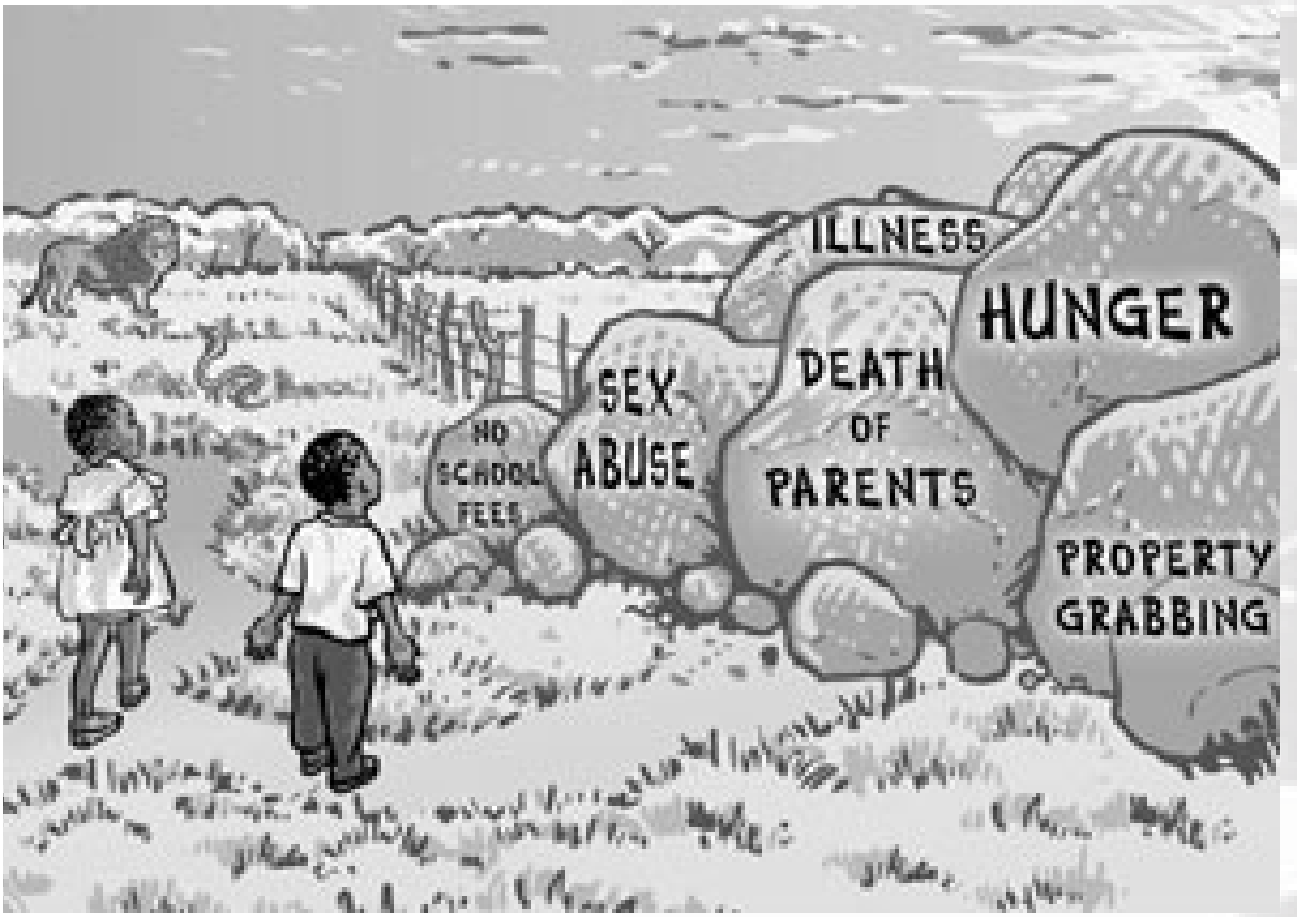
- The facilitator uses the picture of the mother holding the child to discuss what children need to grow strong.
- What can we learn from this activity?
- Can money on its own meet children's needs?
- What are some children's needs that can be met without money?

Summary of key learning points

- Children have different needs that must be met to ensure that they successfully go through the Journey of Life
- We can use a picture of a maize plant to help us understand that the way we take care of our children and meet their needs will help them to become adults
- We can satisfy many children's needs without money. Our love, commitment, time, hands, ears and hearts can be used to meet the important needs of children.

PART 4: UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S PROBLEMS

55 Mins



Objectives

- To identify the different problems that children face on their journey of life
- To understand that some problems are difficult for children to manage on their own
- To think about how children can reduce the problems they experience in life.

Activity 5 Discussion: The Problems of Children

20 Mins

PURPOSE: To help participants think about the problems that children face as they grow, for example, problems associated with HIV/AIDS.

Steps

"We have talked about what a child needs to grow up in order to be healthy, strong and responsible. All children face problems whilst growing up. Now, we are going to look at these".

1. Think about the problems you faced as you grew up... When you were little… when you went to school… in your youth… What were some of those problems?
2. Ask participants to list these problems on a flip chart.
3. What are the problems that children face in your community as they grow up today?
4. If the child comes from a family where the parent is sick or has died of AIDS, what problems will they have?
5. Do you think that children can solve their own problems?

Tip: Encourage participants to give other examples of problems that children can and cannot solve.

The facilitator uses the picture of the boy and the girl standing in front of the boulders representing problems. The discussion focuses on the problems facing children.

Activity 6 Demo: Even the strongest child can be weighed down by problems

20 Mins

PURPOSE: To show participants that even strong children can become weighed down by too many problems.

Materials Needed

- Bag or sack
- Stones collected by participants

Steps

1. Ask each participant to collect a stone to represent a problem that children face, using the list from Activity 5.

Tip: Find a bag or sack to hold all the stones as participants collect them.

2. Ask participants to state a problem their stone represents as they place it into the bag. (For example, 'this stone represents a child losing its mother'.)

Tip: If you have a large group, divide participants into smaller groups and move from one group to another collecting the stones in the bag/sack.

3. Ask a child (or someone pretending they are a child) to demonstrate their strength by jumping in place as high as they can several times. Comment on how strong this "child" is.

4. Give "the child" the bag of stones to carry and ask the child to jump in place again. To help demonstrate how heavy problems can be, say: *"This sack only has a few problems in it, but I want to show that it is heavy with the problems of children, so I will pull down on it."*

5. Pull the sack down and tell the "child" to try to jump in place.

6. Ask participants why it is difficult for this child to jump up and down.

Tip: If participants suggest that it is because the bag is being pulled down, you can explain that you are holding the bag to show the heavy weight of problems that children experience in their lives, and that problems weigh down children.

7. Point out that even a strong child who has problems will find it difficult to continue on his/her Journey of Life.

8. Ask participants to show how they can help the child, and discuss other ways of helping children with problems.

Tip: Ideas can include lifting the bag, removing some of the stones, supporting the child and carrying the bag to help the child move along the Journey of Life.

"In this way, the child's load is made lighter or removed, and the child can now continue on the Journey of Life. As long as the child's load does not become too heavy, the child can take responsibility for itself. However, when the child's load becomes too heavy with problems, the community needs to help".

Lessons learned

- What can we learn from this activity?
- How do the problems mentioned affect children on their Journey of Life?
- What problems would you say make children's lives particularly difficult in your community?
- How can you reduce the load of problems carried by children in your family or community?

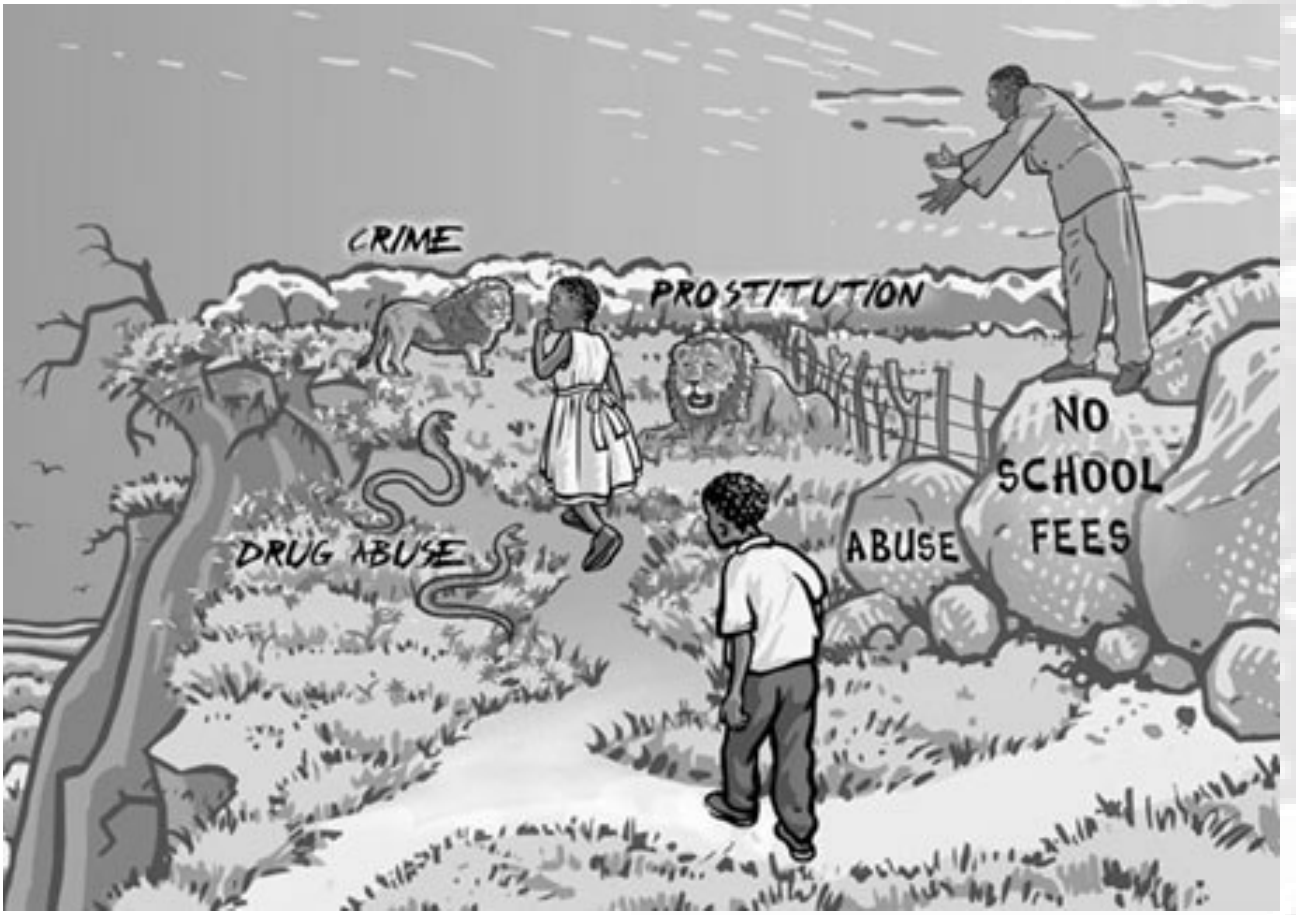
Summary of key learning points

- Children experience different problems as they grow and develop
- Children may be overwhelmed by problems, particularly if they are faced with too many problems at the same time
- Without much effort, we can help reduce the load of problems in children's lives.

Notes

PART 5: IDENTIFYING CHILDREN WHO NEED HELP

120 Mins



Objectives

- To help participants identify children who are struggling with problems
- To help participants appreciate what happens to children when they cannot cope with problems
- To help participants recognise that when children are overwhelmed by problems, they may take the Road of Danger.

Activity 7 Discussion: Children with difficult lives

30 MinS

PURPOSE: To help participants recognise which children are struggling with problems.

Steps

"When children have problems, they tend to behave in different ways that may concern those around them. We need to recognise those children who are struggling with problems and provide the necessary support".

1. Divide participants into 3 groups and assign the following questions to each group:

Tip: Each group should take no more than 5 minutes to discuss each question and 5 minutes for report back.

a) What kind of children do you know with problems in their lives?

b) How do they behave to show us that they are having problems?

c) What are the dangers that children could face by behaving in this way?

2. Participants give feedback from their smaller group discussions to the main group

3. Ask one participant to draw up a summary chart of the vulnerable groups of children in the community.

Tip: Use the chart below to ensure that all categories of children are included in your discussion.

Children with difficult lives include:

• children living on their own • refugees • girl children • children caring for sick parents • orphans • abused children • children living in extreme poverty • married children • commercial sex workers • child-headed households • children on the streets • children in institutions • children who are forced into marriages • children with parents living overseas • children who abuse drugs and alcohol • disabled children • albinos • children in child labour.

Activity 8 Role-play: Children's Problems are Everyone's Problems

40 Mins

PURPOSE: This role-play helps participants to understand how children's problems may affect the child, the family and the community.

Steps

1. Ask participants to form three groups as follows:

   a) Group 1 should show how the child is affected by one problem he/she is experiencing in life

   b) Group 2 should show how a family is affected by one problem that a child in the family is experiencing

   c) Group 3 should show how the community is affected by one problem that a child in the community is experiencing.

2. Each group presents their role-play.

Tip: Allow 10 minutes for preparation for each group and 5 minutes for presentation of the role-plays by each group.

Lessons learned

15 Mins

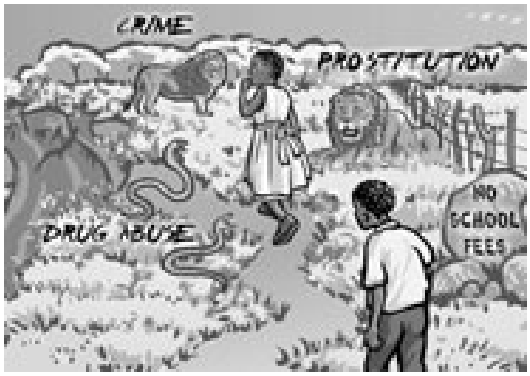
- What lessons have we learned from the different role-plays?
- Who is affected by the children's behaviour?
- If the children's behaviour is not addressed over time, what happens as the child grows older?
- What are the consequences for the child, the family, and the community if problems are not addressed?

Tip: Ask participants to think about children who may behave in less expected or unusual ways, for example, "the invisible child" who may withdraw or isolate him/herself.

Activity 9 Discussion: The Road of Danger

35 MinS

PURPOSE: To encourage participants to think about what happens to children when they cannot cope with problems.



Steps

"Sometimes in our lives, when we cannot cope with our problems, we go in a direction that may lead to danger. This we call the Road of Danger. Being on this road can lead to us hurting ourselves and those around us."

1. Ask participants if they can think of any time in their journey of life when they have taken the Road of Danger

2. Using the Road of Danger picture, help participants to appreciate that some children who are trapped by problems get off the Main Road and take the Road of Danger.

Tip: Use the Picture Pack for this discussion or alternatively draw in a picture of a child blocked by boulders that represent the problems that were used in the role-play. The Road of Danger represents the desperate things that children do when they feel hopeless about their future.

3. Discuss the following:
   - What can drive children to take the Road of Danger?
   - What happens to children who take the Road of Danger?
   - Where does the Road of Danger lead?
   - What will happen to children who have taken the Road of Danger when they are older?
   - Do you think children on the Road of Danger can get back onto the Main Road? How? Can they do it on their own?
   - Do you know of any stories of children who have come back from the Road of Danger?

Tip: Take no more than 5 minutes to answer each discussion point.

The facilitator uses two pictures from the Picture Pack. One discusses how children get on the Road of Danger and its effects on children. The second picture discusses how the child comes back from the Road of Danger.

Summary of key learning points

- Some children face greater challenges from birth, and others face their challenges later in life
- When children take the Road of Danger, their personal development, families and communities are also affected
- Children who show "dangerous behaviour" for example, stealing, alcohol and drugs, may in fact be showing that they need help and support
- It is important to acknowledge that children can return onto the Main Road from the Road of Danger.

PART 6: BUILDING CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS

110 MinS

Objectives

- To recognise why children who face difficulties do not always go on the Road of Danger
- To understand that children have inner strengths that help them to manage most problems
- To understand the type of 'gifts' that families and communities can give to children to help build their inner strength.

Activity 10 Discussion: Characteristics of a strong child

25 MinS

PURPOSE: To enable participants to understand that children have inner strengths that help them to manage most problems.

Steps

"Not all children facing problems take the Road of Danger. Children have strengths that can help them overcome their problems. Let us think about these strengths."

1. Ask the group if they can remember children who have managed to remain strong despite the challenges they face

Tip: "Strong" does not mean physical strength, but refers to inner strength and the ability to cope with problems. Let ideas come from the participants first.

2. Ask the group to brainstorm (ideas coming out quickly) about the characteristics of a strong child

3. Write down the responses on a piece of flip chart paper and present the summary to the group.

Tip: Make sure that your list includes the ideas below.

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Characteristics of a strong child

- Can ask for help
- Is positive and has hope for the future
- Can set goals
- Puts effort into work
- Plays well with other children
- Prays and believes in God, or a Higher Being, etc.
- Looks clean and can take pride in his/her appearance
- Can deal with challenges and frustrations
- Takes responsibility and cares for siblings and family members
- Is confident
- Has good relationships with peers and adults
- Puts ideas into action
- Despite tragedies and difficulties, can continue with routines of life (going to school, etc).

Activity 11 Discussion: Building the inner strength of children

25 Mins

PURPOSE: To help participants develop practical ways to build children's inner strength

Steps

1. Ask participants to think about how they can help children to become strong

2. Divide participants into 5 small groups. Each group should discuss one of the following questions and report back to the main group.

- Are children born strong or weak?
- What makes a child strong?
- What makes a child weak?
- Do all children have the same strength?
- Can we as families and communities help children to become strong?

Tip: Allow 10 minutes for discussion and 15 minutes for feedback

The facilitator uses the picture of the girl caring for her sick parents to discuss how to strengthen children.

After the feedback session, state that: *"We can help strengthen a child's ability to handle problems. We can either help children to be strong when they face problems, or better still, give them strength before they experience problems. Let us now think about what we can do as families and communities to help strengthen children."*

Activity 12 Demo: The Gift Box

40 Mins

PURPOSE: To help participants think about the gifts they can give children to help them become strong.

Tip: Have a "gift box" ready for this exercise. This can be a cardboard box, a paper or a plastic bag, or cupped hands. Participants need two objects to symbolise 'gifts'. These may be leaves, stones, seedpods, or bottle tops.

Steps

"Now that we understand that families and communities can make children strong, think about the gifts that you received as a child that made you strong. What gifts would you now give to a child."

1. Pick up two stones to put into the gift box. The first stone represents the 'gift' that your parent(s) gave you. The second stone represents the 'gift' that you give to your children.
2. Pass the 'gift box' from one participant to another
3. As the 'gift box' reaches each participant, the first 'gift' is put into the box and this gift is named, for example, Courage
4. Participants then put the second 'gift' into the box, naming the 'gift'

Tip: Write a summary list of gifts on a flip chart or sheet of paper as participants identify them. Remind participants that there are gifts besides money, food and clothing that participants can give children. The emphasis should be on emotional, social and spiritual gifts. If the group does not mention these gifts, suggest a few, and then ask participants if they can think of others. Examples are: love, acceptance, respect, protection, feeling of belonging, encouragement, appreciation, attention, guidance, approval, and parent-to-child communication.

5. Out of all the 'gifts' mentioned, which are the most important ones to help a child through their journey of life?

6. Present a summary of the 'gifts' mentioned. Check that all the 'gifts' in the box below are on your list.

'Gifts' that parents and communities can give to children

- Providing a caring community environment: giving children love, acceptance, and guidance
- Providing children with a sense of belonging
- Appreciating the accomplishments of children
- Encouraging mutual respect between adults and children
- Giving children a voice in their families and communities
- Providing opportunities for the child to express feelings
- Emphasising the importance of working together
- Supporting the development of common values and beliefs
- Giving equal value to the development of boys and girls.

Lessons learned

- What lessons did you learn from this activity?
- What would you say are the most important 'gifts' that help a child on his/her journey of life?

Activity 13 Discussion: Practical ways to support children

15 MinS

PURPOSE: To encourage participants to think about practical ways that enables them to support children in their communities.

Steps

*"As passionate and committed individuals in our communities, there is much we can do to help children grow and develop. Think about some of the practical things **you** can do in your family and community to meet children's needs."*

1. Ask participants to break into small groups and discuss the following:
- What do you already do to support children?
- What else would you like to do?
- What help do you need in order to do more?

Tip: Spend no more than 5 minutes on each discussion point.

2. Each group should record their group ideas on a sheet of paper

3. Stick all contributions on a wall (or tree) so participants can see the ideas and suggestions.

Summary of key learning points

- Children have the inner strength to solve many problems on their own
- The "gifts" that people give to children help to build their inner strength
- Sometimes it takes committed and passionate individuals to bring about change in the lives of children who face difficulties
- No matter how strong children are, we need to remember that they are children
- Not all children with problems take the Road of Danger. We can learn important lessons from children who have managed to remain strong, regardless of the problems that they may face in life.

Notes

PART 7: GET INVOLVED!

130 MinS

Objectives

- To help communities develop Circles of Support that can help children before, during and after difficulties arise
- To help the community sustain itself so caregivers do not burn out
- To develop a community plan that will support children in the community.

Why get involved?

Sometimes caregivers feel burdened by the responsibilities involved in providing care and support to children and other vulnerable people in the community. However, there are various community responses that, if collectively carried out, can provide support to children in the community and which can relieve the burden of individual caregivers.

"So what is a community? A community is made up of individuals and groups with common values, beliefs and even shared problems. Communities work together to come up with solutions to identified problems."

Tip: Communities do not necessarily have geographical boundaries. Help participants think about the different communities they belong to, such as churches, village committees, children's clubs, burial societies, etc.

Activity 14 Discussion: Community support

PURPOSE: To find out what support services exist for children in the community, and to show the importance of Circles of Support (see below) for children and their caregivers.

"We are stronger when we work together to support children in our communities. The burdens on each of us become less. Children also become strong when they have different people providing support. All those who provide help and support to children form Circles of Support."

Steps

1. Ask participants to move around the group and identify individuals that they feel may belong to the same community using their broader understanding of community. For example, church groups, women's groups, sports groups, youth groups.
2. In smaller "community groups", participants should identify people who help children and discuss the following questions:
    - If a child wants to go to school but the family has no money, who can help?
    - If a parent has died, who can help?
    - If a child is sexually abused, who can help?
3. Record all responses and stick on a wall or tree.

Activity 15 Game: Circles of Support

15 Mins

PURPOSE: To show how Circles of Support help protect children.

Steps

1. Ask a participant to stand in the middle to represent a girl (or use a girl participant if you have one in your group). Ask eight participants to stand in a circle around the child to represent different people in the child's life who support children. For example, 'You are the school teacher, you are a family relative, you are the priest, and you are the nurse.'

Tip: Use examples given earlier by participants of people who help children.

2. Tell participants in the circle that they are the **Circles of Support** around the child. The child has a problem – her mother, her last surviving parent has died – and this problem is leading her to try to break through the Circles of Support, and get lost on the Road of Danger. Make sure the adults are holding hands and in a wide enough circle to allow space between them. Tell them they have to allow the child some room to run about inside the circle. The adults should prevent the child from breaking out by holding hands. Once everyone understands what he/she is supposed to do, let the child try to break out. The adults will keep the child safely supported.

3. Stop the game after a few minutes. Explain that things have changed now that the girl has become pregnant. The priest is refusing to support the child as he thinks she is a sinner, so ask the priest to move out of the circle. The teacher does not want a pregnant child in her class in case the other children get ideas, so he/she is also refusing to help. Ask the teacher to leave the circle. One of the girl's relatives thinks the girl is irresponsible and must have encouraged the man to sleep with her, so he also refuses to help and leaves the circle. Leave the gaps open. Tell participants that they cannot make the circle any smaller. They may not hold hands or touch each other, but they must still try to prevent the child from breaking out. Now continue the game. The girl tries to break out of the circle, with participants attempting to block her. Because of the gaps in the circle, the girl will usually succeed in breaking out of the Circles of Support. After a few minutes, stop the game and explain that when a support system is weak, absent or harmful, the child may do destructive things with his/her life.

Lessons learned

10 Mins

- What lessons did you learn from this activity?
- How can we become a more caring community to support children facing problems?
- How can we support ourselves in the work we do?
- How do communities work collectively to solve children's problems?

Tip: Children can become part of the Circle of Support for each other.

Activity 16 Discussion: Developing a Community Plan

45 MinS

PURPOSE: *To guide participants into thinking through of practical ways in which they can develop a community plan to facilitate support and care for children.*

"It is important for communities to work and plan collectively so that they can identify what they want to do, who should be involved, the time it will take, and resources required."

Steps

1. Ask participants:
- What are you doing already as a community to provide support and care for children
- How they can improve what they are doing, using what they have learned today

Tip: Record all activities that communities could be involved in.

2. In smaller groups, ask participants to develop a plan they would like to carry out in their community (after the workshop).
3. The plans should contain ***one*** activity they plan to do, who will conduct the activity, how it will be carried out, and a timetable.
4. Ask the smaller groups to report back their community plans to the main group. Be encouraging and support their suggestions.

Tip: Developing a Community Plan will take 20 minutes with 15 minutes for report back.

5. Ask one of the participants to compile a summary of the activities listed in the community plans. Use the format suggested below.

Tip: Make sure that each group is limited to one activity.

Activities	Who will do it	How	Timetable
1			
2			
3			

"It is up to you to decide whether you wish to go forward with the plans you have developed today. You can also decide if you want to meet again with your group to plan further. If you wish we can provide a skills workshop on community mobilisation that can assist with planning strategies."

The facilitator uses the picture of the community dancing together to discuss how the community can work together to benefit children.

Lessons learned

- What was useful about this exercise?
- How far did you go with developing your community plan?
- How far could you go to implement this plan in your community?

Examples of community activities that meet the needs of children

Physical needs
- Establishing communal gardens
- Income generation activities for community guardians, caregivers or older children
- Collecting or making clothing for children
- Teaching orphans how to look after themselves, and their brothers and sisters (cooking, cleaning and child care)

Emotional needs
- Raising community awareness to support the emotional needs of children
- Forming support groups for guardians (especially children heading households)
- Encouraging children to collect items to remind children of their deceased (or sick) parents (Memory Box programmes)

Social needs
- Encouraging and supporting activities outside of school (for example, sports, art, socialising)
- Spending time with orphans and children with difficult lives - or helping them to cope with various daily chores
- Forming support and play groups for children (kids clubs, youth clubs, drop-in centres)
  -Training community aunties and uncles on educating children on how to socialise and prevent HIV infection.

Spiritual needs
- Praying with children
- Inviting children to participate in religious activities (youth groups, prayer meetings, etc).
- Religious counselling with a message of hope for the future (counselling groups)
- Encouraging religious groups to participate in activities that support children (church soccer teams)

Intellectual Needs
- Setting up homework clubs (parents and community volunteers helping with homework)
- Helping children remain in school

Activity 17 Game: River Crossing

20 MinS

PURPOSE: A fun activity that challenges participants to work together and provides an opportunity to solve a problem collectively. This activity game uses the image of a river to help participants to focus on the idea of working together to solve problems.

Steps

1. Divide participants into two groups, and give each group three pieces of paper, sacks or stones.

2. Ask them to imagine that a certain part of the room/space being used is a wide river that they need to cross. Explain that each group has to cross the river, using only three pieces of paper (sacks or stones) as 'stepping stones'.

Tip: Participants have to cross an imaginary river that appears too wide. Make sure that the imaginary river cannot be crossed with just three 'stepping stones'. If not, give the teams only two.

3. Ask participants to cross the river. Leave them to struggle for a while.

4. Then ask for other ideas, for example: *"What are some other ways that you can cross the river?"* Take a few minutes to discuss. Let participants try out their new ideas. If participants have not thought of any ideas, the facilitator then explains: *"If you share the stepping stones with the other team, will that help?"* Make sure that the imaginary river can be crossed using all 6 pieces of paper (sacks or stones).

5. Once the two groups have joined together using all the 'stepping stones' to cross over the river, ask them what they have learned from the game. They should have learned that working together means you can cross impossible obstacles and therefore achieve much more.

Summary of key learning points

- A community is made up of individuals and groups with a common purpose, values and shared problems
- Collective action is important if communities are to effectively deal with their problems, for example, the increasing number of orphans
- Children feel stronger when they are loved and cared for by their communities
- Members of communities can support each other through difficult times.

PART 8: Evaluation and Closing the Workshop

25 Mins

PURPOSE: To help you evaluate the workshop and find out whether it was useful, enjoyable and understandable.

Activity 18: Evaluation

15 Mins

Steps

1. Ask participants

a) What did you learn from the workshop?

b) How did it change the way you feel about children?

Tip: Decide whether you want participants to say what they think or whether they will draw or write their responses on flip chart paper. If you think it is easier for them to say what they think, make sure you or someone else can record comments and observations.

Closing the Workshop

PURPOSE: To briefly review the Journey of Life, thank participants and close the workshop.

Activity 19: Closing Ceremony

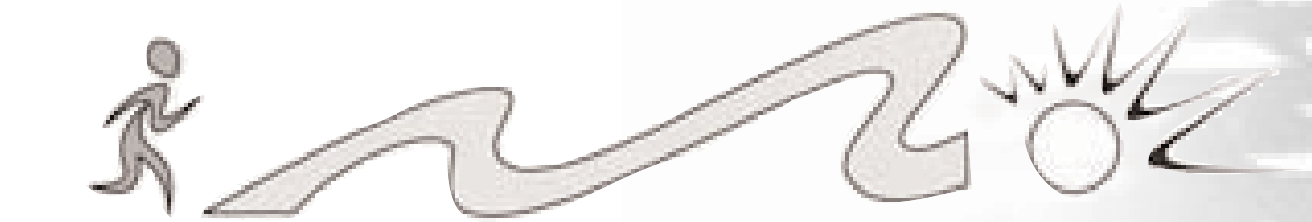
10 MinS

Give a brief summary of the workshop.

You could say: *"I am happy that you joined us in exploring the Journey of Life. We have talked about what children need to grow and prosper during their journey of life, what makes it difficult for them to move forward, what strengths children have to help themselves, and what we can do to help them. We have also talked about helping each other so that we can support children in our community."*

Steps

1. Thank participants for coming and making their community plans.
2. Close the workshop in whatever manner you feel appropriate – either saying a prayer, singing a song, or having children dance, handing out the certificates, etc.
3. Thank participants for their time and wish them well in their plans to support children in their communities.



Annexes

ANNEX 1

GUIDELINES FOR AN ABBREVIATED ONE DAY WORKSHOP

This is a shorter version of the Journey of Life workshop. It is designed to easily fit into a day. The activities to use are listed below by number and the time for each activity is listed in brackets.

Welcome (5 minutes)
1. Getting to Know Each Other (15 minutes)
2. Journey of Life (20 minutes)
4. Cost of Meeting Children's Needs (25 minutes)
6. Even the Strongest Child (20 minutes)
8. Children's Problems are Everyone's Problems (40 minutes)
9. Road of Danger (35 minutes)
12. Gift Box (35 minutes)
14. Community Support (20 minutes)
15. Circles of Support (25 minutes)
16. Developing a Community Plan (45 minutes)
18. Evaluation (15 minutes)
Closing the Workshop (10 minutes)

Total time of activities: $5^{1}/_{2}$ hours
Total time for workshop with lunch and teas included: $6^{3}/_{4}$ hours

Annex 2 Games and energisers for the workshop

1. The sun shines on...	Participants sit or stand in a tight circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle shouts out for example 'the sun shines on all those wearing blue'. All the participants wearing blue must change places with one another. The person in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move so that there is another person left in the middle without a place in the circle. The new person in the middle shouts out the same thing, this time using another colour or type of clothing and the game continues.
2. Pass the energy	Standing or sitting in a circle, participants hold hands stay quiet and concentrate. The facilitator sends a series of 'pulses' both ways round the group by discreetly squeezing the hands of those next to her/him. Participants pass these pulses round the circle, as in an electric current, by squeezing the hand of the person next to them and literally 'energising' the group.
3. Pass the person	Participants stand facing each other in 2 lines. Each person tightly grasps the arms of the person opposite. A volunteer lies face up across the arms of the pairs at the beginning of the line. Gently, the person is 'bumped' all the way along the line by pairs putting their arms up and down to move the volunteer on.
4. Heads to tummies	People lie on the floor in a chain so that each person has their head on another person's stomach. Someone will laugh. Hearing someone laugh through his or her stomach makes the next person laugh and so on round the chain.
5. Yes/No Game	Participants split into two lines, so that each person faces a partner. One line has to say, "Yes" in as many different ways as possible, while the other line is trying to convince their partner "No". Swap around so that each line has said both "Yes" and "No" and then discuss how people felt/which one was easier to say etc.
6. People to people	Everyone finds a partner and one person is the leader and calls out actions eg nose to nose, back to back, head to knee etc. Participants have to follow these instructions in their pairs. When the leader calls "People to people" everyone must change partners.
7. What am I feeling?	Participants sit in a circle. Each person takes a turn acting out an emotion. Other participants try to guess what feeling the person is acting out. The person who guesses correctly acts out the next emotion.
8. Clap exchange	Participants sit in a circle. Send a clap around the circle by facing and clapping in unison with the person on your right, who repeats the clap with the person on their right, and so on. Do this as fast as possible. Send many claps around the circle at the same time.

"To grow from a child into an adult is a journey- the journey of life. Along the way children may encounter problems. Often they are strong enough to continue their journey without additional help. But sometimes the problems are too many or too difficult. It is then that the child requires the strength and caring of the community to continue onward with their journey."

The Journey of Life is a workshop to raise community awareness of the problems that children face growing up in a time of HIV/AIDS, war, and family disintegration. Its objective is to assist the community in identifying children in need of social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical support. It also seeks to find solutions to the problems that children encounter using the resources available in the community, and to help the community strengthen the resilience of their children.