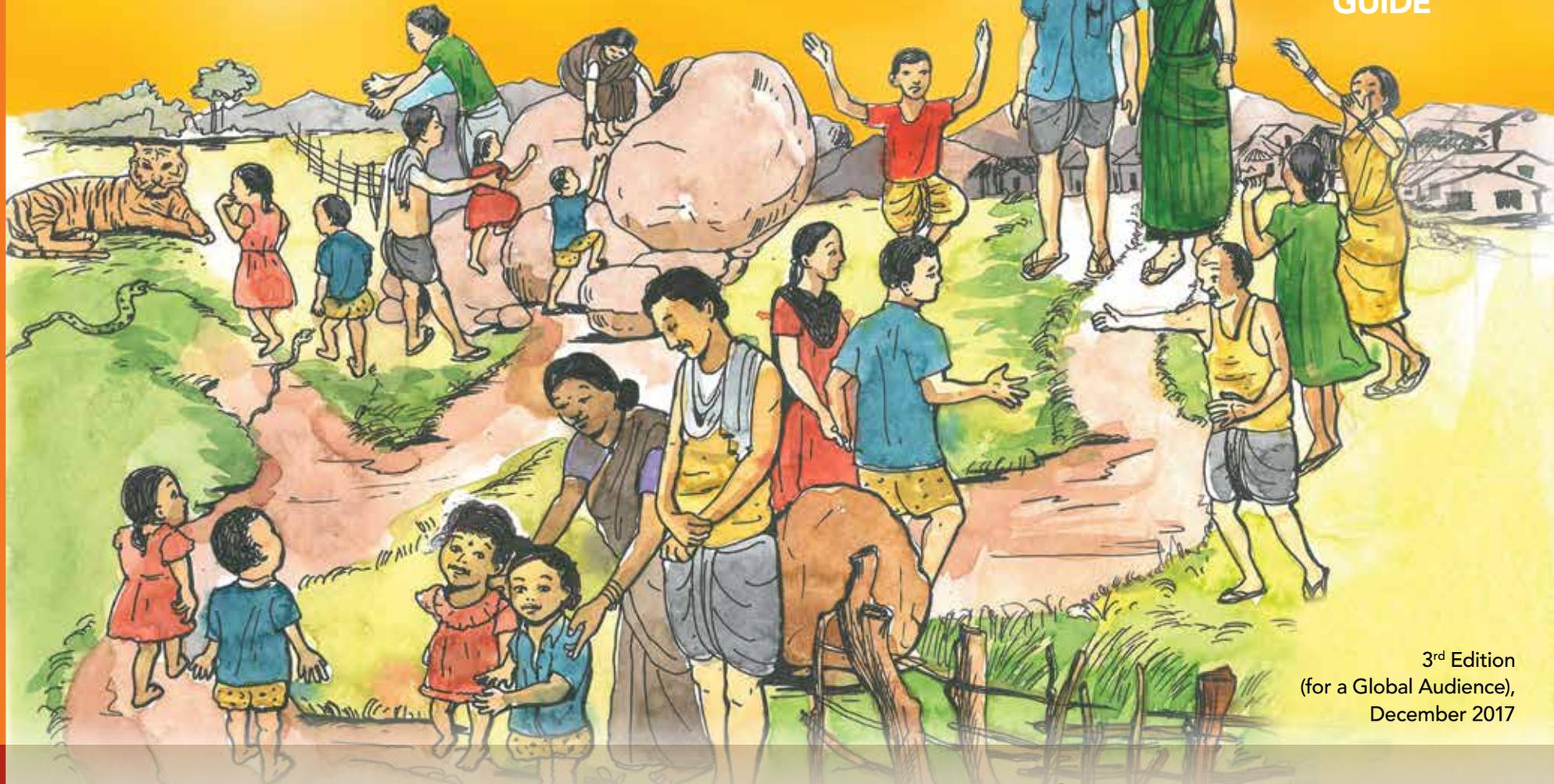


# THE Journey of Life

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP TO SUPPORT CHILDREN



## COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



SEE  
BACK COVER  
FOR FULL  
SERIES

Each workshop comes in both a Facilitator Training Guide (FTG) and a Community Implementation Guide (CIG) – Make sure you have the right version.

CIG  
1,2,3

### INCLUDING:

- Action Workshop 1: *Community Parenting*
- Action Workshop 2: *Supporting Grieving Children*
- Action Workshop 3: *Lessons from life – Teaching Life Skills to our Children*

3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
(for a Global Audience),  
December 2017





**REPSSI (the Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative)** is the leading African psychosocial support non-profit organization. It was founded in 2002 and operates in 13 countries across East and Southern Africa, with its head office in South Africa.

REPSSI partners with government ministries (particularly the ministries responsible for social services, education and health), development partners, international organisations, NGOs and CBOs. We provide support to our partners who strengthen the capacity of communities and families to care for and protect their children and youth. Our partners collectively reach at least two million children per year.

REPSSI promotes an enabling environment for communities and families to preserve and nurture the psychosocial wellbeing of boys and girls.

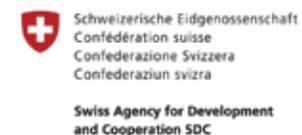
This publication must be attributed with the words: REPSSI (2017), The Journey of Life Trainer's Manual Global Edition): Facilitator's Guide. Johannesburg: REPSSI. [www.repssi.org](http://www.repssi.org) in collaboration with CRS.



**Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States to serve World War II survivors in Europe. Since then, we have expanded in size to reach 100 million people annually in over 100 countries on five continents.

Our mission is to assist impoverished and disadvantaged people overseas, working in the spirit of Catholic social teaching to promote the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person. Catholic Relief Services works in partnership with local, national and international organizations and structures in emergency response, agriculture and health, as well as microfinance, water and sanitation, peace and justice, capacity strengthening, and education. Although our mission is rooted in the Catholic faith, our operations serve people based solely on need, regardless of their race, religion or ethnicity. Within the United States, CRS also engages Catholics to live their faith in solidarity with the poor and suffering people of the world.

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# Acknowledgements

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## Author's acknowledgements

We began our journey in 2003, being inspired by Stefan Germann of REPSSI, to develop a workshop to assist communities in caring for children. The inspiration grew into a program of six workshops. The Journey of Life Series seeks to address the psychological and social needs of children affected by HIV and AIDS, war, violence and displacement. We would like to thank the many participants from southern and eastern Africa who devoted their time, energy and inspiration in developing the original Journey of Life Series, upon which this revised edition (for a Global Audience) is based.

The 1st edition of the Journey of Life was developed and written by Jonathan Brakarsh, with support from the Community Information and Inspiration Team Editors: Glynis Clacherty, Juliet Le Breton, Mel O’Gorman, Aulora Stally Artists: Anxious Katuruza, Stan Watt Cover Illustration: Stan Watt Pictures: Anxious Katuruza DTP: Blue Apple Members of the Community

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This revision for a Global Audience was prepared after a Journey of Life workshop was led by Lynette Mudekunye and Alex Tigere of REPSSI for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in Chennai, India in 2016. Based on input from that training, it was further adapted by Lucy Steinitz (CRS), with additional support from Elizabeth (Liz) Barry for the Action Workshops. Mary Keerthana Thanikal

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# Foreword

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## Our Journey

Twelve people from southern and eastern Africa – all of us having worked with children or the issues of HIV and 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 about growing up in poverty and in wealth, and 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 call 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 100 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 are experiencing today. 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 CIIT composed, revised, pre-tested and rewrote 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. Most recently, we were delighted in 2016 when Lucy Steinitz at Catholic Relief Services – one of our 12 co-founders (then affiliated with Catholic AIDS Actions) – asked whether we would co-produce a Journey of Life for a Global Audience with CRS. This latest edition, with illustrations from India, is the result.

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



Noreen Masiwa Huni

*Executive Director REPSI*

## Introduction to the Journey of Life series

### Purpose

The Journey of Life series helps communities to support both caregivers and children in need. With individual and community resources often stretched to the breaking point by HIV and AIDS, war, violence and natural disasters, people need the information and skills to be able to plan a course of action. The Journey of Life encourages reflection, dialogue and action among children, caregivers and concerned members of the community.

### Who is it for?

The Journey of Life series is for all people who interact with children. This includes caregivers, parents, classmates, friends, religious and traditional leaders; and various professionals such as police, teachers, nurses and doctors. Rather than offer the workshop to a select group of counselors or community workers, the Journey of Life involves all those who have an impact on the daily lives of children.

## What is the Journey of Life series?

### *The Community Implementation Guide and the Facilitator Training Guide*

There are two types of guides in the Journey of Life series. The one is the Community Implementation Guide (this one) and the other is the Facilitator Training Guide. They are very similar and as the names suggest, **the Facilitator Training Guide prepares facilitators to implement the community conversation (using the Community Implementation Guide) with stakeholders of the community.**

The Community Implementation Guide aims to facilitate the actual community conversation with community members. To prepare facilitators to conduct the actual community conversation they go through the same activities they will use in the community conversation.

### *Journey of Life Awareness Workshop*

The Awareness Workshop increases community awareness about the needs and problems of children and how to mobilize motivated people to work on these issues. The Journey of Life Awareness Workshop gives communities an opportunity to identify their capacities and their collective responsibility

towards children. It allows communities to understand children's issues, build their inner strength to live a fulfilling life and cope with any challenges encountered through the journey of life.

There are also nine Action workshops on specific themes. They are:

1. *Community Parenting*
2. *Supporting Grieving Children*
3. *Lessons from Life*
4. *Social Connectedness*
5. *Making our Communities Safer*
6. *Children with Disabilities*
7. *Ending Child Marriage*
8. *Ending Human Trafficking*
9. *Protecting Children from Abuse*

The Action Workshops assist the community to transform their awareness into a specific plan of action, using the information and skills they have acquired in the workshops.

For more information, see back cover.

## Who are the facilitators?

Two groups of people are involved in the Journey of Life series to assist in the transfer of knowledge and skills:

- a. **Trainers** who train other facilitators and also work with the community; and
- b. **Community facilitators** who work directly with the community using the Community Conversation Guide to hold informal discussions

The Journey of Life series is appropriate for trainers and community facilitators with basic formal education who can read and write, can impart their knowledge to others, and have a passion and interest in bettering the lives of children.

The Journey of Life series is designed in an easy-to-follow way, and all people who meet the following criteria can facilitate if they have read this manual and/or have attended a training session:

- Experience working with communities
- Experience working with children
- Sound psychosocial support knowledge and skills
- Those with approximately seven years of education.

A ratio of 2 facilitators per 20 participants is recommended per workshop.

## Who are the participants?

The Journey of Life series is for all people who interact with children. This includes caregivers, parents, classmates, friends, religious and traditional leaders; and various professionals such as police, teachers, nurses and doctors. Also remember the slogan, “Nothing about us, Without us!” Make sure that you include children and youth (aged over 16) amongst the participants.

## Principles and philosophy of the Journey of Life series

The Journey of Life series is based on the following key principles:

- The family and larger community have the strength, the capacity, and the resources to respond to the challenges of life. We begin with these strengths and support families and communities to build on them.
- Children are not passive recipients. Instead, they can be actively involved in meeting their own needs and those of other children and adults.
- Community mobilization is multi-generational. When children, youth, and adults are involved together they learn from each other.
- Communities do not need to be told what to do. Rather, the workshops guide communities to conceive their own solutions and develop plans to carry them out.

- Finding ways to work together to address common issues can be fun, simple and non-technical. People with varying levels of education and different backgrounds can use drama, art, dance, song, and discussion to develop new ideas and skills.
- All efforts to support children must ensure they are protected, and that confidentiality is maintained.

## 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 'speech bubble', and information about when to use the Picture Pack (a set of pictures to help you with the workshop). Each of these sub-titles is represented by a symbol that you can see below.

### **OBJECTIVES**

**Objectives help you to focus attention on a certain issue. (Note for facilitator: The objectives are for your use only. Please do not read them out to participants.)**

### **Purpose**

**The section called "Purpose" provides guidance and key reasons for doing each activity.**

### **Activities**

**Activities help the participants learn, contribute to the discussions and stimulate ideas.**

#### **Activities include:**

- Discussions (when the participants discuss issues, with your guidance)
- Demos (when you ask a participant/participants to show/explain something to the group)
- Role plays (where participants will act out a situation)
- Games (helps to energize participants as they learn about 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 organize the activity, or key points that you need to emphasize.



### Lessons learned

This section helps participants summarize 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.



### 30 MINUTES

### 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 next to the activity title, on the right-hand side of the page. Participants may take a longer or shorter time to complete each session, so it is useful to use the time given as a guide.

### Facilitator's speech

*A speech bubble indicates words that the facilitator may use to highlight important issues throughout the workshop. These words appear in quotation marks (" ").*



## PART 1 Introduction and welcome

 30 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

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



### WELCOME:

You could say:

*"Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (name) from \_\_\_\_\_ (organization) 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 life challenges. 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 numerous, and 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."*

---

## Activity 1.1

### Getting to know each other Game

 30 MINUTES

---

#### Purpose

To help the participants introduce themselves and to get to know each other and their interests

#### TIP:

You can ask the participants to board different buses, for example, a carers' bus, football fans' bus or dancers' bus. This game helps the facilitator to understand the background of the participants.



#### STEPS

#### Buses Game

*"We all take buses to get places. You take a bus 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. As you board the bus of your choice, you should shout out your name."*

Continue to ask the 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 color of shirts the participants are wearing, their jobs, or the number of children they have. The participants can come up with their own ideas for buses.

**Activity 1.2**  
**Ground Rules**  
*Discussion*



**Activity 1.3**  
**Expectations**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**

To explain the basic rules of the workshop that will govern the behavior of the participants for the duration of the meeting

**Purpose**

To understand the expectations and concerns of the participants

**STEPS**

1. The facilitator asks the participants to provide the ground rules for the workshop, for example, switching off cell phones, respecting others' opinions, etc.
2. The facilitator lists the ground rules on flip chart paper.

**STEPS**

1. The facilitator divides the participants into three groups.
2. Each group writes down their expectations for the workshop on flip chart paper.
3. Each group briefly presents their views.

4. The facilitator goes through the presented expectations, highlighting which ones can be met during the workshop and those which might not be met.

**TIP:**

It's important to be honest and respectful, and not make false promises. Ensure that you address all logistical questions or concerns at this point before the workshop starts.

## PART 2 Facilitation skills

### Activity 1.4

#### Principles of the Journey of Life series

Discussion



10 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To help the participants understand the basic beliefs upon which the Journey of Life series is built

#### 1. The facilitator explains that:

The Journey of Life series is based on the following key principles:

- The family and larger community have the strength, the capacity, and the resources to respond to life's challenges. We begin with these strengths and support families and communities that build on them.

- Children are not passive recipients. Instead, they can be actively involved in meeting their own needs and those of other children and adults.
- Community mobilization is multi-generational. When children, youth and adults are involved together they learn from each other.
- Communities do not need to be told what to do. Rather, the workshops guide communities to conceive their own solutions and develop plans to carry them out.
- Finding ways to work together to address common issues can be fun, simple and non-technical. Drama, art, dance, song and discussion can be used to develop new ideas and skills, by people with varying levels of education and different backgrounds.
- All efforts to support children must ensure that they are protected, and that confidentiality is maintained.

#### 2. The participants discuss the principles (5 minutes).

**Activity 1.5**  
**Working with the community**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**

To help participants understand what a community is and the factors that are important to consider when working with a community

**STEPS**

1. The facilitator asks the participants the question: "What is a community?" and records their responses on a flip chart.

2. The facilitator should then give a definition of community as follows:

*"A community is made up of individuals and groups with common values, beliefs, or shared problems."*

3. In buzz groups of 2 to 3 people ask the participants to list the different types of communities they know.
4. The facilitator should explain that the Journey of Life is applicable to such communities.
5. Participants should join a group that they identify with, for example, people of the same religion, people from the same area, people with the same marital status.
6. In their community groups, participants should answer the following questions:
  - a. What are the skills and resources that can be found in all communities?

- b. How can we work with communities so that they do not have unrealistic expectations of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other development organizations?
- c. What can be done to ensure that we, as NGOs and development workers, do not look down upon the community (a maximum of three points)?

**TIP:**

Each group can answer one question depending on time and energy.

**Activity 1.6**

**Overview of the community mobilization cycle**

*Discussion*



**30 MINUTES**

**Purpose**

To help the participants understand the necessary steps for mobilizing communities, using the Journey of Life series to achieve this objective

**STEPS**

1. The facilitator asks the participants to read the six steps in the "Overview for Community Mobilization" in the box on the following page.
2. The facilitator explains that as the participants learn the Journey of Life series, they should think about how each workshop fits into the steps of community mobilization.

3. If the participants request more information about these steps, they can read through the information box where steps 1 to 6 are explained in more detail, under Facilitator's Notes.
4. Preparing to mobilize:
  - a. Divide the participants into organization/country groups.
  - b. Give them flip chart paper to do a mapping exercise.
  - c. Ask them to think about communities that they work in or know well.
  - d. Ask them to identify and illustrate the power structures within the community such as religious leaders, traditional leaders and business people.
  - e. Ask them to identify the most marginalized groups within the community.
  - f. Ask participants to identify and draw individuals who would be committed to the Journey of Life process.
  - g. Ask participants to identify and draw on their map those organizations working with orphans and vulnerable children, or other children in need of services.
  - h. Ask the following the questions:
    - i. What would be the ideal days/times to meet with the community?
    - ii. Where will the meetings be held and who would be the person who takes the lead at these meetings?
    - iii. How would you ensure that a wide range of age groups is represented?
- iv. Which influential people and groups would support the Journey of Life initiative?
5. Organizing the community for action:
  - a. Ask participants to discuss what needs to be considered when organizing the community for action.
  - b. Record their responses on flip chart paper.
  - c. Allow time for discussion.
4. To review the remaining steps in community mobilization, have participants meet in various group activities to discuss the questions listed under each step (creating awareness, planning together, acting together, and evaluating together). This can be done throughout the TOT workshop rather than all at one time.

**TIP:**

As you go through the Awareness and Action workshops, develop the relevant steps of community mobilisation. For example, after a session on the Awareness Workshops, discuss the step (or actions) of creating awareness in the community. After a session on the Action Workshops, you can discuss the community mobilisation steps of planning and acting together.

## Note to the Facilitator: Overview for Community Mobilisation

### *1. Preparing to mobilize*

- Know your community: Identify existing organizations, such as religious groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), youth groups, and committees working with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and those affected by HIV and AIDS.
- Identify the power structures: Traditional leaders, elected councilors, religious and business groups, and community leaders who can mobilize the community, and lend authority to any efforts to do so.
- Recognize those willing to commit time and effort to establishing the Journey of Life process.
- Plan the ideal days/times for meeting with the community, including the venue and the person taking the lead at meetings.
- Since the Journey of Life is multi-generational, take steps to ensure that a wide cross-section of age groups is represented.
- Initially conduct a few meetings with influential people and groups to gather support.

### *2. Organizing the community for action*

From those attending the Journey of Life Awareness workshop, identify a group of community leaders to spearhead the process. This group might be part of an existing group or committee, or a new one created to lead the community initiative in caring for children.

Find out which individuals and organizations are already involved with providing support to vulnerable children. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these individuals and organizations.

Explore the reasons that draw people together to care for children. Based on whether it is cultural obligations, religious beliefs or political reasons, it would be advisable to involve traditional leaders, religious leaders or elected officials in the process. The chances of success are even higher if a combination of different leaders join together to support the community action.

This group must receive the community's mandate and commitment to work through the issues raised at the end of the Journey of Life Workshop.

### **3. Creating awareness in the community:**

#### **Exploring the issues**

- Explore the issues raised with the organizing committee after the Journey of Life workshop.
- Answer these key questions:
  - What is the community already doing to support children?
  - What are the challenges confronting the community as it tries to support children?
- Set priorities for action.
- Use picture codes in informal settings with the larger community to explore any issues that may arise

The Awareness Workshop is a tool to encourage the community to explore the issues of children that need help and raise their awareness of ways in which they can help these children.

### **4. Planning together**

- Which issues do we want to address?
- What are the available resources within the community?
- Which other programs and organizations are trying to address issues beyond the scope of the Journey of Life series?
- Facilitators need to be aware of other organizations and programs that can be solicited to address some of the other issues that may arise, for example, providing food, schooling, shelter, clothing, and recreational facilities. These may differ across countries and communities, but the facilitator must be able to support the organizing committee in liaising with other organizations to address issues that are critical, even if they are not addressed through the Journey of Life program.
- What skills do we possess?
- How might the Journey of Life series fit into these efforts?
- Develop an action plan.
- Use the relevant Action Workshops.

The Journey of Life process helps communities to identify things that they can do to help vulnerable children, and develop plans of action to put these into practice.

### **5. Acting together**

- Request the organizing committee and other interested groups to take action on the following:
- Access resources both within and outside the community
- Link up with established organizations and structures that are sustainable and have the resources and power to lead change, such as local government bodies, traditional leaders and religious institutions.
- Build capacity and resources using the Action Workshops and other intervention practices.
- Implement the action plan
- Use 'study circles' (see below) to include the larger community in a review of the Journey of Life series in a discussion of the picture packs.

It is important that any group or organization that is promoting community awareness through the Journey of Life also plans to follow up with the community. This will help them to act together and produce a new and different environment for their children. Facilitators that are trained to implement the Journey of Life should be challenged and encouraged to

find ways of continuing interaction with these communities to support them in implementing their plan of action. This is a long-term commitment of at least several months or years.

The process should involve ongoing community monitoring of the success of their intervention. Have they done what they had planned? What have been the results? It should also involve ongoing reflection and replanning. If one action was successful or not successful, what should the next action be? Who needs to be involved? How should it be done to either build on the previous success or to address any challenges from the previous experience?

### **6. Evaluating together**

- What do you want to learn from the evaluation?
- Develop the evaluation instruments
- Provide feedback to the community in order to validate the results.
- Share the lessons learned and the recommendations with the community.

***A community-based method of evaluation:***

Study circles are groups of people who meet to learn new ways of improving their lives. Study circles also serve to monitor and evaluate progress. These groups can provide useful, on-going feedback about changes observed among children and caregivers in the communities where the Journey of Life series is being incorporated. For example, the study circles may seek answers to the following questions:

- Who are the children I am concerned about?
- Have they changed and how?
- Who are the care givers I am concerned about?
- Have they changed and how?

The study circles can also have their own mini-workshops to review the Journey of Life series and assess their progress from time to time.

A key person can meet with these groups periodically to assess the development of skills within the study circles and the impact of the Journey of Life series.

(Source: Adapted from L. Grabman and G. Snetro, How to Mobilise Communities for Health and Social Change, John Hopkins Media Clearinghouse)

**Activity 1.7**  
**Facilitation and participatory learning**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**  
To learn facilitation techniques which encourage participatory learning

**STEPS**

1. Divide the participants into three groups and assign the following tasks:

**Group 1:** Discuss what participants need to learn.

**Group 2:** Draw a picture of the Journey of Life facilitator(s). In the drawing, write the words which describe their most important characteristics. Write comments next to the relevant body parts, for example, the head, heart, feet and arms.

**Group 3:** Using excerpts from the Journey of Life workshop let the participants show in a drama:

- The characteristics of a good facilitator who encourages participatory learning; and
- The characteristics of a poor facilitator.

2. Let each group report back (30 minutes).

3. The facilitator says:

*"The basic principle of participatory learning is that everybody has knowledge and experience to contribute to the process."*

4. Referring to the *Facilitator's Guide*, the facilitator summarizes that participatory learning is based on five steps (spiral model):

- Build on the experience of the participants. Make sure you are aware of their past experiences and what they know.
- Look for patterns in their experience. Note the experiences

that participants have in common and those that are different.

- Be creative with new information. Build on the participants' knowledge and experiences.
- Help the participants practice new skills and plan for action.
- Help the participants apply the lessons they have learned. After the workshop, the participants can use these new skills and knowledge in their daily lives.

# The Journey Of Life Awareness Workshop

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## Facilitator's Guide

### Overview

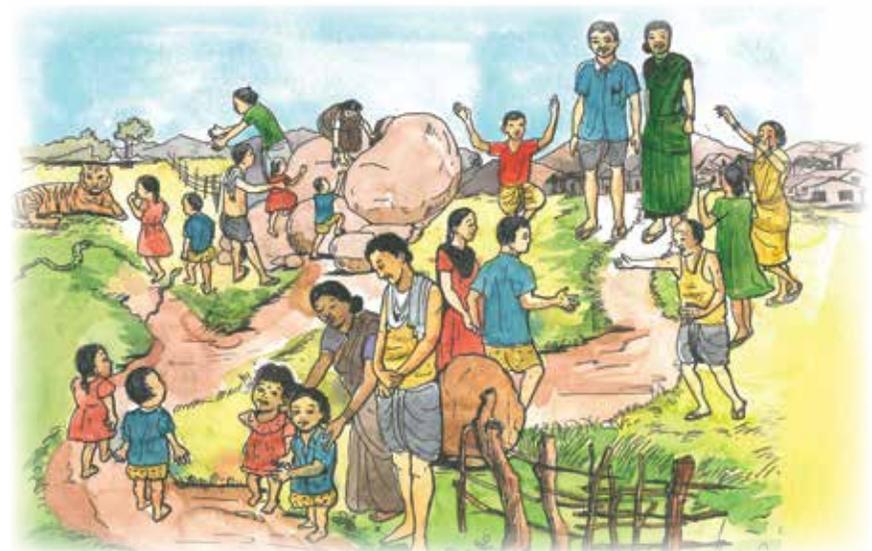
To grow from a child into an adult is a journey – the journey of life. Along the way, children face problems. Often they are strong enough to continue their journey without help.

For example, many children take care of their brothers and sisters, or look after sick relatives. But sometimes the problems are too numerous or too difficult for children to handle. When children are overwhelmed by life's problems, the community can use its collective strength to support the child.

The Journey of Life Awareness Workshop is designed to help youth and adults to understand the needs and problems of children who live in difficult circumstances. This is the first workshop in the Journey of Life series, aimed at adults and youth who already help children or want to help them.

The estimated time for the workshop is 2 days. It would be useful to start each day with a brief reminder of the issues that

have already been covered. 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), or, if it supports safety and ease in sharing, form gender-specific groups, i.e., a women's group and a men's group.



## Outline of the workshop

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

## Materials needed

- 6 pictures (J1-J6)
- 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, such as candles, certificates, or whatever you feel is appropriate.

The workshop has seven parts. These are:

**Part 1:** Introducing the Journey of Life – introduces the Journey of Life concept and our lives as a journey

**Part 2:** Meeting children's needs – shows that it does not cost much to provide for children's needs

**Part 3:** Understanding children's problems – helps participants understand that children are quite resourceful, but they can be overwhelmed by problems and sometimes need help

**Part 4:** Identifying children who need help – enables participants to recognize when children are struggling with problems

**Part 5:** Building children's strengths – empowers participants to help children develop their strengths and find solutions to their problems

**Part 6:** Get involved! – guides participants to develop a community plan that will support children

**Part 7:** Evaluation and closing the workshop



## Day 1: Workshop Schedule

### **PART ONE: Introducing the Journey of Life**

12.20 Discussion: Drawing your Journey of Life

### **PART TWO: Meeting children's needs**

2.00 Discussion: Identifying children's needs  
2.20 Discussion: The cost of meeting children's needs  
3.00 Tea

### **PART THREE: Understanding children's problems**

4.00 Discussion: Problems children face  
4.20 Demo: Even the strongest child can be weighed down by problems  
4.45 End of Day 1

*This is a suggested workshop schedule. Note that times are approximate. The activities may take longer.*



## Day 2: Workshop Schedule

### **PART 4: Identifying children who need help**

8.15 Review of Day 1  
8.45 Discussion: Children with difficult lives  
9.15 Role Play: Children's problems are everyone's problems  
10.10 Discussion: The Road of Danger  
10.45 Tea

### **PART 5: Building children's strengths**

11.00 Discussion: Building the inner strength of children  
11.30 Role play: The gift box

### **PART 6: Get involved**

12.10 Discussion: Circles of support  
13.00 Lunch  
14.00 Discussion: Practical ways to support children  
15.00 Tea  
15.30 Game: The river crossing game

### **PART 7: Evaluation and closing the workshop**

16.00 Evaluation  
16.30 Closing  
16.45 End of Day 2

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

- To help adults and youth think about the impact of HIV and AIDS, violence, war, poverty 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, their behavior may change
- To help participants understand that children have strengths and if united with adults and/or other children, they can help build on 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

## PART 1 Introducing the Journey of Life

 40 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

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

### Activity 1 The Journey of Life Discussion

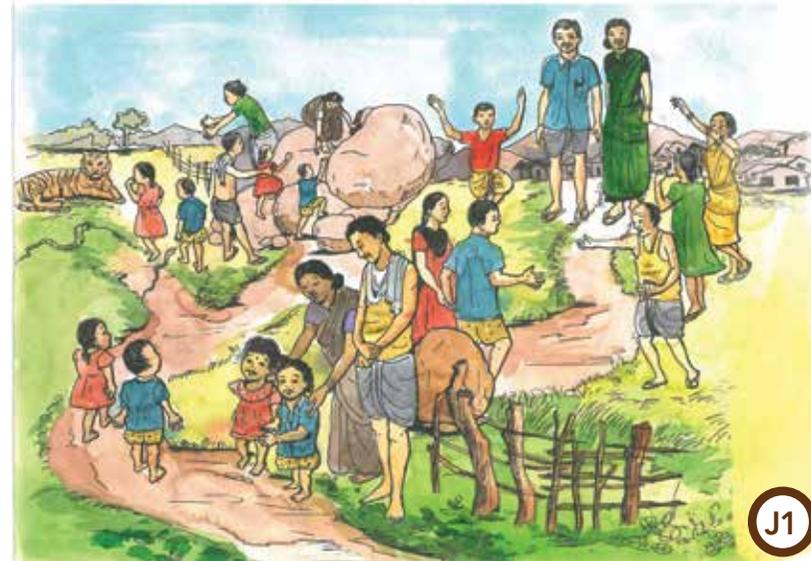
 40 MINUTES

### 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 good. Some bad."*



J1

1. Present Picture J1 (The Journey of Life) and ask each participant to think about his or her life as a journey.

2. Ask the participants to draw their Journey of Life, including two important events that have happened.

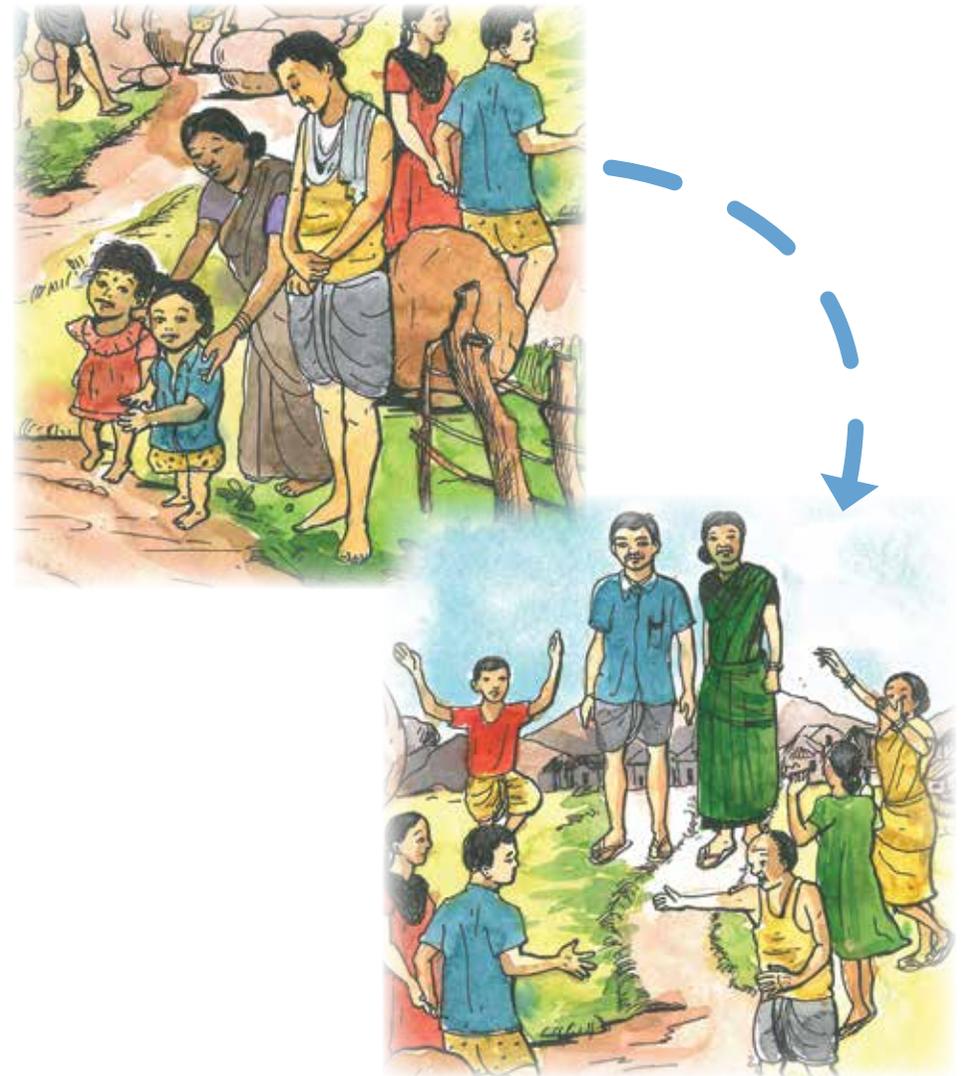
*“Think of your life as a journey from childhood to adulthood. Draw your life as a journey and show two significant events, good or bad, that happened to you.”*

3. Ask the participants to think about what they needed for their Journey of Life, and discuss this with another person.
4. In the group, ask “What help did you need?”, “Who provided this help?” Make 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 2 Meeting children's needs

 20 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

- To help the participants understand what children need for healthy growth; their social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual development
- To help the participants appreciate that some needs of children can be met without money

What do children need to grow?

*"We have identified what we needed to grow into healthy adults. Now let us talk about what children need to enjoy their childhood, to cope with the difficulties they experience and to grow into strong and responsible adults. Let us try to think of non-monetary things that children need."*



**Activity 2**  
**Identifying and Understanding Children's Needs  
and Children's Rights**

*Discussion*



**40 MINUTES**

**Purpose**

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

**STEPS**

1. Ask the participants to look at the Picture J2 (Children are Like Young Plants). The facilitator uses this picture to illustrate the next point.

2. *"Children are like young plants. They need to be cared for. If you take good care of your plants, they will be strong and you will have 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 to help the community."*

**TIP:**

You can substitute "maize, wheat or rice plants" if that is more relevant.

3. *"Now we are going to look at what a child needs to grow into a strong adult."*

**TIP:**

Make sure that the following needs are mentioned: physical (food and shelter); intellectual (education); spiritual (a belief in a higher being); emotional (love); identity (a name, roots, a family name and belonging to a family, clan, community and nation); participation (ability to speak out and be listened to and taken seriously in decisions that affect them); protection (from harm, from abuse, from labor); and social (positive friendships which means they have a right to play with their friends, relationships with adults who will listen to them and help them).

4. Ask the participants to call out things children need to grow and develop into strong adults. Every time the participants call out a need, you acknowledge it ("Yes, they need food").
5. List the needs as they are called out on the flip chart. (You will use this list in the next activity).
6. Help participants understand that children's needs are children's rights.

*"Children have rights that should be protected. What you have listed as what children need to grow are also children's rights. For example, children have the right to be kept safe from harm, the right to receive adult care, the right to participate in making decisions and the right to education (which is more than just going to school)."*

7. Ask the participants to discuss the following in pairs:
  - a. Is there any difference in what boys need or have a right to, and what girls need or have a right to?
  - b. What can children do to make it easier for families and communities to meet their rights?

**Activity 3**  
**The Cost of Meeting Children's Needs**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**

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

**STEPS**

*"Let us look at the list of needs we created in the activity, 'Identifying Children's Needs' and see how we can provide for these. For each need, let us look at what it requires, money or people."*

1. Use the list of needs you have just developed for a discussion on whether people play a major role in fulfilling the need or money plays a major role in providing for the need.
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:**

See the table below for an example. You could use symbols, different pen colors or pictures to represent if the need requires MONEY or PEOPLE. Make the table using flip chart paper or a large sheet of paper, and write in large print or pictures.

Children's Needs: List what participants say in this column	People play major role	Money plays major role
Food	3	3
Clothing	3	3
Love	3	
Sense of belonging	3	
Protection		
<b>Total Number of Needs</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

4. 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 above shows that in the PEOPLE column, there are 4 entries. You can point out that from the exercise that PEOPLE meet the needs of children more than MONEY.

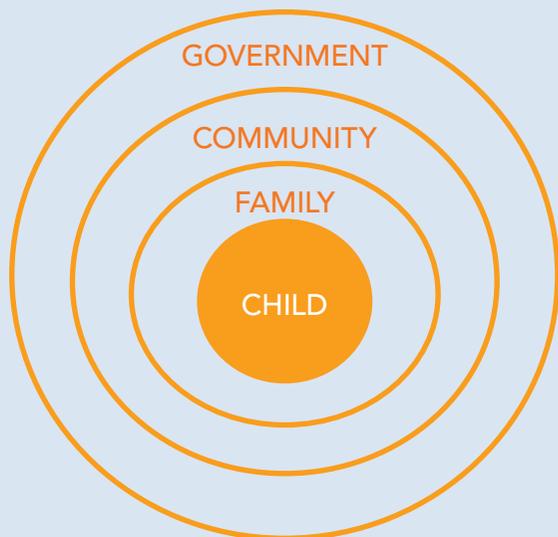
**TIP:**

Instead of counting the number of participants who think that a community needs people or money to meet a child's needs, participants can discuss and reach a consensus. For example, if they agree that PEOPLE rather than MONEY meet the needs of children, put a tick next to the need under the people column, Count the ticks in each column.

### Learning and reflection

The facilitator uses the Picture J2 (Children are Like Young Plants) to discuss what children need to grow up strong.

- What can we learn from this activity?
- Can money on its own meet children's needs?
- What are some of children's needs that can be met without money?



*“For every right there are responsibilities to the duty bearer to provide for and to protect the right. There are circles of support around a child. The family is normally the primary duty bearer: to make sure that children get the food, health care, shelter, protection, love and education that they are entitled to. The community supports the family. For example, the community may be involved in building a school, or repairing a road. The government has a responsibility to provide schools and teachers, and the international community supports governments to do this. Children also have responsibilities, for example, to attend school and do their homework.”*



## Summary of key learning points

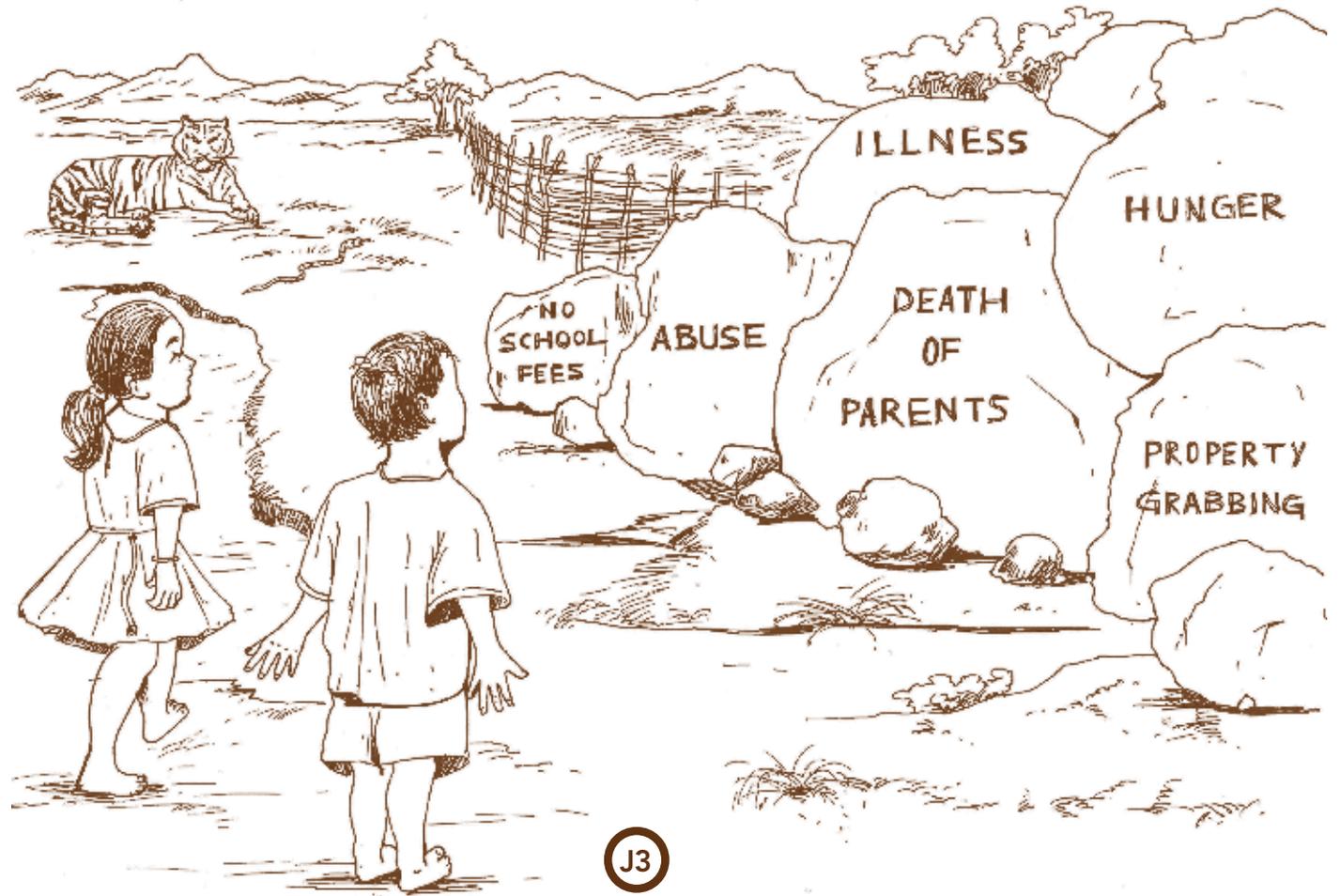
- Children have different needs that must be met to ensure that they successfully go through the Journey of Life. The international community has agreed that these needs (which are the same for all children, everywhere in the world) will be codified into children’s rights. Children’s rights are therefore not foreign but are what families and communities everywhere have always known must be given to their children if they are to become healthy and strong adults.
- We can use a picture of a young plant to help us understand that the way we take care of our children and meet their needs will help them to become adults.
- Children need love, a sense of belonging, an identity, education, food, health care, and shelter. Children also need to be protected and to participate. Families and communities have a responsibility to ensure that children receive these.
- Although some needs may require both money and people, we can satisfy most children’s needs without money. Our love, commitment, time, hands, ears and hearts can be used to meet important needs.

## PART 3 Understanding children's problems

 20 MINUTES

### 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



J3

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## Activity 4

### The Problems of Children

Discussion



#### Purpose

To help the participants think about the problems that children face as they grow, for example, problems associated with HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict

#### Reflection

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

#### TIP:

Activity 4 feeds into Activity 5.

1. In plenary, use the Picture J3.  
The discussion focuses on the problems facing children.
2. Say to the participants: "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?"
3. Ask the participants to discuss in pairs what problems children face today in the community as they grow up.
4. Ask the participants to list the problems on a flip chart.
5. If a child comes from a family where at least one parent is sick or has died, what problems will they have?
6. Do you think that children can solve their own problems? How?
7. How can we encourage children and help them solve problems? What skills can we teach them?

#### TIP:

Encourage the participants to give other examples of problems that children can and cannot solve by themselves.

**Activity 5**  
Even the strongest child can be weighed down by problems

*Demo*



**Purpose**

To show the participants that even strong children can become weighed down by too many problems

**Materials needed**

- Bag or sack
- Stones collected by participants



**TIP 1:**

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

**TIP 2:**

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

**STEPS**

1. Ask each participant to collect a stone to represent a problem that children face, using the list from Activity 5. Have one participant carry the empty bag to show other participants how easy it is to walk, skip and jump with a light (empty) bag.
2. Ask the participants to state a problem that children in their community face or, if they are children, have them share problems they or other children face, which their stone represents as they place in the bag. (For example, "This stone represents a child losing his/her mother").

3. Ask a child (or someone pretending to be a child) to demonstrate their strength by jumping 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 again. To help demonstrate how heavy problems can be, say:

*“This sack only has a few problems in it, but I want to show you that it is heavy with the problems of children, so I will pull it down.”*

5. Pull the sack down and tell the “child” to try to jump in place.
6. Ask the participants why it is difficult for this child to jump up and down.

**TIP:**

If the participants suggest that the child cannot jump 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.

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 the participants to demonstrate how they can help the child, and discuss other ways of helping children with problems. Ideas can include lifting the bag, removing some of the stones, supporting the child and carrying the bag to help the child continue on the Journey of Life. As participants make suggestions, have them take a stone out, one at a time, signifying the child’s load getting lighter. Have the child, or person acting as the child, now skip and jump with the empty bag.

*9. “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 himself/herself. 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.
- Today, children face different problems than they did in the past.
- Children can solve their problems if supported.
- However, if children face too many problems at the same time, they may become overwhelmed and fail to thrive.
- If we put our efforts together we can reduce the load of problems in children's lives.

## PART 4 Identifying children who need help

 120 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

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



### Activity 6 Children with difficult lives *Discussion*

 30 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To help the participants recognize 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 recognize those children who are struggling with problems and provide the necessary support to them."*

1. In plenary ask the following questions:
  - a. In your community, which group of children have 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. Ask one participant to draw up a summary chart of the vulnerable groups of children in the community.

**TIP:**

Use the chart on the following page to ensure that all categories of children are included in your discussion.

**Children with difficult lives include:**

Children living in war zones; refugees; girls; children caring for sick parents or very old grandparents; orphans; abused children; children living in extreme poverty; children in families where there is domestic violence; child-headed households; children on the streets; children in institutions; children who are forced into marriages; children with absent parents; disabled children; albinos; children in child labor; child soldiers, children who are trafficked, children who migrate and children initiated in witchcraft or accused of being engaged in witchcraft.

**Activity 7**  
**Children's problems are everyone's  
problems Role play**



**Purpose**

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

**STEPS**

1. Select a problem listed in summary box under Activity 7, titled 'children with difficult lives include'.

2. Divide participants into three groups. Ask them to role play the following scenarios based on the selected problem:
  - a. **Group 1:** show how the child is affected by the problem
  - b. **Group 2:** show how a family is affected by the problem that a child is experiencing
  - c. **Group 3:** show how the community is affected by the problem that a child is experiencing.
3. Each group presents their role play.

**TIP:**

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



### Lessons learned (15 minutes)

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

### TIP:

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

## Activity 8

### The Road of Danger

*Discussion*



35 MINUTES

### Purpose

To encourage the participants to think about what happens to children when they cannot cope with problems

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

1. Ask the participants if they can think of any time in their journey of life when they have taken the Road of Danger.
2. Using the Picture J4 (The Road of Danger) help participants to appreciate that some children who are trapped by problems get off the 'Main Road' and take the Road of Danger.

**TIP:**

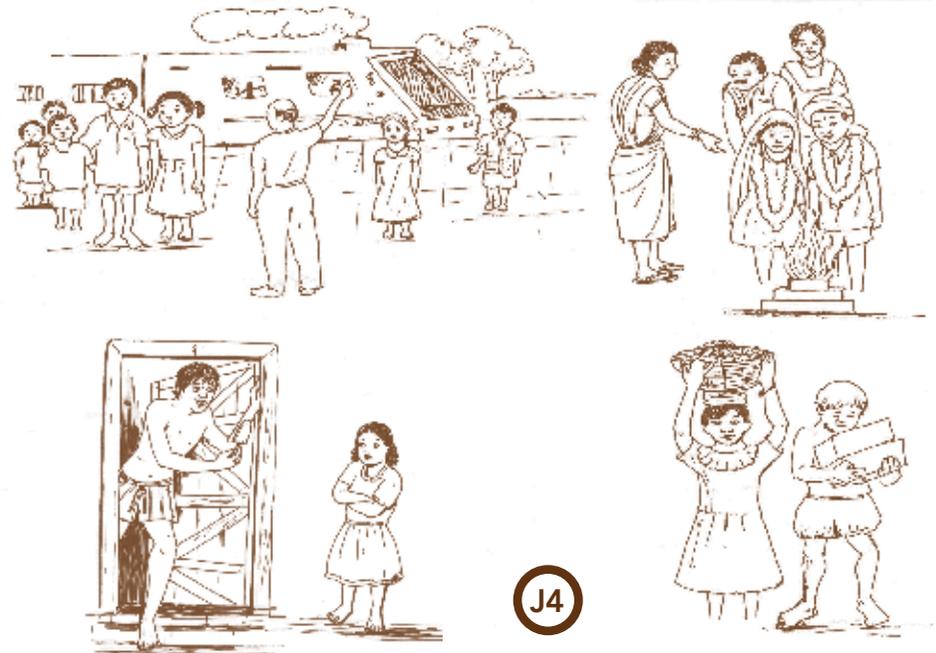
Use the Picture (J4) for this discussion or alternatively draw a picture of a child blocked by boulders that represent the problems that were used in the role play. The Road of Danger represents the desperate things that children do when they feel hopeless about their future.

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 be the future of children who have taken the Road of Danger?

- Do you think children on the Road of Danger can get back to the Main Road? How? Can they do it on their own?
- What support does your community give them? How do children get back on the Main Road?
- Is it enough? What other support do children need?

**TIP:**

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





## Summary of key learning points

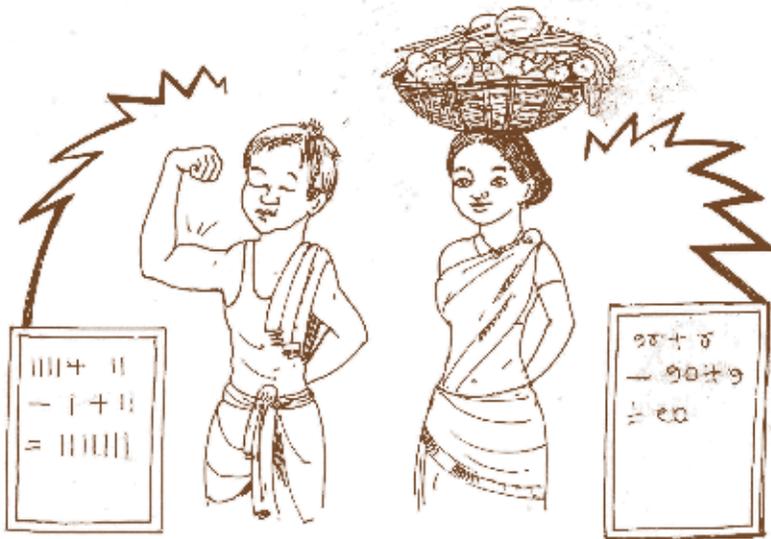
- Some children face greater challenges from birth, and others face their challenges later in life.
- When children take the Road of Danger, their personal development, families and communities are also affected.
- Children who show 'dangerous behavior' for example, stealing, alcohol and drug use, may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

## PART 5 Building children's strengths

 15 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

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



### Activity 9 Building the inner strength of children *Discussion*

 30 MINUTES

### Purpose

To enable the participants to understand that children have inner strengths that help them to manage most problems. To help the participants develop practical ways to build children's inner strength

### 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 3 participants to share stories of 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 thrive with problems. Let ideas come from the participants first.

2. Ask the group to brainstorm (ideas coming 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.

### Characteristics of a strong child

- Can ask for help
- Learns from their mistakes
- Is positive and has hope for the future
- Can set goals
- Puts effort into work and school

- Plays well with other children
- Prays and believes in God, or a Higher Being
- Looks clean and takes 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 the daily routines of life (e.g. going to school).

Even when children express these characteristics, they still need support for them to be strong and remain strong.

### STEPS

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

#### Group 1:

What makes a child strong?

Do children have the same strength? Explain your answer. Why do you think children’s responses to a situation may differ?

**Group 2:**

Why are some children not as strong as others? How can families and communities help children to become strong?



**TIP:**

Allow 10 minutes for discussion and 15 minutes for feedback. The facilitator uses the Picture J5 (Building Children's Strengths) 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 encounter problems."*



**Activity 10**  
**The Gift Box**  
*Role play*

 **40 MINUTES**



**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 plastic bag, or even cupped hands. The participants need two objects to symbolize 'gifts'. These may be leaves, stones, seedpods or bottle tops.

**STEPS**

This activity can be done in pairs of small groups if more comfortable than in a large group.

*"Now that we understand that families and communities can make children strong, and that we have a responsibility to make children strong, let us think about the non-material gifts that you received as a child that made you strong. What gifts would you now give to a child that could make them strong?"*

1. Pick up two small objects to put into the gift box. The first stone represents the 'gift' that you received as a child . The second stone represents the 'gift' that you give to other children.
2. Pass the 'gift box' from one participant to another.
3. Ask participants to pass the 'gift box' from one to the other so that it reaches all of them once. When it reaches each participant, they should place the first 'gift' into the box and name the 'gift'", for example, Courage.
4. Ask participants to repeat the exercise naming the second 'gift' as well.

**TIP:**

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

5. Present a summary of the 'gifts' mentioned. Check that all the 'gifts' in the box below are on your list. Display the gifts on a wall in the room.

### '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
- Protecting children from abuse and making communities safer
- 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 his/her feelings
- Emphasizing the importance of working together
- Supporting the development of common values and beliefs
- Giving equal value to the development of boys and girls
- Teaching children important skills
- Helping families that are struggling to produce their own food



### Lessons learned (5 minutes)

- 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?



### Summary of key learning points

- Children have the inner strength to solve many problems if supported.
- The 'gifts' that people give to children help to build inner strength.
- Some children cope better than others during times of stress.
- 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 and need our support.
- 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 face in life.

## PART 6 Get involved!

 130 MINUTES

### 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



### Activity 11 Circles of Support *Discussion*

 30 MINUTES

#### 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

The following steps can be done in one group or divide the group into smaller groups.

Ask a participant to stand in the middle to represent a girl (or use a female 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 her. For example, a school teacher, a family relative, a priest, a friend or a nurse.

### TIP:

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

1. Tell the 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 has led her to try breaking 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.

2. Stop the game after a few minutes. Explain that things have changed now that the girl has become pregnant.
  - The priest refuses 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 the 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 the participants attempting to block her. Because of the gaps in the circle, the girl will usually succeed in breaking out of the Circle of Support. After a few minutes, stop the game and

explain that when a support system is weak, absent or harmful, a child may do destructive things with his/her life.

### Discussion points

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 the responses and stick them on a wall (or tree).



### Lessons learned (10 minutes)

- **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?**



Children can become part of the Circle of Support.

**Activity 12**  
**Practical ways to support children**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**

To guide the participants to develop a practical community plan to facilitate the support and care of children

**STEPS**

*“As passionate and committed individuals in our communities, there is much we can do to help children grow and develop. We have been talking about gifts we can give, actions we can take but now we need to put them in a plan. Think about some of the practical things you can do in your family and community to meet children’s needs. 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 the resources required.”*

1. In plenary, ask the participants to discuss the following:
  - What are some priority things children need? What are the two most important?
  - What are you doing already as a community to provide support and care for children?
  - What else would you like to do?
  - What help do you need in order to do more?
  - How can you improve what you are doing, using what you have learned today?

2. Record their group ideas on a sheet of paper.

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

**TIP:**

Record all activities that communities could be involved in.

4. In smaller groups, ask the participants to create a plan they would like to carry out in their community in order to meet the needs of children.

5. The plans should contain one activity they plan to do, who will conduct the activity, how it will be carried out, and a timetable

**TIP 1:** Child participation and children’s voices should come out clearly in the plan.

**TIP 1:** Make sure that each group is limited to one activity.

**TIP:** Developing a community plan will take 20 minutes with 15 minutes for report back.

7. Ask one of the participants to write/record a summary of the activities listed in the community plans. Use the format suggested below.

*“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.”*

6. Ask the smaller groups to report back their community plans to the main group. Be encouraging and support their suggestions.

Activities	Who will do it	How (Process)	Timetable
1			
2			
3			



## Lessons learned (10 minutes)

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

## Examples of community activities that meet the needs of children

### *Physical needs*

- Establishing communal food gardens
- Income generation activities for community guardians, care givers or older children
- Collecting or making clothing for children
- Teaching orphans how to look after themselves, and their brothers and sisters (e.g. cooking, cleaning, child care)
- Emotional needs
- Raising community awareness to support emotional needs of children
- Forming support groups for guardians
- Encouraging children to collect items to remind them of their deceased (or sick) parents (Memory Box program)

### *Social needs*

- Encouraging and supporting activities outside of school (e.g. sports, art, socializing)
- 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 centers)
- Training community aunts and uncles on educating children on how to socialize and prevent HIV infection.

### *Spiritual needs*

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

### *Intellectual/Mental needs*

- Setting up homework clubs (older children, parents and community volunteers helping with homework)
- Helping children to remain in school

**Activity 13**  
**River-crossing**  
Game



20 MINUTES

**Purpose**

A fun activity that challenges participants to work together and provides an opportunity to solve a problem collectively. This game uses the image of a river to help the participants

**STEPS**

1. Divide the participants into two groups, by gender if the numbers are even, 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'.

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

**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 it can be crossed, then give the teams only two.

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 the participants try out their new ideas. If the 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 crossed the river using all the 'stepping stones', ask them what they have learned from the game.

### Discussion points

- Why was it difficult initially to cross the river?
- What made it possible to cross the river?
- What can we learn from this about collective action and responsibility?



### 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 the problems or obstacles they face.**
- **Children feel stronger when they are cared for by their communities.**
- **Members of communities can support each other through difficult times.**
- **In working together, it is possible to achieve more.**

## PART 7 Evaluation and Closing the Workshop

 25 MINUTES

### OBJECTIVES:

- To help the participants summarize what they have learned and how it has changed their attitudes towards children
- To conclude the workshop so that the participants feel a collective sense of pride and accomplishment
- To evaluate the workshop



### Activity 14 Evaluation *Discussion*

 25 MINUTES

### Purpose

To help you evaluate the workshop and find out whether it was useful, enjoyable and straightforward

### STEPS

1. Ask the participants the following question
  - a. What did you learn from the workshop?
  - b. How did it change the way you feel about children?
  - c. What would you do differently as a result of this workshop?

Decide whether you want the participants to say what they think or 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 record comments and observations.

**Activity 15**  
**Closing Ceremony**  
*Discussion*

 **10 MINUTES**

**Purpose**

To briefly summarize the workshop, thank the participants and close



**STEPS**

1. 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 thrive; 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. You need to carry this work forward by translating what we learned in this workshop into action. Continue discussions and children's support activities at household and community levels."*

2. Inform the participants that there are additional workshops available if they wish to provide further help to children and caregivers. The workshops are the Journey of Life for Children and the three Action Workshops: Community Parenting, Supporting Grieving Children and Life Skills.
3. End the workshop in whatever manner you feel appropriate – by saying a prayer, singing a song, dancing, handing out the certificates, etc.
4. Thank the participants for their time and wish them well in their plans to support children in their communities.

# ACTION WORKSHOPS

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## Introduction

The Action Workshops provide the community with the next step in discovering ways to help children. They are a call to action. They offer a method to come together and the skills to help children on a daily basis. These workshops do not train specialized counselors, but instead train people who care. The philosophy is that every person can help a child.

These workshops are multi-generational. Youth and adults work together to support each other, and to support children. The Action Workshops use the life experiences of the participants as a source of knowledge for evaluating the current situation of children, and to decide what steps can be taken to remove obstacles that children face on their journey of life.

There are nine action workshops:

*Action Workshop 1: Community Parenting*

*Action Workshop 2: Supporting Grieving Children*

*Action Workshop 3: Lessons from Life*

*Action Workshop 4: Social Connectedness*

*Action Workshop 5: Making our Communities Safer*

*Action Workshop 6: Children with Disabilities*

*Action Workshop 7: Ending Child Marriage*

*Action Workshop 8: Ending Human Trafficking*

*Action Workshop 9: Protecting our Children from Abuse*

*For information on Action Workshops 4-9 please contact [info@repssi.org](mailto:info@repssi.org)*

After introducing the Journey of Life to India in 2016, two new short Action Workshops (Action Workshops 8 and 9) were added. As with the other Action Workshops, these can be adapted for use globally in accordance with the local context and culture.

Although participation in the Journey of Life Awareness Workshop is not a pre-requisite for these Action Workshops, it is recommended.

It is best to have two facilitators per workshop, one of whom can provide a 'listening ear' and a referral in case a participant needs some one-on-one support. It is recommended to have between 15 to 25 participants per Action Workshop.

### **Ending Human Trafficking in Our Community (Action Workshop 8)**

This one-day workshop is designed to start a community conversation on how to respond to child human trafficking in home communities to protect children and youth, as well as how to prevent trafficking it from occurring.

### **Protecting our Children from Abuse (Action Workshop 9)**

This 1-day workshop is designed to help communities identify and respond to abuse of children in their communities.

## ACTION WORKSHOP 1:

# Community Parenting

## *Facilitator's Guide*

### Introduction to the facilitator(s)

We live in a time of great change. War, displacement, migration and community violence continue to affect families and weaken the relationship between parents or caregivers and children. Children are facing new economic and social pressures. Children are learning different values than those of their parents due to stressors placed on parents, such as finances, food security, and migrant working conditions. They may think differently and want to live differently. This can lead to communication problems between parents and children.

This workshop looks at ways to parent in difficult times. More importantly, this workshop encourages the idea of community parenting. This means that communities can provide parenting to families who are struggling to thrive as a family unit. Some examples include instances where one or both parents are seriously ill, a child-headed household, or where elderly people are trying to raise their grandchildren.

The facilitator should make sure that a wide range of different people are invited to this workshop such as parents, community caregivers and children aged 12 years and older who are interested in talking about community care of children. This also includes children who are heads of households.



## How to set up the workshop

When possible, two facilitators per 20 participants are recommended for this workshop and all workshops.

Explain the purpose of the meeting and the need for everyone to participate. Encourage both adults and children to share freely.

Invite the elders to share their wisdom and talk about what they have learned from children. (It might be useful to split children and adults into separate groups and have them report back a summary of their discussion).

Agree on a few ground rules to facilitate a smooth group discussion, such as confidentiality, no interrupting, no personal attacks and giving everyone an opportunity to speak.

Let the group understand that the aim of the workshop is to encourage each other to speak and share ideas. Try to keep the discussions positive. If participants talk about how “badly behaved” and “disrespectful” children are today, explain that children “act badly” when they are upset or afraid. If the children in your group begin to sense that they are there to be criticized or attacked, they will not participate.





## Day 1: Workshop Schedule

8.00      **Opening**

### **PART 1: Our families have changed**

8.15      Activity 1: Difficult times affect our families and our relationships with each other

### **PART 2: Some families need help in times of change**

9.00      Activity 2: A story about a bridge

9.45      Tea

10.15     Activity 3: Some families need help

### **PART 3: How to help children and families**

11.15     Activity 4: Old ways and new ideas

12.15     Lunch

1.15      Activity 5: Important parenting practices

### **PART 4: Better parenting**

3.05      Activity 6 Parenting styles

3.20      Activity 7: Children's temperament

3.45      Activity 8: Parent-child communication

4.00      Activity 9: Good discipline

(Review times as per adjustments)

### **PART 5: Better parenting**

4.40      Action planning (1-2 hours)

*This is a suggested workshop schedule. Note that times are approximate. The activities may take longer.*

### *Age of participants*

12 years and older

### *Materials*

Flip chart paper

Pens or crayons for drawing Tape

Pictures C1 - C3

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

- To assist parents and caregivers to discover their own knowledge so they can strengthen their relationships with their children
- To help communities plan how they can use resources to parent children in families that are struggling to thrive as a family unit
- To develop an individual and community plan of action that will build strong families

## PART 1 Our families have changed

### Opening



15 MINUTES

1. Open the workshop in a way that is appropriate to the culture or country, for example with a song, prayer or dance.
2. Welcome the participants and outline the purpose of the workshop.

*“Welcome to Community Parenting. This is a one-day workshop that helps communities discuss how to parent in difficult times. It encourages discussion about how parents can build strong relationships with their children, and how the community can provide support to families where a parent or guardian is ill, or when children have lost their parents through death or migration.”*

3. Ask the participants to look around the room and identify people to whom they are connected (e.g. they may live in the same area, attend the same place of worship, share the same name or are related). Ask each person to move towards these people and greet them.

*“So many things bring us together. We are all connected. This workshop is about families, the connections we all have with one another, and how we can use these connections to help our own families and those families in need. Some of you may be in family groups today, and some of you may be connected in other ways. Can you think of a song that speaks about our togetherness, about belonging to each other, about being members of one family? Let’s sing that song.”*

4. Emphasize that the participants will work in groups with young and old, adults and youth, and that it is important that the adults and youth listen to each other.

## Activity 1

Difficult times affect our families and our relationships with one another

Discussion



45 MINUTES

### Purpose

To get the participants to identify issues that have placed stress on the family and important relationships in our communities

### STEPS

Use Picture C1 (Our Families have changed).



*"Families have changed over time. Some families have changed due to the loss of parents through various diseases, war and natural disasters. We can look at our families today in comparison with those established 20 or 30 years ago and a number of changes can be identified. Our discussion for this session focuses on family changes."*

1. Ask the participants these questions:
  - How are these families different?
  - What were our families like in the past?
  - What are our families like now?
  - What has caused this change (15 minutes)
2. Divide the participants into three groups. Each group should have an equal gender balance (men and women) and age balance (mix adults, youth and children where appropriate).

*“Think about one change that has happened in your community. It could be an easy or difficult change. Draw a picture of what things looked like before and after the change.”*

Ask the groups to think about how the change has affected their a) relationships with children, b) relationships with their families and c) relationships with each other in the community.

3. Hand out large sheets of paper for a group drawing by all participants. (You can tape together sheets of newspaper for this activity.) (20 minutes)

4. Ask each group to display their drawing and report back on what has changed and how these changes have affected a) relationships with children, b) relationships in families, and c) relationships with each other in the community. (10 minutes)

5. Finish by saying:

*“We are all connected to each other. When our families and our communities are affected by change, it also affects how we relate to our children and how our children relate to us. As a community, we want to develop ideas about how all of us can cope with these changes and keep our families and children strong.”*

## PART 2 Some families need help in times of change

### Activity 2

#### A story about a bridge

Discussion



15 MINUTES

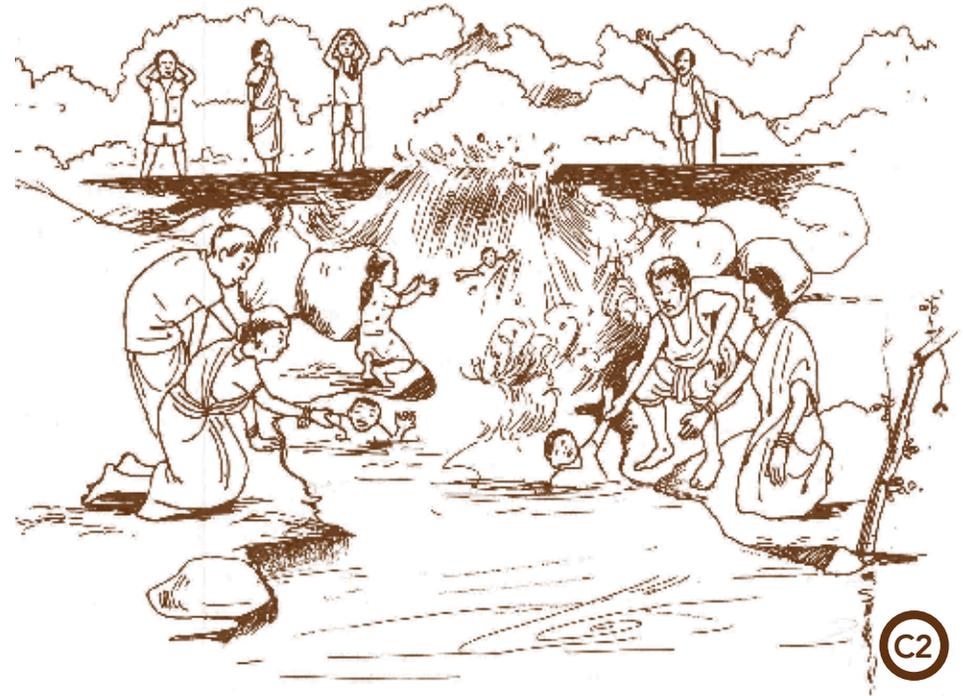
#### Purpose

To look at how we respond to changes that affect children in our families and communities

#### STEPS

Use Picture C2 (The Flood).

1. Ask the participants to explain what is happening in the picture.



C2

2. Tell the following story to the group:

*"We have talked about how changes can sometimes bring problems. I want to tell you a story about a community that has experienced change. Think about what they did and think about what you would do."*

*This is the story of a village that was built next to a large river. One morning the village woke up to the cries of children being washed away by the river. They soon discovered that the river had flooded and destroyed the bridge. Children trying to cross the river were being washed away. The villagers quickly started to pull children out.*

*One day, after many months of pulling children out of the river, a young man who had been watching asked: "Why don't we rebuild the bridge?"*

*Some of the villagers said they were too busy and carried on trying to pull children out of the river. Others said they had forgotten what the bridge looked like and were afraid to try. Others said they had no skills in bridge building.*

*"And so children kept being swept down the river as they tried to cross."*

3. Ask the group to discuss:

- What change took place in this community?
- How did the community respond?
- What can we learn from this story about how we respond to changes in our communities? (15 minutes)

4. Ask participants to discuss the following questions in pairs:

- Have there been times in your childhood when you have almost 'swept away' by problems?
- Which group of children in your community have fallen into the river and are swept away by problems, for example, those with ill parent or children living on their own.

5. Ask the participants to share what they have learned with the large group. Write a list of those children identified as vulnerable and drowning. (20 minutes)

6. Sum up the activity:

*“In times of change, children can experience difficulties and feel that they are swept away. We have learned from the story that it is important to help those who are drowning and that we can’t ignore the problem.”*

*“If we allow children to keep being swept away by problems, it will weaken our community and affect all of us. When we are drowning we sometimes need to look for help from others. We can’t build the bridge on our own – it’s much easier if we do it together.”*

## PART 3 How to help children and families

### Activity 3

#### Old ways and new ideas

Discussion



60 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To recall effective traditional parenting approaches and look at ways that communities have supported children and families in the past

#### STEPS

1. Divide the participants into three groups to answer the following questions:

**Group 1:** What traditional practices a) protected children and b) gave them guidance about growing up?

**Group 2:** When you were growing up, what happened to the children who had no one to look after them? (10 minutes)

**Group 3:** What type of relationship do you remember having with the parents/people who raised you? What was good about it?



**TIP:**

Spend about 10 minutes discussing the feedback from the group in plenary, highlighting the helpful local practices of parenting children that can be kept or resuscitated.

During this discussion, list on the flip chart some ways of parenting that can meet the new challenges of raising children and helping families today. (20 minutes)

**2.** Discuss these questions with everyone:

- Do we need to parent children who are not our own? Why or why not?
- What are some of the things that make it difficult to parent children who are not our own? What can we do about these things?
- What kinds of issues are young people facing today that could make parenting difficult? How can we deal with these issues?

**TIP:**

Make sure young people's ideas are heard in this discussion.

## Note to the Facilitator:

### Children need to be protected from:

- Sexual, physical and emotional abuse
- Losing their property rights
- Stigma
- Missing out on school
- Losing their family structure by separating siblings
- Child marriage and child Trafficking

### How adults can protect children by:

- Listening to them
- Giving children permission to say “NO” if an adult tries to hurt them
- Defending the child’s right to education, shelter and nfreedom from exploitation

### How adults can understand children by:

- Putting themselves in the shoes of the child (empathy)
- Spending quality time with the child each day
- Giving children time to play and be with their friends
- Giving children time to grieve and provide support
- Inviting children to share their problems with the family

- Showing respect to children
- Focusing on children’s spiritual needs
- Nurturing and loving children

### How adults can encourage children by:

- Supporting children’s efforts at school and in the home
- Expressing hopefulness
- Believing in children’s ability to solve problems
- Expressing confidence in the child’s ability to cope with life’s challenges
- Using positive, helpful words

### How adults can better communicate with children:

- Checking for understanding
- Speaking kind words
- Not shouting
- Making time to talk
- Informing children about difficult issues like death in a simple way

**Activity 4**  
Important parenting practices  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**  
To identify specific ways of parenting children and caring for those in need in our communities

**STEPS**

*“So, what have we learned about important ways to parent children? Talk about important parenting practices.”*

1. Divide the participants into five groups. Each group will look at a different idea.

**Group 1:** What do we need to protect our children from?

**Group 2:** How do we protect them?

**Group 3:** How do we show understanding?

**Group 4:** How do we encourage them?

**Group 5:** How do we show good communication? (15 minutes)

2. Have groups report back what they have learned. After the report back, make sure that most of the following items are covered (see box on the following page.) (30 minutes)

**TIP 1:**

Groups can tell their ideas through a brief song, poem, drama or dance. You want to see what actions they will carry out in the community, rather than have them make lists.

**TIP 2:**

Do not overwhelm the participants with information. Present one or two ideas and discuss them briefly.



## PART 4 Better Parenting

### Introduction to the facilitator(s)

This Better Parenting component of the Action Workshop is intended to facilitate guided discussions and learning by parents, care givers and others in the community who care for youth and children. The focus is on improving parenting knowledge, attitudes and skills. We believe that Better Parenting is a lifelong learning process.

This workshop builds upon the idea of **community parenting**. This means that communities can provide parenting to families who are struggling to thrive as a family unit. Some examples include instances where one or both parents are seriously ill, a child-headed household, or where elderly people are trying to raise their grandchildren. Knowledge presented in this action workshop can be utilized by a variety of caregivers in the community to promote the protection and healthy development of children and youth.

\*Adapted from: **Sustainable Outcomes for Children and Youth**, a five-year USAID-funded OVC project (2015 – 2020) providing care and support services and linkages to health services for vulnerable children and families in 17 districts in Central and

Western Uganda. It is implemented by Catholic Relief Services in coordination with local implementing partners, Action for Community Development (ACODEV), African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), and TPO Uganda.

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## Activity 5 Opening



5 MINUTES

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**Parenting involves raising a child from infancy to adulthood. Many people can parent, even if they didn't give birth to the child. This includes grandparents and other relatives, foster parents and even neighbors and friends.**

1. Ask the participants to look around the room and identify people to whom they are connected (e.g. they may live in the same area, attend the same place of worship, share the same name or are related). Ask each person to move towards these people and greet them.

*"Welcome to Better Parenting. This is a one-hour workshop that helps communities discuss parenting techniques to best support children. It encourages discussion on parenting styles and how the community can provide support to families where a parent or guardian is ill, or when children have lost their parents through death or migration."*



**Activity 6**  
**Parenting styles**  
*Discussion*



**60 MINUTES**

**Purpose**

To get the participants to identify different parenting styles to enhance child's self-esteem and wellbeing, as well as build positive relationships with others

**STEPS**

(approximately 10 minutes per step)

*"There are four types of parenting styles:*

- *Very strict,*
- *Firm-but-fair*
- *Permissive*
- *Indifferent/Uninvolved"*

*Styles may vary from time to time, depending on the situation. Overall, however, it is best to be loving and caring, while maintaining clear, consistent expectations. This is most often expressed in the "firm-but-fair" style, which some people also call "tough love". Good parenting can be learned by practicing over and over. Do not worry if you make an occasional mistake; just try again.*

1. Ask the participants these questions:
  - Which parenting style do you prefer and why?
  - What do we need to know to improve our parenting style?
2. Divide the participants into three groups. Each group should have an equal gender balance (men and women) and age balance (mix adults, youth and children where appropriate).

*"Think about what parenting looks like in your community. Draw a picture of what things look like."*

Ask the groups to think about a) what style is most common, b) how does this impact how children feel about themselves and grow up and c) if you ask children, what style they prefer, what would they say?

3. Hand out large sheets of paper for a group drawing by all participants. (You can tape together sheets of newspaper for this activity.)
4. Each group should then display their drawing and report back on what they see in the community and how it impacts a) how children feel about themselves; b) relationships children have with others in the community; and c) what is one thing you can do better.
5. Finish by saying:

*"We are all connected to each other. Our children are affected by parenting styles. They also affect how we relate to our children and how our children relate to the community. As a community, we want to develop positive behavior and healthy development in our children. We can all work together to keep our children strong and healthy."*

## PART 5 Children's temperament

### Activity 7 Discussion



60 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To look at how different temperaments are present in children and understand how that impacts child behavior

#### STEPS

1. Ask the participants to explain what is happening in the picture.
2. The facilitator tells the following story to the group:

*“Temperament refers to the specific thoughts, feelings and behaviors that make every person – and every child – unique. Each child has his/her own unique way of seeing and reacting to things, and is a little different in relating to others. There are five basic temperament types among children. Each type has its positive aspects and its challenging aspects:*

- *The very active child*
- *The impulsive child*
- *The independent child*
- *The sensitive or shy child*
- *The dreamy child.*

*Parents/caregivers should recognize and accept the different personalities of their children. Their response should vary accordingly.*

- *All children may be friendly, happy, and kind to others some of the time. But at other times, their reaction may be different.*

- *Children will not always fit into one temperament type. They will display behaviors that fall under different types at different times. One temperament type will usually dominate, however.*
- *Some parts of a child's temperament can change as he or she gets older, but other parts are inborn and cannot be changed. These need to be understood, managed and accepted.*
- *Positive aspects of a child's temperament should be encouraged; negative aspects should be controlled or re-channeled (for example, into sports or creative activities)."*

3. Ask the participants to discuss the following questions in group or in pairs:
  - How can you tell that children are different in their temperament – that is, in the way they see and react to things that are going on around them?
  - What do you know about your children's temperaments?
  - How are they the same or different from one another?
  - Can temperament be changed? In what ways?

4. Ask the participants to share what they have learned with the large group. Write a list of what has been discussed.
5. Sum up the activity:

*"Understanding and accepting each child's unique temperament will improve that child's happiness and cooperation. When we can recognize the temperament of a child, as well as how their temperament is connected to their behavior, community carers, parents, grandparents, and other community members can look at how to best support the development of children in the community."*

## PART 6 Parent-child communication

### Activity 8 Discussion



20 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To look at best practices pertaining to communication between parents and children

*"We are going to talk about ways that parents and other caregivers communicate with children and what is useful about these ways. Good communication: means sharing information, ideas and feelings between people. It involves listening, observing the other person, and talking. (Listening always comes first.)"*

#### STEPS

1. Divide the participants into three groups to answer the following questions:

**Group 1:** What are the benefits of communicating with children?

**Group 2:** What can happen if there is no communication or poor communication?

**Group 3:** How does good communication begin?

- *"Be an active listener, meaning pay attention with your whole body.*
- *Let the child speak and explain his or her concerns, thoughts and opinions. Ask for clarification if you don't understand something.*
- *Keep eye contact.*
- *Show interest in what the child is saying.*
- *Be honest but remain sensitive to the other person.*

- *Do not judge.*
- *Do not raise your voice or yell.*
- *Ask open-ended questions.*
- *Praise the child often.*
- *Keep your requests simple."*

**TIP:**

Spend about 5 minutes discussing the feedback from the group in plenary, highlighting the helpful local practices of communicating with children that can be kept or resuscitated.

## PART 7 Good discipline

### Activity 9 Discussion



12 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To look at best practices pertaining to disciplining a child.

#### STEPS

1. Divide the participants into three groups to answer the following questions:

**Group 1:** What are the different methods parents and caregivers use to discipline their children?

**Group 2:** Should discipline methods change as children grow older?

**Group 3:** In your opinion, are some methods more effective than others? Which ones are more effective?

#### TIP:

Spend about 5 minutes discussing the feedback from the group in plenary, highlighting the helpful local practices of communicating with children that can be kept or resuscitate. Then share the information below.

2. There are many positive methods to discipline your children:
- Focus on the good: Acknowledge and celebrate good behavior and try to focus less on bad behavior.
  - Re-direct the child's attention: Stop the child's misbehavior and show him/her the correct behavior.
  - Withhold privileges: Children should learn that privileges come with responsibility and they need to be earned. If a child misbehaves, reduce something that the child likes

to do or have, for example less playtime on the weekend with friends.

- Grounding: Not allowing the child to leave a certain space for a period of time, usually the home or his/her room.
- Time-out: Send your child to the corner of the room with nothing to do and ignore the child until he/she is calm and quiet.

(Note: The number of minutes in time-out should never be more than the child's age, e.g. 3 minutes for a 3 year-old; 15 minutes for a 15 year-old.)

Be wise in your choice of discipline:

- Discipline should be applied according to the child's age. The methods that are used for young children may not apply for older children.
- Before the discipline is imposed, ask the child why he/she misbehaved (maybe there is a good reason.)
- Choose the appropriate 'punishment to fit the crime'. Older children may suggest what they think is a fair disciplinary response.
- After the discipline is over, ask the child what he or she learned.
- Remember that the goal is to prevent the same misbehavior in the future.

Be sure that the amount of discipline fits the misbehavior; also that it is appropriate for the child's age (generally less for a younger child, more for an older child); be sure discipline is equal between boys and girls.

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## Activity 10

Discussion



30 MINUTES

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### Purpose

To develop an individual and community plan of action

### STEPS

1. Let the participants join the groups of people they feel most connected to from the opening activity. They can also work in pairs, if that is more comfortable.
2. Making an individual action plan: Ask each person to identify two things that they could do as individuals to make sure that the children in their care, and the families that are 'falling into the river', are protected, understood, encouraged and benefit from good communication. Let each person write their individual plan of action and share it with other members of the group. (10 minutes)

### TIP 1:

Rather than write, participants can sing, speak or dance their individual and community action plans.

### TIP 2:

If participants cannot write, the facilitator can write down their community action plans as they are performed. Have people sign their action plans with objects, thumb prints or another way.

Making a community action plan: Let the group discuss what they can do as a community to make sure that the children in their care and the families 'falling into the river' are protected, understood, encouraged and benefit from good communication.

Write the community plan of action on flip chart paper and get everyone to sign it to show their commitment. The community action plan should include a time frame and resources needed to carry out the plan. Present the paper to the project coordinator or facilitator. (15 minutes)

3. Briefly discuss with everyone the following questions:
  - Which community groups exist that can assist in doing this work?
  - How can we work with them? (5 minutes)

**Activity 11**  
**Building the bridge**  
*Discussion*



**Purpose**

To end the workshop with a simple, powerful image that will stay in people's minds

**STEPS**

1. Ask the participants to explain "what is happening in this picture?"  
Use Picture C3 (Rebuilding the Bridge)

**Note to the Facilitator:**

The picture demonstrates (a) protection; (b) peer support; (c) good communication; and (d) encouragement.

2. *"Do you remember the story of the river? Do you remember the young man? What did he suggest? He suggested that the villagers rebuild the bridge. Today I hope that you have some ideas of how we can rebuild the bridge and strengthen our families. We will do our final activity to summarize what we have learned."*

3. Divide the participants into two groups: one for children and one for adults. Each group should have the same number of people. Let all the children stand on one side of the room and the adults on the other, facing each other. Tell the group that the river is flowing between them and that the children cannot get across. Ask the adults to think about one thing they have learned in the workshop.

**TIP:**

If there are no children, let the adults play the children's role.

4. Ask each adult to call out something they have learned. For example, "I have learned it is important to try and put myself in my children's shoes" or "I have learned that I do not listen to my children when they try to tell me things" or "I have learned how to help other children" or "I have learned that some families are more at risk of falling into the water and I want to do something to help them".

As each adult does this, he/she reaches across the river and builds a bridge by taking one of the children by the hand.

They then bring the child to the other side of the river to stand with the adults. Make sure each child is approached by an adult and no child is left out. (20 minutes)

5. Facilitator says:

*"We have built our bridge across the river and have reached out to children and families in need of help. What you have learned and taught each other here today will improve the lives of many people."*



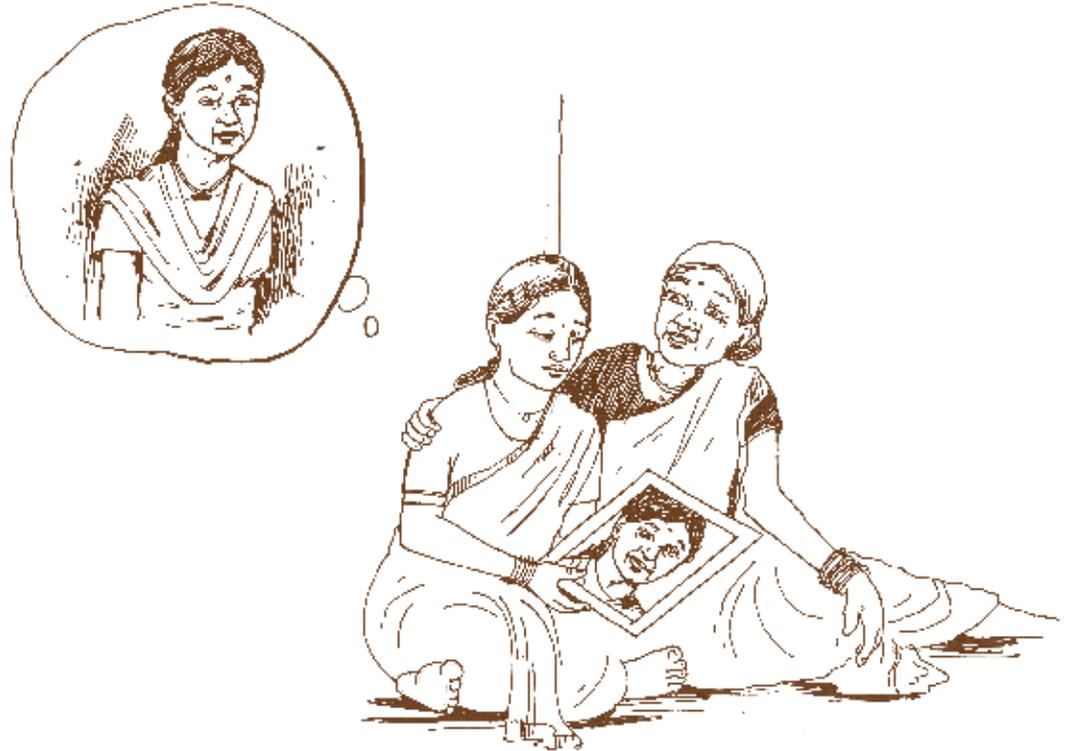
# Supporting Grieving Children

## *Facilitator's Guide*

### **Introduction to the facilitator**

"My grandchildren are often sad. I can see they are sad. But I don't know what to say about their parents dying. I worry that they think that I don't love them. But I love them with all my heart."

These are the words of a grandmother who lives at the northern tip of South Africa, in an area called Blouberg in Limpopo Province. She looks after five grandchildren aged 3 to 17 years. Her two daughters have died – one a year ago and the other only three months ago. She could see that her grandchildren were sad, but she did not know what to do to help them. Many people find themselves in such situations. Many of us are looking after children who have lost parents. Some of us do not look after children who are sad, or who are grieving, but we see them in our communities. What can we do to help?





## Day 1: Workshop Schedule

8.00      **Opening**

### **PART 1: The death of even one person affects us all**

8.15      Activity 1: Difficult times affect our families and our relationships with each other

### **PART 2: How do communities and families cope with death and loss?**

8.45      Activity 2: How do we deal with death now?

### **PART 3: How does death affect children?**

9.35      Activity 3: Blind Walk

10.05      Tea

10.35      Activity 4: How does death affect children?

11.35      Activity 5: Breaking the Wall

### **PART 4: Talking to children about death**

12.05      Activity 6: What you can do to help children?

1.05      Lunch

2.05      Activity 7: Talking about Death

### **PART 5: How to help children**

3.05      Activity 8: Action plans

3.30      Activity 9: Closing

### *Age of participants*

16 years and older

### *Materials*

Flip chart paper

Pens or crayons

Pictures G1-G5

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

(NOTE: Parts of this workshop have been adapted from Kurt Madoerin's workshop on Bereavement Counselling with Children)

- To help families and communities cope with death and learn how to assist children who have experienced the death of a loved person
- To equip adults with the skills that help children find peace and cope with grief
- To collectively identify ways of helping children who are grieving

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## Opening



30 MINUTES

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1. Open the workshop in a way appropriate to the culture or country (e.g. a song, prayer or dance).
2. Facilitator welcomes the participants

*“Welcome to the workshop. Today we will be talking about supporting grieving children. This workshop is designed to help communities identify what they can do to help children who have lost parents, caregivers and other people they love. Talking about death can result in strong feeling and emotions brought about by remembering our own losses. These feelings and emotions are very personal. It is important that we are sensitive and supportive to each other*

## PART 1 The death of even one person affects us all

### Activity 1 Human knot Role play

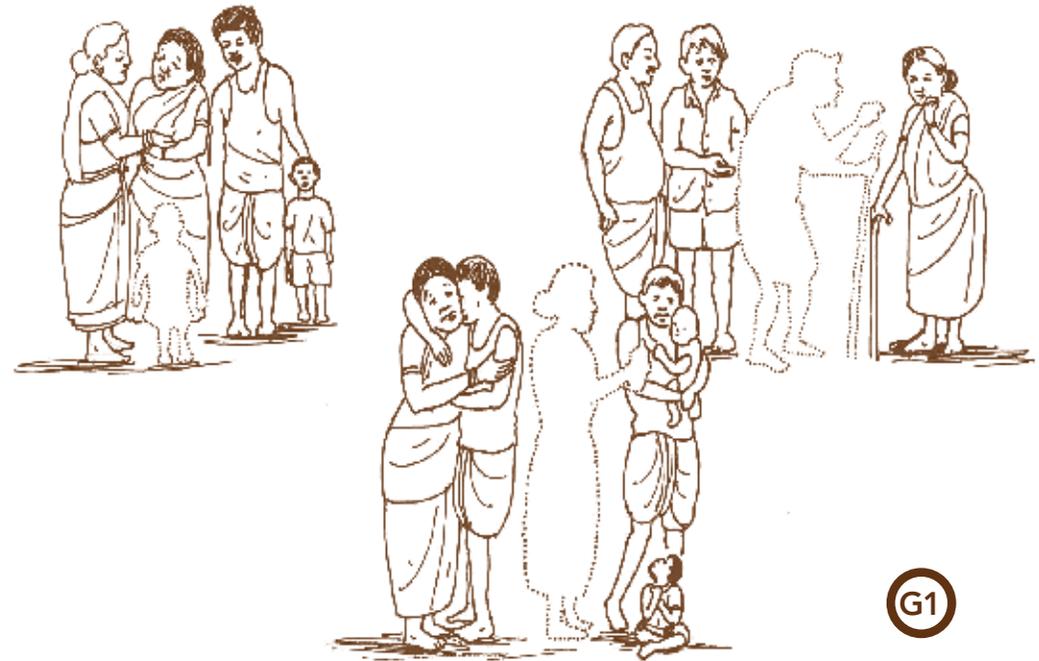
 30 MINUTES

#### Purpose

Demonstrate how everyone is affected by death, and also illustrates that some people are left alone when people die

#### STEPS

1. Divide the participants into groups of four and ask everyone to hold hands while standing. Let one person in each group link arms with someone from another group. Each group represents a family.



2. "Each of these groups is a family in your community. They love each other and care for each other. I am going to touch some people, once I touch you, please sit down. The people whom I touch represent those who have died."

3. Walk around and touch a few people in each group. Make sure that one or two people are left in some groups and that in other groups people have no one to hold on to.
4. Leave the group like this for 2 minutes in silence
5. Let everyone return to their seats and then discuss the following questions in the large group:
  - What happened?
  - Were there some people left with no one to hold their hands?
  - How did it feel when there was no one to hold your hand?
  - Ask individual people for their reactions. (10 minutes)
6. Acknowledge that this activity may bring up strong feelings such as sadness for the participants. People can spend a few minutes talking in pairs about what they were thinking and feeling during this activity.

Use Picture G1 (Death Affects All of Us).

Ask the participant:

- What is happening in this picture?
- Is this what happens in our community?
- Who in our community is left without anyone to hold on to? Who is left behind now when someone dies?
- How does it affect their life (10 minutes)

**TIP:**

The facilitator should make sure that issues concerning children/orphans are discussed.

## PART 2 How do communities and families cope with death?

### Activity 2

#### How do we deal with death now?

Role play



50 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To explore existing practices related to death, and identify their strengths and weaknesses

#### STEPS

1. Explain that we will be looking at what people do when a person dies and how children are affected.
2. Divide participants into two groups. Ask them to do a role play showing what happens in the community when someone dies, and what happens to children.

**Group 1:** Show what people do that helps children cope with death.

**Group 2:** Show what people do that prevents children from coping with death. (15 minutes)

3. Ask the participants to present the role plays. (10 minutes)

#### TIP:

Some examples of the child's experience of death are as follows: It is a time when all their possessions and property are given away; they may be asked to live with relatives they do not know well or be told to forget the person who has died.

4. Once the role plays have been presented, discuss the following questions:
  - What was the child's experience of death?
  - What happens now in this community when someone dies?
  - How are children involved? (10 minutes)

5. Ask everyone to summarize what they have learned.  
(5 minutes)

6. *"We've spoken about how children are included or excluded from what happens after a loved one dies. Now we are going to talk about how death affects children. What is it like for a child to have a parent or loved one die?"*

## PART 3 How does death affect children?

### Activity 3 Timeline Discussion



60 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To help the participants understand what happens when a child loses a parent or loved one

*"This activity is called a timeline. We are going to picture a child who has lost a parent at a certain age and trace other losses triggered by the death of a parent. This will help us understand the effects of the loss on the child as he or she grows."*

#### STEPS

1. Agree on an imaginary child who has lost his/her parents that you want to track over a period of 5, 10 or 15 years. Agree at what age the child lost his/her parents.
2. Using a flip chart or board, list the kinds of loss that can be triggered by the death of a parent over a period of time, as indicated below:

#### TIP:

Some examples of the child's experience of death are as follows: It is a time when all their possessions and property are given away; they may be asked to live with relatives they do not know well or be told to forget the person who has died.

Age of Child	Possible losses
5 years (parents die)	
7 years	
11 years	
15 years	

3. Discuss the following as you list the possible losses:
- Could some of these losses be avoided?
  - How can the child be assured (to reduce anxiety, worry, depression) that his/her needs will be provided for?



### Lessons learned

- Children who lose their parents experience other losses, some of these losses are 'man made' and some are out of our control.
- It is important to meet children's needs so as to reduce the possibility of cumulative losses.
- Children need to be provided for and be assured of that support to reduce worry and anxiety
- To help the participants understand what happens when a child loses a parent or loved one

*"This exercise shows us that children who have lost their parents have needs that are to be met by the remaining family members, and the community. They need people to provide food and shelter, to protect them and to guide them."*

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## Activity 4

### How adults and children grieve

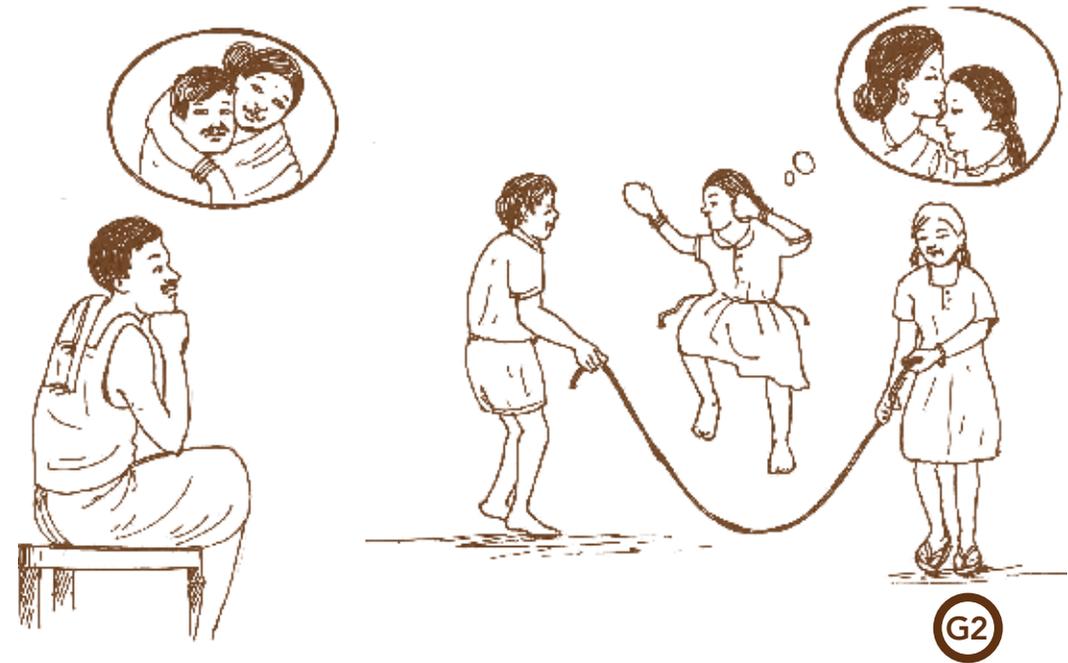
Discussion

 30 MINUTES

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#### STEPS

1. Use Picture G2 (How adults and children grieve)
2. Let the group answer the following questions in relation to Picture G2:
  - What do children do when someone they love dies?
  - What is happening in this picture?
  - What do children do when they feel sad, angry or frightened after a loved one has died?
  - Do children and adults show feelings differently?



#### TIP:

To understand how children behave after a death, you may want to explain to participants that children show their grief by crying, getting angry, acting naughty, bed-wetting, playing less or playing more, becoming irritable, withdrawing to their room, fighting with other children or showing no feelings at all.

## Note to the Facilitator

Behaviors that children may show after a loved one has died:

- Self-blame – The child believes that it was something that he/she did or did not do that caused the death.
  - Seeking approval – By paying too much attention to rules and being over-obedient; preventing themselves from being happy, carefree children.
  - Feeling a sense of betrayal – That they have been personally let down and that the world now owes them something.
  - Taking on adult responsibility – The child may feel the need to be the head of the house.
  - Acting out – Being 'naughty' to attract attention.
  - Cutting off their feelings – Shutting down or blocking out their feelings. This may happen physically or emotionally or both.
  - Somatizing (the mind/body connection) – Developing tummy aches, headaches or sore limbs because the child feels unhappy inside.
  - Role playing the difficult circumstances – Acting out the injury, death or funeral of the loved one.
  - Becoming aggressive and destructive – In their pain, some children may seek to hurt others or may show sexual or erotic behavior.
- Becoming clingy and dependent – Being fearful of being left alone.
  - Becoming afraid of the dark, of the future, etc.
  - Regressing to behavior common in those younger than they actually are, for example, bed wetting, soiling, wanting a bottle, etc.
  - Feeling stigmatized – Believing that others will never appreciate them again, as they are now orphans.
  - Not being able to concentrate on their schoolwork – Daydreaming etc.

### 3. Facilitator summarizes:

*"Is there any difference between the feelings of adults and children when it comes to the loss and death of a loved one? There isn't. The difference might be in how adults and children show their feelings. A child might be sad for a few minutes and cry, and then play happily and laugh for the next hour. Children's feelings may come and go and change faster than an adult's feelings. But they do have feelings, such as, anger, fear and sadness, just like adults."*

## PART 4 Talking to children about death

### Activity 5 Breaking the wall Game



#### Purpose

To illustrate that it is possible to change the way we have always done things, and to talk openly about death with children

#### STEPS

1. Clear an open space in the room. Ask all the participants to go to one side of the room. On the other side, place a bottle of water or soda on a table or chair.
2. Stand next to a bottle of water or soda and say:

*"Here is a nice drink. The child wants this drink. Helping a child to talk about their feelings and answering their questions about the death of a loved one is the drink the child needs. But things keep the child from having it. I want everyone to call out the things that get in our way of talking to children about death. These things are called barriers."*

3. Participants will call out things like: fear, culture, age, time to talk our own grief.
4. As a participant calls out something, ask him/her to come to the center of the room. Make a note of it on a piece of paper. As each barrier is named, another person joins and eventually the barriers form a wall between the adults on one side of the room, with the facilitator holding the drink on the other side of the room.

**TIP:**

Don't forget to ask the youth at the workshop for their ideas.

5. Read out some of the barriers from your list that prevent people from talking to children about death, and then ask the group how they might remove each barrier. As suggestions are made, ask each person representing one barrier to walk away thereby creating a space in the wall.
6. Once a number of the 'barriers' have sat down and there is a gap in the wall. Ask everyone to join the facilitator in sharing the drink.

**Activity 6**

Talking to children of different ages about death  
*Role play*

**60 MINUTES****Purpose**

To help the participants practice talking about death-related issues to children of different ages

**STEPS**

1. *"Talking to children of different ages is a process and not an event. It calls for continuous discussions about death with the grieving child. In this session we want to discuss some of the important issues we should talk to our children about. What must we tell them about death?"*

2. Make a list with the participants on flip chart paper:
- “What do you think are the most important things to tell children about death?”
  - “What would you have liked to have been told when a person you loved died?”

3. Divide the participants into four groups. Each group will act out a short, three-minute drama about how to talk to children about death. The drama is about a child who has recently lost his/her parent or caregiver. Use the ideas from the list that was previously developed. Each group will perform one of the following ages: (10 minutes)

**Group One:** 0-5 years

**Group Two:** 6-11 years

**Group Three:** 12-15 years

**Group Four:** 16-18 years

4. Present the dramas (15 minutes)

5. After each drama, discuss for 5 minutes the following questions:
- What are your responses to the drama?
  - What did the adult or youth do that helped the child?
  - What did they do that confused or frustrated the child?
- (20 minutes)



### Lessons learned

**Ask participants what they have learned from this activity. (5 minutes)**

## Note to the facilitator

### How children grieve and how to talk to them about death.

#### *How do children understand death?*

When a family member dies, children often react differently from adults. Children understand death differently at different ages and stages of development. They will also express their grief in various ways at different ages. For example, pre-school children usually see death as temporary and reversible, like cartoon characters on television that die and come back to life. As a child's reasoning develops, their understanding of death develops to the point that they will eventually come to realize that death is final and inevitable.

Children mourn, but often quite differently from adults. How children mourn is determined by their reasoning ability and their emotional developmental. Below is a general guideline describing how children at different ages understand death, followed by some points on how children grieve, and how to talk to children about death.

#### *0-2 years: infants and toddlers*

At this stage:

- A child is not old enough to understand death.
- A child has no understanding of time and therefore cannot understand that death is permanent.
- A child is frightened to be left alone and separated from his/her primary care giver. Death affects their sense of security as the child misses the unique physical pattern of contact from his/her care giver. For example, each of us hugs/holds in a special way.

The child expresses his/her distress in changes in eating and sleeping patterns, with more crying and irritability. Toddlers' responses include outbursts of anger as a way to express a wish to bring their mother back. They may have no interest in toys or playing, and may regress to behaviors that they had outgrown.

How to help:

- Children of all ages need extra attention, physical and verbal love, and comfort after experiencing trauma or loss.
- Infants and toddlers need their routine and environment to stay as similar as possible. Keep their feeding, eating and sleeping times consistent.

- Reduce the number of unfamiliar people who have contact with the child. Try to replace the primary caregiver with one or two consistent adults.
- When they are older, the death should be explained to them.

### **3-5 years: magical thinking**

The pre-school child is still not able to understand that death is permanent. They will keep asking when the dead person will return. They believe that like cartoon characters, people can return to life, or that death is like sleeping and that the dead person will wake up. Pre-school children believe that what they wish for will come true, and that their actions will cause things to happen.

How to help:

- Explain what 'dead' means, for example, "Mummy is dead. She cannot come back. Her body has stopped working. She can't eat, talk or play anymore."
- Be patient and answer questions as they come up, even if they continually ask, "When is mummy coming back?"
- Avoid phrases such as 'passed away' or 'late' which are vague and confusing.

- It is also important to explain that the person died from a 'serious' illness and not a common everyday illness such as a cold.

### **6-8 years: concrete reasoning**

Children now begin to understand death as permanent, but may think that only old people die. Children at this age are interested in death, how it will affect their lives, and what will happen to the body.

How to help:

- Give a simple explanation of death and the causes of death, with the child being encouraged to ask questions.
- Help them to talk through their thoughts and fears.
- They need reassurance about the future, that people will be there to take care of them, and that the death was not their fault.
- Familiar routines are comforting and necessary, for example, going to church.
- Try to improve their self-confidence at every opportunity. Show encouragement, support and loving praise whenever possible.

### *9-11 years: abstract thinking*

Children at this age begin to understand that death can happen to anyone and that it is permanent.

How to help:

- At this age, the child has well-developed communication skills. Set aside time to talk to the child. Simple and direct explanations about death are needed.
- Allow the child to spend time alone, perhaps with the belongings of the deceased person.
- Be honest with pre-adolescent children about how the death will change their life.
- They may wish to rely on friends for support, as well as adults.
- Be sure that children in this age group still have time to play and be children. Their circumstances may make it nearly impossible for them to still be children as they may be forced to take on adult responsibility. But it is important that adults share some of these responsibilities for short periods to allow children time to play and have fun.

### *12-18 years: adolescence*

Teenagers may have a full understanding of death, but it is seen as something that cannot happen to them. Teenagers, almost by nature, are likely to think that they are 'invincible', and find it very difficult to think that they could die. They may focus on the meaning of death in their lives, for example, they may feel self-pity or the need to take on the role of the parent.

How to help:

- Include teenagers in the planning of funerals.
- Teenagers rely on their peer group for support and should be encouraged to spend time with friends.
- They may express their anger through risk taking behaviors, for example, drugs, alcohol and risky sexual behavior. Discuss the implications of harmful behaviors with them.
- Teenagers who are parents themselves, caregivers or HIV positive will need greater support to develop a sense of independence and responsibility.
- Speak to teenagers as adults. Respect their views, but recognize that they may need extra support.

## PART 5 How to help children

### Activity 7

What you can do to help children who are grieving

*Discussion*



20 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To provide the participants with information to help children

#### STEPS

*"We've discussed some of the important things to talk to children about. How we respond to children about death can greatly assist them in their understanding and coming to terms with the event."*

### Note to the Facilitator

A quicker way to do this activity is as follows:

- Divide participants into 3 groups to discuss picture codes G3, G4, and G5
- Participants then return to the larger group and discuss what these pictures show about how to help children when someone they love dies
- The facilitator can briefly present one or two key ideas for each picture.

## Caring, communicating, and allowing children to express grief

Use Picture G3 (Caring; communicating, and allowing children to express grief).

### TIP:

Make additional copies of the picture to distribute to the groups.



1. Ask the participants:

*“What does the picture tell you about how to help children when someone dies?”*

2. After the participants have discussed the picture summarize the key ideas by explaining that adults need to:

- Communicate and give information to children about death
- Show caring and understanding to children
- Allow children to express grief.

3. Ask the participants to think of two ways they can:

- Be caring and understanding of children
- Communicate and give information to children about death
- Allow children to express grief.

4. Add additional information – see below. (10 minutes)

### **A) Communicate and give information**

To help children we can:

- Be honest about the fact that the person has died
- Explain the death means the person will not come back
- Answer the children's questions about death no matter how we feel.

### **B) Care and understand**

To help children we can:

- Show them we care about them and love them
- We can do this in many small ways that may differ according to their age
- Share some of our own feelings of grief so they know we understand (empathize)
- Tell and show them that we are here to talk when they need someone to listen.

### **C) Allow children to express grief**

To help children we can:

- Allow them to express their grief. Remember children can express grief in many different ways. Sometimes they do not cry or look sad. They can show their grief by being angry or naughty. Children can also be very sad one minute and play and laugh soon after. This does not mean they do not feel emotions.

## **Memory and ritual**

5. Discuss the following questions in plenary:

- Should we remember someone who has died? Is it necessary to remember?
- How should this be done? Can we use our religious or spiritual rituals to deal with grief?
- What do we need to remember?

6. Use Picture G4 (Memory and Ritual).



Ask the participants:

*“What does the picture tell you about how to help children when someone has died?”*

7. When people have described the picture, summarize the key ideas, explaining that adults can help children by:
- Allowing the child to remember the person who has died
  - Allowing the child to use religious or spiritual rituals to deal with their grief, for example, prayer

**TIP:**

Discuss what is the value or benefit of encouraging children to remember the person who died. Emphasize the need to remember the good things and values, dreams and aspirations of the person who has died. Bring into memory all the positive things.

8. Briefly provide any new information – see below/ (10 minutes)

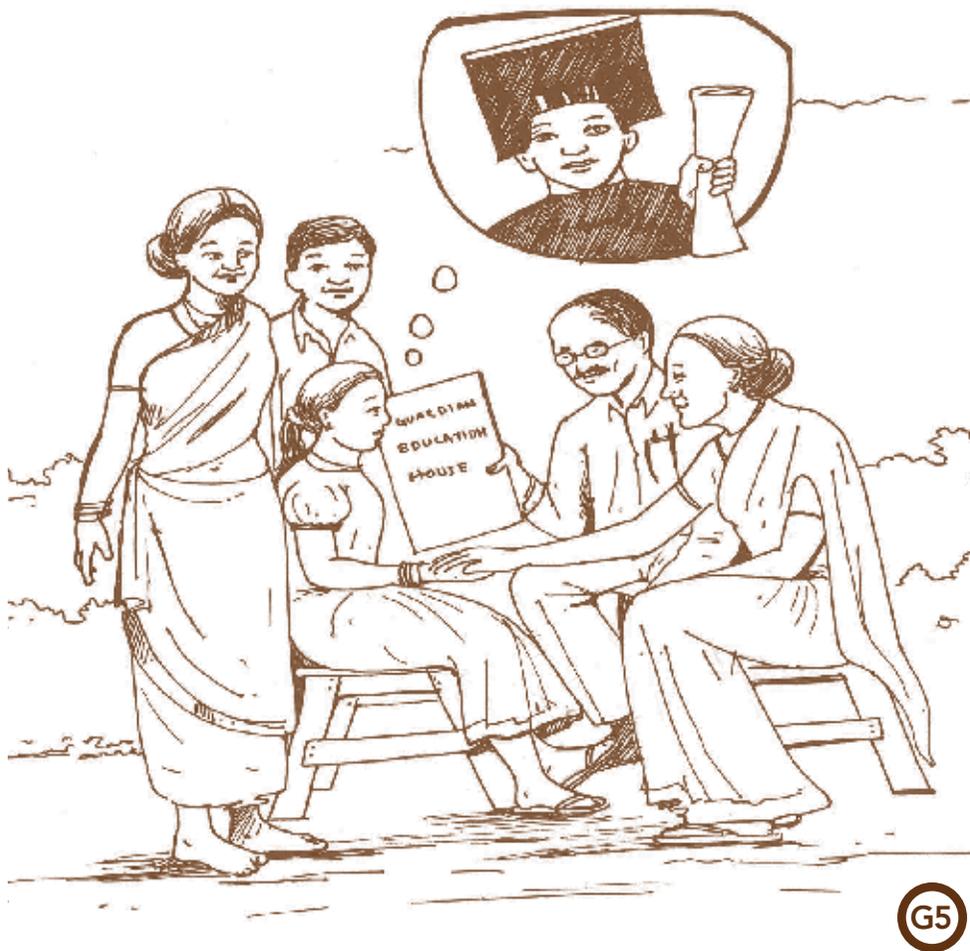
### Memory and ritual

To help children we can:

- Hold onto memories by talking about the person who has died and remembering happy times
- Create rituals such as candle lighting to remember the person
- Use rituals from our own faith to give children a spiritual tool for dealing with their grief. For example, teach children a special prayer for times when they feel sad.

## Practical plans and building a future

Use Picture G5 (Practical plans and building a future)



9. Ask the participants:

*“What does the picture tell you about how to help children when someone has died?”*

10. Ask the participants for two ideas about how they can do the following:
- Discuss practical issues with children such as who will take care of them, where will they live and what will happen to their education
  - Build a child’s self-confidence and faith in the future.
11. Briefly provide any new information – see below.  
(10 minutes)

## Practical plans

To help children we can:

- Plan with them who will look after them before their caregiver dies
- Give children honest information about how this death will affect them, for example, where they will live, who will give them money for school fees, books and food.

## Build their self-confidence and faith in the future

To help children we can:

- Encourage their efforts than criticize them
- Praise them for their efforts
- Talk to them about what they will do in the future and encourage them to set goals.



## PART 6 Action planning

### Activity 8

#### What you can do to help children

*Discussion*



25 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To develop an action plan that can be implemented in the family and in the community

#### STEPS

1. Divide participants into two groups. They must decide on:
  - One action that will take place in their family to support grieving children
  - One action that will take place in their community to support grieving children. (10 minutes)

2. Let the groups explain or show what they will do. Prepare a list of the actions. (10 minutes)
3. Briefly discuss whether there is a group or committee that can follow through with what has been learned today. Identify the group and when they will meet. (5 minutes)

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**Activity 9**  
**Closing**  
*Discussion*



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**Purpose**

To create a sense of unity among participants, and end the workshop

**STEPS**

1. The facilitator encourages participants to join hands in a circle and sing a lively or happy song.
2. The facilitator thanks everyone for coming and informs participants that there are four other action workshops, Community Parenting, Life Skills for Children, Making Our Communities Safer and Ending Human Trafficking, which might interest them.

**End of workshop**

## ACTION WORKSHOP 3:

# Lessons from life: Teaching life skills to our children

## *Facilitator's Guide*

### Introduction to the facilitator

This workshop is designed to help communities give children the life skills they need. Skills are the ability to do things. Life skills mean being able to respond to the demands of life in effective ways. This workshop is called 'Lessons from Life'. It looks at the lessons that the workshop participants' have learned from their own lives, and how they can use these lessons to help children. The main focus of this workshop is to help youth and adults to identify, practice, and impart to children the life skills that children need to travel successfully on their own journey of life.

### What are life skills?

The World Health Organization has defined life skills as: "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". UNICEF defines life skills as: "a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills". The UNICEF definition is based on research evidence that suggests that shifts in risk



behavior are unlikely if knowledge, attitudinal and skills based competency are not addressed.

In short, life skills empower young people to take positive action to protect themselves and promote healthy living and positive social relationships.

### **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

- To identify the different life skills that participants have been given by their parents, caregivers and communities
- To identify the life skills that children need to respond to the challenges of life
- To plan what actions parents and caregivers can take to impart life skills to their children

#### **Age of participants**

16 years and older

#### **Materials**

- Paper for the facilitator to write on
- Paper for participants to write on
- Pens or crayons for drawing
- Pictures L1-L3



## **Day 1: Workshop Schedule**

**8.00**      **Opening**

### **PART 1: The life skills that my parents and community gave me**

8.15      Activity 1: My house

### **PART 2: The life skills that help children**

9.35      Activity 2: What do children need to build strong houses?

10.35      Tea

11.25      Activity 3: What do these skills mean in children's lives?

12.15      Lunch

### **PART 3: How do children learn life skills?**

1.15      Activity 4: How do children learn life skills? (25 minutes)

1.40      Activity 5: Teaching children life skills (60 minutes)

### **PART 4: Action Planning**

2.40      Activity 6: Action plan (30 minutes)

3.10      Activity 7: Closing (10 minutes)

*This is a suggested workshop schedule. Note that the times are approximate. The activities may take longer.*

## PART 1 Life skills from my parents and the community

### Opening



15 MINUTES

Open the workshop in a way appropriate to the culture or country (e.g. a song, prayer or dance). Follow with this introduction:

*“Welcome to Lessons from Life: Teaching Life Skills to Our Children. This workshop is all about what children need to know and be taught to succeed in life, and how we as youth and adults can pass this knowledge on to our children, brothers and sisters.”*



L1

**Activity 1**  
**My house**  
Discussion



80 MINUTES

**Purpose**

To help a group brainstorm different life skills and assist participants think through the value of life skills using the symbol of a house

**STEPS**

1. Ask participants for the definition of the word 'skills'.
  - a. Introduce the term 'life skills' to the group.

*"On our journey of life, our parents and those who love us help us to grow up. They teach and give us skills to be able to live a normal and fulfilling life. Skills are the abilities to do things. Some of these skills are planning, leadership, decision making and communication. Life skills help us live a functional life and help us face and overcome challenges effectively."*

- b. This activity is to be done in plenary and not in small groups.
2. In plenary ask participants to shout out different life skills. Record the mentioned life skills on flip chart paper. Let one member of each group tell a story of how a specific life skill has been helpful in their life. (20 minutes)

**TIP:**

The focus of this activity is on social and emotional life skills, though life skills such as maintaining a house should be acknowledged as a useful contribution.

## Note to the Facilitator

Some examples of life skills:

- The ability to plan
- The ability to make decisions
- The ability to communicate
- The ability to seek help when needed
- The ability to settle arguments/resolve conflict
- The ability to express your wants and needs
- The ability to take care of yourself (hygiene, health)
- The ability to take care of others
- The ability to maintain a house (e.g. cleaning, budgets)
- Knowing your strengths and weaknesses
- Resourcefulness (finding different ways to solve problems)

**3.** *“When we have the life skills that we need it is like living in a strong, well-built house. Our strong house can stand up to the sun, the wind and the rain. If we have the necessary life skills we can stand up to most things in our lives and thrive. Every child needs to live in this kind of house.”*

Use Picture L1 (My house).

*“Together, draw a picture of a house that shows the life skills that people gave to you. Each brick of the house should represent a specific life skill. For example, one brick could be ‘making decisions’. We need to be able to make decisions to thrive and move forward in life. You can write the life skill or draw a picture of it on each brick.”*

### TIP:

If the facilitator does not have the picture code, he/she can draw a sample house.

- 4.** After completing the drawing of their houses, the participants should talk about the following questions while in their groups:
- What are the life skills that have been most important in your life?
  - Why are those skills so important in your life?
  - Who taught you those skills?
  - As you look at your house, would you say your house is complete?

- Why would you say it is complete?
- What is missing from your house? What life skills can you say you are lacking?
- What other life skills would you like to have been given? Why?  
(20 minutes)

**TIP:**

As people give their presentations, record the life skills that were considered important and those that were lacking in people's lives. Give a summary of the key points.

5. Invite several participants to come up and share the story of their houses using the above questions as guidelines.  
(20 minutes)

**TIP:**

For participants, tell your own personal story. Do not tell the group's story.

Emphasize that:

- There are important skills that all individuals need to have in order to cope with the daily demands of life.
- It is the role and responsibility of parents and caregivers to impart life skills to their children.
- There are different ways of teaching life skills to children. We need to use our experiences to identify the most effective ways of doing so for the benefit of our children.
- If we lack certain life skills, how can we try to develop these skills for ourselves, as well as for the benefit of our children?
- Who in our communities teaches life skills to children in absence of parents (or care givers)?

## PART 2 The life skills that help children

### Activity 2

What do children need to build strong houses?

Discussion



60 MINUTES

### Introduction

Use Picture L2 (Helping Children to Build Strong Houses)

*“We have spent some time talking about our houses, the life skills our parents and communities taught us, and what was missing from our lives. What do children need to build strong houses? What life skills will enable our children to meet the challenges they encounter?”*

*We need to think beyond the skills of managing household chores or generating income. What are other important life skills for children? Using the stories we have told and the pictures of our houses, list the skills that we want our children to have.”*



1. Using the house drawn in Activity 1, ask participants to write the life skills they want children to have. Write these life skills on the bricks or on different parts of the house (e.g. walls, floors, windows). (20 minutes)

**TIP:**

Note that some survival skills may be mistaken for life skills such as stealing, putting up with abusive relationships and lying.

2. If some of the life skills under each of the headings in the box below are not mentioned, the facilitator should include one or two points.

*“Life skills are the same but how they are used or applied may vary with the context.”*

## Note to the Facilitator

**Life Skill 1:** Children need to know how to communicate and build relationships with others. They need to learn how to:

- Talk to and listen to another person
- Share their problems and worries with another person, so their burdens are lighter and they are happier
- Share with others and also care for others
- Work together with others to achieve a common goal.

**Life Skill 2:** Children need to build their confidence and self-esteem by:

- Valuing themselves
- Believing and trusting in themselves
- Believing in themselves even when others say they are bad or wrong
- Knowing their strengths and their weaknesses
- Learning to stand up for what they believe
- Learning to recognize when they need help or how to ask for it.

**Life Skill 3:** Children need to learn to make decisions by:

- Considering the consequences if they decide on a certain course of action
- Making up their own minds
- Thinking through a number of options and selecting one that will produce the best results for the given situation.

**Life Skill 4:** Children need to learn how to resolve conflict by:

- Working through differences with people in a friendly way
- Avoiding or controlling angry, violent, or destructive situations with others.

**Life Skill 5:** Children need to be able to set goals for their future by:

- Having a goal for the present or future, and being able to take the necessary steps to achieve this
- Being clear about the things that they want to achieve in life.

### Activity 3

## What do these skills mean in children's lives?

Discussion



45 MINUTES

### Purpose

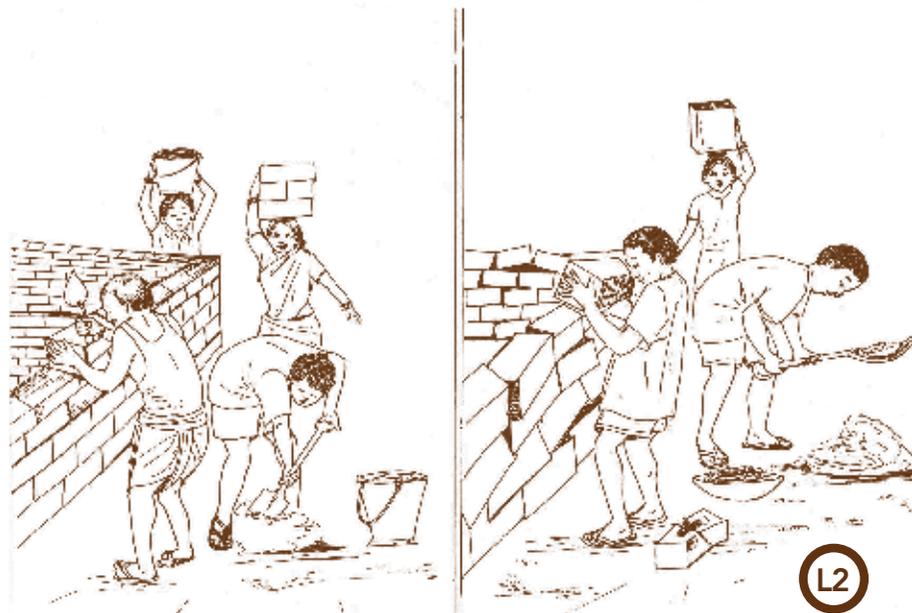
To help participants understand the importance of life skills in children's lives

#### 1. Use Picture L2

*"What do you see happening in this picture?"*

#### 2. Ask the group to discuss the following:

- What happens when a child and an adult communicate well? (Life Skill: Communication)



- How can parents and caregivers help build confidence and self-esteem of children? (Life Skill: Building Confidence and Self-Esteem)
- Give examples of decision making by a child headed household? (Life skill: Decision Making)
- What happens if a child who heads a household is able to resolve conflict? (Life Skill: Resolving Conflict)
- What happens to a child who has set goals for his/her life? (Life Skill: Setting Goals for the Future)

**TIP:**

The facilitator can explain that adults, and not just children, need to improve their life skills.

3. "Our children face many challenges in life. How to get help when they need it? How to make decisions when the parents are absent or have died? Some challenges are similar; some challenges are different from the ones that we faced growing up. If we make sure that our children have the life skills they need, then they can respond to the challenges of life, perhaps even better than we did."

Use Picture L3 to summarize the activity.

"These pictures illustrate each of the life skills and ways that adults, youth and children can help. These life skills are communication and building relationships (upper left corner); building confidence and self-esteem (upper center); decision-making (upper right corner); resolving conflicts (lower right corner); and setting goals for the future (lower left corner)."



## PART 3 How do children learn life skills?

### Activity 4

#### How do children learn life skills?

Discussion



25 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To encourage participants to think about how they learned life skills and to think about ways they could teach children similar skills

#### STEPS

1. In plenary, allow participants to brainstorm and discuss the following questions:
  - How did you learn the important skills necessary to succeed in life? (The answer to this question will help us to better understand how to teach life skills to our children).

- How do children learn? (10 minutes)
2. Make sure to mention that children learn through:
    - Observation
    - Imitation
    - Direct experience
    - Play
    - Being taught by adults, peer, the media, etc.



**Activity 5**  
**Teaching children life skills**  
*Role play*



**Purpose**  
To allow participants to draw on their own experience to teach life skills to children

*"In life, teaching a person a life skill may take one meeting or several meetings. It can be done anywhere and be taught in any way. It can take a long time to teach or a very short time."*

Use Picture L2 (Helping Children to Build Strong Houses) to illustrate the above points. While children can already manage many life challenges, they depend on adults for guidance.

**STEPS**

1. Split participants into four groups and assign the following task. By using role play, show how you would teach a life skill to a child of the age allocated to you:

**Group 1:** 0-5 years

**Group 2:** 6-10 years

**Group 3:** 11-14 years

**Group 4:** 15 -18 years.

2. Allocate 10 minutes for preparation and 3 minutes for each group presentation.

3. Allow the four groups to present their role plays.

4. Once the role plays have been presented, discuss these questions:

- What life skill did each role play illustrate?
- How did they teach the child this life skill?
- What approaches/methods worked?
- What approaches/methods did not work?
- How can you be sure that the child learned the necessary life skill? (30 minutes)

## PART 4 Action Planning

### Activity 6 Action plan Discussion



30 MINUTES

#### Purpose

To allow participants to prepare action plans to teach life skills to children in their community

#### STEPS

*“When we leave this workshop how are we going to teach these life skills to our children? Let’s make our action plan. Are there already groups in your community that look after the needs of children, for example, an OVC or HIV and AIDS action group? Are there any other groups that work together here (e.g. church, youth, other support)?”*

1. Let the participants work in three groups. Each group should come up with at least one example of what they can do at the family and community level to help children learn life skills. They can talk through the following questions to assist.
  - What can I do to promote and ensure that children within my family and community gain important life skills?
  - What knowledge, information, skills and experience do I have to teach life skills to children?
  - Where in our community are children learning life skills?
  - How can life skills teaching/education be added into activities that are already taking place in your communities (e.g. dance clubs, football clubs, drama clubs)?
2. Ask the groups to present their action plans in plenary. (15 minutes)
3. Consolidate the action plan based on the three group presentations.

#### TIP:

Ask what community activities already exist. Further information about other good interventions is provided in the resource sheet at the back of this manual.

**Activity 7**  
**Closing**  
*Discussion*



**10 MINUTES**

**Purpose**

To allow participants to discuss what they have learned from the workshop

**STEPS**

1. End the day by asking the participants what has been the most important learning for them. The facilitator can ask the following question:

*“What have you learnt today?”*

**TIP:**

The closing action can express participants' commitment to their action plans and to children.

2. The facilitator thanks the workshop participants for coming.

*“Thank you for coming to this workshop. The next step is to have meetings within your community and your community groups to talk more about what you have done with your action plans, and other matters affecting your children. We wish you all the best and know that the children living here will benefit.”*

3. Close the workshop in a way appropriate to the culture or country (e.g. a song, prayer or dance).

**End of Workshop**

# Annex 1: Games and Energizers for the workshop

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## 1. The sun shines on

The 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 color or type of clothing and the game continues.

## 2. Pass the energy

Standing or sitting in a circle, the 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. The participants pass these pulses round the circle, as in an electric current, by squeezing the hand of the person next to them and literally ‘energizing’ the group.

## 3. Pass the person

The participants stand facing each other in two 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

The 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 in the other line the opposite person is trying to say “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, e.g. nose to nose, back to back, head to knee etc. The participants have to follow these instructions in pairs. When the leader calls "People to people" everyone must change partners.

## 7. What am I feeling?

The 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

The 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.

# Annex 2: Resources and Links

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## A. THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

1. Williamson, J (2000). *Bibliography of selected resource material concerning children and families affected by HIV/AIDS*. [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)
2. International HIV/AIDS Alliance (2004). *A parrot on your shoulder: A guide for people starting to work with orphans and vulnerable children*. [www.aidsalliance.org](http://www.aidsalliance.org)  
Issues to consider when thinking about encouraging children's participation.
3. International HIV/AIDS Alliance (2004). *Building Blocks in Practice: Participatory tools to improve the development of care and support for orphans and vulnerable children*. [www.aidsalliance.org](http://www.aidsalliance.org)
4. International HIV/AIDS Alliance (2003). *Building Blocks: Africa-wide briefing notes*. [www.aidsalliance.org](http://www.aidsalliance.org)  
Resources for communities working with orphans and vulnerable children.

5. Child Protection Society (1999). *How can we help? Approaches to Community-Based Care*. Zimbabwe. [www.womenchildrenhiv.org](http://www.womenchildrenhiv.org)  
A guide for groups and organisations wishing to assist orphans and other children in distress.

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## B. COMMUNITY PARENTING

1. UNICEF (2004). *A Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV/AIDS*. [www.ovcsupport.net](http://www.ovcsupport.net)  
This framework is based on lessons learnt over many years. It considers families and communities as the foundation of an effective, scaled-up response.
2. *The Fatherhood Project* [www.hsrc.ac.za/fatherhood](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/fatherhood)
3. Richter, L et al (2004). *Family and community interventions for children affected by AIDS*. Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa. [www.hsrcpublishers.co.za](http://www.hsrcpublishers.co.za)

### C. SUPPORTING GRIEVING CHILDREN

1. *The International Memory Project*. [www.healthlink.org.uk](http://www.healthlink.org.uk)  
The use of memory work with children to help them to express their grief and have hope for the future.
2. CARE International and SCOPE OVC (2003). *Telling our Stories: A tool to help children deal with loss, grief and transition*. Zambia. [www.careinternational.org.uk/resource\\_centre/health](http://www.careinternational.org.uk/resource_centre/health)
3. Books for children and adults to help in dealing with grief and loss. These may be ordered through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Descriptions and abstracts of the books may be found on [www.sheknows.com](http://www.sheknows.com)
4. Family Health International (2002). *Voices from the communities*. [www.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACY062.pdf](http://www.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACY062.pdf)  
The impact of HIV/AIDS on the lives of orphaned children and their guardians.
5. Hospice, *Talking to Children about Death*. Retrieved on 15 November 2010 from <http://www.hospicenet.org/html/talking.html>
6. See Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Health Sector Programs/ Psycho Social Support. <http://info.worldbank.org>

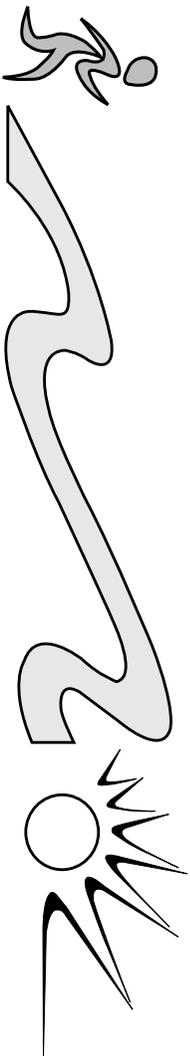
7. Mallman, S (2003). *Building Resilience in Children Affected by HIV/AIDS*. Catholic AIDS Action, Namibia. [www.caa.org.na](http://www.caa.org.na)  
This book discusses the various behaviours and problems of children, and how children can be helped.

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### D. TEACHING LIFE SKILLS TO OUR CHILDREN

1. *Just A Little Smile*. Produced by Vuleka Productions. South Africa. [www.vulekaproductions.co.za](http://www.vulekaproductions.co.za)  
A documentary chronicling a remarkable psycho-social intervention by youths in the lives of vulnerable children in a South African rural community hard hit by poverty and HIV/AIDS.
2. *No more sitting around*. Produced by Vuleka Productions. South Africa. [www.vulekaproductions.co.za](http://www.vulekaproductions.co.za)  
A documentary that takes a look at urban youth who realise that they can make a positive contribution to society, rather than sitting around and waiting for something to happen. This documentary seeks to build young people's confidence and increase their skills and expand their networks.

3. Kaim, B et al (2005). *Auntie Stella: Teenagers talk about sex, life and relationships*. Revised version. Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC), Zimbabwe. [www.tarsc.org](http://www.tarsc.org)  
Through a series of 40 letters written to a wise and sympathetic agony aunt, young people, 12–19 years, explore personal and social issues that affect their sexual health and relationships.
  
4. Smith, T (2004). *Child Headed Household Guide*. Salvation Army Masiye Camp. Zimbabwe. [www.masiye.com](http://www.masiye.com)  
A resource guide for youth who have lost their parents and are assuming responsibility for their households and siblings.



THE **JOURNEY** OF **LIFE**

# Certificate

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has successfully completed the

\_\_\_\_\_workshop

in the Journey of Life Series.

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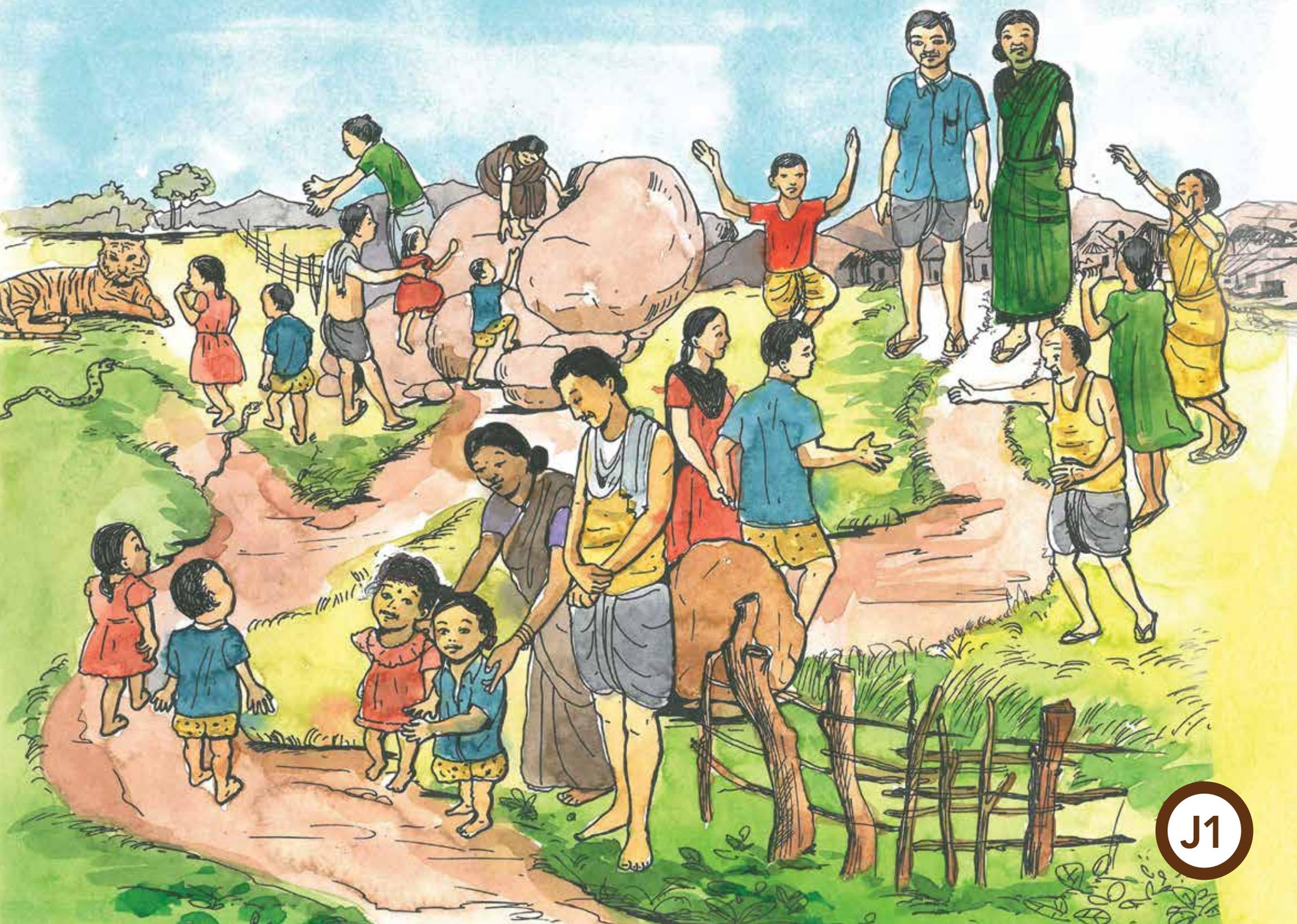
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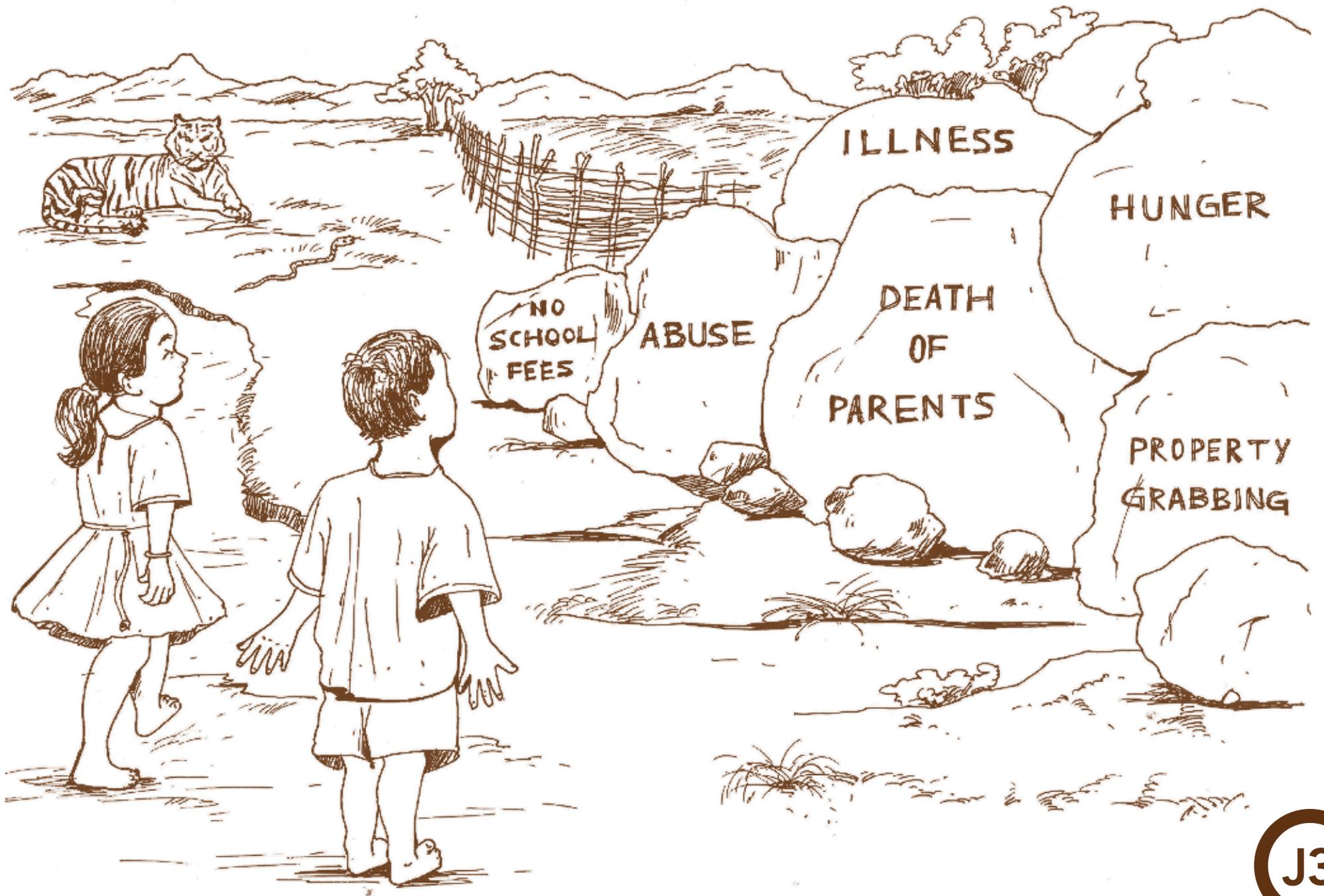
(Organisation)

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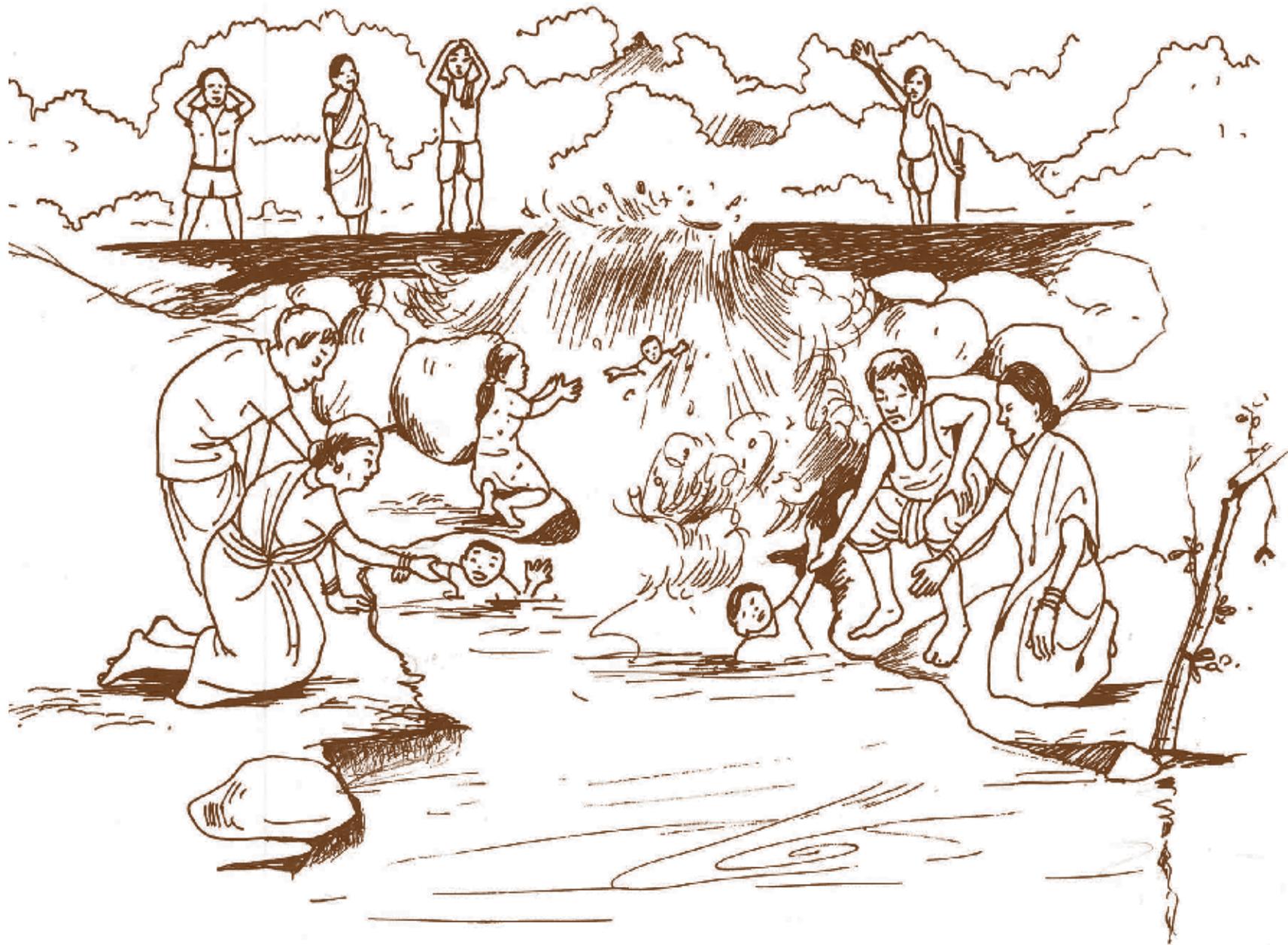




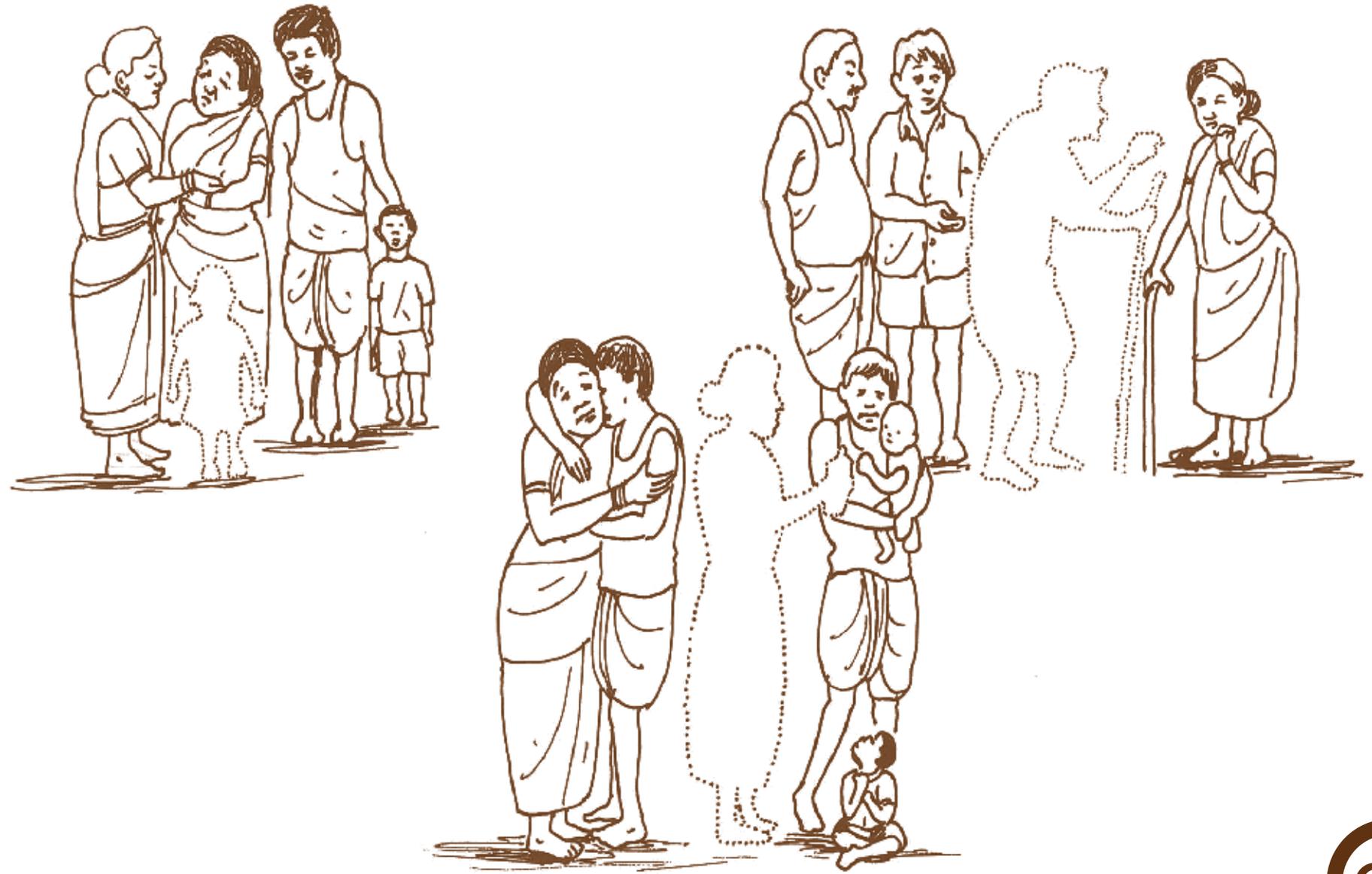


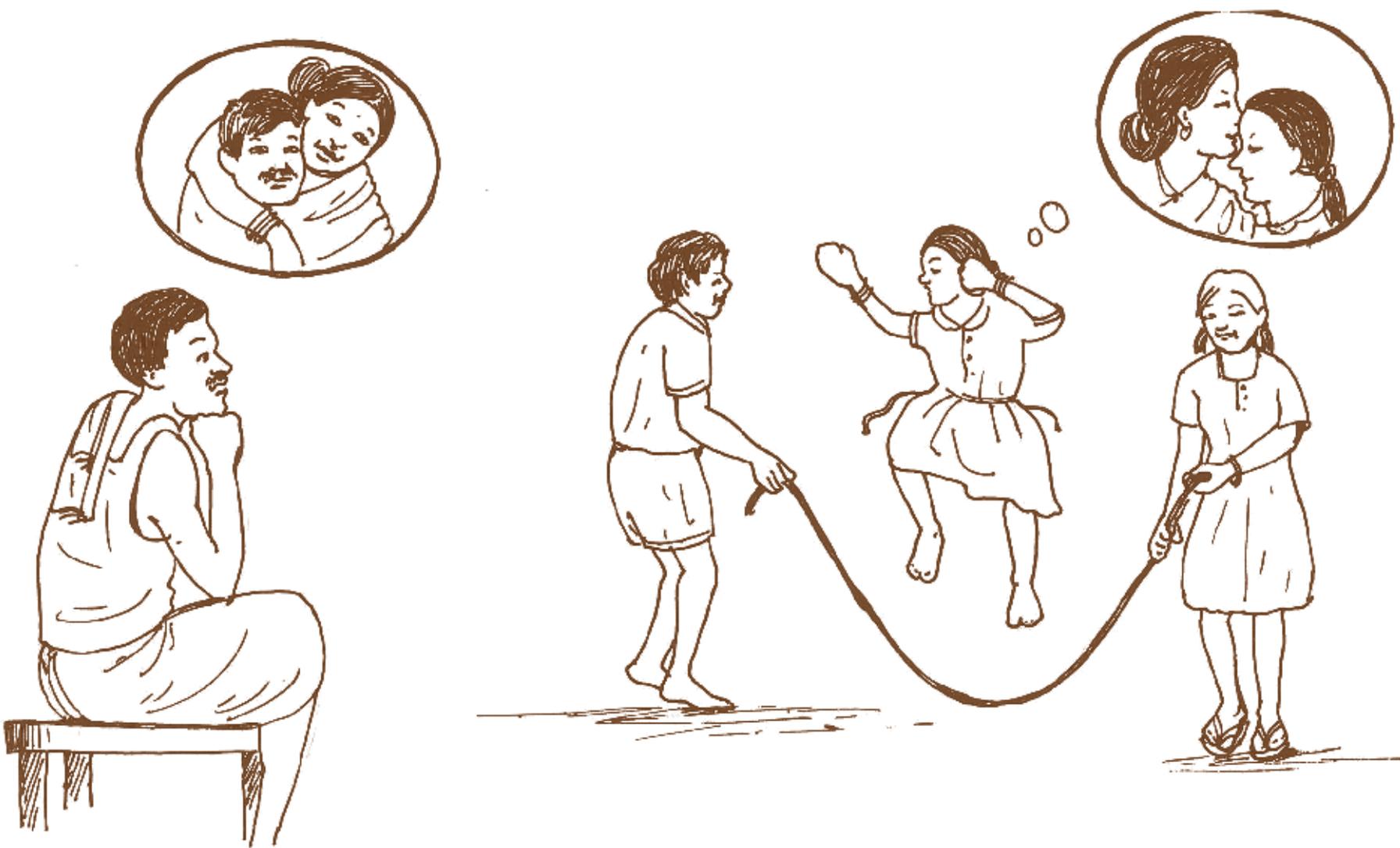


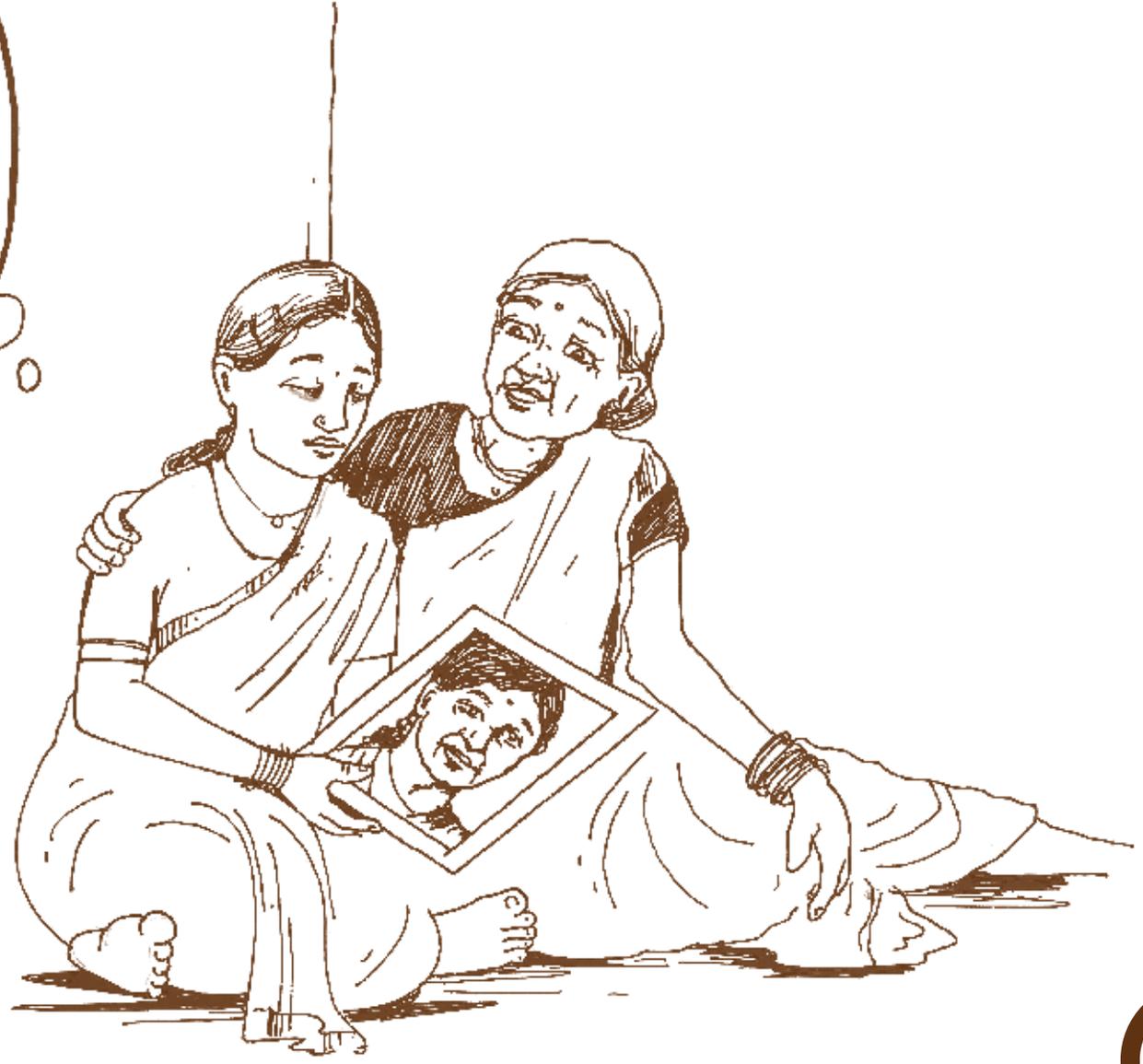




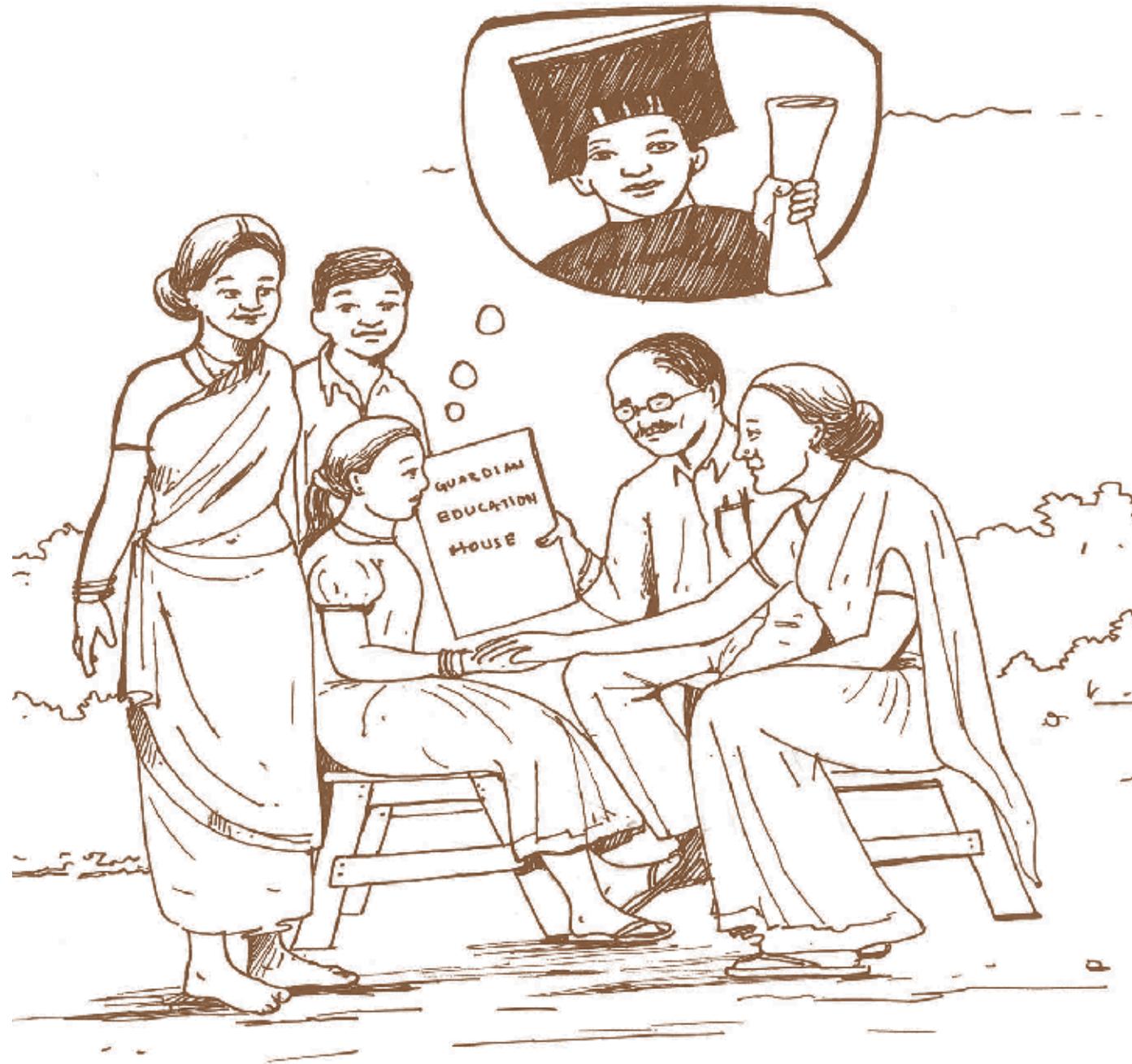


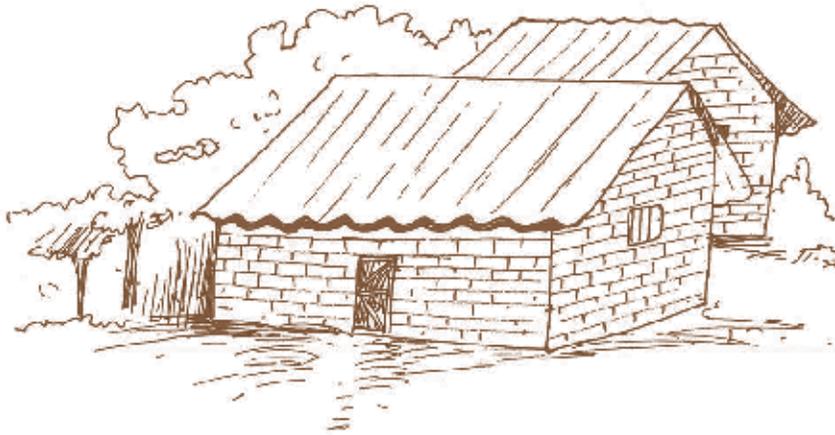
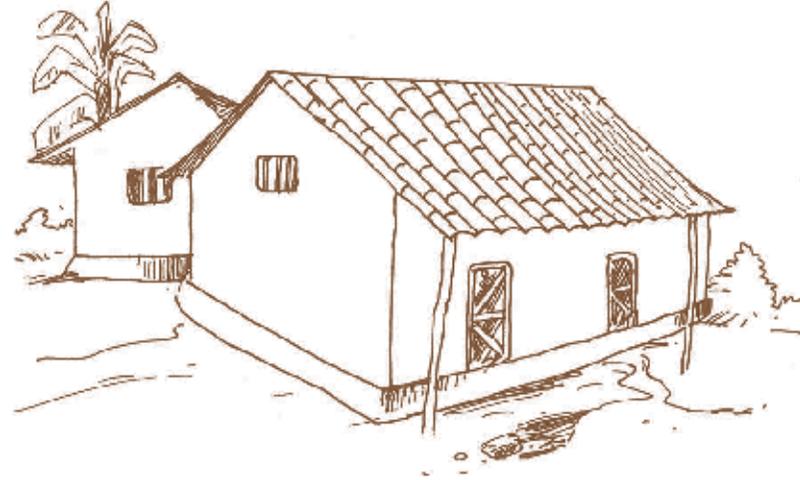


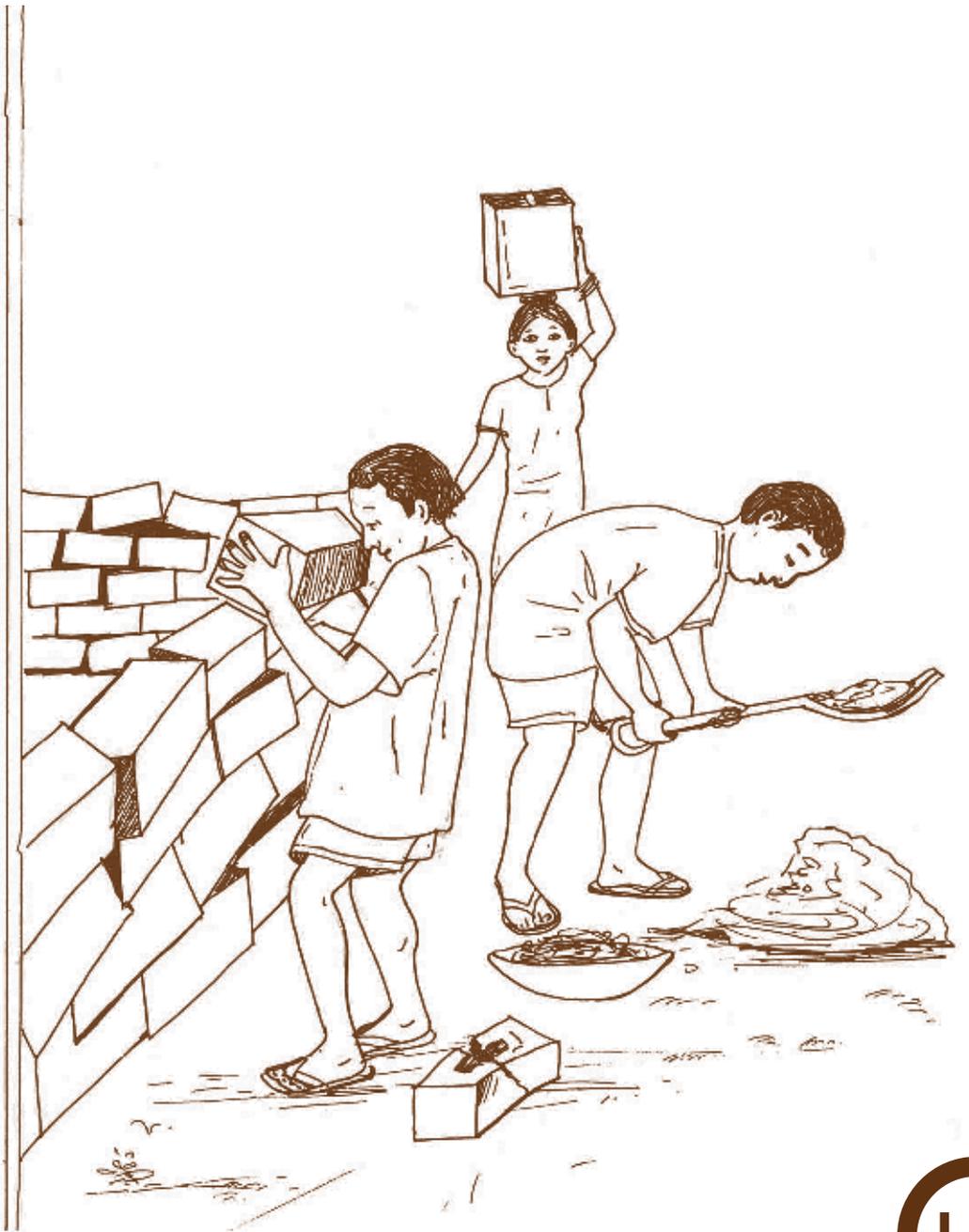
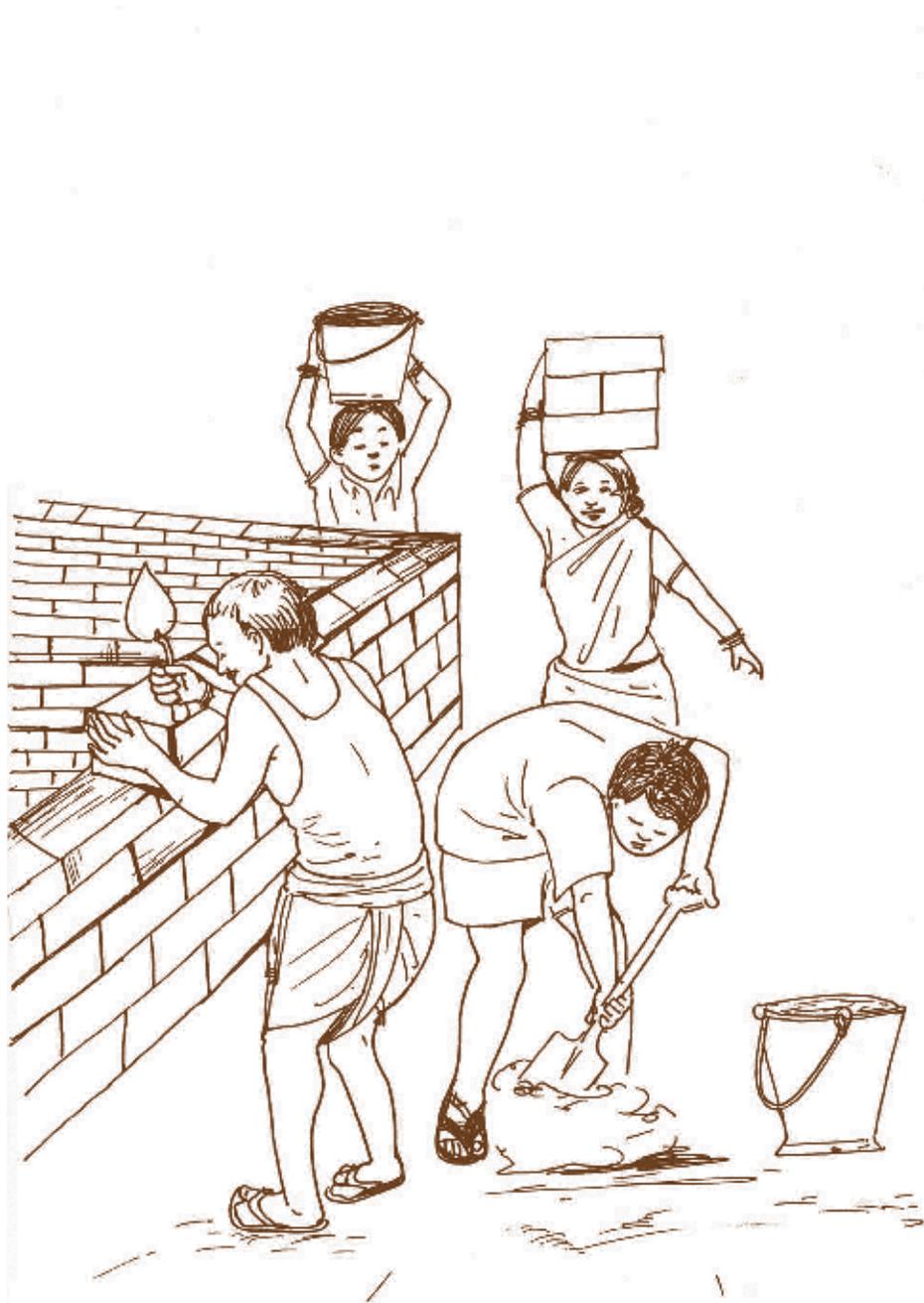


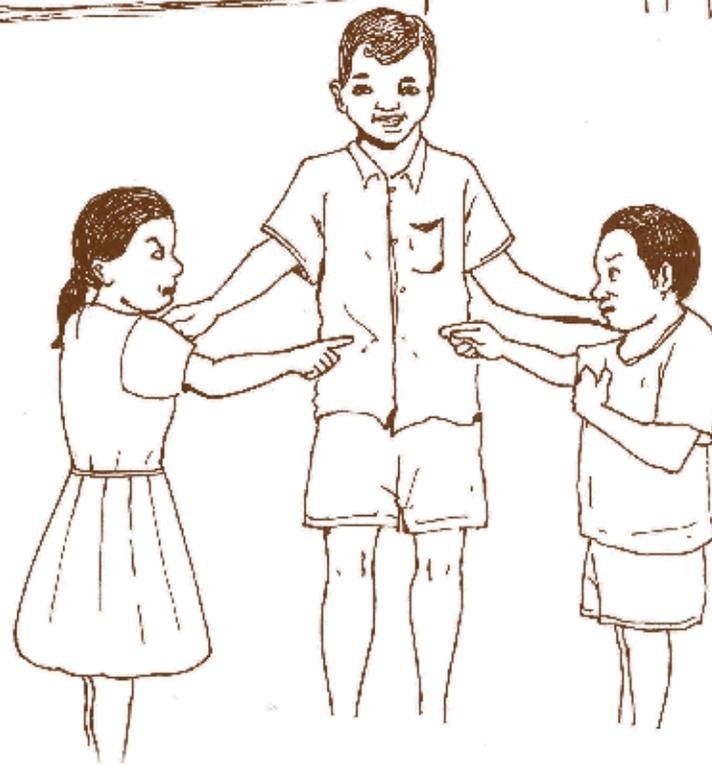












## JOL COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS SERIES

Each workshop comes in both a **Facilitator Training Guide (FTG)** and a **Community Implementation Guide (CIG)** – The FTG prepares facilitators to implement the community conversation (using the CIG) with stakeholders of the community. Make sure you have the right version.

Number	Manual	Content	Where to access
1, 2, 3	The Journey of Life Community Workshop to Support Children	Facilitation Skills Workshop + JoL Awareness Workshop	www.repssi.org www.crs.org
	Action workshop 1	Community Parenting	
	Action workshop 2	Supporting Grieving Children	
	Action workshop 3	Lessons from Life – Teaching Life Skills to Children	
4	Action workshop 4	<i>Social Connectedness</i>	www.repssi.org
5	Action workshop 5	<i>Making our Communities Safer</i>	www.repssi.org
6	Action workshop 6	<i>Children with Disabilities</i>	www.repssi.org
7	Action workshop 7	<i>Ending Child Marriage</i>	www.repssi.org
8	Action workshop 8	<i>Ending Human Trafficking</i>	www.repssi.org, www.crs.org
9	Action workshop 9	<i>Protecting Children from Abuse</i>	www.repssi.org, www.crs.org

- The JOL series has developed in response to the changing needs of children and other action workshops have been added to the original package.
- If facilitators have prior experience in facilitation and community mobilisation it is not necessary to begin with the Facilitator Training Guides and they can begin with the Community Implementation Guides.