

## Services to orphaned and vulnerable children

### 1. Definitions

#### Orphan

A child whose survival, care, protection or development may be compromised, due to a particular condition, situation or circumstance and which prevents the fulfilment of his or her rights.

#### Child – headed households

Child – headed households are recognised by the following:

- The parent or primary caregiver of the household is terminally ill or has died.
- No adult family member is available to provide care for the children in the household
- A child has assumed the role of primary caregiver in respect of a child or children in the household in terms of providing food, clothing psychological support.

#### Primary Caregiver

A person who has formal or informal parental responsibility or right in caring for the child and who exercises that responsibility and right.

### 2. Child-Care forums (CCF'S) AND COMMUNITY BASED MULTI PURPOSE CENTRES (DROP IN CENTRES)

The above mentioned are, together with relevant community leadership structures, the key mechanism for community mobilisation. The forums are made up of community members who mobilise community groups to;

- Facilitate activities that enable community members to talk more openly about HIV and AIDS and the impact of the disease on children, families and communities, and to in this way work towards reducing stigma and discrimination.
- Recruit prospective foster care parents.
- Facilitate community income-generating projects to help vulnerable households.
- Facilitate processes that build the capacity of primary caregivers, community members and volunteers to respond effectively to the different needs of children.
- Facilitate after-school care and holiday programmes.
- Promote and strengthen linkages between community based responses to orphans and vulnerable children with prevention, treatment and care programmes.

#### 2.1. ACTIVITIES FOR CCF

##### Assessing the situation within their community

- Identify orphaned and vulnerable children
- Determine who the caretaker if the children are and how are they living
- Conduct assessment of physical, emotional and social needs
- Identify community resources

- Compile community profile

#### Mobilising their community

- Using the collected data increase awareness of the plight of orphaned and vulnerable children
- Actively involve children and youth mobilizing them as community volunteers
- Establish criteria for determining who qualifies for care and services and helping families to access service
- Identify and facilitate appropriate services to orphaned and vulnerable children and families
- Network with service providers
- Render and advocacy service at community level on behalf of orphaned and vulnerable children
- Provide information, education and communication on HIV & AID, child care, social services, social grants, hygiene and nutrition
- Facilitate projects that will generate income, such as communal food gardens and small businesses
- Implement support groups to assist in dealing with bereavement
- Facilitate training and mentoring of caregivers of children and families

#### Strengthening the care giving and coping capacities of families

- Keep a record of vulnerable children
- Refer children and families in need to agencies who are able to provide them with services and resources that they need.

#### 2.2. ACTIVITIES FOR DROP IN CENTRES

- Identification of orphans and other vulnerable children
- Provision of material assistance, (cooked and nutritious meals at least once a day, or snacks for children to take to school, food parcels and clothes)
- Early childhood development centres
- Assist with application for Social Grants
- Provide pre-, post-, ongoing and bereavement counselling to address the psychological needs of children
- Referral to appropriate organisations/resources
- Monitoring of home circumstances, school work and attendance
- Development of care plans for the OVC, addressing their educational, emotional, social and health needs
- Implement youth programmes
- Implement awareness programmes
- Provide after school recreational activities and school holiday programmes
- Assist with laundry services for Child Headed Households
- Community members to do an income generating project that will help sustain the centre/service.

## **For more enquiries**

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