



ISIBINDI
CREATING CIRCLES OF CARE

**Isibindi Model of Care
for Vulnerable
Children and Youth**



NACCW

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CAREWORKERS



Isibindi Model of Care for Vulnerable Children and Youth

Description

The Isibindi Model deploys trained community-based child and youth care workers in communities in an innovative team outreach program providing developmental support to children and families rendered vulnerable as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is a cost-effective model operating accountably at prevention and early intervention levels of the child and youth care system in partnership with a range of inter-sectoral roleplayers.

Project Goal

The overall goal is to create safe and caring communities for vulnerable children, and youth at risk through a developmental child and youth care work response.

Essential Elements

- The model incorporates and builds on the model of family preservation and focuses on children and youth made vulnerable through the illness or death of one or both parents and which may result in their becoming part of child-headed households.
- It reflects an ecological perspective of the needs of vulnerable children. Trained child and youth care workers work in the lifespace of children and youth in the community, using a developmental strengths-based approach. The intervention is expected to enable children and youth to acquire skills that will increase their competency in their living environment. The intervention will also facilitate emotional support to children and youth as they are prepared to adjust to an environment in which normalisation of the living context increasingly means the absence of 1 or both parents.
- Trained child and youth care workers work within the context of a developmental assessment and promote the experience of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity as a means to healthy development. All significant child and youth care work methodologies and approaches are incorporated in the model, including group processes, individual contacts, life space work, visits, referrals, support, relevant counseling, developmental assessments and planning.
- In this model, children and youth are the focus of services in the context of the family, extended family, neighbourhood and community with a service provider and/or the state acting as a protective mechanism.
- All processes and methods relevant to community development are incorporated in the model. Any risk experienced at the first level (of family), will be compensated for by a focused intervention which, while promoting interconnectedness of the family to the extended family, neighbourhood and community will empower children and youth with life skills.
- The training provided to child and youth care workers facilitates an understanding of the importance of contemporary communities in reversing the impact of challenges in the environment and children and youth internalising roles of impotence and inferiority. The training focuses on facilitating, encouraging and developing a strong community-base and community involvement in healing the broken circles of young people. It encourages care-givers to recognise the resource potential within communities - including those of religious, social, business and educational institutions, that can equip children and youth, to deal responsibly with the emotional, material and ecological hazards that they face as they watch parents become progressively ill and die.
- The project will be terminated if the monitoring and evaluation processes show that it is not sustainable. Sustainability relates to all aspects of the project including the attaining of project goals, its acceptance by stakeholders, the adherence to the integrity of the model, as well as financial sustainability.
- The model embodies inter-sectoral collaboration.
- Child-headed households are considered a priority in the context of the project.
- A child and youth care component made up of programmed intervention with individual families and/or a cluster of families by teams of trained child and youth care workers working under the leadership of a project manager doing life space work.

Strategies, Processes And Methods

These occur at all stages of implementation though the emphasis may change at different stages:

- The project and its processes will be implemented in partnership with the NACCW occupying a mentoring and guiding role specified contractually.

- A needs assessment has to be conducted in a way which takes into account community leaders, key role players and institutions which hold power in the community, as well as representatives of people at grassroots level. The needs assessment may occur through consultation, brainstorming, and incorporates existing material. It is the process which also helps to identify the targeted children.
- The implementation and the exact nature of the project will be influenced by the features of the context, and determined in consultation between NACCW and the implementing agent. The implementation process must be aimed at ensuring sustainability of the project including on-going financial sustainability.
- Identifying and developing an appropriate partnership. A local service delivery organisation or a residential facility (for children) must take ownership of the project to act as project manager.
- Developing a community-based steering committee if indicated and ensuring training and establishing mechanisms for information sharing. The partnership has to be part of this steering committee and maintains control and ownership of the project especially through the involvement of the service delivery organisation acting as project manager. The formation of a steering committee facilitates community participation and reinforces the sustainability of the project.
- Identifying and accessing funding and resources for the project.
- Identification of community members to be trained by NACCW as child and youth care workers (depending on the availability of funding, either as paid or volunteer service providers).
- Training and deploying informed child and youth care workers to provide effective, economical and accountable child and youth care services in the community, based on the current paradigm for child and youth care.
- On-going training and supervision aimed at providing a holistic, integrated and accountable service which encourages work from a strengths-based perspective in the life-space of children and young people.
- Trained community child and youth care workers will be attached to a small cluster of identified families determined by, distance, number of service recipients, and nature of the interventions required.
- Child and youth care workers will be supervised and mentored by an identified child care professional qualified to offer supervision. These small groups will work as teams and all the teams in a designated area will be coordinated by a project coordinator. Mechanisms for on-line supervision, consultation, appraisal and disciplinary processes are used.
- Setting up relevant mechanisms for project accountability and monitoring of child and youth care workers at the level of service delivery. Protocols, procedures, recording systems, registers, contracts, and job descriptions are consistently applied aimed at maintaining control, ensuring accountability and generating statistics. Monitoring and evaluation will be a continuous process throughout all stages of the project and will involve consultation between project partners, with the implementing agent preparing quarterly reports. An independent evaluation will be undertaken.
- Processes of consultation and feedback at all levels of the project implementation.
- Networking and promoting inter-sectoral partnerships and cooperation in the community and more broadly in the child care field.
- Trained volunteers will be attached to each team as and when required.
- Beneficiary families, child and young people are identified and enumerated.

Preparation For Implementation

- The purpose of the project is advertised in the community.
- A needs assessment is conducted (determined by the setting).
- A partnership is developed between NACCW and the implementing organization or agent with contractual roles and responsibilities being outlined.
- Relevant role players in the community are identified and approached to be involved in the project.
- The model and its various components is work shopped by NACCW and contextualized (by NACCW and the implementing agent).
- Potential child and youth care workers are identified by the implementing organization/agent.
- Workers trained by NACCW in child and youth care.
- Initial funding sources are identified.

Optional Additional Components

The following constitute additional components to be introduced independently or in concert to further develop community capacity to provide a safe and caring environment, and can be introduced as discrete project components as the project develops:

- Food gardens.
- Income generation programs.
- A "Safe Park".
- A Life Centre.
- Foster Care.