

# THE ESSENTIAL PACKAGE



The Framework



# FRAMEWORK ONE: Building Blocks

| Building Blocks   | Definitions   | How the EP is Addressing the Building Blocks   |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Foster Positive Caregiver-Child Interaction &amp; Support</b></p>               | <p>Caregivers, and other family members, set the rules for how a child is fed, disciplined and take decisions about the child’s development. When a child and caregiver have a strong and supportive relationship, the child is more likely to be healthy physically, emotionally and more resilient.</p>   | <p>The EP provides age appropriate suggested actions for ways in which caregivers can interact positively with their children to provide needed care and stimulation for physical, cognitive/language &amp; socio-emotional development, and for addressing their health, nutrition &amp; protection needs.</p>                                  |
| <p><b>Employ Developmentally Appropriate Approach to Health &amp; Development</b></p> | <p>In the early years, children experience rapid growth and development. With adequate support they are able to meet their developmental milestones. At each stage of development, children have unique needs that need to be addressed for optimal development to occur. Each stage is an important entry point for preventing potential problems and for identifying and responding to emerging concerns.</p> | <p>The Essential Package seeks to address the need to support a child’s holistic development and look out for key milestones across all the different developmental domains by focusing on age specific needs, one can more easily prevent or provide early support when a child appears to need additional support.</p>                         |
| <p><b>Support Linkages to Broader Systems of Integrated Care</b></p>                  | <p>Children and families live in communities and rely on services being available to meet their needs. Families impacted by HIV and related stigma and discrimination and poverty may be socially isolated and therefore not accessing services even if they are available.</p>   | <p>The Essential Package provides an entry into the households which may be socially isolated by allowing for regular and consistent interaction between a caregiver and a home visitor. These home visitors serve as intermediaries between the caregiver and the services they may need.</p>   |
| <p><b>Eliminate Barriers to Care And Support</b></p>                                  | <p>Families and communities often face significant hurdles to accessing support. These hurdles are not only related to potential stigma and discrimination but can include issues of distance to services, lack of sustainable livelihoods, and other policy related matters.</p>   | <p>The EP recognizes the critical importance of economic strengthening and protection as foundational elements of support to families. It highlights the role that social welfare plays in meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families and suggests appropriate linkages for families to meet their needs and attain their rights.</p> |



# FRAMEWORK TWO: Holistically Addressing the Needs of Young Vulnerable Children

## Overall Goal:

All children have access to essential supports and services needed to meet their full developmental potential across the physical, socio-emotional, cognitive/intellectual, and spiritual domains.

## Outcomes at Three Levels:

**Child Status:** Child is able to reach their full developmental potential

**Caregivers Status:** Caregiver is healthy and able to respond effectively to child's needs

**Caregiving Environment:** Child lives in a safe, stable and consistent caregiving environment

|   | <u>Prenatal to Birth</u>   |  | <u>Birth to &lt; 3</u>   |   | <u>3 to &lt; 6</u>   |   | <u>6 to 8</u>  |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|---|
|   | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions  | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions   | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions   | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions   |
| <b>Critical Needs and Essential Actions per Age and Stage</b> | 1. Supportive interventions for maternal depression  | 1. Observe caregiver for signs of mental distress and link to social networks  | 1. Consistent caregiver(s) who can form attachments and respond to children's signals  | 1. Encourage caregiver to observe when baby is hungry, tired, or scared and to respond in a kind and sensitive way as well as model behaviors for caregivers to understand positive caregiver and child interaction | 1. Consistent caregiver(s) who can form attachments and respond to children's signals including recognition of children who are grieving or distressed             | 1. Encourage caregiver to show empathy and understanding of children's feelings and engage child during home visits to understand their needs   | 1. Caregiver(s) who respond to the growing complexity of child's needs with encouragement and motivation | 1. Support caregiver in recognizing achievements of children and building self reliance in children   |
|   | 2. Broader household engagement in supporting women during and after pregnancy   | 2. Link mother to community support group and/or appropriate services within a health facility if available  | 2. Responsive caregiver(s) who practice appropriate breastfeeding and complementary feeding while showing affection to children  | 2. Encourage caregiver to exclusively breastfeed up to 6 months and then begin complementary feeding  | 2. Caregiver(s) who support child's learning, development of new skills and communication  | 2. Encourage caregiver to actively participate in child's learning and development (e.g. teaching child stories, rhymes, songs, offering choices to children so they can learn to make decisions, and involving children in home chores and praising their good work) | 2. Integration and acceptance into peer group, creating relationships outside the home                   | 2. Encourage caregiver to involve child in family decisions as well as to form attachments with peers outside the household                                     |
|   | 3. Access to adequate prenatal and post-natal care for mothers   | 3. Link mother to health facility, an MCH program if available, and if HIV positive, ensure that mother is accessing PMTCT   | 3. Language stimulation  | 3. Encourage caregivers to interact with child through telling stories, singing songs, and answering questions  | 3. Increased exposure to language  | 3. Encourage caregivers to provide books and read to their child  | 3. Opportunities to practice reading, writing and language   | 3. Encourage caregiver to take active role in child's learning and skills development through providing opportunities for reading, writing, and active learning |
|   | 4. Attendance of a skills professional at birth  | 4. Provide information on danger signs for maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality including HIV risk and the importance of births attended by skilled professionals | 4. Opportunities are needed to develop motor skills (i.e. crawling, sitting, etc.), explore and play with a variety of objects in a clean, safe, and stable environment and with peers, and to develop independence and simple self care | 4. Encourage and explain to caregivers the need for children to have the opportunities to play, explore, have a safe environment and develop  | 4. Age appropriate entry into a safe, non-discriminatory early learning program, especially for girls (including opportunities to interact with peers — e.g. play) | 4. Link children to a community based preschool if available  | 4. Age appropriate entry into non-stigmatizing/non-discriminatory basic education, especially for girls  | 4. Link children to a primary school  |
|   | 5. Adequate nutritious foods during pregnancy, especially if mother is on ART  | 5. Link mother to community available nutrition programs to receive supplementation and micronutrients (Vitamin A, iron and iodine)  | 5. Child receives medical treatment within 3 days of illness   | 5. Refer child to health facility for immunizations and when ill  | 5. Child receives medical treatment within 3 days of illness   | 5. Refer child to health facility when ill  | 5. Child receives medical treatment within 3 days of illness   | 5. Refer child to health facility when ill  |
|   | 6. Women have a right to routine medical care during and after pregnancy   | 6. Help to ensure women have access to health care   | 6. Access to adequate and nutritious food  | 6. Link child to community to receive supplementation and micronutrients including CMAM   | 6. Access to adequate and nutritious food and medical care   | 6. Link households with community nutrition programs when available   | 6. Child has access to adequate and nutritious food  | 6. Link household with community nutrition program when available   |
|   | 7. Pregnant women have the right to be safe from harm, violence and abuse and to seek help if they are experiencing this | 7. Support and link women in suspected case of abuse with community-based mechanisms and government authorities  |  |   |  |   |  |   |

**Key:**  
 Care and Development  
 Health  
 Nutrition  
 Rights and Protection

| <b>Cross-Cutting All Age Groups:</b>   |   | <b>HIV Affected:</b>   |  | <b>Those with Disabilities:</b>                                  |   |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Critical Needs   | Essential Actions   | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions  | Critical Needs   | Essential Actions   |
| 1. Age-appropriate psychosocial support (i.e. bereavement counseling)  | 1. Link child with age-appropriate psychosocial care and support  | 1. Age-appropriate HIV prevention, testing, and treatment if necessary | 1. Encourage caregiver to test their children who show symptoms of the virus | 1. Sensitize community around different types of disabilities    | 1. Educate community about disabilities and how to provide support  |
| 2. Clean water/sanitation facilities   | 2. Support access to clean water and latrine  | 2. Adequate care for HIV-infected children                             | 2. Encourage caregiver to take child to health clinic immediately when ill   | 2. Access to services for any physical or mental health problems | 2. Ensure linkages to health services   |
| 3. Insecticide treated mosquito net  | 3. Support access and encourage the use of insecticide treated mosquito net   | 3. Children have the right to know their status                        | 3. Support age-appropriate disclosure  | 3. Protection from physical danger, including abuse and neglect  | 3. Support and link children in suspected cases of child abuse and neglect with community-based mechanisms and government authorities |
| 4. Children need to live in a safe environment, free from harm, violence and abuse (verbal, physical, and sexual) where they are treated with equal importance by their caregivers | 4. Support and link children in suspected cases of child abuse and neglect with community-based mechanisms and government authorities |  |  |  |   |
| 5. Recognition that child is a citizen of the state e.g. birth registration  | 5. Encourage parents/caregivers to register their child so he/she has access to health, education and protection services             |  |  |  |   |
| 6. All children, boys and girls, have a right to education   | 6. Ensure all children, boys and girls, have access to education  |  |  |  |   |

# FRAMEWORK THREE: Key Actions for Caregivers of Young Vulnerable Children

## Why are These Services Important for Caregivers?

**Psychosocial Support:** Caregivers taking care of sick family members or who are HIV+ may be stressed and worried about the future. When caregivers are depressed or stressed, they may not be able to show the needed love and affection to their children or provide for their basic needs.

**Healthcare:** If caregivers are ill, it can compromise how they are able to care for their children. Thus, it is important that they also seek medical attention not only for their children but also for themselves.

**Food and Nutrition:** Everyone in the family needs a balanced diet and protein-rich foods such as eggs and meats as nutritious foods helps adults to stay healthy and carry out daily activities and helps children to grow and learn.

**Legal Protection:** Caregivers need support to know their rights and the importance of registration to access services. When male caregivers die, children and women may not inherit their house and land. With no one to protect them, young caregivers, especially girls, may be exploited and/or abused.

**Economic Strengthening:** When the primary caregiver becomes ill or dies, the household loses its income to support the family's basic needs. Caregivers, especially young caregivers, should have the opportunity to learn new skills to earn an income to provide for their family's needs. Also, some caregivers may no longer be able to work but need income to provide for their children's health, nutrition, and education needs. Thus, they need support to access government grant programs that will help them (e.g. welfare grants, pension funds, poverty certificates, etc).

## Key Actions to Support All Caregivers

### Psychosocial Support

- Identify and link caregivers to community support including respite care, support groups, and bereavement counseling to help stressed or depressed caregivers
- Sensitize community how on to best support caregivers

### Healthcare

- Encourage caregiver to go to the nearest health clinic if he/she shows signs of diarrhea, fevers, cold chills or vomiting for treatment and medicine
- If the caregiver is on ART, the volunteer should encourage him/her to take their medicine as directed
- Encourage caregivers who believe that they may be HIV+ to get tested
- Support caregivers who are HIV+ to seek appropriate treatment

### Food and Nutrition

- Encourage caregivers to eat a balanced diet
- For households who do not have access to nutritious food, identify and link them to counseling and feeding programs within the community
- Sensitize communities to help caregivers meet their nutrition needs, such as by working in their garden

### Legal Protection

- Encourage caregivers to register the births and deaths of household members
- Identify link households to community available legal support for poor labor practices, abuse charges, and inheritance issues

### Economic Strengthening

- Identify and link caregivers to livelihoods training and life skills education that promotes reading, writing and math skills

## Key Actions to Support Specific Types of Caregivers

### Mother

- For pregnant mothers, ensure access to antenatal care, prevention of mother to child transmission and postnatal care
- Ensure access to respite care, especially for those caring for sick family members
- Refer mothers to social support services including economic strengthening, protection from abuse, and mothers groups

### Father

- Encourage fathers to form a bond with children as soon as they are born
- Engage fathers in the care and development of the children as well as encourage support for the nutrition and health needs of mothers and children
- Link to social support networks for income generation, knowledge sharing, and all male groups
- Use model fathers to reinforce positive behaviors such as proper discipline

### Grandparent

- Build on strengths of grandparents to ensure the cross-generational transfer of culture, values, and wisdom occurs
- Link grandparents to social support networks and government safety nets such as pension funds and grants
- Create opportunities for grandparents and children to communicate positively

### Sibling/Child Headed Household

- Provide opportunities for child caregivers, especially girls, to continue school even while supporting needs of family
- Ensure child caregivers are protected from abuse and refer them to appropriate and child friendly systems for care
- Counsel child caregivers to combat depression, prevent HIV and provide opportunities to interact with peers
- Ensure access to social networks and counseling (e.g. bereavement counseling, youth groups, play groups, church groups, etc)

### Other Extended Family/Foster Family

- Link caregivers to foster care grants
- Engage social welfare system to follow up on these children at the community level
- Guard against sibling dispersion through community engagement
- Sensitize community about child rights to prevent abuse and exploitation
- Reinforce the need for caregivers to provide love and attention and to support children's growth and learning
- Encourage caregiver to treat all children in household the same

