

INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT - BWF

Introduction

TAHEA Mwanza in partnership with Better Way Foundation (BWF) are implementing a project on Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD). The project is implemented in 4 Wards of Bugogwa, Shibula, Sangabuye and Kayenze in Ilemela Municipality, Mwanza region focusing on 4 thematic areas of Nutrition, Early stimulation and Early learning, Health care and Protection. This is a scaling up following the piloted IECD project in Bugogwa from 2013 - 2015.

Project Goal: Promoting Integrated ECD Interventions in Ilemela District 2016 - 2018

Objectives;

- i. To improve ECD services and primary caregiver practices in Ilemela district resulting in better nutrition, stimulation, care and protection for young male and female children including children with disabilities.
- ii. To strengthen institutional capacity to advocate for the implementation of laws, policies and strategies that reflect the rights of young children, including those with disabilities in Ilemela District and national level.

In year 2016 the following activities were implemented;

- Trained Para teachers and Caregivers in ECD centres to facilitate learning to children with age 3-6 years and enable smooth transition to primary school.
- Development of teaching, learning and play materials using local resources by trained para teachers and caregivers.
- Training of management committee members on governance of ECD centres, Law of the Child and Minimum Standards.
- Training of 18 community volunteers on ECD promotion and implementation.
- Train selected women coordinators and women groups in nutrition (IYCF, food preparation and preservation), Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and Child Rights and Protection.
- Hold meetings with village, ward and religious leaders to raise their awareness on the importance of investing on ECD and appropriate practices.
- Take stock of indigenous and other available food stuff commonly used in the area.
- Organize workshop to train selected LGA officials on ECD and planning for ECD interventions.

Achievement

The project managed to achieve the following:

- Improved the capacity of 44 para teachers and caregivers in facilitating learning to children 3-6 years.
- Increased the number of age appropriate materials especially the locally available ones in the ECD centres, para teachers and caregivers are using the knowledge and skills to replicate more materials. 16 out of 22 centres have adequate materials.

- We have improved the work of the centre management committee, they meet monthly to plan for and discuss the development of the ECD centres.
- Improved practices of 18 women coordinators on nutrition (IYCF, food preparation and preservation), Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA), Child Rights and Protection. They have they have shared same knowledge to a total of 380 women in their communities through weekly meetings.
- Improved knowledge and increased awareness on the importance of ECD to local leaders and communities. 8 Community based ECD centres have been established in all the 4 Wards.

Success Story

Leticia Dioniz 50 years old is married to Mussa Yangilo and a mother of 5 children. She lives at Igumamoyo village in Sangabuye Ward. She is one of the 18 Women Coordinators who were trained by TAHEA on nutrition and IYCF practices.

After the training last year she went back and cascaded training to 34 women at Igumamoyo. The trained women have improved their nutrition and IYCF practices as Leticia says, "Many women are now aware of the importance of safe delivery in hospital, just from December 2016 to this February 2017, a total of 7 mothers went to give birth at our Health Centre - Sangabuye". She added that "I have walked at night like a hyena, they would knock on my door and say mom take us to hospital, so i was waking up and escort them".

She also explained that the general knowledge of most women on the importance of eating vegetables has increased, before they used not to consider it as important food. She included men during her training so that women will not get in conflict with their husbands because of changing diets and budgeting for the meals. Leticia, whose daughter in law has a 1.5 months child is using her to demonstrate good practices in nutrition and IYCF. "When she was pregnant i made sure that she is attending clinic so that the child is safe, and she was born healthy with 3 kgs. Yet i am going to make sure that she breastfeeds the child for six (6) months without any other food or drink" She ended her story.



Left is Leticia Dioniz and to the right is Leticia with her daughter in law and the new baby

Unique Approach:

The integrated approach is unique. By addressing all together the 4 services a child needs for optimal development makes this approach unique. Nutrition, Health care, Protection and early stimulation/learning.