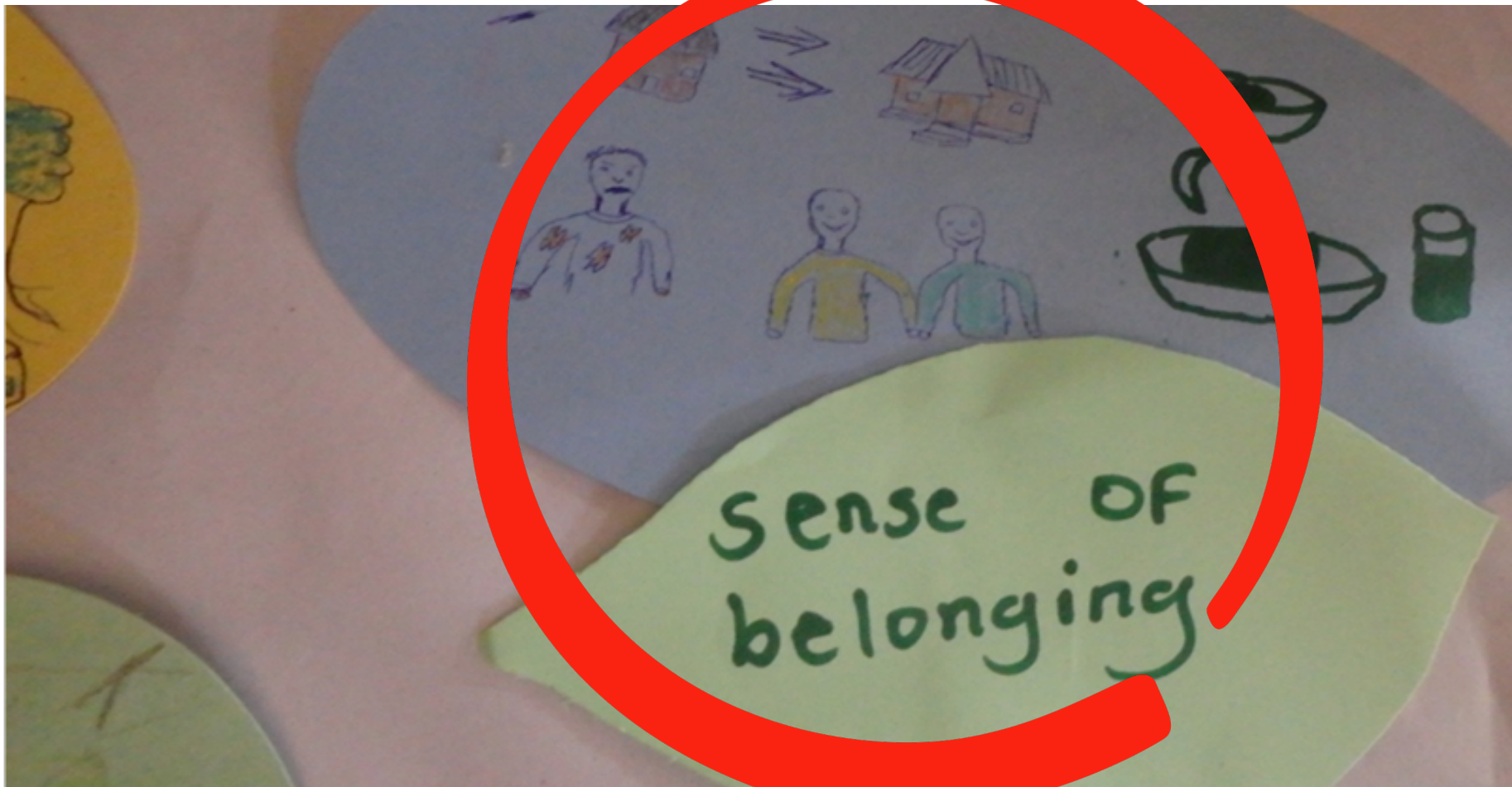




**Save the Children**

# Key Findings Related to VAC in Kinship Care in East Africa



# Introduction

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A Save the Children participatory research on kinship care (2015) in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zanzibar

The research aimed to build knowledge on endogenous care practices within families and communities, especially informal kinship care, in order to increase the care and protection of children.

## Research Objectives

- To increase understanding of the magnitude and characteristics of kinship care
- To increase understanding of the experiences (positive and negative) of children living in kinship care.
- To increase understanding of male and female caregivers perspectives and experiences
- To identify and analyse the extent to which existing laws, policies relate to children living in kinship care and/or prevention of family separation.
- To develop policy and practice recommendations to prevent family separation and support family strengthening efforts

# How findings of the full report is organized

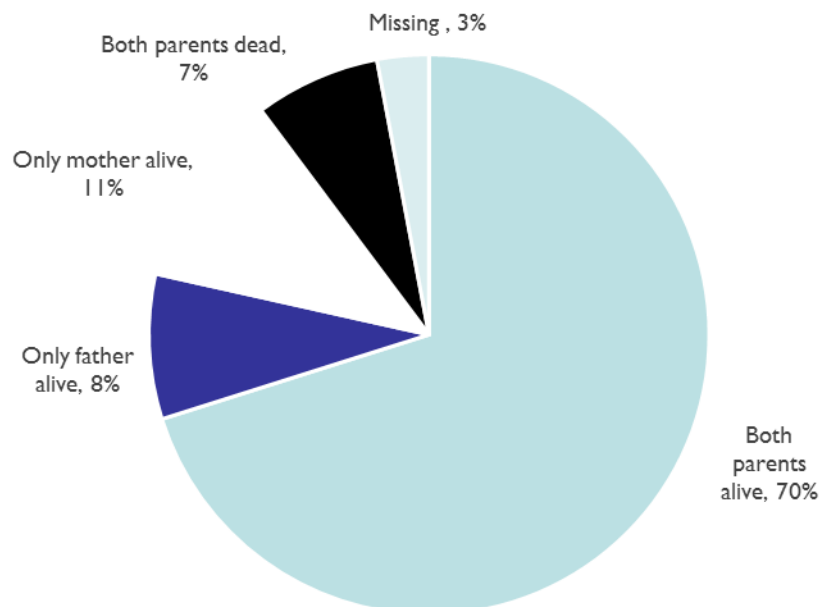
1. Legal, policy, plans and data concerning kinship care
2. Traditional practices, trends in kinship care and influencing factors
3. Positive and negative experiences of girls and boys living in kinship care, and protection and risk factors influencing outcomes
4. Children and caregivers support needs, and the availability of such support
5. Policy and practice recommendations



# Scale

- In Ethiopia (DHS 2011) 71% of children (age 0-17) live with both biological parents. 14% live with their biological mother only and 3% with only their biological father. **A significant percentage of children (11%) live in households without their biological parent**
- In Kenya (DHS 2003) 58% of children live with both biological parents. 26% live with their biological mother only, and 3% live with their biological father. **A significant percentage of children (11%) do not live with either biological parent**
- In Tanzania (DHS 2010) 58% of children aged 0-17 are living with both biological parents. 19% are living with their biological mother only and 6% are living with only their biological father. **A significant percentage of children (17%) do not live with either biological parent**

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN 0-17 IN ETHIOPIA NOT LIVING WITH A BIOLOGICAL PARENT, ACCORDING TO SURVIVAL STATUS OF PARENT



# Factors contributing to kinship care

- ☐ Traditional, socio cultural and religious practices
- ☐ Family poverty
- ☐ Lack of access to secondary education and health services
- ☐ Urbanisation and migration
- ☐ Displacement due to conflict/disasters
- ☐ Family breakdown (divorce, polygamy, alcohol abuse)
- ☐ HIV/ AIDS, death of parent (s), other illness



# Positive and negative experiences of **girls and boys** living in kinship care

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- ❖ Proper love and care and a sense of belonging
- ❖ Fair treatment
- ❖ Guidance and discipline
- ❖ Fulfilment of basic needs and access to education
- ❖ Appropriate responsibilities
- ❖ Freedom of expression
- ❖ Preservation of family identity and inheritance
- ❖ Communication & wider support



- ❖ Lack of parental care
- ❖ Discrimination and unfair treatment
- ❖ Mistreatment and abuse
- ❖ Challenges in meeting basic needs
- ❖ Too much workload
- ❖ Limited voice
- ❖ Lack of information and inheritance
- ❖ Isolation

# Caregiver experiences

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- ❖ Caring for children prestigious and blessing from God
- ❖ Importance of family love, responsibility and sense of belonging
- ❖ Kinship care as a social security investment
- ❖ Child supports household and work
- ❖ Family name and inheritance



- ❖ Caregiver struggle to provide child basic needs due to economic difficulties
- ❖ Sense of obligation, duty and resentment about using existing family resources
- ❖ Insufficient support from family or community
- ❖ When the child seems ungrateful
- ❖ Fears about inheritance

# Protective and risk factors influencing outcomes

- Choice or obligation to care for a child which is influenced by patriarchal or matriarchal decision making processes
- Motivation to care for the child and the degree of "closeness" between the child and caregiver
- Families' financial situation
- Child's behaviour – being polite and hardworking or undisciplined
- Regular communication and support with parents or other relatives
- Child's individual circumstances (e.g. child born out of wedlock, child with disability) and community reactions.

# A few key recommendations

- Children have a **sense of belonging** in their families. There is family unity, no discrimination among children and no child feels isolated.
- **Strengthening child protection systems** (national laws, policies, guidelines) and community based systems to increase identification, monitoring and response to kinship care families and prevention of family separation.
- Children are protected. There is zero tolerance for any form of violence against children.
- Children have **opportunities to play**.
- **Strengthen children's participation** and non-discrimination







## Visioning Tree Exercise in Kenya

# THANK YOU



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