

Kinship Care Album

Ethiopia



Save the Children

BREAKTHROUGH

“All children thrive in a safe family environment and no child is placed in harmful institutions”



Save the Children

WE ARE the world's leading independent organisation for children.

OUR VISION is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

OUR MISSION is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Foreword

Kinship care in Ethiopia is embedded within the socio-cultural and economic context of the Ethiopian family system as alternative child care option, where by relatives assume greater responsibility for the provision of psychosocial and economic care of children who are orphans or those unable to live with their parents as a result of several factors. The kinship bond in Ethiopia includes family members related with the orphan children either by blood, marriage, clan, friendship, and or other deliberately created social ties.

Kinship care is a valid care option for the large number of children in Ethiopia who are unable to live with their parents. Kinship care is preferred by children and care providers for several reasons. It provides opportunities for lasting attachments between the child

and caregiver, important for the healthy physical and emotional development of a child, and health, education and wellbeing outcomes. Kinship care arrangement preserves the family, community and cultural ties for children. It also reduces likelihood of subsequent placement of a child in a residential care facility minimizing the associated risks, and reduces distress on children resulting from moving in with strangers. On the other hand, there are also noted concerns and evidence of increased risk of protection violations, including abuse, violence and exploitation of children in kinship care arrangement.

This album presents viewpoints of children and young people, who have been engaged in this participatory research on kinship care - as advisors, researchers, respondents and documenters, →

Foreword (continued)

→ during the months of June to December, 2014. It presents the positive and negative experiences of children and care providers in kinship alternative care arrangement as told by children. In this album the child researchers and those informant children to the kinship care research expressed their own understanding of and/or experiences in kinship care arrangement using different mechanisms such as drawings, poems, storytelling, and moments captures going around in their own communities. It incorporated views of girls and boys, including those living in kinship care arrangement and those children living with their biological parents who are caring for kin child within the family. The album also presented some of the key recommendations expressed by children in their vision tree.

Working with the children and young people in this research, all the necessary

measures were taken to ensure their participation is based on voluntary, with safe and enabling environment. Child safeguarding measures were taken and respected in the process of documenting this album through creating a safe and secure environment where they feel protected, respected and recognized, having due consultation with children throughout the research process. Some children provided their own direct stories with their full consent and their care providers; and in other cases the names and locations have been altered to ensure anonymity and safeguard the children who told their experiences.

Special thanks go to all local research team members and informant children, young people and caregivers who have shared their direct experiences of kinship care, informing the output of this report. Special thanks also to the Save the Children staff members and

Partners namely: Marry Joy Development Association, Love for Children Organization and Ratson Women, Youth and Children Development Programme, who have taken active part in the research process as part of the research team. We also would like to express our appreciation to the local government offices that provided the required support for this research to take place.

Save the Children believes that this Kinship Care Album will give insights to the views and experiences of children and their care givers in the kinship alternative care arrangement, and inform programs aimed at enhancing the quality of care provided for children in kinship care arrangements. We hope you will enjoy going through the report!

Save the Children in Ethiopia

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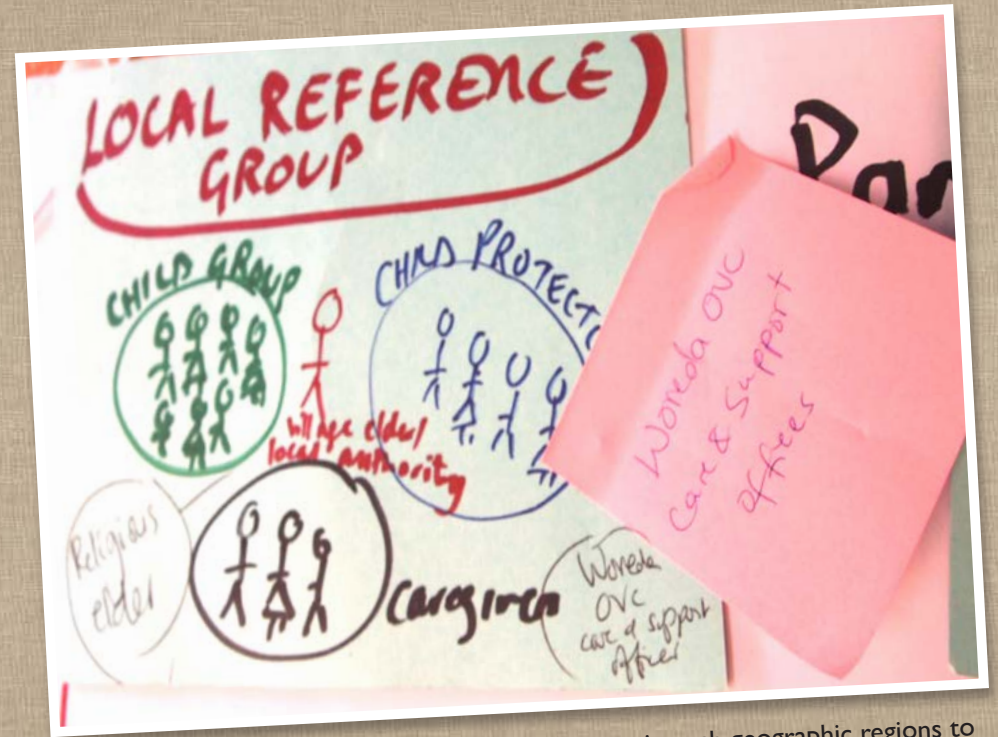
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The Local Research Team



Each research team in each of the four geographic areas, is composed of six children living in kinship care, two children living with biological parents and two care givers with equal gender disaggregation



The research team identified local reference groups in each geographic regions to support the work, including such as child led structures, local associations, community child protection committees, district level OVC care and support offices.

PART 1

Understanding Kinship Care



The local research team attending training on participatory research methods/ tools



Developing time line for the research

Kinship care

Family-based care within the child's extended family or with close friends of the family known to the child, whether formal or informal in nature.



Developing time line for the research



Using body mapping to explore positive aspects and challenges of children and care givers in kinship care





Identifying protection and risk factors in Kinship alternative care



Care givers in Hawassa town working on resource map



Children and caregivers using participatory tools such as body mapping, trend analysis, service mapping and exploring care options and factors influencing kinship care during the data collection



Mapping the positive and negative aspects living in different kinship care options, such as with grand parents, aunts, uncles, etc



Drawing recommendations addressing issues at different level

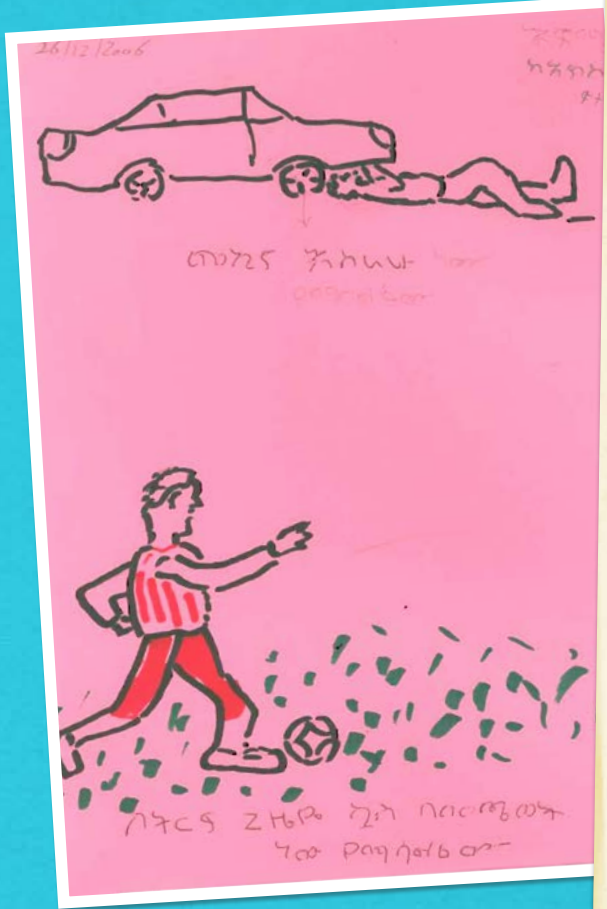
PART 2
 Living in
 Kinship Care
 As Told by Children

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A promise is firm
 as the limitless sky
 (a traditional saying)



Children in kinship care told their stories using drawings, poems, writings ...



**A 16 year old boy from
 Addis Ababa wrote:**

“Since the death of my Mom,
 I am living with my aunt. I
 do not have any emotional
 distress as other children
 who are separated from
 their parents. I know
 children who always feel
 sad because, for example,
 they are discriminated in
 the family. But such things
 has never happened to me.
 One of the advantages I got
 living with my aunt is that
 I am attending my school
 properly. But there are no
 disadvantages for me living
 with my aunt”.

Kinship care providers, though life is not easy for them, they take responsibility of caring for the children, to keep them safe when their parents are away



This is my grandmother. I am 14 years old, and I live with her. She also cares for other grand children of hers in the house (who are my cousins). We all go to school and help her in domestic work during our spare time.



Hiwot and her sister, lives with their uncle and his wife in Takusa district. Both of them are going to school. Their parents have passed away when they were really young. Their uncle has four biological children, 2 girls and 2 boys. Though life is not easy for him, he took both of his nieces and provides care for them as his own children.



"I am Tewodros, 10 years old. I, my two sisters and brother live with our grandmother. My mom has passed away and my father is sick and is in bed, and does not live with us. Even though it is summer time now, I am going to school, taking summer classes."



↗ I help my grandmother with the house work and with our small farm".

← "I also get time to play with other children in the neighbor, and I am happy"



Living in kinship care is a preferred option for children. Some children, though are not provided well with their basic needs, they feel happy and prefer to live with their kinship-family

A story as told by a 13 years old boy and his sister

He used to live with his two brothers and sister and their parents, in a place called Wolayita Sodo. When he was 10 years old, he and his younger sister came to Hawassa town to spend summer with their aunt (sister of their father). Unfortunately, they lost their mother and two brothers due to an accident happened at home. Their father has health complication and cannot take care of the children. For that reason the father decided for them to stay with their aunt whom they went to spend summer with. Their aunt is a single mother, and is living with a very poor income to care for them. For that the child had to work to bring income; and he go to school only for three days out of the five school days of the week, because he has to go to the market for the two days to sell plastic bags to support the family, that range from 25 cents to 3 Ethiopian birr.



"I work hard to support the family. But I am happy to live with my aunt because she is my family and loves me and my sister".

Handwritten text in Amharic script, likely a transcription of a story or interview. The text is dense and covers most of the page.

Some children face discrimination within the kinship family

The 12 years old boy lives in a rural Kebele, in one of the study areas. The child always gets stress and wonders about whom his mother was, and why his father abandoned him when he was a little baby. He is currently living with his aunt (sister of his father) and her son. He feels that he is discriminated and maltreated by his aunt and her son. He is not allowed to mix with the family and spend nights in a small room located within the family farm field, exposed for danger. It is a scary place for him. He said he does not get timely meal with enough amounts, and his aunt does not buy him shoes and school materials such as note books and pen. He feels that his cousin (son of his aunt) does not like him because he thinks that he is going to share his inheritance. He heard his neighbors talking that his mother has died due to HIV/AIDS. He hates living with his aunt.

Some children experience change of kinship care providers

A 14 years old girl tells her story: "I lost my mother when I was 9 years old. My father was terminally sick at that time, and for that reason my aunt (sister of my father) took me to her house. At that time she promised that she will provide me a good care, also will let me visit and take care of my sick father. But, things were different when I start to live with her. She took me to her house so that I would serve as a maid at home and take care of her newly born baby. I do household work – I clean house, I wash the baby's and my aunt's cloth, and when they come from work I serve dinner and coffee, and then I sleep at mid night. I then weak up at 5am

in the morning, prepare and serve breakfast, then go to the market caring their things to sell. I also travel for water to fetch water, and carry up to 20 liter water on daily based. Added to that I am not allowed to go outside and play with other children. The neighbors' children do not like me. They always say bad things about me. After some time passed we were informed about the death of my father, and I went for his funeral. At the funeral, I met with my older sister who is living by herself. I told her my situation and she decided to take me with her though she is poor to provide for my needs. My aunt was not willing to let me go. Thus, my sister reported the case to the

Handwritten text in Amharic script, likely a transcription of a story or interview. The text is dense and covers most of the page.

police, and I expressed my preference to live with my sister to the police. Now I am living a peaceful life with my sister, and I am a high rank student at school. Now I am 14 years old and 6th grade student"

Observation in urban setting:

Advantages for children living in kinship care:

- Children are protected from going out to live on the street
- Some girls came to city to live with relatives ruining away from child marriage, and they are now protected from child marriage
- We saw children having good sanitation and care
- Children living in kinship care get education opportunity
- They get mentoring and guidance from their kinship care providers
- We met children in kinship care who are happy, play and share meal with other biological children of the kinship family

Disadvantage situations:

- Some children do difficult work, including to bring income for the family, and are not going to school
- We saw children living on the street
- Children are also at risk of sexual violence

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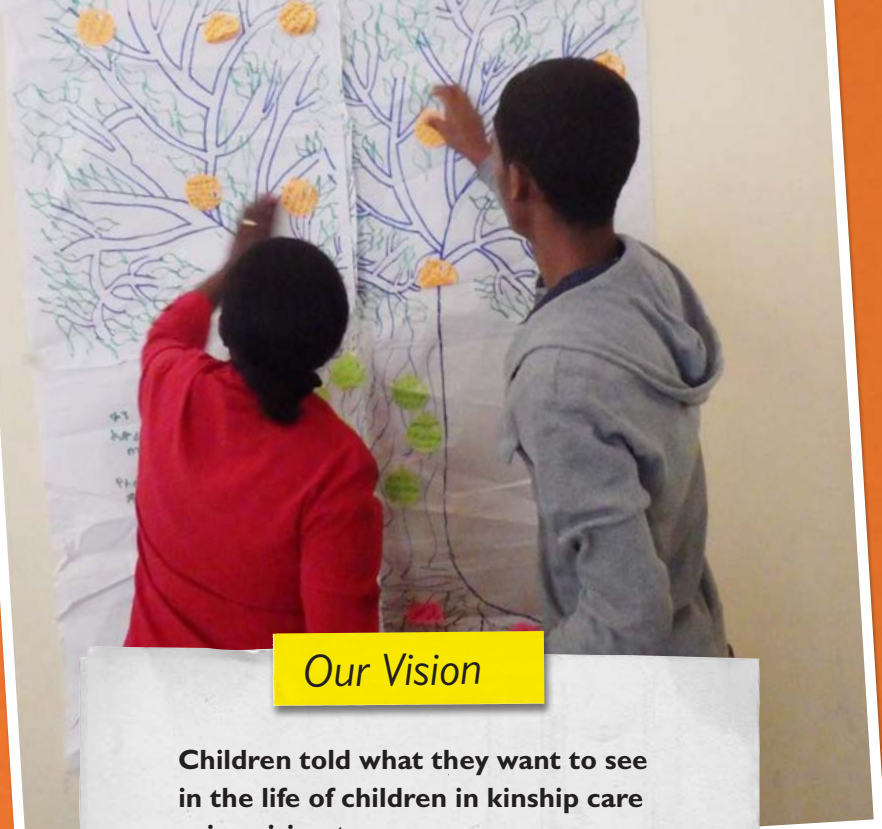
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Our Vision

Children told what they want to see in the life of children in kinship care using vision tree

- Access to free and quality education
- Access to free health care services
- Acceptance of and support to children by the general public
- Economic and other support for families
- Wish for long life to parents
- Peace in the country

*"I am Genet,
13 years old. I live
with my aunt and
her two daughters.
My aunt loves me and
give me proper care
as she do for my
cousins (her biological
daughters)"*



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