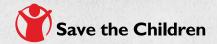
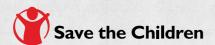
# Kinship Care Album Ethiopia





#### BREAKTHROUGH

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



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

**OURVISION** 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

## Contents

#### PART 1:

Understanding
Kinship Care .....

#### PART 2:

Living in Kinship Care ....

#### PART 3:

Our vision ....

### 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.

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.



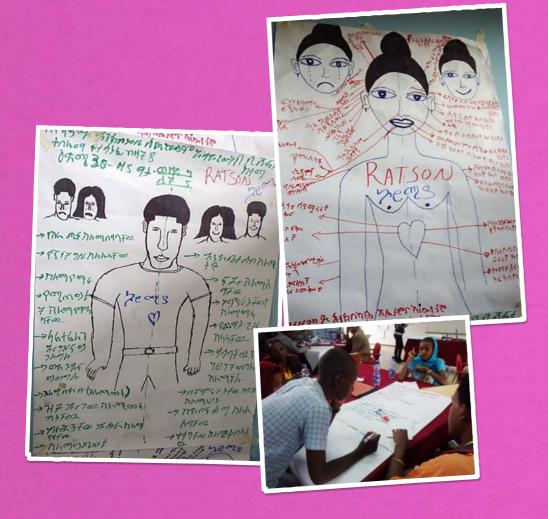
Developing time line for the research



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









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They mapped resources where children and care providers can access support



Identifying protection and risk factors in Kinship alternative care



Care givers in Hawassa town working on resource map



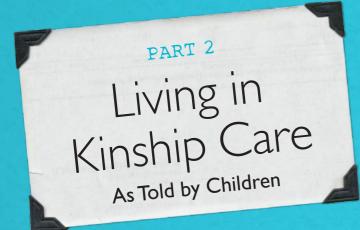
Children and caregivers using participatory tools such as body mapping, trend analysis, service mapping and exploring care options and factors influencing kinship care during the data collection



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



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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:

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"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".

My name is Hanna, I am 9 years old. I live with my aunt. Now I am standing at the gate of our house.

During my spare time, I help my aunt at the house work.



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# A 12 years boy living with his uncle said:

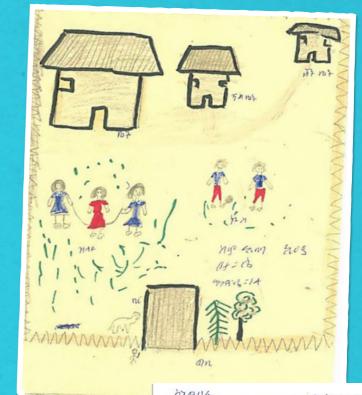
"I live with my uncle and his children, and he provides a good care for us. He is a very kind and caring person; he is known for supporting poor people and those living in distress. My uncle sometimes work late in the evening, and he does not let us go outside for playing because he is afraid that something bad will happen to us. My uncle is a couch to a local football club, and I love playing football with him"



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

# A story written by a biological child of a man who is caring for his nice:

"Hiwot is living with her uncle and his children (us), because both of her parents have passed away. My father, her uncle is caring for her as his own children. She is attending her school, and now is 6th grade student. She is living happily playing with her two cousins Abeba and Kalkidan (daughters of her uncle). I believe she is being treated equally as I am and live a good life".



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".

Kinship care as a preferred option for children than living with parents

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#### Running away from domestic violence (a story as told by a 14 years old girl)

The 14 years old is living now with a lady who used to nurse her father (who is HIV positive) while he was terminally ill. Now her father is well but he comes home drunk for every single night. One day she run away from the house with her little brother because her father tried to sexually assault her. And they both started to live on the street. Her little brother passed away while living on the street. One day, the lady who used to nurse her father met her on the street, and she took her at her own house and started to take care of her.

"I now feel happy and safe living with my 'aunt' and her children. I support my aunt with domestic work and her business, selling fish. She treats me equally with her children, and we respect each other with her children. I do not want to go back to my father".

### Parents decide for their children to live in kinship care

A 14 year old girl tells her story: I am 14 years old and 8th grade student. I live with my aunt since I was 3 years old child. My aunt told me that my father and mother are divorced, and that my mother (her sister) sent me to her because she was unable to care for me. My aunt has three children of her own, two of them are older than me and one is younger. I used to take care of the younger child at home when she was little. I also do all domestic work at my aunt's house, except for baking Ingera (local meal). I wake up early in the morning and prepare breakfast and coffee to the family. And then I go to school. When I am back from school, do remaining work at home and if I have tir I study or do my homework".

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# Some children face discrimination within the kinship family

The 12 years old boy lives in a rural Kebele, in one of the study ares. 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 distance 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

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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"

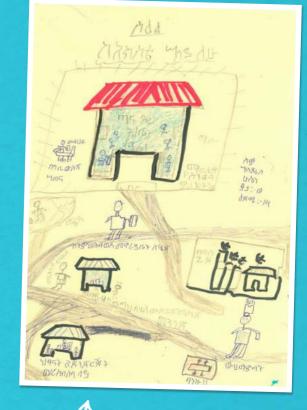
# Indris, 14 years old, who used to live with his uncle told his story using poem and drawing:

I used to live with my uncle in a rural place. He used to make me work in his farm; I used to do tending, tilling the land, weeding and mowing. I used to keep cattle at the field for long hours. If I get tired and refuse to work, my uncle used to beat me harshly. I was not going to scho ol while his children were studying. And one day my aunt decided to take me with her because she was aware of the maltreatment I had living with my uncle. Now I am going to school, at 7th grade. I and my aunt also get support from OVC project in our community for my schooling.

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Living with my uncle.
I do weeding, I keep cattle, and I cut trees.





Living with my uncle: I wake up early in the morning, keep the cattles at the field for the whole day and come back home when the moon comes, around 9 PM. Now with my aunt: I go to school and study, I play at the field; there is a mosque where I pray, we have support from OVC project, and I help my aunt bringing water to use at home.

# An observation feedback from a local research team members

"What I have observed is that children living in kinship care in rural communities get good treatment and support from their kinship care providers. However the children always feel sad, missing their parents. There is no open discussion with their care providers, and they have no one to share their true feelings with. They look sad while playing. Though they are getting all their basic needs, they do not have family love and affection".

#### Another child researcher said:

"children living out of
their parents have very low
self confidence, they easy
get offended or sad, they
have low self esteem, and
they do not mix themselves
with others in the
community. Most of them are
in work activities
pacity"

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#### A ten year old girl wrote:

"My mother died when I was 10 years old.

Now I am 12 years old and I live with my aunt (sister of my mother). I always feel sad thinking of my Mom. I missed her too much. My aunt loves me and she provides for all of my needs, treats me like my Mom and she sends me school. But I always think of my mother and feel sad"

Findings of girls between 8 – 16 year in Bishoftu (DebreZeit) town, when they walk around in their community to explore resources and risks for female children

#### Within our community:

- There is a school where children can learn
- There is transpiration system to use
- There is a police station where children get legal support
- There is good sanitation and children can play around
- There are religious institutions (churches and mosques) in the community where children can worship
- There is 'Horra' lake where children swim, but it also has a danger since it is a very deep one
- There is a place where people buy and use 'Khat' to which children might be exposed to addiction. (Khat is the leaves of an Arabian shrub, which are chewed as a stimulant.)
- There are bars where people get drunk, children might be exposed for violence

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# Same group of girls living in rural communities of the Amhara Region indicated

In our community girls has to go for a long distance to buy something or for other work. In our areas girls usually face harassment by young men sitting around on the street or at local bars. We girls are thus afraid of going out by own.

For us living in a town is a preferred option because girls can easily move around to go to school, churches, hospitals and the like, since there is easy transportation system or are nearby distance.

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#### Another group of girls:

In our community there is a muddy and difficult road, we have no transpiration system, and we have to go for a long distance. Because of that it is for example, difficult to go to hospital in time of sickness, of if a pregnant woman is in labor it is difficult to take her for clinic and she is then in danger, a girl when she went out for shopping or to school she is in danger of sexual violence and abduction. So girls should not be sent alone, especially during nights

# 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



• 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
sive me proper care
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