

REPORT ON A LOCAL COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Venue: St Joseph's Catholic Parish, KZN

Date: 7 September 2016

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Total Number trained: 17

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Community dialogue Objectives

The overall objectives of these community dialogues are:

- To create a platform where community members can interact with key community service providers.
- to foster relationships between critical service providers and community members
- to update community members on recent developments within critical service providers spheres
- to enable community members an opportunity to address or meet the needs of the children in their care, especially orphaned and vulnerable children.

The first session

The facilitators welcomed the invited guests who in this case are the project stakeholders who came from the different local communities which are: DSD, Social Workers and Councillors and introductions were done until the child care workers and parents or guardians also invited had a feel of the community dialogue session. Attendance registers circulated and ground rules were set and thereafter expectations of the community dialogue were shared as below:

1. Understanding the importance of networking with project stakeholders.
2. Ways in which we can identify the problems affecting children and who to refer the problems to.
3. Strengthening community relationships
4. Understanding our community leaders' roles, services they offer and how to network with them.

Second Session

Presentations from guest speakers: Question and Answer Session

Guest 1: Hlengiwe Mkhize

Organisation: Staff nurse at Wasbank local health clinic

Information shared

She informed people about how their health clinic operates and offer services to the community. The Wasbank health clinic is in the premises of a local school and deals directly with taking care of children's health needs. They have outreach teams that deal with home visits, work with support groups, refer child abuse cases to social workers and they have family health teams that teach and support good nutrition for children and help parents in referring sick children to the clinic, help with counselling and HIV testing, teenage pregnancies and also work hand in hand with a community health committee.

What should we do when sometimes, the referrals do not get help from the clinic?

There is a suggestion box at the clinic where you can write your complaint and drop it in there for the clinic committee to read and attend to the issue as soon as they can.

We come across some poorly elderly caregivers eg grandmothers who struggle with taking care of children they live with how do we help?

You should refer those cases to social workers or community health workers who also will refer them to the clinic for medical help.

How does a councillor help when people do not want to work with the DOH or DSD officials?

Councillors are supposed to

1. To serve as facilitators of the community
2. To serve as communication links between council and community

When you get to a homes where there is lack of proper child care, how do we help these families?

You can refer them to Duduza Care Centre where they can be supported through food parcels and soup kitchen. DSD also comes in with supply of adult pampers and makes sure that the care givers can use the contents of the box, if they cannot, then the HBC workers at Duduza Care Centre can help them.

How do we help a child to take their medication in the absence of a parent?

You need the consent from the parents/ guardian first.

Guest 2: Sibonokuhle Zwane

Organisation: Councillor for Wasbank area

Information shared

Ward councillors are selected by a specific geographically-defined ward within the municipality. They are therefore expected to make sure that concerns related to their wards are represented on council.

In the Wasbank area, he mentioned that they work hand in hand with support groups, outreach teams, school development committees that deal with school safety and refer any cases of illnesses or failure of children to attend school.

Councillors support youth campaigns and youth months through distribution of condoms, child safety committees and help in the community when unattended issues of teenage pregnancies, child abuse and drug abuse through the help of SAPS whenever these issues arise. They also help in building homes or acquiring land to build homes for destitutes and refer people to SASSA for government grants.

How can I ensure that I get my ARVs when nurses are mean about pick up times?

Clinics can arrange drop off times on specific days, specific venues and one will have to attend reviews after every 6months. Sometimes mobile clinics visit community members and patients can make use of these.

How can our councillors help Sicelimpilo HBC or other communities to grab government opportunities in order to develop?

Sicelimpilo can make a suggestion box and use the people's concern to discuss issues with the councillor about their problems and the help they need.

How do you deal with favouritism at clinics regarding accessing? Is there a pace to lodge clinical complaints?

There are channels to report bad behaviour or closure of clinics if they are operating on the wrong policies. Clinical complaints can be reported to the clinic committee and one has to write their name and number on the complaint form.

Can SASSA refund stolen money?

No, they can help with rectifying the issue.

Guest 2: Ms Thandeka Ndlovu

Organisation: DSD

Information shared

The DSD works hand in hand with Home Based Care Centres where the child care workers assist children with school homework and if there are any unsolved child safety or abuse cases, they refer to the social workers who will write a report and submit to SASSA. The main aim of DSD is to work with abused children and help to support their rights and safety.

How do we deal with mothers who abuse grant money and has left you all the duties and documents?

Social workers must visit their homes and write a report to SASSA who will stop payment and approve another guardian.

How do you get help a maternally abandoned child?

A social worker must assess the case, write a report and if the child is ill, there is need for a doctor's report, and then submit the documents for grant application

What services can DSD offer to OVCs?

Most services to OVCs are rendered through the Home-Community Based Care programme and these include early identification of vulnerable children and their families, referrals, training of community caregivers and psychosocial support and material-assistance.

This approach is geared towards keeping children within their families and communities. It is aimed at providing comprehensive care and support which is complemented by proactive action at community level. This includes linking families with poverty alleviation projects and other services in the community, such as food security initiatives and early childhood development (ECD) services.

Closure of session

This session was closed with a vote of thanks after which a song and prayer were shared.

Individual interview tool