Economic strengthening for family reintegration of separated children
Separated children

- Leaving the street
- Deinstitutionalized
- Associated with armed forces/groups
- Trafficking survivors
- Economic migrants
- Displaced
Background

• Household poverty major driver of family separation

• Affects ability of families to reintegrate
ES approaches

- Skills training
- Income-generation projects
- Cash transfers
- Agricultural development
- Small business development
- Financial education
- Microcredit
- Savings accounts
- Job development
- Cash-for-work
- Food-for-work
- Value chain development
Background

• Many failed experiments

• Fail to evaluate & document lessons
  – Donors and organizations are often unaware of each other’s work and learning

• Agencies struggle to know what to implement
What we did

• OFDA grant

  – Literature review
  – Interviews with practitioners
  – Review of “gray literature”
Outputs

• State of the field
• Outline common ES approaches
  – Advantages, disadvantages with CP lens
• Case studies of innovative models
• Key principles
Findings

• Physical reunification not sufficient to ensure child will remain in family care
  – Household ES seen as crucial

• No single type of ES intervention known to be more successful in keeping families together
Evidence Base

• Evidence around ES as means to facilitate reintegration extremely weak

• ~50 evaluations of ES effects on children
  – None look at family separation/reintegration
Dilemma

• Shoring up household economy based on contextual needs while preventing agency dependence...within budget constraints

– Worse when recipients live in remote locations or spread out across wide areas
Challenges

• Job market nearly non-existent

• Family may not be able to take advantage of market-based intervention
  – i.e. business development, credit

• Acknowledged need for holistic, graduated ES approach
  – But few agencies manage to implement in this way
Agency Capacity

• Lack of strategy for ES within reintegration work

• ES as “add-on component” / “afterthought”
  – Many programs started with social or public health goal & resorted to ES to increase beneficiary uptake
Agency Capacity

- Skills training & IGA “very challenging”
- lack skills/initiative for market analysis
Agency Capacity

• Agencies implement interventions they’re familiar with
• Overuse of entrepreneurship models
• Skills-training as “an end in itself”
  – Not connecting beneficiaries to sustainable employment
Program cycle “too short”
Targeting

• Serving only vulnerable categories can invite negative treatment

• Some agencies open to other community children
  – But struggle with budget constraints
Risk

• Increased domestic and sibling care while parents work/train

• Loss of school time, playtime
Risk

• Sometimes increased child labor
  – But relationship with HH income is complex

• Can affect household power relations
  – Potential for tension, abuse, family separation
Key Principles

- Integrate ES with health, education, peace-building, etc.
- Build impact evaluations into program (& budget)
- Build programs upon joint field missions and multi-disciplinary assessments
- Case management approach
- Local market analysis!
Thanks OFDA

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• Strong evidence, relative to other ES interventions.

• Positive impact on children in many contexts.

• Can incentivize the protection and wellbeing of children.
Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)

Challenges/Limitations

• Requires specialized expertise and a safe delivery mechanism.

• Children should not directly receive cash.

• Some households may game the system.

• Negative incentive for parents to send children to work.

• Risk of jealousy, stigma, bullying and theft.
Cash-for-Work

Strengths

• Helps ensure labor best-practices.

• Makes work available to different demographics.

• Prioritizes urgent projects (e.g. emergency reconstruction).
Cash-for-Work

Limitations/Challenges

• Can increase incidence of child labor

• May attract children below working-age.

• Need childcare to increase female participation
Vouchers

Strengths

• Can circumvent cultural problem of women dealing with money.

• Mitigates risk of giving children money (e.g. through education or training vouchers).

• Ensures payments used for basic needs.
Vouchers

Challenges/Limitations

• Vendors must be selected carefully to obviate embezzlement.

• Households gaming system.
Group Savings

Strengths

• Sustainable approach.

• Increases agency of women and spending on children.

• Low cost per capita.

• Suited to otherwise ineligible candidates for credit.

• Entry point for financial literacy.

• Helps build social capital.

• Success in using this platform for other programming (e.g. health, non-formal education).
Group Savings

Challenges/Limitations

• Problematic when households spread over wide areas.

• Most successful when groups are self-selected.

• Groups formed for other purposes (e.g. health) may not be appropriate for group savings.

• 2 evaluations found little impact on children.
Individual Savings

**Strengths**

• Children can be direct beneficiaries.

• Lifelong impact on financial behaviors.

• Builds relationship between beneficiary and financial institution.

• Motivates savings.

• Can increase child’s savings, educational planning and self-esteem.
Individual Savings

Limitations/Challenges

• Some evidence that individual (vs. group) savings increases risk of GBV.

• Need financial institutions willing to work with low-income, vulnerable pops.

• Legal/policy restrictions prevent children or non-nationals from accessing banks.
Job Placement

Strengths

• Good for children entering working-age.

• Alternative for individuals not interested in self-employment or loans.
Job Placement

Limitations/Challenges

• Less feasible in rural areas, and where wage jobs are scarce.

• May require provision of child care.

• Requires “soft-skills” education.

• Requires mapping and maintaining relationships with employers.

• Legal and policy restrictions may prohibit non-nationals from jobs.
Apprenticeships

Strengths

• Older children can be direct beneficiaries.
• Children gain practical work experience, useful for the future.
• Sometimes more fruitful than TVET alone for near-term wage employment.
Limitations/Challenges

• Need a code of conduct with employers.
• Requires mapping and monitoring employers and well-being of apprentices.
• Apprentices may drop out of school.
• Legal/policy restrictions may prohibit non-nationals from jobs.
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Strengths

• Older children can be direct beneficiaries.
• Good for beneficiaries unable or unwilling to attend school.
• Quality of training better than community-based/mobile training.
• Brings skilled-labor to local economy, often resulting in remittances.
• Official certification.
• Additional services can be organized around learning centers.
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Limitations/Challenges

• Risk flooding local labor market with particular skills.

• Unrealistic expectations.

• More expensive than apprenticeships or mobile training.

• Follow-up services after training are essential.

• May result in school drop-out.

• Quality of training must be sufficient.
Mobile Training

**Strengths**

- Good when beneficiaries are scattered/remote.
- Older children can be direct beneficiaries.
- Useful when beneficiaries are unwilling/unable to attend school.
- Less expensive than training centers.
- High demand.
Mobile Training

Limitations/Challenges

- Only for basic skills.
- Must be planned around agricultural calendar.
Income-Generating Activities (IGA)

Strengths

• Work can be home-based.

• Feasible for very poor, low-skilled individuals.

• Useful in rural and urban contexts.

• Good for non-nationals where formal employment is illegal.
Income-Generating Activities (IGA)

Limitations/Challenges

• Must conduct market analysis for goods produced.

• Products should be up to commercial standards.

• May require facilitating linkages with suppliers/buyers.

• Children usually become involved in HH businesses.
Microfranchising

Strengths

• Older children could be direct participants.

• Good for urban areas.

• Firms share burden of risk.
Microfranchising

Limitations/Challenges

• Newer approach, little evidence available on overall efficacy.

• Franchisees require of training and start-up grants.

• Outreach to firms requires time.

• Must work with all parties to ensure work is safe.
Business loans

Strengths

• New profits generally benefit children (education, nutrition).
• Relevant urban and rural.
• Particularly needed in rural areas.
Business Loans

Challenges/Limitations

• Requires partnership.

• Inappropriate for very poor.

• Need consumption support at the outset.

• Not for children as direct beneficiaries.

• Can increase child labor in the near term; should be monitored.
Recommendations:

• Agencies: prioritize building internal capacity to design and implement ES progs

• Donors & policymakers: work to build ES capacity of Child Protection field

• All stakeholders: build evidence base through evaluation research
  – Esp. experimental/longitudinal designs