PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FORUM

Breaking Barriers... Creating Connections

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Towards Resilience - Engaging Adolescent Girls and Young Mothers in a refugee context in Uganda

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AVSI works for a world where every person, aware of her value and dignity, is the main protagonist of her own integral development and that of her community, even in crisis and emergency contexts.

**Sectors**
- Education
- Food security and Nutrition
- Agriculture
- Health
- Protection
- Psychosocial care
- Family strengthening
- Livelihoods
- WASH
- Energy
- Environment
- Urban development
Adolescent girls and young mothers have HUGE psychosocial needs

- 25% of Ugandan girls ages 13-17 years and 11% boys reported sexual violence in the past year
- 28.3% girls who experienced pressured or physically forced sex during their childhood became pregnant as a result
- Refugee girls are WORSE. They face multiple forms of violence

2015 VAC study in Uganda
Our Intervention

• AVSI worked with 521 Adolescent Girls and Young Mothers in Kyangwali and Omugo refugee settlements in Uganda through the Ending Violence against Children (EVAC) project (April, 2018 to March, 2019)
• EVAC Mission, “to make societies safer for children and end violence against children everywhere”
• Guided by the INSPIRE strategy
INSPIRE at a Glance:

Implementation of laws,

Norms and Values,

Safe Environments,

Parent & Care-Giver Support,

Income & E- Strengthening,

Response & Support Services &

Education and Life skills.
AVSI Approach to supporting AGYMNs

• 3 months Vijana Life skills Training Model intended to build resilience
• Focused on INSPIRE aspect of Education and life skills provision
• 9 social workers and 10 community incentive workers identified, trained and monitored 438 (227 in Kyangwali and 211 in Omugo) Adolescent Girls and young Mothers
Vijana Life skills model

- *Vijana* life skills Model is an essential package in helping the AGYM make informed decisions and cope with challenges and their eventual transition to adulthood.
- The model empowers adolescents to understand who they are, appreciate where they are going, better manage their challenges and consequently adopt positive behavior.
- [https://issuu.com/avsiuganda/docs/vijana_avsi_youth_life_skills](https://issuu.com/avsiuganda/docs/vijana_avsi_youth_life_skills)
The need for child care skills

• During the Vijana Life skills training sessions and follow up visits, we noted that most of the girls were struggling with caregiving practices
• Girls exhibited negligence and violence towards their babies
• Following this observation, AVSI decided to train them on the Uzazi Parenting skills training (Reflecting another INSPIRE element) for an additional 3 months resulting into greater resilience and positive child care practices.
• 521 (327 in Kyangwali & 194 in Omugo) Girls enrolled for the parenting sessions.
• [https://issuu.com/avsiuganda/docs/uzazi_avsi_parenting_model_-_young](https://issuu.com/avsiuganda/docs/uzazi_avsi_parenting_model_-_young)
Uzazi Parenting skills model

• 5 modules built on the hypothesis that parenting skills training increases parenting knowledge among participants, which translates into improved parenting behavior and ultimately results into improved well-being of children

The training helped parents:

• appreciate their children as they are,
• appreciate their parenting responsibility
• adopt positive (authoritative) parenting behavior, values, skills and attitudes
• towards enabling parents accompany their children to maturity
Results

the Vijana life skills training has had varied positive changes on the lives of the AGYM

- improved character (manners),
- better communication skills,
- improved relationships between youth and their parents/caregivers and other family members,
- an increase among youth re-joining school in addition to better self-care.
Results

Parenting training resulted into:

• Adolescent girls and young women re-enrolled in school
• Grand parents took on care giving roles for grad children while girls went to school
• Improved child care practices evidenced during the training and home visits
• Improved relationships between the adolescent girls and young mothers and their parents/ caregivers
Sharing experience – Meet Aisha - The Teenage young mom who resumed school

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ndTDa1Sunx0WT65vJWF8bpNfT7vFSSax
conclusions

• Life skills training impacts reasoning and decision making of adolescents
• Beneficiary engagement/decision making in planning and implementing activities is critical.
• The parenting training addition emerged as a necessity as expressed by the girls
• Involving and working closely with other actors in the lives of AGYM especially at family and settlement levels is critical
• The blend of life skills with Parenting skills training to AGYM resulted into increased resilience