

Report on the second training course on life-skill development for children living with HIV in Da Nang city, Vietnam

Name of reporter: Vietnam Health Improvement project (VNHIP)

Project title: Life-skill development for children living with HIV – second group

Location: Da Nang city, Vietnam

Number of beneficiaries: 12 children

Period: From November 2017 to October 2018

1. Introduction

Because of the nature of the HIV/AIDS disease, many children who are suffering from the disease have lost one or both parents and are therefore living either with extended relatives or in a foster care situation. Furthermore, there is a significant amount of fear and misunderstanding about the disease in Vietnam. Hence, children who are affected by the disease being ostracized and abandoned by their communities. These structural hardships in the lives of these children can mean that they miss out on crucial parental and community support in their formative years, leading to, in some cases, deficiencies in the areas of relationship-building, self-confidence, and positive lifestyle.

To help the children further develop and refine the skills that they need to successfully navigate the challenges of life, Hulza made its financial support for VNHIP to organize two training courses on life-skill development for 25 children living with HIV and those affected by HIV at Da Nang city in the Central Vietnam.

The first training course has been implemented from June 2017 to December 2017. The training course made a very good contribution to life-skill development for 10 children living with HIV in Da Nang city. Those children could apply the improved skills to their daily lives.

2. Aims of the course:

The goal of the course is to equip the children with important life-skills, so that they feel better prepared to find their places in the world.

The course is aiming at the following:

- Promote positive thinking that lays the foundations for a happy, healthy, and productive life
- Help children to build confidence and pride within themselves
- Teach specific skills that children can apply to their daily lives that will develop better relationships with others and with themselves

3. The accomplished activities

This was an interactive course that taught through active learning and group discussions. Every month, the children focused on one skill or value that is important to living a successful and happy life. The training course consists of 12 training units. The children have actively participated in exploring each treasure to improve their life-skills.

The trainers tried to connect the theme of the previous day with the following training theme to make sure that the skills are build on the previous themes. Each training unit, at the end of the day, the children took 10 minutes to draw a picture or write in their diaries about the day. Those exercises helped the children process and absorb the lessons they have learned.

Some actives we have done:

✓ **Opening day - Why Am I Here?**



The kids and their caretakers enjoy the cinema time in the first meeting

✓ **Seeking support**



Write down 5 main persons on the fingers and relax with the lesson via games

✓ **Helping others**



Learn the lesson via some team building games

✓ **Building relationship through positive interactions with others**



Learning to take instant photos and playing game

✓ **Respect and responsibility: Treating people how you want to be treated**



Outdoor trip with the lesson about “Respecting and protecting the nature and it will give you back more than that”

✓ **Self-awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses**



The lesson is run by the leader of HIV caretakers group via sharing information and game

4. Results of the training course

This course built the confidence and life skills for the children, so that they could apply those in their daily lives. We promoted positive thinking that laid the foundations for a happy, healthy, and productive life.

VNHIP have just run 6 training units: “Opening day- Why am I here”; “Seeking support”; “Helping others”; “Building relationship through positive interactions with others”; “Respect and responsibility: Treating people how you want to be treated”; “Self-awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses”

Even though we did not finish 12 training units in this time, the result is quite promising. We found that they have improved a lot and they are very interested in the life-skill training. Through short interview with the caretakers and observation of the trainers, it is found that the children are more confident and active in communication with the trainers and other children. In the first training session, all children did not want to participate in the game, but now, all

children are so active and supportive. At home, the children take more responsibilities and care about other family members. This formerly very little seems to happen. The children have positive thinking and positive behaviors about the life and their future. The children knew how to deal with daily issues, seek for help.

5. Challenges and solutions

In the beginning, the parents and caretakers didn't want to take their children to the course. They didn't believe in the trainers. In the first training, we invited the caretakers joined together with the kids. We also introduced to them some good things their children would receive after the training. After some training sessions, the children and families became interested in this training, so that more families wanted to send their children to the course. Besides, we got some challenges after we finish unit 6 of life-training. One family whose two children joined the training moved to Ho Chi Minh city to live because of their private reason. The other two children could not join the training because their caretakers do not have time to take them go to the class at the weekend. Although we all tried to convince them to continuously bring the children in, the families couldn't make it. Because of above challenges, we decided to stop running this training. The leader of the HIV caretaker group - Mr. Toan said that he would contact other caretakers to bring more children in (as least 10 children for the training). We agreed that we will run the last 6 training units in 2019. This second training will be still taken place at VNHIP office.

6. Conclusion

Despite of some challenges, the training course is very successful and meaningful for the children and their families.

Beside the training, VNHIP also provide other supports for those children, such as bicycles, scholarship, monthly support, vocational training and livelihood development, etc. to make sure that all children have chances to go to the school.

7. Next suggested actions

The children will continue training on the following issues:

- Empathy
- Interpersonal relationship
- Decision making
- Coping with stress
- Coping with Emotion
- Celebration Picnic day

8. Financial report

Total grant received: **88,792,848 VND (= 3,600 Euro)**

Total expenditure for the first group: **37,988,000 VND** (finish)

Total expenditure for the second group: **25,720,000 VND**.

Total under spending: **25,084,848 VND**. This under spending budget will be used for the last 6 training units of second group in 2019