

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF POSITIVE PARENTING SESSIONS: A CASE OF MOSES *

MOSES*, 13, ZAMBIA**Other interviewees**

- Mercy*, 39-year-old mother

Story summary

Moses is a 13-year-old boy who lives with his mother, father and three siblings in a populated village in the Copperbelt Province. He is in grade six. His parents are subsistence farmers, who grow maize and groundnuts for home consumption. In addition to farming responsibilities, Moses's mother actively engages in her community as a caregiver and takes part in Save the Children's Positive Parenting sessions.

Moses shared that before his mother started attending Positive Parenting sessions, her way of parenting was not good as she often used to shout and beat them.

“Our mother was really something else; she never used to appreciate me no matter how good I performed both at school and with household chores. She rarely showed love, spent time with me or my siblings,” Moses shared with a sad face.”

Moses recalls how his mother's behaviour towards him and his siblings affected their relationship, they became emotionally detached and were unable to have meaningful interaction with her as the result of constant fear of being shouted at. He recalls becoming sad, less imaginative and creative and he eventually stopped seeking explanations, as well as asking questions on issues that troubled him as a teenager.

However, Save the Children under its Child Sensitive Social Protection (CSSP) project started conducting Positive Parenting sessions targeting 1000 Social Cash Transfer beneficiary households with children 0-14 years. The aim was to equip caregivers and parents with the necessary skills to understand how to develop better relationships with their children. They learnt several practical skills to nurture children, this includes positive ways to discipline children that helps them develop.



Figure 1. Shows Mercy and Moses washing beddings together step-by-step

Moses excitedly shared how his mother's behaviour started changing after her participation in the sessions.

"My mother really got transformed, she started showing us love, even asking us what our thoughts about some of the things she wanted to do. This has made us create a positive relationship with her and we stopped fearing to ask her about anything affecting us and I now always look forward to coming home after knocking off from school," Moses happily shared.

Mercy, 39, acknowledges the organization's valuable work in empowering caregivers and parents by facilitating Positive Parenting sessions. She envisions a future where children are free from the abuse inflicted upon them by their parents. Mercy believes that education and the absence of abuse will pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future for these children, allowing them to escape the constraints of poverty in their families.



Figure 1. Shows Moses chatting with his mother-Mercy

How is Save the Children helping (or did we help) that child or family:

Save the Children is implementing a child sensitivity programme targeting 1000 households on the Social Cash Transfer programme in various communities in Kalulushi District, including Moses's community. By promoting Positive Parenting, the project aims to enhance the well-being of children and their families, fostering high-quality and positive interactions. Moreover, this intervention, known as cash plus, supplements existing social protection measures, resulting in a more significant impact on children's lives. Furthermore, through the parenting session, caregivers' communication with their children becomes more based on the best interest of their children. This programme ultimately strengthens the bond between caregivers and children, contributing to a more nurturing and supportive environment.

Moses's story in his own words:

"I was born in 2010. I live with my father and mother. I have four brothers and one sister. I am in grade 6. I am very happy that my mother is attending parenting sessions. She has changed ever since she joined the parenting group. We have a warm interaction with her every day. She used to shout at us and beat us and we used to be scared of her. We never used to eat or play together.

She has now changed because there is a difference between how she was and how she is now. I can attest to the fact that we can now even wash my cloths and beddings together. She helps us with our homework and sometimes she finds time to tell us stories. We now have good-quality interaction with her every day. I and my siblings are no longer afraid of her, and we are now good friend."

Mercy's story in her words:

"I am 39 years old. I am married with five children. I was put on the Social Cash Transfer programme in February 2022. I was involved in Save the Children's programme in February when they came to sensitize about the positive parenting programme in our area.



“This year in February 2023, I was lucky to be one of the community members to be put on Social Cash Transfer programme and that gave me an automatic qualification to join the parenting programme under Save the Children’s Child Sensitive Social protection project because I also have children who are under 14 years of age.

“During the first 8 weeks, we learnt about three dialogues and eighty-guidelines of good interactions. I reflected and noticed some gaps in the way I treat my child Moses and my other children. Indeed, I used to beat and shout at my children most of the times. I never used to create time with them. My Children were afraid of me.

One of the guidelines I learnt and loved most is planning with the child step-by-step towards a goal. I now love to do chores with my children and help them how to do the work better. Besides showing love to them, I praise them and appreciate them when they do good things, something I did not do before I enrolled in the parenting sessions.

To sum it up, I now create time when I am at home to have good quality interaction with my children, I just want to thank Save the Children for providing this positive parenting programme. It has created change in the way I relate with my own children. I now have better quality interactions with them.”

Background / Project information:

The CSSP project promotes child-sensitivity through the “cash plus” parenting model to help improve parenting practices and prioritize the rights of children to education, nutrition, and protection. The project also places emphasis on improving access to relevant basic services for the most vulnerable and marginalized communities and children in a transparent and accountable manner, through facilitating the establishment of various transparency and accountability mechanisms. One of the project outputs is strengthened child sensitivity of the ‘Social Cash Transfer’ (Improved parenting practices in households receiving SCT).

Interview conducted by: Adam Nyundo

Interview translated by: Adam Nyundo

Date of interview: 28th June, 2023

Story edited by: Mulapwa Mukopole

Story Approved by: Mulapwa Mukopole

Country/region of interview: Copperbelt, Kalulushi

Interview language: Bemba