

REPORT ON THE THREE-DAY ICDP PRINCIPLES TOT WORKSHOP

Date: 15TH – 17TH JUNE 2021

Venue: PRESTIGE HOTEL - MAMFE, EASTERN REGION

In Attendance: 14 participants (4 males, 10 females)

1.0 Introduction

At ICDP we strive to create a supportive and warm environment, showing empathy, generating enthusiasm, motivating and building confidence in caregivers to enrich their capacity to care for children. Research clearly illustrates globally that children require affection, love and care from caregivers through effective and efficient interaction which can be achieved through capacity building and training.

In Ghana ICDP organized a three-day residential training of trainers' workshop for project staff, key district stakeholders including the Ghana Education Service (Girl Child Education unit), Social Welfare and Community Development and other development consultants who interact with children on daily basis.

2.0 Goal & Objectives

The Goal of this training was to equip staff, district stakeholders and partners with the requisite ICDP principles and guidelines to conduct effective and efficient stepdown training for parents, caregivers and children.

Other Specific training objectives included

- ❖ To introduce staff, stakeholders and partners to the ICDP program
- ❖ To discuss strategies to integrate the 8 guidelines of good interaction into every day professional lives.
- ❖ Introduce facilitators to the tools and checklists and other inquiry approaches to caregiving
- ❖ To train key stakeholders or facilitators to deliver ICDP principles to groups of caregivers

DAY ONE

The workshop began around 10am with an initial virtual opening address from the Chairperson for ICDP Mrs. Nicoletta Armstrong. She expressed her delight to participate in the workshop as she thanked the Country Director for ICDP-Ghana Mrs. Joyce Lanyoh whose commitment towards the ICDP program had resulted in the training of facilitators to also engage caregivers on the guidelines of good interaction which would promote holistic child development. She shared how ICDP program started in 1985 but took seven years to formulate the entire concept in 1992 before it was presented as model to the W.H.O.

She also introduced the participants to the research on Neuroscience explaining the human brain and the parts ie (Reptilia, Mammalian, Rational/Advance) and how these parts develop through growth stimulated as a result of interaction at different stages of the child. She shared how the “prefrontal cortex” also known as the executive brain constituted one of the parts of the brain which ensures proper reasoning and problem-solving which developed only through good interactions with the child.

Joyce Lanyoh later led the discussions on parenting and other local child rearing practices in Ghana. She explained that ICDP would be 10 years in Ghana in 2022 and the organization had organized this workshop to create the awareness of the model and advocate for its integration into the local child rearing practices. There were photo illustrations for participants to share their thoughts on them. She later introduced the participants to the 8 guidelines of good interactions also known as the three dialogues as the fuel of ensuring efficient interactions between caregivers and children. These included

- ❖ Emotional Dialogue: Showing love and positive feelings to the child, following and responding to the initiatives of the child, establishing an intimate personal verbal/non-verbal communication and offering praise and confirmation to the child
- ❖ Mediation Dialogue: Helping child focus on things in the environment, carry meaning to child’s experiences, enriching child’s experiences, topics through creativity.
- ❖ Regulative Dialogue: Setting limits in a positive manner offering alternatives for what may not be allowed, guiding the child step by step also termed as scaffolding.

The participants later joined Mrs. Ingunn virtually as she also shared an overview of the ICDP program with the facilitators stressing on the importance of good interactions as foundations of brain growth and formation and the overall child development. The participants finally participated in a role play of local child rearing practices and then juxtaposing with the modern ICDP child rearing practices which is based on empathy and the 3 dialogues necessary for child development. An evaluation conducted at the end of the first day revealed high ratings of the content, facilitation, inclusivity.

DAY TWO

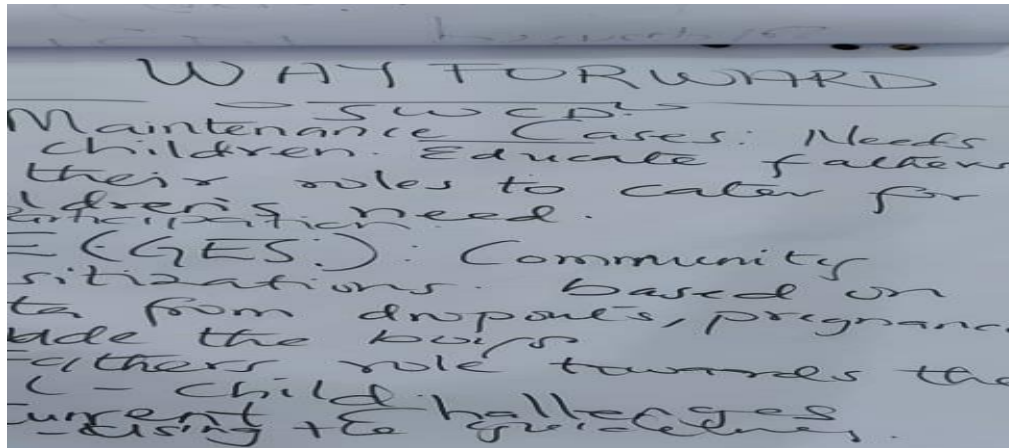
The day also begun with a brief recap of the previous day's activities led by one of the facilitators. Mad. Joyce then took the participants through the seven principles of sensitization during the interacting processes and the need to establish trust between the facilitator and the caregiver. Caregivers need to be encouraged to see children in a positive mindset building on highlighting positive methods of childrearing and promoting the "Inquiry approach" to communicate effectively the concept of empathy in Action. The facilitators were later taken through promoting gender transformational parenting to involve both fathers and mothers to eliminate the barriers to effective parenting from a gender lens.

Later Kimberly, shared virtually with the facilitators some impacts of ICDP guidelines in several high-risk communities in Chicago USA. She shared how essential it was for caregivers to enhance a good interaction with children and the role these 8 rules of ICDP towards the achievement of the goal. Participants were also introduced to some monitoring tools and techniques like the Likert scale which would be used to measure and track interactions among caregivers over a particular time period.

As a way forward the facilitators were tasked to work with identified caregivers or children within selected communities and share findings and reports of interactions with their target groups. Mad. Joyce stressed on the support in terms of resources and logistics given to the facilitators throughout the processes. The selected facilitators also agreed to work in groups to interact with caregivers on the 8 golden rules of interaction and report on findings.

PLAN FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

The role plays were used to prepare participants to address some of the challenges when faced with the same situations at home between care givers and children. Participants were given an opportunity to plan their work through questions asked, making plans on how to incorporate knowledge gained in their work, identifying indicators as well as well action plans. These two activities were aimed to provide participants capacity to implement their work after training.



EVALUATION

An evaluation questionnaire was designed to for participants to assess the knowledge gained on the subject. The results showed that there was a considerable knowledge gain by all facilitators who scored improved results as part of the post-test questions. Additionally, role plays conducted by participants were scored by participants who gave feedback as part of the learning processes.

BARRIERS IN TRAINING

There were very few issues with regards to internet connections, this was not anticipated and was efficiently managed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future trainings should include practical field sessions with selected caregivers to create a learning platform for facilitators.

CONCLUSION

The workshop equipped the facilitators with the needed skills to be able to share the concept of the 8 ICDP principles (3 dialogues) applying the 7 guidelines of good sensitization with caregivers

and children in order to help children develop and contribute to the total development of children, their families and the society.

TRAINING IN GALLERY



Report on Initial meeting with Groups On The ICDP Program In some Communities in Akuapim South in The Eastern Region of Ghana

Based on the initial facilitator workshop organized by ICDP Ghana led by Mrs. Joyce Larnyoh implemented the ICDP principles by sensitizing stakeholders such as government bodies and individuals who are responsible for early childhood development and child protection in the country. In June 2021 facilitators were trained for a week on all ICDP principles and guidelines by Mrs. Larnyoh and divided into pairs, each pair made plans for their practical work with groups of caregivers (their self-training projects).

As of July 2021, 3 groups of care givers numbering 15, all women, have been engaged on ICDP principles, to interact better with their children and to strengthen their relationship as well. To enforce covid 19 principles, caregivers were grouped in 5, 7 members per group. These caregivers were between ages 19-30, with 1 or more kids between the ages 0-15 years. As part of the implementation plan, the facilitators reiterated the point that caregivers were to reconsider their conceptions about children and rather see them as individuals who are human beings with great potentials. They should be able to interpreted the child's signals and expressions as mothers.

The concept of the Zone of Empathy will enable them release the sensitive care to the child once they see the child as a person. The case where child was out of the Zone of Empathy could lead to neglect and abuse. There was an initial engagement with the groups to ascertain their child rearing practices to allow facilitators to document progress. Role Plays, sharing of pics and videos and local songs were integrated in all interactions.

This initial meeting revealed that these care givers have limited knowledge on showing love and did not ascribe to publicly showing love and affection to children. They believed children are well behaved if you discipline them physically. To these caregivers, their children are afraid of them, and fear indicates discipline.

It was interesting to note that the caregivers engaged expressed they did not have the best childhood experience. Facilitators disabused this mindset and educated them that equally raising your child with love, affection and empathy produced the same or even better results; disciplined and well-behaved adults. Caregivers were remorseful and expressed to facilitators they wished they had a better childhood and looked forward to learning more of these principles and practicing them.

Guideline 1- Showing Love

With this information, the team took them through the first dialogue which is showing love. They were made to role play scenarios of love and how children could feel. There were discussions on how to read the facial expressions of children, and explaining the Empathic identification through verbally and non-verbally strategies in order to release sensitive care to the children.

Given the success of the few parenting sessions, the facilitators identified more households to begin sessions with. Sessions were agreed for every other weeks with a duration of 2 hours maximum. The initial meetings took place at a community called Oboadaka, in the Eastern Region, where the five parental groups were introduced to the concept of ICDP. Facilitator's plan on running the remaining 11 sessions on ICDP principles with them. They agreed to adhere to all ICDP protocols and showed enthusiasm and emotional commitment to the training by creating names and slogans to build enthusiasm among themselves. Groups names includes "*pretty ladies*", "*innocent ladies*" and "*Obaatampa meaning A mother who cares for her children*" Caregivers were informed that ICDP would build on their latent caregiving practices that will

promote child development and not introduce new skills. Groups agreed to meet every other Wednesday at 2:30pm. Caregivers were also given take home assignments and to report to back to the group.

The concept was also explained to the chief and elders of the communities, who expressed their interest and attested to the need to change how children are being raised, which should be a more friendly and emphatic way. He commended ICDP for bringing this initiative to the community.

For our government officials who participated in the initial workshop, unfortunately they have not yet given us a report on how they are implementing the program in their work places.



Lydia a staff of ICDP interacting with a group of teenage mothers



Kwaku another ICDP staff interacting with his group of caregivers



Daniel is also a staff engaging his group of caregivers



Madam Joyce Laryoh with the Chief and Queen Mother of one of the communities after discussions on the ICDP program.

REPORT ON THE MEANING DIALOGUE WITH CAREGIVERS (GUIDELINES 5-7)

(KWAKU OBUOBISAH, LYDIA AMPOFO AND DANIEL ABGOKU-

(FIELD SUPERVISORS)

1. Introduction

With the initial process of the implementation of the program, the Country Director met with the larger group of the caregivers to explain in details the ICDP concept and how the intervention primarily supports caregivers, parents and children to influence and improve the quality of interaction with the introduction of the ICDP program on the Three Dialogues and the Eight Guidelines of Good Interaction.

There were role plays on bad child rearing practices that impact negatively on the child’s development. The concept of the program which is crowned in research of famous scientists like Vygotsky, McVicker Hunt among others clearly defines healthy interactions between caregivers and their children as a fundamental element that enhances strong, positive impact on children’s mental development. The International Child Development Programme in Ghana led by the Country Director Joyce Larnyoh facilitated a three week interaction in August 2021 with three groups of caregivers in “Oboadaka” community within the Akuapem south municipality/Ghana.





2. Target Group: 20 caregivers in three different Groups

3. Objectives

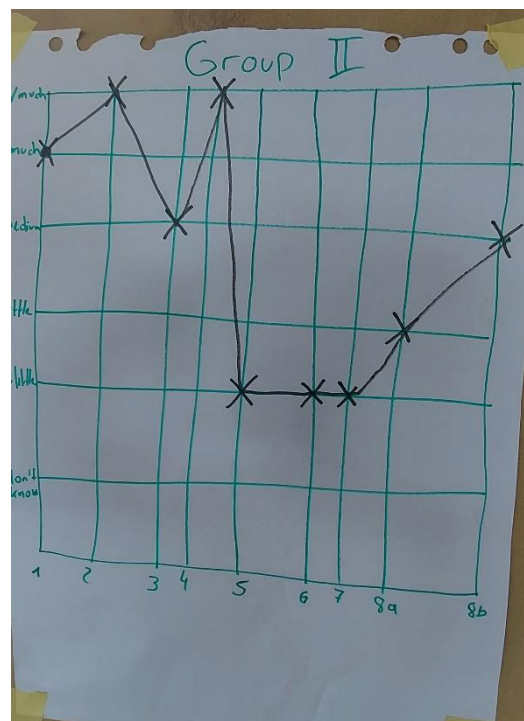
The objectives of these sessions included

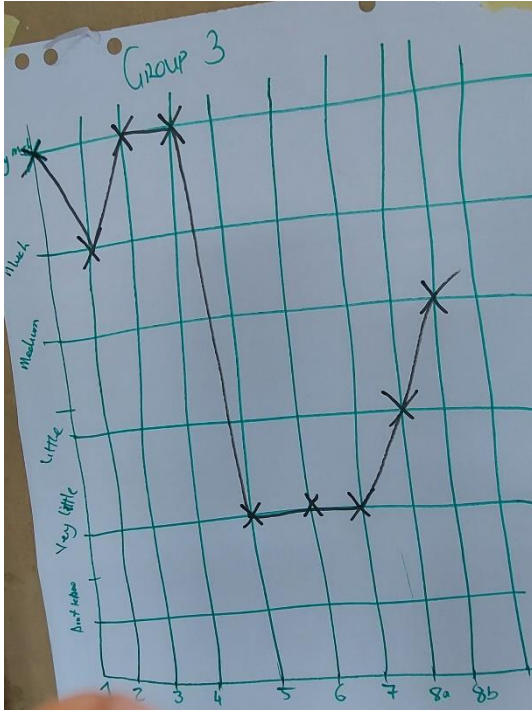
- Revision on the importance of interaction and the empathy based approach to caregiving in relation to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Generally, the staff used the participatory approach and role play to engage the groups on the ICDP Principles.
- The caregivers conception of the child and empathic identification as a person or an object.

- Discussion of the Zone of Empathy : Inclusion and Exclusion
 - Practising the Meaning Dialogue which is conveying meaning to the child’s experiences with enthusiasm.
 - Expanding the child’s experiences through connecting topics and making comparisons.
 - Explaining and telling stories that connect with children’s experiences in and around the communities they are living in.
- (a) The need to practice these inherent caregiving skills to enhance child development

4. Activities

- ✓ The field facilitators engaged caregivers in weekly reviews of previous dialogue ie Emotional with their respective groups of caregivers to ensure they understood the dialogue and had begun to apply the guidelines (1-4)
- ✓ The three groups of caregivers were then introduced to the Comprehensive dialogue by first assessing their levels on the Likert Scale to provide facilitators with their levels of understanding and be able to measure their progress throughout the weeks as they progress.





For the three groups of caregivers their levels in terms of guidelines 5-7 were at the “Very little” rank

✚ Joint focus/shared attention was very little among the caregivers

✚ Giving meaning and explanations to children was also very little

✚ Expanding experiences/making connections was also very little among the caregivers

- ✓ A total of 20 caregivers in three different groups were engaged throughout these sessions
- ✓ The supervisors throughout the period engaged the caregivers in guidelines 5-7 also termed the comprehensive dialogue.
- ✓ This dialogue focused on (i) focusing and sharing attention (ii) sharing meaning with enthusiasm (iii) talking about experiences, thoughts, feelings, sensations in order to deepen knowledge expand, compare, reflect, connect.
- ✓ The caregivers agreed that, they did not make time to pay attention to whatever their children were engaged in.
- ✓ The caregivers sometimes shouted at them or beat them to stop whatever they were trying to do.
- ✓ One of the caregivers shared an experience of how her “5-year-old daughter liked to play the role of a mother in the kitchen cooking. They would go for empty containers and use them as cooking utensils and stones as fire. The caregiver felt the activities of the child made the surroundings dirty and so she beat her to stop”. This led to a role play using the same scenario to engage the groups on the meaning making dialogue to clearly explain the need to engage the child in expanding the child’s experiences in a much more positive way. This was done through Joint focusing, describing and making meaning for children to

clearly understanding things and expanding the learning experiences to other situation as explained earlier.

- ✓ This stage included where they practiced the dialogue by observing things together, where the caregiver cooked and the child participated through questions and answers. The child also initiated questions where the caregiver answered with explanation. Certain leading question strategies were used e.g. Hello... ?, What is this...? Can you tell me why....?
- ✓ This clearly showed that they there were challenges in the practice of the guidelines under the comprehension dialogue.
- ✓ After the engagements with the caregivers, they agreed to make time to guide and support the child to enable them understand issues around them. This helped the caregivers pay attention to what their kids did and help them expand their knowledge. They also promised to desist from the use of canes as a way of disciplining their children.
- ✓ The field supervisors also used the “inquiry approach within the focused group discussions to facilitate the sessions in order to make meaning through joint focus of attention. These
- ✓ Some caregivers shared how they join their kids in playing, when they were very young, however when they became adolescents, they desisted from joining them in the playground.
- ✓ Some caregivers also indicated they did not see the need to apologize to children when they wronged them due to some traditional and social norms.



Lydia a Field Supervisor and Joyce Larnyoh interacting with a group of mothers



Pictures above shows a group picture with field supervisors and ICDP's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer after interacting with groups of caregivers on ICDP Program. The Country Director Joyce Larnyoh and an intern from Germany Annica participated to observe the various session.

5. Conclusion

At the end of the 7th guideline, the recap sessions revealed that caregivers had acquired increased knowledge on the need to focus and share attention collectively with their children, this ensured they explained situations and also used their experiences and made connections to broaden the knowledge and scope of their children. This would promote good interactions with their children which would enhance their development.