Breakout Session Report: Implementation of the Nurturing Care Framework
Date: Wednesday, 13th March 2024
Venue: Accra Metropolitan Assembly Headquarters, Accra.

Introduction

The Breakout Session on the Nurturing Care Framework (NCF) was expected to identify challenges as well as highlight opportunities to improve the effectiveness in implementing interventions within the respective nurturing care domains of the framework. The 19 participants who attended the NCF Breakout Session were drawn from the following organizations:

Name of Organization	Number of Participants
IHVAG	2
GES	4
ECE	2
CLCD	1
Peki College	1
Sabre Education	1
Makola Market	1
WIEGO	2
GAMA	1
Department of Children	1
EC	1
Undisclosed	2

The group discussions were expected to be guided by a set of questions presented by the ECNG covering the following areas:[1]

1. Understanding the Nurturing Care Framework:
2. Integrating Nurturing Care Principles into Practice:
3. Overcoming Implementation Challenges:
4. Building Capacity and Support:
5. Monitoring and Evaluation:
6. Scaling Up and Replication:

Group Discussions

Presentation on NCF

Out of the 19 participants in the group, only two were familiar with nurturing care principles, the framework, and its application. The Breakout Session therefore had to pivot and dedicate most of its allotted time to familiarise with the components of the NCF and draw on existing Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) practices to facilitate its discussions.

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[1] See Annex A

The term 'nurturing care' was defined and the 5 components of the NCF namely, Good health
Adequate nutrition; Safety and security; Opportunities for early learning; and Responsive caregiving, were discussed with illustrative examples of interventions per domain. WIEGO's work with the Makola Daycare Centre was shared as a case study to emphasize how the nurturing care principles have been integrated in the Guidelines which govern the operation of day-care centres within the market space.

A participant's feedback on the presentation was that 'Inclusion' was now an additional domain of the NCF. The presentation slides are attached as Annex A.

Responses to Guiding Questions

1. **Suggestions offered on how to integrate nurturing care principles into practice were as follows:**
   a. all stakeholders, particularly caregivers should communicate with children in the local Ghanaian languages to foster a stronger sense of bonding between the caregiver and child;
   b. the Government of Ghana's School feeding programme should be introduced in day care centres to ensure that adequate nutrition will be provided to children, in addition nutritionists should periodically sensitize caregivers on the importance of providing good nutrition to young children.
   c. there should be periodic visits to schools to inspect food being cooked for children.
   d. stakeholders should attempt to define the boundaries of what constitutes harsh punishment of a child within the Ghanaian context as some Ghanaian cultural practices and values could constitute abuse and therefore infringe on the emotional and psychological well-being of the child.

2. **Suggestions offered on how to overcome challenges related to implementing the NCF were as follows:**
   a. many stakeholders implementing existing programmes which fall within the NCF domains work in silos as they are not aware of the NCF principles, there must be better collaboration among them to achieve effectiveness of interventions, as the NCF domains are inter-related.
   b. Government of Ghana ECCD policy formulation processes should be decentralized to ensure the participation and buy-in of all stakeholders from the national to the local -level.

3. **Suggestions offered on how to strengthen capacity on the knowledge and application of the nurturing care principles were as follows:**
   a. health workers should be tasked to educate caregivers especially new parents, on the NCF principles.

Addendum

- Annex A: ECNG Guiding Questions on Implementation of the Nurturing Care Framework
- Annex B: Presentation slides - ***Implementing the Nurturing Care Framework***