

# **Involving Children in Decision-Making, Project Design, and Monitoring & Evaluation**

*Presented by*

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## **Background on CRS Zimbabwe OVC Project**

- Began in 2001 with a USAID grant to launch the STRIVE project
- Offers education assistance, psychosocial support, economic strengthening and food security
- Serving over 23,000 children in 2008
- Implementing 2 special projects for out of school youth and children living with HIV & AIDS with support from UNICEF and Royal Netherlands Embassy



# Introduction

*Children have the right to participate in decisions that affect them,  
such as...*

- How their school operates
- How their community supports and protects children
- How OVC projects are designed, monitored and evaluated

*Meaningful participation also improves the quality and relevance of  
OVC projects!*

## Method 1: Child Friendly Schools

- Discussions about school environments & OVC
- Community (including children) develop criteria for “child friendly” schools
- Assessment team regularly reviews schools; children participate by writing essays
- Successful schools awarded “Child Friendly” status





## Method 2: Child Care Teams

- OVC beneficiaries proposed idea
- “Child Care Teams”
  - a teacher
  - two peer counselors (one boy & one girl)
  - a community volunteer
- Primarily **urban-based**
- Purpose: to discuss challenges, solutions & action steps

## Method 3: Child Protection Committees

- Members
  - Trained Child Representatives
  - Caregivers
  - Community Representatives
- Primarily **rural-based**
  - e.g. Uzumba Orphan Care
- Purpose: to monitor welfare of children in the community



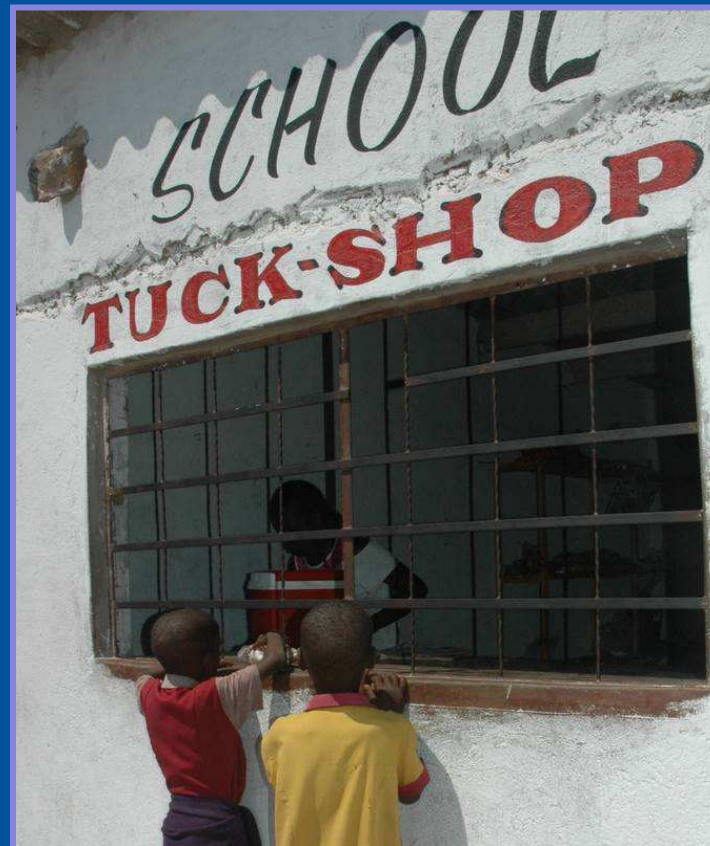


## Method 4: Developing Quality Standards

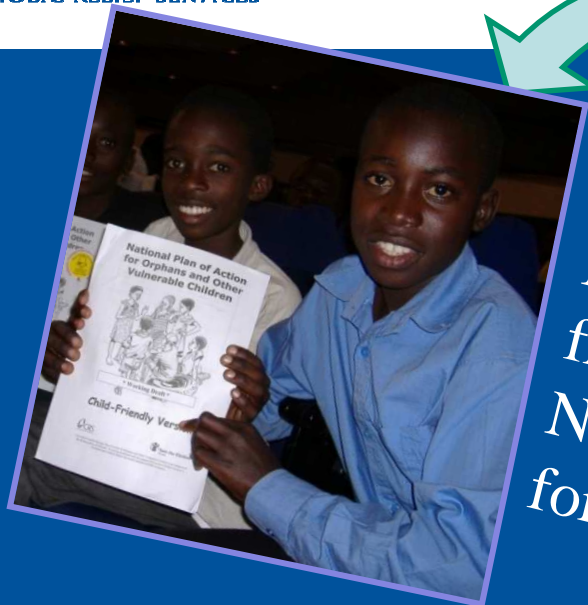
- Involved in Zimbabwean minimum quality standards for OVC programming; participation includes collaboration with Implementing Partners, Community and Government
- Children play a key role in each step of the process:
  - e.g. community consultants spend time with OVC to prioritize interventions (e.g. food, education) and to detail activities necessary for the interventions' success

## Method 5: Small Funds Initiative

- Given to community groups
- For good ideas around improving OVC care and support
- Children involved project development by participating in the selection process



# Other Examples



Development of child-friendly version of the National Action Plan for OVC



Participatory learning at Junior Farmer Field Schools

Station Days  
– a project monitoring day





## Results

- 30+ “Child Friendly” schools in Zimbabwe
- 375 village-level Child Protection Committees
- “Child Care Teams” addressed dozens of situations
- USAID now requires child consultations
- 650+ OVC benefit from Small Funds Initiative
- Child-friendly NAP helped children learn about policy
- Child rights training and participation have helped improve projects

## Discussion

- Traditional cultural values: a challenge
- Beyond view-sharing to actual **participation**
- Child participation objective in government's OVC policy helpful
- Future plans:
  - child friendly version of child protection laws
  - child friendly treatment literacy materials
  - training manual for Child Protection Committees, including vernacular language translations



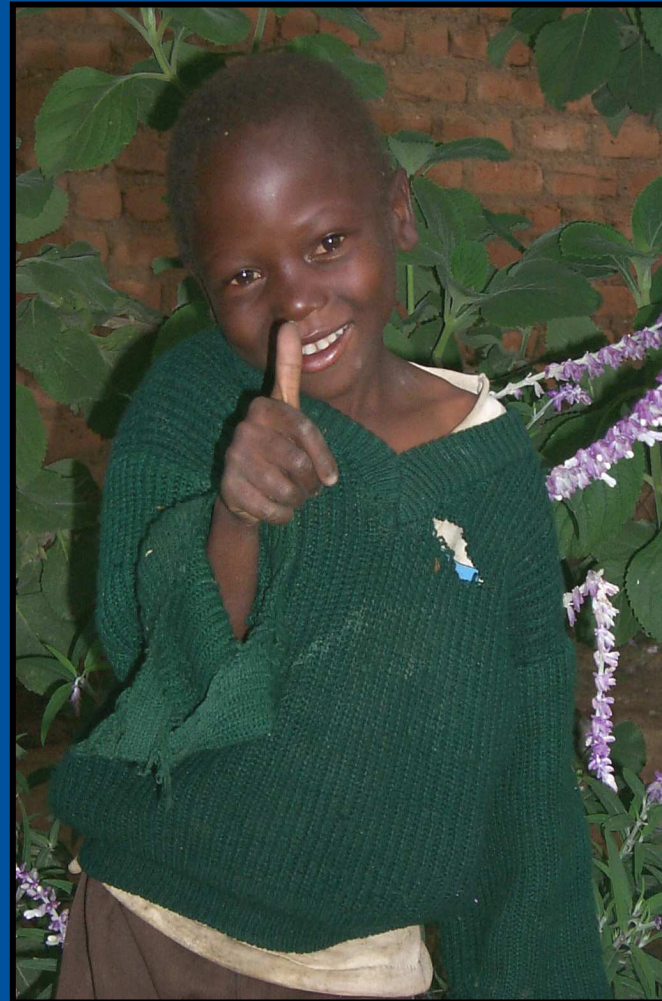
## For More Information...

- **Publications:**
  - Minimum Quality Standards for OVC Programming in Zimbabwe: An Implementer's Guide. *To be published July 2008.*
  - How-to Guide for Child Participation in Education Initiatives. Baltimore: CRS. 2007.
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*Tatenda*

*Siyabonga*

*Thank you!*



*Photo: Gaye Burpee*