

## Integrating Early Childhood Development Project

Children affected by HIV/AIDS are at high risk for poor developmental and health outcomes. Strides have been made in reaching these children and their families with health, nutrition, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) services. However, fragmentation of services during pregnancy and early childhood, as well as across multiple levels from the family to the facility, poses challenges to achieving optimal developmental outcomes. The integration of early childhood development (ECD) interventions into HIV, OVC, PMTCT, antenatal care, and other health and nutrition services can improve health and nutrition outcomes for at-risk children by building on existing resources and networks to quickly reach children.

PATH's Integrating ECD (I-ECD) Project is a two-year project in Mozambique and Kenya funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The I-ECD Project team will work with existing PATH projects to integrate and strengthen ECD services in communities and facilities and support multi-sectoral linkages and collaboration. In particular, it will partner with the APHIAplus project in Nyanza Province, Kenya, and the Window of Opportunity Project in Mozambique.

### BUILDING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Through the I-ECD Project, PATH will award subgrants to community-based organizations (CBOs) currently providing health, education, or social services to children and families affected by HIV/AIDS. PATH will provide CBOs with tailored assistance around organizational management and capacity-building for programs to integrate high-quality ECD interventions into their programs. PATH will also train facility and community workers to conduct assessments, services, and referrals, as well as adapt and develop tailored integrated ECD materials.



Trained CBO staff and health workers will be able to evaluate interactions between children and caregivers, counsel caregivers on ECD topics, suggest age-related language and play activities and local materials for simple toys, and refer families for services. Trained CBO staff and service providers will link families and health care services to ensure HIV-affected families have access to a comprehensive package of services.

### DEVELOPING A SCALABLE MODEL

There is currently limited programmatic experience on effective interventions for young children living in areas with high prevalence of HIV. Through this project, PATH plans to implement, document, and disseminate a successful model for sustainably and effectively integrating ECD activities for young children (0–5 years) affected by HIV into existing health services. Using lessons learned from Mozambique and Kenya, PATH will develop a scalable model for ECD integration and capacity building, and share evidence to strengthen programs aimed to improve ECD outcomes.

*Photo: PATH/Mike Wang*