

## APPENDIX H

### SUMMARY OF THEMES DELINEATED AFTER FOCUS GROUP WITH CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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#### THEME 1            ACTIVITIES CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES ENGAGE IN

- Enjoy nothing            -            three participants stated that their children enjoy nothing, but continued to explain in which activities they do participate
- Games with friends       -            never at home, always play with friends
  - play with younger siblings' friends
  - some neighbourhood children take the CSDs toys and tease them
- Mealtime                 -            children eat with rest of family or they eat alone
  - allowed to choose food, e.g. tea, mealie porridge, bread, vegetables, fruits and meat (this depends on what is available). At times no choices are provided due to only one food type being available
- Bathtime                 -            activity done very frequently (between two and three times per day). Sometimes only wash face and hands
  - like playing with water
  - do not like water over face and head
  - some try to be independent, but need help from primary caregiver or older siblings
  - some very dependent on primary caregiver to assist with the activity

- Music and dancing - primary caregiver teaches them songs (e.g. church songs)
  - primary caregiver does not like dancing, encourages younger peers to dance with the child
- Literacy exposure - three of the five participants said that their children had no interest in magazines or pictures
  - two paged through a magazine (Bona) and tried to scribble.
- Help with domestic tasks
- Wants continuous reinforcement - have to clap hands if she finishes her food
- One child runs away and sits alone on the rubbish dump all day

## **THEME II            COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS USED BY CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

- Greeting - all participants indicated that they felt greeting was very important. This is one of the indicators for being a “*good child*”
- Commenting - none of the participants perceived their children as commenting on activities
- Requesting - one participant said that her child requests to play with friends
  - do not request certain foods, activities or clothing
- Providing information - four of the five participants commented that their children never tell them where they are going. These children are perceived as naughty (no way of communicating message?)

- Choice-making
  - some make choices in terms of what they want to eat (particularly sweets and “*simbas*” chips)
  - mostly on level of indicating preferences (precursor to choice-making), e.g. milk
- Protesting
  - crying
- Indicating pleasure
  - no examples provided
- Signalling presence
  - should not request attention during adult communication, perceived as being rude
- Inappropriate interaction
  - participants commented that sometimes their children talk to strangers and visitors in an inappropriate way – causing shame for the family.

**THEME III            COMMUNICATION MEANS USED BY CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

- Means frequently mentioned
  - crying
  - inappropriate talking
  - unintelligible speech
  - using objects to communicate, e.g. showing empty plate to indicate “*finished*”

**THEME IV            RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

- Level
  - most participants commented that their children’s understanding is limited (e.g. days of the week).

- Participants struggle to understand communication intention, frustrates CSDs.
- Demands
  - children cannot cope with demands and try to avoid them through difficult behaviour or non-compliance. Leads to power struggles.

## **THEME V            GENERAL COMMENTS**

- Participants generally perceive their children's behaviour as inappropriate. Also state that the children are uncooperative, highly irritable, short-tempered and stubborn, especially when demands are placed on them. One participant stated that her child is constantly tired (passivity to avoid demands?)
- Some children are well integrated into the community, e.g. play with neighbourhood children, go to the shops and go to church.
- One participant said that she did not want to encourage her child to play with other children, as they tease her child because they think she cannot understand.
- One participant said that she did not want to give her child with a disability any more toys (they used to make him wire-cars) as the other children take the toys.