

Ngoma ya Roho (Dance of the Soul) DISCUSSION GUIDE



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FOOD AND NUTRITION
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With support from USAID/Tanzania, the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III Project (FANTA) collaborated with Media for Development International, the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre, and leading Tanzania film industry talent to write and produce a feature film to communicate nutrition messages and model good practices for the first 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday to reduce the high rate of stunting in Tanzania. The honourable Minister of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children contributed a testimonial at the end of the film.

Film Synopsis

Ngoma ya Roho follows Minza, a dancer with a community theatre group in her village, as she leaves her baby behind to journey to Dar es Salaam to pursue her dream of being a dancer. With no experience as a mother and following the advice of village women, Minza's sister feeds the crying baby water and food, and the baby doesn't grow properly. Meanwhile, in the city, Minza wins a prize in a dance festival. One day she finds an abandoned baby and learns he had been taken from the home of a well-off nurse-nutritionist. She becomes the baby's nanny and learns about the importance of optimal infant feeding and how to take care of a baby to ensure healthy growth and development. Moved by this experience to return home, Minza finds her baby severely ill and takes him to a hospital nutrition rehabilitation center and resolves to take better care of him.

Preparation for Discussion of *Ngoma ya Roho*

- Set up the equipment and make sure everything works before the workshop begins.
- Check the picture and sound quality/volume.
- Make sure all participants can see the screen.
- Make sure the room is dark enough if using video projection.
- Make sure everyone is seated and paying attention before starting the film.
- Cue the film to begin promptly.

You will need:

- A flash drive or DVD with the film loaded on it
- A video projector and screen large enough for all participants to see the film clearly
- A sound system powerful enough for all participants to hear the film clearly
- A flipchart and marking pens

Using This Guide

This discussion guide is designed to facilitate conversation and raise thought-provoking questions to encourage viewers to think more deeply about the nutrition, care, and food practices the film addresses. Facilitators should view the entire film to guide discussion and prompt questions effectively.

Good facilitators create space for safe, non-threatening discussion, allowing people to explore their own beliefs, fears, and taboos related to the subject. At the same time, facilitators should understand the information about nutrition and stunting and be ready to respond if viewers share myths and sub-optimal practices about nutrition, especially infant and young child feeding, and no one in the group corrects them.

Steps

1. Welcome participants to the session. Explain that they are here to watch a film about real Tanzanians. The film is 2 hours long (it could be shown in two sections).
2. Allow about 1 hour for the discussion.
3. Introduce the film using the text below.

Ngoma ya Roho is the story of Minza, an aspiring dancer, who leaves her baby behind in her village to travel to Dar es Salaam to pursue her dream of becoming famous. With no experience as a mother and following the advice of village women, Minza's sister feeds the crying baby water and other food, and the baby doesn't grow properly. Meanwhile, in the city, Minza wins a prize in a dance festival. One day she finds an abandoned baby. She manages to find the baby's grandmother, Limi, a nurse/nutritionist, and becomes her nanny. Minza learns how to care for babies and decides to return home to her own child. She finds him severely malnourished and takes him to a hospital for treatment, vowing to take better care of him.

4. Ask participants to introduce themselves and put them at ease. Encourage everyone to share their thoughts and perspectives for a rich discussion.
5. Set ground rules to make sure everyone feels comfortable to share their thoughts and perspectives without fear of criticism.
 - Turn off cell phones.
 - Listen, even when you disagree.
 - Don't interrupt when others are talking.
 - Avoid side conversations.
 - Speak from your own experience.
 - Agree to disagree.

The Messages in the Film

- ✦ Good nutrition during the first 1,000 days between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday—the critical time for brain development, healthy growth and strong immunity—is one of the best investments to build healthier and more prosperous futures.
- ✦ Good nutrition during the 1,000-day window helps save lives; improves school readiness and educational achievement; reduces disparities in health, education, and earning potential; boost the country's gross national product (GDP); and breaks the intergenerational cycle of poverty.
- ✦ Malnourished children are at greater risk of infections such as diarrhea in childhood and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease in adulthood.
- ✦ Babies should be fed ONLY breast milk, which provides all the food and water a baby needs for the first 6 months of life. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months protects babies from many illnesses, such as diarrhea and respiratory infections.
- ✦ At 6 months, when breast milk is no longer enough to meet their nutritional needs, babies should be fed a variety of family foods while continuing to breastfeed for 2 years and beyond. The amount, frequency, density and variety of complementary feeding should increase gradually, and food should be prepared safely to reduce the risk of contamination with pathogens. Feeding young infants and children requires active care and stimulation.
- ✦ Contaminated food and water can cause diarrhea and other infections, which deplete nutrients needed for recovery. Optimal water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices to reduce exposure to parasitic infections and pathogens include access to latrines, safe water, hand washing with soap at critical times (before preparing, feeding, and eating food and after using the toilet and cleaning a baby's bottom), and using clean hands and utensils to feed babies.
- ✦ Attending regular monthly clinic visits for growth monitoring will ensure babies grow well. A healthy child who is growing well should gain weight every month. If a child is not gaining weight or is losing weight, there is a problem.
- ✦ During child growth monitoring, caregivers can ask questions about their children's growth, health and nutrition. Growth monitoring can identify serious nutrition problems such as severe thinness or swelling (bilateral pitting oedema). It is important to address poor growth and other signs of poor nutrition as soon as they are identified. Babies and young children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) are at risk of death and need urgent treatment in hospital with special (therapeutic) foods.
- ✦ Food myths and sub-optimal nutrition practices, especially concerning pregnant and lactating women, young children and adolescent girls, should be addressed at community level to avoid depriving these groups of nutritious food for improved health and nutrition.
- ✦ One in three children under 5 years of age in Tanzania is stunted (short for their age). Children who are stunted learn to sit, stand and walk later than other children; have poorer cognitive development; and perform worse in school. Economic productivity losses from stunting in Tanzania are estimated at almost 30 trillion TZS by 2025.¹

¹ Ash D, Sethuraman K, Sommerfelt AE, Oot L, Kovach T, Chiduo G, and Yokobety M. 2016. *Reducing Malnutrition in Tanzania: Estimates to Support Nutrition Advocacy*. Dar es Salaam: FHI 360/FANTA and Prime Minister's Office.

Sample Discussion Questions for Viewers of *Ngoma ya Roho*

Overall Themes

- ✦ Did you learn anything from this film? If you did, what was it?
- ✦ What is the film's message? Do you agree or disagree with it?
- ✦ Was there something you didn't understand about the film? What was it?
- ✦ What did you like best about the film? Why?
- ✦ What did you like least about the film? Why?
- ✦ Did anything in this film remind you of something that has happened in your own life or that you have seen happen to others?
- ✦ Would you recommend this film to a friend? Why?
- ✦ Did anything in the film surprise you? What and why?
- ✦ What were you thinking when the film ended?
- ✦ What part of the story was most powerful? Why?
- ✦ If you had written the screenplay for this film, would you have changed the ending? If so, why?

Film Characters

- ✦ Who was your favorite character? Why?
- ✦ Who was your least favorite character? Why?
- ✦ Do you respect any of the characters? Who and why?
- ✦ Did any of the characters make you angry? Why?
- ✦ If you could ask a character in the film a question, what would it be?

Educational Messages and Modeling of Best Practices

- ✦ How did the health care providers treat Minza? Could they have done something differently?
- ✦ The nurse in the film gave a nutrition education session for pregnant women attending the clinic. What other ways could more community members, especially women of reproductive age, be reached with these messages?
- ✦ Why did Minza's sister feed the baby as she did?
- ✦ Have you or someone close to you ever struggled to feed a baby? Where did they go for help?
- ✦ Minza's baby was given water to drink, local herbs and food. What is the appropriate age for a baby to be given water and food? Why?
- ✦ Do you think Minza's family understood why her baby was sick?
- ✦ Why do you think Minza's baby did not gain weight and become ill?
- ✦ Minza's baby is hospitalized, and the doctor says it is because of malnutrition. What does this term mean to you?
- ✦ How is a malnourished child like Minza's normally handled in your community?
- ✦ What can people do as individuals and in their communities to solve a problem like Minza's baby had?
- ✦ What did Minza learn about feeding her baby when she moved in with Limi? Do you think mothers in your community can make the same changes? If not, why not?
- ✦ Minza was taught how to wash hands correctly. Why do you think this is important, especially when taking care of a young child? What are critical times to wash your hands with soap or ash and water? What is the safest way to dry your hands?
- ✦ What are some beliefs about pregnant/lactating women and feeding young children in your community? How could they be addressed?
- ✦ How can mothers explain to others in their families and communities the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months and complementary feeding of foods from all the food groups afterward in a way that people will understand?
- ✦ The health care provider talked about the first 1,000 days. What did she mean by that?

- ✦ Stunting was mentioned in the film. What do you think it means? How can we address it? Did you know that stunting was such a big problem in Tanzania?
- ✦ What did you learn from the film that you didn't know already? Will you do anything differently after seeing the film? If yes, what will you do?
- ✦ What message from the Minister of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children do you remember?

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