

FG1_Calabar Rural Primary 1 (8 nov19, 51 min)); n=4 (1M, 3F); Ironbar Primary School, Calabar

INT: How many of you know that your child's school offered free vision screening, or an eye test was conducted on your child?

Participants indicated by raise of hand

FG1_Fem1: Yes they did

FG1_Fem2: Yes they did

FG1_Male1: I was not aware

FG1_Fem3: Yes, they give some letters and some eye drops to the pupils that were affected.

**INT: now if your children had their vision tested. What were you told about the results of the eye test?
Were you told by the teachers?**

FG1_Fem1: Yes, to take the child to the hospital

FG1_Fem2: Yes , to bring child to the clinic

FG1_Fem3: Yes, me too

FG1_Male1: Since I was not aware, I do not know.

INT: What do you think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now? What about in the future?

FG1_Fem1: to improve eyesight of our children that is the reason for this exercise

FG1_Fem2: it will help them in their due course

FG1_Male1: it will improve their eyesight and make them to see well

FG1_Fem3: like it because it will improve their eyesight

INT: What about in the future?

FG1_Fem2: hmm! to eradicate the problem of maybe becoming blind or having difficulties is seeing in the future.

FG1_Fem1: it will help them to read their books without using their eye glass. It affect their sight especially their studies.

FG1_Fem3: some maybe withdrawn if the eye is not properly managed now, some might be withdrawn from school because of the eye problem

FG1_Male1: it will their future and their and their mental reasoning too due to the fact that they can't read well they don't know their focus where they are heading to so, if.... This programme is helpful, I think, if the something is done.....it will improve their eyesight so that it will, they won't have problems of old aging and blindness and other sight impairments

FG1_Fem3: it will affect them for their education in future if the eyes are not taken care of at work it will affecting them, in future because they will not be able to see clearly and know what their focus

FG1_Fem1: they will not live a good life because I believe this our eye is our life if you cannot see well there is nothing that you will be able to do in life

FG1_Fem2: they will not be useful to themselves, that is why we have a lot of beggars in the north because some of them cannot see, you can't do anything meaningful

FG1_Male1: they will not be useful to the society apart from themselves because when the society need them they won't give a good account of themselves due to the lack of eyesight

INT: After your child had his/her vision tested at school, what were you told you should do about your child's eye health?

FG1_Fem3: to take her to the eye clinic

FG1_Male1: well since I was not all that aware of it emmh! I told the my child that she should not use it I referred it back, because I was not aware as I told you before I was not aware of the programme so that is the thing something like need to be advertised so the parents will be enlighten the more so that they can get a backup that okay this kind of organization is operating very fine in so so school, so I was afraid.

FG1_Fem1: I was referred to the eye clinic

FG1_Fem2: I was referred to the eye clinic to take my child to the eye clinic.

INT: Why do you think further testing was recommended for your child's eyes?

FG1_Fem3: eeh! because as they tested her they find problem in her eyes

FG1_Male1: eem, if somebody is recommended for further test since those people are her in the school, I don't think have all the equipment there, there in the hospital there are well equipped and the facility is all fixed there I think that is better, that is very good of them. So that good medicine will be recommended and give to them by the dispensers.

FG1_Fem1: for proper treatment of the eyes, that is ehh! Since they tested them in the school to my own understanding maybe the equipment the used was not that em em, was not really eehhh enough or functional. For proper treatment and medication, they have noticed a problem

FG1_Fem2: I thought it was for confirmation, maybe they referred the, the letter the gave the child to go to the clinic was to confirm and for the proper treatment.

INT: We know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination at the eye clinic choose not to do so. What do you think are the main reasons some families make that choice?

FG1_Fem2: to my own understanding I think some of them maybe lack of chance, lack of chance, some parents are very busy and some, they might not be interested

FG1_Fem1: ehh feel since the problem detected on their child will not affecting the child in the home so I feel maybe the just look at it as since it is not really a problem to them so they overlook.

FG1_Male1: is some time due to their religious beliefs some of them they don't believe in this medical treatment they believe in their orthodox churches and you see because that they decided to pay a deaf ear on it

FG1_Fem3: some parent may think that when there are going, myself I was thinking that when am going there I will spend a lot of money, ('she laughed')

FG1_Fem2: because I don't have chance I pay deaf ears to it, you know if you don't have chance you will not be interested in doing something

FG1_Fem1: in my own case since the child was not complaining any physical eh eh problem so I feel maybe is not important for me to go there, since I didn't see any physical problem, you understand, there was no dropping in the eye he was always going about with his normal business so I feel maybe is not that serious so I over looked.

FG1_Fem3: some guardian may feel that they just come to deceive them, so that they will go and spend money (she laughed and every other person in the group)

FG1_Male1: some ignorant parents may think that it is just eehh....ignorancy, ignorance un the side of the parents and they are unaware of what is going on.

FG1_Fem1: illiteracy, (she chuckled and laughed out) illiteracy is part of the problem some parent who are not educated may not believe that their child or their wards eye can be treated and corrected so they just go about their business.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG1_Fem1: it depends on a particular family; a father might say a mother can also say in my family is my husband.

FG1_Fem2: in my family I take decision since the father is not always with us.

FG1_Male1: personally, I take decision but when am not there I can delegate the function to any other person, like either my wife or elderly ones or my friends.

FG1_Fem3: in my own family my husband always takes decision

INT: Why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination?

FG1_Fem1: well, "clear throat" I on my own part do takes my children to the hospital for checkup each time I see her robbing the eye ball so I feel maybe there is something there, so I feel it is necessary let me take her to the hospital

FG1_Fem2: at times a child may be coming back from school, my child will come back from school and complains either the pains or anything that is happening to his or her child, if he continue telling me you know there are some children that will disturb you if that thing really affect them, they will disturb you from there I will have no choice, no decision that to take him or her to the hospital for the checkup.

FG1_Male1: it is pertinent to do that why at least, eehh either, half yearly or quarterly so that their children will not complain of eyesight and that exercise is very pertinent and it is good for his own future development thank you.

FG1_Fem3: myself at times like this eee dry season that we are entering soon, some, some of my children they used to have this ee this sickness apolo so I don't I don't normally like to buy medicine in the clinics or I take them to the hospital in order to give best treatment.

FG1_Fem2: at times this food that we eat do effect in our eyes cos the was a book that I read they will say if you eat this particular food it will affect your eye, so if you know that you have been cooking the food or you have been giving it to your children, you have to once in a while take them for checkup.

FG1_Fem1: sensitization workshop can makes the parent say ahh! I heard over the radio or television that it is good to take your child for eye examination ones in a while, so things like that can help the parent to take their children for eye examination

FG1_Male1: the question of the children coming to school and playing rough play, many of them used to play roughly that some can even carry sand pour on other person's eye and since it was a play coming back home they won't tell the parent, they will not tell you, so it is very necessary for the eye check, so as to checkmate that.

FG1_Fem3: it is necessary checkup enh! to take the child to the hospital for eye checkup at times because as we are taking care of ourselves from time to time so also with eye, so it is good to take child to the hospital for checkup.

FG1_Male1: generally due to the world we are the world is too hazardous, many, many countries trying to take this nuclear, all these things flowing in the air can be very, very harmful to the eyes, so it is good for that checkup to be done

FG1_Fem2: Even these phones we are using, the television that the children are watching also have effect on their eye.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG1_Fem1: both parents can make decision, both parents can make such decision, my own my husband and I we make the decision.

FG1_Fem2: I make decision, once I observed a little I will tell my husband that we should go to the hospital

FG1_Male1: we believe generally, in general observation anybody who observed fast can also call the other, so that they can take the decision

FG1_Fem3: my husband and I can make decision due to anybody that observe thing for the child, will bring up the idea this is what to be done to the child.

FG1_Fem1: anybody who the child is staying with whether is a guardian or parents or caregiver or whoever can make the decision can take the child to the hospital.

FG1_Fem3: it depends on how that person that the child is with care for that child, so anybody can make the decision.

INT: What message would you like me to bring back to the other researchers on the team?

FG1_Fem2: in a situation where the families of a child or the guardian are very poor or less privilege, it will make them not to be able to take up their wards for eye examination. You may not have a radio or a television, even if you do you may not have NEPA to listen or watch so that you hear information like this.

FG1_Male1: ehh yes I will like that either billboard (hand bills, flyers) should be given out so that people get access so that people will know many of them will still know and be aware that such organization is existing to help at willing so that how it is.

FG1_Fem1: even billboard too should be put in some strategic places where people can see and get to know what is happening and get benefit from it too.

INT: Thinking back to everything we discussed today, what would be your key message?

FG1_Fem1: ‘chuckled and laughed out’ okay they should continue good in their good work

FG1_Fem2: enh! Enh! It shouldn’t be as it used to be like this our Cross River State, they started given children food along the line they stop, so, what I am trying to say is it should be a continuous process.

FG1_Fem3: I need the thing to continue because that is good and is beneficial to parents and the children, so I like it I say thank you keep it up.

FG1_Male1: yeah! Since the world is too hazardous there is nothing we can do than thanking the organization for good job well done and I hope that they should continue in their good performance and then making everybody to be aware of what is going on. This I give them much kudos.

INT: What about key messages for parents?

FG1_Fem2: okay what I have for parents is whenever they hear about such thing they should not hesitate to take their children to the hospital has said it is an amazing thing, even me I did not believe that such thing can happen without collecting a dime so my advice to some parents is they should stop complaining of money or lacking of chance they should take everything serious.

FG1_Fem1: parents should avail themselves of the opportunity and make them to have their eye examined.

FG1_Male1: I said all the parents should cooperate with this organization because eye “eye is life” eye is the center of the light of the body, so please I am beckoning on all parents to cooperate with this organization so that we can push the problem of eye impairment from our society.

FG1_Fem3: am pleading the parents to take everything serious, because you don’t know the one that will be benefit to you, when you take it minor! Minor!! Minor!! Things are passing you, so, I plead with this organization also to keep it up.

FG2_ Calabar Rural Primary School (Apostolic Primary School, Idang); 7 Nov 2019, 1 hr

INT: Now, how many of you know that the school offered free vision screening or eye test for your children?

FG2_Male1: I know

FG2_Fem1: Yeah!

FG2_Fem2: I know

INT: Now, if all your children had their vision well tested, what were you told about the result of this test? Did the teacher tell you?

FG2_Male1: You mean the result of the test I was being told about?

INT: Yes, the result of the test that was done in the school.

FG2_Male1: What I know is that my child was screened and he was given paper to bring it to me as the parent so that I can take him to where the test will be carried out, and I took him to the place and the child was tested, and I was asked to come back after a week, though I have not done that.

FG2_Fem2: Me I went to the place they said I should go. I went, they said I should keep coming, coming, coming. So *(She suddenly stopped talking)*.

FG2_Fem3: From the test result done in school, according to your question, I thought the hospital or the clinic should have followed up.

FG2_Fem1: Well, like me when you came here, you did the sampling test from those children that have infection on their eyes, but later you gave them referring letter to their parents, so that the parents would be the ones to carry their children to the hospital. Then, they have to bring the feedback. That is why *(Paused)* that was what was left to be done. Since then he has not gone to back to the hospital.

INT: Then madam you said you knew about the test.

FG2_Fem2: Hmm as I went there, they screened them, they test them but they will not give me result.

FG2_Fem3: Okay, in that way, the child came back with a letter and she was telling us some things. I didn't *(Abrupt stop)* since I'm not the biological mother I then went to the grand ma, because of it her mother came inviting them. The way they are answered me due to their mentality, they asked me to leave their child there was nothing wrong with their child. That was why when I was invited I found so discouraged to come since the parent didn't give me the right to flow.

INT: What do think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now?

FG2_Male1: You mean the screening or the hospital? What I'm saying is that for this organization, they are trying to build the future of our children so that they will leave without having eyes problem. So that is what they are trying to create for us, which is for our own good.

FG2_Fem3: I think that in issues like this, it's a help for our infants for better tomorrow, because I have seen some people at a low minor age, they started wearing lens due to the problem *(The participant mean spectacles)*. Some said when they were kids they *(Referring to the participants' parents)* did not have this idea to take them to the hospital. So since it's about theirs, so this idea that you people brought now will be a help for us tomorrow.

FG2_Fem2: This idea, I believe, it is God that bring you people here. Like me, my children have eye problem. I prayed God should pass through you people to come and deliver me *(Smiling as she said it)*. I believe that through this thing my children would see fine.

FG2_Fem2: Hmm. For me, what I wanted to know about this eye problem, like this my daughter, I don't know if the eye has been painning her...I don't know because I have never seen water dropping on it. Because the eye is like this "after five eyes", can it affect her or would there be any result to correct to be normal eye? That's what I was having in me to ask, if there can be anythingweather drugs or anything to give her for the eyes to be correct straight.

INT: Has she gone to the hospital?

FG2_Fem2: No.

INT: She should go to the hospital.

FG2_Male1: Well, there's something I know about human. Like me. I know that anything that happens to me, though any other person will be sympathetic concerning me, I am the very person that feels the pains. So my son when he was *(Pause)*, in fact he had chicken pox.

INT: Now, after your child had his or her eye or vision tested what were you told to do about your child's eye health?

FG2_Male1: We were not told anything (*Pause*) like now we were not told anything. We were asked to come back next week. But then there were some examination that took place. They kept him far distance and kept some letters far from him asked him, 'can you see?' They closed one of his eyes and there was another thing they gave him to look at those letters through that very thing like glass. So, they closed one of his eye and asked him: 'Can you see this?' He said, 'yes', 'Can you see this?' He said, 'yes', 'Can you see this?' He said, 'yes.' Though some other alphabets have been very small he couldn't answer. So after that nothing was done yet, nothing was done. I was asked to go with him and come back next week.

FG2_Male1: I was asked to take the child to hospital.

INT: Now, why do you think further test was recommended for your child's eyes? You know that the child was tested in school? Why do you think a child's eye needs to be tested further?

FG2_Fem2: (*Beamed smile on her face, then bends her head in a sympathetic manner*). Because they did not give me any solution about him, about his eyes. So, that's why I need you people to test them further.

FG2_Male1: Like me, after they tested the child in the school, they asked me to take the child to the hospital, and in the school they asked me to come back. I think the main aim was so that what they have started they will be able to finish it for our children to gain back their normal sight.

FG2_Fem1: Eh! For you cannot just go to the hospital and after the first treatment. You have to continue so that they can find out what the problem is. They will make sure that they have cured the sickness or any diseases that is in you. But if you don't follow you might have come back and continue with the same thing. So that was the reason a follow up is made.

FG2_Fem3: Hmm...I think testing the child is for our better tomorrow because from the first place it will encourage us to move further for the child's health.

INT: I know that some parents or guardians whose children are referred for further examination in the clinic choose not to go, what do you think are the main reasons why some families make such choice?

FG2_Fem3: Some parents know that going to hospital is a taboo (*She laughs as she was talking*). Also, some think that hospital is for big people or people that inherit sickness. So, I think it's a wrong mentality that do weigh some parents down.

FG2_Fem1: Some will think of money. Because the most important thing is money. There is no way you will go and you will not spend money. But if the money is not there you will feel very reluctant to go. And in some cases after the test, they will tell you, "go and do this test." You have to pay money! (*She threw her hands open and opened her eyes wide*). So that one discourage some parents to continue.

FG2_Fem2: At times money. (*She bent her head down and twisted her mouth*). Because there's no day that you will go to the hospital they will not say bring money for the test. That is why some parents, if you talk about hospital they will not answer you.

FG2_Male1: Actually, what I wanted to say you have said already, but let me just add this. As far as Nigeria is concern, why poor people do not go hospital (*Paused*) people of less privilege cannot go to hospital maybe when free test was conducted today and then they are asked to go to hospital, they know that going to the hospital, even from the nurses to the doctor won't pay attention to them without going there with money. First of all, they will ask you to buy card. After that, they will prescribe drugs to you and ask you to buy. And they will not even start giving you treatment without even seeing you giving out money. That's all about Nigeria that we are in. But are proud of being a citizen of it, please. Thank you.

FG2_Fem1: Another thing is time wasted. Some may go there and they continue to delay you. That delayance can discourage some.

FG2_Fem1: Maybe because of their religion.

INT: Because of their faith?

FG2_Fem1: Like Apostolic faith. They will tell you, 'Don't swallow drugs'

FG2_Fem1: Money is the very important thing! Money! Money!!

FG2_Male1: There's another. There's another thing. Ah! Because when you find yourself in the midst of friends making discussion, you realize a lot of things why some people don't go to hospital. They think that what didn't exist in their body, but once they go to hospital, and they pronounce that, that thing will take place and they would have it. For instance, somebody that has not been in a

hospital before they may believe that once finds himself there and they make mention of one sickness or the other, from there they will start having the sickness or another. So that will make some people of being afraid of going to the hospital. (*Myth: if you don't a sickness or disease but your presence in the hospital or mention of that disease to you by a doctor will make you contract that disease.*)

INT: Now, who in the household or family makes the decision of not going to the hospital? That if a child is referred to the hospital for further checkup, who in the family decides whether to take the child to the hospital or not?

FG2_Male1: Ah! You know, when you talk about family, well, you know that in some homes that the mothers are no longer with the fathers of her children. Some families the mother ran away and leave the children with the father, some the father forsake the children and leave it with the mother. But I think in a normal family that the father are still married to the mother, it will be the father that will take the decision. But at times when the father gives the instruction and he leave the house, the mother will take another decision and say, *'it is not me and my children.'* So, sometimes it happens like that.

FG2_Fem2: Family I think when such issue came into the family, it's the mother that will encourage the father to know what to do. If for instance now, the child came home with a letter they say go to the hospital, if the mother focused she will encourage the father to bring out money. But if the mother takes it less concern it will be like that. So I believe mother encouragement will also encourage the father to work faster.

FG2_Fem1: Another thing, if the mother is the breadwinner of the family, the mother will take care of the children. So you will ignore the father's decision, you will tell the father, *'if I don't bring money so you cannot carry these children.'* Or the mother will say, *"I say let my children be there!"* So, problem will start.

FG2_Fem2: It's the father that will bring money before the mother takes the children to the hospital (*Another participant said 'no problem' in a sarcastic manner and everybody started laughing*).

FG2_Fem1: (*Still laughing as she was saying this*). Because some fathers they don't have handwork, they don't have nothing with. So if you are the mother, you know those children is your children, you have money, the mother can even be the head, the head of the family to carry the children to the hospital.

INT: Now why do we think some families now choose to bring their children to the hospital?

FG2_Fem1: Hmm! they know that when one takes the child to the hospital there are people, the doctors that are trained for a particular sickness. Those ones are the ones that give the right medical treatment. The father is the right person that will tell, *'Oh...Let us go to the hospital and see because they are specialist.'*

FG2_Fem3: Okay. Me, I think some why families like taking their infants to hospital is for the better of their children, because they know that taking their child to the hospital make the parents have less stress. For instance, if the child is sick, it will not all that as if it will take the child's life because they have been going on for checkup; so it will just be mild sickness. It will help.

FG2_Male1: To me what I have to say is that, if you love your children or child, so once the child fall sick, you will rush the child to the hospital because you don't want to lose the child. So, that is the reason that parents take their children to the hospital because they don't want to loss the child.

FG2_Fem2: For me to go to the hospital, or taking our children to the hospital is very good. Because when you go you know the particular sickness that is disturbing the child and you know the particular drugs that you will give to them so that you stop the sickness. Whether father or anybody. If the mother love the children she will take the children to the hospital before the dad come back.

INT: Now, who in the family takes that decision of taking a child to the hospital?

FG2_Fem1: Hmm! It should be the father now. But at times if the father (*paused*) for instance if the father is not living around at least the mother can do that or uncle or anybody at all.

FG2_Fem3: Hmmm! As I was saying, in a family a thing may come in like say they should take the child to the hospital. If the mother don't show focus that's how the thing will end. Because if the mother says, *"it's true o! Let's take this child to the hospital and know how far about the child."* Her focus may encourage the father. But if the mother is less concern that's how the thing will just bury (*Forgotten*). So I think the mother focus encourage the father to do something.

FG2_Male1: To me. I say that in our homes we have parents, and we also have guardians, like housemaid. So to me I think that the one that love the child most should be the one to take the child to the hospital. If it is the father -- unless the father does not have chance; [in that case] he can push it to the mother. And if the mother loves the child she should be the one.

FG2_Male1: Because why I said so [it should be the person who loves the child the most], there in the hospital somebody maybe needed to go and buy drugs. Also, what you didn't think may come up that may need extra strength. I think it should be somebody that will be able to respond quickly to carry out any duty, any command that is given to him or her to carry. So I think such person is the right person to take a child to the hospital.

FG2_Male 1: For instance if it is the mother, maybe they went to the hospital with ₦1,000, but they say that the money is not enough, you will know the mother maybe will be -- *(Paused)* start thinking on where to go to get the money. But if it is a guardian, a guardian will say: *"Mtchew!(Hiss) let's go back...After all, they gave me ₦1,000"*. If it is the father, he will know that this is his child or daughter, he will look for where else to look for money. So I think the right person to take a child to the hospital should be the parents. Because they would understand what it means.

INT: In the course of our discussion somebody made mention of stress to take a child to hospital for eye care. Can we talk more on that?

FG2_Fem1: Hmm! at times eh! Maybe you have other things to do at the particular day. You go there without seeing the doctor that time. So you look around and they say, "the doctor is coming...the doctor is...and those things." Okay. It will be stress to the parents, because they have other things to do at home but not to come there and waste the whole day. And you doctors have to show sympathy on them. Some doctor's they don't have that human sympathy *(Clears her throat afterwards)*.

INT: When your child brought home the referral letter, did you take the child to the hospital?

FG2_Fem2: Yes, I took them to the hospital and they screened them. They said I should come back to the Health Tech *(Children's Eye Clinic)*. The day that they give me to go back to the hospital, I went and they tell me say there this thing -- *(Paused)* until the particular thing that they will take do them come. But up till now it never come. *(Patient was rescheduled at the clinic)*

INT: But have you gone back since that time to check?

FG2_Fem2: I went. They said I should come back.

INT: When your child was given a referral letter from school what did you do?

FG2_Male1: I took the child to Health Tech. So they carried out some test. Why I could remember they told me to come back, but I have not seen fault in him, any fault in his eye. You know things are not as we think. Like me, I'm a civil servant, I'm working somewhere and then where I'm working they really monitor us, you must be on seat whenever your boss starts looking for you. So there was no time for me again to go to the hospital with the child.

INT: So, you actually took him but when it was time for the second checkup or appointment you weren't able to make it because of time.

FG2_Male1: Yes, the main reason is that, I think if the used to open by 8.00 o'clock it would have been better. But that day I went around 7.00 o'clock I have to stay there till past 9.00. Before they even attend to my child was around past 1.00 o'clock. I even absent myself from work. So because of that first day experience I couldn't go back again.

INT: When the referral letter was given to your neighbor's children [for] whom you are standing in, do you know what was done? What did he [the neighbour's child's parent] do? Did he take the child to the hospital?

FG2_Fem3: No! I went and told the parent that they should take the child to the hospital according to the slip that was given. They then told me there's nothing wrong with their child, that I should leave that thing! So, that was what they told me. They didn't take her to the hospital.

INT: But do you know if the child had once told them that he or she had eye problem before?

FG2_Fem3: Hmm...I don't think, although the girl eye is this *after-five*, I don't know if it has been paining her o, I don't know of that one. *(After-five is a colloquial name for strabismus or squint, which is an eye condition)*

INT: But do the parents know of the condition of the eye of that child. Do they know?

FG2_Fem3: They are aware of. They knew, it is their child. They have been seeing it. They knew. But they only told me that there's nothing wrong with their child, I should leave that thing!

INT: If I may ask again, do you know if the child sees well with his or her eye since you know that the eyes are not looking straight? Do you know if the child is seeing well?

FG2_Fem3: She see very well. She has been seeing well.

FG2_Male1: Please Ma, there's something I would like to ask? Have you ever seen the child putting thread in the needle?
(*Everybody laughed*)

FG2_Fem3: Uhm! Almost everyday! (*She laughed, and every other person laughed too*).

INT: Is there anything you think we may need to add to what we've discussed so far, it could be maybe an idea that comes to you now, or an experience you had, or even your opinion on what we've been discussing, if have any?

FG2_Fem1: Hmm! Like what she has just said. I would have advised you people to contact the parents personally and talk to the child living with the parents? (*Female 3 nodded in the affirmative*). Yes, you find a day, meet them and advise their parents that this eye problem will affect the child in future. Since she can see now, she's a young, small girl, but when she grows up, it will affect her. By your advice (*Gesticulating with her hands*), the mother will stand up and find solution, go to the hospital.

FG2_Fem3: I have already said so with them. They told me I should leave that thing, that it is inheritance from her father. That if her father has ever wear glasses, the girl will wear. That that is how the father's eye is. That was why I was talking about parents with low mentality.

FG2_Male1: What I want to say is that as I earlier say: I own myself from head to toe; whatever that happens to me, I am the one that feels the pain. So, what I can add, like this my sister has just said (*Referring to Female 3*), I can see that some people are the destruction of their family. Though for some people since that does not happen to them in particular they don't feel their pain.

FG2_Male1: If somebody should understand what blindness means -- that if you are blind, a mad man may even be better off than you, because what a mad man will take and put into his mouth he can see it. But a blind man does not know what he puts into his mouth, he does not know where he's going. So even if he has a better thought about himself but he will not be able to carry it out because he can't see anything.

FG2_Male1: If this organization will be able, they should not end it [the program] in schools. They should go to the society, which is going to individual homes, just like during immunization. The people going to do immunization go to house; I think they [vision care people] should also do same thing.

FG2_Male 1: I want to also plead if our children are referred to hospitals; like me, from experience, they should always respond to us in time, and they should also know that it is not one person or two persons that will be going to that hospital that same day. If the doctors and nurses can resume work very early, even by six , parents that love their children because they have some other things to do, people that do timetable to themselves -- they know when to do this, when to do that, when to do this -- so that they can be successful in whatever they do. If nurses and doctors can resume work earlier, I think this effort will not be in vain.

INT: What can I tell from each of you that I can tell our other team members?

FG2_Fem1: Like me, what I should advise as you is about following up. I really appreciate your effort. But (Paused) there are family that are very poor that cannot afford even transport from here to Mary Slessor (*The name of the road to the Children's Eye Clinic*). I think those people must be given a helping hand so that they will use that to bring the child to the hospital. Helping hand, Yes!

FG2_Fem3: Secondly, you guys need to talk to the doctors and nurses. They should try encourage patients, because there are times you go to the hospital, nurses will just be passing you like that. You may spend a lot of time. When you just leave there, they feel they will not like to go there again due to their attitude. So, as you guys are encouraging us, also encourage doctors and nurses in their different working place [to encourage us].

FG2_Male1: There's something that I have seen now. You know, since right from the day that you people tested my child's eyes, thereafter you collected my number from the head teacher and called me. You used your time, your credit, in fact, your finances, everything, and all these things are free of charge. This is something I used to see elsewhere but not in Nigeria. I'm a Nigerian, and I'm proud of being a Nigerian because this is where God made me and put me (*Striking his chest as he said this*). I'm from here. But what is one is one; and what is zero is zero. This thing is something I used to see people talking about something that does not exist. After calling me and informing about the time [for the focus group], I came late, even when I came late, you still welcomed me. In fact, you welcomed every one of us with good manner of approach. So, it is something of surprise, I really appreciate it, I really appreciate this organization; what they have done, the training that they have given to their workers, in fact, it is such a thing that somebody may even think that cannot be found in Nigeria. But I have seen it. So I really appreciate it and I will continue to say that "May God bless you people and give you more enablement to continue."

FG2_Male1: But I still want to say this, because what I have seen from two of you, I don't know if others that are carrying out this same exercise are also doing the same thing. But I really want to say let people copy from you people. In this way, it will really help. Thank you very much.

FG3_Calabar Rural Secondary School

INT: Ok how many of you know that your child's vision was screened in school, that people came there and did vision test for your children. How many of us know?

(Participants identified by lifting of hands)

FG3_Male1: My sister they gave her a note. Which she misplaced the note, that's why she could not come to the hospital. So I don't know if there is something that you can still be done to help her, if anything can still be done.

INT: So if all of us agree, if all your children had their eyes tested, what were you told about the result of the eye test? You knew that your child's vision was tested, what were you told about the result of that test?

FG3_Fem1: Emm like my own she said she cannot see form far, She can't see from far, so when the tested her they gave her that note, so which she misplaced. That's all.

INT: But did a teacher -- did you receive any note from your child concerning the eye test?

FG3_Fem1: Yes he now told me, as I go and ask him in the house, so he bring the book and show me

INT: When you knew that your child eye was tested, did you receive any letter, any referral note from your child concerning the eye test?

FG3_Fem2: Yes.

INT: What was written on it? Did you take time to read through it?

FG3_Fem2: Yes I read it.

INT: Did the child tell you more, may be so so so people came to my school, may give you a little description?

FG3_Fem2: He don tell me

INT: You all knew your child had their eyes tested. What do we think that may means to their health – their eye health and their general health??

FG3_Fem1: well, like in my own case when you gave my mum the news because I was present there when she gave her the news. So my mum was like, she was afraid that with time she might not be seeing again. So eh! After the note my mum now said that next week that am going to take her to the hospital so all of a sudden when I ask her for the note, so my mum was worried. That is why when you called immediately she called me where I was to come.

INT: who did you ask about the note? Your mum or your sister?

FG3_Fem1: My sister.

INT: Ok, what did she say?

FG3_Fem1: She said, eh! She went to her bag, her school bag to bring out the note. She could not find it.

INT: Was it on that same day that she --

FG3_Fem1: No oh! The day we wanted going to the hospital, ye that's when we realized that the note was not there

INT: What do we think testing the vision of children may mean to their general health? If you know that ok a child's vision can be tested. What do we think that it could mean, does it have any effect on their general health or their wellbeing?

FG3_Male1: Well tested the eye of a child, eh! To find out the error or the problem, then after tested them and find out the error, the next step is to treat the problem. Whatever that is wrong, is what I feel that is all about.

INT: Sir, was your child given a referral note?

FG3_Male1: I think yes

INT: Then after that referral note, did you take -- was your child taken to the clinic?

FG3_Male1: Well ah; we have been going to the clinic, university clinic, teaching hospital before this issue

INT: So when this referral note was given you took the child to the clinic

FG3_Male1: What I'm saying is that I have been taking her before this programme

INT: He now showed you the note. So your child didn't show you the letter but yesterday after you spoke to us, when you went back home he now showed you the referral note. Madam you said that yes your child was screened in the school and was given a referral note. But I did not clarify; did your child show you the note?

FG3_Fem2: He show me

INT: So what did you do after she now showed you the note?

FG3_Fem2: I say, eh that day I no bin feeling fine to carry go hospital

INT: Mama you said your child didn't show you the letter?

FG3_Fem1: ehnn

INT: Did he tell you reasons why he had not showed you the letter?

FG3_Fem1: He said that he forgot. That he showed his father, but he did not show me. He showed my husband eh! But he did not show me.

INT: **After the vision test, after the test that was done on the child, were you told anything about the health of that, the vision health of that child? So your child's vision was tested; he or she came home with a referral letter. Did the child say anything, ok maybe mummy or daddy this is what they did, they did test in my eye; this is what they said about my vision or my eye health. Or did a teacher tell you that ok people came and tested the eye of your child, this is what they found out. Did you hear anything about that?**

FG3_Male1: Yes eh! She told me actually, but what I said was that, so far that we have been treating this matter in the Teaching hospital. Maybe if there is any other diversion or any other way; well I will accept that. So before this programme, and eh! Whatever that is, all I need is my child you know to be well treated. Eh! That is what I need. Thank you.

FG3_Fem1: In my own case, immediately she came back, she showed us they, she explained everything to us. In fact she was prepared to go for the checkup; but she misplaced the paper. So oh I don't know if there is anything that can still be done.

INT: **If your child's vision is tested in school perhaps that should be the end. Why do we think that there should be further test after you knew that ok the child's vision was tested in school? Why do we think that there should be further test again?**

FG3_Fem1: The test in the, to me the test in the school was just the start then after there you process, you proceed to the hospital. Because the equipment you have in the hospital might not be the same one they took to the school. So the test will be more effective in the hospital more than the one in school.

INT: If a child is tested and there is need for further test -- why do you think there should be need for another test?

FG3_Fem2: Whether they will see that whether the thing is still there – if the eye is still having a problem.

FG3_Fem2: Because he ie no even tell me that he has eyes problem, I don't know that he has eyes problem, that was my first time that I hear, so I don't know, what you people do to,

INT: Why do you think there should be further test? Even though a test was done in the school, why do you think further test should also be done?

FG3_Fem1: I don't know oh! (Chuckles) My voice is; I no fit talk, my voice is. (Coughs) Cough worry me.

INT: **Ok now we know that there are some parents that do not take their children to the hospital when you referee, you give a referral letter they choose not to go to the hospital. Why do you think some parents take that decision?**

FG3_Male1: Well; in a situation such a thing, actually you know, I don't see reason that somebody will see her daughter or her son or any of her children being sick without not to treat them. What I feel that is financial obligation, if somebody doesn't have money to treat someone, they next thing is that maybe he just decide not to do anything because he has no money, maybe because of that!

FG3_Male1: They situation of this county now, but to me I see no reason why my daughter will be sick, or having any problem such as eye problem, then I see that this is my own daughter, then I feel not to treat her. I will do that; but my own case is different from others. So what I feel is that due to there was no money for some parents,

FG3_Male1: If anybody has money, seeing her daughter or her son or any of her children sick, can't the person wake up and go and treat eh the child? So what I feel is that people does so because there was no money. I believe so.

INT: We are saying that money now. That's there is financial challenge.

FG3_Male1: That is what I am saying, yes financial problem ya

FG3_Fem1: To me I see like eh that its ignorance. There is ignorance [referring to not knowing the cost of different eye care services].

FG3_Fem1: The situation is whereby your child comes home and tells you what took place in school; and definitely the told that child the test there is free. Because since it is free -- everybody likes free things. Like my Mum, immediately she told her and after one week my mum was prepared to take her there – well, my mum asked me to take her there.

FG3_Fem1: [mother willing to have child go to hospital, thinking it's free] But we could not find the note again; so my mum was very angry, and she was quarreling and, so there was nothing we can do.

FG3_Fem1: So she was asking me, can we go there without that note, can we go there without that note? And me I don't know anything about this; so I said ah! Me I don't know. Because the will definitely need that note, because I know any office you go they will say do you have anything to show? So that's why we could not go back. If not we were prepared to because since we heard that it is free. Yes. My mum was very happy, immediately she heard that it was free. So

INT: Why do some families choose not to go to the hospital even if you refer a child to the hospital?

FG3_Male2: Money

FG3_Fem2: Because of no money now! Because of no money eh! That is why.

FG3_Male2: In my case, [it's because] there's no money.

FG3_Fem1: Some parents might say that all this while my child has been walking feely without any issue with his or her eye; then why will they say she has a problem? Sometimes they will ask [the child], 'Are you feeling any pain?' Since there is no pain, there's nothing to complain about. So that's why they just feel reluctant to [go for a follow-up eye exam at the hospital].

INT: are you saying that some parents may not actually know that a child has an eye problem?

FG3_Fem1: Yes, because the child is not feeling any itching inside [their eyes].

FG3_Fem1: And his view [visual acuity] is very good.

FG3_Fem1: But meanwhile, on the inside it's eating the child up gradually until it becomes obvious. That's when the parents might say, 'Oh, let's do something fast!'

INT: Let's also not forget that children don't do not express themselves very much as adults. So what we are saying is that a parent may not know that a child is having an eye problem.

FG3_Fem1: Yes

INT: So let's say a child's parent doesn't know the child has an eye problem and somebody discovers the child does have an eye problem. Apart from money, why do you think that when the parent knows the child has an eye problem yet chooses not to go [for the follow-up exam]? Any other reasons?

FG3_Fem1: Lack of exposure yes

FG3_Male1: Lack of exposure yes may cause that.

INT: Who generally takes the decision of taking a child to the hospital?

FG3_Fem1: Sometimes it's me. Sometimes the women because there are very close to their children you understand, yes the women. It is when the situation becomes worse that's when the father comes in.

FG3_Male1: Personally they're my children and when they come back from school, I look after them very well, my children. [I'll say], 'Oh, my son, have you come back from school? How is everything?' And they will tell me, how was today. [And if there were] any problems, I must surely know. My children, I have to take proper care of them. So if any of them has a problem, I must know. So I don't think that my children will be sick and I would fail to know. I believe that whenever any of my children has a problem, they must surely tell me and I must surely take responsibility.

INT: Who takes the decision of taking a child to the hospital?

FG3-Fem1: In my house it is me, because – like, my second son, we were sweeping the house. He fell down playing with his brother and he's wounded. My husband didn't say anything; it doesn't concern him. But it was serious and the blood was sick. So I took my boy to the hospital and my husband did not ask me anything.

FG3_Fem1: So even now when the children return from school, my husband doesn't have time for them. [He says] 'Any problem, go and ask your mother. Your mother knows everything about you people.' But the thing where I use to say; if to say dem be girls for me, (chuckles) but all of them be boys (laughs)

INT: Who takes the decision in the family to say ok make we carry this children go hospital? Who wan carry am?

FG3_Fem2: Is me. Me, oh! Everything is me. The times my children are sick, it's me. Anything I want to buy, even my children's school fees, it's me.

INT: **There are families that when you give them referrals, they will take their children to hospital. Why do we think that some families decide to take their children to hospital when they know that there is need for them to take their children to hospital?**

FG3_Male1: Someone you know. Why parents personally, because I know that hospital is where you go and have or find out what is wrong about the child --

INT: -- for an eye examination --

FG3_Male1: for eye problems, because at the hospital, there's a lot of equipment – different types of equipment. So when you go there [to the hospital] they must find out what's wrong with the child. So taking a child to the hospital is very very good indeed, better than to taking her to a local place. [participants clapping in agreement]

FG3_Fem1: Eh! You know some families are health conscious. Any small health challenge they will definitely go to the hospital.

INT: What your saying is, before you said ignorance, now if a family is educated, if there is high level of education they take eye health very serious

FG3-Fem1: Yes those kinds of families they are very health conscious

INT: **In the family that decides to take a child to the hospital for an eye examination, who takes that decision in that family?**

FG3_Fem2: It's my husband.

INT: **Is it your your husband that takes the child to the hospital?**

FG3_Fem2: It's me, it's me.

FG3_Fem1: To me, both parents play two roles. Sometimes the husband might not have the chance [to bring a child to the hospital]and so the wife may do that. And sometimes the wife may not have the time [so the husband does it]. It's both of them. It depends on who's free.

FG3_Fem2: The reason why I didn't go [with my child for the follow-up appointment] was because of the money. I saw the paper that my child brought back [home]; I thought that it was something that I need to pay money for. And so I said that I wouldn't be able to go.

FG3_Fem2: The second thing is that my child has never complained of [any] eye problem; he's seeing clearly. Even his father said that he does not have any problem with his eyes. But I was just telling him that we should just go and check. So, I decided on my own that I will take him myself when I have some money.

FG3_Fem2: Regarding going to the hospital, it's both sides [parents]: his father can take him, and me, too; I can take him there.

Co-INT: **Do you think it's a good thing for that child to be taken to the hospital for further treatment? Or do you think that after all the child he has not complained of eye issues before so it's not a big deal, it's not important?**

FG3_Fem2: I'd like to take the child to the hospital rather than to a chemist or pharmacy. [no reason given]

FG3_Fem1: There is a question I want to ask, eh! There is a friend of mine who has eye issues. When he uses his phone, the letters there are very tiny and he cannot see very well. He went for a test and he spent money to get glasses. So, I don't know if the organization has any particular programme for the adults.

INT: Ok like I said before, it's a child eye health project and we are talking about children.

FG3_Male1: Personally, you know when you're having treatment -- maybe you're given a particular spec -- eyeglass. Is there anything we should eat, maybe a particular fruit that a person should eat? I'm asking if there is any particular food or fruit the person will continue eating in order to help the drugs to work?

INT: Yes, there are fruits that you can eat to keep the eye healthy. But an eye problem that demands the wear of spectacles, you will wear spectacles to correct it while also taking other fruits. that's why we are saying, that's why we are stressing [that] if you're given a referral note to go to the hospital maybe to get spectacles, it's because spectacles at that moment is what is needed to correct that eye problem. But that doesn't mean you wouldn't eat fruit, you will still be eating fruits but, spectacles are --

FG3_Participant: -- or drugs --

FG3_Fem2: Giggles. That eyeglasses, I don't understand --

Co-INT: Ok, you don't understand why people wear them?

FG3_Fem2: Yes.

INT: [long explanation about refractive error and how eyeglasses, for people who need them, will bend the light as it enters the eye to touch the retina properly and lets the person see better; people who have this problem can be young children; so if someone needs glasses, try to make them wear them because without the glasses, they can't see very well; the glasses help correct the problem]

FG3_Fem2: So you can wear them all the time?

Co-INT: Yes

FG3_Fem2: Even in the night? [her question wasn't answered]

FG3_Fem1: My question is this. Now that I know that you people know that he [my son] has an eye problem, what are we going to do? Go to the hospital? I thought you people would give him glasses. [referral note was lost so did not go to hospital]

Co-INT: whispers to her that another referral note will be given

FG3_Male1: What I want to ask is this: after using the glasses -- spectacles, is there anything -- maybe when he's watching television or whatever -- that somebody can say, 'Oh, stop doing this so this thing will not come back again.' Or something like that. Maybe you are using this thing as a treatment. You will forbid this thing; you are not going to take part of this thing or something like that. So that is what I wanted to know.

INT: If a pair of spectacles is given to a child, the child is supposed to wear them. He can wear them to do anything; watch TV or read. Sometimes parents know when a child has an eye problem, [like] when they're watching TV with the family and the child goes close [to the screen] to see I so they know. But when a child wears glasses, he or she sees very well, and she can do anything! So long as the child is not doing anything that will harm the eyes or that will make the glasses break while he's wearing them -- If he sees very well, he can do anything when his wearing his glasses.

Co-INT: I think if I can break in. I think what he was trying to ask you, doctor, is if you could educate him about any habits that may be harmful for a child that's wearing glasses. Let's say his child is wearing glasses. Are there habits that you can tell him about -- like, tell his child not to watch TV. I think that's what he's asking you; what are the harmful things? You know, there are so many myths, like if a child sits near the TV [to watch it], it spoils the eyes. Are they any harmful or forbidden habits that a child who is wearing spectacles should not participate in?

INT: [long answer about being in a world with technology; everyone uses a cellphone, which can affect the eyes if used for a long time and you're looking there constantly; puts a strain on the eyes which, like the body, can become tired; so you can reduce amount of time children use a cellphone to about 1 hour, and when they do it should be in a room with bright light; even adults using computer should look up to relax the eyes; do everything in moderation]

FG3_Fem1: Does smoking affect the eye?

INT: Yes. Now, in the eye, just like in the body, there are things you call radicals, which are byproducts that attack the cells in the body and make them not function well. There may be a time when they [a doctor] will give you what we call antioxidants. A natural source is from fruits and vegetables. What do they do? They help reduce these things from your eyes. But smoking makes the amount of those radicals you have in your body increase. And [there are] so many things can come out of smoke that people can become blind because they're smoking. Smoking does not go well with vision, with overall body [health].

FG3_Fem2: I want to know, if you come close to the television (*speaking vernacular*) can it be a problem, [like if] a little child goes very close to the TV, can it affect the eye? Or can lighting a cooking fire affect a child's eyes?

Co-INT: [to the interviewer] She is asking, if a child is using too much firewood can it affect the eyes? And if a child is watching --going too close to the television, can it affect a child's eyes?

INT: If a child is close to the television, first of all find out if that child can see the TV very well. If he can, then advise the child to sit further back. But if the child can't see well -- if he gets close to the TV he sees better, then that child should be taken to the hospital for examination.

FG3_Fem2: What about the fire, firewood?

Co-INT: (*speaking vernacular*) Then fire; (*speaking vernacular*) constant smoke from firewood, does it affect the child?

INT: You know, we can't just tell people not to cook! Even if you put out the fire you shouldn't get too close because it's hot. Ok. You know I had said in our society, you wouldn't say, 'Don't cook'. But if you even if you put out the fire, you still shouldn't

stay too close because it's hot. So if you take something off the fire, stay away. If you need to go back [to cook], you go back. In that way there won't be too much smoke

Co-INT: (*Speaking vernacular*) What Doctor said is in this setting, in our society, we use frewood. But when it's time to put out the fire – to shatter it – you know it'll be very hot. So it's not good for a child to stay close to that smoke for a long time

FG3_Male2: What about for grownups and firewood. Like women who stir the *fofo* ' [corn mush]; how are they going to do it? They always do it over a wood fire.

INT: That's what we call an occupational hazard. (*Speaking pigin English*) Anything what you do, dey involve a small hazard or risk but you can manage them. You need to manage them very well. You can cook *fofo* ' but don't stay close to the fire.

INT: **Do you have any message that you want us to give to our organization? Maybe concerning child eye health, or concerning this discussion we have just had. Do we have any message to give to our organization?**

FG3_Fem1: Yes. The message I have is eh! first of all, I want to thank the organization because it's not an easy task; to do anything free. Ehn!

FG3_Fem1: And another thing I should plead that they should extend the hand to the older ones. Yes because the young ones, the older ones have more problems sef because right from their youthful age till date they have been having such. Like my mum sometimes she will, if she wants to watch television she likes seating very close. The same thing with my sister; if she wants to watch television you will see her she will go very close to the television and be stressing her eyes like this. So I just want the organization to do something about the older ones since they have tried for the younger ones. They should also extend their hands to the older ones. Thank you.

FG3_Male1: God bless you Em! I want to thank the organization because as if that they knew that the county is eh! in fact is too bad. So what they are doing is very very good indeed. I thank them very well, in Jesus Name Amen.

FG3_Fem1: Doctor, I say thank you very much. May God bless you in Jesus Name Amen. (*Chuckles*)

FG3_Fem2: Doctor, Thank you very much. God bless you people in Jesus Name Amen

FG4 Calabar Urban Primary School (24 Sep19, 1hr); n=4 (1M, 3F); PCN Primary School Ikot Ishie

INT: How many of you know that your children or your child was examined in school? That's there was school eye screening in the school, in their school?

FG4_Male1: Actually, (*raising up his hand*) in my own case I was in the school. That particular school is where I teach, where madam came (*pointing at one of the co-facilitators, a nurse*) and examined the children, and my child was given drugs to use for some days. But (*shaking his head in disagreement*) I was not given any paper from the Head teacher to further his treatment, if at all there was any other treatment. I thought the drugs Madam gave to him was the only drug (*raising his index finger up*) to correct the issue. *Coughed after speaking.*

FG4_Fem1: Yes, my son was screened at St Jude Anglican School, and he brought back a slip for referral. But (*tightens her lips, and looks away*) I didn't (*rubs her hands on her knees*) I didn't take it serious (raised her voice here and looked at the facilitator). I just...I felt. He didn't He hasn't complained of any eye defect or something. So... I'm my....my work didn't permit me to....didn't give me free time to take him there (*gesticulating with her right hand*). And I was also considering the fact that I have to go and make ...I have to go and pay some monies and all that (*waves her hand*), which I was noti wasn't disposed at the time.

INT: So all of your children had their eyes tested in the school.

FG4: All: (*All agreed*). Okay.

INT: But what were you told about the result of the eye test, when the child brought the referral letter?

FG4_Fem1: Ahhh (*Raising her finger up*) I can't re... remember, but I think, hee since it was a referral they may have seen something ...wrong.

FG4_Fem2: My own child was given the... this thing today (*gesticulates with her hand and rubs her fingers together*). So I had to took him there at health center and after the all the testes they gave him lenses, which he used for about for six months, before it expired. Since when it expired I have not been able to take him back to the there.

Ic: what effect it may have on the wellbeing of your child, if your child tested in the school and was identified to have any eye problem, what do we think that could have on the health of the child, or the wellbeing of that child?

FG4_Male1: Actually. we the parents, I myself in particular(*beating his chest and gesticulating*), if I have known that the drugs that was given to the child was for the child to further the treatment I would have taken him for treatment. But I felt that the drugs was just the only drug (*pointing his finger up*) to correct that measure at that particular time. That is why I couldn't move further. And actually, I was not given a piece of paper from the Head teacher. If I was given a sheet of paper or a piece, at least I would have looked at the piece of paper and then follow up.

INT: Your child didn't bring a piece of paper?

FG4_Male1: No. (*Shakes his head*). I was there in the school (*pointing his finger*) when Madam came and examined their eyes but I was not give if it is the paper was given to the head teacher which she did not give to me. The head teacher is a female. But drugs were given to me to give to the child. I gave. i used the drugs on the child until the drugs finished.

FG4_Fem1: if the child was tested and an eye defect was seen and it was not followed up like my case I didn't follow up, well, I will say it was an act of negligence on my part. And It would have affected him negatively, because it may have gone beyond the stage of managing it and all that. But if it was treated and handled properly, he would live healthier.. Thank you (*in low voice*).

INT: After your child's vision has been tested at school, what were you told about your child's vision, your child's eye health?

FG4_Fem2: As for me, it was my husband that went there to pick, so that day he came with the eye drop and he saw that note which you get to her, but he didn't give the approval of her when to get the glasses. So since we have done anything apart from the eye drops that you gave to her.... We have done anything.

INT: Why do you think further was recommended even though the child was tested in school? Why do think the child was given a letter to go for further even though the child was tested in school?

FG4_Fem3: So that he will have proper treatment.

FG4_Male1: The child needed further treatment so that the child vision will not become worse in future.

INT: You know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination may choose not to go, what do think are the reasons why some families make that decision? (They all laughed).

FG4_Fem1: Well, my case like I said in my case I didn't follow up. my child was given that referral, but I didn't follow up. Like I earlier mentioned that i have the time in my office, and I personally felt there was nothing wrong with his eyes because he has never complained to me about his eyes having problem. And then I said, I was concerned about going there and they are asking me I must buy, I must pay for the drugs, I have to pay for the glasses, and all that.

FG4_Fem2: though, yes we didn't follow up because unlike me, it's only my husband that is always at home with them. I go out in the morning come back late maybe six-seven. But though my first son has this eye issue and my husband is also have the same thing, but we have a family doctor at the...eee that eh Health Tech Clinic. He was like feeling like (*she hissed*) when he's ready he will her.... to the womanto treat (*her voice receded*).

FG4_Male1: In fact, I want to add that some parents would not want to take correction when it has not gotten to the worse part of it. If a child is not is sick, and then maybe that child is diagnosed that he has a problem like this in future if that problem is not corrected....in future the child will develop this...some parents will be careless about it because....because that problem has not come. Some parents may wait until the problem becomes worse before they begin the treatment. Like madam was saying (*He pointed to a participant*) that she looked at the child and feel that the child was not having any problem. (*Showing emotions, opening his eyes wide, and gesticulating*) So if some is not having problem you cannot just say let me take this child to the hospital when you know that the child has not complained.....it is when.....madam you saw somebody came and complain to you ehee that....and you saw the eye, the eye was red....ehe that is the situation with parents too, when it gets to that level then they can now say okay will say let me carry my child ...to where they will treat.

INT: Who in the family makes the decision of taking a child to the hospital?

FG4_Fem2: In my family it's my husband. I don't have the time of taking the child to the clinic.

FG4_Fem1: In my own case I'm the one.

FG4_Fem3: I am the one.

FG4_Male1: I take my children to the hospital (*pointing at himself*). Except in a situation where it becomes worse that their mother can back them or can carry or can back them and we follow. But if it is situation like this, I pick my child to the hospital myself.

INT: Why do we think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination? We discussed before that some choose not to go, but why do we think some families choose to take their children to the hospital for eye examination?

FG4_Male1: We, (*placing his hand on his chest*) anything that has to do with the sight I don't joke with it. But I was not given instruction to carry that child. When you called concerning this issue, I became bordered, and even up till now, I am bordered, because that is the will of a human being. If you allow your child in that condition and tomorrow it get worse you blame yourself. I cannot leave this for my wife. So some it's as a result of negligence but some don't joke with their children's health.

FG4_Fem1: Yes maybe, when that family has a history of that sickness, illness, what disease, they tend to be serious about when issues like come up to follow it up because they know already that they have a history in the family that they have a history of that in their family. So they wouldn't joke about it and they follow it up.

FG4_Fem3: As for me, whether having it in the family or not, as a caring parent, mother or father, when you see anything like that in your child's health, you have to be serious about it. You can't be waiting for the father, the father may not have chance to care about it. But you as a mother, that know what is (*with much gesticulation*) in the stress you passed through before having that child, you may not want anything to happen to child. So you will take it upon you to be serious about it.

FG4_Fem2: Let me say something. when you talk about responsibility, the responsibility is both for the man and the woman. So that when you see that your child is not feeling fine, because sometimes if the mother is very occupied, maybe the father knows that the mother is occupied and will not have the chance, like my husband he's always there. But sometimes I will be the one to know.

FG4_Fem2: But when this thing happened to my son, I came back home early, as we were watching television the way my son was blinking his eyes -- which my husband [knew because he] is always at home with them -- I see him blinking his eyes, and I was like, "Ah-ah, what happened?" He said, "Mummy I don't know. This is what has been happening to me these days. , I blink my eyes like that even in the church my friends will be calling me 'blink blink.'" I said, "Jesus! And your daddy is always at home?" [Implying the father had not been careful with the child] So I now had to call my husband, "Look! See what is happening to this boy? This boy is always

blinking his eye continuously like this, and you are not aware?" He [referring to the husband] was like, "Aww, Jesus! I am not aware. You know your mother will be going." I said, "No problem, I will take him to the hospital." It's our responsibilities. If the man is occupied, the woman is there. You're supposed to take the child to the hospital. So, the responsibility is for both the man and the woman.

FG4_Fem1: What if, in the event of a single parent? I mean based on the question. it will be on the shoulders of the parent that is available. So if there are no both parents there.

FG4_Male1: To me I want to add that it is the female parent that can easily detect that a baby of two, three (years) is sick. If (*small pause*) the mother discovers and now tells the father, this is what I have discovered from this our child, then the decision now would be on the father now to take the child to the hospital. (*Small pause*) Yes.

INT: Is there anything else you'd like to add to what we've discussed today?

FG4_Fem1: There is a concern. I wish to know or find if it is only the schools that were captured by your team for the screening that the children that were referred would be attended to or would have access to the eyecare (*she lowered her voice*).

INT: Do you think there is anything to add to this discussion that you think is very important?

FG4_Fem2: Yes, yes, I think there should be a follow up. Because one, times are hard. If you have made a referral, if the team have made a referral, they should have access to the parents, or the parents number, the ward's parent's number and they could always assist or support because there may be no resources, no funds to take the children from one point, so as to get to where they have referred the child to. So maybe if there is a follow up or support, there won't be laxity on the part of a parent (who may be) thinking of going for the referral even though it is the responsibility of a parent to be concerned about his or her child's health eyecare. So I think that's what I have to add. I really encourage parents who have been referred to go for further check-up.

FG4_Male1: I knew that it's an encouragement. What I have to say is that you people allowed the encouragement to last for long before you started calling us. If you had followed us up with this information immediately between two, three weeks or a month, I don't think we would have sat here today. I think everybody would have taken his or her child to where the child will be corrected. I think that's what I have to add.

FG4_Fem1: Well, from the experience or from all that we have said, I think if this kind of screening is going on schools, why not come well prepared, why the referrals again, if it is to give glasses at that very instance, you give glasses. If it is drugs, you give drugs, and then maybe the referral should be after those things have been used for a particular time maybe for six months. So I feel when screenings are done, carried out in schools, it should be holistic, they should be ready to attend to the immediate concern of whatever that has been or detected.

FG4_Male1: She has spoken my mind.

INT: We have other team members too that are involved in this discussion we are doing. Now this is our own group, we would like to take some message from you to them concerning what are discussing. Do you have anything individually that you would like to tell us so that we can share with them?

FG4_Male1: Well, (*Then keeps quiet again*)

FG4_Fem2: What I will say is, I want to say that we are so happy that through this especially I whom actually does not even the time, I have not been serious about taking my daughter to the hospital to find out what really is her problem. But by this seminar and presentation you've made us to take this so serious and we want thank you. We really appreciate, and this will make us stand and then take it serious upon ourselves that we'll take this children to the hospital to find out what really is their problem, because even when the sent the letters, honestly my husband did not take it serious and said, "*what is wrong with her, she is not of eye problem or what,*" but with this presentation at least this will make us take that case serious and if you still have the form now we would love it so that we can go to the hospital to know what is wrong with her.

FG4_Male1: Well, I appreciate the organization for what they have done. After all it wouldn't have bordered you since these children are not your children, but you still have the mind after the referral, to call us in persons to come and sit down and then you discussed the issues with us. In fact, we are very very happy and we have appreciated what you have done (*Using his hand to touch his chest and shaking his head*). We want you to give us the necessary guardian forward so as to get those children treated. Thank you very much.

FG4_Fem1: I also want to add to that, i am grateful that I was called out. I did not feel at initial time, to leave office. I did not see the need but because of the consistent phone call by the facilitator encouraged me to come, because I kept wondering 'how did he get my number, how serious is this issue that he kept calling me to come out ' and I was actually, I was feeling very guilty that I didn't follow up that referral there. So with this kind of call and this discussion, it has helped me, maybe in future not to take any referral lightly, that

any other time my child is given anything, any referral from school I will follow it up, and that, since I didn't follow up that other one, I don't know if there is an opportunity to still take him there.

FG4_Fem3: Okay. My own is just to thank you people for the opportunity that's been given to me.

FG4_Fem1: I think it may also be a case of lack of information, enlightenment, and follow up. You know, a parent may not be informed on how serious the issue of that child is. Like I said in my case, I was only observing with my own eyes how the child is not having anything, any problem. So if I was enlightened enough to see the need to take him without referral, I think I would have known that. So there is always a need to (*small pause*) like 'Oga' here has said (*pointing at the male participant*), there is always a need to follow up early enough.

FG4_Male1: I would want to add to what she has said. You know, in spite of the fact that we are living in town, we still have a lot of illiteracy in town. That is, if that particular thing is not from the government, and then nothing is attached to it to let them know that it is something important and government is attached to it, a lot of people are afraid. Because there was a time they said people came to immunize children in some private school, about three or four children died as a result of that exercise. So anything that has to do with non-governmental organization, if proper arrangement is not made, some people are afraid. Some people believe that it is only government officials that are supposed to go to school for immunization or for eye treatment or for any thing that has to do with children's health. So, that too can make some parents feel deterred and say, '*Aaah!, it's not government issue. I won't take my child so that they will go and spoil my child's eye.*' So that is one of the reasons (*His voice receded*).

INT: Are you saying fear is also one of the reasons parents fail to (*He came in again*)

FG4_Male1: Yeah, fear! Yeah! Yeah!!

FG4_Fem3: Okay. For me, because some people don't understand it well, they may think it's something they have to pay money for. Because I have heard someone complain about it that, '*This their calling, they may call like that and say free, and on reaching there they will ask you for an amount of money which you may not be able to afford.*' Someone was trying to discourage me, so I said, 'No, let me go and see first before I know if it's something of money or not.' And on reaching there I discovered that it was not something of money, everything was free. The only thing I bought was card at the cost of Three hundred Naira. So for me, it's like some people just have that fear of money, maybe they don't have the money to go and pay. That's one of the things.

INT: Are there any other reasons that you can think of for parents not taking their child to the hospital for a follow-up eye exam?

FG4_Male1: You cannot know another person's feeling. Those of us who are here, we have explained our feeling towards your direction. Now we have given few things that we suggest parents might be afraid of. So, maybe some parents, as I have already said, I don't need to repeat it, would feel they will go and worsen the situation of their children. Even when I was called my wife was asking me which of the government agencies that was calling me. "From where? Is it from Ministry of health?" I told her, "No, it's from an NGO." Especially female folks; they trigger their minds to government things, and then if it is not government thing they will begin to entertain fears. I think that is one of the justifications I have made.

FG4_Fem2: It's basically the same reasons that we have already given that cut across other parents' mind.

FG5__Ikom Rural Secondary School

INT: How many of you know that your child's school offers free vision screening or an eye test for your children?

FG5_All: Both the participants were aware

INT: So all of your children had their vision or how well they get tested. What were you told about the results of that eye test?

FG5_Male: Yes

What were you told about the results of that eye test?

FG5_Male: I was asked to take her to children eye clinic.

FG5_Fem: He came with a form that I should take him to the children clinic.

FG5_Fem: so I was thinking may the children Clinic are organizing maybe eye checkup

FG5_Fem: I didn't even know the eye center there, so we were just delaying putting date putting date till school resumed

FG5_Fem: I was surprised he came one other day those people still came to school and said he eye has problem

FG5_Fem: and I said okay if that is the case I will go to that children clinic but I have not gone.

INT: Did the teacher tell you or did you receive a note from your child about the test results?

FG5_Fem: I was called by the doctor;

FG5_Male: the follow-up call was from the doctor.

INT: What do you think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now? What about in the future?

FG5_Male: Eh a lot a lot because if you don't see many thing wrong and the it is very frightening to have problem with the eye because is like entire vehicle engine not being in order though the mind is there, but you need the eye to go here or direct, here or there, so a lot is wrong if your eyes are not in order.

FG5_Male: Because she will not see well if the teacher is writing on the board,

FG5_Male: she herself may not see well if she is copying her note

FG5_Male: or writing she will write out of the line and all of that,

FG5_Male: I have found time to come to school to request to the teacher because she complain she could not see from a point,

FG5_Male: so I had to request that her position be changed, that has happened.

FG5_Fem: Well in my case hmm! I think it is very relevant because it is beginning to make his eye case to bother me, I have not been taking it serious

FG5_Fem: I only try to ask question because of the way see him doing things at home,

FG5_Fem: I say in the school what is happening do you see, I said in the class do you see the board,, are you seeing well?

FG5_Fem: I ask questions like that, "he is still a child" so when this eye test came and he told me they said he has eye problem "ah! I became bothered, that it to say it is serious issues that need to be taken serious.

FG5_Male: when I talked about eh! the eye means a lot to her health and her person

FG5_Male: it's difficult to find a blind woman married, although by the grace God they are fashioning their own way of survival but is not as easy,

FG5_Male: so talking about the future, I don't expect [anything]. I pray that god and your organization step in to help us out.

FG5_Male: Apart from marriage what can a blind person do for themselves?

FG5_Fem: well hmm! What will a man without the eye do? he will be affected emotionally, psychologically and physically he will be affected

FG5_Fem: I do not pray that the case should go bad beyond what it is now.

INT: After your child had his/her vision tested at school, what were you told you should do about your child's eye health?

FG5_All: ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD INDICATE THEIR CHILD WAS REFERRED FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AT THE NEARBY HOSPITAL-BASED EYE CLINIC.

FG5_Male: for me ehm after the test here were asked to go to the clinic by which time I didn't have time to go

FG5_Fem: I was referred to the children clinic.

INT: Why do you think further testing was recommended for your child's eyes?

FG5_Male: Perhaps because of ehh you know after a test a lot of discoveries will be made by those who are expert.

FG5_Male: I am not an expert, if you say your eyes are disturbing you I will begin to look for a solution

FG5_Male: so if your organization found time to come around for this purpose and they discover that there is a problem with a particular child what they will do like you have done is that they will insist on trying to see that they help out the situation and

FG5_Male: that is why they insisted after the test that look this child must be brought to this point for this purpose perhaps because of the situation of what they have found.

FG5_Fem: Referring the child to the clinic makes me understand that case needs to be Properly taking care of

FG5_Fem: and that person who referred me to that hospital have made pre arrangement or can take of the situation that is why we were referred there.

INT: We know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination at the eye clinic choose not to do so. What do you think are the main reasons some families make that choice?

FG5_Male: Ehhh simply put, a lot of our people are poor and poverty affect reasoning, yes because you run around what the look at is what to eat.

FG5_Male: They remember that other problems that will make the family sorrowful later are pending; some claim they don't have time.

FG5_Male: Naturally I had something doing [I was busy]. Most parents are too busy to a fault.

FG5_Male: Some will not have understood what they were asked to do so,

FG5_Male: that was why earlier said that poverty is a problem

FG5_Male: Our society needs a lot of education.

FG5_Fem: I should say if a parent should refuse to take the child case for further treatment in this kind of situation it should be out of carelessness,

FG5_Fem: in my own case why I did was not chance I only fix time I say during holiday we will go there

FG5_Fem: I went there once to that children I didn't actually know that there now have eye center there,

FG5_Fem: so when I went there that was on a Saturday the place was locked up so

FG5_Fem: I told my boy don't worry we will go so that is how I was postponing until he came back and told me those people Came and said I have eye problem and

FG5_Fem: I said oh they said so, and you see the eye is sensitive part, is not every parent that you will talk about their children eye and they will just rush,

FG5_Fem: they need to be sure that this people can take care of this situation

FG5_Fem: they need to be aware because we have seeing situation where people go for treatment and have other cases so nobody will just push the child and say go especially when it is the eye, they need to be sure.

FG5_Fem: Like me why I held on I didn't want to send him there I would have put him on the bike but I said hold on I will go myself when I get there and see what is happening and am sure I will know what to do I will take the next step.

FG5_Fem: Actually Some of those children may actually not inform their parents, they may those that do not inform their parent, they are children,

FG5_Fem: if not that am somebody that is focus I look at their books I may not even have seen that form, Not to talk f what happened. I wouldn't have known.

FG5_Male: Ehh if you do a test in that case, some children live they suffer a lot, their interest is for the children to assist them not them assisting the children.

FG5_Male: So ehh, if you even spy into most homes you would like to become jesus christ so you can safe them out of what they pass through Because they don't even eat well they want to take,

FG5_Male: no time for themselves let alone given them medical care,

FG5_Male: they don't care, they want to benefit they give out they don't give back to those children.

FG5_Male: In some cases the parents are very bad.

FG5_Fem: in cases like being a guardian who maybe is not really interested in the child health situation

FG5_Fem: you bring out this kind of thing say I should go to ehheh I may think that money may be require I will not want to go there so that I may not be involve in the financial cost.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG5_Male: decisions about children it should come from both parents, if the superior argument comes from madam, why not, I may not know it all.

FG5_Male: My wife is a teacher, this particular Emmanuella, was not doing well in holy family nursery and primary secondary school and then somehow while discussing with her colleague in the school she came said there is a school called that one along Boarder road, and then she was moved to that school she got to that environment which was not as fine as the one she was gone to leave, she herself said she liked the place and then she started taking first, till she got to secondary school and I now bring her to foresight, so my wife influence my decision in that aspect. When we sit down we look at which school is good enough for them to go to, we agree and once we agreed we take the child there, yeah!

FG5_Male: About health if we are the house together and there is any health challenge we fix it, I pay if am not strong enough at the moment and she is strong, she pays, so it is a joint thing.

FG5_Fem: In a family well decision like this, it does not involve just one person, it does not take only one person, in decision like this you put your heads together, it may not be only the father and the mother,

FG5_Fem: it may involve other members of the family give their advice say what they feel about the situation at the end of it you take the right thing

FG5_Fem: I don't think this has to do with just one person, a child is for everybody in the family so it should not be a case for the father, if the father is not there, or the mother not there the leave the case there like that, no!

FG5_Fem: Other members of the family supposed to be involve in taking decision concerning somebody's life

INT: Why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination?

FG5_Male: if a child complains, like you said we should be specific it should be eye that ehh dad my eyes are not good, or I can't see well or my eye is paining me

FG5_Male: the best thing to do to be able to know what to do is to take the child for a test so that we will know if as she came to school something happened, she fell and hit her eye or she fought or that nothing is wrong, something entered the eye or that she actually has eye problem from the beginning and what would be done to correct them. The only way, the best thing to do is to take child for a test. That is what will determine what is wrong with the child and then from there you will now know where and where to go to and then working the person who may have done the test.

FG5_Fem: In my case the child has not been complaining, but I have been noticing things, the way he looks at things, the way he reads and I will be questioning him to find out if he has eye problem, to ask him if he seats in front of the class I ask him a lot of questions.

FG5_Fem: I have been planning within me that with time I will actually take him for test on my own before now.

FG5_Fem: Though I have just been postponing thinking that if I go there it might be financially high

FG5_Fem: I will plan and arrange myself so that when I am buoyant enough I will go.

FG5_Fem: Only for this test to come and it is bring out the result that he actually has a problem not that he has even complained on his own

FG5_Fem: but when I ask him he will say no, he is okay he can read mummy, look at him looking at..." Assurance what is your problem, can read well she will say yes mummy, in the class do you see the board? She will say yes mummy but I know she has a problem which needs to be taken care of.

FG5_Male: Well normally it is good to take a child for general check- up ones in a while,

FG5_Male: children may not know themselves well enough the best thing to do is to have a doctor,

FG5_Male: if you cannot afford to go to a particular clinic or hospital, you take your children to find out their health status once in a while so that nothing will take you unaware

FG5_Fem: like he said I think it is necessary to take you children for check -up.

FG5_Fem: To be sure, as I am now am having eye problem to prevent the future of my child eyes having the same sight effect

FG5_Fem: I have no other option to make sure everything is okay.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG5_Fem: Mothers are always with the children, day in day out, they give them food, they bath them they check on them,

FG5_Fem: fathers may be too busy, too busy to even be around the children and in most homes you find out that,

FG5_Fem: even if the child has a problem the first inform the mother, it is the mothers who will now take the situation to the father, that this what is happening, that what we should do, or what do you want us to do? It all mostly bounced back to the mothers.

FG5_Male: The say the world is the woman's world, yeah! That is how it is, they have more time with the children. That is the truth so most times. So we hear from them [the mothers] rather than the children. They tell you, "Oh, our child is this, and our other child is that." Then you call the child and ask the child yourself. He is likely to be shy but will open up.

FG5_Male: Whatever the case is, you have gotten the first-hand report from your wife. So the next question is, "What will we do?" That is where we discuss together and then there will be a solution.

FG5_Male: Generally as a man I take decision

FG5_Male: but again like I said as it concerns health, if you take a decision alone most time and anything happens otherwise it is possible that other partner will said, but I said we should apply the other way, if we all agree it is better, in any case, if there is any doubt I take the decision and I insist that this....

FG5_Male: You can come with an idea and if it is not good enough I say no this is how it is going to be and we will go that way.

FG5_Fem: in my case for my boy I am s single mother, the father is very far. Am in-charge and I take decision concerning everything, health wise, everything. So I take the decision on what happens and what is to be done.

INT: What key message would each of you have to share?

FG5_Male: Educate the people on eye health care through partnership between government and NGO.

FG5_Fem: Public and parent in general should be sensitive to the eye health of their children and their wards.

FG6 Ikom urban Secondary (26 Sep, 2019, est. 1hr); n=5 (3M, 2F)

INT: How many of you know that your child's school offered free vision screening or eye test for your children?

FG6: Four people said they were aware, and one was not aware (Female 1)

INT: So all of your children had their vision or how well they see tested. What were you told about the results of that eye test?.

FG6_MALE1: I think we only saw the test result, we were not told anything, we went through it and then ehh, overleaf was a referral and charge to go to the primary health care center for further assessment and perhaps treatment.

FG6_MALE2: the same to me also I saw the report and the result which I never is not in my place, I never saw the doctor, but I saw a phone number that any time I am ready I should communicate and take my child out but I didn't communicate because I loss the phone number.

FG6_FEM1: Me, I wasn't aware, it is when the doctor called me on phone and said Blessing, so I had to call her and say what is the problem. she had to tell me that they did an eye check-up, and she gave the paper to my husband so the father put the paper inside the bible, Because he is a busy man, he will not have time for this things. I am the only person that if I was aware, I would have taken the child there because I am a health personnel know what is involved.

FG6_FEM2: yeah she came with a latter that ehh that this is the result that they gave her, so when I went through I I saw it was just a referral letter to go for eye check-up at children's clinic, that was it but I didn't go.

FG6_MALE3: My son came with a referral letter to me showed me that they said that I should take him to children clinic for eye check-up, though he kept disturbing me and I told him I don't have time because if I leave home in the morning I won't leave the office till evening, so I told him we will go but I didn't go, unfortunately when I came I met the doctor here and I now said follow them because the reason why is I have been taking the various hospitals teaching hospitals, while I was Bayelsa State . I gave birth to them when I was in Bayelsa State, I discovered that when he was still tender I took him to PH (Port Harcourt) where they use machines to test his eyes because any time he sits to watch any programme water start to flow from his eyes, so I wasn't comfortable with that. I started taking him to hospitals, teaching hospitals even before his age, even when I got to Ikom here I have made efforts, I took him to holy family to ask, then when Ayade's wife (Governor's wife) came to Ikom I took him there and they gave eye drops then I was thinking of taking him to ogoja because someone told me about one hospital in Ogoja I wanted to take him there but I couldn't go because of time, because I don't play with his eyes.

INT: What do you think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now?

FG6_MALE1: Well I see it as just as you introduced in a partnership between the Queen's university with the govt of Nigeria I see it as a joint partnership of this very important stakeholders in the interest of our children so that they can assist in arresting issue of eyesight early enough so that as they grow old they will not come down with this challenges of seeing in the later part of their lives that is how I see it.

FG6_MALE2: I see it as a good thing to my child as effort for our children.

FG6_FEM1: it is very very important, because without eye you are just useless in life you can see except god will help you, so the problem is very very necessary and important, because as parent we are very careless we don't carry our children for check-up, it is to remind us that we should take our children very well.

FG6_FEM2: I see the exercise as being very important to the children and I thank God that whoever has this vision to start up something like this I thank God for the person I am even praying that this vision should have affected adult like us instead of children. It is very important to the future of the children; God will continue to reward whoever brought about this vision. I thank you.

FG6_MALE3: I don't have much to say, they have said much. I think that there is a saying that 'catch them young' so in the time past there was nothing like this. people don't take care of their eyes with the kind of processed food we eat now (that can) affect our children, unlike before that we eat leaves within those days our parents live more than hundred years and they were still seeing clear, their vision was still very active. this programme I think, since we are catching them young, is better to start them from early age before they get to adulthood. they will now start to take of their eyes.

INT: What about in the future?

FG6_MALE2: Their future will be bright. It means that this excise is aimed at making the children future bright. which is helping them not to have any problem of sight in future, especially as it is done in schools so that as they grow up to higher school, they will not have the problems, they will not encounter any problems with their sight, they will read well in future.

FG6_MALE1: More so they will be able to cope with this challenges that this early stage, perhaps even through the university level, but by the time the begin to age because the vision is not there it will even affect their productivity, they may not be able to be productive as should have been and by this time we who today are parent, will be aging and will be expecting returns to investment in terms of the care we have given to these children, when we get to that point they may not be able to take responsibility for us because they will be clouded with health challenge especially that they cannot see, so it is very important, it is necessary that we bridge this gap early enough in the interest of the children future as well as ourselves when we eventually grow old.

FG6_Male1: I think that the spectacles are very important in fact treatment generally is very important, for me I don't know too much about the use of spectacles, I see a number of children with those spectacles I ask if there is improvement some still tell me they go down with those challenges, so I don't know much about, it but I think that early trtm of early diagnosis like you have done is very important, early trtm measures to ensure that ehmm the situation does not progress to the point where the child can no longer see or the vision is so blurred they cannot see clearly is very important that is why I give a thump up to this project.

INT: After your child had their vision tested at school, what were you told you should do about your child's eye health?

FG6_MALE1: As I said earlier, I got the referral, beyond the referral we were not told anything, ehmm it was stated in that referral that perhaps the goes to the facility further examination also will be done and maybe spectacles given to the child, that is basically what that information I had concerning that.

FG6_MALE2: The information I got from child, from the paper is to call the doctor and to discuss some issue and take the child to where the doctor will take care of her of her eyes but before then I have been taking my child to other doctors because of the eyes, is only like I said I missed the contact to reach the doctor I could have been there.

FG6_FEM1: Me am not aware na, so I don't know what to say.

FG6_FEM2: It was after the referral letter, that I knew , I don't know all the while that she has any problem, so it was after that day that I knew.

MALE 3: Like I said earlier that he brought a sheet referral he gave it to me and I asked if I they tell him to take him to the center there and that eye test is free, that I should just go there and test him and see I now asked him what if they give you eye glasses, he said he does not need eye glasses ...he said he don't know let us just go there, before I now told him that the next day early in the morning, he said let's go, I said I am going to the office I don't have time now...so my....take him there.

INT: Why do you think further testing was recommended for your child's eyes?

FG6_MALE3: I think because if has no problem with his eye they won't refer him to the hospital for further check-up

FG6_FEM2: I know that when you diagnosed the eye you discovered that there was a problem so that was why you referred her

FG6_FEM1: In the case of referral if you don't have a serious case the cannot refer you they will handle it in the spot, so the aim of referring the child, it means that the child has a very serious problem.....

FG6_MALE2: the reason why the child was referred is to take care of her.

FG6_MALE1: it just means that the first examination must have detected that something wrong with her sight that needs further examination and perhaps a response.

INT: We know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination at the eye clinic choose not to do so. What do you think are the main reasons some families make that choice

FG6_MALE1: For me I think that anything that has to do with any organ in the body requires specialists, so haven detected that there is a problem with my daughter's eyes I felt that primary health care will not be equip enough to manage it, I felt it is necessary I get a specialist to manage it.

FG6_MALE2: Like I earlier said I missed the contact of doctor, that is the reason I didn't take my child to referring office but I have been doing something for the eye of my child, I have been taking her out, but where they referred her to that is where I have not been.

FG6_FEM1: Negligence, and mindset

FG6_FEM2: The reason why- let me speak for myself- I did not go because of chance (I was not available) I did not have chance (not available). It escape my memory even when I was thinking toward it this day will I be free (available), will I be able to go? And then before it got to that day it escaped my memory

FG6_MALE3: It all balls down to time factor, some parents have very tight schedules, at times I can be in the office from morning till midnight.

FG6_MALE1: I wanted to add that, I may not be completely right but within this location you find yourself issue of eyesight are not seen as emergencies, hence the child can see and he is not under pains can you see me he says yes, it has not come to the clinical situation where you cannot see me others absolutely no need to respond is not just restricted to eyesight even if the child tells you now that Daddy I have malarial or I have head ache and the child can still walk and wheeled with other children you feel that it is not serious, sometime is just children is not serious, just leave the child there until when it come to the point the child is shivering on bed and cannot move, that is when we respond, even as adult, to be very fair with you, it is very difficult to see adult in this area walk on his own like this to the hospital to say I have check-up, unless those that have diagnosed with BP and heart problems and diabetes like that through protracted situations if not as I am sitting here it was just last month that for over a year I have not check my BP. You hardly would see somebody like this walk to the hospital say I came for check-up, is not , is not common here.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG6_FEM2: There are some decisions that the head, the husband will take but as a wife if know that your husband will take a decision that will destabilize the family you move for it (you step in to take responsibility on behalf of the family should you suspect that your husband will take a "bad decision").

FG6_MALE1: In my house, decision making is shared we discuss with my wife as to what we should do as much as possible like I said earlier I am not consistent here I try to make her take responsibility for a number of things, a number of things she needs to take responsibility on but decision making, for me from background even when we want to decide as per where a child need to school, we used to sit down with that child and tell the child why she needs to leave the school she is now to perhaps the school we are thinking somehow we give her the opportunity to say this the school i like, we don't like that school maybe we cannot afford that one but decision making is between us, though, but there are some point that I veto my wife, when she wants to go this way I say no that direction is not good this is what I want but to an extent she is involved.

FG6_MALE2: In decision as a good home they must join in the decision. In my own house as a man in the house not that I will 100% take decision on my own every time, sometime thing will not work well. So as a good home you must put your wife in your decisions.

FG6_FEM2: In my home decision is shared, most times my husband takes decision

FG6_MALE3: I take decision in my home but most time we shared in the decision making

INT: Why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination?

FG6_MALE3: Just as he has rightly said earlier, if you want to take your child maybe primarily for the first time to know exactly what is happening to the child, concerning his/her eyes you will go to where, I will not say a specialist because they do call themselves specialist (maybe after you round up from school there are courses you will do and become a specialist, like ear doctor, nose, maybe some people use other people to do practice to perfect, their field). Just holy family here, to get exactly or close to what is wrong with the child you now think of where to (find) someone who specializes in that field. Like in ikom, I don't think there is any, I have gone round. The reason why (parents choose to bring their children for an eye examination) is there are no specialists in that field. The specialist will know what to do if anything goes wrong.

FG6_FEM2: They do it to avoid blindness in future and that is just the reason.

FG6_FEM1: To avoid blindness too, so that your child can see clearly and maybe you have seen that child is not reading his books well.

FG6_MALE2: Like some parents that will take their children to specialist are because you have passion for their children. That is the reason, if you don't have a passion for your children or with your child you cannot even do what some speakers have said here that until you see them down in their health you cannot even know that they passing through some pains. That is some parents only give birth to children but they are not there to take care of them to the way they are supposed to do. if you don't have the passion for that child, you will take the child to hospital without even waiting for somebody to tell them what to do.

FG6_MALE1: I think that there are number of reasons that are responsible for that, some parent take their children for medical check-up because of the health history of the family, if for instance I know that I am diabetic I will talk to my children about diabetes as they progress and I will also like to know their status so that there wouldn't be issues of damage in future. So, if we have problem with sight in our family some parent will readily want to diagnose their children very early about it. The other thing that can cause the parents to do that, is when you see abnormal behaviour in your child. A child is supposed to see this thing and read but your child is seeing and complaining that Daddy I cannot see. He is looking at something, yet he cannot see, you will certainly want to take that child for diagnoses. and then I think that just as my colleague said it is passion, I will want to say parent levels of awareness differ some people have good health seeking behaviour others are passive about health issues, others believe that even if they see the symptoms the child is presenting, our local herbs are okay and there is no need going to the hospital. My dad used to squeeze this leaf when you complain. They do those home medications. So when you do those medications, there will be no need to go to the hospital. So, I think awareness is actually very important. Another this is money, if the money is not there you will know that this child is sick but you will not go. You will be praying and praying. There are parents in Ikom here who since they were born, have never counted (up to) fifty thousand naira (meaning that they are poorly resourced)

FG6_FEM1: we are many (in similar poor condition as above)

FG6_MALE3: there are people out there that are very poor

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

FG6_MALE3: like what you are talking about. Women generally do take care of the children more than men, because they care of the children more than we. it is only few out of 100%, maybe 40% of the men that take time to look at their children, check them very well, you understand. Why I said so, in my own house, let me use myself, in my own house. When my kids were growing up (very young), when they want to go to the toilet, they will come to Daddy. "I want to go to toilet" and their mother would wonder why? Anything they do, they tell me first, you understand? At times, women do these better than the men, so the women can take decision on that.

FG6_FEM2: On health matters the women take decision because most times the men are not there, my husband, he goes out early and comes back late, so he doesn't know, it is you that will tell him Maybe I will call on phone; she sick or he is sick! When did it start, like yesterday you came back late have you gone to the hospital? I said no I want to go, he says ok, so I go.

FG6_MALE1: Well, it is a joint decision but for me I, don't joke with health issues, once you mentioned them like I said earlier I believe in quality. if my child is sick, I rarely will say go to the chemist and buy drugs I will rarely say so. I will also take him to the hospital for diagnoses and treatment. Now if you have the well withal to do this things I would like to say that most times, this drawback is from the men because the financial muscle is not there, nobody will see the child sick and the child is getting no attention. If you give a man money he was wants to go for the best, women are more responsive if the child has headache, the woman will begin to think of how to find a remedy, you know they are more responsive. The men too are concern about their children when it comes to decision making about the children in my house it is the two of us, as the child is sick we go to the hospital and we have our hospital.

INT: What message would you like me to give to the rest of the research team?

FG6_MALE1: For me, the issue of tracking or perhaps what you will better call monitoring, like I said earlier we do not have that good health seeking behaviour in this part of the world.

A gap like that it should be done properly I say so because we are aware anybody can write any document and give to any child to bring. Anybody can come and claim to be a doctor, I don't know how long you have been in Ikom, I don't tune CRBC (local radio station) and the reason is that as soon as you tune, you hear of Osas specialist, the whole radio station is saturated with specialists that are creating and even doing worst things instead of helping situations, they are teaching children how to learn sex in the name of the man's organ.

FG6_Male1: A number of things are happening. I don't listen to CRBC and I don't allow my children listen to CRBC. So if you use, CRBC to reach the parents, am sorry am sure that if you do a sample of people who listen to CRBC in Ikom you will know that a number of them don't. People tune to CRBC so that they can hear if the announcement they gave on burial have been done. They just tune to hear if it is not done. They just call to find out and that is all. So CRBC is not a good platform to showcase a programme like this. To reach out to parents, people need to be referred to PHC. For me I have gotten the contact of parents, and it is good you follow up on them. The moment you give the referral and the parents are not forthcoming, you do the test and parents are not forthcoming, I will suggest that in your subsequent review, you should strengthen your follow up mechanism so that people will follow up when parents

are not forthcoming. I don't think it will be bad if you try to locate the address of that child, because just like sir and madam said(the 2 speakers), a number of this children are not staying with their biological parents some of them are going to these schools just to fulfill the righteousness (obey Government) that they didn't keep this child at home. So if organization come up like this we should be passionate about what they are doing. Numbers two; a number of Nigerians have lost confidence in govt systems as I am I hardly will take my child to primary health care for treatment. PHC was supposed to be functional 24hours, but if you leave pass here 10'oclock (if he leaves his home at past 10.0 o clock to the PHC) you will never get anybody there. I have done it severally and that is why I stop going there. A number of Nigerians even those in leadership position including our president, they take private health care and so when your status is a bit stable you will not want to go to health facility because of serious negligence on the part of the government. Even the paracetamol tablets that you get from there is not same as the one you get from the health facility, it is not the same so, people have lost confidence in Nigeria govt. the promises they have made you won't see anything in practice, so the system is faulty. It's our country.

INT: What would you say is your key or main message?

FG6_MALE1: The key message is first, the initiative is commendable. the school-based approach is a good one but they need to go further to integrating the parents of children who fall below the line incase in terms of the response. And that they should let Nigerians know that the children will have access to the services as stated in your documents.

FG6_FEM2: just like he said and I even said it earlier, I said that the children that are, you know the children that fall under this (failed the test); the parent too should be integrated (treated). It is very good move in the right direction, that we appeal that the parent should be integrated.

FG6_MALE3: Well they started well let it not end in the research alone, let it continue the way you started it here.

FG7_Ogoja rural secondary school

INT: How many of you know that your child's school offers free vision screening or an eye test for your children?

All said they knew except one male.

INT: So all of your children had their vision or how well they get tested. What were you told about the results of that eye test?

FG7_Fem1: Like in my own case, my son didn't tell me there was anything

FG7_Fem1: like that, it was yesterday, you, one of you called my husband, where he is, he had to call me whether I have heard anything like that, I said no, he asked whether the child was in school that yesterday, I said he was in school there, when the child came back now.

FG7_Fem1: I ask him [father], he said he didn't hear anything like that,

FG7_Fem1: so I told my husband to send that very number to me, he said he has already send the number to me, after sometime one of you called me now,

FG7_Fem1: I told the person my child didn't have any problem like that, he [researcher] said no I should come today, I should come by 10, that is why I am here.

Fem 2: Even myself, my boy did not tell me anything,

Fem 2: it was Dr E [optometrist] that called me last week, he said I should try and come by this Wednesday, then yesterday again he called me again.

FG7_Fem2: when the boy came back from school I had to ask him, he said it was the same person that gave him.. eh.. the doctor that came for eye test, but he didn't give me full information.

FG7_Male2: Em! also with me, (e...m) my daughter told me that eh... the parent should come to the school, that's the only the thing my daughter told me .

FG7_Fem3: (Clearing of throat..) hmmm my son he came with a referral note to me,

FG7_Fem3: because I don't have the money, he is an orphan, am a widow and I had a stroke, that is why I did not go [for follow up exam in the clinic]

INT: What do you think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now? What about in the future?

FG7_MALE1: Eh... eyes are a light of the body, so if you have, as I am, having sight problem, I don't want my daughter or my son to have such thing.

FG7_Male1: If the government had start this thing [referring to school vision screening tests] before now, I will not have this kind of problem [referring to sight problem he has].

FG7_Fem1: Eyes [and good vision] are very important in the body. They are one of the important things in the body. Without eyes [seeing well] I don't think anything can function.

FG7_Fem1: With our eyes [seeing well], we can read and write, see everything clearly and our education will forge ahead.

FG7_Fem2: It is very important for one to know whether he has problem in the eyes or not.

FG7_Fem2: Because my son didn't tell me [he failed the school vision test] and I didn't see the [referral] letter or I would have gone to the hospital for screening. I have gone to the hospital they have screened me. They have given me – if he [referring to her son] had informed me I would have taken him there by now.

FG7_Fem3: Thank God for the government, for the opportunity that it has given to our children [to take care of their health]. Because many of us, even when we were in school, we did not have that opportunity

FG7_Fem3: Right now, as I am talking to you people now, I am suffering from an eye problem that I have been going to the hospital for several visits now [to address it]. I thank God for this [program to test vision of people at an] early age.

FG7_Fem3: I thank God [and think that He] should continue to help the government and help you people that are coming to help us ... it means they don't want the children to suffer the same things we suffer from [referring to health issues such as poor vision or blindness].

INT: After your child had his/her vision tested at school, what were you told you should do about your child's eye health?

FG7_Male1: Eh...m they told us – the government told us to bring our child to the eye clinic.

FG7_Male1: But I have no money to bring my child to the clinic like they told us to.

FG7_Fem1: Because my child was having an eye problem; that's why they said we should go to the general hospital.

FG7_Fem2: What I think is that before they gave a referral letter for my daughter to go to general hospital, the doctor who tested her noticed some damage in her eyes before giving the referral letter.

FG7_Fem2: It's the question of [not having] money that made me not to go there (general laughter).

FG7_Fem3: The reason why the doctor referred my child to the hospital is so they can carry out, the.... the treatments immediately before the eyes get bad.

INT: Why do you think further testing was recommended for your child's eyes?

FG7_Male1: He was referred to the general hospital because the doctor has checked his eyes.

INT: We know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination at the eye clinic choose not to do so. What do you think are the main reasons some families make that choice?

FG7_Fem1: The reason why some of us did not go is because we don't have the money to go there.

FG7_Fem1: We have no supporter. Some children are orphans and some mothers are widows [earlier statement said didn't have the money so implies another adult could have paid to get to the clinic]. (

FG7_Male1: (right hand on the chest, with the left hand up for answers) Like me, some, they [referring to his children] bring hom all these letter to the mother who can't read and she says, "Give me the letter and when your father comes [home] I'll give it to him to read." But when the father comes home, she's forgotten so she won't give the letter to the father to go through it and for the father to take the child to the hospital.

FG7_Male1: [Or] they will give it [referral letter from the school] to the father who can't read and he'll say, "I'll give it to your mother to read". And the same thing [happens]; he keeps the letter and forgets [to give it to his wife to read].

FG7_Male1: Some people don't have the money. So they tell you go to the hospital on this date but when the day comes, you don't have transport to go the hospital. And you start thinking, "When will I have the money to go to the hospital?" – even the money [needed] to fuel your [motor] bike – if you even have a bike. So it takes N200 (naira) to go to the hospital You don't even have N200 to go **and move a cup of gari to eat** and you're going to use N200 to pay for transport and come home sleepy and hungry? [Implies 'I don't think that's what people choose to do'.]

FG7_Fem3: Like, in my case, my son didn't tell me [about the referral to hospital]. Had he told me, I would have gone – I would have taken him to the hospital [for the follow-up eye exam].

FG7_Fem2: The reason why I didn't go with her is because there was no transport. [continues to explain lack of money so means have to pay for transport and can't afford it]

FG7_Fem2: At the time [we should have gone], there was even no food for us to eat. So when she brought the letter, there was no money. That's why we didn't go.

INT: Why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination?

FG7_Fem1: Some families on their own will bring their children for eyes examination [because] they are educated and they know the implication of [untreated] eye problems. So they want to know early if their children are having eye problems or not. That is why they take them to the hospital for eye checkups.

FG7_Male1: The reason why most -- some parents bring their children to the eye clinic is they know [such problems run in the family] 'it's their family hereditary'.

FG7_Male1: For some, it's financial; some have the money, so it's very, very necessary for them to go and screen their children in order to know the nature of their eye [problem] before the eyes will be infected.

FG7_Fem2: (ehh... clearing of throat) Some parents bring their children to the hospital to guard against that symptom because they know that in their family they have it [thinking of a specific eye problem]. Maybe their great, great grandparents have it, so they want to bring them [their children to the hospital] to guard against it.

FG7_Fem3: Why some parent take their children to hospital for medical checkups is to know the state of the eye -- to see if the eye is in order, whether there's any problem. So it's for proper management.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

Father alone		Mother alone		Both parents together	
M	F	M	F	M	F
0	3	0	0	1	2

INT: What key messages do you have?

FG7_Male1: My message to them is this: they should not be missing school.

FG7_Fem2: This key message (...3-5 second pause) -- parents, they should be very careful. If their children say, "Daddy, or Mummy, they gave us this [a referral letter] from school", they should get up and take the child to the hospital.

FG8 Ogoja Urban Secondary School

INT: So all of your children had their vision or how well they get tested. What were you told about the results of that eye test?

Fem 1: My son told me that he has eye problem, that they tested him and said that he has eye problem and he should go to the general hospital. They referred him to that place, but I didn't go

FG8_Fem2: Myself, (deep breath...) my daughter use to complain of eye problem. I knew that she has an eye problem before the test. When they did the test she came back to say that they referred her to general hospital. But on my own part I failed to take her there. (li 16-17)

FG8_Fem3: My own, she said they ran a test for her, they were pointing out some word for her to identify them. But she couldn't identify some of them and they directed her to go to general hospital. I was told that we were going to have that screening exercise, and I was thinking that the exercise to be here...

FG8_MALE1: (chuckles), Like in my own case, my child was tested in the government school there, he came but he didn't give me the referral note, that I should go to the hospital there. I told you earlier, I'm on staff at that hospital. Had he given me the information, I would have taken him to the place [for a follow-up appointment]. But he didn't tell me and I didn't see the note they gave him [to bring home to a parent].

FG8_MALE2: Unlike me, (throat clearing) my daughter came home and told me about the information but said she was not given any written note.

FG8_MALE2: My problem was that I didn't have any money to take her to the general hospital. If I did, we would have gone there.

INT: What do you think that might mean for your child's health and wellbeing now? What about in the future?

FG8_MALE2: It's good for the human health to take good care of the baby. Or the child in short, so that they can be able to read very well and understand what the teachers are teaching him

FG8_MALE1: Its very good, eyes are very import for the child as a human health without eye you cannot even see, me I feel than

FG8_MALE1: its good for their own health in case of tomorrow, let them not be blind, by tomorrow

FG8_Fem2: The eye is the number one essential part of the body, so there is no way a child will progress academically without good vision so it's very necessary to follow up when the child has eye problem at early stage before the eye get destroyed

FG8_Fem1: (laughing) we are thanking the government, because the eye is very important for the children because without eye you cannot read, you cannot see, but by the help of this government our children can be able to see very well and read clearly (adjusted seating position) so we are happy for that

FG8_Fem3: (Throat clearing..) I think Government has done a very great job, by sending this eye screening exercise because the eye is the light to the body. As one of my colleagues earlier said, if you don't have a good sight, you cannot do anything.

FG8_Fem3: so government has done a good work by sending this exercise, and I pray that the good lord will strengthen them and provide all they needed to carry on this exercise

INT: Is there anything to add or change from what you've told me so far?

FG8_MALE2: Eh...m, no.

INT: After your child had his/her vision tested at school, what were you told you should do about your child's eye health?

[ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD INDICATE THEIR CHILD WAS REFERRED FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AT THE NEARBY HOSPITAL-BASED EYE CLINIC.]

FG8_Fem1: I was told to go to general hospital so that they will treat the child, the eyes,

FG8_Fem1: but unfortunately I have no money to go there, that is why I didn't go, then the government has come with it....it's going to be well in Jesus name...Amen (responded by all)

FG8_Fem3: because she has eye problem she cannot see well

FG8_MALE1: Most of us didn't get the referral notes that is why we are trying to contribute, our children didn't give us the notes.

FG8_MALE1: He was referred to the hospital because the Dr has tested him and knows that his eyes have problems that was why he was referred.

FG8_Fem3: My child was referred to the general hospital because the doctor has known that in future if they did not correct it will affect the child that is why they send him there that is why they referred him there.

FG8_Fem2: My child was referred after carrying out the test, and discovered that she has eye problem.

FG8_Fem2: If they did not follow it up, in the future it will be disastrous,

FG8_Fem2: and even myself I have eye problem which am now using lenses, so if the child did not follow it up, it may result to using lenses or getting damage entirely.

INT: Why do you think further testing was recommended for your child's eyes?

FG8_Fem1: Because she has eye problem, she cannot see well

FG8_Fem2: My child was having eye problem

FG8_Fem3: Because the doctor can carry out examination before it gets bad

FG8_MALE1: My child was referred after they carried out the test

We know that some parents or guardians of children who are referred for further examination at the eye clinic choose not to do so. What do you think are the main reasons some families make that choice?

FG8_Fem3: The reason why I did not follow it up is because the child left and travel to somewhere that time, and she just came back,

FG8_Fem3: I was promising that I will take her there, that was when the doctor now called me that they are having meeting with us today, I said okay, that will be a very good thing

FG8_MALE2: Some guardian or parents doesn't take their children there, mostly guardians, maybe they went their it might be their brothers children, because they are not the proper people that gave birth to those children,

FG8_MALE2: if such information has been related to them, they wont to spend their money on them because is not their real made children,

FG8_MALE2: so for that reason they prefer to living such children like that and allow their eyes to get bad, and which is very bad.

FG8_MALE1: Some of the parents doesn't have the knowledge of all this..

FG8_MALE1: Because some time it may happen that, even when they gave a referral letter, they may not know the content of that letter to really know that this is what is been happening and this is what has been on is helping our children or ourselves, you understand?

FG8_MALE1: So, sometimes it's good as you call us like this, so that at least when we, we came and get the knowledge, now we can even carry on the news and tell others, when we brief them they will really know what is going on, thank you.

FG8_Fem3: Unlike me, I didn't ... I was not aware, that we are to go to general hospital, I was only told that I should come here so I didn't know that the test will be done there

FG8_Fem2: for some parents they will not accept [there is a problem]. Say this my daughter or my son who is suffering from eye problem,. They [parents] just tell them, "Go sit down. You're too young to be suffering from an eye problem. It's a lie. You're too small to have your eyes bother you!"

FG8_Fem2: like me, I am one of them (general laughs). I tell my daughter to go sit down [and be quiet], even now. (laughs. Everyone)

FG8_Fem1: Eh for me, some children when you give them that referral letter, they will not even give it to the parent.

FG8_Fem1: [about children who don't give the referral note to parents] At the end they will tell the parent that they did some sort of test but they won't be able to explain to the parents. And since you don't have anybody to ask or confirm this, you will also forget about it. You won't take it seriously. You'll be relaxed about it. That's the reason.

INT: Who in the household generally makes such decisions?

Father		Mother		Both parents	
M	F	M	F	M	F
0	3	0	0	1	2

INT: Why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for an eye examination?

FG8_MALE1: some parents know they have that same problem in their family, like me, am surprise in that very school, I have about almost 4 children there, and is only one that was tested and they know that he has a problem with eyes eh.. Problem, so.. at times just like what my colleague said there, at times you will feel so bad that the said this child, when they are four in that school one you said is having eye problem and I become surprise, at I myself, I will even kick against it I say my friend go and seat down its not true

FG8_MALE1: but there are some parents who knows that really, even in their own family they has problem with their eyes, so they said that anytime it is good to take my child to the hospital because I know that I was having this problem before, not some of us that we don't know that we have eyes problem in the family

FG8_MALE2: generally you know that regarding health, even when you have a headache it will attack your eyes, you have catarr – [flu], it will attack your eyes.

FG8_MALE2: then it happen that you have a little money you carry yourself to the hospital and do a necessary test to really know what is happening with you, it's the doctor that will tell you, this is what is happening, this is what is happening, and h will know the direct drugs to give to you so that that eye or that headache will go, so it's important.

FG8_Fem2: some of them take their children to eye clinic because they know that their child has already gotten that problem the problem is there,

FG8_Fem2: sometimes, children always complaint to their parent that this is what is happening, like my own, like in the school, you will keep him here (hand describing toward the black board in the classroom used) he will not see very well except you keep him in the front,

FG8_Fem2: he has complain to me before they do the test, so that is why...and some of them they carry them their (clinic) because they have the money to carry them for the test

FG8_Fem3: Why some parents take their children to the clinic is because some of the children will be complaining of eye every time, sometime you will be seeing their eye red, some time you will see, mummy my eye is paining me every time, so parent will say let me take my child to the clinic to know what is wrong on time before the eye will get worst

FG8_Fem1: (Throat clearing...) like some parents, they carry their children to hospital, it's not because of they have anybody in their family that have eye problem they just carry the children to hospital to test and know whether this kind thing want to affect my daughter or my son

INT: WHO IN THE HOUSEHOLD GENERALLY MAKES SUCH DECISIONS?

Father		Mother		Both parents	
M	F	M	F	M	F
0	3	0	0	1	2

INT: What would be your key message to the other members of the research team?

FG8_FEM1: The key message is that most children like my son, Dr Emma told me parent should be able bring their children to the clinic

FG8_FEM3: children easily forget, when you child comes from school, you should be able to ask what and what happened in school

FG8_FEM2: teachers should be writing notes to parents; children don't know what to say

FG8_MALE1: my message to parents is that the parent to ask the children if they have a letter from the school

FG8_FEM4: Unlike me, I use to seat down with my children

FG9 Urban Ugep Primary (St Joseph Primary School), 3 females 01oct19; 1 hr

INT: So, how many of you know that there was an eye test carried out in the school of your children?

(FG9_ALL 3 knew)

INT: What were you told about the eye test that was done in the school?

FG9_FEM3: What?

INT: You knew that an eye test was carried out on your child in the school, okay...what were told? What did you know about the eye test that was done in the school?

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking pigin English*) My daughter bin come tell me say I'm hear -- dem say eyes, dey disturb am for school. That's why they write this letter [referral letter, and] give to her, which she come give me, say make I carry am go for Teaching Hospital. But that time I don't have money. That's why I no carry her go.

INT: Okay, the child told you that they told her that she had eye problems.

FG9_FEM3: Yes. They give me the letter. (*She brought the referral letter out*)

FG9_FEM2: I heard it also. My daughter came home. She explained that they have an exercise in their school due to her eye problems and they gave her a paper [referral letter]. She told me...it's a result of money -- I don't have money for going there; even the transport to get there -- at that time I didn't have anything. That's was the thing was pending like that.

FG9_FEM1: Yes...eeehh....my daughter also told me; she gave me the letter but -- (*She hissed*) I missed the date. When I went to the hospital Dr L told me that we've already missed the date, that we should come back -- that she was going to call us back. So that was how we missed it.

INT: You didn't go the day that you -- why --

--FG9_FEM1: (*Came in before the I Wer could finish*) I don't know (*She shrugged with open hands*), I forgot. Yes, I forgot, but I later took her there.

INT: But did she come with referral letter?

FG9_FEM1: Yes

INT: Now that you know the vision of your child was tested in school, what do you think this might mean to your child's eye health?

(FG9_ALL: no one understood the question)

INT: Let me explain. If you know that your child's eyes were tested in school; as a parent, how do you think that would affect hyour child's eyes now -- not in a negative way; but what effects would it have on your child's eye health?

FG9_FEM1: That....is it that if the eye was not treated the child would....maybe she might not be able to concentrate in school now because of the eyes.

FG9_FEM2: When the eye is not being treated, it will....let me say in futurein future it will bring problem. It will bring some problems, and as we are here we need a help. The government they should help us concerning that.

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking pigin English*) Even me too na help na for make dem help treat my daughter.

Co-INT [REFRAMING THE QUESTION]: What the doctor was asking is that, if your child was found to have an eye problem, how do you thik that would affect your child? Do you think it will affect him or her?

FG9_All: yes! Yes! (li 58-60)

FG9_FEM2: Yes, it will affect the child. Since they found she has a problem, if we didn't go -- so for instance, if we went to the hospital as they referred us to do; if we refused to go there, it would create a problem for the child; yes.

INT: or if I may say, what does it mean to the health of that child, if the vision of the child is tested in school. What does it mean to the health of the child?

FG9_FEM2: Eh sometime, it would make the child not to be seeing fine like that. It will make the child not to be seeing fine; clearly.

INT: After the eye of your child was tested in school; what were you told about the child's eye health?

FG9_FEM2: That day when she came back [home], she was telling me that they tested her eyes and she couldn't see far. That was the problem. They said she should go to the hospital. But because of [the lack of] money, we didn't go.

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking Pigin English*) Even me, oh! When time reach, we no get money, na because of money. Me, I bin say when time, when I hold money I go carry am go hospital. Now were money no dy me for hand that's why I no carry am go there.

FG9_FEM1: She [referring to her daughter] said that the doctor said she could not identify some letters on the wall. That is what she said.

INT: So your child's eyes were tested in school and she was given a referral letter to go to the hospital. Why would there be a need for further testing?

FG9_FEM2: [Because] it will help the child, for the problem to be solved. My child went to the hospital because they referred her to do so; had it been that I went there and they gave her something that will make the problem end. when the child went to the hospital, as they refer her so, had it been that I went there; and they gave her something. It will make the problem to be over.

[FG9_F3 agrees with FG9_F2].

INT: Why do you think a child's eyes should be tested further in the hospital?

FG9_FEM3: Na because of money, oh! Even me! Because if I go there, they go give am treatment.

FG9_FEM1: The reason why they ask the child to go to the hospital is for that test -- to check if there are more problems.

FG9_FEM1: [The reasons they ask the child to go to the hospital is to find] the causes or what actually led to the eye problem.

INT: Some parents whose children are referred to the hospital for further tests choose not to go. Why do you think some parents decide not to take their children to hospital after [getting a letter of] referral?

FG9_FEM2: It's due to money sometimes. Most parents will think if they go there, the hospital will charge them. And sometimes they don't have money.

INT: Charge as in is it expensive or is it cheap? How does money affect a child not being taken to the hospital?

FG9_FEM2: It's all down to money. When the money's not there, you won't take the child to the hospital.

[FG9_Fem3 agrees with Fem2]

INT: So are you saying that money is the only reason why children don't go to the hospital? Are there other reasons?

FG9_FEM1: Money is not the only reason for me. Maybe some parents; they are too busy.

FG9_FEM1: and some of them just take things for granted. Most of them actually have the money to take the child to the hospital, but they just take everything for granted and just let it be.

FG9_FEM1: Another reason is disbelief [beliefs]. Some people don't believe in anything; they don't believe that anything -- like, some children who lived nearby in my neighbourhood, when their eyes were tested their parents said, 'God forbid it's not my child'. So they just leave it.

INT: Is it not believing in the test, or that the child has a problem?

FG9_FEM1: Not believing the child has a problem. Unbelief on the problem. They will say there's no need for further testing because there's no problem.

INT: We have said that some families do not take their children to the hospital for further eye tests. Now in a family or in a household, who decides that this child should be taken to the hospital for further tests? Who makes that decision -- is it the mother, or the father, or the grandfather, or the grandmother?

FG9_FEM2: Is the father that is the head of the family. Is the father that will decide what they will do.

FG9_FEM3: is true oh!

FG9_FEM1: Sometimes the mother. But it depends on who the child is staying with. If the child is staying with the mother, it might be the mother. If the child is staying with both parents, it's the father.

FG9_FEM1: [If there are two households] it's the father.

INT: You were saying that it's only the father that takes decisions to take the child to hospital? Is it what we are agreeing?

FG9_All: Yes.

INT: Earlier you explained why some families don't go to the hospital or eye clinic for further testing. Now I'm asking, why do you think some families choose to bring their children in for eye test?

FG9_FEM1: Most of them must have had okay family history; but one of them has had an eye problem and maybe they just neglected the issue and it got worse. So if there's a chance [to avoid this], they will bring their children [to the clinic] – they will rush and do something before anything becomes bad like [for] the previous one.

INT: You're saying that if a family has a history of eye problem, they will like to take their children to the eye hospital?

FG9_FEM1: To stop the situation before it gets worse.

(FG9_Fem2 agrees with Fem1 even after INT prompts for another reason, but further prompting → different answer)

FG9_FEM2: (giggles) Most of the time it's true. Their forefathers – there's a history of eye problems in the family. When they start having issues like that, they will likely take their children to the hospital or clinic to find out what is happening so their child won't be affected.

FG9_FEM3: It's true.

INT: Who in the family makes the decision to take the child to the hospital for a check up?

FG9_FEM3: I think it's the father

FG9_FEM2: At times in the family! You know we, the mothers. At times let me just say like that! At times we, the mothers, due to the close relationship we normally have with our children in the house. We will quickly know what is good and what is bad. We will quickly try to take our children to the hospital for them to check the child in case of any problem that will come. For prevention, in short. For prevention.

INT: Ok you're saying that mothers make the decision because they are closer to the children.

FG9_FEM2: Yes! Yes!

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking in pigin English*) I no dy look my husband. Wan money come my hand I use to carry my children go hospital

FG9_FEM1: The grandparents, too, can also suggest that the children should be taken to the hospital for eye testing, for further check-up, if they are staying with them so they have the right to [decide].

INT: So is that in the absence of the father and the mother, or even when the father and mother are present?

FG9_FEM1: even in the presence of the father and the mother.

INT: What if the father and the mother say we will not take her? Could the grandparents stand in and say take the child to the hospital?

FG9_FEM1: yes.

FG9_FEM2: It's good for somebody to take care of a child whenever they find out that there is a problem, to avoid blindness.

(FG9_F3 agrees with FG9_F2)

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking pigin English*) When you know say that your child, something dy come like this, you quickly carry am go teaching, or any other hospital. You fit carry am go there [for problems] like eyes problem

INT: What kind of eye problem do you think a child may have, maybe as a mother, what kind of eye problem maybe your child may have told you that he or she has?

FG9_FEM3: (*Speaking pigin English*) Like some of children, dem fit sit done, water dy comot dem for eye, that one eyes started. (*speaking pigin English*) Sometimes [children say], 'Mummy, eyes dey paining me. Or sometimes 'Eye, dey hot me'. (li 210-216)

FG9_FEM1: Eh! Sometimes [they say] that the eye is itching them.

FG9_FEM1: What I really wanted to say is that most parents may not want to go for further tests because they think it will be expensive. And most times I know it's expensive, but I just want them to remove that kind of a thing from their mind. As in -- if you can just make them think that they should just come, you know; they should just come. Because some people will just tell you, 'I don't have transport, because I don't have this, I don't have that!' And when you go to the hospital it's not really that expensive.

FG9_FEM1: So if you can just make them [family members] feel at home; that they should just bring the child

FG9_FEM1: Or just make them feel that when they come you can help them pay their transport. Even if they walked to that place; you can pay their transport back home. I think they will feel free to bring their children. Even their neighbours.

INT: I think you [Fem1] said something before that some fear that it will be expensive, but it may not actually be expensive. Does it mean that the fear for money or being afraid that the care will be expensive [is a barrier even though] sometimes it's not actually expensive?

FG9_FEM1: No. there are just afraid of the unknown. I'm not saying – it might be expensive, it might not. That's what I'm trying to say. But most parents, they will just think it's going to be expensive and just waste my time to go there when I don't have the money.

INT: Are they some people who choose to not go because in the past they've gone to the hospital before and know it's expensive because they've actually spent money, or is it because they heard it will be expensive?

FG9_FEM1: They just assume that it's expensive and [so] choose not to go.

IWer [Clarifying]: So the fear of having to spend money is an assumption but it may not really be all that expensive?

FG9_FEM1: Yes.

INT: Is there anything else we'd like to discuss further?

FG9_Fem2: Like, how to take care of the eyes. When you go there with your child, they will take care of her eyes. Sometimes they give you drugs or eyeglasses, provide those things for the child.

INT: Have you seen a child wear eyeglasses before?

FG9_All: yes! Yes! *(A brief space of silence)*

INT: Do children [around here] wear glasses?

FG9_All: yes! Yes!

Co-INT: We're just asking the same questions to probe in case there's some ideas. Are there any other reasons why a parent who knows his child has an eye problem or has been screened and given a referral, doesn't go the hospital? You told us it's basically due to funding, or that some people don't have the time, or it's their belief system. Are there any other reasons? Maybe it's not your reasons, but you've heard something from your neighbour or co-worker, that may be a barrier for parents to take their children to the hospital.

FG9_FEM1: If in a family your husband says, 'No' -- let me just say the husband and wife are living together and their child just came back from school and brought something like that [a referral letter for further eye tests in hospital] and then you discuss it with your husband who says 'no'; in that case, if you respect your husband a lot, you wouldn't go. You will prefer it be like that. You will now tell your child, 'Since your father says no, that means you will not go' and the child wouldn't go to the hospital.

Co-INT: So that's the place of respect in the family. (no one disagrees or comments further)

Co-INT confirms that for Fem2 and Fem3, the child brought home the referral letter but the family didn't have the money to bring the child to the foollow-up appointment.

INT: Is there any message you want to give to our other team members -- to our organisation -- to the people that we are working with? Is there anything that you will like to say to us or that you want us to tell them?

FG9_FEM3: Tell outside people?

Co-IWer [clarifying]: No, only us, our team. Like the doctor and me, there are other people doing interviews in Ogoja and other places. We also have our bosses.

FG9_FEM3: (*speaking in pigin*) Like they thing were I know, were I for say; na help were I say make dem help us because of our children. Like, some are times as we no get, make them look about our children their sickness.

INT: (speaking pigin English) their sickness for eye?

FG9_FEM3: yes.

FG9_FEM2: I'd like to plead with them that they should help us by providing either the drugs for the children or the glasses. Any help that they give, they should know that they will help our children. They should give that help to us.

FG9_FEM1: I want you people to tell them that we are grateful for giving us an opportunity like this.

FG9_FEM1: We are also asking them to help educate mothers like this, the way we are sitting down [discussing in a focus group] for free. They should continue this kind of focus group so that mothers can actually express their opinion like this.

INT: We were talking about family, but you now narrowed it down to mothers. Ok why were you emphasising more on mothers?

FG9_Fem1: Because mothers are closer to their children more than their fathers. Because sometimes some mothers are not working class mothers, there are mostly at home and the fathers are always working, maybe they come back late, so they don't really know what is happening at home, unless the mother tells the father that this is what is wrong with the child. So there are very close to the children more than fathers. Am not saying all mothers, but most of them. (li 299-306)

FG9_Fem1: They should also give free eye medication to our children, or glasses -- provide all those necessary things for them. (li 309)

INT: Do you have any message to give to our team concerning the eye health of children or the vision of children, maybe as a mother or as a father?

FG9_Fem2: I would like to thank them. I would like to tell them that this exercise [referring to the focus group discussion] -- let this exercise continue. Let this exercise continue. Let them help our children.

FG9_Fem3: It's true.

FG9_Fem1: I don't even know what to say

FG9_All: (*all laughing!!*)

INT: Concerning the vision of children; you've thanked us for the work. Do you have anything to say, maybe as a mother, concerning the vision of your children?

(FG9_ALL: no response)

Co-INT: Or do you have questions about child eye health?

FG9_FEM2: Okay, let me ask what might have caused the problem in the child; like, for instance, the child who can't see [the] front [of the classroom], not see far? Let me just ask that.

INT: There are many diseases that can affect the eye. In some cases, it may be due to infection, or it may be something the child carried from the womb [genetic condition], or something that is passed from family member to family member. In some cases, it may just be a disease or eye problem that came on its own. Some problems may be treated with glasses, others with glasses. Some can be managed with time, meaning there's no definite treatment for it but you can manage it – the person can cope with it. There are many problems that can affect the eye, just like there are different parts of the eye. And there are different diseases that can affect these different parts. But for each of them, there's always a treatment that can be given for them.

FG9_FEM1: Okay, my question is: is there any particular foods that you can eat that will cause eye problems?

INT: First and foremost, any food that is not good for the body is not good for the eyes. For example, you [speaking to FG10_Fem1] asked if there's a particular food that can cause eye problems?

FG9_FEM1: Yes.

INT: Any food that is not healthy, one should not eat -- or any drug or medication -- anything that you're taking that is harmful to the body, you shouldn't take because it will also affect the eye one way or another. For example, we don't encourage people to drink alcohol because in addition to affecting the body, it also affects the eye.

FG9_FEM1: Another question. Is it true that eating too much garri affects the eye? Some people will tell you that, eh! Because my mother use to give me plenty garri to eat when I come back from school and [she says] that's why I can no longer see. Is it true?

INT: Well, I'm not an authority who can say that garri causes eye problems. But I haven't seen any reason why garri should cause eye problems. If it did, was it well fermented? But that's a different question.

INT: Another thing; we are talking about children's eye health. Is it because -- is it that garri that causes vision impairment in children or in anyone, generally?

FG9_FEM1: Children! Children!!

INT: Well, I don't have an -- I'm not an authority to say what causes eye problem. I have not found any reason to say that garri causes eye problems.

(FG9_All pause a bit. Nobody saying an additional thing)

FG9_F3 :(*speaking pigin*) Them told us, say this hot garri; dey disturb for eyes. Eh! When you do hot eba' chop. Ie dey disturb for eye.

INT: Do you mean that if you make eba' and you eat it immediately when it's very hot, it will disturb the eyes?

FG9_FEM3: yes.

INT: Well, I don't have any reason to say it causes it or it doesn't cause eye problems. But I would advice not eating anything that is too hot or too cold, just normal temperature. But I don't have any evidence to say if you eat hot eba' you will have eye problems, either as a child or an adult.

FG9_FEM1: I have another question. Some children actually have eye problems from birth. So when pregnant, what should you eat to improve your child's vision?

INT: Are asking if there are ny food that keeps the body healthy, keeps a pregnant woman healthy, keeps the child healthy?

Co-INT: Vegetables

INT: Don't eat anything that causes harm. Pregnant women are always encouraged to eat vegetables and fruit; that will keep you healthy.

INT: If you're healthy while pregnant, the child in your womb will also be healthy, including her vision.

INT: So, how many of us now know that there was vision test that was carried out in this school and in other schools where our children were attending?

FG10_All: All the participants knew about the vision screening in schools

INT: But did you hear anything? Did the teacher tell us anything about it for those of us that heard or did our child bring back a referral letter

FG10_Male3: Yes

FG10_Male1: Some children had issues some children had issues so they brought them back. So when doctor came they actually had a meeting with those children, then she left back.

FG10_Male4: Like in my own case my child came back with a referral letter and she told me that they conducted eye test on her. That was what I saw.

INT: What were we told about the eye test? Yes, we knew that was conducted, but what were we told about the eye test, but what were we told about it? The eye test that was performed on your child.

FG10_Male2: Come again with the question?

INT: I asked before, did we know there was a vision test or an eye test carried out in the school? (And they all answered, 'yes, we know') Okay. What did we know about it? Like what were we told about the vision test?

FG10_Male1: I think it's to correct the child's eye problem. If the test is carried out and they discover that the child has a problem with the eyes. It's to correct the child's eye problem, maybe with lenses, or operation depending on the case of the child.

FG10_Male3: My children informed me about it, but there was no referral letter or note given to them. But rather they are to come to the general hospital for further checks and to get some glass, which I didn't approve because I didn't hear that from the authority.

INT: Now we know that vision test was carried out and maybe some of us received word from the child or teacher or referral letter. What do we think that might mean to the health of that child or the wellbeing of that? (*Some pause, then the question was repeated*) A vision test was carried out in the school and a referral letter was brought, or word of mouth, the child was asked to go to the hospital, what do think we think from our own opinion that might mean to the health of that child or to the wellbeing that now or in the future?

FG10_Male2: Actually if that problem is not handled properly, it may endanger the child's sight in the future. I think that particular test has been carried out is something needed to be done so that the child's sight can be secured for the future.

FG10_Male4: As my fellow parent has said here, I know that if there's actually a problem then there's a need for solution. And I think the aim of the organization is to find if there are children in schools that are having challenges with their sight problem, then solution should be done. The earlier the better. (*His voice receded gradually*)

What kind of problem?

FG10_Male4: Okay. One of the children, my neighbour's child, though my own does not have issue, when he came back I was asking him, have they conducted the test on you? And he said, yes. And I laugh and said, "Which means you're blind? And he said, "No, I can see from a close range but I can't see from a far distance". So which means he has a problem which medically I don't know the name but I know that he actually has a problem of seeing from a distance.

INT: So your child's vision was tested, and a letter was given where you were told about the child's wellbeing, the vision of that child. Why do you think a further test is requested for a child even though the child's eye was tested in school?

FG10_Fem4: A child that was given a letter, it means that the child has a problem with his or her sight.

INT: A problem like ...?

FG10_Fem4: Maybe long sightedness or short sightedness. Like my own child was not given a referral letter but the friend was given. I had to go to the house to find out, and mother said she was about taking the child to General Hospital.

FG10_Fem3: Though my children came to this school, this is the first time they are here so they have not been tested but if I'm a parent my child brought this referral letter to me, I will look at it for proper confirmation of it. The letter has been given to you to go back to the hospital for proper confirmation. So if they retest, they repeat the same now take proper care, now either glass, medications or other things for the sight.

FG10_Male1: Sometimes I think mostly in this area that is dominated by peasant farmers, sometimes parents are careless about their children's eye challenges. Eh! Some cases might go into a chronic stage and if something is not done about, which means it can lead to total blindness. So there is need for consistent check up to really see how that kind of problem can be handled properly.

FG10_Male4: The only thing I want to say is, in my own case when the referral letter was brought to me and they asked us to go for further eye test, it's to confirm whether problem is there, you understand. But since then I have not gone, because I was still waiting, maybe the team will still revisit the school for further test, and also because I didn't get approval from the authority, from the school authority to go for further test, that's why I couldn't go for the eye test.

FG10_Male3: Like me, none of my child came with a referral letter. I think the test, the further test will be very important to actually ascertain what is to be done. That's why the further test is actually very important.

INT: Now we know that some parents even after referring their referring children choose not to go to the hospital. What do we think may be the reason why some parents do not take their children to the hospital after referral?

FG10_Male3: I think one of the problem is that some parents may be scared of taking their children to the hospital maybe one, financial incapability, and some of them apart from the financial state they could be afraid of damaging further their children's sight. I think that's the two things I have.

FG10_Male4: You know some parents may be like in my own case when you issues like this come to me, I first of all handle the spiritual aspect of it, before going to give medical attention, because I know that there are some cases that we have handled like that in the past. I remember a child in my station where I was pastoring. They took the child for eye test and then they brought the child to church. It is not that we don't believe on medical aspect. We believe so much, but sometimes it can be a spiritual attack. I remember I prayed for a child; I just laid my hand as I was led to pray for that child, and when they took the child for test, the test result was negative. In fact, her sight was restored and everything was normal. So that is the reason why some of us believe that spiritual controls the physical also. But it's necessary that you take your child to the hospital for proper medical care. Thank you.

FG10_Fem4: I want to come in with what my pastor said. Actually, it's true. Sometimes it's spiritual. I would have said that I have that problem around that May. I could not see far distance. Even when the sun is heating the weather will be look so dark to me. I got to an extent I asked my friend, "how is the weather? But she will say but weather is very okay I will say, do you know that I can see well. So I keep on praying because I was not born with any eye problem. And I believe when I was in the secondary school they have tested us and I did not have eye problem. But suddenly I started seeing very dark. And I remember when we are doing this net campaign, I was the one tallying (collating) it, but instead of me to tally the right line, I was going to the next line even making mistakes. And then I will drop the paper. But I just prayed. I told my father and he said, 'okay, use my General Hospital card and go to General Hospital for testing'. But I said, "papa leave it, so that they will recommend eye glass for me, I said I don't want to use eye glass." But I keep on praying; I know that it was not real, it was just sent (*that is, an affliction*), so I rebuked it. Sometimes, it's not finance, but it's a problem from attack (witchcraft). So we need to fasten up in prayers (*get serious in prayers*), and by the time I prayed it all vanished (*Some participants laughed*).

FG10_Fem3: Sir too was my own observation. Actually, my children came, especially my last son, came and told me that they tested him. After the test what make not to go with the child was that I couldn't receive any note from them. They said they told them to go to General Hospital because we have where we do with my daughter that has eye problem. Each time she complains I do take her to Calabar for eye check-up. So, that was why I couldn't go for this one.

FG10_Male1: Though for me I was never brought up here, but I think life brought me down to Cross River. In my place mostly like this. I was brought up in the North and I am from the North. In my place we believe most of these challenges is ignorance, and like my brother has said it's either ignorance or lack of the....when they check out the financial status and they say, "I don't even have money for transportation, how will I go to the hospital. If they really mean to treat my child, they should give us a date and then come back to the school". And I think that's a serious ignorance to that. Me in my own place, it is ignorance, that's the main cause.

FG10_Fem3: Some parents it's the financial status that will make them not to go further by going to the hospital. Some also since the child has not been complaining at home, maybe I'm not seeing fine, tears rushing out of my eye they will feel maybe that test is the problem, let them sit back and check before they go to the hospital.

FG10_Fem1: The problem we are having in the rural area is after doctor's check-up, they go for pastor's check-up, after that they go to neighbour's check-up, after that they go to check-up to really confirm (*All participants were laughing as she talks*). But I know that

medically it is God that has that wisdom to doctors: treat as you treat, God has the cure, provided you go to the right route. The children brought the notes to me, immediately I did not. I followed up with General hospital which my doctor here still promised me that the people will come back by September as that she said, so I let the children to live around in case they want to see it. I support and encourage the parents that anything medical they should not joke, you see. They should take to doctor, after then come back and we follow up with prayers.

INT: Now in a household whose role it is to make the decision of taking a child to the hospital? In the family who decides whether a child will go to the hospital not, is it the father or mother, the grandfather or the grandmother? *(Some participants laughed)*.

FG10_Male1: It's the father.

FG10_Fem4: It's the father

FG10_Male1: It's the father

FG10_Male3: It's the father but on condition. Some homes where the woman is the bread winner, then, she might be the one to say so because she might be the one to bring out the money *(Everybody laughed)*.

FG10_Male4: It's the father.

FG10_Fem3: To me I will say it's me because I'm with my children.....

FG10_Fem2: In some families it's bothboth parents that took the child to the hospital.

FG10_Fem1: Eh! It is the father and the mother when they are well united. And then the decision is taken to take the children to the hospital.

INT: The first question I asked was why some families do not take their child to the hospital; what are the reasons. The next is, why do some families now take their children to the hospital? Why do they let's decide, let's take this child to the hospital?

FG10_Fem1: Yes, when there is love, unity in the family, and the family is one, they have what we call curtain discussion. The wife and the husband decide on what to do for their children. That's when they always decide that taking the children to the hospital first. When there is unity, there is peace, there is that understanding.

FG10_Male1: Eh! I think the reason for you taking your child to the hospital is for you to make sure he's fine. Okay, Just like I said, some people have this long sighted problem, and some...the parents never even knew. Okay just for example, if you sit down and you see your child bringing out tears in the eye. It's a cause to worry, and I think it's a reason for you to say, 'we need to take this child to the hospital.' Yes.

INT: You [Male 1] said a child being short sighted and tears coming out from the eye of that child. Is there another eye problem that can also make a child to go to hospital for eye examination?

FG10_Male1: For me it's when I see my child, because I know some of the children don't even know when their eyes are giving them problem. Like in the university days, I know it's maybe when it's exam period, or when you're the type that reads a lot; when you go to read with lantern and then you see your eyes bringing out tears, that's when you will know you have problem. But if you don't notice anything (Pause) my main reason is when I see a child bringing out tears in the eyes I feel as if the problem is becoming worst, so there's need for medication, because I might not know if he can see from distance or not if he does not open mouth to tell me. But once I see tears coming out, yes I will know that something is wrong with this child.

INT: Are you're saying that children may not be able to express themselves?

FG10_Male1: Some of them!

INT: Are you saying that you as an adult or parent can know if a child is having any problem maybe by looking or knowing the way the child is acting?

FG10_Male1: Yes.

FG10_Male4: There are some children whose eyes itch them. Some maybe they will be scratching, some may have glaucoma, cataract. When you discover that your child is just scratching, always scratching his or her eyes, then there is something wrong, you have to do something very fast maybe to take that child to the hospitals.

FG10_Fem4: The first question that was asked was why is it's good for parents to take their children to hospital. It's good because there at the hospital proper test will be conducted, and the right medication to that case will be given to you.

INT: Now I'm now asking why is it that some families now decide to take their children to the hospital for further examination in the hospital.

FG10_Fem4: So that right medication will be given to you. Because if you go to Chemist they will not test you, they will just give drugs, and it will not be exactly the case you have they will give you drugs for. So, it's good for parents take to their children for confirmation in that general hospital, that is why the cases you cannot handle in the health center they will refer you to the general hospital, because in the general hospital proper care will be rendered to you.

INT: Okay. Madam, when you were speaking you made mention of some going to the chemist to get some drugs. Are there some that go to the chemist maybe, instead of to the hospital to get some medication or have the eyes of their child tested?

FG10_Fem4: In the chemist nothing like that will be rendered to you, there is no services of that test conducting there. That's why it's not good for a parent to take their children there. To me I don't believe somebody taking his children to chemist, because there the chemist man there for you to tell him or her what you want, the drugs you needed, not for you to go there and tell "*I was sleeping, I was feeling pains like this*". He will not give you exactly what you needed. That is why we send them to hospital so that proper care, test will be conducted, and they will give you result and drugs according to the result they have there.

FG10_Male3: Another thing is I think why parents will always take children to hospital is number one, if the children are complaining of a particular incident about their eye, maybe they are having stress sighting anything or just like tears are coming out of their eyes, or their eye itching and all that, so if the children start complaining about their eyes, i think any good parent would want to go further examination to see what they could do, how to arrest the situation. Thank you.

FG10_Male1: I will say that there are two questions you asked, why parents don't take children to the hospital and while some take. One, why parents don't take children to the hospital is basically because of their financial problems. Like in the village like this where you see peasant farming dominating everywhere, a parent has not have something to take care of their children at home, even feeding; where is the money to take the child to the hospital? That's one of the major reason. Then parents who are buoyant, financially buoyant, they love children and they see that if something is not done about it their child can totally go blind. So the best thing they can do is to take their children to the hospital and check their eyes and see what they can do to proffer solution to that very problem.

FG10_Fem1: Another thing is like lack of awareness. Some parents don't know the correct thing to do at the right time. I was taking care of one blind man...he's a man now in this (name of a place) So recently I just asked him...though he's man, he has children. So one day I just asked him, why did you become blind? So he said, it's because of measles, when he had measles he was young, and his parents were dropping leaf liquid. Why? I asked him. He said they didn't know they should take him to the hospital. Like in civilized countries, people go for awareness in the Church, in clinics, in village parks. The awareness is this: some people can have money they don't know what to use the money for; some people can have money they lack time. You see, some people can have money but they lack encouragement, awareness, encouragement, and time (*raising her fist in emphasis*). Eh! Another thing is ignorance; they don't know. When you ignore a small thing on a child, it becomes a big thing, it can make can the child handicap. Some don't even value their children because they have them so many. That's why it's good for you people in administrative work, we ourselves, everybody should be going out for awareness, sensitization, you see. After the doctors came here some parents trooped in asking questions. I called for a meeting, I tried to explain to them because they were thinking the school wants to collect money. I said even when they came they collected not even a ten kobo! I did not ask. So, my conclusion is: lack of awareness, lack of sensitization, ignorance. Poverty is, I mean, an understatement. You're welcome.

FG10_Fem2: For some parents it's ignorance. And some parents believe that glasses are for older not for children that any problem that is associated with the eye will result in having glasses; some will believe at the tender age since my sister had it and they used urine. Some parents knows that it's urine they will drop on the child's eye. Like one of my neighbour, when I saw it I said, "Why are you doing this?" He said, "No that's what I use, that's what my mother was using". So I was trying to tell her "this is bad, this can affect this child in the future." Whose urine are you using for this? She said it's the child's urine. So that' what I feel.

FG10_Fem4: From my own observation for the parent taking the children to the hospital is that when you observe when children are reading. Because some children carry their books and keep like this (*Bringing her two hands together in front of her face to demonstrate a child reading a book close to his/her hand*) which does not supposed to be so-so when you see like that in the life of the child, you are supposed to take the child to the hospital for eye check up to see if it is proper or not proper.

INT: In a household or a family, who decides when to take or whether to take the child to the hospital for further examination? Remember, I asked before when they decide not to go now they have decided to take their to the hospital to the hospital who makes that decision?

FG10_Male3: The father and mother if the house is in unity.

FG10_Male4: Well, in marriage that is the only eh! (*Paused*). I have seen that in marriage mathematically they say one plus one is one in marriage, then if you're going to the school system one plus one is two. So in a family that is united, any decision that the father takes is also the decision that the wife is also be in support. So, it's the father.

FG10_Fem2: In my own observation it is the mother, because it's the mother that is closer to the children than the father, and it's the mother that will observe that this child has a problem with her sight, and discuss with the father; if the family is one, the father because of time might tell the mother, 'to take the child to the hospital.'

INT: Going back to what we've talked about, is there something else we feel from every one of us here that we didn't add or that came to our mind now, or we forgot to say concerning our central discussion which is child eye health is there something you we left out, you can also say now?

FG10_Fem1: I don't whether because I'm the oldest mother here. So I would love to advise that when you educate a mother you have educated a family or the nation. The mother is closer to the children and observes smarter than the father, and when she tells the father about what is wrong with the child, it should be peaceful. Then they come to a compromise. So I'm advising the mothers to be very observant (*Waved her index finger in the air and lowered her voice too*), no matter how busy your schedule is when you come back check your child's body you suffered the labour pain check! check!! check!!! If you discover anything call the father's attention. I'm advising the pastors that when they bring eye pain to the Church they should not say it's attack...because I listen to my radio when a satan sent a message to church goers. The satan said, "go and tell your members o that I don't attack children of God; I am suffering here in hell fire, I don't attack them. And your members when they ask them to do the correct thing and when they don't do it they will say satan! Satan!! Satan!!! That it's never satan at all, that he satan is afraid of children of God because of the kind of prayer they hammer every day. So don't use your ignorance to blame satan. Pastors, when they bring children to church and they say eye is worrying tell them, pray for them, quite alright and then immediately you advise parents to take those children to ye doctors. Teachers, I'm advising you that you're the role model of the children. When you see the way your child is doing in the class, if they are vision problems, no matter what it may be, call the attention of the parent, and make a follow up. Make sure they take that child to hospital. Tomorrow that child will never forget you. And then parents, especially heads of families, the husbands, the father. When you return, inquire: "Ah! mummy I have come back, I hope no complain in the house; was there any headache?" This and that. So where the mother forgot he will tell her. As the saying goes, a tree can never a forest! (*Other participants joined in to complete the proverb*). Then we will be able to monitor the health of our children, I mean *pari passu*.

INT: Is there anything that you would want us to talk more in detail, as we said before: child eye health, spectacle wear, what we've discussed so far, is there something you would want us to talk more in detail?

FG10_Fem4: (*First cleared his throat*) In the course of our discussion one of my fellow parents spoke about glaucoma, and I actually want to know more about it like...somebody, I was discussing with somebody and the person said, '*glaucoma leads to mental disorder*'. I don't know if that is true. So, I'm just to trying to ask a question, because you said anything we've not discussed I think for that part I will like to know a bit the glaucoma. Does a child have it or is it only for adults?

INT: Yes, Ah! A child can have glaucoma, what we call congenital glaucoma. Congenital in the sense that the child was born with it. Glaucoma can also occur as a result of trauma, maybe somebody was hit the eye of a child. Also, a child can also have glaucoma. Anything that causes the pressure in the eye to rise to a certain level can cause glaucoma, both in adults and in children.

FG10_Fem4: Does it affect the brain? Does it cause does it bring mental disorder?

INT: I may not be in authority to say it causes mental disorder but how the eye works, the eye is supposed to see. If you remember some people when they have their legs cut off they can still tell you '*it's as if feeling pain in the legs*', what we call phantom limbs. So in the eye also, if the eye is not there to function, there is always a nerve that connects the eye to the brain. If that part of the nerve is still there, if something touches it can send sense message to the brain that it's seeing something...he may not be able to explain that thing but it may give message to the brain that it's seeing something. Now the person will now be telling you some things that are not there. That's the explanation I can give to it, but I'm not in authority to tell you that somebody who is blind can have mental problem.

FG10_Male3: What can be the cause of this eye problem? Since we talking about eye, what could be the problem?

INT: Many things can cause eye problem. Some can be due to genetics, passed from father to son, from mother to son. Some can be because of maybe accident, trauma. Some on their own can just come, you can just explain it. Let's say refractive error now, problem with vision. Some children may have a father started wearing glasses at young age, some may not have any problem in the family but they are the first person to wear it. Some may bemay be due to one or two things in the course of their life. So there are many things that can cause eye problem. But what we are focusing on is, this eye problem that just came now, how do we handle it; if it hasn't come,

how do we prevent it; and if it has reached to a stage where it has come and we are finding it difficult to manage, we encourage or counsel the person that has that problem. Centring on children who have eye problem and child eye health, children have longer lives to live than adults, all things being equal.

INT: Do you have a message for the other members of our research team? I'd like to hear from everybody

FG10_Fem4: Still on financial status, some will know that the child has eye problem they are waiting for these people that come and give treatment free. They don't get money, they are waiting for such time may be when it will be announced in their church, '*there is a free eye check, free glasses,*' and all that. So they will be waiting for time than to go to the hospital and spend money.

FG10_Male1: Sometimes some parents are scared that the cost for eye treatment is very high. Because of that they prefer, just like what she has said (*Pointing at the last participant that spoke*), they prefer a method which they will not spend the more money, because they are looking for something that you can give little money and the solution can come. So I think they lack awareness, because if there is awareness there is always a solution to that. I think some parents can know what to do. Some may think they will demand for big money, they will not able to have such money to able to pay the hospital bill'. I think that's one of the major challenge also.

FG10_Male3: Also, I will say parents are afraid of getting their children's eyes worsened because of some other incidents that may have happened around them. For example, maybe someone whose eyes had some issues after the operation and it became worst. So that is also another factor that can also put fear on them.

INT: Are you saying that fear can also make some families not to take their children to the hospital for further check-up?

FG10_Male3: Yes, I have also heard about the case of people whose children have some issues like that and at the end they ended to operating the eyes and some of them lost their eyes. So that is another part that creates fear in the hearts of some parents.

INT: Did you say that your eyes were tested but that divinely your eyes were treated?

FG10_Male3: Divinely! How it happened nobody knows, only God knows. Because none of my parents actually has eyes problem. At the end of the whole problem, from my year one till I became ten years it was war. I couldn't see anything. The tenth year, miraculously in the dream, because I had a dream where I was taken to the hospital and was operated upon and, then I woke up and I started seeing; and when I was ten. So, from that time I can't say I have gone to any medical or have involved into serious medical attention to get my eye better. Rather, I have rejected glasses and all that severally, because I just feared and with that fear I was like maybe if I take glasses it can rather affect my eye more. So, that is it.

FG10_Male4: The only message I have for your team members is like an advice. It's an advice to them that they should continue the good work that they are doing, you know, creating awareness like mummy earlier said, as some people lack the awareness. So let them go on with the good work and witness to people, create the awareness, sensitize them, let them be aware of all these things, so that we will have a wonderful society where our children, you know, will live and there will no cases of this much cases of sight problem. Because in those days when we were growing up we used to see sight problem as something that is for adults; they are the people that have such cases of eye problem. But these days, the number of children have even increased that have sight problems. So let them continue the good work that God has sent them to do because we believe that it is God that has given them the wisdom. God bless you.

FG10_Male3: I want to also say a big thank you for the organization, the management of this board that the Lord will further bless them and increase them. And the team members of this organization that will Lord will strengthen them and take them further. It's a great input to humanity, in helping parents, children of the parents that may not afford this. So the Lord will bless them. (*Laughs afterwards*)

INT: The men have been blessing us. We want the women to bless. (*Everybody laughs*) Ma, bless us.

FG10_Fem4: I also want to thank God for the board, the organization because it's not easy. If not for the glory of God, because there are a lot of people out there that cannot afford even a card in the hospital. A lot of people cannot start buying a card because at times if a child has problem like of the eyes. The lens they gave to us was about ten thousand plus, the drugs it was up to fifteen thousand plus. And if the parent will not be able to afford the money, it will end up not getting the eye glass or the drugs for the child. So I want thank God for this organization that they should also keep on. Again, at times when they give the eye check-up for the children, the people will not come, and there are also times they will be scheduled to come but they may not be available. So I want to thank God for God encouraging them, that there should be an encouragement for them to continue in what they have started.

FG10_Male3: Yes, I want to ask a question. Just as we are ending the ending the meeting today, I want to ask, what is the further step about the children now?

INT: Are you asking about the ones who were not given referral letter or the ones that were given referral letter?

FG10_Male3: Those that were tested! What is the next step?

INT: The project is still on going, the centers are still there. Every child, tested in school or not. Once is discovered that the child is having an eye problem; you child, your neighbour's child, just refer or ask the child to go there. The child will be attended to.

FG10_Male3: Do you mean in the General hospital?

INT: Yes, the General Hospital!