EVALUATION OFFICE
FEBRUARY 2012

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL: A CHILD-TO-CHILD APPROACH

Programme Evaluation for Year One Grade One Outcomes

unicef

Getting Ready for School: A Child-to-Child Approach, Programme Evaluation for Year One Grade One Outcomes

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February 2012

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EVALUATION REPORT

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Programme Evaluation for Year One, Grade One Outcomes

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Preface

The Evaluation Office, working closely with the Education Section, commissioned American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an evaluation of UNICEF's Getting Ready for School pilot programme in 2007. The Getting Ready for School pilot programme was implemented in Bangladesh, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Tajikistan and Yemen. This programme model was unique in its child-to-child approach, as older children (Young Facilitators) worked with younger peers to increase their academic and nonacademic school readiness skills. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the programme increased children's successful transitions into primary school and achieved secondary goals such as increased family support for children's education. The evaluation methodology consisted of randomized controlled trials in five of the countries and a matched-subjects design in the sixth.
This report presents in-depth analyses and results of the evaluation at the country level among four countries that were able to follow up on children's transitions to primary school: Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen. We hope that readers from both the Education sector and the Evaluation discipline will be satisfied with the rigour of the methodologies used and the clarity of the analyses.

Our appreciation for the effort and professionalism that was demonstrated in this evaluation goes to the AIR evaluation team consisting of Elizabeth Spier, Jeff Davis, Olivia Padilla and Nitika Tolani-Brown. Support was also provided by Miguel Socias, Corbrett Hodson, David Seidenfeld and Kathryn Brand, while expert guidance was provided by Pia Britto of Yale University. We also extend thanks to the national research teams that carried out each country-level evaluation.

We thank Tashmin Khamis, Christiana Brown and the rest of the team at the Child-to-Child Trust for their invaluable guidance and practical support in the design and implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme.

The project would not have been possible without the initiative and ongoing work of Abhiyan Rana. We would also like to express gratitude to our colleagues in the Evaluation Office – Kathleen Letshabo and Samuel Bickel – for recognizing the need for an independent evaluation and for their insightful contributions at every stage. Likewise, we appreciate the efforts made in all participating UNICEF country offices, especially in the six countries where the Getting Ready for School programme was launched during this pilot year.

Readers of this report inspired to learn more about the Getting Ready for School programme are invited to visit the UNICEF website (<www.unicef.org>). Readers interested in UNICEF's evaluation priorities and strategies will also find important information there.

Susan Durston
Associate Director and Chief of Education
UNICEF New York Headquarters

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

AIR	American Institutes for Research
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
DEO	Taiz Governorate Education Office, District Education Offices Yemen
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of UNICEF's programme Getting Ready for School: A Child-to-Child Approach is to facilitate the successful transition of young children into primary school through the use of older schoolchildren (Young Facilitators) as providers of early childhood education support to younger children in their communities. Programme goals include improved school readiness and on-time enrolment among young children as well as increased family, community, and teacher support for young children's learning. Pilot programmes were implemented in six countries during the 2008–2009 school year: Bangladesh, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Tajikistan and Yemen. UNICEF contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to provide UNICEF with an independent assessment of whether and to what extent the programme achieved its desired results based on findings from a follow-up of children through their transition into first grade in four of the six participating countries: Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen. One of the main reasons for this impact evaluation was to determine whether the low-cost, non-formal programme could indeed make an impact on children's school readiness. The findings are intended to identify programme strengths, weaknesses, challenges and best practicesto guide future implementation and expansion of this programme.

The evaluation was structured in the form of country-level randomized controlled trials. A mixed-methods approach was used whereby a combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided measures of programme impacts as well as essential information regarding conditions that seem to have contributed to or detracted from the programme's success. The use of a common evaluation framework and of common tools across countries enables the drawing of conclusions about the success of this pilot programme over all and allows for the formulation of general recommendations to guide future programme implementation and expansion within and across countries.

At the end of the first grade year, teachers completed a survey regarding children's academic progress (measured against each country's national learning standards for first grade), their social and emotional adjustment to the classroom, their caregivers' level of engagement with the school, and the extent to which their family prepared them for the schoolday. There were significant programme impacts in Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Bangladesh, but not in Tajikistan. The Getting Ready for School programme continued to have a high level of impact in Yemen, substantially improving on-time enrolment, children's academic progress and adjustment to the classroom, and family involvement in primary school. There were also substantial programme impacts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the areas of on-time enrolment, some academic skills, children's adjustment to the classroom, and families' engagement in preparing children for the schoolday. The very high rate of attrition among the sample in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, means that the results cannot be generalized with certainty. In Bangladesh, the programme had a positive impact on on-time enrolment and on caregivers' engagement with the school. Although beyond the scope of this analysis (it was part of the first-year evaluation report), it is worth noting that the pilot programme also had a significant impact on the Young Facilitators. School principals and community leaders observed an increase in self-confidence and enthusiasm for school among them.

The evaluation identified some critical facilitating factors or strengths. In order to maximize the impact, a high dosage of interaction between young learners and young facilitators is needed and families and communities should be involved from the beginning of the program. Obviously, significant buy-in support from stakeholders – children, parents, teachers, school directors and government – is of great help in order to achieve results.

The following recommendations are presented for the future development, sustainability and expansion of Getting Ready for School:

- As the programme was most successful in countries where young learners had repeated and ongoing experiences and support to acquire school readiness skills (for example, more frequent programme sessions and take-home activities), every effort should be made to ensure that the Getting Ready for School programme is provided to children as often as possible – preferably twice a week or more and supplemented by extra practice at home or in the community.

- As the programme was only successful in countries where family and community were involved from the beginning, such early involvement should be included in all future Getting Ready for School programming.

- Further expansion of Getting Ready for School into new regions within countries or into new countries should, wherever possible, include early advocacy with government educational officials to situate the programme within the country's early childhood education goals and/or country goals to increase on-time enrolment in primary school. Such up-front action will increase the chances of long-term programme sustainability and may increase more immediate practical support for the programme.

In conclusion, the Getting Ready for School programme enjoyed a highly successful pilot implementation in several countries. The programme was extremely well received by stakeholders and achieved key goals. Continued development and expansion of the programme, combined with efforts to securee sustainability, could make Getting Ready for School a valuable resource for countries and communities who seek to increase better educational opportunities for their young children.

CHAPTER 1 EVALUATION DESIGN

This chapter presents the Getting Ready for School programme model and identifies the research questions for this evaluation. The evaluation design – including the sampling framework, evaluation instruments, data collection and analytic approach – is also described. Chapters 2 through 6 contain country-by-country information regarding evaluation, sample findings, a summary of cross-site findings and recommendations for further programme development and expansion.

1.1 Programme description

The Getting Ready for School programme is intended to facilitate the successful transition of young children into primary school by providing them with school readiness skills (both academic and social), engaging families and others in the community as capable partners in children's development, and improving the ability of schools to successfully engage their youngest learners. The programme is not intended to replace comprehensive early childhood development programmes, such as kindergartens or preschools, but rather to provide a low-cost alternative for supporting young children's school readiness in communities where formal early childhood development programmes are unavailable to most families. Getting Ready for School is based on a successful child-to-child model originally developed in the area of health, and consists of an older child (a 'Young Facilitator') being provided with guidance and information which he or she then shares with peers or younger children in the community through formal and informal means.

The Getting Ready for School pilot programme involved the training of teachers to provide guidance and supervision to Young Facilitators, the Young Facilitators themselves (students, typically in Grades 4-8), and young children in the community who were one year away from expected on-time school entry at the start of the programme. Young Facilitators and young children met in sessions that were typically held twice weekly at a school. In some countries, Young Facilitators and young children also had some sessions in the community. Young Facilitators worked through a series of planned activities with the young children. These activities were designed to support child development through play.

The pilot programme also intended, as a secondary benefit, to increase the level of support that families, schools, and communities provided to further children's school readiness and successful transition to primary school. Figure 1 (*see Figue 1, page 2*) shows the model of change for this programme.

Specific programme goals were:

For young children: to increase their school readiness and their on-time enrolment in primary school.

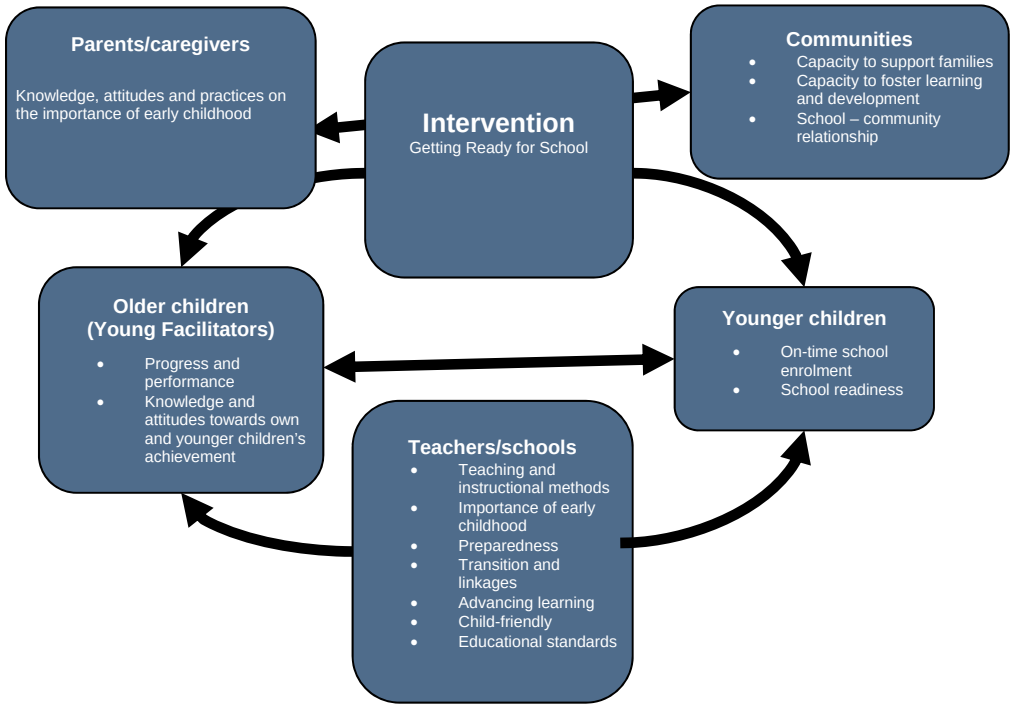
For families whose young children participated: to improve their understanding of the importance of school readiness and to increase their active support for their young children's learning. This was a secondary goal because parents were not directly involved in the programme.

For Young Facilitators: to improve their educational engagement and performance; to increase their positive attitudes toward learning; and to increase their belief in the importance of supporting young children's learning.

For teachers: to increase their belief in the use of child-centred pedagogy; to increase their understanding of the importance of school readiness; andto raise first grade teachers' expectations regarding the level of school readiness of their incoming students. As achieving change in teacher attitudes toward child-centred pedagogy typically takes an extended period of time and a high level of support, this was considered a secondary goal of the intervention.

Because Getting Ready for School was implemented as a pilot programme, community-level change was not expected during the first year.

Figure 1 Model of change



1.2 Research questions

Based on the model and programme goals, the following research questions were addressed in this First Grade Follow-up evaluation:

- To what extent did implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme have an impact on young children's on-time enrolment in first grade?
- To what extent did implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme have an impact on young children's attendance in first grade?
- To what extent did implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme have an impact on children's completion of first grade?
- To what extent did implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme have an impact on children's academic performance and their social learning and behaviour in the classroom?
- To what extent did implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme have an impact on family-school connections and on the extent to which families prepared children for a successful schoolday?

Each of these questions will be addressed at the country level. Chapter 6 provides a summary of cross-site findings, evaluation results and recommendations for further programme development and expansion.

1.3 Evaluation Design

The most powerful evaluation design is the randomized control trial (RCT). Random assignment of communities or schools to intervention and control groups allows for confidence that differences in outcomes between the two groups are indeed the result of the intervention rather than of other factors. This evaluation's goal was to support each of the six countries participating in the pilot programme in conducting an RCT, with intervention and control groups drawn from multiple communities within each country.

This evaluation used an intent-to-treat model, meaning that impacts were examined based on availability of Getting Ready for School in a community, rather than confining analyses to just those participants who attended or completed the programme. The intent-to-treat model provides information about how communities benefit from the availability of Getting Ready for School. This information iscritical for UNICEF in determining whether future expansion of this pilot programme is likely to achieve the desired outcomes.

1.3.1 Sampling framework

AIR worked with stakeholders from each country to design a sampling framework and methodology that would balance representation, practicality and cost-effectiveness. Concentrating implementation efforts and resources in a smaller number of defined areas allowed for a more in-depth understanding of programme impacts, minimized challenges associated with implementation and enhanced the efficiency of data collection. The Intervention group consisted of the schools, teachers, families and children who had the Getting Ready for School programme available to them. The Control group consisted of schools, teachers, families, and children who did not have the programme available to them but were otherwise as similar as possible to the Intervention group. See Table 1 (*same page*) for a description of the specific strategy used to create Intervention and Control groups in Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen, along with notes regarding any potential sources of bias.

Table 1 Sampling strategy by country

Country	Group assignment strategy	Issues
Bangladesh	RCT with assignment at the school level	None
Democratic Republic of the Congo	RCT with assignment at the school level	Pre-existing differences between some characteristics of Intervention and Control groups mean that results should be interpreted with caution
Tajikistan	RCT with assignment at the school level	None
Yemen	RCT with random assignment of matched pairs of schools	None

1.3.2 Instruments

In order to address the research questions, a variety of evaluation tools were created, including: a school records form; child assessment; two caregiver interviews; a teacher survey; a Young Facilitator survey; community stakeholder interviews; session records; a cost record form; and a primary school enrolment record form.

The baseline data collection included a school records form, child assessment, the first caregiver interview (caregiver interview one), the teacher survey and the Young Facilitator survey. Throughout the programme implementation, staff of the evaluation team and programme implementers completed session records and cost records. The outcome data collection included repeat administrations of the child assessment, caregiver interview one, the teacher survey (*see appendixes A through D, pages 61-*

111) and the Young Facilitator survey. Feedback about the programme was obtained through a supplemental caregiver interview and additional questions in the Young Facilitator outcome survey. Community leaders were interviewed at the conclusion of the programme. School enrolment information was gathered approximately four months after the start of the school year.

The current First Grade Follow-up includes a teacher survey and school records only. Each country's teacher survey covered children's academic progress (customized for each country to align with that country's first grade learning standards), children's social and emotional characteristics, and family-school relationships. School records were examined to assess children's on-time enrolment, attendance and retention in first grade.

1.3.3 Data collection

AIR developed an 'Assessors' Guide', which focused on instrument implementation and data collection techniques, and an 'Evaluation Operations Manual', which addressed evaluation management strategies, data collection planning, translation of instruments and quality control in data collection. The 'Evaluation Operations Manual' laid out the steps to guide the Evaluation Focal Point in each country through their data collection process.

AIR also developed Excel-based data entry templates for all instruments. A separate document containing data entry instructions was sent to education and evaluation focal points in each coutnry. To minimize data entry errors, the templates were set up to allow only valid values.

Data collection for the current First Grade Follow-up involved assessors examining school records and asking teachers to complete surveys.

1.3.4 Analytic approach

The analytic approach was based on an intent-to-treat model. The question was whether or not introducing Getting Ready for School into a community had an impact on young children, on their families and on others within that community. Therefore, all children were included in the analyses, whether or not they took part in Getting Ready for School. The impact of having the programme *made available* in the community was examined in order to provide a more accurate picture of how much a community benefited from the programme, rather than how just those individuals who chose to participate in the programme may have benefited.

General linear models were used to determine whether group assignment (Intervention versus Control) played a significant role in changes observed from baseline to outcome for young children, caregivers, and teachers. Additional factors were introduced into the models to identify any differential programme effects – in order to determine whether having a certain characteristic meant that someone benefited more or less than others from the intervention. For example, one could find that the programme has a stronger impact in one region of a country than in another.

1.4 Presentation of findings

In the remainder of this report, we present evaluation findings at the country level for each of the four countries that participated in the First Grade Follow-up, summarize results across countries, and include a final chapter that discusses the results of this pilot programme evaluation and provides recommendations for further developing and scaling up the programme within the current pilot countries and into new countries.

CHAPTER 2 BANGLADESH

2.1 Need for the intervention

In 1990, the Government of Bangladesh promulgated the Primary Education Compulsory Act, which mandated free and compulsory education for the first five years of school. This policy has greatly increased the number of children enrolled in primary school, but the nation is struggling to meet the demand for quality education. The majority of families with infants and young children in Bangladesh have limited access to services that can help them to nurture their child's cognitive and psychosocial development. Similarly, service providers in the health and education sectors receive little training in providing early childhood development services. Because of these factors, most young children do not receive the support necessary to prepare them for enrolment in primary school at age six, which contributes to high drop-out and repetition rates and compromises learning outcomes.

In 2001, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, with financial and technical assistance from UNICEF, started an early childhood development project to support advocacy, mobilization, caregivers' education, school readiness, and networking and capacity building of partners. This project resulted in an increased awareness of the benefits of supporting early childhood development, and most notably, an increased number of communities initiating preschools attached to primary schools with support from local non-governmental organizations (NGOs). From 2001 to 2005, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), an indigenous NGO, took part in a UNICEF-supported early childhood development project that resulted in increased knowledge about care needed for proper physical growth and mental development of children. The BRAC has now initiated its own pre-primary school system. With support from UNICEF, the Government, and other local NGOs, the Bangladesh Shishu Academy is implementing an Early Learning for Child Development project that aims to empower caregivers to stimulate the cognitive, emotional, and social development of children from birth to age five.

While numerous local NGOs are now running small early childhood development centres throughout the country, less than 15 per cent of children receive formal education prior to primary school[1]. In response to the inaccessibility of pre-primary education, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has identified pre-primary education as a policy priority and is currently developing a national curriculum and formal structure for early education. The Ministry has also proposed training of teachers for pre-primary classes, providing pre-primary classroom space inside primary schools andsupplying teaching materials and other necessary support. Early childhood development programmes will be implemented in two tracks: preschool classes in primary schools for five-year-olds, and an alternative family-based programme for three- to five-year-old children from marginalized families. These early education programs will be linked with health, nutrition and other complementary services. The Getting Ready for School programme fits well within the goals of the current administration to expand access to early educational opportunities.

[1] World Bank, *Bangladesh Education Data & Statistics*, World Bank, Washington D.C., 2005.

2.2 Nature of the intervention

The Getting Ready for School programme in Bangladesh was implemented in collaboration with the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE). The DPE team piloted the programme in 30 schools. From each of the six administrative divisions of the country, the DPE selected one district and two upazilas (subdistricts) based on high drop-out and low school completion rates. DPE then randomly selected five schools from each upazila. The chosen districts are geographically representative of the country. UNICEF and DPE decided to randomly select Intervention and Control schools from different upazilas in order to prevent cross-group contamination. Altogether, the pilot project included 30 Intervention group schools, with 450 Young Facilitators and 2,000 young children.

A Young Facilitator from the fifth grade was paired with one or two eligible five-year-old children. The 35-week programme was designed to be implemented during a school year, with one session per week. Young Facilitators and young children participating in the project received early learning kits filled with materials intended to foster early literacy and numeracy. The activities were divided into sets, and activities within and between the sets become progressively more complex. The activities included pictures, games, rhymes, and songs that encouraged children to experiment with common everyday objects, solve problems, and draw conclusions. The Getting Ready for School intervention was envisaged as a one-year programme to be implemented with children the year before they were eligible to enrol in primary schools.

2.3 The evaluation

2.3.1 Data collection

Baseline data were collected in January 2009; outcome data for teachers, Young Facilitators and community stakeholders were collected in November 2009; and outcome data for children and their caregivers were collected in December 2009. Data were collected by trained, certified assessors. Data collection quality monitoring was conducted by UNICEF and the contracting NGO. No significant issues arose during the course of data collection.

2.3.2 Sample

Four hundred and fifty Young Facilitators and 2,000 young children participated in the programme. A random subsample of 30 schools were selected for inclusion in the evaluation. At the First Grade Follow-up Evaluation, a random subsample of 500 young children from the initial evaluation sample were identified for follow-up in the form of teacher surveys (250 Intervention group children and 250 Control group children). Of those, first grade teacher survey data was obtained for 235 Intervention group children (94 per cent) and for 213 Control group children (85.2 per cent).

Table 2 (*same page*) shows the characteristics of the 30 participating Intervention group schools and 30 Control group schools at the time of the baseline evaluation.

Table 2 School characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Number of students enrolled	*M* = 281 (Range 94 – 1,043)	*M* = 281 (Range 70 – 890)
Number of teachers and educational assistants	*M* = 8 (Range 3 – 21)	*M* = 6 (Range 1 - 13)

Student/teacher ratio	*M* = 40:1 (Range 11:1 – 84:1)	*M* = 58:1 (Range 17:1 – 135:1)
Daily absence rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 19% (Range 7% – 43%)	*M* = 24% (Range 6% – 65%)
Dropout rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 3% (Range 0% – 25%)	*M* = 5% (Range 0% – 17%)

At the baseline evaluation, 53 of the 60 Intervention group teachers took part in the evaluation, along with 49 in the Control group. Of those, 49 of the Intervention group teachers and 41 of the Control group also participated in the outcome evaluation. Differential attrition among teachers is therefore of no concern.[2]

Table 3 (*same page*) shows the characteristics of teachers in the Intervention and Control groups (as reported at baseline). Teachers in the Intervention and Control groups did not significantly differ with regard to their years of experience teaching, educational level, or whether they lived in the community where their school was located.

Table 3 Teacher characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender (% female)	51%	42%
Years teaching	*M* = 9.1 (*SD* = 8.6)	*M* = 9.5 (*SD* = 9.2)
Live in school community? (% yes)	59%	65%

Of the 883 children who took part in the baseline evaluation in Bangladesh, 814 also took part in the outcome assessment, which comes toan overall attrition rate of 8 per cent . Within the Intervention group, 432 children completed the baseline assessment and 399 completed the outcome assessment (an attrition rate of 8 per cent). Within the Control group, 451 children completed the baseline assessment and 419 completed the outcome assessment (an attrition rate of 7 per cent). There are, therefore,no concerns about differential attrition among children and families. Note that an additional three Intervention group children and one Control group child completed the outcome assessment but did not participate in the baseline, for a final sample of 887 children.

Table 4 (*same page*) reflects child and family characteristics at baseline.

Table 4 Child and family characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender of participating child (% female)	53%	46%
Number of household members	*M* = 5.5 (*SD* = 2.3)	*M* = 5.5 (*SD* = 1.7)
Number of household members under age 12	*M* = 1.5 (*SD* = 1.2)	*M* = 1.6 (*SD* = 1.2)
Two-parent households	90%	95%

[2] Differential attrition is typically defined as a 10 per cent or greater difference in attrition between one group and another (in this case, between the Intervention Group and the Control group). When differential attrition has occurred, there can be concern that groups are no longer equivalent and adjustments must be made in the course of data analysis.

Families with out-of-school children[3]	13%	10%
Responding caregiver literacy (% literate)	51%	50%
Family resource level[4] (% low)	65%	69%

A total of 410 Young Facilitators were in the Intervention group. Of those, 397 were retained for the outcome evaluation, resulting in a low attrition rate of 3 per cent. There was no control group for Young Facilitators. Table 5 (*same page*) shows the characteristics of the Young Facilitators.

Table 5 Young Facilitator characteristics at baseline

Gender (% female)	46%
Grade 4	< 1%
Grade 5	18%
Grade 6	82%

Community leader interviews were completed with heads of school and with members of the school management committees from each of the 30 Intervention group schools.

2.4 Programme implementation and participation

This section provides information on the level of participation in the Getting Ready for School programme among children assigned to the Intervention group and among the Young Facilitators; programme implementation; the extent to which children in both the Intervention and Control groups participated in other early childhood development programmes; the success of programme communications in conveying key messages to the community; and on stakeholder perceptions of programme strengths, challenges, and sustainability.

2.4.1 Participation in Getting Ready for School

There were 35 programme sessions offered. A total of 435 young children were assigned to the Intervention group and attendance records were available for 390 of those children. According to programme records, young children attended an average of 31.5 sessions (SD = 4.33): an attendance rate of 90 per cent. One hundred and three children (26 per cent) had perfect attendance. Only one child did not attend any sessions (according to programme records), and three children did not attend any sessions according to their caregivers (of those, two had no attendance information from the programme, but one child had attended 33 sessions according to programme records). We did not find significant differences in child attendance rates based on children's gender, household resource level, whether older children in the household were in school or out of school, or whether the caregiver who completed the baseline interview self-identified as literate or illiterate.[5]

Session attendance information was available for 215 of the 397 Young Facilitators with both baseline and outcome information. Among the Young Facilitators for whom attendance information was unavailable, it appears to be a case of missing records rather than non-attendance because records tended to be missing for whole schools rather than for individuals within schools. The 215 Young

[3] Among households with one or more older children aged 7–13 years, percentage of households where at least one of those children was not enrolled in school at the time of the baseline evaluation.

[3] Low resource level based on the presence of three or fewer of the following items in the household: bed, radio, living room, television, satellite receiver, mobile telephone, gas cooker, refrigerator or washing machine, car.

[5] With $t(387) = 0.83$, *ns* for gender; $t(387) = -1.19$, *ns* for resource level; $t(182) = -0.45$, *ns* for older child in school or out of school; $t(387) = -1.55$, *ns* for caregiver literacy.

Facilitators for whom information was available attended an average of 94 per cent of sessions, with 46 per cent (n = 99) having perfect attendance. We did not find significant differences in Young Facilitator attendance based on their gender.

2.4.2 Implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme in Bangladesh

As intended, the Getting Ready for School programme was implemented across 35 sessions, with each session lasting approximately two to three hours. At the conclusion of each session, the teacher completed a session record where he or she indicated whether the instructions in the teacher's guide were clear, whether the teacher felt that literacy and numeracy activities were fun for most of the children, whether the Young Facilitators felt that activities were fun, whether the lessons were at the right level of difficulty for the young children, and whether the Young Facilitators found it easy or difficult to implement the activities. Teachers also provided information about resources they had purchased for the sessions, preparation time, and offered recommendations for any needed improvements in the programme.

Teachers found their instructions to be *Very clear* 78 per centof the time, *Somewhat clear* 22 per cent, and *Not clear* less than 1 per centof the time. Young Facilitators found their instructions to be *Easy to follow* 83 per cent of the time.

Teachers and Young Facilitators gave similar ratings for how fun the activities were for the young children. Teachers rated the activities *Very fun* 77 per cent of the time, *Somewhat fun* 22 per cent, and *Not fun* just 1 per cent of the time. Young Facilitators rated the activities as *Very fun* 76 per cent of the time, *Somewhat fun* 24 percent, and *Not fun* less than 1 per centof the time. Just 38 per cent of activities were rated by teachers as being at the right level of difficulty for children, with a much higher 60 per cent rated *Very easy* and less than 3 per cen trated *Too difficult*.

2.4.3 Participation in other early childhood development programmes

There were substantial differences between the students in the Intervention group and in the Control group with regard to their participation in other early childhood development programmes. While only 11 per cent of the Intervention group students (n = 44) participated in another programme, 69 per cent of the Control group students did (n = 287). Among the Intervention group children that attended another programme, 64 per cent (n = 27) attended a private preschool, 21 per cent (n = 9) attended a public (government-run) preschool, 10 per cent (n = 4) attended a private kindergarten, and 5 per cent(n = 2) attended a grade zero programme at a public or private school. Among the Control group children who attended a programme, 42 per cent (n = 120) attended a public preschool, 34 per cent (n = 97) attended a private preschool, 12 per cent (n = 33) attended grade zero at a public or private school, 11 per cent (n = 32) attended a private kindergarten, 1 per cent (n = 2) participated in educational sessions run once or twice per week by a local community organization or NGO, and one child attended public kindergarten.

Because of the high rate of participation in other early childhood education programmes and due to the differences between the Intervention and Control group in rates of participation, whether and to what extent participation in another early childhood development programme influences the impact of the Getting Ready for School programme on young children's development will be examined.

2.4.4 Getting Ready for School programme: Strengths and challenges

There were several areas of strength in this pilot programme. First, there was a high level of buy-in from communities, the Ministry of Education (MoE), local school staff, families, and children. Second, School Management Committees and/or heads of school played a significant role in programme implementation in many communities by providing ongoing oversight and support to the teachers and families involved, even though this support had not been formally planned. Third, Getting Ready for School seems to have gained a high level of family involvement. Many families contributed materials and snacks to the programme, and accompanied their children to sessions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that families have

incorporated some of the Getting Ready for School activities such as songs and rhymes into everyday living at home. For example, one mother stated the following:

> *"My daughter has learned a lot during this project. She has become more confident and makes contact with other children. She knows the days of the week. She counts, and writes her own name. I like the songs, too, and we sing them together sometimes. I will enrol my daughter in primary school next year, and I hope she will complete her Masters one day. I studied only up to class six."*

Most heads of school (83 percent, n = 25) believed that as a result of the programme, parents had become more likely to visit the school outside of regular meeting times and were more active in their support for their child's education. Forty per cent (n = 8) expressed the opinion that this increased school-home communication had also resulted in better retention in school among the Young Learners. Reports from heads of school suggest that Young Facilitators have become more serious about their school work and have developed communication and social skills through participation in the programme.

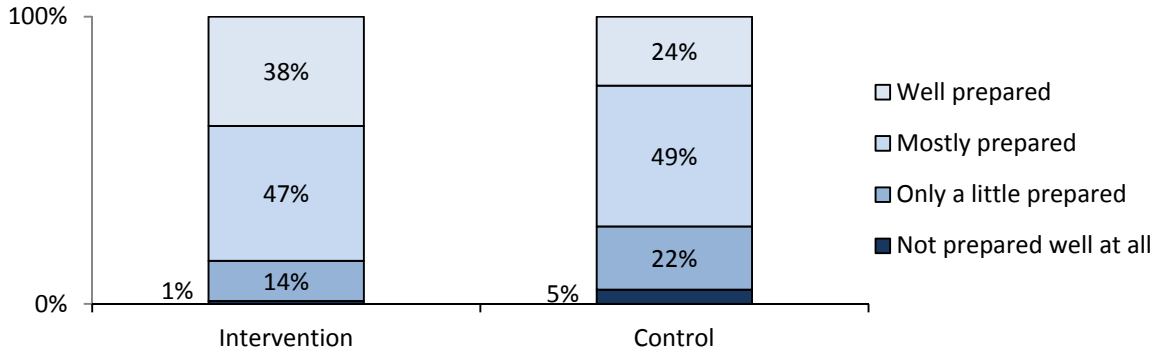
Stakeholders identified some challenges to successful implementation as well as issues that may have limited the programme's positive impact. First, in the absence of extra pay or a honorarium, getting teachers to volunteer for the programme presented some challenges. Second, UNICEF Bangladesh staff reported that monitoring of the programme implementation in the field was weak, with some monitors focusing more on completing paperwork than on active programme oversight. Third, teachers were observed speaking about programme participants in ways that may have undermined their self-esteem and positive feelings about the project. Some teachers, for instance, reportedly told their classes that the most talented students would be chosen to be Young Facilitators (implying that the students who were not selected were inferior) and some also made negative comments about the Young Learners' capabilities. A fourth area of concern is that during sessions with young children, some Young Facilitators imitated negative characteristics of their own teachers, such as speaking in a loud voice, engaging in rote repetition, and using corporal punishment.

2.5 Programme impacts

This section covers programme impact findings for young children in the areas of on-time enrolment in first grade; school attendance; completion of first grade; academic performance, social learning and behaviour in the classroom; and family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day. Data were examined for any differential programme impacts for children based on their gender, their household resource level, and whether the caregiver who completed the baseline interview self-identified as literate or illiterate. Differences at the community level could not be examined due to the small number of children in each community.

Teachers were asked to rate how well prepared children were for school upon entry into their class according to the following choises: *Not prepared well at all, Only a little prepared, Mostly prepared* and *Well prepared* (*see Figure 2, page 11*).

Figure 2 Children's overall school readiness

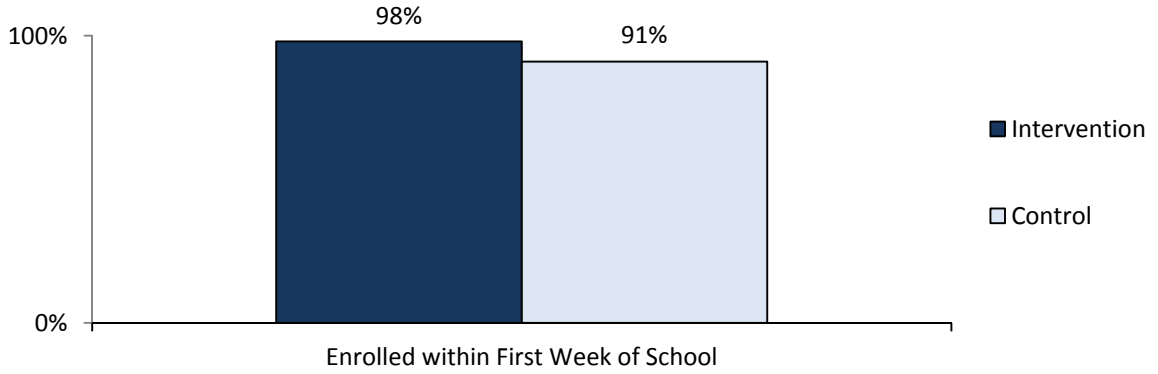


Children's overall preparation for school was predicted by a combination of two factors:the child's participation in the Intervention group or the Control group, and the child's gender (with Intervention group children better prepared than Control group children and girls better prepared than boys). Preparation for school was not predicted by caregiver literacy or by household resource level.[6]

2.5.1 On-time enrolment in first grade

On-time enrolment information was available for 411 Intervention group children (95 per cent) and 401 Control group children (89 per cent). Intervention group children were significantly more likely to have been enrolled in first grade on time when compared with Control group children.[7] As shown in Figure 3, (*same page*) the on-time enrolment rate was 98 per cent for Intervention group children (n = 403), and 91 per cent for Control group children (n = 363). If all of the children with missing enrolment information were indeed enrolled in school (which is unlikely), the Intervention group would still have higher enrolment. Across the sample, girls and boys had nearly identical on-time enrolment rates, with 95 per cent for girls (n = 389) and 94 per cent for boys (n = 377).

Figure 3 On-time enrolment in first grade



2.5.2 Children's connectedness to school

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which children tried to do their best in school and the extent to which they seemed to enjoy school. Teachers for 69 per cent of children in both the Intervention and

[6] Adjusted R^2 = .055, $F(2, 415) = 13.18$, $p < .001$.
[7] $t\ (566.5) = 4.66$, $p < .001$.

Control groups said that it was mostly true or very true that the child tried to do his or her best. And teachers for 82 per cent of Intervention group children and 77 per cent of Control group children said it was mostly true or very true that the child seemed to enjoy school. Whether teachers felt that children tried hard to do their best was significantly predicted by child gender (teachers gave higher ratings for girls) and by caregiver literacy (with teachers giving higher ratings to children with a literate caregiver), but was not predicted by household resource level or by whether the child had been in the Intervention or Control group.[8] Whether teachers felt that children seemed to enjoy school was significantly predicted by caregiver literacy alone (with teachers giving higher ratings to children with a literate caregiver) and was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or by whether the child had been in the Intervention group or Control group.[9]

2.5.3 First grade academic outcomes

Children's learning outcomes were examined based on Bangladesh's national first grade learning standards in the areas of literacy, mathematics and science. Children's abilities to solve problems and to work constructively in the classroom (applied skills) were also looked at.

Literacy:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in reading/language arts compared with other children of the same grade level. Child gender significantly predicted teacher ratings for children's academic skills in reading/language arts, with higher ratings for girls than for boys. Teacher ratings for children's overall literacy skills were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[10]

We then asked teachers about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of reading/language arts, including the ability to: identify all letters of the Bangla alphabet; articulate letter sounds in Bangla correctly; add correct vowel symbols when writing; articulate Bangla letters correctly; read simple familiar words in Bangla; and to sound out unfamiliar words in Bangla. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat, or Able to do well*.

Teachers reported that 75 per cent of Intervention group children and 70 per cent of Control group children could identify letters well, 74 per centof Intervention group children and 72 per centof Control group children could write letters well, and 33 per cent of Intervention group children and 41 per cent of Control group children could correctly note vowel sounds required in Bangla writing. Child gender significantly predicted whether children were able to identify letters, whether they were able to write letters correctly, and whether they were able to correctly note vowel sounds in writing, with girls outperforming boys in each of these areas. Children's skills in these areas were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[11]

In the area of reading, teachers reported that 48 per cent of Intervention group children and 51 per cent of Control group children could articulate letter sounds well, 45 per cent of Intervention group children and 53 per cent of Control group children could read familiar words well, and 16 per cent of Intervention group children and 22 per cent of Control group children could sound out unfamiliar words well. Child gender significantly predicted whether children were able to read familiar words and whether they were able to sound out unfamiliar words, with girls outperforming boys in both of these areas. Children's skills in these

[8] Adjusted R^2 = .021, $F(2, 421) = 5.56$, $p < .01$.

[9] Adjusted R^2 = .007, $F(1, 429) = 3.94$, $p < .05$.

[10] Adjusted R^2 = .010, $F(1, 428) = 5.31$, $p < .05$.

[11] With Adjusted R^2 = .008, $F(1, 420) = 4.27$, $p < .05$ for "Identifies all letters of the Bangla alphabet"; Adjusted R^2 = .015, $F(1, 419) = 7.54$, $p < .01$ for "Writes the Bangla alphabet"; Adjusted R^2 = .018, $F(1, 415) = 8.43$, $p < .01$ for "Adds correct vowel symbols when writing".

two areas were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[12] Children's abilities to articulate letter sounds were predicted by their household resource level, with children from higher-resource households outperforming children from lower-resource households. Children's abilities to articulate letter sounds were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[13]

Mathematics:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in mathematics compared with other children of the same grade level. Child gender significantly predicted teacher ratings for children's academic skills in mathematics, with higher ratings for girls than for boys. Teacher ratings for children's overall mathematics skills were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[14]

Teachers were then asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of mathematics: the ability to identify numerals 1 through 50; to write number names in Bangla; to count up to 50 objects; to say which of two numerals between 1 and 50 is larger and which is smaller; to add and subtract up to 10 objects; and to solve simple word problems in addition or subtraction. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet,Able to do somewhat or Able to do well.*

In the area of number identification, teachers reported that 71 per cent of Intervention group children and 69 per cent of Control group children could identify numerals 1 through 50, and 45 per cent of Intervention group children and 44 pe rcent of Control group children could write number names well. Children's abilities to identify numerals and their abilities to write number names were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

In the area of counting, teachers reported that 71 per cent of both Intervention and Control group children could count up to 50 objects well, and 53 per cent of Intervention group children and 57 per cent of Control group children could say which of two numerals between 1 and 50 is larger and which is smaller. Children's abilities to count up to 50 objects were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to say which of two numerals is larger and which is smaller were significantly predicted by their gender (with girls outperforming boys), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[15]

In the area of applied mathematics, teachers reported that 60 per cent of both Intervention and Control group children could add and subtract up to 10 objects well, and 25 per cent of Intervention group children and 34 pe rcent of Control group children could solve simple word problems well. Children's ability to add and subtract was not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's ability to solve simple mathematics word problems were significantly predicted by caregiver literacy (with children of literate caregivers outperforming children of illiterate caregivers), but were not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[16]

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[12] With Adjusted R^2 = .009, $F(1, 419) = 4.64$, $p < .05$ for "Reads simple familiar words in Bangla"; Adjusted R^2 = .012, $F(1, 419) = 6.00$, $p < .05$ for "Sounds out unfamiliar words".

[13] Adjusted R^2 = .010, $F(1, 420) = 5.24$, $p < .05$.

[14] Adjusted R^2 = .016, $F(1, 427) = 7.90$, $p < .01$.

[15] Adjusted R^2 = .014, $F(1, 404) = 6.84$, $p < .01$.

[16] Adjusted R^2 = .009, $F(1, 402) = 4.48$, $p < .05$.

Science:

Teachers were asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of science: the ability to categorize living and non-living things by their basic attributes; to understand information about the world presented in a drawing or model; and to describe sources of pollution in his/her environment. For each skill, teachers indicated whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat or Able to do well*.

Most children in both groups were just beginning to acquire science skills. Teachers reported that 31 per cent of Intervention group children and 28 per cent of Control group children could categorize living and non-living things, just 6 per cent of both Intervention and Control group children could understand information about the world presented in a drawing or model, and 6 per cent of Intervention group children and 14 per cent of Control group children could describe sources of pollution. Children's abilities to categorize living and non-living things were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to understand information about the world presented in a drawing or model were significantly predicted by a combination of child gender (with girls outperforming boys) and caregiver literacy (with children of literate caregivers outperforming children of illiterate caregivers), but were not predicted by household resource level or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[17] Children's abilities to identify sources of pollution in their environment were significantly predicted by child gender (with girls outperforming boys), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[18]

Applied Skills:

Teachers were asked to rate children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment compared with other children of the same grade level. Children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment were not significantly predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.Teachers were then asked about three specific applied skills children would use across subjects: the ability to organize their work materials; to think through how to solve a problem in advance; and to ask questions to increase their understanding. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicated whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat, or Able to do well.*

Sixty per cent of Intervention group children and 55 per cent of Control group children could organize their work materials well, according to teachers' reporting, 16 per cent of Intervention group children and 22 per cent of Control group children could think through how to solve a problem in advance, and 14 per cent of Intervention group children and 26 per cent of Control group children asked questions to increase their understanding. Children's abilities to organize their work materials and their abilities to ask questions to increase their understanding were significantly predicted by their gender (with girls outperforming boys), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[19] Children's abilities to think through how to solve a problem in advance were not significantly predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

[17] Adjusted $R^2 = .017$, $F(2, 390) = 4.28$, $p < .05$.

[18] Adjusted $R^2 = .012$, $F(1, 396) = 5.71$, $p < .05$.

[19] With Adjusted $R^2 = .008$, $F(1, 383) = 4.16$, $p < .05$ for "Organizes work materials"; Adjusted $R^2 = .015$, $F(1, 387) = 6.80$, $p < .01$ for "Asks questions to increase his/her understanding".

2.5.4 First grade social and emotional learning and classroom behaviour

Teachers were asked to rate children's behaviours in the areas of social relationships and their abilities to manage their behaviours and emotions in the classroom.

Social relationships:

Teachers were asked about two social behaviours in the classroom, namely how well the child was able to work collaboratively with others (*Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat, or Able to do well*) and whether the child was helpful to others (*Not at all true, A little bit true, Mostly true or Very true*).

They reported that 36 per cent of Intervention group children and 38 per cent of Control group children were able to work collaboratively, and that 31 per cent of Intervention group children and 36 per cent of Control group children were helpful to others. Children's abilities to work collaboratively were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's helpfulness toward others was predicted by their gender (with girls seen as more helpful than boys), but was not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[20]

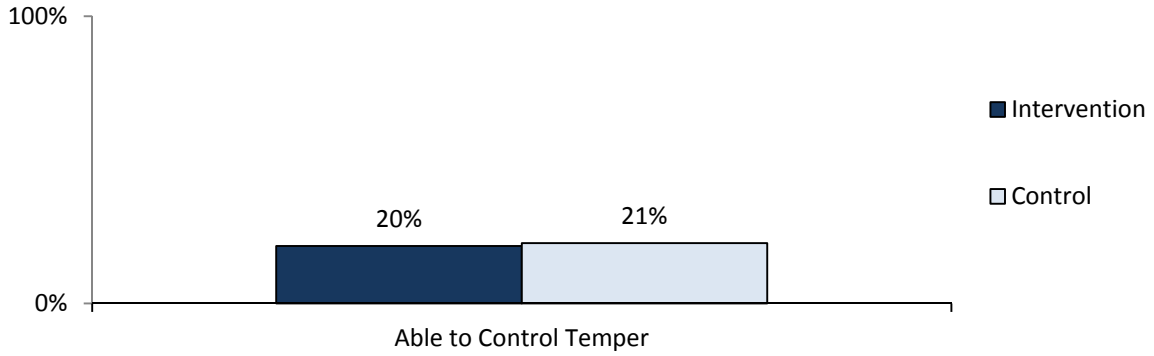
Classroom behaviour:

Teachers were asked to indicate whether a child was able to control his/her temper, whether he/she was able to think before acting, and whether he/she was generally well behaved (*Not at all true, A little bit true, Mostly True or Very True*).

It turned out that children in both groups were still learning to manage their emotionsTeachers reported that 20 per cent of Intervention group children and 21 per cent of Control group children were able to control their tempers well, 19 per cent of Intervention group children and 22 per cent of Control group children were able to think before acting, and 41 per cent of Intervention group children and 39 per cent of Control group children were well behaved in the classroom. Children's abilities to control their tempers were predicted by a combination of gender and whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Control group girls performing best), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy or by household resource level.[21] The percentage of children whose teachers said it was *Very true* that they could control their temper was nearly identical for the Intervention and Control groups (*see Figure 4*, *page 16*), but the Intervention group had more positive ratings overall (fewer low ratings) relative to the Control group. Children's abilities to think before acting and their abilities to behave well in the classroom were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

[20] Adjusted $R^2 = .017$, $F(1, 426) = 8.17$, $p < .01$.
[21] Adjusted $R^2 = .019$, $F(2, 425) = 5.23$, $p < .01$.

Figure 4 Classroom behaviour
(Percentage of children whose teachers said it was *Very true* that they could control their temper)

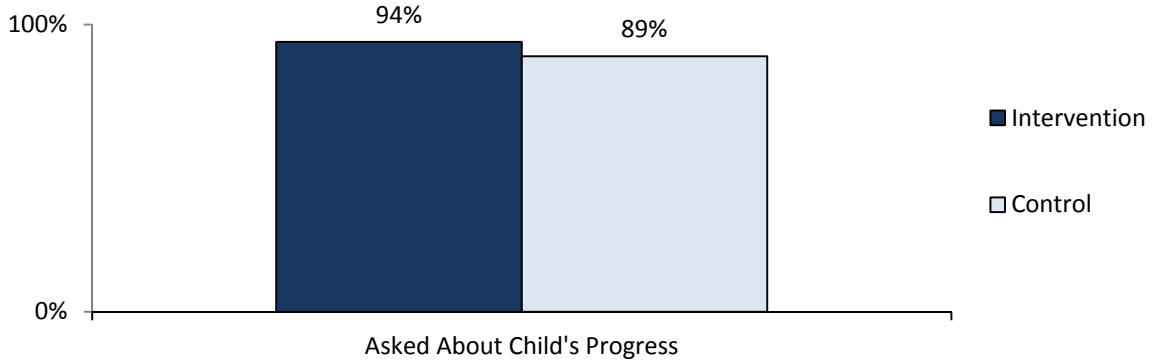


2.5.5 Family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day

Family involvement in school can help both teachers and families to better meet children's needs and can send a message to both the school staff and the child that the family believes that school is important. Teachers were therefore asked how often a child's family initiated contact with them to learn how the child was doing in class and how often the child's family had initiated offers of help with the school or class. Figure 5 (*see Figure 5, same page)* shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group whose families had contacted the teacher at least once during the school year to enquire about their child or to offer help with school or class activities.

Frequency of family contact with the school to enquire about children's progress was predicted by a combination of gender and whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group parents contacting the teacher more often than Control group parents and families of girls contacting the school more often than families of boys), but was not predicted by caregiver literacy or by household resource level (*see Figure 5, same page*).[22] Frequency of volunteering was not significantly predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Figure 5 Family engagement in school
(Percentage of children's families who contacted the teacher at least once during the school year)



Families also demonstrate their belief that school is important when they make sure that the child arrives at school prepared for the school day. Teachers reported that it was *Very true* that the child arrived at

[22] Adjusted R^2 = .029, $F(3, 429) = 5.33$, $p < .01$.

school on time for 50 per cent of the Intervention group and 52 per cent of the Control group. Approximately half of the children (50 per cent of the Intervention group and 45 per cent of the Control group) arrived at school prepared with needed materials (e.g., pencil). Teachers furthermore reported that it was *Very true* that children arrived at school with a neat and clean appearance for 46 per cent of the Intervention group and 53 per cent of the Control group. In all three of these areas, children's preparation for the school day was significantly predicted by their gender (with girls better prepared than boys), but was not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[23]

2.5.6 Summary of programme impacts

The Getting Ready for School programme in Bangladesh had a significantly positive impact on children's on-time enrolment into primary school. Families from the Intervention group were also more likely than families from the Control group to contact the school to ask about their child's progress. The programme did not have an impact on children's academic skills, social skills or classroom behaviour.

2.6 Discussion and recommendations

The Getting Ready for School programme had a very successful implementation in this pilot year in Bangladesh. The programme already enjoys a high level of support among education officials and is playing a vital role within the educational system by providing an interim form of early childhood development support while the government continues to make progress toward universal access to pre-primary education. The programme evaluation in Bangladesh was conducted as a well-run randomized controlled trial. The accuracy of its findings can therefore be viewed with confidence.

There were several areas of strength in this pilot programme. There was a high level of buy-in from communities, the Ministry of Education, local school staff, familie, and children. Attendance at programme sessions was very high. School Management Committees and/or a school principal took on a significant role in programme implementation in many communities, providing ongoing oversight and support to the teachers and families involved in the programme, even though this support had not been formally planned. Many families contributed materials and snacks to the programme and accompanied their child to sessions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that families incorporated some of the Getting Ready for School activities such as songs and rhymes into everyday living at home.

We found a significant positive programme impact on children's on-time enrolment into primary school, with a 98 per cent on-time enrolment rate for Intervention group children and a 91 per cent rate for Control group children. Among enrolled children, Intervention group families were significantly more likely than Control group families to contact the teacher to find out about their child's progress. This type of early positive engagement in school is important for children's succes. There was no significant programme impact on children's academic skills, classroom relationships or behaviours by the end of first grade.

Recommendations emerging from this evaluation are as follows:

- Bangladesh should continue to expand the Ready for School programme because it appears to have a positive impact on children's transitions to primary school.
- As Bangladesh shifts the programme from a school-based to a home-based model, care should be taken to preserve aspects of the programme that may have contributed to the greater family

[23] With Adjusted R^2 = .013, $F(1, 430) = 6.49$, $p < .05$ for "This child came to school on time"*;* Adjusted R^2 = .011, $F(1, 428) = 5.85$, $p < .05$ for "This child came to school with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)"; Adjusted R^2 = .021, $F(1, 430) = 10.39$, $p < .01$ for "This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school".

engagement in primary school. For example, family visits to the local primary school and opportunities to meet teachers may be helpful

In sum: Bangladesh has had a very successful pilot implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme. Given the relatively low level of programme dosage (just a few hours a week) and the fact that most children in the Control group attended other early childhood development programmes, achieving any impact on children's academic and behavioural skills or on parent behaviours constitutes a notable achievement for the Getting Ready for School programme. The programme can continue to play a role in getting families engaged in children's primary education, thereby supporting Bangladesh's progress toward achieving universal primary education.

CHAPTER 3 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

First grade follow-up results for this country should be viewed with caution because of the extremely high rate of attrition within the sample and the uneven attrition rates between the Intervention group and Control group samples.

3.1 Need for the intervention

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most populous and poorest nations in the world with a population of over 60 million with about 80 per cent of the people living on less than US$1per day.[24] The country's tumultuous history has had devastating consequences for the populace of the country, most notably for children and youth. The re-emergence of civil unrest has threatened the progress of stable government and jeopardized the well being of children, many of whom are forced into fighting. Other consequences include the dissolution of family units, rapid increase in the number of street children, reduced access to basic social services, reduced income for families and increased infant mortality rates.

The Government has taken formal steps, however, to protect the rights and well being of its youngest citizens. It signed the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and pledged to continue the progress made toward the goals of the 1990 World Summit for Children held in New York. It also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child by a 1990 decree and implemented a National Action Programme for the Survival, Protection and Promotion of the Mother and Child in 1992. Anational nursery education curriculum was adopted in 1997 with the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Artical 18 of Framework Law recognizes pre-primary school education but considers it optional. The Law on the Protection of the Child was adopted in January 2009.

Due to the social and economic crises that have plagued the Democratic Republic of the Congo, local NGOs and other groups have faced enormous challenges in establishing sustainable educational programmes for children. Within the sector of early care and education, the country continues to focus on strengthening local institutions to fully implement children's rights, expanding access to preschool education through reduced-cost programmes and encouraging equal gender access to pre-primary school education. The net enrolment rates in preschool remain very low, at less than 1 per cent.[25]

To respond to these issues, UNICEF is helping the country in creating Early Childhood Development Centres for the comprehensive care for young people. The Government has campaigned to participate in the pilot implementation of Getting Ready for School as a means to promote school readiness among young children and forward their agenda to expand access to early education.

3.2 Nature of the intervention

The Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Professional Education, with support from UNICEF, selected 25 primary schools in which to implement the intervention and 25 similar schools to serve as control schools in the evaluation. Fifteen pairs of these schools are located in Kinshasa, the capital, and 10 pairs in Mbandaka in the province of Equateur. The language of instruction in both cities is Lingala. Two-thirds of

[24] Youdi, Robert Visituluta, 'Early childhood care and education (ECCE) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)', background paper prepared for the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2006. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001475/147506e.pdf>, accessed 25 February 2009.

[25] UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), 'Democratic Republic of the Congo: Early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes', country profiole prepared for the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2007,* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2006.

these schools are already supported by UNICEF and have received educational materials such as school kits and services such as teacher training.

In each school five school personnel were retained: two teachers from Grade 1, one teacher from Grade 6, one teacher from Grade 5, and the school principal. Each school had 20 Young Facilitators and each Young Facilitator guided three younger children. This comes down to 500 students and facilitators and 1500 young children under the supervision of 100 teachers. Only a random subsample took part in the evaluation.

An initial training for 75 teachers took place from August to September 2008 in Kinshasa. A second training for 50 teachers took place in October 2008 in Mbandaka. The training for 300 Young Facilitators took place in September 2008 in Kinshasa. In Mbandaka about 200 student facilitators were trained in November 2008.

Programme implementation began in Kinshasa in November 2008 and in Mbandaka in December 2008. The programme concluded in June 2009.

3.3 The evaluation

3.3.1 Data collection

Baseline data were collected in November 2008 through February 2009; outcome data for teachers, Young Facilitators, and community stakeholders were collected in June 2009; and outcome data for children and their caregivers were collected in February and March 2010. Data were collected by trained, certified assessors. Data collection quality monitoring was conducted by UNICEF. Evaluation staff faced a number of significant issues in the course of data collection. Flooding limited access to several areas during the period of outcome data collection. This country has had significant, ongoing conflict and incursions of fighting into programme areas; high levels of family mobility also limited the collection of outcome data.

3.3.2 Sample

At the baseline evaluation, 375 children and their families were in the Intervention group and 373 in the Control group. Outcome evaluations were completed with 228 children and their families in the Intervention group and 217 in the Control group. Attrition rates stood at 39 per cent in the Intervention group and 41 per cent in the Control group. While these attrition rates are high, they are not significantly different between groups.

The attrition rates were due to logistical difficulties in implementing data collection (*see page*. 23) rather than refusal on the part of the participants. Attrition was greater still for the first grade follow-up, with information available on only 75 Intervention group children (20 per cent of the original sample) and 35 Control group children (9 per cent of the original sample). First grade follow-up data was only available from Kinshasa. While data were obtained on a few children from Mbandaka, they were only from the Intervention group. Programme impact analyses were therefore not possible.

Table 6 (*see* Table 6, *page 21*) summarizes child and caregiver characteristics for the baseline and outcome samples. Families in the Control group had more than double the rate of out-of-school older

children than families in the Intervention group, were more likely to have a caregiver who identified himself or herself as illiterate, and were also more likely to fall into the lower household resource category when compared with families in the Intervention group.[26] Each of these three characteristics will be taken into account when evaluating programme impacts. In both groups, caregivers' self-reported literacy rates were higher than the 63 per cent rate reported by UNESCO in 2002.[27]

Table 6 Child and family characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender of participating child (% female)	49%	54%
Number of household members	*M* = 3.8	*M* = 4.0
Number of household members under age 12[28]	*M* = 1.1	*M* = 1.0
Two-parent households	73%	76%
Families with out-of-school children[29]	9%	21%
Responding caregiver literacy (% literate)	91%	82%
Family resource level[30] (% low)	30%	42%

3.4 Programme implementation

Interviews with school principals from all 25 Intervention schools identified numerous areas of programme strength. All were extremely positive about the programme and cited numerous benefits. Nearly all principles reported that the Young Facilitators were very enthusiastic, did an excellent job, developed a significant level of skill in teaching young children, became more engaged in school, and became highly visible and very well regarded in their communities. Young children have been observed practicing the songs and skills they learned at home, with friends and out in the community. School principals noted that the children who participated in the programme seemed to learn a great deal, had developed good relationships with others, and had developed skills for first grade. Young children were observed to have become very enthusiastic about enrolling in first grade, and the principals were looking forward to having a well prepared first grade class the next year.

Parents and community members became active supporters of the programme and of young children's learning, expressing their appreciation for the programme to the school principals. Parents had also reportedly become more aware of the importance of early learning and increased their level of communication with the school. School principals indicated that parents asked them if the programme could continue during school vacations, that parents of children who were not enrolled in the programme came to ask if their child could participate, and that parents of younger children had requested their child's participation next year.

The principals noted a significant programme benefit for teachers as well. Several described the Getting Ready for School teacher training as excellent, and nearly all school principals observed an increase in teacher skills and knowledge. Teachers were enthusiastic participants in the programme, despite extra demands placed on them. School principals also described an increased level of professional commitment among teachers.

[26] $t(146.6) = 2.46$, $p < .05$ for out-of-school older child; $t(677.5) = -3.75$, $p < .001$ for caregiver literacy; $t(739.5) = 3.62$, $p < .001$ for household resource level (higher or lower within sample).

[27] See <http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=22558&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html>.

[28] This does not include the child participating in the evaluation.

[29] Among households with one or more older children aged 6–11, percentage of households where at least one of those children was not enrolled in school at the time of the baseline evaluation.

[30] Low resource level based on the presence of three or fewer of the following items in the household: bed, table, chair, radio, television, clock, computer, refrigerator or camera.

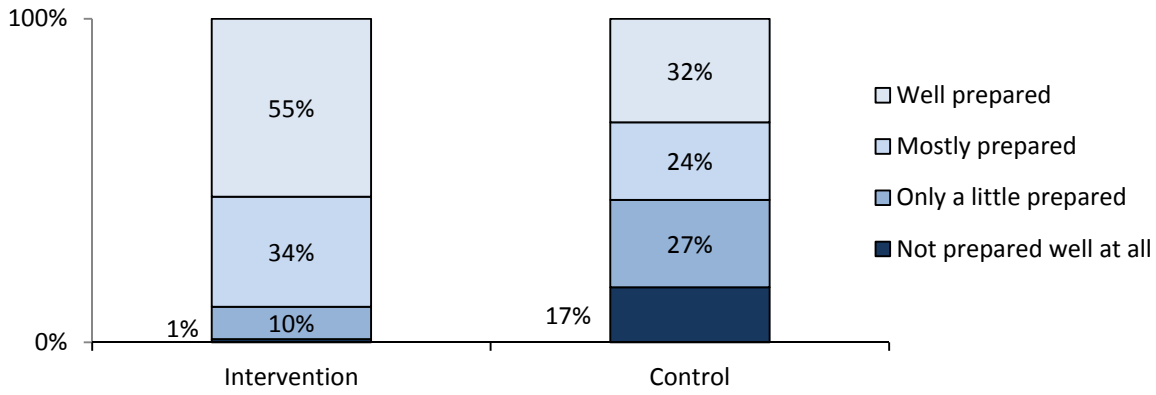
The challenges faced in the programme implementation during this pilot year were mostly logistical in nature. One of the main difficulties, according to school principals, was the late arrival of instructional materials, apparently due to impassable roads in at least some communities. Sometimes promised incentives for children and teachers such as biscuits, and a transportation allowance for Young Facilitators and teachers were not forthcoming. The irregular provision of snacks left children hungry during the sessions and may have discouraged attendance in some cases. Several principals also reported that due to family mobility they had some difficulty in reaching parents and getting correct information about participating children.

3.5 Programme impacts

This section covers programme impact findings for young children in the areas of on-time enrolment in first grade; school attendance; completion of first grade; academic performance, social learning and behaviour in the classroom; and family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day. Data were examined for any differential programme impacts for children based on their gender, their household resource level, and whether the caregiver who completed the baseline interview self-identified as literate or illiterate. Differences at the community level could not be examined due to the small number of children in each community.

Teachers were asked to rate how well prepared children were for school upon entry into their class according to the following choices: "Not prepared well at all", "Only a little prepared", "Mostly prepared" and "Well Prepared" (*see Figure 6, same page*).

Figure 6 Children's overall school readiness



Children's overall preparation for school was predicted by a combination of whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group and the child's household resource level at baseline (with Intervention group children better prepared than Control group children, and children with fewer household resources better prepared than children with more). Preparation for school was not predicted by child gender or by caregiver literacy.[31] This negative relationship between household resources and school readiness was present in both the Intervention and the Control groups and is contrary to what would be expected. However, because of the high rate of attrition within the sample, results may not be typical.

[31] Adjusted R^2 = .186, $F(2, 106) = 13.11$, $p < .001$.

3.5.1 On-time enrolment in first grade

Available data show an on-time enrolment rate of 76 per cent among Intervention group children and 64 per cent among Control group children. Because on-time enrolment information was available for a larger percentage of Intervention group children than of Control group children, it is therefore not certain that the percentages would be the same if information was available for the whole sample.

3.5.2 Children's connectedness to school

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which children tried to do their best in school and the extent to which they seemed to enjoy school. They reported that for 63 per cent of Intervention group children and 50 per cent of Control group children, it was *Mostly true* or *Very true* that they tried to do their best. For 85 per cent of the Intervention group and 81 per cent of the Control group, teachers felt that it was *Mostly true* or *Very true* that the child seemed to enjoy school. Whether children tried to do their best in school or whether they seemed to enjoy school was not predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether they were from the Intervention group or Control group.

3.5.3 First grade academic outcomes

Children's learning outcomes were examined based on the country's national first grade learning standards in the areas of literacy (Lingala and French), mathematics and life skills. Children's abilities to solve problems and to work constructively in the classroom (applied skills) were also looked at.

Literacy:

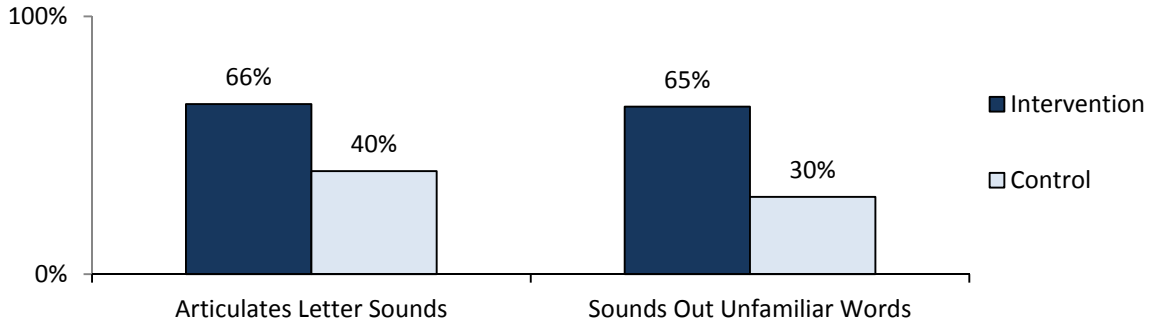
Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in reading/language arts compared with other children of the same grade level. Teacher ratings for children's overall literacy skills were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Teachers were then asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of reading/language arts: the ability to articulate letter sounds correctly while reading aloud in Lingala; to sound out unfamiliar words correctly in Lingala; to read fluently in Lingala; to understand the meaning of sentences they read in Lingala; to understand simple sentences written in French; to recognize words written in French; to print numerals, uppercase letters and lowercase letters neatly (given age expectations); and to write in cursive script. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was "Not able to do yet", "Able to do somewhat", or "Able to do well".

Children's abilities to articulate letter sounds correctly while reading in Lingala and their ability to sound out unfamiliar words correctly in Lingala were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group. These skills were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resource level (*see Figure 7*, *page 24*).[32] Children's abilities to read fluently in Lingala and their abilities to understand the meaning of sentences written in Lingala were unrelated to their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group.

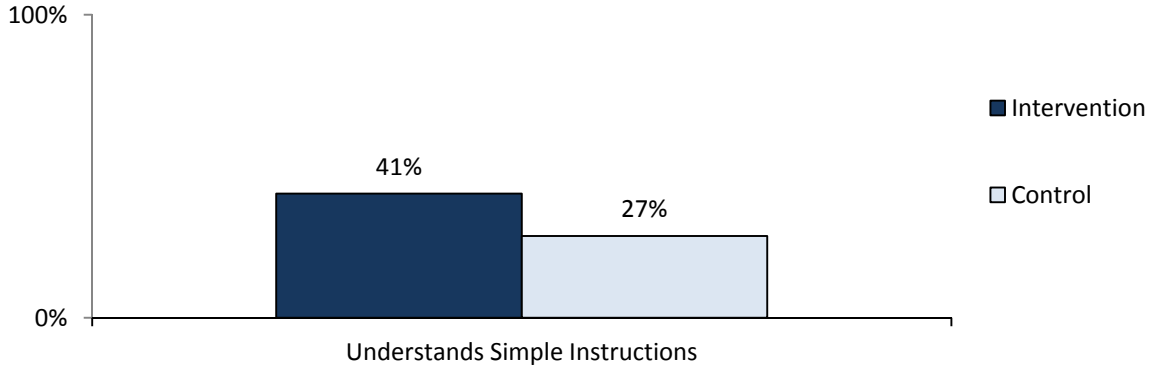
[32] Adjusted R^2 = .036, $F(1, 105) = 4.96$, $p < .05$ for "Articulates letter sounds correctly while reading aloud in Lingala"; Adjusted R^2 = .131, $F(1, 104) = 16.70$, $p < .001$ for "Sounds out unfamiliar words correctly in Lingala".

Figure 7 Children's literacy, Lingala
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



Children's abilities to understand simple instructions in French were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resource level (*see Figure 8, same page*).[33] Children's abilities to recognize written words in French were unrelated to their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group.

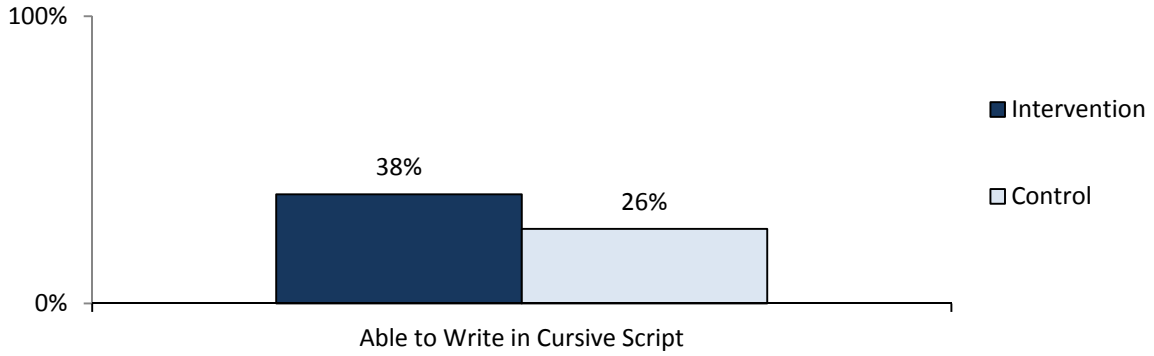
Figure 8 Children's literacy, French
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



Children's abilities to print numerals and uppercase and lowercase letters neatly were unrelated to their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to write in cursive script were predicted by both whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group and their household resource level, but were not predicted by child gender or by caregiver literacy (*see Figure 9, page 25*).[34]

[33] Adjusted R^2 = .049, $F(1, 102) = 6.26$, $p < .05$
[34] Adjusted R^2 = .069, $F(1, 102) = 4.77$, $p < .05$.

Figure 9 Children's literacy, Writing
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



Mathematics:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in mathematics compared with other children of the same grade level. Teacher ratings for children's overall mathematics skills were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Teachers were then asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of mathematics: the ability to identify numerals 1 through 20; to add and subtract simple numbers; to multiple and divide simple numbers; to recognize and perform simple functions with Congolese currency; and to use a ruler to measure length. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well.*

Teachers reported that: 77 per cent of children in the Intervention group and 72 per cent of children in the Control group were able to identify numerals 1 through 20 well; 72 per cent of children in the Intervention group and 60 per cent of children in the Control group were able to add and subtract simple numbers well; and 39 per cent of Intervention group children and 31 per cent of Control group children were able to multiply and divide simple numbers well. Children's mathematics skills in these three areas were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

In the area of applied mathematics, teachers reported that 51 per cent of Intervention group children and 31 per cent of Control group children were able to recognize and use their national currency well, and that 52 per cent of Intervention group children and 23 per cent of Control group children were able to use a ruler well. Children's abilities to recognize and perform simple functions with the national currency were significantly predicted by child gender (with boys outperforming girls), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[35] Children's abilities to use a ruler to measure length were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Life skills:

Teachers were asked about children's acquisition of life skills in three areas: the ability to assist others at school and/or in the community at a level appropriate for their age; to describe how to prevent diseases

[35] Adjusted R^2 = .030, $F(1, 104) = 4.26$, $p < .05$.

common in his/her community; and to describe how to protect the natural environment in their community. For each skill, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well*.

According to teacher reports, 55 per cent of Intervention group children and 26 per cent of Control group children were able to assist others, 28 per cent of Intervention group children and 6 per cent of Control group children were able to describe how to prevent disease, and 51 per cent of Intervention group children and 28 per cent of Control group children were able to describe how to protect their natural environment. Children's abilities to assist others in the school and/or community were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to describe how to prevent diseases and their abilities to describe how to protect the environment were significantly predicted by child gender (with boys outperforming girls), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[36]

Applied skills:

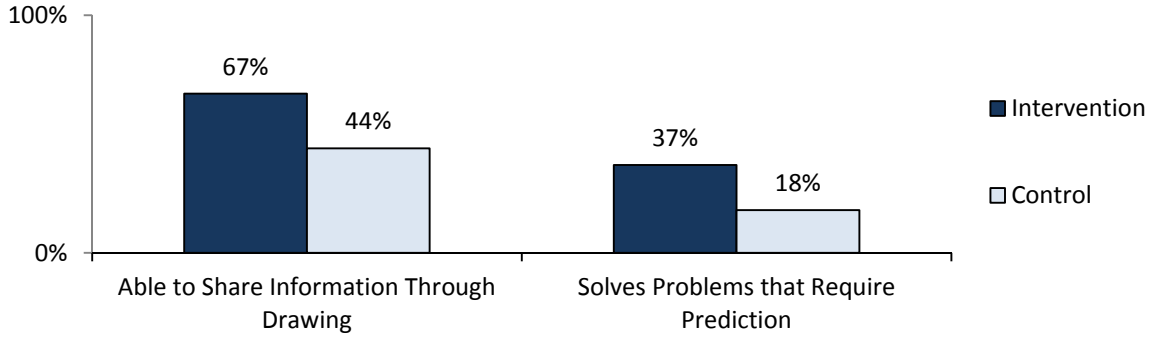
Teachers were asked to rate children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment compared with other children of the same grade level. Children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment were not significantly predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Teachers were then asked about specific applied skills that children would use across subjects, namely the ability to: share information through drawing; solve problems that require prediction; think through how to solve a problem in advance; select appropriate materials to complete a task; organize work materials; ask questions to increase understanding; express curiosity; and show creativity in work and play. For each skill, teachers indicated whether the child was *Not able to do yet*, *Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well*.

Children's abilities to share information through drawing were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resources.[37] Children's abilities to solve problems that require prediction were predicted by a combination of household resources (with children from lower-resource households outperforming children from higher-resource households) and whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but not by child gender or caregiver literacy (*see Figure 10, page 27*).[38] Children's abilities to think through how to solve a problem in advance were not predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

[36] Adjusted $R^2 = .042$, $F(1, 99) = 5.38$, $p < .05$ for "Able to describe how to prevent diseases common in his/her community"; Adjusted $R^2 = .038$, $F(1, 100) = 4.99$, $p < .05$ for "Able to describe how to protect the natural environment in his/her community".
[37] Adjusted $R^2 = .029$, $F(1, 102) = 4.09$, $p < .05$.
[38] Adjusted $R^2 = .136$, $F(2, 95) = 8.50$, $p < .001$.

Figure 10 Applied skills, general
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



Children's abilities to select appropriate work materials to complete a task were not significantly predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to organize their work materials were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, or household resources (*see Figure 11, same page*).[39]

Figure 11 Applied skills, organization
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well**)***

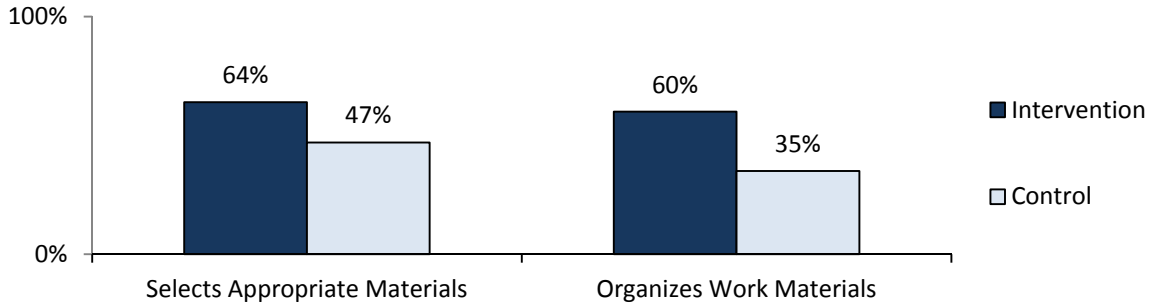
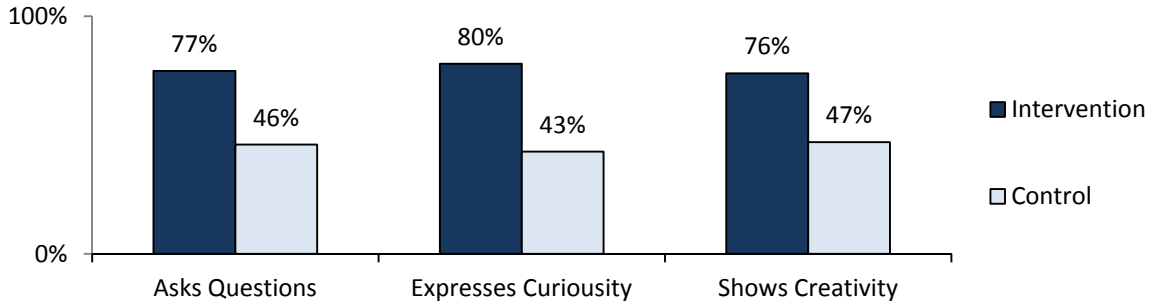


Figure 12 (*page 28*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who demonstrated creativity and curiosity. The extent to which children asked questions to increase their understanding and the extent to which they expressed curiosity were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by gender, caregiver literacy, or household resources.[40] The extent to which children showed creativity in work and play was predicted by a combination of whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group and gender (with girls scoring higher than boys) but was not predicted by caregiver literacy or household resources.[41]

[39] Adjusted R^2 = .037, $F(1, 96) = 4.65$, $p < .05$.
[40] With Adjusted R^2 = .088, $F(1, 99) = 10.56$, $p < .01$ for "Asks questions that increase his/her understanding"; Adjusted R^2 = .198, $F(1, 100) = 25.75$, $p < .001$ for "Expresses curiosity".
[41] Adjusted R^2 = .085, $F(2, 90) = 5.20$, $p < .01$.

Figure 12 Applied skills, creativity, and curiosity
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



3.5.4 First grade social and emotional learning and classroom behaviour

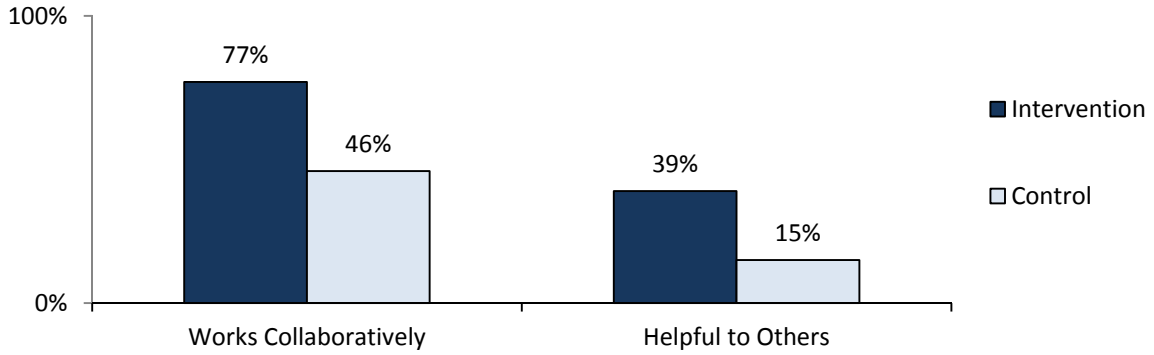
Teachers were asked to rate children's behaviours in the areas of social relationships and their abilities to manage their behaviours and emotions in the classroom.

Social relationships:

Teachers were asked about two social behaviours in the classroom, namely how well the child was able to work collaboratively with others (*Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat,* or *Able to do well*) and whether the child was helpful to others (*Not at all true, A little bit true, Mostly true* or *Very true*).

Figure 13 (*same page)* shows the percentage of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to work collaboratively and the percentage who helped others at school. Whether children were able to work collaboratively and whether they were helpful to others were both predicted by whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resource level.[42]

Figure 13 Children's social relationships
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well* or of which it is *Very true*)



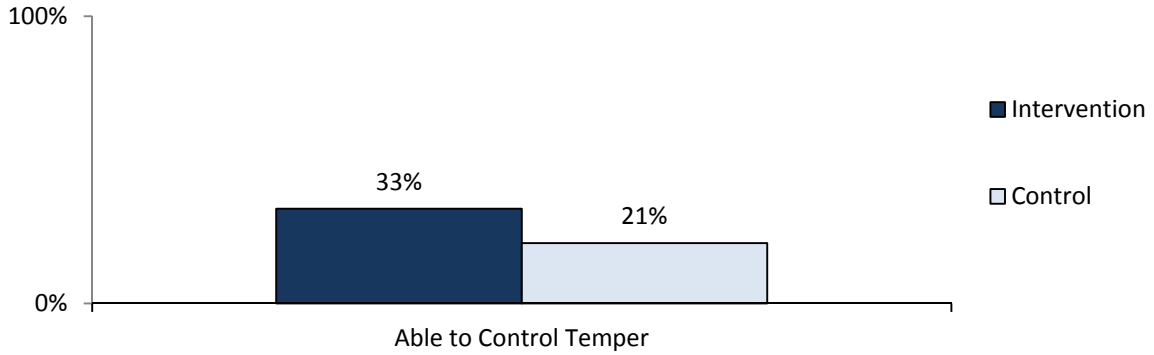
[42] With Adjusted R^2 = .176, $F(1, 103) = 22.93$, $p < .001$ for "Works collaboratively with other children"; Adjusted R^2 = .049, $F(1, 95) = 5.95$, $p < .05$ for "This child is helpful to others".

Classroom behaviour:

Teachers were asked to indicate whether a child was able to control his/her temper, whether he/she was able to think before acting, and whether he/she was generally well behaved (*Not at all true*, *A little bit true, Mostly true or Very true*).

Children's abilities to control their tempers were predicted by whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group, but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resource level (*see Figure 14*, *same page*).[43] Children's abilities to think before acting and their abilities to behave well in the classroom were not significantly predicted by their gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Figure 14 Children's abilities to manage their emotions
(Percentage of children of whom it was reported to be *Very true*)



3.5.7 Family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day

Teachers were asked how often a child's family initiated contact with them to learn how the child was doing in class, and how often the child's family had initiated offers of help with the school or class.

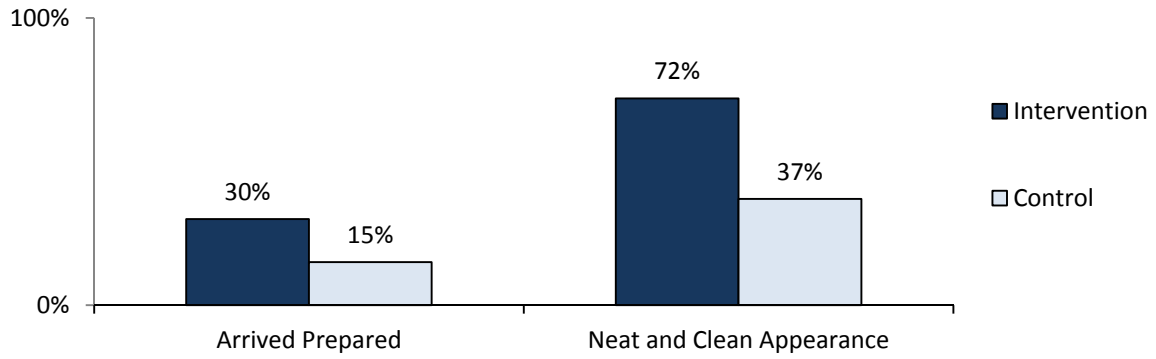
Teachers reported that 79 per cent of Intervention group children's families and 69 per cent of Control group children's families had contacted the school at least once during the school year to learn how their child was doing. They also reported that 77 per cent of Intervention group children's families and 74 per cent of Control group children's families had offered to volunteer at the school during the school year. Frequency of family contact with the school to enquire about children's progress and frequency of volunteering were not significantly predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.

Families also demonstrate that they believe school is important for a child when they make sure that the child arrives at school on time, with needed materials (such as pencils) and with a neat and clean appearance. The extent to which children arrived at school on time was predicted by caregiver literacy (with children of illiterate caregivers more likely to arrive on time than children of literate caregivers), but not by child gender, household resource level, or whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group.[44] The extent to which children arrived at school prepared with the materials they needed and the extent to which they arrived at school with a neat and clean appearance were both predicted by

[43] Adjusted R^2 = .042, $F(1, 102) = 5.50$, $p < .05$.
[44] Adjusted R^2 = .028, $F(1, 102) = 3.08$, $p < .05$.

whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group, but not by child gender, caregiver literacy, or household resource level (*see Figure 15, same page*).[45]

Figure 15 Child's Home Preparation for the School Day
(Percentage of children of whom it was reported to be *Very true*)



3.5.5 Summary of programme impacts

Based on the data available, the Getting Ready for School programme had a positive impact on children's on-time enrolment in primary school, beginning literacy (in Lingala), applied skills (such as being able to organize materials and to ask questions to deepen understanding), and social relationships and behaviour in the classroom. Intervention group families also better prepared their children for the school day than Control group families.

3.6 Discussion and recommendations

The Getting Ready for School programme had a very successful implementation in its pilot year in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The programme already enjoys a very high level of support, it is highly visible in communities, and there is significant demand for its continuation and expansion.

There were several areas of strength in this pilot programme. Enthusiastic Young Facilitators, teachers, and school principals made a significant effort to implement the programme well. School principals reported that the Getting Ready for School training and programme had a significant positive effect on teachers' skills and knowledge. Young Facilitators not only gained teaching skills and increased their engagement in their own schooling, they also gained respect among peers and adults in their schools and communities. And school principals reported a higher level of parent engagement in school and a greater desire on their part to meet their children's educational needs as a result of the programme.

At the end of the programme year, a large positive programme effect on children's beginning literacy and smaller programme effects in some other areas of development were noticed. These positive impacts appeared to continue through the end of first grade, with Intervention group children having better literacy and better adjustment in the classroom and Intervention group families' better preparing children for the school day when compared with Control group families. However, given the very high attrition rate, it is possible that these results are not typical.

[45] Adjusted R^2 = .057, $F(1, 101) = 7.09$, $p < .01$ for "This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)"; Adjusted R^2 = .139, $F(1, 104) = 17.79$, $p < .001$ for "This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school".

Given the relatively low level of programme dosage (just a few hours a week) and the challenging living conditions faced by many children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, achieving any impact on children's school readiness and parental engagement in education constitutes a notable achievement for the Getting Ready for School programme.

The recommendations to emerge from this evaluation are as follows:

- The Getting Ready for School programme should be maintained and expanded in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Ongoing monitoring should be used to ensure that programme impacts observed here can be generalized.
- Teachers in primary schools that receive children who have participated in Getting Ready for School should be provided with training and support to maintain and encourage children's further development of skills and continued positive adjustment to the classroom.

In sum, the Getting Ready for School programme was extremely successful in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is a country that faces severe challenges in providing support and education to children and families. Every effort should be made to maintain and expand this programme, if possible, to benefit more children.

CHAPTER 4 TAJIKISTAN: COUNTRY-LEVEL IMPACTS

4.1 Need for the intervention

Until 1991, Tajikistan was the poorest of the Soviet states. Due to significant transfers of human and financial resources, however, Tajikistan enjoyed a level of public services and infrastructure far beyond the actual state of economic development. With centrally supported social sector systems, parents were assured of accessible health care, education and state support for early child care and development. Severe economic decline after independence in 1991 was compounded by a destructive civil war that lasted until 1997. During this period, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contracted by over 70 per cent and social sector spending dropped sharply, especially in subsectors not considered part of basic services, such as preschool and visiting nurses.

Economic growth resumed at the end of the 1990s, but Tajikistan remains the poorest country in the region, with roughly half of its population still living in poverty and current GDP still at only 75 per cent of 1991 levels. With massive migration, remittances accounted for over half of GDP in 2008 thought the current economic crisis, however, has already caused a drop in remittance income. Tajikistan's many female-headed households now face declining income in addition to absent fathers, leaving women and children increasingly vulnerable. Complicating the situation is the regularity of natural disasters, which further erode ageing infrastructure and challenge already weak institutional capacity and low social sector budgets, placing at risk the capacity of every sector to protect and support the development of Tajikistan's youngest citizens.

During Soviet rule, there were 2,000 kindergartens (1990). Fewer than 500 are operating now, serving less than 10 per cent of the preschool-age population. Only 4 per cent of the national education budget is allocated to preschool. Disparities are significant; access is concentrated among children from urban areas and those able to pay the costs of attendance. Moreover, as many as 60 per cent of children lack support for early learning at home.[46]

The UNICEF-sponsored Getting Ready for School programme joins a parent-to-child programme supported by Open Society Institute/Step by Step Tajikistan that uses a similar approach. The Aga Khan Foundation has long provided some support to centre-based Grade 0 programmes in one region and is now looking to expand to community-based models in other areas of the country. This presents new possibilities not only for expanding access to school readiness programmes but for creating lasting knowledge on design, implementation, institutionalization, and expansion of quality, cost-efficient, and sustainable programmes directed at young children and their caregivers.[47]

4.2 Nature of the intervention

The central Ministry of Education in Tajikistan as well as District Education Departments and local NGOs have been heavily involved in planning for the Getting Ready for School programme. Two rural districts (Rumi and Bokhtar) were chosen to participate in the programme. In each district, 10 schools were randomly assigned as Intervention group schools and 10 were assigned as Control group schools. Because several schools in Bokhtar district were benefiting from a Step by Step-supported programme, they were eliminated from the sample pool prior to the random selection process.

[46] UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), 'Tajikistan: Early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes', country profiole prepared for the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2007,* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2006. < http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001472/147248e.pdf>, accessed 25 February 2009.
[47] See: <www.akdn.org/tajikistan_education.asp>, accessed 25 February 2009.

The programme was designed to involve teachers of Grade 4. In the Tajik school system, children remain with the same teacher for the first four years of school. The Getting Ready for School programme draws upon current Grade 4 teachers who are the teachers of the Young Facilitators and who in the following year will teach the incoming Grade 1 children. Programme implementation began in October 2008.

4.3 The evaluation

4.3.1 Data collection

Baseline data were collected in October 2008; outcome data for teachers, Young Facilitators and community stakeholders was collected in June and July 2009. Outcome data for children and their caregivers were collected in October and November 2009. All data collection was carried out by trained, certified assessors. Data collection quality monitoring was conducted by both UNICEF and the contracting NGO.

4.3.2 Sample

Of the 600 Young facilitators and 2,500 young children who initially participated in the programme (additional Young Facilitators and young children joined the programme later), a random subset was selected for the evaluation.

Table 7 (*same page)* shows the characteristics of the 20 participating Intervention group schools and 20 Control group schools at the time of the baseline evaluation.

Table 7 School characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Number of students enrolled	*M* = 907 (Range = 216 - 2,173)	*M* = 770 (Range = 223 - 1,455)
Number of teachers and educational assistants	*M* = 55 (Range = 32 - 93)	*M* = 34 (Range = 12 - 68)
Student/teacher ratio	*M* = 15:1 (Range = 9:1 – 26:1)	*M* = 23:1 (Range = 13:1 – 33:1)
Daily absence rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 5% (Range = 1 – 12%)	*M* = 5% (Range = 1 – 13%)
Dropout rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 1% (Range = 0 – 2%)	*M* = 1% (Range = 0 – 3%)

Of the 600 children who took part in the baseline evaluation, 599 also took part in the outcome assessment. Among the Intervention group, 300 children completed the baseline assessment and 299 completed the outcome assessment (an attrition rate of less than one per cent). All 300 Control group children completed both the baseline and outcome assessments.

As shown in Table 8 (*see Table 8*, *page 34*), nearly all children in both groups resided in two-parent households. There was a very high literacy rate among caregivers, and few children in either group lived in a household where there was an out-of-school older child.

Table 8 Child and family characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender of participating child (% female)	50%	45%
Number of household members	*M* = 8.6 *SD* = 3.5	*M* = 8.6 *SD* = 3.3
Number of household members under age 12[48]	*M* = 2.5 *SD* = 1.8	*M* = 2.5 *SD* = 1.7
Two-parent households	97%	98%
Families with out-of-school children[49]	2%	1%
Responding caregiver literacy (% literate)	97%	98%
Family resource level[50] (% low)	29%	38%

A total of 300 Young Facilitators participated in the evaluation, and all 300 completed the Young Facilitator survey at both baseline and outcome. Note that there was no Control group for Young Facilitators. All Young Facilitators were enrolled in Grade 4, and 58 per cent were female.

Interviews were completed with school principals from all 20 Intervention group schools and with 20 community leaders–one from each of the Intervention school communities.

4.4 Programme implementation and participation

This section provides information regarding the level of participation in the Getting Ready for School programme among children assigned to the Intervention group and the Young Facilitators; programme implementation; the extent to which children in both the intervention and Control groups participated in other early childhood development programmes; the success of programme communications in conveying key messages to the community; and stakeholder perceptions of programme strengths, challenges, and sustainability.

4.4.1 Participation in Getting Ready for School

There were 35 programme sessions planned, but sessions were suspended for approximately two months in the winter and not all sessions were completed as intended. Although 300 young children were assigned to the Intervention group, Getting Ready for School programme attendance records were only available for 143 of the children. Among those 143 children, reported programme attendance was very high, with young children reportedly attending an average of 33.6 sessions (*SD* = 3.92). Given the reduced number of sessions offered and the reported tendency of school staff in Tajikistan to automatically check off that they did what they were supposed to do, it is unlikely that the average child attended 33 sessions when that many sessions were not even offered. These attendance figures based on teacher records should therefore be treated with extreme caution.

Caregivers reported somewhat lower levels of programme attendance for their children, and this information may be more reliable. Among the 298 caregivers who provided information about their child's attendance, 54 per cent (n = 160) reported that their child attended every session or almost every session, and 86 per cent (n = 256) reported that their child attended most sessions. Only one caregiver

[48] This does not include the child participating in the evaluation.

[49] Among households with one or more older children aged 7–13, percentage of households where at least one of those children was not enrolled in school at the time of the baseline evaluation.

[50] Low resource level based on the presence of three or fewer of the following items in the household: clock, fan, table, television, telephone, mobile telephone, DVD player, video camera or computer.

reported that his or her child did not attend any sessions, and the caregiver stated that the child did not participate because the family had been unaware that the programme was available.

Attendance information was only available for 80 of the 300 Young Facilitators, but Young Facilitators nevertheless were asked how often they had worked with their young child(ren) in the Getting Ready for School programme. Rates of self-reported participation by Young Facilitators were relatively low, with 30 per cent (n = 91) reporting that they never participated, 22 per cent that they participated twice per week or more (n = 67), 46 per cent (n = 137) that they participated a few times per month, and 2 per cent (n = 5) that they participated a few times per semester.

4.4.2 Implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme

The implementation plan involved 35 Getting Ready for School sessions, held on a weekly basis. Because none of the schools had any heat, several sessions had to be cancelled because of cold weather. The exact number of sessions that were held is unclear. Most sessions lasted an hour, but there was substantial variability in the length of each session across teachers, with some teachers reporting typical session lengths of 45 minutes to an hour and others reporting typical sessions lasting 3 or 4 hours. At the conclusion of each session, the teacher completed a session record where he or she indicated the following: whether the instructions in the teacher's guide were clear; whether the teacher felt that literacy and numeracy activities were fun for most of the children; whether the Young Facilitators felt that activities were fun; whether the lessons were at the right level of difficulty for the young children; and whether the Young Facilitators found it easy or difficult to implement the activities. Teachers also provided information about resources they had purchased for the sessions, preparation time, and made recommendations.

Teachers reported that their instructions were very clear 97 per cent of the time and somewhat clear the remaining 3 per cent. Young Facilitators found their instructions to be easy to follow 93 per cent of the time. Teachers and Young Facilitators gave positive ratings for how enjoyable the activities had been for the young children. Teachers rated the activities as *Very fun* 93 per cent of the time, and *Somewhat fun* the remaining 7 per cent of the time. Young Facilitators rated the activities as *Very fun* 89 per cent of the time, *Somewhat fun* 10 per cent and "Not fun" less than 1 per cent of the time. Just 38 per cent of activities were rated by teachers as being at the right level of difficulty for children, 58 per cent were rated *Very easy* and 4 per cent *Too difficult*.

4.4.3 Participation in other early childhood development programmes

Information regarding participation in other early childhood development programmes was only collected from Getting Ready for School programme families. All 300 Intervention group families reported that their child did not participate in any other early childhood development programmes.

4.4.4 Getting Ready for School programme strengths and challenges

All 20 school principals believed that the Getting Ready for School programme had been successful in several areas. Young children's knowledge and self-confidence had been improved, as had teachers' knowledge of child development and their skills at working with young children and developing learning support materials. School-community interactions had increased, and there was a high level of satisfaction among programme parents, community members and participating teachers as well as among Young Facilitators and the young children themselves. The programme's popularity was underlined by reports from the field observing that young learners filled up available classrooms when sessions were held.

There were several challenges associated with successful programme implementation during this pilot year. One of the main barriers was the reduced number of programme sessions offered. Weekly programme sessions were planned, but cold weather and other issues led to the cancellation of several sessions during the winter months. Programme design in Tajikistan did not include extra sessions to be

conducted by Young Facilitators on their own outside of the formal school sessions. This meant that children in Tajikistan received a low programme dosage, both compared with what was planned and with what happened in other participating countries. Another area of significant concern was the fact that district education departments assigned teachers to participate in the training for Getting Ready for School without regard to their availability or their background. Some of them, for example, were secondary school teachers without experience in the development or education of young children. When teachers who had participated in the training were unavailable to carry out the programme, they were replaced with other teachers who had not been trained. A third area of concern involved the use of traditional Soviet-style (not child-centred) teaching methods employed by the Young Facilitators. This style was not child-centred and limited the amount of truly interactive learning. Finally, both school principals and community leaders pointed out that incentives for teachers were needed to encourage their involvement in the programme.

4.5 Programme impacts

This section describes programme impact findings for young children in the areas of on-time enrolment in first grade; school attendance; completion of first grade; academic performance, social learning and behaviour in the classroom; and family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day. We examined the data for any differential programme impacts for children based on their gender, their household resource level, and region (Bokhtar or Rumi).

4.5.1 On-time enrolment in first grade

Nearly all children enrolled in first grade on time. Of 300 Intervention group children, 277 enrolled on time (92.3 per cent), 6 were not enrolled (2 per cent), and the status of 17 (5.7 per cent) was unknown. Of the 300 Control group children, 274 enrolled on time (91.3 per cent), 13 (4.3 per cent) were not enrolled, and the status of 13 (4.3 per cent) was unknown. There was no significant difference in on-time enrolment rates for Intervention versus Control group children.[51]

4.5.2 Children's connectedness to school

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which children tried to do their best in school and the extent to which they seemed to enjoy school. They reported that for 72 per cent of Intervention group children and 66 per cent of Control group children, it was M*ostly true* or *Very true* that they tried to do their best. For 83 per cent of the Intervention group and 80 per cent of the Control group, teachers felt that it was *Mostly true* or *Very true* that the child seemed to enjoy school. The extent to which children tried to do their best in school was predicted by region (with students from Rumi getting higher ratings than students from Bokhtar), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[52] The extent to which children seemed to enjoy school was predicted by a combination of their gender (with girls getting higher ratings than boys) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource households enjoying school more than those from lower-resource households), but was not predicted by region or by whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[53]

4.5.3 First grade academic outcomes

Children's learning outcomes were examined based on Tajikistan's national first grade learning standards in the areas of literacy, mathematics, and applied skills.

[51] t (509.7) = 1.61, *ns.*

[52] Adjusted R^2 = .015, $F(1, 547) = 9.32$, $p < .01$.

[53] Adjusted R^2 = .014, $F(2, 547) = 5.14$, $p < .01$.

Literacy:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in reading/language arts compared with other children of the same grade level. Teacher ratings for children's overall literacy skills were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[54]

Teachers were also asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of reading/language arts: the ability to articulate letter sounds; to sound out unfamiliar words; to read fluently; and to read with comprehension. Teachers were to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet*, *Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well*.

Teachers reported that 80 per cent of Intervention group children and 78 per cent of Control group children were able to articulate letter sounds well, and 69 per cent of both Intervention and Control group children were able to sound out unfamiliar words well. Children's abilities to articulate letter sounds and their abilities to sound out unfamiliar words were unrelated to their gender, household resource level, region, or whether the children were from the Intervention or the Control group.

In the area of beginning reading, teachers reported that 61 per cent of Intervention group children and 60 per cent of Control group children were able to read fluently, and 65 per cent of Intervention group children and 64 per cent of Control group children were able to read with comprehension. Children's abilities to read fluently were predicted by a combination of their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households) and region (children from Bokhtar performed better than children from Rumi), but were not predicted by child gender or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[55] Children's abilities to read with comprehension were predicted by their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[56]

Mathematics:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in mathematics compared with other children of the same grade level. Teacher ratings for children's overall mathematics skills were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[57]

Teachers were also asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of mathematics: the ability to identify numerals 1 through 99; to identify geometric figures (point, line, triangle, etc.); to identify the meaning of mathematical symbols in addition and subtraction (+, -, =); to add and subtract numbers 1 through 99; to solve simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life; to understand units of money; and to understand units of time (week, month, etc.). For each skill, teachers were to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat or Able to do well*.

In the area of numerals, shapes and symbols, 58 per cent of Intervention group children and 54 per cent of Control group children were able to identify numerals 1 through 99 well; 70 per cent of Intervention

[54] Adjusted $R^2 = .023$, $F(1, 548) = 13.64$, $p < .001$.
[55] Adjusted $R^2 = .020$, $F(2, 548) = 6.63$, $p < .01$.
[56] Adjusted $R^2 = .009$, $F(1, 548) = 5.87$, $p < .05$.
[57] Adjusted $R^2 = .044$, $F(1, 548) = 26.06$, $p < .001$.

group children and 62 per cent of Control group children were able to identify basic geometric figures; and 85 per cent of Intervention group children and 86 per cent of Control group children understood mathematical symbols well. Children's abilities to identify numerals 1 through 99 and their abilities to identify geometric figures were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[58] Children's abilities to understand mathematical symbols were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[59]

In the area of mathematical operations, teachers reported that 37 per cent of Intervention group children and 30 per cent of Control group children could add and subtract numbers 1 through 99 well, and 57 per cent of Intervention group children and 52 per cent of Control group children could solve simple applied problems. Both children's abilities to add and subtract numbers 1 through 99 and their abilities to solve simple applied problems in daily life were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[60]

In the area of mathematics for daily living, teachers reported that 80 per cent of Intervention group children and 78 per cent of Control group children understood units of money well, and 68 per cent of Intervention group children and 70 per cent of Control group children understood units of time well. Children's abilities to understand units of money were not predicted by child gender, household resource level, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group. Children's abilities to understand units of time were predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[61]

Applied skills:

Teachers were then asked about acquisition of applied skills that a child would use across academic subjects. In the areas of thinking skills, teachers reported that: 59 per cent of Intervention group children and 56 per cent of Control group children were able to express their ideas in a logical sequence; 38 per cent of Intervention group children and 43 per cent of Control group children were able to solve problems that required prediction; and 58 per cent of Intervention group children and 57 per cent of Control group children were able to distinguish main ideas from details well. Children's abilities to express ideas in a logical sequence and their abilities to distinguish main ideas from details were both predicted by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group. [62] Children's abilities to solve problems that require prediction were not predicted by child gender, household resources, region, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.

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[58] With Adjusted R^2 = .011, $F(1, 548) = 7.32$, $p < .01$ for "Can identify numerals 1 through 99"; Adjusted R^2 = .013, $F(1, 548) = 8.07$, $p < .01$ for "Indentifies geometric figures".

[59] Adjusted R^2 = .012, $F(1, 548) = 7.60$, $p < .01$.

[60] With Adjusted R^2 = .023, $F(1, 548) = 14.17$, $p < .001$ for "Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 99"; Adjusted R^2 = .007, $F(1, 547) = 4.63$, $p < .05$ for "Solves simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life".

[61] Adjusted R^2 = .012, $F(1, 548) = 6.37$, $p < .05$.

[62] With Adjusted R^2 = .012, $F(1, 548) = 7.72$, $p < .01$ for "Expresses ideas in a logical sequence"; Adjusted R^2 = .013, $F(1, 548) = 8.45$, $p < .01$ for "Distinguishes a main idea from details in a story".

In the area of organizational skills, teachers reported that 56 per cent of Intervention group children and 53 per cent of Control group children were able to select appropriate materials to complete a task, and 56 per cent of Intervention group children and 55 per cent of Control group children were able to organize their work materials well. Children's abilities to select appropriate work materials were significantly predicted by a combination of household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes) and region (with children from Rumi getting higher ratings than children from Bokhtar), but were not predicted by child gender or by whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[63] Children's abilities to organize their work materials were significantly predicted by their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[64]

4.5.4 First grade social and emotional learning and classroom behaviour

Asked to rate children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment compared with other children of the same grade level, teachers reported that children's overall abilities to work well in a classroom environment were significantly predicted by their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, region, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[65]

Social relationships:

In order to rate children's behaviours in the areas of social relationships, their abilities to manage their emotions, and their abilities to self-organize in the classroom, teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was able to work collaboratively with others, and whether he/she was helpful to others (*Not at all true, A little bit true, Mostly true or Very true*).

In the area of social relationships, teachers reported that 70 per cent of both Intervention and Control group children were able to work collaboratively with others, and 75 per cent of Intervention group children and 71 per cent of Control group children were helpful to others. Whether children were able to work collaboratively was predicted by region (with children from Rumi getting higher ratings than children from Bokhtar), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or whether a child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[66] Whether children were helpful to others was predicted by a combination of site (with children from Rumi getting higher ratings than children from Bokhtar) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but was not predicted by child gender or by whether a child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[67]

Abilities to manage emotions:

We asked teachers about three classroom behaviours related to children's abilities to manage their emotions. Teachers were asked to indicate whether the child was able to control his/her temper, whether he/she was able to think before acting, and whether he/she was generally well behaved (*Not at all true*, *A little bit true, Mostly true or Very true*).

Teachers reported that 68 per cent of Intervention group children and 65 per cent of Control group children were able to control their tempers well; 64 per cent of Intervention group children and 66 per cent

[63] Adjusted R^2 = .023, $F(2, 547) = 7.42$, $p < .01$.
[64] Adjusted R^2 = .007, $F(1, 546) = 5.02$, $p < .05$.
[65] Adjusted R^2 = .039, $F(1, 548) = 23.16$, $p < .001$.
[66] Adjusted R^2 = .007, $F(1, 548) = 4.97$, $p < .05$.
[67] Adjusted R^2 = .018, $F(2, 546) = 6.07$, $p < .01$.

of Control group children were able to think before acting; and 82 per cent of Intervention group children and 77 per cent of Control group children were generally well behaved in the classroom. Children's abilities to control their tempers and the extent to which they were well behaved were both predicted by their gender (with girls receiving higher ratings than boys), but were not predicted by household resource level, region or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[68] Children's abilities to think before acting were predicted by their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by their gender, region, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[69]

4.5.5 Family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day

Teachers were asked how often a child's family initiated contact with them to learn how the child was doing in class and how often the child's family had initiated offers of help to the school or class.

According to teachers' reports, 88 per cent of Intervention group children's families and 86 per cent of Control group children's families had contacted the school at least once during the school year to learn how their child was doing. Seventy-six per cent of both Intervention and Control group children's families had offered to volunteer at the school. Frequency of family contact with the school to enquire about children's progress was predicted by a combination of household resources (with caregivers from higher-resource households initiating contact more often than caregivers from lower-resource households) and child gender (with caregivers of boys initiating contact more often than caregivers of girls), but was not predicted by region or by whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[70] Frequency of family contact with the school to volunteer was predicted by region (with caregivers from Rumi offering to volunteer more often than caregivers from Bokhtar), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[71]

Families also demonstrated that they believe school is important for a child when they make sure that the child arrives at school on time, with needed materials (such as pencils), and with a neat and clean appearance. Teachers reported that it was "Very true" that the child arrived at school on time for 88 per cent of the Intervention group and 89 per cent of the Control group. Similarly, teachers reported that 88 per cent of the Intervention group and 89 per cent of the Control group children arrived at school prepared with needed materials. And teachers also reported that it was "Very true" that children arrived at school with a neat and clean appearance for 89 per cent of the Intervention group and 91 per cent of the Control group.

The extent to which children arrived at school on time was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, region, or whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group. The extent to which children arrived at school prepared with the materials they needed was predicted by region (with children from Bokhtar more prepared than children from Rumi), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group.[72] The extent to which children arrived with a neat and clean appearance was predicted by a combination of household resources (with children from higher resource households receiving higher ratings than children from lower-resource households), site (with children from Bokhtar receiving higher ratings than children from Rumi), and child gender (with girls receiving higher ratings than boys), but was not predicted by whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group.[73]

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[68] With Adjusted R^2 = .015, $F(1, 546) = 9.44$, $p < .01$ for "This child controls his/her temper"; Adjusted R^2 = .007, $F(1, 546) = 4.81$, $p < .05$ for "This child is generally well behaved".

[69] Adjusted R^2 = .018, $F(1, 546) = 11.15$, $p < .01$.

[70] Adjusted R^2 = .036, $F(2, 545) = 11.23$, $p < .001$.

[71] Adjusted R^2 = .005, $F(1, 546) = 3.88$, $p < .05$.

[72] Adjusted R^2 = .010, $F(1, 546) = 6.63$, $p < .05$.

[73] Adjusted R^2 = .043, $F(3, 546) = 9.08$, $p < .001$.

4.5.6 Summary of programme impacts

UNICEF's Getting Ready for School programme did not have any significant impact on children's on-time enrolment in primary school, school connectedness, academic progress, or their behaviour in the classroom. The programme also did not have any impact on caregivers' engagement in their children's primary education or on the extent to which they prepared their children for the school day.

4.6 Discussion and recommendations

The programme proved to be very popular with Young Facilitators, young learners and teachers, with additional Young Facilitators and young children joining the programme during the year. School principals reported increased levels of school-community interaction, high levels of satisfaction with the programme among school staff, and increased understanding of young children's development among teachers. Teachers and Young Facilitators rated nearly all of the activities as a lot of fun for the children.

However, there were several weaknesses with the programme implementation in this pilot year, and these issues may well explain the low level of programme impacts. First, the teachers selected for training in the Getting Ready for School programme were often not the teachers who implemented the programme, leaving untrained teachers leading Getting Ready for School sessions in many schools. Second, the programme design in Tajikistan called for weekly programme sessions (compared with at least twice weekly in most other countries). This schedule, combined with not-unexpected school closures in the winter due to cold weather, meant that children in Tajikistan received a low programme dosage. By the end of first grade, there were no discernible differences between the Intervention group and the Control group.

Several recommendations emerge from this pilot programme evaluation:

- UNICEF may want to consider whether the Getting Ready for School programme is right for the Tajikistan context.
- If the programme is continued in Tajikistan, a higher 'dosage' is needed because early learning requires repeated exposure to new concepts in a variety of contexts over time.
- Greater caregiver involvement in the programme or sending children home with activities to practice with their families between sessions may reinforce learning.

In sum, the Getting Ready for School programme has been greeted with great enthusiasm in Tajikistan, and changes in programme design and focus may help Getting Ready for School better achieve the desired outcomes in Tajikistan. As it was implemented during the pilot year, however, the Getting Ready for School programme did not have any significant impact on children's school readiness or transition to primary school.

CHAPTER 5 YEMEN

5.1 Need for the intervention

The modern education system in Yemen is relatively young, having begun in 1962 when the Yemen Arab Republic was established. During the 1970s, Yemen witnessed an expansion of basic education, although there were great disparities in educational policies between the North and the South until the 1990 unification. Traditionally, North Yemen has been a relatively closed society where education has been limited only to religious schools, or to small, community-based schools, with boys the majority of the students. Tradition dictates that parents are not obliged to send girls to school. Many girls attend school only if that school is close to their home, equipped with separate lavatories, well supervised, and staffed with female teachers. The opportunity costs associated with educating girls are also an important consideration for many families. Girls represent a valuable source of household labour, which is lost when girls are at school or studying. This is particularly the case in rural households. With the migration of male adults to neighbouring oil-rich countries over the last 25 years, women in rural areas now constitute the majority of the agricultural labour force, leaving daughters to carry out many of the domestic chores.[74]

The unified Yemen of the 1990s faced several problems, including a weak education system, low levels of teacher training and qualification, gaps in enrolment between boys and girls, weak institutional capacity from the Ministry to school levels, and low community participation.[75] In recent years, however, the provision of universal and high quality early education has become a policy priority for the government. Even though the General Law of Education defines pre-primary education as the first stage of education and designates nursery schools and kindergartens as providers of education to children 3 to 6 years old, preschool programs are not compulsory.[76]

Furthermore, one of the Ministry of Education's recent goals, as stated in the five-year plan for the period 2001–2005, has been to pay more attention to pre-primary education and to extend preschool services across all governorates of the country. The government's plan was to provide funds for cost-effective construction of appropriate buildings and ensure the requisite human and financial resources for pre-primary education while at the same time encouraging private sector investment. Progress toward these goals has been slow, however. The Getting Ready for School programme is viewed as an important element in the push for universal access to high quality early interventions for young children that will, in turn, boost their readiness for formal schooling.

5.2 Nature of the intervention

A general Inception Meeting was held in March 2008 to brief a steering committee on the concept, objectives, and project framework of the Getting Ready for School programme and to agree on the

[74] Noman, Laila, 'Education of girls in the Yemen', 1995, The Britisch-Yemeni Sodicty, < http://www.al-bab.com/bys/articles/noman95.htm>, accessed 25 February 2009.
[75] World Bank, *Yemen Economic Update,* Issue 11, September December 2002, retrieved from <
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTYEMEN/News%20and%20Events/20150099/YE-Winter2002.pdf> on 24 May 2012.
[76] UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), 'Yemen: Early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes', country profiole prepared for the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2007*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, 2006. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001472/147256e.pdf>, accessed 25 February 2009.

national management structure of the project. It was decided that the programme would be implemented in three districts in the Taiz Governorate: Haifan, Al-Makha and Mawza. Fifteen Intervention Schools and 15 Control Schools were identified within the Taiz Governorate, with 5 Intervention and Control Schools respectively from each pilot district.

Getting Ready for School focal points at Taiz Governorate Education Office, District Education Offices (DEO) and the UNICEF Taiz office jointly conducted school visits in July 2008 to discuss the Getting Ready for School programme and its evaluation with school principals and teachers.

Teachers were provided with general guidance on how to identify eligible Young Facilitators among their students. The matching process between Young Facilitators and young children was completed by the UNICEF Taiz Office with support from DEO, Intervention Schools and Field Coordinators. The Getting Ready for School pilot programme began in February 2009 and concluded in August 2009.

5.3 The evaluation

5.3.1 Data collection

Baseline data were collected in September 2008, outcome data for teachers, Young Facilitators and community stakeholders were collected in July 2009 and outcome data for children and their caregivers in October 2009. All data collection was done by trained, certified assessors and quality monitoring was conducted by both UNICEF and the contracting evaluation consulting group. There were no significant data collection issues reported, and the data sent from the field was of high quality.

5.3.2 Sample

A total of 83 teachers, 183 Young Facilitators, and 581 young children participated in the programme. A random subset of these participants formed the Intervention group sample.

Table 9 (*same page*) shows the characteristics of the 15 Intervention group schools and the 15 Control group schools at the time of the baseline evaluation.

Table 9 School characteristics

	Intervention	Control
Number of students enrolled	*M* = 428 (Range 151 – 1,359)	*M* = 339 (Range 81 – 744)
Number of teachers and educational assistants	*M* = 16 (Range 7 – 37)	*M* = 14 (Range 3 – 41)
Student/teacher ratio	*M* = 28:1 (Range 5:1 – 43:1)	*M* = 31:1 (Range 6:1 – 58:1)
Daily absence rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 14% (Range 4% – 30%)	*M* = 11% (Range 2% – 21%)
Dropout rate as of 2007/08 school year	*M* = 7% (Range 0% – 19%)	*M* = 9% (Range 0% – 40%)

At the baseline evaluation, 81 teachers were in the Intervention group and 19 in the Control group. At the outcome evaluation, three additional Intervention group teachers took part in the teacher survey for a total of 84, as did 18 teachers from the Control group. There were no concerns about differential attrition among teachers. Table 10 (*see Table 10, page 44*) shows the characteristics of teachers in the programme and Control groups (as reported at baseline). Teachers in the Control group had significantly

more years of experience than did teachers in the Intervention group.[77]Teachers in the Intervention group, however, had a significantly higher level of education.[78] We did not find significant variation in teachers' years of experience or educational levels between the three participating districts.

Table 10 Teacher characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender (% female)	30%	26%
Years teaching	*M* = 10.8 *SD* =5.3	*M* = 13.4 *SD* = 4.7
Live in school community? (% yes)	81%	90%

At the time of the baseline evaluation, 301 children and their families were in the Intervention group and 300 in the Control group. Outcome evaluations were completed for 297 children and families in the Intervention group and 297 in the Control group. This attrition rate is very low for both Intervention and Control group families, and there are no concerns about differential attrition. Children in the Control group were more likely than children in the Intervention group to reside in a two-parent household.[79] There were no other significant differences between Intervention and Control group families based on these characteristics. Table 11 (*same page*) summarizes child and caregiver characteristics at baseline.

Table 11 Child and family characteristics at baseline

	Intervention	Control
Gender of participating child (% female)	50%	44%
Number of household members	*M* = 7.5 (*SD* = 2.7)	*M* = 7.8 (*SD* = 2.6)
Number of household members under age 12	*M* = 2.8 (*SD* = 1.6)	*M* = 2.9 (*SD* = 1.6)
Two-parent households	91%	96%
Families with out-of-school children[80]	17%	17%
Responding caregiver literacy (% literate)	50%	60%
Family resource level[81] (% low)	51%	48%

5.4 Programme implementation and participation

This section provides information regarding the level of participation in the Getting Ready for School programme among children assigned to the Intervention group and the Young Facilitators; programme implementation; the extent to which children in both the intervention and Control groups participated in other early childhood development programmes; the success of programme communications in conveying key messages to the community; and stakeholder perceptions of programme strengths, challenges and sustainability.

[77] $t(101) = -2.02$, $p < .05$.

[78] $t(37.79) = 2.78$, $p < .01$.

[79] $t(542.3) = -2.29$, $p < .05$.

[80] Among households with one or more older children aged 7–13, percentage of households where at least one of those children was not enrolled in school at the time of the baseline evaluation.

[81] Low resource level based on the presence of three or fewer of the following items in the household: bed, radio, living room, television, satellite receiver, mobile telephone, gas cooker, refrigerator or washing machine or car.

5.4.1 Participation in Getting Ready for School

There were 35 programme sessions offered. A total of 301 young children were assigned to the Intervention group. According to programme records, young children attended an average of 25.2 sessions (SD = 11.36). Forty-four children (15 per cent) had perfect attendance and 34 (11 per cent) did not attend any sessions. In the course of parent interviews, however, only nine programme families reported that their child never attended the programme. Of those, six stated that they had been unaware that the Getting Ready for School programme was available to them.

Of the six families who reported that their child had only attended once or twice, two reported that the low attendance was because the child's behaviour made him or her too difficult to participate; one family reported that the programme was not interesting to the child or the child did not wish to go; one that there was no one available to take the child to the programme; and one that the programme was inaccessible due to location and/or lack of transportation. The sixth respondent did not provide a reason for the low attendance.

Among the three regions participating in the programme, Mawza had the highest average attendance rate for young children (76 per cent), closely followed by Haifan (74 per cent), with a lower 66 per cent attendance rate in Al-Makha. Where children had lower rates, they attended sporadically throughout the duration of the programme rather than dropping out completely. Reports from the field suggest that lower attendance in Al-Makha may be primarily due to the long distances that some children had to travel. There were no significant differences in child attendance rates based on children's gender, household resource level, whether older children in the household were in school or out of school, or whether the caregiver who completed the baseline interview self-identified as literate or illiterate.[82]

The 153 Young Facilitators attended an average of 88 per cent of the sessions, with 52 (35 per cent) having perfect attendance. As with the young children, Young Facilitators from Mawza had a significantly higher level of attendance than Young Facilitators from the other two regions, with an average attendance rate of 96 per cent in Mawza, 87 per cent in Haifan, and 84 per cent in Al-Makha.[83] We did not find significant differences in Young Facilitators' attendance based on their gender.

5.4.2 Implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme

As intended, the Getting Ready for School programme was implemented across 35 sessions, with each session lasting approximately an hour and a half. At the conclusion of each session, the teacher completed a session record where he or she indicated whether the instructions in the teacher's guide were clear, whether he/she felt that literacy and numeracy activities were fun for most of the children, whether the Young Facilitators felt that activities were fun, whether the lessons were at the right level of difficulty for the young children, and whether the Young Facilitators found it easy or difficult to implement the activities. Teachers also provided information about resources they had purchased for the sessions and on time spent for preparation, and offered recommendations for any needed improvements in the programme.

Teachers reported that their instructions were *Very clear* 90 per cent of the time, *Somewhat clear* 8 per cent of the time, and *Not clear* just 2 per cent of the time. Likewise, the Young Facilitators found their instructions to be easy to follow 91 per cent of the time.

Teachers and Young Facilitators gave similar ratings for how fun the activities were for the young children. Teachers rated the activities as "Very fun" 76 per cent of the time, *Somewhat fun* 22 per cent of the time, and *Not fun* just 1 per cent of the time. Young Facilitators rated the activities as *Very fun* 76 per

[82] With $t(297) = -1.21$, *ns* for gender; $t(296.1) = 1.55$, *ns* for resource level; $t(225) = -1.28$, *ns* for older child in school or out of school; $t(273) = 1.02$, *ns* for caregiver literacy.
[83] $F(2,146) = 7.45$, $p < .01$.

cent of the time, *Somewhat fun* 21 per cent of the time, and *Not fun* 1 per cent of the time. Thirty-six per cent of activities were rated by teachers as being at the right level of difficulty for children, with a much higher 62 per cent rated *Very easy* and less than 3 per cent *Too difficult*.

5.4.3 Participation in other early childhood development programmes

Only nine of the children in the evaluation took part in any other early childhood development programme. All nine were from the Intervention group. Four participated in a public preschool, two participated in private preschools, one took part in educational sessions provided once or twice per week by a community organization or religious group, and one took part in an unspecified programme type.

5.4.4 Getting Ready for School programme strengths and challenges

School principals and community leaders noted several strengths in the Getting Ready for School programme in their communities. All school principals reported a high level of interest in and enthusiasm for the programme among school staff and participating children. Several also indicated that the programme was beneficial because it increased young children's school readiness and reduced their fear of school; increased community concern for young children's development; strengthened school-community relationships; engaged teachers; and generated enthusiasm for learning among Young Facilitators and the young children. Community leaders corroborated this information, reporting that the introduction of Getting Ready for School had increased the level of awareness of the importance of children's early learning; increased awareness of the importance of on-time enrolment (with some parents who had not enrolled children on time previously now expressing regret that they had not done so); and increased school-community connections so that parents were now more likely to visit the school to discuss their child's progress.

While stakeholders did not identify any serious difficulties in programme implementation, they did identify several challenges. Most school principals reported difficulty finding adequate space for the programme, and several lacked adequate numbers of teachers to facilitate the programme. About half of the school principals indicated that the amount of supplies (e.g., teaching aids, school bags, pencils, scissors) allocated for the programme was insufficient, and many thought that there could have been more financial support or other incentives provided for implementing teachers.

5.5 Programme impacts

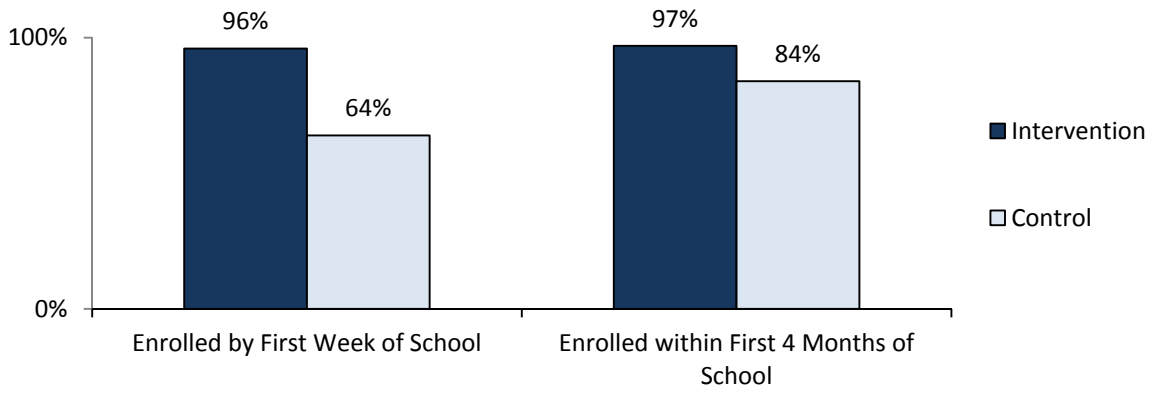
This section presents programme impact findings for young children in the areas of on-time enrolment in first grade; school attendance; completion of first grade; academic performance, social learning and behaviour in the classroom; and family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day. The data for any differential programme impacts for children based on what region they lived in, their gender, their household resource level, and whether the caregiver who completed the baseline interview self-identified as literate or illiterate are also examined here.

5.5.1 On-time enrolment in first grade

There was a significant programme impact on young children's enrolment in primary school (*see Figure 16*, *page 47*). Among children in the Intervention group, 96 per cent (n = 288) enrolled by the first week of school, 1 per cent (n = 4) enrolled after the first week in school, and 3 per cent (n = 9) had not enrolled in any school within the first four months of the school year. Among children in the Control group, 64 per cent (n = 189) enrolled by the first week of school, 20 per cent (n = 58) enrolled after the first week in school, and 16 per cent (n = 48) had not enrolled in any school within the first four months of the school year. While the enrolment gap between Intervention and Control group children narrowed somewhat by the end of the fourth month of school, children who begin first grade late miss out on valuable learning time, and may struggle to catch up to peers – potentially leading to a more negative school experience.

Programme implementation staff in Yemen also reported a high level of commitment and enthusiasm among Intervention group parents to enrol their children in school on time.

Figure 16 On-time enrolment in first grade



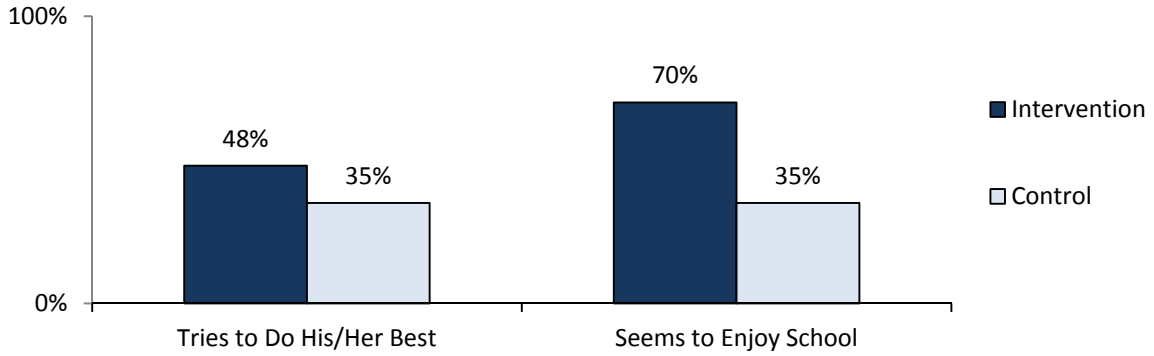
The impact in Al-Makha was particularly strong: 98 per cent of the children in the Intervention group enrolled on time (n = 98), no children enrolled late, and only 2 per cent (n = 2) did not enrol at all. In the Control group, only 26 per cent of the children enrolled on time (n = 25), 52 per cent enrolled late (n = 50), and 22 per cent (n = 21) did not enrol. Enrolment rates were similar for boys and for girls within both the Intervention and Control groups.

5.5.2 Children's connectedness to school

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which children tried to do their best in school and the extent to which they seemed to enjoy school. Figure 17 (*see page 48*) shows the percentage of children in the Intervention group and the percentage in the Control group who tried to do their best and who seemed to enjoy school. The extent to which children tried to do their best in school was predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with children from the Intervention group receiving higher ratings than children in the Control group) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource households receiving higher ratings than children from lower-resource households), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[84] The extent to which children seemed to enjoy school was predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with children from the Intervention group receiving higher ratings than children in the Control group), household resource level (with children from higher-resource households receiving higher ratings than children from lower-resource households) and region (with children from Haifan and Mawza receiving higher ratings than children from Al-Makha), but was not predicted by child gender or caregiver literacy. [85]

[84] Adjusted R^2 = .022, $F(2, 432) = 5.81$, $p < .01$.
[85] Adjusted R^2 = .119, $F(3, 438) = 20.75$, $p < .001$.

Figure 17 Children's connectedness to school
(Percentage of children whose teachers said it was *Very true* that they did their best of enjoyed school)



5.5.3 First grade academic outcomes

Children's learning outcomes were examined based on Yemen's national first grade learning standards in the areas of literacy, mathematics, and science. Children's abilities to solve problems and to work constructively in the classroom were also looked at.

Literacy:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in reading/language arts compared with other children of the same grade level. Teacher ratings for children's overall literacy skills were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with higher ratings for the Intervention group) and their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or region.[86]

Teachers were then asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of reading/language arts, namely their ability to: identify letters in script; write letters correctly; associate letters with sounds; read basic words; and to sound out unfamiliar words. For each skill, teachers indicated whether the child was *Not Able to do yet*, *Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well*.

Figure 18 (*see page 49*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able identify and write letters well. Children's abilities to identify Arabic letters in script were predicted by a combination of whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[87] Children's abilities to write letters correctly based on their position in a word were predicted by a combination of their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households), whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and gender (with boys performing slightly better than girls), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy or by region.[88]

[86] Adjusted R^2 = .048, $F(2, 437) = 12.13$, $p < .001$.
[87] Adjusted R^2 = .054, $F(2, 438) = 13.59$, $p < .001$.
[88] Adjusted R^2 = .053, $F(3, 439) = 9.26$, $p < .001$.

Figure 18 Children's literacy, letter forms and sounds

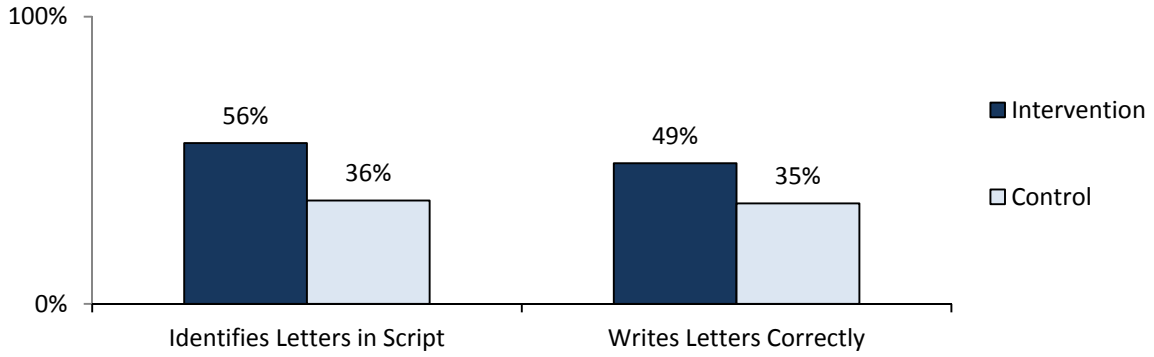
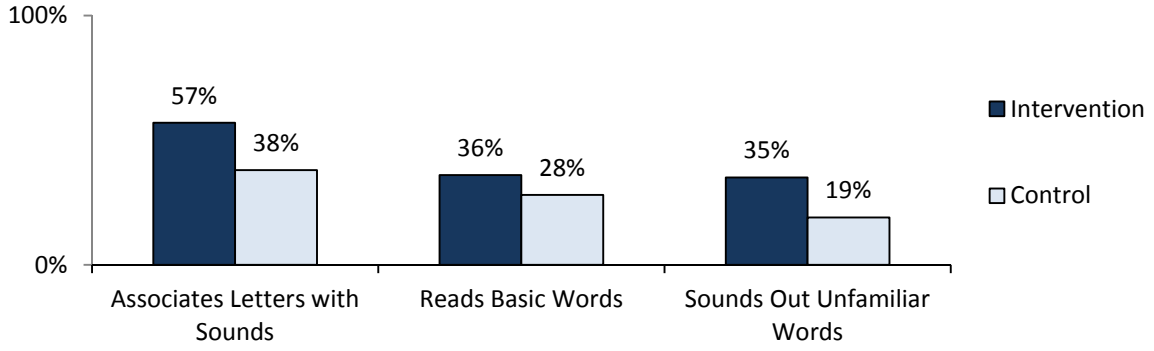


Figure 19 (*same page*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to perform each beginning reading task well. Children's abilities to associate letters with their sounds were predicted by a combination of whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[89] Children's abilities to read basic words were predicted by a combination of their household resource level (children from higher-resource households performed better than children from lower-resource households), whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), region (with children from Haifan scoring higher than children from Al-Makha and Mawza) and gender (with boys scoring slightly higher than girls), but were not predicted by caregiver literacy.[90] Children's abilities to sound out unfamiliar words were predicted by a combination of whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and their region (with children from Haifan scoring higher than children from Al-Makha), but were not predicted by child gender, household resource level, or caregiver literacy.[91]

Figure 19 Children's literacy, beginning reading
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



[89] Adjusted R^2 = .058, $F(2, 439) = 14.40$, $p < .001$.
[90] Adjusted R^2 = .095, $F(4, 438) = 12.49$, $p < .001$.
[91] Adjusted R^2 = .051, $F(2, 435) = 12.63$, $p < .001$.

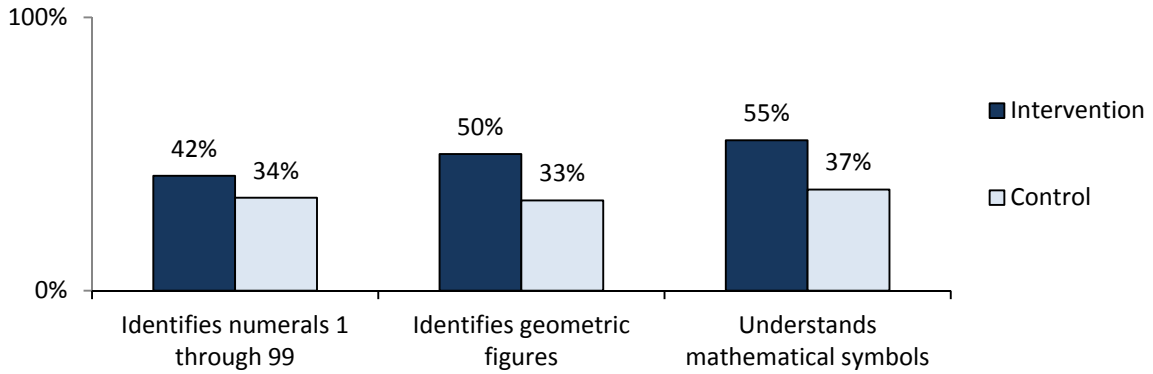
Mathematics:

Teachers were asked to rate children's academic skills in mathematics compared with other children of the same grade level. The ratings for children's overall mathematics skills were predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with higher ratings for the Intervention group) and their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[92]

Teachers were then asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of mathematics, namely the ability to: identify numerals 1 through 99; identify geometric figures; identify the meaning of mathematical symbols; understand quantities of 1 through 99; add and subtract numbers; and to solve simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life. For each skill, teachers were to indicate whether the child was *Not able to do yet*, *Able to do somewhat* or *Able to do well*.

Figure 20 (*same page*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to perform each mathematics task well in the identification of numerals, shapes, and symbols. Children's abilities to identify numerals 1 through 99 were predicted by a combination of household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), and region (with children from Haifan scoring highest) but were not predicted by child gender or caregiver literacy.[93] Children's abilities to identify geometric figures were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[94] And children's abilities to understand mathematical symbols were predicted by whether they were from the Intervention group or Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or region.[95]

Figure 20 Identification of numbers, shapes, and symbols
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)

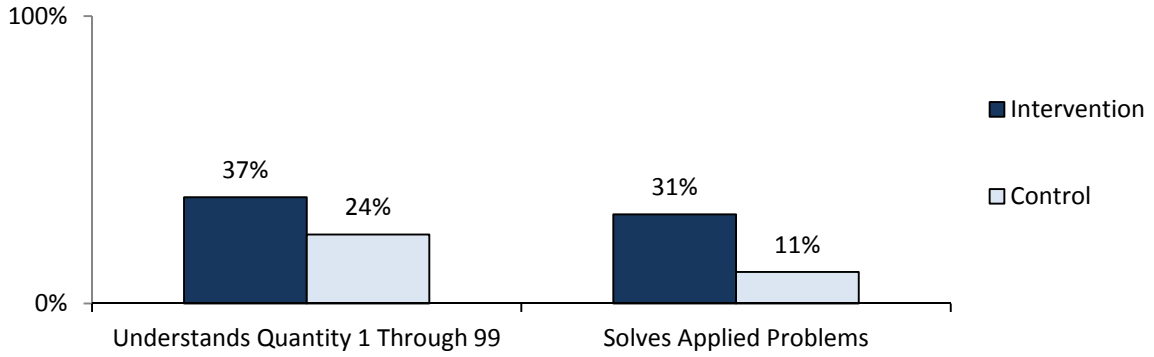


Children's abilities to say which numbers are larger or smaller within numerals 1 through 99 were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and household resource level (with children from higher-

[92] Adjusted R^2 = .058, $F(2, 437) = 14.53$, $p < .01$.
[93] Adjusted R^2 = .066, $F(3, 440) = 11.38$, $p < .001$.
[94] Adjusted R^2 = .057, $F(2, 438) = 14.12$, $p < .001$.
[95] Adjusted R^2 = .045, $F(1, 441) = 21.76$, $p < .001$.

resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or region.[96] Children's abilities to add and subtract numbers 1 through 99 were predicted by a combination of region (with children from Haifan scoring higher) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, or whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group.[97] And children's abilities to solve simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life were predicted by whether they were from the Intervention group or Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level, or region (*see Figure 21, same page*).[98]

Figure 21 Beginning mathematics operations
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well)*

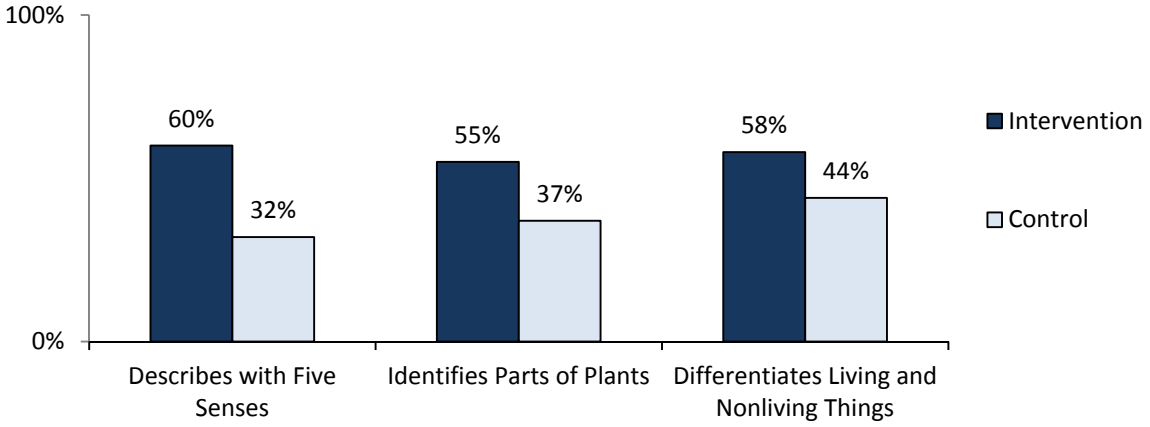


Science:

Teachers were asked about children's acquisition of specific skills in the area of science. Figure 22 (*see page 52*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to perform each science task well. Children's abilities to describe the attributes of objects using the five senses were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), region (with children from Haifan scoring higher) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender or caregiver literacy.[99] Children's abilities to identify the parts of plants were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and caregiver literacy (with children of literate caregivers scoring higher), but were not predicted by child gender, household resource level or region.[100] And children's abilities to differentiate living and non-living things were predicted by region (with children from Haifan scoring highest), whether children were from the Intervention group or Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender or by caregiver literacy.[101]

[96] Adjusted R^2 = .046, $F(2, 437) = 11.56$, $p < .001$.
[97] Adjusted R^2 = .064, $F(2, 438) = 16.02$, $p < .001$.
[98] Adjusted R^2 = .049, $F(1, 404) = 21.82$, $p < .001$.
[99] Adjusted R^2 = .153, $F(3, 434) = 27.04$, $p < .001$
[100] Adjusted R^2 = .064, $F(2, 434) = 15.92$, $p < .001$
[101] Adjusted R^2 = .101, $F(3, 433) = 17.26$, $p < .001$

Figure 22 Science skills
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well)*

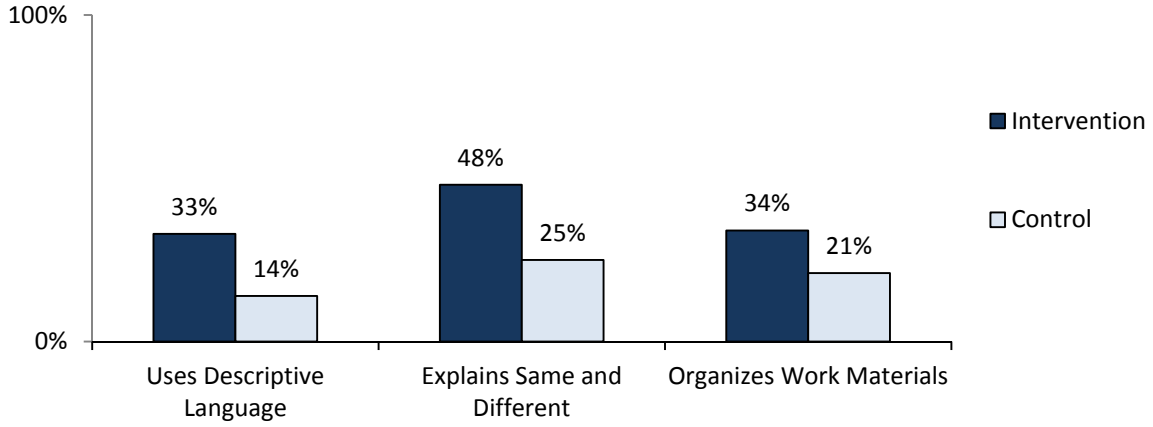


Applied skills:

Teachers were asked about children's acquisition of applied skills that would be used across subjects. Figure 23 (*see page 53*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to use descriptive language and the percentage who were able to explain same and different. Children's ability to use descriptive language was predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), and region (with children from Haifan scoring higher), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or household resource level.[102] Children's abilities to explain same and different were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and region (with children from Haifan scoring higher), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or household resource level.[103] Children's abilities to organize their work materials in the classroom were predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children performing better) and caregiver literacy (with children of literate caregivers receiving higher ratings), but were not predicted by child gender, household resource level or region.[104]

[102] Adjusted R^2 = .098, $F(2, 408) = 23.18$, $p < .001$.
[103] Adjusted R^2 = .135, $F(2, 420) = 33.71$, $p < .001$.
[104] Adjusted R^2 = .068, $F(2, 433) = 16.87$, $p < .001$.

Figure 23 Applied skills
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



5.5.4 First grade social and emotional learning and classroom behaviour

Teachers were asked to rate children's abilities to work well in a classroom environment compared with other children of the same grade level. Children's overall abilities to work well in a classroom environment were significantly predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and by their household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or region.[105]

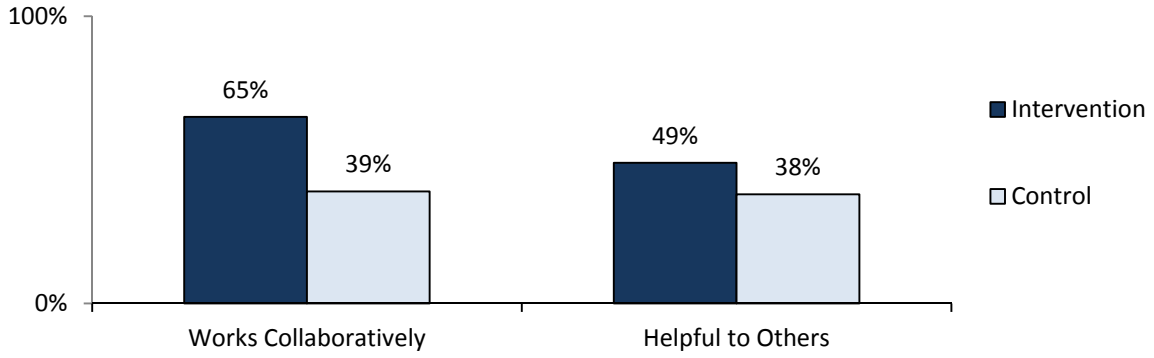
Social relationships:

Teachers were then asked to rate children's behaviour in the areas of social relationships, their abilities to manage their emotions and their abilities to self-organize in the classroom.

Figure 24 (*see page 54*) shows the percentage of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to work collaboratively and the percentage that helped others at school. Whether children were able to work collaboratively was predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, caregiver literacy or region.[106] Whether children were helpful to others was predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher), but was not predicted by child gender, household resource level, caregiver literacy or region.[107]

[105] Adjusted R^2 = .039, $F(2, 435) = 9.93$, $p < .001$.
[106] Adjusted R^2 = .077, $F(1, 436) = 37.44$, $p < .001$.
[107] Adjusted R^2 = .016, $F(1, 433) = 8.02$, $p < .01$.

Figure 24 Children's social relationships
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well* or of which it is *Very true*)



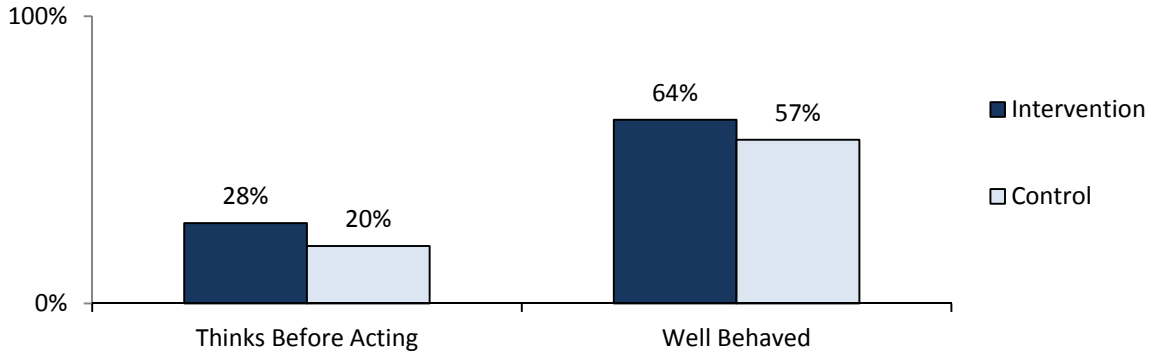
Ability to manage emotions:

Teachers were asked about three classroom behaviours relate to children's abilities to manage their emotions, namely whether the child was able to control his/her temper, whether he/she was able to think before acting, and whether he/she was generally well behaved and to rate the children by *Not at all true*, *A little bit true*, *Mostly true* or *Very true*.

Children's abilities to control their tempers were predicted by a combination of region (with children from Mawza scoring highest, followed by children from Haifan, and children from Al-Makha scoring lowest) and household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes), but were not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or whether the child was from the Intervention group or the Control group.[108] Children's abilities to think before acting were predicted by a combination of whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children scoring higher) and caregiver literacy (with children of literate caregivers scoring higher), but were not predicted by child gender, household resource level or region.[109] The extent to which teachers thought that children were well behaved was predicted by a combination of household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes getting higher ratings than children from lower-resource homes) and whether children were from the Intervention group or Control group (with children from the Intervention group scoring higher), (*see Figure 25, page 55*).[110]

[108] Adjusted R^2 = .040, $F(2, 423) = 9.76$, $p < .001$.
[109] Adjusted R^2 = .047, $F(2, 408) = 11.11$, $p < .01$.
[110] Adjusted R^2 = .027, $F(2, 436) = 7.10$, $p < .01$.

Figure 25 Children's abilities to manage their emotions
(Percentage of children of whom it was reported to be *Very true*)

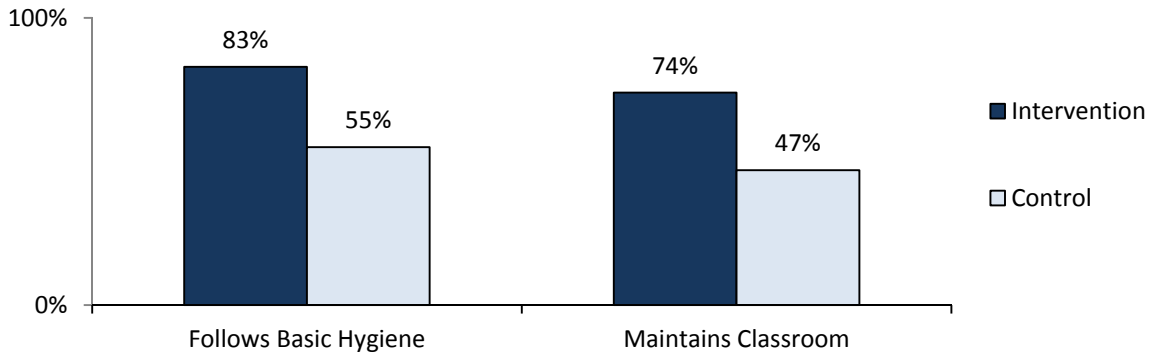


5.5.5 First grade life skills

Teachers were asked about two areas of children's life skills, namely whether the child was able to follow basic hygiene and whether he/she participated in maintaining the classroom, using the ratings *Not able to do yet, Able to do somewhat or Able to do well*.

Figure 26 (*same page*) shows the percentage of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group who were able to follow basic hygiene and/or participated in maintaining their classroom. Children's abilities to follow basic hygiene and their participation in maintaining their classroom were both predicted by whether they were in the Intervention group or Control group (with Intervention group children receiving higher ratings), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, household resource level or region.[111]

Figure 26 First grade life skills
(Percentage of children reported to be *Able to do well*)



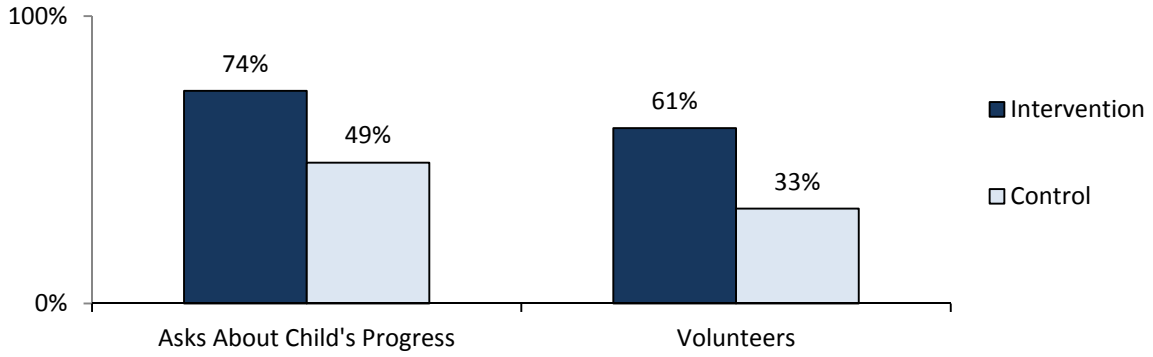
[111] With adjusted R^2 = .097, $F(1, 412) = 45.27$, $p < .001$ for "Follows basic hygiene practices (e.g., washing hands)"; Adjusted R^2 = .097, $F(1, 412) = 45.27$, $p < .001$ for "Participates in maintaining his/her classroom".

5.5.6 Family-school connections and children's preparation for the school day

Teachers were asked how often a child's family initiated contact with them to learn how the child was doing in class, and how often the child's family had initiated offers of help with the school or class.

Figure 27 (*same page*) shows the percentages of children in the Intervention group and in the Control group whose families had contacted the teacher at least once during the school year to enquire about how the child was doing or to offer to help with school or class activities. Frequency of family contact with the school to enquire about children's progress was predicted by a combination of household resources (with caregivers from higher-resource households initiating contact more often than caregivers from lower-resource households), whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group caregivers making more frequent contact), and region (with caregivers from Haifan initiating more contact), but was not predicted by child gender or by caregiver literacy.[112] Frequency of family contact with the school to volunteer was predicted by a combination of whether children were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group caregivers volunteering more often), household resources (with caregivers from higher-resource households volunteering more often than caregivers from lower-resource households), and child gender (with caregivers of boys volunteering more often), but was not predicted by caregiver literacy or by region.[113]

Figure 27 Family Engagement in School
(Percentage of families reported to have initiated contact *At least once*)

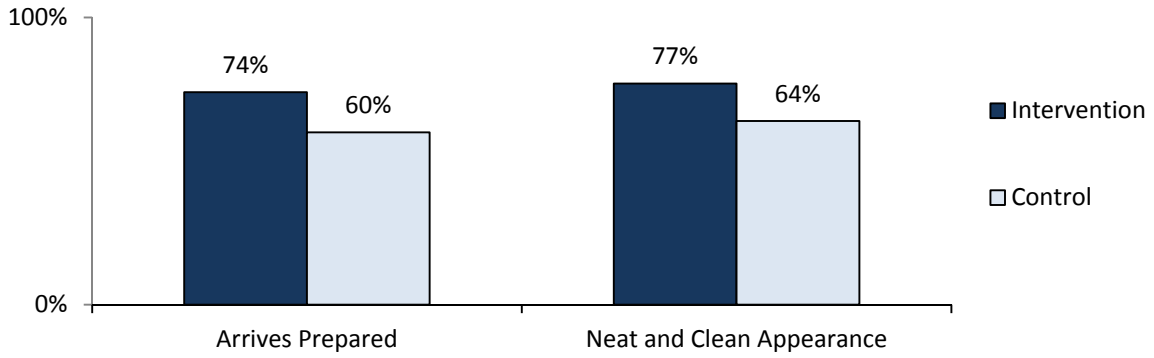


Families also demonstrate that they believe school is important for a child when they make sure that child arrives at school on time, with needed materials (such as pencils), and with a neat and clean appearance. The extent to which children arrived at school on time was predicted by household resource level (with children from higher resource households more likely to arrive on time), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy, region or whether children were in the Intervention group or the Control group.[114] The extent to which children arrived at school prepared with the materials they needed was predicted by a combination of whether they were from the Intervention group or the Control group (with Intervention group children better prepared) and by household resource level (with children from higher-resource homes better prepared), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or region.[115] The extent to which children arrived at school with a neat and clean appearance was predicted by a combination of household resources (with children from higher resource households receiving higher ratings than children from lower-resource households) and whether they were from the Intervention group

[112] Adjusted R^2 = .176, $F(3, 440) = 32.33$, $p < .001$.
[113] Adjusted R^2 = .118, $F(3, 432) = 20.32$, $p < .001$.
[114] Adjusted R^2 = .035, $F(1, 441) = 16.92$, $p < .001$.
[115] Adjusted R^2 = .031, $F(2, 442) = 8.04$, $p < .001$.

or the Control group (with Intervention group children receiving higher ratings), but was not predicted by child gender, caregiver literacy or region (*see Figure 28, same page*).[116]

Figure 28 Child's Home Preparation for the School Day
(Per centage of children of whom it was reported to be *Very true*)



5.5.7 Summary of programme impacts

The Getting Ready for School programme impacts that were evident at the end of the programme year carried over through first grade. Children in the Intervention group were much more likely to have been enrolled on time and had significantly greater connectedness to school, better academic skills, better social skills and behaviour in the classroom, and better hygiene practices when compared with Control group children. Caregivers of Intervention group children also had a higher level of engagement with their children's primary school and they better prepared children for their school day.

5.6 Discussion and recommendations

The Getting Ready for School programme seems to have had a very successful implementation in this pilot year. There was a high level of enthusiasm for the programme among participants, school administrators and community members. The programme evaluation in Yemen was in the form of a well-run, randomized controlled trial and evaluation findings can be viewed with confidence.

There were several positive programme impacts. The most significant impact is the 32 per cent increase in on-time enrolment among children who had the Getting Ready for School programme available to them. As on-time enrolment is a significant concern within Yemen's educational system, this impact has positive implications for the educational system as well as for individual children. Once enrolled in first grade, Intervention group children had better academic skills and a better adjustment to their first grade classroom when compared to Control group children. Intervention group caregivers, moreover, were more intensively engaged in their children's classroom and better prepared their children for the school day when compared with Control group caregivers.

The recommendations to emerge from this evaluation are as follows:

- The Getting Ready for School programme should be continued and expanded in Yemen based on evidence that it improves children's enrolment and engagement in primary school. Increased on-time enrolment into primary school is one way that Yemen can make progress toward achieving universal primary education.

[116] Adjusted R^2 = .047, $F(2, 442) = 11.85$, $p < .001$.

In sum, Yemen had an extremely successful pilot implementation of the Getting Ready for School programme, and the programme seems to be on a very positive path toward future success in Yemen.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide UNICEF with an independent assessment of whether and to what extent the Getting Ready for School programme achieved its desired results, based on programme implementation during the pilot year. The findings from this evaluation identify programme strengths, weaknesses, challenges and best practices to guide future implementation and expansion of the programme. The current report presents findings from a follow-up of children through their transition into first grade in four of the six participating countries: Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tajikistan and Yemen.

The evaluation was structured in the form of a country-level randomized controlled trial in each of the four countries – the most rigorous type of evaluation design. A mixed-methods approach was used whereby quantitative data (such as children's scores on school readiness assessments) were combined with qualitative data (such as interviews with community leaders) to provide measures of programme impacts as well as essential information regarding conditions that seem to have contributed to or detracted from the success of the programme. The use of a common evaluation framework and tools across countries enables the drawing of conclusions about the success of this pilot programme overall and allows for the formulation of general recommendations to guide future programme implementation and expansion across countries as well as within them.

The Getting Ready for School programme had two main goals for young children: to increase their school readiness; and to increase their rate of on-time enrolment in first grade. At the end of the first grade year, teachers of enrolled children were asked to complete a survey regarding the child's academic progress (measured against each country's national learning standards for first grade), their social and emotional adjustment to the classroom, their caregivers' level of engagement with the school, and the extent to which their family was preparing them for the schoolday.

Table 12 (*same page*) summarizes programme impacts, with *Yes* indicating a significant programme impact on one or more child outcomes in each area assessed. Note that specific academic outcomes varied by country based on each country's first grade learning standards.

Table 12 Summary of programme impacts

	Bangladesh	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Tajikistan	Yemen
On-time enrolment in grade one	**Yes**	**Yes**[117]	No	**Yes**
Children's connectedness to school	No	No	No	**Yes**
Academic skills				
Literacy	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes**
Mathematics	No	No	No	**Yes**
Science	No	n/a	n/a	**Yes**
Applied skills	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes**
Life skills	n/a	**Yes**	n/a	**Yes**
Classroom social skills and behaviour				
Social relationships	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes**
Classroom behaviour	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes**
Family-school connections				
Family-school contact	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes**
Child preparation for the school day	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes**

[117] While children in the Intervention group had greater on-time enrolment than children in the Control group, the high attrition rate means that this result was based on only partial data, and should be generalized with caution.

Programme impacts varied substantially across countries and were relatively consistent with what was observed at the end of the programme year. The Getting Ready for School programme continued to have a high level of impact in Yemen, substantially improving on-time enrolment, children's academic progress and adjustment to the classroom, and family involvement in primary school. There were also substantial programme impacts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the areas of on-time enrolment, some academic skills, children's adjustment to the classroom, and families' engagement in preparing children for the school day. The very high rate of attrition among the sample in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, however, means that the extent to which results can be generalized is not certain. In Bangladesh, the programme had a positive impact on on-time enrolment and on caregivers' engagement with the school. For all three of those countries, increasing on-time enrolment is a critical component of achieving universal primary completion. As over-age enrolment and failure to enrol entirely is very costly to society in many countries, programmes that increase on-time enrolment in school provide a tangible benefit. In Tajikistan, there was little programme impact at the end of the programme year and no impact on transitions to primary school. On-time enrolment is less of an issue in Tajikistan than in some of the other countries (although there are still high drop-out rates later in primary school). There was no impact on children's first grade academic progress, children's adjustment to the classroom, or caregiver involvement.

Countries varied with regard to how much they communicated with and actively involved parents in the programme, and five of the six participating countries had some degree of family participation or support. Only Tajikistan did not establish home-programme or community-programme connections. This was due to a combination of a post-Soviet culture, in which parents viewed education as something separate from family life, and a programme design that in this pilot year was exclusively school-based and school-focused. In the other five countries, parent support for the programme took the form of parents taking an interest in the programme in general, sometimes included parents taking the initiative to advocate for the programme (for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some parents requested additional programme sessions during school breaks, while other parents approached the school to make sure the programme would be available to their young child next year), and in at least one country (Bangladesh) included practical parent support such as supplying snacks for the children.

Based on the evaluation findings, the following recommendations are presented for the future development, sustainability, and expansion of Getting Ready for School:

- The programme was most successful in countries where young learners had repeated and ongoing experiences and support to acquire school-readiness skills. Every effort should be made to ensure that the Getting Ready for School programme is provided to children as often as possible – preferably twice a week or more – supplemented by extra practice at home or in the community.
- The programme was only successful in countries where it was implemented with family and community involvement from the beginning. This component should be included in all future Getting Ready for School programming.
- UNICEF country offices that were very successful in programme implementation (especially in engaging families and communities) should be asked to share their ideas for best practices that might be replicated in other countries with similar cultural contexts.
- Further expansion of Getting Ready for School into new regions within countries or into new countries should, wherever possible, include early advocacy with government educational officials to situate the programme within the country's early childhood education goals and/or country goals to increase on-time enrolment in primary school. This course of action up front will increase the chances of long-term programme sustainability and may increase more immediate practical support for the programme.

IN CONCLUSION, THE GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMME ENJOYED A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PILOT IMPLEMENTATION IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES. THE PROGRAMME WAS EXTREMELY WELL RECEIVED BY STAKEHOLDERS AND ACHIEVED KEY GOALS. CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE

PROGRAMME, COMBINED WITH EFFORTS AT SECURING SUSTAINABILITY, COULD MAKE GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR COUNTRIES AND COMMUNITIES WHO SEEK TO INCREASE BETTER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN.

APPENDIX A: TEACHER SURVEY AND ITEM-BY-ITEM RESPONSES, BANGLADESH

Dear Teacher,

We are working on a project concerned with the preparation of young children for school. This study is sponsored by the UNICEF and is being conducted in several countries in different regions of the world. UNICEF is trying to improve children's school readiness and help children and their families make a successful transition to the child's participation in first grade. We are learning about two groups of children in each country – one group participated in the Getting Ready for School programme, the other did not. By looking at both children who participated in the programme and children who did not participate, we can learn more about the specific impacts of this programme on children and their families.

We would like to learn more about how the child named on the cover sheet of this survey is doing in your first grade class. This child's parent or guardian has given us permission to ask you these questions.

The survey will *not* be used to judge you as a teacher or to judge your school. The information that you provide will *never* be shared with the child's family and will *not* become part of this child's school record. Only the independent research team conducting the study will see your answers. There are no right or wrong answers, and you do not have to answer any question you do not want to.

We thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation will help us learn better ways to improve children's school readiness in Bangladesh.

A. ABOUT YOUR CLASSROOM

First, we would like to learn some general information about your classroom. If you teach multiple classes, please focus on the class in which the child named on the cover sheet of this survey participates.

A.1 How many children are enrolled in this class? _____

A.2 What is the grade level of this class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Kindergarten or grade zero only**
2. **First grade only**
3. **Second grade only**
4. **Combined grades in same class**

88**. Don't know**

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your class. If you have not had an opportunity to observe this child's behaviour enough to answer a question, please choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that item.

	Not at All True	A Little Bit True	Mostly True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child thinks before acting	1	2	3	4	88
This child controls his/her temper	1	2	3	4	88
This child is helpful to others	1	2	3	4	88
This child cannot sit still for long	1	2	3	4	88
This child is generally well behaved	1	2	3	4	88
This child often seems worried	1	2	3	4	88
This child is often unhappy	1	2	3	4	88
This child makes friends easily	1	2	3	4	88
This child is easily distracted	1	2	3	4	88
This child tries his/her best to do well in school	1	2	3	4	88
This child lies or cheats	1	2	3	4	88
This child seems to enjoy school	1	2	3	4	88
This child is self-confident	1	2	3	4	88
This child gives up easily if work is difficult	1	2	3	4	88

C. FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

Next, we would like to learn about the relationship between this child's family and the school.

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your class.

	Not at All True	**A Little Bit True**	**Mostly True**	**Very True**	No Opportunity to Observe
This child came to school on time	1	2	3	4	88
This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)	1	2	3	4	88
This child seemed tired or sleepy while at school	1	2	3	4	88
This child seemed hungry while at school	1	2	3	4	88
This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school	1	2	3	4	88
It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school	1	2	3	4	88

D. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please answer the questions in this section for the child identified on the cover of this survey. We understand that not all children learn at the same rate, and will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *reading/language arts* compared to other children in the same grade from previous years? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *mathematics* compared to other children in the same grade from previous years? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children in the same grade? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how well was this child prepared for school? Did he/she have the skills and behaviours needed to be successful in school when he/she began the school year? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not well prepared at all**
2. **Only a little prepared**
3. **Mostly prepared**
4. **Well prepared**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the academic skills listed below, please indicate how well you think this child has mastered the given skill. If you have not had an opportunity to observe whether a child has acquired a certain skill, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question. We will <u>*not*</u> use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

	Not Able to Do Yet	Able to Do Somewhat	Able to Do Well	No Opportunity to Observe
Identifies all letters of the Bangla alphabet	1	2	3	88
Articulates Bangla letter sounds correctly	1	2	3	88
Reads simple familiar words in Bangla	1	2	3	88
Sounds out unfamiliar words in Bangla	1	2	3	88
Writes the Bangla alphabet	1	2	3	88
Adds correct vowel symbols when writing	1	2	3	88
Able to identify numerals 1 through 50	1	2	3	88
Able to write number names in Bangla	1	2	3	88
Able to count up to 50 objects	1	2	3	88
When given two numbers between 1 and 50, able to say which is larger and which is smaller	1	2	3	88
Able to add and subtract up to 10 objects	1	2	3	88
Able to solve simple word problems in addition and subtraction	1	2	3	88
Able to categorize living and nonliving things by their basic attributes	1	2	3	88
Able to understand information about the world presented in a drawing or model	1	2	3	88
Able to describe sources of pollution in his/her environment	1	2	3	88
Able to identify Bangladesh's major holidays	1	2	3	88
Assists others at school and/or in the community at a level appropriate for his/her age	1	2	3	88
Solves problems that require prediction	1	2	3	88
Works collaboratively with other children	1	2	3	88
Organizes work materials	1	2	3	88
Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance	1	2	3	88
Asks questions to increase his/her understanding	1	2	3	88

E. TEACHER OPINIONS

Last, we would like to learn more about your views as a teacher. Please indicate how true you think each statement is for you as a teacher in general (not just for this child). Remember that there are no right or wrong answers and your answers will be kept confidential.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Mostly true	Very true	Don't know
E.1 Students can learn from each other.	1	2	3	4	88

E.2 Teachers know more than students. They should just explain the facts to students.	1	2	3	4	88
E.3 Praising children too much can spoil them.	1	2	3	4	88
E.4 Teachers should give students problems with specific correct answers.	1	2	3	4	88
E.5 Students also learn important information outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	88
E.6 Allowing students to talk about their ideas during lessons takes time away from learning.	1	2	3	4	88
E.7 Teachers should give the most attention to the best students in the class.	1	2	3	4	88
E.8 It is the teacher's responsibility to find a way to meet the learning needs of every student in his/her class.	1	2	3	4	88
E.9 Parents cannot be expected to help much with children's learning because they are not trained teachers.	1	2	3	4	88
E.10 Teachers should take time to answer students' questions during lessons.	1	2	3	4	88

Thank you!

We appreciate your time and assistance and value your opinions.

RESPONSES

A. ABOUT YOUR CLASSROOM

	Intervention	Control
A.2 What is the grade level of this class?		
Kindergarten or grade zero only	10.3% (n = 23)	12.6% (n = 26)
First grade only	88.8% (n = 198)	87.4% (n = 181)
Second grade only	0.9% (n = 2)	0.0% (n = 0)
Combined grades in same class	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

	Intervention	Control
B.1 This child thinks before acting		
Not at all true	4.0% (n = 9)	6.4% (n = 13)
A little bit true	37.4% (n = 85)	36.5% (n = 74)
Mostly true	40.1% (n = 91)	35.5% (n = 72)
Very true	18.5% (n = 42)	21.7% (n = 44)
B.2 This child controls his/her temper		
Not at all true	10.1% (n = 23)	4.9% (n = 10)
A little bit true	35.2% (n = 80)	32.5% (n = 66)
Mostly true	34.8% (n = 79)	41.1% (n = 84)
Very true	19.8% (n = 45)	21.2% (n = 43)
B.3 This child is helpful to others		
Not at all true	2.6% (n = 6)	3.9% (n = 8)
A little bit true	25.9% (n = 59)	26.6% (n = 54)
Mostly true	40.4% (n = 92)	34.0% (n = 69)
Very true	31.1% (n = 71)	35.5% (n = 72)
B.4 This child cannot sit still for long		
Not at all true	10.0% (n = 23)	21.9% (n = 43)
A little bit true	45.7% (n = 105)	33.2% (n = 65)
Mostly true	20.4% (n = 47)	24.0% (n =47)
Very true	23.9% (n = 55)	20.9% (n = 41)
B.5 This child is generally well behaved		
Not at all true	1.8% (n = 4)	2.9% (n = 6)
A little bit true	17.2% (n = 39)	19.5% (n = 40)
Mostly true	39.6% (n = 90)	38.5% (n = 79)
Very true	41.4% (n =94)	39.0% (n = 80)
B.6 This child often seems worried		
Not at all true	57.8% (n = 129)	51.5% (n = 105)
A little bit true	32.7% (n = 73)	36.8% (n = 75)
Mostly true	7.6% (n = 17)	7.8% (n = 16)
Very true	1.8% (n = 4)	3.9% (n = 8)

	Intervention	Control

	Intervention	Control
B.7 This child is often unhappy		
Not at all true	65.0% (n = 143)	58.1% (n = 118)
A little bit true	22.3% (n = 49)	28.1% (n = 57)
Mostly true	10.0% (n = 22)	7.4% (n = 15)
Very true	2.7% (n = 6)	6.4% (n = 13)
B.8 This child makes friends easily		
Not at all true	2.6% (n = 6)	6.4% (n = 13)
A little bit true	29.5% (n = 67)	32.5% (n = 66)
Mostly true	43.2% (n = 98)	36.5% (n = 74)
Very true	24.7% (n = 56)	24.6% (n = 50)
B.9 This child is easily distracted		
Not at all true	23.8% (n = 54)	31.5% (n = 64)
A little bit true	43.2% (n = 98)	42.9% (n = 87)
Mostly true	17.6% (n = 40)	19.2% (n = 39)
Very true	15.4% (n = 35)	6.4% (n = 13)
B.10 This child tries his/her best to do well in school		
Not at all true	6.2% (n = 14)	9.0% (n = 18)
A little bit true	25.2% (n = 57)	22.0% (n = 44)
Mostly true	30.1% (n = 68)	32.5% (n = 65)
Very true	38.5% (n = 87)	36.5% (n = 73)
B.11 This child lies or cheats		
Not at all true	79.7% (n = 181)	69.0% (n = 140)
A little bit true	13.7% (n = 31)	21.2% (n = 43)
Mostly true	3.1% (n = 7)	3.0% (n = 6)
Very true	3.5% (n = 8)	6.9% (n = 14)
B.12 This child seems to enjoy school		
Not at all true	2.6% (n = 6)	5.9% (n = 12)
A little bit true	15.2% (n = 35)	17.6% (n = 36)
Mostly true	40.0% (n = 92)	41.7% (n = 85)
Very true	42.2% (n = 97)	34.8% (n = 71)
B.13 This child is self-confident		
Not at all true	1.8% (n = 4)	5.9% (n = 12)
A little bit true	28.9% (n = 66)	26.6% (n = 54)
Mostly true	37.3% (n = 85)	24.6% (n = 50)
Very true	32.0% (n = 73)	42.9% (n = 87)
B.14 This child gives up easily if work is difficult		
Not at all true	35.5% (n = 77)	37.8% (n = 74)
A little bit true	50.7% (n = 110)	39.8% (n = 78)
Mostly true	6.0% (n = 13)	8.2% (n = 16)
Very true	7.8% (n = 17)	14.3% (n = 28)

C. FAMILY–SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

	Intervention	Control
C.1 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class?		
Not at all	6.1% (n = 14)	11.3% (n = 23)
Once or twice during the school year	25.7% (n = 59)	34.3% (n = 70)
Three to five times during the school year	31.7% (n = 73)	22.1% (n = 45)
About once a month or more often	36.5% (n = 84)	32.4% (n = 66)
C.2 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities?		
Not at all	25.7% (n = 59)	22.2% (n = 45)
Once or twice during the school year	23.5% (n = 54)	31.5% (n = 64)
Three to five times during the school year	29.1% (n = 67)	25.6% (n = 52)
About once a month or more often	21.7% (n = 50)	20.7% (n = 42)
C.3 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child?		
Not at all	1.3% (n = 3)	1.5% (n = 3)
Once or twice during the school year	11.9% (n = 27)	22.8% (n = 47)
Three to five times during the school year	40.1% (n = 91)	25.2% (n = 52)
About once a month or more often	46.7% (n = 106)	50.5% (n = 104)
C.4 This child came to school on time		
Not at all true	1.3% (n = 3)	7.8% (n = 16)
A little bit true	13.0% (n = 30)	8.3% (n = 17)
Mostly true	36.1% (n = 83)	32.2% (n = 66)
Very true	49.6% (n = 114)	51.7% (n = 106)
C.5 This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)		
Not at all true	0.9% (n = 2)	2.9% (n = 6)
A little bit true	16.6% (n = 38)	16.2% (n = 33)
Mostly true	32.8% (n = 75)	36.3% (n = 74)
Very true	49.8% (n = 114)	44.6% (n = 91)
C.6 This child seemed tired or sleepy while at school		
Not at all true	66.2% (n = 145)	54.0% (n = 108)
A little bit true	25.6% (n = 56)	34.0% (n = 68)
Mostly true	5.5% (n = 12)	11.0% (n = 22)
Very true	2.7% (n = 6)	1.0% (n = 2)
C.7 This child seemed hungry while at school		
Not at all true	49.8% (n = 108)	40.3% (n = 81)
A little bit true	38.7% (n = 84)	38.3% (n = 77)
Mostly true	9.2% (n = 20)	14.9% (n = 30)
Very true	2.3% (n = 5)	6.5% (n = 13)
C.8 This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school		
Not at all true	1.7% (n = 4)	4.9% (n = 10)
A little bit true	23.0% (n = 53)	15.6% (n = 32)
Mostly true	29.1% (n = 67)	26.3% (n = 54)
Very true	46.1% (n = 106)	53.2% (n = 109)

	Intervention	Control
C.9 It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school		
Not at all true	3.6% (n = 8)	10.1% (n = 20)
A little bit true	21.4% (n = 48)	17.7% (n = 35)
Mostly true	25.9% (n = 58)	28.8% (n = 57)
Very true	49.1% (n = 110)	43.4% (n = 86)

D. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

	Intervention	Control
D. 1 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in reading/language arts compared to other children in the same grade from previous years?		
Far below average	1.8% (n = 4)	6.3% (n = 13)
Below average	13.2% (n = 30)	12.6% (n = 26)
Average	31.7% (n = 72)	31.6% (n = 65)
Above average	46.7% (n = 106)	39.8% (n = 82)
Far above average	6.6% (n = 15)	9.7% (n = 20)
D. 2 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in mathematics compared to other children in the same grade from previous years?		
Far below average	1.8% (n = 4)	1.0% (n = 2)
Below average	10.6% (n = 24)	17.0% (n = 35)
Average	31.4% (n = 71)	34.5% (n = 71)
Above average	43.8% (n = 99)	33.5% (n = 69)
Far above average	12.4% (n = 28)	14.1% (n = 29)
D.3 Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children in the same grade?		
Far below average	0.9% (n = 2)	2.0% (n = 4)
Below average	8.3% (n = 19)	12.8% (n = 26)
Average	38.6% (n = 88)	33.0% (n = 67)
Above average	42.5% (n = 97)	34.5% (n = 70)
Far above average	9.6% (n = 22)	17.7% (n = 36)
D.4 Overall, how well was this child prepared for school? Did he/she have the skills and behaviours needed to be successful in school when he/she began the school year?		
Not well prepared at all	1.3% (n = 3)	5.3% (n = 10)
Only a little prepared	13.5% (n = 31)	22.1% (n = 42)
Mostly prepared	47.4% (n = 109)	48.9% (n = 93)
Well prepared	37.8% (n = 87)	23.7% (n = 45)
D.5 Identifies all letters of the Bangla alphabet		
Not able to do yet	0.9% (n = 2)	4.3% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	24.3% (n = 53)	26.1% (n = 54)
Able to do well	74.8% (n = 163)	69.6% (n = 144)
D.6 Articulates Bangla letter sounds correctly		
Not able to do yet	4.6% (n = 10)	10.6% (n = 22)
Able to do somewhat	47.7% (n = 104)	38.6% (n = 80)
Able to do well	47.7% (n = 104)	50.7% (n = 105)

	Intervention	Control
D.7 Reads simple familiar words in Bangla		
Not able to do yet	7.8% (n = 17)	7.3% (n = 15)
Able to do somewhat	46.8% (n = 102)	39.8% (n = 82)
Able to do well	45.4% (n = 99)	52.9% (n = 109)
D.8 Sounds out unfamiliar words in Bangla		
Not able to do yet	26.7% (n = 58)	27.1% (n = 56)
Able to do somewhat	57.1% (n = 124)	50.7% (n =105)
Able to do well	16.1% (n = 35)	22.2% (n = 46)
D.9 Writes the Bangla alphabet		
Not able to do yet	0.9% (n = 2)	4.4% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	24.8% (n = 54)	23.8% (n = 49)
Able to do well	74.3% (n = 162)	71.8% (n = 148)
D.10 Adds correct vowel symbols when writing		
Not able to do yet	10.9% (n = 24)	9.5% (n = 19)
Able to do somewhat	55.9% (n = 123)	49.5% (n = 99)
Able to do well	33.2% (n = 73)	41.0% (n = 82)
D.11 Able to identify numerals 1 through 50		
Not able to do yet	5.1% (n = 11)	8.4% (n = 16)
Able to do somewhat	24.2% (n = 52)	22.6% (n = 43)
Able to do well	70.7% (n = 152)	68.9% (n = 131)
D.12 Able to write number names in Bangla		
Not able to do yet	15.5% (n = 34)	13.7% (n = 26)
Able to do somewhat	40.0% (n = 88)	42.1% (n = 80)
Able to do well	44.5% (n = 98)	44.2% (n = 84)
D.13 Able to count up to 50 objects		
Not able to do yet	3.2% (n = 7)	8.4% (n = 16)
Able to do somewhat	26.3% (n = 57)	20.5% (n = 39)
Able to do well	70.5% (n = 153)	71.1% (n = 135)
D.14 When given two numbers between 1 and 50, able to say which is larger and which is smaller		
Not able to do yet	10.9% (n = 24)	12.7% (n = 24)
Able to do somewhat	35.9% (n = 79)	30.7% (n = 58)
Able to do well	53.2% (n = 117)	56.6% (n = 107)
D.15 Able to add and subtract up to 10 objects		
Not able to do yet	9.6% (n = 21)	10.0% (n = 19)
Able to do somewhat	30.7% (n = 67)	30.5% (n = 58)
Able to do well	59.6% (n = 130)	59.5% (n = 113)
D.16 Able to solve simple word problems in addition and subtraction		
Not able to do yet	20.7% (n = 45)	17.4% (n = 33)
Able to do somewhat	53.9% (n = 117)	48.4% (n = 92)
Able to do well	25.3% (n = 55)	34.2% (n = 65)

	Intervention	Control
D.17 Able to categorize living and non-living things by their basic attributes		
Not able to do yet	26.6% (n = 58)	26.5% (n = 50)
Able to do somewhat	42.2% (n = 92)	46.0% (n = 87)
Able to do well	31.2% (n = 68)	27.5% (n = 52)
D.18 Able to understand information about the world presented in a drawing or model		
Not able to do yet	45.1% (n = 96)	54.9% (n = 100)
Able to do somewhat	48.8% (n = 104)	39.6% (n = 72)
Able to do well	6.1% (n = 13)	5.5% (n = 10)
D.19 Able to describe sources of pollution in his/her environment		
Not able to do yet	38.2% (n = 84)	38.7% (n = 70)
Able to do somewhat	55.9% (n = 123)	47.0% (n = 85)
Able to do well	5.9% (n = 13)	14.4% (n = 26)
D.20 Able to identify Bangladesh's major holidays		
Not able to do yet	44.0% (n = 96)	29.7% (n = 55)
Able to do somewhat	39.4% (n = 86)	54.1% (n = 100)
Able to do well	16.5% (n = 36)	16.2% (n = 30)
D.21 Assists others at school and/or in the community at a level appropriate for his/her age		
Not able to do yet	10.4% (n = 22)	19.4% (n = 35)
Able to do somewhat	67.3% (n = 142)	48.3% (n = 87)
Able to do well	22.3% (n = 47)	32.2% (n = 58)
D.22 Solves problems that require prediction		
Not able to do yet	39.2% (n = 80)	40.9% (n = 72)
Able to do somewhat	49.0% (n = 100)	46.0% (n = 81)
Able to do well	11.8% (n = 24)	13.1% (n = 23)
D.23 Works collaboratively with other children		
Not able to do yet	4.3% (n = 9)	5.6% (n = 10)
Able to do somewhat	60.0% (n = 126)	56.1% (n = 101)
Able to do well	35.7% (n = 75)	38.3% (n = 69)
D.24 Organizes work materials		
Not able to do yet	5.6% (n = 12)	5.1% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	34.7% (n = 74)	39.4% (n = 69)
Able to do well	59.6% (n = 127)	55.4% (n = 97)
D.25 Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance		
Not able to do yet	19.4% (n = 41)	22.3% (n = 40)
Able to do somewhat	64.9% (n = 137)	55.9% (n = 100)
Able to do well	15.6% (n = 33)	21.8% (n = 39)
D.26 Asks questions to increase his/her understanding		
Not able to do yet	31.5% (n = 67)	33.0% (n = 59)
Able to do somewhat	54.9% (n = 117)	41.3% (n = 74)
Able to do well	13.6% (n = 29)	25.7% (n = 46)

E. TEACHER OPINIONS

	Intervention	Control
E.1 Students can learn from each other.		
Not at all true	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A little bit true	3.7% (n = 8)	12.4% (n = 26)
Mostly true	47.4% (n = 102)	30.6% (n = 64)
Very true	48.8% (n = 105)	56.9% (n = 119)
E.2 Teachers know more than students. They should just explain the facts to students.		
Not at all true	0.0% (n = 0)	3.9% (n = 8)
A little bit true	3.8% (n = 8)	12.1% (n = 25)
Mostly true	37.1% (n = 79)	32.4% (n = 67)
Very true	59.2% (n = 126)	51.7% (n = 107)
E.3 Praising children too much can spoil them.		
Not at all true	42.5% (n = 91)	30.4% (n = 63)
A little bit true	39.7% (n = 85)	50.2% (n = 104)
Mostly true	9.8% (n = 21)	12.6% (n = 26)
Very true	7.9% (n = 17)	6.8% (n = 14)
E.4 Teachers should give students problems with specific correct answers.		
Not at all true	48.1% (n = 103)	42.1% (n = 88)
A little bit true	27.1% (n = 58)	19.1% (n = 40)
Mostly true	12.6% (n = 27)	16.3% (n = 34)
Very true	12.1% (n = 26)	22.5% (n = 47)
E.5 Students also learn important information outside the classroom.		
Not at all true	0.5% (n = 1)	0.0% (n = 0)
A little bit true	4.7% (n = 10)	8.9% (n = 18)
Mostly true	19.5% (n = 42)	15.3% (n = 31)
Very true	75.3% (n = 162)	75.7% (n = 153)
E.6 Allowing students to talk about their ideas during lessons takes time away from learning.		
Not at all true	94.4% (n = 203)	94.3% (n = 197)
A little bit true	4.2% (n = 9)	0.0% (n = 0)
Mostly true	0.9% (n = 2)	2.9% (n = 6)
Very true	0.5% (n = 1)	2.9% (n = 6)
E.7 Teachers should give the most attention to the best students in the class.		
Not at all true	92.1% (n = 198)	96.7% (n = 202)
A little bit true	6.5% (n = 14)	1.0% (n = 2)
Mostly true	0.0% (n = 0)	0.5% (n = 1)
Very true	1.4% (n = 3)	1.9% (n = 4)
E.8 It is the teacher's responsibility to find a way to meet the learning needs of every student in his/her class.		
Not at all true	1.9% (n = 4)	0.5% (n = 1)
A little bit true	6.5% (n = 14)	9.4% (n = 19)
Mostly true	17.2% (n = 37)	16.3% (n = 33)
Very true	74.4% (n = 160)	73.9% (n = 150)
E.9 Parents cannot be expected to help much with children's learning because they are not		

	Intervention	Control
trained teachers.		
Not at all true	68.2% (n = 146)	60.3% (n = 126)
A little bit true	25.7% (n = 55)	23.0% (n = 48)
Mostly true	5.6% (n = 48)	8.1% (n = 17)
Very true	0.5% (n = 1)	8.6% (n = 18)
E.10 Teachers should take time to answer student questions during lessons.		
Not at all true	5.6% (n = 12)	2.4% (n = 5)
A little bit true	1.9% (n = 4)	2.4% (n = 5)
Mostly true	10.7% (n = 23)	10.0% (n = 21)
Very true	81.8% (n = 175)	85.2% (n = 178)

APPENDIX B: TEACHER SURVEY AND ITEM-BY-ITEM ANSWERS, THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Dear Teacher,

We are working on a project concerned with the preparation of young children for school. This study is sponsored by the UNICEF and is being conducted in several countries in different regions of the world. UNICEF is trying to improve children's school readiness and help children and their families make a successful transition to the child's participation in first grade. We are learning about two groups of children in each country – one group participated in the Getting Ready for School programme, the other did not. By looking at both children who participated in the programme and children who did not participate, we can learn more about the specific impacts of this programme on children and their families.

We would like to learn more about how the child named on the cover sheet of this survey is doing in your first grade class. This child's parent or guardian has given us permission to ask you these questions.

The survey will *not* be used to judge you as a teacher or to judge your school. The information that you provide will *never* be shared with the child's family and will *not* become part of this child's school record. Only the independent research team conducting the study will see your answers. There are no right or wrong answers, and you do not have to answer any question you do not want to.

We thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation will help us learn better ways to improve children's school readiness in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A. ABOUT YOUR CLASSROOM

First, we would like to learn some general information about your classroom. If you teach multiple classes, please focus on the class in which the child named on the cover sheet of this survey participates.

A.1 How many children are enrolled in this class? _____

A.2 What is the grade level of this class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Kindergarten or grade zero only**
2. **First grade only**
3. **Second grade only**
4. **Combined grades in same class**

88. **Don't know**

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your class. If you have not had an opportunity to observe this child's behaviour enough to answer a question, please choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that item.

	Not at All True	A Little Bit True	Mostly True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child thinks before acting	1	2	3	4	88
This child controls his/her temper	1	2	3	4	88
This child is helpful to others	1	2	3	4	88
This child cannot sit still for long	1	2	3	4	88
This child is generally well behaved	1	2	3	4	88
This child often seems worried	1	2	3	4	88
This child is often unhappy	1	2	3	4	88
This child makes friends easily	1	2	3	4	88
This child is easily distracted	1	2	3	4	88
This child tries his/her best to do well in school	1	2	3	4	88
This child lies or cheats	1	2	3	4	88
This child seems to enjoy school	1	2	3	4	88
This child is self-confident	1	2	3	4	88
This child gives up easily if work is difficult	1	2	3	4	88

C. FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

Next, we would like to learn about the relationship between this child's family and the school.

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**
88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**
88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**
88. **Don't know**

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your class.

	Not at All True	A Little Bit True	Mostly True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child came to school on time	1	2	3	4	88
This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)	1	2	3	4	88
This child seemed tired or sleepy while at school	1	2	3	4	88
This child seemed hungry while at school	1	2	3	4	88
This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school	1	2	3	4	88
It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school	1	2	3	4	88

D. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please answer the questions in this section for the child identified on the cover of this survey. We understand that not all children learn at the same rate and will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in <u>reading/language arts</u> compared to other children in the same grade from previous years? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in <u>mathematics</u> compared to other children in the same grade from previous years? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children in the same grade? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how well was this child prepared for school? Did he/she have the skills and behaviours needed to be successful in school when he/she began the school year? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not well prepared at all**
2. **Only a little prepared**
3. **Mostly prepared**
4. **Well prepared**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the academic skills listed below, please indicate how well you think this child has mastered the given skill. If you have not had an opportunity to observe whether a child has acquired a certain skill, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question. We will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

	Not Able to Do Yet	Able to Do Somewhat	Able to Do Well	No Opportunity to Observe
Articulates letter sounds correctly while reading aloud in Lingala	1	2	3	88
Sounds out unfamiliar words correctly in Lingala	1	2	3	88
Reads fluently in Lingala	1	2	3	88
Understands the meaning of sentences he/she reads in Lingala	1	2	3	88
Understands simple instructions in French	1	2	3	88
Recognizes words written in French	1	2	3	88
Able to print numerals, uppercase letters and lowercase letters neatly (given age expectations)	1	2	3	88
Able to write in cursive script	1	2	3	88
Assists others at school and/or in the community at a level appropriate for his/her age	1	2	3	88
Able to describe how to prevent diseases common in his/her community	1	2	3	88
Able to describe how to protect the natural environment in his/her community	1	2	3	88
Able to identify numerals 1 through 20	1	2	3	88
Able to add and subtract simple numbers	1	2	3	88
Able to multiply and divide simple numbers	1	2	3	88
Can recognize and perform simple functions with national currency (Congolese Franc)	1	2	3	88
Able to use a ruler to measure length	1	2	3	88
Able to share information through drawing	1	2	3	88
Solves problems that require prediction	1	2	3	88
Works collaboratively with other children	1	2	3	88
Selects appropriate materials to complete a task	1	2	3	88
Organizes work materials	1	2	3	88
Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance	1	2	3	88
Asks questions to increase his/her understanding	1	2	3	88
Expresses curiosity	1	2	3	88
Shows creativity in work and play	1	2	3	88

E. TEACHER OPINIONS

Last, we would like to learn more about your views as a teacher. Please indicate how true you think each statement is for you as a teacher in general (not just for this child). Remember that there are no right or wrong answers and your answers will be kept confidential.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Mostly true	Very true	Don't know
E.1 Students can learn from each other.	1	2	3	4	88
E.2 Teachers know more than students. They should just explain the facts to students.	1	2	3	4	88
E.3 Praising children too much can spoil them.	1	2	3	4	88
E.4 Teachers should give students problems with specific correct answers.	1	2	3	4	88
E.5 Students also learn important information outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	88
E.6 Allowing students to talk about their ideas during lessons takes time away from learning.	1	2	3	4	88
E.7 Teachers should give the most attention to the best students in the class.	1	2	3	4	88
E.8 It is the teacher's responsibility to find a way to meet the learning needs of every student in his/her class.	1	2	3	4	88
E.9 Parents cannot be expected to help much with children's learning because they are not trained teachers.	1	2	3	4	88
E.10 Teachers should take time to answer student questions during lessons.	1	2	3	4	88

Thank you!

We appreciate your time and assistance and value your opinions.

RESPONSES

A. ABOUT YOUR CLASSROOM

	Intervention	Control
A.2 What is the grade level of this class?		
Kindergarten or grade zero only	5.6% (n = 3)	4.5% (n = 1)
First grade only	79.6% (n = 43)	72.7% (n = 16)
Second grade only	0.0% (n = 0)	4.5% (n = 1)
Combined grades in same class	14.8% (n = 8)	18.2% (n = 4)

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

	Intervention	Control
B. 1 This child thinks before acting		
Not at all true	18.7% (n = 14)	0.0% (n = 0)
A little bit true	25.3% (n = 19)	58.8% (n = 20)
Mostly true	28.0% (n = 21)	20.6% (n = 7)
Very true	28.0% (n = 21)	20.6% (n = 7)
B.2 This child controls his/her temper		
Not at all true	16.4% (n = 12)	32.4% (n = 11)
A little bit true	16.4% (n = 12)	20.6% (n = 7)
Mostly true	34.2% (n = 25)	26.5% (n = 9)
Very true	32.9% (n = 24)	20.6% (n = 7)
B.3 This child is helpful to others		
Not at all true	22.7% (n = 15)	35.3% (n = 12)
A little bit true	12.1% (n = 8)	32.4% (n = 11)
Mostly true	25.8% (n = 17)	17.6% (n = 6)
Very true	39.4% (n = 26)	14.7% (n = 5)
B.4 This child cannot sit still for long		
Not at all true	17.4% (n = 12)	29.4% (n = 10)
A little bit true	18.8% (n = 13)	23.5% (n = 8)
Mostly true	31.9% (n = 22)	20.6% (n = 7)
Very true	31.9% (n = 22)	26.5% (n = 9)
B.5 This child is generally well behaved		
Not at all true	14.1% (n = 9)	18.2% (n = 6)
A little bit true	28.1% (n = 18)	33.3% (n = 11)
Mostly true	28.1% (n = 18)	18.2% (n = 6)
Very true	29.7% (n = 19)	30.3% (n = 10)
B.6 This child often seems worried		
Not at all true	36.9% (n = 24)	38.2% (n = 13)
A little bit true	23.1% (n = 15)	47.1% (n = 16)
Mostly true	24.6% (n = 16)	8.8% (n = 3)
Very true	15.4% (n = 10)	5.9% (n = 2)

	Intervention	Control
B.7 This child is often unhappy		
Not at all true	32.4% (n = 24)	11.8% (n = 4)
A little bit true	27.0% (n = 20)	41.2% (n = 14)
Mostly true	13.5% (n = 10)	20.6% (n = 7)
Very true	27.0% (n = 20)	26.5% (n = 9)
B.8 This child makes friends easily		
Not at all true	8.2% (n = 6)	14.7% (n = 5)
A little bit true	5.5% (n = 4)	47.1% (n = 16)
Mostly true	23.3% (n = 17)	17.6% (n = 6)
Very true	63.0% (n = 46)	20.6% (n = 7)
B.9 This child is easily distracted		
Not at all true	13.0% (n = 9)	23.5% (n = 8)
A little bit true	40.6% (n = 28)	44.1% (n = 15)
Mostly true	23.2% (n = 16)	8.8% (n = 3)
Very true	23.2% (n = 16)	23.5% (n = 8)
B.10 This child tries his/her best to do well in school		
Not at all true	19.7% (n = 14)	35.7% (n = 10)
A little bit true	16.9% (n = 12)	14.3% (n = 4)
Mostly true	31.0% (n = 22)	14.3% (n = 4)
Very true	32.4% (n = 23)	35.7% (n = 10)
B.11 This child lies or cheats		
Not at all true	59.2% (n = 42)	55.2% (n = 16)
A little bit true	12.7% (n = 9)	17.2% (n = 5)
Mostly true	5.6% (n = 4)	10.3% (n = 3)
Very true	22.5% (n = 16)	17.2% (n = 5)
B.12 This child seems to enjoy school		
Not at all true	5.5% (n = 4)	3.1% (n = 1)
A little bit true	9.6% (n = 7)	15.6% (n = 5)
Mostly true	23.3% (n = 17)	46.9% (n = 15)
Very true	61.6% (n = 45)	34.4% (n = 11)
B.13 This child is self-confident		
Not at all true	8.6% (n = 6)	12.5% (n = 4)
A little bit true	14.3% (n = 10)	46.9% (n = 15)
Mostly true	34.3% (n = 24)	9.4% (n = 3)
Very true	42.9% (n = 30)	31.3% (n = 10)
B.14 This child gives up easily if work is difficult		
Not at all true	15.1% (n = 11)	21.9% (n = 7)
A little bit true	32.9% (n = 24)	37.5% (n = 12)
Mostly true	23.3% (n = 17)	15.6% (n = 5)
Very true	28.8% (n = 21)	25.0% (n = 8)

C. FAMILY–SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

	Intervention	Control
C.1 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class?		
Not at all	20.6% (n = 14)	31.4% (n = 11)
Once or twice during the school year	19.1% (n = 13)	28.6% (n = 10)
Three to five times during the school year	38.2% (n = 26)	28.6% (n = 10)
About once a month or more often	22.1% (n = 15)	11.4% (n = 4)
C.2 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities?		
Not at all	23.2% (n = 16)	25.7% (n = 9)
Once or twice during the school year	21.7% (n = 15)	17.1% (n = 6)
Three to five times during the school year	31.9% (n = 22)	17.1% (n = 6)
About once a month or more often	23.2% (n = 16)	40.0% (n = 14)
C.3 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child?		
Not at all	8.7% (n = 6)	8.6% (n = 3)
Once or twice during the school year	30.4% (n = 21)	34.3% (n = 12)
Three to five times during the school year	20.3% (n = 14)	22.9% (n = 8)
About once a month or more often	40.6% (n = 28)	34.3% (n = 12)
C.4 This child came to school on time		
Not at all true	9.7% (n = 7)	11.8% (n = 4)
A little bit true	12.5% (n = 9)	20.6% (n = 7)
Mostly true	27.8% (n = 20)	26.5% (n = 9)
Very true	50.0% (n = 36)	41.2% (n = 14)
C.5 This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)		
Not at all true	21.9% (n = 16)	51.5% (n = 17)
A little bit true	24.7% (n = 18)	18.2% (n = 6)
Mostly true	23.3% (n = 17)	15.2% (n = 5)
Very true	30.1% (n = 22)	15.2% (n = 5)
C.6 This child seemed tired or sleepy while at school		
Not at all true	43.5% (n = 30)	44.1% (n = 15)
A little bit true	21.7% (n = 15)	35.3% (n = 12)
Mostly true	10.1% (n = 7)	2.9% (n = 1)
Very true	24.6% (n = 17)	17.6% (n = 6)
C.7 This child seemed hungry while at school		
Not at all true	27.4% (n = 20)	36.1% (n = 13)
A little bit true	26.0% (n = 19)	27.8% (n = 10)
Mostly true	16.4% (n = 12)	2.8% (n = 1)
Very true	30.1% (n = 22)	33.3% (n = 12)

	Intervention	Control
C.8 This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school		
Not at all true	1.4% (n = 1)	0.0% (n = 0)
A little bit true	9.5% (n = 7)	40.0% (n = 14)
Mostly true	17.6% (n = 13)	22.9% (n = 8)
Very true	71.6% (n = 53)	37.1% (n = 13)
C.9 It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school		
Not at all true	2.9% (n = 2)	16.7% (n = 6)
A little bit true	5.8% (n = 4)	22.2% (n = 8)
Mostly true	27.5% (n = 19)	13.9% (n = 5)
Very true	63.8% (n = 44)	47.2% (n = 17)

D. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

	Intervention	Control
D. 1 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in reading/language arts compared to other children in the same grade from previous years?		
Far below average	5.6% (n = 4)	9.7% (n = 3)
Below average	8.3% (n = 6)	16.1% (n = 5)
Average	36.1% (n = 26)	29.0% (n = 9)
Above average	38.9% (n = 28)	38.7% (n = 12)
Far above average	11.1% (n = 8)	6.5% (n = 2)
D. 2 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in mathematics compared to other children in the same grade from previous years?		
Far below average	6.9% (n = 5)	0.0% (n = 0)
Below average	8.3% (n = 6)	25.8% (n = 8)
Average	31.9% (n = 23)	29.0% (n = 9)
Above average	36.1% (n = 26)	41.9% (n = 13)
Far above average	16.7% (n = 12)	3.2% (n = 1)
D.3 Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children in the same grade?		
Far below average	4.2% (n = 3)	6.3% (n = 2)
Below average	9.7% (n = 7)	12.5% (n = 4)
Average	26.4% (n = 19)	40.6% (n = 13)
Above average	47.2% (n = 34)	37.5% (n = 12)
Far above average	12.5% (n = 9)	3.1% (n = 1)
D.4 Overall, how well was this child prepared for school? Did he/she have the skills and behaviours needed to be successful in school when he/she began the school year?		
Not well prepared at all	1.4% (n = 1)	17.6% (n = 6)
Only a little prepared	9.6% (n = 7)	26.5% (n = 9)
Mostly prepared	34.2% (n = 25)	23.5% (n = 8)
Well prepared	54.8% (n = 40)	32.4% (n = 11)

	Intervention	Control
D.5 Articulates letter sounds correctly while reading aloud in Lingala		
Not able to do yet	12.7% (n = 9)	20.0% (n = 7)
Able to do somewhat	21.1% (n = 15)	40.0% (n = 14)
Able to do well	66.2% (n = 47)	40.0% (n = 14)
D.6 Sounds out unfamiliar words correctly in Lingala		
Not able to do yet	6.9% (n = 5)	30.3% (n = 10)
Able to do somewhat	27.8% (n = 20)	39.4% (n = 13)
Able to do well	65.3% (n = 47)	30.3% (n = 10)
D.7 Reads fluently in Lingala		
Not able to do yet	19.4% (n = 14)	5.6% (n = 2)
Able to do somewhat	20.8% (n = 15)	44.4% (n = 16)
Able to do well	59.7% (n = 43)	50.0% (n = 18)
D.8 Understands the meaning of sentences he/she reads in Lingala		
Not able to do yet	11.9% (n = 8)	23.5% (n = 8)
Able to do somewhat	26.9% (n = 18)	32.4% (n = 11)
Able to do well	61.2% (n = 41)	44.1% (n = 15)
D.9 Understands simple instructions in French		
Not able to do yet	10.1% (n = 7)	32.4% (n = 11)
Able to do somewhat	49.3% (n = 34)	41.2% (n = 14)
Able to do well	40.6% (n = 28)	26.5% (n = 9)
D.10 Recognizes words written in French		
Not able to do yet	23.9% (n = 16)	17.1% (n = 6)
Able to do somewhat	43.3% (n = 29)	57.1% (n = 20)
Able to do well	32.8% (n = 22)	25.7% (n = 9)
D.11 Able to print numerals, uppercase letters and lowercase letters neatly (given age expectations)		
Not able to do yet	17.1% (n = 12)	20.0% (n = 7)
Able to do somewhat	45.7% (n = 32)	54.3% (n = 19)
Able to do well	37.1% (n = 26)	25.7% (n = 9)
D.12 Able to write in cursive script		
Not able to do yet	19.1% (n = 13)	42.9% (n = 15)
Able to do somewhat	42.6% (n = 29)	31.4% (n = 11)
Able to do well	38.2% (n = 26)	25.7% (n = 9)
D.13 Assists others at school and/or in the community at a level appropriate for his/her age		
Not able to do yet	21.5% (n = 14)	25.7% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	23.1% (n = 15)	48.6% (n = 17)
Able to do well	55.4% (n = 36)	25.7% (n = 9)
D.14 Able to describe how to prevent diseases common in his/her community		
Not able to do yet	36.2% (n = 25)	39.4% (n = 13)
Able to do somewhat	36.2% (n = 25)	54.5% (n = 18)
Able to do well	27.5% (n = 19)	6.1% (n = 2)

	Intervention	Control
D.15 Able to describe how to protect the natural environment in his/her community		
Not able to do yet	29.9% (n = 20)	38.9% (n = 14)
Able to do somewhat	19.4% (n = 13)	33.3% (n = 12)
Able to do well	50.7% (n = 34)	27.8% (n = 10)
D.16 Able to identify numerals 1 through 20		
Not able to do yet	1.4% (n = 1)	11.1% (n = 4)
Able to do somewhat	21.9% (n = 16)	16.7% (n = 6)
Able to do well	76.7% (n = 56)	72.2% (n = 26)
D.17 Able to add and subtract simple numbers		
Not able to do yet	11.3% (n = 8)	22.9% (n = 8)
Able to do somewhat	16.9% (n = 12)	17.1% (n = 6)
Able to do well	71.8% (n = 51)	60.0% (n = 21)
D.18 Able to multiply and divide simple numbers		
Not able to do yet	26.1% (n = 18)	38.9% (n = 14)
Able to do somewhat	34.8% (n = 24)	30.6% (n = 11)
Able to do well	39.1% (n = 27)	30.6% (n = 11)
D.19 Can recognize and perform simple functions with national currency (Congolese Franc)		
Not able to do yet	9.9% (n = 7)	13.9% (n = 5)
Able to do somewhat	39.4% (n = 28)	55.6% (n = 20)
Able to do well	50.7% (n = 36)	30.6% (n = 11)
D.20 Able to use a ruler to measure length		
Not able to do yet	18.3% (n = 13)	20.0% (n = 7)
Able to do somewhat	29.6% (n = 21)	57.1% (n = 20)
Able to do well	52.1% (n = 37)	22.9% (n = 8)
D.21 Able to share information through drawing		
Not able to do yet	9.6% (n = 7)	17.6% (n = 6)
Able to do somewhat	23.3% (n = 17)	38.2% (n = 13)
Able to do well	67.1% (n = 49)	44.1% (n = 15)
D.22 Solves problems that require prediction		
Not able to do yet	22.4% (n = 15)	39.4% (n = 13)
Able to do somewhat	40.3% (n = 27)	42.4% (n = 14)
Able to do well	37.3% (n = 25)	18.2% (n = 6)
D.23 Works collaboratively with other children		
Not able to do yet	0.0% (n = 0)	31.4% (n = 11)
Able to do somewhat	23.3% (n = 17)	22.9% (n = 8)
Able to do well	76.7% (n = 56)	45.7% (n = 16)
D.24 Selects appropriate materials to complete a task		
Not able to do yet	12.5% (n = 9)	25.0% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	23.6% (n = 17)	27.8% (n = 10)
Able to do well	63.9% (n = 46)	47.2% (n = 17

	Intervention	Control
D.25 Organizes work materials		
Not able to do yet	23.9% (n = 16)	41.2% (n = 14)
Able to do somewhat	16.4% (n = 11)	23.5% (n = 8)
Able to do well	59.7% (n = 40)	35.3% (n = 12)
D.26 Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance		
Not able to do yet	26.2% (n = 17)	27.3% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	35.4% (n = 23)	51.5% (n = 17)
Able to do well	38.5% (n = 25)	21.2% (n = 7)
D.27 Asks questions to increase his/her understanding		
Not able to do yet	2.9% (n = 2)	11.4% (n = 4)
Able to do somewhat	20.3% (n = 14)	42.9% (n = 15)
Able to do well	76.8% (n = 53)	45.7% (n = 16)
D.28 Expresses curiosity		
Not able to do yet	0.0% (n = 0)	25.7% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	20.0% (n = 14)	31.4% (n = 11)
Able to do well	80.0% (n = 56)	42.9% (n = 15)
D.29 Shows creativity in work and play		
Not able to do yet	11.1% (n = 7)	20.0% (n = 6)
Able to do somewhat	12.7% (n = 8)	33.3% (n = 10)
Able to do well	76.2% (n = 48)	46.7% (n = 14)

E. TEACHER OPINIONS

	Intervention	Control
E.1 Students can learn from each other.		
Not at all true	0.0% (n = 0)	2.9% (n = 1)
A little bit true	6.8% (n = 5)	11.4% (n = 4)
Mostly true	25.7% (n = 19)	17.1% (n = 6)
Very true	67.6% (n = 50)	68.6% (n = 24)
E.2 Teachers know more than students. They should just explain the facts to students.		
Not at all true	6.8% (n = 5)	5.9% (n = 2)
A little bit true	2.7% (n = 2)	0.0% (n = 0)
Mostly true	16.4% (n = 12)	17.6% (n = 6)
Very true	74.0% (n = 54)	76.5% (n = 26)
E.3 Praising children too much can spoil them.		
Not at all true	19.2% (n = 14)	25.7% (n = 9)
A little bit true	24.7% (n = 18)	17.1% (n = 6)
Mostly true	19.2% (n = 14)	8.6% (n = 3)
Very true	37.0% (n = 27)	48.6% (n = 17)

	Intervention	Control
E.4 Teachers should give students problems with specific correct answers.		
Not at all true	16.9% (n = 12)	35.3% (n = 12)
A little bit true	0.0% (n = 0)	11.8% (n = 4)
Mostly true	9.9% (n = 7)	11.8% (n = 4)
Very true	73.2% (n = 52)	41.2% (n = 14)
E.5 Students also learn important information outside the classroom.		
Not at all true	20.5% (n = 15)	32.4% (n = 11)
A little bit true	17.8% (n = 13)	20.6% (n = 7)
Mostly true	17.8% (n = 13)	20.6% (n = 7)
Very true	43.8% (n = 32)	26.5% (n = 9)
E.6 Allowing students to talk about their ideas during lessons takes time away from learning.		
Not at all true	46.4% (n = 32)	64.5% (n = 20)
A little bit true	8.7% (n = 6)	9.7% (n = 3)
Mostly true	23.2% (n = 16)	3.2% (n = 1)
Very true	21.7% (n = 15)	22.6% (n = 7)
E.7 Teachers should give the most attention to the best students in the class.		
Not at all true	57.7% (n = 41)	62.9% (n = 22)
A little bit true	5.6% (n = 4)	0.0% (n = 0)
Mostly true	14.1% (n = 10)	8.6% (n = 3)
Very true	22.5% (n = 16)	28.6% (n = 10)
E.8 It is the teacher's responsibility to find a way to meet the learning needs of every student in his/her class.		
Not at all true	15.1% (n = 11)	5.7% (n = 2)
A little bit true	0.0% (n = 0)	2.9% (n = 1)
Mostly true	31.5% (n = 23)	8.6% (n = 3)
Very true	53.4% (n = 39)	82.9% (n = 29)
E.9 Parents cannot be expected to help much with children's learning because they are not trained teachers.		
Not at all true	16.7% (n = 12)	23.5% (n = 8)
A little bit true	12.5% (n = 9)	8.8% (n = 3)
Mostly true	29.2% (n = 21)	11.8% (n = 4)
Very true	41.7% (n = 30)	55.9% (n = 19)
E.10 Teachers should take time to answer student questions during lessons.		
Not at all true	2.7% (n = 2)	4.3% (n = 1)
A little bit true	0.0% (n = 0)	4.3% (n = 1)
Mostly true	23.3% (n = 17)	0.0% (n = 0)
Very true	74.0% (n = 54)	91.3% (n = 21)

APPENDIX C: TEACHER SURVEY AND ITEM-BY-ITEM RESPONSES, TAJIKISTAN

Dear Teacher,

We are working on a project concerned with the preparation of young children for school. This study is sponsored by the UNICEF and is being conducted in several countries in different regions of the world. UNICEF is trying to improve children's school readiness and help children and their families make a successful transition to the child's participation in first grade. We are learning about two groups of children in each country – one group participated in the Getting Ready for School programme, the other did not. By looking at both children who participated in the programme and children who did not participate, we can learn more about the specific impacts of this programme on children and their families.

We would like to learn more about how the child named on the cover sheet of this survey is doing in your first grade class. This child's parent or guardian has given us permission to ask you these questions.

The survey will *not* be used to judge you as a teacher or to judge your school. The information that you provide will *never* be shared with the child's family and will *not* become part of this child's school record. Only the independent research team conducting the study will see your answers. There are no right or wrong answers, and you do not have to answer any question you do not want to.

We thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation will help us learn better ways to improve children's school readiness in Tajikistan.

A. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please answer the questions in this section for the child identified on the cover of this survey. We understand that not all children learn at the same rate and will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *reading/language arts* compared to other children of the same grade level? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**
88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *mathematics* compared to other children of the same grade level? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**
88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children of the same grade level? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**
88. **Don't know**

For each of the academic skills listed below, please indicate how well you think this child has mastered the given skill. If you have not had an opportunity to observe whether a child has acquired a certain skill, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question. We will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

	Not Able to Do Yet	Able to Do Somewhat	Able to Do Well	No Opportunity to Observe
Articulates letter sounds correctly while reading aloud	1	2	3	88
Sounds out unfamiliar words correctly	1	2	3	88
Reads fluently	1	2	3	88
Understands the meaning of sentences he/she reads	1	2	3	88
Expresses ideas in a logical sequence	1	2	3	88
Distinguishes a main idea from details in a story	1	2	3	88
Writes neatly	1	2	3	88
Can identify numerals 1 through 20	1	2	3	88
Can identify numerals 1 through 99	1	2	3	88
When given two numbers between 1 and 20, can identify which is larger and which is smaller	1	2	3	88
When given two numbers between 1 and 99, can identify which is larger and which is smaller	1	2	3	88
Knows the meaning of symbols for addition and subtraction (+, -, =)	1	2	3	88
Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 20	1	2	3	88
Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 99	1	2	3	88
Understands the different units of money	1	2	3	88
Understands units of time (week, month, etc.)	1	2	3	88
Solves simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life	1	2	3	88
Identifies geometric figures (point, line, triangle, etc.)	1	2	3	88
Solves problems that require prediction	1	2	3	88
Works collaboratively with other children	1	2	3	88
Selects appropriate materials to complete a task	1	2	3	88
Organizes work materials	1	2	3	88
Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance	1	2	3	88

B. SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your first grade class. If you have not had an opportunity to observe this child's behaviour enough to answer a question, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question.

	Not at All True	Somewhat True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child thinks before acting	1	2	3	88
This child controls his/her temper	1	2	3	88
This child is helpful to others	1	2	3	88
This child cannot sit still for long	1	2	3	88
This child is generally well behaved	1	2	3	88
This child often seems worried	1	2	3	88
This child is often unhappy	1	2	3	88
This child makes friends easily	1	2	3	88
This child is easily distracted	1	2	3	88
This child tries his/her best to do well in school	1	2	3	88
This child lies or cheats	1	2	3	88
This child seems to enjoy school	1	2	3	88

C. FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

Next, we would like to learn about the relationship between this child's family and the school.

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

1. **Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child?** *(Circle one number)***Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the behaviours listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your first grade class.

	Not at All True	Somewhat True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child came to school on time	1	2	3	88
This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)	1	2	3	88
This child seemed to get enough sleep	1	2	3	88
This child seemed hungry while at school	1	2	3	88
This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she comes to school	1	2	3	88
It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school	1	2	3	88

Thank you!

We appreciate your time and assistance and value your opinions.

RESPONSES

A. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

	Intervention	Control
A.1 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in reading/language arts comparedto other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	0.4% (n = 1)	1.5% (n = 4)
Below average	8.8% (n = 24)	5.5% (n = 15)
Average	19.7% (n = 54)	23.6% (n = 65)
Above average	38.3% (n = 105)	47.6% (n = 131)
Far above average	32.8% (n = 90)	21.8% (n = 60)
A.2 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in mathematics compared to other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	0.4% (n = 1)	0.7% (n = 2)
Below average	7.3% (n = 20)	5.1% (n= 14)
Average	21.5% (n = 59)	26.2% (n = 72)
Above average	38.3% (n = 105)	46.5% (n = 128)
Far above average	32.5% (n = 89)	21.5% (n = 59)
A.3 Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	0.7% (n = 2)	1.1% (n = 3)
Below average	6.6% (n = 18)	4.7% (n = 13)
Average	19.3% (n = 53)	24.4% (n = 67)
Above average	41.2% (n = 113)	48.0% (n = 132)
Far above average	32.1% (n = 88)	21.8% (n = 60)
A.4 Articulates letter sounds correctly while reading aloud		
Not able to do yet	0.0% (n = 0)	1.5% (n = 4)
Able to do somewhat	20.4% (n = 56)	21.1% (n = 58)
Able to do well	79.6% (n = 218)	77.5% (n = 213)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.5 Sounds out unfamiliar words correctly		
Not able to do yet	2.2% (n = 6)	3.6% (n = 10)
Able to do somewhat	28.8% (n = 79)	27.3% (n = 75)
Able to do well	69.0% (n = 189)	69.1% (n = 190)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.6 Reads fluently		
Not able to do yet	10.2% (n = 28)	4.0% (n = 11)
Able to do somewhat	29.2% (n = 80)	35.6% (n = 98)
Able to do well	60.6% (n = 166)	60.4% (n = 166)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.7 Understands the meaning of sentences he/she reads		
Not able to do yet	6.2% (n = 17)	4.0% (n = 11)
Able to do somewhat	28.5% (n = 78)	32.4% (n = 89)
Able to do well	65.3% (n = 179)	63.6% (n = 175)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

	Intervention	Control
A.8 Expresses ideas in a logical sequence		
Not able to do yet	8.8% (n = 24)	5.8% (n = 16)
Able to do somewhat	32.5% (n = 89)	38.5% (n = 106)
Able to do well	58.8% (n = 161)	55.6% (n = 153)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.9 Distinguishes a main idea from details in a story		
Not able to do yet	8.8% (n = 24)	5.1% (n = 14)
Able to do somewhat	33.2% (n = 91)	37.8% (n = 104)
Able to do well	58.0% (n = 159)	57.1% (n = 157)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.10 Writes neatly		
Not able to do yet	1.8% (n = 5)	3.6% (n = 10)
Able to do somewhat	28.1% (n = 77)	28.0% (n = 77)
Able to do well	70.1% (n = 192)	68.4% (n = 188)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.11 Can identify numerals 1 through 20		
Not able to do yet	0.4% (n = 1)	2.5% (n = 7)
Able to do somewhat	9.1% (n = 25)	13.5% (n = 37)
Able to do well	90.5% (n = 248)	84.0% (n = 231)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.12 Can identify numerals 1 through 99		
Not able to do yet	8.7% (n = 24)	9.1% (n = 25)
Able to do somewhat	37.8% (n = 104)	33.2% (n = 91)
Able to do well	53.5% (n = 147)	57.7% (n = 158)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.13 When given two numbers between 1 and 20, can identify which is larger and which is smaller		
Not able to do yet	1.8% (n = 5)	3.3% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	11.3% (n = 31)	16.0% (n = 44)
Able to do well	86.9% (n = 238)	80.7% (n = 222)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.14 When given two numbers between 1 and 99, can identify which is larger and which is smaller		
Not able to do yet	10.9% (n = 30)	11.3% (n = 31)
Able to do somewhat	35.8% (n = 98)	42.3% (n = 116)
Able to do well	52.9% (n = 145)	46.4% (n = 127)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.15 Knows the meaning of symbols for addition and subtraction (+, -, =)		
Not able to do yet	0.4% (n = 1)	1.8% (n = 5)
Able to do somewhat	14.6% (n = 40)	12.0% (n = 33)
Able to do well	85.0% (n = 233)	86.2% (n = 237)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

	Intervention	Control
A.16 Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 20		
Not able to do yet	1.5% (n = 4)	2.2% (n = 6)
Able to do somewhat	13.5% (n = 37)	16.0% (n = 44)
Able to do well	85.0% (n = 233)	81.8% (n = 225)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.17 Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 99		
Not able to do yet	17.2% (n = 47)	17.5% (n = 48)
Able to do somewhat	46.4% (n = 127)	52.7% (n = 145)
Able to do well	36.5% (n = 100)	29.8% (n = 82)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.18 Understands the different units of money		
Not able to do yet	0.7% (n = 2)	3.3% (n = 9)
Able to do somewhat	18.7% (n = 51)	18.2% (n = 50)
Able to do well	79.5% (n = 217)	77.0% (n = 211)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	1.5% (n = 4)
A.19 Understands units of time (week, month, etc.)		
Not able to do yet	2.2% (n = 6)	5.1% (n = 14)
Able to do somewhat	29.6% (n = 81)	25.1% (n = 69)
Able to do well	68.2% (n = 187)	69.8% (n = 192)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.20 Solves simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life		
Not able to do yet	5.1% (n = 14)	7.3% (n = 20)
Able to do somewhat	37.6% (n = 103)	41.2% (n = 113)
Able to do well	57.3% (n = 157)	51.5% (n = 141)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.21 Identifies geometric figures (point, line, triangle, etc.)		
Not able to do yet	2.2% (n = 6)	8.0% (n = 22)
Able to do somewhat	27.7% (n = 76)	30.2% (n = 83)
Able to do well	70.1% (n = 192)	61.8% (n = 170)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.22 Solves problems that require prediction		
Not able to do yet	10.6% (n = 29)	11.3% (n = 31)
Able to do somewhat	51.6% (n = 141)	45.8% (n = 126)
Able to do well	37.7% (n = 103)	42.5% (n = 117)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.4% (n = 1)
A.23 Works collaboratively with other children		
Not able to do yet	2.2% (n = 6)	2.2% (n = 6)
Able to do somewhat	27.4% (n = 75)	27.6% (n = 76)
Able to do well	70.4% (n = 193)	70.2% (n = 193)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

	Intervention	Control
A.24 Selects appropriate materials to complete a task		
Not able to do yet	2.9% (n = 8)	8.7% (n = 24)
Able to do somewhat	40.9% (n = 112)	37.8% (n = 104)
Able to do well	56.2% (n = 154)	53.1% (n = 146)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.4% (n = 1)
A.25 Organizes work materials		
Not able to do yet	4.0% (n = 11)	9.5% (n = 26)
Able to do somewhat	40.1% (n = 110)	35.6% (n = 98)
Able to do well	55.5% (n = 152)	54.5% (n = 150)
No opportunity to observe	0.4% (n = 1)	0.4% (n = 1)
A.26 Thinks through how to solve a problem in advance		
Not able to do yet	5.1% (n = 14)	12.0% (n = 33)
Able to do somewhat	46.0% (n = 126)	37.5% (n = 103)
Able to do well	48.5% (n = 133)	50.2% (n = 138)
No opportunity to observe	0.4% (n = 1)	0.4% (n = 1)

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

	Intervention	Control
B.1 This child thinks before acting		
Not at All True	3.7% (n = 10)	2.5% (n = 7)
Somewhat True	32.0% (n = 87)	32.0% (n = 88)
Very True	64.3% (n = 175)	65.5% (n = 180)
B.2 This child controls his/her temper		
Not at All True	5.1% (n = 14)	4.0% (n = 11)
Somewhat True	30.3% (n = 83)	28.2% (n = 77)
Very True	64.6% (n = 177)	67.8% (n = 185)
B.3 This child is helpful to others		
Not at All True	3.3% (n = 9)	4.0% (n = 11)
Somewhat True	22.0% (n = 60)	24.8% (n = 68)
Very True	74.7% (n = 204)	71.2% (n = 195)
B.4 This child cannot sit still for long		
Not at All True	40.1% (n = 110)	40.9% (n = 112)
Somewhat True	25.9% (n = 71)	24.1% (n = 66)
Very True	33.9% (n = 93)	35.0% (n = 96)
B.5 This child is generally well behaved		
Not at All True	0.4% (n = 1)	2.6% (n = 7)
Somewhat True	17.6% (n = 48)	20.1% (n = 55)
Very True	82.1% (n = 224)	77.4% (n = 212)
B.6 This child often seems worried		
Not at All True	52.6% (n = 144)	55.5% (n = 152)
Somewhat True	32.5% (n = 89)	29.6% (n = 81)
Very True	15.0% (n = 41)	15.0% (n = 41)

	Intervention	Control
B.7 This child is often unhappy		
Not at All True	58.0% (n = 159)	62.3% (n = 170)
Somewhat True	29.6% (n = 81)	23.4% (n = 64)
Very True	12.4% (n = 34)	14.3% (n = 39)
B.8 This child makes friends easily		
Not at All True	2.6% (n = 7)	4.4% (n = 12)
Somewhat True	19.7% (n = 54)	16.8% (n = 46)
Very True	77.7% (n = 213)	78.8% (n = 216)
B.9 This child is easily distracted		
Not at All True	61.9% (n = 169)	53.5% (n = 144)
Somewhat True	21.6% (n = 59)	28.3% (n = 76)
Very True	16.5% (n = 45)	18.2% (n = 49)
B.10 This child tries his/her best to do well in school		
Not at All True	2.2% (n = 6)	4.0% (n = 11)
Somewhat True	26.3% (n = 72)	29.9% (n = 82)
Very True	71.5% (n = 196)	66.1% (n = 181)
B. 11 This child lies or cheats		
Not at All True	67.9% (n = 184)	74.4% (n = 201)
Somewhat True	17.7% (n = 48)	14.8% (n = 40)
Very True	14.4% (n = 39)	10.7% (n = 29)
B.12 This child seems to enjoy school		
Not at All True	0.4% (n = 1)	1.8% (n = 5)
Somewhat True	17.2% (n = 47)	18.6% (n = 51)
Very True	82.5% (n = 226)	79.6% (n = 218)

C. FAMILY–SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

	Intervention	Control
C.1 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class?		
Not at All	12.1% (n = 33)	13.6% (n = 37)
Once or twice during the school year	43.6% (n = 119)	39.2% (n = 107)
Three to five times during the school year	32.6% (n = 89)	31.9% (n = 87)
About once a month or more often	11.7% (n = 32)	15.4% (n = 42)
C.2 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities?		
Not at All	24.1% (n = 66)	24.5% (n = 67)
Once or twice during the school year	43.4% (n = 119)	44.0% (n = 120)
Three to five times during the school year	26.6% (n = 73)	20.5% (n = 56)
About once a month or more often	5.8% (n = 16)	11.0% (n = 30)

	Intervention	Control
C.3 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child?		
Not at All	49.4% (n = 134)	33.8% (n = 92)
Once or twice during the school year	33.6% (n = 91)	36.0% (n = 98)
Three to five times during the school year	12.9% (n = 35)	22.8% (n = 62)
About once a month or more often	4.1% (n = 11)	7.4% (n = 20)
C.4 This child came to school on time		
Not at All True	2.2% (n = 6)	1.5% (n = 4)
Somewhat True	10.3% (n = 28)	9.5% (n = 26)
Very True	87.5% (n = 239)	89.1% (n = 244)
C.5 This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)		
Not at All True	1.1% (n = 3)	0.7% (n = 2)
Somewhat True	11.4% (n = 31)	9.9% (n = 27)
Very True	87.5% (n = 239)	89.4% (n = 245)
C.6 This child seemed to get enough sleep		
Not at All True	4.0% (n = 11)	2.9% (n = 8)
Somewhat True	12.5% (n = 34)	10.9% (n = 30)
Very True	83.5% (n = 228)	86.1% (n = 236)
C.7 This child seemed hungry while at school		
Not at All True	79.1% (n = 216)	81.3% (n = 221)
Somewhat True	16.5% (n = 45)	10.7% (n = 29)
Very True	4.4% (n = 12)	8.1% (n = 22)
C.8 This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she comes to school		
Not at All True	1.8% (n = 5)	1.8% (n = 5)
Somewhat True	9.5% (n = 26)	6.9% (n = 19)
Very True	88.6% (n = 242)	91.2% (n = 250)
C.9 It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school		
Not at All True	1.1% (n = 3)	1.1% (n = 3)
Somewhat True	13.6% (n = 37)	14.0% (n = 38)
Very True	85.3% (n = 232)	84.9% (n = 230)

APPENDIX D: TEACHER SURVEY AND ITEM-BY-ITEM RESPONSES,YEMEN

Dear Teacher,

We are working on a project concerned with the preparation of young children for school. This study is sponsored by the UNICEF and is being conducted in several countries in different regions of the world. UNICEF is trying to improve children's school readiness and help children and their families make a successful transition to the child's participation in first grade. We are learning about two groups of children in each country – one group participated in the Getting Ready for School programme, the other did not. By looking at both children who participated in the programme and children who did not participate, we can learn more about the specific impacts of this programme on children and their families.

We would like to learn more about how the child named on the cover sheet of this survey is doing in your first grade class. This child's parent or guardian has given us permission to ask you these questions.

The survey will *not* be used to judge you as a teacher or to judge your school. The information that you provide will *never* be shared with the child's family and will *not* become part of this child's school record. Only the independent research team conducting the study will see your answers. There are no right or wrong answers, and you do not have to answer any question you do not want to.

We thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation will help us learn better ways to improve children's school readiness in Yemen.

A. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please answer the questions in this section for the child identified on the cover of this survey. We understand that not all children learn at the same rate, and will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *reading/language arts* compared to other children of the same grade level? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in *mathematics* compared to other children of the same grade level? (*Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children of the same grade level? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Far below average**
2. **Below average**
3. **Average**
4. **Above average**
5. **Far above average**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the academic skills listed below, please indicate how well you think this child has mastered the given skill. If you have not had an opportunity to observe whether a child has acquired a certain skill, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question. We will *not* use your assessment of this child to judge your abilities as a teacher.

	Not Able to Do Yet	Able to Do Somewhat	Able to Do Well	No Opportunity to Observe
Associates letters with letter sounds	1	2	3	88
Identifies individual letters within Arabic script	1	2	3	88
Reads basic words	1	2	3	88
Sounds out unfamiliar basic words correctly	1	2	3	88
Writes letters correctly based on position in a word	1	2	3	88
Writes neatly	1	2	3	88
Can identify numerals 1 through 99	1	2	3	88
When given two numbers between 1 and 99, can identify which is larger and which is smaller	1	2	3	88
Knows the meaning of mathematical symbols +, -, =, <, >	1	2	3	88
Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 99	1	2	3	88
Understands the different units of money	1	2	3	88
Understands units of time (week, month, etc.)	1	2	3	88
Identifies geometric figures (circle, triangle, etc.)	1	2	3	88
Understands simple fractions	1	2	3	88
Solves simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life	1	2	3	88
Uses descriptive language to explain his/her environment	1	2	3	88
Can explain how two things are the same and different	1	2	3	88
Can explain simple stories from the Quran or other religious texts	1	2	3	88
Can explain the difference between living and non-living objects	1	2	3	88
Can identify basic parts of plants	1	2	3	88
Can describe attributes of objects using five senses	1	2	3	88
Can explain how to solve a problem	1	2	3	88
Follows basic hygiene practices (e.g., washing hands)	1	2	3	88
Participates in maintaining his/her classroom	1	2	3	88
Works collaboratively with other children	1	2	3	88
Organizes work materials	1	2	3	88
Can work independently when asked by teacher	1	2	3	88

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

For each of the behaviors listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your first grade class. If you have not had an opportunity to observe this child's behavior enough to answer a question, just choose the "No opportunity to observe" option for that question.

	Not at All True	Somewhat True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child thinks before acting	1	2	3	88
This child controls his/her temper	1	2	3	88
This child is helpful to others	1	2	3	88
This child cannot sit still for long	1	2	3	88
This child is generally well behaved	1	2	3	88
This child often seems worried	1	2	3	88
This child is often unhappy	1	2	3	88
This child makes friends easily	1	2	3	88
This child is easily distracted	1	2	3	88
This child tries his/her best to do well in school	1	2	3	88
This child lies or cheats	1	2	3	88
This child seems to enjoy school	1	2	3	88

C. FAMILY-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

Next, we would like to learn about the relationship between this child's family and the school.

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**
3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child? *(Circle one number)*

1. **Not at all**
2. **Once or twice during the school year**

3. **Three to five times during the school year**
4. **About once a month or more often**

88. **Don't know**

For each of the behaviors listed below, please indicate how true this has been for this child during his or her time in your first grade class.

	Not at All True	Somewhat True	Very True	No Opportunity to Observe
This child came to school on time	1	2	3	88
This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)	1	2	3	88
This child seemed to get enough sleep	1	2	3	88
This child seemed hungry while at school	1	2	3	88
This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she comes to school	1	2	3	88
It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school	1	2	3	88

Thank you!

We appreciate your time and assistance and value your opinion!

RESPONSES

A. CHILD'S ACADEMIC PROGRESS

	Intervention	Control
A.1 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in reading/language arts compared to other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	5.2% (n = 14)	18.7% (n = 39)
Below average	15.5% (n = 42)	19.1% (n = 40)
Average	33.6% (n = 91)	28.2% (n = 59)
Above average	26.9% (n = 73)	16.3% (n = 34)
Far above average	18.8% (n = 51)	17.7% (n = 37)
A.2 Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills in mathematics compared to other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	3.3% (n = 9)	17.7% (n = 37)
Below average	15.9% (n = 43)	22.5% (n = 47)
Average	35.4% (n = 96)	22.5% (n = 47)
Above average	22.1% (n = 60)	19.6% (n = 41)
Far above average	23.2% (n = 63)	17.7% (n = 37)
A.3 Overall, how would you rate this child's ability to work well in a classroom environment compared to other children of the same grade level?		
Far below average	4.8% (n = 13)	16.8% (n = 35)
Below average	11.5% (n = 31)	16.3% (n = 34)
Average	34.4% (n = 93)	29.3% (n = 61)
Above average	31.5% (n = 85)	21.6% (n = 45)
Far above average	17.8% (n = 48)	15.9% (n = 33)
A.4 Associates letters with letter sounds		
Not able to do yet	5.5% (n = 15)	17.9% (n = 37)
Able to do somewhat	37.6% (n = 103)	44.4% (n = 92)
Able to do well	56.9% (n = 156)	37.7% (n = 78)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.5 Identifies individual letters within Arabic script		
Not able to do yet	11.0% (n = 30)	18.8% (n = 39)
Able to do somewhat	33.0% (n = 90)	44.9% (n = 93)
Able to do well	56.0% (n = 153)	36.2% (n = 75)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.6 Reads basic words		
Not able to do yet	19.7% (n = 54)	35.4% (n = 73)
Able to do somewhat	44.2% (n = 121)	36.4% (n = 75)
Able to do well	36.1% (n = 99)	28.2% (n = 58)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.7 Sounds out unfamiliar basic words correctly		
Not able to do yet	18.8% (n = 51)	39.0% (n = 80)
Able to do somewhat	46.0% (n = 125)	42.4% (n = 87
Able to do well	35.3% (n = 96)	18.5% (n = 38)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.8 Writes letters correctly based on position in a word		
Not able to do yet	10.9% (n = 30)	22.7% (n = 47)
Able to do somewhat	40.5% (n = 111)	42.0% (n = 87)

	Intervention	Control
Able to do well	48.5% (n = 133)	35.3% (n = 73)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.9 Writes neatly		
Not able to do yet	17.3% (n = 47)	30.0% (n = 62)
Able to do somewhat	40.4% (n = 110)	30.4% (n = 63)
Able to do well	42.3% (n = 115)	39.6% (n = 82)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.10 Can identify numerals 1 through 99		
Not able to do yet	13.5% (n = 37)	22.1% (n = 46)
Able to do somewhat	44.2% (n = 121)	44.2% (n = 92)
Able to do well	42.3% (n = 116)	33.7% (n = 70)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.11 When given two numbers between 1 and 99, can identify which is larger and which is smaller		
Not able to do yet	13.7% (n = 37)	29.2% (n = 61)
Able to do somewhat	49.6% (n = 134)	46.4% (n = 97)
Able to do well	36.7% (n = 99)	24.4% (n = 51)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.12 Knows the meaning of mathematical symbols +, -, =, <, >		
Not able to do yet	4.7% (n = 13)	15.8% (n = 33)
Able to do somewhat	40.1% (n = 110)	47.4% (n = 99)
Able to do well	55.1% (n = 151)	36.8% (n = 77)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.13 Can add and subtract numbers from 1 through 99		
Not able to do yet	20.1% (n = 55)	27.5% (n = 57)
Able to do somewhat	46.9% (n = 128)	34.8% (n = 72)
Able to do well	33.0% (n = 90)	37.7% (n = 78)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.14 Understands the different units of money		
Not able to do yet	7.8% (n = 19)	15.0% (n = 31)
Able to do somewhat	26.5% (n = 65)	50.0% (n = 103)
Able to do well	65.7% (n = 161)	35.0% (n = 72)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.15 Understands units of time (week, month, etc.)		
Not able to do yet	14.3% (n = 39)	21.7% (n = 45)
Able to do somewhat	53.7% (n = 146)	54.6% (n = 113)
Able to do well	32.0% (n = 87)	23.7% (n = 49)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

	Intervention	Control
A.16 Identifies geometric figures (circle, triangle, etc.)		
Not able to do yet	13.6% (n = 37)	30.7% (n = 63)
Able to do somewhat	36.3% (n = 99)	36.6% (n = 75)
Able to do well	50.2% (n = 137)	32.7% (n = 67)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.17 Understands simple fractions		
Not able to do yet	41.1% (n = 108)	47.8% (n = 97)
Able to do somewhat	43.3% (n = 114)	39.4% (n = 80)
Able to do well	15.6% (n = 41)	12.8% (n = 26)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.18 Solves simple applied mathematics problems based on daily life		
Not able to do yet	26.0% (n = 61)	40.5% (n = 83)
Able to do somewhat	43.4% (n = 102)	48.3% (n = 99)
Able to do well	30.6% (n = 72)	11.2% (n = 23)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.19 Uses descriptive language to explain his/her environment		
Not able to do yet	13.5% (n = 34)	34.2% (n = 67)
Able to do somewhat	53.4% (n = 134)	51.5% (n = 101)
Able to do well	33.1% (n = 83)	14.3% (n = 28)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.20 Can explain how two things are the same and different		
Not able to do yet	2.3% (n = 6)	23.5% (n = 48)
Able to do somewhat	50.2% (n = 129)	52.0% (n = 106)
Able to do well	47.5% (n = 122)	24.5% (n = 50)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.21 Can explain simple stories from the Quran or other religious texts		
Not able to do yet	27.4% (n = 68)	51.5% (n = 106)
Able to do somewhat	57.3% (n = 142)	41.7% (n = 86)
Able to do well	15.3% (n = 38)	6.8% (n = 14)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.22 Can explain the difference between living and non-living objects		
Not able to do yet	2.2% (n = 6)	16.6% (n = 34)
Able to do somewhat	39.8% (n = 107)	39.5% (n = 81)
Able to do well	58.0% (n = 156)	43.9% (n = 90)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.23 Can identify basic parts of plants		
Not able to do yet	4.8% (n = 13)	20.8% (n = 42)
Able to do somewhat	39.9% (n = 109)	42.1% (n = 85)
Able to do well	55.3% (n = 151)	37.1% (n = 75)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

	Intervention	Control
A.24 Can describe attributes of objects using five senses		
Not able to do yet	3.3% (n = 9)	17.7% (n = 36)
Able to do somewhat	36.5% (n = 99)	50.2% (n = 102)
Able to do well	60.1% (n = 163)	32.0% (n = 65)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.25 Can explain how to solve a problem		
Not able to do yet	40.7% (n = 100)	47.0% (n = 93)
Able to do somewhat	52.8% (n = 130)	48.0% (n = 95)
Able to do well	6.5% (n = 16)	5.1% (n = 10)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.26 Follows basic hygiene practices (e.g., washing hands)		
Not able to do yet	0.0% (n = 0)	6.5% (n = 13)
Able to do somewhat	16.8% (n = 42)	38.2% (n = 76)
Able to do well	83.2% (n = 208)	55.3% (n = 110)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.27 Participates in maintaining his/her classroom		
Not able to do yet	1.2% (n = 3)	8.7% (n = 18)
Able to do somewhat	24.6% (n = 64)	44.2% (n = 92)
Able to do well	74.2% (n = 193)	47.1% (n = 98)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.28 Works collaboratively with other children		
Not able to do yet	1.8% (n = 5)	8.3% (n = 17)
Able to do somewhat	32.7% (n = 89)	52.9% (n = 109)
Able to do well	65.4% (n = 178)	38.8% (n = 80)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.29 Organizes work materials		
Not able to do yet	6.7% (n = 18)	27.2% (n = 56)
Able to do somewhat	59.0% (n = 158)	51.9% (n = 107)
Able to do well	34.3% (n = 92)	20.9% (n = 43)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)
A.30 Can work independently when asked by teacher		
Not able to do yet	8.4% (n = 23)	18.4% (n = 38)
Able to do somewhat	59.5% (n = 163)	50.2% (n = 104)
Able to do well	32.1% (n = 88)	31.4% (n = 65)
No opportunity to observe	0.0% (n = 0)	0.0% (n = 0)

B. CHILD'S SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

	Intervention	Control
B.1 This child thinks before acting		
Not at All True	8.9% (n = 22)	22.7% (n = 45)
Somewhat True	62.9% (n = 156)	57.1% (n = 113)
Very True	28.2% (n = 70)	20.2% (n = 40)
B.2 This child controls his/her temper		
Not at All True	22.5% (n = 59)	17.4% (n = 35)
Somewhat True	47.7% (n = 125)	44.3% (n = 89)
Very True	29.8% (n = 78)	38.3% (n = 77)
B.3 This child is helpful to others		
Not at All True	3.4% (n = 9)	7.7% (n = 16)
Somewhat True	47.4% (n = 126)	54.6% (n = 113)
Very True	49.2% (n = 131)	37.7% (n = 78)
B.4 This child cannot sit still for long		
Not at All True	19.4% (n = 53)	21.3% (n = 44)
Somewhat True	40.3% (n = 110)	54.6% (n = 113)
Very True	40.3% (n = 110)	24.2% (n = 50)
B.5 This child is generally well behaved		
Not at All True	2.6% (n = 7)	7.4% (n = 15)
Somewhat True	33.6% (n = 92)	35.8% (n = 73)
Very True	63.9% (n = 175)	56.9% (n = 116)
B.6 This child often seems worried		
Not at All True	41.1% (n = 102)	43.0% (n = 86)
Somewhat True	52.4% (n = 130)	48.5% (n = 97)
Very True	6.5% (n = 16)	8.5% (n = 17)
B.7 This child is often unhappy		
Not at All True	49.6% (n = 129)	47.1% (n = 96)
Somewhat True	40.4% (n = 105)	45.1% (n = 92)
Very True	10.0% (n = 26)	7.8% (n = 16)
B.8 This child makes friends easily		
Not at All True	4.1% (n = 11)	12.4% (n = 25)
Somewhat True	40.5% (n = 109)	61.4% (n = 124)
Very True	55.4% (n = 149)	26.2% (n = 53)
B.9 This child is easily distracted		
Not at All True	31.1% (n = 76)	32.5% (n = 63)
Somewhat True	39.8% (n = 97)	44.8% (n = 87)
Very True	29.1% (n = 71)	22.7% (n = 44)
B.10 This child tries his/her best to do well in school		
Not at All True	10.0% (n = 27)	14.4% (n = 29)
Somewhat True	41.7% (n = 113)	51.2% (n = 103)
Very True	48.3% (n = 131)	34.3% (n = 69)

	Intervention	Control
B. 11 This child lies or cheats		
Not at All True	66.0% (n = 163)	71.8% (n = 140)
Somewhat True	30.4% (n = 75)	22.6% (n = 44)
Very True	3.6% (n = 9)	5.6% (n = 11)
B.12 This child seems to enjoy school		
Not at All True	4.0% (n = 11)	8.3% (n = 17)
Somewhat True	26.3% (n = 72)	56.3% (n = 116)
Very True	69.7% (n = 191)	35.4% (n = 73)

C. FAMILY–SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

	Intervention	Control
C.1 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to find out how their child was doing in your class?		
Not at all	26.4% (n = 73)	51.0% (n = 105)
Once or twice during the school year	33.6% (n = 93)	23.8% (n = 49)
Three to five times during the school year	23.1% (n = 64)	15.0% (n = 31)
About once a month or more often	17.0% (n = 47)	10.2% (n = 21)
C.2 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did this child's family initiate contact with you to offer help with class or school activities?		
Not at all	38.7% (n = 104)	66.8% (n = 137)
Once or twice during the school year	29.0% (n = 78)	19.0% (n = 39)
Three to five times during the school year	17.1% (n = 46)	5.4% (n = 11)
About once a month or more often	15.2% (n = 41)	8.8% (n = 18)
C.3 Since the beginning of the school year, how often did you contact this child's family about behaviour or schoolwork problems with this child?		
Not at all	39.1% (n = 108)	68.7% (n = 136)
Once or twice during the school year	25.7% (n = 71)	18.7% (n = 37)
Three to five times during the school year	18.8% (n = 52)	4.5% (n = 9)
About once a month or more often	16.3% (n = 45)	8.1% (n = 16)
C.4 This child came to school on time		
Not at All True	3.6% (n = 10)	8.2% (n = 17)
Somewhat True	29.3% (n = 81)	32.7% (n = 68)
Very True	67.0% (n = 185)	59.1% (n = 123)
C.5 This child came to school prepared with the materials he/she needs from home (such as pencils)		
Not at All True	4.3% (n = 12)	7.2% (n = 15)
Somewhat True	21.4% (n = 59)	33.0% (n= 69)
Very True	74.3% (n = 205)	59.8% (n = 125)
C.6 This child seemed to get enough sleep		
Not at All True	1.5% (n = 3)	6.2% (n = 12)
Somewhat True	13.2% (n = 27)	30.1% (n = 58)
Very True	85.4% (n = 175)	63.7% (n = 123)

	Intervention	Control
C.7 This child seemed hungry while at school		
Not at All True	39.7% (n = 93)	28.3% (n = 56)
Somewhat True	47.9% (n = 112)	56.6% (n = 112)
Very True	12.4% (n = 29)	15.2% (n = 30)
C.8 This child had a neat and clean appearance when he/she came to school		
Not at All True	2.5% (n = 7)	4.3% (n = 9)
Somewhat True	20.6% (n = 57)	31.7% (n = 66)
Very True	76.9% (n = 213)	63.9% (n = 133)
C.9 It was important to this child's family that he/she do well in school		
Not at All True	2.4% (n = 6)	11.3% (n = 22)
A Little Bit True	30.1% (n = 75)	43.3% (n = 84)
Mostly True	67.5% (n = 168)	45.4% (n = 88)
Very True	2.4% (n = 6)	11.3% (n = 22)

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February 2012

The report was commissioned by the Evaluation Office in association with the Education Section, and managed by the Evaluation Office.