Thrive ECD Results Dissemination meeting

20th December, 2024

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Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the entire Thrive team in Sierra Leone, from the Institute for Development, for their invaluable support. Special recognition goes to Talib Deen for his exceptional administrative and IT support, Anais Bash-Taqi for her outstanding graphic design contributions, and Mr. Emmanuel Foray for his skillful coordination and facilitation of the meeting.

We are deeply grateful to all participants, both those who joined in person and those who participated virtually your engagement was instrumental in making this event a success.

A special note of appreciation goes to Mrs. Regina Yillah, CEO of the Institute for Development (IfD), for her visionary leadership and guidance throughout this process.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the Principal Investigator, Prof. Mary Hodges, for her leadership in organizing this meeting, as well as the dedicated research assistance teams from Njala University, Milton Magai Technical University, and the University of Makeni. Your efforts have been invaluable, and we thank you sincerely.

Summary of the Thrive ECD study

Background

THRIVE is a large-scale, multi-country research initiative focused on building a comprehensive understanding of Early Childhood Development (ECD) policies and service delivery models and their effectiveness at scale. ECD interventions have the potential to significantly improve childhood health, cognitive and psychosocial development, nutrition, education, and overall well-being. These improvements can drive economic growth and promote social inclusion. The program is funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), managed by Oxford Policy Management, and implemented in Sierra Leone by the Institute of Development (IfD). Key academic partners include Boston College (USA) internationally, and Njala University, Milton Margai Technical University, Eastern Technical University, and the University of Makeni (UNIMAK) nationally.

Introduction

The Thrive ECD study is premised on the critical gaps and challenges in access to pre-primary education in Sierra Leone, where only 21% of children aged 3-5 have access to such facilities. Nearly half of children in this age group are cared for by parents without literacy skills, limiting their ability to support formal education. This situation contributes to the cultural practice of sending 28% of children to live with non-biological parents in hopes of better opportunities. Despite efforts to expand access to pre-primary education at an annual growth rate of 4-5%, a significant resource gap remains, particularly in the availability of trained educators. Even with UNICEF's plan to train 6,000 pre-primary educators starting July 2025, achieving universal coverage at the current rate would take 40 years.

Barriers such as distance, costs, safety concerns, and time constraints further hinder access for families living far from the 1,200 primary schools established by the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE). These challenges are particularly pronounced in hard-to-reach rural areas, where pre-primary education is largely unavailable and unlikely to expand in the next decade. However, alternative informal systems such as Madrassahs, which serve approximately 60% of these communities, provide an opportunity to explore adaptive approaches to ECD.

Moreover, access barriers also extend to urban informal settlements and minority language groups, where dialectal diversity and limited translator availability exacerbate exclusion. For some communities, pre-primary education is not perceived as desirable or economically viable, given their farming, fishing, or other livelihood priorities.

Given this context, it is important to understand the perceptions and practices surrounding nurturing care and early childhood development in hard-to-reach communities and to identify opportunities to strengthen informal ECD provision in Sierra Leone.

Study Aim

To understand the perceptions, practices, and informal service provision related to early childhood care and development in hard-to-reach communities, with a view to identifying opportunities for strengthening or modifying existing practices and informal Early Childhood Development (ECD) provision.

Study Objectives

a. To explore household and community perceptions of nurturing care, early child development, and learning.
b. To examine the current and evolving practices, including informal service provision, in nurturing care and early child development among householders and communities.
c. To identify individuals within communities who hold power, trust, and influence to drive or hinder changes in perceptions and practices.
d. To determine opportunities for amplifying positive outcomes in nurturing care, early child development, and learning by strengthening or modifying existing practices and informal ECD provision.

Research Questions

a. What are the perceptions amongst householders and communities around nurturing child care and early child development and learning?
b. What are the current and changing practices, including informal service provision, amongst householders and communities around nurturing care and early child development?
c. Who within communities has the power, trust, and influence to change existing perceptions and practices?

What are the opportunities to amplify positive outcomes around nurturing child care, early child development, and learning by strengthening or modifying existing practices and informal ECD provisions?

Methods

The study employed a qualitative approach to examine current and evolving practices in nurturing childcare, early childhood development (ECD), and early learning in hard-to-reach and underserved communities in Sierra Leone. Observations were conducted on childcare practices and caregiving teams (parents, grandparents, guardians, neighbors, teachers, etc.) in urban slums and rural areas. Retrospective accounts from researchers, including their experiences of childcare during the civil war and fostering arrangements, provided historical context. Data collection included focus group discussions with diverse community members (e.g., youth, elders, and religious leaders), key informant interviews with Christian and Islamic leaders, academics, and INGO personnel, and discussions on attitudes toward childcare, early learning, and aspirations for ECD.

Key Findings

1. **Barriers to ECD Access**: A significant challenge in rural communities was the distance to primary schools and health centers, which raised concerns about children's safety when traveling. Parents in these areas prioritized farming as the main source of income and wealth, which often conflicted with formal education schedules.

2. **Time Constraints and Community Variations**: Time-poor caregivers, predominantly in farming communities reliant on time-sensitive crops like rice, had limited capacity for voluntary contributions to ECD initiatives. Conversely, caregivers in time-rich communities (e.g., cassava farming or trading hubs) had more flexibility to participate in ECD activities.

3. **Urban and Rural Divide**: Urban slums, despite poor environmental conditions, provided better access to pre-primary education, with many families paying privately for schooling. These areas were not classified as "hard to reach" due to the availability of educational services.

4. **Fostering and Caregiving Arrangements**: Fostering arrangements, often informal and involving extended family, were common in cases of parental death, divorce, or economic hardship. However, the quality of care depended on factors such as financial stress and family relationships.

5. **Corporal Punishment**: Violent punishment, rooted in the country's historical context, was reported but noted to have decreased in recent years due to anti-corporal punishment campaigns and the use of mobile phones to report abuse.

6. **Islamic Educators' Role**: Islamic educators expressed willingness to integrate play-based learning into their curriculum while maintaining cultural values, highlighting the potential for partnerships to expand pre-primary education in Muslim-majority communities.

Conclusions

The study highlights critical gaps in ECD service delivery in hard-to-reach communities, including geographical barriers, cultural norms, and time constraints imposed by agrarian livelihoods. It underscores the need to tailor ECD programs to local contexts, particularly in farming communities where rigid schedules conflict with formal education. Urban slums, although better served, require continued attention to ensure equity. Additionally, fostering arrangements and the role of Islamic educators present opportunities to improve access and quality of ECD services through culturally relevant and community-based approaches.

Recommendations

1. **Context-Specific ECD Interventions**: Develop tailored ECD strategies for time-poor agrarian communities, such as mobile or farm-based education models, and integrate school feeding programs to address ECD-related nutritional needs.

2. **Leverage Islamic Educators**: Partner with Islamic schools to incorporate play-based learning into their curriculum while respecting cultural values, expanding access to pre-primary education in rural areas.

3. **Strengthen Fostering Support**: Provide targeted support for foster families, including financial assistance, counseling, and monitoring, to improve nurturing care in informal fostering arrangements.

4. **Promote Child-to-Child Mentoring**: Introduce mentoring programs in hard-to-reach villages, allowing older children to support younger ones in learning and care, especially in settings where formal caregiving is limited.

5. **Increase Accessibility in Rural Areas**: Invest in infrastructure, such as safe footpaths and bridges, to reduce travel barriers to schools and health centers in isolated communities.

6. **Engage Time-Rich Communities**: Prioritize implementing volunteer-based models, such as Lively Minds, in time-rich communities where caregivers have more availability for ECD activities.

7. **Expand Advocacy on Corporal Punishment**: Continue anti-corporal punishment campaigns

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Term
IfD	Institute for Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office
NSC	National Steering Committee
MoHS	Ministry of Health and Sanitation
MBSSE	Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education
UNIMAK	University of Makeni
MMTU	Milton Margai Technical University
CSO	Civil Society Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
TTI	Teacher Training Institutions
ICAP	International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs
CHW	Community Health Worker
HTC	Higher Teacher's Certificate
HEC	Higher Educator's Certificate
FQSE	Free Quality School Education
PI	Principal Investigator
ISWAY	Intergenerational Study of War-Affected Youth
FSI-ECD	Family Strengthening Intervention for Early Childhood Development

Opening statement

Dr Rebecca Esliker
HoD School of Nursing, University of Makeni

On behalf of Thrive, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for all your presence and engagement today. As we gathered here, we are reminded of the vital role that early childhood care and education plays in shaping the future of our children, especially in communities that face significant challenges accessing formal education services. In these hard-to-reach areas, innovative informal approaches to early learning and caregiving emerge rooted in resilience, creativity, and local traditions.

This study was made possible through the collaboration and contribution of many stakeholders, including community members, educators, policymakers, and researchers. Together, we aim to ensure that every child, regardless of education, location, or circumstances, have access to the foundation needed to thrive. The primary purpose of today's meeting is to share the findings of our study on child care and informal early learning in hard-to-reach communities.

This dissemination event is an opportunity to, first of all, present the key insights, that is, to share evidence-based insights into how families and communities in hard-to-reach areas support early childhood development and informal learning. Secondly, is to highlight the challenges and innovations, that is, we discuss the barriers these communities face and their innovative approaches to ensure children's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. And thirdly, we want to foster collaboration.

We want to provide a platform for dialogue amongst stakeholders, including policy makers, educators, and community leaders on how these findings can inform interventions, policies, and programmes. And fourthly, we want to identify actionable steps so we can work together to translate the study's findings into actionable strategies that improve access to and the quality of early childhood care and learning in underserved areas. The knowledge we will share today will help us better understand how to support children in hard-to-reach communities in Sierra Leone and to contribute to the developing inclusive context-specific policies and practises.

Thank you for being so committed to this critical conversation. And we look forward to a productive and engaging discussion that will inspire collective action to benefit our children and their futures. Once again, welcome and let us embark on this journey of learning and collaboration together

Keynote Address

Mrs Melody Martin
Deputy director

Ladies and gentlemen, It is an honor to stand before you on this momentous occasion. I will begin by invoking the powerful words from our national anthem:

> ***The more we are together, the happier we shall be, Highly exalted, heaven on earth free. Great things are looming before me, Firmly united ever we stand, Singing thy praise, O native land. We raise up our hearts and our voices on high, The hills and the valleys we hail for our pride. For it is here and is here that I know, The land that we love, our Sierra Leone.***

As we gather here today, I want to remind us that everything we are striving to accomplish ties back to our devotion to this land and its future—the children of Sierra Leone.

On behalf of the government, and specifically the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, I extend our heartfelt appreciation to our partners, particularly SOAR Thrive, for your unwavering support in advancing Early Childhood Development (ECD) and foundational learning. Education is a fundamental right, and it is our government's duty to ensure that every Sierra Leonean child has access to it. However, the reality is that our efforts are often constrained by a lack of funding and technical expertise.

It is at such moments that partnerships become critical. As a parent with many children who cannot afford to send all of them to school would gladly accept help, so too do we embrace the support of our partners. Thrive, we acknowledge your invaluable contributions. While the responsibility is ours, the reality is that we cannot achieve this alone.

Let us take a moment to reflect on how far we've come. Prior to 2018, early childhood education in Sierra Leone was largely seen as an urban, elitist idea. It existed mainly in private schools or was implemented by those with exposure to early learning models overseas. The government's organogram at the time, 6-3-3-4, did not even recognize pre-primary education.

It wasn't until 2018 that this narrative began to shift. With support from the World Bank, government leaders acknowledged the gaps in our education system. Early childhood education became a recognized priority, and initiatives were launched to develop a national Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum, minimum standards, and teacher training resources. Today, teacher training colleges across the country boast preschool labs, and for the first time, we have a dedicated Early Childhood Development Unit in the Ministry of Education.

But ECD is more than just education. It is a holistic, multisectoral approach to child development. A child needs education, yes, but also health, nutrition, security, and a nurturing environment. For this reason, ECD is not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education. It is the collective duty of all ministries—Health, Gender and Children's Affairs, Agriculture, and Finance—to come together and ensure that every child has the foundation they need to thrive.

In 2020, we established the Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy to solidify this collaborative approach. Since then, we have made tremendous strides, including training over 1,500 educators in play-based, holistic learning approaches and integrating ECD into our education sector plan. Our nation's commitment to foundational learning has not gone unnoticed, earning accolades for our President and Education Minister.

Today, I want us to reflect on the progress we've made and the work that lies ahead. From establishing play labs in hospitals and correctional centers to forming national and regional networks for ECD, we have shown that collaboration is key. But the journey is far from over.

As we move forward, I urge us to remain united in purpose and to continue addressing the gaps in our system honestly and proactively. Let us work together to ensure that every Sierra Leonean child—regardless of their circumstances—has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive.

Clap for yourselves, for it is because of all of you that we are here today, moving closer to a brighter future for Sierra Leone.

Thank you.

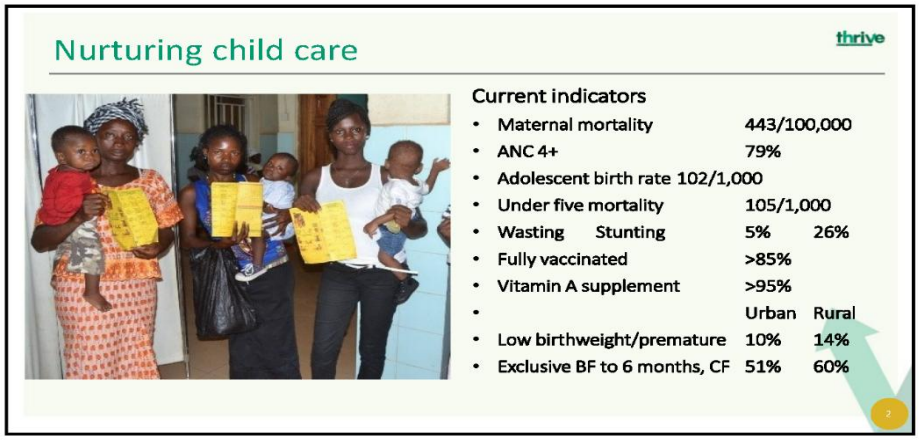
The Thrive ECD Research Team

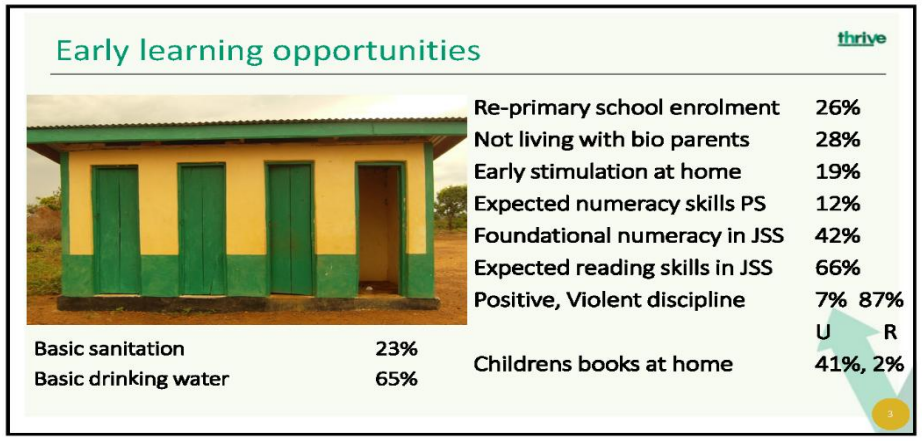


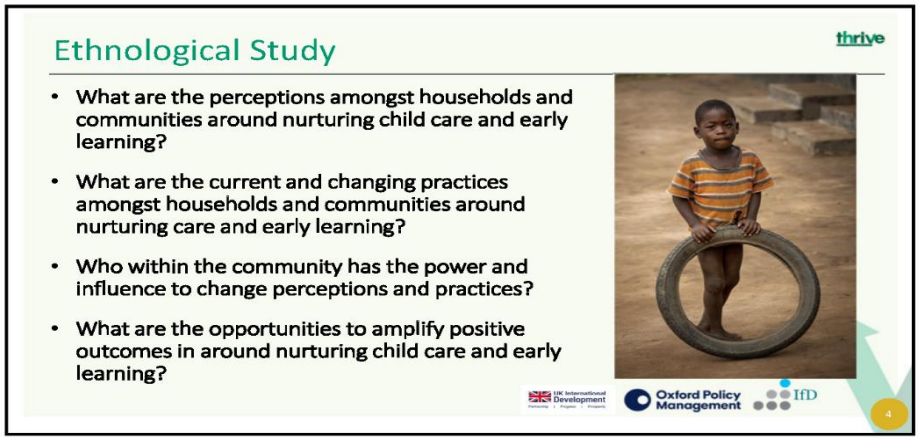
Presentations

ECD perceptions and practice at the community level









Team composition and timeline

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- 15 field workers experienced in social science methodologies and fluent in local languages (Krio, Mende, Themne, Fulla, Susu, Mandingi, Kono, and Limba)
- 12 sessions of 60 minutes of remote training via Zoom and WhatsApp on nurturing care and early learning over a three months period
- Training in March-June
- Practice fieldwork July-September, reporting and peer reviews (Zoom)
- Materials: consent forms, voice recorders, power-banks
- Field work October December, peer review and revision

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Training and orientation

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- Many policies and papers related to ECD in SL
- Introductions on Zoom and ECD-WhatsApp group for sharing
- Power (and trust) mapping and practice
- Focus groups discussions and practice (pre-testing/translations of stem guide)
- Non Participant Observation (NPO) and practice
- Key Informant interviews
- Reporting, peer review and revisions over 6 months
- Dissemination of findings

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Power (and trust) mapping: Example Safroko Limba chiefdom



- Who has power in the community to make or resist change: small circle if they have little power, big circle if they have a lot of power
- What kind of power?
- Knowledge / resources / position / others
- Formal or informal?
- Big position does not necessary mean more power!
- Describe the kind / source of power
- Compare power and trust
- Draw relationships between people

Ethics and Introductions

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- Co-created research with Njala University
- Ethical approval from the SL Medical and Ethics and MBSSE Research Committees
- Safeguarding for researchers and communities: police clearance
- Letter of introduction to District Education Officers (DEOs)
- Letter of introduction to Paramount Chiefs from DEOs
- Introduction to Section-, town chiefs, village headmen, religious leaders, health workers, traditional healers, mammi-queens, TBAs, security, youth leaders
- Informed consent

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10 Focus Groups Discussions



- 1 per site (6-12 participants)
- Open ended questions, conducted in local languages
- Recorded, transcribed and back-translated
- Targeting
  - Traditional leaders, healers
  - Muslim, Christian leaders
  - Teachers
  - TBAs, CHWs, youth leaders

Focus Groups Discussions (FGDs)

Let's talk about:

- the good changes have you noticed in this community since Ebola.
- the bad changes have you noticed in this community since Ebola.
- how young children are growing up in this community.
- how children play and learn before they are old enough to go to school
- the preferred age children should start school
- Is there anything this community could do better prepare young children for primary school?

5 Key informant interviews

- Senior Islamic Scholar in Kambia
- Christian leader in Kenema
- Headmistress in Bo
- INGO in Makeni
- Academic (MMTU) in Western Area

FINDINGS 100 NPOs

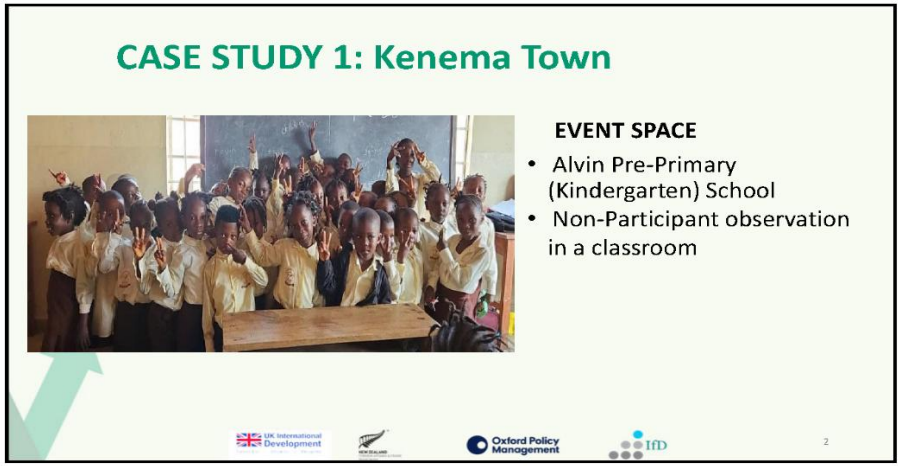


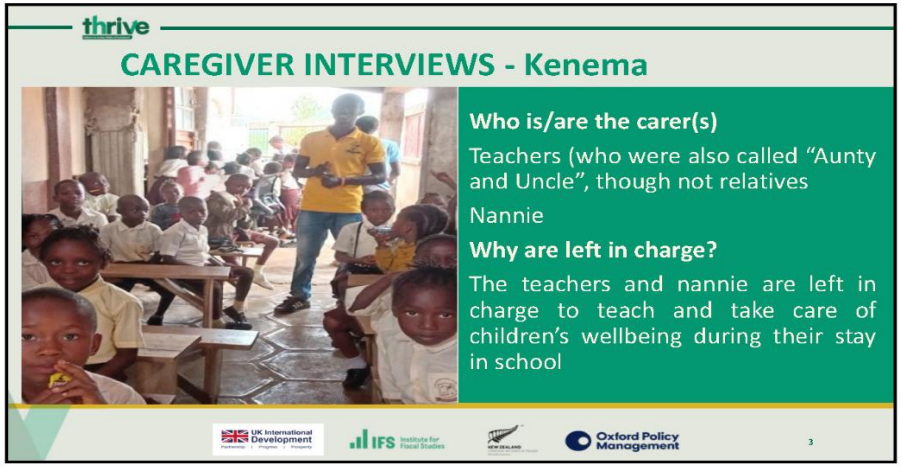
- 60% of carers interviewed were mothers
- 20% were G-mothers (2% were G-fathers)
- 8% were 'aunts'
- 4% were single fathers
- 28% not living with their biological parents
- Physical discipline: knocking/slapping/caning especially towards *men -pekin*
- Children taken to the farm 'cos the schools are too far away, unsafe to travel home alone (rivers, bridges, unsupervised)

Strong desire for Primary & Primary Schools

Presentation from the Eastern Technical University









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Bad aspect of childcare in Pre-school



Disorderly: some will sleep, some will be learning, some will be at the toilet etc.

- Motivation to stay: especially during the first week of leaving their parents
- Hygiene: some of them toilet or urinate on themselves
- Some of them fight and like wild play that will not the accepted by another child especially with outdoor swinging

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Conclusion of observation relating to ECD in Kenema



- **Children show their interest in learning by being curious, persistent, and creative while they play and interact with others**

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Location: Njala Giema, Jawei Chiefdom, Kailahun District

EVENT SPACES:

Baola Quarter In morning at 9:45

Around Primary schools

"I want them to grow to love learning, and the act of touching the book every day will help them get used to it. I want my kids to have an education because I was never able to."

School children dressed in their school uniforms rushing to school..

Around Chiefs house

'y' junction- At home

Boys singing on the way to the communal pump

Graduation ceremony at ETU



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CAREGIVER INTERVIEW: Njala Giema, Jawei Chiefdom, Kailahun

Who is the carer?

The father

This is unusual, in villages

Why are the children left in his charge?

"I missed having an education and I yearn for my children to go to school and learn"



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Interesting comments from interviews

The good aspect in child-care

Father "I want them to grow to love learning"

Surprising aspects of interviews

- Excitement on the face of the father while talking
- Eagerness to see his children loving education

The bad aspect in child-care

- When you do not pay much attention to kids, leads to lack of proper hygiene
- Stressful
- Limitations in carer's movement

9

Conclusion

This carer is passionate about his girl's education. He will be one of the people who will demand improvement in education. He cares enough, to go to the government or to the chief and complain that teachers are not doing their job. We don't have to persuade village people to support education, we just have to listen to what they really want.

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Case Study 3: Bunumbu One. Peje West Chiefdon, KAILAHUN



EVENT SPACE:

When? 1:50-3:50pm

Where? At grandmother's house

What was the event?

- A boy riding an old Honda trye
- Riding round the house
- Grandmother watching keenly

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Caregiver interview in Bunumbu One



Who is the carer?

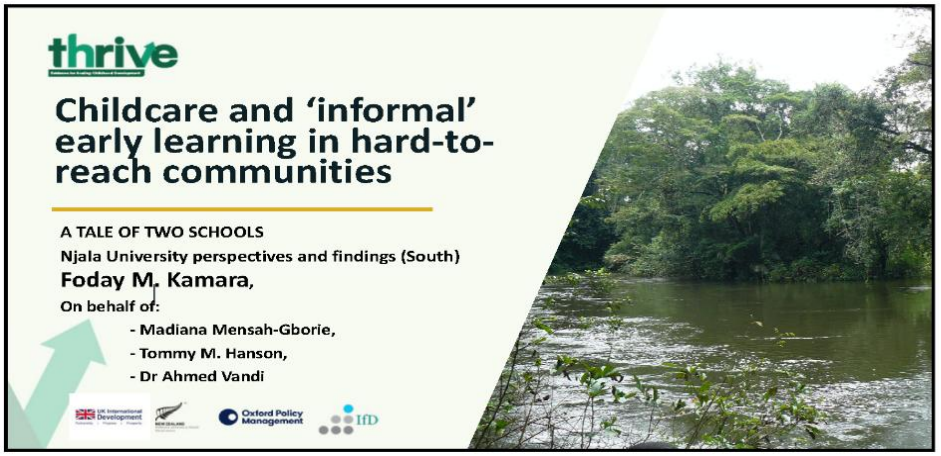
Grandmother

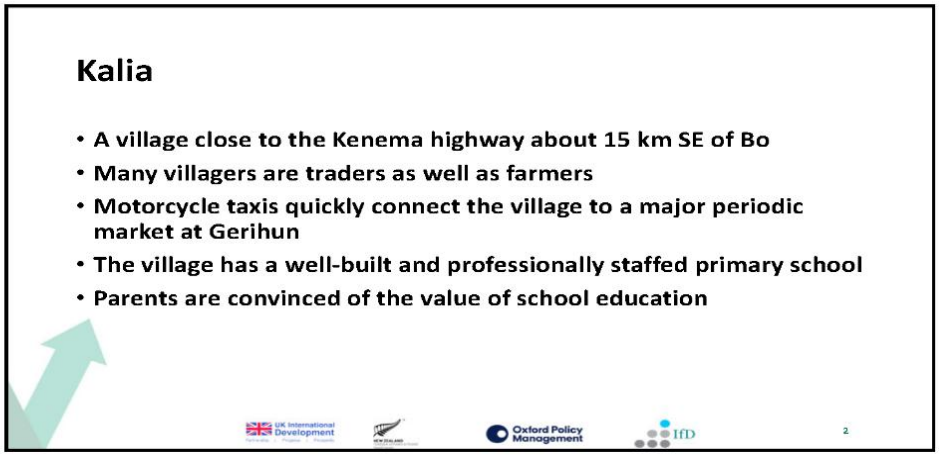
Why is she left in charge?

To provide care while the mother and father are away

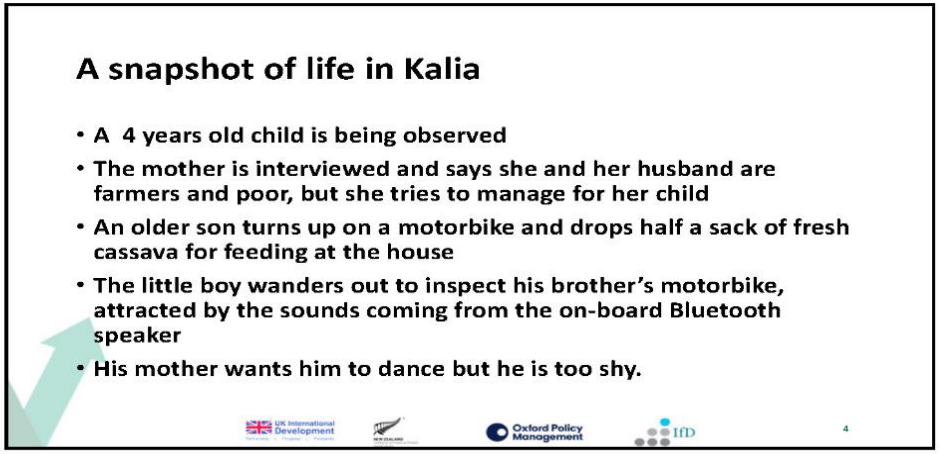
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Presentation from Njala University Team









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KALIA



Focus Group Discussion

Before the war, parents were uneducated at Kalia . Most of their letters were read by clerks who divulge the content of their letters, in front of the whole village. Nowadays their educated children read the content of their letters.

Gbandi

- Gbandi is reached from Baima, a small chiefdom HQ on the road to Freetown about 20 km NW of Bo
- There is a rough track of about 8 km from Baima to Gbandi, motorable by bikes and 4-WD vehicles. Halfway there is a steep hill on which even 4-WD vehicles can become grounded
- There is poor signal coverage for phones and bikes rarely reach Gbandi unless chartered in Bo or Baima
- When sick, villagers are supposed to come to Baima, their nearest health unit
- The nearest periodic market is in Mofombo, about 16 km distant, but the first half will often have to be covered on foot
- There is a school built by local effort covering classes 1 to 4 but no paid teachers. Children have to walk to Baima or Gbangba for Classes 5 and 6.

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Gbandi Primary School,

Constructed by villagers



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Gbandi Primary School:

Inside the school, no paid teachers, no classrooms



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A 'corner' in Gbo chiefdom [location redacted]



None of the children in this village attend school

To get to the nearest school, 3 miles distant, they will have to walk unsupervised through thick bush and over a dangerous stick bridge

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9

A story of children not in school

- Not everyone is convinced by education. I talked to a man who had 3 school-age children. They followed him the farm each day
- I asked 'why?'
- He said he had educated 5 other children, and they went to the city, and show no interest in their home
- His land is all he has to leave his children. School does not educate the children to look after the land, yet their land is their only wealth
- So he takes his remaining children to the farm to teach them how to look after the land

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Gbandi, Gbo chiefdom, Bo District



Gbandi – focus group discussion

The FGD was with grannies. They are instrumental in maintaining farms and homes and in caring for small children.

Could they help with the early education of these children?

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Thank You

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Presentation Milton Magai Technical University

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MMTU findings: UWA slums, RWA-Waterloo, NW-Kambia and Islamic perspective: current and potential ECE

Abdulai K. Kandeh,
Cherno Barrie MMTU
Dr. Abubakarr Lamin (FBC)



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KOLLEH TOWN - sample stories - 1



- A coastal strip prone to flooding during the rains or very high tides. It is used as a dump site by FCC. One play-space was littered with pig faeces and trash.
- Children (about 3-9y) were playing on the ground with pigs around and throwing stones at the dump site. A 4y boy dropped his bread, picked it up, dusted it off and ate it.
- A 5y girl was fully dressed with a neat, stylish hairstyle was thin but appeared healthy and confident enough to play. She requested her mother's IPad.
- She sat with a 9s girl and 3y boy watching Nigerian children's comedies and taking turns to play a 'bike race' game. They mocked anyone losing fast and celebrated anyone who lasted longer in the game.

2

OBSERVATIONS: Kolleh Town - 2

- A shared compound of 15 apartments: room and small parlour (bricks and zinc) typically rented by families of 5-8. In the a large yard 3 girls (4-7y) and a boy 3y were enjoying a game 'bead packing'. To win, they had to stack two columns of 10 beads and then throw a single bead between them to score a '**gooooal**'. If any of the beads fell during the process, that child has lost their round, and the next child took a turn.
- The 7y tried to bully the others and take 2 turns. The 4y old reported to her grandma who was busy laundering.
- Grandma rushed to the scene with a cane to flog the 7y for disrupting the game.

3

CAREGIVER INTERVIEW Kolleh Town - 2

- Mother, 24 years-old married, pineapple trader. She completed primary level education, her husband is jobless and they live in a single room. Their 5y daughter goes to school but had a headache that day, was given Panadol, and told to rest at home.
- "W*i kin krak joke, ple en mek fun Off am*. I love my daughter, rub skin with her (cuddle), she tells me 'lie-lie' stories and explains things that happened in school. We play games: 'balance ball', '*nothin*' and skipping rope.
- School lunches, good medication/services are expensive. Moving around with her while trading is challenging: it is difficult to trust someone with child care.
- In the morning, I wash and dress her for school and ensure she eats before leaving. Most times I drop off and pick her up. Sometimes the dad does that or assists with her homework: studying, reading, or entertaining. I advise her not to beg for food in school and not to accept food/gifts from strangers. I only leave her at home alone if I am nearby
- From 4-5pm she goes to Qur'anic classes at the mosque (100m away).
- If I have to punish her I send her to bed, or seize her playtime."

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MOYIBA - EVENT SPACE - 1



Built on a steep hillside, with water flowing over slippery. sharp granite stones. Houses are on banked surfaces with high unfenced edges. Brick-built apartments in a compound share a spacious yard where children come to play.

A 42 years-old, unemployed tiler, with primary level education cooks for his family once a day and feeds his neighbors children.

"I have 6 children: 2 step daughters (my wifes' first husband is dead), 16 and 14y; two *mEn pikin*, the same age, and two of my own daughters: 8 and 4y. Two are not going to school (1 step daughter and 1 *mEn pikin*), they are sellers in the market, to support the home and their siblings' schooling. I am happy to see her (4y) playing; she goes to school; she shows me her work and makes fun of me."

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OBSERVATIONS - Moyiba - 2

- A 4y girl Neneh looked thin, with a rash around her ear. She had brown hair and walked barefoot. She was trying to thread beads onto a *brumstik* but both ends were loose, so as she tried, some fell off the *brumstik* and she shouted

  "*a bo, ow u de kOmOt so ba*" [English: oh heck, how do you keep coming out].
- She had a baby doll and wanted to wrap the *brumstik* around the dolls waist but the *brumstik* broke and the beads scattered.
- An older girl (8y) came and told her to use string instead but the string was too thick to pass through the tiny holes of the beads. The older girl tried 2-3 times, then left to go and play cards, while Neneh searched for another *brumstik*.

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CAREGIVER INTERVIEW Moyiba in WAU - 2

- Isatas' grandpa is a 48y mechanic, married, and educated to O Level. He worked in the USA for about 20y, returned to SL and has his own garage.
- "Isatas' father is my son but is not serious. I'm the one taking full care of her, I adore her. I pay her school fees (Nursery 2) and everything. Here we mostly send children to school at 3y. The type of school depends on the earning of the family/or their understanding towards education.
- Small scale traders/working class use school as day-care whilst they hustle during the day and upon returning home will pick up the child. 70% send their children straight to primary school. Free education is not only to send the child to school, but providing enough lunch and uniforms.
- Some children eat leftover rice before going to school, and are given only NLE 1 as lunch money. Mostly I have to give tips to these children as they pass and cry for lunch. As soon as a child wakes up s/he ask for NLE 1 to buy puff cake and will survive all day, running up and down without proper dress, or *afbak*. Most of the boys wear torn trousers.
- Isata is sometime abusive and violent and I do flog her for misbehaviour and then refuse to play with her, or send her off to sleep early, curtailing her freedom."

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Location: Crossing village, Koya, WA Rural - 1

EVENT SPACE: Yard outside a *pan bOdi*

- OBSERVATION: one boy (1y), two girls (3y) all dressed but barefoot
- Girls were playing with a small doll that they backed with a small *lappa*
- The toddler defaecated *"Ramadan dOn kaka"*. The mother continued cooking and paid no attention to the children. The three-years old girl covered the faeces with ashes and they continued playing. Later they all ate without washing their hands.
- *"Ramadan dOn trowe di granat"* Isatu slapped the little boy on his back twice who cried. The mother stepped away from her cooking and asked the girls to pick up the ground nuts, and grumbled *"dis wuman frOm we e go tide, e nor wan kam tEk e granat"* [This woman since she went she doesn't come for her ground nuts].

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Location: Waterloo, WA Rural - 2

EVENT SPACE: *Karantha* an open area near a water well with colourful plastic mats

CAREGIVER INTERVIEW: *Karamokoh* (Qur'anic scholar) *and karandens* (students)

OBERSVATION:

- Kids between the ages of 6-9y arrive at different times. The boys wore long white Islamic robes and the girls wore hijab (scarf).
- Each one of them read the Qur'anic chapter at their own pace.
- *Karamokoh* moved around to inspect what they were reading. After a satisfactory review of their work, he moved each of them to the next chapter, and slowly tutored them until they were able to read it on their own. *Karamokoh* spent about 20 minutes reviewing and writing new verses for these kids. Each one was dismissed after getting their daily reading assignment for tomorrow

Location: Kapiron village, Magbema chiefdom, Kambia

9 EVENT SPACES:

- In front of a shack
- In front of a blockhouse
- Under a mango tree
- In an orange farm whilst harvesting oranges
- In a dancing ground
- A back yard (2)
- A field
- House

The nearest school is a mile and half way

CAREGIVER INTERVIEWS Kapiron, Kambia

- The care givers were biological mothers (8), and step mother (1)
- Children 3-5y don't attend preschool/nursery school due to the non-availability of these schools in the village
- Neighbors help take care of others children
- Some want to send their children to pre-schools in other villages but they don't have the finance to do so
- Use corporal punishment to regulate their children
- Play with their children
- Feel proud and happy to take care of their children

OBSERVATIONS: Kapiron, Magbema chiefdom, Kambia

- Children were observed
  - Wearing only pants, T-shirt without *afbak*, trousers, or pants
  - accepting food from neighbors
  - eating without washing their hands
  - playing with motor cycle tyres a lot
  - at 4-6y speaking their native language well
  - can go to near by fruit farms to help farmers to harvest
  - can count 1-5 at least
  - have made from locally made toys
- Farm owners give children their share immediately after harvesting
- Junior uncles are like elder brothers to children – they play together

PARTICIPANTS FOR THE FDG (6)

Teacher, rice farmer, mason, wife, mix crop farmer, head master

What do you do to protect children from harm?

- Not allowing them
  - go to the forest alone
  - to cross the main street alone or play on the street
  - to play with strangers
- God is the protector

13

What are the changes in this community since Ebola?

Good changes

- Improved medical facilities in hospital and clinics
- People are not afraid to go to hospital now
- People are more conscious of health risk now (touching any sick person)

Bad changes

- Climate change (more rain), poor cultivation
- Economic hardship (inflation)

How do children in this community learn before they are old enough to go to primary school?

By playing:

- They play so many games like akara, kick sid, foot ball etc
- After playing for sometime, they go home for water and food

14

thrive



Madrassa, WA Urban

Have a set term-times, calendar, dress code and fees.

Currently most madrassa don't have play-based pre-primary facilities.

Pre-primary teachers-in-training from FBC have started being assigned to Madrassa in Freetown

A Madrassa Early Child Program (MECP) model has been operating well in East Africa funded by the Aga Khan Foundation.

15

Brief History of Islamic Education in SL

- Started in Kambia, Gbile (before Fourah Bay College in 1827) as *Karantha*, with firewood as light and wooden slates as books, locally made stencils and ink
- *Karantha* doesn't provide opportunity to learn the Arabic language
- Islamic College in Magburaka: teachers are certified as Arabic teachers
- Graduates established Madrassas (formal Arabic schools) was later established where children would learn the Arabic and other subjects like mathematics led to decrease in attendance of *Karantha*
- Graduates were recruited by government to teach in Government owned and government assisted schools, so Arabic teachers started leaving the Madrassa for because of the better salary which led to decrease in the Madrassa
- Umaa Welfare is now supporting some madrassas with financial and material support for both the children the teachers

16

CURRENT STATE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN KAMBIA

- *Karantha* and Madrassa still exist in Kambia (in the mosques)
- Arabic is not effective in primary schools because of insufficient Arabic teachers and not enough time on the timetables

CHALLENGES FACED BY ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN KAMBIA

- Non recruitment and replacement of Arabic teachers in schools
- No 100% Islamic schools
- Advent of Umaa Welfare supporting some madrasas and leaving others
- Insufficient time for Arabic in the primary school's timetable

17

Islamic Education in S/L

Forms, characteristics and Differences

Karantha/ doudal/ learning place (informal)

- One educator teaches everything
- Wooden slates and writing stick and pencils use as writing materials
- No school fees (give what you can afford- every Wednesday))
- No uniform
- No classroom (can takes place any where)
- Informal curriculum
- Formative assessment (recite previous lesson before a new lesson is given)
- No promotion
- No report card

Madrassa (Formal)

- Classroom blocks
- Curriculum with different subjects including mathematics
- Books and pens for writing
- Different teachers base on their specialty
- School fees
- Summative assessment
- Report cards including pass or fail
- Pupils put on uniform

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Thank You

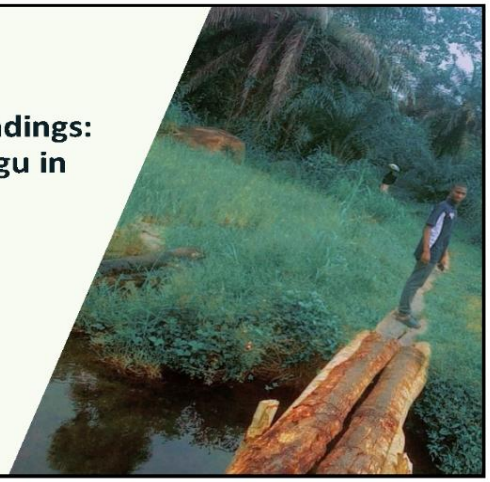
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Presentation University of Makeni

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UNIMAK perspective and findings: Kono, Bombali and Koinadugu in hard-to-reach communities

By Jimmy A. Isiaka, Tamba I. Matturie
Medrine S. Koroma, Lamarama S. Gibateh,
Dennis B. Mansaray and Alhaji K. Bangura



Location: Kangordu Village, Gbane Chiefdom, Kono District

9 EVENT SPACES:

Veranda (4): Grandpa (chief) taking care of an infant whilst the mum sweeps

Kaiki stall: 7y boy left in charge to sell his mums (56y) goods, not paying attention: dancing playing with a bicycle, getting caned

Cocoa farm: 5y warming sleep-over rice but burning her fingers in the process

Outside kitchen: A boy crying in Kono *"Nde yee mei soi na"*

Okada household: parents buying rice cake for breakfast (no food cooked at home)

Parlor: young mum (30y) force feeding pap to her infant by hand with the help of her 4y son (holding his arms)

2

9 CAREGIVERS INTERVIEWS Kangordu village, Kono District

- 6 mothers, 2 grandmas, 1 widow *"I am married to the chief by inheritance"*
- Grandparents were carers because the parents were dead (1), studying/working in the city (1)
- None sent to pre-school - long distance and too young to walk to PS "4-5 miles".
- Willingness to send them to pre-school when opportunity arises they are sent to relatives
- Child care is "expensive" but brings "happiness"
- CHWs are the first point of contact when children get sick.
- 1 grandma uses herbs and if it doesn't work, and the CHW refers her to Koidu (10 miles away) she just she changes the herbs
- 1 senior grandma (67y) *"Yeima e sei wan nbema, be na a kan sandai seei ma, be na foa to a yah bay tomboy do da wan a yei e dooda tai me na" meaning*

  "At night she always sits by me, I teach her some Bundu songs and tell her that I will have to dance for her when she will be initiated into the Bundu society"

3

OBSERVATIONS: Kangordu, Gbane Chiefdom, Kono

- Kids crying and asking to be fed in the morning
- Dynamics of caregiving, including delays in responding to a child's needs due to competing priorities (chatting to neighbors, sweeping the compound)
- Carers share responsibilities of attending to their children's need
  - Okada HH- father gave money to older daughter (5y) while mother gave money to younger daughter (4y) to buy food in the morning
- Kids play or move around without much supervision
- In 2 HHs children were seen eating without washing their hands
- Most children are taught personal hygiene, including brushing teeth
- Petty trading and counting
- Corporal punishment (shouting, beating, and restriction) was observed

4

FGD: Kangordu, Gbane Chiefdom, Kono

- 9 participants (6M, 3F)
- Access to education children have to walk about 4-5 miles
  - *"…since I knew this village our children have been suffering…nothing has changed because since I was born in this village it has not had a school and we still do not have school in the village"* (Oldest man)
  - *"if you look around the village you will find no hospital and in the neighbouring villages, they have community centres where children gather to play and dance. This is not the case for us as such opportunities are not available here".* (Oldest man)
  - *"children start to go to school at age 5 to 6 years because the children have to be mature and able to take the hard venture of the terrible road leading to the school at OGBADO".* (Chief)
  - *"Our women have to go 7 miles off this village before they get access to a hospital"* (Chief)
- *There is a strong readiness to have a school in the community*
  - *"…It is even frustrating when teachers ask for their yearly fees. But if we have a school in the village, it will help at great deal. …children have access to a near by school, they can easily go for class and return to their houses as soon as possible…"* (Youth leader)

5

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Kabun Village, Safroko Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District

Two large beetles *Kuthoroh* were brought back from the farm by the mother and stuck onto *brumstiks*. Gently shaken they made an amusing sound for a boy Abdul 4y and Sarah 3y.

Annoying a visiting neighbor, Saio said "*Yando ni kᵌri*" meaning I will kill it!

Abdul responded "*Na yi kᵌre nin, yan do yii na kᵌri*" meaning if you kill it I will kill you!

Grandmother (70y) and Saio laughed together and play resumed without punishment

6

Location: Kabun village, Safroko Limba Chiefdom, Bombali

<u>10 EVENT SPACES:</u>

Local mud-block house veranda (2)

Chiefs' back yard: (2)

3 rice farms,

farm hut *Pin/Binkii,*

flagging rice and

drinking palm wine/pega packs

1 open community center: 3y & 5y boys climbing amongst the rafters

Kitchen with fire stones inside with banana and calabash trees by the side.

Riverside: laundry, swimming, bathing: segregated by sex on different sides of the river

7

10 CAREGIVER INTERVIEWS Kabun, Safroko Limba Chiefdom, Bombali

- 5 mothers, 1 widow, 3 grandmothers and 1 father

Good aspects of child-care

- *'learning to respect elders', 'not to be greedy', 'not to learn abusive language', 'taking care of us when we get old', 'seeing them playing makes us happy'.*

Bad aspects of child-care

- *'Caring for children can be challenging'*
- *'Difficulty faced when the child is sick', 'no finance', the 'distance is too far to take him to the hospital' also* they 'crying for things they want', and this can 'disrupt my work on the farm or at home'
- Complaint about children being 'stubborn' ignoring advise such as 'don't go there!'

8

OBSERVATIONS: Kabun, Safroko Limba, Bombali

- Children playing with beetles (*kuthoroh*) and *brumstiks (huputhu)*
- Using their toys, encourage younger friends "don't be afraid"
- Reaction (crying) when an adult steps on their pretend pot whilst 'playing cook'
- 3y boy pretending to drive a mortar whilst playing with his 2y neighbor
- Mother & grandmothers authority over the child often ignored
- Young children (4-5y) helping in the farm, learning to farm, offered palm wine
- 6y boy crafting beautiful caps on their own using stones and pega packs then counting in Limba "*wuthae, bilae, bitatie, binan…." 1-10*

9

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Creative arts 6-9y

'They successfully crafted a beautiful cap with a round top with no covering and a long, tail-like projection at the back that could reach down to their waists. John was the first to wear the cap. He then removed it and began counting the number of plastics used in its creation. He was counting in Limba {***wuthe bilae, bitati, binaŋ, bisɔhie, bison-wuthae, bison-bilae, bison-bitatie, bison-binan, koorhi***} [English: 1-10} he could count correctly from one to ten, but struggled with higher numbers, repeating the counting process several times.'

10

FGD: Kabun, Safroko Limba, Bombali

8 participants (6M,2F) Chief, chairlady, teacher, youth leader, traditional healer, stranger, elder & TBA.

- Accessibility: *'… those in secondary school are going to Binkolo which is 5-6 miles away. Those in primary school go to Kathala which is above 3 miles away, they are really suffering, the road is muddy and swampy…" (TBA)*
- Young children copying parents and siblings:

"…let us make school" or "let us make society" especially when they are left at home and their siblings went for schooling …" (Chief)

"…if a nursery school is here, and those playing toys are in this nursery school, it will be better. If there is no school, unless the parent has to leave the child at home and then go to the farm and until that child reaches the age of 7 or so…"(Chairlady)

"Early learning is good. When you send that girl child early to school, before she could develop breasts, she would have gone far with her learning, and if that girl child has gone far with her education, it would be very difficult for her to be confused by any male…" (TBA)

11

Location: KORDALA, WARA WARA CHIEFDOM, KOINADUGU

10 EVENT SPACES

- **The family seated outside on the veranda because it was raining.**
- **Outside kitchen where aunty was pounding husked rice and preparing it for cooking.**
- **Riverside and shop where John T (3y) and his siblings played and bathed before moving to the shop where there parents sell their wares.**
- **Communal drying area where Kankoh (3y) and T. Boy protect the drying farm produce from livestock and birds.**
- **Backyard kitchen (2) where Tortor (4y) was having his hair cut by his uncle nearby.**
- **Veranda (2) where Tortor and two other children were eating groundnuts and chatting.**
- **Primary school playground - honey bees where Pa Sorie (4y) and his friends were playing, throwing stones at the beehive and turning cartwheels.**
- **Farm – Mary (3y) singing and harvesting groundnuts**

12

10 CAREGIVER INTERVIEWS KORDALA, WARA WARA, KOINADUGU

- 7 mothers, 1 father (divorced), 1 grandmother and 1 guardian (orphaned *men pikin)*
- The children were only left unsupervised when they were playing at the drying floors or when asked out on errands like when Kaday (*men-pekin* 6y) went to the communal hand pump to fetch water. (Kaday guardian was very angry and threatened to flog her)
- The villagers seems to really value the aspect of sending young children to school
- Manty (3y) threw a temper tantrum after her mother said she couldn't buy from the woman selling the *afbak* because they were too expensive.
- Children are often 'stubborn' and did not listen to instructions from their parents, John T. Is an example of that he has to be threatened by his parents before he would do what they asked.

13

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Learning to farm at 3y old

TIya watin yU cry fO, Na fO yU mama ihn bobi

Na fO yU uncle ihn motoca, Na fO yU papa ihn tin dem, Na fO yU grani ihn tabaka, Ta tabaka

This three year old had learnt many songs and knew the names of many crops.

Imitating petty traders hawking their wares *'res dae ooo'* She pretended that the leaves she had cut up was rice to be sold and put all the smaller leaf pieces on a bigger leaf and said *'r dae cam go sel'* meaning I am going to sell. She continued yelling loudly *'res dae o, swit col res dae'*.

14

OBSERVATIONS: KORDALA, WARA WARA CHIEFDOM, KOINADUGU

- John T, a three year old at his parents' shop repeated 17 Leones after a customer had just said 17 Leones. He began counting, he started with 17, continued with 1 and stopped there
- Playing with *gigs* (locally made baby walkers) and *kants, (us*ed motorbike tyres pushed around with a stick)
- Informal ECE by elder siblings / neighbours
- Children fetch water and look after farm produce spread out on the drying floors.
- Tortor 4y was beaten by his faher for losing his school supplies.
- We rarely saw children beaten by their parents even the men pikin. They were well cared for and in school (2 miles away).

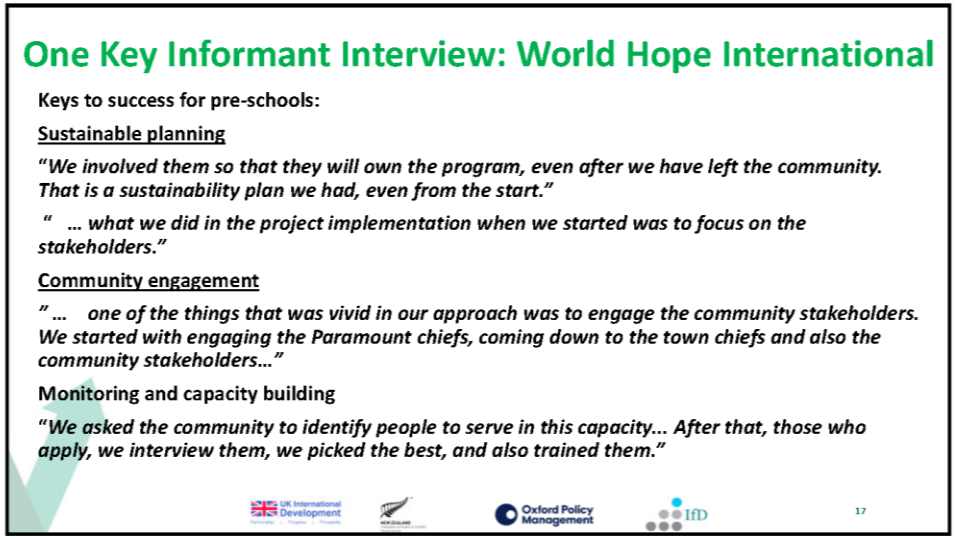
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FGD: KORDALA, WARA WARA CHIEFDOM, KOINADUGU

In front of the chief's compound with YOUTH MAN, MAMMY QUEEN, FARMER, PASTOR, CHIEF, CHAIRLADY & TRADER, STRANGER, BIKEMAN.

- **They mentioned how things have changed since the war & Ebola outbreak:**
  - **They now perform better handwashing and hygiene practices.**
  - **Children are better fed and dressed than they were before the war.**
- **Children usually begin school around 5-6yrs. There's a pre-school in the neighboring village about 2 miles away (DEC Sarokor Primary School)**
- **Child fostering for education is much safer nowadays due to mobile phones so children being fostered can maintain communicate with their parents.**
- **Their advice to government on the need for increased access and quality of amenities in the area in order to prevent children travelling to other places to study.**

16


One Key Informant Interview: World Hope International
Keys to success for pre-schools:
Sustainable planning
"We involved them so that they will own the program, even after we have left the community. That is a sustainability plan we had, even from the start."
" … what we did in the project implementation when we started was to focus on the stakeholders."
Community engagement
" … one of the things that was vivid in our approach was to engage the community stakeholders. We started with engaging the Paramount chiefs, coming down to the town chiefs and also the community stakeholders…"
Monitoring and capacity building
"We asked the community to identify people to serve in this capacity… After that, those who apply, we interview them, we picked the best, and also trained them."
17


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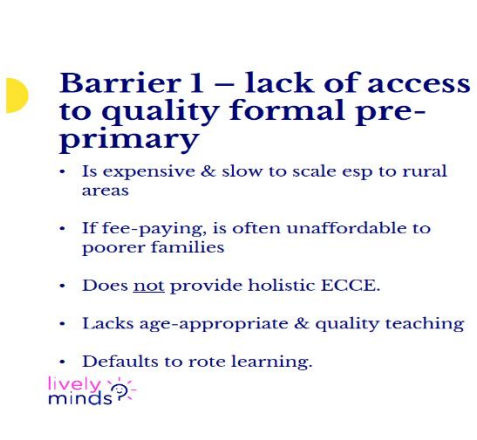
Presentation on other ECD models

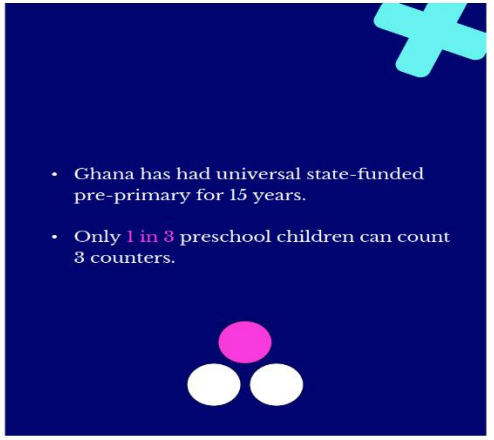
Lively minds model









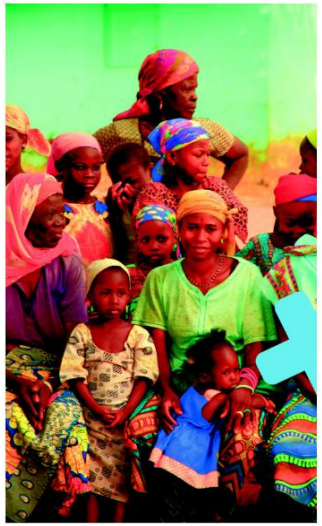


Barrier 2: lack of home learning & care

- In Ghana & Uganda a rural child spends 75% of their time at home.
- But most parents in rural areas struggle to provide ECCE.

Only 13% households surveyed had conducted *any* play activities with child in past 3 days.

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2. The Lively Minds solution

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Our big idea...

Parents are the sleeping giant.

Parents everywhere can drive child development and transform their children's futures.

No matter their education or socio-economic level.

We awaken this potential.

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Parenting workshops & radio programme

- Use behaviour change methodology to build confidence.
- Challenge gender & social norms around parenting.
- Teach practical and cost-free parenting activities.



So that parents...

- See themselves as capable & valued caregivers.
- Provide nurturing learning & care at home.

Parent-run Play Schemes

- Mothers run free educational Play Schemes for all 3-6 year olds.
- These take place in Kindergarten class in Ghana, informally in Uganda.



So that children...

- Get exposure to games that develop different skillsets.
- Benefit from small-group work, caring teaching, discovery and child-centred learning.
- Develop creativity, numeracy, problem-solving.

Government delivery

Lively Minds trains & coaches local government

↓

Local government train & coach trainers in each community (Kindergarten teachers Ghana, VHTs in Uganda)

↓

Community trainers train Mothers & broadcast radio

↓

Parents run Play Schemes and provide better care at home

↓

Kids get quality care and learning at the Play Scheme & at home

So that the programme is sustainable, scalable & affordable....

- The programme supports pre-primary where it exists, or provides a community resource where no there is other ECD provision.
- No additional staffing.
- Minimal additional transport.

3. Our results

Parenting workshops & radio programme

- Use behaviour change methodology to build confidence.
- Challenge gender & social norms around parenting.
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3. Our results

Plans

We are working with THRIVE to design a small pilot to

- Adapt the model to ensure it is appropriate for context, needs and opportunities
- Harmonise with existing initiatives, structures & systems
- Explore interest in and potential pathways to scale

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Questions?

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Pekin to Pekin model

PIKIN-TO-PIKIN MOVEMENT

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

PRESENTED BY:

BAI KAMARA

PROGRAM MANAGER

DATE: 20TH DECEMBER 2024

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- ❑Brief Profile of Pikin-To-Pikin Movement (P2P / PTP)
  - Who we are?
  - What we do?
- ❑The Early Childhood Development Project in Kailahun District

WHO WE ARE?

- Pikin-To-Pikin Movement (P2P) is a National Child-Centred Community Development Non-Government Organization
- Established in **1994** and formally registered in **1998,** with the Government of Sierra Leone
- **Vision -** Sustainable and inclusive development that provides children with a conducive environment to realize their full potential and ensure their well-being.
- **Mission -** To work with government, communities, development partners, and other stakeholders to create and sustain a conducive environment for the growth and well-being of children in Sierra Leone

WHAT WE DO & WHERE WE WORK

➢**Thematic Areas:**

1. Child Protection
2. Education
3. Health and Nutrition
4. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
5. Institutional Capacity Development

➢ **Operational District**

1. Moyamba
2. Bonthe
3. Kailahun
4. Bombali
5. Tonkolili

Early Childhood Education Project

- Increasing Access, Retention and Performance in Primary Education Project,
- Project Duration: 5 years (2011-2016)
- Funders: Comic Relief through Child to Child Trust UK
- Project Location: Kissi Kama, Kissi Tongi and Kissi Teng, Kailahun district
- Primary Schools 21

Approaches

- Child-to-Child methodology
- Multi-Stakeholders engagement
- Capacity development
- Community engagement
- Child Friendly School methodology

Key project participants

- Young Facilitators (YFs) – over 2,500
- Young Learners (YLs) – over 3,000
- The Teacher Facilitators
- Parents
- Community Sensitization Committee (CSC)

Stakeholders

- Child Welfare Committee
- The Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs
- The District Council
- The media (local and international media houses)
- The UNGEI

The Ebola Period

Main activities after redesigning of the project

- ❖Radio Programs
- ❖Establish Radio Listening Groups
- ❖Supplied rechargeable solar radios
- ❖Pay stipend to TFs
- ❖Supply Ebola items: DHMT, DERC and Community

Project activities cont.

- ❖Capacity building training of staff, Education, MSWGCA, CWC, Teachers, and children
- ❖Activity packs, story books and the Life skills curriculum for YFs
- ❖Support MSWGCA with XL motor bike
- ❖Supply bicycles to the CSC
- ❖Conducted Community Stakeholders Engagement

Impact of the project

- ❖Over 3,300 Young Learners (YLs) and 2,500 Young facilitators(YFs) reached
- ❖YLs demonstrated increased school readiness with better literacy, numeracy and social skills when enrolled in P1
- ❖Increased and on-time enrolment in primary-one
- ❖Over crowding and lack of adequate sitting accommodation to support all the children.

Impact of the project

- ❖Improved and strengthened communication skills
- ❖Increased confidence and assertiveness to speak out
- ❖Demonstrate future aspiration

World Hope International

World Hope International Early Childhood Care & Educations Experiences

- Early Childhood Development (ECD) Project (Sahr Kpakima)
- Enable the Children Program – Pilot Therapeutic Playgroups (Laura Boothby)



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) PROJECT- BOMBALI DISTRICT

Promoting Better Opportunities for Young Children

Background

- From 2016 to 2022, the Ministry of Basic and Secondary School Education (MBSSE) and UNICEF supported World Hope International to implement the community-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) project in Bombali District.
- **The project impacted over 2,000 beneficiaries, including:**
  - 16 operational centres
  - Young children and parents.



Project Objectives

1. Provide early learning opportunities for young children in poor communities.
2. Support caregivers with practical skills in child rearing
3. Develop scalable and sustainable ECD models
4. Strengthen capacity for government and NGO partners

Project achievements

- Training of 69 educators and 23 MSGs.
- Community engagement and radio awareness campaigns.
- Coaching and stipend payments for educators.
- COVID-19 sensitization and precautionary measures.





Challenges

- Difficulty securing facilitators on scheduled activity dates.
- Delayed funding transfers affecting activity timelines.
- Budget constraints limiting project scope.

Key Partnerships

Collaboration with:
- Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE)
- Ministry of Health (DHMT)
- Bombali District Council
- Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL)
- Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs.

Lessons learned – Key Takeaways

1. Share project budgets with stakeholders to manage expectations.

2. Provide activity timelines well in advance to ensure readiness.





ENABLE THE CHILDREN – PROGRAM PILOT - THERAPEUTIC PLAYGROUPS

Enable the Children

- Established in 2007, adopted by WHI in 2025
- Provide paediatric physiotherapy, occupational therapy and psychosocial services.
- Provide services to over 1000 children living with disabilities
- Provide disability awareness trainings/ sensitisations for partners, teachers, religious and traditional leaders, caregivers, schools.
- 2 key events – Beach Outing and Sports Event
- Work with various ministries and councils – MOH , NCC, MOSW, MBSSE, MOGCA, (IRCSL)

Pilot - Therapeutic Playgroups

Key Context: Organized play opportunities for children are rare.

- CLWD face stigma, reduced play opportunities, and developmental delays.
- Out of school kids or families struggling to send child to nursery.

Pilot Details:

- 6-week program
- Weekly 2-hour sessions combining structured and child-led play
- 8 children (ages 4-7) and their caregivers.
- Various abilities and conditions



Key Objectives and Outcomes



Overall Goal: To enhance therapy access and opportunities for children with disabilities (CLWD) in Sierra Leone.

Objectives:

- Children have access to a safe play environment where they can be supported to work on their individual therapy goals, within a group setting.
- Children to regularly attend therapy sessions and be given opportunities to learn new skills alongside their caregivers.
- Caregivers have increased confidence to play and complete therapy with their child.
- Caregivers have an increased understanding of the importance of therapy and play with regards to childhood development.

Outcomes:

- Improved developmental milestones, and fine-motor/ gross-motor skills.
- Caregivers to have an Increased understanding of therapy and play and the ability to do this with their children.



Typical Session structure

Themes: Focused on building body awareness / Letters and numbers
•Arrival and self-directed play.
•Welcome song
•Interactive songs (e.g., "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes").
•Group Story time
•Craft activities (e.g., handprint painting).
•Snack time for social skill practice.
•Self- directed play and sensory activities (e.g., bubbles, ribbon sticks, music).
•Caregiver session – talk about different topics (e.g. self help skills, challenges
•Close with a goodbye song.



Successes and Challenges

What went well:
- Use of ECCE educators – mixing their skills with rehabilitation / therapeutic skills.
- Review of therapy needs
- Mixed abilities worked well in group settings
- Access to assistive devices (chairs, standing frame)
- Children showed increased confidence and social interactions
- Caregivers developed stronger bonds with their children and other caregivers
- Provided play bag at the end.





Challenges:
- Attendance consistency
- Poor time-keeping affected session flow
- Some children initially overwhelmed by the environment
- High staffing ratio



Feedback- quotes

"We want the group to continue—it has educated both caregivers and the children, helping us understand how to better support our kids"

"My child loved the nursery rhymes, especially 'Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.' It brought so much joy and engagement to them."

"The playgroup has helped to reduce our stress and discouragement about our child's condition by having regular contact and support."

"The advice and self-help training were also helpful to us. It gives us courage to work with our children at home."

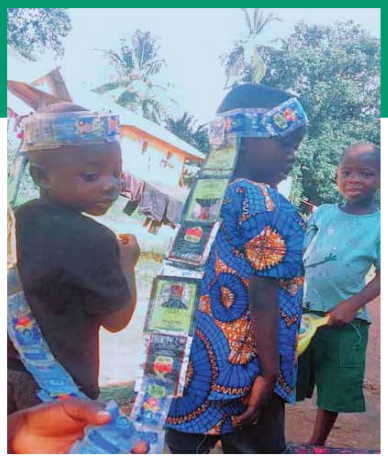
WORLD HOPE INTERNATIONAL

Posters presentation

University of Makeni

Creative arts: ‘pega-packs’ (Limba)

by Dennis Banday Mansaray and Alhaji K. Bangura
UNIMAK



Event Space

Back yard kitchen of the “Gbaku” (Chief) house with the Gbaku, the father of the youth leader, Kumba (Johns paternal grandmother) (mondama) and Kathie is Sories’ maternal grandmother sat under orange and palm trees.

Observations 2-3pm

Nearby, three children John (5), Sorie (6), and Momoh (9) were playing with empty, double-punch, disposable plastics (pega pack). These are ‘one-shot’ rum (flavoured and sometimes coloured ethanol) usually 43% proof, 25mls. Momoh was repeatedly called away by one of his aunts.

Sorie was responsible for joining the plastics, using a medium stone and hitting the plastics on a big stone. John and Sorie repeatedly went to the dustbin close to the bush to find more plastics. Their grandmothers called them away from the dustbin but they ignored them until Sorie said “tƐƐna dah” meaning this is enough. They returned to the stones and crafted a beautiful cap with a round top, no covering and a long tail that reached their waist. John was the first to wear the cap, then removed it and counted the plastics (wuthe bilae, bitati, binaŋ, bisƆhie, bison-wuthae, bison-bilae, bison-bitatie, bison-binan, koorhi) [1-10}.

Momoh rejoined them, praising the cap “wu lohoi ae” meaning this is beautiful. They were called by their grandmothers for food. Kumba said “loka thankor than” meaning wash your hands. She poured clean water over John’s hands without soap and helped him to scrub the dirt off.

Marys' farm songs (in Krio)

by Medrine S. Koroma and Lamarama S. Gibateh
UNIMAK



Event Space

About 2.5 miles from Kordala village is their farm: over a stream, a swamp and a hill. The local bridge was a single, slippery log so Mary (3) was carried by her cousin Yandi (11). There are round thatched farm huts with fire stones for cooking.

Observation

9:30am Mary named the plants on our way 'granat, corn, konsho, okra, peppers... 9:40am Marys' mother, grandmother, Yandi, and aunty started uprooting granats and putting them into plastic buckets. Mary's task was to transfer the buckets to the observers who removed the granats from the roots. Mary sang:

Iya watin yU cry fO, Na fO yU mama ihn bobi , Na fO yU uncle ihn motoca
Na fO yU papa ihn tin dem , Na fO yU grani ihn tabaka, Ta tabaka

The song was asking why the child was crying, if it was about her mother's breastmilk, her uncle's motorcar, her father's things or her grandmother's tobacco.
10:20 Her mother and grandmother called Mary because they had lost sight of her in the long grass. Mary walked back singing the ABC song.
10:50 Mary began cutting up some leaves while singing 'Happy Birthday'. Then shouted 'res dae ooo' imitating the petty traders hawking their wares, 'r dae cam go sel' meaning I am going to sell. then loudly 'res dae o, swit col res dae' and 'col res dae' scooping up dirt from the floor and pretending it was soup for the rice. She went uphill singing 'credit alert'.
11:40 We grew tired and sat down. Mary said 'ouna wach mi granat fo mi ar dae go pohmpohm sai' meaning to please look after her granat when she is away.
12:30 Mary commented 'mama yu see aw borbor ihn dohdoh make' meaning mother can you see how Borbor's (protruding) navel looks.
12:56 Mary carried the lighter bucket containing corn on their cob with the help of Yandi as we walked back downhill to the village.

Playing with crickets (in Limba)

by Alhaji K. Bangura and
Dennis Banday Mansaray
UNIMAK



Event space

There was a rough floored veranda that was widely open. Bananas were growing at the side and a tarpaulin was spread in front of the house with rice drying under the sun.

Observation

13:05 Abdul, a four year old boy, and his neighbour Sarah three years old, were playing with local brooms by the side of the house. Sarah is left with Abdul's grandmother whenever her parents leave for farm-work

.

13:46 Abdul's mother returned from the farm, bringing two large, brown Kuthoroh (insects presumed to be crickets) for them from the farm. She fitted each onto a long stalk from the broom and gave the one to Abdul who started playing with it. As Abdul gave the stalk a gentle shake, the cricket produced sound.Abdul's mother fitted the cricket to the stalk for Sarah, but she was afraid to handle it herself. Abdul collected it from his mother and gave it to Sarah and said, "don't be afraid".

13:53 Abdul went to the parlour leaving Sarah playing, gently shaking the stalk for the cricket to produce sound. When it fell off and went over the veranda Abduls grandmother told Sarah to go down and collect it, but Sarah was afraid and called Abdul to collect it for her. Sarah shouted, "Borbor, borbor saa do" meaning boy, boy come here. Abdul went down the wooden steps and collected the cricket for Sarah. The grandmother fixed the cricket on the stalk again and gave it to Sarah.

14:21 Fowls came to feed on the drying-rice. The grandmother shouted, "Borbor, Borbor: awah kabantha ŋathᵋbee" meaning Abdul, go and scare the fowls. Abdul took his slipper and threw it and the fowls ran away. Then, he re-joined Sarah playing with the cricket.

14:39. A neighbour Saio, joined Abdul and Sarah with her 4 months old infant. Abdul put the brown, noisy cricket close to her ear and Saio said "Piya!" meaning 'stop! Abdul persisted taking the noisy cricket close to her ears until Saio seized his stalk took the cricket off and said "Yando ni kᵓri" meaning I will kill it! Abdul responded "Na yi kᵓre nin, yan do yii na kᵓri" meaning if you killed it, I will kill you! The grandmother and Saio laughed together. Saio later fixed the cricket into the stalk and handed it back to Abdul and he continued playing.

Njala University

Locally made deckchair (in Krio and Mende)

by Francis Baigeh Johnson
Previously of Njala University



Event Space

Three women and five men 30-40 years old were in a swamp harvesting rice with a boy (12 years)collecting the rice. Nearby, (Amie) about one-year old was in a three sticks deckchair which allowed her to sit without help The sticks wrapped with blue cloth for comfort.

Observation

11:18am Amie was crying and the boy came and started dancing until her was smiling and raising her hands. His mother called him to come and take away her harvested rice. He took a plastic bottle containing stones and shook them, then left it close enough for Amie to reach. She began hitting the shaker on the ground.

11:32am Amie bent sideways and slept. Her brother said "Mama Amie is sleeping, oo!" and his mother relied 'lay her on the mat close to the unfinished building '. After her brother left, Amie woke up, started rolling on the ground and cried until her mother came, called for water to wash her hands, sang and breast fed her. When she she slept again her mother laid her down then asked the brother to keep an eye on her as he collected the rice from the swamp.

Interview CAREGIVERS (mother)

I am 38 years old and my husband owns this swamp. I went to school unto SSS2 then went in for tailoring. My husband promised to buy me a sewing machine so it will serve as another source of income for us. I do some petty trading at home. My husband is a teacher at an Islamic primary schools, Kenema and also a farmer. I play and sing with Amie and she likes me stroking her head to comfort her to sleep.

Child caring is not easy because when she is sick I have to diagnose and explain to the nurses what is happening to her. However, having a child is like having a companion: a bond exists. These children give me joy. I play with them especially my son - we regularly tell stories to each other. He is in JSS1 now, is really doing well and sometimes helps me sell at home. The three sticks is a self-made chair like our parents used to make for us. Later I will make a wooden walker the same way I did for my son.

www.thrivechildevidence.org thriveprogramme@opml.co.uk

Eating with dogs in Bo town

by Foday M. Kamara
Njala University



Event Space

The compound is fenced with many houses and dogs. Twenty people live there: nine boys, one girl, eight adults (M4: F4) and two small boys. The older boys are assigned different tasks: sweeping, collecting water, washing the dogs, emptying the dust bin. The kitchen are three fire stones and two pots.

Caregiver Interview (in Krio)

"These boys are so helpful in the kitchen, most times if not feeling good they cook."
"Dogs serve many purposes for instances, we feel the joy of living with dogs and dogs generally help to protect the compound against thieves."
"A child that loves you listens and inculcates all of your good tricks".
"My child has just shown signs to me that he wants to toilet. Caring is not only limited to ones' own children but pay attention to others. Whatever we do God sees."
"He comes closer to me laughing and calls me 'Ngoh' meaning elder sister."
"When he started messing I just threaten that I will beat him if he messes up himself. If he wants to do anything he attempts to call the name, for instance, if he wants to toilet he says stool, wants to drink he points towards his mouth. When he wants to urinate he holds his pee. These signs help me understand the childs' way of communicating. He only toilets on himself now when sick with running stomach."

Observation

Madam CK was preparing food with five boys (8-13 years) help. Of the nine boys two are her biological children, four are cousins and three are other relatives. CK is the grandmother of one of the two small boys on the floor eating. CK shared the food into eight dishes. A plate of rice was given to the older of the small boys to eat, and to feed the younger one. Three friendly dogs started eating alongside them especially the youngest who repeatedly had to push the dogs away from eating from his bowl. Later he took a cup of water, poured it into the food, scattered everything onto the floor then put his hands into the oily plate and rubbed it on his face and clothes. After breakfast the small two boys began playing with a cane and conduit pipe pretending to steer their vehicles.

Milton Margai Technical University

Traditional Qur'anic learning experience in Ganya, Falaba District

by Papa N'Jai
Milton Margai Technical University



My father enrolled me in a karantha when I was about 5-6 years old. My teacher (karamokoh) was a very dark–skinned, grey-haired Mandingo man who was perhaps in his late 60s. There was no formal enrolment, no academic year, no class roaster or specific start and end times for the studies. New students were accepted throughout the year in an ad hoc manner. An important "tobanghol" ceremony was performed at home: cooking a lot of food and preparing chobbaal (rice flour mixed with water and sugar or honey).

This was cut into small chunks topped with a Kola nut. After a brief statement by the "chairperson", an Islamic scholar invited me to sit on a mat near him flanked by guests. He wrote a few sentences on a wooden slate (alluwal), took my index finger and pointed to words on the slate (alluwal). I carefully repeated them. After that, prayers were offered, food served and the dough handed out: the size depended on the status of the guests: the biggest for the Chief, Imam and other VIPs.

We used to get up about 6am to go to our teacher's house (karamokoh) roughly 400 metres away. We each had a wooden salate (alluwal) and our teacher wrote mostly Arabic letters for the beginners. We used locally made ink (n'daha) and wooden pens. Alluwal were washed weekly to remove old notes, dried in the sun and cleaned with a leaf (sencheingel hako n'daha). We sat on locally made mats or sometimes a dried sheep skin. We used the open space in front of his house in the dry season, and squeezed onto his small veranda in the rainy season.

There was no formal sitting arrangement. It was haphazard. Each of us read at our own pace. Sometimes, especially at night, our voices could be heard several houses away. We only reached out to him for help with pronunciation. He had a long cane which he used to maintain decorum and to punish slow learners. In the evenings we sat around a small bonfire for light for reading and warmth during the harmattan. The firewood was often brought by us the students (karandens).

My experience of Qur'anic homes (doudhal and madrassa)

by Chernor Abdul Wahab Barrie
Milton Margai Technical University



My family had been displaced by the war, living in a remote village in Guinea. One Saturday morning when I was about 5-6 years old my mother enrolled me into a doudha accompanied by maternal and paternal aunts with a small bundle of kola nut and chobbal. A ninety years old man (my paternal grandfather's cousin) was the prayer caller (muadim) of the chiefdom. A ninety years old man (my paternal grandfather's cousin) was the prayer caller (muadim) of the chiefdom. Everyone there was afraid of him as they believed he possessed supernatural powers. I was given a small wooden tablet on which my karamoko would write for me. I don't remember whether he flogged us but every Wednesday, we used to bring him bundles of wood (leddeh alarba).
In 1999 we returned to Freetown (Rokuper) where I continued Qur'anic learning with my father and 7-8 other students in front of his spare parts shop. He would flog us if we could not remember the previous lesson or he caught us playing during his lessons.

In 2001 when we transferred to Calaba town, and I was enrolled in a renowned Qur'anic home (Ansarul). The principal Sheikh Bah was one of the chief imams but we were taught by one of his 4-5 tutors. We used to take a small amount of money every Wednesday (leddeh alarba). You were flogged and sent home if you failed to bring Wednesday money. Learning took place in the morning hours for those in the afternoon shift in 'English' schools and vice versa. Sometimes the tutors asked us to fetch water. Flogging was part of the learning process if one failed to retain what was learnt previously (during recap) or were caught playing.

Those who were higher in Qur'anic chapters taught those in lower chapters and were permitted to flog. In turn they learnt from the tutors and were also flogged for breaking rules. The Ansarul was mixed age groups: smaller children 5-6 years old could be in higher Qur'anic chapters than some 10-11 years old. So, this meant that the older ones learned from the smaller ones.

After NPSE, I moved to the Ansar Islamic School, Kissy Dockyard, (madrassa) just like a formal English school with uniforms, different classes, fees, curriculum, syllabus, terms, examinations and results. I stayed in there for three years before I took almost a 17 years break from Qur'anic Education.

Unemployed tiler care-giving in Moyiba

by Hamid S Turay
Milton Margai Technical University



Event space

An informal settlement built on banked surfaces with high unprotected sides on a steep hillside in the east end of Freetown. A big compound had several small cement housing units, and a paved open area suitable for play.

Observations

2:10pm Four years old Neneh looked thin with a rash around her ear, brown hair, and no slippers. She was trying to thread a bromstik with beads. Some fell off and she shouted “ah bo, how u dae kormot so ba”.

She wanted to wrap the beaded bromstik around her dolls’ waist but it broke and the beads scattered. An older girl (7 years) came and they tried to using rope. but it was too thick, so she left to play cards while Neneh searched for another bromstik.

Nenehs’ father arrived with a plastic bag of ingredients to prepare the days’ meal. Neneh cuddled him affectionately and he gave her a biscuit. He called an older girl to bring out a pot, set the fire so they can prepare plain rice (without meat or fish). Neneh ran errands and brought old pieces of cloth to remove the pot from the fire.
A teenage girl old came with 5-gallon water on her head used for drinking. She heated the palm oil, finished pounding peppers and bitter balls. Dad dished the food and served his neighbor’s children whose parents were at work
4:18pm Loud music came for afar and the children started dancing and miming. Dad shouted *“nor to way u na don belly full”* and told them to clean up before dancing.

Interview: Father, 42, tiler, married (mother sells junks)

Neneh is in Nursery School 1 (100 meters away), shows me her school work and makes fun of me as I never went to school. I don’t have money to take care of them makes me stressed and sad. I have six children: 2 teenage step daughters, 2 teenage men pekin and 2 biological daughters. Two of the teenagers sell in the market to support the home and their siblings’ schooling. Even when I have work, I try to come home early. Most children come and play in our yard because it’s spacious and they have some wild play, so someone responsible has to be around.

Play spaces in Kolleh town, on the estuary

by Abdulai K. Kandeh
Milton Margai Technical University



Event Space

Rusty corrugated zinc houses with sharp edges, (pan-bodi) on low foundations, vulnerable to flooding. Around a dump site and a piggery. There are no toilets. People use containers and empty their faeces into the sea. Flies were all over the children when they ate bread and tea.

Observation

A thin girl (5 years) with a neat, stylish hairstyle requested her mothers' IPad. She sat with an older girl (9 years) and a boy (3 years) watching Nigerian childrens' comedies and playing a bike-race game by turn. They mocked those loosing faster and laughed, celebrating those lasting longer on the game. The mother was occupied with her housework, and the children apeared unsupervised. Another girl (7 years), joined them with a skipping rope. Other children played amongst the pigs and threw stones at the dump bin. One boy dropped his bread, picked it up, dusted it and ate it. A girl urinated in the open.

Interview: Mother 24 years, a pineapple trader, primary level ed.

Her husband is jobless. Her daughter attends school, but had a headache, was given Panadol, and told to rest that day. "we joke, I love my daughter, rub skin with her, she tells me 'lie-lie' stories and explains things that happen in school. Lunch for school, good medication and services are very expensive. Moving around with her whilst trading is challenging since it is difficult to trust someone when you are not around. In the morning, I wash and dress her and make sure she eats before leaving. Most times I drop and pick her up from school and sometimes her dad does this. I advise her not to beg for food and not to accept food/gifts from strangers. We live in a single room. Sometimes her dad assists by studying, reading, and entertaining her. We play games. She likes playing 'balance ball', 'nothin', skipping rope. I will only leave her if I go for a short distance. She goes for Arabic classes from 4-5pm. I punish her by asking her to go to bed or seizing her play time.

Eastern Technical University

Jawei chiefdom, Kailahun (in Mende)

by Marion b. Nyakoi
Eastern Technical University



Event Space

School surroundings, the path to the stream and around the chiefs compound.

Observations

Two 3-4 year-old girls dressed in school uniforms were rushing to school as (according to their older cousin) they were late.

I questioned their father why these young girls were already in primary school.
"I want them to grow to love learning, and the act of touching the book every day will help them get used to it. I want my kids to have an education because I was never able to."
Another day I saw and heard several boys singing on their way to collect water. Two were counting songs and one went like this.

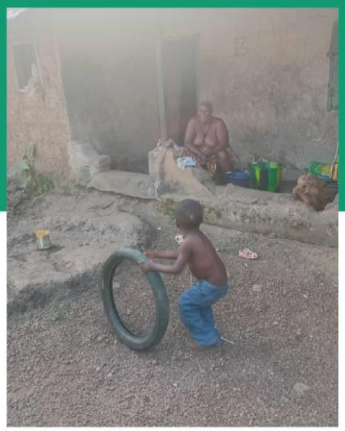
"intai ma felai, felai ma sawai, sawai ma nani, nani ma luluo, luluo ma waita, watai ma wafulai, wafulai ma wayagba, wayagba ma tailu, tailu ma puuh puuh"

[English: One and two, two and three, three and four, four and five, five and six , six and seven, seven and eight, eight and nine, nine and ten.]

One day around 5am I heard a grandmother telling her grandson (around 3 years old) to get outside to clean himself because he has messed himself with faeces. The grandmother is a petty trader. Another day after coming from her trading (about 6:30pm) the boy did not greet her, so she gave him a slap on his head saying "you are not in the habit of greeting people?"
I interviewed a woman in the same house and was told that the boys' mother had travelled to look after her sick sister in Freetown. Another woman in the house mentioned "the boy was a happy, playful child at an earlier stage staying with his grandmother. But later he has became quiet, perhaps he misses his mother."

Sibling rivalry over tyre-play, Kailahun

by Joseph C.A. Mboma
Eastern Technical University



Event Space

An open dusty area with pebbles used by children for play. There were three houses, two outside toilets, an open well, three kitchens, piles of firewood, a grapefruit tree and an old cupboard containing rags, shoes and empty cans.

Observation (in Mende)

2:00pm Momoh (4) was rolling an old tyre around imagining it to be a vehicle. He was barefoot and wore no shirt. His mother called loudly "Momoh; OO nya loi?" meaning 'Momoh; where is my child?' She ran out of the kitchen, saw him in the hot sun and took him to the kitchen to sit beside her.

2:30pm Juma (7), came home from school and greeted everyone. Momoh turned the pages of his book whilst Juma took off his uniform. They went to the playground, rolling the tyre around in a 'ride' five times. Unfortunately, Momoh could not count correctly. He went around three times and Juma told him it was five times. Juma, went round seven times, telling Momoh that it was only five times. Momoh protested and started counting "OO, OO Juma, gi kalE hima in taa, fElE, sawaa, woita, wOfila. Ta mia bE lOlu mia? Be nya gafa vaa!" meaning "no, no Juma, I went round one, two, three, six and seven and you are now saying it is five times? I have been cheated". They started fighting. Momoh, fell to the ground and cried loudly. Mother came, took the tyre and invited both back to the kitchen.

3:50pm Uncle Jaia was asked to investigate what had happened. When Momoh started counting they all burst into laughing. Uncle Jaia bought rice cake and they went to eat on the veranda.

Caregiver interview (with mother)

Q: GbEmia dO makElE hu nyandEngo bi vaa? [What is good about caring for children?] R: It brings joy considering their playing activities. I also have the belief that in my old age they will care for me. Q: GbEmia nyamu gOO doi maKElE hu bia bi vaa? [What is bad about caring for children?] R: These days children are ungrateful and only care for their own needs without considering the constraints parents go through bringing them up. Some can even abandon you in your old age.

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2:30pm Juma (7), came home from school and greeted everyone. Momoh turned the pages of his book whilst Juma took off his uniform. They went to the playground, rolling the tyre around in a 'ride' five times. Unfortunately, Momoh could not count correctly. He went around three times and Juma told him it was five times. Juma, went round seven times, telling Momoh that it was only five times. Momoh protested and started counting "OO, OO Juma, gi kalE hima in taa, fElE, sawaa, woita, wOfila. Ta mia bE lOlu mia? Be nya gafa vaa!" meaning "no, no Juma, I went round one, two, three, six and seven and you are now saying it is five times? I have been cheated". They started fighting. Momoh, fell to the ground and cried loudly. Mother came, took the tyre and invited both back to the kitchen. 3:50pm Uncle Jaia was asked to investigate what had happened. When Momoh started counting they all burst into laughing. Uncle Jaia bought rice cake and they went to eat on the veranda.

Interview CAREGIVERS (mother)

Q: GbEmia dO makElE hu nyandEngo bi vaa? [What is good about caring for children?] R: It brings joy considering their playing activities. I also have the belief that in my old age they will care for me. Q: GbEmia nyamu gOO doi maKElE hu bia bi vaa? [What is bad about caring for children?] R: These days children are ungrateful and only care for their own needs without considering the constraints parents go through bringing them up. Some can even abandon you in your old age.

Annexure

Meeting agenda

Dissemination of findings of a study on child care and 'informal' early learning in hard-to-reach communities

Venue: New Brookfields Hotel **Date:** 20th December 2024 **Time** 9am-5pm
MS Team ID: 391110448601 **Passcode: Jg9mV7Lc**
Primary Objective:

- Outline the key findings of the Thrive ECD-study
- Affirm Thrives' commitment to capacity building

Timing	Activity (questions can be submitted) during/after each	Lead / Facilitator
9:00-9:30	**Registration and refreshments: Gallery Poster review**	Emmanuel Foray
9:30-9:45	Welcome, purpose of meeting and introductions	Dr Rebecca Esliker (UNIMAK)
9:45-10:00	An overview of ECE in Sierra Leone: Progress and Planning	Mrs Melody Martin Assis. Deputy Director ECD unit, MBSSE
10:00-10:15	Selection of researchers from four Universities, methods, remote training/orientation, practical sessions and peer reviews	Prof. Mary Hodges, Njala University
10:15-10:40	UNIMAK perspective and findings: North (Limba and Kono)	Jimmy A. Isiaka, Tamba I. Matturie Medrine S. Koroma, Lamarama S. Gibateh, Dennis B. Mansaray and Alhaji K. Bangura
10:40-11:00	**Coffee break Gallery Poster review**	All
11:00-11:25	MMTU perspective and findings (WAU slums, NW-Kambia) and Islamic perspective: current and potential ECE	Abdulai K. Kandeh, Cherno Barrie and Dr. Abubakarr Lamin (FBC)
11:25-11:50	Njala University perspective and findings (South)	Madiana Mensah-Gborie, Foday M. Kamara and Tommy M. Hanson
11:50-12:15	Eastern Technical University perspective and findings (East)	Dr. Esther Yei Mokuwa, Francis Baigeh Johnson, Marion B. Nyakoi and Joseph C.A. Mboma
12:15-12:45	Child care and training practices and the 'Hard-to-Reach'	Prof. Paul Richards, Njala University
12:45-1:15	KIX program on Early Childhood	Dr Maxim Conjor (FBC)
1:15-1:45	Questions and Answers	All
1:45-2:45	**Lunch break and Group photo**	All
2:45-3:05	Community ECE Pekin-to-Pekin	Mr Bai Kamara (P2P)
3:05-3:25	Community ECE and CLWDs World Hope International	Laura Boothby
3:25-3:50	Community ECE from Uganda and Ghana	'Lively Minds' by remote
3:50-4:20	Questions and Answers	
4:20-4:35	**Tea break**	
4:35-4:55	Certificate awards	Regina Mamidy Yillah
4:55-5:00	Events satisfaction survey	All
5:00	Administrative arrangements, departure	Talib Deen, IfD

Group pictures







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