



**Save the Children**

**Southern Africa Regional Conference on Early Child  
Development in Lusaka, Zambia**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023**



**Project Title:** Operationalization of Nurturing Care Framework(NCF) in Save the Children's Early Childhood Development(ECD) work in the Conflict and Crisis Contexts

**Sub-Theme:** Innovative ways of increasing access to quality early childhood development and education services especially to the poor and marginalized.

Violet Birungi, Uganda, Save the Children: Head of Health and Nutrition,  
[violet.birungi@savethechildren.org](mailto:violet.birungi@savethechildren.org)

And

Dr. Daniel Okello Ayen, Government of Uganda: Director, Public Health and Environment in KCCA, [dokello@kcca.go.ug](mailto:dokello@kcca.go.ug)



# Introduction

**Project:** Operationalization of the Nurturing Care Framework in Save the Children's ECD work in conflict and crisis contexts

**Presentation Title:** Impact of Mother Baby Areas on Early Childhood Development in the refugee and host communities of Yumbe, Terego and Midi-Okollo districts in Uganda

**Funder:** Dubai Cares

**Implementation areas:** 4 Refugee Settlements– West Nile region of Uganda (Bidibidi, Rhino Camp, Imvepi and Omugo)

**Project duration:** 3 years - 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023



# Nurturing Care Framework

Nurturing care envelops early childhood development

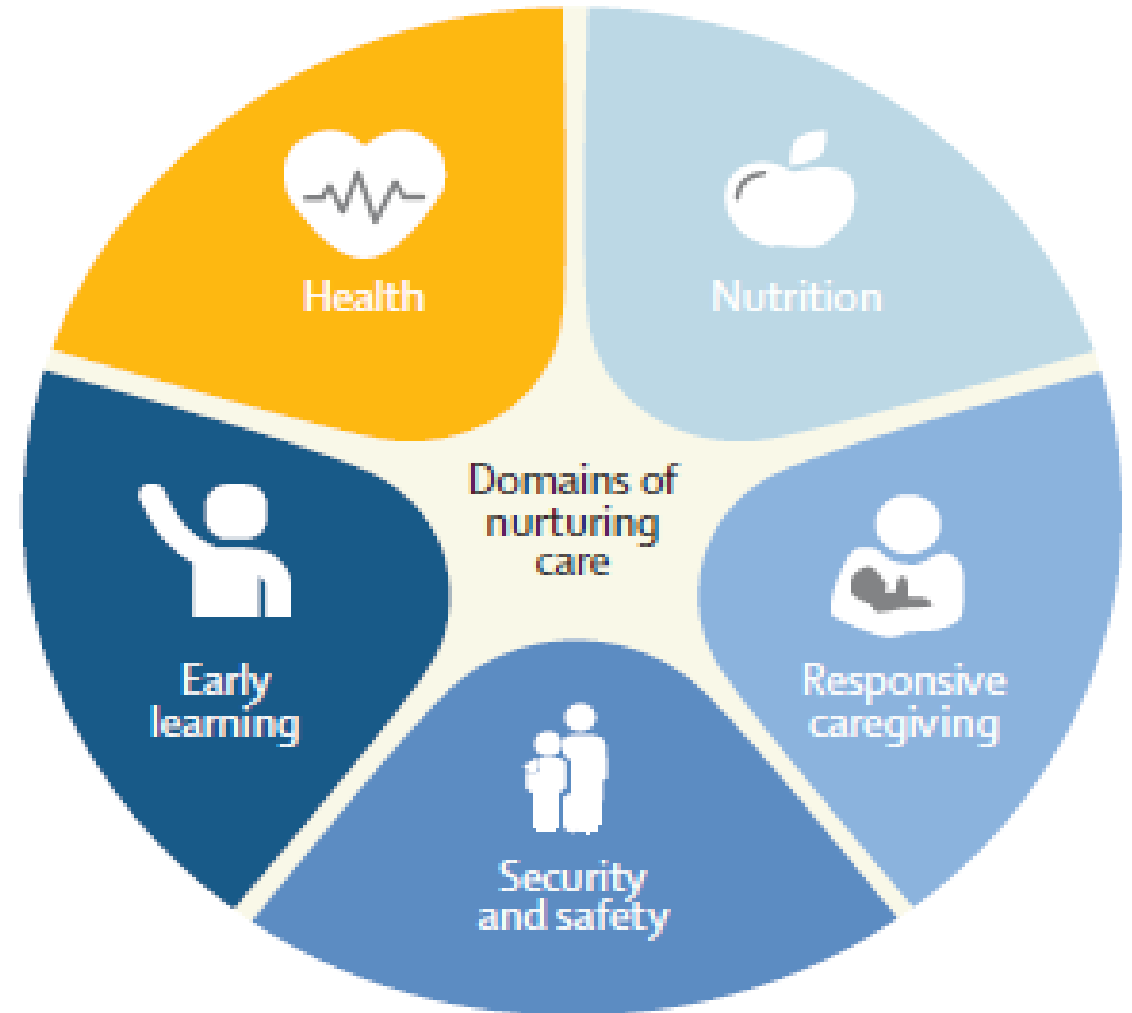
Health care

Nutrition

Responsive caregiving

Safety & security

Opportunities for early learning



# SCI -Mother Baby Area (MBA)



MBA's are safe spaces for caregivers and their children.

- Constructed within the ECD centers in the community or health facilities.
- Clear linkage to health facilities, ECD centers and community

## Activities at MBA

- Parenting sessions
- Playing and learning
- **Referrals of Children with Special Needs/Disabilities (CSN/CWD)**
- **Psychosocial support ie on GBV among others**
- Promotes responsive caregiving,
- Encourages breastfeeding practices and early stimulation to children through locally available materials.

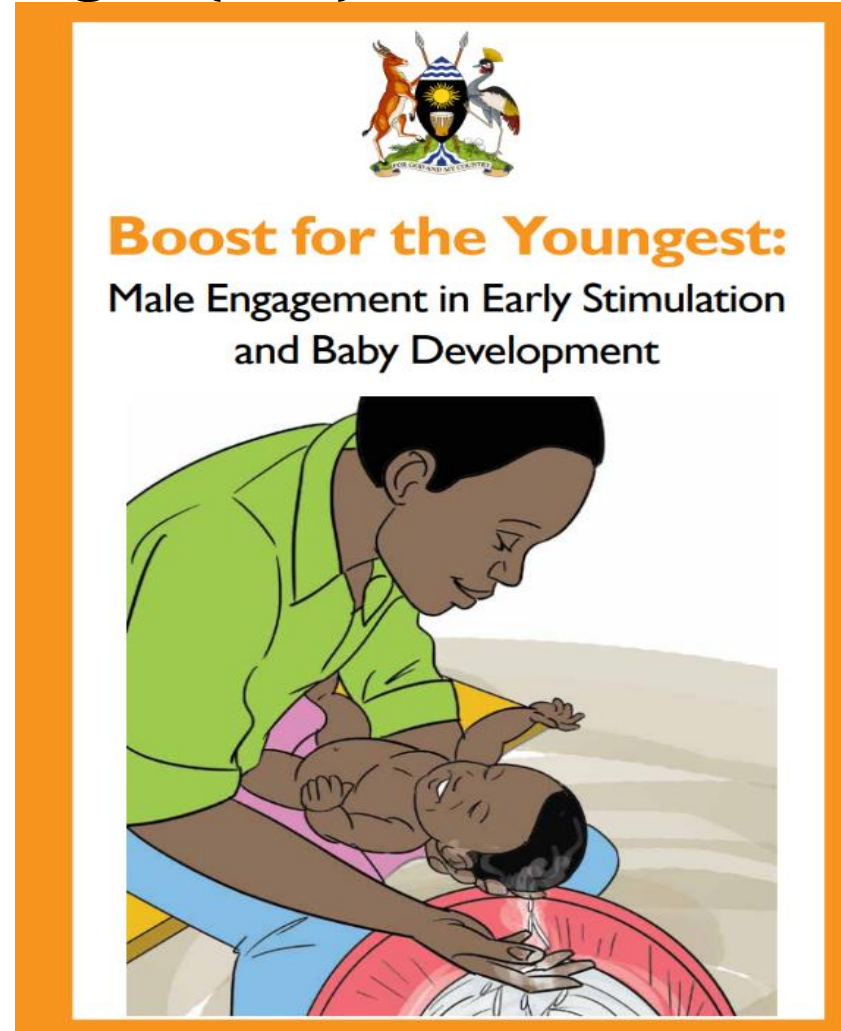
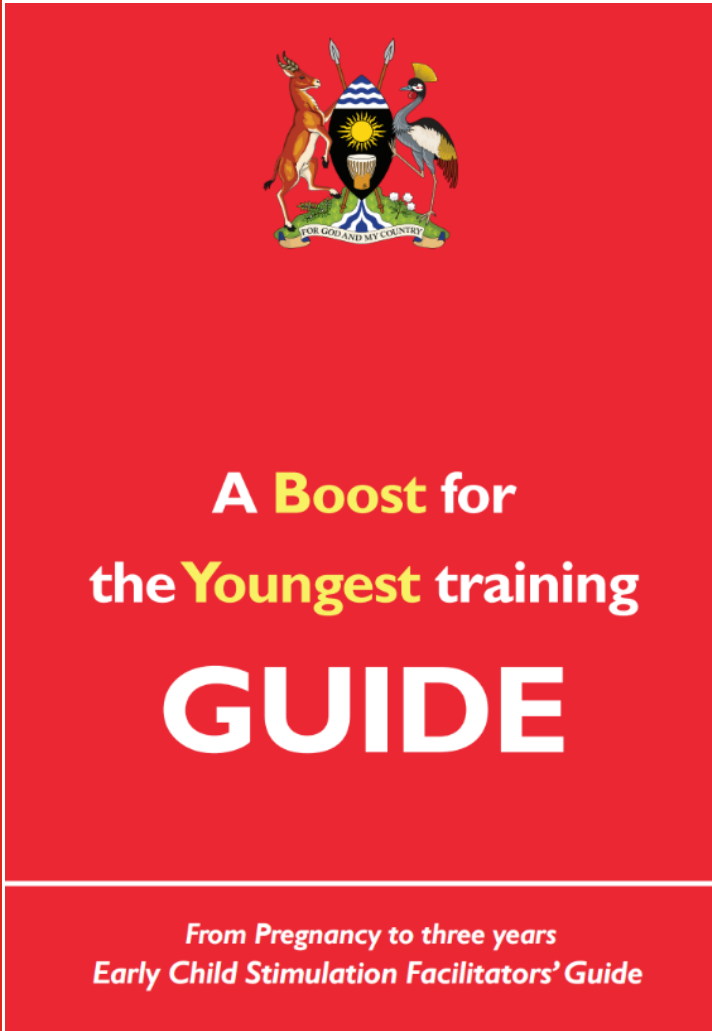




# Methodological approach:

SC Boost for the Youngest(BFY) toolkit that covers NCF's 5 components

- Parenting sessions conducted at MBAs- 3 months
- Used: BFY toolkit that covers NCF's 5 components.
- Toolkit divided into 5 modules with 18 sub-divided sessions
- Additional 4 sessions for Male engagement.



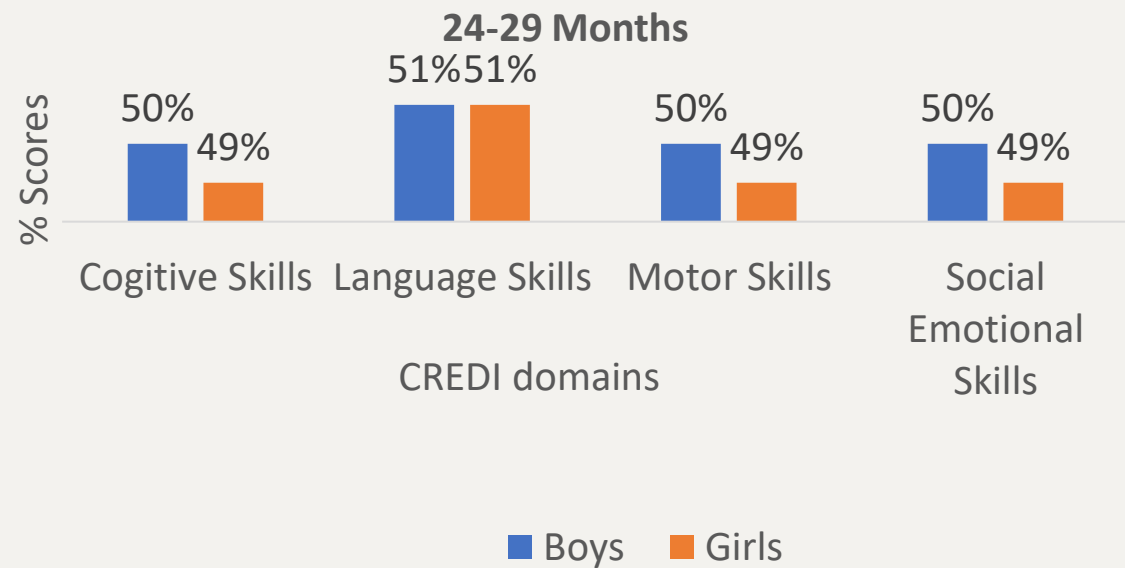
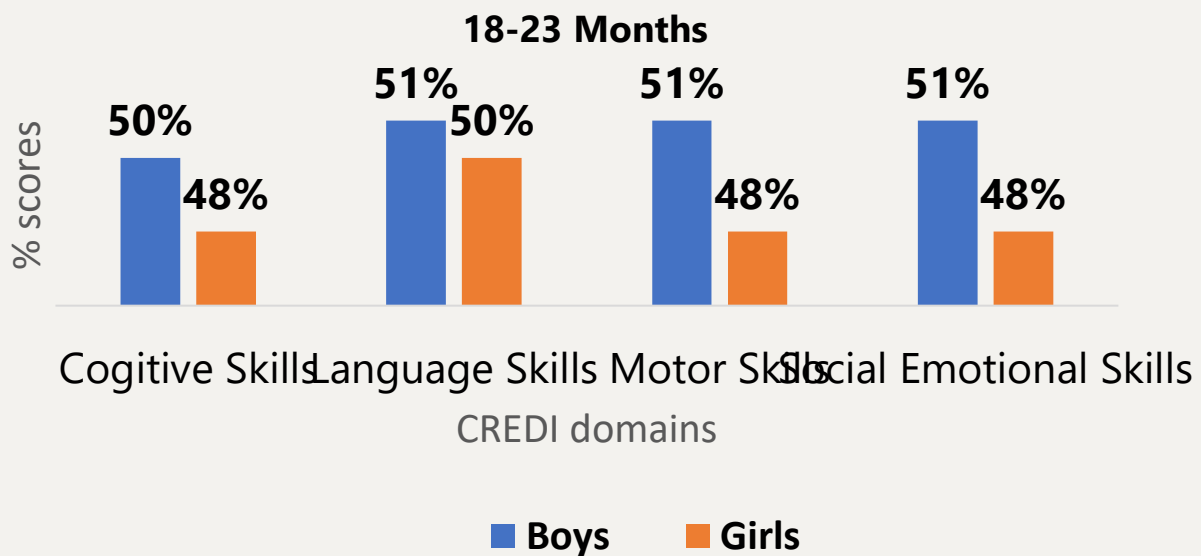
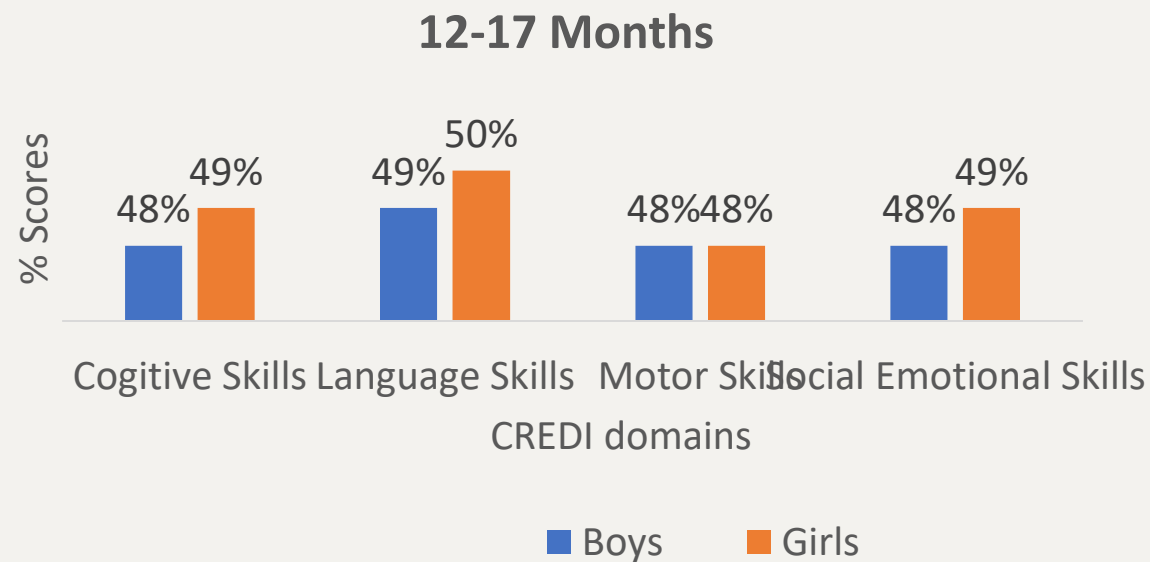
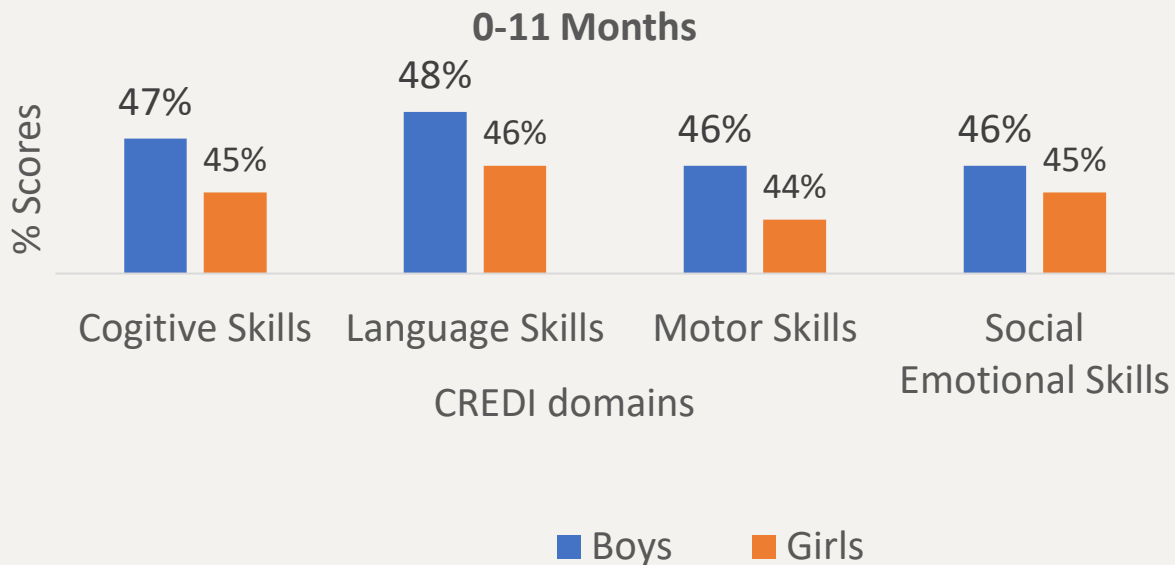
- Translated to 3 languages ie Arabic, Kakwa & Lugbarati

# Midline Evaluation-Methodology

- Evaluation done 1.6 years after the project start
- Adopted a mixed methods approach and used a cross-sectional study design that utilized both the qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques
- **Quantitative methods:** Household survey using adapted Multiple Indicator Cluster (MICs) questionnaire for children under five and Caregiver Reported Early Childhood Development Index (CREDI) long form questionnaire for children 0-3 years and system analysis to support Nurturing Care (literature review, organizational capacity, and frontline worker assessment).
- **Qualitative methods:** Key Informant Interviews at (national, district and community level), Focus Group Discussion and desk review of literature

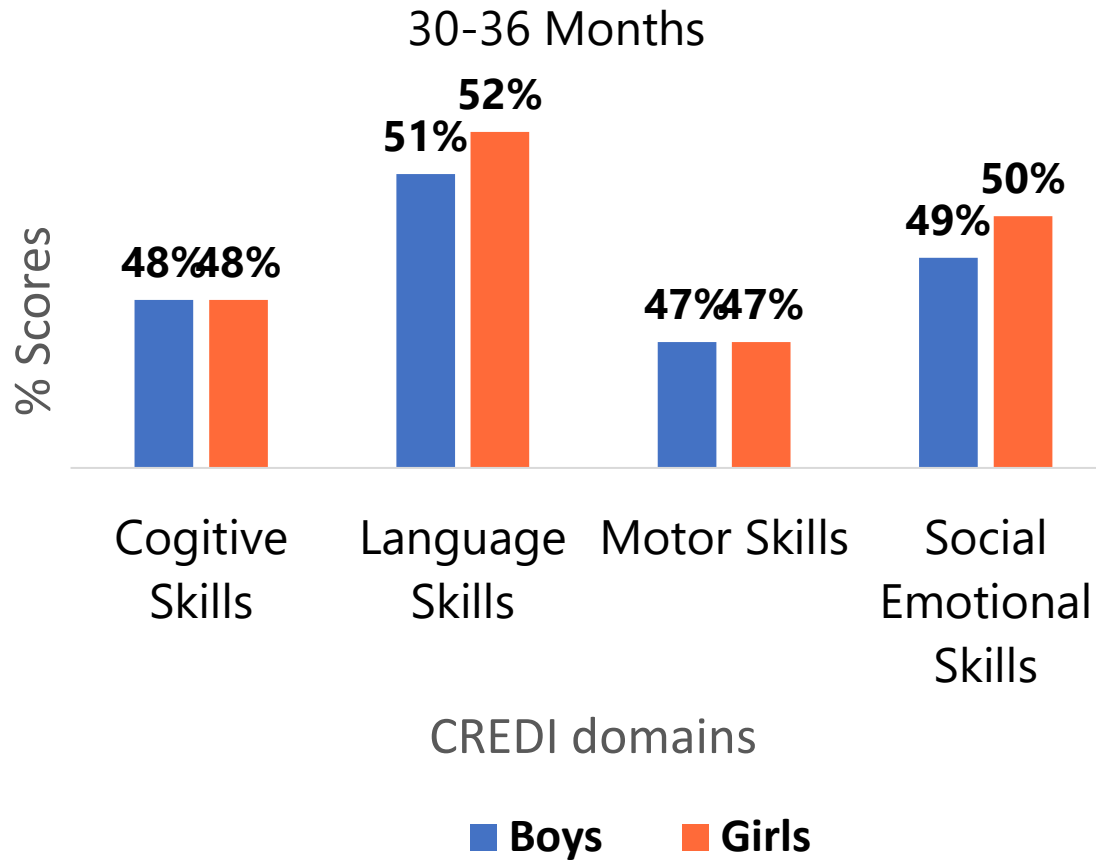


# MTR CREDI SCORES

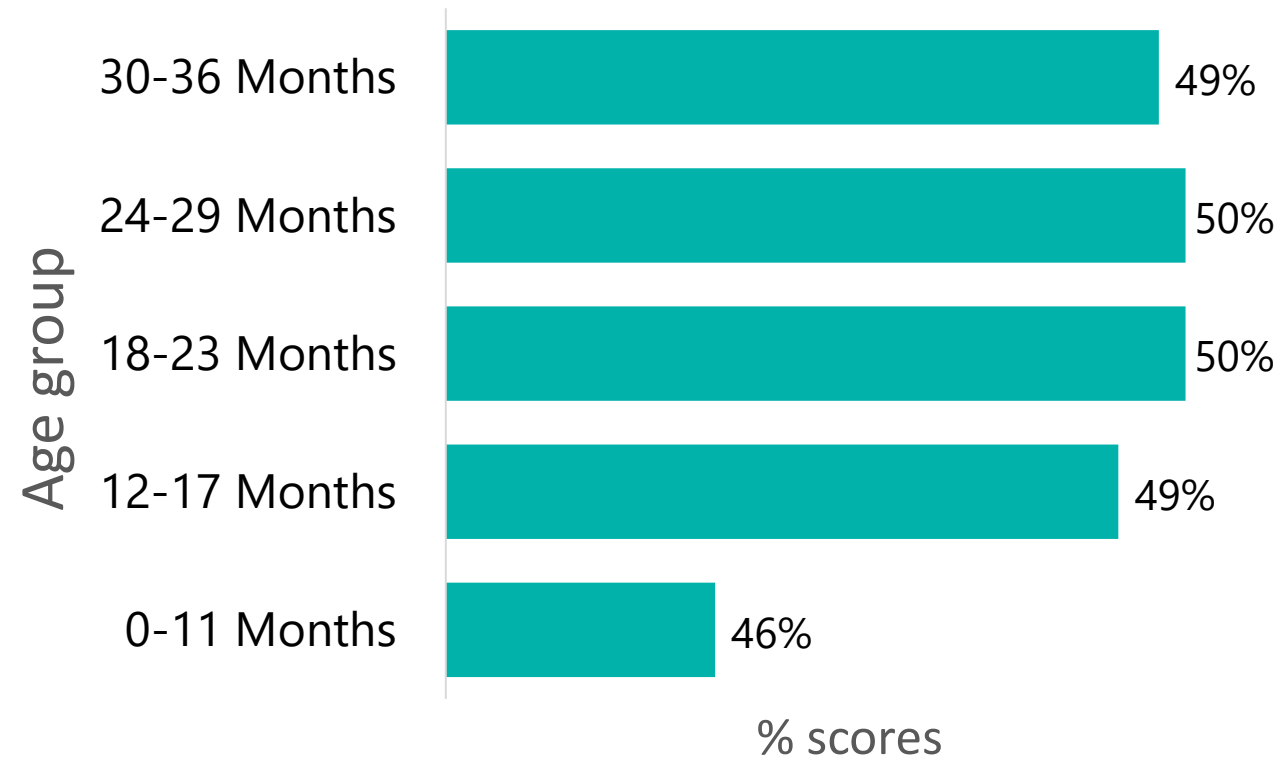




## MTR CREDI SCORES



## Overall CREDI Scores by Age Category



# Findings and discussion

- 138 caregivers with Children 0-3 were reached (70-girl and 43 with boy children)
- The overall average scores for the 5 age band is 49% ( 0- 11 months- 46%, 12- 17 months-49%, 18-23 months 50%, 24-29 months-50%, 30-36 Months-49%)
- Age group 0-11 months scored the lowest (46%) across the 5 CREDI domains with Motor skills scores the lowest 44% in girls and 46% in boys. Childhood illness like malaria with convulsion, and anemia which affects motor skills
- While age groups 18- 23 and 24- 29 months scored highest with an average of 50% within the domain Language skills had the highest at 50.5% in the age group 18-23 and 51% in the 24- 29 group. Children become active and try to learn how to express themselves in these 2 age groups.
- The overall scores are below 50% explained by the Refugee settlement dynamics.
- The confounders: (Childhood illnesses like malaria, Food insecurity, migration- mobile population, less father involvement and having child-headed families, limited Income Generating Activities (IGA), and Insufficient water among others)
- Additionally; Children who attended the MBAs were observed to be more active, confident, and familiar with following routine, compared to those who did not attend.



# Scenario 1: Proscovia's daughter's remarkable performance

A 'CHILD ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM' from Save the Children. The form is filled out with handwritten information. The child's name is 'Jackie', and the center is 'MBA'. The form includes a section for 'DEVELOPMENTAL AREAS' with seven categories, each with four sub-items and checkboxes for 'Very good' and 'Can improve'. The 'General feedback on the parent/guardian on the child's progress' section contains handwritten notes: 'Very good result, child is very happy, very active, very good support from the staff, very good interaction with other children in the class.' The form is signed by 'Proscovia' and dated '2024/02/23'.

Proscovia (mother to baby Jackie) attended all 18 parenting sessions at MBA

She received knowledge and practiced activities such as singing, reading and playing with her children

She took her daughter Jackie to play and learn and interact with other children at the MBA.

Outcome:

Jackie was enrolled in ECD at 3 years and her school performance was remarkable in all aspects including interaction with other children; according to the school report above



# Project Sustainability

- Integration of two components critical in Human capital development( Health and Education) eases integration existing government structures.
- Scalability in the Urban environment especially in informal work place environments like markets.
- Community ownership of the MBAs- seen through minor repair down by the community



# Conclusions and recommendations:

- Integration of Health and Education is feasible.
- There is an indication that factors that determine childhood cognitive development outcomes are better as a result of the project intervention.
- Government and other stakeholders should establish MBA programs to promote responsive caregiving and early learning integrated with IYCF and MNCH practices to enhance child survival, health, protection, nutrition and development; and caregivers wellbeing.



# Among tools used in the project – A short video clip on Nurturing Care Framework-Opportunity for early learning

[Uganda DMS Advocacy, Media and Communications - OPPORTUNITY FOR EARLY LEARNING.mp4 - Thumbnails \(sharepoint.com\)](#)





# Thank You Questions?







**THANK YOU**