

**AN ANALYSIS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES AS CENTRES OF
CARE AND SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE
CHILDREN USING THE ASSET BASED
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODEL: A
CASE STUDY OF UGANDA**

Rosaria Kunda Marron

PhD 2020

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CASE STUDY OF UGANDA**

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**Bachelor of Mass Communication (BMC), Master of Arts (MA) in
Development Studies**

Thesis Submitted for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: 

ID No.: 16212316

Date: 27/08/2020

Dedication

This piece of work is dedicated to my two very beautiful daughters—Michelle and Roisin.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable support and advice of my supervisor Professor Gerry McNamara. Extremely patient, wise and above all kind, he ‘held my hand’ throughout this journey.

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Acronyms/Abbreviations

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
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BRMS	Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CCT	Centre Co-ordinating Tutors
CMC	Centre Management Committee
DEO	District Education Officer
DES	Directorate of Education Standards
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EFA	Education for All
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards
EMIS	Education Management Information Services
FBO	Faith Based Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAR	Gross Attendance Ratio
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoU	Government of Uganda
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
KyU	Kyambogo University
LC1	Local Council 1 (Local Government Representatives at Village Level)
LMICs	Low- and Middle-Income Countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoESTS	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MRC	Madrasa Resource Centre
MSNA	Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment
NAR	Net Attendance Ratio
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NIECD	National Integrated Early Childhood Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PCR	Pupil Classroom Ratio
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTC	Primary Teacher College
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
RWC1	Refugee Welfare Council 1 (Refugee Representative Chairperson)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Standards
UCRNN	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
UCS	Uganda Catholic Secretariat
UMSC	Uganda Muslim Supreme Council

UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USE	Universal Secondary Education

Glossary

Caregiver	Pre-Primary Teacher
Local Organisations	CBOs, NGOs and FBOs
Mobilisation	Organising and getting together community members for a particular exercise or event
Motivation for participants	Incentives to participate

ABSTRACT

Rosaria Kunda Marron

An analysis of Early Childhood Development Facilities as Centres of Care and Support for Vulnerable Children using the Asset Based Community Development Model: A case study of Uganda.

The community-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) model recognises ECD as a community development effort. Knowing the subjective nature of social issues, the study used the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Model as the framework for analysis, not least because it defines development contextually, and covers three major concerns of community development; structure, power and shared meaning.

A key outcome of this study was that it modified and extended the use of ABCD model from a tool for community development work to an evaluation tool. Broadly, this pointed to the need to change the way education programmes are evaluated. The study also provided evidence for scaling up of the ECD model in vulnerable communities, especially in the global south where governments are unable to provide the service.

The study pursued what happens when a community based ECD intervention is implemented, and how and why it produces a particular effect. Therefore, it was primarily qualitative and used individual experiences as a basis to understand the ECD programme. Theoretically, the study used the phenomenology framework of inquiry, recognising the importance of the social and cultural position of actions, interactions, and interpretations of any given situation. A natural choice of approach was the case study approach which allowed for a focus on the local context and situation.

The study linked the theory, the literature and the data through template analysis, and found that through community participation and community capacity, a community's social assets at individual, organisational and institutional level can work together to provide semi-formal pre-primary education. This ECD model provides a viable option for care and support for vulnerable children who may otherwise miss out on the accrued individual, economic and social benefits of ECD.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Context

This chapter introduces the study objectives and outlines the structure of the thesis. It also gives an overview of the ethical considerations guiding the study. It also outlines the broad circumstances of Uganda, thereby providing the setting for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and vulnerable children within Uganda's legislative commitments and obligations. This chapter also looks broadly at ECD policy and practice globally and in vulnerable communities, and then gives an overview of ECD in Uganda.

1.1 Introduction

The field of Early Childhood Development (ECD)¹ is framed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, General Comment 7 (UN 2006) and refers to the physical, cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development of young children until they transition to primary school—typically around age 6 or 7.

As the first phase of human development that starts during pregnancy, ECD is an integrated concept that cuts across various sectors, including health and nutrition, education, and social protection (World Bank, 2011: 5). Early childhood is the most rapid period of development in a human life, which lays a foundation in childhood and beyond for cognitive functioning, behavioural, social, and self-regulatory capacities, and physical health (UNICEF, 2011). It therefore needs a holistic approach, which includes multiple learning environments that influence the development of a child, recognising the need for linkages between education, nutrition, and health. Many children, particularly in vulnerable communities, face various stressors during these years that can impair their healthy development and influence their future lives.

1.1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study analysed the community-based model of ECD using Uganda as a case study. This study intended to examine the community based ECD facilities as centres of care and support through the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach. The overall

¹ ECD is also known as early childhood care and development (ECCD) and encompasses early childhood education (ECE), early childhood care and education (ECCE), and other designations.

objective of the study was to find out if they can provide care and support for vulnerable children in Uganda. Specifically, the study aimed to;

1. Analyse the provision of community-based ECD services as centres for care and support of vulnerable children in Uganda
2. Demonstrate the feasibility of the Community Based ECD Services in Uganda through the Asset Based Community Development model
3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the Government of Uganda ECD Policy Framework in terms of the ABCD model
4. Evaluate the ABCD model as a tool of analysis of community-based development

1.1.2 Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted within the confines of the ethical guidelines of the Research Ethics Committee of Dublin City University, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, and the United Nations implementing partners for ECD in Uganda—all of which have provisions for engaging in research involving vulnerable people. These bodies reflected a consensus on sampling, consent, confidentiality and methodology.

1.1.3 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 looks at the theoretical constructs within ECD as a sector, and discusses professional ideas, thoughts and perceptions around ECD.

Chapter 3 discusses ECD policy and practice at the global level and in vulnerable communities, and then discusses the concept of Community Based ECD with examples from various contexts including Euro-America, developing countries, vulnerable communities and Uganda.

Chapter 4 examines the theoretical framework for this study—the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model—which guides the analysis of the implementation of the ECD Framework in Uganda. It also looks at community development conceptually and practically.

Chapter 5 explores the overall strategic approach to the study. It discusses the guiding frameworks which underpin the study, and the strategic choices made in how the study was conducted. It includes the aims of the study, the research tools employed, procedure, and data analysis.

Chapter 6 presents and unpacks the findings of the study, and Chapter 7 gives a synopsis of the study and provides a summary of the findings in line with the objectives that the study had set out to explore. Most importantly, it highlights the key outcomes of the study. The chapter also places the study in the global context by discussing possible implications, and looks at a few reflections from the research process.

1.2 Uganda Country Demographic Context and Status of Young Children

Uganda has one of the youngest—57% of its citizens are under the age of 18—and fastest growing populations in the world (UNICEF, 2019). Though as a country Uganda has made considerable progress in improving the well-being of its children, notable challenges remain. These include the increasing demands of a rapidly growing population, the impact of the increasing flow of refugees, disease outbreaks—including HIV and AIDS and Corona Virus—and climate change, all within a context of moderate economic growth, stagnant budget allocations and strained capacities to plan and deliver essential social services. The low public investment in education and rapid population growth have resulted in declining education indicators.

1.2.1 Population Trends

With a very high fertility rate, Uganda's demographic profile depicts the classical population pyramid (meaning that Uganda has a very young population with the largest group being those between 0 – 4 years old). With every subsequent group of newborn babies increasing, this translates into increasing demand for pre-primary education. Data (UBOS, 2019) shows that only 10 per cent of young children are enrolled in pre-primary school. This points to a huge lack of access to and participation in pre-primary education.

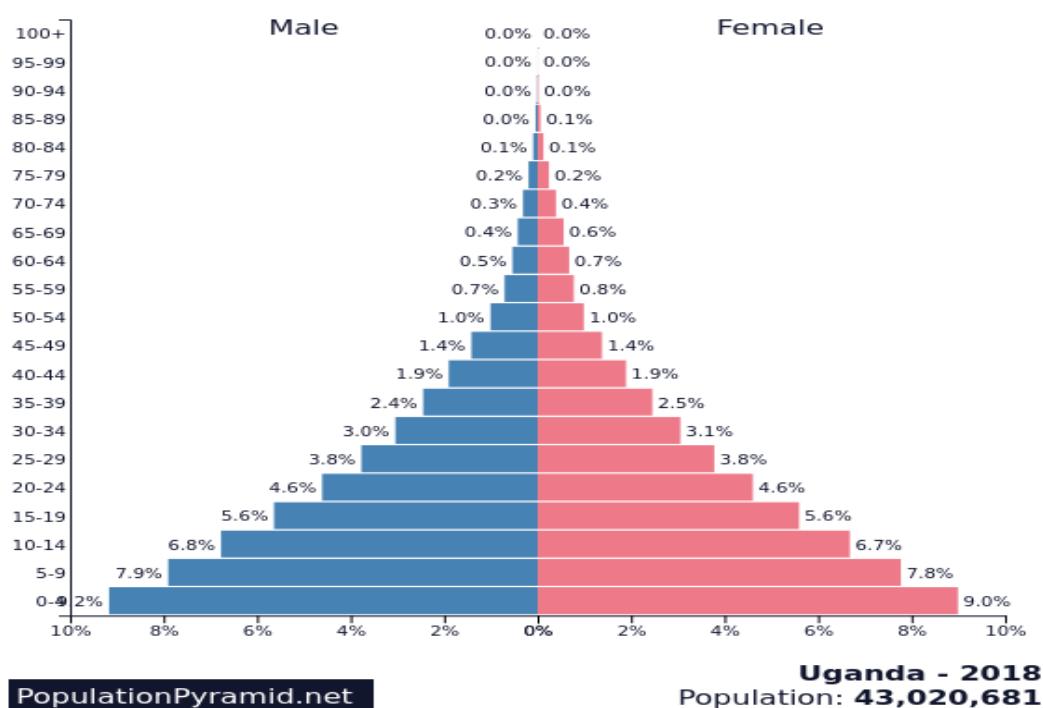


Figure 1 Uganda's Population Profile 2018 (Source: PopulationPyramid.net)

A fertility rate of 5.82² has overtaken the economic growth rate (Refer to Figure 2) meaning the continuous growth of the school aged population—especially for preschool—remains an important factor in education policy and implementation. The education sector needs to find ways to increase access to services.

² Uganda Population 2019 Worldometers (<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/uganda-population/>)



Figure 2: Uganda's GDP Growth Rate 2019

1.2.2 Poverty and Vulnerability

Vulnerability is characterised as insecurity in the well-being of individuals, households, and communities in the face of changes in their external environment (Serrat, 2017: 23). People move in and out of poverty and the concept of vulnerability captures the processes of change better than poverty line measurements (ibid). Vulnerability can be caused by factors such as conflict, disease/illness and severe weather. It can also be caused by inflation, increased prices of essential commodities and a lack of employment opportunities for people. These factors often affect communities who may not be able to cope with these changes when they occur.

The Uganda Bureau of Standards estimates that in 2016/17, 21.4 % of the population in Uganda—nearly 8 million people—were living below the national poverty line with 11% of children under 5 years being underweight and 29% experiencing stunting (UBOS, 2019: xxvi). The incidence of poverty remains higher in rural areas than in urban areas. The poor in the rural areas represent 25% of the population compared to about 10% in the urban areas. Considering that the rural areas comprise about 76% of the population, they contribute 89% of the national poverty. On the other hand, the urban areas which constitute 24% of the population, contribute 11% of the national poverty (UBOS, 2019: 42).

Many children in Uganda live in poverty, and come from large families that are unable to financially support the education of all of their children (Lofomsky, 2014: 2). The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2016: 4) estimates that 8% of children in Uganda are critically vulnerable, 43% are moderately vulnerable, a total of 4.7 million children live in poor households and 8.7 million live in insecure non poor households. Further, UNICEF Uganda's 2018 Annual Reports states that 55% of children aged between 0–4 years in Uganda live in poverty, 24% live in extreme poverty, and nearly 11% of children are orphans (UNICEF Uganda, 2019).

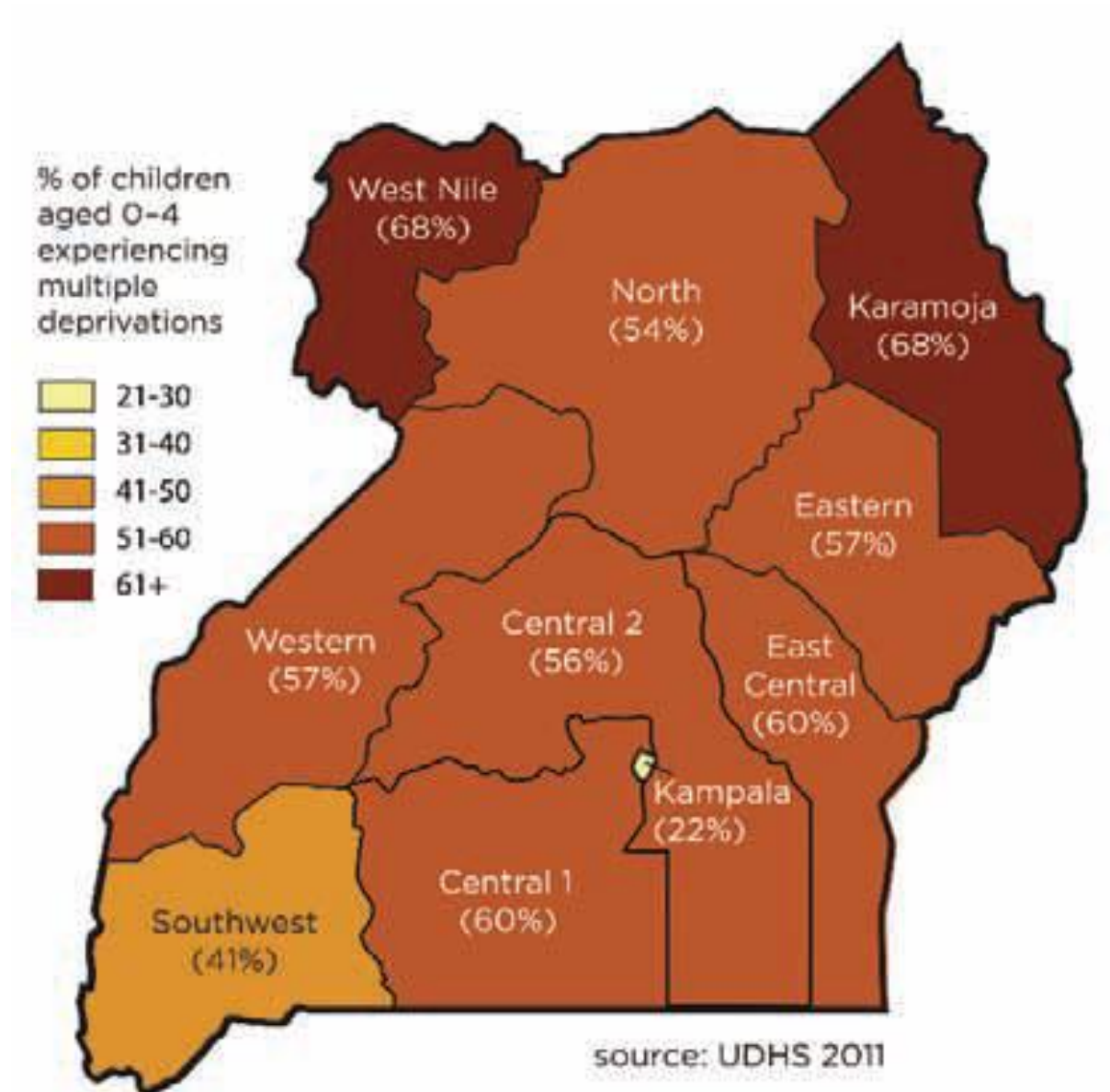


Figure 3: Children experiencing multiple deprivations in Uganda by region

Additionally, traditional child care and stimulation practices for young children provided within their homes and community settings have broken down due to circumstances and lifestyle changes. Children living in these settings often have insufficient attention, care and stimulation. Sadly, they are at risk of failing to grow into healthy young people and to develop relevant cognitive, behavioral, and emotional capacities.

1.2.3 Refugees in Uganda

Uganda is one of the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world, with close to 1.36 million refugees registered in 2018 (UNHCR, 2018: 6). As a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, Uganda moved beyond these treaties when incorporating them into law to extend further rights of refugees (REACH, 2018: 18). It adopted progressive legislation that gave refugees the right to work, freedom of movement and the ability to live in settlements rather than refugee camps (Government of Uganda, 2006).

Uganda's refugee response is co-led by the Ugandan Government's Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The two agencies jointly oversee inter-agency coordination, while the UNHCR leads the inter-sector coordination (UNHCR, 2018). At district level, OPM's Refugee Desk Officer oversees refugees in the district and works with district local government to coordinate the response. At field level, each refugee settlement is managed by OPM through a camp commandant and other OPM leadership, while OPM and UNHCR jointly coordinate humanitarian actors working in each location.

Refugees continue to arrive on a regular basis, with more than 1 million South Sudanese, 600,000 Congolese and 40,000 Burundian refugees expected to be in the country by 2020 (UNICEF, 2019: 30). This vast influx of refugees is due to numerous factors in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes regions including war and violence in DRC and South Sudan, and economic and political crises. However, Uganda continues to implement one of the world's most progressive and generous refugee law and policy measures which take into account

the needs of both refugees and host communities with humanitarian aid shared in a ratio of 70:30 through district local governments (REACH, 2018: 19). Children make up 60 per cent of refugee and host community populations in Uganda (UNHCR, 2018).

Of particular note is the absence of pre-school education in the 2019 – 2020 Education Sector Strategy and the Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda (ERP). Further, the UNHCR notes that community involvement in schools is highly needed to mitigate critical challenges relating to access to education and participation in schooling for children (UNHCR, 2018: 18).

Using composite indicators to identify where humanitarian needs were most prevalent and which population groups were most in need of humanitarian assistance in Uganda, an inter-agency multi sector needs assessment (MSNA) developed a framework that categorized households as Persons in Need (PIN) in various sectors. The MSNA reported that households having school aged children who were not attending school was the primary driver in Persons in Need (PIN) figures. Additionally, host community households that were categorized as PIN in the livelihoods sector were more likely to have children not attending school (REACH, 2018: 11).

At national level, the study found that within the education sector, a higher proportion of host community households (37%) were reported as PIN and PIN and vulnerable (18%) as compared to refugee households (17% as PIN and 10% and PIN and vulnerable) (REACH Initiative, 2018: 78). In this report, education was the only sector with a higher proportion of host community households characterised as PIN than refugee households. The highest proportion of host community households categorized as in need in education were in the West Nile (44%) and Western (42%) regions.

The study also found that out of the households in refugee-hosting districts with at least one child out of school, 94% of refugee and 100% of host community households consider being

‘too young’ as a reason for their children aged between 3 – 5 years not attending pre-school (REACH Initiative, 2018: 81). This age group reported the highest rate of children out of school. The UNHCR (2018: 20) states that this belief could be one of other factors contributing to the low gross enrolment rates of children of pre-primary age in both refugee and host communities at 39% and 19% respectively. In the Western region the number of households with children between 3 – 5 years who were not in school among the host communities was higher than in the West Nile region (REACH, 2018: 82).

1.3 ECD Policy and Practice Globally

“40% of countries with data allocate less than 2% of their education budgets to early childhood education, and that less than 1% of aid to education is invested in pre-primary education.” (Global Partnership for Education, 2019)

Although participation in ECD programmes has grown dramatically in recent years, there is significant variability both across countries and regions. Overall, ECD participation over the past decade has grown by 54% in wealthy countries, but only 17% in low income countries (Wagner, 2018: 83). Diversity is found within countries as well. For instance, the wealthiest urban quintile of Nigerians are more than 5 times as likely to have children in pre-primary programmes as the poorest rural quintile (UNESCO, 2012b: 52).

Theoretical models of child development have placed children at the centre of their explanations but neglect societal, contextual and cultural factors. Recent attitudes and orientation have been inconsistent with and intolerant of cultural diversity, contrary to evidence ‘that alternative patterns of care based on different moral and practical considerations can constitute normal patterns of development that had not been imagined in development theories’ (Levine, 2004: 163). Today, the term ‘culture’ is thought to be the ways in which knowledge, attitudes and values distinguish one group from another, and the way people make meaning in local contexts (Wagner, 2018: 17). More and more, the importance of the child and family in relation to their socio-cultural environment is being acknowledged. Garcia Coll and Magnuson, (2000: 94) cite an example from Puerto Rican culture in which *respeto* (respect) for parents and family is highly valued. They say this value

has been found to be translated into different patterns of play behaviour between Puerto Rican mothers and their infants.

Unfortunately, ECD policy and practice have not been incorporated in education programmes consistently across the globe. ECD services are often made up of multiple, overlapping systems with different and often competing priorities. They generally include four principles, these being exploration, social competencies for relationships, school readiness and communication. Policy and practice therefore aim to identify and implement strategies that include competencies in these areas which are then included in programme design. However, the meaning and adaptation of these four principles varies widely not only among different countries but also among different communities within respective countries. This means that policy and practice may vary from place to place because of adaptation and meaning attached to these principles.

Early Childhood Care and Education has endured battles over the delineation of its goals and objectives, specification of programme models and methods, and selection of service providers and recipients (Meisels and Shonkoff, 2000: 4). Policy makers, service providers and community leaders do not often come together to plan and think strategically. There is a need to offer services that are aligned and coordinated, since good health, nutrition, security and safety, responsive caregiving, and opportunities for early education are all equally important in a child's development (World Health Organization *et al.*, 2018).

1.3.1 ECD Policy and Practice in Vulnerable Communities

“Only 1 in 5 young children in developing countries is enrolled in pre-primary education, and the poorest children are 7 times less likely than children from the wealthiest families to attend pre-primary school.” (Global Partnership for Education, 2019)

In this study, vulnerable communities include low-income countries (defined in terms of per capita GDP or GNP) or people living in poor households (defined in terms of household

income falling below the official poverty line of a country). Vulnerable communities broadly include children who have been displaced, are in fragile settings, orphaned, and experiencing abuse or neglect. With the changing social environment many developing countries have seen increased household poverty and vulnerability as families strive to make ends meet. Inadvertently, this has drawn attention to a rise in structural gaps for child care both within the family and the communities, particularly for poor families and rural communities who can neither access nor meet the costs of private pre-school education for their children. The biggest challenge most vulnerable children face is the capacity of their families to take adequate care of them.

For the poor, equity in access to pre-school education can only be achieved with government support (Wagner, 2018: 84). Government commitment and political will are very important to fill in this gap. Governments must be called upon as duty bearers in human-rights based development to ensure quality services for all children, protection, and support systems for their families (Aidoo, 2008: 31). In Kenya, the enrolment rate stands at 53.5%, 35.5% in Tanzania, and 29% in Rwanda (National Planning Authority, 2015). Increased government participation is one of the contributory factors in the expansion of access to pre-primary education in the three countries (Kisitu, 2018). In Kenya for example, pre-primary education is free and compulsory. In Tanzania each primary school has a pre-primary classroom. And in Rwanda, the Government is responsible for teacher training as well as curriculum development (National Planning Authority, 2015; Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 2016). However, many poor countries, such as Nepal and Niger, spend only a tiny fraction (less than 0.1% of GNP) on pre-primary education (UNESCO, 2012B: 54).

Unfortunately, despite the well-meaning international declarations and policy priorities, vulnerable communities continue to lag behind global and national targets for education. There are many reasons why policy and practice in vulnerable communities are often at odds. Most vulnerable groups have limited power and agency to affect policy reform in areas that most impact their lives, and many decision-makers believe, incorrectly, that policies found to be effective in addressing the challenges faced by 'average' or typical

communities will be equally effective in addressing those faced by learners from marginalised groups (Benavot, 2018: 221). This is not always the case.

The absence of comprehensive national policies is a major constraint to priority and resource allocation to ECD. ECD is a holistic concept but unfortunately, government planning and budget allocations are generally organised in individual sectors. This means that multi-sectoral co-ordination and co-operation at different levels can be difficult (UNICEF, 2005). Even where the idea of holistic and universal ECD has been accepted, low-income countries face the problem of choosing the types of ECD delivery systems for child care, health, nutrition, early education and family support (Aidoo, 2008: 38). But globally, and especially in developing countries, societal interests in more and better education has grown, and alternatives have expanded to meet public demand (Wagner, 2018: 154). This has resulted in the development and amendment of policy and practice.

Aidoo (2008: 36) points out that in Africa, countries have taken two different approaches to developing national policies for young children and their families;

- Creating a policy framework to which all sectors have to respond
- Creating a stand-alone ECD Policy

South Africa provides an early example of developing an integrated national strategy for ECD to increase understanding and commitment to ECD by policy and decision makers at national and local levels. Its national integrated plan for ECD includes national guidelines on ECD for all stakeholders (UNICEF, 2005). Similarly, Uganda developed an integrated ECD Policy in 2016 which is discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4.2).

1.3.2 ECD Policy and Practice in Uganda

Historically, pre-primary education in Uganda can be traced back to the 1930s and was initiated by the British colonial administrators and Indians to prepare children for formal education or prepare the European children for school when they went back to Europe

(Kyasanku, 2017). Naturally, pre-primary education was privately owned and run and this has continued to be the case to-date. This has had three main consequences;

- Enrolment is 'optional' rather than 'universal'
- Participation is highly dependent on household income levels – due to the fee-paying nature of the services provided
- There is uneven distribution of provision between regions - because private providers tend to go where the demand is.

Current estimates (UBOS, 2019) suggest that there are around 7,210 ECD centres in the country with an enrolment of only 9.1 %. The distribution of Early Childhood Development centres is highly driven by income levels. The vast majority of ECD centres (84%) are located in urban areas, indicating a lack of services for the majority of Ugandans in a predominantly rural agrarian society (UNICEF, 2011). The existing gap is likely to persist if the Government does not devise a Policy to rectify the skewed access situation (The New Vision, 2012).

Research indicates that in Uganda, the benefit-to-cost ratio for pre-primary education is 1.6. This implies that money invested in pre-primary schooling will eventually pay itself back (in terms of more productivity, higher income, less crime) with an additional 'profit' of 60% of that investment (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013). However, enrolment and attendance remain low. This may be attributed to other factors such as social norms, traditions, societal and cultural beliefs, as well as limited parent/community awareness. But the main reason for limited access is attributed to the fact that the Government of Uganda is not directly involved in the provision of pre-primary education (Kisitu, 2018: 2). Additionally, although the pre-primary and primary budgets have remained consolidated, nearly 100% of the entire budget goes to the primary sub-sector; with almost no funds directed at the pre-primary sub-sector (The New Vision, 2012).

In recent years, Uganda has placed ECD high on the political and development agenda. The impetus to introduce pre-primary education mainly stems from numerous findings that point to the benefits that children derive from attending pre-primary school, prior to

starting formal schooling (Palmer, 2016). Reasonable progress has been made at legal and policy levels, including the development of the national Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). This role of ECD as part of a broader anti-poverty strategy underscores not only the need, but the importance of holistic ECD service provision.

The Government of Uganda ECD Policy progressively allows for children aged 3-5 years to exercise their right to quality learning, stimulation and preparation for timely enrolment in primary school through the establishment of low- cost community based ECD centres (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007: 11). This is a creative and cost-effective response to meeting the multiple developmental needs of the children, including cognitive, health and nutrition, physical and emotional needs. However, available data shows that many vulnerable children, especially in rural areas, post conflict areas, isolated communities, and poor urban and other disadvantaged communities still do not have access to existing ECD services, and where they do, they access very poor-quality services. The GoU has worked towards encouraging the model of Community Based ECD services in an effort to ensure that ECD services are available for all children of Uganda, especially in rural areas, isolated communities, and disadvantaged urban spaces, who have either limited or no access to ECD.

However, among the sector's significant problems is the lack of trained teachers, insufficient facilities and low-quality services. Also, although quality control is a legitimate function of the state through the Ministry of Education and Sports, there is no framework for inspection and support supervision of pre-primary schools, leaving quality assurance at the discretion of the providers (National Planning Authority, 2015).

There is also an acute shortage of trained teachers which means that many pre-schools operate with teachers who are not professionally experienced or qualified (Kisitu, 2018: 4). Despite the fact that the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) has developed a syllabus (known as the Learning Framework) for ECD, it has not been widely distributed and most centres continue to use syllabi developed by individuals, most of which tend to cover work of Primary One—the first grade in primary school (Ministry of Education and Sports,

2007: 5). Curriculum guidelines and recommendations concerning teaching and methodology have continued to be issued by individual organisations to their members, while others have ‘picked’ and ‘mixed’ what they view as ‘useful’ (Kisitu, 2018: 3). Some providers are forced to approach primary schools for guidance on what should be taught in their settings, hence exposing pre-school children to primary school level content (Brunette, et al., 2017). Under these circumstances, pedagogical and socio-psychological principles of child development are not professionally adhered to (Brunette et al., 2017: 6).

1.4 Legislative Commitments to ECD in Uganda

1.4.1 International Obligations for ECD in Uganda

- **Sustainable Development Goals**

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Sustainable Development Goal 4

The SDGs were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The SDGs include a broad education goal—SDG 4—aimed at ‘inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all’ by 2030. In previous global commitments in education, much less attention was given to inequalities in education beyond increasing access and completion of key stages in formal education. One contributing factor to the increasing importance of equality in education is that governments and policy analysts have far more comparative evidence on disparities in education and learning outcomes today than they did in the past (Benavot, 2018: 220). Further, the adoption of the United Nations Human Rights Based Approach to programming underpins the SDGs therefore moving the focus to vulnerable and marginalised populations.

Uganda is a signatory to the following international obligations for children;

- **The United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is one of the most widely endorsed human rights treaties in the United Nations system. As a human rights treaty, it sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children (Wagner, 2018: 93). It is also one of the most comprehensive human rights treaties and contains a range of articles that cover the spectrum of special rights that children have for their survival, protection, development and participation. It also forms an interdependent complementary framework between the articles within the convention and with other conventions. The UNCRC³ contains four general principles that build a case for greater investments in young children, including the right to:

1. Survival and development
2. Non-discrimination
3. Respect for views and feelings
4. The best interests of the child

Like many other countries, Uganda is a signatory to the UNCRC, and ratified the convention on August 17, 1990. As a country, Uganda reports on its implementation through an independent network known as the Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN).

- **The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child**

This Charter was created by member states of the African Union because they believed that the UNCRC had not covered key socio-cultural and economic realities that are particular to Africa. Uganda is a signatory to this Charter and ratified it on 17 August 1994.

The African Charter highlights the need to include African cultural values and experiences when dealing with the rights of children. When the African Children's Charter is compared with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is noted that a large number of articles are either similar or focused on the same outcomes for children. However, there are aspects that the African Children's Charter addresses in addition to, and that are perhaps also more progressive than those in the UNCRC.

³ Reference to UNCRC Articles 2, 3, 6 and 12, and General comment 7

In Uganda, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2007) recognises that Children in Uganda are affected by various types of abuse including economic and sexual exploitation, gender discrimination in education and access to health, and their involvement in armed conflict. Other factors affecting them include migration, early marriage, differences between urban and rural areas, child-headed households, street children and poverty.

- **The Dakar Framework of Action**

This framework places country level efforts at the centre of all global education goals. Uganda has committed to attain the goals of the Dakar Framework of Action which emphasises expanding and improving comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

1.4.2 National Obligations for ECD in Uganda

Early Childhood Education policy in Uganda is informed by the following legislation:

- **The Constitution of Uganda**

The constitution of the Republic of Uganda guarantees the rights of children in Article 34, which states that a child is entitled to basic education, which is the responsibility of the state and the parents of the child.

- **The Education (Pre-Primary, Primary and Post-Primary) Act, 2008**

This Act states that basic education shall be provided and enjoyed as a right by all persons in Uganda. The act also places joint responsibility for the provision of education and training for the child on the State, the parent or guardian and other stakeholders. It recognises pre-primary as the first level of education.

- **The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy, 2007**

Being a multi-sectoral process in which parents, caregivers, communities and government have a shared responsibility to provide for their children. ECD requires the adoption of an expanded vision and an inclusive policy framework in which ownership, execution and

management of policy and programmes is shared among all the key stakeholders in a holistic manner. This comprehensive policy advocates for effective public-private partnership and networking at all levels—family, community and government.

All in all, this policy is embedded in the guiding principle of enhancing equitable access to holistic ECD services for all children in Uganda. Under the policy, ‘sectoral policies’ are in place to cater for selected ECD issues. For instance, the National Council for Children (NCC) facilitates the ECD Technical Forum and coordinates its activities. This forum serves as a clearing house for ECD programmes in a sector wide approach including early childhood survival and nutrition; early childhood care and protection; and early childhood education and learning (MoGLSD, 2007: 37).

- **National Integrated Early Childhood Development (NIECD) Policy, 2016**

The National Integrated Early Childhood Development (NIECD) Policy (MoGLSD, 2016: 5) aims to;

- harmonize existing ECD policy related goals, objectives and strategies and initiatives within and across all sectors,
- set, improve and align standards for ensuring access to well-coordinated, quality, equitable and inclusive ECD services within and across sectors, and
- Build/strengthen capacity of systems and structures to deliver integrated quality and inclusive ECD programs.

The NIECD Policy and Action Plan ensure integrated services for all children from conception to 8 years of age in the form of health, nutrition, education, protection, water and sanitation and parenting support services. Priority is on the most vulnerable children to benefit from quality ECD services for holistic development (MoGLSD, 2016: 2). The strategies to achieve this include strengthened policy and legal frameworks, effective resource mobilisation, strategic planning and decision making based on clearly defined outcomes and indicators that can be rigorously monitored and evaluated (Makumbi, 2016).

- **The Uganda Vision 2025**

This implicitly focuses on providing specialised education and training programmes for the disadvantaged, vulnerable groups and gifted children, as well as improving the quality and standards of teacher training.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter introduces the study objectives and also provides a roadmap for readers through a summary of the chapters included in the thesis. It looks at Uganda's individual circumstances such as demographics, population trends and poverty and vulnerability within the objectives of the study. It also discusses ECD policy and practice generally at a global level, in vulnerable communities and also in Uganda. It goes on to provide an overview of Uganda's national and international commitments and obligations for young children giving a broad framework for ECD service delivery in Uganda. This chapter basically frames Uganda within the context of the study by discussing the practical and policy issues within which community based ECD takes place in Uganda.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Constructs

The evidence is mounting: Increased global investment in children under 8 years of age today builds a better educated, prosperous, and peaceful citizenry tomorrow. 'Save the Children, 2008'

This chapter looks at the theoretical constructs of Early Childhood Development and discusses professional ideas, thoughts and perceptions within the sector. It looks at important ECD concepts, and broadly discusses teaching and learning within ECD. It also looks at ECD in vulnerable communities, including some key stressors and factors that affect both provision and uptake of ECD in vulnerable contexts.

2.1 Importance of Early Childhood Development

Research has shown that early childhood development has substantial advantages such as gains in emotional and cognitive development, improved educational process and outcomes, increased economic self-sufficiency, initially for the parent and later for the child, through greater labour force participation and higher income, as well as improved health related indicators (Karoly et al., 1998). Additionally, a study on quality canter-based child care reports that high quality child care is an important element in getting children ready for school, and is a predictor of children's performance well in to their school careers (Peisner-Feinberg et al., 1999). It further points out that children who are traditionally at risk of not doing well in school are affected more by the quality of child care experienced than others, and that the quality of child care practices in classrooms is related to the children's cognitive development (Peisner-Feinberg et al., 1999).

Early childhood is generally defined as the period from birth to the time a child enters formal schooling (Wagner, 2018: 82). Early childhood is increasingly perceived to be the foundation period for children to develop psychomotor and cognitive abilities, social skills, moral values and emotions. These shape the identities, develop coping mechanisms, and enhance individuals' social and emotional skills (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013: 9). Globally there is rapid growth in understanding the importance of early childhood as more and more data emerges. Rault-Smith et al. (2008: 6) site a few examples;

- Neuro-scientific data on the theory of brain development provides evidence that young children's intellectual capacities must be nourished or they will be lost
- Economic data shows that early investment in children reaps the largest dividends. James J. Heckman Ph.D. (Nobel Prize Laureate Economist) stated that “On a purely economic basis, it makes a lot of sense to invest in the young . . . Early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success.”
- Programme effectiveness data shows that high quality early childhood programs lay the foundation for success in schooling and positively impact on development, more generally.

Through a developmental-psychoanalytic perspective, Emde and Robinson (2000; 160) highlight the guiding principles for the theory of early interventions as focusing on how we think about the developing child, how we think about the child’s interactions, how we think about the process of intervention itself, and the interplay of what is unique about early childhood development and what is common to development throughout life. Interventions in the first few years of a child’s life are increasingly emphasised as important in determining and shaping children’s future successes in life, and development in pre-school age children includes domains such as cognition, language and behaviour (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013: 9).

UNESCO defines early childhood care and education programmes as those providing health, nutrition, security, and learning from infancy through preschool or pre-primary education (Ball et al., 2014). A growing body of research recognises that early childhood education programmes improve children’s well-being, help to create a foundation for lifelong learning, make learning outcomes more equitable, reduce poverty and improve social mobility from generation to generation (OECD, 2011: 4). Conversely, delays in one area of development can trigger delays in other areas as well. For example, malnutrition in the early years not only leads to poor physical growth (including stunting), but also is highly predictive of delayed cognitive development and low academic achievement throughout the school years (Glewwe, Jacoby, and King 2001, 345 -68). What happens in early years sets trajectories in health, learning and behaviour that can last throughout life (Martin et al, 2000; Malenka et al, 1999; Hensch, 2005; Mustard, 2002 as cited in UNESCO, 2010: 6).

The term ‘early childhood development’ (ECD) is often used to refer to the growth and progression that sustains, supports and works towards the holistic development of children, from birth to the age of 8 years. Emphasis is placed on individuality and meaning, the importance of motives and morality, the significance of emotions, and the centrality of caring relationships (Emde and Robinson, 2000: 174). As standards and expectations for the care and support of young children have improved throughout the centuries, ECD has become a growing focal point for research, policy and practice. Focus has shifted from sheer quantitative concern with child survival to a qualitative concern with development (Garbarino and Ganzel, 2000: 91).

ECD enhances a child’s ability to learn, work with others, be patient and develop other skills that are the foundation for formal learning and interaction in the school years and beyond (World Bank, 2011: 15). This notion has been expressed in a number of international declarations and frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Education for All (EFA) goals and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), all of which have provisions for inclusion of ECD as a priority area. ECD interventions—programmes that support the upbringing of children at home or in community settings—are one of the major ways that development agencies have sought to improve learning from an early age (Wagner, 2018: 90). In this study, ECD refers to interventions that seek to strengthen certain behaviours and skills in young children—such as exploration, social competencies, relationship building, school readiness and communication—while preventing others—such as social isolation, lack of engagement in learning and disruptive behaviours.

Because of the all-encompassing nature of ECD, there are many factors which hinder a child’s ability not only to survive but also to grow and develop. For a child to reach their full potential, it requires work across the spectrum of development, including:

- Access to and provision of adequate food
- Provision of continuous healthcare and vaccination
- Quality care, early learning and stimulation

- A safe, loving and supportive familial environment
- Environment free from war, fear and abuse (UNICEF, 2011: 8).

Growth in demand for ECD programmes is related to the increased importance that families are placing on learning, and their view that schooling—broadly defined—leads to social and economic advancement (Wagner, 2018: 84). With schooling perceived broadly as the ultimate panacea for socioeconomic problems facing families and communities, ECD programs have gained importance in their own right; even among poor and uneducated families, there is growing conviction that children exposed to such programs have a better chance at succeeding in school (Mwaura and Marfo, 2011: 134).

2.1.1 ECD for Cognitive Development

The early years (from birth to age 8) are formidable years in the growth and development of cognition, language, social, emotional and physical competence (Robinson and Diaz, 2006: 4). Due to the rapid neural connections, brain development and growth that take place at this age, this period is considered a critical window of opportunity for optimising children's development through the combined impact of education, care, health, nutrition, protection and stimulation (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2012: 1). Evidence tells us that early positive experiences build strong brain connections in young children (Harvard University Centre for the Developing Child, 2016).

Experience—as sensed by the body's sensing systems such as touch, vision, and hearing—has significant effects on the development, structure, and function of the brain in early life, which for certain pathways can last throughout the life cycle (Young and Mustard, 2008: 75). The increased emphasis on ECD interventions is due to the fact that results are cumulative: the earlier the intervention, the greater the learning (and other consequences) over time (Wagner, 2018: 91).

A review of 20 interventions concluded that by supporting basic health and nutrition services, more than 200 million children under the age of 5 could avoid what was termed as developmental loss of potential in cognitive development and education (Engle et al. 2007: 239). In their meta-analysis of early childhood intervention programmes in developing

countries, Nores and Barnett (2010) found that interventions that incorporated a component of education, childcare, or cognitive stimulation had the largest impact on young children's cognitive development compared to cash transfers or nutritional interventions. Also, an impact evaluation of ECD in rural Mozambique found that children's cognitive, fine motor and socio-emotional skills increased, along with primary school enrolment rates, in communities that received early intervention programmes (Martinez, et al., 2012).

2.1.2 ECD for Poor and Vulnerable Children

Children living in poverty are not only at a much higher risk for stunting, malnutrition and infant mortality, but they are also much less likely to access education and development opportunities in their early years. Stunting and absolute poverty are both indicators that are closely associated with poor cognitive and educational performance in children (Grantham-MacGregor et al., 2007; 62).

Childhood poverty is distinctive in that some of its effects are felt throughout the child's life, passing on into adulthood, regardless of the adult's poverty status. Evidence suggests that without early interventions, poor children will invariably grow up to become poor adults and, in turn, have poor children (UNICEF, 2011: 6). In their early years, poor and vulnerable children face tremendous challenges to their survival, development and wellbeing, arising from poverty and deprivation. Risk factors are more concentrated among poor households with less educated parents, partly because of information failures (for example parents' lack of knowledge on how to support children's growth and development) and partly because of supply-side constraints (for example, unequal distribution of services for young children) (World Bank, 2011:13).

Because of the all-encompassing nature of ECD, these factors may hinder a child's ability not only to survive but also to grow and develop. Behrman and Van Ravens (2013: 9) site a Lancet paper on ECD estimates that reports that over 200 million children under 5 years of age in developing countries do not reach their developmental potential. This means they are substantially less able to take advantage of educational opportunities later in life and are less healthy, less productive and attain lower socioeconomic status as adults.

One of the ways of poverty eradication and reduction of inequality among people is through the use of ECD programmes which put children on equal footing prior to starting primary schooling, regardless of the different conditions in life such as poverty, neglect and ignorance (Kisitu, 2009). They can compensate for disadvantage and vulnerability, regardless of underlying factors such as poverty, gender, race/ethnicity, caste or religion (UNESCO, 2006: 113). They can also contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty by offering an entry point and platform for improving social equity and inclusion. Particularly for poor and vulnerable children, ECD programmes must be comprehensive, involving health, social services and education (Cooke, 1965 as cited in Lombardi, 2011:21).

Research including a set of articles published by The Lancet (2007 and 2011) confirmed the idea that young children benefit greatly from participation in comprehensive ECD programmes (Engle, et al., 2007 and 2011). This was corroborated by studies undertaken in Bangladesh (Aboud, 2006), Cambodia (Rao and Pearson, 2007; Rao et al., 2010), Nepal (CERID, 2006) and Myanmar (Lwin, Nwe Oo and Arnold, 2004). The findings are particularly marked for children from economically deprived backgrounds who attended pre-school programmes and who were found to have far better developmental outcomes than those who did not (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2012:14). There are good indications that the impact is bigger for disadvantaged children than for those from the more advantaged groups (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013: 5). Further, ECD interventions show the importance and utility of investing in young children, especially those who are poor, malnourished, or who live in societies where life circumstances are very unstable (Wagner, 2018: 92).

2.1.3 ECD for Economic Development

ECD is a widely recognised right and major contributor to economic development.

Economists have shown that ECD interventions are an investment in human capital and their hypothetical rate of return is cumulative over time, and highest when begun early (World Bank, 2011). Solid evidence shows that investment in ECD gives the best positive returns for human capital formation and economic growth (Aidoo, 2005: 27) and that ECD increases economic productivity over a child's lifetime.

For children with disabilities, early childhood is the single most important life phase. The impact of failing children with disabilities can negatively affect whole economies. In Bangladesh, the World Bank estimates that USD 1.2 billion annually, or 1.74% of GDP of income, could be lost due to lack of schooling and employment for people with disabilities and their caregivers (Stretenov and Baboo, 2019: 136).

2.1.4 ECD as Preparation for Future Participation in Schooling

The links between early learning and later learning are clear across cultures, and have major consequences for children both in and out of school (Wagner, 2018: 82). ECD enables better performance at other levels of education, improves school readiness, and nurtures positive self-image and positive dispositions (eg. motivation to learn and discover). Enrolment in the first grade of primary education becomes more likely, with higher retention and completion rates and better achievement (UNESCO, 2010: 4). For instance, a 33-African-country-research showed that the absence of preschool experience correlated with a repetition rate of 25% and a completion rate of 50% or less in primary school (Mignat and Jamarillo, 2003 as cited in UNESCO, 2010: 7).

In practice, many ECD services have focused on school readiness, with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There has been a rise of a narrow perspective on ECD as serving to promote emergent literacy and numeracy via rote recitations of the alphabet, choral counting, and workbooks done in seated rows (Dowd and Pisani, 2018: 165). Some stakeholders may view ECD narrowly as promoting foundational skills such as reading and math for primary schooling (Patrinos, 2017), but this study leans towards the views of Dowd and Pisani (2018: 163) who advocate for ECD to directly promote at least language and literacy, emergent numeracy, and social-emotional and motor development, if not also executive function and approaches to learning. School readiness is not only about reading, counting and thought processes. It should include social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and physical and motor development.

2.2 Teaching and Learning Within Early Childhood Development

“It is salutary to remember that early childhood is a culturally constructed concept, and we should ask how theories, research and policies about early childhood connect to the young children they purport to describe, explain, protect and promote through laws and services...”

(Martin Woodhead, Professor of Childhood Studies, The Open University, United Kingdom)

There is widespread concern that the rapid expansion in ECD services in developing countries is driven by Euro-American program models and practices presented as universal standards of best practice (Pence, 2011: 114). Pre-school curricula are often based on models from the West or are downward extensions of primary education (Gakuru, 1992; Hyde and Kabiru, 2003; Kabiru, 1993 and Myers, 2001 as cited in Prochner and Kabiru, 2008: 126). The dominant ECD narrative assumes that children can learn a universal culture; it has introduced an insidiously destructive force in the field—acquiescence to the institutionalisation of ECD—as a socioeducational service that is a right of all children and their families regardless of their circumstances (Nsamaneng, 2008: 136).

More recently, however, experts are arguing that in reality, traditional Western standards and definitions of quality ECD do not represent the best solution in the different contexts. At a macrolevel, the sociocultural context specifies the values and beliefs about what is important and worthwhile (Hauser-Cram et al., 2000: 490) while at a microlevel the sociocultural context mediates the processes of teaching and learning through social interaction (Rogoff, 1990).

ECD takes place within different social contexts where issues related to human diversity and difference impact significantly on children’s understandings of and ways of being in the world (Robinson and Diaz, 2006: 4). Two broad dimensions of teaching and learning need to be considered for quality ECD to be delivered, including external factors that may limit learning emerging from the supply and demand side. The factors from the demand side have to do with the wider environment. Approaches and understanding of teaching and learning vary by ‘context’ and ‘practice’. In this study, the term *context* is used as a conceptualisation that is culturally specific, and the term *practice* is used to describe the actual exercise of teaching and learning. Contexts and practices are always interwoven, and

there is no practice that takes place independent of a context, and vice versa (Wagner, 2018: 57). A concern, then, is how to conceptualise ECD in a way that considers what government policy and parents/guardians want to achieve through practice that appreciates the diverse contexts in which teaching and learning occurs.

2.2.1 Context

The idea that learning varies significantly across cultural contexts is not new (Wagner, 2018: 57). Various studies show that local cultural, social, political, and economic conditions vary so greatly between and within countries that no single approach for providing early childcare and education can be promoted universally (Olmsted and Weikart 1999 as cited in World Bank, 2001: 32). More and more 'local' understanding has been acknowledged by mainstream practice and recognised as playing an important role in ECD services. This discourse positions the importance of respective cultural understanding within individual communities at the centre of ECD practice, thus making a case for 'culturally responsive' ECD programming.

Culture is an important aspect of community and family life. The value of understanding culture as an integral part of the context in which children are nurtured has achieved increasing importance in current views of development (Rogoff and Morelli, 1989). In a discussion on theoretical perspectives around building strengths in families and communities within the provision of ECD services, Munford et al state that culture is a critical part of family and community life, and for this reason it is an important dimension of ECD practice (Duncan and Te One, 2012: 59). There should be a strong relationship between what children learn in school and what is needed to make learning relevant and meaningful to the children of the very diverse cultures that populate the world (Schmelkes, 2018: 14).

2.2.1.1 Family Context

Pioneers in the field of cross-cultural early childhood development, Judith Evans and Robert Myers (1994) argue that indigenous child-rearing practices and beliefs are important for early childhood care and development because they are both pragmatically sound and intrinsically valuable. Indigenous knowledge is important, they claim, to understand,

support, and improve child-rearing; respond to diversity; respect cultural values; and provide continuity during times of rapid change (Evans and Myers, 1994: 3). Similar arguments are raised by Karin Hyde and Margaret Kabiru, who hold that ECD interventions in Africa are more successful when built on local knowledge (2003: 32).

Children's homes are the first places where they begin to absorb the lessons and values that will shape them for the rest of their lives, and such environments vary widely across cultures (Wagner, 2018: 84). Children's learning depends on various factors such as how parents/guardians speak to and interact with them, availability of appropriate reading materials at home, whether children feel socially confident, whether children are relatively healthy and can resist childhood diseases that could interfere with their learning and cognitive development, and whether they are able to access ECD services. Cross cultural research has demonstrated the importance of factors like parental literacy, indigenous rites of passage, and even the shape of environmental landscapes on the skills that children and adults acquire over time (Kagan et al., 1963 and Witkin et al., 1977 as cited in Wagner, 2018: 57).

Several studies (Super and Harkness, 1986; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Weisner, 1984, 1996b; Weisner, Gallimore and Jordan, 1988) have stressed the importance of understanding parents' goals and aspirations for their children and how these are revealed through the activities in which children and parents engage (Hauser-cram et al, 2000: 489). Concerns of safety, changing childcare staff, language and cultural issues, and shared child-rearing beliefs which vary among communities, have been cited in various studies by parents as factors affecting choice and value of ECD services (Duncan and Te One, 2012; 122). This underpins the importance of perceptions and expectations of both parents and communities—from both the Euro American context as well as the developing country contexts—on their understanding and definition of positive ECD outcomes.

2.2.1.2 Community Context

It is important to focus on the interaction of (and sometimes clash between) local cultural beliefs about failures, successes and education itself with the broader beliefs of a

community and what they perceive as successful education and the process of formal care settings (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2012: 29). These beliefs or perceptions determine and shape how the community perceives education and its relevance. Any education service needs to speak to the community members and perhaps be seen as contributing positively to how the child can function within the larger community. It therefore needs to build on and incorporate existing cultural traditions and practices that are relevant and meaningful within the community. Rosenthal (2003) examines the goals of ECD and suggests that though different cultural communities may hold different definitions of 'quality' in ECD that are in line with their respective traditional beliefs and culturally defined goals, ultimately it is agreed that the focus for quality ECD is on the holistic development of the child.

2.2.1.3 Policy Context

At policy level, governments and the international community also shape children's lives because they determine what services are available to them and the environment in which they develop. In an analysis of debates on ECD policies and practices, Papatheodorou (2012: 217) concluded that localised, needs-based, and resource-affordable policies and practices are better placed to achieve outcomes that are universally valued, appreciated and to which everyone aspires. Universally, the importance of holistic ECD outcomes is similar in both the developing and the developed world contexts. Though general policy and practice may be borrowed, 'ideas and concepts are interrogated and scrutinised in the light of the cultural scripts of the borrower' (Rosenthal 2003: 104). This means that practitioners interpret and implement the policies based on personal and professional values, local cultures and available resources.

2.2.2 Practice

The most important factor from the supply side, given basic teaching and learning conditions, is the ability to make teaching relevant and learning meaningful. This involves the participation of the immediate community, the ability of the school management to develop an adequate school culture, and the adequate training and pedagogical performance of teachers (Schmelkes, 2018: 21). Schneider and Stern (2010: 84) state that good learning;

- stimulates learners to be mentally active,

- addresses prior knowledge,
- integrates fragmented pieces of knowledge into hierarchical knowledge structures,
- balances concepts, skills and meta-cognitive competence,
- provides expedient structures in the environment that help learners to develop well-organised knowledge structures, and
- presents information adequately for efficient processing in the human mind given its inherent limitations for processing.

2.2.2.1 Informal Teaching and Learning

Children learn informally, most often through observation, imitation, and experimentation (Schmelkes, 2019: 11). They observe the context in which they live, and learn to give meaning to it (Rogoff, 2003). Woodhead (2006) argues that the most significant features of the early childhood period are the humans with whom they establish close relationships—their parents, carers, siblings, peers etc. These humans give meaning and direction to a young child's experiences, as they variously introduce them to cultural practices and scaffold their acquisition of skills and ways of communicating, collaborating, negotiating and competing over shared activities and engaging in shared play and creativity (Woodhead, 2006: 20). Parent – child relationships are deeply imbedded in and strongly shaped by family and group traditions, as well as by current social milieus that may reinforce existing views of one's self and one's way of relating and coping (Halpern, 2000: 376).

2.2.2.2 Formal Teaching and Learning

Formal schooling leads to learning that is difficult to achieve without a systematic methodology (pedagogy), which involves gradually increasing intellectual demands, eventually leading to the development of higher-order thinking skills (Schmelkes, 2018: 12). However, community and family relationships and child-rearing patterns cannot be changed even though they can be influenced by exposure to the contents of a curriculum. In consequence, any particular specification of early childhood services, curriculum and pedagogy will inevitably reflect particular combinations of cultural assumptions and aspirations, as well as patterns of power and relationship between governments, children, families and professionals (Woodhead, 2006: 21).

The need to engage local capacity in the provision of formal teaching and learning programmes, including parents, guardians, and community members, is particularly cardinal for vulnerable children. In the absence of the internet, media and books in vulnerable communities, children and their educators in ‘formal’ settings like ECD centres often have to make use of what is locally available. For instance, an isolated village with no classroom may be running an ECD programme under a tree. The programme may be using locally made materials as teaching and learning aids and it may also have a relatively high child-caregiver ratio. However, it may be able to provide good quality ECD care because of the unique caregiver who provides a stimulating learning environment and experience to the young children using local approaches such as the use of interactions around stories, songs, and play objects—both tangible and imaginary—and activities to stimulate thinking and exploration, with support from parents and the community.

2.3 ECD in Vulnerable Communities

Children at the bottom of the pyramid face unique and powerful barriers to achieving their potential (Black et al., 2017). ECD interventions show the importance and utility of investing in young children, especially those who are poor, malnourished or who live in societies where life circumstances are very unstable (Wagner, 2018: 92). ECD interventions offer a means for children in vulnerable communities to achieve development outcomes through their right to education. For Tomasevsky (2003), the right to education involves four A’s:

- availability,
- accessibility,
- acceptability, and
- adaptability.

The first two relate to the right *to* education and the second two relate to children’s rights *within* education (Schmelkes, 2018: 15). Children must feel accepted, respected and safe. What is learned must be useful and meaningful both within their community and the global society. However, despite its intrinsic appeal, early childhood interventions have not been embraced uniformly or supported consistently (Meisels and Shonkoff, 2000: 3). While

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4, Target 4.2) states that every child should have the right to high-quality early childhood/pre-primary education, many children across the world begin their lives without appropriate care and early stimulation (Dowd and Pisani, 2018: 159).

In vulnerable communities, poverty is perhaps the most important factor affecting the right to education because it often leads to poor nutrition, vulnerability and sickness in young children. Poverty, stunting, and lack of learning materials and interactions mean that nearly half of 3- and 4-year-old children in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are not reaching basic developmental milestones with respect to cognitive, socio-emotional, or physical development, which hinders their potential (McCoy *et al.*, 2016). Research suggests that cognitive processing abilities and learning approaches are the first line of skills affected by things like health complications and chronic stress (Dowd and Pisani, 2018: 169).

2.3.1 Learning Opportunities

Learning is crucial to reap the benefits of education. The links between early learning and later learning are clear across cultures, and have major consequences for children both in and out of school (Wagner, 2018: 82). Schmelkes (2018) points out that the opportunities for learning are minimal for poor and vulnerable children because of the environment in which they live. Distance from the school and parental expectations regarding schooling are another factor, as is the ‘cultural distance’ of the family and community from the culture of school is also crucial (Schmelkes, 2018: 20).

Availability of quality ECD programmes can be a major hindrance for vulnerable children. Similarly, children within minority language communities often struggle to learn in school, and may require additional financial and emotional support to learn in another language. This may be another potential hindrance for them to learn, and again, access and quality may be an issue. Without government support, many poor and vulnerable children may not have the opportunity to reap the benefits of education through learning. Even with government support, learning inequities exist due to variations in the quality of provision (Wagner, 2018: 84). Promoting learning within these communities— which have a higher

chance of poor health and nutrition, and exposure to violence in early childhood—is not an easy task.

2.3.2 Developmental Niche

Earlier studies have found that parental socioeconomic status and education are key predictors of childhood developmental outcomes (Meisels and Atkins-Burnett, 2000: 273). Wagner (2018: 85) suggests that one useful way to think about this is with the term ‘developmental niche’, which describes three key components of a child’s environment:

- the physical and social settings they inhabit;
- culturally regulated customs and child rearing practices; and
- beliefs or ‘ethnotheories’ of parents, teachers, and others responsible for their care.

These environments can be positive (eg. Play encouraged), negative (eg. Poverty) or destructive (eg. Exposure to violence) and highly dependent on types of parental interaction.

For instance, some cultural practices and beliefs may not provide an enabling or supportive environment to learning and development in children. In his discussion on cultural differences in child rearing, Wagner (2018: 84 - 85) points out that studies have found that the process of acculturation continues generation after generation (Leiderman et al., 1977: 1) in a process commonly termed socialisation but is actually a form of adaptation encoded more in customs than in genes, and transmitted socially rather than biologically (Levine, 1977: 16).

Levine (1977) provides a useful framework that gives credence to the notion of a universal hierarchy of parental goals that places the physical survival of the child at the top, followed by the development of the child’s behaviour and capacity for future economic self-maintenance, and the development of the child’s behavioural capacity in relation to other cultural values at the bottom. This framework suggests that child rearing practices may depend on the ‘useful’ competencies that individuals are expected to master in a given culture. Therefore, adults try either consciously or unconsciously to inculcate the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and social competencies that are deemed relevant to their cultural

milieu (Garcia Coll and Magnuson, 2000: 108) at particular stages. In vulnerable communities, it would not be uncommon for child survival to be the focus of parents and/or guardians in the early years, often to the detriment of other development outcomes.

Also, evidence suggests that gaps in both parental vocabulary and children's vocabulary seem to vary by social class and education of parents, but they may also be due to cultural influences and language interactions as mediated by the developmental niche (Wagner, 2018: 88). Antecedent factors such as whether parents speak to their children in whole sentences or in simple commands, whether they read to them, or whether their children feel respected could interfere with learning and cognitive development (ibid: 95).

Similarly, social hierarchy may determine whether a child has an enabling environment to learn and develop. For instance, in the village of Balandur⁴ in Northern India shows how local dynamics often impact the overall effectiveness of development projects through the influence of the village governing body—known as the panchayat—that reflects the villagers' inclination to enforce more traditional views and power structures (World Bank, 2006). Between the 1950s and 2000s, various government programmes were introduced to the village including free public schooling. However, only those programmes that were backed by politically advantaged/privileged people and those in upper-castes succeeded. Women were seldom included in decision making and girls were not allowed to access education.

2.3.3 Making ECD Education Relevant

ECD education needs to be relevant and meaningful within and among different global and cultural contexts. When Euro-American ECD programmes are applied as the gold standards by which to measure forms of Africa's ECD, for instance, they deny equity to and recognition of Africa's ways of provisioning for its young, and thereby deprive the continent a niche in global ECD Knowledge waves (Nsamaneng, 2008: 136).

⁴ Adapted from World Bank 2006 (village name altered for anonymity)

Besides aiming to achieve other recognised development outcomes for children, ECD also needs to respond to the learning needs of its respective communities. It needs to recognise the importance of cultural conceptualisations of childhood that incorporate child development theories and practices of being in—and understanding—the world. Children should be able to relate what they learn to their context, to find a deep understanding of their immediate world along with the tools for its care and transformation, and discover their own culture in their native language (Schmelkes, 2018: 14).

Families often seek to maintain traditional values while also providing education opportunities for their children. Piper (2018: 25) cites an example of developing-country contexts where a tension may exist between the desire to have contextualised knowledge specific to each particular community on the one hand, and the core difficulty of offering education of even moderate quality to poor and minority populations at scale, on the other. For example, a project carried out among indigenous peoples in Mexico (Instituto Nacional para la Evaluación de la Educación, 2016a) found that indigenous communities highly value what they are taught in school and recognise the need to relate to and exist in the outside world. However, they pointed out that they would also like schooling to instil a value of their own culture and a willingness to participate in it, as well as preparation to face and exist in external contexts. Another important characteristic they said they would like to see in education is the ability to establish horizontal dialogue with members of the dominant and other cultures.

Wadende, Oburu, and Morara (2016) point to another example—the development of the Indigenous Motivational Caregiving Practices Model in East Africa. This model suggests that caregivers engage in many unwritten practices based on culturally specific expectations of children, such as cleaning themselves or babysitting siblings (Nsamenang, 2008). Such a framework of informal learning, as Schmelkes (2018) describes it, should be incorporated into ECD models to build on the investments that parents are already making in their children’s learning.

2.4 Conclusion

Development in early childhood is a multidimensional process in which progress in one domain often acts as a catalyst for progress in other domains. Various studies point to significant benefits of good-quality integrated ECD programmes, with children demonstrating remarkable achievements in their social, cognitive and intellectual development. The fundamental challenge of ECD interventions is to merge the knowledge and insights of scholars and practitioners with the creative talents of those who design and implement social policy initiatives, and to invest in the products of this alliance (Meisels and Shonkoff, 2000: 3).

Formal schooling leads to learning that is difficult to achieve without a systematic methodology (pedagogy), which involves gradually increasing intellectual demands, eventually leading to the development of higher-order thinking skills (Schmelkes, 2018: 12). However, community and family relationships and child-rearing patterns cannot be changed even though they can be influenced by exposure to the contents of a curriculum. In consequence, any particular specification of early childhood services, curriculum and pedagogy will inevitably reflect particular combinations of cultural assumptions and aspirations, as well as patterns of power and relationship between governments, children, families and professionals (Woodhead, 2006: 21).

Arguably, any effective ECD service should be a combination of both formal and informal teaching and learning approaches⁵, particularly in vulnerable communities. For instance, the use of traditional practices such as storytelling (including listening and interpreting the world through common experiences within the community), learning through play, music using local instruments, traditional dance and cultural activities that are group-based and developed from local contexts are a feature of various cultures in many developing countries. Within these practices lies both key formal and informal aspects of teaching and learning. Noteworthy is that in a conceptual analysis of young children's play in African cultures, Mwaura and Marfo (2011: 137) have argued that careful examination of early

⁵ This paper recognises formal approaches as those that lead to a recognised award or certification, non-formal approaches as those that are structured but do not have an accredited award or certification, and informal approaches as those in which learning occurs intentionally or unintentionally as part of other activities and typically does not lead to certification

developmental and learning processes in African contexts reveals pedagogical insights and principles that are very much compatible with constructivist, discovery, activity-based, or problem-based learning, as conceptualised in Euro-American contexts.

Further, to get the full benefits of ECD, it needs to be culturally responsive. Culture determines the nature of many dimensions of children's developmental niches—including daily routines and settings, parenting, and childrearing arrangements—and it must be incorporated into policy development and service provision in Africa and other parts of the world (Nsamaneng, 2008: 137). Though the potential benefits of incorporating the influence of culture into ECD has been widely explored, conventional practices still require greater knowledge and respect for different cultures' disparate beliefs and practices (Garcia Coll and Magnuson, 2000: 110). This could lead to the emergence of better and integrated partnerships in service delivery, communities and families.

Chapter 3: Community Based ECD

It discusses ECD within the SDGs and then looks at community based ECD as a concept, and looks at various examples of community-based models of ECD in different settings, including Uganda.

3.1 Introduction

Today, the policy landscape, public interest, and increased provision of ECD have changed significantly (Wagner, 2018: 93). Early Childhood Care and Education has been shaped by changes in demographics, service delivery, and public attitudes (Kagan and Neuman, 2000: 356). As a result, the international field of Early Childhood Education has experienced a major challenge to the authority of long standing traditional theories and practices largely stemming from the new sociology of childhood, critical psychology and the utilisation of post-modernist/poststructuralist frameworks, which call for educators, researchers and others working with children to begin to reconceptualise their understandings of childhood and their work with young children (Robinson and Diaz, 2006; 1).

3.2 ECD within the Sustainable Development Goals Framework

The growing interest in ECD programmes is evident in a variety of policy statements and conventions that can directly be traced to the UNCRC (Wagner, 2018: 93). Notably, ECD was not included in the Millennium Development Goals (2000), but is now referenced directly in the SDGs. Of the 10 SDG 4 targets, learning issues are central in five of them, including SDG Target 4.2—By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education— which focuses on enabling young children to be prepared for primary school. Achieving SDG Target 4.2 for vulnerable children is arguably one of the most challenging aspects of the SDGs not least because of funding disparities between ECD and other sectors. Achieving this goal for children in low-income countries will be one of the most challenging dimensions of the SDGs (Wagner, 2018: 93).

One of the key aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals' education targets has been on improving prospects for vulnerable children through an emphasis on

equity. Most of the 10 SDG 4 targets focus implicitly or explicitly on aspects of quality education and equity, with special attention paid to reducing disparities between dominant or advantaged populations, on the one hand, and vulnerable or marginalized ones, on the other (Benavot, 2018: 219). Countries—both rich and poor—can adopt early childhood policies that will help children engage in better learning opportunities, including the acquisition of preliminary skills for reading, mathematics and socio-behavioural competencies that will be needed in primary school (Wagner, 2018: 93). A viable option for the lower income countries may be the adoption of low cost ECD services such as the community-based models.

3.3 The Concept of Community Based ECD

Community based ECD is more of an idea and therefore exists as a concept. It does not have a clear definition. Otte and de Barros (2016: 159) say definitions are formulated in order to draw conclusions and to solve technical problems. Definitions have cognitive and communicative functions whereas concepts, in contrast, are like continua relations and visions of possibilities (ibid). However, it has some key traits, particularly that the centres are run on principles of volunteerism, partnership, community ownership and involvement, with support provided for in the national ECD policy framework including some technical support from Uganda's development partners and organisations such as NGOs, CBOs and FBOs.

As more evidence shows that the well-being of children is intimately linked to the well-being of their families and communities, fresh approaches in ECD have broadened significantly to include the overall well-being of the child, the family, and the community. The partnership orientation of service providers has evolved along a developmental continuum to parent involvement, family centredness, and finally, collective empowerment (Turnbull et al., 2000: 646). Stakeholders now recognise that children need;

- A family that is ready to support their development.
- A school that is ready to welcome all children and to advance their development.
- A community that understands its commitment to the developing child and the early years (Rault-Smith et al., 2008: 6).

Studies show that ECD contributes to improving the effects of poverty and risk for children (Barnett, 1998: 204; Smith et al., 2000: 45; Duncan and Te One, 2012; 3) by facilitating social relationships and networks—both on a micro, personal level between families and ECD centres, and on a community level between agencies and organisations, ECD centres, and families. This study will build more on this collaboration at 3 levels in the discussion about the Asset Based Community Development Model in Chapter 4.

Hayden and MacDonald (2000; 32) argue that ECD centres should be seen as offering a service to the community and that a new discourse be developed that incorporates a community-oriented approach to service delivery. In this way, by its very nature, community based ECD would not only provide the respective community's services but also provide care and support for its vulnerable children. Recent shifts in perspective reconceptualise the positions and role of ECD within communities, challenging the traditional practices of involving families or partnerships with parents and leaning towards incorporating new ways of working with, alongside, and in collaboration with family and the wider community (Duncan and Te One, 2012; 1). Proponents of this thinking argue that ECD services are capable of playing a fundamental role in providing a range of integrated services for children, their families and communities. In particularly vulnerable communities where basic services are not available, community based ECD facilities could potentially play a key role in assisting families to access various forms of both formal and informal support. Duncan and Te One (2012: 215) provide strong arguments favouring integrated ECD services that single out vulnerable communities as targets for community-based interventions, providing a strength-based approach that shifts the focus 'from the individual to the situational'. When a development intervention is implemented by individuals, communities and policy makers, it can make positive changes across a wide range of cultures and contexts (Wagner, 2018: 266).

Inadvertently, the community based ECD approach also brings other more general benefits such as an increase in the confidence of local residents to engage with the wider social and political institutions, and with accessing other community resources and opportunities. The combination of early childhood education and parent support initiatives are promising

vehicles for improving child outcomes, particularly when such initiatives are grounded in locality-based settings. (Munford, Sanders and Maden, 2007: 85).

A review of ECD provision in 12 countries recognised that key programmes that linked ECD centres, parents and communities through meaningful and supportive mechanisms can strengthen and build the social cohesion between families, communities, and government and NGO sectors. This is reinforced in the ABCD approach and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The report (OECD, 2001: 84) identified how multi agency initiatives, incorporating ECD provisions, more adequately meet the needs of today's parents and, when located in areas of high need, promote equal educational opportunities without stigmatising individual children. With increased levels of poverty due to the high prices of food, parents increasingly need to go out and work to earn money. This means that they are unable to take on 'traditional' roles which are increasingly being left to older siblings and/or grandparents. This further increase vulnerability levels of these children, as often the older siblings may still be children themselves, and the grandparents may not be physically able to take care of young children.

This being the case, a community based ECD facility would be better able to provide adequate or relevant care and support to vulnerable children as it would have 'qualified' adult caregivers who would know how best to take care of young children. Additionally, the community-based facility would be better equipped in terms of play materials, safety, and culturally responsive practices, etc. to provide essential care for these children.

Drawing on discussions from Mangione and Speth (1998) and Nsamenang and Tchombe (2011), this study argues that three aspects of ECD programming are essential for a community-based approach;

- *Participative*: Families, community members, community organisations and centre leaders need to share decision making responsibilities, maintain open communication, and use evaluation information to improve educational programming
- *Consider holistic development of children*: Children's health, education and social wellbeing need to be considered and responded to holistically.

- *Linguistically, culturally and developmentally appropriate*: Educational services need to be designed to respect and respond to children's home language, culture and developmental level.

Research (Rentzou et al., 2019: 64) shows that any intervention aiming at integrated ECD provision may be bottom-up (front- line delivery, community, parents) and/or top-down (interagency governance, policies and strategies) but needs to be aligned and underpinned by three building blocks:

- a shared vision and a shared understanding among the stakeholders
- key factors supporting integration, and
- quality practices.

These principles have been underlined in the INTESYS Project⁶ in which results suggest that in order to be effective, the journey towards integration should be based on a continuous participatory process of planning, acting and reflecting which ensures that the needs of children and families are taken into account as well as the capacities and possibilities of all actors involved.

As stated earlier, the present societal environment does not allow for families alone to provide all that is needed to raise children. This means community based ECD services become an important complement to parenting. They represent a variety of learning contexts that may be similar to formal learning services in terms of regulation and certification, but may include and accommodate other learning contexts. More importantly, however, community based ECD shows how active community participation empowers and enhances experiences for all.

In a way, the community based ECD service model 'challenges' the general roles and responsibilities of the services provided at ECD facilities. It recognises the importance of the role that communities can play in service provision and also uses available resources from

⁶ The INTESYS project was funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 3 – Forward Looking Cooperation Projects. The project started in November 2015 and ended in April 2019, and was implemented in four countries: Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Slovenia.

within the communities to provide these services. In this ECD service model, different members of the community are active partners in working to improve their quality of life by providing care and support for their children. In underprivileged communities where the voices of the people are silenced by poverty and various social disadvantages, community based ECD provides an opportunity not only for the community to have a service available for its children, but also for inclusive participation in the process.

3.4 Community Based ECD in Practice

The examples discussed below provide a foundation for understanding the possibilities of community based ECD models providing care and support for vulnerable children. Of particular interest is the potential of these models to defy power relations and societal or structural differences within communities through strengthening social relations, promoting dialogue and 'democratic' community participation.

3.4.1 Community Based ECD in Euro-American Contexts

3.4.1.1 The Early Excellence Centres

Among various examples of model community based ECD facilities are the 'Early Excellence Centres', which are supported by the government in England. The first EECs were established in England in the late 1990s as an innovative development for young children and their parents and carers, bringing an integrated approach to education, day care, social support and adult learning (Office for Standards in Education, 2004: 5). This model offers a range of integrated services including early years education for 3 – 4 year olds, full day care for children from birth to 3 years, drop in facilities, outreach, family support, health care, adult education and practitioner training (OECD, 2001: 84) though the provision of early childhood care and education for children aged 3 – 4 is the core of their work.

An evaluation of the centres (Office for Standards in Education, 2004: 10) found that most of the centres inspected were located in areas of significant economic deprivation. The report noted that there was no blueprint for what centres could or should provide, and therefore each centre developed its own services to meet the needs of its particular community. Of particular note in this report was;

- The centre leadership commitment to providing an inclusive setting for children, parents and families
- All centres encouraged and enabled parents and carers to meet regularly at the centre with a member of staff or, in a number of instances, the attached health visitor or the health practitioner located at the centre
- Several centres provided excellent support through their outreach service in which staff formed strong relationships with individual families and their children.
- In all centres, parents were encouraged to contribute to assessments of their children.
- Families in difficulties were helped to deal with other agencies so that they could receive the help they needed.
- The recruitment of bilingual staff in a few centres successfully widened the participation of parents from minority ethnic groups who would not normally have accessed such provision.
- Very effective collaboration between the centres and outside agencies such as the health authority, the local authority including social services, Sure Start, police officers and further education colleges.

This model bears all the tenets of a community-based approach to ECD by having close links with community members and local agencies, and therefore catering for the holistic needs of child development. The carefully developed partnerships with other services were an attempt to be culturally and linguistically supportive to parents and families from minority ethnic groups.

3.4.1.2 The Coram Community Campus

The Coram Community Campus in the UK focuses on providing a range of services for young children and their families—including care, education, health, parent support, and other services such as child psychologist and social work services—on one site (Duncan and Te One, 2012: 5). It works with local authorities, schools and providers of family services to support and train them to deliver government initiatives and improve their quality of provision. Their efforts are directed towards families who face disadvantage or multiple challenges, including social exclusion, precarious work conditions and poverty.

In this model, we see strong engagement with parents and local agencies within communities. Though ECD centres are generally thought to be exclusively ‘child focused spaces’, they are fairly well placed to provide quality ECD services as well as support to parents, families and communities as a whole particularly where the centres are based within the community with community members being an integral part of the service.

3.4.1.3 The Early Head Start Programme

This programme is implemented in the United States of America and focuses primarily on low-income families and children aged between 3 – 4 years old. It provides medical and dental care to children as well as employment to parents. Additionally, it emphasises parent participation in programme governance and service provision.

The Early Head Start has what its designers call a ‘four – cornered emphasis’ that includes child development, family development, community development, and staff development (Halpern, 2000: 373). Core services include;

- child care/early childhood education
- developmental screening/early identification
- parent education and family support through home visits and other activities
- primary health care
- mental health services
- services to promote economic independence (ibid).

As a community-based model, this programme is an example of a holistic approach to early childhood development and education for vulnerable children that includes the families and communities that the children live in.

3.4.1.4 The Primokiz Approach

The Primokiz programme was launched in Switzerland in 2012 by the Jacobs Foundation. It aimed to support municipalities, cities and cantons to develop comprehensive early childhood strategies. When the programme started, 18 small and medium-sized Swiss cities

and three cantons participated. Early childhood experts worked with these cities and cantons to conduct a situation analysis. Based on the results, they went on to develop a comprehensive strategy that aimed to link projected or existing early childhood education and care programmes in a way that would achieve the greatest possible impact as well as correspond with the various needs of children and their families living in the respective municipality or canton.

The Primokiz approach is used in order to foster the development of a strong and comprehensive network of administrative, professional and private actors who work together to analyse the current situation, develop a vision of future early years services provision, and build links between health, social care and education and across all relevant institutions and interest groups, vertically and horizontally (Rentzou et al., 2019: 65 – 66). Two things are unique about this approach: it connects administrative entities with the political sphere and private actors in the field of early childhood (horizontal and vertical cooperation); and it conveys the message that early childhood is a cross-cutting issue for which the education, social services and health sectors are jointly responsible.

A year after concluding the first phase of the Primokiz programme, an evaluation showed that in almost all participating sites, positive decisions were obtained from the political decision makers, welcoming the strategy and agreeing to suggested measures and funds for implementation. Furthermore, it was reported that networking and coordination between the education, health and social services sectors were established, as well as among the actors in the field. Through the participatory process, there developed among all the actors involved a general awareness and a deeper understanding of the importance and the comprehensiveness of early childhood. Unanimously, the continuous support and involvement of political decision makers was found to be crucial for successful strategy development. (Rentzou et al., 2019: 64 - 65).

3.4.2 Community Based ECD in Developing Country Contexts

3.4.2.1 Madrasa Resource Centre (MRC) Early Childhood Development Programme

The Madrasa Early Childhood Development Programme is a regional initiative in East Africa that provides quality, affordable, culturally appropriate, and sustainable preschools among the socio-economically disadvantaged Muslim communities (Mwaura and Mohamed, 2008: 389). This programme grew out of the need for the children of people of Muslim faith to be well grounded in their faith and local culture while also gaining skills to meet the demands of a modern world. Thus, the MRC ECD programme is deeply rooted in practical historical and sociocultural realities within the communities that came to embrace, support, and own it (Mwaura and Marfo, 2011: 136). The overall goal is to improve the well-being of young children from marginalised communities through ensuring a supportive religious, cultural, and learning environment in the early years (Mwaura and Mohamed, 2008: 389).

The success of this ECD programme expansion has been primarily attributed to community entry and participation. The responsibility for the development and management lies with the communities who own and operate the schools, and the process of creating and implementing the centres is focused on building the capacity of community members, including teachers, members of the school management committees, parents and others, to provide quality services and create responsive and supportive educational institutions that are technically, financially and organisationally sustainable (Mwaura and Mohamed, 2008: 390). Further, the programme addresses the holistic development of the child, with a focus not only on school readiness but also on health and nutrition, growth monitoring and parenting education, serving all children, including vulnerable children like those with special needs and HIV and AIDS.

Briefly, these programme operations begin with the identification of communities in need of ECD services. Community entry is done through community and religious leaders. The number of children with no access to preschool and the community's willingness to participate are important criteria for establishing a programme. Following selection, community mobilisation activities are initiated to raise awareness about existing education problems, sensitise the population to the importance of ECD, and position the community to

assume collective responsibility for solving identified problems. In so doing, the programme promotes self-reliance and active involvement in local capacity-building.

Once an agreement has been reached to establish a centre, the community's investment and involvement are evident in all aspects of the programme. For instance, the community identifies or donates land to build a new facility or renovates an existing structure. Under an MRC community-development officer's guidance, community leaders then mobilise people and resources to ensure that the centre will provide high-quality developmental and preschool experiences for children. Teachers are identified from within the community by the community members themselves and trained by MRC trainers.

Programme evaluation, a core element of MRC's service delivery, is a joint venture between community members and MRC staff. For the first 2 years, the preschools are evaluated biannually by the community members and the MRC staff independently. The Child Development MRC staff and the community's representatives then come together to discuss their findings. This participatory process is intended to build community-level evaluation capacity, sensitise communities to quality issues, and inculcate a sense of ownership for sustainability. At the end of 2 years, the preschools are assessed by the national MRC board, and then by a panel of external experts, including Ministry of Education officials. Once a preschool meets the required quality standards, it is allowed to join the Madrasa Graduated Preschools Association, which takes over the monitoring and evaluation function with occasional support from MRC staff. (Mwaura and Marfo, 2011: 137). Of particular note is the community focus of this model.

3.4.2.2 Kenya's Harambee Pre-Schools

A rapid expansion of preschool centres in Kenya after independence was stimulated by President Jomo Kenyatta's popularisation of the Harambee motto, meaning 'pulling and pushing together' (Prochner and Kabiru, 2008: 127). Parents and communities responded positively to the call and immersed themselves in fundraising and resource mobilisation to establish preschool institutions (ibid).

In this model, the preschools are managed by committees that are chosen by the community members. These committees have several roles:

- They mobilise the community assets and skills to get land (which is either bought or donated by community members or the local authorities), building materials, financial contributions and the much-needed labour to build and run the centres.
- They encourage parents to enrol children aged 3 – 6 years
- They organise consultative meetings in which the community decides on fees, identifying a teacher from the community, and the salary to be paid to the teacher
- They supervise and support the teacher

With the government providing subsidised training for teachers, registering, inspecting and supervising these community preschools, basic requirements and standards are assured as prescribed in government policy. This is another example of good practice for community based ECD.

3.4.2.3 Romania Grows with You

This project was initiated after important advances were made in Romania—including new legislation, increased professional capacity in local administration, commitment to investment in early years and education in general and a growing interest in ECD. The project is a four-year collaboration between the Step by Step Centre for Education (CEDP), UNICEF in Romania, the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) and the Jacobs Foundation in Switzerland, and aims to pilot new ways of designing, planning and delivering early childhood services through enhanced cooperation and coordination at community or municipality level. The project aims to reach 1,500 children and their parents, 110 teachers and school principals, 65 ECD professionals in the locality including paediatricians, nurses, obstetricians, midwives, social workers, caregivers, school counsellors and health mediators, and 65 representatives of local council authorities (ISSA, 2019).

The ISSA (2019) says the project creates a paradigm shift, pushing forward the agenda in early childhood policies and practices in the country for children aged birth to six while

making the case for the importance of high-quality early years services. Though the project is still in its infancy, it is an example of meaningful collaboration with all community stakeholders. This is important for any community based ECD model and places this project in a good place to be an example of good practice.

3.4.3 Community Based ECD in Vulnerable Communities

3.4.3.1 The Ngala Services

Ngala, an Aboriginal word meaning ‘mother and child’, is a non-profit organisation that provides integrated services for families and children in Australia. The overall aim of Ngala is to ensure that children, families and communities experience a service that is accessible, responsive and trustworthy. The services provided by Ngala are underpinned by a strong commitment to children’s rights and the importance that these rights are realised within the context of their communities. Basically, it provides three types of services;

- Universal services open to all families eg. telephone helpline, website resources, long day-care centres offering full-day education and care for children aged from birth to five years.
- Targeted services for particular cultural, geographical or other specific groups eg. indigenous parent groups, playgroups in remote regions, programmes to support children following family separation.
- Intensive services offering specialised interdisciplinary support for individual families eg. a prison parenting programme, an overnight stay programme for families with young children (Sumsion, Press and Wong, 2010: 75)

The range of services varies across various communities. This ensures that Ngala continually seeks to strengthen its relationships with local communities, for example, by offering ‘assistance, support and ideas’ (Ngala, 2008: 38). It also strives to foster partnerships within communities, on the premise that the communities are strengthened when people in the community work together to develop locally relevant strategies to achieve locally identified common goals, and address locally identified problems (Duncan and Te One, 2012: 36).

As a community-based model, it provides a robust example of the success of community based ECD that can provide care and support for vulnerable children.

3.4.3.2 Brazil's Community Mothers

“School inequality in Brazil begins in the cradle and tends to be for life. Poorer families have less access to day-care centres and, if they have, it is of worse quality.” Daniel Cara, general coordinator of the National Campaign for the Right to Education.

In Brazil, access to education is near-universal for children between the ages of four and 17. But the picture changes when it comes to infants and toddlers. Just one third spend time in preschool, well short of what the National Education Plan envisages reaching by 2024 (Lima, 2019).

Preschool services in Brazil disproportionately serve children who are older and richer, live in urban areas, and have better-educated parents (World Bank, 2001: 28). The gap between the richest and the poorest is greater for 0 – 3-year-olds, where the richest are 2.5 times more likely to enrol their children in early childhood services than the poorest, as opposed to 0.5 times among 4 – 6-year-olds (UNESCO, 2007: 20). In a BBC report, estimates state that 1.8 million young children do not have access to day-care facilities due to excessive commutes or a lack of places, with 33.9% of the poorest children being affected compared with 6.9% of wealthy children (Walker, 2019).

The government does provide day-care and funding is provided at federal, municipal or state government level. However, provision is patchy and waiting lists are long. Also, legal requirements make establishing ECD centres expensive.

Private day-cares are out of reach for those struggling to get by, often costing between R\$700-3,000 (£140-600, \$185-795) per month; compared to the monthly minimum wage of R\$998 while community mothers typically charge between R\$100-350 per child per month (Lima, 2019). This means that private day-care is expensive and out of reach for poor families. Additionally, everyone working with a group of babies and young children, even helpers, must be certified teachers, making the model very expensive and unscalable,

particularly for rural areas and poorer municipalities (Claudia Costin, Director of the, Getulio Vargas Foundation's Centre for Excellence and Innovation in Education Policies).

A group of Brazilian mothers have created an informal day-care economy for the poorest children. In a BBC article on Brazil's Hidden Day-Care Economy, Walker (2019) reports that community mothers, who are often qualified in early childhood education but do not have formal jobs, look after 10 - 15 infants and toddlers in their own homes and charge a minimal fee. The care they provide includes making meals, changing clothes, playing, reading among other things. They are not licensed or regulated, and are not recognised as members of the childcare community. Therefore, they do not receive any job-related assistance or supervision.

Of particular significance to the community mothers programme as a community-based approach to ECD in Brazil, is winner of the 2018 World Bank Youth Summit Project Competition. This was an initiative called *Mopi Moderna Organizacao Pedagogica Infantil* (or Mopi Moderna Pedagogical Organisation for Children) that targets a network of home-based Brazilian day-care centres with a vetting and selection process, a four-day training course, a standard model for teaching activities, space organisation, safety, daily routine, health and hygiene, and a rating system based on family feedback. It empowers and professionalises the work of community mothers, women from low-income neighbourhoods who charge to take care of children in her own homes (World Bank, 2018). Based on four main pillars—vetting process, educational training, standard model and quality management—mopi aims to provide educational opportunities to 7 Million underserved Brazilian kids in their first four years of life by providing capacity building and quality control to the community mothers model. Taken together, *Mopi* and the community mothers make a formidable community-based model for ECD.

3.4.3.3 Community-Based Early Learning through Yurt Kindergartens

Many rural communities in Kyrgyz Republic are nomadic and spend about three months per year moving their livestock to high pastures or jailoo. During this time, young children are

not able to access learning activities. To address this challenge for nomadic children and families, the Aga Khan Foundation created a mobile early learning approach called 'Jailoo Kindergarten' that uses yurts. Yurts are houses made from wooden sticks covered with felt, which nomadic communities move from pasture to pasture. They are easy to pack up and carry as communities travel from one location to the next. Usually families sleep in yurts and keep all necessary life utilities inside.

The Jailoo Kindergartens are now part of a system of linked central and satellite kindergartens. They have been exceptionally popular, with early surveys indicating that when children who attended them entered primary school, they outperformed others in both reading and maths. Providing early learning activities in mobile locations where families live during these months has significantly increased access to early learning. (Shah and Aitikulova, 2019: 48).

3.4.3.4 Little Ripples

Little Ripples is an ECD programme that was developed for Darfuri refugees in eastern Chad. It is an adaptable, play-based and mindful approach intentionally designed for use in challenging and resource-poor contexts with children—aged 3 to 5—affected by trauma, displacement and other complex issues.

It guides early childhood teachers and caregivers—at any level of education and experience—to deliver play-based learning activities that foster social-emotional development, while using positive behaviour management techniques. It is designed to be integrated with any existing academic or pre-primary curricula and adapted to any context, and teachers are encouraged to deliver the curriculum using activities, stories, music and games that are relevant to their culture, language and context.

Play-based learning is key, as growing evidence shows a relationship between play and development in areas including: language, executive functions, mathematics, spatial skills, scientific thinking and social and emotional development (Hassinger-Das et al., 2017). In many cultures, play-based learning is not regarded as an acceptable form of pedagogy. However, Little Ripples teacher training aims to improve understanding of the positive

impact it can have on child development and future learning. Little Ripples has been adapted and implemented with Central African refugees in Cameroon and Burundian refugees in Tanzania, and is being launched in Greece (Dalrymple and Dallain, 2019: 107). Of particular note is that assessments have shown improved learning outcomes and social – emotional development in young children.

3.4.4 Community Based ECD Services in Uganda

With an economy in which the majority of the population lives in rural areas—with a characteristic absence of basic services—one of the better ways to increase access to quality ECD services is through the provision of targeted community based ECD interventions. The community based ECD model in Uganda is a centre-based service that provides pre-primary education for children between 3 - 5 years in line with the ECD Policy. It is a community led programme with full participation of the community and provides fully institutionalized services for half day or full day depending on the needs of the parents (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2010: 12). Its main focus is on pre-primary education, although other aspects of child development are integrated into it.

The MoES (2010: 12) states that the following services must be provided at the Community Based ECD Centres:

- Activities for early learning and stimulation should be provided following the Learning Framework for children (3-6 years) which was developed by the NCDC.
- Integrated services such as medical check-ups, immunisation, de-worming, and vitamin supplementation should be provided in partnership with the nearest Health Centre. Birth registration should be provided in collaboration with the Sub County or town clerk within which the centre is located.
- Parenting education on good positive child rearing practices for parents.

In this programme, the GoU has partnered with development partners and NGOs throughout the country. There is broad consensus that while learning begins at birth, age 3 is the time for children to commence learning through play and interaction in groups (Engle et al, 2007). Working within the GoU ECD Policy Framework outlined in section 1.4,

government aims at progressively enabling children aged 3-5 years to exercise their right to quality learning, stimulation and preparation for timely enrolment in primary school. This approach—working with and within the communities—is a creative and cost-effective response to meeting the multiple developmental needs of the children, including cognitive, health and nutrition, physical and emotional needs. The general skills that children learn and develop in this model include;

- The development of fine motor skills
- Language development through talking, reading, and singing
- Teamwork, helping, sharing, self-control and persistence
- Pre-writing and pre-reading skills
- The development of gross motor skills
- Taking responsibility and making choices
- Developing sense of self-worth and self-expression
- Encouragement of creativity

These community led ECD centres are developed by communities, for the communities, in the communities. They use various locally built or available structures as ECD centres, and are run on principles of volunteerism, partnership, community ownership and involvement. As provided for in the policy framework, they are supported by district ECD focal points and MoES Coordinating Centre Tutors (in-service teacher educators) through training for caregivers (local community members who volunteer) and centre management committees (CMC), sensitisation on ECD policy and framework, and the provision of ongoing support supervision. Some technical support is also provided by development partners and NGOs.

These centres are non-profit making and hence services are free for all community members. Parents and community members contribute financially or otherwise eg. by taking time to clean the centre, providing books, pencils, food, etc. for the children. If fees are required and agreed upon by community members, these fees are used to pay the caregivers and to get supplies for the centre. This means that ideally, the centres are self-sustaining and community members are active participants.

3.4.4.1 Procedures and Requirements for Service Provision

ECD Centre Guidelines were developed from the ECD Policy to provide the guiding principles for the provision of ECD in Uganda. Summarily, the guidelines state that:

- ECD programmes should be of quality regardless of the type of programme/service offered.
- ECD is a multi-sectoral process that calls for adopting an expanded vision in which ownership, implementation and management of early childhood programs are shared among all key stakeholders in a holistic manner. The nature and scope of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders should be based on partnership and performed in a holistic approach. The provision of child care should be rights based, child centred, community based, family focused, gender responsive, inclusive, flexible and of good quality.
- ECD programmes call for involvement of various stakeholders at all levels; family, community and Government levels in delivery of service. This promotes effective public-private partnership and networking.
- ECD interventions should be embedded in the principle of enhancing equitable access to ECD services for all children in Uganda (Ministry of Education and sports, 2010: 1).

In principle, these guidelines support community-based programme by recognising the roles and responsibilities of community members. The approach favours involvement of all stakeholders within any community. This gives them an opportunity to use available assets to ensure that quality and holistic ECD services are available for their children. The guidelines stress the importance of integrated programming and services. This again highlights the significance of the various stakeholders within any given community to ensure that all the needs of young children including health and social services are met. This in itself is at the heart of the Uganda community based ECD model.

The guide also outlines the needs of children as stated in the legislative framework, these being care, early stimulation, health, nutrition and nurturing, safety and protection, and the environment. The roles and responsibilities of the caregivers are clearly mapped in line with

these needs. The Guidelines also provide procedure and requirements for the centres to be established including health and sanitation facilities, furniture, storage for classroom materials and toys, meals for the children, play areas (both indoors and outdoors), management and administration, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the caregivers including on how the caregivers assess the children's progress at the centres. Additionally, the process of licensing and registration of these centres is outlined and comprises a list of basic requirements and minimum standards and conditions that must be met.

The capacity of communities is built through training in community mobilisation for ECD. Mobilisation and awareness creation on ECD and its importance is generally done through NGOs, Parish Chiefs or Community Development Assistants (local government) within the respective communities. A training manual has been developed to build the capacity of communities—through a series of workshops—as key stakeholders in ECD and to stimulate social mobilisation to include all stakeholders. The focus of this capacity building tool is to provide practical training, advocacy and sensitisation to communities and is conducted through aid agencies, FBOs, NGOs and CBOs that are based in respective communities. The training aims;

- To educate politicians, policy makers, programmers, education officials, civic leaders at all levels and parents on the importance of ECD.
- To stimulate communities to start ECD interventions/programmes which are appropriate to the children's age (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2008: 1).

The series of workshops provide an overview of ECD in general, government policy on ECD, the growth and development of children, children's rights and responsibilities, child rearing practices and the importance of play in ECD. The more specific objectives include:

- Empower and support families and communities to take better care of their children.
- Increase collaboration between stakeholders.
- Educate parents and other caregivers in better childcare
- Involve parents and community leaders in recognizing the benefits of ECD.

- Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of ECD programme/initiatives.
- Develop responsive, participatory and accountable systems of ECD governance and management.
- Implement integrated strategies for ECD which recognize the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2008: 1).

3.4.4.2 ECD Centre Management

Local leaders support the communities to select the Centre Management Committees (CMC) for the centres, and also to identify and agree on the roles and responsibilities of the community and the supporting agency/NGO. The CMC works with the community to acquire land, mobilise community members to put up the necessary structures, set up the centres and equip them with relevant available equipment, facilities and locally made play materials. They also identify, select and appoint caregivers, and assist the centres to enroll and register children.

Management teams at institutional level include parent and community representatives.

The ECD Policy (MoES, 2007: 25) recognises that they play a vital role in:

- Providing overall direction for the policy,
- Ensuring that there are development plans so that the care and service provided are appropriate and of good quality,
- Ensuring accountability for funds invested and custody of facilities and property,
- Monitoring the use of resources to benefit the children as the key beneficiaries,
- Working with and providing the linkage between parents, care givers, teachers, communities and the Government,
- Undertaking public fundraising functions such as charity walks, and public appeals to support child development programs,
- Undertaking leadership to upgrade or improve and develop facilities, amenities and a safe environment for child care, development and education; and
- Providing exemplary leadership.

3.4.4.3 Teaching and Learning

Teachers—referred to as caregivers—are trained through a series of workshops using a Caregivers’ Guide to the Learning Framework for Early Childhood Development which was revised in 2012. The guide was developed to provide step by step guidance to the caregivers—who are volunteers and may not necessarily have the qualifications to teach—to assist them to understand and use the Learning Framework. It covers the following;

- How children develop and learn,
- Developmental activities for children,
- Planning, organising and managing children’s learning,
- Continuous assessment of children’s development,
- Preparing children for primary school,
- Helping to keep children safe.

The main aim of this guide is to provide caregivers with a broad understanding of ECD, assist them to use the ECD Learning Framework, guide them on how to provide a rich learning environment for children aged 3-6 years and effectively plan suitable developmental activities that can promote children’s optimal development (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012: 5). The ECD Learning Framework focuses on learning outcomes and competences that are developed in children. The Caregivers’ Guide focuses on observable and measurable skills, knowledge and values to be acquired by children through learner centred approaches and increased learner-teacher interaction. It includes information on planning of suitable playful activities for children, use of mother tongue as a language for instruction, and the provision of a rich learning environment that will provide children with wide experiences. It should be noted that in ECD classes, ‘there are no lessons to be taught by the adult, but there are developmental activities to be done by children’ (National Curriculum Development Centre, 2005).

The guide also teaches the caregivers how to observe and assess individual children daily, monitor and record individual learning progress, and inform parents of their children’s achievements. These assessment practices aim to assist the caregivers to detect any special

needs and learning difficulties that children may have in a timely manner while also promoting timely interventions where necessary. In line with the ECD Policy (2007) and current international ECD practice, the Learning Framework discourages the use of examinations for children and puts great emphasis on continuous assessment which supports child centred approaches (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2012: 5).

3.4.4.4 Quality Control

District ECD focal point officers provide support supervision to the centres, and the caregivers with assistance from the Centre Coordination Tutors (CCTs). Supporting agencies, such as development partners and NGOs, together with the MoES, periodically monitor and conduct evaluations of the centres to determine levels performance, and provide additional support as and when needed.

To guide the organisation and management of educational institutions, the MoES issued the Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards (BRMS) Indicators for Education Institutions in 2001. In 2009 the MoES and the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) worked together to develop a revised set of minimum standards. The aim was to ensure quality education and improve learning achievement, and consequently completion and retention rates in line with the MoES vision of 'Provision of Quality and Appropriate Education and Sports services for All'. The newly revised BRMS outlines the following pillars/indicators:

- Overall Management
- Provision and Management of Structures and Facilities
- Staff Organisation and Development
- Organisation and Management of Teaching and Learning Processes
- Organisation and Development of Co-curricular Activities
- Organisation and management of learners
- Finance generation and management
- Organisation and Development of Institution - Parents/Community
- Health, Sanitation and Environment Organization and Development
- Discipline Management and Development
- Time Organisation and Management

- Organisation and Management of School Safety and Security
- Management and Organisation of Boarding Facilities (MoES, 2009).

The BRMS basically revised standards to place the child at the centre of the teaching and learning process within the various education institutions by providing a clear, comprehensive framework for provision of quality education in Uganda.

3.5 Conclusion on ECD Policy and Practice

Despite extensive policy borrowing, waves of reform and proven policy interventions, educational inequalities tend to persist over time and across generations, especially among children, youth, and adults from marginalized communities (Benavot, 2018: 221). They are long lasting. However, rather than seeing policies as solutions to the problems, policies should be viewed as tools that build the capacity of communities to address their own problems (Green and Haines, 2016: 375). This does not mean the duties of governments are placed in the hands of community members. After all, universal pre-school education does not have to (and can never) be accomplished by the government alone (Kenworthy, 2015). As part of their development strategies, government policies need to promote decentralized authority and responsibility especially at implementation level. Communities need to be empowered to participate in community development efforts that contribute to ensuring that young children learn what is relevant and meaningful to them.

All children learn best when they are active and engaged, through a range of methods and approaches that are meaningful and relevant to their respective contexts (Hirsh-Pasek and Bustamante, 2018). Even brain data shows that while poverty has real and early effects on brain development (Hair *et al.*, 2015; Lawson *et al.*, 2013), it does not alter the way in which children learn. It is time to change our approaches so that— to borrow from Shonkoff and Fisher (2013)—we adopt a broader approach to educating all children while asking what works for whom and why, and in what contexts.

The examples discussed in this chapter provide a range of examples of community based ECD facilities and services that are available globally. Four sub-themes emerge from the discussions, these being:

- The concept of community participation and ownership including the role of individuals
- The role of group effort and networks within communities including local organisations and institutions
- The importance of adaptability, flexibility and approaches that recognise community/cultural identity
- The importance of using an approach that identifies and makes use of social assets/available resources.

Community participation and ownership provide an important impetus for successful service provision. It allows for community members to build trust and find common goals when they engage with ECD facilities. A combination of skilled leadership and a culture of caring for the young and most vulnerable community members allows parents and community members to come together and provide for the holistic development of their children. For instance, the MRC, The Early Head Start and the Harambee centres allow parents and community members to participate in programme governance and service provision, including identifying the needs that their respective communities have in terms of ECD service provision before setting up an ECD centre. Similarly, the Ngala Centres continually seeks to strengthen relationships with local community members thus allowing them to be part of the processes.

Effective group efforts within communities—both formal and informal—not only strengthen relationships between stakeholders and community members, but also provide for identification of available resources within the communities. This in turn builds collaborative networks. For instance, the Early Excellence Centres, the Coram Community, the Early Head Start and Ngala provide examples of both formal and informal collaborative relationships between and among community members and local organisations/institutions. Similarly, the MRC, Harambee centres work with community leaders to identify and select caregivers for

their centres, and also mobilise members to be part of the programme evaluation process. Also, the Primokiz and the Romania Grows With You approaches connect ‘horizontal and vertical cooperation’, recognising that all stakeholders and community members are jointly responsible for ECD.

Flexibility and cultural identity are reflected in the Early Excellence Centres, MRC, Kenya’s Harambee, the Yurt Kindergartens, Brazil’s Community Mothers, the Little Ripples Programme and Ngala centres. The participation of community members in the provision of ECD in culturally safe environments provides a platform for them to appreciate and contribute positively to ECD as a concept that they understand. For instance, it removes cultural and linguistic barriers for community members especially with minority groups. Over time, this can be effective in building confidence and strengthening systems because it creates new options for relationships to develop on different terms, creating new possibilities for challenging inequalities (Duncan and Te One, 2012: 222).

Using alternative approaches to service provision that look at available resources can fill in crucial gaps where valuable services may not be accessible. The Yurt Kindergartens, Little Ripples and the Brazilian Community Mothers all show innovative and adaptable alternatives that work.

All the models discussed above provide targeted services in the respective communities that they work in, consequently enhancing trustworthiness and relevance where they work. The participation of governments and credible organisations or agencies in regulation and standards, such as with Brazil’s Community Mothers (with mopi) and Kenya’s Harambee Schools, legitimises the models further.

The Aga Khan Foundation took a different, bottom-up approach – starting with a few local areas, listening to communities and local government, and considering where families and young children normally went. Co-designing interventions with local government ultimately achieved their buy-in and political commitment, though this took time. Involving communities early and throughout the process means they now own the interventions and

have become advocates for embedding nurturing care into national government policies that are leading to scale.

Overall, the above examples of community based ECD models in different contexts indicates the importance of explicit theoretical constructs in objectives of ECD education. Though seemingly abstract, they provide 'a common language' for service providers that addresses such issues as what children need and what is most important for parents and communities. This is the thrust of community based ECD models and it provides an important 'blue-print' especially for vulnerable communities.

In Uganda, increased access to quality ECD has been constrained by the fact that the government has taken the position not to provide pre-primary education. The for-profit nurseries remain only accessible to those who can afford it including the upper and middle classes and partly the working poor for whom there is a booming sector of low-cost / low-quality nurseries. Convincingly, the best chance for Uganda to go to scale in the provision of care and support for vulnerable children is through the community-based centres.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework for this study. It first provides a brief overview of community development, and then looks at the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) model. The ABCD model is used to guide the analysis of the implementation of community based ECD in Uganda by ensuring that findings and recommendations of this study reflect theoretical knowledge. The analysis examines the ideas that the ABCD model represents in practice by providing a checklist of important issues in the provision of community based ECD—particularly for vulnerable people—and outlining the way these link to each other. It also draws attention to core influences and processes, and explores the interactions between the various factors which affect ECD provision.

4.1 Community Development as a Concept

Generically, the premise of community development as a concept lies in ‘felt needs’—changes deemed necessary by people to correct the deficiencies they perceive in their community (Wade, 1989: 1). This implies that community development is based on acting upon what a group of people feel is lacking in a particular community. It is a collective grassroots action to tackle felt concrete needs (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2011: 47). As an effective way to cultivate a community development programme plan, defining these needs provides the basis for programme development objectives. Wade (1989: 2) argues that in practice, successful community development is best achieved through programming that reflects the desires of the people, because participation in programme action is largely dependent upon the participants’ roles in defining problems and determining felt needs. This means that community development is better accomplished when its efforts include community participation from inception to actual delivery, especially if the effort is to be sustainable.

This concept is based on perceptions that largely depend on the participation of community members in defining their problems. This approach often leads to one sided views, with the risk of leaving out other equally important opinions and insights. In a sense, development practitioners have tended to treat communities as ‘singular and unproblematic’ in their

spatial boundaries (rather than multiple and overlapping) (Williams, 2004: 561). The power relations within communities are often ignored, and efforts to get quick consensus could very easily mean that the existing 'partitions' within the community are overlooked—such as gender relations, castes, class and ethnicity. Uma Kothari notes that "the more 'participatory' the enquiry the more its outcome will mask the power structure of the community" (Kothari, 2001: 146).

For communities to take ownership of any sustainable community development initiative, a needs assessment must be carried out at community level, developing accessible formats or concepts of inclusive participation of all people. However, when participation is based on felt needs, community members begin to see themselves as people with 'special' needs that can only be met by outsiders (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 2). Meaningful participation can be had only when community members develop activities and programmes based on the capacities, skills and assets that are available in their respective communities. Evidence suggests that significant community development takes place only when community members are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 4). In effect, actual community development efforts are established on an understanding, or map, of the community's resources, competences and skills.

Perhaps an important way to look at community development as a concept, is to tease out what constitutes a community. A review of literature conducted by Mattessich and Monsey (2004) found many definitions of community. Generally, these definitions refer first to people and the ties that bind them and second to geographic locations (Phillips and Pittman, 2015: 7). In this study, the definition of a community is borrowed from Mattessich and Monsey (2004: 56) who define a community as 'people who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other and with the place where they live'. This definition places the process of community development in the hands of the respective community members as active citizens within the larger national development strategies.

Given this definition of 'community', what exactly is community development? Both community participation and improved quality of life are central to community

development initiatives. Some people argue that the role of community development is to increase public participation while others contend that the ultimate goal is to improve the quality of life of the community with participation being a means to an end (Green and Haines, 2016: 78). Curtis (1995: 117) cites a United Nations' definition of community development which defines it as the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of a Nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national development.

Ploch (1976) defines community development as the 'active voluntary involvement in a process to improve some identifiable aspect of community life; normally such action leads to the strengthening of the community's pattern of human and institutional relationships.' (Mattessich and Monsey 2004: 59). Green and Haines (2012: 8) define community development as a planned effort to build assets that increase the capacity of residents to improve their quality of life. Often, these efforts try to use available assets to ensure that there is a high chance of sustainability by placing available assets at the centre of the community development process. Interesting to note is that Paulo Freire (1972) argues that an essential element of community development is the ability to make people aware of their reality of poverty so that they can work to overcome it. He believes that people require transformative education that serves to help communities overcome problems within their communities.

This study views community development as both a *process*—strengthening the ability of community members to work together— and an *outcome*—the result of community members working together to improve the community in various ways—with individuals at the centre of the initiatives. The figure below outlines how this study interprets the basic community development process, showing the central role of community members.



Figure 4: A Community Development Process

Note that this model outlines the essential components of community development though in practice the process may vary. As a process, community members are the core of the development programmes/projects, and are often strategically placed to participate in mobilization, planning, implementation and evaluation. As an outcome, community development includes capacity building—investing in people—as a core component of their work through empowerment.

In a nutshell, community development can be understood as the focused effort by people to learn and work together to guide positive change of their communities, primarily using their own existing assets. Basically, it is deliberate and ongoing, and not only builds capacity but also empowers communities. It is important to note that it is a process through which people and communities learn how they can help themselves, giving them the ability to implement decisions while also leading to long-term development or sustainability. The community is thus a main actor, if not beneficiary, of development (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998: 19).

4.2 Community Development in Practice

The most fundamental characteristic of community development is that it follows an integrated approach to the problems of poverty and development, these being the eradication of poverty (Monaheng, 2000: 127 as cited in De Beer and Swanepoel, 2011: 41). Community development is not designed to bring about change, but to improve community services, facilities and people's lives (Biddle and Biddle, 1965 and Extension Committee on Organisation and Policy, 1966 as cited in Wade, 1989: 3). The central goal is not change, but rather improving community services, facilities, living conditions and material well-being and upgrading the quality of social amenities (Khinduka, 1975 as cited in Wade, 1989: 3).

One of community development's key characteristics has always been to seek out the strengths to be found in communities and to harness them in order that local people can respond actively to problems and needs (Henderson and Vercseg, 2010: 75). Therefore, an important aspect of community development is to help communities to make use of local resources. The 'people centred approaches' and related fields of sustainable development have reconfirmed this focus, with an emphasis on 'local initiative and diversity', and 'self-organising systems' developed around human-scale organizational units and self-reliant communities (Korten, 1984: 300 as cited in De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998: 19). In practice, this study identifies four pillars of community development;

4.2.1 Community Assets

An asset can be viewed as a 'stock' that can be drawn upon, built upon, or developed, as well as a resource that can be shared or transferred across generations. McKnight and Russell (2018: 3 - 5) identify 6 forms of assets needed for a community to thrive;

1. Contributions of residents ie. Gifts, skills and passions
2. Associations ie. Groups and networks of unpaid community members
3. Local institutions including for profit, non-profit, non-governmental and governmental organisations
4. Local places
5. Exchange of intangibles, tangibles and use of alternative currencies
6. Local culture or the 'community way'.

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 25) define assets as the 'gifts, skills and capacities' of 'individuals, associations and institutions' within a community. Similarly, Melvin Oliver (2001: xii), a former vice president of the Ford Foundation, defines assets as "... a special kind of resource that an individual, organisation or entire community can use to reduce or prevent poverty and injustice". Green and Haines (2012: 12) expand the definition of community assets in community development to include physical, human, social, financial, environmental, political and cultural assets. Thus, individuals, associations, local institutions and organizations are useful and valuable within the asset-based community development framework (Haines, 2015: 48). This study uses Kretzman and McKnight 's definition of assets.

Each community boasts a unique combination of assets upon which it can build its future, such as natural resources like private or publicly owned land, livestock, home ownership, community relationships, and human expertise such as building skills, childcare, organizing social gatherings and management. The assets and strengths of a community provide a more effective way for people to draw on their community resources in the process of organizing and development (Burkett, 2011: 575).

Of particular significance in this study is the difference between assets and resources/capacity. There are subtle differences in the various definitions of assets and resources/capacity. Though a community may have many resources/capacity, this does not necessarily mean that the community has many assets. Resources/capacity become assets only when they can be used productively to add value to the community, suggesting that there are under-used resources available within the community (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 5). All communities have a distinctive combination of assets that can be used to develop its potential, these being the individuals who live in that community, as well as the various formal or informal associations and institutions within the community. A thorough map of those assets would begin with an inventory of the gifts, skills and capacities of the community's residents. Household by household, building by building, block by block, the capacity mapmakers will discover a vast and often surprising array of individual talents and

productive skills, few of which are being mobilised for community-building purposes (Kretzmann and McKnight, as cited in Institute for Policy Research, 1993).

4.2.2 Social Relationships

Relationships are the primary currency of community work (McKnight and Russell, 2018: 14). Many people often become involved in issues because of social relationships. Community development practitioners have long recognized the importance of social relationships in organizing and mobilizing community residents, as well as contributing to successful outcomes (Green and Haines, 2016: 165). If a community development process is to be asset-based and internally focused, then it will be in very important ways relationship driven (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993).

Community development efforts can make use of these social relationships and networks—social capital—to facilitate collective action in communities. When organisations and institutions make use of these social relationships or networks, they become assets in the community development process and outcome. All these assets can be mobilized for collective action in the community as neighbours begin to work together, neighbours work within neighbourhood associations that, in turn, work with local institutions as they collaborate with one another (Payne, 2006: 29). Mobilising social assets can stimulate the more formal institutional resources such as local governments, community and faith based organisations, non-governmental organisations and private enterprises. For instance, a mosque can make use of the madrasa, the Muslim school set up, to run community based ECD centres as they already have a ‘structure’ for a learning environment under the leadership of the ‘Mullah’, while having the added advantage of being a centre where parents would be happy to take their children and perhaps to volunteer as ‘caregivers’ in the ECD centres, particularly in Muslim communities. A strong resourceful group of community members with the commitment to having ECD services for their children could initiate and drive the ECD centre.

Community development literature generally refers to this as social capital or social capacity, defined as the extent to which members of a community can work together

effectively to develop and sustain strong relationships; solve problems and make group decisions; and collaborate effectively to plan, set goals, and get things done. (Phillips and Pittman, 2015: 8). Social capital can be operationally defined in a variety of ways from neighbourhood cohesion, which refers to the ability of community members to form strong social connections, to the concept of sense of community (Boyd, et al. 2008: 190). In order to make use of the social capital in a community, any intervention strategy must address that symbiotic role of institutions (such as schools, hospitals and local governments), organisations (such as neighbourhood groups, civic clubs and churches), and local individuals and families (Warren et al., 2001).

4.2.3 Community Participation

Community development cannot effectively take place without community participation. Chambers (1995: 30) defines participation as an empowering process which enables local people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence, and to make their own decisions.

The natural tendency is to think that people get involved because of the importance of the issue—it directly affects them, and they have an interest in finding solutions to the problem (Green and Haines, 2016: 83). Community members also need to see real and direct benefits to participation and that the activities are having an impact (Green and Haines, 2016: 84). With this view, many community development efforts try to encourage and increase community participation by providing information to the community members about the issue/problem through mobilisation. Green and Haines (2016: 84) point out that in many instances, residents have experience and skills that are underused, and they are seeking opportunities to make better use of these skills. Through community participation, a solid local knowledge base is used for development (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2011: 50). The ‘common sense’ knowledge of environmental dynamics that community members possess can be a huge asset to community development efforts. In addition to having an interest in achieving shared wealth, local people can be concerned to create a caring community, a safe and healthy community, a creative community, and a citizen’s community (Henderson and Vercseg, 2010: 80).

4.2.4 Empowerment

Within the framework of community development, contemporary focus has been on collective empowerment, in which participants—including professionals and families— increase their capacity and mastery over resources needed to achieve mutually desired outcomes (Epstein, 1995; Gutierrez and Nurius, 1994; Pinderhughes, 1994; Turnbull and Turnbull, 1997; as cited in Turnbull, Turbiville and Turnbull, 2000: 641). Turnbull et al. (2000) recognize three elements of collective empowerment programme philosophy, these being;

- Families: They represent one group of beneficiaries of an empowerment approach
- Professionals: They too are beneficiaries of an empowerment approach
- Context in which families and professionals interact and collaborate: The context is a beneficiary because collective empowerment has the outcome of making contexts more responsive.

Other key elements include access to resources, participation and changes in community ecology.

In the context of child development within the framework of community development, the study looks at Bronfenbrenner's 1979 Ecological Model Applied to Families of Young Children. Through a community development lens, the *macrosystem* provides an enabling environment for development to take place and consists of the social sector in governments including policy makers, local businesses in the economic environment and the policy environment. The *exosystem* comprises the professionals in the respective social sectors and includes the local organisations like CBOs, NGOs and FBOs, schools, etc. The *mesosystem* includes the individual community members. This model ensures the empowerment of all actors in the development effort through partnerships and a shift of power to being used to build capacity at different levels. Ultimately this means that all participants gain in competence, abilities, resource acquisition and capability.

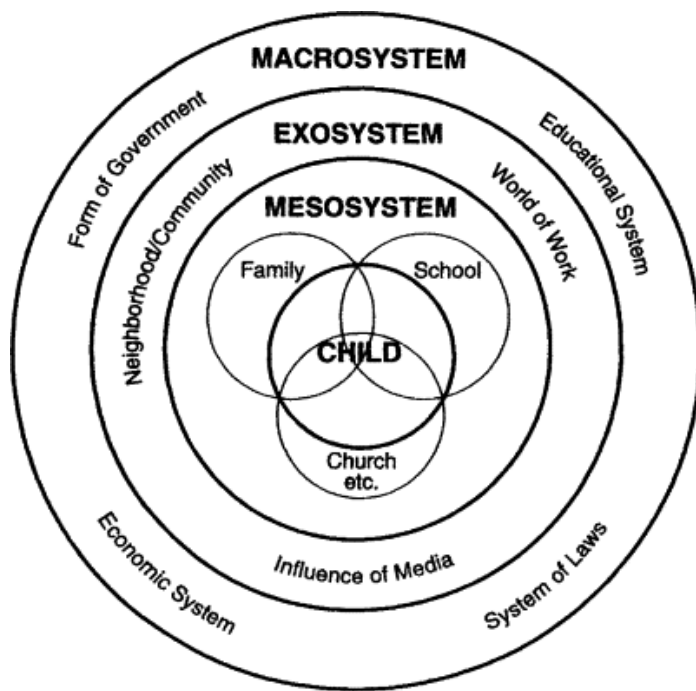


Figure 5: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

Community development stresses the importance of building the capacity of residents to address the issues affecting their quality of life (Green and Haines, 2016: 363). As its central process, alternative development seeks the empowerment of households and their individual members socially, politically and psychologically (Friedman, 1992: 33). By directly incorporating the intended development beneficiaries within the conduct of development projects themselves, the objects of development are deemed to become empowered subjects of their own development (Williams, 2004: 565).

4.3 Community Based ECD as a Community Development Model

ECD is a community development issue. Coulton (1996) says the social organisation of communities—the ability of local structures to contribute to and accomplish the goals of community members from within the community— through both formal structures and institutions, and through informal relationships among community members, may provide the linkage between macro level changes in society and the development of individual children.

The community based ECD model is an all-encompassing programme that also provides skills training and knowledge building for community members to be full contributors to the provision of ECD services. The model uses a decentralised approach that requires meaningful participation from community members, creating ownership that can make the project sustainable.

In many ways, the idea of community participation is key to the implementation of Community Based ECD services anywhere. However, like many development programmes, implementation may not often engage parents, guardians and other community members as active participants in defining what services their local centres should provide. Though the implementation of community based ECD centres is 'logical', the approach risks being 'prescriptive', and excluding the very people who it is meant to provide the service for - the most deprived.

4.4 The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Model

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model discussed earlier (Refer to section 4.2.4) influenced the decision to use the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) model as the tool for analysis in this study. When it is applied to child development, the model becomes a strong theoretical basis for evaluating any ECD model.

"Asset based community development is an approach to working with communities that focuses on people's assets rather than their deficiencies, and encourages the mobilizing of community assets to meet opportunities for genuine community driven or citizen driven development. By focusing on 'the glass half full', it diverges from conventional development agency practice that focuses on problems and deficiencies. This shift is intended to correct the unintended outcome of well-intentioned community development efforts: communities that are inadvertently hobbled by a self-perception of inadequacy and a dependence on outside institutions for solutions to problems" (Mathie, 2006: 2).

Asset based approaches have become increasingly popular as community development models. These approaches focus on the importance of the strengths and assets that people in communities bring to change processes, such as the ABCD model (Burkett, 2011: 573).

ABCD has often been presented as an alternative to needs-based approaches to development (Mathie and Cunningham, 2002: 2). It focuses on the importance of the strengths and assets that people in communities bring to change processes (Burket, 2011: 573). As an unconventional approach to development, the 'asset-based community development' model lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing (but often unrecognised) assets, and thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity (Mathie and Cunningham, 2002: 3). This strong internal focus is intended simply to stress the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993).

Generally, community development attempts have often implemented community projects based on what has been called a 'needs driven' model, in efforts to address persistent social issues. Needs based approaches focus on what the communities lack, suggesting that any development attempts must come from outside the community. This inadvertently points to communities being dependent on assistance from outside their communities. The focus has been on what is deficient in the community as opposed to what assets are available within the community. This approach fails to identify and expand the existing social assets that are already present within the community (Payne, 2006: 27). As an alternative to the more commonly practiced needs-based approach, the asset based community development model shifts the focus of community development from "problem solving" to "asset building" (Wilke, 2006: 2), identifying and tapping in to the potential assets in a community including the talents and skills of individuals, organisational capacities, political connections, buildings and facilities, and financial resources (Page-Adams and Sherraden, 1997 as cited in Wilke 2006: 5).

In contrast to the needs-based approach that addresses perceived "deficiencies" through the use of outside experts and resources, asset-based development genuinely empowers citizens and strengthens government and agency effectiveness by drawing on local residents' resources, abilities, and insights to solve their own problems (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 5). The ABCD was developed by John P. Kretzman and John L. McKnight as a challenge to traditional solutions of urban problems, which focus on the needs and deficiencies of neighbourhoods, and involves working with the strengths, skills and

resources of a community as a way to build engagement and jointly defined goals (Burke et al., 2009: 5). Each community boasts a unique combination of assets upon which it can build its future. The model uses the community's own assets and resources as the basis for development, and empowers community members by encouraging them to utilize what they already possess (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 56). Outside assistance is still needed, but in a support role to citizen-led community development (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 5).

The assets and strengths of a community provide a more effective way for people to draw on their community resources in the process of organizing and development (Burkett, 2011: 575). It is argued that the key to community regeneration is to locate all of the available local assets, connect them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness for local development purposes (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 5). The available assets provide the basis of community capital, including human, social, built, political, cultural, natural and financial capitals.

This shift of the focus to the available assets within communities is the basis of the ABCD model (Burkett, 2011) by focusing on the importance of the strengths and assets that people in communities bring to change processes. This shift from a focus on needs to a focus on assets may particularly have practical benefits for those living within communities that are predominantly made up of individuals from lower social economic groupings because it brings together the positive attributes that exist within the community that can work well for the good of the whole community. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 6) stress that focusing on the assets of poor communities does not imply that they do not need additional resources from the outside, but that outside resources will be much more effectively used if the local community itself is fully mobilized and invested and hence can recognize which additional resources are needed. The model has a strong basis in that it focuses on strengths-based work and citizen-led development.

The ABCD is an approach as well as a set of strategies for identifying and mobilising community assets for change (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003). For example, gathering information on assets allows communities to mobilise resources so that they can be shared

among local residents for the good of the community (Burke et al., 2008: 13). As much as anything, the ABCD is a process of reframing a community in terms of the resources that are already at hand with the intention of using these resources as a basis for collective action (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 55). Additionally, the model does not ignore the limitations of the community, nor does it seek to absolve local government of its social responsibility to the community. Instead, the government joins hands with the local community to find solutions to help improve and develop collective cooperation and social capital (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993: 30).

The ABCD Model has also been used to connect community issues to theoretical principles. For instance, rather than focusing on missing small businesses, this approach would focus on existing small businesses and their success. By zooming in on its assets, the community as a whole will see its positive aspects (such as community gardens, a mentoring program, and the many skills of its residents) and can then work on developing these assets even more (Haines, 2015: 47). This model has been increasingly popular and has been used in the USA, Canada, Europe and Australia (Burke et al., 2009). As a paradigm, it shows the importance of social ties between community members and community issues. It also involves developing relationships between and among local residents, identifying the network of associations and local groups – large and small, formal and informal – who can contribute to the initiative, and expanding the asset map to include local organisations such as the council, community agencies, non-government agencies, schools and hospitals and local businesses, and creating partnerships between these groups (Boyd et al., 2008: 191). The idea is to build capacity within a community – to build and strengthen a community's assets (Haines, 2015: 47).

Payne (2006) points out that though no empirical data is available to demonstrate the effectiveness of the ABCD approach, any arguments are based on theoretical underpinnings. However, all historic evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 8).

4.4.1 Economic Development

Community development is closely linked to local economic transformation. If transformation is truly about building lasting and sustainable solutions, then assets and the integration of economic development are crucial to achieve community development outcomes (Burkett, 2011: 575). This is important because community development without economic development is incomplete.

Beyond the mobilisation of a particular community, the ABCD model is concerned with how to link micro-assets to the macro environment. The model focuses on the boundaries of community and how to position the community in relation to local institutions and the external economic environment on which its continued prosperity depends. A vital component of any asset-based community development project is the economic revitalization of the community, particularly in low income communities where community members are not only faced with the pernicious social effects of unemployment but also underemployment (Payne, 2006: 49). This is important because community development without economic development is incomplete.

However, economic development often means the local interests of the people are 'narrowed down' to merely managing or increasing their assets. On the other hand, a belief in people's resourcefulness and their assortment of assets is the basis of community development. If transformation is truly about building lasting and sustainable solutions, then assets and the integration of economic development are crucial to achieve community development outcomes (Burkett, 2011: 575). The ABCD is a promising approach to achieving a better quality of life and sustaining communities not only over time or in an economic sense, but through the development of all forms of capital that are necessary for a community to thrive (Haines, 2015: 54).

4.4.2 Sustainability

"The vibrant rural community of the future will display an asset-based approach rather than concentrating simply on needs, will use financial and other instruments to take ownership of community assets and will manage assets responsibly and actively over time for public benefit. This represents a community development model that focuses on

community participation and community ownership. This in turn means that sustainability of the development effort is at the core of the strategy.” (The Carnegie Commission for Rural Community Development, 2007: 20)

The ABCD model is strategically important for sustainable community-driven development. It is based on the strengths and potentials of a community, and involves assessing the resources, skills, and experience available and then organizing the community around issues that move its members into action and then determining and taking appropriate action (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996). Sustainability has various dimensions, and for purposes of this study a sustainable community driven approach to development implies that progress within the development effort is lasting.

Through the ABCD model, the development process is sustained and scaled up while it continues to recognise local associations as the driving force – the vehicles through which all the community assets can be identified and then connected to one another in ways that increase their power and effectiveness. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 5) believe that the key to community revitalization is “to locate all of the available local assets, to begin connecting them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness, and to begin harnessing those local institutions that are not yet available for local development purposes”. This points towards purposely placing a community’s social assets—which are important for sustainability—at the centre of the community development process, including through formal and informal networks and institutions.

4.4.3 Asset Mapping

This study uses the definition of asset mapping by Burke et al. (2008) who define it as the process of identifying assets—skills and capacity—and their location within the community. Asset mapping is also a constant exercise aimed at identifying the skills, knowledge, and resources within a community. In community settings, the ABCD model introduces the language of assets by focusing on people’s skills and capacities, and both tangible and intangible resources in an exercise known as asset mapping. The point of mapping assets is

to stimulate purposeful organizing; it is not an end in itself nor a means for outside organizations to extract information (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 56).

The ABCD model encourages social researchers to engage in individual level inventory of capacities such as asset mapping surveys to identify various skills that they may have rather than conduct needs assessments. While individuals do have weaknesses and deficiencies, they also possess strengths and community building capacities that must be identified (Payne, 2006: 32).

These assets need to be 'connected' for any development effort to be achieved, and these connections are initiated at individual, organizational or institutional level through social relationships and ties. These three major categories contain within them much of the asset base of every community (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993), including:

- individuals including youth, seniors, people with disabilities, local artists, and others;
- local associations and organizations such as business organizations, charitable groups, ethnic associations, political organizations, service clubs, sports leagues, veterans groups, religious institutions, cultural organizations, and many others;
- local institutions for community building such as parks, libraries, schools, community colleges, police, hospitals, and any other institution that is part of the fabric of a community.

The ABCD emphasises the need for synergy between all three levels. The goal is to identify how individuals can work within citizen associations to bring about change in the community while sharing resources and collaborating together to achieve a common goal. This is achieved through social relationships and both formal and informal synergies. The ABCD model provides the opportunity for local residents look to one another for solutions by recognising and identifying their assets, while the local organisations and institutions provide the infrastructure and enabling environment to help provide for solutions that are outside the scope of local individuals or community groups. Guided by Payne (2006), Warren et al. (2001) and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), this study groups these social assets into the following three levels;

- i. Social Assets at Individual Level: This includes the talents, abilities and skills of community members
- ii. Social Assets at Organisational Level: This includes local associations like churches, cultural groups and community based organisations.
- iii. Social Assets at Institutional Level: This includes the local institutions like schools, businesses, hospitals and local government.

4.4.3.1 Social Assets at Individual Level

Proponents of the ABCD model argue that any successful community development project must recognize individuals as one of the greatest assets of any community (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993; Payne, 2006). Individuals are seen as assets rather than as being in need of services, and focuses on strengths-based work and citizen-led development. The ABCD model focuses on the importance of the strengths and assets that people in communities bring to change processes (Burkett, 2011: 573).

Metaphorically, social assets can be seen as an invisible bank account into which the assets of social relationships and networks are invested. Assets such as time, energy, skill and vision are held there, and as they grow, so too do the strengths, and social fabric of the community – in a sort of intangible compound interest. Like any capital, when wisely managed social capital enhances the well-being of the citizens who 'banked it' (Russell and Smeaton, 2009: 5). Each time a person uses his or her talents, the community is stronger and the person more empowered (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993).

Formal skills, while helpful, only reach some of the people in the community—usually those who are already involved. Those who are 'on the margins' and are less confident are often slow to participate in any formal recording of skills. Direct involvement and requests for help in organizing particular events or aspects of the same usually evoke positive responses of cooperation and help, and often uncover previously uncelebrated skills and interests (Burke et al., 2009: 14). This is very important in community development efforts. In Europe, leaders are citing Putnam's work—*Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Putnam, 2001) and *Better Together: Restoring the American Community* (Putnam, Feldstein and Cohen, 2005)—as a road map for addressing declining community

spirit. Putnam himself promotes the asset-based approach as a means to build civil society and argues that those who dwell in communities with strong social capital have a greater sense of responsibility towards their neighbours (including those that typically are excluded) and their neighbourhoods; are more content with their lives; and are more likely to find sustainable solutions to local problems from within the community rather than continually and exclusively seeking outside help (Gesthuizen, van der Meer, and Scheepers, 2009).

4.4.3.2 Social Assets at Organisational Level

The ABCD model alleges that social assets are also found in citizen associations and community based organisations such as places of worship, cultural groups, and local NGOs as they provide a forum in which individuals become empowered (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993; Payne, 2006). Payne (2006: 38) points out that these are essential in building strong communities as they empower, organize, and provide a way in which community members become involved in the affairs of the community, while also providing a mechanism for informal social control in the community. They provide a means through which community members can organise themselves formally or informally.

4.4.3.3 Social Assets at Institutional Level

Recognising that community social action is possible does not absolve policy makers of their responsibility (Sampson, 2001: 109). Local government must complement the community development efforts of community members and local associations while maintaining its accountability in providing sufficient and necessary support to them. It should work collaboratively with individuals and associations to impact positive change in the community (Sampson et al., 1999).

Local institutions provide infrastructure that looks at issues including policy, compliance, law enforcement, and public utilities such as schools and businesses. The central role is one of support for community development to take place by providing an enabling environment. As an institution, local government plays a key role in implementing an asset-based community development approach to any community (Payne, 2006: 41). When obliged to work through government systems, community development programmes/projects become sustainable. Local government acts as an infrastructure providing services and political

policies where needed, without supplanting the bonding and bridging relationships between neighbours, community associations and local institutions (Payne, 2006: 41).

4.5 Perceptions of Asset Based Approaches to Community Development

The literature on the ABCD model highlights the tension between the needs based and asset-based approaches to community development (Burke et al., 2008: 9). The ABCD is presented as an alternative to the needs-based approaches where community leaders focus on the needs of the community to secure funding from external agencies thus demoralizing the community and making them feel powerless (Wilke, 2006).

Asset based approaches focus on what is available and hence looks at solutions through a more positive yardstick. The main contention of advocates of the ABCD model is that it responds to the positive attributes of communities, in contrast to what they see as a needs-based approach (Henderson and Vercseg, 2010: 75). These approaches do not focus on who is to blame but on 'what can be used' to mitigate the problem or issue. This naturally places the political system in a position to be answerable to the people it is supposed to serve. Further, this potentially means that the political system is forced to look at the economic system in place and tailor it to meet the needs of the people. Ultimately the asset-based approaches are looking for solutions from within the community and recognizing and enhancing the role of the political and economic systems to serve the needs of the communities.

Critics have argued that this is a right-wing approach to community development with the disadvantaged community having only itself to blame for its disadvantages, while others say it understates the role of political and economic systems that affect communities from the outside (Burke et al., 2008). The focus on existing resources and community-based activity is seen as justifying the withdrawal of state support, thereby offloading responsibility for social and economic issues onto individuals and communities (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 55). Burkett (2011: 574) has criticised the model as building on economic discourses (i.e. assets and capital), having limitations of a professional project of community development and the need for popular and citizen-led frameworks of community practice. It is evident that the model heavily relies on assumptions that may not necessarily translate in

to the required or expected action. Nonetheless, the ABCD model is an innovative strategy for community-driven development in urban and rural communities. Focusing on the assets and strengths of a community provides a more effective way for people to draw on their community resources. If community development and transformation is really about building long-lasting and sustainable solutions, then assets and the integration of economic development are crucial.

Asset based approaches also potentially provide hope and a more positive outlook for the community as the focus shifts to the strengths rather than the weaknesses while giving a more complete picture of the community. This means that community members may feel in control of their own community even when external agents are there to assist the development process. Using available assets means that the community is in effect driving the process from within and thus giving the 'intervention' better chances of sustainability even after the external agents have left. Community members see themselves as being part of the solutions to their issues or problems, with the possibility of having more than only one solution—provided by the external agency.

Mathie and Cunningham (2002) argue that external agencies are needed to facilitate the ABCD process, but should know when to step back so as not to create dependency. External agents can therefore guide the process and assist to 'jump start' social development. Where funding is sought from external agencies, the funding is targeted at the community residents as opposed to the service providers which arguably implies that they benefit more from the external assistance depending on how the service providers use the funds.

Stoeker (2005) argues that this approach is designed to bring people together to influence public decisions. It emphasises neighbor-to-neighbour relationships and the strengthening of social ties as residents engage in the identification of existing assets and resources while co-operating together to build and expand these resources where needed (Payne, 2006: 27). The community members are involved in the process and the sense of ownership and responsibility is heightened. A horizontal relationship is created between all actors in the community including at individual, organizational and institutional level. This strengthens social relationships and binds communities together, and facilitates the empowerment of

communities. All actors are involved in an inclusive process as opposed to a fragmented approach that is created by the needs-based approaches to development. Communities must be allowed sufficient opportunities to act collectively and form partnerships with actors outside their immediate neighbourhood in order to build the bonding and bridging social capital necessary for mobilizing resources and services to address the problems they face (Warren et al., 2001).

However, the most pertinent and practical consideration for anyone considering the use of approaches like the ABCD is its relative newness, which means that there is no long-term analysis of the approach within community development research (Burke et al., 2008: 12). This study attempts to use the ABCD model as a tool of analysis by looking at how it works practically, and the possibilities that emerge from its use.

4.6 Other Alternative Community Development Approaches

Alternative development approaches are centred on people and their environment (Friedman, 1992: 31). Therefore, in practice any community development effort falls within this school of thought. Broadly, the ABCD approach complements other alternative community development approaches such as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) and the rights-based approaches to development. This assertion is in line with the findings of the Coady Institute for International Development (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003), which note the ABCD's capacity to operationalise these other methodologies (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 17).

4.6.1 Participatory Rural Appraisal

Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) is a family of methods that enables communities to share and enhance their experience, and to plan and act together with external service-providers to enrich their lives (Bar-On and Prinsen, 1999: 277). This approach was developed in the early 1990s to initiate a paradigm shift from the top-down to a bottom-up approach, and from blueprint planning to an interactive learning process (Wahib et al., 2017: 812).

The World Bank Participation Sourcebook (1996) defines Participatory Rural Appraisal

(PRA) as a label given to a growing family of participatory approaches and methods that emphasise local knowledge and enable local people to make their own appraisal, analysis, and plans (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 7). Broadly speaking, it is an approach that tries to include rural community members in planning for and managing development projects and/or programmes.

PRA is an inclusive approach that provides for an increased understanding of the issues. This contributes to the opportunity to arrive at sustainable solutions that are acceptable to all stakeholders and more importantly, that can be implemented successfully. The ABCD approach can deepen the PRA analysis and community building outcomes (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 7).

4.6.2 Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) implies a recognition of people's inherent potential, whether this derives from their strong social networks, their access to physical resources and infrastructure, their ability to influence core institutions or any other factor that has poverty-reducing potential (DFID, 1999: 6). Conceptually, it goes beyond PRA because it proactively departs from needs analysis as a starting point, intentionally inviting participants to begin by mapping their assets and identifying their allies (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 10).

Through the process of appreciative enquiry, it organises the social assets that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities, and shows how they relate. Within the SLA, Serrat (2017: 22) outlines key themes that help form the basis to frame development activities as being;

- People-centered
- Responsive and participatory
- Multilevel
- Conducted in partnership with the public and private sectors
- Dynamic
- Sustainable.

This places social capital at the centre of respective efforts to plan for development activities and assess contributions to efforts to enhance their livelihoods.

Both the ABCD model and the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework⁷ primarily focus on the ‘assets’ that are available within a community. When joined with an ABCD approach, SLA is well poised to extend beyond economic development (livelihoods) to the intentional building of bonding and bridging social capital, thereby creating strong social networks that include women and other marginalised groups (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 11). The ABCD framework also offers SLA a means of practical, grass roots application where citizens own the process, often absent in SLA. Like the ABCD approach, the SLA recognizes the synergy between different levels of social relationships and the importance of macro- and micro-linkages. It also acknowledges the importance of linking the different sectors within social development.

4.6.3 Rights Based Approach

The UNHCR defines a rights-based approach to development as a conceptual framework for the process of human development based on international human rights standards and oriented in practice towards promoting and protecting human rights (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 12). The goal is empowerment: to provide people with the capabilities and access needed to change their own lives, improve their own communities and influence their own destinies (ibid). This approach leans towards empowering individuals rather than giving them what they are lacking. Like the ABCD, it places individuals at the centre of the community development process.

4.6.4 Comparing ABCD with other Community Development Approaches

The table below summarises how the ABCD complements other community development approaches;

	Needs Based	Participatory Rural	Sustainable	Rights-Based	Asset Based Community
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⁷ DFID. 1999. Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets

		Appraisal	Livelihood Approach	Approach	Development
Orientation	External	Internal/external	Internal/external	Internal/external	Internal
Assessment	Needs and local wisdom	Needs, problems and what is missing	Assets and strengths	Assessment of human rights policy and practice	What has worked, community Strengths and assets
Relationship between institution and community	Community as passive recipient of aid and programmes	Co-designers of services and programmes	Co-designers	Institution aims to empower and protect rights	Co-producers/citizens
Development of Solutions	Experts, Externally - driven	Local knowledge to co-develop programs and projects	Local knowledge and area-based solutions	Citizens as centre of Development process and directors of development	Citizen – driven internal solutions
Capacity Building	External, professional/ institutional	Professional/institutional	Economic development in response to specific shock and on-going poverty	Institutional and citizen	Citizen and associations
Social Capital	Not a deliberate strategy	Linking Capital between NGO and community	Linking Capital between NGO and community	Linking Capital Between institutions and citizens	Creation of bonding, Bridging and linking capital

Table 1: Comparative Table of Community Development Approaches (Russel and Smeaton, 2009: 14)

Russel and Smeaton (2009: 17) state that when aligned with PRA, SLA and a rights-based approach, the ABCD process creates a local citizen-led community development road map toward new futures for Sub-Saharan African communities, starting where all development initiatives should - with local citizens and what they have. The job of external agents is to support communities on the journey from 'clients to citizens'. (Mathie and Cunningham, 2009) The ABCD implies radical possibilities for the role of communities, NGOs/CBOs and governments in the community-led development pathway opened up by the ABCD model (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 65).

4.7 ABCD Theory in Practice

This study aims to show how the theoretical principles of the ABCD can be used to explore community level intervention models, as well as provide a theoretically informed concept to describe how such a model can be implemented realistically. Green and Haines (2012: 11) say asset-based development is more a method than it is a theory. Basically, they say it is not easy to recognise a theoretical basis for the asset-based community development approach.

However, it can be placed in Wilkinson's (1991) interactional theory of communities which rejects the view of communities as independent social structures, and instead through interaction in a locality, an awareness of common interests emerges. This means that the interactions of community members are harnessed towards the achievement of a particular goal. For instance, as community members discuss the needs of their children in the context of ECD, they would discover that they have similar interests such as safety and security for their children. This may then lead them to recognise that there may be a piece of land available as well as people who would be able to clear and fence off the piece of land to be used as a playground. In this process, people learn to identify, manage, and leverage local resources to the benefit of their locality (Green and Haines, 2012: 11). For example, this could mean that rather than an organisation providing skills training for community members to use outside the community, local trainings could match requirements for jobs that can be created locally such as ECD caregiver training, or making play grounds using locally available material.

The work of Kretzmann and McKnight (and others) has codified the ABCD model as a deliberate process designed to encourage citizen agency, using the language of assets to generate activated subjects and collective actions (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 56). As Mathie and Cunningham (2003: 477) discuss ABCD as a strategy for community driven development, it can be understood as an approach, as a set of methods for community mobilisation, and as a strategy for community-based development.

The goal of asset-based community development is to identify these resources and mobilise community members to use them to meet the needs of residents (Green and Haines, 2012: 12). For example, in the community based ECD model, this could mean identifying people who have good skills for taking care of young children and involving them in the ECD service provision. When these people can put their skills to good use in ECD, this resource is transformed into an asset. As discussed in section 4.4, the focus on assets is at the core of the approach with the potential to give practical solutions to vulnerable communities. For instance, gathering information on assets allows communities to mobilise resources so that they can be shared among local residents for the good of the community (Burke et al., 2009: 13), thus giving them the tools and confidence to engage in self-help as well as networking.

The availability of the wide range of social assets that exist within any community is fundamental to community development, particularly where community development efforts aim to deliver services that the Government is unable to provide adequately such as ECD services. It is argued that the key to community regeneration is to locate all of the available local assets and connect them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness for local development purposes (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 5). Burke et al (2009: 74) show that the ABCD model helps tap into the imagination and confidence of community members, so that they can develop their skills individually and collectively.

The Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative

Green and Haines (2012: 10 – 11) point to the Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative (DSNI) as one of the most widely acclaimed success stories in recent years in the field of community development. The philosophy was to build on local assets rather than a focus on the needs of the community. Located in one of the poorest areas of Massachusetts in the United States, Dudley Street was an area with high poverty levels and social problems. The DSNI began in 1984 when the Riley Foundation decided to invest in the neighbourhood. However, local residents challenged the plan that was presented because it was not “their plan”. In response, the residents established the DSNI with a 31-member board with the majority including local community members. The organisation launched various successful projects, attributed to its combining the role of developer of low-income housing and provider of social services that recognised and made use of available resources within, with

the role of community organiser. Additionally, the DSNI recognised the various cultures in the neighbourhood and sponsored several multi-cultural festivals.⁸ Of key importance here is the recognition of the community members, and the important role that they played in developing their community, as well as their engagement with local businesses, organisations and networks.

The importance of strengthening social relationships—and community participation—for the success of this model cannot be downplayed. Community members can positively play an active and important role in the solutions to their problems. As a programme that puts emphasis on community participation, the community based ECD is a good example of how resources can be pooled constructively, providing a framework for sustainability. This strong ‘internal’ focus is intended simply to stress the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993: 8).

The Arlanza Neighbourhood Initiative

A case study of the The Arlanza Neighbourhood Initiative (Payne and Williams, 2008) is a good example of best practice in aligning theory with practice in community development projects. The Arlanza neighborhood had experienced significant negative changes in the 1990s, with industry replacing residential areas and a significant reduction in staff from the major employer. Many long-term residents were forced to move from Arlanza in pursuit of jobs elsewhere. This migration undermined the social connections and destabilised traditional social networks, weakening the neighbourhood’s bonding social capital. Depletion of this social capital undermines two aspects of neighborhood organization and culture that support healthy youth development: (1) the organizational capacity of neighborhoods to engage in collective action, that is, the strength of their social bonds and the level of trust that infuses those bonds, and (2) the willingness of neighborhood residents to realize their common interests through collective action, such as addressing neighborhood affairs and monitoring neighborhood activities, especially those involving youth (Payne and Williams, 2008: 42). In 2002, the city of Riverside, California addressed the

⁸ For more information on DSNI, see Medoff and Sklar (1994). The video *Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street* (Lipman and Mahan, 1996) documents the efforts of DSNI as well

problem of youth violence through a theoretically informed approach to neighborhood mobilization.

A major focus of the neighborhood mobilization component was to identify neighborhood and residents' assets and create an integrated network to strengthen social capital and the capacity for collective action to improve conditions (Payne and Williams, 2008: 43). Like most communities which have experienced major changes, the social organisation and cultural practices that support child rearing were disrupted. Therefore, one of the goals of the initiative was to decrease risk factors in the lives and environment of children aged 0 – 5 that may lead to the development of violent behaviours detrimental to those children, their families, and the community (Payne, 2006). One of the components of the project was the establishment of a resource centre including a child development centre, to provide support for children through affordable childcare on a sliding scale fee basis.

The stakeholders were aware of the significant difference between baby sitting and early quality education. Through their asset mapping and service delivery components, the project realized that although it had many babysitting options, the young children were not being prepared for school. The initiative recognized the gap and introduced an age-appropriate educational component to the project to prepare children for success in the first years of formal education. To that end, social services were made available through the centrally located neighborhood resource centre which included the Arlanza Child Development Program, a 48-slot day care centre with state preschool services (Payne and Williams, 2008: 44). Ultimately what happened was that the initiative recognized what social assets they had locally through an asset mapping exercise, and identified what they needed from outside the neighbourhood. Asset mapping at the three different levels discussed earlier (Refer to section 4.4.3) was crucial to the success of the project. The Arlanza Initiative provides a robust example of how the ABCD approach is used to show how communities can be improved by using synergies and building links and working relationships between people, institutions and organisations. This is discussed in more detail in the next sub-sections.

4.7.1 Social Assets at Institutional Level

Because there was no funding for the implementation of the project, there was need to identify and secure external funding for the building and operational costs of the resource centre. Collaborative partnerships between various agencies in the community were key to this process. At planning level, the key partner was the local government—in this case the City of Riverside—who managed both the planning and implementation phases of the initiative. Various departments within the city contributed to the effort such as the Parks and Recreation Department as ultimately, they would provide the grounds on which the resource centre was based, and the County Office of Education. Additionally, to ensure that income was generated to assist with maintenance costs, the Riverside County Department of Public Health leased space in the centre for their Women and Infant Children office.

A small multi-purpose community centre was expanded to provide nutritional and health services to women and infants, and also to house a child development centre that would provide 48 slots for local children on a sliding scale fee basis to supplement the 34 slots already available on the park. Various offices, counseling rooms and classrooms were made available for use by other community projects and local groups.

4.7.2 Social Assets at Organisational Level

Key partners were identified and approached for assistance. The Office of Education was subcontracted to arrange for a child care operator to be housed in the facility and because The City did not provide this service, and it was again subcontracted to an agency that provided early quality education for infants and young children. The Youth Service Centre of Riverside was another partner to assist in building social capital through its networks. Typically, this centre provided counseling and therapy for child and substance abuse through its outreach programme—which was school based—and treatment component including individual counselling, crisis intervention and assessment. Another partner was the Riverside County Department of Public and Social Services which helped train and provide job information for Arlanza community members. This organization also donated all the furniture and equipment for the facility as part of their collaboration and contribution. The Alford Unified School District was key to establishing relationships between The City and

various schools in the area, while a local hospital donated 10 modular trailers that were modified into the new Arlanza Youth and Family Centre.

These partners, among others, represented local assets that were employed to enhance the social capital of the local community. With this integration came the pooling of resources and assets that were used to build the infrastructure for community mobilization in keeping with the ABCD Model.

4.7.3 Social Assets at Individual Level

At implementation level, jobs were advertised in local newspapers, and job fliers were distributed for an Administrative Services Manager for the project. Additionally, a board was set up comprising city staff to oversee this new project as a steering committee. The public affairs director served as the Chairperson of the Board, and provided invaluable insights into how collaborative partnerships operate. According to the ABCD Model, individuals represent key assets in any community, therefore this individual's insights—as well as insights of others in the community—represented a vital component to the planning and subsequent implementation of this community building effort (Payne, 2006: 71).

The City Manager met with various individuals who were actively involved in community efforts to build connections and collaboration with community members. This made the process of recruiting key partners easier as stakeholders were now aware that the effort had the support and advocacy of The City Manager which enhanced the project's credibility, created momentum for the initiative and gave the project a high profile in the community. As the planning phase continued, contacts were made with key individuals and volunteers in what the ABCD model calls mobilising local community assets (Ktretzmann and McKnight, 1993; Mattessich and Monsey, 2001). Additionally, this increased the social interaction among community members—another key component of the ABCD model. Further, various individuals offered their resources, representing a good example of mobilising local assets.

4.8 ABCD as a Framework for Analysis

Warren et al. (2001) points out that an intervention strategy in a poor community must address the symbiotic role of institutions, organisations, and local individuals and families. This study uses the figure below—developed using ideas by Payne (2006), Warren et al. (2001) and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993)—to demonstrate the inter-dependent nature of the social assets needed for successful community development efforts, and the encompassing nature of these three levels of social assets.

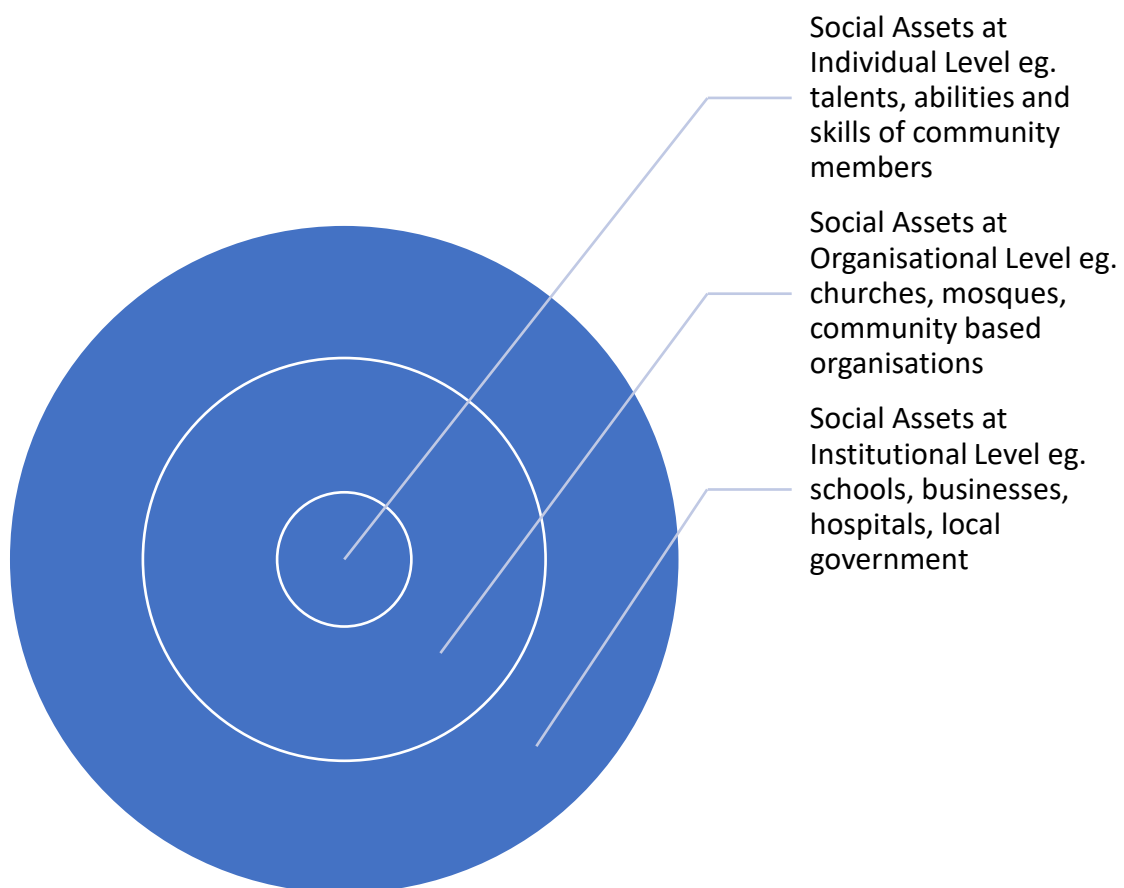


Figure 6: The inter-dependent nature of the three levels of social assets within the ABCD model

As discussed in section 4.4.3, these assets need to be ‘connected’ for any development effort to be achieved and these connections are initiated at individual, organizational or institutional level through social relationships and ties. This can be achieved through active participation at all three levels of social assets.

In section 4.2 the study broke down the components of community development into 4 categories, these being Community Assets, Social Relationships, Community Participation and Empowerment. To develop the framework for analysis of the study, a look at the 3 levels of social assets through the identified cornerstones of community development further narrowed the components of analysis into two main clusters of indicators;

- Community Capacity, and
- Community Participation.

These became the basis for analysis in this study. In essence, the core of the framework for analysis is the mapping of available assets—community capacity—in the communities taking part in the study as well as the utilisation of these assets through community participation. The questions asked are framed around Jackson et al’s (2003) overall indicators of community capacity, and the core community involvement indicators adapted from the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (2006) and The Community Development Foundation (2005) given in Tables 1 and 2 below.

4.8.1 Community Capacity

The study views community capacity as the community’s social assets and their ability to withstand, absorb, adapt and recover from the impacts of shocks and persistent stress. The table below gives Jackson et al’s (2003) overall indicators of community capacity as well as possible ways of measuring them. This table provides the guide for the analysis in this study.

Proposed Indicators	Possible Measures
The community is welcoming and supportive to the whole diversity of the community (e.g. all cultures, ages, vulnerabilities, class, income level, sexual orientation, parent status)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about community events is available in the various languages of the community • Community events include all age groups in a wide range of activities and display the food and music of many different groups

Residents have positive perceptions of their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of residents report feeling proud to live in their community • Residents report feeling comfortable to have outsiders visit their community. Fun, community-wide events open to everyone occur at several times during the year
Residents celebrate together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun, community-wide events open to everyone occur at several times during the year
People participate actively in the social, political, and economic life of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents report they are involved in political action • Banks and other businesses located in or near the community contribute
People come together around community issues and work together towards a common purpose and/or joint project in balanced and proactive ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposing or different points of view are present at community meetings
People from all parts of the community are involved in community activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of groups are represented at community meetings and activities • Many people share leadership and other responsibilities
Community members have a sense of control and a sense of ownership in relation to planning and implementing local programmes and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents sit on Boards of Directors of local agencies and organisations • Residents are involved in programme design and implementation in local agencies and organisations

Table 2: Indicators of Strong Community Capacity

4.8.2 Community Participation

Any asset-based community development effort should go beyond merely having strong capacity and skills within a community. The available skills need to be utilised to achieve any measure of community development. Therefore, this study is also guided by four core community involvement indicators adapted from the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (2006) and The Community Development Foundation (2005), listed in the table below;

Proposed Indicator	Possible Measure
Community Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of adults who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

Community Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together
Social Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of people who have carried out voluntary work individually or in an organization, or have been helped by others (unpaid and not relatives) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) over the past year and ii) regularly over the past year
Condition of the community and voluntary sector (Extent and influence of the voluntary and community sector in the locality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of voluntary and community organisations functioning in the specified locality Percentage of those that are community organisations Percentage of local people who have volunteered or played an active role in a community or voluntary organisation in the past year Range and volume of the services provided by the voluntary and community sector in the past year Percentage of professionally-led voluntary organisations who feel they have adequate access to local decision making Percentage of community organisations who feel they have adequate access to local decision making Proportion of services in selected public service areas delivered by community or voluntary organisations on behalf of the local authority

Table 3: Indicators of Community Participation

Using these indicators as a guide for data collection offers enough evidence on available assets and the level of community involvement. They combine the ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ senses of community involvement, reflecting the intrinsic strength of the community as well as its capacity to be involved in governance, and would therefore be of value to communities themselves, those who work closely with them and to the authorities which lie outside them (Humm, Jones and Chanan, 2005: 5). They also provide a practical measure for how policy relates to practice.

4.9 The ABCD: A Theoretical Framework for the Study

The ABCD is a promising approach to achieving a better quality of life and sustaining communities not only over time or in an economic sense, but through the development of all forms of capital that are necessary for a community to thrive (Haines, 2015: 54).

As an unconventional approach to development, the ABCD model lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing (but often unrecognised) assets, and thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity (Mathie and Cunningham, 2002: 3). It is an alternative community development path for evidence-based initiatives which are asset based, internally focused and relationship driven (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). These assets are revealed through an asset mapping exercise. Within the ABCD model, these assets are then connected and mobilised to work together in a community development project/programme. The connection and mobilisation take place at three levels of these social assets as discussed in section 4.4.3.

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 5) believe that the key to community revitalization is ‘to locate all of the available local assets, to begin connecting them with one another in ways that multiply their power and effectiveness, and to begin harnessing those local institutions that are not yet available for local development purposes. Interesting to note is that more often than not, the most vulnerable and marginalised sections of society are the least likely to benefit from community-based programmes that target them. Uma Kothari (2001 as cited in Williams, 2004: 563) suggests that these programmes, particularly those that emphasise social inclusion, often draw marginalised individuals and groups in to the development process, but do so in ways that bind them more tightly to structures of power that they are not able to question.

In the traditional ‘needs based approach’ to community development, the focus tends to be on reform of institutions and a focus on community deficits. Underlying that approach is the assumption that the role of communities is defined as what happens after the important work of professionals and institutions has been completed (McKnight and Russell, 2018: 8).

The ABCD model inverts this, by shifting the role of professionals based on mobilising the identified community assets and connecting them through collective action. The ABCD model potentially repositions authority over how development unfolds, back into the hands of local communities. When appropriately implemented, it has the capacity to ensure that external agencies avoid the inherent trap underlying some forms of aid giving of treating the people of many African countries as ‘their poor clients’ who receive foreign aid, instead of ‘active citizens’ co-producing an inclusive democratic vision of the future that they own in every way, with—when necessary—the support of foreign aid (Cormac and Smeaton, 2009: 18). External agents are needed as catalysts for change to channel ideas and resources to the community and to serve as intermediaries to the outside world (Friedman, 1992: 158). Therefore, the job of external agents is to support them on the journey from ‘clients to citizens’ (Mathie and Cunningham, 2009).

4.10 Conclusion

As an alternative approach to development, in ABCD the state remains a major player alongside communities and other development partners such as CBOs and NGOs. The external agency of NGOs is clearly needed to initiate community efforts at local self-empowerment (Friedman, 1992: 158). The principles of the ABCD model will be used in this study to frame the methodology chosen and in particular the data analysis. In section 4.2 the study broke down the components of community development into 4 categories which were further narrowed down to two main clusters (Refer to section 4.8). These two clusters—community capacity and community participation—will guide the analysis in this study.

Uganda’s community based ECD model will be tested in terms of community capacity and community participation within the legislative framework for ECD in Uganda, and more specifically the ECD Policy (2007) and the NIECD Policy (2016). In theory, the policies allow for people to be at the heart of the community based ECD programme process, while focusing on the available assets within their communities. An analysis of how this works practically will be conducted using the 3 levels of social assets within the 2 identified indicator clusters outlined above.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the overall strategic approach to the study. It discusses the guiding frameworks which underpin the study, and the strategic choices made in how the study was conducted. It begins with broad philosophical assumptions and then moves on to the study's ontological and epistemological worldviews, giving it a theoretical lens through which it can be understood. It then talks about the procedures involved in the study including the research method used, the research tools employed, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

5.2 Research Paradigms

Most research and evaluation sponsored by official agencies and funders default to the truth and reality testing inquiry framework. This framework expects objectivity to be valued and aimed for, and looks for findings that are presented as valid, reliable, generalizable, and essentially true in the common sense meaning of *true*—that is factual, credible, and supported by empirical evidence (Patton, 2015: 107). Therefore, being associated with 'good science', the majority of evaluations use traditional methods of scientific enquiry and use the same principles, procedures, and ethos as those of the natural sciences. This paradigm or doctrine is known as positivism—a term that is used descriptively by writers as either a philosophical position or a pejorative term used to describe crude and often superficial data collection (Bryman, 2012: 27).

Historically, positivism is associated with the French philosopher, August Comte. His positivism turns to observation and reason as means of understanding behavior while explanation proceeds by way of scientific description (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011: 7). Patton (2015: 107) points out that most quantitative research operates from this traditional scientific perspective and only adds counting and measuring as operational procedures. When this framework is transferred into qualitative research, the methods of data collection are changed but the enquiry framework is not.

A positivist framework for evaluation of early intervention programmes suggests that it is possible through scientific methods to determine definitely what works and does not work in intervention strategies (Hauser-Cram et al., 2000: 491). Positivism treats 'social facts' as existing independently of the activities of both participants and researchers (Silverman, 2013: 86). However, the different stakeholders involved in a programme would have different experiences and perceptions of the programme—all of which are true, that is 'factual, credible and supported by empirical evidence' (ibid). For instance, in an article on linking policy discourse to early education and childrearing in Kenya, Swadener et al. (2008: 409) acknowledge the complexity and contradictions of locally enacted practices of culture in contemporary African contexts while also pointing to the insufficient understanding of the local contradictions and complexities of family life in Sub-Saharan nations.

As with most qualitative research designs, positivism sits uneasily within this study particularly because ECD programmes tend to be very context specific. The positivist framework of enquiry aims to generate data which are valid, reliable and independent of the research setting (Silverman, 2013: 447). This framework does not sufficiently capture information for a programme evaluation because it leaves out important information that can only be found in people's understanding and interactions within the specific contexts.

Post-positivism now informs much of contemporary social science research (Patton, 2015: 106). The post-positivist paradigm acknowledges that science is not value free, that knowledge is socially constructed and constrained by history, culture and time, and that there are multiple possible views of truth (Hauser-Cram et al., 2000; 491). This study is framed within the post-positivist approach to reality, with an emphasis on socially constructed knowledge. The study's approach to reality takes in to account that reality within human affairs is not cast in stone, and every different point of view leads to a different realm of truth. Different perspectives determine the relativity, significance and power of truth, and programme evaluators/researchers have the responsibility to bring these together into respective and relevant narratives.

Practically, post-positivist researchers view inquiry as a series of logically related steps, believe in multiple perspectives from participants rather than a single reality, and espouse rigorous methods of qualitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007: 20). In essence, post positivists argue that context and values are important in conducting and understanding scientific enquiry and are no less important in contributing to an understanding of the phenomenon under study (Fischer and Fosrester, 1987; Habermas, 1973 as cited in Hauser-Cram et al., 2000). In this study, reality is construed from the perspectives of various individuals who experience one phenomenon from different standpoints, placing the study within the phenomenological framework of inquiry.

5.2.1 Phenomenological Framework of Inquiry

Phenomenological research is based on the view that our knowledge of the world is rooted in our (immediate) experiences, and the task of the researcher is to describe, understand, interpret and explain these experiences (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 300). Van Manen (1990: 4 as cited in Creswell, 2007:59) describes research as oriented towards lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the “texts” of life (hermeneutics), placing interpretation at the core to understanding human experiences of a phenomenon. Please note that interpretivism is discussed later on in the section on the epistemological position of the study.

A phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007: 57). The value of phenomenology is that it prioritises and investigates how the human being experiences the world (Adams and Van Manen, 2008: 616). This means that different human experiences are used to give an overall essence of a situation. This study aims to methodically capture how different people experience the same phenomenon—in this case the community based ECD programme—by getting these experiences directly from them. This gives meaning credibility and reliability as it is got from more than one source. In summary, phenomenology aims at getting a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences

(Patton, 2015: 115). This is particularly noteworthy for this study as it relies on day to day experiences of various stakeholders to provide information.

In line with the phenomenological framework, the following are central to this study:

- It is important to understand common experiences of various stakeholders to develop a good understanding of the community-based approach to ECD in Uganda
- As a researcher, it is important to distinguish between personal experiences of this phenomenon—community based ECD in Uganda—and those of the participants
- Questions are generally broad to grasp a better understanding of common experiences
- Data analysis involves identifying significant statements or themes which are then used to write descriptions of what participants experienced (textural descriptions) and the context that influenced how they experienced the phenomenon (structural description)
- From these descriptions, a composite description is developed to present the core of the phenomenon—this being the core of a community-based approach to ECD.

5.2.2 Ontological Stance

“Constructionist philosophy is built on the thesis of ontological relativity, which holds that all tenable statements about existence depend on a worldview and no worldview is uniquely determined by empirical or sense data about the world... Constructionist philosophy is epistemologically subjectivist in that the qualitative inquirer is also engaged in social construction as opposed to objectively depicting reality.” (Patton, 2015: 122)

Ontology relates to philosophical assumptions on the nature of reality. Generally, there are two primary ontological views—objectivism and constructionism. This study leans towards constructionism which understands reality as being shaped by a myriad of human aspects and therefore is based on individual interpretation and meaning. A group of people can assign meaning to a phenomenon and do so regularly, but essence does not then reside in the phenomenon but rather in the group that constructs and designates the phenomenon’s

essence (Patton, 2015: 121). In this worldview, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2008: 20). Social research produces various constructed realities as it involves viewpoints of individuals.

This study is essentially an evaluation of a programme. Using the constructionist approach, this evaluation expects that different stakeholders involved in a programme would have different experiences and perceptions of the programme, all of which deserve attention and all of which are experienced as real (Patton, 2015: 123). The construction of information is an independent process because information is made from different standpoints. This study aligns with the constructionist approach which looks to answer questions about how social realities are produced, assembled and maintained. Bryman summarises the philosophical assumptions of what reality is composed of in 4 main points. He says;

- Social phenomena and their meanings are constructed by social actors
- They are continually accomplished and revised
- Researcher's accounts of events are also constructions
- Language and representation shape our perceptions of reality (2012: 33 - 34).

While still deeply interested in what is going on, constructionist sensibilities also raise questions about the processes through which social realities are constructed and sustained. The analytic focus is not so much on the dynamics within social realities as it is on the construction of social realities in the first place (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008b: 374 – 375).

In this study, meaning is explored and discovered through interaction within the societal and cultural norms in which individuals exist. In practice, questions are broad and general so that participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons (Creswell, 2008: 21). The constructionist evaluator would compare various programme participants' perceptions with one another and the analysis could include interpreting the effects of differences in perceptions and

experiences on attainment of the stated programme goals (Patton, 2015: 123). The constructionist model acknowledges that there are various perspectives on how well a programme may be performing. Each perspective is a valid and important viewpoint that should be included in the evaluation (Hauser-Cram *et al.*, 2000: 492). This study attempts to capture various perspectives about community based ECD and seek to understand them.

5.2.3 Epistemological Stance

Epistemology refers to the assumptions and views about how research should be conducted. These assumptions and views raise questions about, and invite us to reflect upon, the issue of how the social world should be studied and whether a scientific approach is the right stance to adopt (Bryman, 2012: 6). In case study research, the qualitative understanding of cases requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its contexts and particular situation which shapes the activity, the experience and the interpretation of the activity (Stake, 2006: 2). Flowing from the study's ontological position and the research paradigm in which this case study is placed, the best way to question or understand the nature of reality is within the interpretivist framework of inquiry.

As discussed in section 5.2, this study lies within the post positivist paradigm. Unlike the positivist paradigm which applies methods used in natural sciences to understand reality, interpretivism views social science as very different and requiring a framework that recognises the subjective nature of social issues. The use of interpretivism in educational research can be tracked back to the 1970s, though it has been used in the areas of anthropology, sociology and philosophy for much longer (Taylor and Medina, 2013). Its overarching belief is that 'to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it' (Schwandt, 1994: 118). The theory became more prevalent as social scientists refuted the ideology that 'the aims and methods of social sciences are identical to those of natural sciences' (Schwandt, 1994: 119). He further goes on to argue that;

"Interpretive accounts are to be judged on the pragmatic grounds of whether they are useful, fitting, generative of further enquiry, and so forth". (Schwandt, 1994: 130)

The aim of interpretivism is to understand individual experiences, keeping in mind their contention that reality is subjective and created by the individual. Meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2007: 20). The aim of research thus relies on participants' views of the subject to develop a pattern of meaning. This study perceives reality through various individual interpretations—interacting with people as informants rather than as subjects. Questions are broad and general, and key data comes from individual observation as participants construct meaning of the situation. It gets acquainted with the concerns of stakeholders by giving attention to programme action, programme uniqueness and the cultural plurality of the people (Stake, 2004: 86). It tries to understand the nature of a community-based approach and the context in which it exists by looking at the experiences and perceptions of parents, caregivers and community members on community based ECD services with the view to providing evidence that they are socially constructed within the specific social contexts in which they occur. Many of those who object to this approach say too much emphasis is placed on subjective data. Stake defends this approach by defining it as 'an empirical study of human activity'. When the evaluators are not there to see the activity for themselves, they have to ask those who did see them (Stake, 2004: 98). Questions are not framed around opinion or feeling but around actual experience. Noteworthy is that interpretivism works well in this particular area of educational research because the focus is on the people—be it as individuals or as a group. The aim is not to change the system or group of people, but to understand the area that is being studied and this cannot be achieved without input from stakeholders who actually experience the area being studied.

5.3 Methodology

Though case studies can include quantitative evidence, the qualitative research methodology was the natural choice of approach to this study as it is compatible with both the nature of the study and its philosophical underpinnings.

5.3.1 Qualitative Approach

Quantitative data are strong in measuring how widespread a phenomenon is, while qualitative methods are strong in explaining what the phenomenon means (Patton, 2015: 620). Qualitative in this context refers to a mode of research concerned with capturing more of the whole of a phenomenon, in context, including the meanings and interpretations of actors (Hauser-Cram et al. 2000: 492). Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). Creswell (2008: 37) says it begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This approach was a natural choice for this study because it focuses on the context in which a study is conducted, though a basic mixed-methods approach was used to get quantitative data for contextual information.

Metaphorically, Creswell (2008: 35) thinks of qualitative research as an intricate fabric composed of minute threads, many colours, different textures, and various blends of material. He further says this fabric is not explained easily or simply, and like the loom on which this fabric is woven, general worldviews and perspectives hold qualitative research together. Similarly, any community development programme is equally composed of many facets and dynamics that influence one another and cannot be explained easily.

Silverman (2013:6) describes qualitative research as consisting of many different endeavours, many of which are concerned with the 'objective' (*ie.* scientific) study of realities which in some sense are objective (eg. how culture works; the logic of conversations). This implies that the qualitative approach is scientific even when it explores realities like people's lives or behaviours, with facts sought in people's interactions and understanding within particular contexts. This extraordinary set of strengths is sometimes forgotten in the face of criticisms that qualitative research is 'merely' anecdotal or at best illustrative, and that it is practised in casual and unsystematic ways (Mason, 2002: 11). Noteworthy is that qualitative inquiries study how people and groups construct meaning

(Patton, 2015: 5). In this study, the qualitative approach was taken in line with the constructionist approach, allowing the study to trace events, their causes and long-term consequences, and derive insightful explanations for all of these. It places persons and their families within this picture and shows in a realistic sense how they adapt to changing conditions both culturally (in the form of role changes for example) and socially (like alterations in the family developmental cycle). This approach provides rich descriptions and a well-founded rationale for explaining the underlying behavioural and environmental processes at work in local settings and therefore was a natural choice of approach for this study. The key is to understand the context in which decisions, actions, and events occur (Yoddumnern-Attig, Attig, and Boonchalaksi, 1997: 3).

Qualitative research is conducted because we need a complex detailed understanding of an issue (Cresswell, 2008: 40). This study explored and evaluated the community-based approach to ECD through the ABCD model. Qualitative methods are often used in evaluations because they tell the programme's story by capturing and communicating the participants' stories (Patton, 2015: 18). Additionally, it is a form of inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand (Creswell, 2008: 39). Most qualitative researchers believe that they can provide a 'deeper' understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from a quantitative study. This comes from mapping out different territories such as 'inner experiences', 'language', 'narratives', 'sign systems' or 'forms of social interaction' (Silverman, 2013: 125). This places the interpretation of social realities and the description of live experiences of people at the heart of qualitative research.

Again, this made the qualitative approach a natural choice within an interpretivist framework of inquiry. Though ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative data analysis can be challenging, the post-positivists remind us, there is no theory-free observation and the selection of which events and data to include in data analysis are under the control of the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 648).

In summary, qualitative research involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, which relate to the social world and concepts and behaviour of people within their own social context. Critics fail to see the strategic significance of context, and of the particular, in the development of our understandings and explanations of the social world (Mason, 2002: 11). This means that it has an unrivalled capacity to constitute compelling arguments about how things work in particular contexts. The qualitative habit of intimately connecting context with explanation means that qualitative research is capable of producing very well-founded cross-contextual generalities, rather than aspiring to more flimsy de-contextual versions (ibid). Though both qualitative and quantitative measures have a context, qualitative methods involve a careful examination of the context in which the procedures are conducted. For instance, in quantitative methods questionnaires may be completed without necessarily providing for an examination of the context or even providing for what the respondent is thinking or feeling when he/she says yes to a question.

Additionally, qualitative methods are holistic and include the qualia of events and experience, including any text, interview or interview transcript, vignette, story or experience that is either told to a researcher or observed (Hauser-Cram et al., 2000: 494). The community in which the development programme—in this case the community based ECD programme—is being implemented is at the core of this study, which means the qualitative line of inquiry became the expected choice of approach to be used.

5.4 Modes

Generically, this study is an evaluation of the community-based approach to ECD being implemented in Uganda. Qualitative evaluation has increasingly gained importance within the larger public policy context. Recent studies point to increased calls for accountability, greater emphasis on evidence-based policy and ‘best practices,’ in the face of reduced resources for programmes of all kinds given national and global financial crises. In addition, there has been concomitant geometric growth of monitoring and evaluation internationally, especially in support of social and economic issues in poorer countries (Patton, 2015: 178). This study is guided by Stake, who defines an evaluation as the pursuit of knowledge about

value (2004: 16). It uses Stake's (1975) responsive approach to evaluation, which places particular emphasis on the importance of personalizing and humanizing the evaluation process (Patton, 2015: 207).

5.4.1 Responsive Evaluation

Responsive evaluation studies emphasize social issues and cultural values as well as personal and programmatic dilemmas (Stake, 2004: xvi). From the beginning of the study to the end, the responsive-leaning evaluator comes to understand with increasing precision and confidence what is happening and what is the goodness of it. Perception of the programme's activity is at the heart of responsive evaluation (Stake, 2004: 92). Stake (2004:86) summarily defines responsive evaluation as a general perspective in the search for quality and the representation of quality in a programme. This is exactly what this study attempts to accomplish.

Usually, responsive evaluation is largely interpretive, relying on the human observer, the portrayer of human experience, to give meaning and value to the evaluation (Stake, 2004: 90). It relies mostly on interpretive observation rather than critical measurement. Further, the approach involves a level of engagement with the research environment in an attempt to understand phenomena. Other people know important things about the programme, and they have made judgement about various aspects of it (Stake, 2004: 111). Therefore, social interaction becomes the basis for collecting information and is accepted as actual evidence of reality.

A study by management scholars examining performance in relation to the amount and accuracy of information used by management concluded that the interpretive frameworks are more important for performance than the accuracy of the data (Patton, 2011: 12). Evaluation studies that rely from beginning to end on interpretive thinking are also steadfastly responsive to the chronological activity, the perceptions, and voices associated with the evaluand (Stake, 2004: xv). Stake (2004) calls these studies responsive because

many of the important meanings of organisation and accomplishment and goodness are situational, reflecting and responding to the locality of the evaluand.

Aside from the general distinguishing characteristics of programmes, there also may be more specific features that are critical to the effectiveness of particular programme types. One of the difficulties in evaluating a specific programme is that the evaluator often has little basis for knowing which aspects of the programme work in relatively predictable ways and which are very distinctive to that particular programme situation (Stake, 2004: xix). This means that to get a meaningful understanding of the subject, the research needs to be 'people-centred' and placed within the research environment. As a programme evaluation, this argument further strengthens the study's choice of using the phenomenological approach as a research paradigm, as well as its epistemological standpoint as within the interpretivist framework of inquiry.

5.4.2 Culturally Responsive Evaluation (CRE)

The above discussion on responsive evaluation is incomplete without talking about the practical implications of responsive evaluations including culture. Fundamentally, culturally responsive evaluation (CRE) places culture at the centre of an evaluation. Bledsoe and Donaldson (2015: 8) say an evaluation is culturally responsive if it is based on an examination of impact through lenses in which the culture of the participants is considered an important factor. This means that the stakeholders' experiences, perceptions and understanding of the impact of the project or programme being evaluated provide important information for the evaluation. Therefore, an evaluation is culturally responsive if it fully takes into account the culture of the programme that is being evaluated (Frierson, Hood, and Hughes, 2002: 63) as well as the needs and cultural parameters of those who are being served relative to the implementation of a programme and its outcomes (Hood and Hall, 2004 as cited in Hood, 2014: 114).

Culturally responsive evaluation positions itself to be relevant in the context of dynamic international and national settings where policy and programme decisions take place (Hood,

Hopson and Frierson, 2015: xiii). Societies demand attention to culture and cultural context due to the changing fabric of communities, programmes, schools, governments and agencies (Bledsoe and Donaldson, 2015: 4). Therefore, being culturally responsive demands that the evaluator has a broad understanding of the programme being evaluated and as such designs the evaluation in a way that reflects the knowledge, understanding, feelings and attitudes of the stakeholders. Practically, this places the stakeholders' perspectives and experiences at the centre of the evaluation. This ability to empathise with a community provides an opportunity to acknowledge and respect the unique context and situations in which the programme resides (ibid: 6).

Though evaluation literature from the last two decades reflects increasing attention to culture and cultural contexts in the field, most of this literature has focused on culturally responsive evaluation concepts and frameworks (Hood, Hopson and Kirkhart, 2015: 281). Noted theorists and practitioners (Frierson, Hood and Hughes, 2010; Hood, Hopson and Frierson, 2005 as cited in Bledsoe and Donaldson, 2015: 7) contend that cultural responsiveness must be present beginning with the inception and conceptualization of the evaluation team, evaluation questions, and evaluation approach and continuing through the collection of data and subsequent dissemination of results. They have come up with a framework for culturally responsive evaluation (Figure 7 below), which also guided this study.

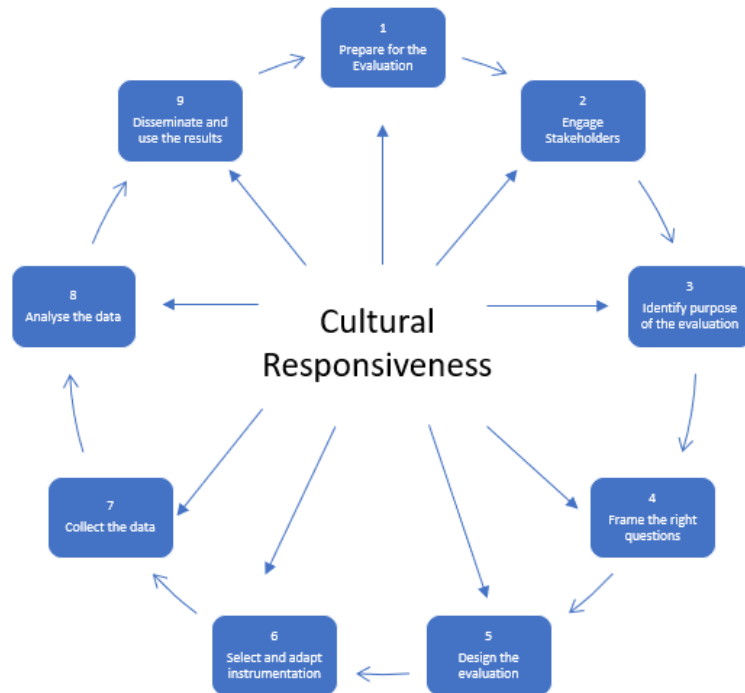


Figure 7: Culturally Responsive Evaluation Framework (Frierson, Hood and Hughes, 2010; and Hopson, 2009 as cited in Bledsoe and Donaldson, 2015: 9)

While CRE does not consist of a unique series of steps set apart from other evaluation approaches, the details and distinction of CRE lie in how the stages of the evaluation are carried out (Hood, Hopson and Kirkhart, 2015: 287). In line with the above framework, the study selected methods of data collection and data analysis that ensured that the evaluation provided results that are representative of the community and the context. This included the use of the ABCD Model as the lens through which the data was analysed. This made the analysis very context specific as it focused on the uniqueness of the community's skills and assets.

5.4.3 Case Study Approach

"Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied... We could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods—but we concentrate, at least for the time being, on the case." (Robert E. Stake, 2000: 435)

The power of case study is its attention to the local situation, not in how it represents other cases in general (Stake, 2006: 8). A case study is perhaps the best known and still dominant variant of comparative methods because it is basically controlled comparison—the study of two or more instances of a well-specified phenomenon that resemble each other in every respect but one (George and Bennet, 2005: 151). Against this backdrop, this study focused on Uganda as a case study for a Community Based Model for ECD in vulnerable communities.

5.4.3.1 Definitions

A case study is a practical analysis that explores an existing situation within its real-life setting. Eisenhardt (1989:534) points to the fact that case studies focus on single settings and how these are embedded in real life situations. Similarly, Stake (2008) discusses ‘the case’ as anything that fits the description of a bounded system of interest, for example a person, enterprise, an institution, a programme, a responsibility, a collection, or even a population. Yin’s definition of a case study has evolved over four previous editions of his book, and reflect a twofold definition that covers the scope and features.

Yin (2014: 16) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that;

- Investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the case) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when
- The boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.

He further says the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situations in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical proposition to guide data collection and analysis (Yin, 2009: 18).

5.4.3.2 Using Case Study Research

The case study approach provides depth where the scope is limited in terms of numbers, geographical area, and time span. In this study, this approach allows a deeper understanding about issues surrounding the communities understanding and role in the provision of ECD services for their children. As an all-encompassing method, the case study

approach can embrace different epistemological orientations, including the interpretivist framework of inquiry (Yin, 2014: 17) with which this study is aligned. The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena, allowing investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events—such as individual life cycles, organisational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries (Yin, 2003: 2).

Researchers may argue that using the historical method may also yield desired results. However, to allow for triangulation of data and increase validity of evidence, the case study is preferred. The case study relies on the same techniques as history, but it adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian's repertoire: direct observation of the events being studied and interviews of the persons involved in the events (Yin, 2003: 8).

Arguably, any programme evaluation is a case study. In the field of evaluation research, Boruch and Foley (2000) make a compelling argument for the use of randomised field trials to be used in all evaluations (Yin, 2014: 13). They argue that any approach to programme evaluation must emulate the controlled environment of laboratory experiments. They maintain that the field trials design can be and has been used even when evaluating complex community initiatives, producing greater certainty in the results because of the individual units of analysis and the large sample. However, the units for analysis of actual outcomes of interest in programme evaluations are generally at a collective level and not at individual level. For instance, the community-based ECD model requires the community to reorganise its entire manner of providing early childhood care—a systems change—thereby creating site to site variability in the units of analysis.

Most field experiments will not be able to support the participation of a sufficiently large number of communities to overcome the severity of the subsequent statistical constraints (Yin, 2014: 13). Evidence from 25 years of the evaluation of Early Childhood Intervention Programmes shows that the model of massive, multisite experimental demonstration is not

serving the field well. Findings point to premature outcome evaluation and do not allow for demonstrations that promote gradual, trial – and – error programme development, field testing, and refinement – demonstrations that also recognise that there is no such thing as a programme model per se but a programme model in its context (Halpern, 2000: 375).

Stake (2004: 247) says evaluation is sometimes interested in the worth of a general policy or some generic treatment, such as teaching better letter writing in diverse settings, but is more often interested in the worth of a particular programme, possibly at many sites, possibly at various times, but still a particular programme. You would want to do case study research because you want to understand a real-world case and assume that such an understanding is likely to involve important contextual conditions pertinent to your case (Yin, 2014: 16).

Case study researchers tend to argue that they aim to generate an intensive examination of a single case, in relation to which they then engage in a theoretical analysis (Bryman, 2012: 71). The defining attributes are that the case should be an integrated system, distinct, specific, complex, and functioning (Stake, 2008:120). The central issue of concern is the theoretical reasoning in which the case study researcher engages (Bryman, 2012: 71). When the purpose of the case study is to go beyond the case it is called an ‘instrumental’ case study (Stake, 2006: 8). Although the case selected is studied in depth, the main focus is on something else (Stake, 2000: 437).

5.4.3.3 Variations in Case Studies

Case studies can cover multiple cases and then draw a single set of ‘cross-case’ conclusions (Yin, 2014: 18). This study is in essence a case study of a community based ECD programme, though it is a multi-case study of the programme in various contexts in Uganda. Stake (2006: 6) calls this the ‘quintain’, that is the target or phenomenon to be studied and it is the ‘umbrella’ for all the individual cases that will be involved in the study. With multi-case study and its strong interest in the quintain, the interest in the cases will primarily be

‘instrumental’ (ibid: 8). Basically, each case was examined mainly to provide insight into the community based ECD programme.

The logic underlying the use of multiple-cases is that each case is carefully selected to predict similar results (a literal replication) or to predict contrasting results but for predictable reasons (theoretical replication) (Yin, 2003: 47). Bryman (2012: 71) points out that the crucial question is not whether the findings can be generalised to a wider universe but how well the researcher generates theory out of the findings. Also, when it is not practically feasible for the study to immerse itself within the research setting for a longer time frame— like many qualitative studies —the exploration of distinct ‘cases’ provides sufficient detail to illuminate and extend understanding of the research problem (Merriam, 1998).

5.4.3.4 Drawing Implications of Case Findings for Theory

Case study findings have implications for both theory development and theory testing. Theory testing aims to strengthen or reduce support for a theory, narrow or extend the scope conditions of a theory, or determine which of two or more theories best explains a case, type or general phenomenon (George and Bennet, 2005: 109). Besides its four objectives, this study also aims to strengthen support for the ABCD Model as well as extend its scope as a model for community development efforts to a model for evaluation of community development efforts.

In qualitative research, our choice of cases should always be theoretically guided. The selection of cases is not based on statistical grounds but derived from a particular theory which we wish to test (Silverman, 2013: 146). Yin argues that case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a ‘sample’, and, in doing a case study, your goal will be to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation) (Yin, 2009: 15).

To further justify this approach, Silverman points out that social science researchers are more concerned with situations than with individuals. In case study research, we sample social relations, not individuals (2013: 145). This approach is particularly strategic in that “a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 2003: 9).

5.5 Methods

Though this study was primarily qualitative, it did include quantitative evidence. The use of a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence, along with the necessity for defining a ‘case’, are but two of the ways that case study research goes beyond being a type of qualitative research (Yin, 2014: 19). This study used 4 different methods to collect data. This collective approach attempted to validate data in some form of triangulation. Triangulation involves identifying how results from different methodologies converge to produce similar findings (Hauser-Cram et al., 2000: 495).

With large programmes, essentially no one person knows much about the whole of it, and as a qualitative study, this study must get the perceptions of need, goal, process, context, problem and accomplishment from various stakeholders in order to understand the big picture. Silverman (2013: 136) confirms that by having a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts, we may, as in trigonometry, be able to triangulate the true state of affairs by examining where the different data intersect. In this way, some qualitative researchers believe that triangulation improves the reliability of data particularly in the absence of a large sample.

5.5.1 Small Scale Survey

In case study research, quantitative data can be collected with a view to show significant features about the case. Typically, this takes the form of survey research on a single case with a view to reveal important features about its nature (Bryman, 2012: 76). In this study, the small-scale survey was basically a scoping exercise to get a snapshot of issues surrounding community based ECD facilities in the region. The survey also collected

important contextual information for the study and allowed the study to be open to whatever became salient to pursue while providing context to the study.

Practically, this took the form of a supervised self-completion questionnaire. Self-completion questionnaires do not suffer from the problem of interviewers asking questions in a different order or in different ways (Bryman, 2012: 234). This was particularly important in this study as the purpose of this survey was to get very clear contextual information from the respondents.

5.5.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a group interview that is concerned with exploring a certain topic (Bryman, 2012: 519). In this study, focus group discussions were used as the primary data collection tools to explore the understanding of community based ECD in Uganda. Generally, the questions aimed to get a narrative construction of ‘what’ and ‘how’ things are organised, as well as to provide an understanding of the experiences of the individuals. Therefore, questions were broadly open ended to get participants involved in the discussion. In qualitative enquiry, it is not uncommon for the design to be emergent and flexible, and questions to unfold as the researcher pursues what makes sense (Patton, 2015: 231). This method mirrors the use of rapid assessments, rapid reconnaissances or rapid reviews that basically involve gathering data and analysing it quickly—often to meet tight deadlines for policymakers—to inform timely decision making and can involve interviewing key informants who are well placed to identify issues, make systematic observations, or provide detailed descriptive information (Patton, 2015).

Typically, the FGD guide included questions that prompted participants to think back, reflect, give examples, and discuss choices. In line with the theoretical framework of analysis—in this case the ABCD Model—the questions were framed around;

- a) Indicators of Strong Community Capacity, and
- b) Indicators of Community Participation

This allowed the study to map the available assets within the community while also providing a gauge for the utilisation of these assets and community involvement.

By bringing together people who share a similar background, focus groups create the opportunity for participants to engage in meaningful conversations about the topics that researchers wish to understand (Patton, 2015: 477). Because the study was interested in participants' perceptions, focus group discussions were perhaps the more meaningful method for collecting data. This approach makes data collection a social experience. Focus group discussions allow for the generation of a substantial amount of data in one group session, while also using the communication between the participants to generate data (European Commission, 2005: 7), using group interaction to provide a specific type of data.

Bryman (2012: 519) points out that there is a concern with the joint production of meaning among focus group participants. Patton (2015: 475) presumes that the social experience increases the meaningfulness and validity of findings because our perspectives are formed and sustained in social groups. The interaction between the participants is used to highlight the respondents' attitudes, frameworks of understanding, share common experiences, and to develop their own analysis of common experiences. How people talk about a topic is important, not just what they say about it (Patton, 2015: 478).

Krueger and Casey (2008: 4) say focus groups should be carefully planned to create a permissive, non-threatening environment, a setting that encourages participants to share perceptions and points of view without pressuring participants to vote or reach consensus. Using focus groups in this study made use of pre-existing groups—in this case parents and caregivers of children in the selected ECD sites—which meant that the researcher intervened less in creating and organizing the groups and focused more on encouraging members to discuss and interact within an informal group discussion guided by a schedule of questions. The object is to get high quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of the views of others (Patton, 2015: 475). Further, group members influence each other by responding to the ideas and comments they hear (ibid). Comments provide mental cues that trigger memories or thoughts of other participants—cues that help explore the range of perceptions (Kreuger and Casey, 2008:

35). The debate within the group should facilitate additional insight into the contexts to be studied (Kitzinger, 1999: 13).

One of the advantages of using focus group discussions is that the quality of data is enhanced by observing the interactions among the participants. The researcher attends not only the content of the conversation, but also what the conversation is like in terms of emotions, tensions, interruptions, conflicts and body language (Patton, 2015: 478). What is not said in focus groups and what precipitates periods of silence can generate fruitful insights...and the extent to which there is a relatively consistent, shared view or great diversity of views can be quickly assessed (ibid). This enriches the experience as well as the information obtained.

Patton (2015: 478) points out that focus groups appear to work best when people in the group, though sharing similar backgrounds, are strangers to one another. He says the dynamics are quite different and more complex when participants have prior established relationships. However, Creswell (2007: 133) says focus groups are advantageous not only when the interaction among interviewees will likely yield the best information, but also when interviewees are similar and cooperative with each other. In this case, the focus group worked better because the participants primarily all aim to get the same/similar benefit from the ECD facilities—this being the children acquiring a particular set of skills. Understanding the questions posed is a key element in focus group discussions.

Of particular note is that the number of issues that can be discussed during an FGD as well as the time available can be limited. The initial plan was to enrich the data by using in-depth interviews to probe further but the study was unable to do so due to time constraints. This is discussed more in the section on limitations of the study in the final chapter.

5.5.3 Reflective Field Notes

Field notes are often part of unstructured observation in studies (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 388). Thorpe (2008) defines field notes as contemporaneous notes of

observations or conversations taken during the conduct of qualitative research. They contain the results of observations, analysis, researcher's comments and self-memos (Mills and Morton, 2013).

Bogdan and Biklen (1992: 122 in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 554) say field notes include:

- Reflections on the descriptions and analyses that have been done;
- Reflections on the methods used in the observations and data collection and analysis;
- Ethical issues, tensions, problems and dilemmas;
- Reactions of the observer to what has been observed and recorded such as attitude, emotion, analysis, etc.;
- Points of clarification that have been and/or need to be made
- Possible lines of further inquiry.

As mentioned earlier in section 5.5.2, in qualitative enquiry, it is not uncommon for the design to be emergent and flexible, and questions to unfold as the researcher pursues what makes sense (Patton, 2015: 231). The study's decision to use field notes was also influenced by their potential to provide prompts for further lines of inquiry if they did come about in the process.

Field notes can be early interpretations of what happens, notes about feelings, ideas about what these might mean, why things happened or did not happen (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 466).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) say field notes can be written at either a descriptive or reflective level. In this study, the field notes were written reflectively after each session of data collection to allow the researcher to reflect on the focus group discussion while the experience was still fresh. Because programme evaluations also explore unintended results, this was an attempt to record as much of the salient and unexpected information that came out of the discussions unintentionally to further enhance the data. Patton (2015: 331) notes that the skilled observer is able to improve the accuracy, authenticity and reliability of observations through intensive training and systematic preparation.

Critics of using field notes as a method for data collection say it is subjective, biased, impressionistic, idiosyncratic and lacking in precise quantifiable measures that are the hallmark of survey research and experimentation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007: 407). Geertz (1973 as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 648) argues that reflective field notes record meanings attributed to situations and phenomena, turning a witnessed, momentary event into a written discourse which can be perused repeatedly and 'read' in different ways. However, first-hand experience with a setting and the people in the setting allows an inquirer to be open and discovery oriented. By being on site, the observer has less need to rely on prior conceptualisation from written documents and verbal reports, and the inquirer has the opportunity to see things that may routinely escape awareness among the people in the setting or learn things that people may be unwilling to talk about in an interview (Patton, 2015: 333). Through unstructured observation, the researcher can observe patterns in sequences of behaviours, conversations or interactions (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 550).

Within an interpretivist framework of enquiry in which this study is based, the researcher not only has a duty to interpret data from participants who have already interpreted their 'world', but to validate this interpretation through triangulation with other data collection approaches. The study's choice of using field notes was to help in triangulation of observations recorded and verbal or written data to validate findings on some level. Reporting and analysis should strive to catch the different definitions of the situation from the different participants, and to combine etic and emic analysis⁹ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 648).

5.5.4 Document Review

A review of relevant documents is an important part of any data collection plan. Documents and records have the attraction of being always available, often at low cost, and being

⁹ Emic analysis focuses on the participants' own subjective interpretations of the situation, while etic analysis focuses on objective analysis or external frameworks (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 648).

factual (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 314). Prior (2004: 388) advises novice researchers to look at documentation, not merely for its content but more at how it was produced, how it functions in episodes of daily interaction, and how, exactly, it circulates. In case study research, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 2014: 107).

Document review provides broad coverage within a long time-span, it is unobtrusive as information is not created as a result of the study, and it can be reviewed repeatedly (Yin, 2003: 86). Records, documents, artefacts and archives—what has traditionally been called ‘material culture’ in anthropology—constitute a particularly rich source of information about many organisations and programmes (Patton, 2015: 376).

Yin (2014: 106) says documentary evidence is likely to be relevant and useful to every case study topic. He lists the types of documents as:

- Letters, memoranda, e-mails, and other personal documents such as diaries, calendars and notes;
- Agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events;
- Administrative documents, such as proposals, progress reports, and other internal records;
- Formal studies or evaluations related to the case that you are studying; and
- News clippings and other articles appearing in mass media or in community newspapers

In contemporary society, all kinds of entities leave a trail of paper and artefacts, a kind of spoor that can be mined as part of fieldwork (Patton, 2014: 376). Among the concerns raised by Yin (2003) in using documentation to gather information is the possibility of selective bias in documents used, as well as possible access problems. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018: 314) echo these concerns and point out that documents and records may be unrepresentative or selective, they may lack objectivity, may be of unknown validity and

may possibly be deliberately deceptive. Yin also says they can be difficult to retrieve/find, may reflect reporting selective bias depending on the respective author, and access may be deliberately withheld (Yin, 2014: 106).

Ideally, access to routine programme or public documents and records, and all official and unofficial documentation generated by or for a programme should not be a problem. However, their use needs to be approached with care.

5.6 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for the study. The concept of purposeful sampling is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007: 125). The logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some pre-determined criterion of importance (Patton, 2015: 281). Criterion sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon. In this study, criterion sampling was strategically used to identify ECD centres and participants for the study.

For Phase 1, the criteria for selecting the ECD centres was that they were community based as defined by the Uganda ECD Policy, they were based in different districts within the Western Region and preferably in different sub-counties. For Phase 2 the criteria were that they were registered as community based ECD centres and based within refugee settlements.

For the survey, participants were selected with assistance from the DEO and ECD focal points within each of the selected districts. Selection was based on them being a sub-county Leader or Chief, DEO, CMC member or parents/guardians of children attending the respective ECD centres. Similarly, participants for the FGDs were selected with assistance from the ECD Centre caregivers and ECD focal points in each district. They mobilised participants based on which community members had children attending the respective ECD centres, and also based on their availability.

5.7 Data Collection

A major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity to use many different sources of evidence (Yin, 2003: 97). As mentioned in section 5.5, more than one method of data collection was used in this study to allow for triangulation of data. This is the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence, and Yin (2003: 98) calls this “the development of converging lines of inquiry.” Consistency of findings across types of data increases confidence in the confirms patterns and themes. Further, having more than one pair of eyes to look at and think about the data, identify patterns and themes, and test conclusions and explanations reduces concerns about the potential biases and selective perception of a single analyst (Patton, 2015: 660).

Triangulation of data sources within qualitative methods may not lead to a single, totally consistent picture. This does not mean that the data are invalid. More likely, it means that different kinds of data have captured different things and so the analyst attempts to understand the reasons for the differences. Either consistency in overall patterns of data from different sources or reasonable explanations for differences in data from divergent sources can contribute significantly to the overall credibility of findings (Patton, 2015: 662).

For case study research, Creswell recommends 4 or 5 cases in a single study as this provides ample opportunity to identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case theme analysis (2007: 128). This study was undertaken in 10 community based ECD centres based in vulnerable communities—including 5 refugee settlements/camps—in the Western and North Western Regions of Uganda. The centres and participants were strategically selected using criterion sampling. As the study explored the use of community based ECD as centres of care and support for vulnerable children, it was imperative that the selected sites were in vulnerable areas. In total, approximately 100 participants were involved in the study.

The quantitative data in the study was collected using a questionnaire that was administered to 50 people. These included the ECD Focal Person in the respective District

Education Offices, the head caregivers of 1 selected ECD centre per district, and 1 member of the centre management committees of the selected ECD centres. As stated in Section 5.5.1., this was a scoping exercise that aimed to provide a snapshot of contextual issues around community based ECD in the participating communities.

The qualitative data was collected in FGDs. Focus group discussions were undertaken with groups of not more than 10 comprising 5 parents of children attending these community based ECD centres, 3 caregivers from these centres and 2 members of the respective centre management committees. One general guideline in qualitative research is not only to study a few sites or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied (Creswell, 2007: 126). The composition of each focus group ensured that the study benefited from information from various points of view to give depth to the discussions. Having representatives from various stakeholders provided extensive detail about each site.

5.7.1 The Pilot Case Study

As a final preparation for data collection, a pilot case study was conducted and was guided by Yin (2003). The purpose was to assist the study to refine the data collection tools and plans, and hence was more developmental. This process basically assisted with the development of appropriate lines of questions and possibly providing some conceptual clarification for the research design (Yin, 2003: 79).

The pilot case study took place at an ECD centre in Fort Portal District which is also in Western Uganda. Generally, a pilot case may be chosen for several reasons unrelated to the criteria for selecting the final cases in the case study design. In general, convenience, access, and geographic proximity can be the main criteria for selecting the pilot case (Yin, 2003: 79). In this instance, Fort Portal was selected because it is not only a geographically convenient and accessible community but also similar in traits to the other districts in the Western and North Western Regions of Uganda where the actual study took place. The pre-test questionnaire was administered to 3 individuals including the DEO, the ECD focal person of

the local parish and a member of the CMC, and the pre-test FGD was conducted with a group of 7 parents and caregivers.

In this pilot case study, the inquiry was as comprehensive and focussed as the actual data collection plan to give a similar experience as was expected in the 'actual' case study sites. This provided considerable insight into community based ECD through the ABCD Model 'lens'. Information from the pilot was used in parallel with the ongoing literature review so the final research design reflected any significant policy or theoretical issues that may have been overlooked initially. Practically the exercise also provided relevant information about the necessary logistics and field work. Yin (2003: 80) points out that the pilot report should be explicit about lessons learnt for both research design and field procedures, and it can also indicate the modifications to be made and hence become a good prototype for the final case study protocol.

After the pilot exercise, the FGD guide was refined to reduce the time for each discussion as participants were visibly tired after 50 - 60 minutes. Also, some of the questions were revised as the study noted that they appeared repetitive especially when they were translated in to the local language. Therefore, the guide was further refined with the help of an assistant researcher who was fluent in the local dialect. The pilot also assisted in refining the initial framework for analysis and the initial template for analysis.

In the actual study the data was collected in two parts:

5.7.2 Primary Data Collection

This involved interaction with direct respondents to extract data directly from them through a small-scale survey which was administered through a questionnaire, and focus group discussions as the main data collection methods. This was done within a four-week period at the respective research sites. The survey and the FGDs were conducted using an interview protocol and a focus group guide respectively (Refer to Annexes 1 and 2). The FGDs were recorded digitally using voice recording instruments, and were then transcribed and translated into English before the transcripts were coded for analysis.

In practice, gaining access to selected sites and convincing individuals to participate in a study may be challenging. This was one of the lessons that came out of the pilot study. Silverman (2013: 215) says it is not uncommon for qualitative researchers to use their existing relationships and contacts for their research. Therefore, the study opted to collect the data in communities that were familiar to allow for easier access. The study also engaged a research assistant who was familiar with the communities to assist with the data collection exercise and provide translation where necessary especially that one of the lessons learnt from the pilot study was on how to frame questions with more clarity for participants.

The data collection exercise took place in two phases. In the first phase data was collected in 5 ECD Centres in 5 districts in the Western Region which has a high number of vulnerable children (Refer to Figure 3). This is discussed in more detail later in section 6.4.1.1. For ethical purposes these centres have been anonymised as follows to protect their identity;

- ECD Centre A
- ECD Centre B
- ECD Centre C
- ECD Centre D
- ECD Centre E

In the second phase data was collected from 5 ECD Centres in refugee settlements/camps in districts with the most settled refugees in Uganda and a high number of vulnerable children (Refer to Figure 3). Again, this is discussed in more detail later in section 6.4.1.1. The West Nile Region of Uganda also has the highest number of vulnerable households with the highest proportion of People In Need (PIN) as categorised by a multi-sector needs assessment (Refer to section 1.2.3). These centres have also been anonymised for ethical purposes as follows;

- ECD Centre F
- ECD Centre G
- ECD Centre H
- ECD Centre I
- ECD Centre J

5.7.2.1 The Survey Questionnaire

As discussed in Section 5.5.1. this was a scoping exercise to get a snapshot of contextual issues around community based ECD in the participating communities. In the first phase of data collection a total of 30 participants across the 5 districts completed the questionnaires while in the second phase of data collection in refugee settings, 25 participants completed the questionnaires. A breakdown of the individuals who completed the questionnaire is provided in Table 4 below.

	Phase 1	Phase 2
Sub-County Leaders/Chiefs	5	3
District Education Officer	5	2
Centre Management Committee (CMC) Members	10	10
Parents	10	10
TOTAL	30	25

Table 4: Breakdown of participants who completed the questionnaire

All individuals who were requested to participate were willing to do so. The questionnaires were self-administered and were conducted using a pre-prepared tool and were collected before leaving each data collection site.

5.7.2.2 Focus Group Discussions

In both phases of data collection, focus group discussions were undertaken with groups of not more than 10 comprising mostly parents of children attending these centres, caregivers from these centres and members of the respective centre management committees. In the second phase of data collection—undertaken in 5 refugee settlement areas—the participants were made up of both refugees and Ugandan nationals. These FGDs were conducted with a research assistant to help with translation from the local language to English and vice versa. Though some participants spoke English, most of them were more fluent in the local dialects.

The study was aware that even when a common language is used in conversation, words can take on a very different meaning in different contexts and cultures. The situation could be even more risky when a translator must be used. Translators need to understand what, precisely, you want them to ask and that you will need full and complete translation of responses as verbatim as possible (Patton, 2015: 480). Further, some words and ideas simply cannot be translated directly (ibid). Advocates for qualitative methods for international project evaluation of development efforts point out that interviewers are not in the field to judge or change norms and values, but to understand the perspectives of others by getting valid, reliable, meaningful, and usable information in cross-cultural environments (Patton, 2015: 483). Therefore, this was the better way to collect data in this study as it allowed the questions to be framed in such a way that the meaning was not lost in translation.

Participants were informed that the discussions were going to be recorded during the introduction and signing of the consent forms. All participants consented to the process. Participants were requested to sit close to each other and close to the researcher and research assistant where the recording device was placed so as to capture all their views. Both visual (observation) and audio (listening) skills were used to collect data as accurately as possible. In FGDs, the researcher attends 'not only to the content of the conversation, but also what the conversation situation is like in terms of emotions, tensions, interruptions, conflicts and body language (Patton, 2015: 478). The FGDs were recorded and notes were taken to keep a record of relevant observations during the discussions to supplement the audio recordings.

Most of the FGD participants were female across the five centres in the first phase of data collection, as their male counterparts were out working far away in their fields or businesses. In the refugee camps/settlements, however, the overall gender make up of participants was equal with only one ECD centre having more females than males and one having more males than females. The gender of the participants was not important in this study as the focus was on their perceptions, attitudes, frameworks of understanding, and common experiences of the community based ECD programme as stakeholders who are similar and cooperative (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2015).

In both phases, each of the participants was randomly assigned a number to assist me to keep track of who said what and when. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and generally participation was free and open. However, there were a few participants who seemed shy and tended to go with what others had said. This was mitigated by engaging these participants directly to encourage them to voice their opinions.

Overall, the participants seemed tired after 30 - 40 minutes and it was a bit difficult to keep the momentum of the discussions going. Participants in the initial 5 centres were generally in a hurry to leave as they had other duties to get to especially as it was a busy time for them in their farms. Similarly, in the refugee settlements there was another survey in progress from the Office of the Prime Minister therefore the researcher had limited time to conduct the FGD. A few participants also felt that some questions sounded repetitive and drew the same answers even though attempts were made to explain and differentiate the questions. This being the case, the researcher was unable to conduct follow-up interviews with any of the participants as planned.

5.7.3 Secondary Data Collection

This involved observations which were recorded as reflective field notes, and looking through relevant documentation such as unpublished material including donor reports, minutes from meetings, etc. where available, and published material such as the ECD Policy, Caregivers Guide/Framework, ECD Centre Guidelines. The study was particularly interested in 'a Case Study Report for the Review of Community-Based Childcare Centres Supported By UNICEF and Major Partners in Uganda (2014)' and 'an Ex-Ante Benefit-Cost Analysis of individual, Economic and Social Returns from Proposed Investment Scenarios for Pre-Primary Schooling in Uganda (2013) which had both focused on ECD in Uganda.

It is important to note that locating useful documents and obtaining permission to use the documents may be a challenge particularly for unpublished material which is not in the public domain. In this study, existing relationships and contacts were used to access as many documents as possible.

5.7.3.1 Reflective Field Notes

The reflective field notes are basically a combination of observations in the field and reflections of the subject matter and data collection process. As discussed in section 5.5.3., Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) say field notes can be written at either a descriptive or reflective level. In this study, the field notes were written reflectively after each session of data collection and focused on my thoughts and observations during the data collection process.

From the survey questionnaires and the focus group discussions, the field notes were able to record reactions of participants, reflections on the focus group discussions and interviews as well as points for clarification and further inquiry. Together with the data from the survey questionnaires and the focus group discussions, the field notes provided a valid source of data (See Annex 7).

5.7.3.2 Document Review¹⁰

While the naturalists would use the literature review of texts and documents to provide background material, constructionist philosophers use texts and documents to provide the theoretical constructs, understandings and definitions. In programme evaluations, programme records can provide a behind the scenes look at programme processes and how they came in to being (Patton, 2015: 377). This study searched for documents using key words and targeted accessible institutional databases that contained documents that had been used in design and support of community based ECD centres. The search was delimited by looking at documents that were only relevant to community based ECD and community development. A review of available documents referred to within the Uganda ECD Policy framework and accessible documents such as programme reports, evaluation documents, minutes from meetings, implementation documents, funding proposals, etc. was undertaken to gain further insight in to the community-based approach to ECD as well as to corroborate findings from the FGDs and the small-scale survey.

¹⁰ Refer to Annex 3

5.8 Data Analysis

Analysis is not a separate stage in research work – it begins with the practical deliberation that accompanies the pre-fieldwork stage and continues as one collects information and writes up the research report (McKernan, 1997: 219). Rubin and Rubin (2005: 201) define data analysis as the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations... [It] entails classifying, comparing, weighing, and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns, or to stitch together descriptions of events into a coherent narrative.

Multi-case research seeks to understand the quintain—in this case the community based ECD programme—and therefore to understand it better we study its sites or manifestations by looking at what is similar and different about the cases (Stake, 2006: 6). However, Simons (2009: 117) cautions that it is difficult to establish guidelines for analysing case studies that are replicable or appropriate in all situations. The question of how well the case study fares in terms of reliability and replicability depends on the type of case. As a multi-case study, each case in this study was analysed by its portrayal of or relationship to the community based ECD programme. As discussed in section 5.4.3. this study is guided by Stake's instrumental case study approach in which a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to revise a generalisation (Stake, 2000: 437). Yin (2009) calls this view an 'analytical generalisation'. This view places case study research firmly in the inductive tradition of the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2012: 71).

5.8.1 Data Analysis Strategy

Prominent proponents of case study research (Yin, 2003 and Stake, 2006) propose cross-case synthesis as the best approach to analysis, particularly if investigating common patterns of behaviour or action across businesses, organisations or other institutions. An important caveat in conducting cross-case synthesis is that the examination of word tables for cross-case patterns will rely strongly on argumentative interpretation and not numeric tallies (Yin, 2003: 135). The purpose of cross-case synthesis in this study was to triangulate data across the cases that were studied to give a picture of the quintain, which was not studied directly, and its cases, which were. As mentioned earlier, this multi-case study was

undertaken to understand the quintain—the community based ECDE programme—in terms of its similarities and differences across the 10 selected cases. In this procedure, the study chose to be guided by Stake’s *case-quintain dialectic*—a rhetorical, adversarial procedure, wherein attention to the local situations and attention to the programme or phenomenon as a whole contend with each other for emphasis (Stake, 2006: 46).

The study looked at the individual findings and at the pre-selected themes and categories constantly so that the individual findings (codes) from the respective cases did not merge too quickly into the categories (merged findings), themes or the overall multicase study. In this way, the study focused on both the cases and the quintain equally without giving undue emphasis to either. Stake points out that the complex meanings of the quintain are understood differently and better because of the particular activity and contexts of each case. Therefore, because this multi-case study aimed to understand how the community based ECD programme (or phenomenon) works in different local conditions, the cross-case analysis was best approached using the case-quintain dialectic process.

For a multi-case study, the case records are often presented intact, accompanying a cross-case analysis with some emphasis on the binding concept or idea (Stake, 2006: 8). Given the binding concept of this study—this being the community based ECD programme—the analysis aimed to provide an interpretation of data across the individual cases that were studied. Essentially, this study began with the community based ECD programme as a concept. It then moved on to studying 10 individual community based ECD centres in terms of their own situational issues, and understanding patterns within each of the cases. Finally, it then analysed the cross-case findings using the ABCD model to make assertions about the use of community based ECD as a binding concept. As mentioned in section 5.4.3., the logic underlying the use of multiple-cases is that each case is carefully selected to predict similar results (a literal replication) or to predict contrasting results but for predictable reasons (theoretical replication) (Yin, 2003: 47). This study strategically looked at possible replication through the ABCD model to strengthen its findings.

In a sense, this study treated each individual case study as a separate study. In line with Yin's view on this approach (2003: 134), it therefore does not differ from other research syntheses—aggregating findings across a series of individual studies. An important step in replication procedures is the development of a rich theoretical framework that states the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found, which later becomes the vehicle for generalizing to new cases (Yin, 2003: 48). In this study, using the replication logic meant that data from the individual cases was displayed according to a uniform framework for analysis as discussed in section 4.8. In principle, each individual case was a 'whole study' on its own whose data was analysed using the same 'lens' to reach conclusions which are the focus of the study.

5.8.2 Data Analysis Technique

"Quantitative evidence is the bones; qualitative evidence is the flesh; and evaluative reasoning is the vital organs." (Jane Davidson, 2005; 2012)

Patton (2015: 620) argues that ideally, studies are designed to be genuinely mixed (valuing both kinds of data) and, because design makes it possible, the quantitative and qualitative data are integrated in analysis and reporting (Bergman, 2008; Greene, 2007; Mertens, 2013; Morgan, 2014). This study collects quantitative data—in the form of a small-scale survey—as a scoping exercise to provide a setting for the study, but the general focus is on the qualitative data. Though it may not be customary to use an integrated mixed-method approach, studies show that this is the trend particularly in evaluation and policy research (Bergman, 2008; Creswell and Clark, 20011; Greene, 2007; Mertens and Hesse-Biber, 2013; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; and Teddlie and Tashakori, 2011 as cited in Patton, 2015: 623).

5.8.2.1 Quantitative Data

In case study research that is also primarily an evaluation, Yin (2009) recommends the inclusion of quantitative data to provide explanations and provide context to the study. Essentially, in this study the quantitative data was used to provide a snapshot of the community based ECD programme. The purpose was to provide some insight and context to

the study, even though the questions that the study primarily sought to answer were mostly found in the general analysis of the qualitative data.

The quantitative data was collected using a standard questionnaire for all respondents. As discussed in Section 5.7, in the first phase of the study data was collected from 30 respondents while data was collected from 25 respondents in the second phase of the study. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24.

5.8.2.2 Qualitative Data

Creswell (2007: 148) points out that data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2007: 475) describe the analysis of qualitative data as a strict and systematic set of procedures that verify and examine the content for meaning. Through reading and re-reading transcripts of the data, the researcher extracts detailed information that leads to valid conclusions. The process of data analysis moves beyond the manipulation of text at this point by coding, categorising, comparing, making links and drawing conclusions (Cohen et al., 2007).

Because this study also aimed to validate the ABCD Model, the data analysis process involved 'theorising' the data within a framework of analysis. When one is 'theorising', one is perceiving, comparing, aggregating, ordering and generally finding connections in the data (McKernan, 1997: 221). Broadly, the data analysis techniques used involved reflection, note taking during the data collection process, summarizing the notes, clustering recurring words into codes and fitting these in to themes and related categories within the theoretical framework of the study. Based on the data, a point of view was created and the data was presented to support the point of view. McKernan (1997: 223) stresses that it is important to check that each response is being interpreted uniformly. Therefore, each transcript was treated with the same criteria of interpretation guided by the framework for analysis.

5.8.2.2.1 Focus Group Discussions

Because the study also aimed to test the validity of the ABCD Model, data analysis in this case study was carried out through a framework based on the model. It therefore relied on theoretical propositions from this model to make up the lens through which the data were analysed. Steered by the literature review, these theoretical propositions were built into and used as the basis for the analysis template. As mentioned in Section 5.8.1. the analysis itself made use of the Cross-Case Synthesis Technique as the study looks at 10 different cases within a single case. This strengthened the findings of the study.

The approach to inquiry used in this study was the phenomenological framework. This means that the participants gave descriptive personal experiences of the issue being explored, and significant individual statements as well as significant group statements were made during the discussions. These statements were listed and then clustered in to meaningful units based on 'what' happened (ie. 'textural descriptions' including verbatim examples) and 'how' the phenomenon was experienced (ie. 'structural descriptions' including the setting and context in which it was experienced). These units were used to develop a list of non-repetitive and non-overlapping statements. These statements were then grouped in to larger units of information/themes which were then incorporated into a 'composite description' of the phenomenon. This passage is the 'essence' of the experience and represents the culminating aspect of a phenomenological study, and is typically a long paragraph that tells the reader 'what' the participants experienced with the phenomenon and 'how' they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

5.8.2.2.2 Document Review and Reflective Field Notes

The study used a technique known as categorical aggregation to extract data from the documents that were reviewed as well as the reflective field notes. In categorical aggregation, the researcher seeks a collection of instances from the data, hoping that issue relevant meanings will emerge (Creswell, 2007: 163).

The document analysis provided general descriptions and contexts for the respective cases while the field notes provided insight in to the process as well. Information from the documents and the reflective field notes was organized in to categories based on the theoretical proposition used in this study as well as the units of information/themes that were coming out of the interactions with participants during the focus group discussions. This data was then triangulated with data from the focus group discussions and the questionnaires that had been administered.

5.8.3 Data Preparation

5.8.3.1 Quantitative Data

In preparation for the actual analysis of these data, a coding frame and a data matrix were developed to provide a useful summary of the available data. In many kinds of social research, the objective is to structure the records in such a way that the data become elements in a data matrix (Swift, 1996: 163). In this study, the coding frame was developed on an excel spreadsheet. The respective questions in the survey protocol were assigned with letters from the alphabet while the various responses were assigned numerical values to their respective responses. Swift (1996: 164) points out that data are ‘constructed’ by the researcher, and the coding frame is one of the major means by which this construction takes place. Below is an extract from my coding frame, which is attached as Annex 1.

1	How many Community ECD Centers are in this Community?	A	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 11-15 (4) = 16-20 (5) = 20<
2	How many Children attend these centers?	B	(1) = 1-10 (2) = 11-20 (3) = 21-30 (4) = 31-40 (5) = 40<
3	What is the Age Range of these Children?	C	(1) = Birth-2 (2) = 3-5 (3) = 6-8 (4) = 9< (5) = Don't Know
4	How many caregivers are available in each of these ECD centres?	D	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 11<
5	Are caregivers trained/qualified?	E	(1) = Yes (2) = No (3) = Don't Know

6	Where are these centres located? (Multiple Choice)	F1 F2 F3 F4 F5	1 = Place of worship eg. church, mosque 2 = School 3 = Community Centre 4 = Own Land 5 = Other (Mention)
7	Who funds these centres? (Multiple Choice)	G1 G2 G3 G4 G5 G6	1 = Self-Funded 2 = Government 3 = NGO/CBO 4 = Parents/Guardians 5 = Community Members 6 = Other (Mention)

Table 5: Extract from coding frame

Using the developed coding frame as a base to understand the data, a data matrix was then populated—also in excel— by entering each response given by the respective respondents for each questionnaire answered during the study. The table below is the corresponding data matrix extract from the coding frame and data matrix in Annex 2.

A	B	C	D	E	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5
1	5	2	2	3				4		1				
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
1	5	2	1	1		2							4	
3	3	3	3	1	1	2		4		1	2	3		
1	5	2	1	3	1	2				1		3	4	
1	5	2	2	1		2							4	
1	3	2	1	1	1	2	3						4	
1	4	2	1	1	1	2							4	
1	3	2	1	1	1	2	3						4	
1	3	2	1	1	1	2		4					4	

Table 6: Extract from data matrix

The data matrix excel sheet was then imported into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24. The data was then sorted by assigning labels to the respective variables in the data set (e.g. variable 1 was labelled as 'Region', variable 2 was labelled as

‘District’, etc.). Values were then assigned to the respective variables in the data set (e.g. 1 to represent ‘Western Region’, 2 to represent ‘West Nile’, etc.).

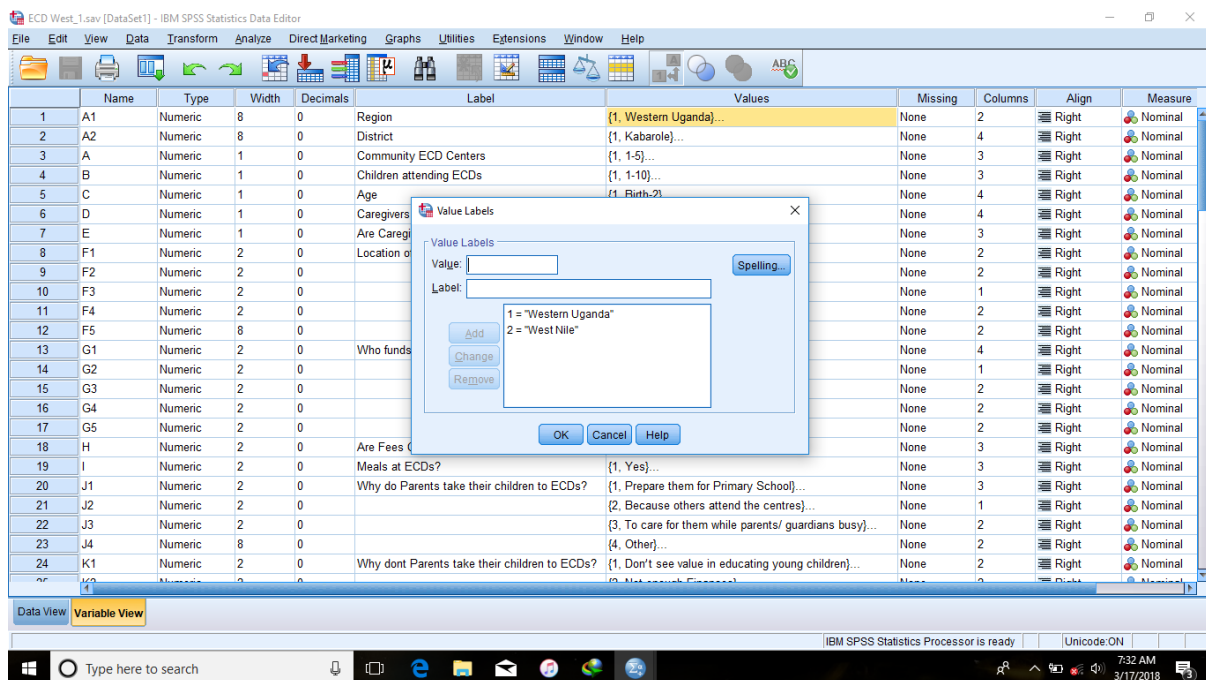


Figure 8: Extract from SPSS showing labels assigned to respective variables

Where multiple response variables occurred, they were labelled and respective multiple response variables were created.

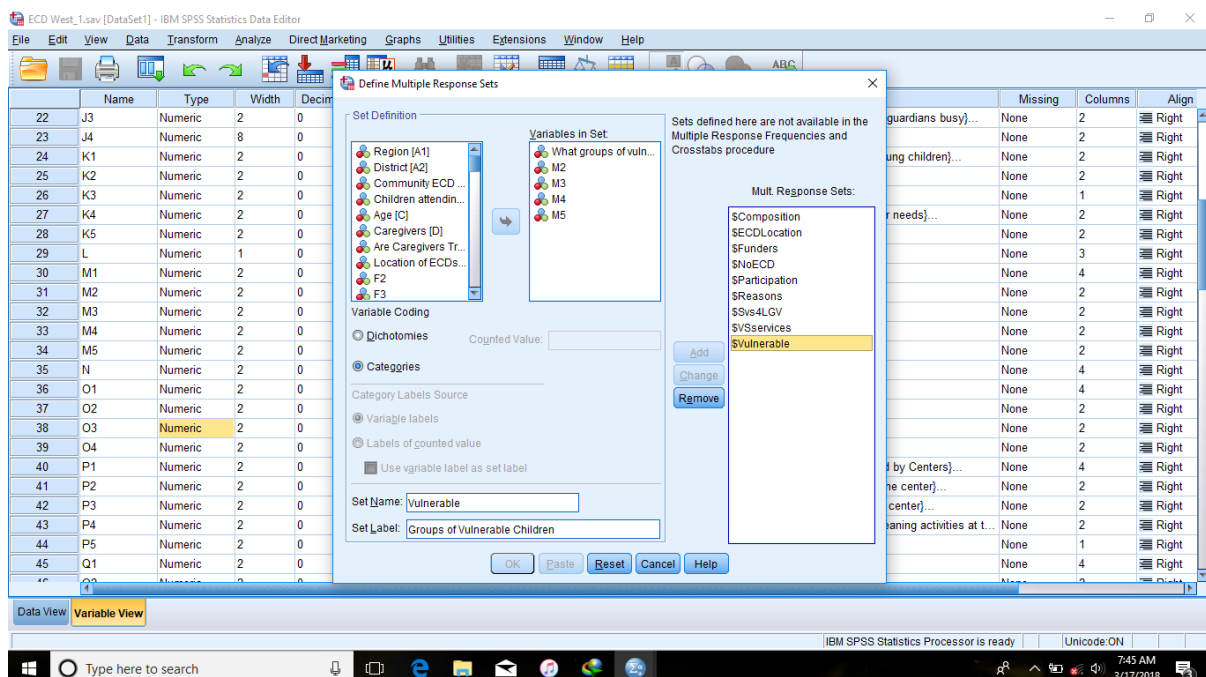


Figure 9: Extract from SPSS showing creation of multiple response variables

Data was analysed and extracted using custom tables with data automatically disaggregated as required.

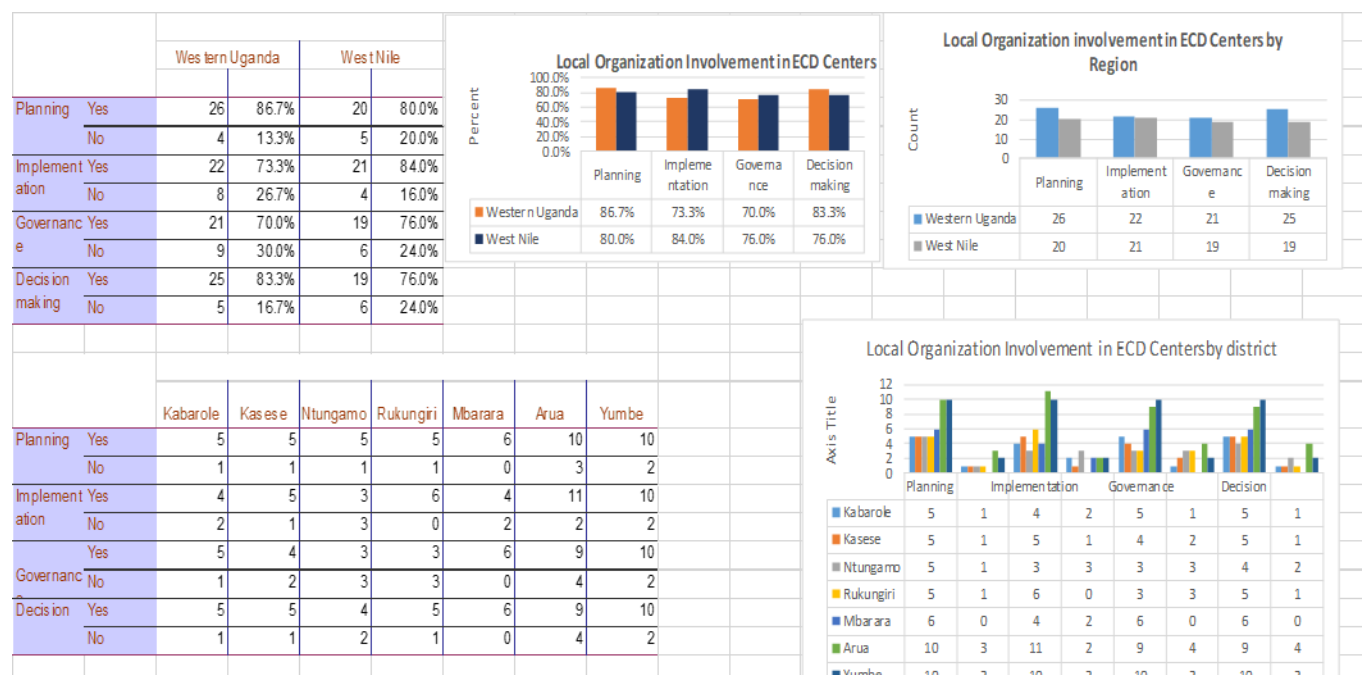


Figure 10: Custom tables with variables with disaggregated data

5.8.3.2 Qualitative Data

Flowing from the study's ontological and epistemological position—these being the constructivist and interpretivist approaches respectively—the data preparation in this study strategically used a style of thematic analysis known as template analysis. The term 'template analysis' does not describe a single, clearly delineated method; it refers to a varied group of techniques for thematically organising and analysing textual data in which the researcher produces a list of codes ('template') representing themes identified in their textual data, some of which will be usually identified a priori but they will be modified and added to as the researcher reads and interprets the texts (King, 2004: 256). McKernan (1997: 224) points out that coding becomes more arbitrary when open ended questions are asked. The idea is to let the data speak for itself. This process was therefore a self-reflecting as well as a reflective process. For not only is it vital to examine the new data, but to do this creatively and reflexively so that valuable concepts emerge to inform powerful theory (McKernan, 1997: 224).

Template analysis can be used in what Madill et al. (2000: 9) call a 'contextual constructivist' position where the researcher can adopt various interpretations of a phenomenon as data is viewed from different perspectives depending on the researcher's position and the specific social context of the study. Against the backdrop of this study's phenomenological framework of enquiry and its constructivist approach, the FGD guide was developed based on the framework for analysis to enable the study to view different experiences of the same phenomena through a common lens.

Often, the best starting point for constructing the initial template is the interview topic guide—the set of question areas, probes and points used by the interviewer (Madill et al., 2000: 259). In this case, the questions were initially pre-coded and the codes were constructed in line with the focus group guide. This helped to focus attention on certain data while increasing consistency and reliability during the coding process. However, the study remained open to adding codes during the process in order to encompass the range of responses provided. Though this approach somehow forced the analysis, it provided a framework to weave the different parts of the analysis together to validate or reinforce the ABCD model. It also brought the fractured data back together again into a comprehensive whole as an explanatory theory.

A particular feature of template analysis that informed the decision to use it in this study is the use of *a priori* themes and application to 'cross case' synthesis. Brooks et al. (2015) present case studies in their article to demonstrate how *a priori* themes can be usefully employed to ensure a focus on key areas potentially relevant to a study or building on an existing theory. The selective and judicious use of *a priori* themes can allow researchers to capture important theoretical concepts or perspectives that have informed the design and aims of a study, or to address practical concerns such as evaluation criteria that a research project has been designed to address (Brooks et al., 2015: 218). Additionally, the flexibility of the coding structure allows researcher to explore the richest aspects of data in real depth (ibid). This was particularly useful for this study as it provided a way to reduce large

amounts of text to data that was relevant for this particular evaluation, while the selective coding also increased consistency and reliability.

When the predominant research strategy is qualitative, a case study tends to take an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2012: 69). In this study, inductive reasoning was strategically used in the coding process. The coding process itself was guided by King's 6 steps which are used in template analysis (King 2004);

1. Define *a priori* themes and codes

Guided by the framework of analysis developed in Section 4.8, the study developed specific themes and categories that would guide the data analysis. The themes indicated the overall focus of information sought for in the study. Flowing from the literature around the ABCD model, the data analysis was guided by 3 themes. The first was Perceptions and Knowledge of Community Based ECD. This theme not only provided an opener for the FDGs but also enabled the study to assess what the community members knew and felt about the programme under analysis. The other two themes applied were Community Capacity and Community Participation (as discussed in section 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 respectively). The capacity of communities and community participation offered enough evidence on available assets and the level of community involvement.

Through an earlier reflective process during the development of the theoretical framework for this study, several categories were developed within these 2 themes. This process was again guided by suggested indicators in Jackson et al (2003), the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (2006) and The Community Development Foundation (2005) as given in Tables 2 and 3. These categories provided the indicators for this key information within the respective themes and guided the development of questions for the FDGs. These themes and categories combined the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' senses of community involvement, reflecting the intrinsic strength of the community as well as its capacity to be involved (Humm, Jones and Chanan, 2005: 5).

2. Transcribe interviews

In qualitative research, interviews are usually audio-recorded and then transcribed.

Qualitative researchers are frequently interested not just in what people say but also in the

way that they say it (Bryman, 2012: 482). Also, because the interviewer is supposed to be highly alert to what is being said—following up interesting points made, prompting and probing where necessary, drawing attention to any inconsistencies in the interviewee’s answers—it is best if he or she is not distracted by having to concentrate on getting down notes on what is said (Bryman, 2012: 482). The FGDs were recorded and later transcribed to ensure that nothing that was said was left out. The transcriptions were done verbatim, maintaining word for word as and when spoken, including instances of repetition, or using hypothetical examples. Random answers were also captured, and where possible, views that were mumbled were recorded.

As discussed in section 4.8, the focus of the study was on shared meaning and understanding of various aspects of the community capacity and community participation. Therefore, it was not necessary to track the individual responses. However, the importance of turn taking during the conversations was noted and used implicitly as a prompt to encourage active participation and turn-taking during the FGDs. The conversation was tracked and noted in the transcripts as participants had been assigned numbers to maintain their anonymity.

Turn-taking is a particularly important tool of conversation analysis because it illustrates that talk depends on shared codes that show smooth transitions and indicate ends of utterances in conversation (Bryman, 2012: 525). It also reflects agreement and disagreement to a question or response when and where they occur. Therefore, the preference structure of the discussion is discovered through the response to an initial statement (Bryman, 2012: 526). This was important in this study as it aimed to construct shared meaning and understanding from the conversations.

3. Carry out initial coding of data applying *a priori* codes where appropriate. If there is no relevant theme, modify an existing theme or develop a new one

Flowing from the inductive nature of the coding process, and by using the suggested indicators for Community Capacity (Jackson et al.; 2003) and Community Participation (Safer and Stronger Communities Fund; 2006, The Community Development Foundation; 2005),

categories were set within which codes were developed from the individual findings within the cases.

Individual case notes with respective findings were made (Refer to example in Annex 6), and these later fed into the template for analysis. These case notes documented synopses of each of the cases while also noting any situational constraints and uniqueness of the individual cases where applicable, as well as the prominence of the identified themes. As each case note was documented, weak clusters and isolates were identified and placed under a separate theme so they would not be lost during the analysis process. Some of these were worth mentioning and discussing—even if speculatively—in the results section.

Through interpretive coding, codes were named and defined in the template for analysis. This was done by looking through the individual findings in each of the categories within the 10 transcripts from the 10 cases. Note that the individual findings were case based after reading and re-reading through each of the individual case notes. As and when necessary, the template for analysis was modified and new categories were developed to accommodate codes that were developed after looking through each individual transcript. This was done in order to include all the valuable and respective findings.

4. Produce initial template

Flowing from the earlier 3 steps, a matrix was developed that would be used as the template for analysis in excel (Refer to Annexes 7 and 8). This template had the themes, categories and codes that would be used to analyse the data. The table below is an extract from the template for analysis.

THEMES	CATEGORIES	CODES WITHIN CATEGORIES (Interpretive Coding)	
Perceptions and Knowledge of Community Based ECD		Centre F	Centre G
	Positive Perceptions of ECD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECD centre teaches children to count, read and write Centre is based in the settlement so children are safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives parents awareness of children's rights Prepares children for a better future Bringing up children with pride

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers are committed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centre is based in the settlement so children are safe
Community Capacity	Voluntary/Community Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community
Community Participation	Community Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People give collective opinions or suggestions during meetings, and they also come up with decisions (*quote available) Mostly only local community leaders because this is a refugee settlement and mobilisation is difficult Community members would like to be involved in decision making (*quotes available) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members involved from selecting appropriate sight for the centre to construction of the centre Local leaders are influential Community members would like to be involved in decision making (*quotes available)

Table 7: Extract from template for analysis

5. Apply template to full data set

Each of the 10 transcripts and case notes were assessed again to ensure that all relevant information had been included. Through a reflective process, all the defined categories (merged findings) and codes (individual findings) were re-assessed for consistency and accuracy to prepare for the actual data analysis.

6. Use the 'final' template for interpreting and writing up findings

Using the final template, the study used cross case synthesis to represent the data in a discussion by making assertions, links and drawing conclusions. This involved preparing a matrix with all the individual findings from each of the 10 cases as indicated in the case notes. This provided the basis for data interpretation and write up of the findings of the study. The final templates are attached as Annexes 8 and 9.

5.8.4 Data Extraction and Presentation

5.8.4.1 Quantitative Data

As discussed in section 5.5.1, the purpose of the quantitative data was to provide a snapshot of issues surrounding community based ECD facilities in the region. Sapsford (1996: 184) argues that in terms of components, proportions and percentages are often more useful than absolute numbers. He also says actual numbers may be useful for planning purposes, but percentages are more interpretable and lend themselves more easily to useful comparison. He further points out that the art of presenting numerical data lies in giving the figures that will convey the desired information in an easily readable form, while still giving enough information for the reader to check the figures and draw conclusions from them other than those presented by the author (ibid).

As discussed in Section 5.8.3. the data was extracted using SPSS and presented using graphs, bar charts and pie charts. Data was disaggregated by region and by district, and these variables were positioned as 'column' or 'independent' variables. The actual questions from the survey protocol—the data points—were positioned as 'row' or 'dependent' variables. This was to ensure that the individual question variables gave data by the independent variables—in this case by region and/or by district. The summary statistics were derived by Count (ie. number/frequency) and Valid Percent (ie. percent calculated for actual data without considering missing or incomplete data) while averages were determined using the 'Compare Means' function where mean scores were derived for specific variables that required averages/mean values. Thereafter, the SPSS output for each variable was copied into excel to produce the various graphs and charts.

5.8.4.2 Qualitative Data

The data was presented in a word table in the form of a matrix. The matrix displayed the units of information coming out from each of the 10 cases through to a uniform analytical framework developed from the theoretical proposition of the study—the ABCD Model. As this was the binding concept of the study, interpretation across the cases was done through

the matrix. For this process, the study was guided by Yin's (2003) and Stake's (2006) understanding of cross-case synthesis as discussed in section 5.8.1.

Stake (2006: 39) points out that many readers look to cross-case analysis to find what is common across the cases and not what is unique to each. This study strategically looked at the distinctiveness of each case in its respective context and how this influences the programme experience. Further, it also emphasized the common relationships across the cases by viewing the programme through one theoretical lens. In this way, the strength of the case study approach was maintained by paying attention to the 'local' situation while using it to provide for a more 'general' explanation in a conceptual sense. An important caveat in conducting cross-case synthesis is that the examination of word tables for cross-case patterns will rely strongly on interpretation and not numeric tallies (Yin, 2003: 135). This enabled the study to draw important cross-case conclusions about the community-based approach to ECD.

5.9 Ethical Considerations

Bryman (2012: 130) points out that ethical issues in research cannot be ignored, as they relate directly to the integrity of a piece of research and of the disciplines that are involved. Ethics has been defined as 'a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others' (Cavan, 1997: 810 as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 112). Bogdan and Biklen (2003:43) suggest that the researcher should ensure that subjects enter research projects voluntarily, understanding the nature of the study and the dangers and obligations that are involved, and are not exposed to risks that are greater than the gains they might derive. An ethical piece of research must demonstrate rigour and quality in the design, conduct, analysis and reporting of the research (Morrison, 1996b as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 112).

As a starting point, the study was conducted within a robust methodology. While many ethical issues in research address rights, this study was also concerned with procedural ethics as a way to ensure that the rights of participants were respected as enshrined in

guiding and regulatory documents for carrying out academic research as a Dublin City University (DCU) student in Uganda. This study was conducted within the confines of the ethical guidelines of DCU and the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST, 2014), both of which have provisions for engaging in research within vulnerable communities. These bodies reflect a consensus on informed consent, a right to privacy, deception and harm to participants.

Cohen et al. (2007:51) describe what they call the cost/benefit ratio as the process of weighing the benefits of the study to the research community against potential harm to participants. In this study, there was no potential harm to participants and findings were likely to assist with future programming for ECD in vulnerable communities. Therefore, this study was in line with the communal codes of educational research studies which determine that, at no time can there be any consideration of an 'affront to dignity, embarrassment, loss of trust and social relations, loss of autonomy and self-determination and lowered self-esteem (Cohen et al., 2007: 52).

The first step in this study was to seek permission from the respective authorities to conduct the study in their ECD centres. In the Western Region, community based ECD is implemented by the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC) and the Uganda Catholic Secretariat (UCS).

Permission was sought from their respective headquarters based in Kampala through a letter of introduction from DCU. Permission was granted and letters were issued to this effect. Noteworthy is that copies of these letters were also presented to the DCU Research Ethics Committee during the ethical clearance process.

These letters were then presented to the respective local representatives at district level who then assisted with contact to the selected centres' management to make the necessary arrangements for data collection. The first point of contact at district level was the office of the respective District Education Officers (DEO) who are the government's education representatives in the different districts. This was more as a courtesy but also to request their participation in the survey.

Below is a flowchart that summarises this process;

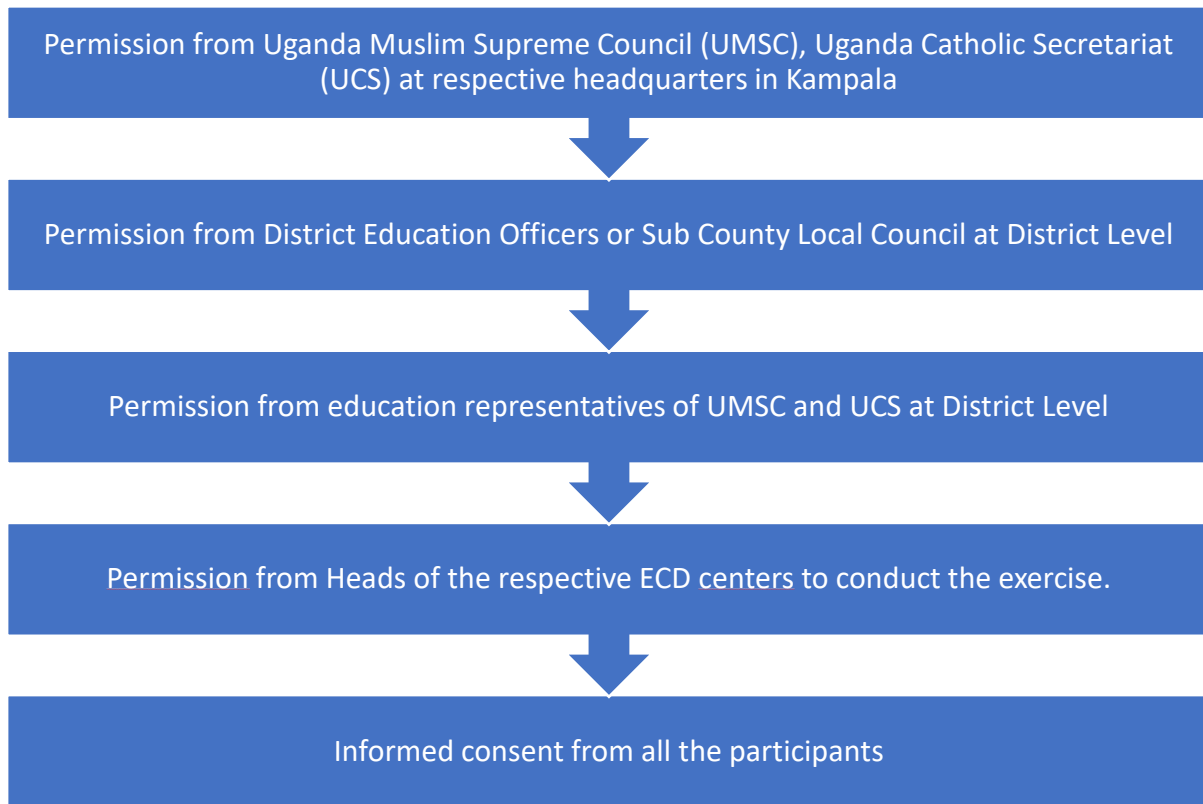


Figure 11: Flowchart of procedural ethics

Of particular note is that there was a slight difference in obtaining permission to access the community based ECD centres in the refugee settlements. The first point of contact was the respective DEO and then the implementing partners for the programme who are based in the settlements.

Bogdan and Biklen (2003:43) suggest that the researcher should ensure that subjects enter research projects voluntarily, understanding the nature of the study and the dangers and obligations that are involved, and are not exposed to risks that are greater than the gains they might derive. It was important for all stakeholders to be informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and also to provide adequate information about the study before seeking informed consent. Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw their participation and/or their data from the study at any point during the study.

The American Evaluation Association has strongly endorsed the consideration of culture in its Guiding Principles (2004), and cultural responsiveness has been woven throughout the standards and posited as central to ethical and responsive evaluation practice. Its statement on Cultural Competence in Evaluation (2011) stresses that self-reflection and admittance of privilege and positioning are important to conducting ethically and culturally competent evaluation as is the ability of the evaluator to consider, monitor, and balance both the cultural and political interests of the communities of focus (Bledsoe and Donaldson, 2015: 7). Therefore, the study engaged directly with the respective DEOs, local representatives and selected participants to confirm the details of the study and also confirm that they were happy to participate. Additionally, with the help of a research assistant who translated from English to the local dialects as and when necessary, the study presented the Plain Language Statement that had been approved by the DCU Research Ethics Committee to all. This helped to engage and build rapport with all stakeholders before the actual data collection while maintaining the ethical requirements and standards of culturally responsive evaluations. Informed Consent Forms which had been approved by the DCU Research Ethics Committee were presented to all participants.

To protect the anonymity of the participants, neither the names of the centres nor the individual participants would be disclosed in the findings. This removed any potential threat of identity exposure from the transcribed materials (Cohen et al., 2007:65). Further, participants were informed of the limitations of protecting their anonymity in the plain language statement and the consent forms because of the small sample size and nature of focus group discussions. They were assured that the audio recordings and transcripts of the FGDs and the interviews were only available to the researcher. They were also informed that the raw data would be disposed of once the data analysis was completed and both audio and computer files would be encrypted and subsequently deleted.

5.10 Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003: 48). In qualitative methodologies, reliability includes fidelity to real life, context- and situation-specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth of response and meaningfulness to the respondents (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 271). Efforts to minimize threats to validity of this study were considered thoroughly at design, data collection, data analysis and data reporting stages. This was ascertained in the essential elements of the methodology within each stage.

An initial step in enhancing the validity of results was to ensure the reliability of the data collected through robust data collection tools. This was done through the pilot study which led to a slight modification of the data collection tools. Particular attention was paid to the length of the FGDs, language and terminology used in the participating communities. Researchers working within an interpretivist framework strive to produce an inclusive and balanced view of the phenomenon of interest that provides a degree of objectivity, yet avoid unnecessary bias brought about by a lack of understanding of key viewpoints, especially those traditionally underrepresented (Mertens, 2003). The extent to which interpretation of the qualitative data represents the perspectives of the underlying groups is critical (Maxwell, 1992). The involvement of a research assistant who is from these communities was of immeasurable value to this process.

In this study, several additional procedures were used to enhance internal validity:

- Triangulation of emerging findings through the use of multiple sources and multiple methods of data collection (Merriam, 1998), including actively seeking out all stakeholders and involving parents and caregivers in the research.
- Ensuring that diverse and multiple perspectives were encouraged during the FGDs
- Clarification of cultural interpretations of activities and observations through daily de-briefing sessions with the research assistant

Of particular interest was the extent to which the research findings and implications would be more generally applicable globally, especially with the increasing number of vulnerable

children in displaced populations and refugee camps. Guided by Yin (2014) and Stake (2006), the selection of the 10 centres as multiple cases strengthened confidence in the external validity (or 'transferability') of the findings. Also, the detailed descriptions of the context (Merriam, 1988) provided in section 1.2, allows readers to assess findings within similar contexts and relate them to contexts with vulnerable children.

5.11 Limitations

As expected, the field work was not without challenges.

5.11.1 Timing of Fieldwork

The field work was conducted between June and July, which is the planting season in Uganda. Being a community of subsistence farmers, this meant that most of the male community members were not available for the FDGs as they were out working in their respective fields.

Access at some of the refugee settlements was restrictive as new refugees were being brought into some of the old settlements. Also, when the refugee settlements were visited, there was another survey in progress from OPM. This meant that this study had very limited time to conduct the FDGs and therefore the entire process was rushed. Participants were also distracted as there was a lot going on around them.

5.11.2 Process

Being a purely academic study, finances were limited. This placed immense pressure on the process in terms of time, car hire and fuel. Mobilisation was often rushed because of the distances between the centres, as well as the heavy rain and the bad roads. This meant that between introductions to local authorities and actual data collection, very limited time was available in each community.

In some instances, even though permission had been granted from relevant headquarters, information had not reached the respective district/centre officials. This meant that on arrival, once local officials had been met, the process of mobilising participants was rushed.

5.11.3 Participation in FGDs

A key assumption was that participants would be open and honest in their responses. Though participation was free and open in the FGDs, the shy or more quiet participants tended to agree with the more outspoken participants. Even when prompted and engaged directly these participants could not substantiate their 'agreements' so to speak.

The gender composition of the focus groups was not always balanced. Unfortunately, the role of gender perceptions was not investigated further in this study, as it was not possible to do so given the limitations of time and resources, however, this could be something that could be pursued in further research by others. Though the reasons for this were not explored, possibilities include the perceived role of females in issues around young children and the disinterest of males in ECD. Also, because it was planting season, most adult males in the communities may have been out working on their farms.

Also, the participants appeared tired about 30 minutes into the discussions. This indicated that the FGD guide may have been too long as the study attempted to gather as much information as possible. Unfortunately, this meant that the final questions were often rushed and therefore responses minimal.

5.11.4 Relationship between Researcher and Participants

The researcher is often seen to be, or is, in an asymmetric position of power with regard to the participants; the former may have more power than the latter, be this by status, position, knowledge or other (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 136). One typical response is to reduce the power differentials as much as possible. This was mitigated by setting up the FGD room in a way that put both the researcher and participants seated around one 'round' table. Another way was by establishing trust and rapport by matching characteristics as much as possible such as the researcher dressing in a way that was similar to the local community members, and using relevant social gestures of respect.

5.12 Summary and Conclusions

Qualitative research involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of verbal data.

These data relate to the social world and concepts and behaviour of people within their own social context. This study was therefore more specifically suited for qualitative procedure as it was mainly exploratory in nature. Research must be systematic and controlled.

Investigating a topic such as this one called for an inductive approach because no 'tailor made pre-defined answers to the research questions are available' (European Commission, 2005: 4).

The phenomenological framework allowed for rich descriptions and a well-founded rationale for explaining the underlying behavioural and environmental processes at work in the local settings. It also enabled the study to derive insightful explanations for issues that emerged during the study. This study's view of reality is that people actively seek out, select and construct their own views on reality based on their socio-cultural contexts and interactions. Therefore, philosophically, it was framed within the constructivist paradigm. As a post-modernist researcher, I am of the view that one important factor in social research is to avoid circumstances that impose definitions of situations on participants. Therefore, the study used the interpretivist framework of enquiry to understand and interpret the data. Philosophically, these paradigms worked for the study as research in education because of 'the way they fit naturally to the kind of concentrated action found in classrooms and schools' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 23).

A survey was conducted in the selected districts in the Western and West Nile Regions to get a snapshot of issues surrounding community based ECD facilities in the region and provide a more focused context for the study. Data was collected by a questionnaire administered to 55 people including the ECD Focal Persons in the respective District Education Offices, the head caregivers of the selected ECD centres per district, and members of the centre management committees. The data from the surveys was analysed using SPSS Version 24.

The study looked at the experiences and perceptions of parents, caregivers and community members on these services in the social contexts in which they occur. The case study approach— using focus group discussions as the primary data collection tools —provided depth where the scope was limited in terms of numbers (10 ECD centres), geographical area (10 districts in 2 regions), and time span (one month). This approach allowed a deeper understanding about issues surrounding the communities and their role in the provision of ECD services for their children. The FGDs were held with caregivers and parents of children attending the selected ECD centres, and members of the centre management committees. This allowed for the generation of a substantial amount of data in one group session, while also using the communication between the participants to generate data (European Commission, 2005: 7). It also used interactions within the respective groups to highlight the respondents' attitudes and provide frameworks of understanding key concepts and common experiences. The data was analysed using template analysis through the ABCD Model.

Generally speaking, ethical principles are not absolute but must be interpreted in light of the research context and of other values at stake (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018: 112). Though procedural ethics may not always be enough in social research, they were employed in this study because there was no potential harm to participants. Research validity was ensured at each critical stage during the study, and a pilot was conducted to enhance validity and ensure reliability of collected data. The involvement of individuals living and working within these communities was of immeasurable value to this process.

Bases for validity and reliability included dependence on real life situations and contexts through the use of the case study approach. Using cross-case synthesis and analysis allowed for replicability. The multiple interests and interpretations of key stakeholders as respondents was invaluable to the process. The FGDs allowed respondents to give detailed and in-depth responses and in a sense encouraged honesty and candour. This allowed the

data collection process to be meaningful to the respondents through the enabling environment provided for them during the process. Triangulation played a key role in ensuring validity and reliability of the findings, and to an extent provided the study with an 'audit trail'.

This study also 'tested' the use of the ABCD Model as a tool for the evaluation of community education and community development programmes. Theory testing aims to strengthen or reduce support for a theory, narrow or extend the scope conditions of a theory, or determine which of two or more theories best explains a case, type or general phenomenon (George and Bennet, 2005: 109).

Chapter 6: Findings and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the key findings of the study. It provides a brief analysis of Uganda's ECD policy framework, and then unpacks information from a review of ECD policy and programme documents, minutes from meetings, previous studies of the programme and programme implementation documents. This gives a more focused view of actual ECD policy and practice in Uganda. It then discusses findings from the small-scale survey, which provides important contextual information for the study.

It goes on to discuss information from a cross-case synthesis of information from FGDs. The aim of these discussions was to get the participants perception of the community based ECD model by engaging them in meaningful conversation. The study assumed that engaging the participants in this way increased the significance and strength of the findings through the social experience of the FGDs as discussed in section 5.5.2. Additionally, it worked on the premise that participants were similar and cooperative with one another—parents, centre management committee members and caregivers in the respective ECD centres—as they all aimed to get the same/similar benefit from the programme, and this further enhanced the quality of the data generated during the discussions.

The findings also include information from reflective field notes taken during the site visits.

6.2 Analysis of Uganda's ECD Policy Framework

This analysis of Uganda's ECD policy framework broadly discusses legislative progress, present needs and budget allocation for ECD. The current education policies and legislative commitments in Uganda reflect the government's noble pledge for equality and equity in the education system. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme which basically ensures that all children in Uganda have access to primary schooling is a prime example of the GoU's commitment. Huge investments have been made in UPE which does not include pre-primary education. It is only fitting that the policy stretches to cover pre-primary education, which is the foundation for the sustainability of UPE.

The Government of Uganda— through the Uganda ECD policy framework—recognises six types of ECD centres to cater for the children of Uganda, these being:

1. Traditional Home-Based Care
2. Day Care Centres
3. Home Based ECD Centres
4. Community Based ECD Centres
5. Nursery Schools/Kindergarten
6. Lower Primary School Classes

With the view that community based ECD Centres are a creative and cost effective response to meeting the multiple developmental needs of the children, key questions in this study include to what extent the Government of Uganda’s ECD Policy Framework—that encourages the establishment of low-cost community based ECD Centres—provides care and support for vulnerable children and includes community members as active agents in the provision of ECD services.

6.2.1 Progress

A key initiative of the Government of Uganda since 1986 has been the promotion of education as a strategic means towards poverty eradication and ultimate societal development (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007:1). An Education Policy Review Commission was set up in 1987 and its subsequent report in 1989 was the first milestone which saw the development of the Government White Paper in 1992. The two documents strongly recommended, among other things, the provision of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda, and recognised the need for government to undertake some measures of control and responsibility for the quality of pre-primary education and progressively work towards full supervision of Pre-Primary Education.

The GoU does not provide pre-primary education in Uganda. The ECD Policy was developed and launched in 2007 and it aimed to increase government’s responsibility in pre-primary education. It targeted young children—from birth to eight years of age—and ECD service providers including parents and guardians, local communities and leaders, education service

providers, relevant training institutions and community-based organisations. It aimed to enhance partnerships that promote holistic approaches to ECD and effective learning/teaching processes appropriate to that age group (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007: 2). Within the policy, other line ministries and government departments had specific roles and responsibilities to ensure that the policy was implemented for the holistic wellbeing of the child and the community. The policy also supported valuable public-private partnerships and networking at all levels among key stakeholders in the process, as well as building up linkages between sectoral partnerships ie. education, health and nutrition, gender, water and sanitation.

The policy ensured that there was an enabling environment to support holistic ECD while also building on the strengths of families and communities. However, there were still notable gaps. It was necessary to develop an integrated framework including a plan of action to ensure better co-ordination, intersectoral priority setting and effective implementation. In response to this, the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (NIECD) was developed and launched in 2016. This was a very positive response from the GoU. The policy recognised equity in access, and also that to be effective, quality ECD needs to be context specific. It harmonized the goals and strategies across sectors and levels from national, district and community levels towards more coordinated, integrated and inclusive ECD (MoGLSD, 2016: 4). It also promoted strategic partnerships, more effective coordination to harness and expand vast knowledge, expertise and resources in ECD to compliment efforts at various levels (ibid).

Other positive steps taken include;

- The creation of the Department of Pre-primary and Primary Education in 2000 (within the Ministry of Education and Sports).
- The development of the early learning and development standards (ELDS) for children 3 to 5 years in 2015 which stipulate the expected learning achievements for young children in areas including cognitive, physical, language as well as social and

emotional development (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports 2015).

- The requirement that all ECD centres must be registered. The NIECD highlights the importance of good governance and accountability (MoGLSD, 2016: 6). Before receiving a license to operate, all providers must show that they meet the Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards (BRMS), which basically translate into the centres being 'child friendly'.
- Increased control of teacher training institutions through the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) in terms of accreditation and entry points (Kisitu, 2009).

6.2.2 Present Needs

The GoU has made huge investments in UPE, and it is fitting that policy stretches to cover ECD which is the foundation for the sustainability of UPE. Though the current GoU education policies and legislative commitments are progressive in terms of equity and equality, major gaps remain in the current policy. For instance, ECD is not identified as a compulsory stage in education before primary school and therefore the policy is not enforced. This leaves initiation and implementation in the hands of the private sector.

The NIECD Action Plan (MoGLSD, 2016: 8) states that the GoU shall increase its financial allocation to support programmes for young children and families to ensure quality, access and equitable distribution of services to all children, conception to eight years. However, it indicates that efforts will be directed to increasing awareness and commitment to ECD services and programmes by all stakeholders. This implies that service delivery itself remains in the hands of the private sector while government involvement and support still remain on the 'fringes' of delivery of ECD services. But in a developing country like Uganda inequity is entrenched by the time children start school and the impact of inadequate quality ECD may not be immediately visible. Waiting for visible consequences may result in a high price to pay to fix problems later on, often with limited results (Gertsch and Wright, 2009:3). The GoU could benefit from rethinking its involvement and support in pre-primary service provision.

There are successful examples of the state supporting ECD services that are privately provided, such as the programme of *Fe y Alegria*, a religious institution that provides infrastructure and management while the state pays for teachers' salaries, and costs of other activities such as teacher training are shared (Cueto Santiago, 2011 as cited in van Leer Foundation, 2011: 18). Van Ravens (2009) provides an example from the Government of Nepal which provides an amount of money every month for each caregiver who regularly provides services at an ECD centre for a group of children. The amount of money is inadequate for the caregivers to live on so the parents of the children top it up. Mauritius has a similar policy but the contribution is per child (World Bank, 2012: 9). Similarly, several countries in Latin America have successfully used voucher schemes to increase enrolment (Berhmans and Van Raven, 2013: 53). These are all examples of government involvement and support of ECD service delivery through positive collaboration with other stakeholders aiming to support equity in education.

6.2.3 Budget Allocation

Implementing the NIECD Policy will cost the GoU and its partners about UGX 1.2 trillion (Makumbi, 2016). The policy states that financing of will be through cost sharing mechanisms among all key stakeholders with additional financing being mobilized from development partners and communities in line with the Resource Mobilization Advocacy Strategy (MoGLSD, 2016: 10).

Though the GoU has included ECD in its development plans, it appears as an “unfunded priority” and hence is not allocated specific budget lines in the National or the District Local Government Budgets. The Ministry of Education and Sports (2007: 15) ensures the inclusion of ECD within the sector's budget framework, but funding only covers the development and dissemination of policy guidelines, curriculum and teacher education/training, advocacy, community mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as research for quality assurance.

Interesting to note is that the MoES Annual Performance Report (2012: 22) pointed to the role of ECD in the improvement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) performance and provided the budgets for pre-primary and primary schooling. The budget for ECD appeared

in one and the same budget line with a very small figure of 0.088% of the joint budget for pre-primary and primary. This shows that the level of financial investment and support by the GoU in pre-primary education is minimal.

6.2.4 Conclusion

It is striking to note that the GoU ECD policy and legislative frameworks recognise ECD as a multi-sectoral process, in which the guiding principles require shared ownership, implementation and management among ALL stakeholders (ie. family, community, Ministry of Education and other key government ministries and departments). Whilst the state is primarily responsible for ensuring that all children and young people receive quality education, all stakeholders are accountable in the process of assisting and supporting government in identifying problem areas and priorities. The roles and responsibilities are based on collaborative partnerships to ensure that provision of the services is rights based, child centred, community based, family focused, gender responsive, inclusive, flexible and provides for holistic child care.

However, the relationship between policy and practice in many sectors is seldom linear. Government's role in ECD provision in Uganda is only to provide an enabling environment. Though the Ugandan policy framework recognises that ECD cuts across various social sectors, it clearly states that responsibility of ECD service provision remains with the private sector. The Uganda MoES acknowledges the lack of access to quality ECD services for vulnerable children, especially in rural areas, post conflict areas, isolated communities, poor urban and other disadvantaged communities (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007: 5). And yet involvement and support remain outside actual service delivery. With the limited availability of resources in Uganda, it is difficult to ensure that every child enjoys a quality ECD programme without government provision.

Nevertheless, the GoU's equitable approach to education can be pursued for ECD by improving and scaling up provision of quality community based ECD centres. By focusing on vulnerable communities, the GoU could make sure that efforts are concentrated in localities with increased deprivation. The objective of this approach is to provide an integrated

package of services at household and community level through innovative and sustainable interventions towards child survival, protection and development. As an intervention for young children affected by poverty, this concept is integral to their growth, survival and development. It also contributes to the provision of appropriate benefits to communities caring for young poor and vulnerable children, and their families. The strengthening and development of this ECD model could potentially be an important resource for care and support of poor and vulnerable young children.

6.3 Analysis of ECD Service Delivery in Uganda

Never before has ECD been so high on the international development agenda. The inclusion of ECD in the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development 2015–2030 is evidence of its increased global attention. The combined activities of the World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, and other major donor agencies show that more investment is being made in ECD in developing countries—including Uganda— than has been the case previously.

Studies have argued that countries have tended to prioritise primary education over pre-primary education (Ejuu, 2012; Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013). Indeed, this is mirrored in Uganda’s financial investment in primary education—through its Universal Primary Education Programme (UPE)—compared with its allocation to pre-primary education as discussed in section 6.2. For instance, Uganda has taken significant steps to improve access to education for children in recent years, with 95% of children having access to primary education (UNICEF, 2019: 16). The UPE programme has made remarkable achievements in terms of increasing access to primary education for vulnerable children. And yet research (JLICA, 2009; Arnold, 2008; Myers, 1992; Grantham-McGregor, et al. 2007; as cited in Nyeko, 2011: 20; UNICEF, 2011 and UNICEF, 2019) suggests that the provision of ECD services for young children in Uganda is marked by inaccessibility and inadequacy.

Though comprehensive data on ECD service providers, users and number of children accessing early learning in both formal and informal settings in Uganda is not readily available, on hand data (UNICEF, 2011 and UNICEF, 2019) shows that many vulnerable children especially in rural areas, post conflict areas, isolated communities, and poor urban

and other disadvantaged communities do not have access to existing ECD services. These barriers include affordability, lack of access points, hours of operation, language of service, and lack of information about services. In these situations, choice is either limited or non-existent. With the share of education in the GoU budget dropping from 13% in 2015 to 11% in 2017 (UNICEF, 2019: 16) the pre-primary education sector is unlikely to make desired progress especially with the growing population figures which mean that a higher demand is being placed on a system that is not geared for the early education of children (Lomofsky, 2014: 2).

6.3.1 Key Statistics

The table below provides a snapshot of pre-primary education indicators in recent years.¹¹

Indicator	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Population (3 – 5 years)	-	3,506,000	3,516,000	3,567,000	3,670,000
Enrolment	430,425	433,258	477,123	563,913	608,973
Male	213,459	214,996	236,284	279,089	301,523
Female	216,966	218,262	240,839	284,824	307,450
Gross Enrolment Rate (GER)	10.2	9.74	9.88	15.8	16.6
Net Enrolment Rate (NER)	10.1	9.5	9.5	9.3	9.1
% Annual Change in Enrolment	20.4	0.7	10.1	18.2	8.0
Number of Schools	4,949	4,956	5,763	6,798	7,210

¹¹ Enrolment refers to the number of children who are officially enrolled in education while attendance refers to whether the children actually go to school and is measured by means of surveys that are based on representative samples and questions generally looking to find out if children have attended respective institutions over a number of weeks.

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)	29	24	22	21	22
Number of Teachers	14,732	15,332	21,310	26,363	27,641
Pupil Classroom Ratio (PCR)	25	28	31	25	27
Total Number of classrooms	17,545	15,388	15,427	22,121	22,971
Pupil Stance Ratio	10	14	23	19	22
Total Number of Toilet Stances	-	20,851	21,015	29,531	28,119

Table 8: Trends of selected Pre-Primary Education Indicators, 2013-2017 (UBOS, 2019)¹²

The difference between population figures and enrolment figures for young children is remarkable. The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) provides data on the Gross Enrolment Ratio (total number of children enrolled regardless of age) and the Net Enrolment Ratio (enrolment of the official age group as a % of the total population of the particular age group) in the Education Management Information System (EMIS).

A household survey—the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (DHS, 2011) found an attendance rate of 23.4% (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013: 6) with high disparities between urban and rural areas and among different socio-economical levels. Unlike the EMIS, the DHS reports the Net Attendance Ratio (a percentage of the number of persons in the official age group attending an education institution to the total population in that age group) and the Gross Attendance Ratio (a percentage of the number of persons attending a given level of education regardless of their age to the total population of the age group corresponding to the respective level of education).

¹² Source: Annual School Census, Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013-2017

	Net	Gross
Enrolment (EMIS)	6.6	8.6
Attendance (DHS)	23.4	41.4

Table 9: NER, GER, NAR and GAR in pre-primary schooling in Uganda from MoES (2011) and Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2011)

The figures in the table above show remarkably low levels of enrolment and attendance. There is a notable difference between the EMIS and the DHS figures which can be explained partly by the existence of many for-profit nurseries and community-based ECD centres that do not report their enrolments, and partly by the fact that in community-based ECD centres children can attend without being enrolled (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013: 13). In pre-primary it is not uncommon for attendance rates to be higher than enrolment rates mostly due to under-reporting of and among the various types of ECD services and programmes. Also, the EMIS may not capture the numbers of children in particular settings or institutions for various reasons while the DHS would.

6.3.2 Policy Implementation

As a signatory to the global and regional frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC), Education for All (EFA), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and standards on the rights of the child, Uganda is committed to using ECD as a platform for ensuring the fulfilment of the rights of children in the country (MoGLSD, 2016: 2). The NIECD policy is an overarching guide in the delivery of ECD services which include prenatal and postnatal care, early infant stimulation and education, parent education, health and nutrition education and care, sanitation, and protection against abuse, exploitation and violence. In its NIECD Action Plan (MoGLSD, 2016: 7) the GoU pledges to ensure that children's early learning at all the different stages of development is implemented and supported. The education aspect of ECD focuses on increasing access to equitable, quality, integrated, inclusive and developmentally appropriate early learning and stimulation opportunities and programs for all children below eight years in Uganda.

In Uganda, like in many other countries, the capacity of the state to use research to inform and implement policy has not been completely utilised. For instance, much of what informs ECD programmes in developing countries like Uganda continues to come predominantly from Euro-American research. Amid growing international attention to ECD interventions in developing nations, it has been observed that unless research specialists are involved very early in the planning of such programmes, substantial investments may be lost (Mwaura and Marfo, 2011: 137). The general principles of a pre-primary policy should reflect progressive, child-centred curriculum, blended with some traditional cultural emphases and recognition of the importance of evaluation (Corter et al., 2006).

The responsibility for child care and development in Uganda has primarily been with the family—including the extended family—and community. This study noted that Uganda's NIECD Policy identifies the importance of family and community engagement, and recognizes the family as the first line of response. Its action plan places family and community strengthening as a core programme with priorities to engage parents and families in children's development, promotion of ownership of the programmes, and enables families to access supportive services (MoGLSD, 2016: 4).

The ECD curriculum in Uganda was developed in 2005 and focused more on child survival and development than on early childhood education. This study found that a Learning Framework was developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (2011) with an emphasis on observable and measurable skills, knowledge and values to be acquired by the children in the following areas:

- Personality and emotional relationship
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem-solving and mathematical concepts
- Knowing and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development.

For effective implementation, the Framework was also translated into Kiswahili and 16 local languages¹³ (NCDC, 2011). Additionally, the study found that a Caregivers' Guide to the Learning Framework (NCDC, 2012) was developed to interpret the Learning Framework and make it easy to use by providing step-by-step instructions for caregivers. It also includes information on the teaching and learning experiences that enhance the holistic development of a child. The Caregiver's Guide emphasises learner centredness and provides for increased learner-teacher contact time, different ability groups and familiar language for initial literacy. However, this study found that these tools have not been well distributed and utilised. Also, many ECD centres have continued to use syllabi developed by individuals. This study reasons that these are often inappropriate for young children who are frequently subjected to unsuitable written examinations.

The data analysed during this study also indicated that pre-primary teacher training in Uganda is not streamlined. There are 40 institutions that train pre-school teachers, and each institution has its own curriculum and entry requirements, and qualifications are not accredited to any recognised body (MoES, 2007: 5). Also, the study found that teacher qualifications varied considerably across various ECD services. Figure 12 below shows that the majority of teachers who declared their qualification to UBOS (2019: 16) had a diploma in nursery school teaching (60 percent). Those with a certificate in nursery teaching and Grade 2 accounted for 9 percent each individually while other teachers/caregivers were trained to teach Grade 4, Grade 5, Secondary Education, Tertiary Education and Special Needs Education.

¹³ Runyankole/Rukiga, Runyoro/Rutoro, Alur, Acholi, Nagaramajongo, Ateso Lango, Dhapodhola, Lubwisi, Lukonzo, Luganda, Lugbarati, Kumam, Lusoga, Pokot and Lebthu

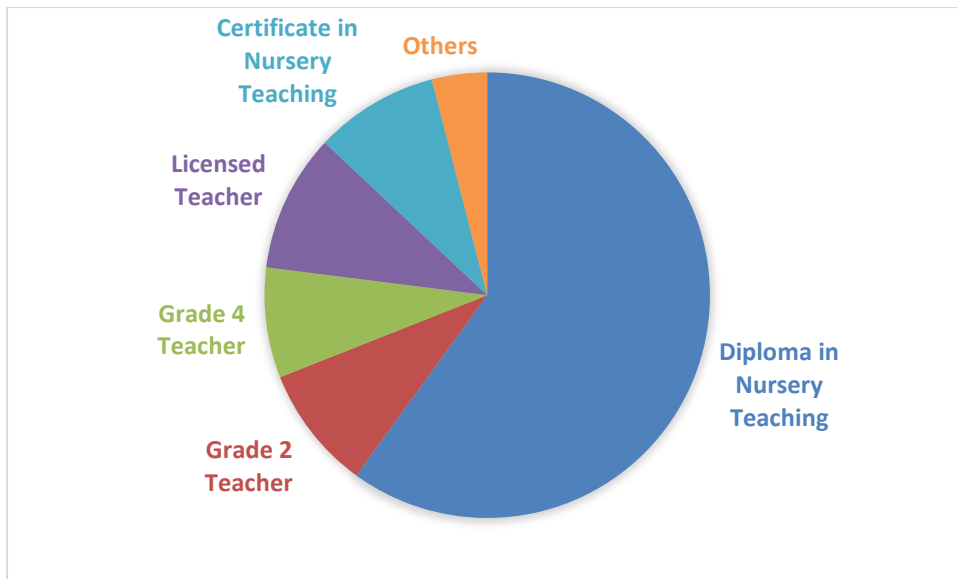


Figure 12: Pre-primary teachers by qualification, 2017 *others include Grade 3 Teacher, Grade 5 Teacher including Diploma in Special Needs Education (DSNE), Diploma in Secondary Education (DSE), Diploma in Tertiary Education (DTE), Graduate Teacher, Trained Caregiver and Diploma in Primary Education (DPE)

In a cost-benefit analysis of the community-based ECD programme in Uganda, Behrman and Van Ravens (2013: 48) argued that in the poorest and most underserved areas of Uganda where the need for community based ECD centres is the highest, schooling attainment is generally low so that few people with a certificate or diploma from Teacher Training Institutions can be found. Further, a review of the programme by Lomofsky (2014: 25) noted that a validation audit of ECD Teacher Training conducted by the MoES in 2009 highlighted various problems with the quality and qualifications of the educators themselves. In response to this audit, the MoES developed The Caregivers Training Framework in 2011 which covers 3 Curriculum Guidelines ie. Certificate in Community Care (9 months), Certificate in Childcare (1 year pre-service and 2 years in-service) and the Early Childhood Development Teacher's Certificate (2 years pre-service and 2 years in-service). Against this backdrop, the study argues that the quality of caregivers in the community based ECD centres is not streamlined and may compromise the quality of care and support provided to young children.

6.3.3 ECD Service Delivery

The study found that currently, provision of ECD education in Uganda is highly dependent on NGOs, FBOs and multilateral organisations. Information that was accessed indicated that they are generally set up by NGOs or FBOs that usually reduce support after an initial phase of a number of years. After that initial phase, the community becomes responsible for operating the centre, hence the term 'community-based'. Community ownership and sustainability are essential characteristics of a high ECD quality process (MoGLSD, 2016: 6).

Sometimes the external support is more continuous as when an FBO provides land and structures for the centre. Available information indicated that FBOs play a major role in providing ECD programmes in developing countries. Faith based programmes are considered desirable by many parents who feel that these programmes replicate the values taught at home (Wagner, 2018: 84). Often housed within a place of worship, these organisations offer nearly 25% of all ECD programmes in developing countries (Britto et al., 2014 and Bartlett et al., 2013).

6.3.4 Partnerships and Coordination

The study noted that the NIECD Policy (MoGLSD, 2016: 6) places Public-Private Partnerships at the centre of ECD programme delivery. The implementation of the policy requires a multi-sectoral approach with contributions and participation of all key stakeholders in line with their primary mandates. This requires mobilization, motivation, capacitation and fulfilment of roles and obligations by actors at all levels of government, in community and local leadership roles, and among parents and caregivers themselves.

This study found that roles and responsibilities are clearly charted in the NIECD Action Plan. This indicates that the GoU has attempted to provide an enabling environment for the provision of a holistic ECD service for young children. In the action plan, the GoU pledges to enhance mechanisms for partnerships in the provision of early childhood development services while increasing its capacity to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the services delivered by partners to ensure quality, accessibility and equity in provisions of services for all children (MoGLSD, 2016: 8).

The specific roles are clearly outlined in the policy (MoGLSD, 2016: 9);

The **Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development** has the mandate to care for Uganda's children through the National Council for Children (NCC). It therefore leads the implementation of the ECD Policy Framework, and works with the Ministry of Education and Sports to monitor the implementation of ECD programmes as well as to engage communities in providing for the care and safety of children.

The **ECD Technical Committee** provides overall guidance on implementation of the NIECD Policy Framework from the National, to the lower local governments. It advocates for inclusion of appropriate planning and budgeting for ECD interventions in sector plans at all levels, and initiates new ECD programs and interventions in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. It is also tasked with leading the dissemination of findings from ECD Research Studies. This committee includes representatives from relevant ministries, departments and institutional stakeholders.

The **National ECD Secretariat** supports the ECD Technical Committee through the preparation of multi-sectoral plans for implementation and reports of the NIECD Policy at national level. The secretariat includes representatives from relevant ministries, departments and institutional stakeholders.

The **Ministry of Education and Sports** (MoES) holds the mandate to develop and review the sector policy, and issue policy guidelines for support, development of instructional materials as well as for the establishment of ECD facilities. Though the establishment of ECD facilities in Uganda remains with the private (community) sector, the MoES ensures that facilities are registered and licensed, and that training programmes for caregivers are streamlined through certification and accreditation. Because ECD provision has been out of the hands of government, the MoES is supporting these already existing facilities to meet standards and requirements as stipulated in the policy through a licensing and registration process which includes capacity building, training and support supervision. However, this procedure is still in its infancy and much work still needs to be done.

The Directorate of Education Standards (DES) and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) are in charge of all capacity building activities relating to ECD.

Through the **Directorate of Education Standards** (DES), the MoES implements the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) which provide standards for assessing and monitoring child development in Uganda including;

- development of a curriculum;
- support parenting and promote parenting programmes;
- improvement of teacher preparation;
- improvement and evaluation of programmes;
- monitoring national progress;
- improving public knowledge on early childhood development; and
- improving instruction (Rault-Smith, Seleti and Viviers, 2008: 3).

These standards underpin all guidelines for ECD implementation in Uganda and outline expectations for the learning and development of young children across several domains of development, namely physical well-being and motor development, thought processes and understanding, social and emotional development, language and literacy, and approaches toward learning.

Through the **National Curriculum Development Centre** (NCDC), the MoES designs and develops curriculum—known as the Learning Framework—which is harmonised and standardised through the ELDS. The curriculum also provides the guiding framework to ensure adherence to the MoES BRMS. Additionally, the NCDC develops all instructional materials for the Learning Framework and guidelines—underpinned by the ELDS— for capacity building of relevant stakeholders in communities in the context of ECD.

Kyambogo University (KyU) takes the lead in harmonising training, certification and accreditation for nursery teachers and caregivers. It also sets up systems to guide affiliation of institutions that train Nursery School Teachers and Caregivers. Training for these groups

is co-ordinated by the the MoES through the Teacher Instructor Education and Training (TIET) Department and Kyambogo University, and is facilitated by NGOs, FBOs and CBOs in collaboration with respective government officers

The **Ministry of Local Government** is the government ministry with executive powers at district level.¹⁴ It therefore works with the MoES to coordinate and provide administrative support to ECD service providers in their respective districts. Having the mandate to initiate and implement ordinances and bye-laws that ensure the enforcement of the Children's Statute at community level, they are well placed to ensure that parents and communities recognise the rights of young children, including the right to education. They can also play a key role to ensure that ECD service providers function within the law and stipulated rules and regulations.

Other partners include;

The **Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment** which holds the mandate to ensure that all ECD service providers have adequate water and sanitation facilities. This includes safe drinking water, clean hand washing facilities, and sufficient sanitary disposal amenities. Further, the ministry is also mandated to regulate the use of land for relevant infrastructure development.

The **Ministry of Health** provides for relevant medical services for young children in ECD centres including immunisation, de-worming and the provision of micro-nutrient supplements. It also provides guidance and sensitisation on health and nutrition for children and mothers.

The **Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development** has the mandate to include budget estimates for all ministries working on various aspects of ECD. The policy states that

¹⁴ The government of Uganda has a highly decentralised administrative structure which places the MoLG in a key position for delivery of government services

it is the responsibility of the MoFPED to ensure that the planning and budgeting process provides for ECD at both central and local government levels.

6.4 Snapshot of Community Based ECD in the Western and the West Nile Regions of Uganda

From the onset, the study worked on the premise that all participants have first-hand experience with the community based ECD model in Uganda, and that they have the essential knowledge of how the community-based model of ECD is implemented and how it works practically in their respective communities. Their responses—together with information from documents that were reviewed as part of the study—provided important contextual information that represented how the community members perceive and understand the implementation of the ECD policy at community level.

6.4.1 Community Contextual Information

This study was undertaken in Western Uganda and the West Nile Region. Before the key findings are presented, this section provides a snapshot of the regions in which this study was undertaken. This provides a context to the study and an understanding of the 10 communities in which the study was conducted. As discussed in the introductory chapter, comprehensive data on early childhood development in Uganda is not readily available and the data that are referred to in different documents varies widely. However, the data uniformly showed that many vulnerable children especially in rural areas, post conflict areas, isolated communities, and poor urban and other disadvantaged communities have limited access to existing ECD services.

As mentioned in section 1.2.3, the highest proportion of host community households categorized as having the highest numbers of children not attending school were in the West Nile (44%) and the Western (42%) regions (REACH Initiative, 2018: 78). These two regions are among the poorest and most marginalised parts of the country. They face development challenges that put them in a different sphere from the rest of the country. They have been caught in a cycle of natural disasters, conflict, a high influx of refugees and limited investment, which perpetuate underdevelopment and hunger (UN Integrated

Regional Information Networks, 2008). This in itself particularly contributes to the high levels on vulnerability¹⁵ of the children in these regions. A Situation Analysis of Children in Uganda reports child poverty rates for children aged between 0 – 4 who are experiencing multiple deprivations at 57% in the Western Region and 68% in the West Nile (MoGLSD and UNICEF Uganda, 2015: 24), which is further testament to the high levels of vulnerability of children in these regions.

The Western Region has an ECD enrollment of 14.7% (Lomofsky, 2014: 1) with the West Nile at just 5% (Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and UNICEF Uganda (2015: 51). Both these figures are much less than the National Enrolment Ratio (NER) which is reported to be at 23%. The West Nile Region faces additional development challenges due to the high influx of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan — making it the region with the largest number of settled refugees in Uganda. This puts it in a different sphere from the rest of the country, and particularly contributes to the high levels on vulnerability of children in the region.

Because this study focused on ECD services for vulnerable children, it tried to get data on the types of vulnerability in the communities. The FGDs listed groups of vulnerable children in their communities while the survey data collected information on types of vulnerability. The study found that the group with the highest numbers of vulnerable children in both the local communities and the refugee settlements was the orphans. Both the local communities and the refugee settlements also had a high number of children with disabilities while the local communities had a higher number of children with HIV and AIDS.

¹⁵ This study's definition of 'vulnerability' of children (including their communities) is broadly centred on the environment within which they live. Various factors influence levels of vulnerability in Uganda including governance trends, population growth, food prices, unemployment, climate change and conflict.

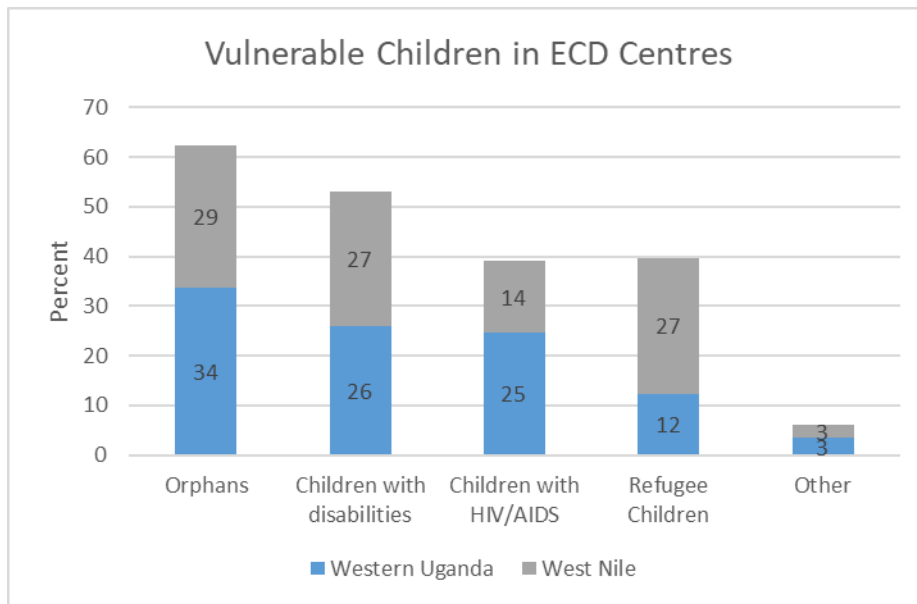


Figure 13: Vulnerable children in ECD centres

6.4.2 Supply of Community Based ECD Centres

From the site visits it was evident that the centres were clean and well-kept. The size of the learning spaces/classrooms was adequate though some of the buildings had incomplete walls and roofs that leaked when it rained. Pit latrines and hand washing facilities were available in all the centres visited. From the FGDs, participants were positive about the quality of services offered in the centres ranging from the way the caregivers treated the children to their safety.

“The centres provide protection and safety of children.” Participant A4

“I like the way caregivers treat young children and provide guidance.” Participant A1

“The centre is based in the settlement so children are safe.” Participant F1

“... our children we brought from South Sudan one of the refugees, by then the play they are making is one of war like producing the sound of a gun but when they were brought here, they forgot those things, as you go in the area, they are singing rhymes. So, I believe it has also helped them through drama.” Participant I2

The study was unable to find actual official figures for numbers of community based ECD centres in the communities visited. However, the survey data suggested that the average number of community based ECD centres in each of the 10 communities that participated in the study is between 1 - 5. (Refer to the graph below shows the obtained mean scores of 1.77 for Western Uganda and 1.04 for West Nile). The study notes that this is meaningless without a comparison with other types of pre-school services in the area or actual numbers of children but it gives a good sense of availability of the services in communities.

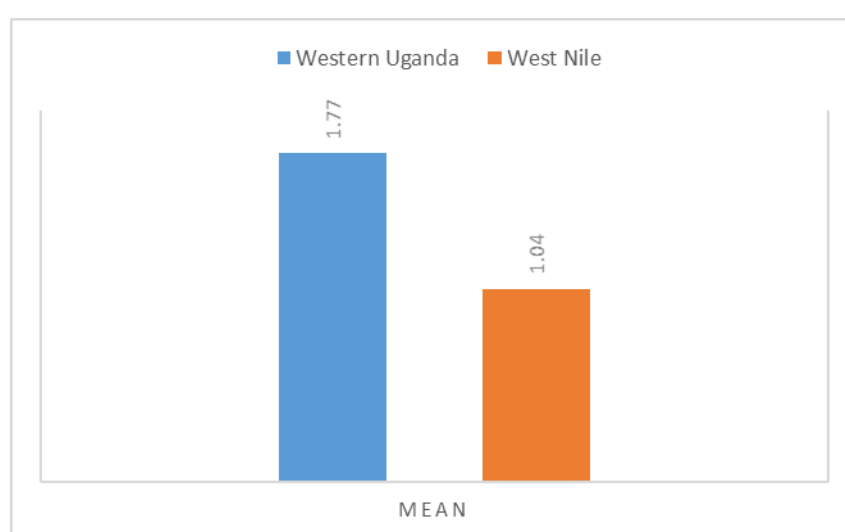


Figure 14: Average numbers of community based ECD centres in communities visited

When disaggregated by district, the data showed that the districts with the refugee settlements had a higher number of centres than the other vulnerable districts that were part of the study. The data also indicated that most of the ECD centres in the refugee settlements are located in community centres (89.5%) while in the local communities the majority (90.3%) are attached to schools. Of particular note was that in the local communities there were a substantial number that were located on their own land and in places of worship. When interpreted through the ABCD Framework, this shows the involvement of the social assets at institutional level—eg. churches and mosques—and organisational level—eg. schools—in providing an enabling environment for the delivery of the programme.

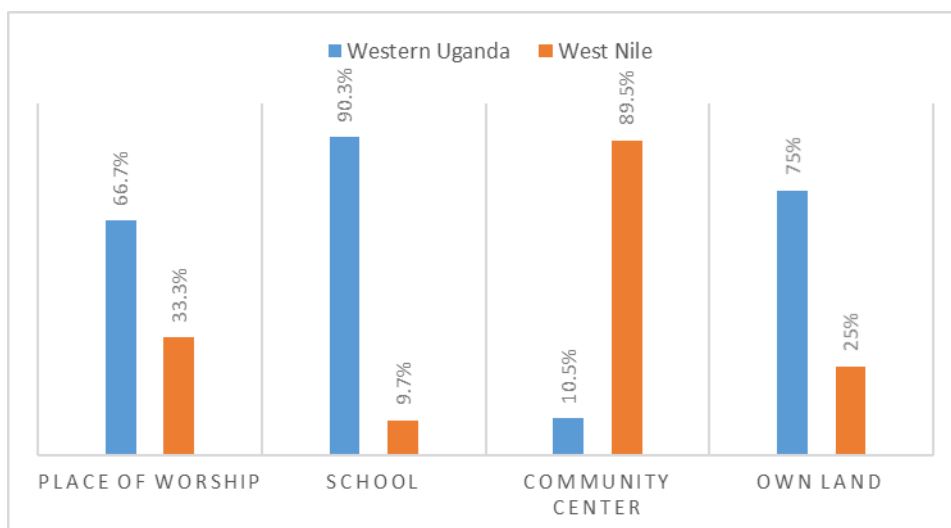


Figure 15: Location of community based ECD centres

6.4.3 Demand for Community Based ECD Centres

Data from the survey showed that the refugee settlements reported that 80% of their centres had more than 40 children in each centre while the local communities reported 73.3%. Though the difference in figures is slight, arguably this shows that the communities with the more vulnerable children had higher registration in ECD centres. Again, the study notes that this data may not depict a conclusive picture as figures need to be compared with population data but it gives a sense of the size of each centre.

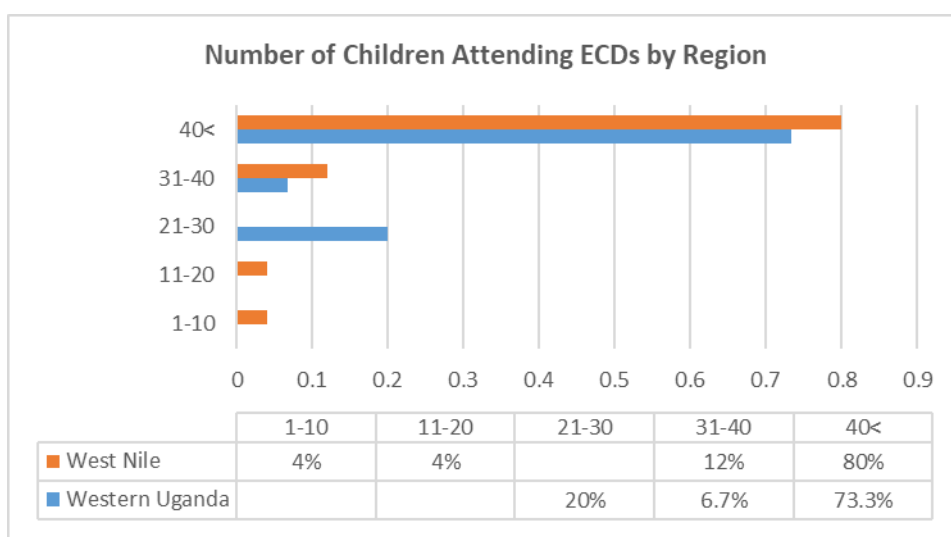


Figure 16: Number of children attending ECD centres by region

6.4.4 Funding for Community Based ECD

Though all data in the study pointed to community members attaching a high value to the caregivers, the study noted that the remuneration provided to them is minimal. It therefore argues that because ECD centres are not funded by government, the community based centres rely fully on contributions from their communities and other well-wishers for everything including remuneration for their care-givers. In a context where families and communities are poor, remuneration cannot be adequate. Nonetheless, these contributions indicate that the social assets at individual level—ie. the parents/community members—are very important for the programme delivery. In terms of sustainability, the study concluded that this was probably the most important recurring cost and determinant for whether the caregivers remained at the centres for long.

Minutes from meetings that the centre management committees (CMC) in some centres had with parents showed that the idea of a regular financial contribution from the parents was discussed and very broadly agreed to. However, there was no indication that this had been effected. In a cost-benefit analysis of pre-primary schooling in Uganda, Behrman and Van Ravens (2013;52) concluded that if parents were able to provide a recurring financial contribution the centres would be able to cover the costs of learning materials, the depreciation of inventory and above all the remuneration of caregivers—which are all recurrent costs. Not surprisingly, findings from this study also showed that some parents/guardians were unable to contribute financially. Looking at the available data and factors, this study found that a viable option to enable them to still send their children to the centres would be for them to regularly provide other support to the centres to cover these recurring costs such as the provision of labour for maintenance of facilities. Theoretically, this again points to the important role of the communities' social assets at individual level.

A look at programme documents and available reports from some of the centres that participated in the study provided existing examples of recurrent financial contributions for caregiver remuneration from organisations supporting the centres—again pointing to the

important role of social assets at institutional level providing an enabling environment for the programme. Though some of these options may not be sustainable, this study concludes that the possibilities of using a combination of financial and non-financial contributions by parents and local institutions—social assets at individual and organizational levels— is a very strong option to cover recurring costs in the community based ECD centres.

From the data, the study noted that the parents/guardians of children attending community based ECD centres in the local communities contributed the most to their funding, whilst in the refugee settlements the centres were mostly funded by NGOs and CBOs. The study also found that that most centres charge fees for the children who attend the centres in the local communities unlike the refugee settlements. From these data, the study concluded that the fees charged by the centres in local communities were a means through which the centre was funded by the community.

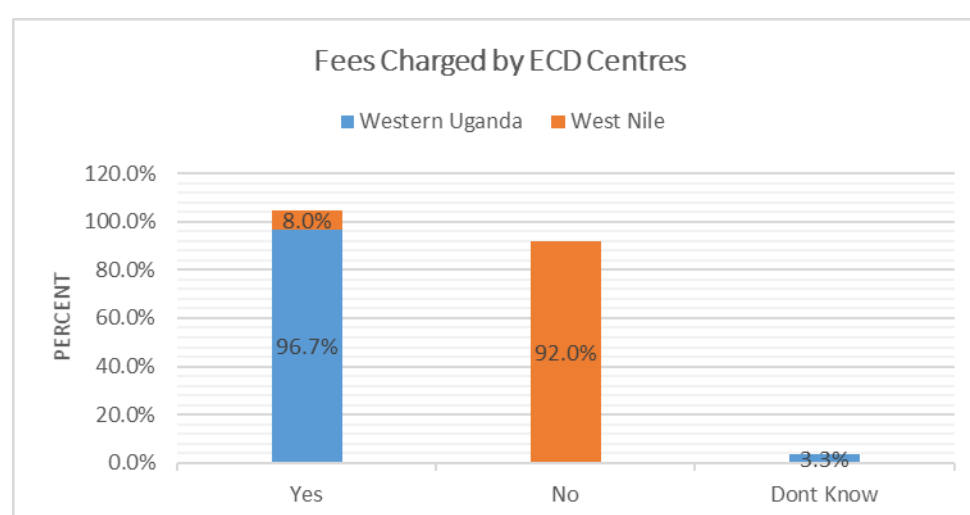


Figure 17: Number of centres charging fees by region

When analysed with data from the cross-case analysis of FGDs, the data conclusively showed that the lack of finances was a determining factor in whether parents/guardians took their children to the ECD centres.

“The school fees are now 35,000 Ugx. She has two children and so they cannot afford.”

Participant C6

“They don’t have income, they are poor, and they can’t afford to pay that much.” Participant C5

C5

“Some can’t manage the cost.” Participant E4

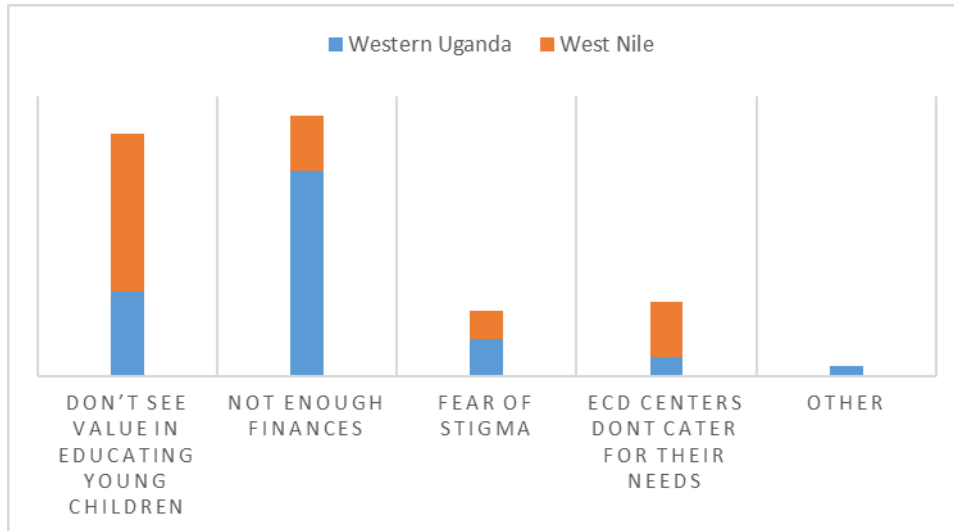


Figure 18: Reasons why parents/guardians don't take children to ECD centres

6.4.5 Caregivers in the Centres

When broken down, the data shows that 90% of the centres in the local communities had between 1 – 5 caregivers, while 64% of those in the refugee settlements had 1 – 5 caregivers and 36% had between 6 – 10 caregivers per centre.

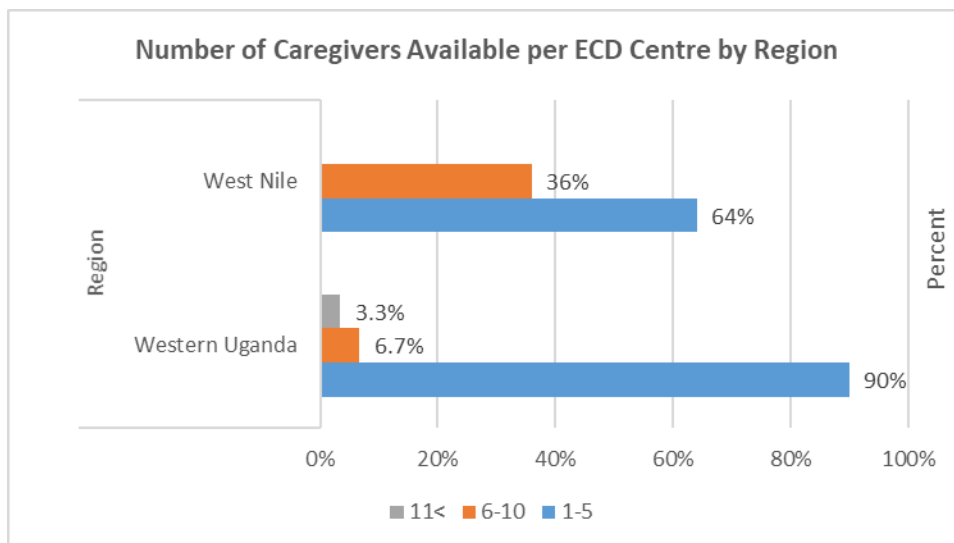


Figure 19: Number of caregivers available per ECD centre by region

This means that the centres in the refugee settlements generally had more caregivers per centre than those in the local communities.

Survey data found that the quality of the caregivers was among the most important aspects of the model.

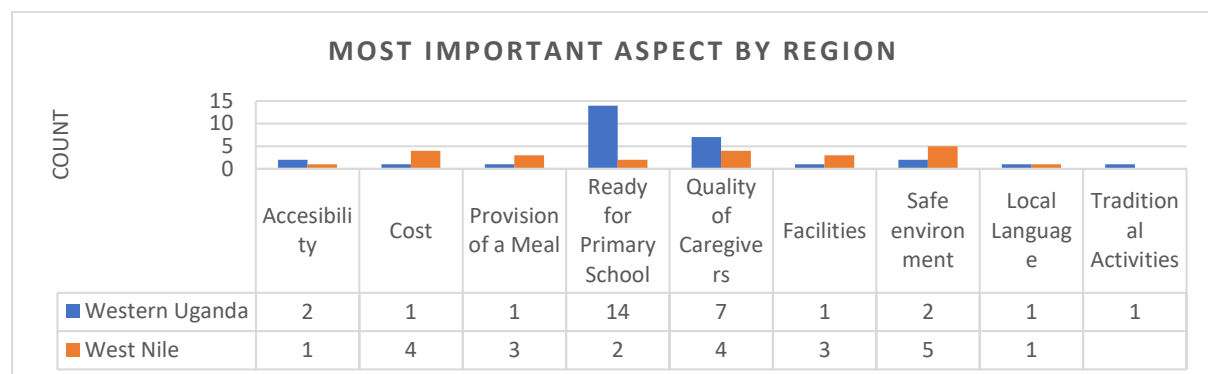


Figure 20: Most important aspect of ECD by region

The study found that the caregivers were often volunteers. Recruitment was done through announcements in community meetings or through the local churches or mosques. The survey data indicated that there were more trained caregivers in the refugee centres than in the local community (Refer to Figure 21).

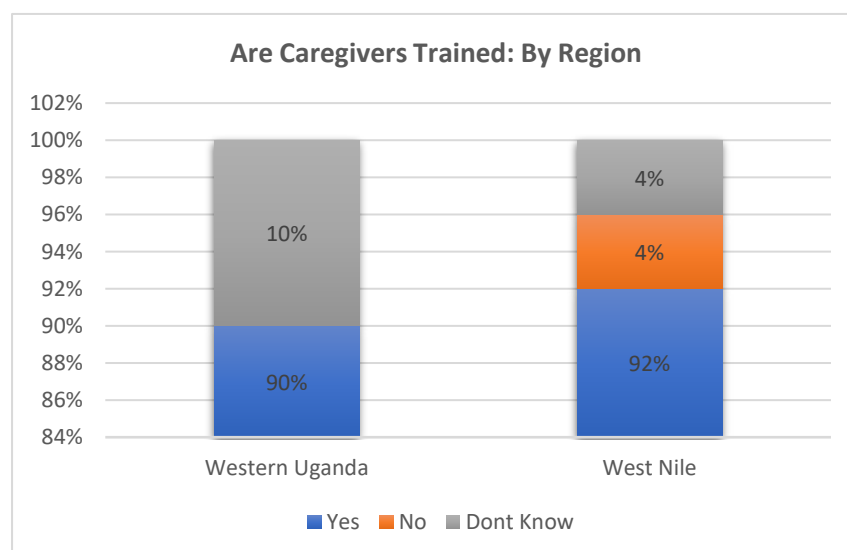


Figure 21: Percentage of trained caregivers by region

The understanding of what constitutes training in the context of this study was not pursued as it was outside the scope of the study. However, from this data and the findings from the Uganda Bureau Of Standards Study (UBOS, 2019) as shown in Figure 12, this study determined that all the caregivers in the centres visited appeared to have completed their primary education.

6.5 Applying Framework for Analysis to Data

The framework for analysis was applied to the study from the data collection right through to the process of thematic template analysis. The goal during data collection was to get a maximum of 10 participants for each of the 10 FGDs, but on average each group was composed of 8 participants comprising parents of children attending these centres, caregivers from these centres and members of the respective centre management committees.

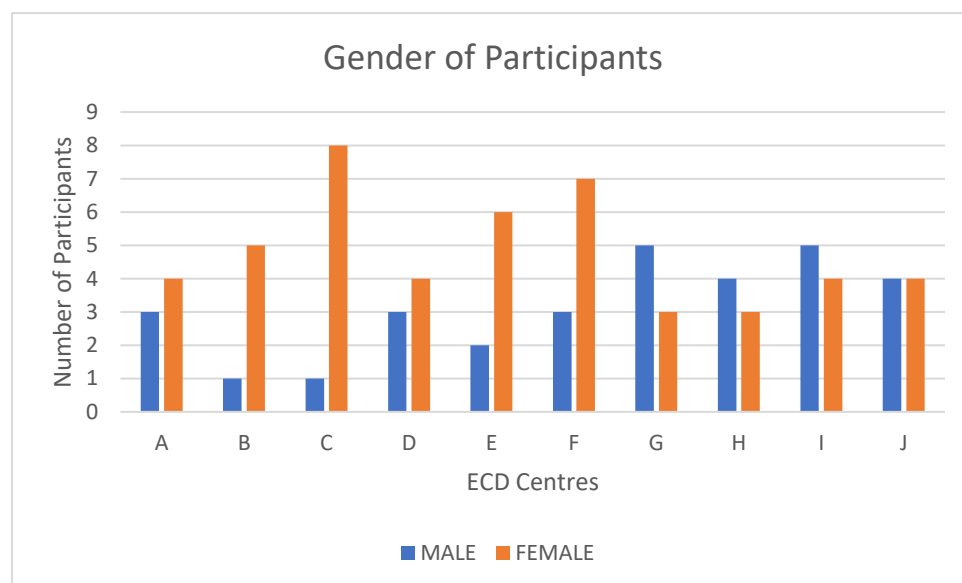


Figure 22: Gender distribution of participants

The study had hoped to have a reasonable gender balance in each of the focus groups but unfortunately the gender composition varied slightly in each centre with an average of 3 males to 5 females per group. An overall picture of the number of participants showed that 61% of them were female and 39% were male. Again, the most probable reason for this imbalance was that females were more likely to be available for the discussions than their

male counterparts who may have been working away from their homes for various reasons particularly as it was the planting season.

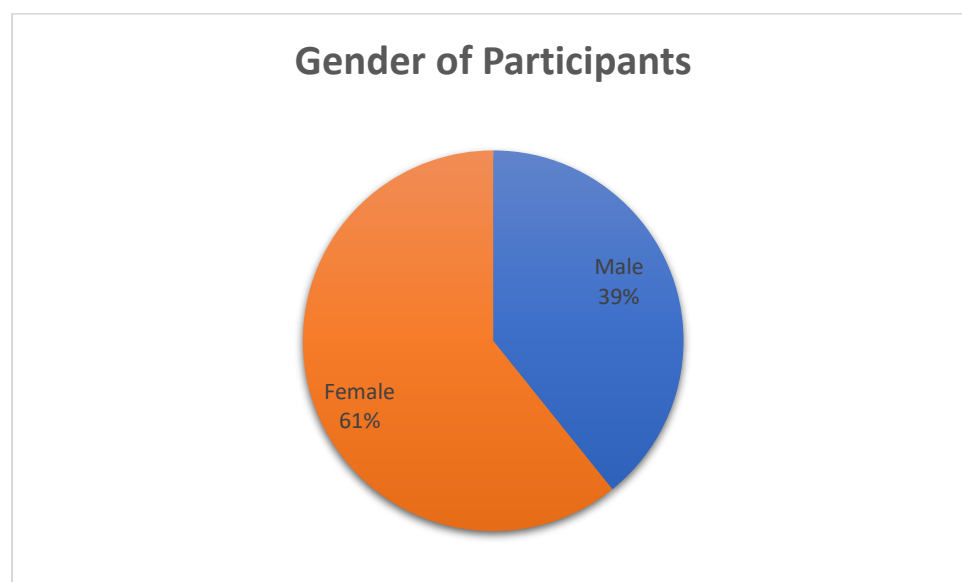


Figure 23: Overall percentage of participants in FGDs by gender

The study did not expect the gender of participants to affect the discussions but it was interesting to note nonetheless.

6.5.1 Asset Mapping

The purpose of this exercise was to map the available assets within the respective communities in line with the framework for analysis as discussed in section 4.8 using the three levels of social assets as guided by Payne (2006), Warren et al. (2001) and Kretzmann and McKnight (1993). As discussed in Chapter 4 of this study, the ABCD model was the theoretical framework used to guide the analysis of the implementation of community based ECD. The basic principles of the ABCD recognise that social assets and resources are present at three different levels of the community and are the ‘vehicles’ through which participation occurs. This study grouped these social assets into three levels (Payne, 2006; Warren et al., 2001; Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993) these being;

- iv. Social Assets at Individual Level: This includes the talents, abilities and skills of community members

- v. Social Assets at Organisational Level: This includes local associations like churches, cultural groups and community based organisations.
- vi. Social Assets at Institutional Level: This includes the local institutions like schools, businesses, hospitals and local government.

In order for the study to get a feel of the social assets available in the communities that participated in the study, respondents took part in an exercise to generate an inventory of available skills and assets in their community known as asset mapping. In this study, the definition of asset mapping was borrowed from Burke et al. (2008) as the process of identifying assets—skills and capacity—and their location within the community. This asset mapping provided an important framework for analysis in this study as it identified the skills, knowledge, and resources within the communities. The figure below was generated from the data to show identified assets from the mapping exercise. The social assets at the 3 levels were listed on an excel spreadsheet and then the individual lists from respective groups were merged into one list at the 3 levels of social assets. This list was converted into a table based on the number of assets at each level, and this table was then used to generate a pie chart for visual representation.

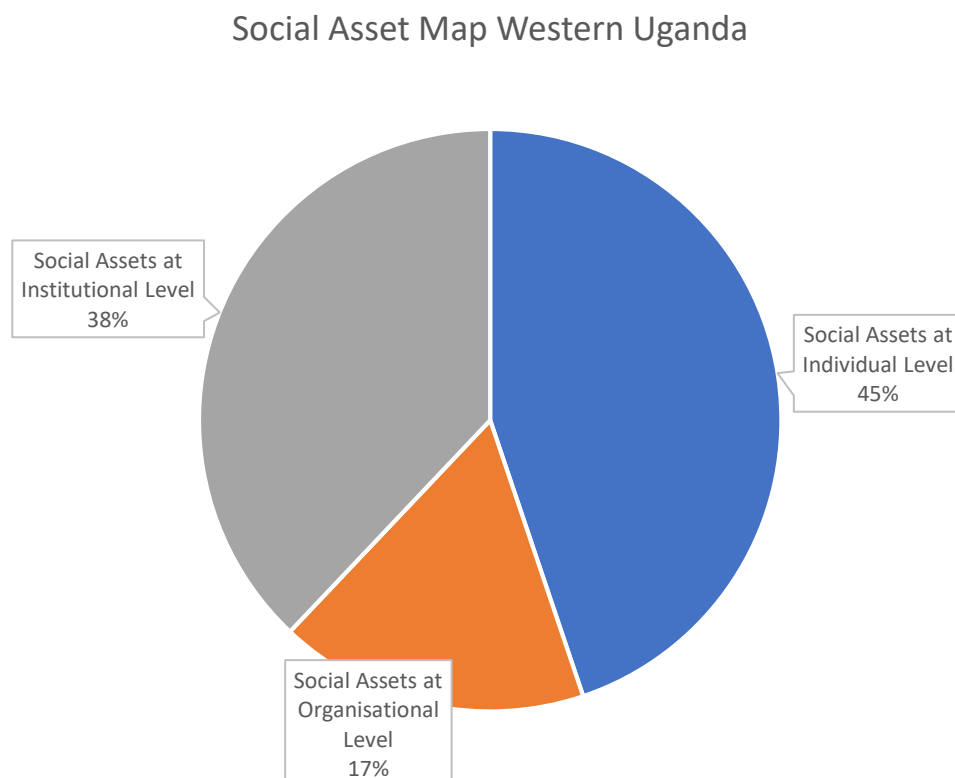


Figure 24: Social Asset Map

The data shows that social assets at individual level dominate the available assets within the communities that participated in the study. In their diagram demonstrating the inter-dependent nature of the social assets needed for successful community development efforts (Figure 7), Kretzman and McKnight (1993) and Payne (2006) place these individual strengths of the community members at the centre of the framework for analysis. Against this backdrop, the analysis also looked at the key findings of the study in line with the social assets available in the communities that participated in the study.

6.5.2 Thematic Assertions

As discussed earlier in Section 5.8, the starting point for analysis was the development of a template. This provided a framework for analysis using the theme-based descriptions of the community based ECD programme based on the theoretical underpinnings of the ABCD model. The discussion on the ABCD in section 4.7 provides clear evidence that the basic ingredients of successful community initiatives involve the identification of local assets and their active connection at individual, organisational or institutional level. Against this backdrop, the study applied two themes during data analysis, these being **Community Capacity** (the identification of local assets) and **Community Participation** (the active connection of identified social assets). These two thematic assertions shaped the main focus of the analysis (as discussed in section 4.8) and formed the basis of the template of analysis.

In the actual analysis, data that spoke to the thematic assertions was drawn from a cross-case synthesis of data from all the centres involved in this multi-case study. This data was gathered using FGDs. The questions that prompted the discussions were framed around the ABCD Model to allow the study to map the available assets within the respective communities while also providing a gauge for the utilisation of these assets and community involvement in the ECD programme. In the individual case notes, the study noted the prominence of the identified themes in each case. The study then used the template to capture the data within these theme-based assertions across the 10 cases from the individual findings that were available. The table below is an extract from one of the individual case notes (Example attached as Annex 6).

Prominence of Themes: Community Capacity	
Individual Findings	Merged Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cooperation in the community</i> • <i>Good relationships between and among community members</i> 	<i>Positive perceptions of community</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Happy to be called to participate in meetings on issues that affect them. People are interested because it's very helpful</i> 	<i>Community cohesion ie. People come together around community issues and work together towards a common purpose</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations eg. NGOs and local government provide seeds and food to families</i> • <i>Community members have positive experiences with local government and community organisations (*quotes available)</i> • <i>NGOs and local government assist in providing seeds and food to families</i> 	<i>Local government and local community organisations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community members organise themselves and have a revolving fund, and also have formed a local organisation that visits families in need (*quotes available)</i> • <i>Rotary club</i> • <i>Community members report having benefitted from voluntary work (eg. at sub-county level)</i> 	<i>Voluntary or community sector</i>

Table 10: Extract from an individual case note showing theme prominence

The focus in the analysis was on how much information was generated during each FGD around the respective themes, keeping in mind that each case could extend or limit an assertion. Further, by sorting and ranking the individual findings from each case, the study was able to make cross-case assertions by noting the evidence, persuasions and references that appeared consistently in most of the individual cases within the respective categories (merged findings). These provided the factors for analysis which in turn provided indicators that led to the assertions made for each theme.

Noteworthy is that during the sorting and ranking process, the analysis excluded information that had the least evidence or was out of harmony with the study, including weak clusters and isolates. This was because they lacked enough persuasive evidence and references to support cross-case assertions.

6.6 Results

6.6.1 Community Participation

When asked what the participants felt was the most important thing discussed during the FGDs, the important role of the community came out strongly. The data from the cross-case analysis of FGDs showed that Community Participation was the most prominent theme in 6 of the 10 discussions (2 from the vulnerable communities and 4 from the refugee settlements), with 1 group from the refugee settlements giving equal prominence to community capacity and community participation. Therefore, this study concluded that community participation was the more important theme in community based ECD when viewed through the ABCD model. Of particular note is that this highlights the importance of interaction among the social assets at individual, organisational and institutional level.

Observations made during site visits and indications from the FGDs and survey data showed that participation in affairs of ECD was only from parents/guardians who had children attending the centres and not the community as a whole. Even then, their participation appeared to be limited. Survey data showed that in both the local communities and the refugee settlements community interest was just slightly above 50%.

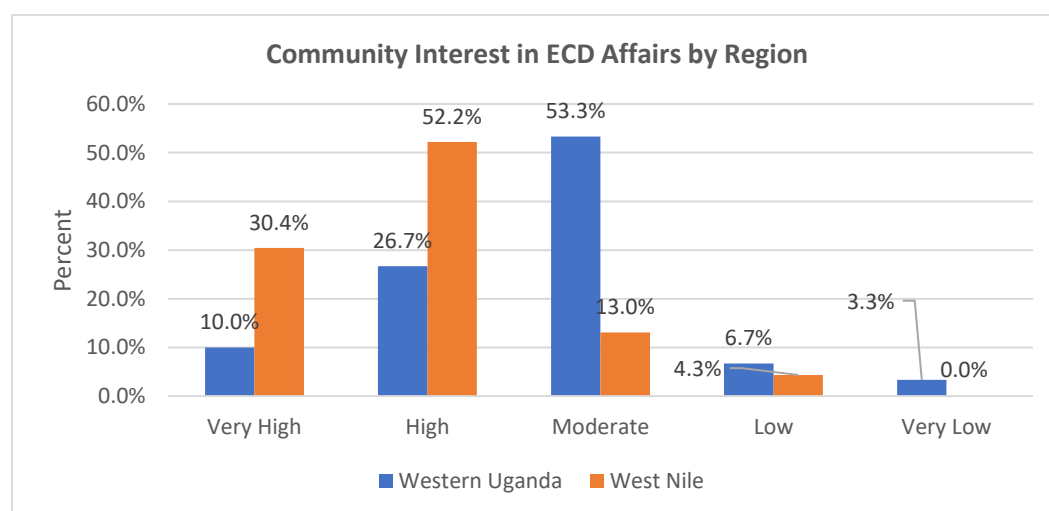


Figure 25: Community interest in ECD affairs by region

Data from both the survey and FGDs indicated that involvement and interest was mostly in the form of attendance at meetings. To a lesser extent, data suggested that parents did participate in building classrooms or maintenance of the playgrounds.

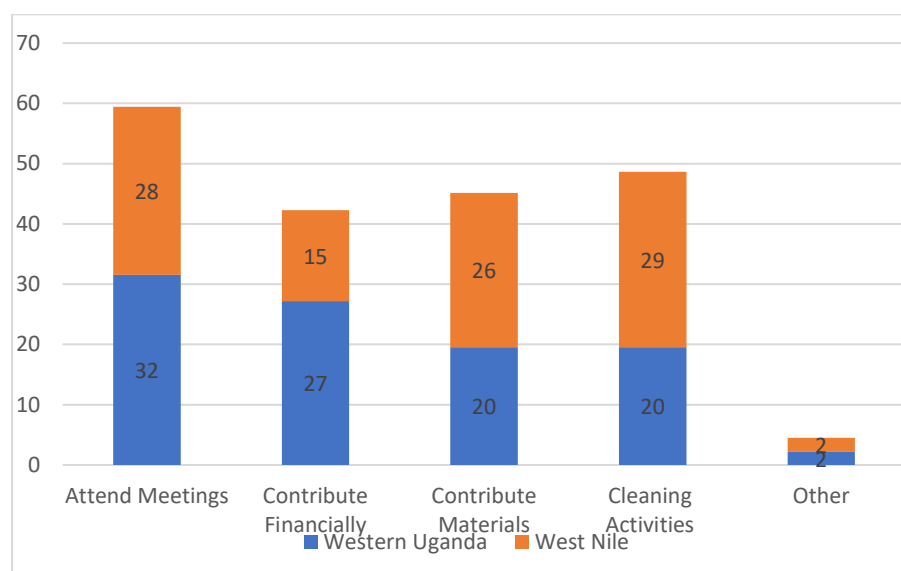


Figure 26: Community involvement in ECD affairs

Data also showed that parents were involved in the affairs of the centre by making financial contributions through fees which generally went to the remuneration provided to caregivers. Interesting to note is that a case study review of community based ECD in Uganda (Lofomsky, 2014: 20) found that a barrier to parents having a sense of ownership was the belief that because they are paying fees, the ECD centres are running on a private school model and hence they do not have to make further contributions. The study did not find any information on expectations or ideas for parent participation/involvement beyond this.

After sorting and ranking the individual findings within each category (merged findings), the data pointed to the following indicators for Community Participation (Presented in descending order of ranking);

6.6.1.1 Community Members Active Participation

Data from all FDGs indicated that community members were actively involved in community issues and often came together to contribute their time, labour or materials for projects. Incidents cited ranged from setting up ECD centres, selecting appropriate sites for the ECD centres, cleaning trenches, community prayers, building water tanks, constructing playgrounds for children, and the renovation of school or ECD centre classrooms. The survey data indicated that community interest in the affairs of the ECD centres was higher in the refugee settlements and more moderate in the local communities, though about 30% of respondents indicated a very high interest in the local communities (Refer to Figure 22).

In terms of actual involvement, the data from both the survey and the FDGs indicated that in both communities, attendance at meetings was fairly high. Survey data noted that in the local communities' involvement was more in terms of attending meetings and making financial contributions to the centres, while in the refugee settlements the community members were also more involved in maintenance and cleaning of the centres, and contribution of materials.

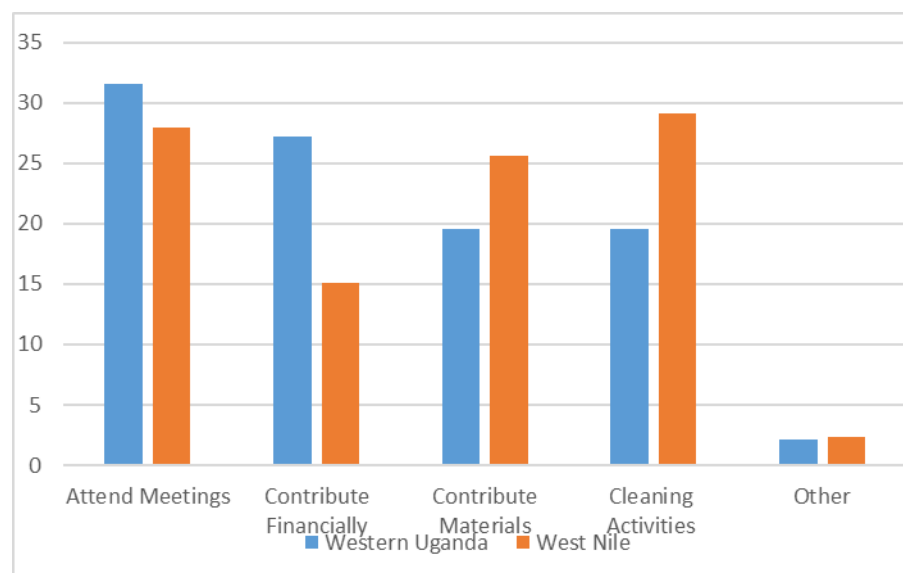


Figure 27: Actual involvement in ECD affairs

Data from the FDGs and attendance records for centre meetings pointed to community members at times not consistently attending all meetings. Of particular note was that sometimes attendance seemed to depend on the reason that the meeting was being called

and if community members felt it was important enough for them to attend, and also if they were being 'facilitated' i.e. Being given incentives to attend the meetings.

Participants stated that both men and women actively participated in discussions in the meetings.

"Women are no longer down. When they ask you, you talk and nobody will silence you."

Participant B1

"As women, we have many groups of women and when we are gathered together, we participate and contribute, answering questions and asking." Participant C1

Of particular note was that in the refugee settlements, both the refugees and host community members came together when communal work or meetings were organised. Some participants stated;

"In funerals, we are together. Local communities with the refugees. We even make contributions together." Participant I1

"Yeah there are some occasions where they come to participate together like when celebrating refugee day. The communities come around together when communal work is organised. There's no segregation even in meetings." Participant J2

"We have good communication between citizens and refugees." Participant G2

"Both refugees and nationals are involved in our committees." Participant J2

The Education Policy (2007) states that all centres should have Centre Management Committees (CMC) comprising parents, local government representatives at village level (LC1), caregivers and the foundation body. These committees must be elected by the communities and must have female representation. All centres visited had functioning committees with the required representation though they appeared to have variable levels of capacity and involvement in terms of finance, planning or maintenance.

“Like even this CMC. We have formed a CMC and we have picked some people from the refugee side, this RWC1 and LC members. They are now in the CMC group.” Participant I5

Practically, the centres were managed by the headteachers and supported by the CMCs. Survey data found that parents/guardians, caregivers and community leaders made up more than 50% of the CMCs in the local communities, while business owners and government officials made up more than 50% of the CMCs in the refugee settlements (Figure 25). This perhaps points to the stability in the composition of the CMCs in the transient refugee populations.

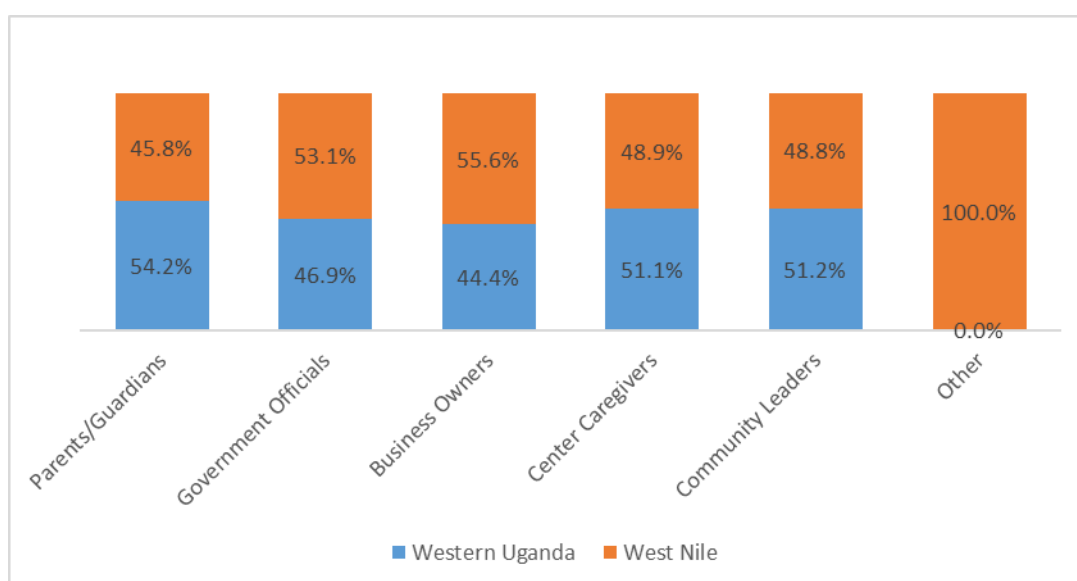


Figure 28: Composition of CMCs by region

The study also found that where the centre was supported by an FBO, the FBO representative appeared to play a leading role on the CMCs. Community members did not appear to understand that the CMCs were accountable to them and not the respective founding FBO. Further, as the CMCs generally comprised people who were viewed as people of authority in the local communities, they did not appear to be held accountable for any issue concerning the centres. The study concluded that the composition of the CMC was indicative of the relationship between the committee and the community members.

6.6.1.2 Voluntary Work

Voluntary work is key to community participation as remuneration may not always be available. The study found that community members do carry out voluntary work formally through voluntary organisations or NGOs and informally in temporary groups. They reported having been involved in unpaid work like construction and renovation of classrooms, slashing grass in surrounding areas, sweeping the church, fencing the school, building a school kitchen, teaching in the ECD centre, health sensitisation, working in ECD management committees, child protection committees, building roads, etc. Participants stated;

“There were parents who helped this school to start and the head of school also contributed.” Participant D3

“The community also added in repairs always. For this term there’s community effort in putting plywood when it is broken.” Participant B2

The data also pointed to community members receiving unpaid help from other people who are not related to them such as receiving seeds cassava stalks for farming, finances for school fees for their children, transport money to reach refugee camps, etc.

6.6.1.3 Community Influence

The survey data reported that community members were mostly involved through attendance in meetings and making financial or material contributions (Refer to Figure 26). Similarly, findings from the FGDs showed that they were mostly involved by attending meetings. The data from the discussions indicated that community influence in decision making was perceived as ‘mere talk and no action’, particularly for community members who did not hold any positions of power or authority within the communities.

This suggested that as individuals, the community members did not feel that they had any influence on projects and activities that affected them in their communities, or that their opinions were valued by those in authority. This came out more strongly in the local communities than in the refugee settlements. Some participants in the local communities had this to say;

“When someone is asking some questions in a meeting, they look at it as unwanted or

unimportant and they don't get the feedback and leave unhappy." Participant C1

Data also indicated that the level of influence depended on the nature of the decisions that needed to be made.

"It depends on the type of decision because if it concerns finance issues, they they will only talk and the things will remain on paper." Participant B1

"For example, on the project of rural electrification, people have not been involved. It's the 'big people' to plan and decide on where the electricity will pass but not the members."

Participant E1

Interesting to note was that data pointed to people feeling that community leaders and committee members are more influential than the community itself as a whole. This came out more strongly in the local communities than in the refugee settlements. Some participants stated;

"Sometimes we, the members, we can not be involved. They can call themselves down and discuss. Sometimes we can hear late." Participant F2

"To be influential you must make committees. You must have members and a cabinet because you might be doing that work but practically you fail. So when you have a committee decision making is achieved." Participant B1

In the settlements the data indicated that community members saw community leaders and members of various committees as community members and not 'differently' as indicated in the data from the local communities. This suggests that because 'organised structures' were prevalent in the refugee settlements, perhaps their community members viewed their community leaders and committee members more as representatives of the people.

“You talked of ECD. When these people came, they approached us as leaders and the executive, so it was our role to come down and discuss without even involving the whole community.” Participant F1

Participants stated that they would like to participate more in decision making. One participant noted that;

“I would feel respected and also present the views of the lower person...” Participant J2

6.6.1.4 Local Government and Local Community Organisations

Observation and interaction with the community members suggested that they were aware of projects implemented by FBOs, CSOs and NGOs in their communities but were not aware of their decision-making structures and processes, or that they could influence decisions in these organisations. This indicated that the organisations working in these communities may not fully engage participants on all issues and activities that they carry out in their respective communities. Additionally, participants struggled to make the distinction between voluntary organizations, CSOs and NGOs. Generally, all organisations working in the communities were referred to as NGOs.

Data pointed towards community members participating in activities organised by local community organisations. Participants also indicated that local community organisations were influential in their communities and were involved in decision making for projects and activities in the communities. Participants pointed out that this was because they were organised;

“They have been influential. For example we have a YES group that trains people who make groups and save money together.” Participant E1

“I think that they are involved but only at base camp. We just hear about what they have decided from our representatives.” Participant F4

The survey found that local organisations were involved in delivery of ECD in various ways. Of particular note was that in the local communities the highest level of involvement was reported as planning, while implementation was highest in the refugee settlements.

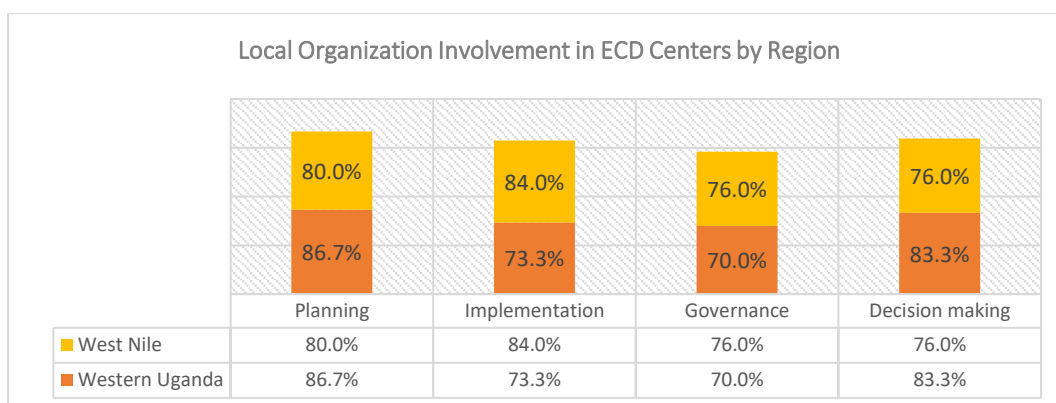


Figure 29: Local organisations involvement in ECD centres by region

Data showed that local government was influential in decision making in projects and activities within the community, and that community members participated in projects and activities organised by local government when invited to do so. Participants in Western Uganda rated co-ordination among local government and local/voluntary organisations in ECD in their communities as being high, while in the refugee settlements it was moderate.

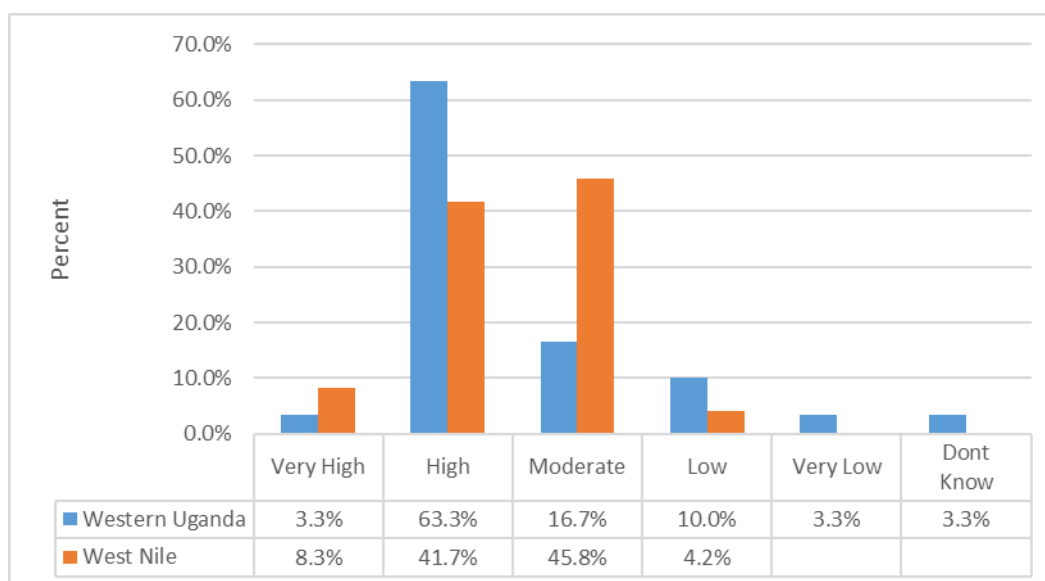


Figure 30: Level of involvement on local government and local organisations in ECD centres

Noteworthy was that the data indicated that in both regions the community members, local organisations and the local government are involved in quality assurance of their ECD centres.

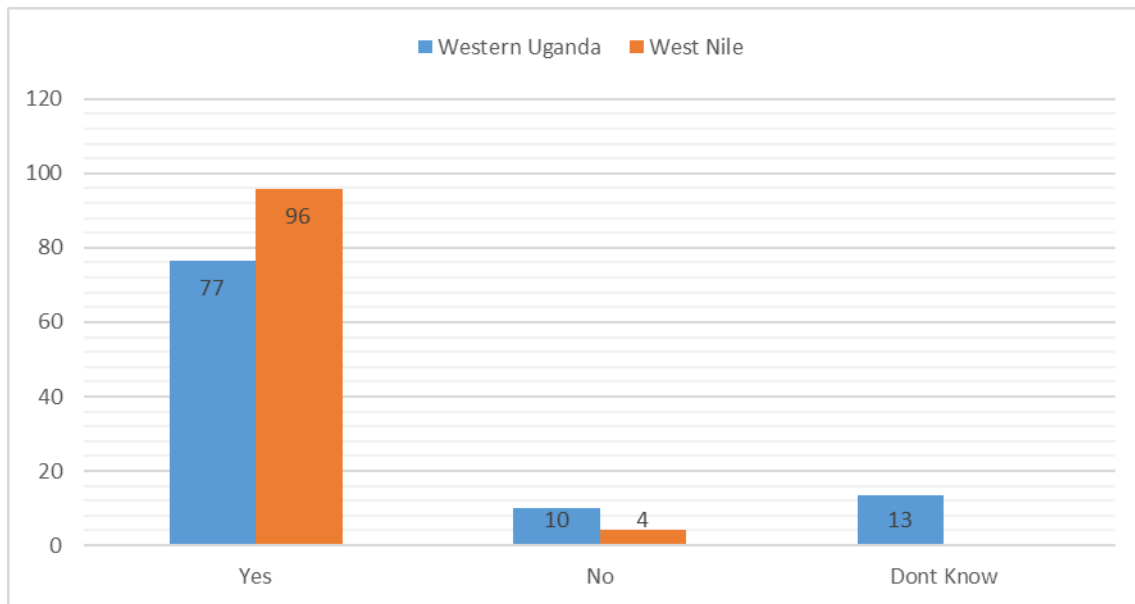


Figure 31: Involvement in quality assurance of ECD centres

However, the centres that participated in this study seemed not to be linked to any other services provided by local government, CBOs and NGOs in their communities. Interesting to note is that participants reported some levels of co-ordination between local government and local organisations. In a case study review of community based childcare centres in Uganda, Lomofsky (2014: 19) found that though some centres have formed relationships with the local health department or the community development officer, these were ad-hoc and often one sided eg. Some centres were used as hubs for monthly health days for immunisations or deworming by the local health department

6.6.2 Community Capacity

When analysed through the ABCD Framework, the data generated from all 10 FGDs showed that Community Capacity was the least prominent of the two themes used to analyse the community based ECD programme. Only 2 of the groups—both local communities—discussed this theme more than Community Participation. Of particular note was that none of the FGDs in the refugee settlements indicated the prominence of community capacity in their communities. After sorting and ranking the individual findings within each category (merged findings), the data pointed to the following indicators for Community Capacity (presented in descending order of ranking);

6.6.2.1 Positive Perceptions of their Community

A cross-case analysis of data from the FGDs and observations made during the site visits all pointed to the community members having a positive perception of their communities in general. Good relationships among community members were reported as was the capacity to co-operate when the need arose.

In the local communities all groups cited *good relationships and peace* among community members while the host communities and refugees cited a *peacefully co-existence* together.

"We feel in harmony." Participant H2

"It is friendly. Refugee communities here are only given a plot for building houses but we, as the host community, are giving some plots to dig...co-existence is there." Participant I1

"Here we feel good because we have got good communication between the citizens and the refugees. The relationship is good." Participant G2

Participants also indicated that co-operation among community members was good.

"I feel so comfortable with the community. The community is peaceful and they are cooperative." Participant F1

"I feel good because the people within are cooperative." Participant D6

However, the findings did not suggest a sense of control and ownership in relation to planning and implementing community issues. Data pointed to attendance and participation in meetings being high but beyond this the only involvement that stood out was in providing services to the centres such as building, cleaning and maintenance. Control and ownership seemed to be taken by local leaders or community organisations that were facilitating the services. From the information gathered, reasons for this were not evident.

6.6.2.2 Knowledge and Perceptions of Community Based ECD

The data from the cross-case analysis of data from the FGDs showed that knowledge of the Community Based ECD Programme was generally high among the participants, and their perception of the programme was fairly positive. The study found that parents and community members as a whole were aware of the important concepts of ECD and how it develops positive outcomes for children, and there was a general appreciation of the ECD centres in the communities. Participants indicated that they were happy with the way the caregivers interacted with the children and also the benefits of the programme for the children.

“What I like most about this ECD centre is that they help us to learn more how we can care for our children.” Participant D1

“The centre changes children’s behaviour and develops their minds.” Participant J2

“The way children interact with their friends.” Participant B4

Some participants also stated that they had also benefitted from the programme.

“ECD changes everybody including parents and teachers.” Participant J3

“They help us learn how we can care for our children.” Participant D1

Data analysed in this study—including the FGD, reflective field notes and document review— also indicated that parents in the participating communities particularly expected them to prepare their children for primary school in various ways including by learning to count, write, play, get disciplined and be safe.

“Before they join primary, they can handle a pencil very well. They start to write and reading is made faster.” Participant E2

“What I like best about this ECD centre is the knowledge that children get. It also prepares children to enter primary.” Participant G6

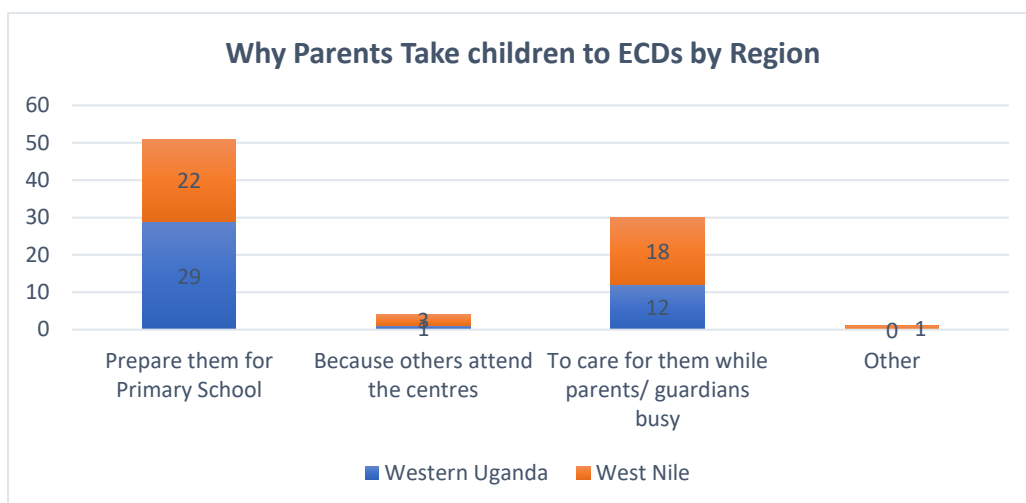


Figure 32: Reasons why parents take children to ECD centres

In the cross-case analysis of data from the FGDs, school readiness ranked highest among the most important aspects of the community based ECD model with the expectation that children move on to primary school after the top class. Similarly, the survey data pointed to parents/guardians having more interest in the centres preparing their children for primary school.

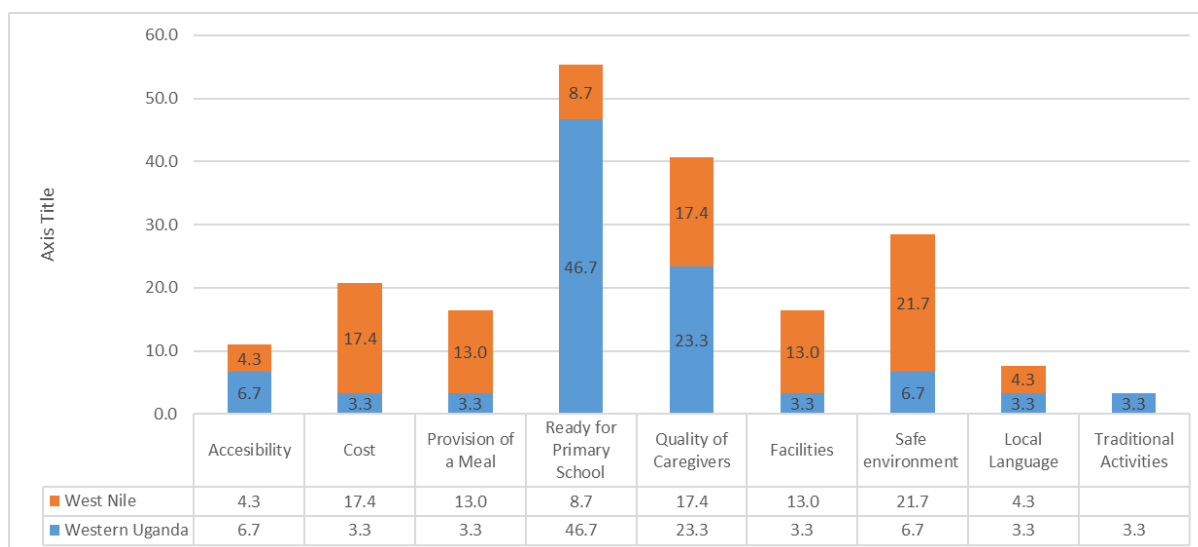


Figure 33: Strengths of the community based ECD model

Of particular note was data from the refugee settlements ranking safety as the most important aspect. The quality of the caregivers in both regions was also ranked highly, as

was the cost in the refugee settlements. The provision of a meal for the children and the presence of facilities was also an important factor in the refugee settlements.

When asked for reasons why some parents/guardians do not take their children to ECD centres, participants in the FGDs and respondents in the survey stated that a low value attached to education as well as a lack of finances for fees and clothes/uniforms were the major reasons.

“some parents do not value education.” Participant I5

“Some can’t manage the cost.” Participant E4

“Parents are worried that they will be asked to pay school fees.” Participant C3

“Waste of money especially because young children can not learn much.” Participant B3

“Some think young children are unable to learn.” Participant A2

“Children below 6 are too young to leave home and parents.” Participant A4

The survey data indicated that finances were more of a reason in the local communities while a low value of education was higher in the refugee settlements.

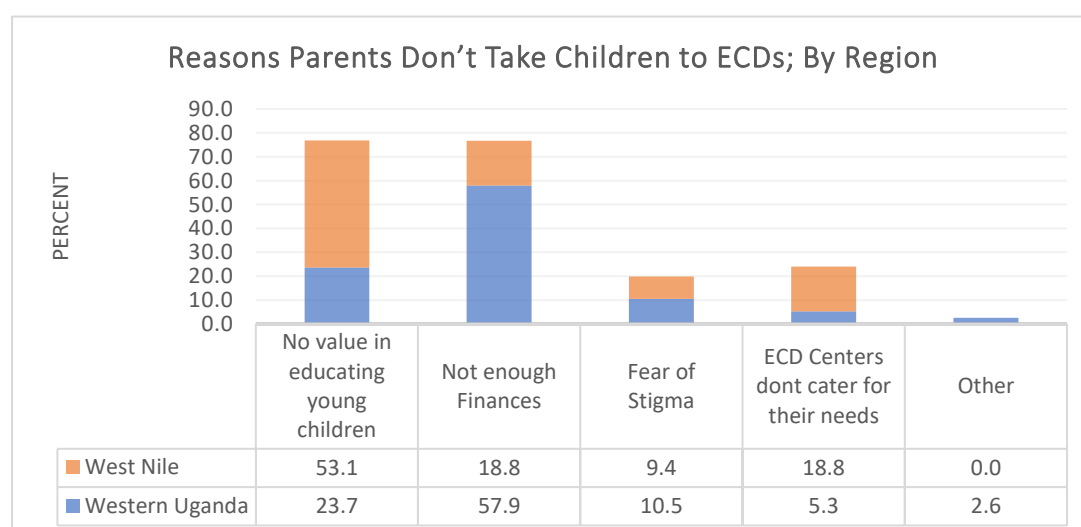


Figure 34: Reasons why parents don't take children to ECD centres

When the figures 32, 33 and 34 were analysed together, it could be concluded that refugee communities perceived the ECD centres more as places providing care and support for the children than did the local communities. The study suggests that this could be because the refugee community may be more vulnerable than the local communities and therefore safety and support would be more important for them.

Through the survey, this study found that the majority of children attending the community based ECD centres were aged between 3 – 5 years, with the local community having 93.3% of their children within this age bracket while those in the refugee settlements included 16% of children aged between 6 – 8.

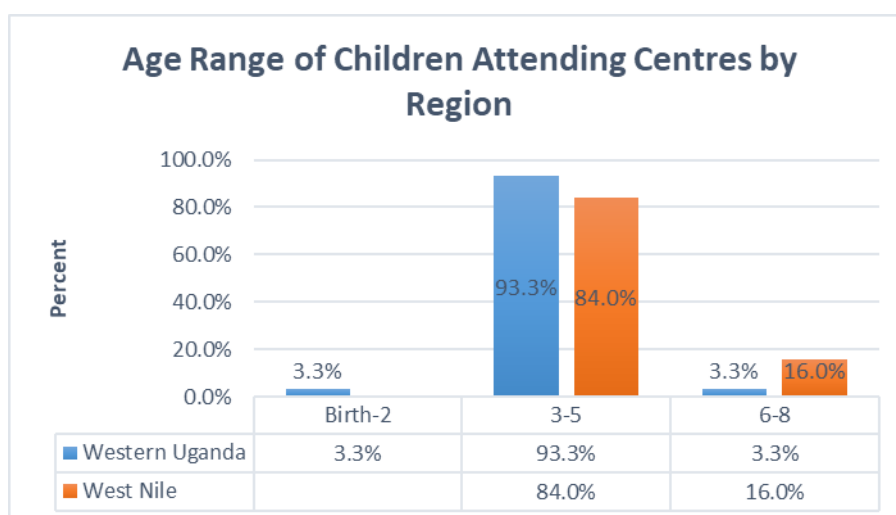


Figure 35: Age range of children in ECD centres by region

The ECD Policy (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007) states that ECD services are targeted at children aged between 0 – 8. Data from the FGDs suggested that community members were not aware that children beyond the age of 6 can be enrolled in the centres as stated in the Uganda ECD Policy.

“The centres care for children from 2.5 – 6 years.” Participant B2

“The centres help children below 6 in health and education.” Participant E1

“They work with children aged 3 – 6.” Participant H1

Uganda's Education Policy Framework does not particularly highlight how the children in ECD centres should learn or be taught. However, the ECD Caregivers' Guide (NCDC, 2012) promotes the planning of suitable playful activities for groups and individuals, and the provision of a rich learning environment that will provide wide experiences.

'there are no lessons to be taught by the adult, but there are developmental activities to be done by children' (ECD Learning Framework, 2005)

During the site visits the study observed only structured teaching in all the centres visited. The classroom set-up in the ECD centres modelled the primary school classroom set-up with children sitting in rows on benches or tables and chairs. A case study review of community based centres supported by UNICEF and its major partners in Uganda (Lomofsky, 2014: 14) found that learning through play is a new concept in Uganda and many parents still prefer their children to learn to read and write through a more structured approach. The study concluded that this highlighted the gap between the policy, what community members knew/expected from the centres, and what was being implemented in the classrooms.

6.6.2.3 Community Cohesion

"Yeah, there are some occasions where they come to participate together like when celebrating refugee day, the communities come together. When communal work is organised there is no segregation. Even in meetings." Participant J2

The data showed that community members came together around community issues and worked together towards a common purpose when the need arose. Participants gave many examples of incidents when this had occurred ranging from attending meetings to hands-on involvement such as making material or labour contributions to community projects, and contributing money to pay salaries for teachers.

6.6.2.4 Local Government and Local Community Organisations

The data showed that the community members knew what work the local government was doing in their community. Examples of positive experiences with local government were cited;

"Construction of boreholes, springs so we get nice water." Participant A6

“They have given us land and security.” Participant I3

“They have given us security, maize and beans seeds, and banana cuttings which we have planted for our children.” Participant D3

They also knew which local community organisations were working in their communities and the various services that they were offering for the community such as financial savings, youth groups, church groups, and village health teams. The data also indicated that most of the CBOs, NGOs and FBOs in the communities provided education services.

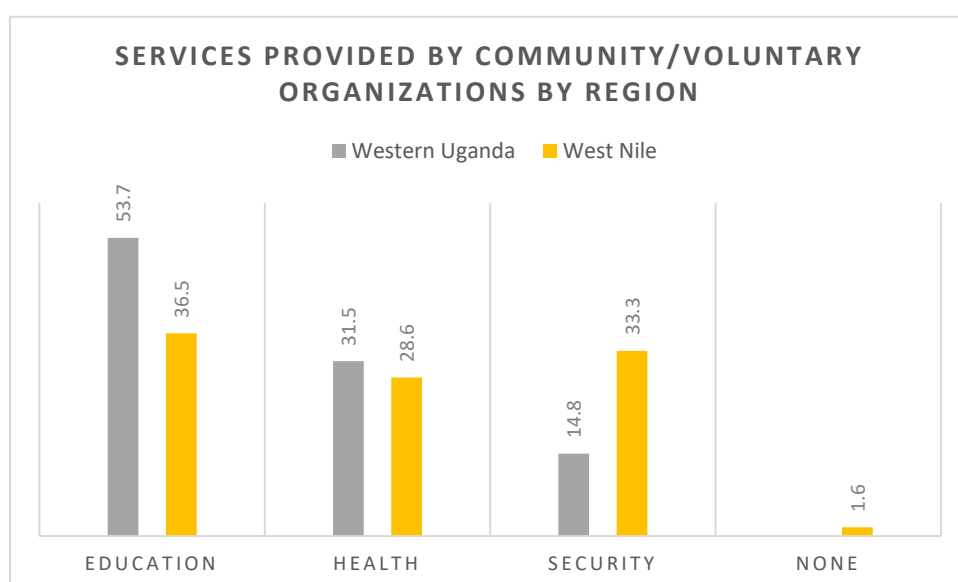


Figure 36: Services provided by Voluntary/Community organisations

6.6.2.5 Voluntary Sector

The study found that in both the refugee settlements and the local communities, voluntary/community organisations mostly provided education services. A probing question on what services these organisations provided on behalf of the local authorities yielded similar results.

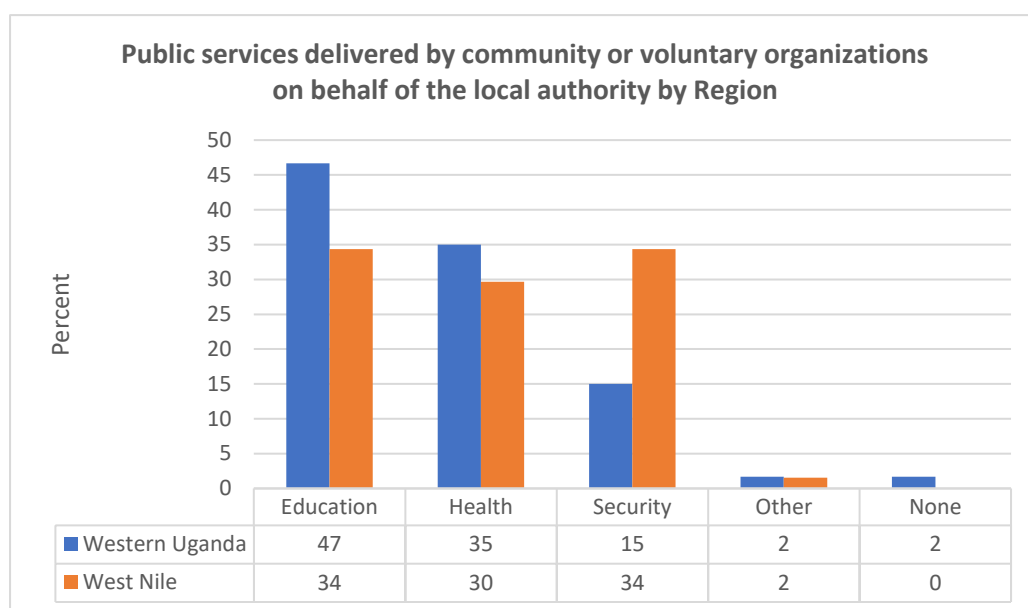


Figure 37: Services provided by local organisations on behalf of local government

Community members were aware of voluntary organisations that were working in their communities, particularly of work these organisations did with community volunteers on behalf of the local government.

“Malaysian people came and worked with community members to build a water tank.”

“Providing education and setting up play materials.” Participant H3

“They bring us seeds.” Participant I3

“When there is a dispute or wrangle in the community, community facilitators are normally the groups settling them.” Participant J2

Of particular note was the voluntary work being done by individual community members. This indicated that at even when there was no formal structure to organise voluntary work, community members were able to assist individually or temporarily mobilise themselves for particular instances. Participants reported having benefitted or received assistance from the

community citing examples such as school fees being paid for their children when they couldn't afford to do so, receiving food from community members, fees for health screening, availing of a revolving fund, and receiving visits from community members as families in need.

6.7 Key Findings

In this section, the study discusses the key findings in four parts. It starts by breaking down the requirements of the community based ECD model in practice to give a more focused perception of the model. It then looks at the community based ECD model as a community development effort by discussing the findings in line with the four pillars of community development discussed in section 4.3. It goes on to discuss the findings of the study within the three levels of social assets as described in the ABCD Framework, and then looks at the provision of care and support for vulnerable children as this was a major focus of the study.

6.7.1 Community Based ECD in Practice

To make the discussion of the findings more meaningful, in this section the study looks at the requirements for a community based ECD centre according to findings in this study. Due to the nature of community based ECD programmes, the cost structure of the centres is relatively simple. From the data analysed during this study, the table below was generated as an overall outline of the basic requirements for a community based ECD centre.

Requirements	Initial Activities	Recurring Activities
Physical Resources	Building/Shelter for Classrooms	Teaching and Learning Materials
	Outdoor Playground	
Human Resources	Community Mobilisation	Maintenance of Facilities
	Initial Training	In-Service Training Supervision
Financial Resources		Caregiver Remuneration

Table 11: Outline of Basic Requirements for Community Based ECD Centres

The requirements noted in the above table are discussed below;

6.7.1.1 Building/Shelter for Classrooms

Data pointed to the land on which the centres were located being donated or provided by existing community structures such as places of worship or primary schools, or community members. For instance, in the local communities the majority of the centres were based at an existing school, or on their own land which had been provided by the respective community members (Figure 38). This study argues that this is an important aspect of the community-based model in that it is a cost-effective way to have the space/land and build without the requirement of financial obligations from individuals or government.

An observation of classrooms in the centres that participated in this study noted that they were all simple and basic structures which were in harmony with the living conditions of the respective communities. From the FGDs, it was evident that parents and communities had been involved in setting up or putting up these structures. In terms of classroom furnishings, observations found that while some of the centres had benches and tables, in others the children sat on reed mats on the ground. Unfortunately, the study did not investigate whether these had been made by parents/community members or if they had been purchased. However, this study contends that if made locally this could also be an important cost-effective way for community members to contribute to the centres.

6.7.1.2 Outdoor Playground

General agreement in the education sector is that play is an important aspect of ECD. Some participants in the FGDs indicated that they appreciated the importance of play in the centres.

“One important factor in the ECD is the play materials.” Participant H2

“The most important factor for me are the play materials.” Participant E2

Again, the community members stated that they were involved in preparing the play areas and making them functional as playgrounds. Documents reviewed showed that UNICEF had

supported the development of ‘model playgrounds’ where everything was constructed using local design and materials and efforts had been made to encourage centres to construct similar playgrounds through exchange visits.

6.7.1.3 Community Mobilisation

This study argues that community mobilization is probably the most important aspect of setting up community based ECD centres. Communities need to be motivated to take an interest in the centre not only for start-up but also for sustainability. In this study the data indicated that existing structures such as places of worship, FBOs and CBOs played a very important role in motivating community members to take an interest in the centres. Of particular note was that in the refugee settlements, all ECD centers that were visited had started up as community-based initiatives and NGOs and partner organisations came on board to support with construction and provision of facilities. The study concluded that this showed that the community members had been able to organize themselves within the three levels of social assets as outlined in the ABCD Framework within the settlements.

6.7.1.4 Initial Training

Though the contextual data indicated that the majority of the caregivers are trained (90% in Western Uganda and 92% in the West Nile Region), the scope of this study did not look at training and capacity of caregivers in detail. However, from observations during the site visits the study concluded that the caregivers were all primarily volunteers with varied levels of training.

Behrman and Van Ravens (2013: 49) pointed out the relatively low level of initial training among caregivers in the community based ECD centres in Uganda. They found that though there is a variation in terms of qualifications of caregivers in the community based ECD centres in Uganda, the caregivers had far less initial training than their counterparts in the for-profit nursery schools. Where it was provided, the training was done by NGOs and CBOs using the Training Framework developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre

(NCDC) within the MoES. Even then, available information showed that the training varied widely among the centres and caregivers.

6.7.1.5 Teaching and Learning Materials

The study reasons that though some teaching materials can be made locally, most need to be purchased such as chalk and textbooks. Available information specified that FBOs and NGOs provided some of these materials. However, the study found that this was inconsistent among the centres that participated in the study. Unfortunately, teaching materials are an important aspect of the effectiveness of the centres and the study noted that this was a bottleneck for the provision of quality services. Similarly, a case study review of the ECD programme in Uganda noted that the ability to make learning materials from local materials is crucial as the community-based childcare centres in Uganda have no or very limited budget for consumables or store-bought materials (Lomofsky, 2014: 41).

6.7.1.6 Maintenance

The study found that community members were involved in maintenance of the classrooms and the surrounding areas of the centres (As discussed in section 6.7). Data pointed to community cohesion being particularly high when it came to cleaning the ECD centre environment.

6.7.1.7 In-Service Training

A cost-benefit analysis of the programme (Behrman and Van Raven, 2013: 49) suggested that a better way for caregivers to stay up to date with recent developments in the profession was through the provision of periodic in-service training. As mentioned earlier, the scope of this study did not look at training of caregivers in detail. However, from the documents that were reviewed during data analysis—including meeting minutes and reports—it was clear that, as with initial training, in-service training varied widely among the centres and caregivers visited. Where available, the study noted that it was mostly conducted by NGOs and CBOs. Additionally, participation was inconsistent and did not appear to be a requirement for the caregivers.

6.7.1.8 Supervision

The whole system for teaching, supervision, mentoring and monitoring in Uganda is set up for primary schools as ECD is not a funded mandate (Lofomsky, 2014: 27). Programme documents that were reviewed indicated that supervision of the centres is carried out by Centre Co-ordinating Tutors (CCTs) who are not necessarily trained in ECD. The CCTs are based at Primary Teacher Colleges and ideally should provide mentorship and supervision to the ECD caregivers by helping them to translate what they have learnt in to practice. However, a case study review of the programme found that each CCT had about 109 schools to mentor and supervise in addition to the ECD centres which they are asked to check on during visits to primary schools (Lofomsky, 2014: 26). Again, actual supervision as an aspect of ECD was outside the scope of this study so it was not explored in more detail.

6.7.1.9 Costs

The study found that caregiver remuneration was an important cost component of the programme. Because the programme is not funded by government, the fees are generally provided by the parents and guardians of the children. The contextual data showed that in Western Uganda, for instance, 96.7% of the centres charged fees. Further, the data indicated that 93.1% of respondents said the parents/guardians of children attending ECD centres in the Western Region paid fees for their children, while 82.1% said fees for the children were paid by NGOs/CBOs in the refugee settlements.

The study found that affordability ranked the highest in the barriers to accessing ECD (Refer to Figure 34). A lack of money for requested fees and other requirements prevented some parents/guardians from sending their children to the ECD centres.

6.7.2 The Community Based ECD Model as a Community Development Programme

In section 4.3, the study looked at the community based ECD model as a community development effort. The study identified four pillars for community development in practice (Refer to section 4.2) and in this section they are discussed within the findings. The study

found that the Community Based ECD Centres do not only provide education services for young children in their respective communities, but also develop their respective communities by enabling community members to participate by empowering them to use their community assets and social relationships for the benefit of the community.

6.7.2.1 Community Assets

As discussed in section 4.2.1, this study borrows the definition from Kretzmann and McKnight (1993: 25) who define assets as the ‘gifts, skills and capacities’ of ‘individuals, associations and institutions’ within a community. They are basically the skills and resources that a community has at individual, organisational and institutional level. In an alternative community development process, these are identified as existing strengths that can be used.

To identify available assets, respondents of the small-scale survey took part in an exercise to generate an inventory of available skills and assets in their community known as asset mapping (Refer to section 6.5.1). The table below is a compressed list of community assets derived from all the assets identified by community members at all three levels;

Individual Level	Organisational Level	Institutional Level
Singers	Churches	Schools
Poets	CBO	Local Government
Actors	Mosques	Hospitals
Teachers	Christian Youth Groups	Businesses
Athletes (including games like soccer, netball, volleyball, etc.)	Football Groups	ECD Centres
Potters		Health Centres
Brick Layers		Shops
Community Mobilisers		Trading Centre
Artists		Local Market Place
Cleaners		Local Council
Leaders		Retail Businesses
Construction Workers/Builders		
Decision Makers		

Table 12: Compressed list of assets derived from asset mapping exercise

Within the context of the findings of this study, these assets were unpacked in section 6.4.2 which discusses supply of community based ECD centres. Through the ABCD lens, the study found that the communities had a range of assets available at all three levels within the ABCD Framework. The study concluded that these assets formed the basis for community capacity, which is an important resource for any successful community development initiative.

6.7.2.2 Social Relationships

As discussed in section 4.2, community development practitioners have long recognized the importance of social relationships in organizing and mobilizing community residents, as well as contributing to successful outcomes (Green and Haines, 2016: 165). If a community development process is to be asset-based and internally focused, then it will be in very important ways relationship driven (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). These relationships are an important source of social capital through which community action can be organised.

Data on positive perceptions of the community and community cohesion from the FGDs showed that good relationships were important vehicles through which community members co-operated and community activities were undertaken. As one participant said;

“There is unity and cooperation. Because without unity and cooperation there is nothing that can come out.” Participant B2

“When I come to the office, the headmaster can help me on any issues I have.” Participant C2

“Group works like cultivating, farming they group Lugbara¹⁶ with refugees then we participate.” Participant G8

“... and savings.” Participant G5

¹⁶ Lugbara is a term used to refer to local residents as opposed to refugee residents

“...like when the communal work is organized, there’s no among themselves, even in meetings. Communal work for example cleaning the compound, digging the rubbish pit.”

Participant J2

“In funerals we are together, local communities together with the refugees, even contributed, we are together.” Participant I1

These statements provided examples of how community members felt about each other and how they related with each other. The study found that social relationships—whether permanent or temporal—were important in community development efforts to bring together and utilize the available social assets. More importantly, the social relationships showed how community efforts can work positively to drive a community development process in various instances. The positive perceptions enabled good social relationships to work together as and when needed.

6.7.2.3 Community Participation

As discussed in section 4.2, this study used Chambers’ (1995) definition of participation to describe an empowering process which enables local people to do their own analysis, to take command, to gain in confidence, and to make their own decisions (Chambers, 1995: 30). Thematically, this study found that community participation was the most prominent theme that came out in the data (Refer to section 6.3.1). Again, this highlighted the importance of interaction among the social assets at individual, organisational and institutional level. As one participant said;

“...like they had a meeting and said they want to construct more classes then the parents they could raise up what they want to contribute to the construction of more classes, some they said they would contribute bricks, others cement.” Participant D1

Participants in the study indicated that mostly their participation in community issues was in the form of attendance at meetings— which in itself is a good thing — but there was a general sense of not being as influential as they would have liked to be.

As one participant stated;

“...It depends on the type of the decision because if it concerns finance issues, they will only talk and the things will remain on paper...” Participant B1

Another participant said;

“When someone is asking some questions in a meeting, they look at it as unwanted or unimportant and they don’t get the feedback they wanted.” Participant C1

This study found that in general, community members were willing to participate. Also, the study concluded that the type of participation as well as the level of participation were important for community members.

6.7.2.4 Empowerment

Community development stresses the importance of building the capacity of residents to address the issues affecting their quality of life (Green and Haines, 2016: 363). Using Bronfenbrenner’s 1979 Ecological Model as discussed in section 4.2.4—within the framework of community development— the aim of a community development model is that all parties in a community gain in competence, abilities, resource acquisition and capability.

This study found that within the *macrosystem* (ie. the social sector in governments including policy makers, local businesses in the economic and policy environment) empowerment takes place when systems are strengthened to enable the processes to take place effectively. For the community based ECD model, this means that the capacity of training institutions is strengthened to equip caregivers with the correct skills and knowledge, as well as to support the ECD centres and ensure quality control through adherence to basic requirements and minimum standards set out in applicable policy. The data showed that most of the caregivers were trained but actual training was not consistent (Refer to Figure 21). The study concludes that within the NIECD policy, there is space for this to be corrected and streamlined for consistency.

Within the *exosystem* (ie. local organisations like CBOs, NGOs and FBOs), the study found that local organisations played a key role in providing services to vulnerable communities especially where the government did not provide the service. Participants in the study were well aware of the various local organisations working within their communities, and of the services being provided service (Refer to Figures 36 and 37). Again, looking at findings from the policy framework analysis and information in Figure 31 show that within the ECD policy framework there is room for their capacity to be built to ensure consistency and adherence to basic requirements and minimum standards.

Because of the central role these organisations play in service delivery to vulnerable communities, they play a pivotal role in any community development process. As mentioned earlier, their capacity can be built to enhance their service delivery. More importantly, they are in a good position to build the capacity of community to drive their respective development processes. Participants recognized the level of influence that the local organisations had within the communities (Refer to Figure 30) as well as their ability to mobilise and bring together community members. The study suggests that this strength that they have can be used more to empower communities to drive the development processes.

Within the *mesosystem* (ie. individual community members) the study found that parents of children were empowered with knowledge about child rights and child development through the community-based approach to the ECD programme. Also, the caregivers were empowered by being trained and given skills that ensure that they provided quality ECD for young children and could earn an income. Similarly, through participation in CMCs and possibly community meetings and community events, community members could develop skills and confidence that would enhance them economically.

All in all, the study found that this model provides for the empowerment of all actors in the development effort through partnerships and a shift of power to the communities themselves.

6.7.3 Social Assets

The findings on community participation and community capacity discussed in section 6.6 assert the roles of social assets—as outlined in the ABCD model—in the community-based ECD model.

6.7.3.1 Social Assets at Individual Level

As discussed earlier, community participation came out as the most prominent theme in the findings. This points to the social assets at individual level being the most important assets within a community. An analysis of the data on levels of involvement and types of involvement found that the active involvement of the community members as individuals or in relationship groups like the CMC, is a core driver for the success of the ECD model. Though the type of involvement varied, the study found that the willingness of community members to be involved in various ways came fairly strongly in the data. The data on volunteering indicated that various skills are available within a single community (Refer to section 6.6.1.2). When harnessed to support community development efforts, the study argues that these skills become central to the success of a community development effort.

The data on types of involvement indicates that these assets are possibly being underutilised. Though data showed that through local organisations community members were involved in planning and decision making (Refer to Figure 29), the actual involvement appeared to be largely through attendance at meetings (Refer to Figure 27 and section 6.6.1). This is a good thing, but when analysed together with information on community influence, the study concluded that the way that community members participated could be enhanced to enable better utilisation of their available skills as an important resource.

6.7.3.2 Social Assets at Organisational Level

Data on community participation and community capacity showed that community members do carry out voluntary work in informally organised groups or through local/voluntary organisations or NGOs as and when the need arises. This shows how assets and resources were ‘pooled’ in an organised manner. The generally positive perceptions and

good relationships between and among community members provided an enabling environment to ‘pool’ assets and resources as and when the need arose.

However, the study found that control and ownership of efforts was not in the hands of the individuals, but in the ‘organised structures’ within the respective communities. These structures ranged from temporary groups to already existing teams and organisations including CBOs, NGOs and FBOs. In line with the ABCD model, this shows the important role of organizational level assets and capacity to drive, shape and make the necessary arrangements for community capacity (Refer to section 6.6.2) to be effectively and efficiently utilized.

The study also found that these structures are able to engage with the community members and provide relevant information on the respective community development efforts being undertaken. Adequate knowledge about development initiatives naturally contributes to the perceptions that individual community members will have about the respective efforts/programme. The structures at organizational level are therefore a tool through which information can be disseminated, and communities mobilised to harness their capacity eg. Assets and resources. The study argues that without a structure—temporary, permanent, formal or informal—through which available individual assets and resources can be organised, the available community capacity could remain underutilised.

6.7.3.3 Social Assets at Institutional Level

For any measure of success, government policy needs to provide an enabling environment for community capacity and participation to take place within a broader framework of development. The enabling environment gives the local organisations and community members a context in which to carry out development efforts in an organised and structured manner.

Quality assurance is arguably the most important role of institutional level assets (Refer to Figure 31). The study argues that to ensure that community development efforts adhere to

basic requirements and minimum standards, the government—including local government if structure is decentralised—needs to provide for the capacity of individuals and organisations to be built around the relevant subjects, again within a broader and structured framework. As discussed in section 4.2.4, community development stresses the importance of building the capacity of residents to address the issues affecting their quality of life (Green and Haines, 2016: 363). This means that community members and local/community organisations and structures may need to be empowered through an enabling political, social and economic environment. This involves capacity building or empowerment, and often needs various sectors to engage with each other. Unfortunately, this was one weakness that came out from the data in this study.

The data from this study indicated that the GoU has a fairly robust framework within which the community based ECD programme is implemented. Organised structures in the form of local organisations are available at community level and community members are aware of the various services that they provide (Refer to Figure 30). What was lacking, however, was strong co-ordination between and among these organisations. With the NIECD policy (2016) implementation still in its infancy, one can only hope that this will get better with time.

6.7.4 Care and Support for Vulnerable Children

6.7.4.1 Safety and Security

The actual locations of the ECD centres that participated in this study was largely in places that communities knew and trusted. Unsurprisingly, this was an emphasis in the refugee settlements.

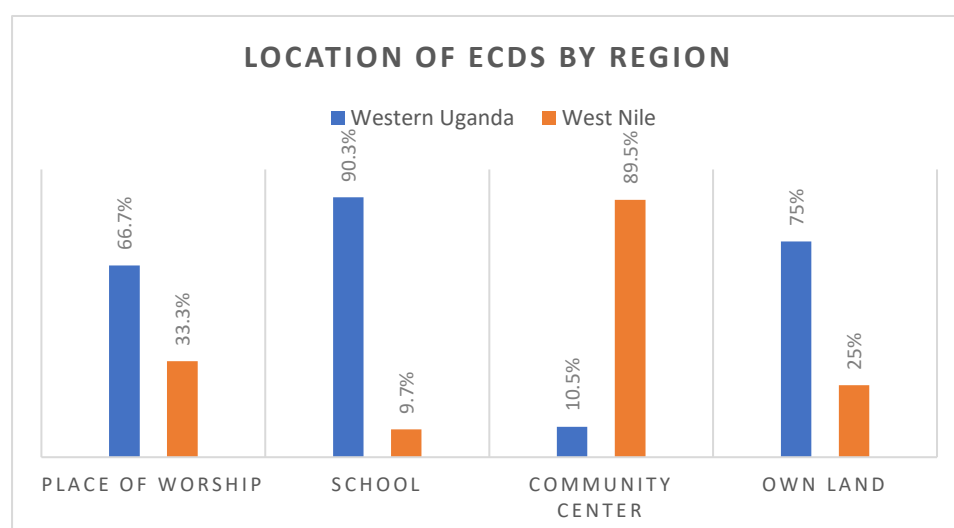


Figure 38: Actual locations of ECD centres within communities

Along with quality of caregivers and school readiness, safety of the children came out as a key concern for parents of children in the ECD centres particularly in the refugee settlements (Refer to Figure 32). When asked what they liked most about the centres, some participants said;

“The place is safe.” Participant E5

“The centre is strategically located and even next to the community.” Participant I5

“There is protection and safety of our children.” Participant A4

“What I like most about the centre is that it is in the settlement, the security of our children is at our hands, we can monitor them...” participant F1

Therefore, the study argues that because these centres are based within the community, they are easily accessible and parents/guardians feel they are relatively safe.

6.7.4.2 Care for Children

The study found that community members felt that the caregivers are very important in the centres (Refer to figure 20). Some participants had this to say;

“Because the place has good caregivers”. Participant E1

“The way the caregivers treat our children, how they are taking them up as one way of guiding them, teaching them, those aspects.” Participant A1

Therefore the study argues that the capacity of the caregivers to care for and support the children is very important.

When asked what they liked most about their ECD centres, one participant said;

“Because the place is facilitated... the children are given breakfast, they are given treatment when they fall sick.” Participant E4

The study found that most of the centres provided meals for the children, more so in the local community than in the refugee settlements.

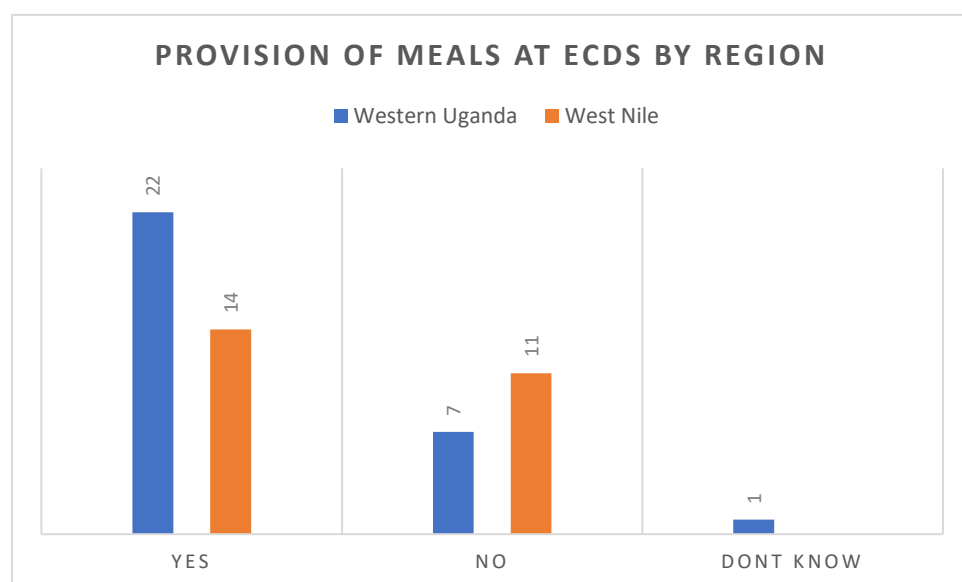


Figure 39: Number of centres that provide meals for children

Overall, the study found that the capacity of the centres to provide care and support for the children is huge. This can range from meals, to psychosocial support. As one participant said;

“...like our children we brought from South Sudan, by then the play they are making is one of war like producing the sound of the gun but when they were brought here, they forgot those things, as you go in the area, they are singing rhymes.” Participant I2

6.7.4.3 School Readiness and Learning

The main message to parents during mobilization efforts for ECD has been that by sending their children to the centres, they will enhance their success at primary school level (Lomofsky, 2014: 41). As discussed earlier, the data ranked school readiness highly as the most important reason why parents/guardians took their children to the ECD centres in their communities (Refer to Figure 20). Some participants in the FGDs said;

“We bring our children for one reason, to learn and get skills and knowledge.” Participant C1

“This is a programme where they get the young ones out there and teach them. Education.”

Participant G2

“What I like best is the knowledge our children get... It prepares them to enter primary.”

Participant G6

The study therefore found that school readiness was an important factor for communities in the community based ECD model.

The ECD Caregivers’ Guide (NCDC, 2012) promotes the use of mother tongue as the language of instruction and the provision of a rich learning environment that will provide wide experiences. From the classroom observation in the centres visited, the study found that the caregivers used English consistently. In the refugee settlements, the study noted that Arabic and Dinka were used but only for explanations particularly for the older children. Also, from all available data, the study concluded that parents expected the children to learn English.

Therefore, this study argues that from a learning perspective, parents and caregivers want their children to continue to speak their languages but they would also want the children to go to school and possibly university which generally use English as the official language of instruction. Therefore, English becomes the ‘gateway’ to formal education and a world beyond their communities. Though proponents of mother tongue instructions would argue otherwise, this study argues that perhaps the language policy of the model needs to be revisited.

6.8 Discussion

With education being widely cited as a panacea for development (Wagner, 2018; Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013; Emde and Robinson, 2000; UNESCO, 2010; World Bank, 2011; Mwaura and Marfo, 2011 and OECD, 2011), the study concluded that the community based model of ECD delivery provided an option for vulnerable children who may otherwise miss out on the accrued benefits. As stated in section 1.1.1, the primary aim of this study was to

analyse the use of the community based ECD model for the provision of care and support for vulnerable children. To guide the discussion on feasibility for care and support for vulnerable children, this study used UNICEF's Conceptual Framework for the Pre-primary Sub-sector (2019) which proposes a system's approach that emphasises collaboration and interdependence of various actors within society for purposes of equity in ECD.



Figure 40: Conceptual Framework for ECD (Source: UNICEF, 2019a)

Most importantly, this study used this particular framework because it places equitable provision of pre-primary education at the core, and therefore focuses on vulnerable children. In this discussion, the study uses both the ABCD Model and the UNICEF Conceptual Framework for ECD as lenses through which to view the community based ECD model.

6.8.1. An Enabling Environment for ECD Provision

It can be argued that an Enabling Environment or the Social Assets at Institutional Level are key elements for the provision of ECD services for vulnerable children. As mentioned in section 4.4.3.3, the central role of social assets at institutional level is one of support for community development to take place by providing an enabling environment.

The study concluded that Uganda has a relatively enabling environment for the provision of ECD for vulnerable children through a semi-formal education programme delivered within an existing formal education system.

6.8.1.1 Policies and Legislation

The study found that the GoU has a comprehensive policy framework that specifically recognises different ways of ECD delivery. The mandate for ECD lies with the MoGLSD and not the MoES. This study argues that this is an indication of the recognition of the holistic nature of ECD including child protection, health and education. The policy framework acknowledges the importance of ECD and has attempted to focus on vulnerable children by putting a concrete policy in place (MoES, 2007 and MoGLSD, 2016) that allows for free pre-primary education (Refer to section 6.2.2) through a community-based model.

The study noted that though the GoU does not provide the service directly, it places Public-Private Partnerships at the centre of ECD programme delivery through the National Integrated ECD Policy and Action Plan (MoGLSD, 2016). The study argues that this also points to a recognition that responsibility for ECD lies with a broad spectrum of actors and provides a context for partnerships between and among government entities, organisations and community members.

6.8.1.2 Ministerial Leadership and Capacity

The study found that the GoU has the institutional capacity to provide ECD for all children. It has put in place various entities and divisions within key government ministries which are mandated to lead and support the provision of ECD including;

- The ECD Technical Committee which provides overall guidance on implementation of the NIECD Policy Framework from the national to the lower local governments
- The National ECD Secretariat which supports the ECD Technical Committee through the preparation of multi-sectoral plans for implementation and reports of the NIECD Policy at national level

- The National Children’s Council (NCC) which is mandated to oversee all aspects of children in Uganda
- The Directorate of Education Standards (DES) which provide standards for assessing and monitoring child development in Uganda
- The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) which designs and develops curricula
- The Teacher Instructor Education and Training (TIET) Department at Kyambogo University which looks at harmonising training, certification and accreditation for nursery teachers and caregivers in partnership with other stakeholders.

However, the study found that though activities and plans are clearly defined and well aligned with policy, co-ordination between and among stakeholders as well as efficiency were weak. The reasons for this were not pursued in this study but available information points to a lack of adequate funding as being a major issue.

6.8.1.3 Public Demand

The study determined that public demand for ECD in vulnerable communities was high. The data showed that the preparation for school readiness (Refer to Figure 17) was a very important aspect on ECD for community members. It also suggested that support for a smooth transition to primary school was a major factor in demand for ECD services. The study also determined that with school readiness, quality of caregivers and safety were the most important aspects of the community based ECD model. Further probing broke these down into what the children were learning in the centres, the centre environment, and safety and accessibility ie. the centres being based within the community. This showed that community members saw the centres as places that can also provide care and support for the children.

This study established that there is a strong awareness and/or understanding of the importance of ECD within communities and families in Western and North Western Uganda.

This is important in community-based models because vulnerable children cannot access the services without family and/or community support, which are their immediate and most important environments.

6.8.1.4 Finance

Available information showed that the GoU financial investment in ECD is very low at 0.088% of the joint budget for pre-primary and primary education. This study therefore argues that the community-based ECD Model is a cost-effective way to provide access to ECD for the most marginalised communities.

The study found that where governments are not able to provide full or partial financial support to ECD, funding and required resources can be provided by communities themselves and NGOs, FBOs or CBOs. As discussed in section 6.2, provision of ECD education in Uganda is highly dependent on NGOs, FBOs and multilateral organisations. Without government funding, this ensures that partnerships and collaborations work to provide for those children who cannot afford to access ECD services privately. From the data, this study concluded that these partnerships and collaborations can enable increased overall capacity to provide holistic support for vulnerable children. As far as community development initiatives and programmes go, the involvement of communities and local organisations contributes to the broader objectives for community development efforts as discussed in Chapter 4.

6.8.2 Action Areas of the Pre-Primary Sub Sector

Social assets at organisational and individual level play a key role in actual delivery of community based ECD services. Within the ECD conceptual framework, this comprises the action areas of this education sub sector.

6.8.2.1 Planning and Resource Allocation

The study determined that the NIECD Action Plan is comprehensive and provides a concrete plan for ECD nationally. Adequate data is available and has been fed into the national plans.

But at local levels, the implementation of the action plans has not been effective. The study reasons that this could be due to inadequate finances.

However, the study concluded that in places where resources are minimal, with adequate planning, preparation and resource allocation it is still possible to provide early childhood care and education of reasonable standards to young children through a community based ECD model. Findings in this study are in line with those from a case study review (Lofomsky, 2014: 40) of the community-based model of ECD provision in Uganda which found that it demonstrates a cost-effective way to provide access to ECD for the most marginalised communities.

This study maintains that *Community Participation* and *Community Capacity* are key to the success of the community based ECD model. At local level, the actual activities tied to setting up and running a community based ECD centre first and foremost rely on community participation through the talents, abilities and skills available in the respective communities, and then on the community capacity (resources) of individuals, organisations and institutions that are available in the communities to provide an enabling environment. This is discussed in the table below by breaking down the initial and recurring activities listed in the Outline of Basic Requirements for Community Based ECD Centres (Refer to Table 12) into the general requirements within each activity and who performs the actual tasks.

	Activities	Requirements	Actor
Initial	Building/Shelter for Classrooms	Land/Space Building Materials/Equipment Labour	Local Organisations ¹⁷ Community Members Community Members
	Outdoor Playground	Land/Space Building Materials/Equipment Labour	Local Organisations Community Members Community Members
	Community Mobilisation	Outreach Activities	Local Organisations/Community Members
	Initial Training	Training Facilities	Training Institutions
Recurring	Teaching and Learning Materials	Curriculum/Framework	Training Institutions/Local Organisations

¹⁷ Local Organisations in the context of this study refer to CBOs, FBOs and NGOs

		Classroom Materials	Community Members/Local Organisations
	Maintenance of Facilities	Materials and Equipment	Community Members
	In-Service Training	Training Facilities	Training Institutions/Local Organisations
	Supervision	Inspectors	Training Institutions/Local Organisations
	Caregiver Remuneration	Finances	Community Members

Table 13: Breakdown of Activities listed within the Outline of Basic Requirements for Community Based ECD Centres

Using colour coding for ease of reference to frequency, the above table shows that the social assets at individual level (red) are the most frequent actors in this model followed by the social assets at organisational level (blue). The social assets at institutional level (green) appear less frequently in the table.

The study confirmed that social assets at individual level—talents, abilities and skills—are fundamental to the physical, human and financial resources required not only to set up the centres and provide the service, but for the service to be sustainable. Therefore, active and meaningful community participation is the core of the community-based ECD programme.

The study determined that capacity of communities to provide a community based ECD programme is important at all three levels of social assets. At individual level, the ability of community members to feel connected was very important and enabled them to work together as a community. Their knowledge of the programme also provided an important indicator of their capacity to engage effectively with the programme and participate actively. At organisational level the FBOs, CBOs, and NGOs provided the important role of facilitation for the individual level assets to be effective and efficient in the community development effort. The data indicated that functional voluntary and community organisations were available in the communities visited, and most of them provided education services (Refer to Figure 36 and 37). Noteworthy is that their level of involvement in ECD was reported to be high particularly in terms of planning, implementation and

decision making (Refer to Figure 29). At institutional level, the government systems provided an enabling environment for the programme to be implemented through existing policy as well as adherence to basic requirements and minimum standards. However, the study concluded that in terms of planning and resource allocation, there was minimal co-ordination between and among the local government, local/community organisations and the ECD centres

6.8.2.2 Curriculum

The study found that an inclusive national curriculum for ECD is available, and it covers key components of nurturing care for children. It also recognises that the domains of development in the curriculum are interrelated, interact with each other and can be mutually reinforcing. Defined in a landmark Lancet Series on Early Childhood Development (Black et al., 2017), nurturing care includes five integrated components these being health, nutrition, safety and security, responsive parenting and early learning. Through the Learning Framework (NCDC, 2011) and the Caregivers' Guide (NCDC, 2012), the GoU provides a coherent and child centred ECD curriculum that is underpinned by nurturing care. However, as discussed in section 6.2.2 this study found that these tools have not been well distributed and utilised. Also, observations determined that teaching and learning materials were not consistent or widely available.

6.8.2.3 Teachers/Caregivers

The study concluded that profiles and qualifications/training for caregivers are not streamlined and vary among the various ECD centres. In terms of their capacity, the study found that the majority of caregivers in the centres are trained in some shape or form (Refer to Figure 18). However, documents that were reviewed indicated that the training varied. Reasons for this were not clear, and the study did not explore the qualifications of the caregivers in detail. This study concludes that for vulnerable children, this means that their access to quality education, care and support is compromised by the inconsistencies in qualifications and training of the caregivers.

The study determined that the caregivers were volunteers from within the community, again pointing to positive identification and use of social assets at individual level. The study also found that the quality of caregivers was very important to community members (Refer to section 6.4.5 and Figure 17). This suggests that the caregivers and their capacity to care for children was very important to community members. This was mirrored in the contributions made by parents in the ECD centres to provide remuneration for the caregivers.

6.8.2.4 Families and Communities

The study found that the parents were actively involved in the ECD centres and provided funding and assistance including cleaning the facilities and maintenance (Refer to section 6.6.1). This speaks to the engagement of social assets at individual level within the communities.

The study also found that parents/guardians participated in management of the ECD centres through CMCs (Refer to section 6.6.1). Therefore, the study argues that they had a sense of ownership and interest in ensuring the success of the services. Community interest in the affairs of the centres was high (Refer to Figure 25) and participation in the affairs varied. From this data, the study concluded that the parents/community members trusted the centres enough to provide care and support for their young children and hence participated in its affairs to ensure that it did so.

The study also found that strategic partnerships within the communities played a key role in fulfilling various roles. This is indicative of the essential role of social assets at organisational level in the community. This study argues that through these strategic partnerships, ECD services of reasonable quality were made available for vulnerable children. Sections 6.6.1.4 and 6.6.2.4 outline the roles played by local organisations in ECD service provision. The study concludes that leveraging partnerships strategically could provide for holistic quality ECD services to be provided for vulnerable children.

6.8.2.5 Quality Assurance

The study found that all ECD centres must be registered (MoES, 2007), and before receiving a license to operate, all providers must show that they meet the Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards (BRMS), which basically translate into the centres being 'child friendly'. As discussed in section 6.3.4, the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) have developed and implement the Early Learning and Development Standards (MoES, 2012) to provide quality assurance in ECD. These standards underpin all guidelines for ECD implementation.

In terms of outcomes for children, the ELDS are guided by the Learning Framework (NCDC, 2011) and the Caregivers' Guide (NCDC, 2012) which emphasise observable and measurable skills, knowledge and values to be acquired by the children. However, the study found that due to financial constraints, lack of key resources and the variation in quality, content and delivery mechanisms provided during training of caregivers by multiple organisations, adherence to policy/legislation and supervision were difficult. The study concluded that practically, there is an absence of a robust framework for monitoring the implementation of the NIECD Action Plan. Though documentation exists in terms of regulations and standards, the study did not find any evidence to suggest that these have been operationalised.

Uganda's ELDS (MoESTS, 2015) outline the essential elements for a community-based ECD centre in terms of structure and location. The study found that Uganda's community based ECD model is designed to locate the centres within the communities that need the service, and that it is easily accessible to them by being in their respective communities. The discussion in section 6.7.3 confirms that the centres are based within the communities and are therefore easily accessible for the children as required in the ELDS.

The availability of adequate infrastructure such as buildings, classrooms, and playgrounds are essential for quality ECD services to be provided. The study found that the centres are based in centres for worship such as churches or mosques, community centres, primary schools or on their own land. This indicates that the social assets at organisational level were strategically used for ECD provision. This also establishes that structurally, the service

is being delivered in basic safe, clean and healthy environments as outlined in the ELDS and NIECD (2016). This is essential for young children to learn effectively in a safe environment.

6.9 Conclusion

This study argues that the purpose and advantage of any community-based model is that it is a model of the people, by the people, for the people. The cross-case analysis provided evidence for the model being a vehicle through which community co-operation and cohesion was enhanced. For instance, participants in all the centres cited examples of community members coming together around community issues such as cleaning, building or making contributions. In the refugee centres the local organisations particularly played a role in co-ordinating these activities.

In general, barriers to accessing ECD in Uganda have been reported to include affordability, lack of access points, hours of operation, language of service, and lack of information about services. In these situations, choice is either limited or non-existent. This study has determined that through community participation and community capacity, a community's social assets at individual, organisational and institutional level can work together to provide semi-formal pre-primary education. This study provides evidence that the community-based model of ECD provision is an effective model of ECD through which to provide care and support for children in vulnerable communities, who may otherwise miss out on this opportunity and the accrued individual, economic and social benefits of ECD for the future.

As discussed in section 2.3, the right to education involves availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability. The study found that the community based ECD model can potentially provide ECD services for vulnerable children because it is designed to allow for availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. The model is designed to be based within the respective community it aims to serve and therefore to a large extent, it is flexible and adaptable to diverse communities. This is particularly important to make ECD education relevant and meaningful within and among different global and cultural contexts.

The study also argues that this model promotes collaboration and is built to make use of available resources/assets within respective communities. Acknowledging the holistic nature of ECD, it emphasises commitment of and cooperation among partners ‘to ensure the necessary coherence and complementarity of interventions’ (UNICEF, 2019b: 2). The study concluded that to be effective, it must be strongly aligned with national policy which in turn needs to provide an environment that encourages and enhances collaboration at institutional, organisational and individual levels within communities.

The study determined that this model provides a viable option to provide quality ECD for vulnerable children if it operates within a framework that has the following components;

- An enabling environment that includes robust policies and action plans,
- An understanding of the importance of ECD,
- Demand from families and communities, and
- Supply of the services by the communities themselves.

The study noted that the ability of the caregivers to interpret and deliver the curriculum is vital, and concluded that the quality and level of care and support is determined by the caregivers’ ability to deliver the service.

As discussed in section 2.1.3 and 2.3.3, tensions between the desire to have contextualised knowledge and support that is specific to particular communities and the need to offer meaningful education that supports children’s specific needs within a wider existence are an important factor in supply and demand of quality ECD services. This study suggests that where government support is lacking or limited, the community-based models provide communities with availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability of quality ECD services. This may be particularly applicable for minorities, displaced populations, children and communities experiencing poverty and deprivation, and other types of vulnerabilities.

Chapter 7: Conclusion, Implications and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This study set out to explore the potential of the community based ECD model to provide care and support for vulnerable children. Its focus was on children who face multiple deprivation in rural communities in Uganda, including those in refugee settlements. This chapter concludes the case study report by giving a synopsis of the study and providing a summary of the findings in line with the objectives that the study had set to explore. It goes

on to briefly discuss the value of the study in the global context and a few reflections of the research process during this study. It also looks at implications for policy and practice in terms of education and evaluation of education programmes for vulnerable children, and potential future areas of research stemming from this study. Finally, it makes some recommendations based on the findings.

7.2 The Case in Context

The community based ECD model is a low-cost response to the absence of government facilities for young children in Uganda. Ideally, this is a creative and cost-effective response to meeting the multiple developmental needs of the children. This model is based on the facilities being developed by communities, for the communities, in the communities, and using various local resources. The centres are run on principles of volunteerism, partnership, community ownership and involvement, with support provided for in the national ECD policy framework including some technical support from Uganda's development partners and organisations such as NGOs, CBOs and FBOs.

Implementation research is central to understanding context, assessing performance, improving quality, facilitating systems' strengthening, and informing large-scale use and sustainability of interventions. The intent is to understand what, why and how interventions work in real-world settings and to test approaches to improve them (Yousafzai et al., 2018). Against the backdrop of Uganda's lack of quality ECD services for vulnerable children—especially in rural areas, post conflict areas, isolated communities, and poor urban and other disadvantaged communities (Reference made to section 1.2)—this study assessed the implementation of the Community Based Model of ECD as a viable option.

In chapter 3, the study looked at ECD policy and practice, and discussed various community based ECD models. Recognising that education is one of the most difficult services to deliver, placing it at the heart of a community draws on available assets to be part of the broad framework of care for vulnerable children. Drawing from the literature review and overall findings, the study argues that the better terminology for ECD provision particularly

at community level should be Early Childhood Care and Education because of the encompassing nature of the concept. Kagan and Neuman (2000: 356) noted that Early Childhood Care and Education has been shaped by changes in demographics, service delivery, and public attitudes (Kagan and Neuman, 2000: 356). Approaches have broadened significantly to include the overall well-being of the child, the family, and the community. The community therefore holds the responsibility of care and support for its children, and what better solution to this than an appropriate community development approach.

This study used Ploch's 1976 definition of community development which is the 'active voluntary involvement in a process to improve some identifiable aspect of community life; normally such action leads to the strengthening of the community's pattern of human and institutional relationships.' (Mattessich and Monsey 2004: 59). As discussed in Chapter 4, this study viewed community development both as a process (strengthening the ability of community members to work together) and as an outcome (the result of community members working together to improve the community in various ways), with individuals at the centre of the initiatives.

The ontological and epistemological worldviews gave the study a theoretical lens through which it can be understood. Because understanding reality is based on individual interpretation and meaning, the study considered information as constructed from different perspectives and views of individuals and groups based on their respective experiences. Therefore, a researcher's role is to understand and interpret these views while acknowledging that they are constructed by those who actually experience the phenomena. To achieve this, the study was conducted in the context in which the programme being studied is based. Stake defends this approach by defining it as 'an empirical study of human activity' (Stake, 2004). A qualitative methodology therefore was a natural choice for this study. As discussed in section 5.3, it is a form of inquiry in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear and understand (Creswell, 2008: 39).

As the study explored the use of a particular model of ECD implementation, it was technically an evaluation of the programme's implementation. This study used Stake's (1975) responsive approach to evaluation which places particular emphasis on the importance of personalising and humanising the evaluation process (Patton, 2015: 207). Responsive evaluation studies emphasize social issues and cultural values as well as personal and programmatic dilemmas (Stake, 2004: xvi). The study also borrowed the key elements of the Culturally Responsive Evaluation Framework (Figure 7) in its approach.

The study needed to understand the programme by looking at different 'projects' as sources of evidence within the parameters of the programme. A case study approach provided the best way to do so. Stake (2006) calls what is being studied the 'quintain', that is the target or phenomenon to be studied and it is the 'umbrella' for all the individual projects involved in the study. The multi-case study approach was used to maintain interest in the quintain—the community based ECD programme—through exploring the individual cases ie. The ECD centres. This meant that the study was conducted in real life settings.

Because the interest was in perceptions, understanding and interpretations of the programme, the study used FGDs as the primary data collection tool. And to complement the qualitative data and possibly reveal important features about the programme, the study collected some quantitative data in the form of a supervised self-completion questionnaire. To further enrich the data, the study also looked at programme and project records and documents which are a particularly rich source of information about many organisations and programmes (Patton, 2015). To select participants and ECD centres to visit, the study strategically used criterion sampling. The logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some pre-determined criterion of importance (Patton, 2015). In line with these methodological choices, the qualitative data was coded, prepared and extracted using a template for analysis which was underpinned by the study's theoretical framework—the Asset Based Community Development Model. The coding process was guided by King's (2004) 6 steps of template analysis. Yin's (2003) and Stake's (2006) understanding of cross-case synthesis were used to present the data in a matrix that enabled cross-case conclusions

to be made. This process strongly relied on interpretation and not numerical tallies. The quantitative data was prepared, extracted and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24. Documents were reviewed to provide the theoretical constructs, understandings and definitions of the programme and also to provide an understanding of the position of ECD centres in communities. The conclusions were then triangulated and presented in this report.

7.3 Cultural Responsiveness of the Study

As discussed in section 5.4.2, this study was guided by a framework for culturally responsive evaluation (Refer to Figure 7). As evaluation studies are conducted in varied contexts and cultures, this study is an example of the application of the framework, and also contributes to the discussion on the framework's practical application. Notable pioneers in the field of CRE define culture as a cumulative body of learned and shared behaviour, values, customs and beliefs common to a particular group or society (Frierson, Hood, and Hughes, 2002: 63). An evaluation is responsive if it attends substantively and politically to issues of culture in evaluation practice (Hood, 2001: 32).

This study was strategically placed within the phenomenology framework of inquiry in order to immerse itself in the culture of the community based ECD programme in Uganda. By placing the all programme stakeholders—particularly the community members in the selected vulnerable communities—at the centre of the evaluation process, the study attempted to bring balance and equity into the evaluation process by merging theory and actual experiences of the programme being evaluated.

The framework identifies key components that are taken in a CRE, which form its guiding theoretical framework. These components are briefly discussed below in relation to this study.

7.3.1 Preparing for the Evaluation

Initial steps in the study involved getting an awareness of how to get to the selected communities in a way that respected and conformed to its societal norms. The formal and

informal power structures had to be recognised. This required the identification of a focal point within each of the participating communities to guide and assist with the process. Fortunately, Uganda has clear guidelines on research in its communities and so did the FBOs who are running the community based ECD centres that were visited. As shown in Figure 11, even when permission was granted from HQs of the relevant FBOs, as a sign of respect and recognition of local power structures, permission was still sought at various levels.

7.3.2 Engaging Stakeholders

Through a review of literature and relevant documents, stakeholders who were potentially valuable to the study were identified through purposive sampling as discussed in section 5.6. Therefore, a diverse stakeholder group participated in the survey and the FGDs and included community members who were direct or indirect beneficiaries of the ECD programmes as well as community representatives such as CMC members. As Hood, Hopson and Kirkhart (2015: 291) state in their work, this enabled the study to create opportunities for information to be gathered through conversations which represented equity and fairness. By introducing the study to all possible participants and providing an opportunity for them to ask questions and provide consent before the data collection began, as well as dressing appropriately and using relevant and respectful language and gestures, trust and respect was cultivated.

7.3.3 Identifying the Purpose and Intent of the Evaluation

This study was purely academic but also aimed at adding value to the field of ECD in vulnerable communities. Preparation for actual fieldwork was instrumental in refining and clarifying the purpose of this study. Specifically, it helped to focus the study more on what would and what would not be explored or examined and why.

7.3.4 Framing the Right Questions

Asking the 'right' questions is key in any evaluation. An initial set of data collection tools was designed but the pivotal point was the pilot study. During the pilot phase, the strengths and weaknesses of the tools and plans were noted. Of particular note was the wording used in

some of the questions as well as the amount of time planned for the exercise. This stage was critical as it also helped to re-focus the tools and align them more with the objectives of the study. Another strength of using the FGD guide was that it is flexible and could be adjusted to go with the flow of the conversations. This meant that the data collection exercise was more balanced and meaningful to the respondents and therefore the engagement and responses during the discussions were more authentic.

7.3.5 Designing the Evaluation

The design of a CRE evaluation is responsive to context; it is not dictated by the CRE approach itself (Hood, Hopson, and Kirkhart, 2015: 293). Following from the previous stage (7.3.4), this speaks to a refinement of the tools used to collect data for the evaluation as well as setting parameters for the data collection. For this study, this meant structuring the questions more towards what the community members would like to see in a community based ECD programme, and also what they felt they already had within their communities that would strengthen or add value to the programme. Of particular note here was the use of mixed methods while maintaining an emphasis on qualitative methodology.

7.3.6 Selecting and Adapting Instrumentation

In a handbook for practical evaluation, Hood, Hopson, and Kirkhart (2015: 294) stress that when selecting instruments for CRE, existing tools must be closely scrutinised for cultural bias in both language and content. In this case, the data collection instruments were designed specifically for this study. Previous interaction with some of the communities that participated in the study as well as previous experience working on the programme was invaluable in this case. Working with a local research assistant was also useful to validate the tools and keep the focus of the study.

7.3.7 Collecting the Data

This stage was as important as framing the right questions and designing the study. As noted earlier (refer to section 7.3.1), it was important to be aware of and use local etiquette when entering the communities and introducing the study and its purpose. As a researcher,

it is important to be respectful of the community members and develop more meaningful engagement with participants. Self-awareness is particularly important for data validity.

7.3.8 Analysing the Data

CRE pioneers stress that understanding cultural context is necessary for accurate interpretation (Hood, Hopson, and Kirkhart, 2015: 295). Because of the financial challenges of a purely academic study, the participants in this study were not able to assist in interpretation of the data once it was collected. However, the use of cross-case synthesis in the template analysis was vital. As discussed in section 5.8.1, the examination of word tables for cross-case patterns was essential during data analysis and interpretation of the findings. The individual case notes (Example in Annex 6) were essential during this stage as they captured the diversity during the FGDs and assisted in identifying useful outliers such as a recognition of the value of play in learning. Hood, Hopson and Kirkhart (2015: 295) note that the existence of positive unintended outcomes can expand one's understanding of programme benefits, while negative unintended outcomes suggest important caveats or cautions that must be considered to prevent harm.

7.3.9 Disseminating and Using the Results

Cultural responsiveness gives credibility and utility to results (Hood, hopson and Kirkhart, 2015: 295). This final stage closes the circle of the CRE evaluation framework illustrated in Figure 7. Again, because this is an academic study the dissemination and use of results outside the academic sphere is not guaranteed. However, it is hoped that the dissemination will most likely occur in the form of publications and conference presentations, one of which has already been done at the Education Studies Association of Ireland Biennial Conference in April, 2019.

7.4 Key Outcomes of Study

This study modified and extended the use of the ABCD model from being a tool for community development work to being ***a strategy for evaluation of community development efforts*** as a means to inform policy and practice. As discussed in section 4.7,

Green and Haines (2012: 11) say asset-based development is more a method than it is a theory. The findings in this study are in line with this school of thought, and argue that the ABCD can be used as a method not only to implement but through which to evaluate community development efforts. With most evaluations in education focusing on international comparative reliability and national averages rather than ‘local validity’, this study suggests that the ABCD is a useful tool that can be used for more meaningful and appropriate assessments and evaluations to improve, identify and clarify the most important issues and dilemmas in facilitating equity in education.

Another key outcome of the study is that ***it asserts the importance of social assets at individual level*** in any community development effort. These social assets are the community members who should be engaged positively and equally because they are at the centre of the process. Their participation and capacity are cardinal to the success of any development efforts.

7.5 Summary of Key Findings in Meeting Research Objectives

7.5.1 Objective 1: To analyse the provision of community-based ECD services as centres for care and support of vulnerable children in Uganda

The overall objective of the study was to find out if community based ECD facilities can provide care and support for vulnerable children in Uganda. Data from the survey (Refer to section 6.4.) showed that the communities with the more vulnerable children had higher registration in ECD centres. Further, the study found that parents/caregivers from the refugee settlements felt that the safe environment and the provision of care for the children that the model provided were the most important aspect for them (See Figure 32). The communities had positive perceptions of the programme and cited the cost, quality of caregivers and preparation of young children for primary school as strong aspects of the model. The study concluded that this model is ideal for provision of care and support for children in poor and vulnerable communities—particularly where government does not provide or fund ECD.

7.5.2 Objective 2: To demonstrate the feasibility of Community Based ECD Services in Uganda through the Asset Based Community Development model

As discussed in section 4.4.3, the basic principles of the ABCD recognise that social assets and resources are present at three different levels of the community. The study found that the ABCD is not just a framework, but a practical process that allows community members to participate in community development efforts. This study found that the community capacity was found within each of the social assets at the three levels, and the community based ECD model makes use of these social assets through community participation (Refer to Section 6.6).

The study concluded that the success and sustainability of the programme lies in the social assets of community members at individual level. This can be achieved through joining their efforts and resources to provide/build the centres/classrooms, maintain the structures and attract caregivers. The community's social assets at organisational level provided the much-needed mobilisation and financial support to the centres through the systems and structures of local/community organisations. This also implies a change in the direction of accountability; it is not just that communities have to be accountable to organisations, but that organisations are equally accountable to communities (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 65). The study also found that the ABCD requires government—as a social asset at institutional level—to play a pivotal but supporting role to help sustain the development efforts. In the community based ECD programme, the social assets at institutional level provide an enabling environment for the programme through existing government policies and procedures that provide strategic technical knowledge and support.

Through the ABCD lens, the study concluded that practically, community based ECD is an effective approach to delivery of ECD services to vulnerable communities who may otherwise not have the service.

7.5.3 Objective 3: To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the Government of Uganda ECD Policy Framework in terms of the ABCD model

The study found that Uganda's education policies and legislative commitments have shown a noble pledge to create and facilitate a comprehensive education system for children, especially with the provision of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and Universal Secondary Education (USE). However, the study argues that considerable evidence suggests a wide gap between policy and implementation particularly in the context of Early Childhood Care and Education.

An OECD summary of current policy trends states that OECD systems have worked to increase access and improve quality of ECD and manage transitions into primary school. While relatively older policies tend to be broader in scope, more recent policies tend to be targeted at children from disadvantaged backgrounds (OECD, 2018: 59). In this sense, the study found that Uganda's policy framework is progressive. Sections 6.2 and 6.3 discuss Uganda's ECD legislative framework and policy implementation in detail. Contextually, Uganda is signatory to key international obligations for children including the Dakar Framework (2000) which emphasizes expanding and improving comprehensive ECD, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Nationally, the constitution guarantees every child's right to basic education and states that the responsibility lies with the State and the respective parents. The Education Act (2008) includes pre-primary education. This is further broken down in the ECD Policy (2007) and the NIECD Policy (2016) which advocate for effective public-private partnership and networking at all levels—family, community and government.

The study found that the policy framework recognises ECD as a multi-sectoral process. The framework outlines the roles and responsibilities required and suggests that they are done in a holistic manner. The study determined that this was to ensure that provision of the services is rights based, child centred, community based, family focused, gender responsive, inclusive, flexible and provides for quality child care. Seeing as the policy framework recognizes ECD as a multi-sectoral system, the study found that implementation is rather weak. The study concluded that co-ordination and co-operation between and among the

different sectors such as education and health, as well as the local and community organisations is minimal at best and non-existent at worst (Refer to Section 6.6.1). The study also found that organisations do not fully engage participants in the communities in which they work, and that the local government is rather under-utilised in the provision of ECD. The study also concluded that none of the centres that participated in this study were linked to any other services provided by local government, CBOs and NGOs in their communities.

The policy framework analysis in this study found that the ECD policy framework provides for delivery of the service through a community-based model. It acknowledges and recognises the roles of individuals, families and communities because of the social assets—as defined in the ABCD model—that they hold. With ECD in Uganda being largely in the hands of the private sector, there was a need for a policy to provide for quality ECD services and guide the sector. The government of Uganda developed adequate policy for the provision of ECD for all children which included the community-based model. However, the study found that though the Uganda National Budget has included funding provision for ECD since 2009, the establishment and management of ECD centres remains a responsibility of private (community) sector—GoU neither provides nor does it allocate any budget for ECD services.

Therefore, the study concluded that the community-based ECD model provides an important cost-effective approach not only in Uganda but in countries where governments do not fund the service. The GoU has made huge investments in Universal Primary Education (UPE), and it is fitting that policy stretches to cover ECD which is the foundation for the sustainability of UPE.

7.5.4 Objective 4: To evaluate the ABCD model as a tool of analysis of community-based development

As the use of evaluation to assess across multiple dimensions evolves, so must the criteria, methods and tools we use (Heider, 2018). This study contributes to the global conversation on the evaluation of education and development programmes and how these can be best

accomplished. The study suggests that the ABCD model appears to be an effective tool for responsive evaluations of community development efforts. By making often undervalued assets more visible, it helps to encourage people to combine their strengths and resources as starting points for development (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 56).

Through asset mapping, the study identified both the tangible and intangible assets in the communities. This provided an indication of the potential within the communities. Using the ABCD model to evaluate the ECD programme made the analysis very context specific. It also focused on the perceptions and knowledge of the community members and the uniqueness of the community's skills and assets. Additionally, it placed the community's perspectives and experiences at the centre of the evaluation and reflected their knowledge, understanding, feelings and attitudes towards the programme.

This study argues that evaluations or analyses of development programmes cannot be effective when traditional approaches are used. They need to be more strategic because communities—including different communities within one country—engage very differently with development processes and programmes. This means having to rethink the focus on pre-determined deliverables and upward accountability mechanisms (Mathie, Cameron and Gibson, 2017: 56). This study highlights the potential of the ABCD model to provide a practical option for this as it allows evaluators to assess development programmes based on their respective community assets and individual circumstances.

7.6 Value of Study in Global Context

Globally, there is no agreement on the best way to deliver ECD that considers the diverse systems and settings within which it may occur. Despite consistent evidence about the types of interventions that are effective in promoting ECD, few interventions have gone to scale, quality is variable, and access to early childhood interventions remains low especially among the most disadvantaged children living in low- and middle-income countries (Yousafzai et al., 2018). This study proposes that the community-based approach is a viable option for many communities especially where children's already existing vulnerabilities may be worsened in circumstances such as unexpected disease outbreaks such as the Corona Virus, which may mean even less support for ECD from governments.

Yousafzai et al. (2018) note that taking interventions to scale typically requires integration into existing delivery platforms. This study shows that the community-based ECD approach can be easily scaled up in many countries/contexts to provide the service for vulnerable children because it exists within already existing systems such as the Uganda Education Policy Framework. Similarly, the study found examples of programmes in which governments had created a system of trained and certified community mothers—like those providing informal ECD services in Brazil—to ensure that they have the same standards as those in the regulated facilities (Refer to discussion in section 3.3.3.). In a global environment in which it is getting harder and harder to secure donor resources to fund development programmes, this study also provides evidence of a sustainable and cost-effective approach to the provision of ECD services.

The global indicator 4.2.2 for ECD (SDG Target 4.2: Early Childhood) is ‘participation rate in organized learning’ (one year before the official primary entry age). Currently, the global indicator 4.2.2 for participation in ECD ranges from around 42% in low income countries to 93% in high income countries (UNESCO, 2019: 136). Recommendations from the 2018 Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2019) highlight the importance of prioritising increased access to early childhood programmes, in order to set a strong foundation for children from migrant background and improve the chances of better learning outcomes in later years. Almost half of 29 humanitarian and refugee response plans reviewed made no mention of learning or education for children under five and less than one third specifically mentioned pre-primary education (UNESCO, 2019: 136). With the global increase in refugee and migrant populations, this study shows that the community-based approach to delivering ECD services is an option to increase the global participation rate and ensuring that the SDG global indicator for ECD is met.

7.7 Reflections on the Research Process

This section looks at two aspects of the research process, these being the relationship between researcher and participants, and the use of a qualitative research approach.

7.7.1 The Researcher and ‘the Researched’

Using a post-positivist framework of enquiry, this study recognised the importance of grounding research in localised cultural contexts. Having previously worked on the ECD programme in Uganda, I was concerned of possible biases from my knowledge of the programme as well as the challenges of researching communities as an outsider. However, my experience worked to my advantage in terms of quality control because I had a good understanding of ‘local and cultural interpretations’ of key phrases used during the data collection. For instance, when certain phrases were used, I was able to understand the multi-layered ‘meanings’ attached to the participant’s interpretations particularly when what was said wasn’t meant ‘literally’.

However, my research assistant and I were viewed as ‘outsiders’. I was regarded as an important visitor and though my assistant was a Ugandan national also originally from the west of Uganda he was perceived as a ‘city person’ as he did not live in the communities in which we carried out the research. Given my previous working experiences with communities, I was prepared for this and had dressed in a similar way to the local residents in an effort to ‘fit in’. I also set up the seating arrangements during the discussions in a manner that put us all physically on the same ‘level’. My research assistant was very helpful in that he understood the cultural nuances which he familiarised me with beforehand such as hand gestures, eye contact and slight curtsying and bowing of the head. This provided for a good reception for us from the FGD participants. In terms of language, the majority of the participants were fluent in the local dialect which my research assistant was fluent in, and/or English and we only had to use a local translator for a strong dialect on 2 occasions.

Being a purely academic study, a few of the participants were initially reluctant to participate. When we arrived in the communities in a four-wheel drive vehicle the community members expected us to be development aid workers. This was particularly worse in the refugee settlements who are a dependant community. Being a ‘dependent community’ the participants wanted to know what benefits they would get from

participating in the FGDs. We tackled this by explaining the nature and purpose of the study while introducing the consent forms and getting them signed. Additionally, during the FGDs, the discussions often shifted towards other developmental issues in the communities but we tried to persistently guide the discussion back to the study by rephrasing the questions and using hypothetical scenarios.

7.7.2 The Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative approach was a natural choice for this study because it focused on the context in which the programme being analysed is implemented. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 3). However, the inclusion of quantitative data provided a broader understanding of the context to the study. This highlighted the value of using mixed-methods in evaluation studies. Creswell (2008: 37) says qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. However, one cannot understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a phenomenon without a comprehensive understanding of the context in which it occurs. The study found that the quantitative data provided a good foundation to understand the programme being studied and to appreciate the context in which the qualitative data was being collected.

Although the qualitative approach was the natural choice for the study, it was not without practical challenges. As all community based ECD centres are set in rural areas, data collection had implications in terms of time and finances for the field work. Personal networks and contacts were used to help in mobilising participants and accessing communities. The refugee settlements in particular were far apart and this meant that quite a lot of time was spent on travel. Also, as it was the rainy season, travel on the roads was extremely difficult and slow. A particular concern for the study was the absence of benefits for the participants in places where a culture of 'providing motivation' has been developed by aid agencies and NGOs. The absence of 'motivation' for the participants meant that the

study spent more time mobilising participants and convincing them to participate with the view to accrued benefits in the future. Participants also generally appeared to lose interest after a few minutes of the FGDs and at times the process was rushed as a few of them said they needed to go and attend to other matters.

7.8 Implications

This section discusses implications of the study on education policy and practice, as well as possibilities for future research.

7.8.1 Policy and Practice

Education is a practice and not a discipline. Therefore, it is important for **all** education research to be used to inform policy and programme practice. For instance, programme evaluation—the criteria we use to assess what is being done and how—incentivizes policy-makers, programme designers, and project implementers to focus on the issues that will be evaluated (Heider, 2017). Particularly in academic studies, implications for education policy and practice can be lost when findings are used only for academic purposes. Researchers have the responsibility to drive the uptake of key findings/results, and could be instrumental in influencing how education practice consumes research findings from studies such as this one. The research experience and findings during this study speak to three possibilities.

Firstly, implementation challenges vary according to different country and community contexts. This study shows that a semi-formal approach to ECD like the community-based programme in Uganda can provide education and care for vulnerable children in communities who may otherwise miss out on education in the early years. Evidence from this study has shown that a flexible approach to ECD that makes use of local resources and support within an enabling policy environment does provide ECD for vulnerable children. Previous studies on levels of knowledge regarding pre-school programmes for developing countries (Behrman and Van Ravens, 2013; Engle et al.; 2007, Engle et al., 2011 and Behrman et al., 2013) have concluded that—though the level of knowledge in this area is moderately high—when formal and informal pre-school programmes are compared, some

informal programmes have been found to have strong results/impact. Further, they found that in programmes targeting the most disadvantaged children, there is evidence for greater effects on the poorest children.

Secondly, challenges related to community participation suggest that the model can be improved upon. This study argues that actual levels of participation of communities in development programmes could and should be enhanced by involving community members in all affairs of the programme particularly in planning and decision making, or at the very least providing the opportunity for them to do so. Perhaps a more decentralised structure of the CMC would provide a platform for community members to be more influential in all affairs of the programme.

Thirdly, utilising the community capacity by increasing co-operation between and among existing organisations and institutions at community level could and should be enhanced. The data indicated that co-ordination between local government and the NGOs/CBOs and ECD centres was not adequate (Refer to section 6.3.4). Local government particularly remains an underutilised asset that could enhance the programme through its already established systems. Relationships are the primary currency of community work (McKnight and Russell, 2018: 14). The success of the model depends upon good relationships and strong linkages between social assets at individual, organisational and institutional level. For instance, this would have positive implications for the quality of caregivers—which the study found to be among the most important aspects of the model. Stronger links between the caregivers, supporting organisations and the training institutions could ensure that training was adequately and uniformly provided in a consistent manner to enhance actual delivery of the programme in the classrooms. Drawing on and increasing the linkages among all three levels of social assets in the respective communities would provide a robust framework for policy makers and practitioners to ensure that the model provides care and support for the vulnerable children.

7.8.2 Research

Although it was evaluated as a programme, this community based ECD model involves various components. Raikes (2018: 174) recommends that a coordinated and cooperative research agenda should be developed to inform the development of metrics, including longitudinal data on multiple aspects of young children's development, attention to the pros and cons of generating comparable data, and the acknowledgement of many factors that affect learning, including family environments, health, nutrition, and exposure to violence (Raikes, 2018: 174). Further research to evaluate the different components of the programme would greatly inform future programming and possibly policy decisions.

Future studies could also explore community capacity and community participation further to better understand community development efforts and indeed the ABCD model.

Reliable and relevant learning assessments in this community based ECD model should be carried out to measure the quality of education as it would add value particularly for policy dialogue and decision making. Raikes (2018: 174) suggests that a comprehensive research strategy is needed to develop reliable and cross-culturally relevant metrics of early childhood development, especially if there is desire to compare across countries.

Finally, the study suggests that future research should focus more on education in communities within countries to seek solutions for the high numbers of vulnerable children who may be missing out on ECD. While it is unclear whether a singular, cross culturally valid metric of early childhood is possible, systematic data on early childhood development is important for tracking inequity (Raikes, 2018: 174).

7.9 Recommendations

1. The ABCD model should be considered as a tool for responsible and culturally responsive evaluation of community development efforts.
2. The ABCD model should be considered as a framework within a 'toolkit' for community based ECD to enable communities to adapt it for their specific needs and contexts. The core-

elements of Uganda's community based ECD programme could be adapted to support vulnerable/marginalised communities.

3. Where possible, suitable low-cost incentives could be provided by governments such as the provision of resources for teaching and learning materials, and minimal salaries for caregivers and/or credit towards entry into future training opportunities. This would greatly support quality in the classrooms as well as sustainability of the programmes.

4. A clear strategy on training and capacity building should be developed. Essentially, it should include all partners in delivery like local organisations, and should cover key areas of curriculum implementation such as capacity building of training institutions and organisations. The use of a strong mentoring system to support caregivers could also be considered.

5. Adherence to basic requirements and minimum standards should be re-emphasised and reinforced by the Ministry of Education as stipulated in the Education Policy. This includes the wide dissemination of policy guidelines in this regard. Mechanisms for planning and co-ordination need to be clearly defined with specific roles and responsibilities outlined.

6. The active involvement of community members should be enhanced by increasing targeted training to community members and community representatives such as CMCs.

7. Reliable and relevant learning assessments should be carried out to measure the quality of education being provided in order to enhance the programme.

8. The policy on language of instruction should be revisited—to possibly introduce bilingual programmes—because children may need to learn to understand, speak, read and write

English at an academic level as their gateway to formal education and the world beyond their communities. As Wagner (2018: 81) points out, ‘an important focal point in international development is that children growing up within minority language communities often struggle to learn in school’ due to the language barriers created by their circumstances.

9. The study recommends that the better terminology for ECD provision particularly at community level should be Early Childhood Care and Education, to clarify and highlight the key components of ECD.

10. Given that the composition of respondents was not balanced in terms of gender, the study also recommends further research into gender perspectives on community based ECD

7.10 Concluding Remarks

The last two chapters of this report bring together information from the document review and the field work, including information on the strategic choices made and used in the research methodology. When unpacked within the components of the theoretical framework in which this study is undertaken, the findings strongly suggest that community based Early Childhood Development (or Early Childhood Care and Education) could be the elixir for major achievements in the provision of the service for vulnerable children.

Overall, the study concludes that the community based ECD model is a viable way to provide care and support for vulnerable children. A key challenge is to engage all factors to create a favourable environment for all stakeholders—including the respective vulnerable communities—to participate in the process. In Uganda, the key aspects are already existing in some shape or form, but may require attention in the few areas outlined earlier. The semi-formal approach of community based ECD models provides for all stakeholders in vulnerable communities to be supported and encouraged to be active participants in a coordinated effort within an enabling environment. The focus should be on narrowing gaps between people *within* nations, and *within* communities (Wagner, 2018: 266).

In the absence of agreement on the best way to provide ECD globally, this study provides evidence that the community-based model is a viable option for vulnerable children to access quality Early Childhood Care and Education. Further, this study suggests that education evaluations should use assessment metrics that balance local validity with national averages and international comparative reliability. This would proverbially ‘raise the floor’ for children in vulnerable communities, which in turn may better facilitate equity in education.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Coding Frame

	Legend	
How many Community ECD Centers are in this Community?	A	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 11-15 (4) = 16-20 (5) = 20<
How many Children attend these centers?	B	(1) = 1-10 (2) = 11-20 (3) = 21-30 (4) = 31-40 (5) = 40<
What is the Age Range of these Children?	C	(1) = Birth-2 (2) = 3-5 (3) = 6-8 (4) = 9< (5) = Don't Know
How many caregivers are available in each of these ECD centres?	D	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 11<
Are caregivers trained/qualified?	E	(1) = Yes (2) = No (3) = Don't Know
Where are these centres located? (Multiple Choice)	F1 F2 F3 F4 F5	1 = Place of worship eg. church, mosque 2 = School 3 = Community Center 4 = Own Land 5 = Other (Mention)
Who funds these centres? (Multiple Choice)	G1 G2 G3 G4 G5 G6	1 = Self-Funded 2 = Government 3 = NGO/CBO 4 = Parents/Guardians 5 = Community Members 6 = Other (Mention)
Do centres charge fees for children?	H	(1) = Yes (2) = No (3) = Don't Know

Do children get a meal at the centre?	I	(1) = Yes (2) = No (3) = Don't Know
Based on your experience, what are the reasons why parents/guardians take children to ECD centres? (Multiple Choice)	J1 J2 J3 J4	1 = To prepare them for primary school 2 = Because others attend the centres 3 = To care for them while parents/ guardians busy 4 = Other (Mention)
Based on your experience, what are the reasons why parents/guardians don't take their children to ECD centres? (Multiple Choice)	K1 K2 K3 K4 K5	1 = Don't see value in educating young children 2 = Not enough finances 3 = Fear of stigma 4 = ECD centres don't cater for their needs 5 = Other (Mention)
Do vulnerable children attend these ECD centres?	L	(1) = Yes (2) = No
What groups of vulnerable children attend these ECD centres? (Multiple Choice)	M1 M2 M3 M4 M5	1 = Orphans 2 = Children with disabilities 3 = Children with HIV/AIDS 4 = Refugee children 5 = Other (Mention)
How would you rate community interest and involvement in affairs of the ECD centres?	N	(1) = Very High (2) = High (3) = Moderate (4) = Low (5) = Very Low
Are community members involved in planning, implementing, governance and decision making structures of ECD centres?	O1 = Planning O2 = Implementation O3 = Governance O4 = Decision	1 = Yes 2 = No

(Multiple Choice)	Making	
How do community members participate in the affairs of the ECD centres? (Multiple Choice)	P1 P2 P3 P4 P5	1 = They attend meetings organised by the centres 2 = They contribute financially to the centre 3 = They contribute materials to the centres 4 = They assist in maintenance/cleaning activities at the centres 5 = Other (Mention)
What is the composition of ECD centre committees? (Multiple Choice)	Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6	1 = Parents/Guardians 2 = Government Officials 3 = Business Owners 4 = Center Caregivers 5 = Community Leaders 6 = Other (Mention)
<u>Community and Voluntary Organisations</u>		
In your experience, are local organisations involved in planning, implementing, governance and decision-making structures of ECD centres? (Multiple Choice)	R1 = Planning R2 = Implementation R3 = Governance R4 = Decision Making	1 = Yes 2 = No
In your experience, how have local/voluntary organisations been involved in ECD?	S	(1) = Very High (2) = High (3) = Moderate (4) = Low (5) = Very Low
How many voluntary and community organizations are	T	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 10<

functioning in this community?		
Which services have been provided by the voluntary and community sector in this community? (Multiple Choice)	U1 U2 U3 U4 U5	1 = Education 2 = Health 3 = Security 4 = Other (Mention) 5 = None
How many community/voluntary organizations are involved in local decision making in this community?	V	(1) = 1-5 (2) = 6-10 (3) = 10<
What public services are delivered by community or voluntary organizations on behalf of the local authority in this community? (Multiple Choice)	W	1 = Education 2 = Health 3 = Security 4 = Other (Mention) 5 = None
<u>Co-ordination and Adherence to Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards</u>		
In general, how would you rate co-ordination among local government, local/voluntary organisations and community members?	X	(1) = Very High (2) = High (3) = Moderate (4) = Low (5) = Very Low (6) = Don't Know
Are community members, local organisations and local government involved in	Y	(1) = Yes (2) = No (3) = Don't Know

quality assurance of ECD centres?		
What do you think is the most important aspect of this ECD model? (Use 1 for the most important, 2 for the next most important, etc.)	Z (Ranking on an 11 point scale)	Z1 = Accessibility i.e. Distance Z2 = Cost to parents/guardians Z3 = Provision of meal for children Z4 = Children are ready for primary school Z5 = Quality of Caregivers Z6 = Facilities e.g. Playgrounds, toilets, safe drinking water Z7 = Safe environment for children Z8 = Use of local language Z9 = Use of traditional activities and instruments e.g. toys, songs, games and dances Z10 = Community involvement Z11 = Other Explain

Annex 2: Data Matrix (Extract)

Site	Number of Centres	Number of Children	Age	Number of Caregivers	Trained Caregivers	Location					Funding					Fees	Meals	Why Children Go					V	D
A	1	5	2	2	3				4		1					1	2	1						
A	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	3	1						
A	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
A	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						
A	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	2	1						
A	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	2	1		3				
B	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	2	1						
B	1	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1		3				
B	3	3	3	3	1	1	2		4		1	2	3			1	1	1	2	3				
B	1	5	2	1	3	1	2				1		3	4		1	1	1		3				1
B	1	5	2	2	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
B	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	3						4		1	1	1						
C	1	4	2	1	1	1	2							4		1	1	1		3				1
C	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	3						4		1	2	1						
C	1	3	2	1	1	1	2		4					4		1	2	1		3				
C	2	3	2	1	3	1							3			1	1	1						
C	1	4	2	1	1	1	2							4		1	1	1		3				
C	5	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
D	5	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
D	5	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1			3				
D	5	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
D	5	5	2	1	1		2							4		1	1	1						1
D	1	5	2	1	1	1	2							4		1	1	1						

Annex 3: Documents Reviewed

1. Community Support for Capacity Development (CSCD) Proposal Document
2. CSCD Implementation Progress Report 2012
3. Early Childhood Development in Uganda Programme Implementation Document (2011 – 2014)
4. ECD Centre Monitoring Tools
5. ECD Communication Strategy Planning Meeting Minutes
6. ECD Toolkit Format Proposal
7. Field reports from UNICEF ECD Advisors
8. Minutes from Community Involvement in Education Meetings (Western and North Eastern Regions)
9. Minutes from ECD Implementation Partners Meeting
10. Minutes from Harmonised Planning Meeting between ECD Advisors, ECD Focal Points and UNICEF (Fort Portal)
11. Minutes from meeting on Material for Sensitisation of Community Based ECD
12. Minutes from Planning Meeting with UNICEF ECD Advisors for Western and Northern Regions
13. Minutes from UNICEF Meetings with VSO Advisors in Western Region
14. Minutes from UNICEF and WFP ECD Planning Meeting
15. Minutes from UNICEF Zonal Office ECD Stakeholders meeting
16. Ministry of Education and Sports ECD Policy Guidelines
17. Presentation on UNICEF's support to ECD programme in collaboration with CSCD
18. Report from 2012 ECD Regional Workshop (UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Region)
19. Reports on UNICEF Audits/Spot Checks of ECD Implementing Partners
20. UNICEF ECD Concept Note
21. UNICEF ECD Feeding Study Concept Note
22. UNICEF ECD Knowledge Building Seminar Report
23. UNICEF Internal ECD Monitoring Reports
24. UNICEF Needs Assessment Report for ECD Centres
25. UNICEF Programme Cooperation Agreement with BRAC Uganda, and progress reports
26. UNICEF Programme Cooperation Agreement with CSCD, and progress reports
27. UNICEF South Africa ECD Proposal 2007 (First Steps: Supporting Implementation of ECD Programmes at Grassroots Level)

Annex 4: Field Notes

Western Region

Observations	<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First Contact at the district Education Office ▪ Secondly, Contact at Catholic Church, UMSC or COU diocesan offices- Secretariats of Education ▪ Thirdly, through sub county offices where ECDs are located ▪ Finally, official Contact with ECD groups <p>Survey Questionnaires</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All parties were willing to fill in the survey. ▪ Filled in by a total of 30 participants across the 5 districts ▪ Included at least one of Sub county leader or government official, 2 CMCs, 2 parents <p>FGD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Majority of the FGD Participants were female across the five centers, their male counterparts were out working far away in their fields or businesses. ▪ Majority of the participants were fluent in the local dialect and or English. ▪ Participants were randomly assigned numbers... Participant 1, 2 ,3 etc so as to keep track of who said what and when.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ranking on the 11-point scale. #26 in questionnaire. However, after explanation, it was corrected ▪ Participation in FGDs was free and open although, a <u>go with</u> tendency (<i>go with what others have said</i>) seemingly crept in from the shy participants. The researcher mitigated this by engaging (<i>picking out respondents randomly</i>) to elicit as many views as possible. ▪ Seemingly, in 2 out of the 5 FGDs, the participants tired out just after 45-50 minutes in the interview. One participant noted “<i>The</i>

	<p><i>questions are too many and they are the same”.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of the responses on Questions 6 and 7 and 11 and 12 drew the literally the same answers and sounded repetitive for majority of the participants, despite all attempts to distinguish for them
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants were informed of Audio Recording in advance to which they assented. They were requested to sit close to each other and close to the researcher where the recording device was placed so as to capture all their views. FGDs were transcribed verbatim, ie. word for word as and when spoken, including instances of repetition using hypothetical examples Random answers were captured and where possible, including views aired amidst mumbling
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECDs are generally a welcome proposition in the community however ECD centres are generally taken as kindergarten/ nursery schools with the expectation that after top class in nursery schools, a child moves on into primary one. Little suggests that children beyond the age of 6 are being taken care of. It is also evident that the understanding of and or the important factors of the community based ECD or the role of the community in ECD is limited. A sense of individuality Community influence is limited to parents /stakeholders of the respective ECD centres Observation and interaction with the parents suggest that they know extremely little about the involvement of CSOs/NGOs in decision making. They are primarily aware of the projects implemented and how they are affected however they are not

	<p>really aware of their decision-making structures. (A lack of awareness was visible mirrored by a lot of guesswork)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community influence in decision making structures has been described as <u>merely stuff of talk</u>. Unless you hold a position of power in the community. ▪ Participant distinction of Voluntary organizations, Community Service Organizations and NGOs seems to be lacking. A general interpretation of them being NGOs is derived, regardless of whether Voluntary or Not.
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North West Region

Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ECDs visited started as Community based initiatives and NGOs/Other partners came on to support with construction and facilities. ▪ The participants were made up of both Refugees and Nations, some of whom were quite knowledgeable. ▪ The FGDs had an average of 7-8 participants; Parents and Some Caregivers who were also parents. ▪ Being refugees, most of them were interested in the outcomes of the exercise (Benefit to them) being a dependent community.
Challenges:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was another survey in progress from OPM therefore we had limited time to conduct the FGD. ▪ Mobilization took almost a whole day ▪ Access to settlements was restrictive as new refugees were being brought into some of the old settlements. ▪ The settlements were quite scattered, Hundreds of kilometres apart and difficult impassable roads due to the rains increased costs and time spent on the exercise.
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mobilization took more time than planned for ▪ Notes were taken in each FGD as a precautionary measure

AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Despite the time limits, credible data was gathered from all the 5 centres and from the Survey Protocol mainly at the Base Camp where Government officials are housed.
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Annex 5: Focus Group Guide

Intro/Welcome

Overview/Purpose of Focus Group Discussion

Ground Rules

- Encourage everyone to participate and speak up
- Inform participants that there may be follow up interview with a few people to get more information and clarification on issues that may come up during the discussion
- All responses are important
- Reassure participants of anonymity and that information is for academic purposes
- We will be recording proceedings just to ensure that everything that is said is captured

Perceptions of ECD Programme

1. What do you know about the community based ECD programme?
2. Where did you first hear about it?
3. Thinking back to when you first heard about it, what did you think of it?
4. Were you involved in any way in setting up the community based ECD centre in your community? How were you involved?
5. Which community members/local organisations do you know were involved in setting up this ECD centre? Are any of them in the Centre Management Committees?
6. What do you like best about it?
7. Why do you bring your children to this ECD centre?
8. Are there any people in this community who do not bring their children to the ECD centre? Why?
9. What has worked well in the ECD programme since it was established?
10. If you were put in charge of the ECD programme, what would you change? And why?
11. What do you think are the important factors in community based ECD?

12. If you could pick one factor that is important for you in the ECD programme what would it be? (List these)

Community Cohesion

1. How do you feel about your community?
2. What are relationships like among the different people in this community?
3. Have there been occasions when this community has come together for an occasion or community activity?
4. How do community members feel about community meetings?
5. How is the community participation at these meetings? Who has participated in these meetings? How have they participated? Eg. community barasa
6. Thinking back to community events in the past, do you think community members have been actively involved?

Community Influence

1. How influential are community members in decision making of activities/projects that affect/benefit the community? Do any community members have leadership roles or responsibilities in activities/projects in the community?
2. How influential are local organisations in decision making of activities/projects that affect/benefit the community
3. If you were invited to participate in decision making, what would your response be? And why?

Local Government and Local/Community Organisations

1. What local organisations are based in this community? Are they community organisations?

2. Are these local organisations involved in community events/activities/projects in your community?
3. How are community members involved with activities/projects of local organisations or agencies?
4. Do community members do voluntary work with these local organisations?
5. What services in this community are/have been delivered by the local government?
6. Have you had any positive experiences with local government or local/community organisations?
7. How are community members involved with activities/projects of local government?
8. Do you think community members, community organisations or local organisations are involved in to local decision making?

Voluntary/Community Sector

1. What voluntary organisations are based in this community?
2. Have there been any services provided by the voluntary and community sector on behalf of the local government in this community? What type of services? When?

Social Capital

1. Have you ever carried out voluntary work individually or in an organization? When? What did you do?
2. Have you ever been helped by others (unpaid and not relatives) in this community? When? What type of help?

Summary Questions

1. Of all things discussed today, what is the most important to you
2. Anything you feel we have left out in today's discussion?

Annex 6: Individual Case Note Example

Code Letter for Case: F

Synopsis (ie. Identifying the case, the site, the activity, key information sources and context information):

1. Funded and supported by UNICEF and UNHCR through Windle Trust which is educational service provider at The UNHCR Base Camp
2. Participants: 7 females and 3 males

Situational Constraints (eg. Local limits or events):

- Time constraints as Government refugee registration exercise and food distribution were happening at the same time and nearly all participated.

Uniqueness among other cases:

Prominence of themes:

- Capacity more prominent than participation???
- Gender differences in theme/category prominence???

1. Community Capacity

Individual Findings	Merged Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>ECD centre teaches children to count, read and write</i>• <i>Centre is based in the settlement so children are safe</i>• <i>Caregivers are committed</i>	<i>Positive Perceptions of ECD</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 	<i>Negative perceptions of ECD</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Children learning</i>	<i>Knowledge of community based ECD</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distance - Based within the settlement</i> • <i>Good learning</i> • <i>Good caregivers</i> • <i>Impact of the centre physically and mentally on children</i> 	<p><i>Most important factors in Community Based ECD</i></p> <p><i>***also knowledge of ECD???</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Peaceful co-existence with host community</i> • <i>Cooperative</i> • <i>Good community leaders (*quote available)</i> 	<p><i>Positive perceptions of community</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People not involved in setting up the ECD centre</i> • <i>NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together</i> 	<p><i>Community cohesion ie. People come together around community issues and work together towards a common purpose</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p><i>Community members have a sense of control and ownership in relation to planning and implementing local programmes and activities</i></p> <p><i>*sense of empowerment???</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together</i> • <i>Community members know which organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing</i> • <i>Community members have had positive experiences with local government such</i> 	<p><i>Local government and local community organisations</i></p>

<p><i>as security, food, water, setting up schools, counselling, protection of land (*quote available)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local government provides security and jobs for refugees</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community</i> • <i>Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government</i> 	Voluntary or community sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Builders eg. Building schools, constructing water tanks</i> • <i>Religious leaders</i> • <i>Cleaning classrooms</i> • <i>Caregivers</i> 	Social Capital ie. Skills and talents available in the community

2. Community Participation

Individual Findings	Merged Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People not involved in setting up the ECD centre</i> • <i>NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together</i> • <i>Some people are eager to participate but others are not</i> • <i>Among those who actively participate, both men and women contribute</i> 	<i>Community members actively participate in issues affecting them</i>

<i>equally ie. Opinions, answers, reactions</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People give collective opinions or suggestions during meetings, and they also come up with decisions (*quote available)</i> • <i>Mostly only local community leaders because this is a refugee settlement and mobilisation is difficult</i> • <i>Community members would like to be involved in decision making (*quotes available)</i> 	<i>Community influence ie. Community members feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cleaning schools</i> • <i>Fetching water for cooking and bathing</i> • <i>NGOs and their implementing partners organise events, activities or projects in which community members participate (*quotes available)</i> 	<i>Community members carry out voluntary work individually or in an organization, or have been helped by others (unpaid and not relatives)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NGOs and their implementing partners organise events, activities or projects in which community members participate (*quotes available)</i> • <i>Local organisations influential at base camp</i> • <i>Local government provides jobs for refugees</i> 	<i>Local government and local community organisations</i>

*****Weak Clusters and Isolates**

Individual Findings	Merged Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Centre should provide food for children</i> 	<i>Recommendations for ECD</i>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fence around the centre</i> • <i>Put water point closer to the centre</i> • <i>Improve the structure because it allows rain to get in and the floor becomes very muddy in rainy season, has no doors or windows (*quote available)</i> • <i>Better latrine facilities</i> • <i>Spiritual or religious element could be included in the centre for children to know God</i> • <i>More caregivers at the ECD centre</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Perceptions of ECD</i> 	<i>Most important issues discussed</i>

Please list the following which are available in your community;

- Social Assets at Individual Level eg. Talents, abilities and skills of community members
- Social Assets at Organisational Level eg. Churches, mosques, community based organisations
- Social Assets at Institutional Level eg. Schools, businesses, hospitals, local government

Supply and Demand

1. How many community based ECD centres are in this community

1 - 5	
6 - 10	
11 - 15	
16 - 20	
20 <	

2. How many children attend these centres?

1 - 10	
11 - 20	
21 - 30	
31 - 40	
40 <	

3. What is the age range of these children?

Birth - 2	
3 - 5	
6 - 8	
9 <	
Don't Know	

4. How many caregivers are available in each of these ECD centres?

1 - 5	
6 - 10	
11<	

5. Are caregivers trained/qualified?

Yes	
No	
Don't Know	

6. Where are these centres located?

Place of worship eg. church, mosque	
School	
Community Centre	
Own Land	
Other	

7. Who funds these centres?

Self Funded	
Government	
NGO/CBO	
Parents/Guardians	
Community Members	
Other	

8. Do centres charge fees for children?

Yes	
No	
Don't Know	

9. Do children get a meal at the centre?

Yes	
High	
Don't Know	

10. Based on your experience, what are the reasons why parents/guardians take children to ECD centres? Please tick more than 1 if applicable

To prepare them for primary school	
To care for them while parents/guardians busy	
Because others attend the centres	
Other (Explain)	

11. Based on your experience, what are the reasons why parents/guardians don't take their children to ECD centres?

Don't see value in educating young children	
Not enough finances	
ECD centres don't cater for their needs	
Fear of stigma	
Other (Explain)	

12. Do vulnerable children attend these ECD centres?

Yes	
No	

13. What groups of vulnerable children attend these ECD centres? Please tick more than 1 if applicable

Orphans	
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Children with disabilities	
Children with HIV and AIDS	
Refugee children	
Other (Explain)	

Community Involvement

14. How would you rate community interest and involvement in affairs of the ECD centres?

Very High	
High	
Moderate	
Low	
Very Low	

15. Are community members involved in planning, implementing, governance and decision-making structures of ECD centres?

	Yes	No
Planning		
Implementing		
Governance		
Decision Making		

16. How do community members participate in the affairs of the ECD centres?

They attend meetings organised by the centres	
They contribute financially to the centres	
They contribute materials to the centres	

They assist in maintenance/cleaning activities at the centres	
Other (Explain)	

17. What is the composition of ECD centre committees? (Please tick all applicable options)

Parents/Guardians	
Centre Caregivers	
Government Officials	
Business Owners	
Community Leaders	
Other (Explain)	

Community and Voluntary Organisations

18. In your experience, are local organisations involved in planning, implementing, governance and decision-making structures of ECD centres?

	Yes	No
Planning		
Implementing		
Governance		
Decision Making		

19. In your experience, how have local/voluntary organisations been involved in ECD?

Very High	
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High	
Moderate	
Low	
Very Low	

20. How many voluntary and community organisations are functioning in this community?

1 - 5	
6 - 10	
10 <	
None	

21. Which services have been provided by the voluntary and community sector in this community? Please tick more than 1 if applicable

Education	
Health	
Security	
Other (Explain)	
None	

22. How many community/voluntary organisations are involved in local decision making in this community?

1 - 5	
6 - 10	

10 <	
None	

23. What public services are delivered by community or voluntary organisations on behalf of the local authority in this community? Please tick more than 1 if applicable

Education	
Health	
Security	
Other (Explain)	
None	

Co-ordination and Adherence to Basic Requirements and Minimum Standards

24. In general, how would you rate co-ordination among local government, local/voluntary organisations and community members?

Very Good	
Good	
Moderate	
Low	
Very Low	
Don't Know	

25. Are community members, local organisations and local government involved in quality assurance of ECD centres?

Yes	
No	

Don't Know	
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Strengths of the Community Based ECD Model

26. What do you think is the most important aspect of this ECD model? (Use 1 for the most important, 2 for the next most important, etc.)

Accessibility ie. distance	
Cost to parents/guardians	
Provision of meal for children	
Children are ready for primary school	
Quality of Caregivers	
Facilities eg. Playgrounds, toilets, safe drinking water	
Safe environment for children	
Use of local language	
Use of traditional activities and instruments eg. toys, songs, games and dances	
Community involvement	
Other (Explain)	
Other (Explain)	
Other (Explain)	

Annex 8: Template for Analysis (Western Region)

CATEGORIES	CODES WITHIN CATEGORIES (Interpretive Coding)
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	Centre A	Centre B	Centre C	Centre D	Centre E
Positive Perceptions of ECD	The way caregivers treat young children and provide guidance	The way caregivers treat young children and provide guidance	Children learning to read, write and develop	Helps and teaches parents to take care of young children	The way caregivers treat young children and provide guidance
	Protection and safety of children	The way young children are cared for	Parents don't have to pay school fees for children	Preparing young children for a better future	It's safe
	Quality of education services provided	Quality of education services provided	Quality of education services provided	Children are not sent away if fees are not paid	Quality of education services provided
	Gives children a good foundation for future learning	Preparing young children for a better future	The way caregivers treat young children and provide guidance	Parents now take their children to school when they are still young ie. Between 3 - 5 and not later	It's close to childrens' homes
	Children learn to express themselves and communicate		Preparing young children for a better future		Doesn't only provide education but also different services
		Children learn to interact with others	Centres provide breakfast and tea for children		Children given breakfast; children cared for when sick
		Good community sensitisation			Caregivers well trained

*Negative perceptions of ECD	Belief that children should only start school when aged 6	Belief that children should only start school when aged 6	Lack of money for fees, clothes and uniforms prevents some parents from sending their children to the centre	Because centre was set up by Muslim Foundation some parents don't bring their children because they are not muslims	Cost is high
	Education is not important			Lack of school fees means some parents don't send their children to the centre	
	Children below 6 are too young to leave home and parents				
		Lack of money for fees			
Knowledge of community based ECD	Bringing up children from 0 - 8	Caring for children from 2.5 - 6	Thought the centres would provide clothes, fees and basic needs for children	ECD is about the way children are cared for at home and at school	Helping children below 6 in health and education
		Helping young children to learn		Caring for children from 3 - 8	
		Preparing young		Caring for children from 2	

		children for primary school		- 12	
		Bringing up young children socially, morally and spiritually		Thought children will be taught using local language/dialect	
	Community lacks knowledge about education				
*Most important factors in Community Based ECD	Provision of quality services	Seeing progress in children	Centres provide breakfast and tea for children	Teaches parents how to care for young children	Play materials
		Provide necessities	Education	Teaches children how to socialise	Enough compound
		Community members should own the centre		Cooperation between parents and teachers/caregivers	Health and sanitation
				Friendship between community members	It has promoted cooperation between community members
				Discipline and morals	The centre is based within the community so close to children's homes
Positive perceptions of	Community is	Cooperation	Cooperation	Cooperation in the	Community is

community	friendly	in the community	in the community	community	peaceful
	Community is needy and open to external ideas	Good relationships between and among community members	Good relationships between and among community members	Children well behaved and well looked after	Community is well developed
		Cooperation between teachers, administration and in ECD centres is good		Community members proud to be part of this community	It's a good environment for children
				Community members are friendly to one another	Community relationships are very good
Community cohesion ie. People come together around community issues and work together towards a common purpose	Community is flexible	Cooperation between teachers, administration and in ECD centres is good	Happy to be called to participate in meetings on issues that affect them. People are interested because it's very helpful	Community members were involved in setting up the ECD centre	All parents were involved in making the playground, construction and renovation of classrooms
	People attend community meetings e.g. Local council, religious, sensitisation	Community members are picky about which meetings or activities they attend		Contribute money to provide teachers' salaries	Parents contributed through providing materials or labour

	People come together e.g. To clean wells, roads	People come together to attend to issues affecting them e.g. Cleaning trenches, athletics, community prayers, wedding ceremonies		Community members worked with Malaysian people to build a water tank for the centre	Community members come together to celebrate important events and occasions e.g. Women's day, AIDS day, maintenance, meetings etc.
	Open participation i.e. Opposing points of view are present at community meetings			Community members come together on issues affecting them e.g. Health screening and sensitisation, construction of classrooms in school, speech day, etc.	
				Some people only attend meetings that directly benefit them	
				Some people afraid to attend meetings e.g. If they think finances will be discussed and they don't have money	
Community members have a sense of control and ownership in relation to planning and implementing local programmes and activities	Community members really interested and involved in meetings		Happy to be called to participate in meetings on issues that affect them. People are interested		

			because it's very helpful		
	Most people participate because they know that their community issues affect them				
Local government and local community organisations	Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations	Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations	Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations eg. NGOs and local government provide seeds and food to families	Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations	Community members know what organisations are working in their community, and what work is being done by local government and local organisations
	Community members have positive experiences with local government	Community members have positive experiences with local government	Community members have positive experiences with local government	Community members have positive experiences with local government and community organisations (*quotes	Some community members have positive experiences with local government and community

	and community organisations (*quotes available)	and community organisations (*quotes available)	and community organisations (*quotes available)	available)	organisations (*quotes available)
			NGOs and local government assist in providing seeds and food to families		Some community members have not had positive experiences with local government (*quote available)
Voluntary or community sector	Most community members expect allowances to be paid to them e.g. When they attend meetings	Community members report having benefitted from voluntary work or being assisted by community members	Community members organise themselves and have a revolving fund, and also have formed a local organisation that visits families in need (*quotes available)	Community members worked with Malaysian people to build a water tank for the centre	Parents contributed through providing materials or labour
	Provide some services on behalf of local government		Rotary club	Community members come together on issues affecting them e.g. Health screening and sensitisation, construction of classrooms in school,	Community members aware of voluntary organisations and their work within the community

				speech day, etc.	
			Community members report having benefitted from voluntary work (e.g. at sub-county level)	Community members report having benefitted from voluntary work (e.g. community members paying school fees for those who can't afford them)	Community members have been assisted by volunteer community
Social Capital i.e. Skills and talents available in the community					
Community members actively participate in issues affecting them	Attended meetings to identify what was needed to set up ECD centre	Attended meetings to identify what was needed to set up ECD centre, and to plan for sensitisation and to actually set up the centre	Members of the community were involved in setting up the centre including church leaders, parents, LCs (i.e. Local council leaders), teachers, etc.	Community members were involved in setting up the ECD centre	All parents were involved in making the playground, construction and renovation of classrooms

	Support caregivers	People come together to attend to issues affecting them e.g. Cleaning trenches, athletics, community prayers, wedding ceremonies	People come together to attend to issues affecting them e.g. Cleaning trenches, athletics, community prayers, wedding ceremonies	Community members worked with Malaysian people to build a water tank for the centre	Parents contributed through providing materials or labour
	Most people participate	Community members are picky about which meetings or activities they attend	Meetings are interactive e.g. Community meetings, PTA meetings, women's groups	Community members come together on issues affecting them e.g. Health screening and sensitisation, construction of classrooms in school, speech day, contributions, etc.	Community members attend meetings and participate in discussions e.g. Safety meeting (*quote available)
		Very few actively participate due to other commitment like work or religion, others are not confident particularly if English is language being used	Community members are actively involved in community events e.g. Cleaning the town		Community members do not actively participate in activities that are not facilitated e.g. If no transport money is provided people do not attend events (*quote available)
		Women are			Community members

		now free to talk and actively participate (*quote available)			feel some events are not well mobilised
					Community members feel leaders are corrupt and so are not motivated to attend events
Community influence i.e. Community members feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	No e.g. They implement whatever they are told		Not too influential and would like to be (*quote available)	Community members would like to participate in influencing decisions	Depends on issue e.g. Community members were not involved in the rural electrification project in their area. The 'big people' planned and decided where electricity lines would pass (*quote available)
	Very dependent on sensitisation* and how assertive the community members are	Depends on type of decision (*quotes available)		It depends on the issue	Community members would like to be involved in decision making on problems and solutions that affect them
		When community members are organised in to committees they are			

		influential			
Community members carry out voluntary work individually or in an organization, or have been helped by others (unpaid and not relatives)				Community members worked with Malaysian people to build a water tank for the centre	All parents were involved in making the playground, construction and renovation of classrooms by providing materials or labour
					Community members have been assisted by volunteer community
Local government and local community organisations	Teacher training institutions training caregivers	Local organisations are influential because they are well organised	Local organisations are influential because they are well organised	No knowledge/awareness of local organisations influence and decision making	NGOs and community organisations are influential
	Local government liaises with community members eg. If they need to implement a project on community member's land they discuss with	Community members not able to influence decisions in local government. They report that local government makes decisions and	Community members involved in local organisations eg. As committee members, chairpersons, secretaries, etc.	Community members involved in local organisations eg. As committee members, chairpersons, secretaries, etc.	

	the respective community members and if agreeable compensation is paid	just inform community members of these decisions			
	Community members are actively involved in activities with local organisations		Community members not able to influence decisions in local government.	Community members participate in local government activities when invited	Community members are actively involved in activities with local organisations
			Community and local organisations are involved in local decision making		
Voluntary work	Community members carry out voluntary work individually or within organisations	Community members report having been involved in unpaid work eg. Slashing surroundings, sweeping church	Community members report being involved in unpaid work eg. Sub-county councillor	Community members worked with Malaysian people to build a water tank for the centre	All parents were involved in making the playground, construction and renovation of classrooms
		Community members report having benefitted from voluntary	Community members report having been involved in unpaid work	Community members involved in voluntary organisations	Parents contributed through providing materials or labour

		work or being assisted by community members	eg. Slashing surroundings, sweeping church, making a well, fencing the school, building school kitchen		
				Aware of voluntary organisations working in community (*quotes available)	Community members carry out voluntary work individually or within organisations (*quotes available)
*Recommendations for ECD	ECD services should only be provided to children aged 3 and onwards	More finances	Children could stay at the centre until the evening	Provide food for children	Classes should be separate from the church
	Community sensitisation	More marketing and community sensitisation	Separate the centre from primary school	Increase number of classrooms	Provide chairs, desks and play materials for children
	Provide basic needs eg. Water, medical care, resting rooms	Fence around the centre	Age appropriate furniture	Improved learning material and environment eg. Playground and play materials, change classrooms	Provide salary for caregivers
	More caregivers	Provide resting room	Improved learning material and		Put caregivers on government payroll

			environment		
		Include boarding facilities	Better salaries for caregivers		
	Separate the ECD centre from the primary school				
*Most important issue discussed	Voluntary work	Local Government	Voluntary work	ECD	Community involvement
	Perceptions of ECD	ECD	ECD as education is very important	Voluntary organisations and work	Community influence
	Working with the community			Local government and community involvement/participation	Local government
					ECD

Annex 9: Template for Analysis (North West Region)

THEMES	CATEGORIES	CODES WITHIN CATEGORIES (Interpretive Coding)				
		Centre F	Centre G	Centre H	Centre I	Centre J
Perception and Knowledge of Community Based ECD	Positive Perceptions of ECD	ECD centre teaches children to count, read and write	Gives parents awareness of children's rights	Process through which children grow and thrive physically, emotionally, socially and mentally	Children learn to socialise and interact	Children not just being fed but also developing

		Centre is based in the settlement so children are safe	Prepares children for a better future	For children to learn	Provides foundation for future learning	Changes children's behaviour and develops their minds
		Caregivers are committed	Bringing up children with pride	Children learn to interact and socialise	Centre provides information on ECD	ECD changes everybody including parents and teachers
			Centre is based in the settlement so children are safe	Opportunity to work with the children	CMC works very well with the parents (*quotes available)	Develops children's abilities and talents
				Care and teaching provided to the children by the caregivers	Assists young children forget about the war in South Sudan (*quote available)	Prepares young children for primary school
						Assists parents to care for their young children
						Children learn new things
						Qualified teachers
	*Negative perceptions of ECD		Parents worried that they will be asked to pay school fees	Some parents think children with disabilities will not be accepted	Some parents do not value education	Waste of money especially because young children can not learn much
			Number of caregivers inadequate for	Some parents think children will not learn anything	Some parents do not value ECD	Parents may feel their children are too young to leave

			number of children so some parents opt to send their children outside the settlement			home
						Parents may worry that their children will be beaten by other children
						Some parents have a negative perception of education
						Parents from some tribes don't want their children to mix with children from other tribes
	Knowledge of community based ECD	Children learning	Educating young children	Works with children aged 3 - 6	Owned by the community	Place where young children go to learn before they are ready for primary school
			It gives children a strong foundation and prepares them for primary school	It's a programme that caters for children in the community regardless of disabilities	Based within the community	Based within the community
					Place where children develop and grow	Focus on children aged 3 - 6

					holistically ie. Emotionally, socially, and physically	
	*Most important factors in Community Based ECD	Distance - Based within the settlement	Distance - Based within the settlement	It has created jobs	Distance - Based within the settlement	Parents have been sensitised about the importance of ECD
		Good learning	Education/What the children learn	Play materials provided	Play materials provided	Community owning the centre
		Good caregivers	Prepares children for primary school	Behaviour of children in the community has changed	Assists young children forget about the war in South Sudan (*quote available)	Land for the centre
		Impact of the centre physically and mentally on children	Safety and security ie. Classrooms and fence	A good environment	Security of the centre eg. Fencing	Funding for the centre
			Number of caregivers	Distance - Based within the settlement	Structure of the classrooms (*quote available)	Structure of the classrooms (*quote available)
			Children are getting free education	The centres should have water points	Employing quality caregivers (*quote available)	Cooperation among community members

			It brings development in terms of buildings	Toilet/sanitary facilities	Make sure the environment is conducive for young children eg. Clean, items that can hurt children should be moved away	Security of the centre eg. Fencing
						The facility itself
						Qualified teachers
			Furniture in classrooms		Latrine	Hygiene ie. Sanitation
Community Capacity	Positive perceptions of community	Peaceful co-existence with host community	Good relationships and communication between refugees and citizens	Harmony in the community	Community is fine	Different refugee nationalities and host community live well together (*quote available)
		Cooperative		Good relationships with host community (*quote available)	Host community and refugees coexist well eg. Some people personally give land to refugees if they need more than what is already allocated to them (*quote	

					available)	
		Good community leaders (*quote available)				
	Community cohesion ie. People come together around community issues and work together towards a common purpose	People not involved in setting up the ECD centre	Community members involved from selecting appropriate sight for the centre to construction of the centre	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching
		NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together	NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together	Cleaning compound, community dialogues/meetings and celebrations	Parents contribute food to the centre every month for children and have employed someone to cook for them	Both refugees and host community members come together when communal work is organised or when meetings are organised (*quote available)
			Funerals, drama, work groups		Both refugees and host community members come together	

					at funerals, local projects (*quote available)	
			Not everyone attends community meetings		Community members freely attend community meetings	
	Community members have a sense of control and ownership in relation to planning and implementing local programmes and activities					
	Local government and local community organisations	NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together	Community members know what services are being provided by local government and are involved in activities being headed by local government (*quotes available)	NGOs and local organisations were involved in setting up the ECD centre	Community members know which organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing	Community members know which local organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing

		Community members know which organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing	Community members know which organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing	Community members know which organisations are working in their community and the type of work they are doing	Community members reported that local government only involved in security issues and providing land to refugees but not community activities	Community members know what services are delivered by local government (*quote available)
		Community members have had positive experiences with local government such as security, food, water, setting up schools, counselling, protection of land (*quote available)	Community members have had positive experiences with local government such as seeds/grain and stalks for planting (*quote available)	Community members involved in activities and projects by local organisations (*quote available) eg. They provide jobs		Community members report positive experiences with local government (*quotes available)
		Local government provides security and jobs for refugees		Community members reported that local government only involved in assessments but not community activities		

	Voluntary or community sector	Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community	Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community	Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community	Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community	Community members aware of voluntary organisations in their community
		Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government		Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government (*quotes available)	Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government (*quotes available)	Community members aware of the work voluntary organisations do on behalf of the local government (*quotes available)
	Social Capital ie. Skills and talents available in the community	Builders eg. Building schools, constructing water tanks		Community mobilisers		
		Religious leaders		Teaching in ECD centres		
		Cleaning classrooms				
		Caregivers				

Community Participation	Community members actively participate in issues affecting them	People not involved in setting up the ECD centre	Community members involved from selecting appropriate sight for the centre to construction of the centre, fencing the centre, etc. (*quote available)	Community members respond positively when invited for meetings	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching eg. When NGO couldn't manage teachers well and wanted to close the centre, the parents came in and assisted with motivating them
		NGOs and their implementing partners organise events for community to come together	Those who attend meetings participate	Both men and women participate fairly in meetings	Community members freely attend community meetings and make monetary contributions if need be (*quote available)	Both refugees and host community members come together when communal work is organised or when meetings are organised (*quote available)
		Some people are eager to participate but others are not	Community members forced to participate in some activities by camp rules/laws (*quote available)	Community members actively involved in community activities	Community members actively involved in community activities	Community members participate equally in community meetings

		Among those who actively participate, both men and women contribute equally ie. Opinions, answers, reactions			Both refugees and host community members work together on local projects (*quote available)	Leadership given to women quite a lot (*quote available)
					Community members respond positively when invited for meetings	Community members respond positively when invited for meetings
						Community members actively involved in community activities
						Jobs given more to host community members than to refugees
	Community influence ie. Community members feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	People give collective opinions or suggestions during meetings, and they also come up with decisions (*quote available)	Community members involved from selecting appropriate sight for the centre to construction of the centre	When things are discussed in meetings, action plans are drawn up and implemented (*quote available)	Both refugees and host community members work together and make decisions on local projects (*quotes available)	Community members influential

		Mostly only local community leaders because this is a refugee settlement and mobilisation is difficult	Local leaders are influential			Community members report that they would feel respected if invited to participate in decision making
		Community members would like to be involved in decision making (*quotes available)	Community members would like to be involved in decision making (*quotes available)			
	Community members carry out voluntary work individually or in an organization, or have been helped by others (unpaid and not relatives)	Cleaning schools	Community members working with voluntary organisations in their community eg. Searching for people from Juba, health sensitisation, working as head teacher (*quotes available)	Teaching in ECD centres	Community members were involved in setting up the centre from cleaning the environment, managing compound and teaching	

		Fetching water for cooking and bathing	Digging land	Grass thatching	Community members(both refugees and host community members) are part of the ECD centre management committee	
			Building houses	Digging gardens/farming area		
			Working with youths eg. Organising sports events			
	Local government and local community organisations	NGOs and their implementing partners organise events, activities or projects in which community members participate (*quotes available)	NGOs and their implementing partners organise events, activities or projects in which community members participate (*quotes available)	Local organisations influential in decision making in projects affecting the community	Local government and organisations influential in decision making in projects affecting the community	Local organisations involved in community events, activities or projects in the community
		Local organisations influential at base camp	Local organisations involved in decision making	Local organisations influential in camp (*quote available)	Local organisations involved in community events,	Community members involved in activities or projects with local government and

					activities or projects in the community	local organisations
		Local government provides jobs for refugees			Community members report high participation in activities and projects of local organisations	Local government and organisations influential in decision making in projects affecting the community
	Voluntary work	NGOs and their implementing partners organise events, activities or projects in which community members participate (*quotes available)	Community members do voluntary work with local organisations	Community members involved in voluntary work with local organisations eg. Parent support groups, child management committees, child protection committees	Community members involved in voluntary work with local organisations	Community members involved in voluntary work with local organisations
			Community members working with voluntary organisations in their community eg. Searching for people from Juba, health		Building roads and schools without assistance from UNHCR or local government	Community members have been assisted eg. They were given school fees for children, seeds, cassava stalks, transport money to reach refugee camp, etc.

			sensitisation, working as head teacher (*quotes available)			(*quotes available)
					Community members have been assisted eg. They were given food, seeds, etc. (*quote available)	
AOB	*Recommendations for ECD	Centre should provide food for children	Centre should provide food for children	Time management by teachers	Add more latrines for children	Change people's attitudes through regular meetings and workshops and other forms of sensitisation (*quote available)
		Fence around the centre	Caregivers materials should be available to everyone	Provide quality services	Change structure of classroom (*quote available)	Provide meals for children
		Put water point closer to the centre	Organise general meetings for parents and teachers	Sensitise the community about the importance of ECD	Fence the centre off	Improve all facilities eg. Latrines, classrooms, learning materials

		Improve the structure because it allows rain to get in and the floor becomes very muddy in rainy season, has no doors or windows (*quote available)	Improve the buildings	Care and maintenance of play materials	Construct a borehole as there's no water point close to the centre	Pay the caregivers a good amount ie. Increase their payment
		Better latrine facilities	Centre should provide food for children		Pay the caregivers a good amount ie. Increase their payment	Sensitise parents about hygiene
		Spiritual or religious element could be included in the centre for children to know God	Make children take meals to the centre			Regular community assistance with cleaning centre surroundings
		More caregivers at the ECD centre	More caregivers at the ECD centre			
	*Most important issue discussed	Perceptions of ECD	ECD	Support of community-based organisations for ECD	Role of local government	Importance of ECD
				Importance of the	Importance of	Having a community based

				community	ECD centres	ECD centre
				Local community organisations	Socialising within the community	Importance of the community
				Behaviour of the community	Role of the community	
References						
	Caregivers refers to teachers in ECD centres. The term was used interchangeably by participants					
	Resting rooms refer to a place where children can sleep while at the centre					
	Facilitation refers to people being given financial incentives to encourage them to attend meetings or activities in the community					
	Big people' refers to people in authority					
	The term 'local organisations' is used interchangeably with 'NGOs'					
	The term 'voluntary organisations' refers to implementing partners for international organisations. Terms often used interchangeably					
	The term 'socialise' refers to relations with others					
	The term 'motivation' refers to financial or material incentive given to community members to do					

	participate in meetings or activities					
	Volunteer community includes individuals who assist others in various ways					