



The Promise of Preschool in Africa: A Randomized Impact Evaluation of Early Childhood Development in Rural Mozambique

Author(s)	Sebastian Martinez, Sophie Naudeau, Vitor Pereira
Contact	snaudeau@worldbank.org
Country	Mozambique
Organizing Theme	Education and Skills, Health, Voice and Agency
Status	Completed
Intervention Category	Early Childhood Development
Sector	Education
Abstract	No Abstract
Gender Connection	Gender Informed Analysis
Gender Outcomes	Gender disaggregated nutrition, Educational enrolment, attainment, performance, literacy and numeracy, non-cognitive skills, women's labor force participation, aspirations
E Design	Clustered Randomized Control Trial (Clustered at community level)
Intervention	The intervention provides pre-school centers given the community forms a committee responsible for managing and supervising the preschool. The committee encourages parents and caregivers to enroll and participate in parenting meetings, construction and maintenance. Communities receive technical assistance and materials for the construction of up to three class rooms with capacity for 35 children each. Also each community receives assistance to build playgrounds, latrines and washing stations. Each class is staffed with two volunteer teachers selected by the management committee. The pre-school follows a set curriculum and lasts for 3.25 hours a day.
Intervention Period	The ECD programs were started in 2008
Sample population	The sample was comprised of 2000 households with preschool aged children as well as community leaders and first grade students in each of the 76 evaluation communities. There are 1018 targeted children in treatment communities.
Comparison conditions	The study compares individuals in communities with the ECD intervention to individuals in communities with no intervention.
Unit of analysis	Individual level
Evaluation Period	Early 2008 - 2010
Results	Primary school enrollments increased significantly by 24% in treatment communities. Beneficiary children spend a significantly greater amount of time on schooling and homework activities (7.2 hours) and a significantly less amount of time on family farm activities. There are consistent significant improvements in cognitive and problem-solving abilities, fine-motor skills and socio-emotional and behavioral outcomes. There is no significant impact on communication and language development. Although it was not the primary goal of the program, there are no significant impacts on stunting and mixed results for other health indicators. The program also has a positive externality on other household members by increasing schooling and increasing the propensity to work of adults in the household. Finally, the program leads caregivers to adopt more appropriate punishment and increase the practice of daily routine.



Primary study limitations	The study may lack external validity. Also, the impacts are only measured for those who actually go to preschool and may not reflect potential benefits to the entire population.
Funding Source	Spanish Impact Evaluation Fund
Reference(s)	Martinez, S., Naudeau, S., & Pereira, V. (2012). The promise of preschool in Africa: a randomized impact evaluation of early childhood development in rural Mozambique.
Link to Studies	http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRICA/Resources/The_Promise_of_Preschool_in_Africa_ECD_REPORT.pdf
Microdata	