



**Save the Children®**

# **Cambodia First Read Endline Report**

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**List of Acronyms**

NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
IDELA	International Development and Early Learning Assessment
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
CCWC	Commune Committees for Women and Children
PoE	Provincial Office of Education
DoE	District Office of Education
MEAL	Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
KII	Key Informant Interviews
CIP	Commune Investment Plan

## Executive Summary

Save the Children in Cambodia has been implementing the project “FIRST READ: *Supporting families with pre-school children to learn together in Cambodia*”, funded by the Prudence Foundation since February 2013. The project supports children under 6 years in target areas to have access to comprehensive home-based ECCD services. The main goal of the project is that poor and marginalised children under six years old in three provinces in Cambodia learn and develop to their full potential. Around 48,000 children in 1,062 villages of 14 districts in 4 provinces of Kampong Cham, Tboung Khmum, Prey Veng and Kratie were originally planned to directly benefit from this project. Key implementing partners include 3 Provincial Education Offices, one local NGO and several community based organizations.

The results of the First Read endline study displayed that beneficiaries reported varied levels of participation in terms of length and intensity of engagement. Almost half of caregivers (49%) reported participating in First Read for a year or more, but at the same time 28 percent reported being involved for less than 6 months. In terms of large and small meetings, the majority of parents reported attending 1-3 of either type of session. However, some reported attending 10 or more. Combining small and large meeting attendance, analyses found that 9 percent of parents had never been to any type of meeting, 36 percent had only been to 1-3 meetings and 25 percent had been to 10 or more. So while a quarter of parents report high attendance at First Read parenting sessions, 45 percent of parents reported either never attending or attending very few First Read parenting sessions. This low level of participation could make it difficult to find a strong impact of the intervention. In addition, further investigation is needed to determine what differentiated families who attended often and those who attended infrequently.

Child development results were in line with those seen from similar populations in other countries but did not meet the benchmarks set at baseline. As expected, older children had significantly more developed skills than younger children, with 5-year-olds scoring 52 percent correct, on average compared to 18 percent for 3-year-olds. Attending an ECCD center was also a strong driver of children’s IDELA scores, as well as paternal literacy. Children who were enrolled in ECCD centers and children with more educated fathers had stronger early skills than children without ECCD access and with less educated fathers. At endline, there were no significant relationships between attending First Read sessions and child development outcomes. Future work could focus on advocacy around increasing access to ECCD centers for all children and also to further engaging fathers in home-based activities. Qualitative findings from the endline show that, in general, parents and other stakeholders seem to agree that children whose families participated in First Read are perceived as getting smarter.

The most notable gains in children’s home learning environments are seen in the areas of book ownership, borrowing and buying, which were the main focus of the First Read program. By endline, 88 percent of families had received First Read materials and had 3 books at home. In addition, more caregivers at endline reported borrowing (7 – 20%) and buying additional books (6 – 11%). Sixty-one percent of parents with 36 – 71 month old children reported reading books to their children and 32 percent reported telling stories to children, compared to 80 and 85 percent of parents reporting that they were teaching letters and numbers to their children. This suggests that more work can be done to encourage parents to engage with their children around First Read books and literacy related activities like storytelling as opposed to rote activities like repeating the alphabet or a list of numbers. Qualitative analysis findings suggest that some parents, especially those who are illiterate, had trouble engaging with First Read parenting activities. Some parents also reported that it was difficult to remember the messages shared during First Read activities.

Endline results suggest that there were increases in positive caregiver-child interactions and decreases in negative or inconsistent disciplinary behaviors but further research is needed to confirm this. The same

parents and children were not interviewed at midline and endline. Therefore we cannot make any conclusions about how First Read has impacted parent-child interactions in these communities. In addition, qualitative analysis findings suggest that some parents are still using negative discipline when their children were not understanding new play or learning activities, suggesting that future First Read parenting sessions should integrate lessons on learning and play activities appropriate for young children and how to positively reinforce children's learning at the same time. These endline findings are aligned with the midline qualitative findings, which showed that daily stress would sometimes cause parents to use bad words towards their children and also presented findings from a survey that showed psychological aggression towards children. The midline report stated that there was anecdotal reduction of violence towards children but pointed out the difficulty in checking the evidence, given that it was self-reported.

The same children and families were not interviewed over time so it is not possible to know the impact of First Read on parenting and stimulation of children under 3 years old but quantitative results suggest that parents were less likely to engage in stimulation and learning activities with their youngest children than with their older children. Specifically, 38 percent of parents reported reading stories to children under 3, compared to 61 percent of parents with children over 3 years. Similarly, 12 percent of parents of 0-3 year old children reported telling stories to their children compared to 32 percent of parents of children over 3 years. Endline results did find that 85 percent of 0-3 year old parents reported singing to children, which is an activity specially supported by First Read. Research on the development of very young children finds that the younger that children are exposed with stimulating language activities the better it is for their development so future work should focus on encouraging parents of very young children not just to care for but also to stimulate their children's early learning.

Quantitative study results find no notable changes in caregivers' health practices or children's health status over the course of the project. However, qualitative results suggest that parents did internalize messages in this area so the impact of First Read on parents' health behavior requires further study. In addition, the core focus of First Read is enhancing materials and engagement to promote early literacy so it so it may not be necessary to maintain as many health indicators in future studies. If the project aims to impact health behaviors more intensive focus in this area may be needed. Alternatively, if health is not the core focus of the project in the future, fewer health indicators can be include in the evaluation and log frames.

The endline findings are consistent with the midline report in assessing that most of First Read's advocacy is targeted at the commune level, to include ECCD activities in the commune investment plan. Although both midline and endline there was anecdotal evidence that communes have already included budget for ECCD activities in their investment plans the stakeholders involved in the FGD and KII at endline were not able to provide specific examples. Duty bearers stated interest in advocating for First Read's inclusion in local budgets, but seemed to lack knowledge on how to make this happen. Overall, there's agreement that budgets are limited and ECCD is still not a priority. This shows there is still great need for a project to advocate for more investment in ECCD. The endline findings did not show any results at of national level policy changes as a consequence of First Read, although there is evidence of the Ministry of Education's support to some First Read events. Currently, 93 out of 138 target communes targeted by First Read have proposed to incorporate home-based ECCD to their CIPs. The proposed budget allocation is pending government approval.

## I. Introduction

Early childhood care and development (ECCD) in this report refers to the physical, cognitive, linguistic and socio-emotional development of a child from conception up to the age of under six years old. In this period, over 85 per cent of the human brain develops.<sup>1</sup> ECCD encompasses a wide range of activities, ranging from prenatal care to nutrition and from early childhood stimulation to pre-school education. Research shows that the environment in which a child grows up substantially affects the development of the brain and the intelligence level of the child.<sup>2</sup> This environment is influenced by a wide range of early childhood settings that all impact the development of the child, including the home and the school.

Crucial foundations are laid in the first years of a child's life which, if weak, can have a permanent and detrimental impact on the child's long term development. Quality guidance, care, love and protection from harm impact a child's future choices, attainment, wellbeing, happiness and resilience. A lack of ECCD services disproportionately affects vulnerable children around the world. As a result, these children often lag behind in terms of their physical, cognitive and socio-emotional development. As children grow older, the development gap increases and gets ever harder to overcome. Children who participate in quality ECCD programs are generally better prepared for primary school, perform better at school, and are less likely to repeat grades or drop-out of school, all reducing the costs of the education system.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is crucial to focus investment on children in their early years.

The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has shown its commitment to improve ECCD services across the country by adopting the first ECCD National Policy in 2010, bringing together eleven line ministries. Recently, this commitment was followed up by launching the ECCD National Action Plan 2014 – 2018. This action plan “seeks to increase enrolment and enhance protection for children aged 0 to under 6 years, especially children from poor families, indigenous minorities and children with disabilities and prioritize community-based pre-schools and home-based early childhood education programs”. The RGC plans to spend more than US\$ 56 million, of which the majority will go towards expanding ECCD services provision, including state, community, private and home-based services. Other strategies include preparing legal frameworks, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, nutrition and health service delivery and information provision and communication about ECCD.

### I.1 First Read project

Save the Children in Cambodia has been implementing the project “FIRST READ: *Supporting families with pre-school children to learn together in Cambodia*”, funded by the Prudence Foundation since February 2013. The project supports children under 6 years in target areas to have access to comprehensive home-based ECCD services. Around 48,000 children in 1,062 villages of 14 districts in 4 provinces of Kampong Cham, Tbuong Khmum, Prey Veng and Kratie were originally planned to directly benefit from this project. Key implementing partners include 4 Provincial Education Offices, one local NGO and several community based organizations.

The main goal of the project is that poor and marginalised children under 6 years old in 4 provinces in Cambodia learn and develop to their full potential. First Read has four pillars: **book development, book**

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<sup>1</sup> UNICEF (2014) Building Better Brains: New Frontiers in Early Childhood Development. Key messages generated from a Neuroscience Symposium organized by UNICEF on April 16, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Deray, Ian J (2000). Looking Down on Human Intelligence: from Psychometrics to the Human brain. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Heckman, J.J. (2008). Schools, Skills and Synapses. IZA Discussion Paper No. 3515

gifting, parental learning and community participation. There are three key objectives and 12 key project indicators, which are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. First Read project key indicators**

<p><b>Objective 1:</b> By the end of 2015, 51,000 children under six years old in project areas have access to comprehensive home-based ECCD services.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of children under six years old who have access to ECCD services.</li> <li>2. Number of ECCD books/materials developed and distributed.</li> <li>3. Number of (HH) parents or caregivers participating in home-based ECCD services.</li> <li>4. Percentage of infants (aged 0-5 months) exclusively breastfed.</li> <li>5. Percentage of children age 6 -23 months who meet nutrition standards</li> <li>6. Number of villages that established home-based ECCD</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> By the end of 2015, 80% of children (aged three to five years old) who attend project area home-based ECCD services in three provinces in Cambodia are equipped with emergent literacy and numeracy to support their learning in primary school.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of children (aged 3-5 years old) who attend home-based ECCD services and achieve developmental milestones or meet Early Learning Development Standards.</li> <li>2. Number of trained parents/caregivers who demonstrate child friendly care and stimulation according to criteria set by partners and Save the Children.</li> <li>3. Number of parents, especially mothers, who participate in maternal literacy groups, and who are able to read simple texts about children and have knowledge about child development milestones and good child care practices.</li> <li>4. Number of ECCD facilitators (teachers and NGOs staff) trained.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Increased capacities of the Provincial Office of Education (POE), District Office of Education (DOE), Schools, CCWC and NGOs in three provinces in Cambodia to support home-based ECCD services.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. At least 70% of Commune Committees for Women and Children (CCWC) show improved planning, implementation, and monitoring of ECCD activities.</li> <li>2. Number of CCWC participating in home-based ECCD services.</li> </ol>

### Key activities

Below is a short summary of key project activities.

- **Establishing the First Read project structure in target villages.** The project structure consists of a management committee, a technical committee and the mother groups with their lead mother and a core mother (



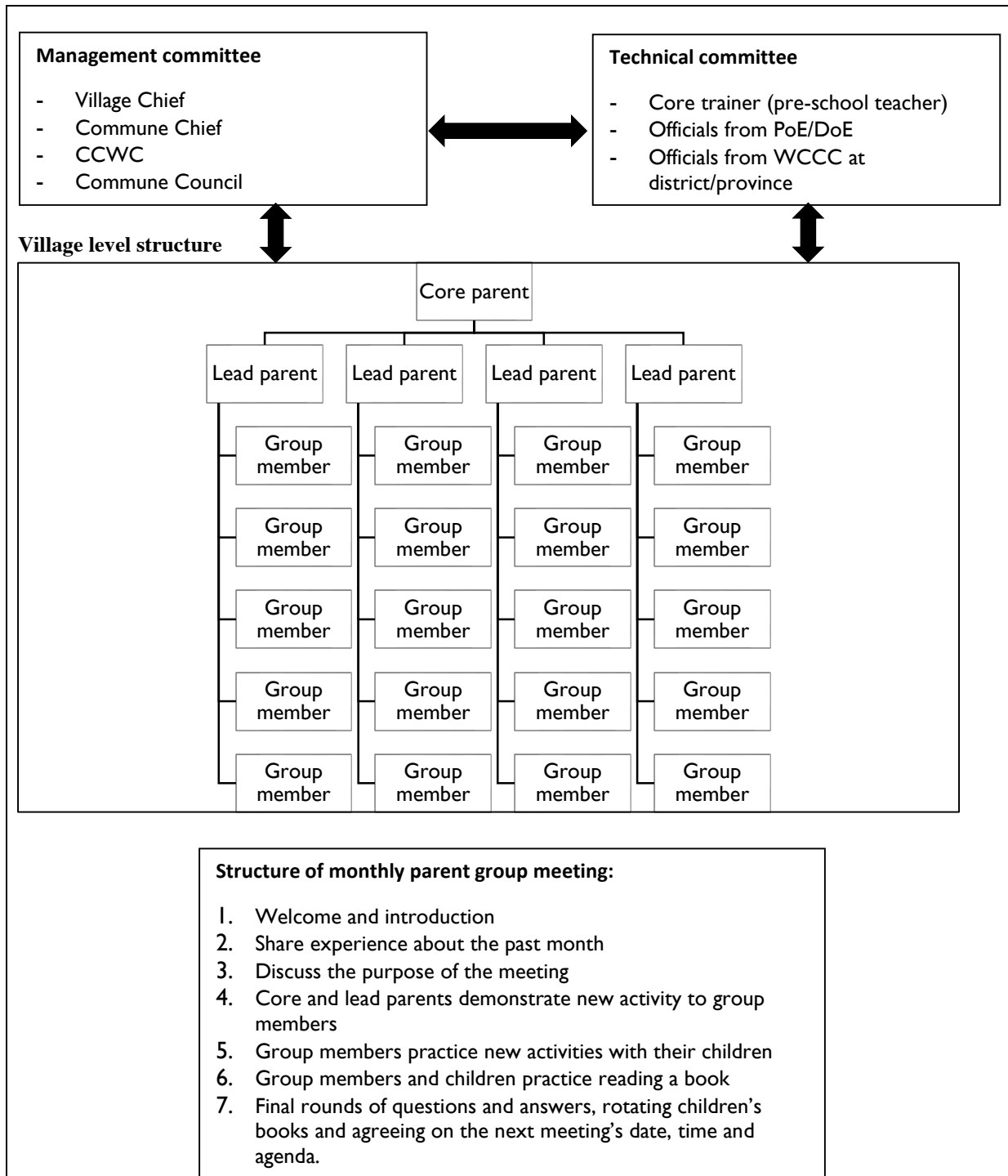
- Box 1). The management committee usually consists of the village chief, commune chief and representatives of the CCWC. The technical committee consists of local pre-school teachers, officials from PoE and DoE and officials from WCCC at the district and provincial level. Their main task is to provide technical input during training sessions and group meetings.

Group parents are selected on a voluntary basis. Among the group parents, one core parent is selected by lead parents together with management and technical committees. The core parent should ideally be a role model in the community with respect to child care practices. Each parent group also selects a lead parent. Each parent group was formed with 25 members maximum to be led by one core parent. In highly populated villages parent groups can be formed with more than 25 members and led by more than one core parent. See below for more information on how parent groups were structured.

At the beginning of the project implementation, “Parent Group” was abbreviated to “mother group” because it is easier to say in Khmer. However, midline evaluation results revealed that this resulted in engaging only female participants. So after this learning from mid-term review the name was changed back to Parents Group to encourage more male engagement in the group.

- **Developing the First Read Home-based curriculum.** The First Read curriculum has been developed through a consultative process with government stakeholders, building on previous work of Save the Children and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. As a result, the First Read curriculum includes sessions on health and nutrition, child development and children’s rights. More specifically, health and nutrition sessions include lessons on prenatal care, breast feeding, infant and young child feeding, hygiene and diseases prevention. Child development includes lessons on birth to 6 months, 6 to 12 months, 1 to 3 years old, 3 to under 6 years old and emergent literacy development. Children’s rights sessions include lessons on the four main children’s rights (survival, development, protection and participation). Later on, the curriculum focused more on First Read stimulation where the four key approaches of talking, singing, counting, and reading/sharing books were adopted.
- **Training of core trainers, training of core and lead parents and training of parent group members.** The First Read project takes a cascade training approach. First, core trainers (usually pre-school teachers) and CCWC are trained in the home-based ECCD curriculum at the district level by provincial education officials and Save the Children staff. Next, core trainers and CCWC with technical follow up from Wathnkpheap, the local NGO partner, POE and Save the Children, deliver training to core and lead parents in their target villages. Finally, core and lead parents train their parent group members.

**Box I, First Read project structure at village level**



- **Facilitating parent group meetings.** After parent groups received the training from their parent and lead parent, they are encouraged to meet all together at least once per month to discuss progress and learn new activities to stimulate the development of their children. The parent and lead parents are primarily responsible for preparing and organizing these meetings, in cooperation with the CCWC and teachers. See



- Box 1 above for details about the structure of these meetings.
- **Children’s book development and distribution.** The First Read project cooperates with local publishers to develop or purchase children’s books and distributes books to participating parents. The project works through partnership with Sipar to deliver trainings on Book Development for Babies and Toddlers for publishers, illustrators, and writers. New books which are produced during the trainings are re-drafted and then brought to test with children and some families before publishing. Save the Children purchases those books for distribution to participating families in the community. Each family should receive a maximum of three titles and in each village more than nine titles are supplied so that the families can exchange books.
- **Project monitoring.** At the commune level the CCWC is the main implementer and monitor of the First Read project. They receive technical support from Save the Children and monitoring support from Wathnakpheap.
- **Advocacy.** The project aims to advocate for inclusion of the First Read project in local structures, such as the commune investment plan, but also for inclusion in national and sub-national policy.

## 2. Rationale: scope and purpose of the evaluation

The main objective of this endline evaluation is to gather information about the project outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations to inform the next phase of First Read implementation. Key evaluation questions are:

1. What are the project contributions to promote children’s access to ECCD services?
2. What is the effect of the First Read project on children’s school readiness (with a focus on children aged 3 – 5 years old)?
3. What are the project contributions, particularly the home-based ECCD intervention, to discourage negative discipline practices and improve home learning environment?
4. What is the effect of the First Read project on parent interaction and stimulation with very young children (0 - 3 years old)?
5. What are the results of the advocacy activities conducted by First Read?

Specific evaluation questions were not identified at baseline, having been later defined at midline stage. At endline the questions were revised to provide a better alignment with project activities and key expected results. The evaluation questions are directly addressed on the conclusion section of this report.

The endline evaluation was carried out in 4 provinces (Kampong Cham, Tboung Khmum, Prey Veng, and Kratie), in 10 out of the 14 districts. The target sample was children and families benefiting from First Read’s home-based ECCD interventions.

## 3. Methodology

This evaluation employed both quantitative and qualitative tools to collect data on the project indicators and to answer the evaluation questions.

### 3.1 Evaluation tools

The International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) tool was used to measure child development and learning, and the IDELA Caregiver Questionnaire was used to interview parents/caregivers. As seen in table 2, the IDELA child assessment contains 22 questions in four domains: motor development, emergent literacy, emergent numeracy and socio-emotional development. It also contains two questions related to executive functioning (short-term memory and inhibitory control), as well as assessor-rated questions related to children’s approaches to learning. Finally, an additional question

related to children’s cultural competence was added to improvement alignment of IDELA with the Cambodian ELDS.

The IDELA Caregiver Questionnaire contains questions about children’s family and household environments (table 3). Specifically caregivers are asked about their educational background, daily play and learning interactions with children, feeding and health practices, and disciplinary behaviors. They are also asked about their expectations and attitudes regarding their children’s development and the importance of education for their future.

Table 2. IDELA Domains

<b>Gross and Fine Motor Development</b>	<b>Emergent Literacy and Language</b>	<b>Emergent and Numeracy</b>	<b>Socio-emotional Development</b>	<b>Executive Function</b>
Hopping on one foot	Print awareness	Measurement and comparison	Peer relations	Short-term memory
Copying a shape	Expressive vocabulary	Classification/Sorting	Emotional awareness	Inhibitory control
Drawing a human figure	Letter identification	Number identification	Empathy	
Folding Paper	Emergent writing	Shape identification	Conflict resolution	
	Initial sound discrimination	One-to-one correspondence	Self-awareness	
	Listening comprehension	Simple operations		
<b>Learning Approaches</b>				

Table 3. IDELA Caregiver Questionnaire

Section	Description
1. <b>General family information</b>	Sex of child, child age, number of children at home, parental literacy, parental education, languages spoken at home
2. <b>ECCD experience and educational expectations</b>	Child participation in ECCD programs, details of participation, parental expectation and aspirations of child's educational attainment
3. <b>Access to early learning materials and resources at home</b>	Types of reading materials at home, types of toys at home
4. <b>Parenting practices and support for learning and development</b>	Adults in the home engaging with children to promote learning and development
5. <b>Inadequate care</b>	Children left alone or in the care of another young child
6. <b>Caregiver self-efficacy</b>	Attitudes about parent's role in child's development
7. <b>Socioeconomic status</b>	Housing materials, objects/appliances owned, land/animals owned

The following tools were used to collect qualitative data:

- Key Informant Interviews (KII); conducted with key stakeholders from government and communities.
- Focus Groups Discussions (FGD): conducted with duty bearers, core mothers and parents.
- Online survey: conducted with key stakeholders in the book publishing industry.

The tools gathered qualitative evidence on the identified research questions and on the four pillars of First Read, namely book gifting, book development, parental learning and community participation. With the exception of the online survey all other qualitative tools had already been used at midline. Small changes were made where relevant.

### 3.2 Sample

The sample for the quantitative study was taken the 29 villages in Kampong Cham, Kratie, and Prey Veng. Children 3 years and older were randomly sampled from the project villages. Children under age 3 were not randomly sampled, but rather if a parent of a randomly sampled 3 – 5 year old child reported having a younger child, they were also interviewed about the younger child.

Table 4. Quantitative endline sample, by child age

	Kampong Cham	Kratie	Prey Veng	Total
<b>Younger than 24 months</b>	30	26	14	70
<b>24-35 months</b>	17	14	8	39
<b>3 years</b>	14	13	17	44
<b>4 years</b>	57	27	16	100
<b>5 years</b>	52	20	31	103
<b>Total</b>	170	100	86	356

Qualitative data was also collected in Kampong Cham, Kratie and Prey Veng. Participants for the Key Informant Interviews and duty bearers' Focus Groups were randomly selected from villages and communes in each target area. Participants for the online survey were purposefully selected by the project team from the pool of book developers who participated in the project.

Table 5. Qualitative endline sample

	Kampong Cham	Kratie	Prey Veng	National
<b>Duty bearers FGD</b>	1 FGD with 9 participants	1 FGD with 5 participants	1 FGD with 9 participants	N/A
<b>Core mothers FGD</b>	1 FGD with 10 participants	1 FGD with 7 participants	1 FGD with 8 participants	N/A
<b>Parents FGD</b>	1 FGD with 5 participants	1 FGD with 8 participants	1 FGD with 8 participants	N/A
<b>KII</b>	3 participants	3 participants	3 participants	N/A
<b>Online survey</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	8 participants

### 3.3 Data collection training and pilot test

Prior to the quantitative data collection enumerators attended a four day training on how to administer the IDELA child and caregiver tools. The training consisted of two days of reviewing the tools in an office and two days practicing with the tools in the field. The field testing of the IDELA tools with children and caregivers served to increase assessor's comfort with the instruments and also to finalize any contextual or translation modifications that were needed to the tools.

During the formal data collection three teams of fourteen assessors were supervised by three Save the Children team leaders. Data collection took ten days to complete and encountered a bit time, searching for right households and travel challenges. Data entry was overseen by Save the Children's MEAL Officer.

There were four enumerators assigned to conduct the qualitative data collection, and they were a different team from those leading the quantitative data collection. All the enumerators attended two days of training on tools and field practices. During the training we clarified the questionnaires in the tools, added extra notes for explaining purpose of the questions to the respondents, and discussed the process of ensuring quality note taking.

The data collection for took four days, excluding travel time. The data entry was done by two employed translators to convert the note from Khmer to English. To ensure quality of translation, Save the Children's ECCD Advisor reviewed the translation before submitting to Save the Children UK's MEAL specialist for analysis.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

The main purpose of the quantitative analysis is to investigate gains in caregiver knowledge and improvements in behaviors related to early development, care and learning, as well as the status of children's development at endline. Summary statistics will be presented to display performance on all areas of the parent and child questionnaires. In addition, this report will look to multivariate regression models to explore relationships between early learning and development and parental knowledge, attitudes and home environments.

Qualitative data investigated key stakeholders' perceptions of First Read main activities and any behavior change promoted by the project. Content analysis was conducted whereby data was coded according to the key issues mentioned by stakeholders and categorized around the four pillars of First Read.

### **3.5 Limitations**

Given the cross-sectional nature of the study design, the results of this assessment do not provide causal evidence of the impact of First Read ECCD programming on child development. Children in the project area were surveyed at baseline, midline and endline but the same children and families were not interviewed at each point in time due to constraints in the budget and human resources available. Also, the same instruments were not used over time due to improvements made to measurement tools over the course of the project. Based on technical support received from consultants (at midline) and Save the Children UK and Save the Children US (at endline). In addition, no comparison group was established at baseline. Therefore, it is not possible to make causal claims about the impact of the First Read program on children in Cambodia.

## **4. Study Findings**

### **4.1 Household and caregiver characteristics**

A total of 300 families were interviewed during the endline study. On average mothers and fathers were between 25-35 years old. Caregivers typically had primary or secondary education, with 75 percent of mothers and 84 percent of fathers reported to be literate. Families had 2.4 children at home on average, and 36 percent of families had one child under the age of 3. When given a list of 10 common home possessions, parents reported that they typically owned 3.5. Finally, all caregivers reported speaking Khmer at home.



Table 6. Caregiver and family characteristics

	Average	Standard deviation
<b>Mother age</b> (Less than 18=1, 18-24=2, 25-35=3, 36+=4)	3.2	0.53
<b>Mother education</b> (0=None, 1=Primary, 2=Secondary, 3=Upper Secondary, 4=Higher education)	1.3	0.72
<b>Mother is literate</b>	75%	0.43
<b>Father age</b> (Less than 18=1, 18-24=2, 25-35=3, 36+=4)	3.3	0.52
<b>Father education</b> (0=None, 1=Primary, 2=Secondary, 3=Upper Secondary, 4=Higher education)	1.5	0.86
<b>Father is literate</b>	84%	0.37
<b>Number of children in home</b>	2.4	1.16
<b>Has a child under 3</b>	36%	0.48
<b>Number of household possessions (0-10)</b>	3.5	1.62

#### 4.2 Participation in First Read

On average, caregivers reported participating in the First Read program for about 15 months, but there was a large range in length and intensity of participation. Mothers were the primary attendees and figures 1 and 2a-c display the range of time caregivers reported being involved with First Read and number of sessions they attended.

Table 7. Overview of First Read participation

	Average	Standard Deviation
<b>Months attending First Read</b>	14.9	10.72
<b># big sessions attended</b>	3.4	4.45
<b># small sessions attended</b>	5.8	9.09

Almost half of caregivers (49%) reporting participating in First Read for a year or more, but at the same time 28 percent reported being involved for less than 6 months. Combining small and large meeting attendance, analyses found that 9 percent of parents had never been to any type of meeting, 36 percent had only been to 1-3 meetings and 25 percent had been to 10 or more. So while a quarter or parents report high attendance at First Read parenting sessions, 45 percent of parents reported either never attending or attending very few First Read parenting sessions. This low level of participation could make it difficult to find a strong impact of the intervention. In addition, further investigation is needed to determine what differentiated families who attended often and those who attended infrequently.

Figure 1. Caregiver participation in First Read

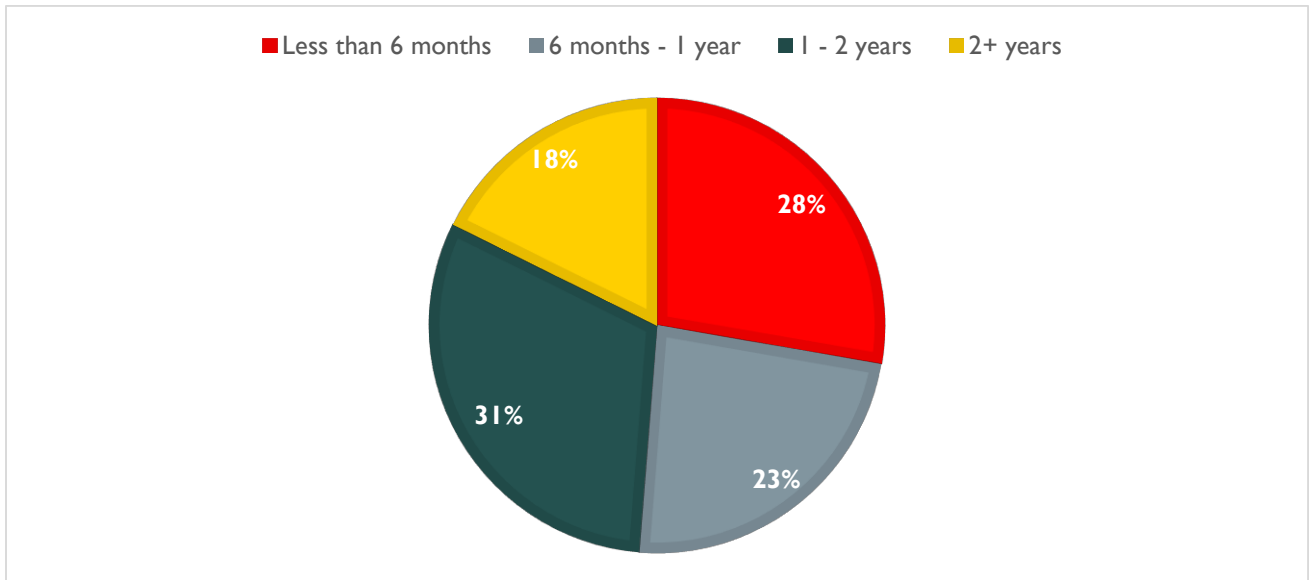
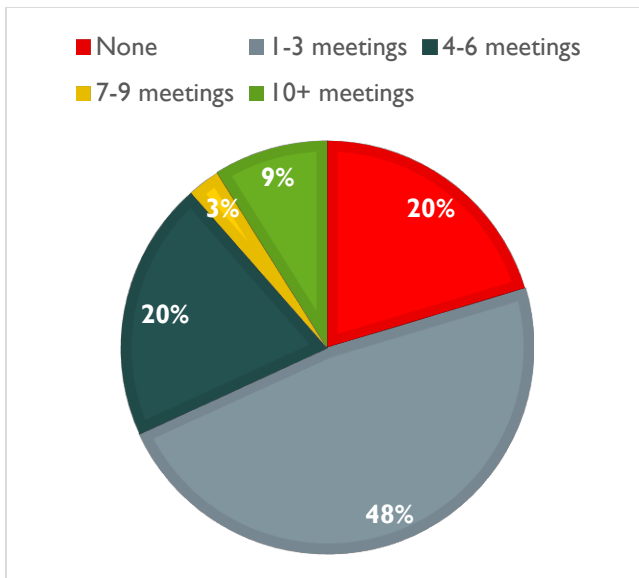


Figure 2. Caregiver attendance at big (a) and small (b) meetings.

2a.



2b.

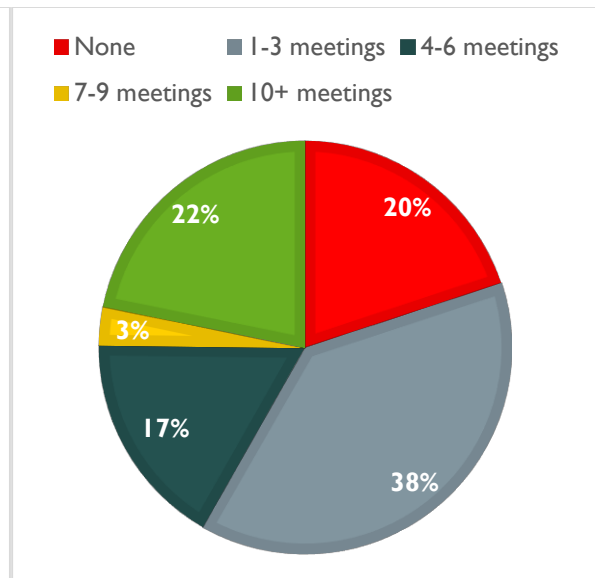
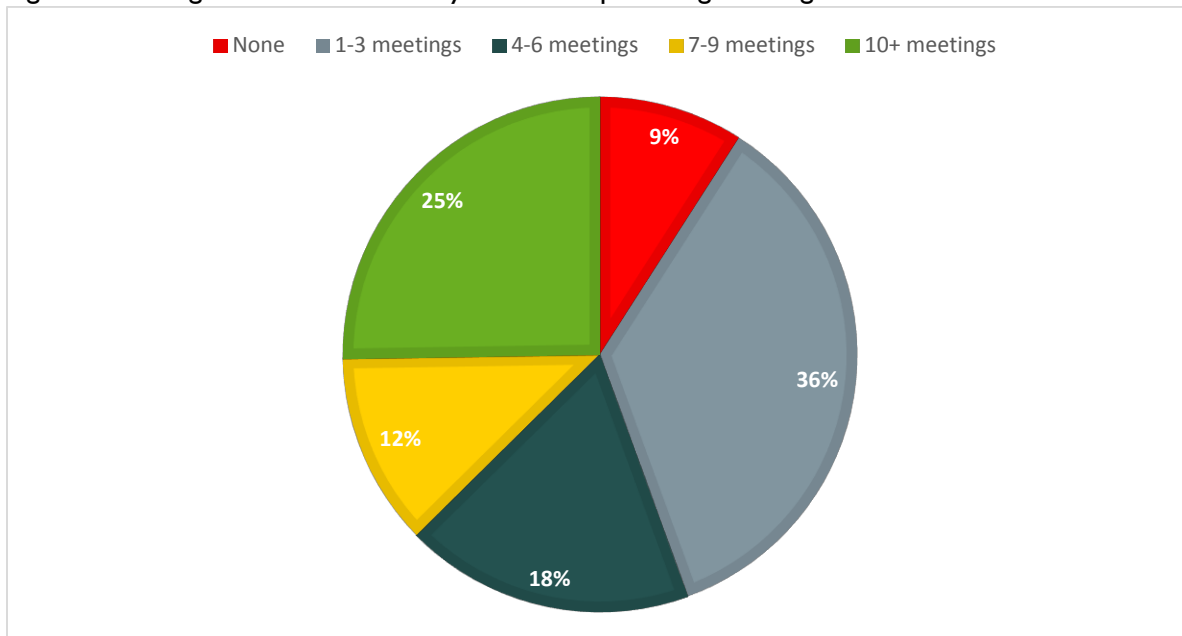


Figure 2c. Caregiver attendance at any First Read parenting meeting.



Analysis of the qualitative data about First Read participation finds that parents' main reason for joining First Read was to learn how to support their children and take care of them.

*"I want to know how to give my children advices and how to educate my children."* FGD, parents, Kratie

*"I want my children know how to communicate with others."* FGD, parents, Kratie

*"I want to know how to support my child to get more knowledge, learn from each other, be smart and clever."* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

Similar to the quantitative findings, qualitative feedback highlighted the challenge of ensuring attendance to member meetings. Those parents who join the meetings seem to highly appreciate it, but overall attendance seems to be low and was identified as a challenge across all KII and FGD. Parents emphasize that participation in meetings is limited, mostly due to work, but also when their children get sick. Frequency of meetings varies per province and group, ranging from every 2 weeks to once every 2 months. Meetings are not regular and have low participation.

*"We invited them but they don't come because they are busy with the farm."* FGD, core mother, Prey Veng

*"It difficult to gather the mothers for meeting as they're busy planting or cultivating."* KII, WCCC chief, Kratie

*"Difficult to gather big group meeting due to member mothers being busy making an income and they have limited knowledge."* KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham

*"The main challenge to have a meeting with mothers was when they have to go to the farm and we have difficulty to meet them."* KII, DOE staff, Kratie

*"I was busy with my rice field, so I could not join often."* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“I attended meetings two times. There are few participants in the meeting due to work at the garment factory and they do not have time to attend the meeting. There are not majority of people, especially young adult parents, stay at home.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

Meetings’ organization is also a problem, with several requests to review meetings’ length, frequency, agenda, schedule and invitation, especially from the Kampong Cham participants.

*“It’s hard to make an appointment because mothers busy with their works, but we need to have some time to meet them and remind them to teach to their children, even we met them at market we still remind them to teach their kids.”* KII, DoE, Kampong Cham

*“We have one requirement, please give us information one week before the meeting, it’ll get much easy to have appointment.”* KII, DOE staff, Kratie

*“Conduct group meeting on Saturday or Sunday while mothers are off from their garment work.”* KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham

*“I’d like to ask for more new lessons which teach about young children.”* FGD, core mothers, Kampong Cham

*“[...] the meeting should not discuss about repeated topics that are useless.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

*“At the first when mothers are selected they want to join, but after the meetings take long time and no one prepare the food for her husband.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

*“Some of parent’s group members think that the project’s meetings talk again and again and they do not see any benefits but only lost their time to earn money. Some members dropped out of their group.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

*“The challenges and difficulty I faced are when making appointment with parents for the meeting not all of them came to the meeting like what we want. Some of them said that they have raised their children like nowadays, do not see something bad happen. This is because they do not understand. But if they know they will recognize.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

In all 3 provinces core mothers invited children to join the meetings to learn when parents refused or couldn’t participate.

*“The children love to join the meeting because they want to play and learn.”* FGD, core mothers, Prey Veng

*“For example, when mothers could not come to the meeting, so we asked their children to come instead of them. When their children went back home they told what they have learnt. The next meeting, their mothers also come to the meeting with us.”* FGD, core mothers, Kampong Cham

Some core mothers invited fathers to join the groups as well, but for the most part they were busy. Core mothers believe fathers should also join First Read.

*“I want the project to mobilize fathers to participate like the mothers so that he can understand about this project.”* FGD, core mothers, Prey Veng

As participation is voluntary there seems to be a natural selection of parents who already value education/child development and the challenge is to promote behaviour change amongst parents who do not seem to value or understand the importance of education/child development.

In addition to the issues above some parents reported challenges putting the learning to practice, sometimes due to shyness. Parents also said that children had difficulties understanding some of the teaching, especially the very young ones. Parents also mentioned that sometimes they forgot the lessons. This issue was also raised by core mothers, who stated that parents do not receive materials with the lessons, so it's easy to forget what they were taught. Some parents resorted to violence when children were having difficulties.

*"It was difficult at the first time because my children didn't understand, so I have tried so many times. Now, they knew a lot, it's better than before."* FGD, parents, Kratie

*"I taught my children to play game, but it's hard for me because I'm shy. Eg, I could not act like duck walking."* FGD, parents, Kratie

*"Sometime I forgot the lesson so difficult to do."* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

*"I have to bully and beat sometime. I can see my teaching to the child is success when he/she is listen to us."* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

*"When mothers go out for work and farming they leave the children with grandmother or neighbor. The parents are busy with the farm so no have enough time to take care the children. They leave their children with their relatives. They also joined with FR, but they are not confident in applying what they had learned from the project with children due to they are too busy so forgot the lesson."* FGD, duty bearers, Kratie

Participants in KII and one of the core mothers FGDs highlighted the challenge of involving illiterate mothers in First Read (either as members or core mothers, as finding literate adults is considered challenging in some areas). As they struggle to understand, their participation and learning is reduced. Grandparents are also considered to face difficulties joining sessions and as parents migrate for work in some cases the grandparents are the ones taking care of children.

*"Mothers are illiterate; they are difficult to understand the lessons. Some time we even hard to find core mother who is literate".* KII, CECE, Prey Veng

*"Some mothers are illiterate and some migrated, their children were taken care by their parents who are so old, so they could not teach or do anything much to their grandchildren".* KII, CECE, Prey Veng

*"[...] for the illiterate parents, we need to develop picture messages for them."* KII, POE, deputy chief of ECE, Kampong Cham

*"Illiterate mothers they are not paying attention to their children learning and caring".* FGD, core mother, Prey Veng

Interviewees have also shared concerns around migration, while participants in the duty bearers and core mothers FGD highlighted the expectation that incentives and snacks are provided by First Read during meetings.

*"Team leader and core mother keep changing and moving out because they make migration and work at garment factory in Phnom Penh."* KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham

*"It's hard because many people have migrated."* KII, DOE, Prey Veng

*"The family is poor so they migrate."* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

*"If the meeting held without snack the parents didn't come. When attend every meeting, parents expect gifts".* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

*"It should have some incentive (money) to encourage people to join in the meeting with us."* FGD, core mothers, Kratie

*"Request for incentive for core and lead mothers."* FGD, core mothers, Prey Veng

*"Some mothers have problem with supporting to their family; they asked for some money when they come to the meeting. They said, 'If there has no money for them it would be better for them to go to work for others to get some money to support for their families'. Because our program is working with poorest people so it's hard to work with them, they need time to work to get money. And if they ask too much money from NGO it's also not easy, because NGO has limit budget to spend for the programs."* KII, staff of ECE office, Prey Veng

The cascading strategy for the trainings was questioned by some in the KII and FGD. It was suggested in KII that all mothers should receive direct First Read training, not just core and lead mothers.

*"If we there is change of mother member, the new mother doesn't know how to teach their children at home since they never attend training of the project. We need to provide many training again and again when there are often change of mother members. The illiterate mothers are difficult to train."* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

*"Core mothers did not get enough training and they have to teach to mother members, so I'd like to ask to give them more trainings to strengthen their abilities."* KII, DOE, Prey Veng

*"Request the training to be conducted at the village level and the project to continue."* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

Most duty bearers didn't provide any examples of learning from training sessions attended by them, when asked about it. From the few who responded the question the most cited learning refers to specific activities (to count, sing, dance) and how parents can support children to do the same. Use of books and child development were also mentioned by a couple of participants. Nevertheless, the majority of duty bearers claimed to use the knowledge and skills acquired through First Read to sensitize others within and outside the project, i.e core mothers and leaders, community members, other NGOs/projects. A few participants also claimed to use the knowledge and skills in schools, teaching students. The quotes below show examples of how duty bearers are using the knowledge and skills acquired through First Read.

*"FRP provided me the reference documents with lesson and picture book so that I can use to teach the residents. My duty is to conduct awareness raising on how to teach children, how to take care pregnancy for pregnant woman, about abuse. So that I can use this opportunity to raise awareness to children as well."* FGD, Duty Bearers, Kampong Cham

*"It is very useful for the commune. I can train mothers in the target village to become the committee of the village because they have learned about this social work. They are very happy to join this training course. They are proud of themselves when they can train other mothers. So that for us as old aged people we will have the time to learn recite a prayer and go to pagoda because of the young parents can replace us."* FGD, Duty Bearers, Kratie

### 4.3 Materials enhancement

One of the core components of First Read is to stimulate the publishing industry to develop and/or source high-quality books and learning aids for young children and their parents. In order to learn about the impact of First Read on the local publishing industry an online survey was conducted with publishers, editors, authors, book sellers and illustrators that have engaged with the project.

All of the respondents of the online survey stated that they have acquired new knowledge and also new skills as a part of their engagement with First Read. All but one respondent received training from First Read.

*"I learnt about ideas for young children; understood about pictures for young children; learnt and understood about what kind of things young children like; have met and interviewed mothers, asked them real questions gotten honest answers"* Online survey

*"I understood more about the different ways that children and adults learn new things. Children learn from pictures, attractive colours, background and the layout of book. They don't like more words while they can't even read, but they do learn and remember those words from pictures."* Online survey

*"[Learnt to] drawing by computer; collage; recycling; use colours and clay"* Online survey

*"I have acquired new skills: 1. Authoring 2. Illustrating 3. Participating in the group"* Online Survey

Respondents also agreed that they are putting the knowledge and skills to practice.

*"This knowledge have helped me with my work to created lots of books"* Online survey

*"It is very helpful. Ex: I'm creating book by the new knowledge which I have got. Knowledge that I gain from the workshop have served my work so well, as I could design and create a first collection for children. I could create a design to fit with my young little audiences."* Online survey

*"It is gets easier; I could create the drawing, use the clay and collage according to customer needs."* Online survey

Although the new skills and knowledge are valued by the respondents, not all of them are already more confident in their job. Respondents provided mixed answers when asked about increase in their confidence as a part of engagement in First Read.

*"Not yet have confident because my activity is still new."* Online survey

*"I really have more confidence because: 1. All the workshop which I have participated had foreigner teachers to share knowledge and experience 2. For books I'm producing we always discussed to find good points 3. When I went to meet people at communities it made me know their needs, possibility and level of their knowledge"* Online survey

*"First Read project has given me more confidence with my work (ex. my illustrations have new ideas such as actors and styles)." Online survey*

*"Not yet have confidence because I lack experience and the training is short."* Online survey

Respondents claimed that First Read project contributed to increase collaboration between the different actors in the publishing industry, although some highlighted that there are still challenges.

*"Not really collaborate with each other It has about 50%" Online survey*

*"Relationship is limited, because of knowledge is still lacking and number of illustrator who work in the area of young children's books is limited, so we have to wait to complete the work while they are also provided service to other publishers. First Read project has helped some of illustrators became publishers."*

Online survey

*"Normally, the relationship between publisher, illustrators and editors seem like just for business, most of them work individually. First Read intervention has changed this habit. Now I understand how important it is working as a team, and those people help each other to create one good book [...]"*Online survey

*"Publishers, illustrators or authors in the country normally not really have a connection. After "First Read project has taken action we have changed and have a very good collaboration." Online survey*

When asked for suggestions on how to improve the book development component of First Read respondents requested more training and also more participation from professionals in the local book industry.

*"I want to have more training, at least once time per year." Online survey*

*"Please bring new good experience to teach us more." Online survey*

*"Invite more people to participate." Online survey*

*"If FR project could continue in the future, I would like to request more participation from illustrators and authors." Online survey*

Overall respondents seemed satisfied with the results of the project when it comes to book development and have showed willingness to continue to engage with First Read.

#### **4.3.1 Book gifting**

One of the pillars of First Read is distributing the high-quality books developed to families. Book gifting or use of books was not particularly highlighted by any of the participants involved in the qualitative study. While issues related to books were mentioned across all focus groups and key informant interviews, they were never mentioned by the majority of participants.



*“FRP organized the books exhibition in the villages to promote community awareness raising on the important and understanding the value of reading.”* KII, POE, Kampong Cham

*“It [First Read] supports book publishing and distribution to mothers. Also distributed ECCD kit consists of picture books, color, toys, etc. to commune to use during parent’s meeting.”* KII, POE Kampong Cham

*“I got books from the program, so I used that books by pointing at the picture and asking my kids.”* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“There are books distributed to the children. Those books have animal picture, the vegetable picture, the fruit picture so the children can know the picture of these through their mother support to interact with the books.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kratie

When participants mentioned books they seemed to appreciate receiving the books, or their distribution as a part of First Read, and there were a few requests for more books to be distributed. When asked their suggestions to improve First Read core mothers cited the need for more books, alongside provision of incentives and greater variety of topics for the lessons.

*“I like the books given by the programme. I could teach my children through those books.”* FGD, core mother, Kratie

*“And Save the Children has given good books which have good pictures to parents; children are so in love with those books.”* KII, DoE, Kampong Cham

*“We need more picture books.”* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

A couple of participants cited instances where books were damaged or lost, as well as participants not receiving books.

*“Some mothers did not receive books so they do not know how to practice book reading with children.”* FGD, core mother, Prey Veng

*“Mothers didn’t know about value of the books they gave to their children. After that their children just tore the books.”* KII, DOE staff, Kratie

*“When I asked them about books they told me, all were torn.”* FGD, core mother, Kampong Cham

*“First Read distributed books to mothers and some books were lost, especially those who received books in 2013.”* KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham

Overall, book gifting, or book use for that matter, does not seem to be a valued element by the majority of participants involved in the data collection. One of the possible explanations is parental/caregiver illiteracy, highlighted in the following sections as one of the challenges faced by First Read. Training could put more emphasis on how illiterate parents/caregivers can support children’s literacy through use of books.

Looking at quantitative results on book gifting and use by families, analyses found changes from midline to endline. Compared to midline, more caregivers at endline reported having received books from First Read, and more caregivers reported buying and borrowing books. However, caregivers reported having the same amount of books, on average, at baseline and endline. Also, corroborating qualitative findings, the books themselves were less likely to be in good or medium condition at endline compared to midline. For more information about where caregivers were buying and borrowing books, see appendix A.

Table 8. First Read book distribution and quality

	Midline	Endline
<b>% of households that received books</b>	78%	88%
<b>Number of books</b>	2.7	2.9
<b>% books in good condition</b>	63%	51%
<b>% households buying additional books</b>	6%	11%
<b>% households borrowing additional books</b>	7%	20%

When asked about their children’s favorite books, parents reported that on average Picture Book I was the most popular, followed by the Picture book of animals. A large proportion of parents also reported that they did not know which book was their child’s favorite.

Table 9. Favorite First Read books

Title	Frequency	%
<b>Picture book I</b>	46	17.36
<b>Do not know which book is child’s favorite</b>	38	14.34
<b>Picture book of animals</b>	32	12.08
<b>Picture book of food</b>	23	8.68
<b>Pa pa big me small</b>	14	5.28
<b>Colour</b>	12	4.53
<b>Voice of animal</b>	11	4.15
<b>Kok I Kok2</b>	9	3.4
<b>One day of YO YO</b>	9	3.4
<b>I do it too</b>	5	1.89

#### 4.4 Access to ECCD

In addition to access to the home-based First Read program, some children also had access to center-based ECCD programs. Older children were more likely to be enrolled in an ECCD program than younger children, but even some children as young as 3 were enrolled in a center-based program. This is important information to take into account for Phase 2 planning because it highlights the fact that many children in First Read impact areas have access to centre-based programs, which of course complement and interact with a parenting support program.

Table 10. Access to center-based ECCD programs from study respondents, by age

Age	% Enrolled in centre-based ECCD
<b>3 years</b>	27%
<b>4 years</b>	50%
<b>5 years</b>	85%
<b>6 years</b>	95%

Note: The proportion among children interviewed confirms participated in center-based ECCD beyond First Read ECCD programme.

Overall, enrollment in a center-based ECCD program appears to have risen since the baseline survey. However, it is difficult to directly compare enrollment across time because children’s age was not controlled for across different data collections. Most children were enrolled in a state sponsored ECCD

program but 30 percent of parents also reported that their children enrolled in some other type of program.

Table 11. Enrollment in ECCD over time, population statistics

	Total enrollment in ECCD	Girl Enrollment in ECCD
<b>Baseline</b>	15%	N/A
<b>Midline</b>	24%	24%
<b>Endline</b>	27%	27%

Note: The proportion of children enrolled in center-based ECCD programs displayed here uses population statistics, not study respondents as noted above.

Table 12. ECCD program enrollment

	Frequency	%
<b>State pre-school</b>	117	58%
<b>Community pre-school</b>	15	7%
<b>NGO, besides SC</b>	7	3%
<b>Other</b>	60	30%
<b>Don't know</b>	3	1%

#### 4.5 Child development

This section describes children’s performance on the direct child assessment. Total domain scores are calculated by adding the weighted score of each item in the domain so that all items contribute equally to the domain score. The total direct child assessment score is calculated by adding the weighted total scores from the core domains (motor, literacy, numeracy and socio-emotional) so that all domains contribute equally to the total score. Due to the difference in administration style between the direct child assessment items and the enumerator reported learning approaches items, the learning approaches items are not included in the total IDELA score. The analyses presented below display the frequency with which children correctly respond to IDELA items.

##### 4.5.1 Emergent numeracy

Overall, there were no significant differences between boys’ and girls’ early numeracy skills. On average children had the highest scores in the areas in early measurement skills and the weakest in completing a simple puzzle. This follows a common pattern as the measurement item is the easiest in this domain and the puzzle the hardest. On average, children correctly responded to 47 percent of the questions in the numeracy domain.

Table 13. IDELA Emergent Numeracy

	<b>Boys (N=135)</b>	<b>Girls (N=167)</b>	<b>Significant difference</b>
<b>Measurement</b>	87%	91%	
<b>Sorting</b>	37%	38%	
<b>One-to-one correspondence</b>	34%	36%	
<b>Simple operations</b>	55%	52%	
<b>Puzzle</b>	22%	17%	
<b>Total Early Numeracy</b>	47%	47%	

#### 4.5.2 Socioemotional development

There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' socioemotional development. In addition, children had fairly equal skills in all subareas assessed and on average correctly completed 43 percent of items.

Table 14. IDELA Socioemotional Development

	<b>Boys (N=135)</b>	<b>Girls (N=167)</b>	<b>Significant difference</b>
<b>Social connections</b>	35%	40%	
<b>Emotional awareness</b>	45%	50%	
<b>Empathy</b>	35%	42%	
<b>Conflict resolution</b>	41%	42%	
<b>Total Socioemotional Development</b>	41%	45%	

#### 4.5.3 Emergent literacy

In the area of emergent literacy, children had the strongest skills in the areas of print awareness and oral comprehension, and the weakest in letter identification. This could be due to the increased exposure to print and storytelling through the First Read program but further research would be needed to confirm this. There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' skills in this area.

Table 15. IDELA Emergent Literacy

	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Significant difference</b>
<b>Expressive vocabulary</b>	40%	40%	
<b>Print awareness</b>	47%	52%	
<b>Letter ID</b>	8%	11%	
<b>First letter sounds</b>	19%	17%	
<b>Writing</b>	36%	44%	
<b>Oral comprehension</b>	51%	51%	
<b>Total Emergent Literacy</b>	33%	36%	

#### 4.5.4 Motor development

On average, children had stronger gross motor (hopping on one foot) than fine motor skills. The most difficult fine motor item for children was drawing a person. There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' motor development.

Table 16. IDELA Motor Development

	Boys	Girls	Significant difference
Copy a shape	39%	44%	
Folding	41%	44%	
Drawing a person	33%	40%	
Hopping on one foot	69%	64%	
Total Motor Development	46%	48%	

#### 4.5.5 Culture and Executive function

Two groups of addition direct child assessment items were included in IDELA for this study. One includes an item focused on cultural competency within Cambodia, and the other includes two items related to children's executive function skills, which highlight the way children process information. On average, children correctly responded to 70 percent of the cultural item that focused on proper ways for children to greet and interact with elders in Cambodia. In terms of executive function items, children correctly responded to 38 percent of short-term memory items, and 23 percent of the inhibitory control task.

Table 17. IDELA Cultural Competence and Executive Function

	Boys	Girls	Significant difference
Cultural competence - Cambodia	67%	73%	
Short-term memory	39%	37%	
Inhibitory control	24%	23%	

#### 4.5.6 Approaches to learning

Learning approaches items focus on how children take on new problems or situations in a learning environment. Assessors fill out these items after completing the IDELA with a child and therefore the items are not directly reported from the child but rather an assessor's rating of the child's performance. Children are scored on a scale of 1 – 4 where 1=Rarely and 4=Almost always. On average children scored close to a 3 (Often) on all items and received 60 percent of the total possible points. There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' scores in this area.

Table 18. IDELA Approaches to Learning

	Boys	Girls	Significant difference
Child paid attention to instructions	2.8	2.9	
Child showed confidence in completing activities	2.8	2.9	
Child was not easily distracted	2.7	2.9	
Child was careful and diligent	2.7	2.8	
Child showed pleasure in accomplishing tasks	2.7	2.8	
Child was motivated to complete tasks	2.6	2.8	
Child was interested and curious	2.8	2.9	
<b>Total Approaches to Learning</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>62%</b>	

#### 4.5.7 IDELA summary

In summary, children had the highest scores on the core IDELA domains of motor development and emergent numeracy. Children had the weakest skills in emergent literacy and answered 43 percent of the IDELA items correctly, on average. There were no gender differences in IDELA scores but age was significantly correlated with IDELA scores, with older children scoring significantly higher than younger children.

Given the strong relationship between age and children’s development and early learning skills, benchmarks for meeting early learning standards were separated by age. Benchmarks were set at 25% for 3-year-olds, 50% for 4-year-olds, and 75% for 5 year olds. Using these benchmarks, on average 16 percent of children were meeting developmental benchmarks at the time of the endline assessment.

Table 19. Proportion of children meeting developmental benchmarks

	% Meeting benchmark
3 year olds	20%
4 years olds	17%
5 year olds	10%
<b>Average</b>	<b>16%</b>

Figure 3. Summary IDELA Scores

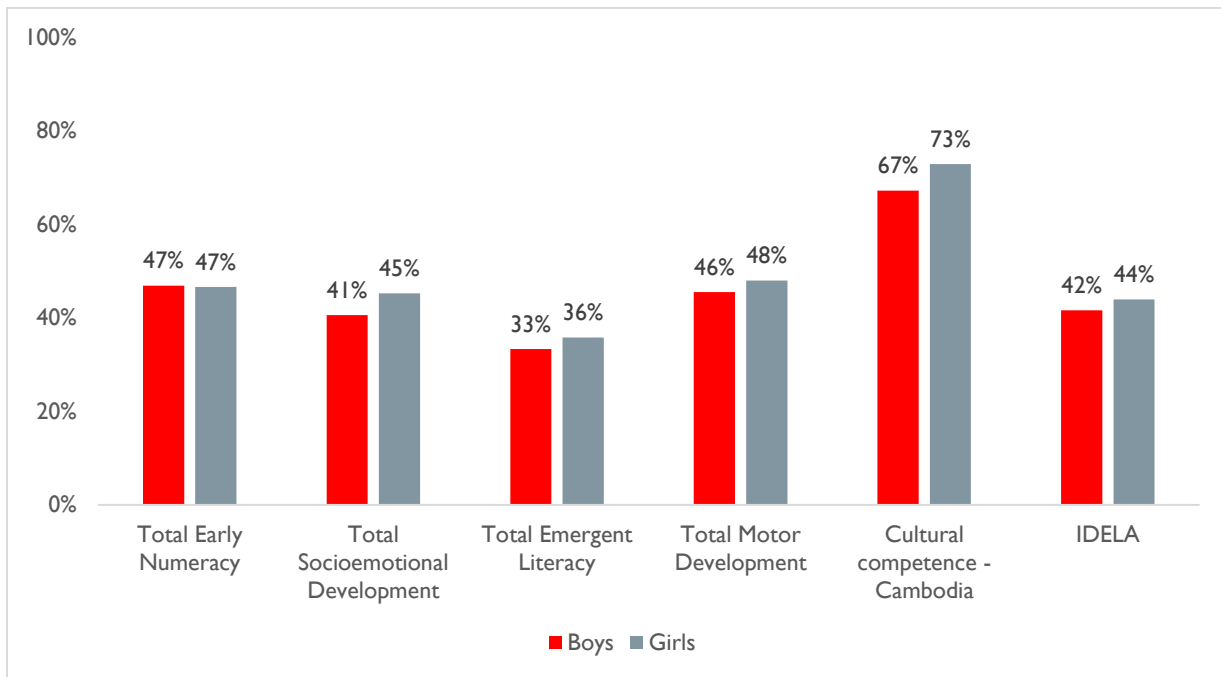
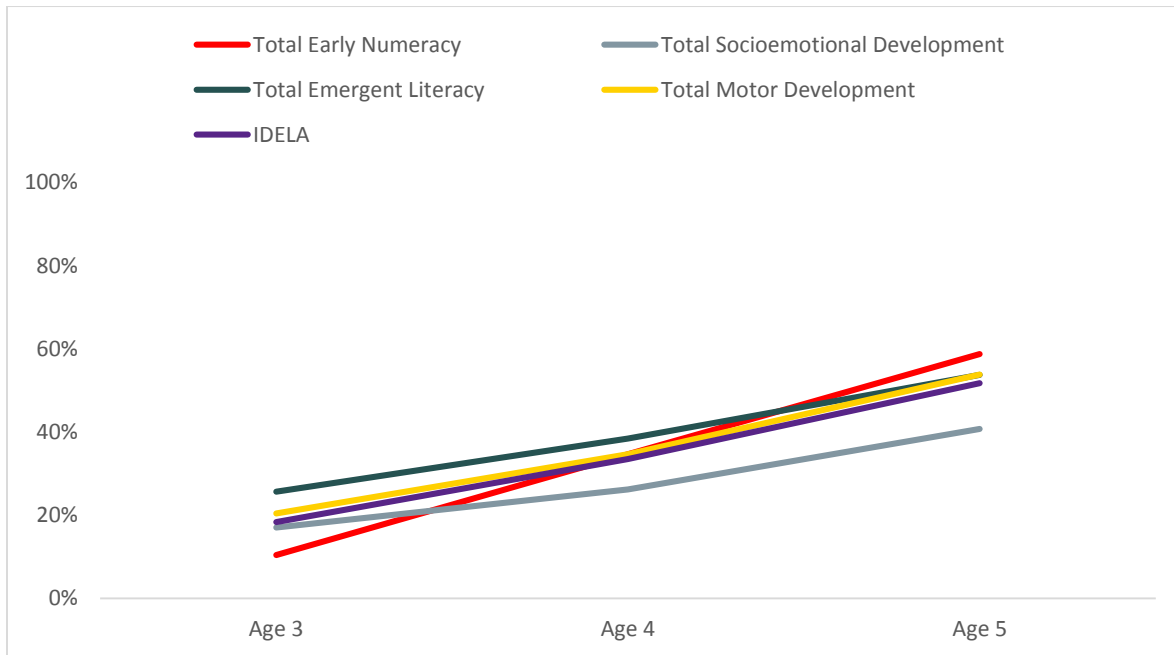


Figure 4. IDELA Scores, by age



#### 4.6 Caregiver-child interactions

In order to better understand the environments within which children are growing and learning, caregivers were asked detailed questions about child-friendly materials in their homes and how they play, teach and

discipline their children. In terms of play materials, parents reported having almost 5 types of toys at home. The most common toys were store-bought toys, outside objects and drawing toys and the least common were puzzles, hand-eye coordination toys and household objects.

Figure 20. Distribution of toys in homes

	<b>Average</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
<b>Homemade toy</b>	55%	0.50
<b>Store-bought toy</b>	79%	0.40
<b>Household object</b>	40%	0.49
<b>Outside object</b>	90%	0.30
<b>Drawing toy</b>	69%	0.46
<b>Puzzle</b>	16%	0.37
<b>Hand-eye coordination toy</b>	39%	0.49
<b>Color shape size toy</b>	46%	0.50
<b>Number toy</b>	59%	0.49
<b>Other toy</b>	3%	0.16
<b># of toy types at home</b>	4.9	1.84

Thinking about parents' interactions with their children, parents were asked about play, learning and discipline behaviors with both their child over 3 years and their child under 3 years. Analyses found that there are similarities and differences in the ways that parents interact with their older and younger child. For example, the most frequently reported activity for both age groups is playing. However, 61 percent of parents reported reading stories to their older child, compared to only 38 percent reading to younger children. Similarly, 32 percent of parents reported telling stories to older children and only 12 percent of parents report telling stories to younger children.

Table 21. Distribution of reading materials in homes

	<b>Older child (36-71 months)</b>	<b>Younger child (0-35 months)</b>
<b>Read stories</b>	61%	38%
<b>Tell stories</b>	32%	12%
<b>Sing</b>	68%	85%
<b>Take outside</b>	81%	77%
<b>Play</b>	96%	92%
<b>Draw</b>	69%	42%
<b>Teach new things</b>	66%	54%
<b>Teach letters</b>	80%	N/A
<b>Teach numbers</b>	85%	N/A
<b>Total play and learning activities</b>	6.4	4.0

Parents were also asked detailed questions about the way they typically discipline their children. The most frequent activities were similar between older and younger children but parents generally reported



disciplining older children more than younger children. On average there were more positive discipline behaviors reported than inconsistent or negative. However, 72 percent of parents report yelling or screaming at their child over 3 years and 45 percent report hitting or spanking them. Also, leaving young children alone with another child or unattended was an infrequent activity in these communities, especially with very young children.

Table 22. Disciplinary behaviors

	<b>Older child (36-71 years)</b>	<b>Younger child (0-35 months)</b>
<b>Have a friendly talk with child</b>	96%	95%
<b>Explain why behaviour was wrong</b>	95%	58%
<b>Praise child if he/she behaves well or does something well</b>	92%	66%
<b>Reward child for obeying you or behaving well</b>	73%	44%
<b>Let child know when he/she is doing a good job/behaves well</b>	89%	N/A
<b>Hug or kiss child when he/she does something/behaves well</b>	94%	88%
<b>Take away privileges, forbade something</b>	65%	N/A
<b>Threaten to punish and then do not actually punish him/her</b>	76%	43%
<b>Let child out of a punishment early</b>	63%	N/A
<b>Child is not punished when he/she has done something wrong</b>	62%	47%
<b>Shook him/her</b>	16%	14%
<b>Shouted, yelled at or screamed at him/her.</b>	72%	36%
<b>Spanked, hit or slapped him/her</b>	45%	19%
<b>Total positive discipline</b>	6.0	3.5
<b>Total inconsistent/negative discipline</b>	3.3	1.6
<b>Days in past week child in care of another child</b>	0.4	0.1
<b>Days in past week child left alone</b>	0.5	0.2

Looking at changes in parent-child activities over time, analyses found that at endline children were more likely to have at least two toys and a caregiver who engaged in four or more activities. However, there was no positive change in the proportion of parents engaging in reading activities with children. At endline children were less likely to experience inconsistent or negative discipline and there was no change in the proportion of children left alone or in the care of another child.

Table 23. Parent-child indicators, over time

	Midline	Endline
% children who have at least 2 playthings	80%	98%
% children with a caregiver who engages in reading activities	56%	50%
% children with a caregiver who engaged in 4+ activities	65%	84%
% of children left alone or in the care of another child younger than 10 years of age for more than one hour at least once in the past week	10%	13%
% of children who experienced at least one parent involvement practice	100%	99%
% of children who experienced at least one positive parenting practice	98%	97%
% of children who experienced at least one inconsistent discipline practice	86%	66%
Note: Endline averages include only families who had children aged 36-71 months and 0-<35 months so as to be more comparable to the midline data for children ages 0-71 months. Also questions were similar but not the same at midline and endline so direct comparison should be done with caution.		

#### 4.7 Child health

Multiple health indicators were also collected for children aged 36-71 months and 0-35 months. Caregivers were asked about general health and vaccinations as well as feeding practices. Few differences were found between the frequency of recent illness or the receipt of vaccinations for children between midline and endline, except that at endline children were less likely to have received a vitamin A supplement or a deworming tablet. This could be due to the fact that children received the supplement or tablets prior to 6 months ago, and thus not reflective of the First Read program.

Table 24. Children's health status over time

	Midline	Endline
% of children (0 - 71 months) who had any difficulty or rapid breathing with cough	42%	41%
% of children (0 - 71 months) who had any fever	53%	54%
% of children (0 - 71 months) who had diarrhoea	17%	17%
% of children (6 - 71 months) who received vitamin A supplement in the past 6 months	89%	55%
% of children (6 - 71 months) who received deworming tablet in the past 6 months	89%	71%
Note: At endline deworming information was only collected for children older than 36 months so the average does not reflect children aged 6-71 months as previously indicated at midline.		

Caregivers were also asked about feeding practices for very young children. Almost all children were breastfed at some point and breast feeding began within a day of being born. Few differences were found

between breast feeding practices of children at midline and endline but slightly more parents reported that their children were breast fed within one hour after birth and more received prelacteal feed (something other than breastmilk). Similarly, the frequency of children meeting target dietary guidelines was similar and low at midline and endline.

Table 25. Feeding practices over time

	Midline	Endline
<b>% of children (0-23 months) ever breastfed</b>	95%	91%
<b>% of children (0-23 months) who started receiving breast milk within 1 hour after birth</b>	71%	84%
<b>% of children (0-23 months) who started receiving breast milk within 1 day after birth</b>	92%	94%
<b>% of children (0-23 months) received a prelacteal feed</b>	10%	20%
<b>% children (6-23 months) who continue to be breastfed</b>	68%	79%
<b>% children (6-23 months) who received 4+ food groups yesterday</b>	60%	63%
<b>% children (6-23 months) who meet minimum meal frequency standards</b>	41%	45%
<b>% children (6-23 months) who ate iron-rich foods</b>	88%	76%
Note: The same for minimum meal standards and iron-rich foods defined at midline were also used at endline.		

When asked about the key messages from First Read sessions, parents seem to remember well key topics from sessions and were able to cite a variety of issues related to health, nutrition, hygiene, emergent literacy and numeracy.

*“I have learnt about colors, count numbers, sing a song and take shower.”* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“Teach the children to learn the number, to respect the olden people, say the polite word to the olden people and to be get the knowledge before start school.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

*“Learn how to protect children from transmitted disease such as wear the dress before going to bed. Sleep in mosquito net. To teach children to speak polite words and to get more knowledge. Learn how to make simple game about letters using leaves.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

*“Learn how to provide nutritious food feeding to children such as making porridge (Bor Bor Krub Koeurng), to clean the breast before breastfeed the child.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

The majority of participants in the core mother focus groups remembered learning about health issues, such as how to take care of a sick or feverish child, use mosquito nets and the importance of vaccines. Hygiene and nutrition practices were also mentioned in all 3 FGD. Another learning mentioned by several core mothers was how to sing to their children and how to protect them from danger.

The majority of the core mothers stated that the topics covered by First Read were appropriate. One of the participants said that *“yes, it [First Read] is appropriate and supports children to learn at school. For example, preschool teachers won’t have difficulties teaching children because they have learnt from us at home”*.

Core mothers see the topics that are taught to children as the main FR benefit (washing hands, singing, counting, be polite).

*“I know how to teach my children and grandchildren. They are smarter than before, can ask questions, speak to others, open books and are careful.”* FGD, core mother, Kampong Cham

Parents also highlighted First Read benefits for families:

*“Mothers gain more knowledge than before.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

*“The children are more clever than before.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

*“My children can speak very well and they can make a discussion with their friends.”* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“The neighbours praise the FR that teach children to sing and mothers are more paying attention to child rearing.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

Acquisition of knowledge, both by parents and children, is seen by duty bearers as the main benefit of FR. Learning how to sing and dance for children was emphasized. The increase in parental support to children was also often highlighted. Participants also mentioned that the main benefits for children are improved skills (i.e. reading, politeness, respect), bravery (not afraid of going to school or interacting with adults) and increased intelligence (participants believe children are getting smarter).

*“There are a lot of benefits especially for children under 5 or 6 years old. The children get a lot of knowledge. In the past parents threatened or bullying and not let the children to play but now the parents permit the children to play and if there is anything dangerous they stay nearby and instruct the children to play safe. In the past, when children go school if their mothers not go along they will not go to school but now children can attend school by their own and are not fear. The children get more knowledge.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

Mothers that participated on the parents FGD believe the sessions were useful and cited different topics as the most useful one, for instance, communication with children, child health, engage with baby during pregnancy, use of books, respect elders and pre-school learning.

Parents reported to have changed their practices toward their children in a positive way and also report that their children’s behaviour has improved, as well as that of other family members. This view was corroborated by one of the interviewees.

*“For families who get directly involved with the project, parents know how to support their kids’ learning. Their kids are smart and like learning”*. KII, CCWC member, Kampong Cham

*“I stop using violence on my children, I have reduced a lot.”* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“In the past mothers depended on the teacher, she doesn’t know she can teach as well.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

*“The children change the behaviour as they are brave to speak at school, to sing a song, and not afraid to attend school. I can see my children change their attitude. For example, when I call them, they reply with polite words.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

*“The children are smart, brave. They dare to ask lot of question to their mother.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

*“My husband change the way he talk toward me.”* FGD, parents, Kampong Cham

*“I’m angry [when child doesn’t learn], but I won’t hit my children anymore because I’m taught [not to]”* FGD, parents, Kratie

*“For example, my oldest daughter told her younger brother that she will buy him a bike for when you becomes the best student. She is appreciated with her brother’s learning.”* FGD, parents, Prey Veng

## 4.8 Advocacy

First Read’s advocacy goals in Cambodia were to include the project in local structures, such as the commune investment plan, as well as in national and sub-national policies. These goals are linked to one of the project’s key pillars , which is to support communities to work together to provide more services for their pre-school aged children by lobbying for a greater investment in ECCD at the local level.

Asked whether First Read had contributed to the introduction of other ECCD services in their communities, most duty bearers didn’t reply the answer. In Kampong Cham one participant said that “not yet”, while in Kratie another participant said that the project only deals with its related activities, seemingly misinformed about what the project activities are when it comes to advocacy and community participation. In Prey Veng another participant made the following statement about First Read’s contribution to introducing other ECCD services in communities:

*“It helps to promote community meeting to discuss about FR and get attention on ECCD promotion and awareness raising in the community.”* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

However, many duty bearers agreed that it is important for communities to invest in ECCD.

*“It’s very important because child is bamboo shoot in the future. We need good and qualify human resource so that it is important to educate children since they are in the belly. Children are born with clever, brave, not shy and easy to accept new knowledge.”* FGD, duty bearers, Prey Veng

When questioned how to include ECCD activities in the commune budget or commune investment plan some duty bearers FGD participants in Kratie and Prey Veng agreed that ECCD should be included in the commune investment plan, but failed to suggest how this could be done or to provide examples of where this has already happened. A couple of suggestions were made in the FGD and in KII:

*“I will propose to integrate the project in gender program. This can be done during commune council meeting or consultation meeting at commune. My role as CCWC, I will debate to continue the project.”* FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham

*“Community start proposing of ECCD development plan to put into commune integration and investment plans (3 to 5years). Community is able to extend its work and raise ECCD in annually investment plan.”* KII, POE, deputy chief of ECE, Kampong Cham

According to duty bearers in the three provinces budget allocation does not prioritize investment in ECCD activities or there is no budget available. A similar challenge was shared in KII.

*“The budget for the development infrastructure, we understand that the investment is mostly benefited for rich people. For example: Road construction to serve for easy driving car or riding motor only. The government budget is limited. Other social services are relied on support from NGOs. Community preschool teacher’s salary supported by NGO. There are only 30 % out of 40 % of commune budget use to support the community awareness raising activities.” FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham*

*“WCCC has no budget for ECCD because our current budget is not enough for current work.” KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham*

*“One more thing, we don’t have budget to support them to work on this project. CCWC has limited understanding and they have a lot of work to do not only have work with Save the Children. I’d like to ask Save the Children to give some budget to support them because there are also many works from Save the Children for them.” KII, DOE, Prey Veng*

*“Overall, I am not sure about budget planning in the commune, because CCWC at communes also are not clear on the budget management. District council and secretary are managing the budget for WCCC and CCWC.” KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham*

Most participants in the qualitative study think attention to child development is low amongst First Read’s key stakeholders due to lack of community ECCD centres and low value placed in early education.

*“They said [parents] they take care of their children for ages, but it’s always fine”. FGD, core mother, Kampong Cham*

*“They [parents] said useless and waste time.” FGD, parents, Kampong Cham*

*“We lack preschools, parents ignored their children; they didn’t register for their children. Some people still hit [children], curse and use violence on their children” FGD, core mother, Kratie*

*“They don’t care about their children health,” FGD, core mother, Kratie*

*“They [parents] still think about their own traditional culture; before their parents have a lot of children, they still could feed them without get any training.” KII, DoE, Kampong Cham*

*“They [parents] didn’t pay attention, didn’t want to study”. FGD, core mother, Kratie*

*“They don’t really believe on my teaching. They don’t think that baby who is in our belly could be taught. For children development lessons I told them but they didn’t believe.” FGD, Core mother, Kampong Cham*

Despite all these challenges some participants in Kampong Cham still saw benefits in community participation and ECCD.

*“First Read Project in the future will help to improve my village. Since we have implemented the project children in my village get more knowledge. Before First Read they did nothing. Nowadays mothers get more knowledge (e.g.) myself, village leader and commune chief have promoted and raised awareness to them. [...] In the future while FRP end the community will keep continue on disseminate”. FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham*

*“In the future if [First Read] organization stops supporting the village, Commune Management will support the villages to continue”. FGD, duty bearers, Kampong Cham*

“It [First Read] organizes group of mothers so that mothers will communicate and share with each other to support children’s learning and playing. Children can play together and learn how to share with each other”. KII, CCWC, Kampong Cham

In FGD and KII there was no mention of First Read’s influence in national or sub-national policies. However, Save the Children staff have stated that the project has been conducting advocacy activities with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to increase their budget for ECCD and review their curriculum and that they are working closely with POE to integrate the project to the annual operational plan of provincial education and ESP and also work closely with commune councils to advocate them to allocate commune budget for ECCD. There is anecdotal evidence that 93 out of 138 target communes have already proposed to integrate home-based ECCD into their 2016 Commune Investment Plan (CIP). The proposed budget allocation ranges from USD 70 to USD 3,800 per commune. The proposals are currently pending government approval and this issue will be closely followed up in Phase 2.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1 Summary

A summary table of progress made against indicators set at baseline is displayed below. It should be noted that numerous indicators were measured in different ways during different data collections and therefore are not directly comparable to one another. For reference, the tools used in the endline data collection are included in appendix B.

Table 25. Indicators and results

Specific objective	Indicator	Baseline	Midline	Endline
<b>Objective 1</b>				
<b>By the end of 2015, 51,000 children under six years old in project areas have access to comprehensive home-based ECCD services</b>	% children under 6 with access to ECCD services <sup>1</sup>	15%	24%	27%
	% of infants (0-5 months) exclusively breast fed <sup>2</sup>	31%	68%	N/A
	# of children 6-23 months who meet nutrition standards (minimum acceptable diet)	37%	41%	45%
<b>Result 1.1</b>				
<b>560 villages have established home-based ECCD, including nutrition programme</b>	% villages with established home-based ECCD program	40%		100% (1062 villages)
	% caregivers participating in home-based ECCD services <sup>4</sup>	5%	92%	91%
<b>Result 1.2</b>				
<b>ECCD materials are available for families involved in home-based ECCD</b>	# books/materials developed (Titles)	10		30 (20 new)
	# books/materials distributed (Copies)	13,500	66,512	97,927
<b>Objective 2</b>				

Specific objective	Indicator	Baseline	Midline	Endline
<b>By the end of 2015, 80% of children (aged 3-5 years) who attend home-based ECCD in a project area are equipped with emergent literacy and numeracy to support their learning in primary school</b>	% of children aged 5 years who attended home-based ECCD and meet early learning standards <sup>5</sup>	9%	0%	10%
<b>Result 2.1</b>				
<b>Trained caregivers who demonstrate child-friendly care and stimulation</b>	% of caregivers who demonstrate child-friendly care and stimulation	40%	65%	84%
	# of mothers who participate in maternal literacy groups	0	295	222
	# of ECCD facilitators who have been trained	123 teachers, 233 core mothers, 0 NGO staff	280 teachers, 323 core mothers, 12 NGO staff	268 teachers, 1,119 core mothers, 12 NGO staffs
<b>Objective 3</b>				
<b>Increased capacities of the Provincial Office of Education (POE), District Office of Education (DOE), Schools, CCWC and NGOs in three provinces in Cambodia to support home-based ECCD services.</b>	At least 70% of CCWC show improved planning, implementation and monitoring of ECCD activities			
	# of CWCC participating in home-based ECCD services			249 CCWCs
<sup>1</sup> Baseline and midline measures used population data whereas endline data used only the sample of children sampled for the study. <sup>2</sup> All children were older than 5 months at endline. <sup>4</sup> Ending proportion does not include parents who report attending First Read but who have never attended a meeting at participating in the program. <sup>5</sup> At baseline and midline the ELDS tool was used and at endline the IDELA tool was used. The core skills assessed by ELDS and IDELA are very similar, and questions were added to the core IDELA tool to make it even more comparable to the ELDS, but children's skills are measured in different ways by the two tools. research in other countries has suggested that IDELA is a more reliable measure of child development than ELDS tools and therefore it was being tested at endline of Phase I in preparation for a longitudinal study using IDELA in Phase 2.				

## 5.2 Conclusions and recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations are provided in answer to each of the evaluation questions established for the endline. Additional recommendations for improvement will be made at the inception



stage of First Read Phase 2 once findings from the endline have been disseminated and discussed with key stakeholders.

### **5.2.1 What are the project contributions to promote children’s access to ECCD services?**

The results of the First Read endline study displayed that beneficiaries reported varied levels of participation in terms of length and intensity of engagement. Almost half of caregivers (49%) reported participating in First Read for a year or more, but at the same time 28 percent reported being involved for less than 6 months. In terms of large and small meetings, the majority of parents reported attending 1-3 of either type of session. However, some reported attending 10 or more. Combining small and large meeting attendance, analyses found that 9 percent of parents had never been to any type of meeting, 36 percent had only been to 1-3 meetings and 25 percent had been to 10 or more. So while a quarter of parents report high attendance at First Read parenting sessions, 45 percent of parents reported either never attending or attending very few First Read parenting sessions. This low level of participation could make it difficult to find a strong impact of the intervention. In addition, further investigation is needed to determine what differentiated families who attended often and those who attended infrequently.

The variation in intensity of participation is typical of new community activities and qualitative findings confirm that parents had difficulty making time to attend meetings or that they did not see the value of continuing to attend sessions. These findings were similar to the midline findings which also showed how work or business prevented attendance to project sessions and also emphasized how lack of incentives for attending the sessions was a barrier to participation. Parents are the key drivers of change in the First Read program model so low levels of participation could make it difficult to find a strong impact of the intervention, and Phase 2 of the project should consider how to make sessions more convenient for parents to attend, with special attention to attract fathers, not only mothers..

### **5.2.2 What is the effect of the First Read project on children’s school readiness (with a focus on children aged 3 – 5 years old)?**

Child development results were in line with those seen from similar populations in other countries but did not meet the benchmarks set at baseline. As expected, older children had significantly more developed skills than younger children, with 5-year-olds scoring 52 percent correct, on average compared to 18 percent for 3-year-olds. Attending an ECCD center was also a strong driver of children’s IDELA scores, as well as paternal literacy. Children who were enrolled in ECCD centers and children with more educated fathers had stronger early skills than children without ECCD access and with less educated fathers. At endline, there were no significant relationships between attending First Read sessions and child development outcomes. Future work could focus on advocacy around increasing access to ECCD centers for all children and also to further engaging fathers in home-based activities. Qualitative findings from the endline show that, in general, parents and other stakeholders seem to agree that children whose families participated in First Read are perceived as getting smarter.

### **5.2.3 What are the project contributions, particularly the home-based ECCD intervention, to discourage negative discipline practices and improve home learning environment?**

The most notable gains in children’s home learning environments are seen in the areas of book ownership, borrowing and buying, which were the main focus of the First Read program. By endline, 88 percent of families had received First Read materials and had 3 books at home. In addition, more caregivers at endline reported borrowing (7 – 20%) and buying additional books (6 – 11%). Sixty-one percent of parents with 36 – 71 month old children reported reading books to their children and 32 percent reported telling stories to children, compared to 80 and 85 percent of parents reporting that they were teaching letters

and numbers to their children. This suggests that more work can be done to encourage parents to engage with their children around First Read books and literacy related activities like storytelling as opposed to rote activities like repeating the alphabet or a list of numbers. Qualitative analysis findings suggest that some parents, especially those who are illiterate, had trouble engaging with First Read parenting activities. Some parents also reported that it was difficult to remember the messages shared during First Read activities.

Endline results suggest that there were increases in positive caregiver-child interactions and decreases in negative or inconsistent disciplinary behaviors but further research is needed to confirm this. The same parents and children were not interviewed at midline and endline. Therefore we cannot make any conclusions about how First Read has impacted parent-child interactions in these communities. In addition, qualitative analysis findings suggest that some parents are still using negative discipline when their children were not understanding new play or learning activities, suggesting that future First Read parenting sessions should integrate lessons on learning and play activities appropriate for young children and how to positively reinforce children's learning at the same time. These endline findings are aligned with the midline qualitative findings, which showed that daily stress would sometimes cause parents to use bad words towards their children and also presented findings from a survey that showed psychological aggression towards children. The midline report stated that there was anecdotal reduction of violence towards children but pointed out the difficulty in checking the evidence, given that it was self-reported.

#### **5.2.4 What is the effect of the First Read project on parent interaction and stimulation with very young children (0 - 3 years old)?**

The same children and families were not interviewed over time so it is not possible to know the impact of First Read on parenting and stimulation of children under 3 years old but quantitative results suggest that parents were less likely to engage in stimulation and learning activities with their youngest children than with their older children. Specifically, 38 percent of parents reported reading stories to children under 3, compared to 61 percent of parents with children over 3 years. Similarly, 12 percent of parents of 0-3 year old children reported telling stories to their children compared to 32 percent of parents of children over 3 years. Endline results did find that 85 percent of 0-3 year old parents reported singing to children, which is an activity specially supported by First Read. Research on the development of very young children finds that the younger that children are exposed with stimulating language activities the better it is for their development so future work should focus on encouraging parents of very young children not just to care for but also to stimulate their children's early learning.

Quantitative study results find no notable changes in caregivers' health practices or children's health status over the course of the project. However, qualitative results suggest that parents did internalize messages in this area so the impact of First Read on parents' health behavior requires further study. In addition, the core focus of First Read is enhancing materials and engagement to promote early literacy so it so it may not be necessary to maintain as many health indicators in future studies. If the project aims to impact health behaviors more intensive focus in this area may be needed. Alternatively, if health is not the core focus of the project in the future, fewer health indicators can be include in the evaluation and log frames.

#### **5.4.5 What are the results of the advocacy activities conducted by First Read?**

The endline findings are consistent with the midline report in assessing that most of First Read's advocacy is targeted at the commune level, to include ECCD activities in the commune investment plan. Although both midline and endline there was anecdotal evidence that communes have already included budget for ECCD activities in their investment plans the stakeholders involved in the FGD and KII at endline were not able to provide specific examples. Duty bearers stated interest in advocating for First Read's inclusion in local budgets, but seemed to lack knowledge on how to make this happen. Overall, there's agreement that budgets are limited and ECCD is still not a priority. This shows there is still great need for a project

to advocate for more investment in ECCD. The endline findings did not show any results at of national level policy changes as a consequence of First Read, although there is evidence of the Ministry of Education's support to some First Read events. Currently, 93 out of 138 target communes targeted by First Read have proposed to incorporate home-based ECCD to their CIPs. The proposed budget allocation is pending government approval.

## 6. Appendix A. Book buying and borrowing

Table A1. Where parents report buying and borrowing books

	% Parents buying books (N=32)	% Parents borrowing books (N=60)
<b>Bookshop in village</b>	34%	2%
<b>Bookshop in nearby town</b>	38%	0%
<b>Library, school, public institution</b>	13%	22%
<b>Friends, relatives, neighbors</b>	0%	73%
<b>NGO</b>	0%	3%
<b>Other</b>	16%	3%

## 7. Appendix B. Multivariate regression results

Table B1. Multivariate equity analysis with IDELA outcomes

VARIABLES	(1) Motor	(2) Literacy	(3) Numeracy	(4) Socio- emotional	(5) IDELA
Child age	0.183*** (0.0136)	0.107*** (0.0112)	0.116*** (0.0116)	0.113*** (0.0155)	0.130*** (0.0101)
Child is female	-0.00505 (0.0202)	-0.000228 (0.0116)	-0.0265 (0.0225)	0.0199 (0.0274)	-0.00297 (0.0149)
Enrolled in ECCD	0.150*** (0.0223)	0.0907*** (0.0173)	0.0801** (0.0184)	0.0898* (0.0301)	0.103*** (0.0123)
Father education	0.0550** (0.0119)	0.0318* (0.0122)	0.0377 (0.0186)	0.0325 (0.0161)	0.0392* (0.0127)
# learning/play activities	0.00276 (0.00830)	0.00720 (0.00636)	0.00708 (0.00725)	0.00259 (0.00654)	0.00491 (0.00569)
# types of reading materials	0.00400 (0.0112)	0.00548 (0.0105)	0.00559 (0.00612)	0.00402 (0.0111)	0.00477 (0.00822)
# home possessions	-0.0110 (0.00886)	-0.00569 (0.00411)	-0.00628 (0.00766)	-0.00741 (0.00837)	-0.00760 (0.00528)
Constant	-0.521*** (0.0759)	-0.280** (0.0595)	-0.186** (0.0568)	-0.195 (0.103)	-0.296*** (0.0565)
Observations	266	266	266	266	266
R-squared	0.460	0.415	0.344	0.312	0.496
Adjusted R-squared	0.445	0.399	0.326	0.293	0.482

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.001, \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05

## **8. Appendix C. Endline tools**

## 9. Appendix D. TOR

**10. Appendic E. Work Plan**