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# Early Childhood Development At Rising Academies

Findings from IDELA assessments – June 2017

# Summary

## What we did

- ✓ We assessed a sample of 90 kindergarten/ABC students using IDELA, a framework developed by Save the Children for assessing early years' development across a number of domains.

## Why we did it

- ✓ The goal was to assess the feasibility of using IDELA for our internal monitoring of our Early Childhood Education. We have routinely assessed older students using EGRA/EGMA, but this was the first time we used a tool like this for assessing younger students.

## What we found

- ✓ Some of the challenges we observe in the older grades are already visible here. Only 25% can correctly supply their name, age, gender, a caregiver's name, their village and their country.
- ✓ IDELA scores increase with age. While this makes sense, it contrasts with the much flatter learning profiles we observe in older grades.
- ✓ Boys perform better than girls, but the differences are not significant, especially compared to those we observe in EGRA and EGMA at older grade levels. More work is needed to explain why this is so.

# Introducing the IDELA framework

## What is IDELA?



The International Development Early Learning Assessment (IDELA) is a tool for assessing early childhood development across a number of domains:

- Gross and Fine Motor Skills
- Socio-Emotional Development
- Emergent Literacy and Language
- Emergent Numeracy
- Executive Function<sup>1</sup>
- Approaches to Learning<sup>1</sup>

IDELA was developed by Save the Children and has been extensively tested and validated. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> time it's been administered in Liberia.

## IDELA domains and items

### Gross and Fine Motor Skills

Copying a shape  
Drawing a person  
Folding paper  
Hopping on one foot

### Socio-Emotional Development

Self-awareness  
Reported # of friends  
Emotional awareness  
Empathy/perspective-taking  
Solving conflict

### Emergent Literacy

Expressive vocabulary  
Print awareness  
Letter identification  
First letter sounds  
Emergent writing  
Listening comprehension

### Emergent Numeracy

Comparison by size/length  
Sorting and classification  
Shape identification  
Number identification  
One-to-one correspondence  
Addition/subtraction  
Puzzle completion

### Executive Function

Short term memory  
Inhibitory control

### Approaches to Learning

Persistence  
Motivation/engagement

<sup>1</sup> Only the first 4 domains have been fully vetted and validated

# A note on our sample and how we are reporting the results

## Characteristics of the sample\*

	#	%
Total surveyed	90	100%
Refused consent	3	3%
Final sample	87	100%
Male	44	51%
Female	43	49%
Age (years)		
3	10	11%
4	14	16%
5	23	26%
6	40	46%

\*Sampled ~30% of girls and boys in each age group

## Reporting the results

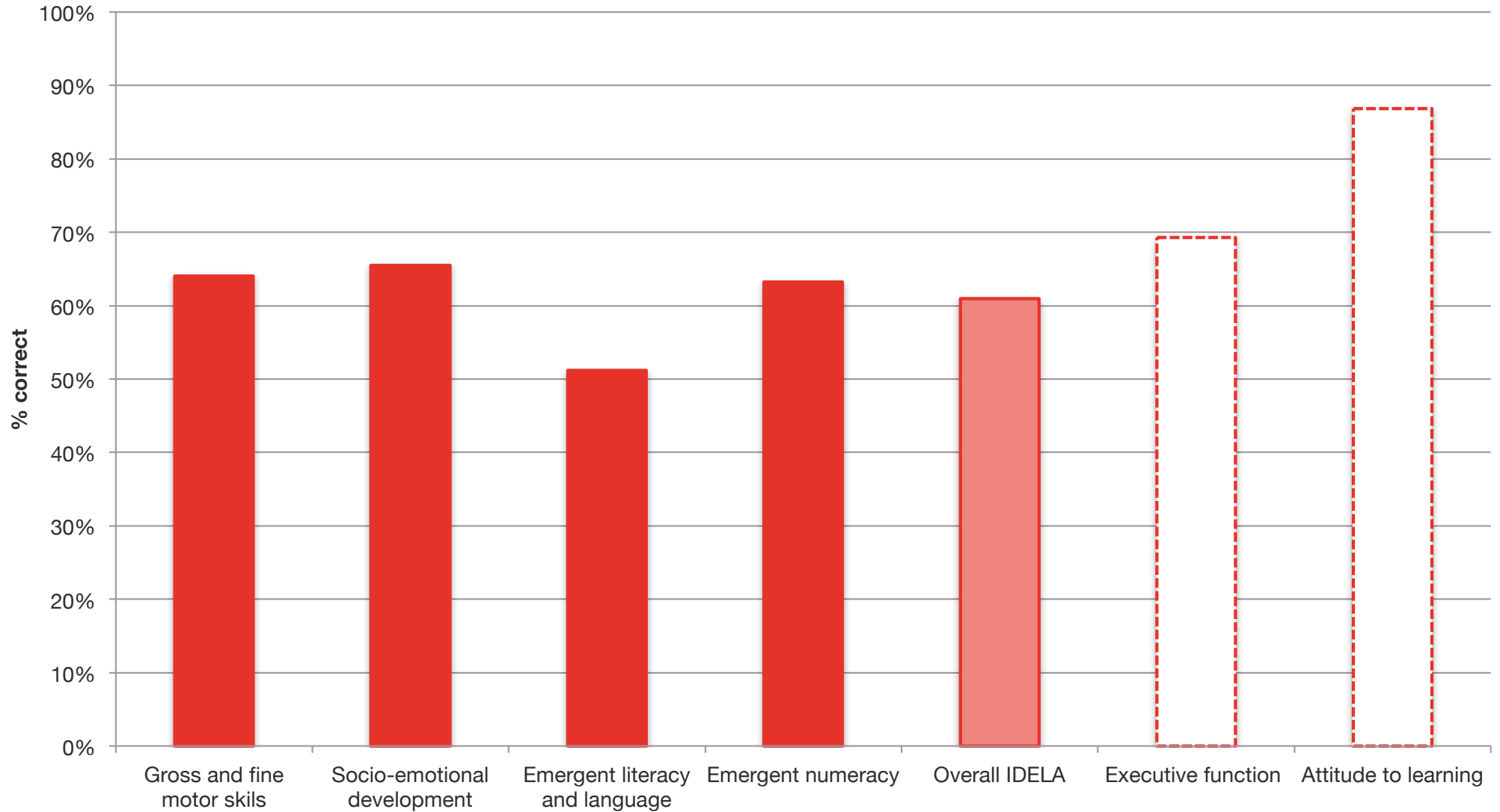
The maximum score available on each IDELA item varies depending on the particular task. Rather than report these raw scores, we therefore follow Save the Children's approach of reporting "item percent scores".<sup>1</sup> These can be interpreted as the percentage of the components of a given item that a child performed correctly. For example, a child correctly placing 3 of the 4 puzzle pieces during the 'Puzzle Completion' item would score 75%.

We then average these scores across all children and report these averages.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. <https://goo.gl/EYfLW2>

# Overall scores by domain

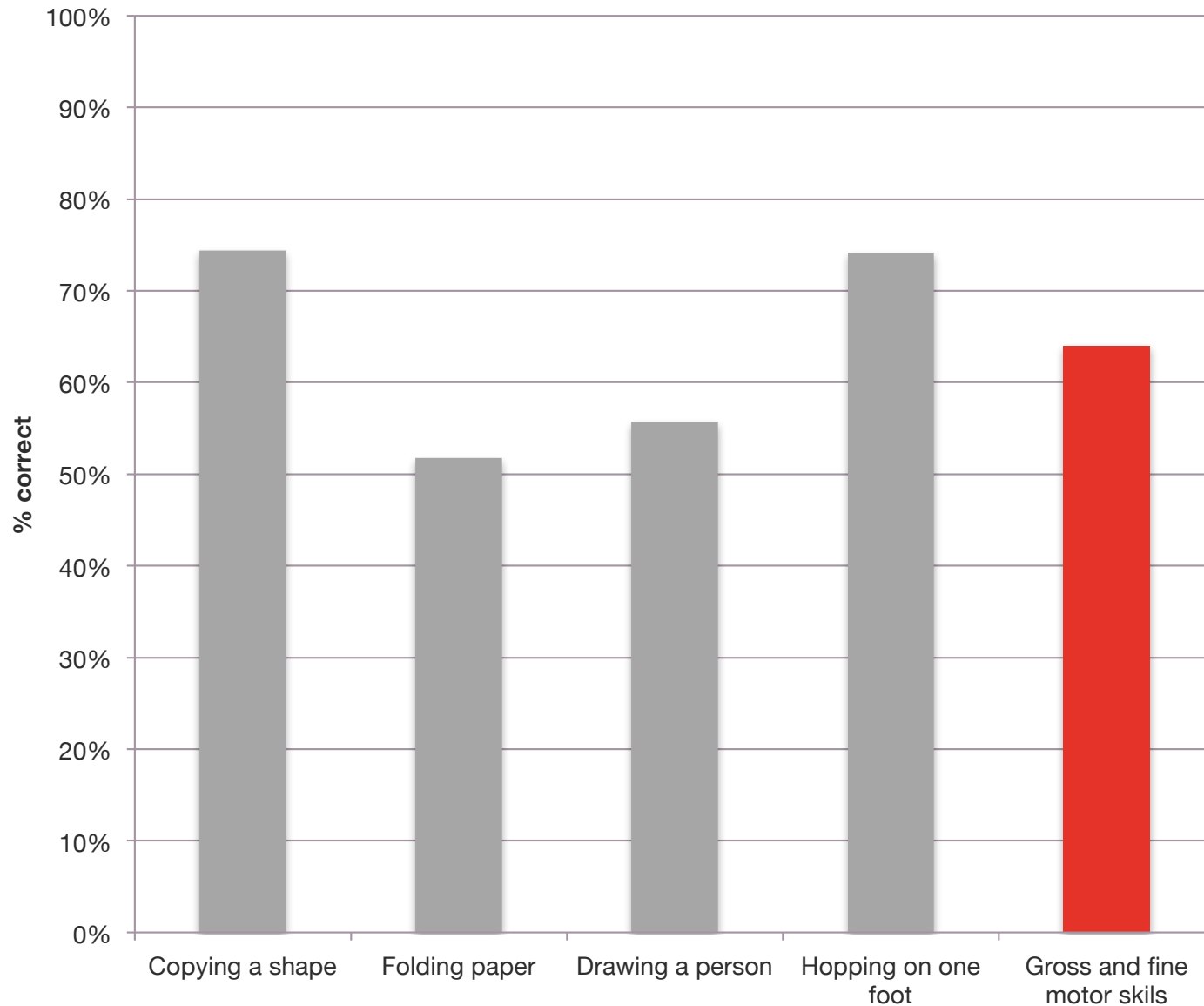
Average item % score by domain



<sup>1</sup> Only the 4 core domains that have been fully validated contribute to the Overall IDELA % score.

# Detailed scores: Gross and Fine Motor Skills

Average item % score by domain



## Deep dive Folding paper

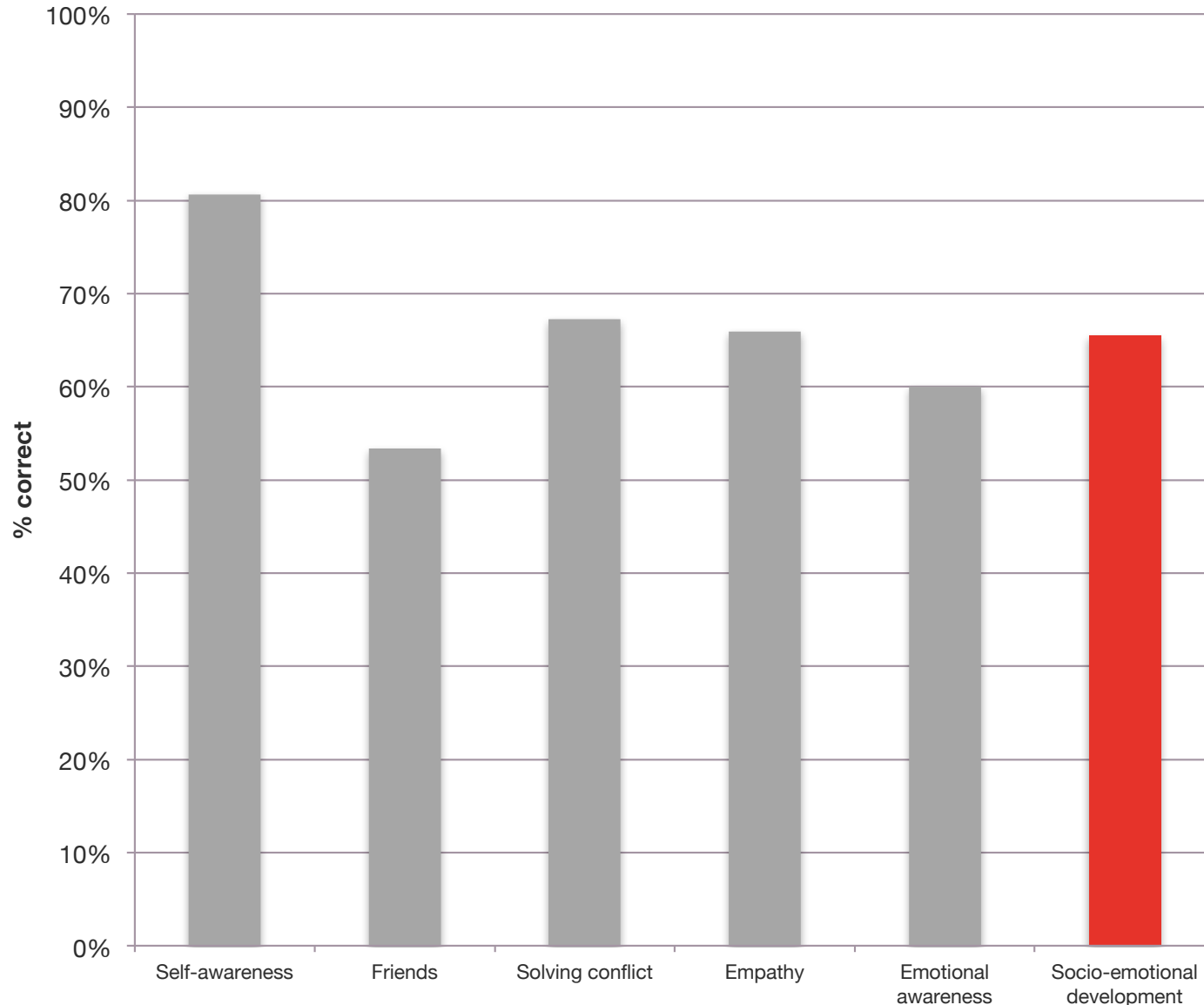
On average, children could correctly follow 2 of the 4 steps involved in the folding activity.

## Deep dive Drawing a person

Scored using a 0-8 scale, with more points available for including more features of the human body or face, the average child's drawing scored ~4.

# Detailed scores: Socio-Emotional Development

Average item % score by domain



## Deep dive Self-awareness

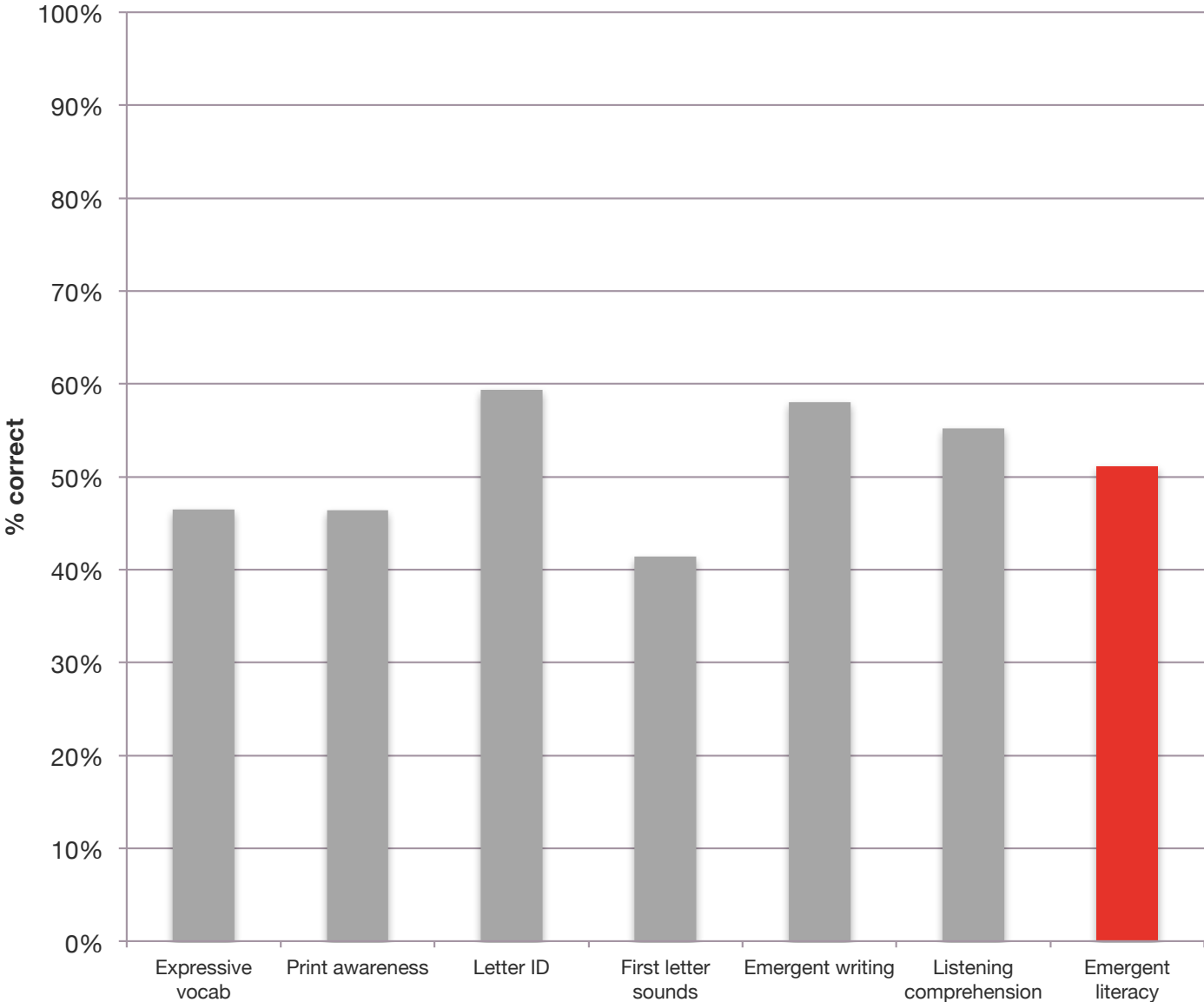
On average, children knew 5 of the 6 following facts about themselves: their name, age, gender, the name of a caregiver, their village and their country. Only 25% knew all 6.

## Deep dive Friends

On average, children could name ~5 friends they like to play with. The number of friends a child named increased significantly with age.

# Detailed scores: Emerging Literacy and Language

Average item % score by domain



### Deep dive

#### Expressive vocabulary

Children were asked to list: a) as many foods that might be found at the market and b) as many animals as they could think of. On average, they could think of under ~10 items/animals in total.

### Deep dive

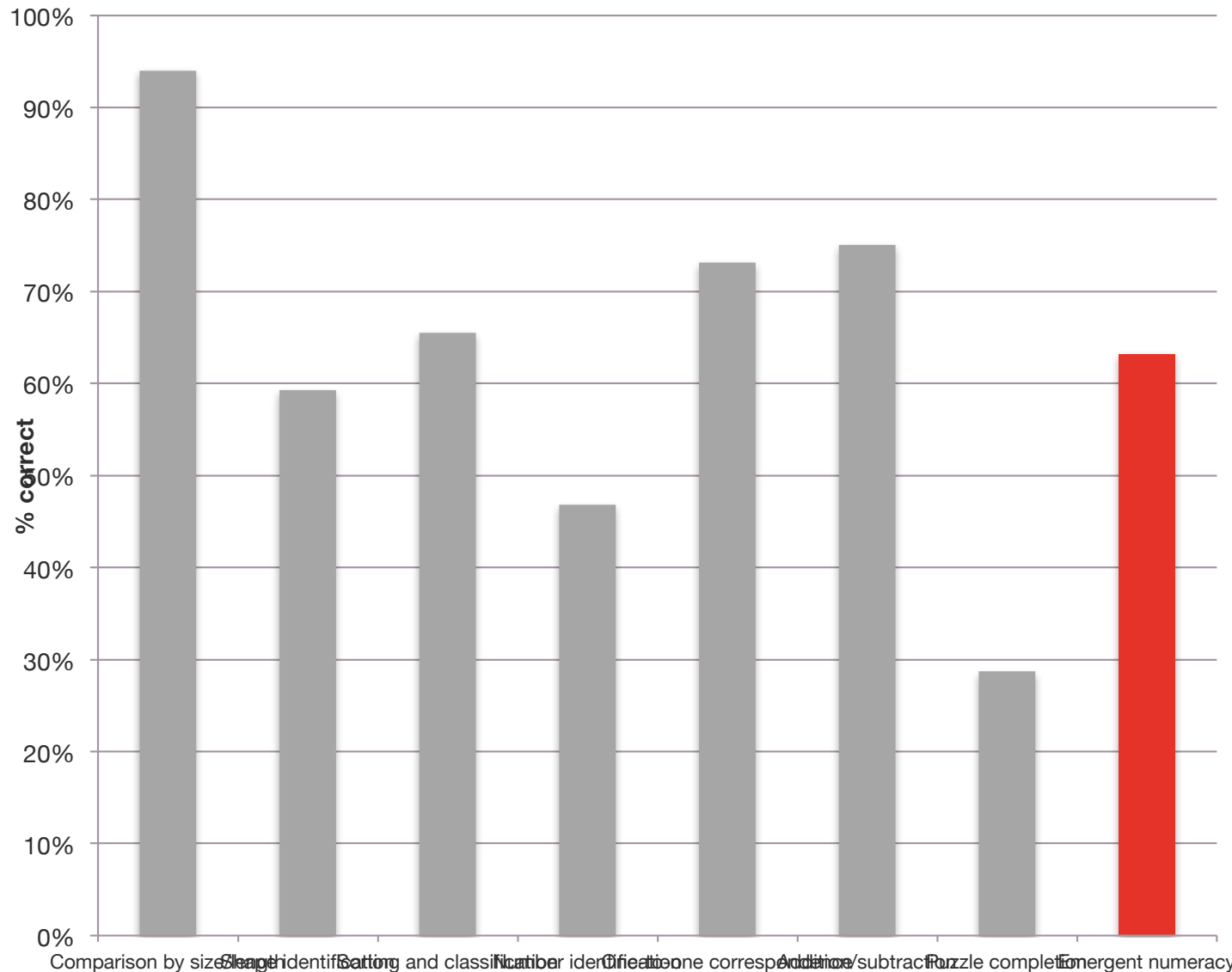
#### Letter identification

Shown a set of 20 letters, on average children could correctly identify ~12 of them.



# Detailed scores: Emerging Numeracy

Average item % score by domain



## Deep dive

### Addition & subtraction

Children were given three problems that required them to solve  $3+2$ ,  $2+2$  and  $3-1$ . 64% of children could answer all three correctly; 16% of children couldn't answer any correctly.

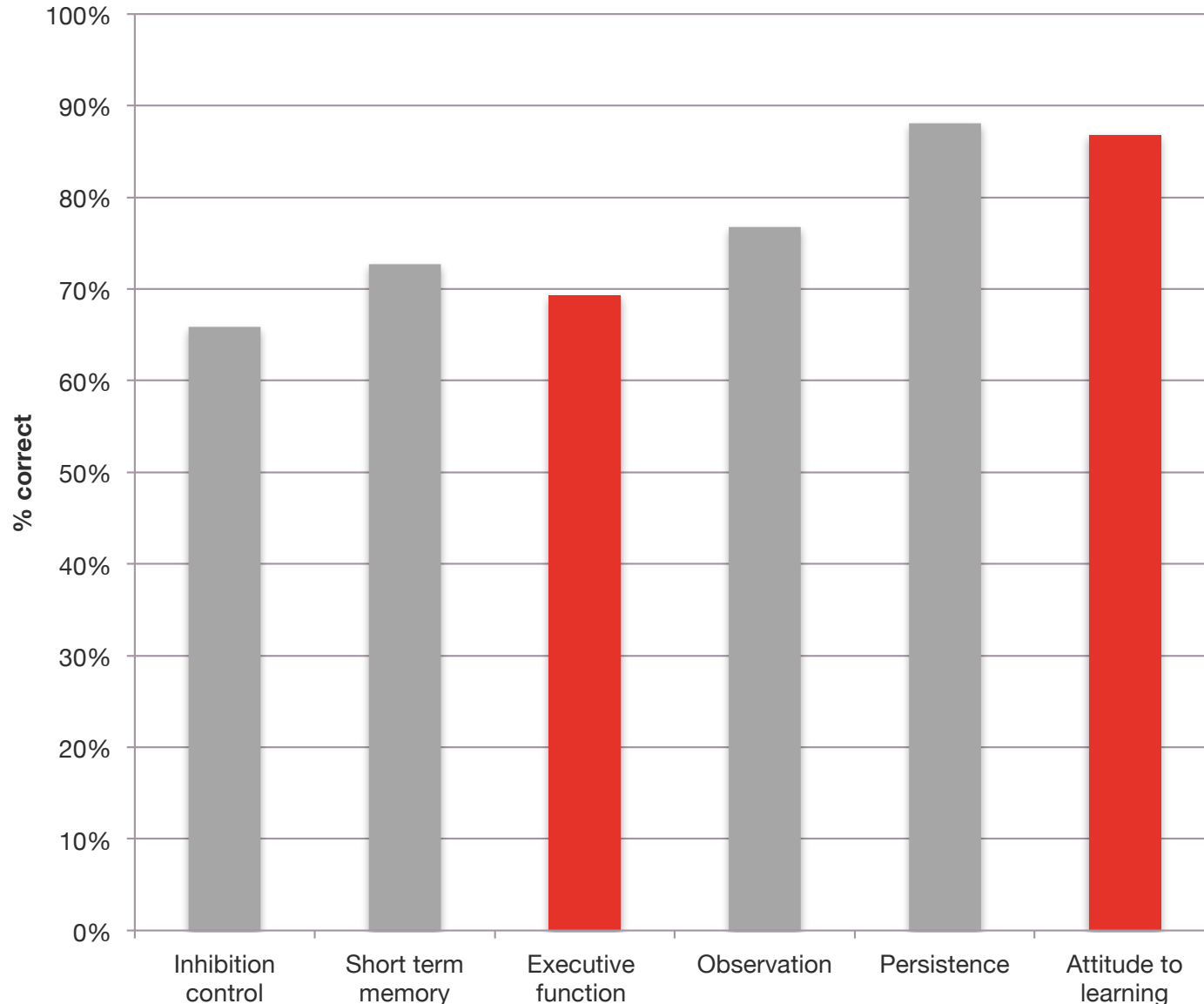
## Deep dive

### Number identification

Shown the counting numbers from 1 to 20 (but out of sequence), children could correctly identify less than half of them.

# Detailed scores: Executive Function and Approaches to Learning

Average item % score by domain



## Deep dive

### Short-term memory

Children had to repeat back a set of between 2 and 5 numbers read to them by the assessor. 50% of children repeated the numbers correctly for all 4 sets; 18% didn't manage to do so for any.

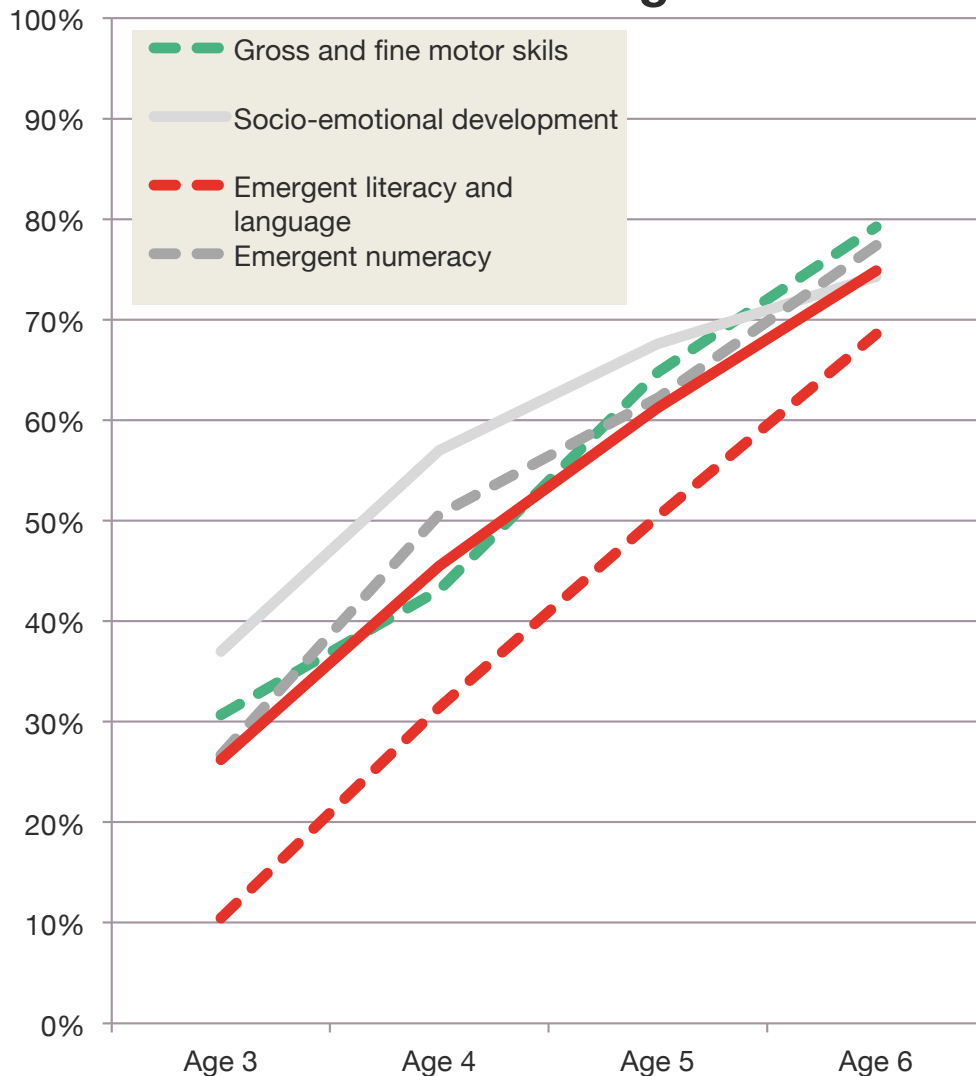
## Deep dive

### Inhibition control

The assessor instructed children that when he said "touch your toes" they were to touch their head, and vice versa. 50% were able to comply every time.

# Learning profiles: how do IDELA scores change with age?

Average item % score by domain and child's age



Age and development are strongly correlated. Correlations range from 0.40 for Socio-Emotional Development to 0.63 for Numeracy. On average, a child's score on a given item was 12-19% higher than for a child one year younger.

To some extent this is exactly what we should expect. However, it is notably *different* to what we found with EGRA and EGMA, where learning profiles were extremely flat and growth from one year to the next was much less pronounced.

The correlation between age and development also seems to be stronger in our sample than in other studies using IDELA.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Pisani (2015) <https://goo.gl/F15SGf>



# Next steps

The pilot was successful. We will continue to use IDELA to track progress of our youngest children next year.

We are sharing anonymised data with Save the Children to help inform other practitioners.

We will consult with schools on whether more of the older KG students are ready for Grade 1.

Results from the accompanying IDELA Caregiver Survey are forthcoming.





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