

# C4CD PLUS IMPACT EVALUATION RESULTS

## Background

Save the Children, in partnership with Ministry of Health, is leveraging an innovative intervention to provide a quality parenting program designed to reach 3-5 year old children in remote communities of the country. The program is a combination of the Care for Child Development (C4CD) program, and Save the Children’s Early Literacy and Math at Home (ELM at Home) program, and is known as C4CD Plus. The C4CD Plus pilot project aims to empower parents and caregivers with the skills to engage 3-5 year old children in early literacy and math activities at home, responsive care, and better health and hygiene for their holistic development through group sessions run by Health Assistants (HAs) and Village Health Workers (VHWs).



*Child matches the letters in his name during C4CD Plus group session in Kamjong, Zhemgang.*

## Study design

A randomized control trial was designed to test the effectiveness of this model. A baseline survey was completed in March 2017 and a post-test with the same families was conducted in October 2017. Children’s development was tested using the International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA), and a caregiver questionnaire was used to capture information about children’s home environments.

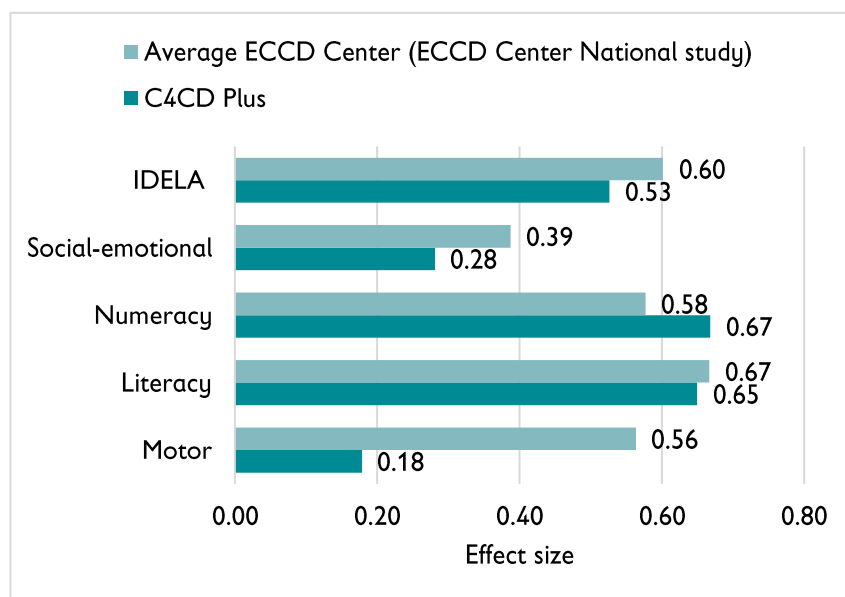
## Results

### Child development

Children whose parents attended the C4CD Plus sessions learned significantly more children in the control group in literacy, numeracy, and overall IDELA score. Also, compared to the learning growth documented during the 2015 national ECCD study, children whose parents attended the C4CD Plus sessions made comparable gains (Figure 1).

This suggests that the C4CD Plus curriculum can serve as a suitable alternative to center-based programming in areas where these services are not currently available.

**Figure 1.** Magnitude of learning and development gains from C4CD Plus and ECCD Center programs





## Equal learning gains for all children

As seen in Figure 2, analyses of differences in children's learning gains within the intervention group, found that the C4CD Plus program produced:

1. Equal learning gains for children from poorer and wealthier families
2. Equal learning gains for children from more and less educated parents

Results from this study also have implications for health and child protection services. Analyses of learning gains across both study groups found that children who weighed more and had more diversity in their diets gained more than children who were lower weight and those with less food diversity.

In addition, children who were reported to do chores in and outside their homes made significantly weaker gains than children who were not responsible for doing chores.

These findings highlight that in addition to strong home learning environments, children require proper nutrition as well as protection from harmful work at a young age in order to achieve optimal development.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the C4CD Plus pilot project was highly successful. A randomized trial of program impact displayed:

1. Significant improvements in caregiving practices as well as children's learning and development.
2. Strong potential to improve the equity of early learning and development within Bhutan.
3. Multi-sectoral support is needed for children's optimal development.

## Recommendations

Sustainable Development Goal 4.2 states, "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education."

In alignment with the global movement toward improving early childhood development services for all children, policy makers in Bhutan should consider how a program like C4CD Plus could be scaled up to other communities and maintained over time. There should also be strong consideration of how Health, Education, and other Ministries could work together to support a holistic approach to child development for the country.

**Figure 2.** Post-test learning and development by maternal education and family poverty

