



Final Research Report 2020 on

The impact of Gender-Responsive Pedagogy and the role of the parent teacher committees in Early Childhood Education in Zambia

a collaboration between VVOB Zambia and CAPOLSA (university of Zambia)

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Submitted by:

Centre for Promotion of Literacy in Sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA)
University of Zambia
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Psychology (Room 6)
Great East Road Campus Lusaka

Principal Investigator

Dr. Haatembo Mooya
haatembo.mooya@unza.zm

Co-investigators

Dr. Jacqueline Folotiya
Dr. Given Hapunda

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Julien Dillensplein 1 bus 2A, 1060 Brussels, Belgium
Telephone: +32 2 209 07 99; Website: www.vvob.org

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Acronyms

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CAG	Community Action Group
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
GRP	Gender-Responsive Pedagogy
GRP4ECE	Gender-Responsive Pedagogy for Early Childhood Education
GR LtP	Gender Responsive Learning through Play
LtP	Learning through Play
PCC	Parent Centre Committee
PTC	Parent Teacher Committee
STEEL	Supporting Teacher Education for Early learning
ZICs	Zonal In-service Coordinator(s)

Definition of key terms

Gender bias	Treating boys and girls unfairly.
Gender responsiveness	Developing plans and actions that consider the different needs of men and women, boys and girls or taking actions to prevent gender bias or gender discrimination.
Gender roles	Learned behaviours in a society that reflected activities, tasks and responsibilities given to men and women that are based on sex differences
Gender stereotypes	Beliefs about behaviours and roles that boys and girls are expected to perform.
Learning areas or play areas	These are areas within the classroom where learning activities take place simultaneously. For example, the shopping area, construction area, Expressive Arts play area. Learners rotate from one activity to the next.
Sex	Biological difference between men and women, boys and girls.
Sex role	Functions of males and females, depending on their biological make up.
Whole group activity	This is an activity that all the children are involved in at the same time. Children may be in different groups but doing the same activity at the same time. For example, storytelling during carpet time or children in different groups doing addition with bottle tops.

Executive Summary

The Gender-Responsive Pedagogy for Early Childhood Education (GRP4ECE) study was a pilot intervention study, which was conducted in Chibombo district. The study focused mainly on Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers. Over a period of 6 months, 3 phases of data collection were conducted: the baseline, midline and end-line. Interventions were implemented at two main points: after the baseline observation and after the midline observation. This report presents results for the entire study, it compares baseline, midline and end-line results.

The main objectives of this research were:

(1) to measure the impact of the GRP4ECE related capacity building interventions on the knowledge, attitudes, and teaching/leadership practice of ECE teachers and school leaders; and (2) to gather data on the role and functioning of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

The purpose of the baseline study was threefold: (1) to determine knowledge and practice of GRP of ECE teachers in their classrooms before receiving interventions in GRP4ECE; (2) to determine how school leaders view gender- and gender related practices in the school; and (3) to determine the role of Parent Teacher Committees (PTCs) in advancing the GRP4ECE agenda.

At baseline, the sample consisted of 10 ECE teachers and 18 school leaders (6 heads, 1 deputy head, 6 senior teachers in charge of ECE and 6 unspecified leaders) from 10 schools (control and intervention) from Chibombo district in Central province.

The purpose of the midline observation was to (1) determine knowledge and awareness of traditional roles as well as the use of Gender challenging questions or a typical examples by ECE teachers in their classrooms and school leaders after receiving the initial 2 interventions in GRP4ECE; (2) determine the role of Parent Teacher Committees in the schools with a view to determine if they could advance the GRP4ECE agenda.

Midline involved the 5 intervention schools only. Therefore, comprising of 5 ECE teachers and 10 school leaders (5 head teachers, 4 senior teacher and 1 deputy head teacher).

Furthermore the PTA & PTC participated in focus group discussions (FGDs). The sample consisted of 40 members of the (non-executive) Parent Teacher Association or PTA (focus groups had between 6 and 12 participants) and 28 members of the (executive) Parent Teacher Committee or PTC (focus groups had between 4 and 7 participants) across the 5 schools.

The purpose of the end-line study was to assess the effectiveness of the GRP4ECE trajectory including the Gender Responsive Learning through Play intervention administered to ECE teachers and school leaders. Consequently, the main objective of the end-line assessment was to determine if and how ECE teachers implemented gender responsive learning through play after they received the training.

At end-line, the sample was similar to that of baseline. Ten (10) ECE teachers and 20 school leaders from the 10 schools were included in the study (9 head teachers; 1 deputy headteacher; 8 senior teachers; and 2 school leaders whose leader positions were not specified.).

Data in the three phases were collected using observations, interviews and (at midline) focus group discussions. During the course of the study, ECE teachers and school leaders in the intervention schools took part in 3 interventions. The first was a training on awareness

of stereotypes. The second training focused on asking challenging questions about gender roles and giving gender atypical examples. This was followed by coaching. The third and final training focused on Gender Responsive Learning through Play (GRLtP). Coaching also reinforced this training.

An analysis of the data at baseline, midline and end-line showed differences in classroom practices mainly in the intervention schools.

In the subdomain of "monitoring of learner-learner interactions for stereotypical behaviour and utterances", observations at end-line revealed general increased learner interactions in the intervention classrooms compared to control schools. Increased interactions were observed between boys and girls. Furthermore, data revealed increased monitoring of learner interactions for stereotypes by ECE teachers in the intervention schools where all but one teacher monitored learner interactions for stereotypes. Observations revealed that monitoring of learner interactions was not practised in control schools. Furthermore, learner - learner interactions were limited by the teacher led approach and absence of play areas.

Regarding neutralizing gender stereotypes with examples or questions, results showed that intervention school ECE teacher practiced using examples rather than questioning to challenge stereotypes. Challenging gender stereotypes was observed more at end-line, even though the intervention was administered before midline assessments were conducted. While intervention school teachers practiced using gender atypical examples, teachers from the control schools were observed using examples that reinforced traditional gender roles and stereotypes during their lessons. This observation was not made for the intervention group.

Regarding learning through play, there was an undeniable difference in implementing learning through play in the ECE intervention classrooms. At baseline and midline, learning through play was not observed in all the ECE classrooms (control and intervention). At end-line, all the intervention schools had play areas with simultaneous activities for learners. A wide variety of play materials was observed arranged and combined in ways which made the areas attractive to all learners (boys and girls). Independent learning through play was observed in intervention schools, unlike in the control group even though all schools had received basic training in learning through play (without specific focus on gender)

Results from interviews conducted with school leaders revealed that the interventions had a positive impact on their individual beliefs about gender roles. As a result, some school leaders had already made changes in their schools that promoted gender responsiveness e.g. tasks that used to be assigned to boys only or girls only were now being assigned to both boys and girls. New knowledge acquired from the training was how to challenge and neutralize gender stereotypes and the importance of play and its implementation in the classrooms. School leaders reported that the training helped them become better leaders by understanding the importance of creating equal opportunities for boys and girls, men and women in the school. Lastly, the school leaders were able to explain what changes they would make within their schools to create a gender responsive environment. They were also able to explain how they would support ECE teacher implement GRP4ECE.

In conclusion, the first objective "to measure the impact of the GRP4ECE related capacity building interventions on the knowledge, attitudes, and teaching and leadership practice of ECE teachers and school leadership" was successfully achieved. The intervention was

somewhat effective as can be observed from the positive results attained for the intervention teachers and the school leaders. While ECE teachers began to challenge stereotypes and stereotypical behaviour in the classroom, school leaders in the intervention schools changed the way they managed the assignments and tasks given to boys and girls to make them more gender responsive. The use of questioning as a technique to challenge stereotypes and stereotypical behaviour is 1 aspect of the training that was not fully implemented by the teachers in contrast to learning through play, organising parallel/simultaneous activities in play corners/area etc. Neutralizing stereotypes through questioning may need to be approached differently, or requires more time, so that teachers are more likely to apply.

Regarding the second objective, “to gather data on the role and functioning of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the parent teacher committee (PTC)” the study revealed that all the schools had a PTC that was elected by non-PTC members. PTC and non-PTC members understood the roles and responsibilities of the PTC. They were in line with the Education Act of 2011.

The major roles of the PTC that were identified through the study include fund raising for the school, acting as a conduit between the school and the community, assisting with school projects such as building infrastructure and provision of teaching and learning materials.

Some recommendations, based on the above conclusion, include:

- (1) The interventions should be scaled-up to other schools, given the success of the interventions in changing attitudes, increasing awareness and changing ECE classroom practices;
- (2) The training should, to maximise its effect, dedicate more time or approach in a different manner the component of challenging stereotypes through questioning as some teachers struggled to apply this. Their challenge could be related to competencies, whereby teachers were not trained to stimulate this kind of reflection or discussion or it could stem from a cultural norm which does not encourage asking questions.
- (3) Gender Responsive Learning through Play (GRPLtP) should be included in the teacher training curriculum based on its effectiveness in promoting GRP.
- (4) In-service structures should be enabled to empower school leaders. In addition to helping school leaders understand what needs to happen in an ECE class, school leaders should also be guided on GRP applied to their role.
- (5) Development partners such as VVOB should continue to enable in-service structures to empower ECE teachers and school leaders as they work to promote gender responsiveness in the schools. In-service structures could do this during school visits and regularly request updates on the progress made by the schools. The partners could also receive feedback on challenges experienced during the implementation of GRP and how they were mitigated.

Introduction

In 2014, the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) introduced Early Childhood Education (ECE) as part of the Zambian national Government agenda. This led to the development of a teacher-training curriculum for Early Childhood Education. However, Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) was not included in the curriculum. Therefore, ECE teachers in Zambia have not been trained in GRP. As ECE teachers interact with learners, they transfer their own gender beliefs and attitudes, shaped by their personal experiences and socialization. The lack of support for teachers to consciously reflect on their gender beliefs and attitudes, as well as on other ECE issues, is certainly a missed opportunity to challenge and bring change to the gender roles that later impede the full development and economic growth of the learners.

It is during early childhood that rapid brain development and acquisition of foundational skills and competencies takes place. Learners develop self-awareness and acquire basic values and attitudes. During this period, stereotypes become fixed and are likely to have a long-lasting impact on how learners perceive their own potential and that of others. ECE, therefore, holds exciting opportunity for learners to develop a gender-sensitive view of themselves and others, which influences the life choices they will make later in life. Boys and girls thrive on a range of opportunities to be kind, thoughtful, strong, adventurous, emotional, brave, gentle, resilient, assertive, active and nurturing. However, the challenge lies in finding practical ways to achieve this with all learners. ECE teachers and their school leaders can work consciously to challenge gender roles before learners develop a fixed and unconscious way of thinking about these roles.

VVOB supports government structures to improve early learning in Zambian (government) schools. This study implemented a series of GRP interventions based on the Gender-Responsive Pedagogy for Early Childhood Education (GRP4ECE) toolkit and targeted ECE teachers and school leaders.

This report summarises the interventions administered, and the results obtained at different phases of the study (baseline, midline and end-line). It also includes a summary of the GRP4ECE toolkit and brief desk review of policies on the role of Parent Teacher Committees (PTCs) in schools.

PTCs are important, they represent the community, which transmits, through the process of socialisation, cultural expectations, practices, values and beliefs about gender roles to learners. Understanding the role of the PTCs helps to determine how they can contribute to create a gender sensitive school environment.

The subsequent sections focus on the purpose, significance and methodology, findings and discussion. The results section highlights the results at the 3 phases of the study followed by a conclusion and recommendations.

1 Background

1.1 Summary of the GRP4ECE Toolkit

Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) aims to respond to the learning needs of all learners to help them reach their full potential. The GRP4ECE toolkit provides information for initial training and professional development in GRP. It targets ECE teachers, school leaders, ECE student teachers, ECE teacher trainers, caregivers and any other practitioners who deal with younger children. Additionally, it is a useful resource for researchers, school parent committees and governing bodies, civil society organizations, community leaders and education policy makers. It supports teachers and school leaders in providing learners in a gender-responsive learning environment.

The toolkit offers an introduction to GRP in ECE with practical tips, which can be adapted to any context. Individual teachers and school leaders can use ideas from the toolkit in their classrooms and schools. Below is a summary of information in the toolkit.

Chapter 1: An Introduction to Gender in Education

This chapter introduces the topic of gender in education and refers to international commitments that support gender equality in education. The chapter also focuses on gender in education within the African context and provides an introduction on the concept of GRP.

The gender inequities prevalent in many African societies extend to the school environment. They manifest in the learning, teaching and management processes. Limited awareness of gender-specific impedes teachers and school leaders from addressing gender constraints. This chapter also discusses international commitments to gender equality in education, gender in education within the African context and gender responsive pedagogy.

Gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP)

Gender-responsive pedagogy (GRP) refers to teaching that pays attention to the specific learning needs of girls and boys. Many pedagogical approaches do not consider gender issues. As an example, many textbooks across countries and levels of education reinforce stereotypes: men often appear in active, leading roles while women merely help. Teachers and learners bring their individual cultural backgrounds into the classroom. GRP prompts teachers to reflect on their own beliefs about traditional gender roles. This helps teachers provide equal opportunities for all learners to engage and learn, regardless of their sex. Furthermore, GRP guides teachers and their school leaders to support gender equality.

Chapter 2: Gender-Responsive Pedagogy and Early Childhood Education Teachers

The second chapter focuses on the relevance of GRP in ECE. It deals with important aspects of teaching and learning in relation to GRP: preparation of lesson plans, delivery of lessons; assessment; play and other learning materials; language use and interactions (between learners, teachers and learners and with parents); health; nutrition; wellbeing; abuse; sexual behaviour and classroom management.

Relevance of gender-responsive pedagogy in early childhood education

In teaching and learning inside and outside the classroom, GRP is relevant. It facilitates participation, access and retention of information and enhances performance in school.

The minds, skills, values, behaviours and attitudes of learners develop in early childhood. Additionally, stereotypes form and become fixed during this period. Learners are still shaping their understanding of what it means to be a boy, a girl, a man or a woman. Therefore, gender biases may reinforce stereotypes and thus influence expectations and learning outcomes. Such biases may occur unintentionally in the classroom and in the community at large. They are rooted in experiences, culture and the media, and passed from generation to generation.

Lesson planning and delivery

A gender-responsive lesson plan considers the specific needs of all learners throughout the teaching and learning processes.

During a lesson, teachers create opportunities for learners to interact with one another. Group work, which encourages equal participation of learners is encouraged. Opportunities given to learners to play with their peers help develop skills to interact effectively and comfortably with their own and the opposite sex.

Teaching and learning environment

Teaching and learning can take place both inside and outside the classroom. The classroom sitting arrangement influences learners' involvement and learning. Among other factors, the sitting arrangement in class, organisation and management indoor and outdoor learning through play, independent learning in play areas and free play, determine gender responsiveness.

Play and other learning materials

The learning environment should be rich in play and other learning materials, such as picture and storybooks, play materials and toys, illustrations and posters on the walls. When play materials appeal to one sex only, all learners miss out. Various experiences with different materials help learners acquire a wider range of skills and fosters holistic development. Gender-specific play materials may also influence learners' understanding of male and female roles. If dolls are only for girls, both boys and girls may think that caring for children is only for women.

For these reasons, it is important for a teacher to think consciously about gender before making or buying play and other learning materials.

Storybooks and picture books, posters and visuals are important because they reflect society and help children learn. They help learners form their idea of the world, find their way in it and become sure of themselves.

Interactions and language use

Young learners learn through interactions with one another, adults and materials. These interactions influence the well-being of learners. It is important for all learners to feel heard and understood. Gestures, intonation and pictures can enhance understanding. The same (body) language should apply for boys and girls. Language directed to or heard by learners, reveals (unconscious) gender biases and reinforces stereotypes. It is therefore useful to reflect when the words "boys" and "girls" are used, when compliments are given, and on the language used by teachers among each other.

Parental support and communication with parents is essential to accomplish increased gender equality between learners.

Assessment

Assessment helps gather and provide teachers, parents and families with critical information on learner's development and growth. Information from assessments helps the teacher adapt teaching methods suit learners' specific needs.

Observation of boys and girls can help to assess gender interactions. The gathered information helps to enhance learners' behaviours, attitudes, values and learning.

Health, nutrition, well-being and gender in the ECE classroom

When addressing the above topics with young learners, there are many opportunities to develop positive gender interactions and to question gender stereotypes.

Sexual behaviour

Young children (especially those under the age of five) tend to be very curious about their bodies and those of others. Exploratory behaviour occurs between children who are similar in age. Be aware that this behaviour occurs openly in the earlier years. With slightly older learners (children over five years) it may be hidden. Learners ask questions about private parts of others or about the origins of babies. This early exploratory behaviour is not sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves coercion, intimidation, force or any other type of power imbalance, such as a difference in age.

Abuse

Vigilance for signs of violence against young learners is critical, as they are often not able to express what is happening to them. Teachers know their learners well and can recognise abuse in their learners. When there is suspicion of abuse, they can alert people within the referral system. Sometimes, teachers are the most trustworthy person in a young victim's life. Learners are likely to tell their teacher what is going on in their lives.

Good classroom management to avoid corporal punishment

Corporal punishment has strong negative effects on learning. On the other hand, reward systems can increase motivation and well-being, which results in better learning outcomes. Good classroom management reduces undesired behaviour from learners and helps teachers avoid the use of strong language or corporal punishment. As with other aspects of teaching, classroom management needs to be gender responsive. If not, it can reinforce existing gender stereotypes.

Chapter 3: Gender-Responsive Pedagogy and School Leaders

This chapter covers GRP in relation to school leaders. It focuses on what school leaders can do to promote GRP in their schools.

A gender-responsive school leader consider the needs of each individual learner. School leaders shape the school's vision and translate values into actions and clear guidelines for all stakeholders within the school community. These become concrete through gender-responsive school plans, budgets and policies. Vision and values form the foundation for all new developments, policies and actions.

Development of a shared vision and values requires participation from all stakeholders in the school community (teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, learners, etc.).

Gender-responsive planning and monitoring

A school leader needs to plan, support and monitor policy making, policy implementation and policy delivery at the school. The shared vision and values of the school guide these processes.

Enhancing gender-responsive teaching, learning and strengthening teacher quality

Crucial factors that enhance gender responsiveness in teaching and learning processes include gender responsive human resource policies and opportunities for teachers to pursue continuous professional development

Enriching the curriculum to be more gender-responsive

School leaders play an important role in enriching existing curriculum to become gender responsive.

Physical infrastructure

As girls and boys have the same physical strength and ability until they reach puberty, there is no need for distinction in the school's physical infrastructure for boys and girls in ECE. It is important that ECE classrooms provide enough space for learners to move.

At this early age, it is not necessary to have toilets separated by sex, especially if half doors are in place. If the toilets separate, ensure the signage is gender responsive and does not reinforce stereotypes. When procuring tables and chairs, it is advisable to cater for the diverse ages that attend ECE class. The tables and chairs should be attractive to boys and girls.

Nutrition

It is important that school feeding programmes do not reinforce stereotypes (e.g. having only women prepare food). Learners must receive nutritious meals without bias. Interaction with parents about the feeding programme is an ideal opportunity to talk with the community about prevailing harmful stereotypes that prevent healthy nutrition.

Child safety and protection

School leadership has the responsibility to uphold a ban on corporal punishment in their school. A school leader can shape school policy that relates to classroom management and punishment. Taking a stance against corporal punishment, such as pinching and beating, contributes to creation of a safe environment for all learners. Open dialogue about gender responsiveness can prevent gender biased violence and promote a gender-responsive school environment. Creating awareness among all stakeholders about policies and mechanisms prevailing that prevent and deal with incidents of School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) can reinforce gender responsiveness in schools.

Chapter 4: Activities to Engage Your Learners on Gender

This chapter covers more explicit gender related teaching ideas, which streamline gender into everyday classroom practices. These activities include sorting, puzzles, a professions memory game and a bingo game. A gender-responsive picture book is included.

Chapter 5: The Go Gender Go Game for Teachers and School Leaders

Teachers also learn through play. The Go Gender Go game caters for ECE teachers. Teachers, school leaders and parents can play the game.

This game can help those interested in familiarizing themselves with the toolkit in an interactive and fun way. It sparks interest and deepens understanding of the content in the toolkit. The aim of the Go Gender Go game is not so much to win the game, but to reflect on GRP, discuss questions and learn together.

1.2 The Zambian Ministry of Education Policy guidelines on Parent Teacher Committee (PTC)

The Education Act of 2011 sanctioned the formation of PTC's. Article 73 under part VII describes a school committee as "a community that seeks to operate a community educational institution" (P. 37). It explains that a parent teacher committee should comprise of not less than 6 but not more than 13 members. The functions of parent teacher committees according to the Act are to:

- Regulate enrolment conditions of learners at the school, including collecting the fees/contributions, if any, of the members of the community;
- Determine the school calendar, the subjects of instruction and syllabi to be implemented (with approval from the Minister);
- Determine expulsion and suspension rules for learners in the school (with approval of the registrar);
- Keep income and expenditure accounts, as well as provide a detailed report to the Registrar;
- Do what is necessary to achieve its purpose.

The Act stipulates one year as the term of office. Then the committee is dissolved, and new members are elected.

The MoGE "Guidelines on Establishing and Management of Low-Cost Early Childhood Education and Development model centres" (2018) describe policy for satellite ECE centres. These ECE teaching units are independent from primary education, and usually have a single ECE teacher. The satellite ECE centres, are instructed, in the guidelines, to have a Parent Centre Committee (PCC) which is the equivalent of a PTC. The PCC is a committee that is elected by the community.

The Ministry guidelines emphasize the need for the school and the community (through the PCC) to work harmoniously in the development and management of the centres. Such centres function through support, management and leadership from the communities who are also responsible to set up these ECE centres and ensure their sustainability. The PCC's main responsibility is to coordinate the affairs of the ECE centre in the community.

In satellite ECE centres the following are key functions of the community:

- Bring children to participate in ECD/ECE
- Promote MoGE policy objectives for ECE
- Collaborate to mobilise resources for ECD/ECE. This includes construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure, providing caregivers and contributing to the welfare of ECE teachers /caregivers.
- Contribute local inputs such as folk stories, traditional games and development of teaching aids for ECD/ECE curriculum.
- Support school feeding interventions
- Provide support in the management of ECD/ECE centres
- Uphold child protection laws and

- Participate in parenting programmes to provide support for children attending ECE.

Composition of the Parents Centre Committee (PCC).

According to MoGE (2018), the Parents Centre Committee (PCC) should consist of a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer and 6 committee members.

The committee is in-charge of play parks, storytelling and folklore, nutrition, child protection and counselling/group parenting. The committee must:

- Be custodian of the ECE establishment
- Discuss and approve the centre budget
- Manage the centre funds and resources
- Liaise with teachers to maintain centre goals and objectives
- Manage the general welfare of the children and the centre
- Solicit support for centre activities from the community, private sector, NGO's and donors
- Participate in the development and design of the development plan
- Organise the school feeding programme
- Acquire land for the centre
- Organise meetings for the parents
- Educate the community on issues related to the ECE centre
- Facilitate staff recruitment and development
- Mobilise the community to support the centre activities
- Transact business for the centre as empowered by the parents
- Ensure ECE caregivers are trained
- Sensitise parents on the initiation and sustainability of the ECE programmes and ensure that caregivers are motivated.

2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

2.1. Purpose of the overall study

The main purpose of the study was to (1) measure the impact of GRP4ECE interventions on knowledge, attitudes and teaching/leadership practice of ECE teachers and school leadership against a baseline. (2) Gather data on the role and functioning of PTAs and their possible contribution to the advancement of the GRP4ECE agenda.

The end-line report describes differences (or lack thereof) between baseline, midline and end-line results based on the interventions administered at different phases of the study.

Each phase of the study had a specific purpose as outlined below.

Purpose of the baseline study

The purpose of the base-line study was (1) to determine ECE teacher's knowledge and practice of GRP before receiving intervention on elements of the GRP4ECE Toolkit (2) to determine if and how school leaders implement gender-responsive practices in their schools, (3) to gather the school leaders' views on the Parent Teacher Committees (PTCs) and Parent Teacher Association (PTAs) and their (PTC/PTA) role in advancing the GRP4ECE agenda.

Purpose of the midline study

The purpose of this midline study was to assess the effectiveness of 2 interventions: becoming aware of stereotypes and neutralising stereotypes by asking gender challenging questions and giving a-typical examples. ECE teachers and schools leaders participated in these interventions. More specifically the study sought to:

- Determine knowledge and awareness of stereotypes and traditional gender roles in ECE teachers and school leaders
- Determine if ECE teachers and school leaders ask gender-challenging questions and give a-typical examples in their classrooms and schools after receiving training and coaching.
- Determine the role of Parent Teacher Committees in advancing the GRP4ECE agenda.

Purpose of the end-line study

The purpose of the end-line study was to assess the effectiveness of the Gender Responsive Learning through Play intervention administered to ECE teachers and school leaders. More specifically, the study sought to determine if ECE teachers applied gender responsive learning through play in their classrooms after receiving training and coaching.

2.2. Significance of the overall study

This study provides information on the efficacy of the interventions administered to ECE teachers and school leaders. This information will help inform further research in GRP and implementation of GRP for ECE at school level, for MoGE and development partners such as VVOB. The study provides empirical evidence in GRP4ECE in a Zambian context that was previously unavailable and yet valuable for influencing policy and funding in ECE.

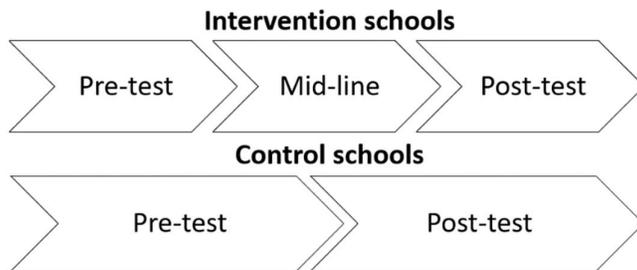
Information on how the PTC operates will enhance understanding on the role and influence of PTCs/PCCS within the school and the community. This information will help determine how the PTC/PCCs can strengthen their support for ECE and GRP in the schools.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The overall study used the Pre-Test and Post-Test comparison group design (before and after) to help document specific impacts related to the intervention group. A mixed methods approach of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used at the 3 phases: baseline, midline, and end-line. Below is a graphic illustration of the design:

Figure 1 Study Design



3.2 Overview GRP4ECE interventions

Interventions after baseline (before mid-line observation)

Interventions conducted before the midline assessment focused on two areas: *raising awareness of stereotypes* and *asking challenging questions about gender roles and giving gender atypical examples*. Two training sessions addressed these topics. Additionally, participating school leaders and ECE teachers received a coaching session.

Training 1: Becoming aware of stereotypes

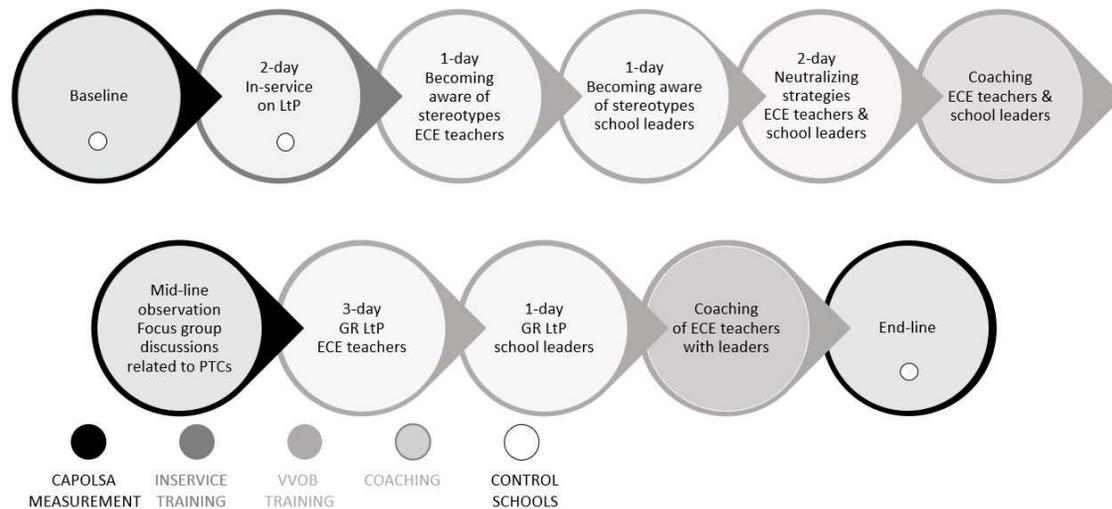


Figure 2: Overview of GRP4ECE interventions

This was a one-day training aimed at raising awareness of stereotypes and traditional gender roles through peer reflection exercises. The training moved gradually from a general perspective to a more personal perspective. To foster an atmosphere of honesty and trust school leaders and teachers were trained separately.

Firstly, the participants received an introduction to common terminology in GRP, the research and the GRP4ECE toolkit. The exercises revealed cultural components in which gender beliefs surfaced, e.g. traditional songs, tales, proverbs, habits, etc. It highlights that gender is contextual and changes over time but also geographically between cities or rural areas that are not far apart. Traditional gender expectations are discussed and the role of praise and disapproval in perpetuating them. For example, some responsibilities typically ascribed to women, are taken up by men when they are remunerated and formalised such as cooking or cleaning. A first link is made to learning materials that contain gender stereotypes.

Next, the participants are asked how gender is present in their own communities, how this affects the behaviours they praise and reinforce, and whether or not they conform to gender expectations. The cultural components in which gender beliefs surface compliment real-life examples of the participants. The participants analyse learning materials from a gender perspective, aided by questions from the Toolkit, so they become aware of stereotypes or traditional roles represented in the materials.

Finally, it is emphasised that gender-responsive pedagogy aims to question gender beliefs in order to create equal opportunities for all learners to reach their full potential. The participants are invited to continue recording their reflections on their schools in preparation for the next steps.

Training 2: Asking gender role challenging questions and giving gender atypical examples

The second training focused on learning how to see and act in stereotypical situations by using neutralising strategies or responses. A 'neutralising response' is defined as asking challenging questions about gender roles or giving examples that break traditional gender roles. This two-day training had plenary sessions, with both school leaders and teachers, intermittently working in peer groups. During the training, the participants received copies of the corresponding chapters of the toolkit for additional reading.

On the first day, the focus is on how to challenge gender views in interactions. The participants shared experiences and limiting gender roles they have noticed in their own context since the awareness training. These examples provided an opportunity for discussion.

Subsequently, contextually adapted role plays for teachers and school leaders were used as a model for neutralising responses to stereotypical situations in the shape of a challenging question or an atypical example. The reflection after each role-play makes the neutralising response explicit and clear for each participant. The participants are then asked to formulate a neutralising response to a situation they have experienced recently. They started with an individual brainstorm, then shared and reflected in peer groups. Some responses were presented in plenary, followed by a final reflections.

On the second day, the challenge of gender views in materials is central. This time, role-plays with gendered materials (of a storytelling and a sensitisation activity) are used as a model for neutralising responses, emphasised by the reflection afterwards. To put this into practice, peers exchanged gendered materials they have encountered in their own environment. First, the participants analysed the learning materials individually from a gender perspective. Their analysis was discussed in peer groups.

After that, individually, the participants devised a gender-sensitive way of using the

material including gender challenging questions and a-typical examples. These ideas are discussed in peer groups, after which one good use of the material is presented and discussed in plenary.

Subsequently, the participants plan in groups an activity of choice, in which gender is likely to come to the forefront and prepare gender-challenging questions or a-typical examples. The preparations are exchanged between the peer groups for input before they perform their role play. To conclude, the participants are informed about the coaching, write down their resolutions and evaluate the training.

Coaching on neutralising strategies

Every stakeholder from the intervention schools is coached individually.

Observations of ECE teachers in their classrooms were followed by coaching.

All of the school leaders also received coaching, based on their resolutions and experiences.

At the end of the coaching, stakeholders were reminded of the upcoming midline measurements by CAPOLSA.

Below is an illustration of Korthagen's ALACT model (2014), an approach used for coaching in this study.

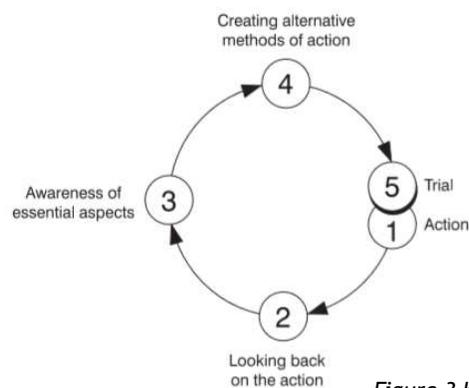


Figure 3 Korthagen's ALACT model

Interventions after mid-line observation

Training 3: Gender responsive learning through play (GR LtP)

As ECE teachers need to apply gender responsive learning through play in their classes a three day training, separate from school leaders, was conducted. All of the school leaders of the intervention school, who are expected to support the teachers to apply gender responsive learning through play, received a separate one day session.

During the coaching, the need for input on classroom management surfaced and was included in this training.

Teacher training

The teachers received printed and laminated versions of the games and the picture books, which are part of chapter 4 of the toolkit and handouts of the training.

First, the teachers shared their experiences using neutralizing responses such as gender challenging questions and a-typical examples. Reflecting on the previous training was followed by revising the importance of Learning through Play and its benefits..

Next the teachers experienced gender responsive Learning through play using a choice board

to engage in several TALULAR equipped play learning areas (TALULAR stands for Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources). The modelling is made explicit through reflecting and discussing the materials and the teacher behaviour afterwards. Subsequently, positive classroom management was explained with a focus on learners' strengths, a prepared environment and consequences as a last resort. To end the day the teachers designed some gender responsive TALULAR resources for their class.

The second day started with modelling and reflecting on class rules.

Teachers were then exposed to very stereotyped learning through play emphasising pink, beauty and caring roles for girls as opposed to blue and strength related objects for boys. In the reflection afterwards, teachers were challenged to come up with ideas to incorporate these gendered materials in a neutral class environment.

The teachers received help calculating the amount of activities needed for the number of learners in class. They also explored the games from chapter 4 of the GRP4ECE Toolkit before they experienced more GR LtP this time guided by one of their peers. Teachers were encouraged to reflect on what was modelled before ending the day by crafting resources to use in class.

On the last day, teachers shared their reflections on the previous day before experiencing yet another session of GR LtP guided by a peer, followed by reflection. Furthermore, learning areas were set up with the resources the teachers crafted the previous days. The set up and the materials were discussed.

Subsequently a way forward was discussed including the support needed from their school leaders. Questions were addressed, and participants were informed about the coaching. Finally, they were asked to write down their resolutions and to evaluate the training.

School Leaders training

First, leaders shared their experiences with using neutralizing responses such as gender challenging questions and atypical examples. Reflecting on the previous training was followed by discussing the benefits and importance of Learning through Play. Next, the all intervention school leaders also experienced gender responsive learning through play using a choice board by engaging in several TALULAR equipped learning areas. The modelling was made explicit by reflecting and discussing the materials, the behaviour of teachers and the amount of activities needed according to the number of learners.

Subsequently positive classroom management was briefly debated. The leaders were then exposed to very stereotyped learning through play. In the reflection afterwards, leaders highlighted the differences between the 2 LtP sessions and read a summarised version of GR LtP handout. Afterwards their support to the teachers was debated, which led to a way forward. To conclude, remaining questions were addressed. School leaders were informed about the coaching and asked to write down their resolutions and evaluate the training.

Coaching on Gender Responsive learning through Play (GRLtP)

This time the leaders and the ministry representatives observed alongside the VVOB coach. Before the observation there was a talk with the teacher. After observing, all the observers discuss before the VVOB coach sits with the teacher and models to the leaders good coaching using the ALACT model. To conclude the leaders and coach reflect on the coaching session observed and on how to help their teacher.

3.3 Study sample

Schools

The study included 10 schools from different zones in Chibombo district. This made the sample of schools representative of the schools in Chibombo district.

Below is a summary of the schools, their zones and the groups they were randomly assigned.

Table 1: List of participating schools and assigned groups

	Name of school	Control/Intervention	Zones
1	Chibombo Primary school	Intervention	Chibombo
2	Musoka Primary school	Intervention	Kafululu
3	Kalala Primary school	Intervention	Kalala
4	Mashikili Primary School	Intervention	Keembe
5	Shalubala Primary School	Intervention	Shalubala
6	Shiyala Primary School	Control	Keembe
7	Shimbilo Primary School	Control	Mufwambe
8	Shifwankula Primary School	Control	Moomba
9	Katuba Primary School	Control	Katowa
10	Mukuni Primary School	Control	Chibombo

Note:
At baseline one intervention school (Manwankalamu primary) was replaced by Kalala primary school due to the school being very remote and not reachable by end-line (logistically).

The study participants included:

- ECE teachers;
- School leaders including Head teachers; Deputy Head teachers; and Senior teachers (in charge of ECE);
- Members of the PTC; and
- Members of the PTA

The numbers of participants is summarised in the table below (table 2). All the sampled schools had but 1 ECE class and teacher. This is common in rural schools of Zambia.

Table 2: Study participants at the different phases of the study

Participants	Baseline		Midline	End-line	
	Control	Intervention	Intervention	Control	Intervention
ECE teachers	5	6*	5	5	5
School heads	3	3	5**	4	5
Deputy heads	0	1	1**	0	1
Senior teachers (in charge of ECE)	4	2	4**	4	4
Unspecified school leaders	4	2		2	0
PTC members (FGD)	-	-	4-7 per school Total 28***	-	-
PTA members/parents (FGD)	-	-	6-12 per school total 40***	-	-

Note: * At baseline one intervention school (Manwankalamu primary) was replaced by Kalala primary school due to logistical difficulties.

** At midline, school leader data were collected but not used in the analysis because the period between the intervention and assessment was too short for school leaders to implement the intervention.

*** FGD participation was based on availability of respondents.

Impact study objective

Baseline

At baseline, 11 teachers participated in the study (see table 2 footnote above). From the 10 sampled schools, 18 school leaders were included. The initial target was to include 2 school leaders, the head teacher and the deputy head (as shown in the table 2 above) if available. During baseline 1 school leader from the control and 1 from the intervention school were not available to partake in the study. During data collection, it was not indicated for 6 leaders (4 of the control and 2 of the intervention group) which exact position they held.

Midline

At midline the 5 intervention schools were included resulting in a total of 5 ECE teachers. After a MoGE recommendation, it was decided to give preference to senior teachers in charge of ECE. These, according to MoGE officers, are more grounded in ECE related matters as compared to either the head or Deputy head teachers.

Senior teachers as well as heads and deputy heads were also included in the entire intervention trajectory.

The head decided who would be interviewed based on availability. In the event that the head was available, the deputy head teacher was not interviewed. If or when the senior teacher was not available, then deputy head teachers were included.

Therefore, the total sample for school leaders at midline was 5 Head teachers, 1 Deputy head, and 4 senior teachers.

End-line

At end-line the sample was similar to that of baseline. Ten (10) ECE teachers, 5 from the intervention and 5 from the control schools and 2 school leaders from the 10 schools included in the study. Although the study was more interested in interviewing the head teachers and the senior teachers, in some instances senior teachers were not available at the time of data collection. In such instance, data were collected from Deputy Head teachers. Specifically, at end-line there were 9 head teachers, 1 deputy headteacher and 8 senior teachers interviewed. During data collection, it was not indicated for 2 leaders which exact position they held.

PTA and PTC exploratory study objective

Questions related to the PTC/PTA formed part of school leader and ECE teacher questionnaire and were asked at baseline, midline and end-line to both intervention and control schools.

Furthermore, a total of 10 focus group discussions (FDGs) were conducted across the 5 intervention schools at midline. Based on availability of respondents, 40 parents of the PTA (non-executive members) participated in FDGs, in groups of 6-12 participants. In addition, 28 members of the PTC, in groups of 4-7, also had FDGs. The PTA and PTC FDGs were conducted separately, to enable triangulation of the data.

3.4 Data collection Tools

The lead researchers, together with VVOB, developed the data collection tools. In the annexes are copies of the complete tools discussed below.

Impact study Objective

The same data collection tools were used at baseline, midline and end-line, with the exception of the school leaders' questionnaire. Below, a brief description of the tools.

- *GRP4ECE Classroom checklist.*
This semi-structured tool was used to collect qualitative and quantitative observation data from ECE teachers as they conducted their teaching and learning activities. The checklist consisted of questions that focused on stereotypes, GRP and play activities.
- *GRP4ECE teacher questionnaire.*
This semi-structured questionnaire consisted of questions focused on stereotypes. It was administered to the ECE teacher who was observed using the GRP4ECE Classroom checklist.
- *GRP4ECE School Leaders questionnaire.*
At baseline the unstructured questionnaire focused on awareness of gender roles and stereotypes. It also explored activities that schools engaged in to promote gender responsiveness to understand what the schools were doing, if at all. At end-line, the unstructured questionnaire was edited in order to capture accurate data from the school leaders in relation to changes they had made in their schools because of the training and how they would use information from GRP training to become more gender responsive in future.

PTA and PTC exploratory study objective

At every stage of the data collection, additional information was gathered on the workings of the PTA/PTCs. Questions related to this formed part of the *GRP4ECE teacher questionnaire and the GRP4ECE school leader questionnaire.*

- *The GRP4ECE PTC committee Focus Group Discussion (FDG) schedule*
This focus group discussion tool was developed to go deeper into the roles and responsibilities of the PTC. The FDG tool was used for 2 separate target groups:
 - parents of the PTA (non-executive members) and
 - members of the PTC.

3.5 Data collection procedure

Appointments with sampled schools were scheduled in advance. Schools were aware of the day when the research teams were visiting their schools. Each team consisted of 2 researchers to ensure reliability of data. The research team made sure to arrive before ECE lessons began. Upon arrival in the schools, the research team paid a courtesy visit to the Head teacher's office to give a brief explanation of the objectives of the study. Afterwards the researchers observed the ECE classroom. Upon completion of the observation, one team member conducted the interview with the same ECE teacher that was observed. The second researcher conducted the interview with the school leaders. After completing the data collection in a school, the research teams thanked the school leaders.

3.6 Data analysis

Below is a description of how the data from the study was analysed.

- *Quantitative analysis:* Frequencies at baseline, midline and end-line were used to assess changes in knowledge and practices of teachers and school leaders. Data were analysed using MS excel. Prior to data analysis, data processing activities included coding, cleaning and entering data onto the data sheet in MS-Excel.
- *Qualitative Analysis:* Qualitative data were collated using facts established through thematic analysis. Conclusions from interviews, focus group discussion and document reviews such as the GRP4ECE toolkit and MoGE policies on the Parent teacher committees (PTC) were part of the analysis.

3.7 Quality Assurance

In order to guarantee the quality of the data, the research team took a number of quality assurance measures.

- The investigator(s) pre-tested the tools prior to the main data collection exercise to ensure validity and reliability of the tools. Items were adjusted based on the pilot experience and feedback from VVOB.
- The research team attended a similar training trajectory as that of the intervention schools (on stereotypes awareness and GRP) facilitated by VVOB. This training provided the team with a better understanding of gender stereotypes and gender roles in education.
- The research assistants who were not involved in the development of the data collection tools were trained and oriented on the tools and on the data collection procedures to ensure that the process of data collection is standardized across the research teams and to ensure quality data.
- The research assistants received training on ethical procedures during data collection, such as obtaining consent from the participants, maintaining confidentiality, allowing participants to withdraw from the study and avoiding coercion of participants to take part in the study.
- The research team checked and verified the data collected to ensure quality and validity of the data.
- Data editing and cleaning preceded data analysis for quantitative data. For qualitative data, researchers transcribed the data before analysing.

3.8 Ethical considerations

The following ethical considerations were made to:

- *Protecting Privacy:* Participant confidentiality and anonymity was upheld by **NOT** using participants' names or any other information that would have made it easy to identify them.
- *Doing no harm:* The research team tried to avoid physical and psychological harm by ensuring that participants were not exposed to discomfort that would otherwise not be experienced by them on a normal day.
- *Respecting Autonomy:* All participants in this baseline voluntarily stated through verbal and/or written (informed) consent that they agreed to take part in the study.
- *Equity and equality:* The research team ensured that all participants in the study were treated both equitably and equally.

3.9 Limitations of the study

- There was an observation that the research team had become more aware of gender stereotypes therefore they were able to identify more stereotypes at midline than at baseline.
- Social desirability was noted in the responses ECE teachers and school leaders. This contributed to the exclusion of school leader data at midline.
- The time between training, implementation and observation were too short, especially at midline. Teachers may have needed extra time to implement information from the training on neutralising responses.
- The scope of the research was narrow regarding participants (it did not include some stakeholders such as traditional leadership, pre-service structures, etc). On contrary the scope was wide in terms of topics (combining the exploration of the PTC with an impact study on different topics such as participant beliefs, neutralising strategies and gender responsive learning through play). Furthermore, the available time was not adequate for the study. More time is needed to study the different subtopics and the process in-depth.
- The GRP4ECE Toolkit builds on an existing understanding of Learning through Play (LtP).
- The additional general LtP training which both the control and intervention schools received had a minimal effect on the teachers as observations revealed that there was no significant change in classroom practice.
- The duration of the general LtP organised by the in-service structures may have not been sufficient for the teachers to internalise and subsequently implement in their schools.

The General LtP training:

Within the STEEL (Supporting Teacher Education for Early Learning) programme, VVOB has oriented ECE teachers in Chibombo district on LtP independent of this research. LtP was gradually introduced to early learning teachers of ECE and Grade 1 as part of a trajectory and ZICs (zonal in-service coordinators) are expected to coach ECE teachers in their zones.

However, there is a lot of teacher mobility and turnover within the Zambian education sector. The schools for the research were randomly selected. It was noted at baseline that teachers included in the sample may not have received LtP training.

Hence, there was need to orient both control and intervention ECE teachers on LtP. The Ministry structures, financially supported by VVOB, organised a 2-day training, which included among others both control and intervention ECE teachers on general LtP. This training took place after baseline and before intervention 1.

Limitations of this general LtP training include:

- VVOB was not technically involved; the trained DRCC conducted the training in line with VVOB's trickle down approach. A known disadvantage of trickle down is some loss in quality.
- Participants were numerous, not merely the ECE teachers of the control and intervention schools. The training targeted all new early learning teachers in the district.

- This was a one-off 2-day training, which is a drastic change from the trajectory of trainings on LtP which other early learning teachers in the district previously received (adding up to lots more time being spent than 2 days).
- There was no follow up on this training, no coaching afterwards.

There is need to further analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the initial general training on LtP. Based on this analysis, adjustment can be made to increase the impact of efforts to bring new teachers of the district up to speed with regards to LtP.

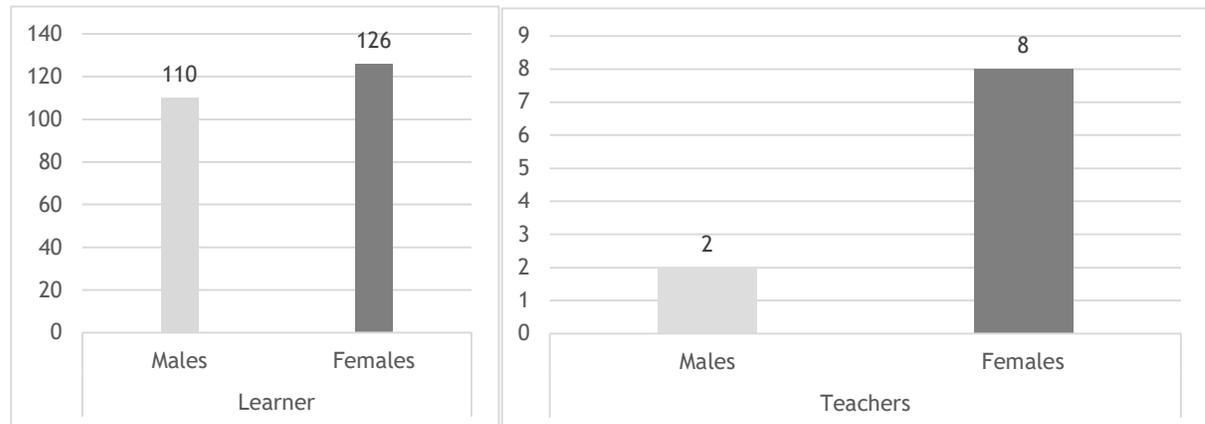
4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Demographics

Demographics of the impact study objective

There were 236 learners (53% female). An average of 31 learners per ECE class. Out of the 10 ECE teachers, 8 were female. For details, see figure 4 below.

Figure 4 Demographic



The years of teaching experience for ECE teachers ranged from 3 months to 34 years. The average years of teaching was 4 years.

All ECE teachers had a Diploma qualification. The majority (9 out of 10 schools) only had 1 ECE teacher and 1 ECE classroom. Only one school had 2 ECE teachers in 1 classroom. In this class the more experienced teacher was interviewed.

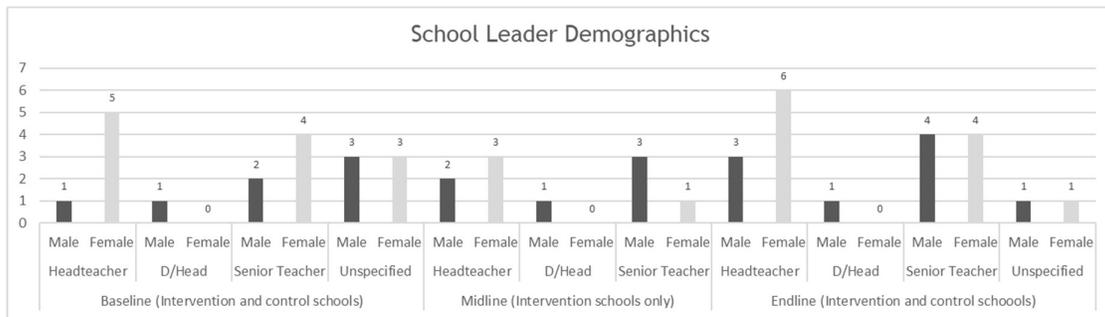
Table 3 and Figure 5 shows the gender of the school leaders across the research. Overall, there were more female school leaders (55%). However, the number fluctuated from Baseline to Edline with more male school leaders (60%) interviewed at Midline and more female school leaders interviewed at baseline (63%) and end line (55%). For school leaders, the average years in school leadership was 8 years.

Table 3: Gender disaggregated school leader data at different phases of the study

School leaders	Baseline M/F	Midline M/F	endline M/F
Head teachers	1-5	2-3	3-6
Deputy heads	1-0	1-0	1-0
Senior teachers	2-4	3-1	4-4
Unspecified ¹	3-3	NA	1-1

¹ The role of the school leader (i.e. whether Head teacher; deputy headteacher; or senior teacher) was not indicated in the data

Figure 5: School Leader Demographics



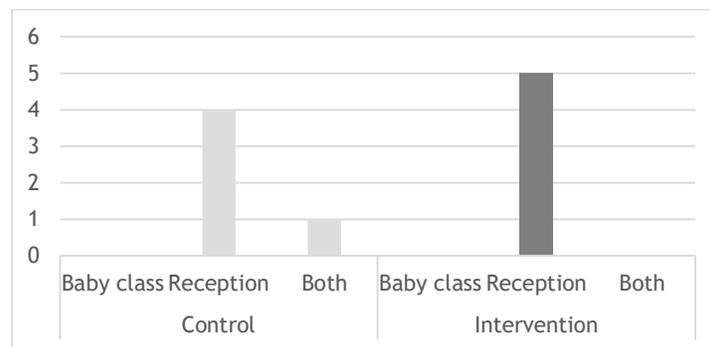
For full details of demographic characteristics of teachers and school leaders, see Table 4 below:

Table 4: Teacher demographics on work experience

	Teacher			School leaders (Head teachers, Deputy heads and senior teachers)		
	Age (in years)	# years being a teacher	# years being an ECE teacher	Age (in years)	# years being a teacher	# of years being a school leader
Mean	31	4 years	2 years	46	21 years	8 years
Range	25 - 40	3 m - 8 years	3 m - 8 years	34-56	6-34 years	1-15 years

All but one of the sampled ECE classes were mixed age groups meaning learners between the age of 3 to 6 are together. These classes followed the Zambian government syllabus for learners aged 5 to 6 years also known as the “reception” syllabus for all learners in their class (also the youngest learners). One control school ECE teacher said she taught both syllabi and followed different syllabi for her oldest and youngest learners in her mixed group. For details see Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 Syllabi taught in the ECE class



Demographics of the exploratory PTA and PTC study objective

All ECE teachers (10) and all school leaders (20) who across the research answered the questionnaires also answered questions related to the PTC/PTA.

Furthermore, the 5 intervention schools had focus group discussions (FGDs) at midline.

Based on availability of respondents, 40 parents, (non-executive members of the PTA), participated in FGDs, in groups of 6-12 participants which mostly had more women than men. In addition, 28 members of the PTC, in groups of 4-7, also had FGDs.

4.2. Findings: Impact on ECE teachers

Findings for the ECE teacher data is presented according to various GRP themes in the tools that were used.

4.2.1 Knowledge and awareness of own gender biases

Knowledge and awareness of own gender biases was measured to understand the beliefs that teachers held about gender roles and stereotypes. This is important because beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes are consciously or unconsciously reflected in the way teachers interact with learners, which may enforce gender stereotypes for the learners. Hence, attention is given to this topic in the GRP toolkit.

Baseline: All teachers in both the control and intervention schools reported that they reflected on the roles of men and women. Their reasons for thinking about these roles did not differ between the two groups. For example, teachers said they think about gender roles because it helps them “*to differentiate what men and women do*”, “*in order for men and women to share responsibilities*”, etc.

Midline: All ECE teachers reported that they thought about their own ideas regarding the roles of men and women. The teachers reported that this was important because it helped to identify or distinguish the role that men and women do in their communities.

End-line: In both the control and intervention schools all the teachers reported that they not only think about the roles of men and women but also that they feel aware of their own views about gender roles and feel this is important.

In the control schools, 4 teachers reported more gender stereotypical roles, for example 1 teacher reported believing that there are typical roles for men/women. In the intervention schools, in contrast, all the teachers reported that all roles can be done by men/women.

Overall, both teachers in the control and intervention schools at baseline through to end-line reported they thought about the roles of men and women and that they were also aware of their own thoughts about gender roles. This is important for the GRP study as underlying beliefs may influence our teaching and reflecting on our possible biases is a first step towards changing them.

4.2.2 Neutralising stereotypes through atypical examples or gender challenging questions

Teachers act as powerful role models for learners. Modelling of non-stereotypical behaviour by the teacher was measured because teacher behaviour; use of language; and forms of interaction influence the learners’ beliefs on what it means to be a boy or a girl. In the GRP toolkit, this is important because teacher behaviour is believed to have a huge impact on learner behaviour (whether typical or atypical).

Teachers were asked if their actions represent the roles of men and women, this would mean teachers also sometimes need to behave in ways that break stereotypes; give

examples that contrast traditional gender roles; and engage learners in interactions that challenge gender biases.

Baseline: 4 out of 5 teachers in the control schools and all the teachers in the intervention schools explained that their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women. For example, one female teacher reported that she played football (a predominantly male sport) with her learners.

In both control and intervention schools, none of the example behaviours: *a-typical gender behaviours and examples* or conversations on gender roles were observed. Thus, what teachers reported they do, was not observed.

Midline: All intervention school teachers continued to report that their actions and interactions represented gender roles. No examples of behaviour that challenged stereotypes were observed during the lessons. Only one teacher was observed asking a gender challenging question. This teacher asked the learners “can a woman be a chief [chieftainess]?”

End-line: At end-line 3 out 5 teachers in the control schools and all teachers of the intervention schools continued to report that their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women. This time all schools (control and intervention) were observed referring to traditional gender roles but in a very distinct manner.

In control schools, examples were given which confirm and reinforce traditional gender roles while in intervention schools, references to traditional gender roles aimed to neutralise stereotypes.

Further, teachers in the intervention classrooms were observed to be more aware of learners’ behaviours.

Two teachers from intervention schools asked questions that challenged stereotypes such as: “*can men wear pink clothes?*” or “*Can girls play football?*”

In 4 of the intervention schools, teachers were observed *giving examples that challenge stereotypes* - showing an improvement from baseline. Examples included: both men and women performing chores that are similar, both sexes holding similar careers, wearing similar colours.

This is an indication that intervention school teachers were able to apply the knowledge they acquired on giving a-typical neutralising examples, and some also on asking stereotype challenging questions.

Unlike in control schools, examples that reinforced stereotypes were not observed for the teachers who had received training. This suggests that the training was effective in helping teachers avoid stereotypical examples.

Conclusions on neutralising strategies:

Overall, the teachers reported that their interactions represented the roles of men and women, regardless of whether they were in the intervention or control group.

Classroom observations at baseline revealed that teachers’ interactions in both control and intervention schools affirmed traditional gender roles. At end-line, teachers in the control schools still portrayed actions and behaviours that were stereotypical such as the following observation:

Teacher was talking about combing hair before coming to school and she pointed at a girl who had not combed her hair and said, *“Look at your friend (meaning a boy). He has combed his hair well like he is not a boy.”*

Meanwhile the teachers in intervention schools attempted to challenge stereotypes and model behaviour that challenged stereotypes.

In 2 schools a story was told about a cowardly boy and a brave girl. Teachers told the learners that there are some girls who are brave and some who are usually scared. The case is the same with boys.

The fact that intervention teachers gave examples that challenged stereotypes at end-line and not midline suggests that teachers may have needed some time to integrate what they had learned into their class practice, otherwise the change of behaviour would have been observed at midline.

At end-line, all intervention teachers, except one, were observed giving a-typical examples. In addition, 2 teachers were observed asking gender challenging questions. This suggests that asking gender challenging questions may have been more challenging for the teachers to apply than giving a-typical examples.

The challenge some ECE teachers had to apply asking gender challenging questions, as opposed to giving a-typical examples could be a cultural or competence factor.

The anecdotal evidence from this study shows that it is easier for ‘Zambian’ teachers to give examples than question situations. This could be associated with socialisation which may not encourage questioning, but stimulates listening, because questioning is perceived as disrespectful. Zambian teachers are socialized in a way that emphasizes “telling” rather than “questioning”. Teachers may not have been trained to stimulate this kind of reflection or discussion rendering it is easier for Zambian teachers to give examples than to ask challenging questions. Given that gender is a topic where reflection is extra important it is recommended, that the training dedicates more time on gender challenging questions.

4.2.3 Gender stereotypes in illustrations in teaching and learning materials

Illustrations in teaching and learning materials are important for young learners as they help them understand better. Often illustrations contain stereotypes, which may reinforce traditional gender roles. Within the GRP toolkit, teachers are not told to get rid of these materials but instead are advised to use them in combination with neutralising strategies such as the challenging questions or a-typical examples discussed above. Attention is also given to making or buying gender-neutral materials or combining materials to achieve a balanced learning environment.

Baseline: At baseline 4 out of 5 control schools and 3 out of 5 intervention schools reported discussing with their learners how men and women are illustrated in teaching and play materials. Observations revealed traditional illustrations of men and women in the teaching and learning materials of a number of classrooms, both in intervention and control schools. For example, in 1 school there was a drawing of a traditional leader who was male and a teacher who was female.

Midline: At midline 4 out of 5 intervention teachers reported discussing with learners how men and women are shown/illustrated in teaching and play materials in their classes. These conversations were nevertheless not observed merely reported on by the teachers.

End-line: At end-line 3 out of 5 control and 4 out of 5 intervention school reported that they discussed with learners how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and learning materials. There was a marked difference in how the control and the intervention schools reported they did this. The intervention schools claimed they used pictures and illustrations as an opportunity to challenge stereotypes while responses from the teachers from the control schools did not qualify their answers. However, these conversations were again not observed.

Overall, the results indicate that majority of the teachers in the control and intervention schools reported discussing with learners how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and learning materials. This trend did not change from baseline to end-line.

In the intervention schools, teachers claimed to use a more traditional illustration as an opportunity to engage in discussions with the learners about gender roles after the training. Whilst all teachers reported having these discussions these were not observed at all, not in control, nor in intervention schools.

4.2.4 Listening and checking for gender stereotypes during interactions and conversations

Language, both verbal and non-verbal reveals a lot about one's feelings, thoughts and beliefs, including ones unintentional and unconscious biases. In the GRP toolkit, plenty of attention is given to interaction as young learners who are still shaping their ideas regarding gender, notice cues in interaction to form their gender identities. Vice versa teachers can, by paying attention to learners' interaction and language, help shape gender responsive conversations, interactions and beliefs.

Baseline: All teachers in the control and intervention schools reported that they listened in and checked on what learners say about men and women, boys and girls during their interactions in class. However, observation reveals that the majority of classroom interaction was teacher centred and therefore did not present learners with sufficient opportunity to interact freely.

Midline: All 5 intervention school teachers indicated they listened and checked on what learners say about men and women, girls and boys. The examples they gave showed an increased awareness of stereotypes. Sometimes teachers elaborated and indicated they challenged the learners' statements by talking to them or by asking a gender challenging question.

End-line: At end-line 3 out of 5 teachers from the control schools and all the teachers from the intervention schools reported that they checked and listened to their learners' conversations and interactions for gender stereotypes.

Of the 3 teachers in the control school, 2 teachers reported that they intervened by challenging stereotypes. For example, one teacher reported that she told her learners that 'what a boy can do, a girl can also do'. This was not observed.

In addition, a review of responses and elaborations showed that teachers in intervention schools listened and intervened by challenging or neutralising the gender stereotypes uttered by the learners.

In the intervention schools, some observations were made where teachers both listened in and checked for gender stereotypes during interactions and conversations and intervened. For instance, a teacher challenged a boy by saying she herded cattle. In control schools, on

the contrary, opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes were observed but were not utilised by the teachers. There is even an observation of a teacher learner interaction in a control school where the teacher refuses to assign a girl to carry a box as it is heavy and should thus be carried by a boy.

Overall while from baseline through to end-line most teachers reported that they listened in and checked on learners' conversations for gender stereotypes. During observations, it was noted at the end-line that intervention school teachers *actively* listened in on conversations and then intervened to challenge any emerging stereotypes. This is distinctly different from the baseline findings where teachers reported listening in because they found themselves within hearing distance of the conversations.

4.2.5 Learning through play results

In this research learning through play (LtP) is interpreted as simultaneous activities possibly in play learning areas which learners engage with independently.

Some teachers in the study were new to their schools and had not received orientation on LtP. As the GRP4ECE Toolkit builds on an existing understanding of LtP there was a need to orient these teachers on LtP before starting the GRP4ECE interventions. The Ministry of General Education (MoGE) in-service support structures, financially aided by VVOB, organised a 2-day training for new early education teachers in the district including both control and intervention school ECE teachers. This training, which happened after baseline, had some limitations which are highlighted under section 3.9 limitations in this report.

Parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners

The presence of simultaneous activities in play areas enables learners to engage in guided play. It gives learners a choice of play activities to engage in rather than teachers assigning learners. In the GRP toolkit there is guidance on how to make independent learning in play areas gender responsive.

Baseline: At baseline 4 out of 5 teachers in control schools reported that they conducted parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners while only 3 in intervention schools reported that they did. However, observations contradicted what the teachers reported. None of the schools at baseline were observed conducting parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners. It is possible that teachers may not have understood LtP and the related questions as they had not yet attended the general LtP training (facilitated by MoGE).

The understanding of the research team, and their ability to probe, also increased throughout the research.

Midline: At midline 2 out of 5 intervention teachers reported that they organise parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners. The observation again contradicted what the teachers reported. Only 1 school was observed conducting simultaneous activities in play areas, while 4 of the intervention schools did not organise simultaneous play activities at midline. The one intervention school applying had 3 maths related activities carried out in groups.

It is possible teachers were expressing their intentions which due to lack of time had not been put into practice or they tended to report socially desirable responses.

End-line: All schools in both the control and intervention reported that they organised parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners. However, further probing revealed that most of the responses the teachers in the control schools gave did not qualify to be categorised as parallel/simultaneous learning through play activities. This was confirmed during classroom observations. Only 1 out of 5 schools in the control as opposed to all 5 schools in the intervention had simultaneous activities in play areas. This 1 control school had 4 activities on offer and another control school offered 2. The intervention schools on the other hand used a variety of low-cost games and activities in their play areas. They also facilitated learners choosing what activity they wanted to play.

Overall, the data from the observations revealed that teachers in the intervention schools implemented learning through play in their classrooms. All intervention schools that had initially indicated lack of learning materials seemed to have managed to create games and activities for learners using low cost local materials.

All teachers both in the control and intervention schools attended a general training on learning through play without the GRP component before midline. Some improvement was observed between midline and end-line for the control group.

The failure to fully implement LtP by most control schools could be attributed to teachers needing more time to implement or to some of the limitations of the MoGE LtP training as highlighted under section 3.9 of this report. This could also explain why most intervention school teachers only applied learning through play after the training on Gender Responsive LtP, instead of after the first MoGE LtP training. There is need to further analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the initial general training on LtP. Based on this analysis, adjustments can be made to increase the impact of efforts to bring new teachers of the district up to speed with regards to LtP.

Assigning learners to learning activities

Choice for learners is something that is not culturally promoted in the Zambian context. Children in ECE would be considered too young or unable to make their own choices. Teachers may experience allowing children to choose as relinquishing their control. The benefits of giving learners autonomy in the form of choice are well researched; it increases learner involvement and thus learning. Furthermore, autonomy-supportive teaching is believed to enhance learners' achievement later in life as the approach promotes the development of young children's executive functions - that is, core cognitive skills that allow children to manage their attention and behaviour.

From a gender perspective, not assigning learners to learning activities allows learners to develop their unique talents and interests hopefully uninhibited by their gender. The toolkit encourages teachers to give learners choice and to monitor if activities attract a variety of learners. Learners should not be inhibited by gender roles in the choices they make. Therefore, when teachers observe an activity that attracts a particular gender, it is important that the teacher reflects on how it can be made attractive to the opposite gender and encourages the opposite gender to try the activity. As such a rotation can occasionally be useful to encourage learners to engage with materials, which they would normally avoid.

Baseline: In both control and intervention schools 4 out of 5 teachers reported assigning learners to learning activities. Observations were consistent with what the teachers said: learners were not given any freedom to choose learning activities. Teachers assigned activities to learners and most of the time was spent doing teacher led activities. While all

teachers in control and 3 out of 5 in the intervention reported that they rotated their learners between different activities, this was not observed.

Midline: There was no observed change: teachers continued to assign learners to learning activities and most time was spent on teacher led activities. In terms of rotation, 4 out of 5 intervention ECE teachers reported rotating learners yet observation did not confirm this.

End-line: In the control schools, 4 teachers reported they assigned the learners to activities; however, observation revealed most time was spent in teacher led activities with occasional individual practice.

In the intervention schools, 2 teachers reported that they assigned learners, while 2 reported that they did not and let learners choose. One teacher reported letting learners choose mostly but assigning them when they felt unable to choose. Observers witnessed choice for learners in all intervention schools. At end-line intervention interviews were, to some extent, consistent with the observations: learners were given some choice and autonomy. The difference between midline and end-line suggests that the training had an effect on the teachers.

Overall, allowing learners choice is not only complicated due to cultural beliefs. It requires that play areas and materials are available. The study has shown that these were not available in most schools at midline before the GR LtP training took place. It is encouraging to see that teachers in the intervention schools were receptive to the training. In 3 intervention schools, ECE teachers reported they gave learners choice, and observation found learners were choosing in all intervention schools. This indicates that in addition to overcoming their beliefs about what girls and boys should and should not do, they left behind teaching practices that were teacher centred.

Acceptable names for play areas in class

The names of learning areas in the classroom can influence learners' involvement in learning activities and their perception of activities in relation to gender roles. In the GRP toolkit, using neutral names is one way to encourage the participation of all learners in all play areas regardless of their gender. For example, the doll area may be less attractive to boys than the pretend area, the home area may be somewhere in the middle, indicating that gender roles from home apply during pretend play.

Baseline: All the teachers in the control schools reported that the play learning areas in their class had names that were acceptable to both girls and boys while 4 of the 5 reported the same in the intervention schools. Although these teachers mentioned having play learning areas, most activities were teacher led and no areas were used during observation.

Midline: 4 of the 5 teachers in the intervention schools explained that the play learning areas are given subject names. This was confirmed by observation. However, in 3 of those schools, there were no play materials in these areas and the areas were not used during observation. One intervention organised three groups activities all of which had neutral names.

End-line: 3 out of 5 teachers in the control schools reported that at their schools the play learning areas are given subject names, which are acceptable to both boys and girls. All the teachers in the intervention schools reported the same.

However, observations showed that in most (4/5) control schools the teachers did not use

or have play learning areas whilst in intervention schools play learning areas with neutral names were observed being used.

Overall, it appears that the names given to play learning areas for both control and intervention schools are not different throughout the baseline, midline and end-line. Observed names of play areas included *game* area, *cosy* area e.g. at Chibombo primary school. Furthermore, subject based area names were very common e.g. math corner.

Activities liked by both boys and girls

It is important that classrooms provide activities that are liked by both girls and boys. This is important because playing together promotes the interaction between boys and girls. In interaction learners form a gender-neutral idea of what it means to be a boy or a girl and realise there are different ways of being a boy or a girl.

The toolkit encourages teachers to be learner centred and prioritise simultaneous group activities, which cater to a variety of learner interests as opposed to teacher centred activities, with the whole class. The latter is common in Zambian classrooms and can be attributed to a variety of factors such as the high number of learners in classrooms, the lack of resources, the expectations of parents.

The toolkit encourages teachers to monitor if activities attract a variety of learners. When teachers observe an activity only attracts a particular gender, it is important for the teacher to reflect on how the other gender can be encouraged to try the activity. The toolkit offers teachers a variety of suggestions to encourage mingling for example by combining materials differently, by adding extra attractive materials, by organising girls or boys only time, by organising activities which are based on the interest of the learners, etc.

Baseline: In control schools, 4 out of 5 teachers agreed that they planned activities that both girls and boys liked while all teachers in the intervention schools reported that they planned activities that both girls and boys liked. Further, 3 out of 5 teachers in the control as well as in the intervention schools reported that they organised play areas/activities based on learners' interest. However, observation data contradicted these teacher reports, as there were (almost) no group activities, materials, or anything based on learners' interest.

Midline: All the teachers indicated that they plan activities they think both girls and boys liked. However, observations continued to contradict this report from teachers.

End-line: 4 out of 5 control and all intervention schools stated that they organised activities that were liked by both girls and boys. These findings are consistent with findings of the observations in the intervention schools, however not in the control schools. In the control schools, only one ECE class was observed to have play materials that were liked/attractive to both sexes. In the intervention schools, all the schools had attractive play areas where learners could engage in a variety of activities simultaneously and more or less independently.

Overall, the increase in play materials and activities at end-line could be attributed to the gender responsive learning through play training that further empowered teachers with knowledge on how to make play materials using local material. This is important because not everything needs to be bought and not many schools have the money to buy play materials. The creation of play materials that were previously unavailable suggests that teachers responded well to the training. The training, coaching and monitoring in

intervention schools could explain why learning through play implementation was higher than in control schools.

A correlation between fun and what is on offer was observed. Anything developmentally more appropriate than an academic teacher led lesson at the chalkboard may be deemed fun. If there are only blocks, and nothing else, the blocks will be considered fun. For preference to emerge there is need of variety and this variety is often absent.

4.3 Findings: Impact on School Leaders

The sample of school leaders consisted of the school head, the deputy head teacher and senior teachers as described in 3.3 Study sample.

The original school leader questionnaire was administered to control and intervention schools at baseline. It was re-administered to control school at end-line whilst a modified version was used for intervention school leaders. This modified version included questions that would capture the progress leaders made towards the objectives explained in 3.2 Overview GRP4ECE interventions.

(The objectives for school leaders included: becoming aware of stereotypes, asking gender challenging questions and giving a-typical examples, as well as supporting ECE teachers to implement GR LtP). The school leader training was basic and did not include exclusive leadership topics such as school policies. Nevertheless, print outs of chapter 3 of the GRP4ECE toolkit on school leadership, were provided as additional information for those who had interest.

This section covers and contrasts baseline and end-line findings. Midline results are not included due to inadequate time between baseline and midline for school leaders to implement GRP in their schools.

4.3.1 Baseline results school leaders

At baseline leaders from control and interventions schools provided similar responses to the questionnaire. Below is a brief summary of results.

Awareness and importance of thinking about roles of men and women

School leaders from both groups reported being aware and reflective about the roles of men and women. Both groups gave similar reasons why they deemed it important to think about these roles. Reasons included: thinking about these roles helps to ensure they practice them, to avoid role confusion, to ensure there are no biases, these roles help plan for the future and to balance out roles.

Awareness of own views on roles of men and women

Both groups felt they are aware of their own views. They attributed this awareness to the different stakeholders they work with, who promote gender equality. Some of the school leaders expressed progressive views: treatment of girls and boys should be equal, women can perform the same tasks as men, there should be balance between the roles of men and women. Nonetheless the general comment, from both groups, was that changing the roles of men and women is not possible due to societal expectations.

Discussions about the roles of men and women

Control and intervention school leaders reported having discussions about these roles with similar groups: NGO's that promoted gender equality in schools, staff members, the PTA, church groups, etc. They felt that these discussions taught them that culture greatly

influences the communities' perception on the roles of men and women. The difficulty in interchanging the roles of men and women was emphasised again.

Community thoughts on roles of men and women

School leaders in both groups reported that the roles in the community are traditional. They said some communities had mixed feelings about equal roles for men and women. School leaders recognised the unequal treatment given to girls by the community and highlighted the need for community awareness and sensitisation.

Actions in the schools that consider the different needs of men and women, boys and girls

Leaders reported on a variety of actions including: community engagement through PTA meetings, provision of equal opportunities for all learners, adapting terms used in the schools e.g. head prefects rather than head boy or girl and activities of clubs in the schools. The intervention schools referred to more actions than the control schools.

Three (3) out of 10 schools reported no actions taken that consider the needs of females and males in their schools. This illustrates the need, especially in some schools, to create awareness around actions by school leaders in their schools which consider the needs of the sexes.

Conversations about how men and women, boys and girls are presented in learning materials

School leaders from both groups claimed these discussions took place but are not through structured, planned or deliberate efforts to discuss presentation of boys and girls in learning materials. The discussions reportedly happen when school leaders take over a lesson e.g. home economics, or during career days or when an incident occurs in the school that prompts the discussion.

Examples of role models that challenge the roles of men and women

Schools leaders provided a considerable list of various role models.

Female school leaders from both groups reported they use themselves as examples of role models. Other role models referred to include the Vice President of Zambia and other female presidents across the world, female doctors and medical officers, the area Member of Parliament, female bus drivers, education officers and men who take on perceived female roles e.g. male chef or nurse.

Supporting ECE teachers in applying learning through play

Responses given by school leaders from intervention and control groups focused on:

- availability of teaching and learning materials e.g. toys,
- ensuring ECE had a budget,
- a leader in the control group mentioned supervision and monitoring.

However, there were no concrete examples on how they supported the ECE teachers to apply LTP, which can be an indication that school leaders needed guidance on how to provide this support.

Supporting ECE teachers to create equal learning opportunities for boys and girls.

The advice given by school leaders from both groups included encouraging mixing and balancing representation of boys and girls in the classroom. A leader of the control group further reported discussing gender issues with the ECE teacher to avoid bias and stimulate equal treatment of boys and girls. Whilst this is a good start there is more support school leaders can provide which shows a need for training.

Additional comments

The school leaders from both groups stressed the need for Government to make available the teaching and learning requirements for ECE, employ more ECE teachers and ensure that ECE teachers receive adequate training.

Conclusion baseline results school leaders

Overall, the results for school leaders in the intervention and control groups were similar across the questionnaire. Through their interactions with different stakeholders and members of the PTA and other community members, school leaders have learned about the views of others. These views have either supported or contradicted their own personal views. Progressive views (e.g. men and women perform similar roles) and traditional views (e.g. emphasis on gender specific roles) of men and women, boys and girls, prevail amongst the school leaders. School leaders suggest that traditional views are driven by cultural beliefs and norms, thus making them difficult to change.

School leaders need additional support on how to support ECE teachers to implement LtP and create equal opportunities for boys and girls. Furthermore, there is need for support to improve actions/activities that promote the needs of boys and girls, men and women.

At baseline, the control and intervention groups are at par in terms of their personal views, practices and school actions/activities regarding gender roles and LtP.

4.3.2 Midline results school leaders

Data on school leaders was collected at midline. However, the timing between the training and the data collection was very short. This is likely to have attributed to the fact that responses felt very socially desirable. Therefore, a choice was made to exclude this data.

4.3.3 End-line results school leaders

ORIGINAL SCHOOL LEADER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

These results below stem from questions that were part of the original leaders' questionnaire administered at baseline and the modified questionnaire administered to the intervention schools at end-line.

Importance of thinking about roles of men and women

Intervention and control groups acknowledged the importance of thinking about the roles of men and women and boys and girls. However, school leaders in the control group noted it was important for men and women, boys and girls to know their roles and responsibilities in order to lessen role confusion. School leaders in the intervention schools emphasized the need for equal treatment and opportunities for men and women, boys and girls.

Awareness of own views on roles of men and women, boys and girls

In both groups there is an acknowledgement that boys and girls should have the same opportunities. However, the control school leaders contradict themselves: while they state the importance of equal opportunities, they also emphasize gender specific roles. Intervention school leaders stated their level of awareness of gender roles had changed. They are consistent in the need for equal opportunities and treatment of the sexes.

Discussion about the roles of men and women

There are no changes in the audiences of these discussions nor between control and intervention schools, nor between baseline and end-line.

There is a major shift between intervention and control schools in the nature of discussions school leaders have about gender roles. Whilst the nature of the discussions did not change in the control schools, the intervention school leaders claim that, because they are more conscious about gender stereotypes, the nature of the discussions has shifted. For example, they are more aware about their own gender stereotypes and those of others. They mentioned making a conscious effort to be more gender sensitive during discussions.

Actions school is engaged in that considers the different needs of men and women, boys and girls

At end-line, respondents in the control group mentioned additional activities they engaged in with learners to achieve gender equality that they did not mention at baseline. The school leaders reported changes at staff and student level. These changes encompassed roles and responsibilities, opportunities and equal treatment of boys and girls, men and women. For example, girls were given the opportunity to ring the bell and raise the school flag that is displayed in the school. Boys were more involved in school chores such as sweeping. Female teachers were given responsibilities that were previously reserved for male teachers e.g. attending certain meetings on behalf of the school.

Supporting the ECE teacher to apply learning through play

While the control school leaders highlighted the involvement of parents and talking to their ECE teachers, intervention school leaders spoke of a broader support which included materials, infrastructure, supervision and monitoring of ECE teachers as well as community engagement about ECE.

Conclusion original school leader questionnaire results at end-line

There was a difference between the control and intervention groups. Responses for control school leaders were consistently the same as at baseline for all the sections in the questionnaire. The intervention school leaders on the other hand showed greater awareness of gender roles and emphasized the need to ensure that boys and girls receive equal treatment.

ADAPTED SCHOOL LEADER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS (INTERVENTION SCHOOL LEADERS)

This section focuses on results from the revised questionnaire administered to the 10 school leaders in intervention schools only.

What school leaders learned from the training

School leaders were asked to mention any 3 things they were previously unaware of which they learnt from the training. The following are the responses.

Equality

Three (3) head teachers and three (3) senior teachers explained that they learned how to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for boys and girls because they both had the ability to succeed.

These answers go beyond the responses given at baseline about the importance of thinking about gender roles. At baseline there was no mention of equal treatment, equal opportunities or equal capabilities. This suggests an improved understanding of gender roles and GRP, which school leaders attributed to the training.

Learning through play

Two (2) school leaders stated that they gained knowledge on how best children learn (through play) and how to use play in the classroom. Materials that should be used with ECE

learners and the importance of learners playing outside was cited, hence the need to have a play park for ECE in their schools. One head teacher explained that they learned that ECE learners have a short attention span and that it was important to consider this when teaching them. Another school leader explained that they now know what to look out for when monitoring ECE lessons.

The above responses on play show that school leaders now have a better understanding of why ECE uses learning through play as a methodology and how learning through play is actualised in the classroom. Although at baseline, school leaders said they supported ECE teachers by providing them with play materials for their learners, and giving them the freedom to prepare budgets, school leaders did not seem to understand why all this was important nor how learning through play works as a pedagogy. The training helped them understand why learning through play was important, in relation to child development.

Challenging gender stereotypes

At baseline the school leaders explained that they challenge gender stereotypes by giving examples that show men and women can do the same jobs e.g. the Vice President of Zambia and their local Member of Parliament who are female and a local chef who is male. This was the only strategy used by the school leaders to challenge gender stereotypes at baseline. At end-line school leaders in the intervention groups reported that they learned how to neutralise and challenge stereotypes in the classroom and in the learning materials used in the classrooms. One senior teacher explained how the training highlighted for her, the gender stereotypes that exist in the community and how these stereotypes are perpetuated. Two out of ten school leaders (both senior teachers) explained that the training helped them realise how they cemented stereotypes based on how they interacted with the learners and assigned learning activities and chores in the classroom.

Three out of ten school leaders explained that they never knew that they could challenge and neutralise gender stereotypes in their homes, until now. They explained that after the training, they were able to ensure that chores and responsibilities in their homes were performed by either sex, without favour or discrimination.

*“I learned how to use the question technique to challenge gender stereotypes”
(Head teacher).*

“As a result of the training, I am now doing tasks that only my husband would do e.g. changing engine oil. He now helps look after the children”, (Senior teacher).

The responses quoted from intervention school leaders above show that they all benefitted from the training in different ways. Some school leaders extended the knowledge they had acquired during the trainings, beyond the classroom. This suggests that school leaders are better informed about GRP than they were before the training.

With the new knowledge they have attained, school leaders are empowered to engage more with other stakeholders on gender roles for the benefit of their learners. Unlike at baseline when results that showed that schools leaders only talked about gender roles in learning materials and within the school setting e.g. during meetings with learners, fellow teachers and the PTA; Now they can go a step further to challenge and neutralise the gender stereotypes that may arise in settings other than the school settings.

Role of training in improving leadership

When asked how they think the training they received has helped them become better school leaders, 2 head teachers explained that when monitoring the ECE class, they now understand what is happening in the class and why certain things are done differently for ECE.

Half of the school leaders from the intervention schools (3 head teachers and 2 senior teachers) explained that they now see boys and girls as equals, with no special preference for one over the other. Another senior teacher noted that they are more proactive when it comes to ensuring gender equality and are more open to changing the way they view gender roles; while another mentioned that before the training, they had a negative attitude towards girls, but this has now changed.

“After training it has helped me and the school to balance the gender roles. Meaning both boys and girls participate in every school activity, the same with staff”
(Head teacher).

“Previously I used to pay less attention at ECE but now I constantly assist and check what is happening, I have developed more interest in ECE”
(Head teacher)

“I sensitize the community on the things I have learnt because certain activities we never used to do cannot harm us, for example cooking; men cook at hotels and restaurants, there is nothing wrong with cooking”
(Senior teacher)

It is clear from the responses provided at end-line that the training has brought about a change in attitude on gender roles and recognition of learners’ abilities regardless of sex. Also, a change in behaviour of school leaders in the intervention school, as they are now proactive when it comes to creating equal opportunities to boys and girls and community sensitization. In the long term, such change in behaviour could create a community that is gender responsive and this could change the future trajectory of boys and girls in terms of their ambitions and treatment of each other. As leaders and drivers of school programmes and activities, they have the power to drive the agenda of gender responsiveness in their schools. This speaks to how the training, as an intervention, could bring about change in attitude and behaviour in the schools, through the school leaders.

Future plans that will support GRP4ECE in the schools

The responses given by all the intervention school leaders on how they intend to support GRP in their schools, focused on creation of awareness and sensitization of various groups on the importance of giving equal opportunities and responsibilities for boys and girls. These groups include learners, teachers, PTC and its members. School leaders noted that involvement of PTC was crucial in sensitizing parents and the general community on the importance of gender equality and equity. School leaders emphasized the need for continuity between what was happening at school and what was being practiced at home. It was suggested that this could be done through Community Action Groups (CAGs). Even headmen and chiefs need to be involved.

“The choosing of leaders has to be balanced and we have already chosen 8 girls and 8 boys to be prefects. Also, the continuous sensitization of parents and teachers on GRP will be considered” (Head teacher).

“Production unit activities should include the girls and boys. Currently, only boys are involved because they are perceived to be sharper and stronger than girls, and are more capable of doing manual work, there is need for sensitisation” (Senior teacher).

At baseline, school leaders did not mention concerted effort towards creation of awareness and sensitization on gender roles. At end-line, all the school leaders mentioned deliberately creating opportunities to create awareness and conducting sensitisation on GRP and gender roles. This suggests that after receiving the training, school leaders appreciated the knowledge they received on GRP. They see the benefit it could bring to the learners, the school and community at large. This significant finding provides hope on the possibility of change in the way gender roles are perceived and the provision of equal opportunities for all at school level and in the community.

Support for ECE teachers in implementation of GR LtP

When asked how school leaders intended to support ECE teachers in the provision of GR LtP, 3 main types of support were highlighted.

1. *Financial*. Three school leaders explained that this would involve providing financial resources to ECE teachers in order for them to buy whatever they need for ECE. Increase funding to ECE in the school and raise funds for the construction of a park and toilets appropriate for ECE learners. One school leader indicated that they will work with the community to ensure that the ECE class has its own classroom. This is similar to what they mentioned at baseline.
2. *Materials*. All the school leaders indicated that they would make all the materials needed by the ECE teachers available by either purchasing materials, asking parents to provide some of the materials, especially low cost or locally available materials used on a daily basis in the home, and helping the ECE teachers create play materials that are gender-neutral.
3. *Human resource*. Four of the schools explained that they would make teachers from other grades available to support ECE teachers when they need it, e.g. when they go on leave or when the assistant teacher is absent, the school leaders will ensure that there is a replacement teacher. Teachers from other grades would be asked to help create play materials for the ECE class. All the school leaders also mentioned that they would make themselves available should the ECE teacher need to consult.

Other forms of support mentioned by the school leaders included, encouraging parents in the community to enrol their children in ECE (senior teacher) and building appropriate infrastructure for ECE (head teacher).

“We will encourage and sensitize parents to bring ECE learners and also ask for their support in providing materials that can be used for play in the ECE classroom”
(Head teacher).

The responses provided by the school leaders suggests a greater understanding of the importance of ECE and what is needed by teachers in the ECE classrooms (ECE classrooms, materials, additional help in the classroom). It also suggests that they understand the

importance of learning through play. With specific reference to gender responsiveness, there was mention of gender-neutral materials for ECE. Nonetheless, the fact that school leaders understand the importance of ECE and are willing to support ECE and ECE teachers in the schools through monitoring and modelling gender sensitive behaviour is positive.

Anticipated challenges in the provision of GRP4ECE in schools.

According to school leaders, the following are some of the challenges they are likely to encounter in the provision of GR LtP:

- Half of the school leaders (5 out of 10) anticipated difficulties in changing the mindset of learners, teachers, parents and the community, as they already view gender roles in a certain way. There may be resistance to a new way of thinking about gender roles. One head teacher in particular noted that there is likely to be a disconnect between the message that the school will give to learners on gender roles and what the learners will be told and exposed to in their home environments. A senior teacher explained that some members of the community are likely to consider what the school deems stereotype, as part of their tradition. Therefore, challenging this may not be acceptable to some parents.

“The biggest challenge here is the community...if parents don’t agree there might be conflict within children who are taught not to discriminate tasks at school but at home expected to maintain roles assigned to them”, (Senior teacher).

- Two school leaders noted that because of a limited number of trained teachers in GRP (ECE teachers that were trained), there is likely to be inadequate work force to change the situation. There is need to train other teachers within the school and not just ECE teachers.
- In two schools, the school leaders (head teachers) noted that the lack of a designated ECE classroom would make it difficult to implement GR LtP because decorating the classroom for ECE and rearranging the play materials on a daily basis can be tedious. Additionally, storing of ECE teaching and learning materials is difficult, increasing the risk of misplacing some materials. When the classroom they use is shared with other grades learners are more likely to be distracted or inhibited by developmentally inappropriate material e.g. decorations on the wall may not apply to ECE.
- Four (out of 10) school leaders referred to inadequate finances for materials and infrastructure development for ECE.
“The challenge will be having to build another class for ECE. This will be difficult due to lack of finances and furniture” (Head teacher).
- One school leader explained that because they have one ECE class, which includes learners of different grades, they might have challenges assigning activities to learners.

Additional comments

When asked to make final comments on how the training had helped them, one head from an intervention school expressed appreciation for the GR LtP training, explaining that initially the concept of learning through play was difficult for him to understand. However, by the end of the training he understood better how learning through play works.

Further, one senior teacher noted that because of the training, there was a change in the

attitude of the head teacher, who used to look down on female teachers in the school. Two school leaders suggested that the training should be spread to other schools because it was beneficial and encouraged the equal treatment of boys and girls. One senior teacher noted that the training had empowered her to change her attitude towards gender roles, even in her personal life, she has changed the way she distributes roles in her household. Another school leader noted the need for Government to take ECE more seriously by providing the needed resources. Overall, the school leaders were very appreciative to VVOB for the training and hoped that other schools would get the opportunity to receive the training as well.

Conclusion adapted intervention school leader questionnaire (end-line)

It is clear from the above responses that the training intervention was beneficial for the school leaders on a personal and professional level. What is interesting is that leaders are recognising the changes that they have undergone at a personal level, because of the training. Clearly, results have shown that the willingness to bring about increased gender responsive in ECE and in school policies and practices, has been ignited by the training. It remains to be seen how the knowledge acquired by the school leaders will translate into observable changes in their schools. Suffice to say that the training intervention had a positive impact on the school leaders in the intervention schools. Please refer to appendix 7.3 for more detailed information on responses from the leaders in the intervention school.

4.4 Findings of the study objective related to the functioning of the Parent Teacher associations PTAs and Committees (PTCs)

4.4.1 FDGs with Parent Teacher Committees

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) that were conducted with the PTCs, in the 5 intervention schools, revealed that the committees were aware of their roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities cited by PTCs are in line with those cited in the Education Act of 2011 (Article 73 part VII). However, when describing these roles and responsibilities, there was no specific reference to ECE, which suggests that they see their responsibilities as catering for the whole school and not just ECE.

Regarding meetings, results revealed that the committees schedule meetings for the year. They also have ad hoc meetings when need arises. The attendance to these meetings appears to fluctuate depending on availability of members.

Responses from PTCs revealed that most of the activities that PTCs conduct for the school focus on construction and maintenance of infrastructure and the environment. The Committee also conducts sensitising activities for the community on various issues related to the school such as the change in curriculum.

However, only two out of five intervention school PTCs focused on matters related to education policies, such as the *re-entry policy* and the *ECE policy*.

Regarding decision making, the PTC is involved in decisions related to the operations and the needs of the school. There exists a sense of ownership of the school activities.

In terms of activities conducted by the PTC to support the school, the mobilisation of resources (financial, material and labour) appears to be a key activity used to successfully

complete the projects the PTC embarks on. This suggests community effort in implementing projects, which MoGE emphasises in its policy documents for PTCs.

It is clear that the PTC is engaged in the activities of the school. It contributes both financial and material resources in the schools and is involved in the decision-making process in schools. It also plays a mediatory and advisory role between the community and the school. The school needs the services provided by the PTC for it stay connected to the community and engage with parents.

4.4.2 FDGs with Parent Teacher Association

Results from conversations with parents of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) who are none-executive unlike the PTC in the 5 intervention schools supports the findings from the PTC discussions.

PTA member responses are similar on roles and responsibilities of the PTC, activities conducted by the PTC, composition of the PTC, election of office bearers, decision making in the PTC, kinds of projects conducted by the PTC, the sources of resources and communication with the community.

The PTA members also confirmed that all the activities conducted by the PTC are stipulated by MoGE.

One difference is that PTA members did not know about the training conducted for the PTC executive members. After a new PTC is elected, the members undergo training. The roles and responsibilities of each position in the PTC is explained during this meeting. The lack of knowledge about this training could be attributed to the fact that these trainings do not occur on a regular basis. Additionally, because the PTA members are not involved in the training, they are less likely to know about it.

Regarding attendance to meetings, PTA members noted that sometimes communication about meetings was poor and this explained their non-attendance to some PTA meetings.

4.4.3 School leaders' views on PTCS and PTAs

School leaders were asked about the role of the PTC in advancing the agenda of gender responsive pedagogy in ECE.

Generally, the findings revealed that school leaders see the PTC as an integral part of the school system. School leaders understand PTC composition and are clear parents can be elected during the annual general meeting (AGM). While there was uniformity in the responses regarding the AGM, the school leaders gave mixed responses on the frequency with which PTC meetings occurred, at their schools, during the course of the year. ECE is represented through the teachers and head teachers that sit on the PTC.

Further, the majority of school leaders understand the role of the PTC and its potential to influence the activities of ECE in schools. They also acknowledged the support and contribution of the PTC to ECE.

In terms of understanding the operations of the PTC and its composition, majority of the school leaders understood the composition and the school representation on the PTC. The school leaders described the PTC as the bridge between the school and the community and acknowledged the important role that PTCs can play in bridging views on the roles of boys and girls between the home and school environment. The PTC is a potential link between the community and the school in promoting equal treatment, opportunities and roles of boys and girls, women and men.

4.4.4 ECE-teachers views on PTCS and PTAs

ECE teachers were asked about the PTC. This was done to understand, ECE teachers' level of involvement and, from their perspective, the role of the PTC in ECE.

The majority of teachers did not know whether ECE teachers had representation on the PTC. Some explained that they had never attended or contributed to a PTC meeting while others explained that they prepare information on ECE, which the school representative presents at PTC meetings. In terms of knowledge on the PTC, most ECE teachers were not fully aware of PTC composition. Majority were not aware when PTC meetings occurred. However, more than half of the ECE teachers are aware of how the PTC is elected.

The PTC activities highlighted by ECE teachers for ECE are similar across the schools e.g. providing building materials, providing teaching and learning materials, and communicating with the community. ECE teachers explained that they would like parents to be supportive of ECE learners by checking and signing homework and contributing to teaching and learning materials.

Overall, from the above responses, it is clear that there is need to:

- (1) inform the teachers about the PTC and its role in the provision of ECE services;
- (2) involve the ECE teachers in PTC activities such as attending the PTC meetings in order to present their needs and
- (3) encourage collaboration between parents and ECE teachers.

There is need to sensitise ECE teachers on ECE representation on the PTC because without this knowledge, they will not use the PTC to leverage the relationship with the PTC to meet the needs of ECE in their schools.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The main purpose of the study was to (1) measure the impact of GRP4ECE related capacity building interventions on knowledge, attitudes and teaching/leadership practice of ECE teachers and school leadership against a baseline. (2) Gather data on the role and functioning of PTAs and how they could contribute to the advancement of the GRP4ECE agenda.

5.1.1 Conclusions of the impact study

During the first phase of the research, baseline results revealed that ECE teachers (from control and intervention schools) and school leaders believed that they were aware of gender stereotypes and that this awareness was important. They reported undertaking activities aimed at enhancing gender responsiveness. However, classroom observations revealed otherwise. ECE teachers were not practicing GRP in their classrooms and were not fully aware of their gender biases. At baseline, results showed there were no *significant* differences in the response patterns between the control and intervention schools.

The first interventions focused on becoming aware of gender stereotypes, asking gender role challenging questions and giving gender atypical examples. Midline results showed increased awareness of gender stereotypes during ECE teachers' interactions with their learners. However, the topic on challenging stereotypes by questioning appeared to be difficult for the teachers, who may have needed a bit more time as evidenced by the lack of implementation at midline as opposed to observations of employment of gender challenging questions and atypical examples at end-line.

The gender responsive learning through play intervention administered after the midline assessment, caused end-line results to reveal a marked increase in the use of learning through play and overall learner-learner class interactions in the intervention schools. Teachers also increased their use of techniques that neutralize gender stereotypes. Differences from base to end-line were not observed for teachers in the control group. Observations at end-line in some control schools showed that ECE teachers continued to reinforce stereotypes in their classrooms

Data from the school leaders showed that the GRP4ECE intervention changed their perception on both gender roles and ECE in general. There is a willingness to make their schools more gender responsive and involve communities. It remains to be seen how the knowledge acquired will translate into implemented practices in their schools. Their responses at end-line showed they had started to use some of the neutralising strategies they had learned.

In line with study objective 1 and the information presented above, the GRP4ECE intervention was successful in creating increased understanding and awareness of gender stereotypes and changing attitudes of the ECE teachers and school leaders on gender stereotypes, challenging gender stereotypes and implementing LtP with gender-neutral materials in ECE classrooms.

5.1.2 Conclusions of the of the study related to the functioning of the PTA

In line with study objective 2, results from PTA FDGs showed that parents are aware of the roles, responsibilities and activities of the PTC.

Results for the PTC FDGs showed that activities conducted by the PTC are well within the confines of MoGE expectations.

The PTA's are making valuable contributions in the schools, which are also benefiting ECE. The views of the school leaders and ECE teachers were both varied and similar depending on the area that was discussed. Teachers seemed to have little to no knowledge about the administration of the PTA (the composition of the PTA; teacher representation on the PTA; number of PTA meetings; how membership to the PTC is decided etc) while they seemed to have more knowledge and awareness of the result of the work for the PTA such as what activities the PTA has done for the school in general and also specifically for ECE; how influential they feel the PTA is in their communities and the support they would like to get from the PTA.

The school leaders on the other hand seemed to have more knowledge and awareness both about the administration of the PTA and the activities that they carried out which include mobilizing funds to buy ECE materials upon set up; paying the ECE teachers; and renovating classrooms and buying furniture. In general, school leaders see the PTA as an important part of the school system which can be used as a link between the community and the school.

This study has determined that a strong link exists between the schools and PTCs, based on the responses from the various study respondents. This suggests that PTCs can be a conduit to engage and educate the community on matters related to gender roles and stereotypes.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the above conclusion, the following recommendations are suggested to MoGE and Development Partners (such as VVOB):

1. There is evidence that the GRP intervention is effective in increasing awareness, challenging both gender stereotypes and stereotypical behaviour in learners (and teachers alike) and promoting simultaneous activities using gender-neutral materials. Therefore, the intervention has potential to be scaled up.
MoGE in dialogue with development partners such as VVOB should investigate what is needed for scale up.
It is recommended to have a trial on a larger scale paired with longer term research.
2. Upon scaling it is recommended that future training trajectories be designed to provide teachers sufficient time to implement their training before they receive further training or coaching due to the attitude-behaviour change gap (It takes some time for behaviour related to beliefs to change).
3. Due to the attitude-behaviour change gap, there is a need to continue to engage with development partners to build the capacity of in-service structures as to enable them to provide regular structural support to ECE teachers and school leaders as they work to promote gender responsiveness in the schools.
4. The GRP packages pre-suppose some understanding on LtP.
The baseline made clear that in randomly selected schools in Chibombo this was not yet the case. Therefore, there is a need to continue to engage with Development Partners to support teachers to apply LtP in early education.

Note that while LtP needs to be somewhat familiar before rolling out, the GRP trajectory can deepen teachers' understanding through the focus on Gender responsive LtP.

5. Some ECE teachers had challenges applying a specific component of the GRP training, asking gender challenging questions, as opposed to giving a-typical examples. This could be a factor of competencies, whereby teachers were not trained to stimulate this kind of reflection or discussion rendering it easier for Zambian teachers to give examples than questions. On the other hand, it could also be a factor of culture and socialisation whereby obedience is a valued trait among children. Questioning and challenging is not encouraged. It is possible that this cultural norm that teachers were exposed to growing up is manifesting in how they interact with their learners and affecting their asking of gender challenging questions (Serpell, 1993).
Given that gender is a topic where reflection is extra important. It is recommended, when scaling up, that the trajectory dedicates a bit more time on gender challenging questions.
6. When scaling up, it is recommended that in-service structures are enabled to empower school leaders further. That in addition to helping school leaders understand what needs to happen in an ECE class, they are also guided on GRP applied to their role in line with chapter 3 of the toolkit.
7. When scaling up GRP-related interventions and research, the depth and scope of the research (e.g. to include traditional leadership, pre-service structures and consider children with special educational needs) and the process evaluation (e.g. efficacy of the tools, fidelity and uptake of the GRP-training) should be enhanced. That way more evidence could be collected on which elements work, or which do not work.
8. The PTC and PTA are present and active. They have the potential to be a good conduit to the community for the purpose of consistency in gender experiences between school and home.

It is recommended when scaling up they are a part of this process.

6. References

Serpell, R. (1993). *The significance of schooling; Life journeys in an African society*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University press.

Wegner, C., Weber, P., & Ohlberger, S. (2014). Korthagen's ALACT Model: Application and Modification in the Science Project" Kolumbus-Kids". *Themes in Science and Technology Education*, 7(1), 19-34.

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7. Appendices

7.1. Tools

7.1.1 GRP4ECE Classroom Observation Checklist

Instructions: This instrument is for gathering qualitative information during observations of the ECE teachers for an entire day of teaching. It is a checklist of questions to guide observations of the ECE Teachers by the Researchers and should not be strictly followed. Researchers will explore addition issues as they emerge during observations. Please observe the following:

1. Research team must pay a courtesy call to the Head teacher's office before meeting the ECE teacher.
2. Must meet with the teacher before class to explain the purpose of the research
3. The researcher should find a place in the classroom, preferably at the back of the class where they will not disturb the learning process.
4. Researcher must settle in the classroom before the teacher begins to teach.
5. The researcher **should not attempt to interfere, in any way, with classroom activities.**
6. The classroom observations should take place the entire duration of class, i.e. from start to finish.
7. Observations should be written in the spaces provided in this sheet.
8. One the day of observation, take note of
 - a. Number of learners in the class: _____
 - b. Number of male learners: _____
 - c. Number of female learners: _____

School Id: _____

Observation start time: _____

Observation end time: _____

Total time observed: _____

Checklist of items observed include the following:

STEREOTYPES		Yes	No	Comment (narrate scenario or question)
1	Questions that challenge stereotypes are asked in class. (These questions can be prompted by a remark in class or by materials used. These questions can be asked by the teachers). Please include question and scenario.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Examples that challenge stereotypes are given in class (e.g. role models that break stereotyped gender roles)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Examples that reinforce stereotypes are given in class (these reinforcements could be made by teachers). Please include question and scenario	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Modelling of non-stereotypical behaviour by the teacher.(e.g. breaking with stereotyped gender roles in teacher's actions for example a female teacher pretending to race a car, or a male teacher tying a doll on his back with a chitenge)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5	How many opportunities were there to challenge stereotypes?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> above 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4- 6 <input type="checkbox"/> None	Comment (describe occurrence or opportunity)
	How many of these opportunities were used to ask a stereotype challenging question?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> above 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4- 6 <input type="checkbox"/> None	Comment (describe the questions)
	How many of these opportunities were used to give a stereotype challenging example?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> above 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4- 6 <input type="checkbox"/> None	Comment (describe the examples)
6	Is the teacher monitoring learner-learner interactions for stereotypes? Explain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
7	How many occasions were there when peer pressure or stereotypes discouraged a learner from exploring different gender roles?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> above 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 4- 6 <input type="checkbox"/> None	Comment (describe occasion)
	Did the teacher intervene? (In your explanation include how often and how the teacher intervened)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
8	Was there interaction between boys and girls without the teacher? Explain and include context and frequency	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
9	How many play areas or table-top activities were organized by the teacher during the observations?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-8 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 and above		Comment (describe play activities)
10	Did play areas have names which are acceptable to both genders? (e.g. 'the pretend area' instead of 'the dolls' area). What were these area(s) called?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
		Names of areas:		

11	How does grouping happen throughout the class day? Observe with extra attention to mixed gender groups.	
12	Do learners engage in all the activities in the play areas? Comment (frequented and less frequented play areas, most frequented by one sex and if learners from opposite sex were frequented in those areas).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13	Observe the play areas/table-top activities which have mixed gender groups. What materials are there? Explain	
	Observe the play areas/table-top activities which do NOT have mixed gender groups. What materials are there? Explain	
	Are there play or learning materials that are attractive to both boys and girls (e.g. gender-neutral colours) in each learning area? What are these materials? Explain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14	Does the set-up and combination of the materials facilitate learners playing with all materials uninhibited by gender roles? (e.g. blocks and dolls next to each other) Explain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15	Was there a learning area that was boys-only or girls-only? Comment (what are the play areas and materials present)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
16	Was there a learning area or activity drawn from the learners' personal interests or suggestions? Explain (state the learning area and materials)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Thank you very much for your time 😊

7.1.2 GRP4ECE semi-structured ECE Teacher Questionnaire

Instructions: This semi-structure questionnaire is for ECE teachers. The researcher must administer the questionnaire to the ECE teacher. Please take note of the following:

1. Introduce yourself: name and where you are from.
2. Explain to the teacher that the purpose of the questionnaire is to learn more about the teacher's experiences with gender related learning and teaching practices and their views on these.
3. ECE Teachers should be informed that the responses they give in this questionnaire will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used for research purposes only. Teachers should be encouraged to express their views freely. There are no wrong or right answers and no one will judge them for the responses they will give. Emphasise that this is not an exam or an assessment.
4. Explain that if teacher feels uncomfortable with some questions they may choose not to answer.
5. Please ensure that the questions in this instrument are strictly adhered to by the Researcher.
6. The questionnaire is administered in a quiet environment, with little or no disturbances.
7. Check if they have any questions.
8. Inform teacher that the interview will take anywhere between 30-40 minutes. Seek their permission to proceed.
9. Ensure they sign the consent form

Teacher id _____

Demographic information

Age of teacher: _____ Sex: Male Female

Total number of learners: _____ Number of boys _____ Number of girls: _____

Age group of learners: Baby class Reception Mixed 3-6 years

ECE qualification: Certificate Diploma Degree

How many years have you been a teacher? _____

How many years have you been teaching ECE? _____

Number of ECE classrooms in the school: ____ Number of teachers in the classroom: ____

Start time: _____ End time: _____

(Please give the teacher a copy of definition of gender terms)

STEREOTYPES		Comments	
1.	Do you think about the roles of men and women?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Do you think it is important for you to think about the roles of men and women? Please explain your response:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Are you aware of your own views on the roles of men and women? Please explain your response	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Do you discuss your views about the roles of men and women with others? Explain your response. If yes indicate when, where and with whom you discuss with. What have you learnt from these discussions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	What does your community think about the roles of men and women?		
6	In which way do you create equal learning opportunities for both girls and boys? Please explain		
7	Do you ever engage your learners in conversations about the roles of boys and girls/women and men? Please explain your response.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Do you ever discuss with your learners on how men and women are shown/illustrated in teaching and play materials in your class? Please explain your response:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9	a. Do you check/listen to what your learners say about men and women/boys and girls? Please explain your response.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	b. Are there any differences in the way the boys and girls treat each other? Please explain your response.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	c. What do you do when you observe this?		

10	Do your actions and interactions with your learners represent the roles of both males and females? Please explain:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Do you give your learners examples of traditional roles of men and women? Explain your answer and mention some examples	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
PLAY AREAS		Comments	
12	Do you organize (parallel) or simultaneous) activities using play areas/corners? Explain. If response is yes, how much time is spent in these learning areas? How much time do you spend with the whole class?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
13	How do you group your learners? Please explain.		
14	Do you assign learners to learning activities? Please explain your answer (why and how you assign them to learning activities).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
15	Do you encourage interaction between boys and girls? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
16	Do you sometimes have learners rotate between different activities? Please explain your answer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Does this get all the learners to play with all the materials? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
17	Do the learning areas in your class have names, which are acceptable to both girls and boys? Please explain your answer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
18	Is it important that the play areas in your class and outside are attractive to all learners? Please explain your answer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
19	Do you plan activities that both girls and boys like?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Please explain your answer		

	How do you ensure that these activities are liked by both boys and girls?	
20	Do you organise learning areas or activities based on learners' personal interests and suggestions? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Does this result in boys and girls playing together? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
21	Do learners engage in all the activities in the learning areas? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
22	Does your variety of class activities reach all your learners? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
23	Do you sometimes have some boys-only or girls-only groups to encourage activities that are less often chosen by a specific group of boys and girls? Please explain your answer. Give an example of such an activity.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
24	Which learning areas do most learners frequent? Please explain the learning areas why they are most frequented.	
25	Which learning areas do learners less frequent? Please explain why these learning areas are less frequented.	
26	Is there one learning activity or area which attracts more boys than girls? Please explain your answer (<i>also, probe on available materials</i>).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Is there one learning area or activity which attracts more girls than boys? Please explain your answer (<i>also, probe on available materials</i>).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

27	Is there one activity that usually attracts a mixture of both boys and girls? Please explain your answer (also, probe on available materials).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
28	Is there an activity or learning area that does not have a mixture of both boys and girls? (also, probe on available materials).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
29	Are there play or learning materials that are attractive to both boys and girls in each learning area? What are these materials?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
30	Does gender play a role when you are selecting and preparing play and other learning materials? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
31	Do you offer the same type of materials but different items with some more appealing to a particular sex? For example, puzzles featuring a princess and a race car of the same level of difficulty? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Does offering this variety of materials actually stimulate learners to play with all materials? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
32	Do you change the variety of play and other learning materials? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
33	Do you change the way you arrange and the combination of play and other learning materials to facilitate learners playing with all material?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
34	Is there anything else that you haven't mentioned that helps facilitate all learners to play with all the materials? Please explain your answer.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Any other comments:</u>			

PTC related questions to ECE teachers

QUESTION	COMMENT
1. Do ECE teachers have representation on the PTA? <i>(Probe: ask respondent to explain their answer)</i>	
2. Who are members of the PTC?	
3. How often does the PTC meet?	
4. How is membership to the PTC decided?	
5. In past year what activities has the PTC conducted for the school?	
6. In the past year, what activities has the PTC conducted that benefited ECE?	
7. Does the PTC have power to influence ECE activities in your school?	
8. Has the PTC helped in promoting ECE to the surrounding community?	
9. How do you think the PTC can support ECE?	
10. How can the PTC get support from parents in ensuring that the school and home environment have similar views on the roles of women, men, boys and girls?	
11. What would they need to ensure this?	

Thank you very much for your time 😊

7.1.3 (a) GRP4ECE School Leaders Questionnaire - Baseline

Instructions: This semi-structure questionnaire is for school leaders (Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher and Senior teacher). The researcher must administer the questionnaire to the school leader. Please take note of the following:

1. Introduce yourself: name and where you are from.
2. School leaders should be informed that the responses they give in this questionnaire will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used for research purposes only.
3. Questions should be administered in the sequence in which they are presented.
4. The questionnaire is administered in a quiet environment, with little or no disturbances.
5. Check if school leader has any questions.
6. Inform school leader that the interview will take anywhere between 30-40 minutes.
7. Seek their permission to proceed.
8. If yes, as that the school leaver signs a consent form.

School leader ID: _____

STEREOTYPES		Comments	
1	Do you think about the roles of men/women?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Do you think it is important for you to think about the roles of men and women? Explain your response:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Are you aware of your own views on the roles of men and women? Explain your response:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Do you discuss your views about the roles of men and women? When? With whom? What have you learnt from these discussions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	What does your community think about the roles of men and women Please explain.		
6.	What actions is the school engaged in that considers the different needs of men, women, girls and boys in the school? Please explain your answer:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Do you occasionally engage people the community in conversations about the roles of women and men, boys and girls? Please explain your answer. If yes further explain who you engage with and provide some examples.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

8.	Do you ever talk with people within the school about how women and men, boys and girls are presented in learning materials? Please explain your answer. If yes, further example with whom you discuss? Please give an example of such a talk or discussion.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Do you ever give examples of that challenge the role of men and women? For example of role models that challenge the roles of men and women, boys and girls? Please explain your answer. If yes, further explain with whom you have mentioned these examples to. Please provide an example.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
PLAY AREAS			
10	How do you support the ECE teacher to apply learning through play?		
11	How do you help the ECE teacher to create equal learning opportunities for boys and girls?		
<u>Any other comments:</u>			

PTC related questions to school leaders

QUESTION	COMMENT
1. Do ECE teachers have representation on the PTA? (Probe: ask respondent to explain their answer)	
2. Who are members of the PTC?	
3. How often does the PTC meet?	
4. How is membership to the PTC decided?	
5. In past year what activities has the PTC conducted for the school?	
6. In the past year, what activities has the PTC conducted that benefited ECE?	
7. Does the PTC have power to influence ECE activities in your school?	
8. Has the PTC helped in promoting ECE to the surrounding community?	
9. How do you think the PTC can support ECE?	
10. How can the PTC get support from parents in ensuring that the school and home environment have similar views on the roles of women, men, boys and girls?	
11. What would they need to ensure this?	

Thank you very much for your time 😊

7.1.3 (b) GRP4ECE School Leaders Questionnaire - End-line (adapted version)

Instructions: This semi-structure questionnaire is for school leaders (Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher and senior teacher). The researcher must administer the questionnaire to the school leader. Please take note of the following:

1. Introduce yourself: name and where you are from.
2. School leaders should be informed that the responses they give in this questionnaire will be held in the strictest confidence and will be used for research purposes only.
3. Questions should be administered in the sequence in which they are presented.
4. The questionnaire is administered in a quiet environment, with little or no disturbances.
5. Check if school leader has any questions.
6. Inform school leader that the interview will take anywhere between 30-40 minutes.
7. Seek their permission to proceed.
8. If yes, ask that the school leader signs a consent form.

School leader ID: _____

1	Have your views of roles of men and women, boys and girls changed since you received training? Please explain your answer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2	As an individual, highlight any 3 things that you learned during the training that you were not aware of before the training?		
3	How do you think the information you received during the training has helped you become a better school leader?		
4	As a school, since you received training in gender responsive pedagogy, have you managed to make any changes that support gender responsive pedagogy? Explain your response	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5	As a school leader, what future plans do you have for the school that will support gender responsive pedagogy?		
6.	What actions will the school engaged in that will support the different needs of men, women, girls and boys in the school?		
7.	How does the school plan to support the ECE teacher to create equal learning opportunities for boys and girls?		
8.	What challenges do you think you will have a school in implementing gender responsive pedagogy in your school?		
<u>Any other comments:</u>			

Thank you very much for your time 😊

7.2 Teacher Findings

7.2.1 Knowledge and awareness of own gender biases

Rationale

Knowledge and awareness of own gender biases was measured to understand the beliefs that teachers held about gender roles and stereotypes. This is important because beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes are consciously or unconsciously reflected in the way teachers interact with learners, which may enforce gender stereotypes for the learners. Hence, attention is giving to this topic in the GRP toolkit.

		Interview		Conclusion Baseline
		Control	Intervention	
Baseline		<p>When asked whether they think about the roles of men and women the teachers agreed that they thought about the roles of men and women and that it was important to think about these roles for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To differentiate what men and women can do ▪ To be able to know how to treat each sex ▪ In order for men and women to share responsibilities <p>All the teachers agreed that they were aware of their own views which include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is expected of them in the community? ▪ Certain things should only be done by men while others only by women <p>These views were attributed to culture and what they observe in the community.</p> <p>3 out of 5 teachers reported that they discuss roles of men and women with their families at home, other teachers during CPDs, or with learners and at church. Discussions centre around:</p> <p>How boys and girls can share tasks in the home without favouring either of them. These teachers reported that they had learned several things from these discussions including:</p>	<p>When asked whether they think about the roles of men and women all the teachers agreed that they thought about the roles of men and women and that it was important to think about these roles for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Men and women do have different roles; ▪ Helps clarify the roles of men and women; ▪ These roles have led to development in the community; ▪ Boys and girls should not be treated differently; ▪ Women should not be dependent on men. <p>All the ECE teachers agreed they are aware of their own views on the roles of men and women, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Different roles for men and women although some roles can be similar ▪ Men and women can have the same roles ▪ Men and women can achieve the same things ▪ All learners should be treated equally and given the same roles ▪ Women and men should not limit each other. <p>All the teachers reported that they discuss roles of men and women with their families, friends,</p>	<p>All teachers in both the control and intervention schools reported that they thought about the roles of men and women. Their reasons for thinking about these roles did not differ between the two groups.</p> <p>According to the teachers the community views on the role of boys and girls are mixed.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to interact with others ○ The community has diverse views on what is expected of men and women. <p>2 Of the 5 teachers who reported that they did not discuss roles of men and women, said they discussed other issues in the company of friends. (not gender related)</p> <p>All ECE teachers reported that the community views on the role of boys and girls are mixed with a combination of either open-mindedness or closed-mindedness about gender roles.</p>	<p>fellow women and work colleagues. Discussions centre around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who should be the family provider? It is mostly the man although women can and should provide. ▪ The role of boys: in a family without girls, they have to perform all house chores. ▪ Boys and girls should be treated equally in the classroom. ▪ What boys can achieve, girls can too. <p>ECE teachers reported the community views on the role of boys and girls are mixed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear roles exist for boys and girls ▪ What girls can do, boys cannot do ▪ There should be no differences between the role of boys and girls at school ▪ Men are the providers in the family. Their role is more important. 	
	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line
Mid-line	<p>When asked whether they think about the roles of men and women, the teachers reported that they did and that it was important about these roles for the following reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raises awareness of the gender stereotypes that we have and that we grew up with. It also brings equal opportunities between males and females. ▪ Gives equal opportunities to both males and females. It makes both males and females feel important in society. ▪ It can help the society to understand these roles. If they know, no one will be left out that they cannot do this or that because of gender roles. ▪ We all have to know which roles to play. Also, to follow what to do. ▪ It helps to differentiate between male and female sex roles, while gender roles help to know that they are taught and can be done by both. 		<p>All ECE teachers reported that they thought about the roles of men and women. The teachers reported that this was important because it acted as a means of identifying gender roles (what men and women do in the community)</p>
	Interview		Conclusion End-line
End-line	Control	Intervention	<p>In both the control and intervention, schools all the teachers reported that they think about the roles of men and women. Equally in both control and intervention schools, all the teachers reported that it was important to think about the roles of</p>
	<p>It was reported that it was important to think about the roles of men and women because it helps to understand gender roles. For instance, in one school the teacher reported, “<i>according</i></p>	<p>It was reported that it was important to think about the roles of men and women because it helped raise awareness on gender issues and identity; gender and sex roles; and creating</p>	

to my understanding, people do not believe that women can do some things. To them it is just men, but you find that women are doing much better than men especially in schools”.

When asked whether they discussed their views about the roles of men and women with others, they reported that they discussed with others and their discussions revolved around gender roles and equality. For instance, in 1 school, the teachers reported that “... I discuss these views at any time and it is usually with my fellow women in the community, for example, when we go to fetch water. I have learnt that roles are interchangeable and that both men and women shouldn’t restrict themselves to the jobs they can do”.

equal opportunities for boys and girls. For instance, in one school, a teacher reported that “... because it helps a lot, you think about how children will grow up and chores they will be doing and creating equal opportunities for boys and girls”. In another school, a teacher reported, “it is important to think about the roles of men and women because we have roles that are meant for men and those that are for females, in this case the biological roles. A man impregnates and a woman gets pregnant”.

When asked whether they discussed their views about the roles of men and women with others, they reported that they discussed with others and their discussions revolved around gender roles and equality. For instance, in 1 school, the teachers reported that “... I once saw a man sweeping the house but he could not let the dirt out for fear that the community would see him. He instead asked a girl to let the dirt out.”

men and women. Further, all the teachers in both control and intervention schools reported that they were aware of their own views about gender roles.

When asked whether they were aware of their own views about the roles of men and women, all the teachers reported that they were aware. In the control schools, 1 teacher reported that there are typical roles for men/women while in the intervention schools all the teachers reported that all roles can be done by men/women.

In the control group 4 out of 5 while all 5 teachers in the intervention schools indicated that they discussed their views about the roles of men and women roles with others.

Overall Conclusion

Overall, both teachers in the control and intervention schools at baseline through to end-line reported they thought about the roles of men and women and that they were also aware of their own thoughts about gender roles. This is important for the GRP study because attitude and behaviour change related to negative gender stereotypes begins with thinking about the roles men and women play and our related thoughts.

7.2.2 Neutralising stereotypes through a-typical examples or gender challenging questions

Rationale

Teachers act as powerful role models for learners. Modelling of non-stereotypical behaviour by the teacher was measured because teacher behaviour; use of language; and forms of interaction influence the learners’ beliefs about what it means to be a boy or a girl. In the GRP toolkit, this is important because teacher behaviour is believed to have a huge impact on learner behaviour (whether typical or atypical).

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>The teachers reported that their actions and interactions represent gender roles. These teachers reported that they imitated the activities of both boys and girls e.g. playing football with boys and netball with the girls. One of the teachers reported that she sometimes she imitates the voice of a male even though she is a woman. Another teacher reported that she did the chores expected of both genders e.g. collect grass to thatch and sweep the classroom to demonstrate to the learners.</p> <p>When asked if they gave examples of actions and interactions that challenge gender stereotypes on the part of the teacher, 3 of the 5 teachers indicated that they did. They reported that they engaged in play with the learners in different activities. They reported that they would invite the boys to sweep with them. They also imitated different roles such as driving a truck so that the girls can also see that they can do it as well.</p>	<p>The teachers explained actions and interactions from the perspective of the learners by highlighting the actions of learners that represent roles of men and women as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Girls tend to play the role of mothers and nurses, while boys take on the roles of their fathers ▪ Girls play more with dolls and boys with cars ▪ Boys play rough while girls tend to be gentle and treat each other with respect ▪ When girls get hurt, boys say sorry while girls do not. ▪ Boys taunt the girls that they (the girls) cannot perform better than the boys at certain activities. ▪ During play, the boys and girls separate and most interaction takes place between the same sexes. <p>When asked what teachers do when they observe these behaviours; one teacher stated that she does nothing, others said that when learners fight, they beat them both, yet another teacher encourages learners to play together or mix up the groups.</p> <p>2 of the 5 teachers indicated that they do not give examples of traditional gender roles. One of the teachers that reported giving traditional gender role examples explained that she tells her learners that a long time ago there were certain roles that boys and girls were expected to perform e.g. boys herding cows and girls cleaning and looking after the babies, but that</p>	<p>4 out of 5 teachers in the control and all the teachers in the intervention schools explained that their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women.</p> <p>In both control and intervention schools the following, behaviours, were not observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher behaviours that break with stereotypes • examples that contrast with traditional gender roles • and interactions that challenge gender biases. <p>What teachers report they do, being actions and interactions that represent the roles of men and women, was not observed. However, observations were limited in time to 1 4-hour session per class. Sometimes reaffirmation of traditional roles, mostly by lack of intervention, was observed.</p>

	<p>this is no longer the case. Both sexes can perform similar roles. The other teacher explained that during funerals women are expected to wear <i>chitenges</i> and <i>vitambala</i>.</p> <p>Of the teachers that responded no, one indicated that the topic had not yet been taught in class, the other indicated that they do not assign roles to learners according to traditional roles.</p>	
Observation		
Control	Intervention	
<p>Role models which break with stereotyped gender roles were not observed at baseline.</p> <p>In terms of actions and interactions that challenge gender roles or stereotypes, no observations were made</p> <p>In terms of examples that reinforce stereotypes given in class (these reinforcements could be made by teachers), it was observed that no such examples were given by teachers. However, teacher's inaction when opportunities arose in the classroom meant that they inadvertently reinforced stereotypes by not addressing them when learners exhibited stereotyped behaviour or interactions. The following were not observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours which break with stereotypes (e.g. a male teacher sweeping) • Examples which contest traditional gender roles • Interactions that challenge a gender bias. 	<p>Examples that challenge stereotypes were not observed in class (e.g. role models that break stereotyped gender roles) at baseline.</p> <p>In terms of actions and interactions that challenge gender roles or stereotypes, no observations were made</p> <p>In terms of examples that reinforce stereotypes being given in class (these reinforcements could be made by teachers), it was observed that examples were not given by teachers but their inaction when opportunities arose in the classroom meant that they inadvertently reinforced stereotypes by not addressing them when learners exhibited behaviours that signified stereotypes.</p> <p>The following were not observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviours which break with stereotypes (e.g. a male teacher sweeping) • Examples which contest traditional gender roles • Interactions that challenge a gender bias. 	

	There were also no incidents observed where teachers reinforced tradition gender roles. with the exception of incidents of in-action.	There were also no incidents observed where teachers reinforced tradition gender roles. with the exception of incidents of in-action.	
Mid-line	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line
	<p>All ECE teachers indicated that their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I feel by participating in activities e.g. soccer, you have to participate in that, even netball and dancing, and they see this thing cannot be done by just girls or boys but by both. ▪ Like when playing I don't side the girls, even if it is time to go to the ground on Friday, I play football, even boys play netball. ▪ Sometimes that is done via acting the role ▪ I try to act like a male when need be 		<p>All the teachers reported that their actions and interactions represent gender roles. No examples that challenge stereotypes were observed and only one teacher was observed asking a stereotype challenging question</p>
	Observations		
<p>No examples that challenge stereotypes were observed in class during midline. (e.g. role models that break stereotyped gender roles)</p> <p>In terms of observations on questions that challenge gender roles this was observed only in one school when the teacher asked whether men can also <i>cook and sweep</i>. The question itself contains a common stereotype that men should not do these chores. The learners responded in the affirmative stating men can take on these tasks.</p>			
End-line	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	<p>At end-line 3 out 5 teachers in the control schools and all teachers of the intervention schools reported that their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women. This finding is consistent with what was found at baseline, midline and end-line.</p> <p>. All schools (control and intervention) were observed referring to traditional gender roles but in a very distinct manner. In control school examples were given which</p>
<p>When asked whether their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women teachers reported that their interactions with learners included actions such as sweeping and playing. In one school, the teacher emphasized the need to balance role allocation so that no single gender gets (dis)advantaged. In yet another school where the teacher reported that</p>	<p>When asked whether their actions and interactions represented the roles of men and women teachers reported that their interactions with learners included pretend/role playing and participating in the learners' games or other activities. In one of the schools the male teacher reported that "... <i>sometimes I have to pretend and act like a</i></p>		

<p>their actions did not represent roles of men and women, the teacher reported, <i>“it is not good for learners to see all the roles in one person. It can confuse them”</i>.</p> <p>When asked whether they gave learners examples of traditional roles of men and women teachers reported that they did this in class when teaching certain topics and generally during lessons through examples. The examples given here were of typical traditional gender roles. For instance, one teacher reported <i>“... there is a lesson in social studies which talks about different ceremonies i.e. the Lozi ceremony. With this, I have told them that mostly it is the men who paddle the boat and the women cook”</i> Another teacher reported that <i>“... I do that, I always talk about respect. They are supposed to show respect before the elders and the way they respond it has matter. For girls when sitting they are supposed to mind because they wear skirts. The way a boy and girl sit differ</i></p>	<p><i>woman to help learner understand what I am saying if am talking about a woman”</i></p> <p>When asked whether they gave learners examples of traditional roles of men and women the teachers reported that they did however this may have been a misunderstanding of the question as a review showed that their examples were all atypical of traditional gender roles. For instance, one teacher reported <i>“I give examples to educate them the difference of where we are coming from, where we are now, and new gender things which have come or developed”</i>. It can be observed that examples were given as a basis for neutralizing stereotypes. For instance, one teacher reported, <i>“Mostly in stories, I tell them the roles that men did in the olden days e.g. hunting and women, the role of cooking. I tell them that at present day things have however changed as both men and women can perform similar roles”</i>.</p>	<p>confirm and reinforce traditional gender roles (with 2 exceptions). In intervention schools, references to traditional gender roles aimed to neutralise stereotypes.</p> <p>In addition, teachers in the intervention classrooms were observed to be more aware of learners’ behaviours.</p> <p>However, only two teachers from intervention schools asked questions that challenged stereotypes such as: <i>“can men wear pink clothes?”</i> or <i>“Can girls play football?”</i>.</p> <p>In 4 of the intervention schools teachers were observed <i>giving examples that challenge stereotype</i> - showing an improvement from baseline. Examples included: both men and women performing chores that are similar, both sexes holding similar careers, wearing similar colours. This is an indication that teachers were able to apply the knowledge they acquired on giving a-typical neutralising examples, but less so on asking stereotype challenging questions.</p>		
<p>Observations</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1031 808 1079" style="text-align: center;">Control</td> <td data-bbox="825 1031 1354 1079" style="text-align: center;">Intervention</td> </tr> </table>		Control	Intervention	<p>In control schools, teachers were observed giving examples to learners that reinforced stereotypes. This was not observed for the intervention teachers who had received training, which suggests that the training was effective in helping teachers avoid stereotypical examples</p>
Control	Intervention			
<p>Actions and interactions that challenge gender roles and stereotypes were observed the examples that challenge stereotypes were observed in 2 of the control schools.</p> <p>For example, in one class it was observed during a dancing game in class, girls kept choosing girls and boys chose boys, so the teacher asked why boys were not choosing girls. The teacher then told the learners</p>	<p>In terms, of actions and interactions that challenges gender stereotypes and roles, it was observed that teachers were more observant of learner behaviour and utterances. However, the stereotype challenging questions were asked only in two schools. Some examples, <i>“can men wear pink clothes? Can girls play football?” “Can men sweep the house? What roles do family members perform? It is rainy</i></p>			

	<p>that ‘this time a girl must choose a boy and a boy must choose a girl’. In another instance the teacher was also observed asking boys to sweep since girls ‘do it all the time’. To this the boys complained but the teacher asked the boys whether they did not sweep at home and some boys said no while others said they wash plates.</p> <p>On the contrary, there were also evident examples that reinforce stereotypes given by teachers), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When assigning tasks of the day to the learners in class, teacher asked, “<i>Who will pack chairs?</i>” A girl raised up her hand and teacher murmured ‘<i>mmm,</i>’ and she instead, picked a boy. Later, the same teacher told a boy during a math exercise not to be slow because he was a boy. ▪ Teacher was talking about combing hair before coming to school and she pointed at a girl who had not combed her hair and said, “<i>Look at your friend (meaning a boy). He has combed his hair well like he is not a boy.</i>” ▪ Teacher told a story about Joseph and Mary where she portrayed boys as being naughty. When the two characters were returning home from school, Joseph decided not to walk but to run while Mary was walking. Joseph ran carelessly without caring to check the safety on the road and he was hit and died 	<p><i>season now, who do you think goes to the field to cultivate? Can women cultivate too?</i></p> <p>In 4 schools, so all but one, teachers gave a range of examples that included both men and women performing chores that are similar, both sexes holding similar careers, wearing similar colours and both having attributes of being brave.</p> <p>For example, in two schools, the teachers read a story to the children that involved a cowardly boy and a brave girl. They told the learners that there are some girls who are brave and some who are usually scared. The case is the same with boys.</p> <p>In another example, during independent learning through play activities, an illustration of a male sowing is seen on one of the memory cards. The teacher used this illustration to show that sowing can be done by both women and men.</p> <p>At end-line, teachers were not observed reinforcing any gender stereotypes.</p>	
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while Mary was careful and was able to reach home safely.
The teacher grouped girls and boys separately on the mats, and this led them to play separately. Separation was encouraged during singing as well.

Overall Conclusion

Overall, the teachers reported that their interactions represented gender roles, regardless of the arm in which they were in this study (control vs. intervention) or the time point at which they were asked (baseline, midline or end-line).

However, the observations that were made at baseline revealed that teachers' interactions in both control and intervention schools affirmed typical gender roles. However, at end-line, teachers in the control schools still portrayed actions and behaviours that reinforced stereotypes whilst the intervention teachers were more likely to challenge stereotypes and model a-typical behaviour.

The fact that teachers gave examples that challenged stereotypes during end-line and not midline, that is shortly after they received training, is an interesting finding. It suggests that teachers may have needed some time to plan and integrate what they learned into their class practice.

At end-line, all intervention teachers are observed giving a-typical examples yet a mere 2 out of 5 schools are observed asking gender challenging questions. This suggests that asking gender challenging questions seems to have been more difficult to apply than giving the examples.

While it is evident from the data that teachers in the intervention schools understood how to give non-stereotypical examples, this may not be the case for the input received on questioning stereotypes. This finding shows it may be useful to revisit the topic around gender challenging questions and check whether or not the teachers understood and if so, which difficulties they face in applying it to their classroom practice. This could be a factor of culture and or socialization whereby obedience is a valued trait among children. Therefore, questioning and challenging is not encouraged. It is possible that this cultural norm that teachers were exposed to growing up is manifesting in how they interact with their learners and affecting how they ask gender challenging questions

7.2.3 Gender stereotypes in illustrations in teaching and learning materials

Rationale

Illustrations in teaching and learning materials are important in the learning of young children as they reflect society and help learners to form their idea of the world. Often illustrations contain stereotypes, which may reinforce traditional gender roles. Within the GRP toolkit, teachers are not told to get rid of these materials but instead are advised to use them in combination with neutralising strategies such as questions or examples. Attention is also given to making or buying gender-neutral materials or combining materials to achieve a balanced learning environment

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline	
	Control	Intervention		
Baseline	<p>The teachers indicated that they discuss with their learners on how men and women are illustrated in teaching and play materials. These teachers reported that they did this mostly using teaching aid in class.</p> <p>One 1 teacher indicated following the syllabus closely and that she had just started teaching ECE that term and that she did not yet had extensive discussions with the learners on such issues.</p>	<p>The teachers indicated that they discuss with their learners how men and women are illustrated in teaching and play materials and gave the following explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rules were for all to follow, regardless of sex ▪ Chores were for all to do, regardless of sex ▪ Important to show respect and love to one another ▪ During the science lesson on what men and women can and cannot do. It was emphasised that all tasks e.g. sweeping and cleaning, can be done by both sexes. 	<p>4 out of 5 control schools and 3 out of 5 intervention schools reported discussing with their learners how men and women are illustrated in teaching and play materials. This type of dialogue was not observed.</p>	
	Observation			
	Control	Intervention		
	No observations made	No observations made		
Mid-line	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line	
	<p>When asked, the teachers indicated that they discussed with their learners how men and women are illustrated and learning materials and gave the following explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Like the book, I showed men or a boy was herding cattle but I asked if only boys herd cattle but they were hesitant because they have never seen it, but this time I did not draw a chart, was supposed to show both.</i> • <i>Yes, that is done by explaining what roles are shown on the charts and trying to tell learners that they too can do that.</i> • <i>By using charts like the charts for presidents in Zambia. Some illustrations in charts show that women are weak while men are strong, but I tell them that both male and female can be leaders.</i> 		<p>4 out of five intervention teachers reported discussing with learners how men and women are shown/illustrated in teaching and play materials in their classes. This type of dialogue was not observed.</p>	
	Observations			
No observations made				

				Conclusion End-line
End-line	Control	Intervention	3 out of 5 control and 4 out of 5 intervention school reported that they discussed how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and learning materials. There was a marked difference in the how the control and the intervention reported they did this with intervention schools using pictures and illustrations as an opportunity to challenge stereotypes while responses from the teachers from the control schools did not qualify their answers. This may indicate the answers are socially desirable rather than a reflection of reality. However, this type of dialogue was not observed in any school.	
	Teachers in the control schools claimed to discuss with their learners how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and playing materials. However, their responses did not substantiate their claims.	In the intervention groups teachers reported that they discussed how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and playing materials. Their discussions focused on the gender stereotypes highlighted in the pictures. For instance, one teacher reported that <i>"... mostly girls would be portrayed like playing with dolls and putting babies on the backs and cooking while the boys are portrayed as the strong ones with soldier and car toys. Therefore, I try to bring in a different aspect to such by telling stories that portray a girl as a strong one and a boy the weak one. I also use charts to break or neutralise the stereotypes. I show that both boys and girls can do the same thing"</i> . Another teacher reported shared that <i>"I tell them that even though pictures are showing a man or woman, what they do can be done by either a man or woman"</i> .		
		Observations		
		Control	Intervention	
		No observation made	No observations made	
Overall Conclusion				
The majority of the teachers either in the control or intervention claim to discuss how boys and girls are portrayed in teaching and learning materials. This trend did not change from baseline to end-line. From the intervention point of view, it was assumed that teachers in the intervention schools would be more aware how boys and girls are depicted in materials and use them as opportunity to challenge gender stereotypes. The clarifying statements made by teachers seem to support this assumption. Alas, observations were not made to substantiate the claims especially those made by the control schools. In most schools there were not enough learning materials or teaching aids to enable the research team to observe a teacher discussing how boys and girls are depicted in learning materials. Although "talking walls" (walls with charts) were available, these were not used during observation to discuss how men and women are				

displayed. For instance, at Chibombo primary school a traditional leader was male, and a girl was depicted playing netball whilst the boy played football on a chart.

7.2.4 Listening and checking for gender stereotypes during interactions and conversations

Rationale

Language, both verbal and non-verbal reveal a lot about ones' feelings, thoughts, and beliefs, including ones' unintentional and unconscious biases. In the GRP toolkit, plenty of attention is given to interaction as young learners who are still shaping their ideas regarding gender, notice clues in interaction to form their gender identities. It is therefore important that teachers listen to the learners' interaction and language to help shape gender responsive conversations, interactions, and beliefs.

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>The teachers reported that they listen and check on what learners say about men and women, girls and boys.</p> <p>Some teachers reported that there were differences in the way boys and girls treated each other. According to these teachers, this happened mostly outside the supervision of the teacher, especially during outside play when they learners engaged in different games e.g. soccer, netball. They reported that when they observed this, they intervened so that the learners treated each other the same.</p>	<p>The teachers said they listened and checked on what learners say about men and women, girls and boys.</p> <p>One teacher noted that learners talk about the roles of their mothers and fathers at home. Learners try to copy their parents' behaviour.</p>	<p>All five teachers in the control and intervention schools reported that they listened in and checked on what learners say about men and women, boys and girls during their interactions in class. The observations show that in both control and intervention schools, the teachers were not listening in and checking for gender stereotypes in the conversations that were taking place between the learners.</p> <p>It can be speculated that this was not observed because the majority of classroom interaction was teacher guided and therefore did not present learners with sufficient opportunity to interact freely beyond for example snack time or outside play but also then listening in on conversations was not observed.</p>
	Observation		
	Control	Intervention	
	<p>It was generally observed that teachers were not listening in and checking learner conversations for gender stereotypes.</p>	<p>It was generally observed that, teachers were not listening in and checking learner conversations for gender stereotypes</p>	

	Interview	Conclusion Mid-line
Mid-line	<p>The teachers indicated they listened and checked on what learners say about men and women, girls and boys. On teacher reported that <i>'for instance last week when teaching they had a conversation, one girl pointed at a boy saying, 'you are going to be a police officer', when I asked why she said, 'I am a girl I cannot be a police officer'.</i></p> <p>When asked whether there were differences in the way boys/girls treated each other, the teachers reported that boys do not like playing with girls and are fond of fighting girls. A teacher reported that <i>'even girls do the same - they want to play on their own'</i>. When asked what they do when they observe this, a teacher reported that <i>'I try to mix them to create that friendship and acceptance'</i>.</p> <p>Another teacher stated that <i>"I heard them before being introduced to this, I heard a girl, say it is not for boys to play with dolls, even a boy saying, 'no don't play with a car it's for boys"</i>. The teacher further reported that there were differences in the way boys/girls treated each other. <i>"It is difficult to break, then I was not paying attention, girls would not want to sit with boys and vice versa, when you put them together, once you leave, they separate again. It took time but now at least"</i>.</p> <p>What you do: <i>"I used to ignore but recently I talk to them about it. what if he is the only boy at home and there is a baby, should he leave it, and girls, I asked, have you not seen a woman drive and they said they have."</i></p> <p>Other examples given by teachers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sometimes boys refuse to sit with girls. ▪ Because of the cultural beliefs and their upbringing from their families. ▪ I usually come in and challenge them to always look and take each other equally. ▪ Boys say they cannot fetch water and girls say heading cattle is not for girls. However, I challenge them to say what if the boy is sick? Who is going to do that? ▪ No, in the past, it was there but now it has changed due to the teaching I have been doing. If I see they treat each other differently, I sit them down and help them understand that they are equal. ▪ Girls says boys like fighting /bullying while boys say girls like plaiting hair. When a boy cries, they say that he is like a woman. Yes, the boys are very aggressive towards each other whiles girls are tender towards each other. 	<p>All 5 ECE teachers indicated they listened and checked on what learners say about men and women, girls, and boys. The examples they give show an increased awareness of stereotypes. Sometimes teachers elaborate and indicate they challenged the learners' statements for example by talking to them or by asking a gender challenging question.</p> <p>The observation revealed that listening to stereotypes was relatively common compared to baseline. However, the challenging responses which were quoted in the interview were not observed.</p>
	Observations	
	<p>At midline most of the schools were observed to listen -in or check interaction for stereotypes except in one school. This was mostly done during outside play time. The teachers attempted</p>	

	to mix the learners up in their seating arrangement in class and during outside play. At 1 of the schools a teacher overheard a conversation where a girl, said it was not for boys to play with dolls while a boy said to a girl 'no don't play with a car it's for boys' however the teacher did not respond.		
End-line	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	3 out of 5 teachers from the control schools and all the teachers from the intervention schools reported that they checked and listened to their learners' conversations and interactions for gender stereotypes. A review of the responses showed that teachers in intervention, compared to control schools, did not just listen or check but intervened by challenging or neutralising gender stereotypes. One teacher went as far as to claim interaction had changed in her class. The observations show that intervention school teachers were more proactive, they listened in and intervened when overhearing gender stereotypes during learner interactions.
	When asked whether they listen in and check learners' conversations and interactions for gender stereotypes, the teachers reported that they did, and the conversations were mostly centred on gender roles at home. One of the teachers reported, <i>"When I tell the learners to sweep the classroom, the boys would say, at home the girls are the ones who sweep. I respond by changing the roles in the classroom so that the boys now sweep, and the girls pick litter"</i> . Another teacher reported that the learners <i>"... sometimes they have such crazy talks as women are not supposed to smoke"</i> .	When asked whether they listen in and check learners' conversations and interactions for gender stereotypes, the teachers reported that they did, and the conversations were mostly centred on gender roles at home. For example, one teacher stated that <i>"...mostly boys say girls are weak and like to play with their hair and girls also say boys are bullies, they like to push. When I hear this I intervene by saying that at home you have brothers and sisters, the same way that you love and play with your siblings is the same way that you should treat your friends here"</i> . Another teacher reported, <i>"the learners have now started to say that there is no difference between boys and girls in what they can do.... When I see that they do not treat each other equally with respect, I challenge them to treat each other equally"</i> .	
	Observations		
Control	Intervention		
In the control schools there were opportunities to challenge gender stereotypes, but they were not utilised by the teachers. For instance, at 1 school, the teacher asked who wanted to volunteer to collect the box of learning material. A girl then raised her hand to which	In the intervention schools, there were some opportunities where teachers listened in and checked for gender stereotypes during interactions and conversations. For instance, in 1 school the teacher overheard a conversation between the boys and girls about herding cattle where the boys were emphasising that they		

	the teacher protested and stated that a boy should instead go because the box was heavy.	were going to herd cattle. At this point the (female) teacher reported that she also herded cattle - a remark to which the boys laughed. She then intervened with a question directed towards the boys in which she asked if she would die if she herded cattle. The learners then responded by saying she would not.	
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Overall Conclusion

While it can be observed that from baseline through to end-line teachers reported that they listened in and checked learners conversations for gender stereotypes, it was noted at the end-line that intervention school teachers actively (as compared to passively) listened in to the conversations and then intervened to challenge the stereotypes. This is contrary to the baseline reports (both control and intervention) where teachers reportedly listened in because they found themselves within hearing distance of the conversations.

7.2.5 Parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners

Rationale
 The presence of simultaneous activities in play areas enables learners to engage in guided play. Sometimes they even have choice to interact with whichever activity they enjoy as opposed to being assigned by the teacher.
 In the GRP toolkit there is guidance as to how to make independent learning in play areas gender responsive.

		Interview		Conclusion Baseline
		Control	Intervention	
Baseline		When asked if they organised parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners, 4 out of 5 teachers reported that they did. On average, it was reported that about 30 minutes is spent on such activities. However, one teacher indicated that her learners spent 3 hours on such activities. Overall, the teachers reported that they spent about 3 to 4 hours with the learners.	3 of the teachers indicated that they do not organise parallel activities due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient materials • Too many learners to handle • It does not work, teacher used to do it previously for 30 minutes. Of the remaining 2 teachers 1 claimed to have play areas where learners are put in groups for about 8-10 minutes per play area. Total amount of time spent on the parallel activities being	4 out of 5 teachers in control schools reported that they conducted parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners while only three in intervention schools reported that they did. However, observations contradicted what the teachers reported. It appears that teachers tended to report socially desirable findings. It is also likely that teachers may not have understood LtP areas as they had not yet attended the general LtP training. This also included the research team.

		about 30-40 minutes. The last teacher referred to outdoor play activities where learners are divided into groups and these groups focus on different activities at the same time, although this arrangement does not constitute play areas.	
	Observation		
	Control	Intervention	
	This was not observed at baseline. No simultaneous activities in play areas were set up or used during observation.	Only one school at baseline had 1 differentiated simultaneous activity: using bottle tops to create different numbers The teacher placed the class in different groups for the learners to create the numbers assigned to their group, 3 6 or 5. (numeracy game) Less than 10 minutes was spent doing this activity. In other schools simultaneous activities in play areas were not observed.	
	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line
Mid-line	2 of the teachers indicated that they do: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Though not much because am only learning to use the corners. About 20 minutes in the corners and at the mat is about 5 minutes.” ▪ “Each area has hours” While the other 3 teachers said no: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “As of now, it is still a challenge as I am still making some materials to use as we have shortage of materials to use. However, it is something, which will be sorted out soon.” ▪ “We have not yet come up with corners due to lack of materials, so learning is done on the mat. In addition, no permanent class for ECE class we have to share with others.” 		2 out of 5 teachers reported that they organise parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners. The observation contradicted what the teachers reported. Only in 1 school were simultaneous activities in play areas observed, while 4 of the intervention schools did not organise simultaneous play activities at midline
	Observations		
	Only 1 school, a different school from the one trying to apply at baseline, had what could be called simultaneous activities. What was observed in the other schools could not qualify to be classified as simultaneous activities as it was predominantly teacher led. In this school, the teacher organised three groups of boys and girls (in groups of three) where the children played a		

	bus game with drawing of a bus on a cupboard while the second group played a math game - cards with numbers. In the third group, the children played with blocks of different colours. The children spent about 10 minutes in each activity.		
End-line	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	<p>All schools in both the control and intervention reported that they organised parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners. However, further probing revealed that most of the responses the teachers in the control schools gave did not qualify to be categorised as parallel/simultaneous learning through play activities. This was consistent with the observations.</p> <p>Only 1 out of 5 schools in the control and all 5 schools in the intervention spent most of the teaching time on simultaneous activities in play areas. The intervention schools had a variety of low-cost games and activities in their play areas. They also provided learners an opportunity to choose what they wanted to play which is part of gender responsive LTP.</p>
	<p>When asked if they organized parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners the teachers reported that they did. Some of the responses that they provided included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I cannot account for how much time I spend on play areas because I have many learners in my class. I spend roughly 4 hours with the class.</i> <i>At the shopping corner the girls sell to the boys while at the 'cosy' corner the two sexes play fantasy games</i> 	<p>When asked if they organized parallel/simultaneous activities using play areas/corners the teachers reported that they did. Some of the responses that they provided included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I prepare different activities, if they seem interested, they can be there even for 7 minutes</i> <i>It helps to make all learners to be engaged in different activities at the same time</i> 	
	Observations		
Control	Intervention		
<p>One school had several activities taking place at the same time. The play areas set out by the teacher were the bus game, the number area, the vowel- matching game and the dice game area.</p> <p>At another school, the teacher set out two letter name games: learners could print letters on cardboard or trace letters in the sand using stones/sticks. These games were played from inside and outside the classroom, respectively. However, 2 activities is few and this class spent most time doing teacher led activities.</p>	<p>There were several activities taking place at the same time in groups and in learning areas.</p> <p>The teachers set up table-top activities in all the five schools and the learners were given the opportunity to choose from the choice board which activity to play with at a given time.</p> <p>Activities included but were not limited to <i>bingo game, the chalkboard, the pretend area, cup and ball games; board writing game, beading, memory game, reading game, puzzles, writing in sand game, initial sound game, etc.</i></p>		

The rest of the schools had no simultaneous activities set up.

At one specific school, as some learners were still trickling into school one by one before the start of class, the learners played outside on tires while others were moulding with clay as teacher was setting up the table top activities.

Overall Conclusion

The data from the observations revealed that at end-line teachers in the intervention schools implemented learning through play in their classrooms. Schools in the intervention that had initially indicated lack of learning materials seemed to have managed to create games and activities for learners. All teachers both in the control and intervention schools had received training in regular learning through play without the GRP component. Some improvement was observed between baseline and end-line for the control group. However, only one control school had a variety of activities in the play areas. The failure to fully implement LtP by the control schools suggests that the general LtP training organised by the in-service structures, may have faced limitations (duration of training, amount of participants, etc) which negatively influenced its impact. This is further reinforced by the finding that the intervention school teachers only improved their application of learning through play after the training on GR LtP, which deepened their understanding of LtP. More information on the limitations of this general LtP training in the report section 3.9 Limitations of the study. It could be useful to further analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the initial general training on LtP (attended by both control and intervention teachers). Based on this analysis, changes can be made to increase the impact of efforts to bring new teachers in the district up to speed with regards to LtP.

7.2.6 Assigning learners to learning activities

Rationale

Choice for learners is something that is not culturally promoted in the Zambian context. Children in ECE would be considered too young or unable to make their own choices Teachers may experience allowing children to choose as relinquishing their control.

The benefits of giving learners autonomy in the form of choice are well researched; it increases learner involvement and thus learning. Furthermore, autonomy-supportive teaching is said to enhance learners' achievement later in life as the approach promotes the development of young children's executive functions - that is, core cognitive skills that allow children to manage their attention and behaviour.

From a gender perspective, not assigning learners to learning activities allows learners to develop their unique talents and interests hopefully uninhibited by their gender.

The toolkit encourages teachers to give learners choice and to monitor if activities attract a variety of learners as learners should not be inhibited by gender roles in the choices they make. Therefore, when teachers observe an activity attracts merely 1 gender it is important the teacher reflects on how it can be made attractive to the opposite gender and encourages the opposite gender to try this activity. A rotation can also occasionally be useful to encourage learners to engage with materials, which they would usually not choose.

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>When asked if the teachers assigned learners to learning activities the teachers said they did. This assignment was carried out variedly and one of the teachers reported that it also depended on the topic she was teaching e.g. if the topic required role play.</p> <p>Further when asked if they rotated the learner to different learning areas, the teachers reported that they sometimes help learners to rotate between different activities. They reported that doing this helped learners to experience and know the different activities in the class. When asked if this got all learners to play with all the materials, the teachers reported that it got the learners to play with the materials given to them</p>	<p>When asked if the teachers assigned learners to learning activities the teachers said they did. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For example, one teacher mentioned during math they play with bottle tops and seeds for counting and put those in the “addition machine”. • One teacher indicated that assigning activities is mainly done for absent learners so they could catch up with the rest of the class • One teacher said she assigned activities according to age of learners: the younger learners are sent to play while the older learners are asked to write and colour. • One teacher said learners were assigned when providing them with materials. • The last teacher mentioned that she used to assign activities according to age of the learners. The younger learners would play with toys, while the older ones would colour. However, she no longer assigns activities. Learners choose what activities they would like to engage in. <p>Further when asked if they rotated the learner to different learning areas, the teachers reported that they sometimes help learners to rotate between different activities. The teachers reported that they did this by:</p>	<p>In both control and intervention schools 4 out of 5 teachers agreed that they assigned learners to learning activities</p> <p>Observations were consistent with what the teachers said about assigning learners to learning activities. It was observed that learners were not given the freedom to choose activities but were assigned by the teachers. Observations revealed that mostly all learners engaged in the same activity.</p> <p>In terms of rotation, all teachers in control and 3 out of 5 in the in the intervention reported that they rotated their learners between different activities. However, this rotation of learners was not observed. .</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotation took place during Maths lesson and Expressive Arts, which involves activities like throwing and kicking balls. • Furthermore, rotation takes place between different play areas and during outside play activities. <p>The teachers stated rotation was helpful because it allows learners to be exposed to the different play activities and to play with all the materials.</p> <p>One of the teachers explained that they did not <i>have enough time to rotate learners between activities in class.</i></p>	
	Observation		
	Control	Intervention	
	Teachers in 4 schools were observed to assign learners to learning activities however mainly all learners were assigned the same or a similar activity or individual practice	In intervention schools, 4 ECE teachers were also observed to be assigning learners to learning activities however mainly all learners were assigned the same or a similar activity or individual practice.	
Mid-line	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line
	<p>All the teachers indicated that they do assign learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>By giving them tasks such as playing matching activities and puzzles. This was done for the learners to consolidate to concepts introduced at the mat so when playing amongst friends they learn.</i> • <i>We have numbering game played with three children and it is for learning how to count. Therefore, when others do the game, others get dollies while others will be buying stuff and doing role playing.</i> • <i>To help the learners develop the interest of interaction between themselves and also to help them learn.</i> 		<p>The assignment of learners to learning activities was done by the teachers, as was the case at baseline. Thus, there was no observed change in the way the teachers assigned learners to learning activities. Observation did not align with the answers the teachers gave.</p> <p>In terms of rotation, 4 out of 5 ECE teachers indicated that learners are rotated.</p> <p>Teachers answers and elaborations could be considered as an increased understanding of LtP. it</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>By putting them in groups and giving them materials to play with. To have order in class during learning but also to ensure that they all know what they are asked to do</i> <p>In terms of rotation, the teachers reported that they rotated their learners. They highlighted the following as some of the modalities they used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I introduce a number I give activities for others to colour, and for others to make the number. Therefore, for a learner to get a concept they have to go through all the stages for them to learn it. Playing with all materials: in some way, as they are exchanging activities they are coming in contact with different materials in that room.</i> • <i>It is not every day that those who were selling today will sell tomorrow. On other days, they will do role play or games so I swap them. Playing with all materials: yes, everyone participates because everyone has what to do and they interact, all the age, they do not feel like they can't do anything.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Rotation helps the learners to know each activity, which others have done and not just stick to one activity.</i> ○ <i>Yes, because they are exposed to all materials and they become familiar with them.</i> ○ <i>They are put in groups were one activity is done and when they finish that, they have to go to the other activity hence the need to rotate.</i> ○ <i>Yes, since the pass through all the corners or learning areas so that they know what happens at every learning area</i> <p>While 1 teacher indicated that rotation does not happen. The teacher reported that this is due to lack of play materials rotation is very limited.</p>	<p>appears teachers were beginning to realise what they ought to do whilst they were not yet able to put it into practice.</p>				
	<p>Observations</p>					
<p>End-line</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Interview</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Control</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Intervention</td> </tr> <tr> <td>When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, most of the teachers (4) reported that they did.</td> <td>When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, some of the teachers reported that they did while other teachers reported that they did not. For instance, in one school a teacher reported that: <i>"I only assign</i></td> </tr> </table>	Control	Intervention	When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, most of the teachers (4) reported that they did.	When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, some of the teachers reported that they did while other teachers reported that they did not. For instance, in one school a teacher reported that: <i>"I only assign</i>	<p>Conclusion End-line</p> <p>In the control schools, 4 teachers reported they assigned the learners to activities. In the intervention schools, 2 teachers reported that they assigned learners, while 2 reported that they did not and let learners choose. One teacher reported letting learners choose mostly but</p>
Control	Intervention					
When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, most of the teachers (4) reported that they did.	When asked, if they assigned learners to learning activities, some of the teachers reported that they did while other teachers reported that they did not. For instance, in one school a teacher reported that: <i>"I only assign</i>					

		<i>learners Unless they are not sure of where they want to be in other cases learners get to choose what they want to do”.</i>	assigning them when they felt unable to choose. Observers witnessed choice for learners in all intervention schools. In control schools there were no simultaneous activities observed.
	Observations		
	Control	Intervention	
	No choice for learners as simultaneous activities were absent in most of the schools. It was mainly observed that most time was spent in teacher led activities with occasional individual practice.	In all schools, learners were generally given the opportunity to make a choice on which learning through play activity to undertake at a given time. The choice board was used for this process of choosing.	The difference between midline and end-line suggests that the training had an impact on the teachers.
Overall Conclusion			
<p>Allowing learners choice is not only complicated due to cultural beliefs but also because free choice also requires play areas and materials to be available. The study has shown that these were not available in most schools at midline before the gender responsive learning through play training took place. It is encouraging to see that teachers in the intervention schools were receptive to the training. In 3 intervention schools ECE teachers reported they gave learners free choice, and all were observed allowing learners to choose. This indicates that in addition to overcoming their beliefs about what girls and boys should and should not do they left behind beliefs related to how controlled teaching should be.</p>			

7.2.7 Acceptable names for play areas in class

Rationale			
<p>The names of learning areas in the classroom can influence learners’ involvement in learning activities and the way they perceive certain activities in relation to gender roles. In the GRP toolkit, this is one way to encourage the participation of all learners in all play areas regardless of their gender. For example, the doll area may be less attractive to boys than the pretend area, the home area may be somewhere in the middle, indicating the gender roles from home apply in the school setting. Gender-neutral names are part of making LtP gender responsive</p>			
	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	The teachers reported that the areas in their class had names that were acceptable to both girls and boys for example none of the areas were called the doll area. This was because	The teachers explained that the areas are given subject names: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-math, • Expressive Arts, 	All the teachers in the control schools reported that the areas in their class had names that were acceptable to both girls and boys while 4 of the 5 reported the same in the intervention schools. Although teachers in both control and intervention schools mentioned having areas for

	<p>they used subject names to label play areas. Names that were used included</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDS corner • Literacy corner • Science corner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and • Literacy and • Social Studies. <p>The other play areas were <i>house corner</i> and the <i>cosy corner</i>. All area names were acceptable to both boys and girls.</p> <p>One teacher did not know how to respond to the question on play area</p>	<p>learning activities, Observation merely saw teacher led activities. No simultaneous activities were observed using the areas.</p>
	Observation		
	Control	Intervention	
<p>In both control and intervention, schools there were areas marked on the wall aligned to teaching subject. However, these did not fit the description of play areas of this research as there were no play materials there and learners were not observed engaging in these play areas.</p>			
Mid-line	Interview		Conclusion Mid-line
	<p>At mid-line data was consistent with what was found at baseline. The teachers explained that the play areas are given subject names and the other areas are the house and <i>cosy corner</i>. All names are acceptable to both boys and girls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One teacher mentioned having a market corner, <i>“when we put both boys and girls go. They both go to home corner when playing, and they both play games too”</i> • <i>“I do not have play learning due to lack of materials”</i> • Another teacher reported <i>“they easily associate with areas and what is found there and the importance of it”</i>. • One teacher said: <i>“All the areas are liked by both boys and girls.”</i> <p>While the other stated that: <i>“They are yet to have the play area. As I just said earlier, am only 2 weeks old, so I still need to put up play areas like pretend areas”</i>.</p>		<p>4 of the 5 teachers reported that the play areas are given subject names. These reports were consistent with observations whereby play areas had subject name labels e.g. literacy corner although many did not have materials.</p>
	Observations		
	<p>In four schools, play areas were observed to have acceptable name such as shopping areas and cosy area. However, in 3 of those schools, there were no play materials in these areas and learners were not observed engaging in these play areas. One intervention school did organise</p>		

	three groups activities all of which had neutral names (bus game, math game with number cards and blocks).		
End-line	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	3 out of 5 teachers in the control schools reported that at their schools the play areas are given subject names, which are acceptable to both boys and girls while all of the teachers in the intervention schools reported the same. Further, observations showed that in most control schools the teachers did not use/have learning areas. However, all intervention schools did use/have learning areas with neutral names.
	Some of the teachers explained that the play areas are given subject names, which are acceptable to both boys and girls. The acceptable names include <i>Maths corner</i> , <i>science</i> , <i>shop corner</i> ; 'cosy' corner etc.	All the teachers explained that the play areas are given subject names, which are acceptable to both boys and girls. Some of the <i>acceptable</i> names reported by the teachers include <i>home corner</i> , <i>shop corner</i> , <i>environment corner</i> , and <i>language and literacy corner</i> .	
	Observations		
Control	Intervention		
	In control school, 3 schools were observed to have acceptable name pasted on the wall such as shopping/market corner and cosy corner. However merely 1 school had several activities taking place at the same time all of which had acceptable names such as the bus area, the number area, the vowel- matching game and the dice game area.	All school had play areas being used and all these areas had acceptable names to both sexes. The names included shopping corner, bus game, drawing area and so forth.	
Overall Conclusion			
Generally, it appears that the names given to play areas for both control and intervention schools are not different throughout the baseline, midline and end line. Common names of play areas include cosy area, game area, and subject based area e.g. math corner.			

7.2.8 Activities liked by both boys and girls

Rationale

When classrooms provide activities that are liked by both girls and girls it stimulates playing together and promotes interaction between boys and girls. This helps learners to form a gender-neutral idea of what it means to be a boy or a girl, to realise there are different ways of being a boy or a girl, some like pink some do not and that is ok.

The toolkit encourages teachers to teach learner centred and organise group work with activities, which cater to a variety of interests as opposed to working teacher centred with the whole class especially given the high number of learners in some Zambian classes. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to monitor if activities attract a variety of learners. When teachers observe an activity attracts merely 1 gender it is important the teacher reflects on how it can be made attractive to the opposite gender and encourages the opposite gender to try this activity. The toolkit offers teachers a variety of suggestions to encourage mingling for example by combining materials differently, by adding extra attractive materials, by organising girls or boys only time, by organising activities which are based on the interest of the learners, etc.

		Interview		Conclusion Baseline
		Control	Intervention	
Baseline		<p>The teachers claimed they planned activities that both girls and boys liked. One teacher, elaborated that her activities are guided by the lesson plan and that these are not deliberately altered to be interesting to the learners</p> <p>In addition, 3 the teachers also reported that they organised play areas/activities based on learners' interest.</p> <p>They reported that this was most feasible when it came to play activities (e.g. football) where they could tailor activities/games that girls and boys like. They also reported that this helped the learners to play together.</p> <p>The two teachers that reported that they did not organise activities based on the interest of learners explained they planned lesson according to the syllabus and policy documents. Policy does not highlight planning learner activities based on learner interest</p>	<p>The teachers indicated that they plan activities they think learners like. They reported they know learners like the activity when they do not want to stop playing. Teachers reported looking out for activities that all the learners could participate in.</p> <p>In addition, when asked whether they organised play areas/activities based on learner interest the teachers reported that they organised play areas/activities based on learners' interest and indicated a variety of activities such as construction and shopping etc. According to the teachers, activities are mostly organised as suggested by the timetable and policy, although sometimes, the learners are invited to suggest games by the teacher. This is mostly done during story time when learners tell their own stories and the teacher sometimes asks them to draw characters from their stories e.g. a cow.</p> <p>Teachers indicated that during activities that learners enjoy, boys and girls are more likely to play together.</p>	<p>In control schools, 4 out of 5 teachers agreed that they planned activities that both girls and boys liked while all teachers in the intervention schools reported that they planned activities that both girls and boys liked</p> <p>Further, 3 out of 5 teachers in the control schools reported that they organised play areas/activities based on learners' interest and 3 out of the 5 teachers in intervention schools also reported they organised play areas or activities based on the learner interest.</p> <p>However, observation data contradicted the teacher reports as there were almost no materials nor activities created based on learners' interest.</p>

		Observation			
		Control	Intervention		
		<p>Activities very much liked by both boys and girls were not observed in both control and intervention schools with the exception of outside games which tended to be liked more. Activities were almost exclusively teacher led. Some learners remained keen whilst others disengaged or got antsy which led to minor incidents. All schools had few materials to elicit preference by boys and girls as the children were made to play with what was available. Nevertheless, when it came to outside play, there were activities that were liked by both girls and boys. The boys preferred to play soccer while the girls would rush to play 'chiyato' or netball. The levels of enthusiasm for these activities was very marked. Further teachers seemed to have had no plans/knowledge on how to engage learners to work independently on activities while they were doing other activities such as marking learners' work.</p>			
		Interview		Conclusion Mid-line	
Mid-line	<p>When asked whether they organised activities based on learners' interest teachers highlighted several activities which included both in-door (e.g. colouring, play time) and outdoor activities (e.g. singing and dancing; <i>'sheep come home'</i>). One of the teachers indicated, "<i>... that is what the curriculum asks us and it helps us to create an equal learning opportunity for both girls/boys... by taking into consideration what each gender likes and mixing it to attract both</i>".</p> <p>In addition, 2 out of 5 teachers also reported that they organised learning areas or activities based on the personal interest of learners while others, 3 out of 5 reported that they did not. One teacher stated that "<i>... sometimes learners suggest what they would want to play with so in such times we give them what they ask for. This even helps them to mix</i>" Some of the factors that were highlighted include the class size and one teacher indicated, "<i>I have to make a choice but there is a limitation due to space</i>".</p> <p>One of the teachers who reported that they did not organise activities based on learners' interest stated that they did not do this because they wanted follow the timetable and maintain order.</p>		<p>All the teachers indicated that they plan activities they think both girls and boys like. However, observations contradicted this in 4 out of 5 schools.</p>		
			Observations		
			<p>No observations on activities liked by both boys and girls were captured. 4 out of 5 intervention teachers-did not organise parallel activities. During teacher led activities there is no room for preference by boys or girls. In the one school where parallel activities were observed, the majority but not all of the children were observed to like the activities.</p>		

	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>When asked whether they organised activities that were liked by both girls and boys the liked activities that were mentioned by teachers included both outside games (e.g. skipping, football) and classroom activities (making objects). One of the teachers stated, “<i>We organise for skipping ropes which are interesting for boys and girls. I ensure that I organise multiple activities so that each learner chooses the activity that interests them most</i>”. Another stated that “<i>...the bus games are also liked by both, so I put them out for them during the expressive art period. I also make sure that I make them attractive to the learners and motivate them to play by telling them that I will do this and that if you are participating. I also get involved as a teacher; I play with them</i>”.</p>	<p>When asked whether they organised activities that were liked by both girls and boys the teachers reported that they allow the learners to take the lead in coming up with the activities. In one of the schools, a teacher stated that “<i>...usually the activities are chosen or suggested by learners hence they choose what they like. I also do it by seeing what they already like or trying something new which everyone would want to participate</i>”</p>	<p>4 out of 5 control and all intervention schools stated that they organised activities that were liked by both girls and boys</p> <p>In the control schools, only one ECE class was observed to have play materials that were liked/attractive to both sexes in contradiction with what teacher reported.</p> <p>In the intervention schools, all the schools had attractive play areas where learners could engage in a variety of activities simultaneously and more or less independently. Said activities attracted both boys and girls.</p>
	Observations		
	Control	Intervention	
	<p>In the 1 school that had several play areas, the children (boys and girls) seemed to enjoy the dice game consisting of a dice, bottle tops of all sorts of colours and a cardboard with numbers.</p> <p>In this school there was also a whole class building blocks activity, learners created things they seemed to enjoy out of the blocks. The girls made beds, cups and other house materials while the boys created cars and guns out of the blocks, in line with more traditional roles of caring role for girls and strength</p>	<p>There were play areas that were attractive to both boys and girls in all schools. In some schools the reading area with story books of different colours i.e. yellow, blue and white was attractive to both gender groups. In others, the telephone and the throw ball area while in another both boys and girls liked the colourful and appealing doll collection.</p>	

associated roles for boys.
In other schools activities were given for the purpose of managing the classroom. Learners there were bored and tended to play with any other materials available to them.

Overall Conclusion

Preference by a certain gender is difficult to observe during teacher led sessions which leave no room for choice. Furthermore, preference depends on the offer available. Learners will like blocks if the alternative is tracing in notebooks which does not mean they would choose blocks if more activities are on offer.

The increase in play materials at end-line could be attributed to gender responsive learning through play training that empowered teachers with knowledge on how to make play materials using local material. This is important because not everything needs to be bought and not many schools have the money to buy play materials. The creation of play materials that were previously unavailable suggests that teachers responded well to the training. The training, coaching and monitoring in intervention school could explain why learning through play implementation was higher than in control schools. At end-line the simultaneous activities on offer (in all intervention schools and 1 control school) attracted both boys and girls.

7.3 School Leader Findings

7.3.1 Importance of thinking about roles of men and women

Rationale.

It was important to ask school leaders whether they thought about roles of men and women to understand the beliefs that leaders held about gender roles and stereotypes. This is important because beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes are consciously or unconsciously reflected in the way leaders interact with learners, colleagues, parents, procurement, visioning, etc which may enforce gender stereotypes. Hence, attention is giving to this topic in the GRP toolkit and the intervention.

Interview			Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>Most (7 out of 9) school leaders reported that it was important for them to think about roles of men and women because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It helps promote the life of a girl child.</i> • <i>Promotes equity by not being biased.</i> • <i>It helps boys and girls, men and women know what to do and what is expected of them. This prevents confusion of roles.</i> 	<p>9 out of 9 School leaders agreed that it was important to think about roles of men and women because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It helps harmonisation where roles are not balanced between boys and girls in the school.</i> • <i>Men and women need to know their roles to avoid confusion.</i> • <i>It helps planning when boys and girls know what they should be doing</i> 	<p>Leaders in the intervention and control schools acknowledged the importance of thinking about the roles of men and women.</p> <p>They each identified why it was important. The reasons they gave for why it was important were similar. They emphasis the need for men and women boys and girls to know their place in society. Many of the statements implied different, unequitable, roles.</p>
Interview			Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>All the schools leaders (10 out of 10) reported that it was important to think about the roles of men and women. When asked why the school leaders mentioned the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It was important for men and women to know their responsibilities to lessen confusion in the performance of tasks.</i> • <i>Important to know what men and women can or cannot do.</i> 	<p>All school leaders (10 out of 10) stated it was important to think about the roles of men and women. Reasons given include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To ensure that boys and girls are treated the same.</i> • <i>Girls are as capable as boys are.</i> • <i>Boys and girls should have the same opportunities.</i> • <i>It's important that one sex does not made to feel superior to the other.</i> 	<p>Intervention and control groups acknowledged the importance of thinking about the roles and men and women and boys and girls. However, the reasons given differed.</p> <p>Reasons given by school leaders in the control group mainly highlighted that men and women, boys and girls must know their roles and responsibilities in order to lessen role confusion.</p> <p>School leaders in the intervention schools focused more on the importance and need for</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychologically, there are things that only men can do. Men and women should know their limits. Both men and women, boys and girls can do the same things and succeed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Children need to grow up knowing that they can achieve anything regardless of their sex.</i> 	equal treatment and opportunities for men and women, boys and girls.
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Overall Conclusion

Conclusion: At baseline school, leaders in the control and intervention schools had similar views about the importance of thinking about the roles of men and women. Most reasons cited were not gender responsive. At end-line, school leaders in the control schools highlight the same points they had mentioned at baseline. For the school leaders in the intervention schools, there is a clear shift in awareness and importance. The reasons given for the importance of thinking about these roles showed greater appreciation of the fact that men and women, boys and girls are equal; they are capable of performing the same tasks. They emphasize equal treatment and opportunities.

7.3.2 Awareness of own views on roles

Rationale. Surfacing school leaders’ own gender biases and beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes results in increased awareness. This is important because beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes are consciously or unconsciously reflected in the way leaders interact with learners, colleagues, parents, procurement, visioning, etc which may enforce gender stereotypes. Awareness, achieved through self-reflection on beliefs about the roles of men and women, boys and girls, can lead to more gender sensitive interactions and leadership. Hence, attention is given to this topic in the GRP toolkit and the intervention.

Baseline	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
	<p>All 9 school leaders agreed that they were aware of their own views.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working in the education system has assisted them to become more aware of the views about men and women e.g. through the education policy. Interacting with other stakeholders in the education sector had helped them become more aware. 	<p>Most school leaders indicated that they are aware of their own views. The following were some views:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Over the years, there has been a change in how people think about the roles of men and women in society.</i> <i>Women are just as capable as men are and should be treated equally.</i> <i>The more educated one is, the more they are likely to share roles equally between men and women.</i> 	<p>While views on awareness were very similar and to some extent positive, some views seem to accept the status quo that men and women have their roles, and nothing could change this. The positives are contradicted by the reasons leaders gave for thinking about the roles of men and women. (which did not emphasize equality). This highlighted the need for awareness training.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Men and women are not different apart from the biological side of things.</i> • <i>Women know their roles and so do men.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One leader noted an imbalance in gender roles and changing this imbalance would be difficult. 	
	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>All the school leaders (10/10) indicated that they are aware of their own views on roles of men and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Men provide necessities needed at home, women are the caregivers.</i> • <i>Certain roles are gender specific and can only be performed by either boys or girls.</i> • <i>Boys and girls should be given the same opportunities.</i> • <i>Roles are interchangeable between men and women, boys and girls.</i> • <i>Men's roles are more challenging than those of women. Women cannot manage to do men's roles.</i> • <i>Sometimes, women are just not strong enough.</i> 	<p>All the school leaders (10/10) indicated that they experienced much greater awareness of their previous views. They acknowledged of previous “<i>negative attitude</i>” and “<i>unhelpful way of thinking</i>”. This greater awareness and acknowledgement of equal opportunities and treatment of boys and girls. Was shown in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal acknowledgement of change in perception and behaviour towards boys and girls and gender roles has taken place • A change in how boys and girls should be treated, there should be no discrimination. • There should be equal opportunities and treatment of both boys and girls. • A lot more emphasis on being gender responsive. 	<p>While there is an acknowledgement that boys and girls should have the same opportunities, the respondents in the control group contradict themselves on gender specific roles. Respondents in the intervention group spoke of the changes in their awareness levels on gender roles. Their responses on gender roles are clear on the need for equal opportunities and treatment of sexes.</p>
Overall Conclusion			
<p>Conclusion: At baseline, the school leaders in the control schools very generally indicated where they think they gained their awareness and views on roles. There was an emphasis on separate roles for men and women although 2 school leaders acknowledged that there are no difference in what men and women can achieve.</p> <p>At baseline, school leaders in the intervention schools were more explicit about their views and provided views that were more gender-neutral than school leaders from the control group. Some school leaders in the intervention group noted that an imbalance exists in gender roles and that this was irreparable. At end-line, the views of the school leaders in the control school somewhat remains the same although they give examples of their views and contradicted themselves. While they acknowledge the need for equal opportunities, they are clear that roles should be gender specific. School leaders in the intervention school show a remarkable change in attitudes and views compared to baseline. In terms of awareness, the school</p>			

leaders are aware of their previous thoughts, which they identified as unhelpful to their learners and society. They are also aware of their new thoughts and attitudes towards men and women, which are more progressive.

7.3.3 Discussion about the roles of men and women

Rationale. School leaders were asked if they discussed the roles of men and women, boys and girls and if so, who are the different audiences they interacted with. This provided information on the views of the school leaders as well as of the audiences regarding roles of men and women. The occurrence of these discussions illustrates the importance of leadership involvement. The views of the audiences provide a starting point for more tailored future intervention or activities around GRP.

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>All of the school leaders reported that they discussed their views about the roles of men and women. These discussions take place during meetings mostly (with teachers and with learners) but also during informal conversations with family, friends and church members.</p> <p>General comments from the school leaders was that society adopts a more traditional approach to gender roles.</p> <p>Only 2 out of 9 leaders reported that the community had embraced a more open-minded approach about gender roles.</p>	<p>School leaders explained that discussion on the roles of men and women were conducted during staff meetings, CPDs, school briefings, council meetings, etc.</p> <p>With learners during class and during clubs e.g. guidance and counselling, FAWEZA, human rights club.</p> <p>With the community during PTC meetings and during family gatherings.</p> <p>From discussions, school leaders reported learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that culture greatly influences how roles of men and women are perceived. • Men feel superior to women. Roles are gender specific and very difficult to interchange. 	<p>Clearly, school leaders engage in discussion on gender roles at different levels, although the effectiveness of these discussions is not known. It appears these discussions have informed varied views about the roles of men and women. Discussion surfaced the feeling men are superior to women and that their roles are not interchangeable.</p> <p>Culture seems to play a key role in these perceptions.</p> <p>These statements support the need to increase awareness of school authorities and the community on matters related to gender and gender roles. Increased awareness is important to the school leaders because they are the link between the community and the school and are therefore agents of change.</p>

	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>School leaders listed the following as places where discussions take place; mostly in staff meetings with fellow teachers and in class with the learners; other places mentioned include workshops, PTC meetings, at church and with their families.</p> <p>Through discussions, school leaders reported learning that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some people are ignorant about their roles • boys do not like to perform chores that are done by girls because of societal expectations. <p>One school leader explained that in the work place there was an effort to ensure females are not disadvantaged.</p>	<p>School leaders in the intervention schools indicated that they now make a conscious effort to discuss the roles of men and women.</p> <p>Discussions are conducted mostly in the school environment with learners and fellow teachers.</p> <p>Some indicated that discussions about roles of boys and girls, women and men are now being conducted in their homes.</p> <p>Some indicated that during discussions they are more conscious of gender stereotypes.</p>	<p>There is a major shift in the nature of discussions school leaders in the intervention schools have about gender roles. While the audience they have discussions with has not changed, they are more conscious about gender stereotypes. The discussions in the control group are no different in terms of the audience and the nature of the discussions.</p>

Overall Conclusion

Conclusion: The responses of baseline and end-line for the control group are generally similar. They had discussions with the same groups and the conclusion on gender roles was the same, except that it was expressed in a different way. For school leaders in the intervention schools similarities at baseline and end-line are limited to the groups that school leaders interact with. At end-line, school leaders take the initiative to conduct discussions, even in their homes which is different from baseline. Furthermore, in their discussions, they have increased awareness of gender and avoid stereotypes.

7.3.4 Actions school is engaged in that consider the different needs of men and women, boys and girls

Rationale. In order to understand if and how school leaders are promoting gender responsiveness, it was important to ask about existing gender related activities in their schools. This enabled the research team to identify gaps in how school leaders are promoting gender responsiveness in their schools. At the end of the study, this would allow the researchers to determine if the intervention made a difference in changing the mindset of school leaders and improving the activities they implemented before the intervention.

	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	
Baseline	<p>When asked about the actions that the school is engaged in that considers the different needs of men and women, boys and girls, 7 out of 9 leaders reported engaging the community and sensitizing them about the roles of men and women. This process is done mostly when the leaders get an opportunity to speak with parents that come to the school e.g. during PTA meetings. One school leader indicated that there was no action taken towards this.</p>	<p>2 out of 9 school leaders indicated that he/she were not doing anything.</p> <p>2 out of 9 School leaders reported doing some activities for learners through NGOs and clubs e.g. FAWEZA club in their school which promotes the rights of learners and school council meetings.</p> <p>5 out of 9 schools claimed to ensure equal opportunities for learners in the provision of tasks and responsibilities in the school.</p>	<p>Majority of leaders in the control schools (7) and intervention schools 7 reported they engage in actions that consider the different needs of men and women, boys and girls. A total of 3 leaders mentioned not doing anything, 1 from the control school and 2 from the intervention schools.</p> <p>Overall, it appears there are some activities happening in the schools.</p>
	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>At end-line, 1 out of 10 school leaders mentioned that they were engaging the community on the issue of early marriages.</p> <p>Another one mentioned that as a school they are trying to enforce the re-entry policy.</p> <p>Most of the schools mentioned that they try to ensure that the treatment and opportunities given to boys and girls are the same.</p> <p>Two school leaders mentioned sharing school responsibilities equally between male and female teachers.</p> <p>Another leader mentioned conducting talks in the schools on gender equality.</p>	<p>School leaders in the intervention schools explained that they had started to implement what they had learned about GRP in their schools.</p> <p>The school leaders no longer assigned gender specific roles. Teachers and learners, boys and girls, women and men in the school were expected to perform the same duties and tasks.</p> <p>Some schools explained that sensitization activities through talks conducted in the schools break stereotypes and encourage gender equality and equity.</p> <p>Leadership positions in the school were now divided between male and female teachers and learners.</p>	<p>At end-line, respondents in the control group mentioned additional activities they engaged in with learners that they did not mention at baseline. These activities aimed to increase gender equality.</p> <p>The school leaders in the intervention schools similarly highlighted new activities at end-line. They had made changes at staff and student level. These changes of roles and responsibilities were opportunities for equal treatment of boys and girls, men and women.</p> <p>The difference between the control and intervention groups is that in the intervention schools, the changes in activities school leaders made were based on greater awareness of gender stereotypes and the importance of gender equality.</p>

		Schools mentioned they would continue to engage with NGOs and community members that interact with the schools to promote gender equality.	
Overall Conclusion			
<p>Conclusion: At baseline, 1 out of 9 control school leaders indicated that their schools did not engage in any activities or actions that consider the different needs of men and women, boys and girls.</p> <p>At end-line, all the control schools highlighted what they were doing. Much of the information provided was common across the schools yet more activities were cited than at baseline.</p> <p>For the intervention schools, at baseline 2 out of 9 school leaders had indicated that they were not taking any action.</p> <p>At end-line, all the schools highlighted their activities and cited more activities.</p> <p>There was no significant difference in the information coming from the school leaders in the intervention and control school, although Intervention school leaders did seem to conduct their activities with a greater awareness. This could be attributed to increased awareness of GRP.</p>			

7.3.5 Supporting the ECE teacher to apply (Gender Responsive) learning through play			
<p>Rationale. Since learning through play is the ECE teaching methodology mandated by MoGE, it was important to know if and how school leaders support their ECE teachers in implementing (GR) LtP in their classrooms. The GRP intervention included a component of GR LtP. Understanding how school leaders supported ECE teachers in applying (GR) LtP can help to identify knowledge gaps or pre-existing knowledge on GR LtP in school leaders. This information can help to tailor interventions.</p> <p>At end-line, comparing the responses of the intervention schools may deepen the understanding of the impact of the intervention which focuses amongst others on leaders supporting ECE teachers.</p>			
	Interview		Conclusion Baseline
	Control	Intervention	<p>Responses given by school leaders generally focused on providing support to ECE teachers and not specifically on how to support them to apply learning through play.</p> <p>This highlights the limited understanding of school leaders and their need for training on supporting ECE teachers in general and specifically to apply gender responsive learning through play in their classroom.</p>
Baseline	<p>Almost all the school leaders (7 out of 9) reported that they supported their ECE teachers.</p> <p>The support provided was mostly through the provision of materials e.g. toys.</p>	<p>Intervention school leaders reported on the following support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing teachers the freedom to make budgets • Ensuring that teachers have the learning and teaching materials, they need to teach using play. Either through donations from well-wishers or purchases made by the school. 	

	<p>Some leaders indicated that they supported their teachers through supervision and monitoring.</p> <p>A leader who indicated that they had not supported their teacher indicated that this was because ECE had just been established and they were still learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give teachers freedom to ask when they need anything for teaching. • Encourage teachers to share knowledge and experiences on how to teach through play with other teachers in the school. • Allow ECE teacher to attend workshops and CPD within and outside of the school environment. 	
	Interview		Conclusion End-line
	Control	Intervention	
End-line	<p>School leaders mentioned working with parents to obtain contributions in the form of money and materials for ECE.</p> <p>They also expressed the intention to talk to ECE teachers about their challenges.</p>	<p>Responses provided by school leaders in the intervention schools on how they would support ECE teachers include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop infrastructure for ECE class. • Develop a play park for the learners • Provide materials for play • Provide supervision and monitor the teacher to ensure that he/she is implementing learning through play in the classroom. 	<p>While the respondents from the control schools highlighted the involvement of parents and talking to their ECE teachers, the responses from school leaders in the intervention schools were more comprehensive because it included provision of materials, infrastructure and supervision and monitoring of ECE teachers as they implemented learning through play.</p>
Overall Conclusion			
<p>Conclusion: At baseline, the control school supported teachers mainly through the provision of teaching and learning materials that are needed to implement LtP in the classroom. At end line control schools mentioned that they would continue to provide material support but in addition, they would talk to the teacher to identify what their challenges are. At end-line, the intervention schools that received training emphasized infrastructure development, provision of materials, monitoring and supervising ECE teachers and developing a play park. Although information given by the intervention and control schools is similar, there are some differences. One major difference is that because of the training, school leaders in the intervention schools have a better understanding and appreciation for GR LtP than school leaders in the control schools. Their support is likely have a greater impact than those in the control groups because of this understanding.</p>			

7.4 PTA / PTC Findings

7.4.1. School leader views on PTCs and PTAs

School leaders were asked about the role of the PTC in advancing the agenda of gender responsive pedagogy in ECE and the following section presents findings on these issues.

7.4.1.1 ECE representation on the PTA

Most school leaders reported that ECE teachers have representation of the PTC. However, this representation is not the ECE teacher. Rather, the teachers and head teachers that sit on that Committee represent them. These representatives help raise up any issues related to ECE on behalf of the ECE teachers. A school leader from one school reported that they involve 2 ECE learners (children) in the PTC meetings at the school.

Some school leaders (2) explained that their teachers were still new and had not been introduced to the PTC. Overall, it appears that ECE representation on the PTC is through the school leadership and not directly through involvement of the ECE teachers and/or learners.

7.4.1.2 Membership to the PTC

School leaders seem to have an understanding on the composition of members in the PTC. It was generally agreed that membership on the PTC comprised of the head teacher, deputy head-teacher and parents. Only 2 school leaders were not aware of this composition. The exact numbers of the parents and the teachers in the PTC varied across schools. At school level, the Head teacher and Deputy were members of the PTC with a variation in the criteria and number of teachers ranging from seniority, number of years served and interest. Parents in the PTC are elected by other parents to become members of the PTC.

7.4.1.3 Frequency of PTC meetings

School leaders reported that holding meetings ranged from fortnightly to as far apart as once a year during the annual general meeting (AGM). It was also reported that meetings were often called when need arose and there was an issue that required attention.

7.4.1.4 Decision on membership

It was generally reported that membership to the PTC was decided during the annual general meeting where parents voted to decide who becomes a member of the PTC. School leaders only reported on the composition of the PTC from the perspectives of the parents and not composition of school staff on the PTC.

7.4.1.5 PTC activities conducted for the school in the past year

Two school leaders, who were relatively new in their schools reported that they were not sure what the PTCs had done.

Almost all the activities reported by the school leaders focused on physical infrastructure such as construction works as well as provision of material services. The activities reported included the following:

- Constructing latrines specific for ECE
- Mobilizing funds to buy ECE materials upon set up
- Paying the ECE teachers; and
- Renovating classrooms and buying furniture

7.1.4.6 PTC and power to influence decisions in their schools

Most school leaders agreed that the PTC had influence. They reported that the PTC acted as the bridge between the school and the community. Most leaders agreed that this was because the PTC mobilized parents to bring their children to school and were in charge of mobilizing resources.

7.1.4.7 PTC promoting ECE

Majority of school leaders reported that school leaders have promoted ECE in their schools. They have done this through the sensitization meetings they hold with parents about the importance of ECE. Additionally, they encourage parents to bring their children to school. These school did not depend on the PTC to sensitize the community. About 3 school leaders mentioned that the PTC was not helpful in promoting ECE.

7.4.1.8 PTC support for ECE

When asked how the PTC could support ECE, the school leaders focused on infrastructural development such as building of classrooms, providing teaching and learning materials and getting involved in the school feeding program. They emphasized the importance of sensitising the community on the importance of ECE.

7.4.1.9 PTC support in bridging views on the roles of boys and girls between the home and school environment

School leaders were asked how the PTC could help ensure that the school and home environment have similar views on the roles of woman, men, boys and girls and what would need to happen to ensure this takes place. School leaders unanimously agreed that the PTC itself needed to be educated and sensitized about gender issues so that they lead by example before reaching out to parents. It was suggested that sensitization on the roles of boys and girls will need to move beyond PTC meetings to include community sensitization activities, meaning that community leaders should be part of the training. School leaders expressed confidence and readiness to support the members of the PTC in this training and sensitization.

7.4.2. Teachers' views on PTCs and PTAs

Teachers were asked about the role of the PTC in advancing the agenda of gender responsive pedagogy in ECE and the following section presents findings on these issues.

7.4.2.1 ECE teachers and representation on the PTC

Most of the teachers (7 out of 10) reported that they did not know if ECE teachers had representation on the PTA.

Of the 7 teachers, 2 explained that they have never been invited for a meeting, 2 mentioned they prepare information and it was never discussed and others mentioned that only primary and secondary teachers form part of the PTC.

Three (3) out of ten (10) teachers responded ECE teachers had representation on the PTC. Of the 3 one explained that even though she did not attend the meetings, other teachers presented matters related to ECE, 2 explained that they attended the meetings and matters related to ECE were addressed.

While the ECE teachers are aware about the PTC, they do not know if or how ECE is represented in the PTC.

7.4.2.2 Composition of the PTC

Teachers were asked about members of the PTC. Two ECE teachers indicated that they were not sure. 6 out of 10 ECE teachers noted that the PTC included community members and school staff (Head teacher, deputy head and the teachers) although they did not mention numbers. 2 out of 10 explained that it comprises of the head teacher and the deputy head. Clearly, more than half the ECE teachers in the schools visited are aware of the PTC composition. There is need to sensitize the ECE teachers on the PTC.

7.4.2.3 Frequency of PTC meetings

When asked about the number of times the PTC meets, majority of teachers (7 out of 10) reported that they did not know. 3 out of 10 reported the PTC meets 3 times in a term, 1

teacher reported once a term and 1 other teacher reported once in a year. These results illustrate the need for ECE teachers to receive information on the PTC.

7.4.2.4 How membership to the PTC is decided.

When asked how members of the PTC are decided upon, 4 out of 10 ECE teachers said they did not know. Another 4 out of 10 teachers explained that the members are chosen by the parents through a voting process and finally 2 out of 10 teachers explained that they were chosen during the PTC annual general meeting, without mentioning that they are elected. The results indicated that while some ECE teacher are aware of how members of the PTC are decided upon, others do not.

7.4.2.5 Activities conducted by the PTC for the school in general

One of ECE teachers mentioned that the PTC bought computers for the computer room at the schools. Another explained that the school allegedly bought blocks for building classrooms (she did not see the blocks). 1 ECE teacher explained that the PTC had built toilets and cleared the surroundings in the school. 7 out of 10 teachers explained that they did not know what the PTC had done for the school. These results show that ECE teachers are not very conversant with the activities of the PTC.

7.4.2.6 Activities conducted by PTC that benefited ECE

When asked what activities conducted by the PTC specifically benefited ECE, 4 out of 10 teachers reported that they did not know. 2 ECE teachers explained that the PTC had purchased blocks and built an ECE class, another 4 out of 10 explained that the PTC had done nothing for ECE. In some schools the PTC did nothing for ECE, in other schools the teachers did not know what the PTC did. Majority of ECE teachers responded in this manner (8 out of 10). They suggest that the PTC needs to do more for ECE and that teachers need awareness of how the PTC is supporting ECE.

7.4.2.7 PTC power to influence ECE activities in the school

The majority of ECE teachers (6 out of 10) reported that they had no idea if the PTC has the power to influence the ECE activities in the school. One teacher responded the PTC has no power to influence ECE and explained that it was only the schools that had the power to decide what happens in ECE. Only 3 ECE teachers responded yes. The explanations given for their responses include the fact that parents in their school pay for the service (K200) and therefore have some power. One of the ECE teachers that responded yes explained that the PTC has the power to influence ECE enrolment because they encourage parents from the communities to enroll their children in ECE. Lastly, the other ECE teacher that responded yes explained that she just knows that the PTC has power to influence the activities of the school including ECE.

7.4.2.8 PTC promoting ECE in the surrounding community

The majority of ECE teachers responded that the PTC had helped promote ECE to the surrounding community by doing the following: buying teaching and learning materials needed in ECE, bringing their children for ECE and sensitizing the community and encouraging other parents to bring their children for ECE. Only 3 out of the 10 teachers responded they did not know how the PTC had helped to promote ECE.

7.4.2.9 How PTC can support ECE

ECE teachers explained that the PTC could support ECE in the following ways: paying fees for their children in ECE (1 teacher), supporting ECE children as they do their homework and signing the homework (2 ECE teachers). The majority of teachers (7/10) explained that contributing teaching and learning materials to ECE classroom was an important way the PTC could support. Other teachers (3/10) explained that sensitizing the community is a way they can support ECE.

7.4.2.10 PTC support from parents on how to ensure that the school and the home environment have similar views on the roles of woman, men, boys and girls

4 out of 10 ECE teachers explained that the school should sensitize parents, during PTC meetings, on roles of boys and girls and parents regarding the equal treatment and equal opportunities for boys and girls. This information should then be communicated and modelled by the parents to their children at home. 3 out of 10 ECE teachers explained that parents should show keen interest in what children are taught at school so they can implement at home by working hand in hand with the teachers. One ECE teacher explained that irrespective of sex, parents should encourage their children to come to school. One teacher explained that she did not know.

7.4.2.11 What do teachers think is needed to ensure the above happens?

To ensure that the school and home environment have similar views on the roles of men and women, boys and girls, the ECE teachers suggested the following: firstly, parents need to be open minded about the roles of men and women, boys and girls (1 teacher). Secondly, there is need for more interaction between parents and teachers to share knowledge (5/10 teachers) and lastly, there is need for parents to discuss the topic on roles of boys and girls with their children at home (4 teachers).



VVOB – education for development

Julien Dillensplein 1 bus 2A
1060 Brussels
Belgium

T • +32 (0)2 209 07 99
E • info@vvob.org

 VVOB

 @VVOBvzw

 VVOB vzw

www.vvob.org

