

# EFFECTS OF ACCESSING CHILDCARE SERVICES ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

## A Case of Cross-Border Traders at Kenya/Uganda Border



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# **EFFECTS OF ACCESSING CHILDCARE SERVICES ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

## **A Case of Cross-Border Traders at Kenya/Uganda Border**

A publication of the African Women Studies Centre,  
Women's Economic Empowerment Hub, University of Nairobi

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Cover & layout by: Minneh Wanjiku

First published in September, 2024.

Published by

African Women Studies Centre  
Women's Economic Empowerment Hub  
University of Nairobi  
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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews
CBTAs	Cross-Border Trade Associations
CCGD	Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development
CSLA	Community Savings and Loan Associations
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECC	Early Child Centre
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECDE	Early Childhood Development and Education
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labor Organization
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STR	Simplified Trade Regime
UCDW	Unpaid Care and Domestic Work
UN	United Nations
WEE	Women Economic Empowerment
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for funding the Women Economic and Empowerment Hub at the African Women’s Studies Centre, University of Nairobi. We thank the University of Nairobi for housing the WEE Hub administratively and supporting its management committee.

Special acknowledgement goes to Prof. Wanjiku Kabira, the WEE Hub leader and Prof. Mary Mbithi, the Research Director for their leadership and guidance during the data collection and development of this report.

We express our appreciation to our partners including the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), Cross-Border Trade Associations (CBTAs), and the County Government Departments in Busia County for their support during this study.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the WEE Hub researchers and research assistants for their dedication and efforts in ensuring the smooth collection of quality data. In particular, we thank Dr. Jenniffer Birech, Reuben Waswa, Rachael Keeru, Gideon Muendo, Carolyn Mwikali, and Brian Mutune.

Many thanks to the technical team comprised of Prof. Mary Mbithi, Rachael Keeru, Carolyn Mwikali, Diana Kabiru, and Gideon Muendo for working tirelessly to complete this report.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Childcare has gained traction in the recent times as the need for childcare services has increased. Globally, over 40% of all children under primary school require structured childcare but lack access to it. While taking care of children is fundamental to their well-being, there is a consensus in the literature that the amount of time allocated to care work is negatively correlated with female labour force participation. For children below three years, the provision of subsidized early childcare services still remains a huge gap. Although some privately owned early childcare services exist in Kenya, they remain few and far very expensive, a factor which has constrained their access by women who have children under four years of age and are involved in micro–small–sized enterprises or employed in the informal sector.

In 2022, UoN WEE Hub, in collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Standards, conducted a study among women involved in cross-border trade in Busia County and Namanga counties, Kenya's two largest border crossing towns. This study aimed to analyze the participation of women in cross-border trade and establish the challenges women face in cross-border trade. Although several challenges were identified in this study, the study also established the need for child care for women and men involved in cross-border trade as a necessity, with 47 percent of businesswomen interviewed saying they needed child care but was not able to access it mainly due to unavailability, quality and cost concerns. Only 10 percent of the respondents reported being able to access a daycare or employ a house help. As a coping strategy, 40 percent of these women traders either go to work with the children or leave the child(ren) with relatives or friends, a factor that affected their concentration on the business as they opened their business late, or closed early, spend time on telephone addressing childcare issues, while sometimes missed work altogether. 94 percent of those women traders observed that childcare responsibilities have negatively affected their business.

Having established the need for childcare in Busia, UoN WEE Hub, in partnership with the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), the Ministry of East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), and Regional Development, and the association of women in cross-border trade established a childcare centre at the Busia border in 2021. This facility allows women and men involved in cross-border trade to pay KES 50 per day for childcare. This study analyzes this childcare center's effects on women's businesses one year after benefiting from the facility.

This monitoring study aims to assess the effects of the childcare service on the growth of businesses one year after accessing the childcare facility. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. assess the effects of accessing childcare on the participation of women in cross-border trade;
- ii. analyze the effects of childcare on the growth of beneficiaries' businesses;

- iii. analyze the shift in gender norms, and;
- iv. analyze the impact of daycare on reduced gender-based violence (GBV) among men, women and children.

The study design is longitudinal, with the baseline data collected when the children boarded the childcare and the second wave of survey conducted one year later. During the baseline survey, 60 beneficiaries of the childcare were interviewed, while during the second wave of survey, while forty-three (43) beneficiaries (71% of the initial participants) were interviewed in the second wave, as 17 of the original beneficiaries had dropped out of the childcare. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for the study, and data were collected using in-depth face-to-face questionnaires administered to women and men who had been accessing childcare for the last year. The questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions and was administered through Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI). The monitoring survey took place in October 2023.

The analysis shows that after one year of accessing the childcare:

- i. More women have been able to work more than eight hours daily.
- ii. More women have engaged in additional income-generating activities in addition to running their businesses.
- iii. More respondents can now source their goods from across and within the border.
- iv. Women can also sell their goods in other markets further from the border, such as Kisumu, Bumala, Nambale, Mumias and Kakamega.
- v. More women have also joined community/social/cooperative/chamas groups and are participating more in leadership positions.
- vi. The number of registered businesses has increased, suggesting that the operations have become more formalized and are now paying taxes to the county government.
- vii. More spouses (men) have joined the women (wives) in dropping off or picking up children from the care centre and are increasingly involved in enrolling children's at the childcare centre.

Based on these findings, the study has concluded that:

- i. Enrolling children in the childcare centre enabled women to intensify their cross-border trading and diversify their markets beyond Busia town, allowing them to trade in areas further away.
- ii. Increased profits were primarily used for business expansion and other household activities, further empowering women and households.
- iii. There is a gradual redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work (UCDW), which may have contributed to better relations at the household level and a reduction in GBV incidences in the household or neighbourhood.
- iv. Reducing the time spent on UCDW frees up time for women, some of which is spent participating in networks, including women's groups, and potentially taking up leadership roles.



- v. Women appreciate leaving their children at the childcare to engage in income-generating activities. Their key concerns for their children are safety, caregivers, cleanliness and security of the environment, diet, and the quality of services at the childcare centre.
- vi. Overall, the reduction and redistribution of childcare responsibilities lead to better outcomes for women-owned businesses, family relations, and women's economic empowerment.

The study recommends that the national and County Government of Busia can support growth of small-scale women business by: (i) developing policies aimed at reducing and redistributing care work by establishing facilities that provide care for children aged below four years, (ii) supporting childcare development by increasing budgetary allocations to support childcare & Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) to ensure adequate provision of childcare, for enhanced parents business performance, (iii) supporting women traders to better engage in cross border trade by establishing childcare facilities at the border towns and in the markets, (iv) ensuring that construction of all market infrastructure including cross border market infrastructure provide childcare facilities which are at close vicinity to women to enable their better participation in cross border trade opportunities, (v) encouraging involvement of spouses (men) in childcare related activities is an important pathway to encouraging men participation in UCDW and is important in achievement of improved family relations including reduction to GBV.

The civil society can consider (i) advocating for childcare facilities through mobilizing women traders to engage the county governments and pushing for childcare facilities in trading centers, (ii) promoting redistribution of UCDW, including childcare responsibilities as a way of improving family relations and reducing GBV, (iii) promoting sensitization on shift of gender norms around childcare work and domestic work redistribution for better participation of women in the workplace and enhanced incomes for households.

Cross Border Trade Associations can consider (i) promoting investment in childcare facilities as an investment opportunity and for enhanced participation of women in cross-border trade and (ii) advocating for government support to childcare facilities for better economic empowerment of women and safety of children of cross border traders, as one of the support measures for cross border trade.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Background and Context

Care work, in all forms, is a critical social good. It is vital to society's provision of goods and serves as the fundamental basis of market economies. Most care work across the world is unpaid, and it is heavily gendered, with more than three-quarters of all unpaid care work being performed by women globally (Addati et al., 2018; ILO, 2019). The OECD (2014) also observes that time spent by women on unpaid care work globally is two to ten times more than time spent on the same work by men. This has profound implications for gender equality and women's economic empowerment, as unpaid care work impedes women's labour-market results, including labour-force participation, wages, and job quality (Ferrant et al., 2014). Several studies have shown that the burden of unpaid care work on women and girls was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, which drove many women further out of the paid workforce<sup>1,2,3</sup>.

Domestic care work is essential in all communities because it promotes individual and community health and well-being, social development, and economic growth. However, policies and practices still fail to recognize, effectively reward, and represent these chores as paid labour and reduce and redistribute unpaid care work to males. Therefore, failure to recognize, redistribute, and compensate caregivers has far-reaching effects on individuals and communities. Furthermore, neglecting UCDW results in erroneous conclusions about the levels and trends in people's well-being and the value of time, limiting the effectiveness of policy in socioeconomic contexts, particularly with regard to gender inequalities in employment and other areas of WEE.

Childcare is a matter that has attracted international attention recently and has led to the ratification of several conventions to support the provision of childcare resources by governments, development partners and employers. These conventions guide governments in providing childcare services to ensure the well-being of the parents and the children. They do not make it mandatory, providing various actors in society an opportunity to play their respective roles in providing essential services. Some of these conventions include:

- i. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, set out an agenda for national action to end discrimination against women. Among the measures foreseen to prevent discrimination and ensure women's effective right to work is Article 11 2(c): State Parties shall

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<sup>1</sup>Grantham et al. (2021)

<sup>2</sup>Suubi et al (2022)

<sup>3</sup> Whillans A. (2021)

take appropriate measures to encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life.

- ii. The ILO Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities, 1981 (No. 156), 11 encourages institutions to put in place childcare measures., by providing that all measures compatible with national conditions and possibilities shall further be taken to develop or promote community services, public or private, such as childcare and family services and facilities. (Article 5(b)).
- iii. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which 191 countries, including Kenya, have ratified, states that for guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall *ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children*. Additionally, this convention provides that State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from childcare services and facilities for which they are eligible (Article 18). This provision implies that childcare should promote the welfare of both the child and the parent.

## 1.2 The Need for Childcare

World Bank (2020)<sup>4</sup> observes that more than 40% of all primary school children globally require structured childcare but lack access to it. This shortage negatively affects children and families in low and lower-middle-income countries, which account for more than eight out of every ten children who require childcare but do not have access to it. ILO statistics also show that the need for care globally is increasing, and it is expected that by 2030, 2.3 billion people will need care, with children under the age of 15 who will need childcare accounting for about 87 percent. In Kenya, in particular, the need for child care is evident in the country where population growth is 1.9 percent per year, fertility rate of 3.3, and women of childbearing age (15-49 years of age of 2023) account for over 25 percent (based on WHO statistics for 2023); and extreme poverty line level (those living below 1.9 US\$ per day) of 34 percent.

Gender differences in participation in childcare work persist, with women performing most of this care work (Antonopoulos, 2009). While caring for children is fundamental to their well-being, it compromises women's ability to engage in the labour market. In 2022, women's labor force participation rate worldwide was 50 percent compared to 80 percent of men, a deficit of 30 percent. Childcare responsibilities force women out of the workforce and also contributes to lower profits for women owned businesses (JPAL, 2023). Also, it is often ignored in the policy discourse despite policy decisions that affect the lives of those providing and receiving care. According to a report *Women's Work: Mothers,*

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<sup>4</sup> Devercelli & Beaton-Day (2020). Better Jobs and Brighter Futures: Investing in Childcare to Build Human Capital. World Bank Group.

*children and the Global Childcare Crisis* (2016), not only do mothers face the burden of care provision, but unpaid care work is also undertaken by younger girls, adolescents and grandmothers.

The relationship between childcare (as a form of unpaid care work) and labour force participation has been studied extensively in developed countries. There is a consensus in the literature that the amount of time allocated to care work is negatively correlated with female labour force participation (Bauer & Sousa-Poza, 2015; Chai et al., 2021; Ghosh & Chopra, 2019; Mosomi, 2019). Furthermore, care work by women tends to decline with the level of economic development of a country, a reflection of both a reduction and a redistribution of care work (Elson, 2017).

### **1.3 The need for childcare and establishment of Daycare in Busia town**

In Kenya, the establishment of ECDE centres provides care for children above three years of age through the Early Childhood Development (ECD) framework. For children below three years, the provision of subsidized Early Childcare services remains a huge gap. Although some privately owned early childcare services exist in Kenya, they remain few and far costly, a factor which has constrained their access by women who have children under four years of age and are involved in micro small – sized enterprises or employed in the informal sector.

Case studies such as OXFAM (Maina & Kimani, 2019) in five informal settlement areas in Nairobi city show that women spend on average 11.1 hours per day for various kinds of care work compared to 2.9 hours per day spent by men on similar kinds of women. This reflects the disproportionate burden of caregiving that falls on women in many societies, and it often goes unrecognized and undervalued, leading to gender inequalities in various aspects of life. With regards to paid work, the same study found that men spent almost double the time women spent on paid work. A study by UoN WEE Hub (2022) among small-scale cross-border traders between Kenya and Uganda found that women spent less time in their trading activities than men due to care and other domestic worker-related activities.

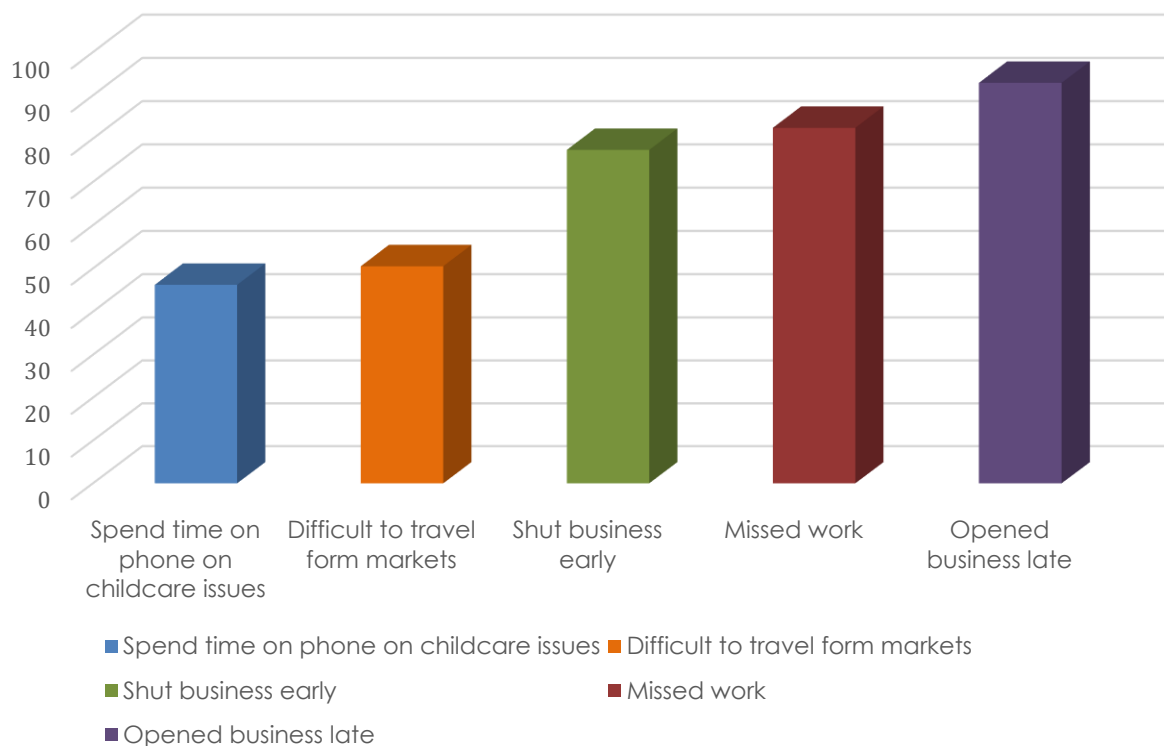
In Busia town, child care is needed. In 2022, UoN WEE Hub, in collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, conducted a study among women involved in cross border trade in Busia and Namanga borders, Kenya's two largest border towns. This study aimed to analyze the participation of women in cross-border trade and establish the challenges women face in cross-border trade. Although several challenges were identified in this study, the study also established the need for child care for women, with 47 percent of women cross border traders interviewed saying they needed child care but were not able to access it mainly due to availability, quality and cost concerns and only 10 percent of the respondents being able to access a daycare or employ a house help. As a coping strategy, 40 percent of these women traders either went to work with the children or left the child with relatives or friends, a

factor that affected their concentration on the business as they opened their business late, or closed early, spent time on telephone addressing childcare issues, while sometimes missed work altogether.



*Women fish traders carrying their children to the market*

**Figure 1: Effects of lack of childcare**



Further 94.2 percent of the respondents observed that childcare responsibilities affected their business performance, including profit margins.

Based on the findings of the need for affordable and quality childcare around the Busia border, UoN WEE Hub, in partnership with the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD), the Ministry of East African Community, Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs) and Regional Development and association of women in cross border trade established a childcare centre at the Busia Border, where women involved in cross border trade leave their children who are below four years of age as they go about doing their businesses. The daycare facility is located in Matayos, near the Soko Posta Market, and currently harbours more than 60 children under four years. The daycare operates from early morning hours (8 a.m.) to evening hours (5 p.m.) and has eight staff: one administrator, four caregivers, two cleaners, one on casual contract and one cook. The caregivers are grouped into their areas of expertise. Two caregivers attend to children aged 0-2, and the other two attend to children aged 3-4. The children are grouped into two categories, ages 0-2 and 3-4, because they require different attention. Since its inception, the number of children being brought to the centre has increased. The centre records high numbers of children (over 60) during market days, Mondays and Thursdays, while lower numbers (22-32) are recorded during holidays and when schools are closed. Meals are provided to the children at different times of the day, i.e., breakfast, lunch and snacks at 4 p.m. At the centre, children engage in different indoor and outdoor activities, allowing them to develop their creativity while developing their

imagination physical, cognitive and emotional strength promoting healthy child development. Women traders pay a minimum amount of KES 50, while other interested women pay KES 100. The parents/guardians make arrangements with the childcare administrator regarding the mode of payment. The location of the daycare centre near the market is very convenient for breastfeeding mothers who breastfeed their children at least twice a day. The daycare centre has a lactation room where mothers can breastfeed their babies.

UoN WEE Hub monitors the business growth indicators to realize the impact of childcare access on women's businesses and the growth and development of children accessing childcare facilities using a set of child development indicators. The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development coordinates the day-to-day management of childcare, keeping track of and studying the children's attendance trends while also building the capacity of the parents to take better care of the children.

In 2022, WEE Hub carried out a baseline study to establish the status of businesses for 60 businesses owned by women and men whose children had been enrolled their children at the childcare centre. The survey showed that the majority (70%) across all marital circumstances had decided on their own when it came to enrolling their children in daycare. Additionally, 70% of the women operated unregistered retail businesses, and the bulk of their proceeds were utilized for domestic use or business expansion. Most of the firms (70%) had no employees or engaged just one. Only 40% of women spend up to eight hours in their enterprises, and 41% work longer than eight hours. Additionally, some traders (33percent) cannot acquire goods across the border the entire week, with a few (30.0%) buying goods across the border more than three times weekly. In regards to sales and profits, 33.3% of the respondents did not make as much or are below KES 10,000 per month. The current study compares the baseline study findings with the results of a monitoring survey undertaken one year after accessing the childcare to assess the effects of the childcare on women's businesses.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

- i. Does accessing affordable and quality childcare enhance the participation of women in Cross-border trade?
- ii. Has accessing childcare contributed to the growth of businesses for the beneficiaries?
- iii. Has accessing childcare contributed to the shift in gender norms?
- iv. Has accessing childcare contributed to a reduction in gender-based violence (GBV)?

## 1.5 Research questions

The first monitoring survey (wave 2) of this study aims to assess the effects of childcare on the growth of businesses one year after accessing the childcare facility.

More specifically, the study analyzed the effects of accessing childcare on the:

- i. Participation of women in cross-border trade
- ii. Growth of businesses for the beneficiaries
- iii. Shift in gender norms
- iv. Gender-based violence (GBV).

## 1.6 Contribution of the study

The evidence provided by this study will inform the scaling of affordable childcare facilities. The county government of Busia, the national government, and development partners will find the study helpful in informing the value of their investments in supporting the growth of small-scale businesses, particularly when addressing the childcare responsibilities of working or businesswomen. Further, the evidence will inform childcare provision as a complementary policy in the STR. The findings are useful to researchers engaging in similar studies. At the same time, civil society will find the evidence useful in advocating for support and upscaling of childcare facilities to reduce the burden of unpaid care work and enable women to participate better in the market economy.



*Children at Busia Daycare Centre*



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## LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 Effects of childcare on the participation of women in the market economy

Studies from North America, Europe, and Latin America show that childcare responsibilities restrict women's labour force participation and demonstrate a strong negative association between childcare costs and maternal employment (Clark et al., 2017). In Bhutan, for example, a study by the Asian Development Bank (2014) found that over 90 percent of non-working women cited household or family duties as the main reason for not working. Childbearing and care are barriers to women's economic participation; e.g., in Mongolia, childcare is the third most important reason for non-participation in the labour force for all working-age women (Partnership for Economic Policy – PEP, 2020). Similarly, in Bangladesh, having young children in the household reduces women's labour force participation (Solotaroff et al., 2019), and the lack of access to childcare outside the home explains labour market outcomes between men and women (Solotaroff et al., 2020).

Regarding business, unpaid care work and family responsibilities drive women toward informal employment and constrain their income-earning activities as informal economy workers (Cassirer and Addati, 2007). A study by the International Food Policy Research Institute (2003) in the slums of Guatemala City showed that 40 per cent of mothers working informally were caring for their children themselves, and lack of childcare cited as a key reason for not taking formal economy jobs where the children could not accompany them. A similar study in the Philippines (where more than two-thirds of all women work in the informal economy) showed that 20 per cent of women cited family responsibilities as the reason they worked in informal rather than formal employment (Verceles and Beltran, 2004). Similarly, in Bangladesh, 13 per cent of women in small enterprises reported family responsibilities as a reason for turning to entrepreneurial activities, compared to less than 1 per cent of men in Angola (Marcucci, 2001).

In Angola, women participate in the informal economy due to flexible work hours that enable them to fulfil household and childcare responsibilities. Family responsibilities reportedly affect the type and location of income-generating activities that parents, particularly women, accept in Zambia. They compel women in Costa Rica to seek domestic or other informal work that provides flexible working hours. As informal economy workers, women's family responsibilities does not only limit the types of activities but also amount of time they can spend on their paid business activities, as shown in a study of small enterprises in the Philippines, Tunisia, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh, which found that relative to men, women entrepreneurs tended to be concentrated in less dynamic activities within the informal

economy which build on traditional domestic skills and which can be performed at home while carrying out domestic duties (Marcucci, 2001). The same study showed that in Zimbabwe, women's family responsibilities limited the ability of women entrepreneurs to search for new markets for their products. In contrast, in both Tunisia and Zimbabwe, women entrepreneurs were more likely than their male counterparts to work at time intervals throughout the day or to work only mornings, afternoons or evenings, given their unpaid domestic duties. In the Caribbean, women's domestic responsibilities are considered to constrain the geographic scope of their economic activities (Seguino, 2003), while Women in Zambia and Tanzania reported that the time involved in registering a business was burdensome and directly conflicted with their family responsibilities (Richardson, 2004). In addition, women in cross border traders often lack the time to participate in training, acquire information on export markets and travel long distances to explore markets that offer better prices and fairer conditions, as shown by (World Bank, 2012; USAID, 2012; Ndumbe, 2012).

## **2.2 Empirical studies/evidence on childcare**

Several studies testing the impact of child care have tested the impact of access to Early Child Care of low-income families on maternal employment, number of hours worked, and maternal income have been undertaken in Latin American countries.

Bivens et al. (2016) estimate high returns to childcare in terms of labour force participation and national income. Their analysis showed that (i) if women's labour force participation in the United States matched that of America's international peers, the potential gains to gross domestic product (GDP) could be enormous: up to \$600 billion annually. (ii) providing affordable, high-quality child care should be a core component of any strategy to boost women's labour force participation, and that an expenditure on child care of equivalent to 10 percent of family income could increase overall women's labour force participation enough to boost GDP by roughly \$210 bn (or 1.2 percent) (iii) The additional tax revenue and reduced public outlays associated with higher GDP stemming from higher participation of women in the labour force could provide roughly \$70 billion in economic resources to governments to help finance the investment in ECCE.

Wang (2015) analyzed the effect of the government's universal childcare programme on women entrepreneurship in China. The analytical approach involved (i) analyzing the relationship between access to child care and female entrepreneurship using the least squares method. The analysis was a before-and-after comparison approach of the entrepreneurial status of mothers with preschool-aged children, before and after the policy change, from provinces where childcare facilities expanded a lot and provinces where childcare facilities expanded only a little within a period of three years. The analysis results showed that an institution with a more accessible childcare system significantly increases the

number of female entrepreneurs without influencing the number of male entrepreneurs. Hence, family-friendly policies may close the gender gap in entrepreneurial activity. Policies that seek to stimulate female entrepreneurship should be coordinated with work-family programs.

PEP's (2020) study shows the effect of a public free preschool education programme providing free childcare services in Mongolia, a programme offered by the Metropolitan Department through full subsidization of public kindergartens and offering places to these facilities through a rotary system. The government also partially subsidizes private kindergarten. The programme is offered to children aged 2-5 years for the whole academic year, five days a week, and for working hours (9 a.m. – 5 p.m.). The impact evaluation involved an experimental study design of two groups: one that won the rotary (as the treatment group) and one that did not win as the control group. Data was collected through 3 surveys, from 2017 to 2019, to measure the programme's impact on the labour market outcome comparison of employment, earnings, and hours worked for the mothers whose children won the rotary vs those who did not win. The study showed that the provision of child care (i) increases the employment rate of parents significantly, increasing the rate of employment for mothers by 8.3% and for fathers by 2.9%; (ii) increases hourly wage for both mothers and fathers by 6%; and; (iii) increased profitability of having a formal job by 10.8% for mothers (with no significant effect on fathers).

Attanasio et al., (2017) evaluated the causal relationship between a large-scale provision of Public free centre-based care and child development, maternal labour market outcomes and family environment in Rio de Janeiro- Brazil, for 2007 to 2012. This programme targets integrated early childhood development for infants and children aged up to three years and includes daycare, health services, food and access to instructional toys and materials for children. On a yearly basis, through a lottery allocation process, the government provides 10,000 slots for the free child care facility, far less than the demand. On the other hand, a random selection of households who won the lottery and those who lost the lottery provided the treatment and the control groups, respectively, for evaluation. The evaluation involved a survey of 4348 households evenly distributed between the winners and losers of the lottery. Repeated surveys were carried out in 2007, 2008, 2012 and 2015. The 2018 survey provided baseline socioeconomic indicators for households in the two study groups. The results showed that in the households where the child accessed a free daycare facility, this had a significant positive impact on the social economic impact of the caregivers. For example, the income of the grandmother caregivers whose children had access was significantly higher (US\$ 250 per month), were 73% more likely to be employed, worked 46 hours more per week and were 88% more likely to pay for social security as compared to grandmothers of the children who did not have access to the free childcare. Households with the child access to free childcare also had higher incomes by US\$ 121 per month.

In a related study, Clark et al. (2017) tested the effects of affordable and improved-quality day care on women's labour market engagement in Korogocho slum in Nairobi. Using a randomized control trial (RCT), they carried out their evaluation with three study arms, including (i) mothers in two of the study arms receiving vouchers for subsidized centre-based ECC for one year; (ii). To examine the effect of quality childcare centres on women's use of ECC services, about half of the daycares participating in the voucher program were randomly selected to receive additional provider training and materials such as mattresses, potties, toys, and hand-washing stations. The study involved a baseline survey, and an end-line survey was conducted with 738 (87%) of these mothers to assess whether they used the ECC facilities and, if so, how it impacted 1) maternal employment, 2) number of hours worked, and 3) maternal income. The study found that (i) mothers were eager to send their children to early childcare centres. (ii) Mothers who received subsidized childcare were 17% more likely to be employed than mothers who did not. (iii) Working mothers who received subsidized childcare were able to work on average five fewer hours per week than those who did not, without any loss to their earnings. (iv) Subsidizing childcare helped mothers to both find and maintain employment. (v) More than quality concerns, cost is the main barrier to women accessing centre-based childcare.



*A son waves goodbye to his mother as the father takes him to Busia Daycare Centre*

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## METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a longitudinal study where the same population of men and women who had enrolled their children at the daycare centre were tracked, and variable changes were observed. Baseline data was collected one year ago. The second wave of data collection formed the monitoring of the effects of assessing the childcare one year after the beneficiaries of the childcare had accessed the childcare for a period of one year. The study aimed to interview the same sixty (60) beneficiaries who had initially participated in the study during the baseline period.

During the second wave of data collection, it was observed that sixteen (17 beneficiaries who had participated in the initial baseline survey had dropped out because their children had transited to Early Childhood Development Education Centres (ECDE). At the same time, other parents had relocated from Busia town. During the second wave of the survey, forty-three (43) beneficiaries (71% of the initial beneficiaries) were interviewed as opposed to the original sixty (60) baseline survey participants. In addition, sixteen (16) new beneficiaries who had joined the childcare during the past year were also interviewed. The 43 participants formed the 1<sup>st</sup> cohort of the study, while the new 16 participants formed the second cohort of the study, with the data collected from this group forming the baseline information for this 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort.

### 3.2 Data collection methods

An in-depth face-to-face questionnaire was administered to women and men accessing childcare for the last year. The questionnaire had both closed and open-ended questions. Data was collected using a CAPI system and then exported to SPSS for further analysis.

### 3.3 Mobilization of the respondents

Mobilization of the respondents was carried out by the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development, partners of the WEE Hub on this project, who are involved in the day-to-day management of the daycare center. This ensured that data collection was carried out smoothly. A total of 59 respondents were mobilized for the study.

### 3.4 Preparation of the data collection tools

The team developed the survey monitoring tool and held a series of technical meetings to revise and refine the tool to ensure that the tool was comprehensive and captured all the variables under study. The revised tools were then programmed into CAPI to be ready for data collection.

### **3.5 Training of the research assistants and pre-test of research tools.**

A one-day physical training was conducted to familiarize the research assistant with the data collection tools. During the training session, each research assistant was issued a tablet that would be used for data collection. A pre-test of the data collection tools was also carried out in Kasarani sub-county, Nairobi County and further revisions were made to the data collection tools.

### **3.6 Data collection process**

The data was collected from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at the Busia daycare Centre. Four research assistants and one researcher were involved in the data collection. The data collected were checked for quality before submission to the server.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

A consent form was included in the introduction section of the questionnaire. The research assistants explained the study's purpose and read the contents of the consent form to the respondents. All the respondents interviewed in the monitoring survey gave their consent.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

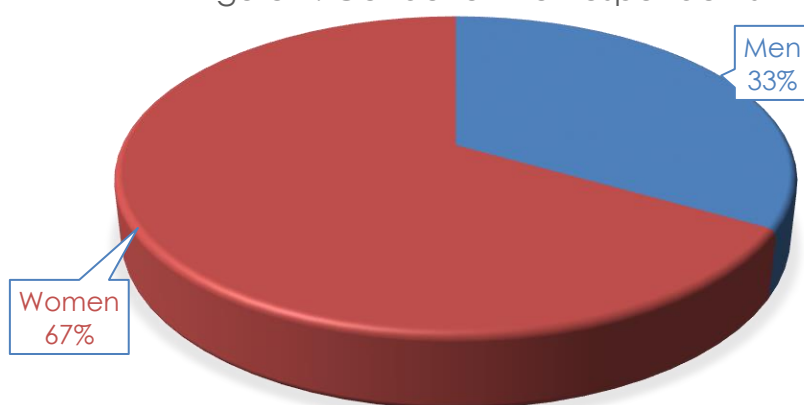
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### 4.1 Descriptive

#### 4.1.1 Response rate

In the second wave of data collection, the 43 respondents interviewed represented 71 percent of the initial 60 studied childcare beneficiaries who participated in the baseline survey. Results presented and discussed in this section compare the same 43 respondents (women and men) who were studied both in the baseline and during the second wave of data collection. Out of 43 participants studied in the two periods, men accounted for 10 percent (five men) of the respondents in both cases.

Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents



#### 4.1.2 Marital status of the respondents

Seventy-six percent of the respondents were married, 17 percent were single, 3 percent were separated or divorced, and 3 percent were widowed (Table 1).

Table 1: Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Proportion of respondents (%)
Single	17.2%
Married	75.9%
Separated	1.7%
Divorced	1.7%
Widowed	3.4%

#### 4.1.3 Business types and ownership

The respondents partake in trading of various goods and services, which include bakery, selling new and second-hand clothes, hotel, butchery, selling fish, making clothes, selling shoes, selling cars and

motorcycles, first moving consumer goods, wedding accessories, toys, peanut butter, transportation of goods between Kenya and Uganda, fruits, groceries, cereals, Mpesa agent, selling food, event organizing and bookshop.

The employed respondents revealed that they worked in various sectors, including cybercafé, clearing and forwarding, national government offices (such as the NSSF), county government, and an ECDE school, primary school, boutique, and bakery.

#### **4.1.4 Enrolling of children in the childcare**

A majority (87.9%) of the respondents had not enrolled more children in the childcare centre during the last year since the baseline study had been undertaken. Only 8.6 percent had enrolled another child, while 3.4 percent had enrolled more than one child within one year, suggesting that some beneficiaries of the childcare, who had children below four years of age, saw the benefits of childcare and therefore enrolled more of their children in the childcare.

#### **4.1.5 Decision-making on enrolling the children**

Majority of the children, 77%, were aged 1-3 years, while those below one year accounted for 7.7%, and those between 3-4 years accounted for about 16.4%. Of the children at the childcare during the monitoring survey, 52.3% were boys, while 48.7% were girls. Only 18.6% of these children were breastfeeding. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents observed that before enrolling their children in childcare, they would go to work with the child.

At the baseline, 70 percent of women respondents observed that they had decided on enrolling their children on their own while only 21.7 percent reported that it was the spouses that had made the decision, and only a small proportion of 1.7 percent of the women reported that they had made their decision jointly with their spouses.

During the monitoring survey period, only four out of the 43 childcare beneficiaries (who were also the mothers of the children) had enrolled additional children on the daycare during the past year, whereby three of those who had enrolled additional children were working either as a casual labourer, one was selling maize, while the third was a nursery school teacher. The children's ages ranged between 13 – 31 months; they were two girls and two boys, and 3 of them (i.e. ages 13, 14 and 29 months) were breastfeeding. When asked how the centre supported them, they noted that it has a lactating room where they would breastfeed their children. Hence, they were able to frequent the daycare centre, at most thrice a day, to breastfeed the babies. One of the respondents observed that she brought the baby's milk, which the caregivers would feed the baby with. Some breastfeeding mothers also noted that it was difficult to find time to come to the centre and breastfeed the baby during the day, so they packed food and milk.

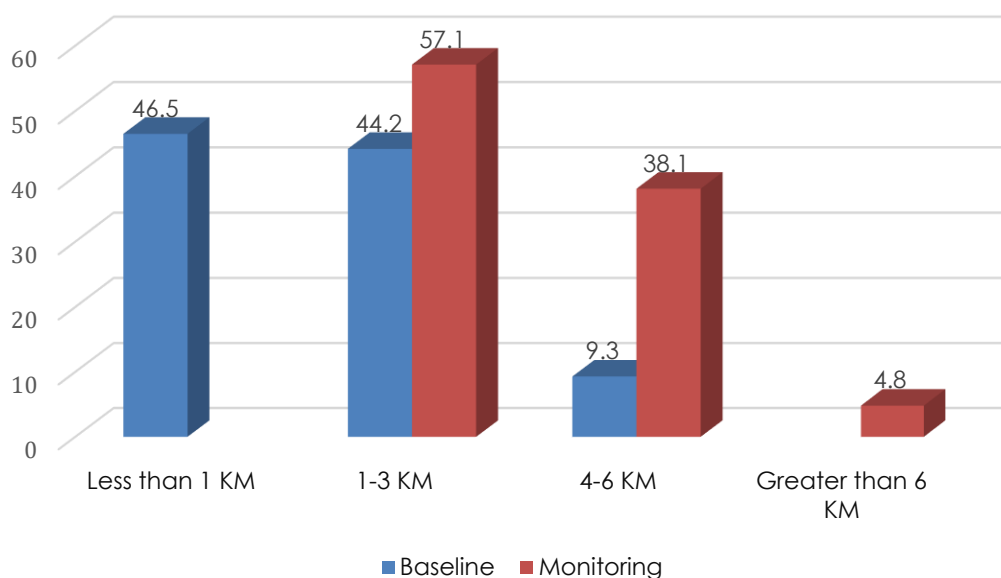


With regards to the decision about enrolling the children, two mothers made this decision alone, while the other two made the decision jointly with their spouses.

#### 4.1.6 Distance of childcare beneficiaries' residents from the childcare

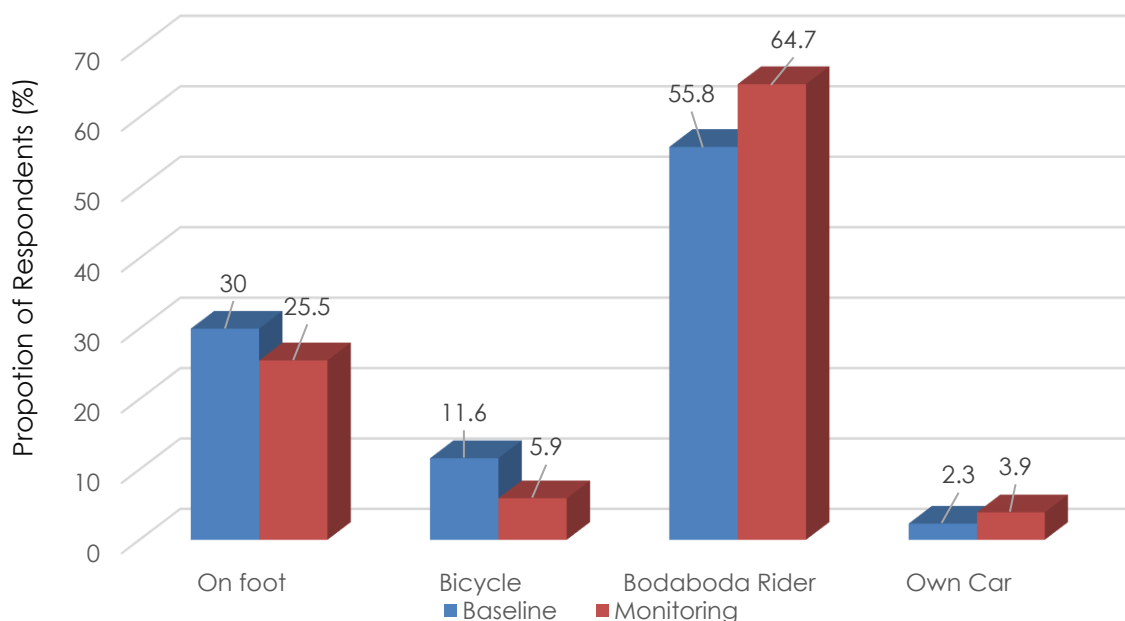
A significant proportion of the beneficiaries of the childcare at both baseline (44%) and monitoring (57%) survey periods resided at a distance of 1-3 kilometres from the childcare centre. During the baseline, most beneficiaries (46.5%) resided less than one kilometre from the childcare centre, while no beneficiaries were more than six kilometres away from the childcare centre. During monitoring, a significant proportion of the beneficiaries were staying at a distance of 4-6 kilometres and over six kilometres away from the childcare centre (Figure 2). This indicates that with time, the childcare started attracting beneficiaries residing on the outskirts of Busia town. The long-distance also implies higher transport costs to the childcare centre for the beneficiaries.

**Figure 2: Distance from the childcare**



Most beneficiaries during the baseline and the monitoring survey period used *boda boda* (motorbike riders) as their means of transport, as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Means of transport to and from the childcare Centre**



## 4.2 Impacts of the childcare

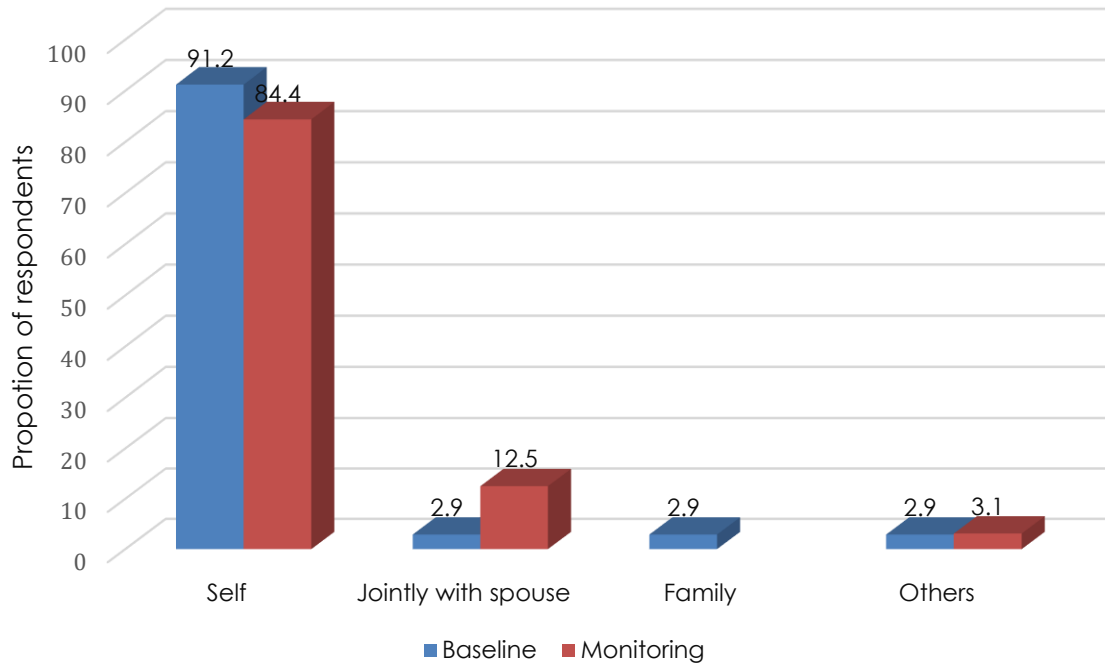
### 4.2.1 Business outcomes

Several business growth indicators were observed during the study’s baseline and the monitoring survey. These indicators include the proportion of respondents (i) employed or doing business, (ii) frequency of sourcing goods across the border, (iii) with more than one (1) income-generating activities, (iv) whose businesses are registered, (v) have more than one (1) employee, (vi) spend more than eight hours at work, (vii) crossing the border more than once per week, (viii) accessing markets, other than Busia border, (ix) Amount of sales per month, (x) size of profits per month, (xi) membership in CBTA (xii) participation in CBTA activities, (xiii) participation in the leadership of associations, (xiv) membership in women groups/Chamas, (xv) ownership of bank accounts, (xvi) whose spouses (husbands) involvement in decision-making on enrolment to the childcare centre.

### 4.2.2 Business registration and ownership

The proportion of respondents with registered businesses at the baseline and monitoring survey periods had not changed. Regarding business ownership, sole ownership had reduced during monitoring study period, while joint ownership had increased during the same period (Figure 4).

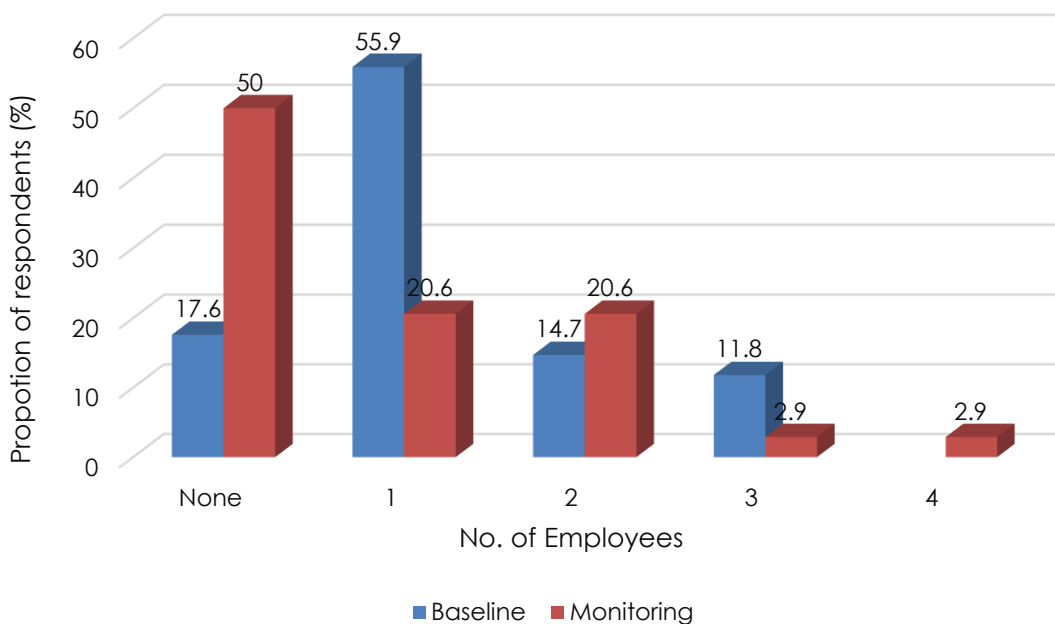
**Figure 4: Business Ownership**



**4.2.3 The number of people employed in the business**

There is a decrease in the number of businesses employing at least one person during the baseline and the monitoring survey period from about 82 percent to 50 percent, respectively (Figure 5). More respondents (50%) during the monitoring study period had not employed an extra person compared to the baseline study period, when only about 18 percent had not employed an extra person. This suggests that due to childcare, respondents had more time to spend on their businesses and may not have needed an extra hand in their businesses.

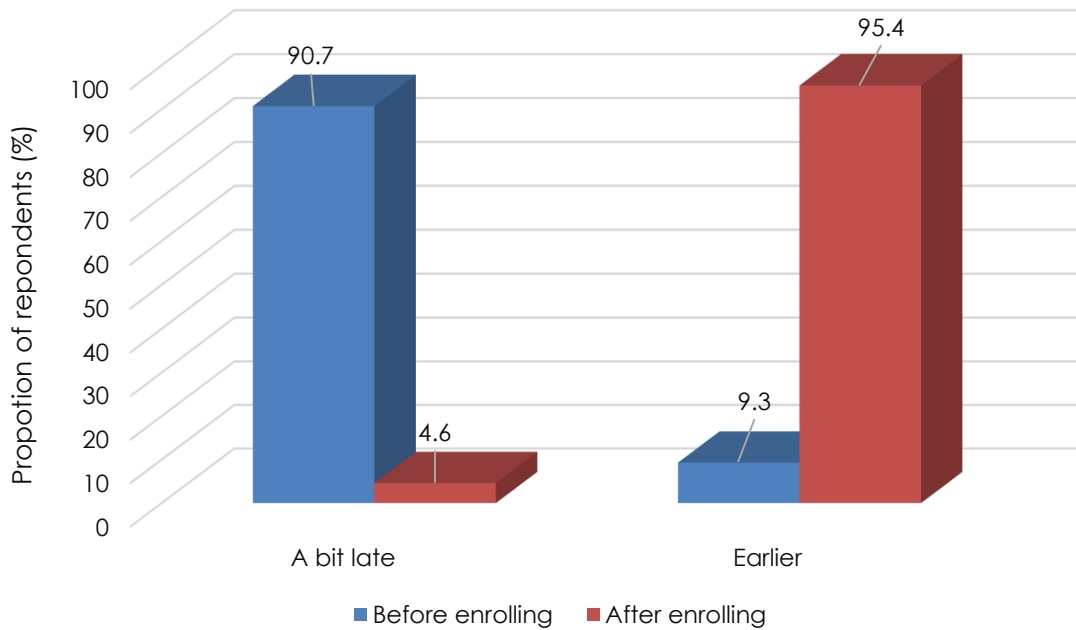
**Figure 5: Number of businesses employing extra workers during baseline and monitoring**



#### 4.2.4 Hours spend in business

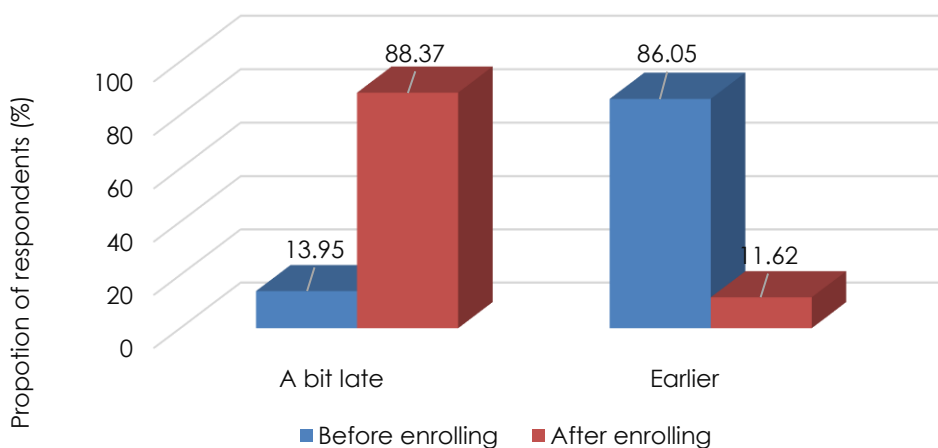
Regarding working hours, during the baseline survey period, it was observed that most respondents used to open their business or reported working late (90.1%) compared to the monitoring period, where this proportion was only 4.6 percent. This scenario changed after enrolling children in childcare, with the majority (95.4 %) of the respondents observing that they opened their businesses a bit earlier than before (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Time respondents left home for work before and after accessing the childcare**



The same trend is observed with regard to closing businesses. During the monitoring survey, the majority of the respondents noted that after enrolling their children on childcare, they closed/left work later (88.4%) than before enrolling their children on childcare, as compared to about 14% who closed their businesses a bit late before enrolling their children to the childcare (Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Proportion closing business earlier or late before and after enrolling in the childcare**

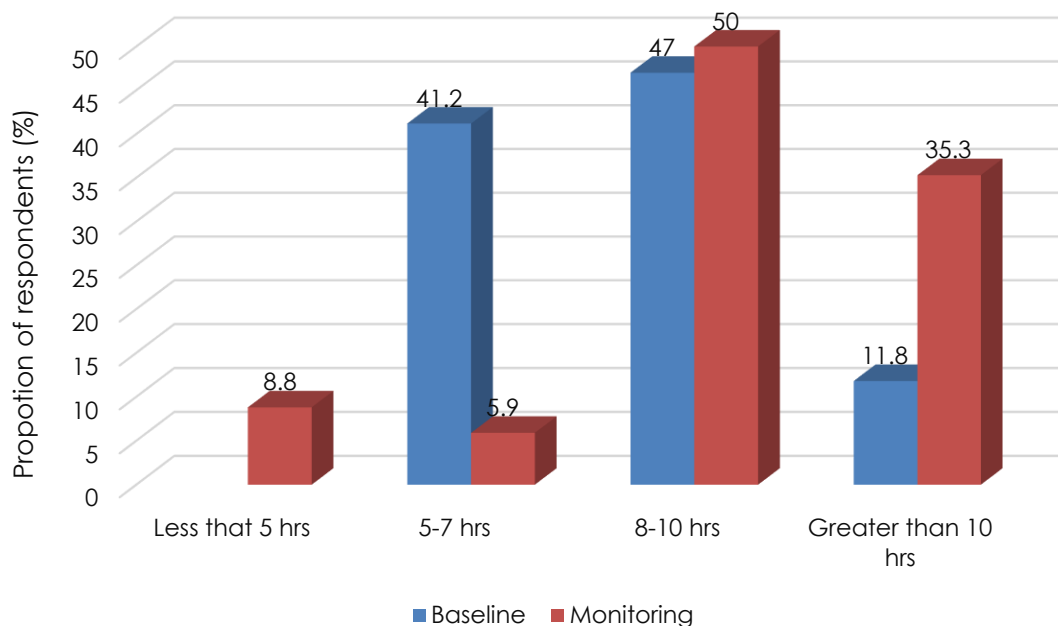


This suggests that the childcare centre freed some time spent on childcare responsibilities for the beneficiaries, enabling them to open their businesses earlier or close their business later than before they started utilizing the childcare. This, therefore, gave the women more time to spend in their businesses.

The maximum number of hours worked was 12 hours at baseline, while during the monitoring study period, the maximum hours worked rose to 13 hours per day. On average, the number of hours worked improved after children were taken to childcare.

The number of respondents who spend less than 7 hours in their businesses had reduced from about 41 percent to less than 17 percent, while those who worked for more than eight hours increased from about 59 percent to over 85 percent in the baseline and the monitoring surveys respectively as shown in Figure 8. This shows that women have more time to tend to their businesses due to reduced childcare responsibilities.

**Figure 8: Hours spend in business / work**



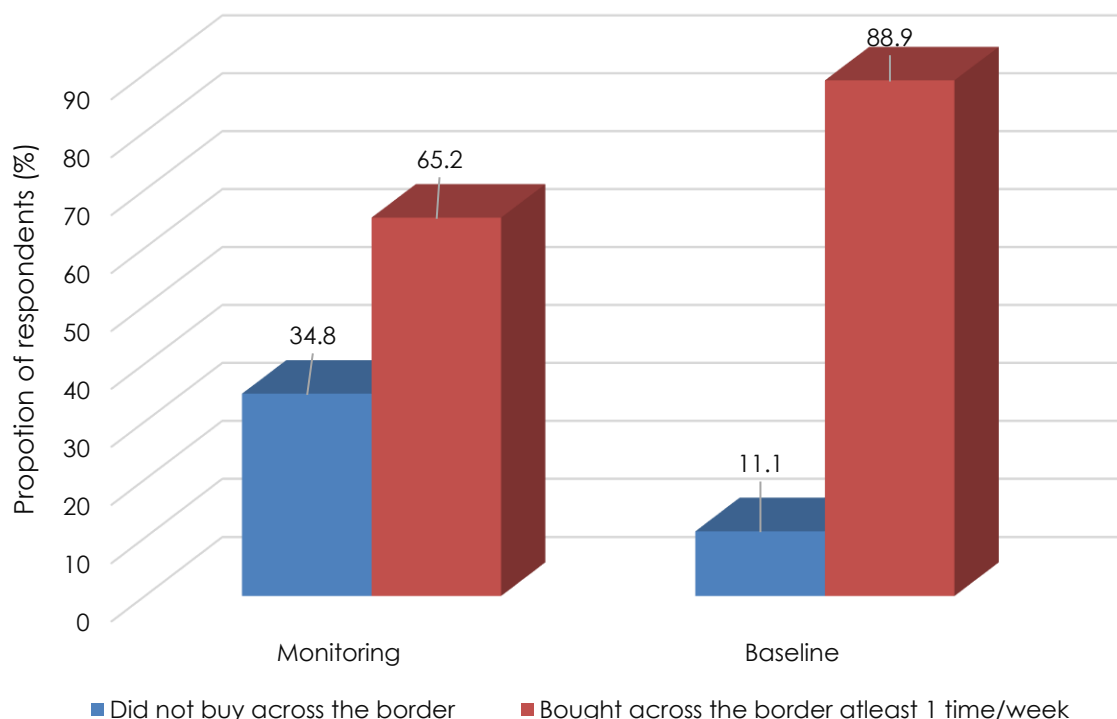
#### 4.2.5 Market diversification

To measure the impact of childcare on market diversification, respondents were asked if they were trading in markets other than the Busia market. Forty-three percent (43%) of the respondents noted that they had accessed markets other than Busia town to sell their products. These markets include Kakamega, Bungoma, Malaba, Mathayos, Nambale, Butula, Mundika, Ugunja, Bumala, Mundika, Nambale, Kisii, Charera, Nairobi, Kitale, Eldoret, Angorong, Dongosi, Kisumu, and Siaya. This suggests some market diversification between the baseline and the time of the monitoring survey. The childcare enabled women to travel further away from Busia town to other markets.

#### 4.2.6 Sourcing goods across the border

The number of women who crossed the border more than once a week to source goods from Uganda increased from 65 percent during the baseline study period to about 89 percent during the monitoring study period (Figure 9). At the same time, it is clear that those who bought their goods only from the Kenya side decreased from about 35 to about 11 percent during the baseline and the monitoring study periods, respectively.

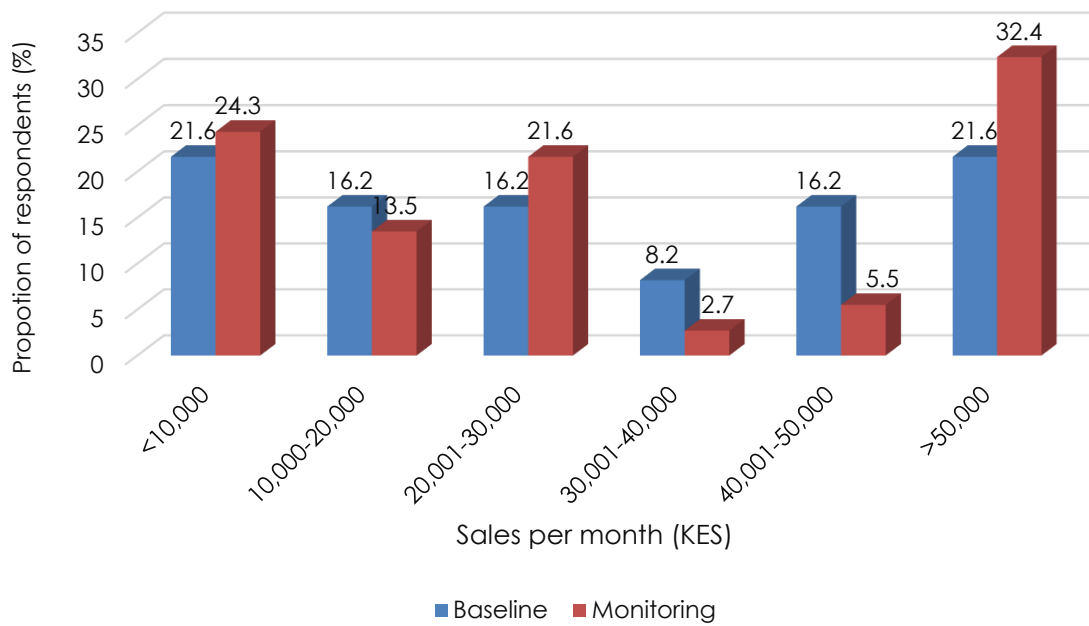
**Figure 9: Sourcing goods across the border**



#### 4.2.7 Sales

A comparison of the sales at the baseline survey and first monitoring survey shows that sales and profits had increased slightly during the monitoring surveys. The average monthly sales rose from KES 47,351.35 to KES 69,243.24, although some businesses recorded reduced sales. The highest increase in monthly sales was 1462%, rising from KES 32,000 to KES 500,000. The lowest increase in sales was around 13%, from KES 30,000 to KES 34,000. This implies that the respondents increased their sales, most likely because they had more time to attend to their businesses and sell their products in other markets besides Busia town. Notably, a larger proportion of the respondents (32%) had sales of over KES 50,000 per month during the monitoring survey period, compared to about 22 percent with the same size of sales during the baseline period (Figure 10).

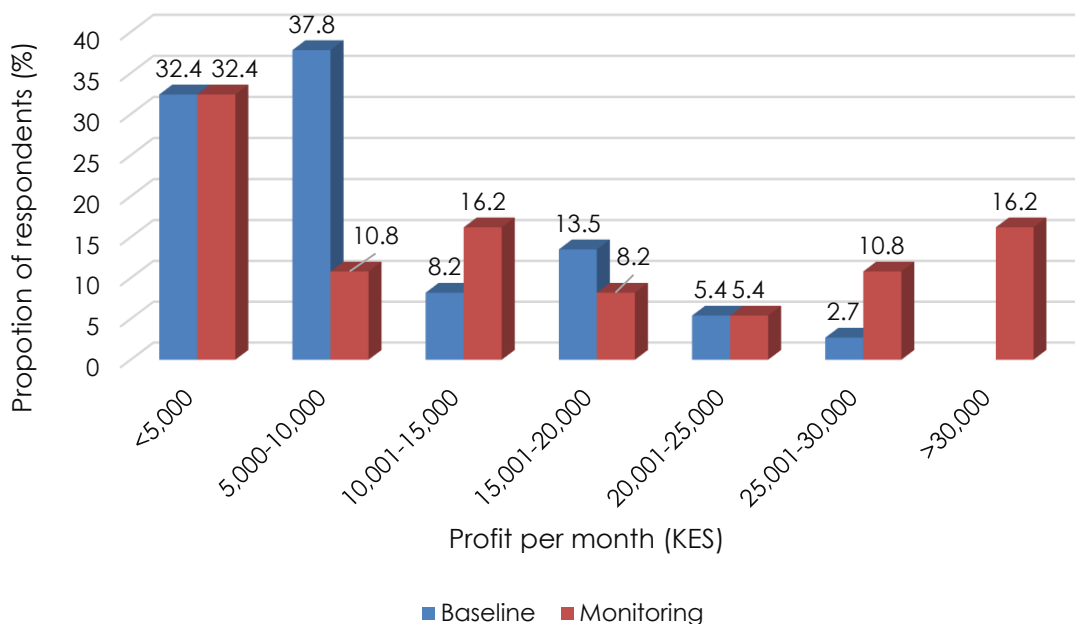
**Figure 10: Sales at baseline and monitoring survey periods**



#### 4.2.8 Profits

Profit at baseline ranged from KES 2,000 to KES 30,000, with average sales of KES 9,861 per month, while at the time of the monitoring survey, they ranged from KES 1,000 to a high of KES 80,000, and with an average of KES 19,444 per month. At the time of the monitoring survey, 64 percent of the respondents recorded an increase in profit compared to the baseline study period. The increase in profit ranged from KES 2,000 to KES 78,000, with the average increase in profit being KES 9,324 per month. The highest change in profit was 3900%, from KES 2,000 in the baseline stage to KES 80,000 in the monitoring stage. A few respondents, however, reported losses in profits, with the highest loss being 60%, from KES 15,000 in the baseline stage to KES 6,000 in the monitoring stage. During the baseline, only 30 percent of the respondents reported profits of over KES 10,000; during the monitoring, the proportion of respondents reporting profits of over KES 10,000 per month was over 56 percent. In addition, during the monitoring survey period, 16 percent of the respondents reported making profits of over KES 30,000 per month, while no respondents reported such profits during the baseline survey. The increase in profits was significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The proportion of respondents reporting different profit levels during baseline and monitoring survey periods is presented in Figure 11.

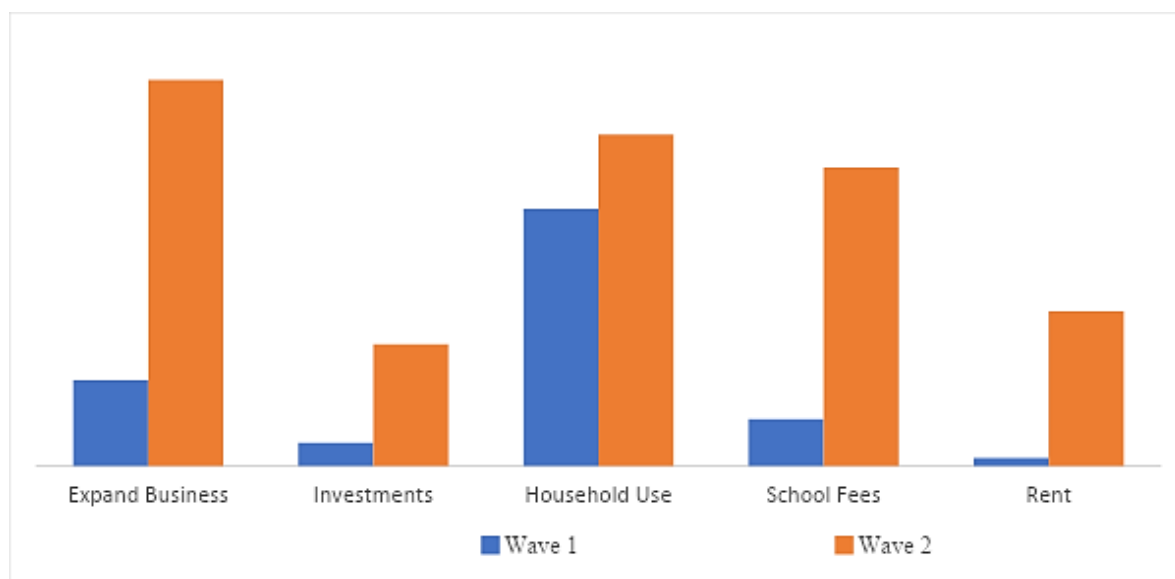
**Figure 11: Profit at baseline and monitoring survey periods**



**4.2.9 Use of business proceeds**

Comparing the monitoring and the baseline periods, it is clear from the responses that during the monitoring period, there was increased use of the business proceeds for various use categories, including expansion of business, investments, household use, school fees and rent. Figure 12 shows the proportion of responses indicating these increases, with the largest respondent increase of over 63% related to the use of the proceeds for business expansion. This suggests that more businesses were increasingly utilizing their business proceeds to invest in their business’s expansion. During the monitoring, it was clear that respondents further spent their business proceeds in new areas, including paying salaries for their workers, paying electricity bills, and supporting their family members and siblings.

**Figure 12: Use of business proceeds**



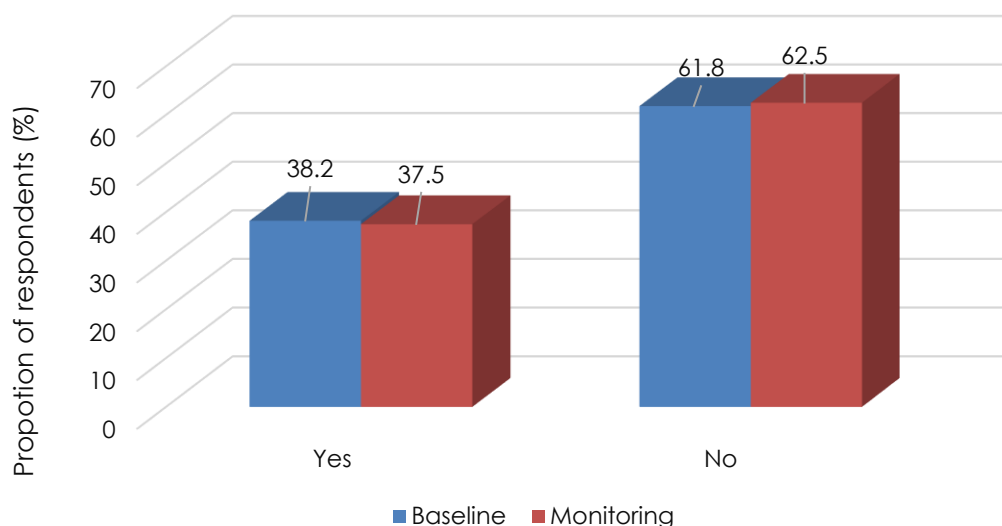


When asked if decision-making had changed in the last six months, 15 percent responded in the affirmative and observed that increased business proceeds and more time in the workplace have enabled them to make their own decisions.

#### 4.2.10 Engagement in other income-generating activities

Analysis shows that during the monitoring period, the number of respondents who had other income-generating activities slightly decreased compared to the baseline period. Women who had extra income-generating activities decreased from 38.2 percent during the baseline period to 37.5 percent in the monitoring period (Figure 13). The other income-generating activities were poultry keeping, Boda Centers services, Mpesa, salon, farming, and selling peanut butter. Access to childcare likely gave the beneficiary parents more time, which they used to engage in other income-generating activities.

**Figure 13: Proportion of respondents with other income-generating activities**



### 4.3 Impacts of childcare on gender roles

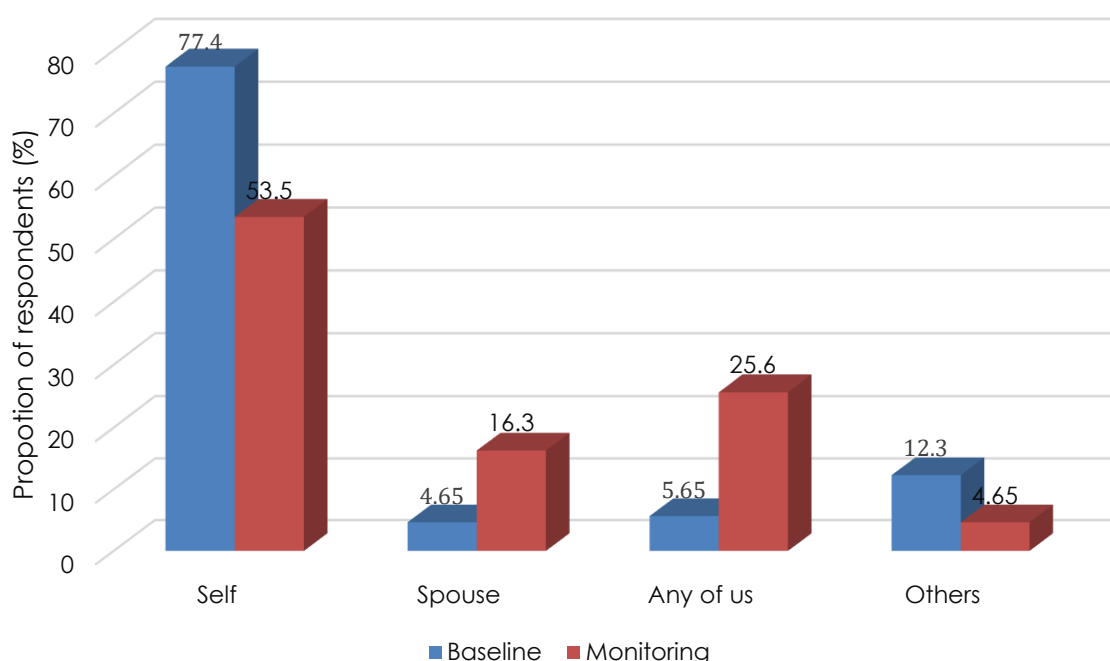
To assess if there has been shifting in gender norms, the respondents were asked several questions regarding who: (i) takes care of the children, (ii) cooks, (iii) washes clothes, (iv) bathes them, (v) prepares them for school, (vi) takes them to and (vii) picks them up from the school/childcare, (viii) helps in doing their home works, (ix) pays their school fees, (x) attends parents meetings at the childcare, and, (xi) whether or not the respondents had asked their spouse to help with some of the domestic tasks.

With regards to all the activities mentioned above, the baseline results revealed that most of the women (77.4%) were undertaking these activities. At the same time, spouses' participation accounted for 3.7, and joint responsibilities accounted for 8 percent, while other people (including sisters, brothers, and house helps) accounted for about 12 percent.

### 4.3.1 Impacts on unpaid care and domestic work

The monitoring survey shows that the proportion of women and other household members responsible for these domestic activities had decreased from 77.4 percent and 12.3 percent during the baseline to 53.5 percent and 4.7 percent, respectively, during the monitoring period. The proportion of spouses undertaking these responsibilities had increased from 4.7 percent to 16.3 percent during the baseline and monitoring study periods, respectively. These results show that, although these care and domestic responsibilities remain predominantly the responsibility of women, more spouses are getting involved in undertaking these domestic responsibilities, an indication of an early likelihood of shifting in gender norms regarding childcare and domestic work (Figure 14).

**Figure 14: Domestic chores responsibilities**



When asked if they had requested their partners to help with some of the tasks (discussed above), about 60 percent said they had not, while about 44 percent said they had. The reasons given for not asking for assistance include:

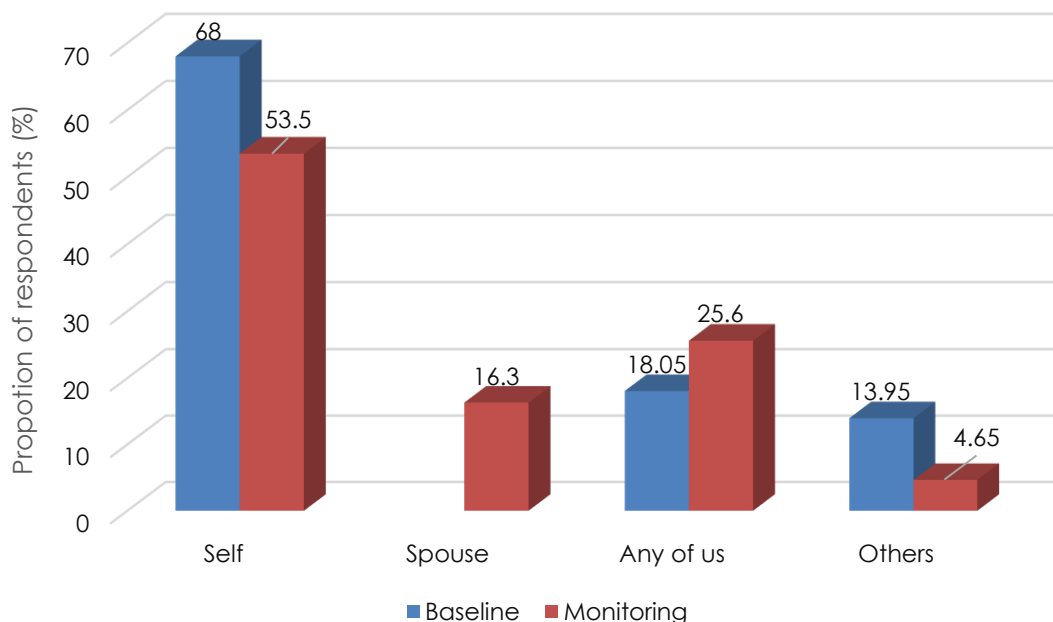
*‘It’s my duty to do these tasks’, ‘He can’t accept’, ‘He believes I should take care of the children’, ‘Most of the time he is away for work; therefore each one understands their role well’.*

### 4.3.2 Dropping and picking children from the childcare centre

Figure 15 shows the changes in response regarding the people dropping or picking up the child from the daycare for the baseline and the monitoring period. During monitoring, the proportion of women and others who dropped or picked the child from the childcare centre decreased from 68 and about 14 percent to 53.5 and 4.6 percent, respectively. Notably, the number of spouses and the proportion of respondents

who indicated that either of them dropped or picked the child from the childcare centre increased from zero to 16.3 percent, and from about 18 to 26 percent, respectively. This shows that, increasingly, spouses (fathers of the children) were responsible for picking up or dropping the children at the childcare centre.

**Figure 15: Proportion dropping and picking children to the childcare**



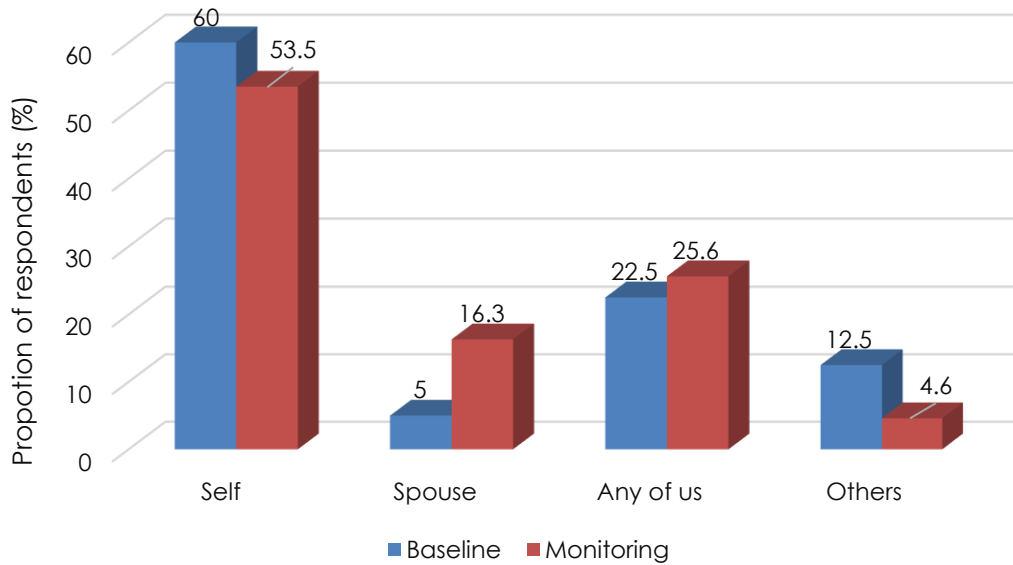
The ‘others’ mentioned in the monitoring survey included boda-boda riders, neighbours, siblings, and aunts.

When asked whether they (the women) asked their spouses to help them with household responsibilities, some women noted that it was their duty to do the household chores and would never ask their husbands to help. A few respondents mentioned that their partners helped them with the household chores, while others reported that their husbands arrived late from work and that others were away most of the time due to work. This, therefore, shows that gender norms persist, and women feel that it is their responsibility to do the house chores solely and, hence, do not ask the men to help.

### 4.3.3 Assisting older children with school homework

With regards to assisting the older children with school homework, the proportion of women and ‘other’ helping had decreased from 60 and 12.5 percent during the baseline survey to 55.3 and 4.6 percent during the monitoring survey period, respectively while the proportion of spouses (fathers) and those assisting jointly had increased from about 5 and 22.5 percent during baseline to 16.3 and 25.6 percent respectively during the monitoring survey period. Slightly more spouses (fathers) were being involved in assisting the elder children with homework (Figure 16).

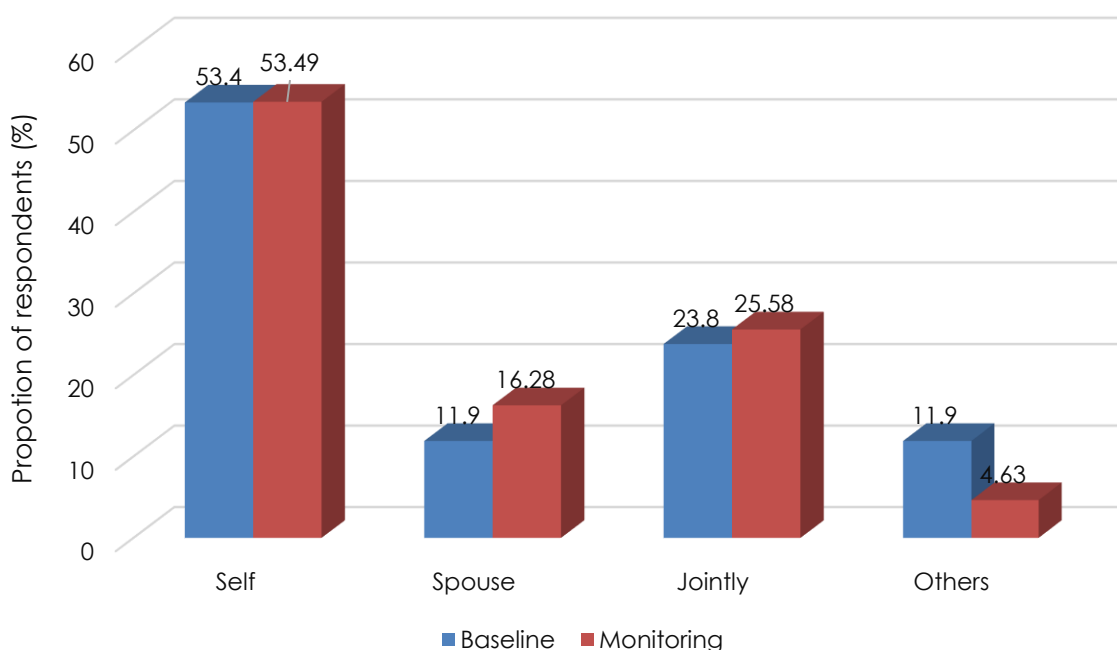
**Figure 16: Helping elder children with homework**



#### 4.3.4 Payment of school or childcare costs

The proportion of the women paying school fees or childcare costs at the baseline and during the monitoring period did not change. Change is noticeable in the proportion of spouses who paid, with the proportion of spouses paying to increase from 11.9 to 16.3 percent. The proportion of women and men jointly paying for childcare or paying school fees increased slightly from about 23.8 to 25.6 percent. Others payments for school or childcare seemed to have decreased over the same period (Figure 17). This shows that over the study period, more spouses started paying school and childcare costs independently or jointly, taking off this responsibility from others.

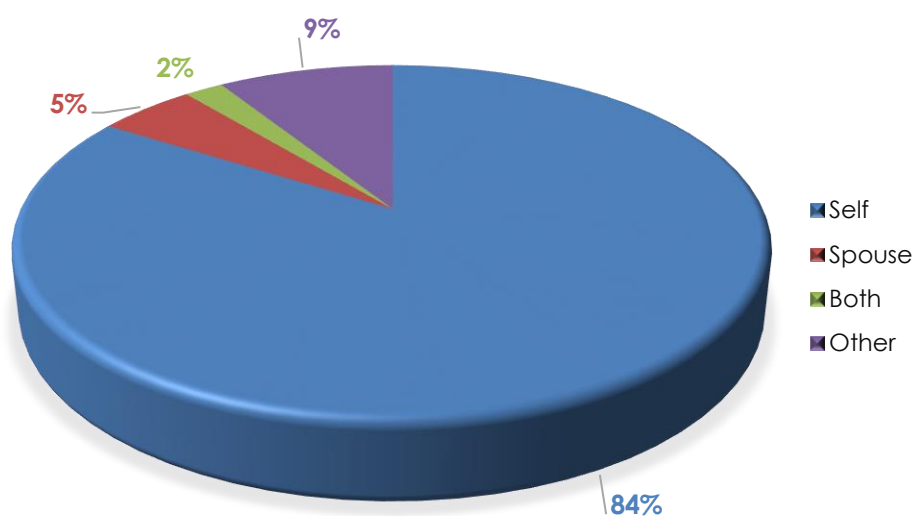
**Figure 17: Payment of school or childcare costs at the baseline and monitoring periods**



### 4.3.5 Parents participation in meetings related to childcare

To gauge the level of participation in the meetings related to childcare, the respondents were asked whether they or their spouses attended the last meeting that had been called to the childcare. Responses to this question are presented in Figure 18. The proportion of respondents who had participated in the last meeting for the childcare was 84 percent, while 5 percent observed that their spouses had participated, and 2 percent stated that they had participated in the latest meeting at the childcare together with their spouses. Nine percent of the respondents observed that other people, including aunts and grandmothers, participated.

**Figure 18: Respondents participation in childcare-related meetings**

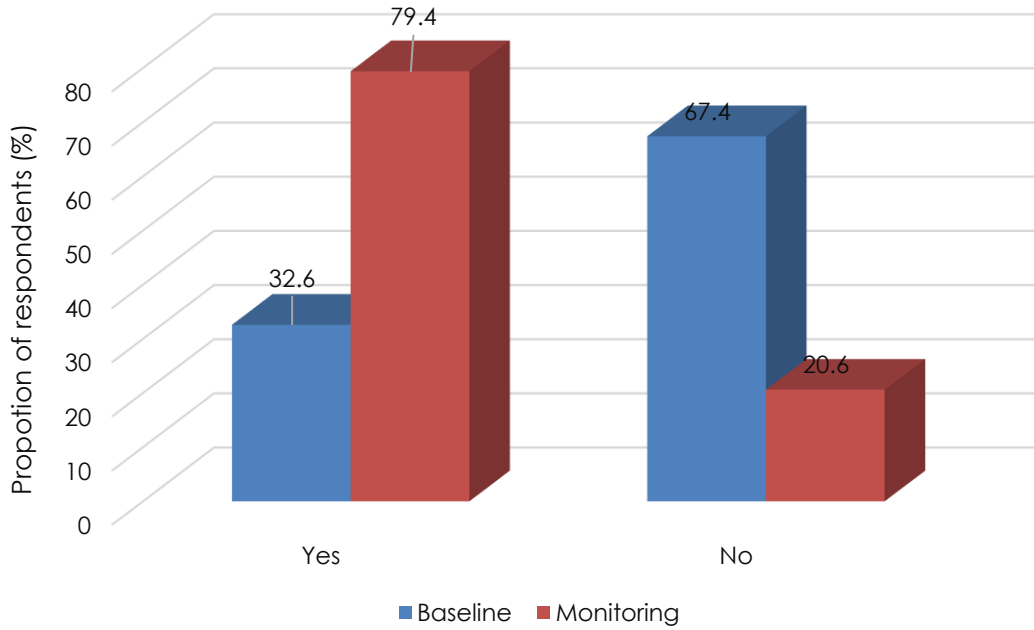


### 4.4 Participation in networks

Important networks studied were membership and participation in CBTAs and women groups. The results of the baseline and monitoring surveys show a decline in membership in cross-border trade associations (CBTAs) from 45.5 percent to 43.2 percent), and in participation from 61.4 percent to 41.5 percent. Reasons for non-membership and not participating in the CBTA networks included the following: most of the women in the association were elderly; hence, the young ones felt they could not fit in. Others were unaware (5), did not have an ID, had not yet decided, lacked time, fear of losing money, and business was still new and unregistered.

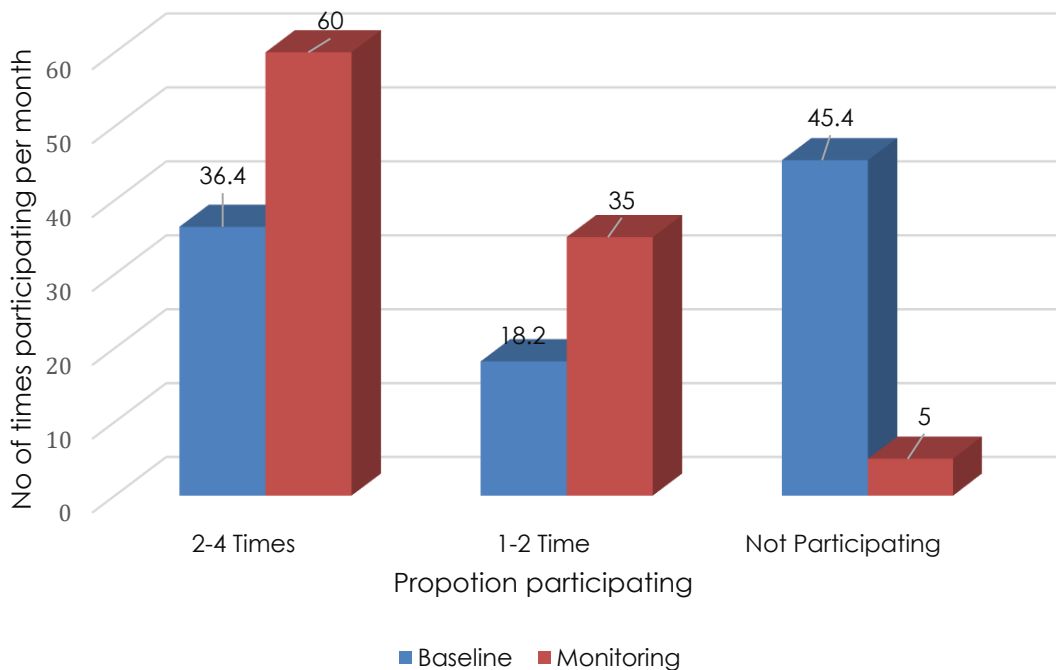
Additionally, and on a positive note, between the baseline and monitoring survey periods, there was an increase in membership in women groups (Figure 19).

**Figure 19: Membership in women’s groups**



The proportion not participating reduced from 45 percent to about 5 percent while participation rates (measured in the number of participation times per month increased from about 18 % to 35%) as shown in Figure 20.

**Figure 20: Participation in women’s groups**



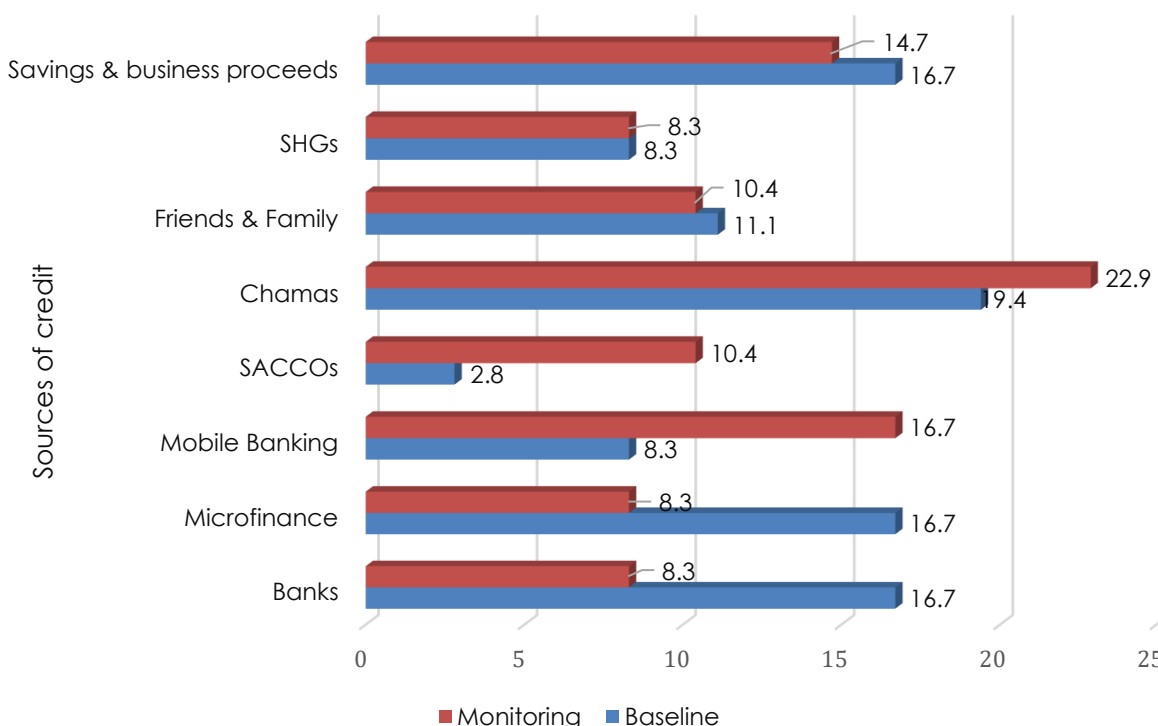
Notably, the proportion of women taking up leadership roles increased during the monitoring survey period as compared to the baseline period from about 18 to about 27 percent, respectively. This suggests that the childcare freed some time for women to participate in network leadership roles.

#### 4.5 Ownership of bank accounts, savings and sources of credit

A comparison of the baseline and monitoring surveys shows that there was a reduction with regard to the number of women who had their own business bank accounts, which was 88.2 and 70.3 percent, respectively.

With regards to where they save their money, the majority (about 45%) of the respondents save in banks, while others save in mobile phones (26%), CSLAs/*chamas* (22%), while savings at SACCOs and home, each accounted for (4%) of the respondents. Figure 21 shows sources of credit.

**Figure 21: Sources of credit**



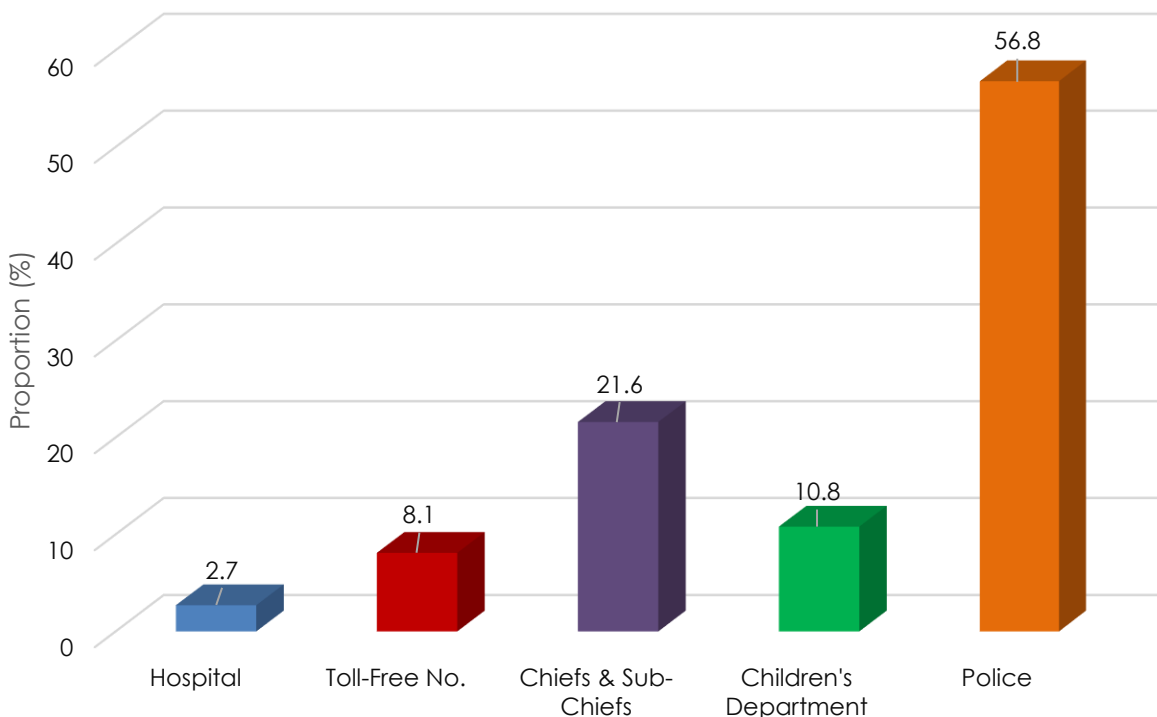
CSLAs/*chamas* remain the largest source of credit at both baseline and during the monitoring survey, accounting for about 19 and 23 percent of the credit's sources, respectively. Microfinance, friends and family, banks, as well as savings and business proceeds as sources of finance seemed to have reduced in importance during the monitoring survey as compared to the baseline survey period, while *chamas*, SACCOs and mobile banking were more important sources of credit during the monitoring survey period. A few of the respondents identified shylocks as the other source of credit.

#### 4.6 Effects of childcare on gender-based violence

Before discussing issues related to gender-based violence (GBV), a general understanding of what GBV is was explored. More than 90% of the participants had a general understanding of gender-based violence, stating that it is the abuse of men, women, and children. Most respondents (75.5%) said they

were aware of the GBV reporting mechanism, which includes reporting to the police stations, toll-free, children’s department, chief’s office and CBTA. The most known (about 57% of the respondents) GBV reporting channel was through the police, followed by reporting through the chiefs and sub-chiefs (about 22% of the respondents), as shown in Figure 22.

**Figure 22: Awareness of the GBV reporting mechanism**

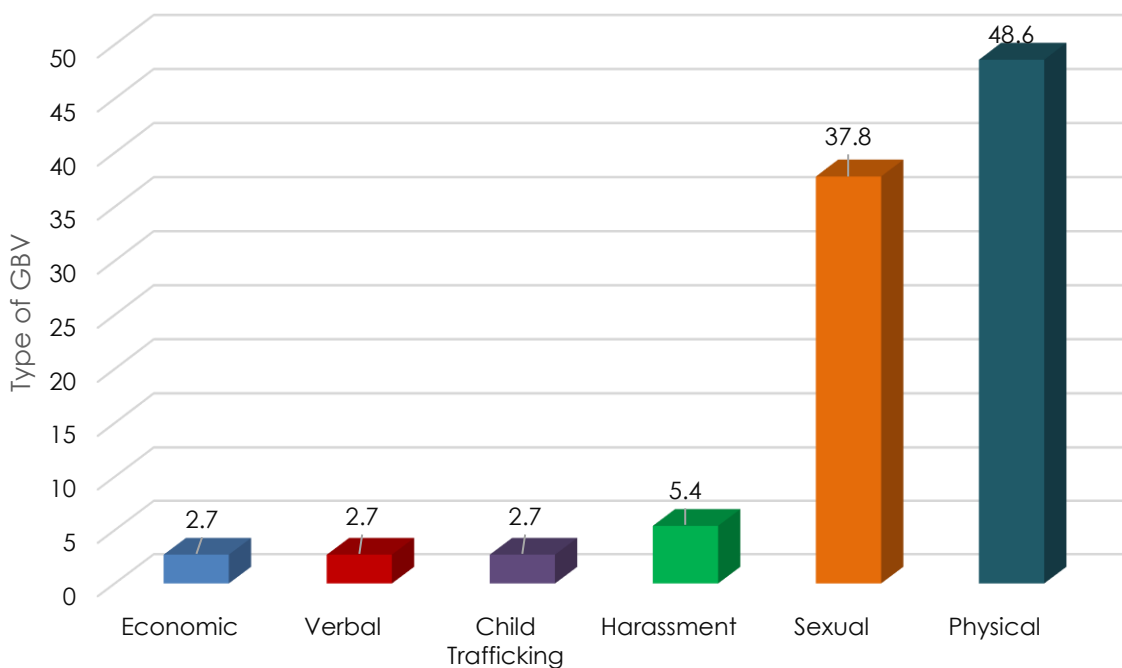


About 46.5 percent of the respondents had been at one time trained in GBV. The most common area (43 % of the respondents) of training was on reporting GBV, followed by how to fight GBV (about 22% of the respondents). Other areas where respondents had received training included the prevention of GBV (13 % of the respondents), recording evidence and how to handle GBV survivors (8.7 % of the respondents), and effects of GBV (about 4% of the respondents). Training on GBV was administered mainly by NGOs, CSOs, social workers and religious leaders.

The respondents were asked if there had been incidences of GBV towards people they knew, including their children, relatives, themselves or fellow women traders over the past year. More than half of the women (56.9%) stated that they had witnessed some form of GBV towards people they know during the baseline survey, while this proportion was 67 percent during the monitoring survey period. Types of GBV that the respondents had witnessed are shown in Figure 23.



**Figure 23: Types of GBV**

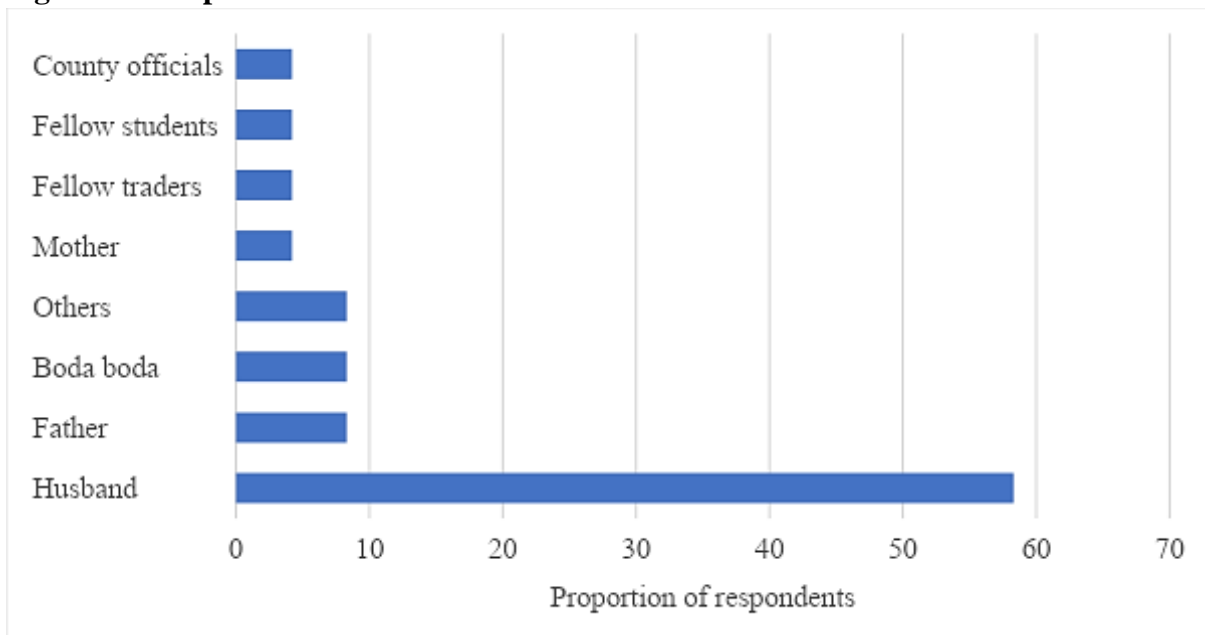


During the monitoring survey period, the majority of the respondents (about 49%) had witnessed physical abuse, while about 38 percent had witnessed cases of sexual abuse. Cases of harassment were identified by five percent of the respondents, while child trafficking and verbal and economic abuses had each been witnessed by 2.7 percent of the respondents.

Regarding the place where GBV happens, most of the respondents during both the baseline and monitoring survey period identified home as the most common place. During the monitoring survey period, about 68 percent and 14 percent of the respondents identified home and marketplace, respectively, where GBV takes place. School and along the road were each identified by 7 percent of the respondents, while the countryside as the place where GBV takes place was identified by about 4 percent of the respondents. Most cases of GBV had taken place in the daytime, as was mentioned by 55 percent of the respondents, while cases taking place during the nighttime were mentioned by 45 percent of the respondents.

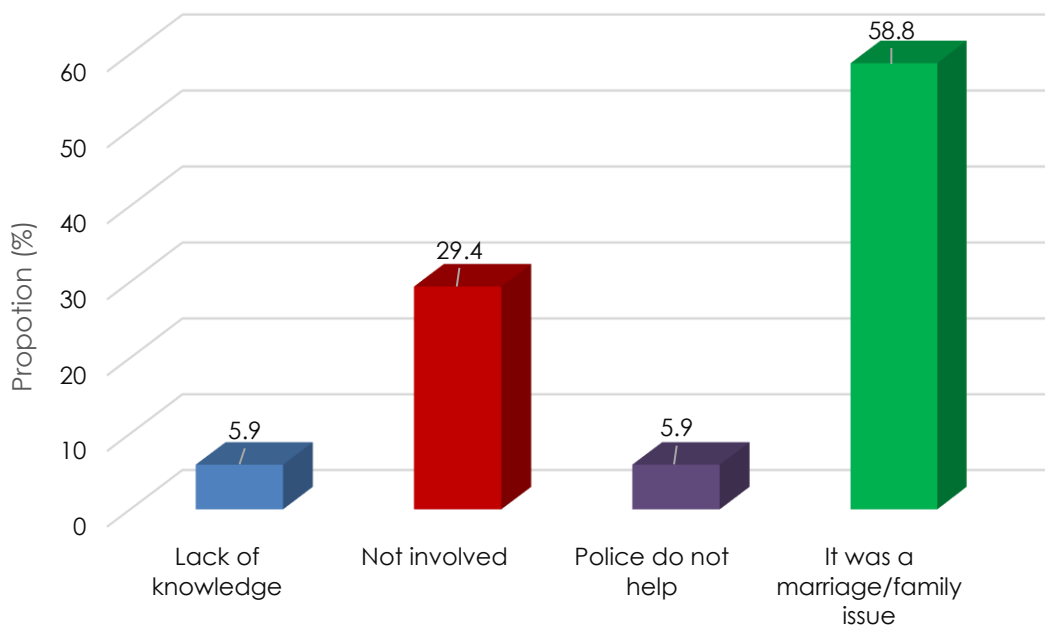
With regards to the perpetrators of GBV, husbands were reported to be the main (58%) perpetrators, followed by other relatives (uncles, brothers-in-law, stepmothers and cousins), fathers (of the children) and boda-boda riders as each was reported by 8 percent of the respondents. Mothers, fellow traders, fellow students, and County officials each were reported by 4 percent of the respondents. Figure 24 shows the proportion of respondents identifying specific perpetrators of GBV.

**Figure 24: Perpetuators of GBV**



Most of the cases (about 68%) were not reported, the main reason for not reporting being that the issue was a marriage/ family matter. Other reasons for not reporting GBV are shown in Figure 25.

**Figure 25: Reasons for not reporting GBV**



Reported cases accounted for 32%, with most (about 55%) being reported to the police, reporting to hospital and community leaders each accounted for 18 percent. Cases reported to the teacher accounted for 9 percent of all abuse cases. About 64 percent of the reported cases were actioned in form of the perpetrators being arrested or the affected persons receiving counselling services.

Regarding the impact of childcare on GBV on children, the respondents observed that there have been fewer cases of rape, reduced child theft and (or) trafficking, less child abuse and reduced family conflicts.

The respondents observed that: “children with stepmoms are better protected at the Centre; children are not exposed to their parents fights and conflicts anymore; there are reduced cases of GBV including defilement, abduction and rape.

With regards to the effects of childcare on GBV on women, the respondents observed that there have been reduced cases of GBV against women and family conflicts, and women have become economically independent and enlightened.

#### 4.7 Opinions on the childcare

All the respondents interviewed at baseline and monitoring study periods reported they were comfortable leaving their child at the daycare because their children were safe, the centre was clean, and the care was high quality. They acknowledged that the staff members of the CBTA are well-known, which assured them that their children were safe. The respondents also mentioned that since enrolling their children at the daycare Centre, they witnessed much growth in their children, some of whom started being independent. As a result, women have been able to go about their businesses without any fear, which has greatly contributed to their businesses and well-being. This is reflected in the statements below:

*The security and safety of my kid is guaranteed. The caregivers have impacted the kids positively, through the things they are told and the company from other kids - the Centre has provided a humble environment for growth.* Parent with a child at the daycare Centre

*The childcare provides a safe space for the young children and also allows women to work,* Parent with a child at the daycare Centre

*When picking the baby in the evening, he is full and clean. The staff take good care of the children.* Parent with a child at the daycare Centre

*The security and safety of the kid is guaranteed, the caregivers are friendly and professional. In case of any incident, the Centre's administration contacts the parents.* Parent with a child at the daycare

*The environment is safe. Child is given healthy meals and the health of the child is monitored.* Parent with a child at the daycare Centre

*My son was an introvert before; after coming to the center he was able to interact with other children. Parent with a child at the daycare Centre*

*The caregivers have impacted the kids positively, through the things they are taught and the company of other kids - the Centre has provided a humble environment for growth. Parent with a child at the daycare Centre*

Regarding what they like about the childcare, during the monitoring, the beneficiaries indicated that they liked the safety of the child, friendly staff, a good environment for children's growth, healthy diet and quality services. Other benefits of the childcare identified by the respondents include; the parents had more time to take care of other children, the other children were able to concentrate with schoolwork other as opposed to taking care of the young ones, the mothers had more time to concentrate on their work and they had freedom of movement, reduced conflicts in the home, reduced costs in the home including costs related to house help to take care of the baby, hence more saving, improved spousal relationships and improved child welfare including health, speech and overall development.



*Veronica Makokha counting fish at Busia fish market*

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## **SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **5.1 Summary of key findings**

This study has analyzed the effects of accessing quality and affordable childcare on women's businesses. The summary of the monitoring survey findings based on the 17 indicators used to measure the effects are presented in this section. The following findings have been observed:

#### **i. Women's business ownership and employment**

Regarding business ownership, sole ownership was reduced during the monitoring study period, while joint ownership increased simultaneously. There is a decrease in the number of businesses employing at least one person during the baseline and the monitoring survey period from about 82 percent to 50 percent, respectively.

#### **ii. Time spent on economic activities**

The study has shown that the beneficiaries of childcare have increased the time they spend in their businesses or workplaces. There is a reduction in the number of respondents who open their businesses late from about 90 % to 4.6%. The number of respondents who left work or closed business later increased from 14% to 88 percent during baseline and monitoring study periods, respectively. The proportion of respondents who spent less than 7 hours in their businesses had reduced from about 41 percent to less than 17 percent, while those who worked for more than eight hours increased from about 59 percent during the baseline to over 85 percent during the monitoring survey period. On average, the number of hours spent on work increased after children were taken to childcare. The childcare reduced the time women spent on this type of work and allowed them to spend more time in their businesses.

#### **iii. Trading across borders and market diversification**

Forty-three percent (43%) of the respondents had accessed markets other than Busia town to sell their products. In addition, the number of women who crossed the border more than once a week to source goods from Uganda increased from 65 percent during the baseline study period to about 89 percent during the monitoring study period.

#### **iv. On business outcomes**

Average sales per month rose from KES 47,351.35 at baseline to KES 69,243.24 at the monitoring study period, and a larger proportion of the respondents (32%) had sales of over KES 50,000 per month during

the monitoring survey period, as compared to about 22 percent with the same size of sales during the baseline period.

**v. Profits**

Profits between the baseline and the monitoring survey study period increased significantly from an average of KES 9,861 to KES 19,444, with 64 percent of the respondents reporting an increase in profit while a few reported a loss in profits. The increase in profit ranged from KES 2,000 to KES 78,000, with the average increase in profit being KES 9,324. During the baseline, only 30 percent of the respondents reported profits of over KES 10,000, while during the monitoring period, the proportion of respondents reporting profits of over KES 10,000 per month was over 56 percent, while 16 percent of the respondents reported making profits of over KES 30,000 per month. This suggests that women made more money from their businesses, most likely because with childcare, they were spending more time attending to their businesses.

**vi. Use of business proceeds**

Results showed that the business proceeds were increased during the monitoring period for various use categories, including business expansion, investments, household use, school fees and rent. The largest increase of over 63% was related to the use of the proceeds for business expansion. It is therefore concluded that with increased income (though increased profits) women invested in expansion of their businesses and other household expenditure-related activities.

**vii. Shift in gender norms**

The proportion of spouses reporting to be undertaking various domestic work, including taking care of the children, cooking, washing clothes, bathing, preparing, dropping and picking up children from school, helping in doing their homework and participating in parents' meetings at the childcare centre or school was observed to have increased 4.7 percent to 16.3 percent in baseline and monitoring period respectively. At the same time, the proportion of women indicating that they did those domestic activities alone had decreased from 77.4 percent during the baseline to 53.5 percent during the monitoring study period.

**viii. Membership and participation in networks**

Membership and participation in women groups during the study period had increased, with the non-participating proportion reducing from 45 percent to about five percent while participation rates (measured in the number of participation times per month increased from about 18 % to 35%). It is therefore concluded that with more time, women are likely to participate in available and relevant networks.

#### **ix. Bank account ownership, savings and sources of credit**

Results showed a decrease in business bank account ownership from 88.2 percent during the baseline study period to 70.3 percent during the monitoring study period. The majority (about 45%) of the respondents save in banks, while others save via mobile phones (26%) and CSLAs/*chamas* (22%). Savings at SACCOs and at home each accounted for 4% of respondents. CSLAs/*chamas* remained the largest source of credit at both the baseline and monitoring survey, accounting for approximately 19% and 23% of credit sources, respectively.

#### **x. Opinions and perceptions the childcare**

The respondents indicated satisfaction with the childcare services, observing that they liked the safety of the child, friendly staff, a good environment for children's growth, healthy diet and quality services. They also observed that the childcare had also taken off care responsibilities from older siblings of the participating children.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the impacts of the childcare one year after onboarding the children to the childcare, it can be concluded that:

- i. Enrolling children in childcare reduced the time women spend on childcare and they spent more time in their businesses. With increased time spent in their businesses, more women could purchase goods across the border (Uganda side) more often, and they could sell their goods in other markets in the county far from the border. This increase in trade is reflected in their increased sales and in increased profits. It is concluded that women intensified their trading across the borders, diversified their markets beyond Busia town (border market areas), and could trade in areas further from Busia town.
- ii. Increased profits were mostly used for business expansion and other household activities to further empower women and households.
- iii. Beginning with dropping and picking up the children from the childcare centre, more spouses (husbands) gradually started to engage in other UCDW related to childcare. Involvement in care work is a channel for contributing to a shift in gender norms. This redistribution of work may have contributed to better relations at the household level and reduced GBV incidences in the household or neighbourhood.
- iv. Reduction of time spent on UCDW frees time for women, some of which is spent participating in networks including in women groups and possibly taking up leadership roles. The networks are further areas of women's empowerment as they provide leadership potential development for women, while savings groups are potential vehicles for providing credit.
- v. Women appreciate leaving their children at the childcare centre as they go to engage in income-generating activities. The crucial concerns for their children are safety, caregivers, cleanliness and

security of the environment, and the diet and quality of the services they receive at the childcare centre.

- vi. The findings clearly lead to the conclusion that reduction and redistribution of childcare responsibilities leads to better outcomes for women- owned businesses, family relations, and eventually good for women's economic empowerment.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are being made to state actors (national and county government):

#### **5.3.1 Recommendations to National and County Governments**

Based on the findings and the conclusions of this study, it is recommended that for support of the growth of small-scale women's businesses for growth, both the Busia County government and the national government of Kenya should consider:

- i. Developing policies aimed at reducing and redistributing care work by establishing facilities providing care for children under four years.
- ii. Support childcare development by increasing budgetary allocations to support childcare and Early Childhood Development Education (ECDE) to ensure adequate childcare provision for enhanced parents' business performance.
- iii. Support women traders, in better engaging in cross-border trade by establishing childcare facilities at border towns and markets.
- iv. Ensuring that construction of all market infrastructure, including cross-border market infrastructure, provides childcare facilities close to women to enable their better participation in cross-border trade opportunities.
- v. Encouraging the involvement of spouses (men) in childcare-related activities is an important pathway to encouraging men's participation in UCDW and is important in improving family relations, including reducing GBV.

#### **5.3.2. To civil society**

- i. Advocate for childcare facilities by mobilizing women traders to engage the county governments and push for providing childcare facilities in trading centres through participation in budget processes. This can be done via written memoranda or oral presentations during public participation.
- ii. Promote redistribution of UCDW, including childcare responsibilities, to improve family relations and reduce GBV.
- iii. Promote sensitization on changes in gender norms around childcare work and domestic work redistribution for better participation of women in the workplace and enhanced household incomes.



### **5.3.3 Cross-Border Trade Associations**

- i. Promote investment in cross-border childcare facilities as an investment opportunity and for enhanced participation of women in cross-border trade.
- ii. Advocate for government support to childcare facilities for better economic empowerment of women and safety of children of cross border traders.

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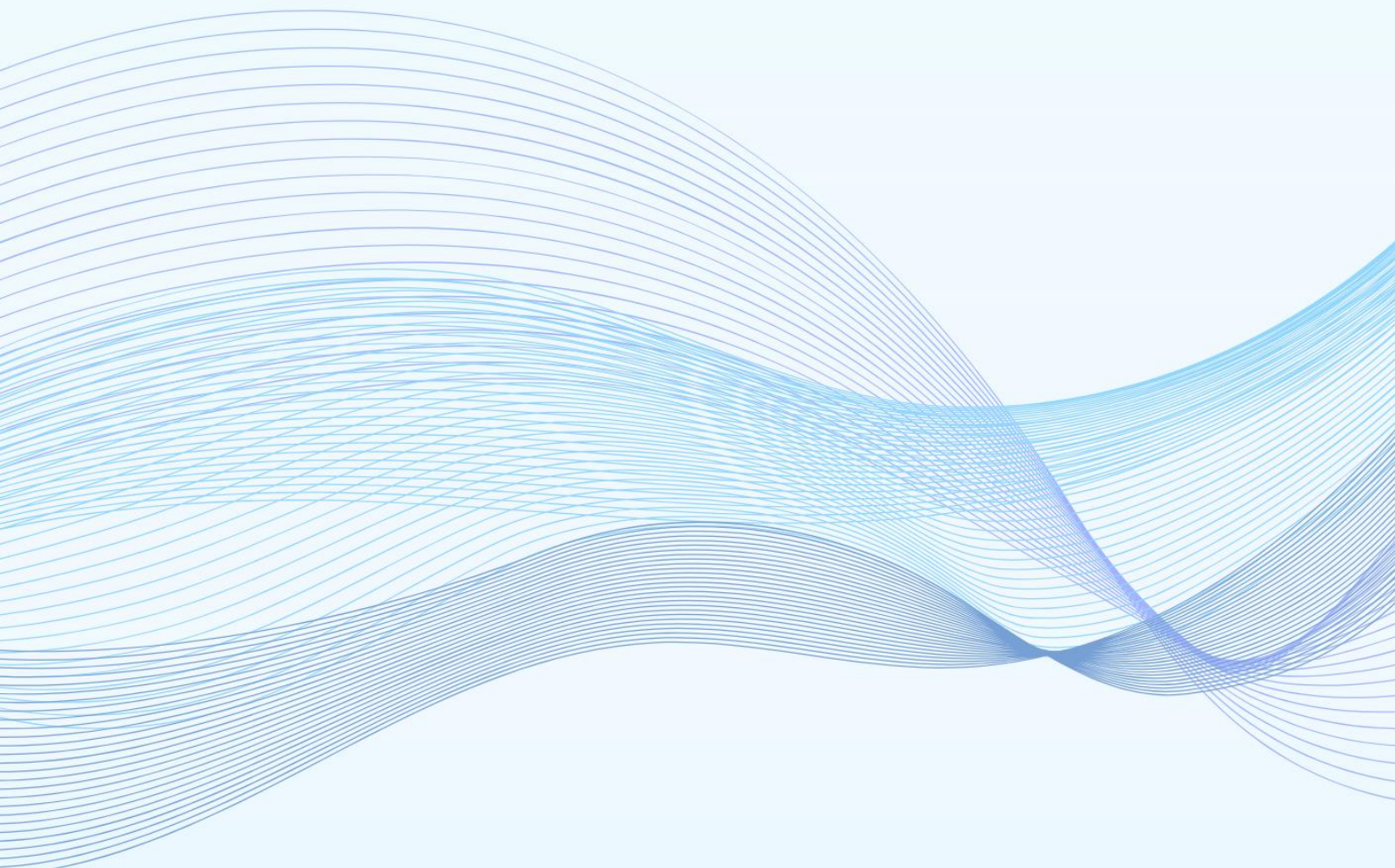
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