

BENUE

REPORT OF A BASELINE SURVEY CONDUCTED IN 3 LGAs COMPRISING 5 COMMUNITIES ON CBECCDE/PRE-PRIMARY SITUATION ON THE 3RD- 8TH OCTOBER, 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a survey report of community Based Early Childhood Care and Education/pre-primary (CBECC/pre-primary) in Benue State in 5 communities of Ado, Gwer West and Logo LGA. The purpose of the survey is to identify the major gaps in the current ECCE/pre-primary of children 3-5 years in the state especially in rural communities that will provide basis for specific suggestions on how to improve ECCE in the State and LGA levels. It is hoped that the findings will lead to the development of programs and projects that are supportive of child survival, growth, development and protection. It will also support the new system of education that supports one year compulsory pre-primary education for 5 year old children as integral part of basic education system.

Issues of access, quality, government and community support for ECCE in Benue state were looked at in the survey..

The findings revealed that children 3-5 years in the focus communities are completely sidelined from CBECC/pre- primary. All the communities are hard to reach rural communities with bad roads that are only accessible during dry season. The communities revealed an unsatisfactory situation about protection and development of children. Children's well being is being threatened in so many ways, for example lack of health facilities exposes parents to self-medication, herbal drugs and use of untrained traditional birth attendant's, poor access to improve safe water and sanitation.

Again, other issues that affect child development include gender issues, inadequate feeding as a result of food insecurity at the household and family level due to constant communal conflict and flood that result to malnutrition and stunted growth, HIV/AIDS that reduces survival and protection as well as early marriage which places much burden on young parents. The findings also revealed that although there is education sector plan in the state such plans are not being used to develop programs and activities for ECCE. There is no coordination collaboration

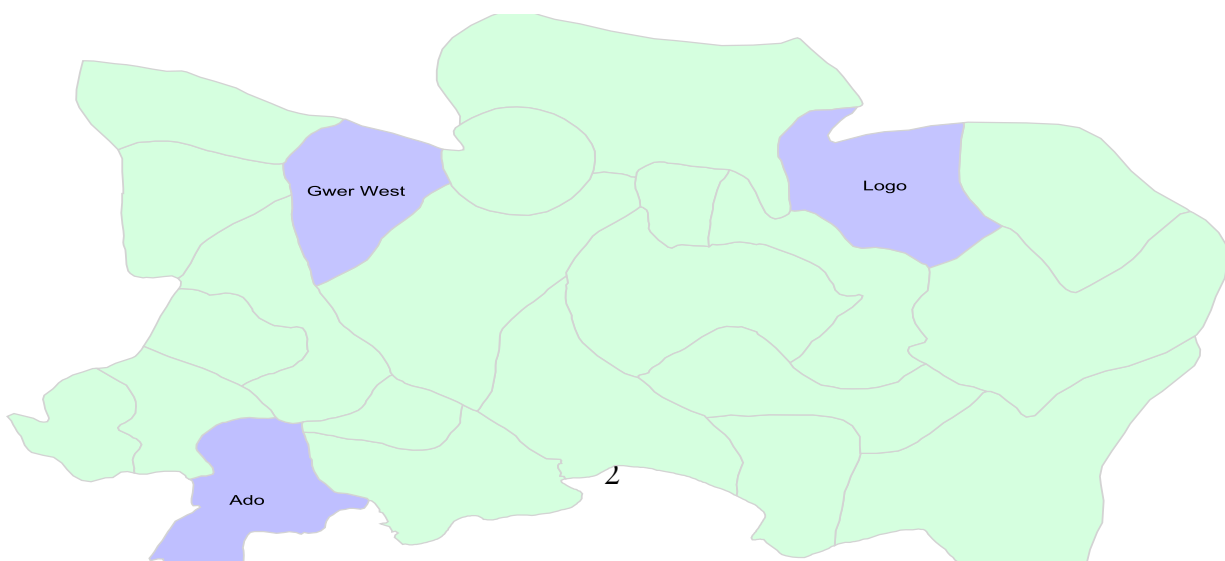
between education sector and ministries departments and agencies as well as NGOs working on ECCE. Financing ECCE in the state is very low.

Despite all this, there are inputs that exist in the community that might support child development in the community if given the desired support. These include the extended family system and community based associations that provide collective interest and communal caring of children, in addition to these, there is the church, which plays a part in shaping the character through moral and spiritual guidance, and the availability of fertile land that caters for food requirements.

Several methods of gathering data were used extensively. The methods used were observation, interview, focus group discussion and retrieval of available data of education budget and training records from SUBEB and Ministries of Education.

A. INTRODUCTION

A Community Based Early Childhood Care and Education/preprimary survey was conducted in 13 states in Nigeria including FCT from 29th October 8th -November 2014. Benue State was among the focus states in 3 selected LGAs and in 5 communities. A survey with a purposive sampling method was designed and used. The main purpose of the survey is to determine the current situation of ECCE/pre-primary of children 3-5 years in the state especially hard- to- reach rural communities, access to preschool, quality of learning and community participation and government including development partners/NGO. A total of 424 households with a population of 779 U-5 children were included in the survey across 5 communities in the state. Also included in the survey were education secretaries of the 3 LGAs and the chairman of SUBEB in Benue State.



(Map of Benue state with communities and LGAs included in the survey)

Currently in Benue state, only 25 % of children are being served through pre- primary school linkage attached to public schools due to a number of inequality factors. Most of the children who live in hard- to- reach rural communities are often excluded from accessing preschool services.

MICS 4 (2011) report that only 50.9 percent of children aged 39-59 months are currently attending pre-school in Benue state. Most of these children are enrolled in private pre-schools. A large proportion of these children whose parents are experiencing poverty and residing in rural communities are still deprived.

The Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief Transition (SMART) survey report also indicates that in 2013 and 2014, Benue State recorded 20.3 % and 19.2 % respectively of children under 5 who were stunted. Stunting affects cognitive development and learning skills. It might force children to drop out of school later in life. This is as a result of poor feeding practices.

The reports of the sentinel survey in Nigeria have shown that Benue State has maintained the highest prevalence rate of HIV infection (1999: 16.8%; 2003: 9.3%; 2005:10.0%, 2007: 10.6% and 2010:12.7%). As a result, mother to child transmission is very high. Young children are getting infected on a daily basis. This has also contributed to declining condition for optimal child care practices for under 5 year old children. Children affected and infected by HIV are often sidelined from pre-school's intervention.

Constant communal conflict in the state has increased poverty, which has affected survival, growth and development of young children.

Constant and continuous strike of public school teachers in the state has also forced children out of school. The enrolment of children in pre-school linked to public schools has also dropped significantly. This is because most people lack or have lost confidence in public schools in the state, and they have decided to keep their children at home without adequate care.

B. BACKGROUND

To ensure a sound take off of the program and provide a good baseline for measuring progress, the UBEB in collaboration with UNICEF organized a participatory meeting to design the tools and agree on the process of the data collection. The planning meetings started on the 21st July, 2014 with the development of survey tools, training and generating of sample size. Again, there

was pilot testing of the tools in two states, namely Sokoto and Ebonyi in two communities each. The purpose is to validate the reliability of the tool. The experience of field work was utilized and used to conduct a baseline survey in 5 communities in Benue state. All together the process took four months to complete. The scope of the survey covers 5 deprived communities selected across 3 LGAs. These LGAs have the highest level of school drop-outs compare to other LGAs in the state. The focus communities are:

LGA	COMMUNITIES	NO OF HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION			NO OF U 5 CHILDREN		
			total	Male	female	Total	male	female
Ado	Alomo- Rijo	132	950	462	458	306	190	146
Logo	Mbaifu- Logo	127	639	331	308	179	100	79
Logo	TSE-AGERAGA	109	675	320	355	145	82	63
Gwer west	TSE-ABUNDE, MBALOSU-MBAPA	108	557	269	288	213	110	113
Gwer west	TSE-BOBO-UGAH, MBAKOMBOR	41	201	100	101	98	55	43

Table 1 shows List of focus communities by Local Government

C. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY

The main objective of the survey is to collect information on CBECCE/Preprimary and identify the major gaps in the current ECCE in Benue State that will provide the basis for specific suggestions on how to improve the existing ECCE in the state and LGA levels.

METHODOLOGY

TRAINING AND HOUSEHOLD ENUMERATORS

A training of trainer of resource persons and ECCE desk officers were conducted. The purpose is to ensure they gain understanding and skills on the use of the tools. The reason for training of the desk officer was to ensure sustainability and scale up of the intervention in future. This was followed with a step down training of the enumerators. The enumerators were selected based on their experience, expertise on data collection, analysis, and understanding of the local language.

Interviews were conducted by the resource persons and the desk officer, out of 7 persons who applied, only 5 were engaged to do the work. The selected enumerators attended 2 day training before the commencement of the survey. The purpose is to ensure that they have a clear understanding of ECCE program in Benue state, the rationale and what is expected of them. The content of the training included what is ECCE/rationale, why integration of ECCE? Why CBECC? What is integrated Early Childhood Care Consultative Committee? How to administer the tool, role play and where the communities of intervention are sited. The SUBEB supported the training by providing refreshment to participants and also provided a vehicle to facilitate movement of enumerators.

SAMPLING

The sample selection procedure was conducted using purposive sampling method in all the 5 communities. In 4 communities, the household numbers were large therefore 80 percent of the households were selected for the survey, with the exception of Tse- Bobo Uga community that has less than 50 households, all the household were sampled and administered with questionnaires. A Total of 424 households were included in the survey across 5 communities

DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The following methods were used in the collection of data: (1) Focus Group Discussion (FGD), (2) key informant interviews (3) and desk reviews

Focus Group Discussion: this involved the discussion with community/opinion leaders, and community members who have relevant information on the community. The FGD provided Information for the following components of the questionnaire: background information, and availability of basic infrastructure that protects the rights of young children in the community.

The people involved in the FGD included community leaders, representative of women groups, youth groups, churches, community development associations, community vigilante group, cooperative groups and farmers' associations.

Key informant interviews: interviews were used to gather data from key stakeholders based on their knowledge, experience and involvement with ECCE. Respondents included the SUBEB chairman and the LGEA Education Secretaries of the intervening LGAs. Basic information included state level information on ECCE.

At the household level, the key informants were the household heads who were interviewed to gather data on the household information including personal data of the household heads and the well being of children 0-5 years.

Desk review: a desk review was also employed during the interviews to look at existing documents on ECCE in the state and LGAs. Education budgets for the year 2013/14 were looked at and analyzed, training records were also checked and list of the number of schools and teachers by qualification were checked.

SELECTION OF THE COMMUNITIES

The selection of the communities was done by SUBEB in collaboration with UNICEF. The criteria used for the selection was based on the report of the mapping exercise, which revealed that those communities selected were high burden communities in terms of low enrolment and high school dropout.

F. RESULTS

Access

Benue state Government domesticated the Child Rights law in 2008. The law on the rights of the child states that a child has the right to develop 'to the maximum extent possible' which means every child is entitled to a comprehensive care irrespective of age, sex, status, religion etc. this also means access to ECD is a right and no child should be denied of the basic necessity of life. The purpose is to ensure children survive, grow and develop. Therefore, the government must bear and fulfill the responsibility for the realization of services necessary to protect the rights of young children by promoting access to ECCE. The implementation of the child right law is inactive in Benue state, limiting access to justice and the protection children received especially U 5 children.

Indicators selected to measure progress on access will include percentage of children 3-5 years who have access to CBECC, and the percentage of children aged 5 years enrolled in pre-primary school. Measurement for access is broader than just enrolment, it must include of all children, for example children with disabilities, children who are HIV positive, and children who are affected by conflicts and disasters. This indicator is necessary to assess the impact of children enrolled and participating in ECCE/pre-primary in the focus communities and in Benue at large. Again, to provide opportunity for children who are marginalized and live in rural communities to benefit

from the approved one year compulsory pre-primary education by the Federal Government of Nigeria, which is an interregal part of the basic education system. It is expected that the new system will enable full resourcing of Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) and expand access to all eligible children in the state.

The survey report indicates that 100 % of all children in the 5 focus communities in Benue State do not have access to CBECCE/ Pre-primary. This situation is similar to most rural communities the state. This might affect children right to optimal child care if not addressed.

The issue related to access in the 5 communities is highlighted and discussed below:

All the communities live in hard- to -reach rural areas and suffer from the unavailability of basic infrastructures like boreholes, electricity and good roads; the bad roads are a major challenge especially during rainy seasons.

Some of the issues involved in poor access to pre-school education include the under listed:

Alomo- Rijo in Ado LGA- The community is located 12 kilometers from the LG headquarters on an un-tarred road that is inaccessible during the rainy seasons due to the river-rine trends that surrounds the community. The nearest school to Aloma-Rijo community is LGEA Uneje Rijo, which is 4 kilometers away from the community. Few parents, who understand the importance of education make efforts to take their children with motorcycle every morning to the nearest school, some keep their children with relations and friends in other nearby towns in order to ensure that their children benefit from education. Most of these children, especially girls experience abuse, exploitation by their caregivers , they are being raped, and affected with teenage pregnancy; they are also engaged in excessive household chores and farm work that prevents them from learning.

Mbaifu- Logo in Logo LGA of Benue State: It is located 35 kilometers from Ugba the LG headquarters on an un-tarred road that has difficult terrain especially during the rainy season. The settlement has no primary school. The nearest primary school is about 7 kilometers. The literacy level in the community is low especially amongst women and girls.

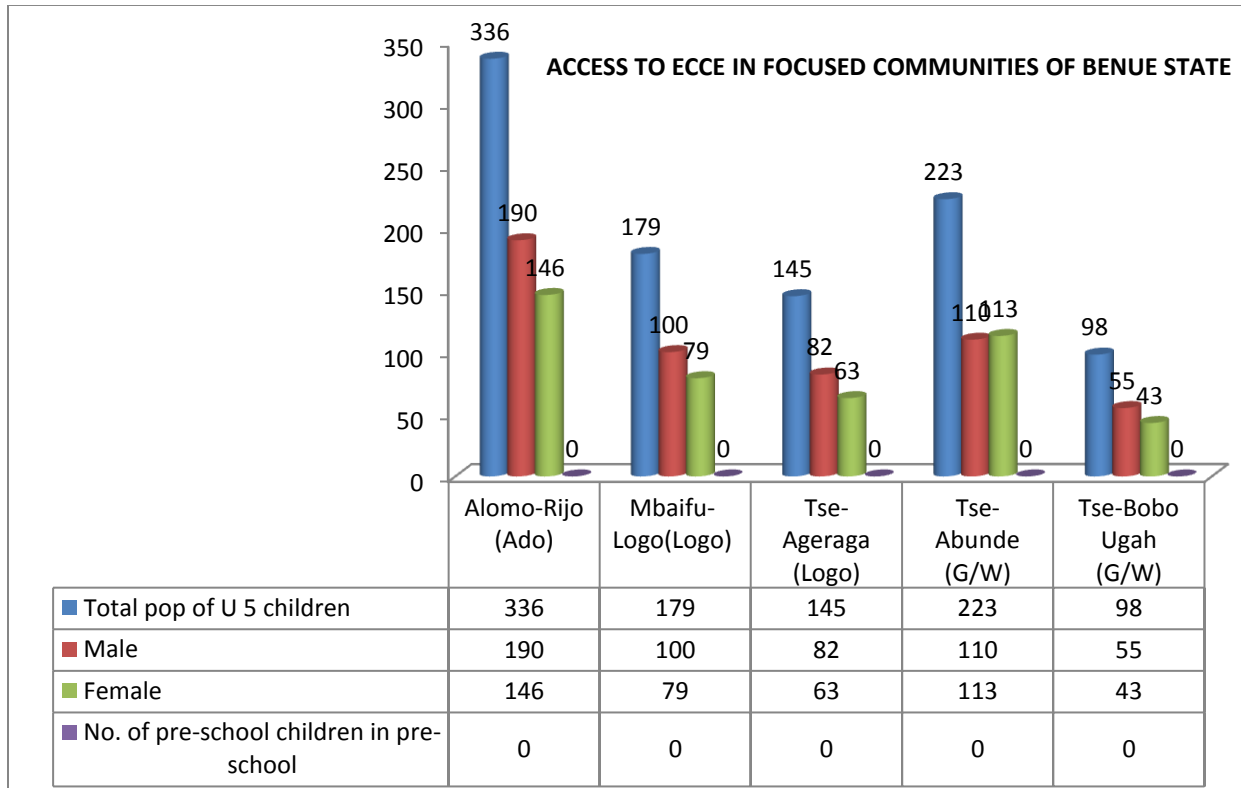
Tse-Ageraga, Logo LGA: The community is located 47 km from the Local Government headquarters. It is located in the interior part of the Local Government Area which makes it a hard- to -reach area. Children are seen wandering in the community without any support.

Abunde, Mbalosu- Mbapa, Gwer-West LGA:

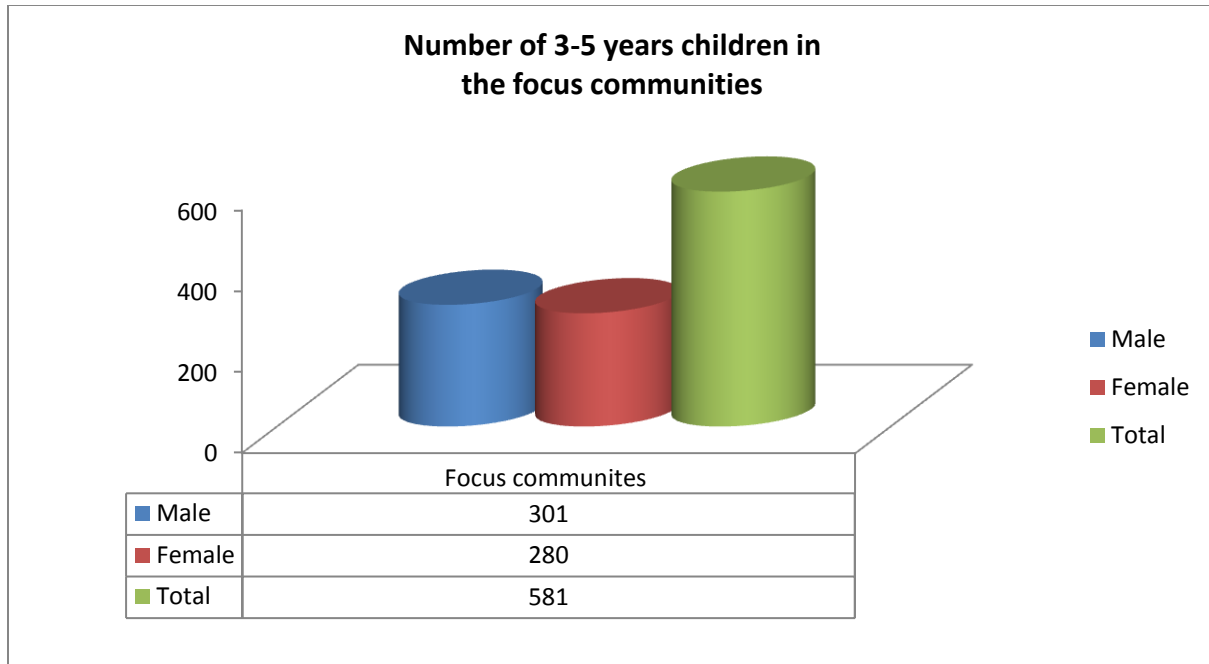
The distance is 32 kilometers from Naka the capital of the Local Government. The settlement has existed for over 100 years, but due to its disadvantaged location as well as lack of influential inhabitants, it remains what could be termed a small Tiv village without infrastructural development. Early marriage is a prominent feature in the community as well as low literacy of level the girl child.

Tse-Bobo-Ugah, Mbakombor in Gwer-West LGA

Tse-Bobo is located about 35 kilometers from Naka, the capital of Gwer-West Local Government Area of Benue State.

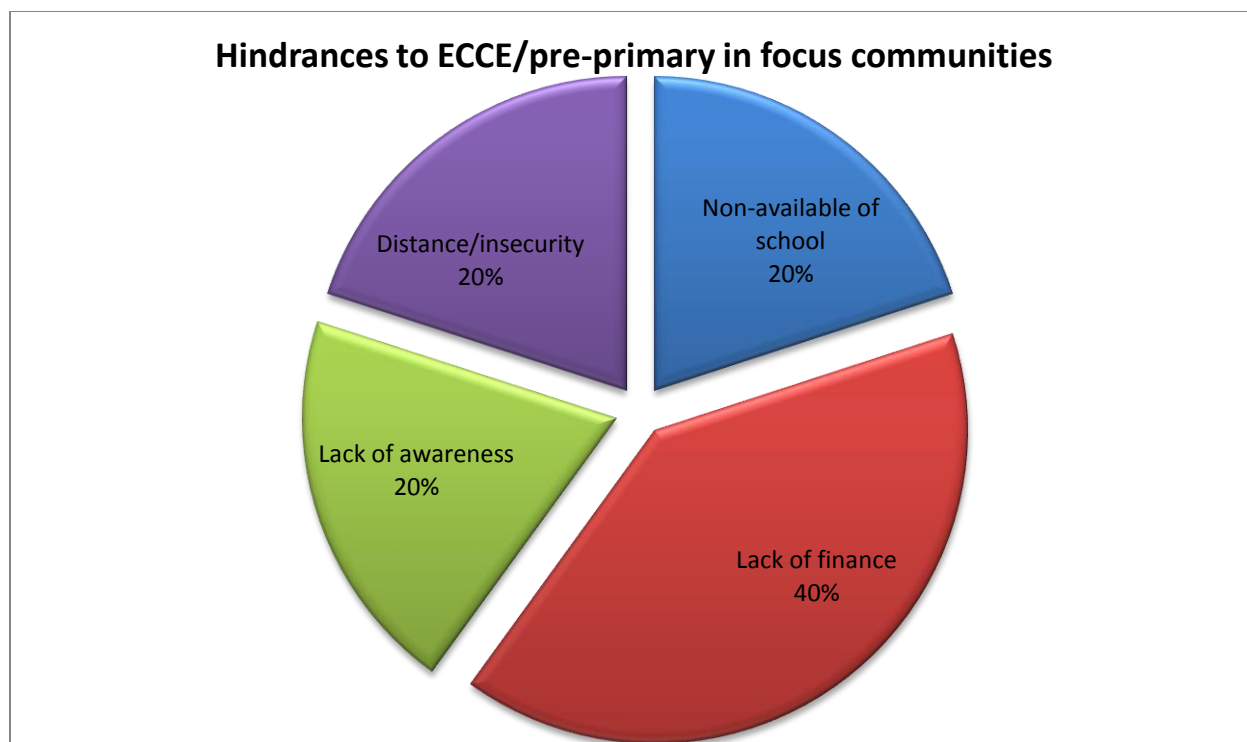


Graph 1: showing access to ECCE in focus communities



Graph 2: Estimated number of 3-5 years by sex in the focus communities.

Following discussion with the parents and community members revealed some of the barrier militating against children attending pre-school in the communities, they include the fact that very few parents know the importance of pre-school development and send their children to near-by communities to attend pre-school centers. More so 40% of parents in the focus communities could not send their children to school because of the high fees, 20% due to inadequate awareness on the importance of pre-primary education, insecurity due to constant communal crisis that put children at risk especially young children and low literacy of parents/caregivers, 20% due to far distance from the community to the nearest pre-primary school coupled with the fact that all the communities are located in hard- to- reach rural communities with poor road networks, the children are force to stay at home. Therefore, most children are left wandering in the community while their parents are at work with nobody to care for them. This situation is similar to most rural communities in the Benue state.



Hindrances	Percentage
Non-availability of school	20%
Lack of finance	40%
Lack of awareness	20%
Distance/insecurity	20%

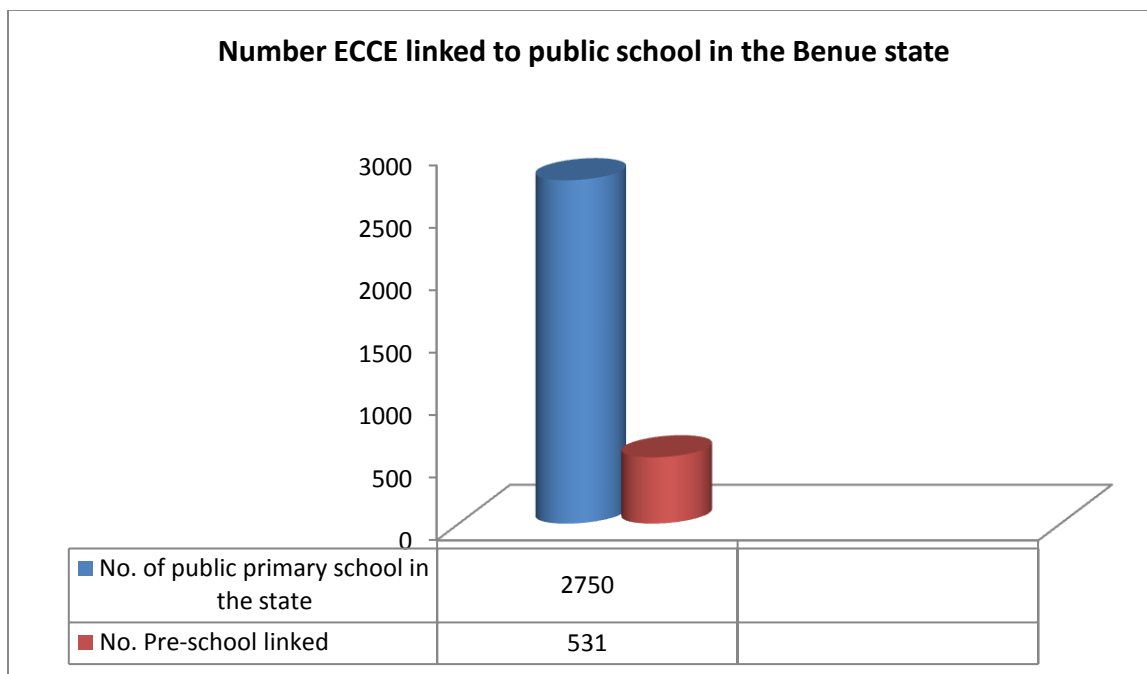
Chart 1: percentages of hindrances to ECCE/pre-primary.

The discussion with households also revealed that cultural practices affects women and children in all the communities, most women marry early and have children too soon and often, without adequate spacing thereby increasing the risk of mortality from pregnancy related causes. Polygamy is a prevalent practice in all the communities that increases the number of children and family composition. On the average, the household size is about 8 – 10 members with inadequate income to fend for the needs of the family. This might affect adequate means of livelihood that might reduce optimal child care practices. The setting is such that each farming family requires many farmlands, the greater the number of children in the traditional farming families the greater the farm outputs.

Several Researches indicates that parents who have fewer children are more patient and less primitive. They have more time to devote to each child’s activities, schoolwork and other special

needs. The findings also are in agreement with the fact that children who grow up in small families are healthier, have somewhat higher intelligence test scores, do better in schools and attain higher levels of education (Blake, 1989; Grant, 1994; Powell & steel 1993).

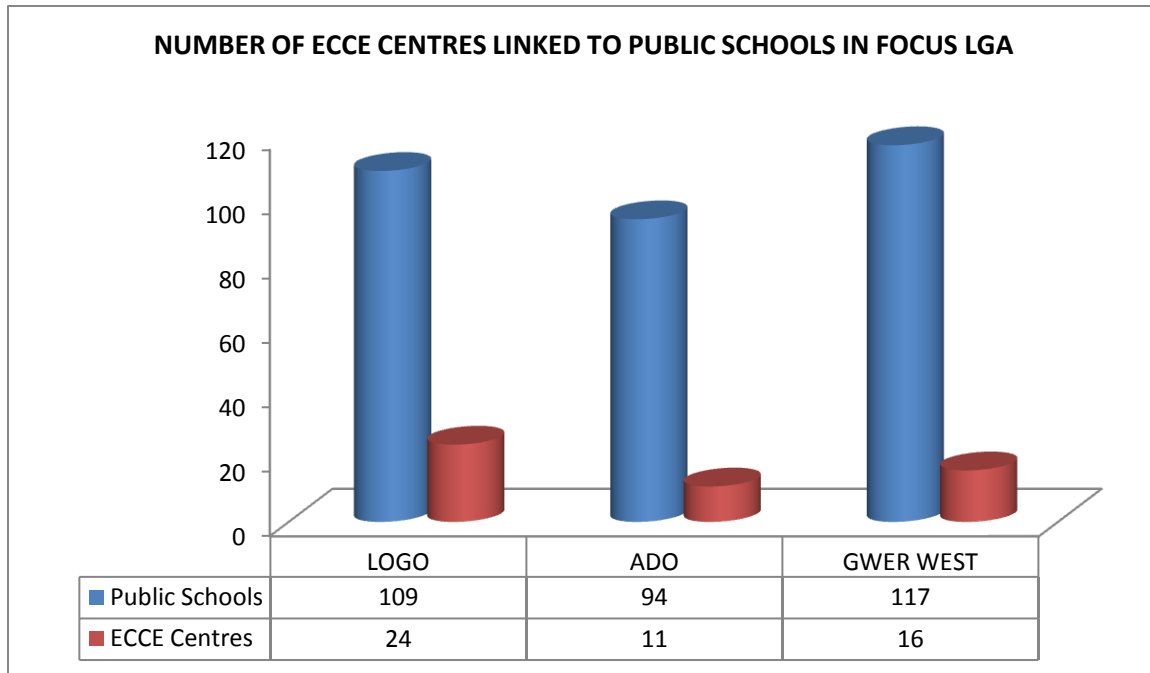
Despite the Federal Ministry of Education directives that pre-schools be established alongside existing primary schools and the encouraging of both community and private efforts in the provision of pre-primary education, Benue State is still lagging behind. Currently in Benue state only 25 % of pre-primary schools are linked to public schools in the state due to a number of inequality factors. Below is a chart showing the number of public schools and number of ECCE linkage.



Graph 4: Number of ECCE/pre-primary school attached to public schools in the state.

Number ECCE linked to public school in the focus LGA

The data shows only 23% of public primary school in the focus LGA are linked to pre-primary. Most pre-school linkage are sited in urban and semi-urban area of the state, rural communities are completely sidelined from the intervention. Most of the children who live in rural communities, children who are physically challenged and are HIV positive are often excluded from accessing pre-school services. This indicates that pre-school linkages are not on course in the public schools in the state. The survey also revealed that there are no primary schools and other basic education institutions in the focus communities and in most rural communities.



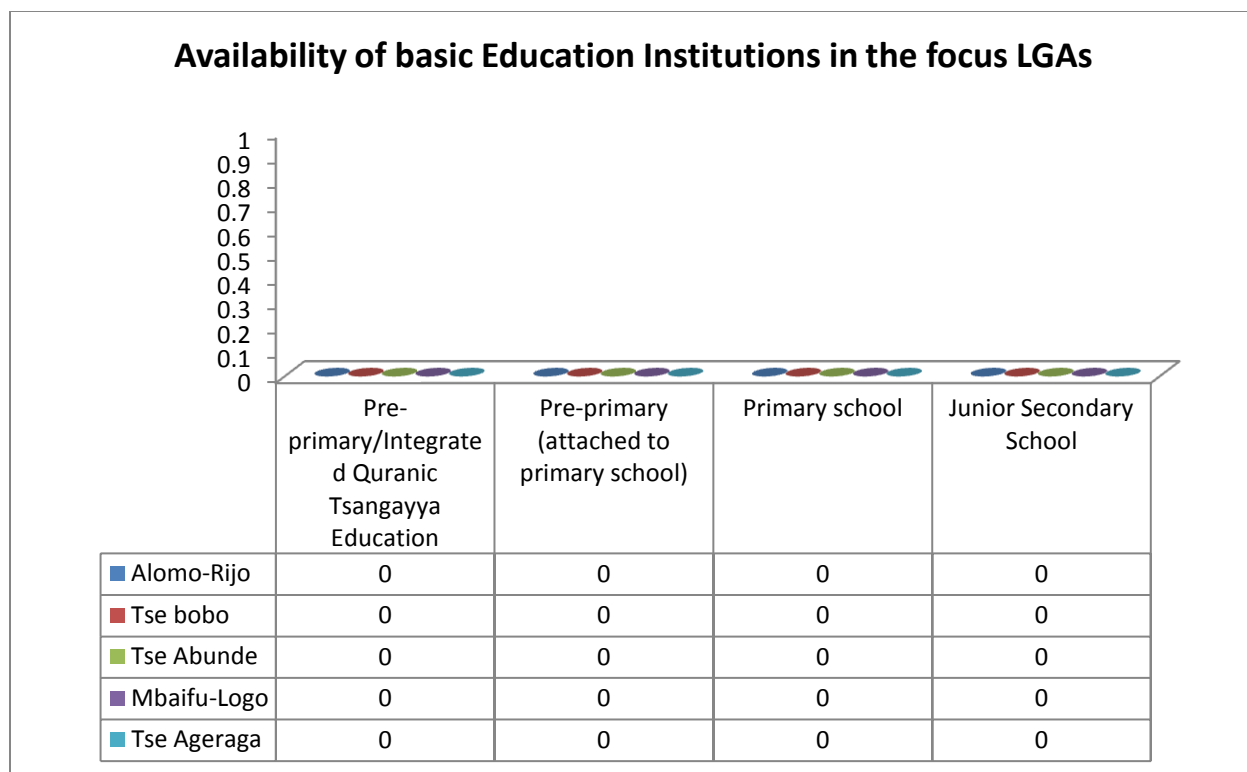
Graph 5: Number of ECCE linked to public school in the focus LGA

Ado LGA- Only about 11.7% public schools are linked with ECCDE in the LGA

Logo LGA- only about 22% public schools are linked to ECCDE in the LGA

Gwer West LGA- only about 13.7% public schools are linked to ECCDE in the LGA

Most of the linkages are in urban and semi-urban communities.



Graph 6: Available basic education institution in the focus communities

Teachers in the state are not willing to work in the rural communities due to poor infrastructural facilities. This shows low articulation/perception of government directives by Benue State Government. Promoting such linkages will enable government to have more access, quality and cost effectiveness, which is relevant to EFA goal 1 of promoting access to education and Universal Basic Education, and 2015 marks the dead line for achieving the goal.

Quality

Quality shows the effectiveness of any program, it looks at what makes CBECCE/pre-primary program work for the people who take part in them and for the communities who are intended to be enriched by them. The figure for enrolment does not tell us what type of education children are receiving once they arrive in school. The need to ensure quality education has long been included in international treaties, it was emphasized in Jomtien World conference on education in 1990 and one of the six EFA goals agreed in Dakar in Senegal in 2000. This also means access without quality doesn't produce education: Measurement for quality must include the key elements agreed for quality ECCE/Pre-primary; they include trained teachers, quality learning environment, whether at home or center level, relevant curriculum.

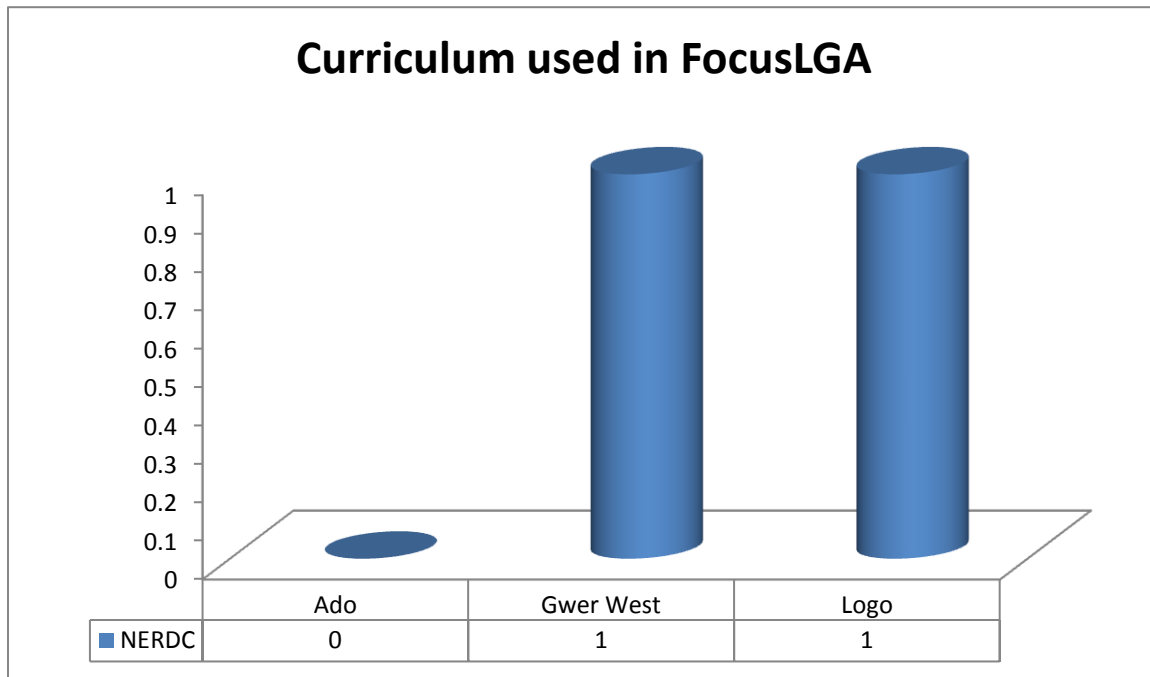
Indicators set to measure progress in quality of CBECCE/Pre-primary are percentage of ECCE teachers/ caregivers with minimum NCE Qualification, number of ECCE teachers/caregivers, teacher pupils ratio, type of learning facilities, availability of stimulation and/play material in pre-primary schools, and availability of instructional materials were used to solicit information of quality of ECCE delivery. Other areas that were germane touched on water and environmental sanitation, health care services, birth registration and low child's learning. These are supported at home.

The survey indicates that 100% under 5 year old children in the 5 focus communities do not have access to any form of pre- primary education, with poor quality of care at the household and community level due to low knowledge and skills of caregivers, in terms of nutrition, health, psycho-social support, environmental supports, love and nurturing, the opportunity to play explore learn, interact with materials, solve problem and participate in their communities. All these are supposed to be met simultaneously. However, the survey looks at community level and household care that will promote quality practices. And also look at the number and qualification of teachers in LGA of intervention.

Curriculum used:

The ECCE curriculum in Nigeria has been developed by NERDC to be used by all stakeholders committed to the education of children 0-5 years. It is developed to allow every Nigerian child to enjoy the right to development, whether at home, informal or semi formal pre-school setting. The

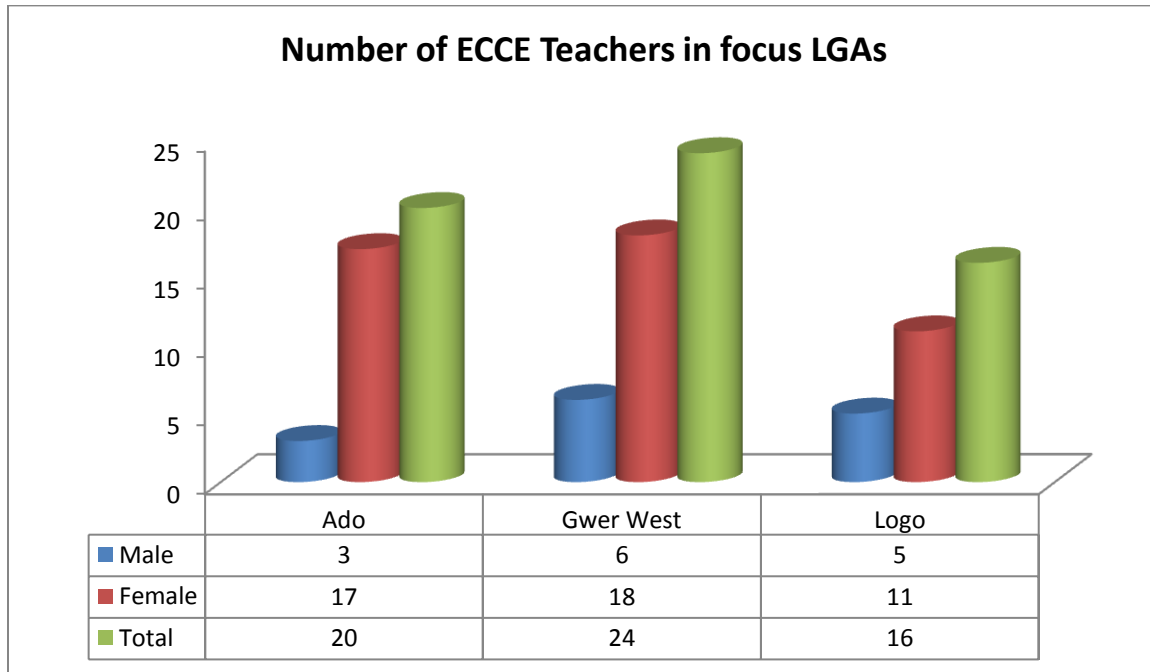
NERDC curriculum addresses the stages of development and the needs of the child.



Graph 7: Type of curriculum used in focused LGA

Findings of the survey revealed that in Benue state the curriculum is available in the focus LGEA office of Logo and Gwer west LGA but is not being used in the ECCE centers. Discussions with the ECCE desk officers in the LG revealed that the caregivers/teachers lack skills and capacity to implement. Ado LGA has never seen the curriculum, the ECCDE centers are using children books as a guide to teach in ECCE classes. The chart bellow shows the findings of curriculum used in the focus LGA.

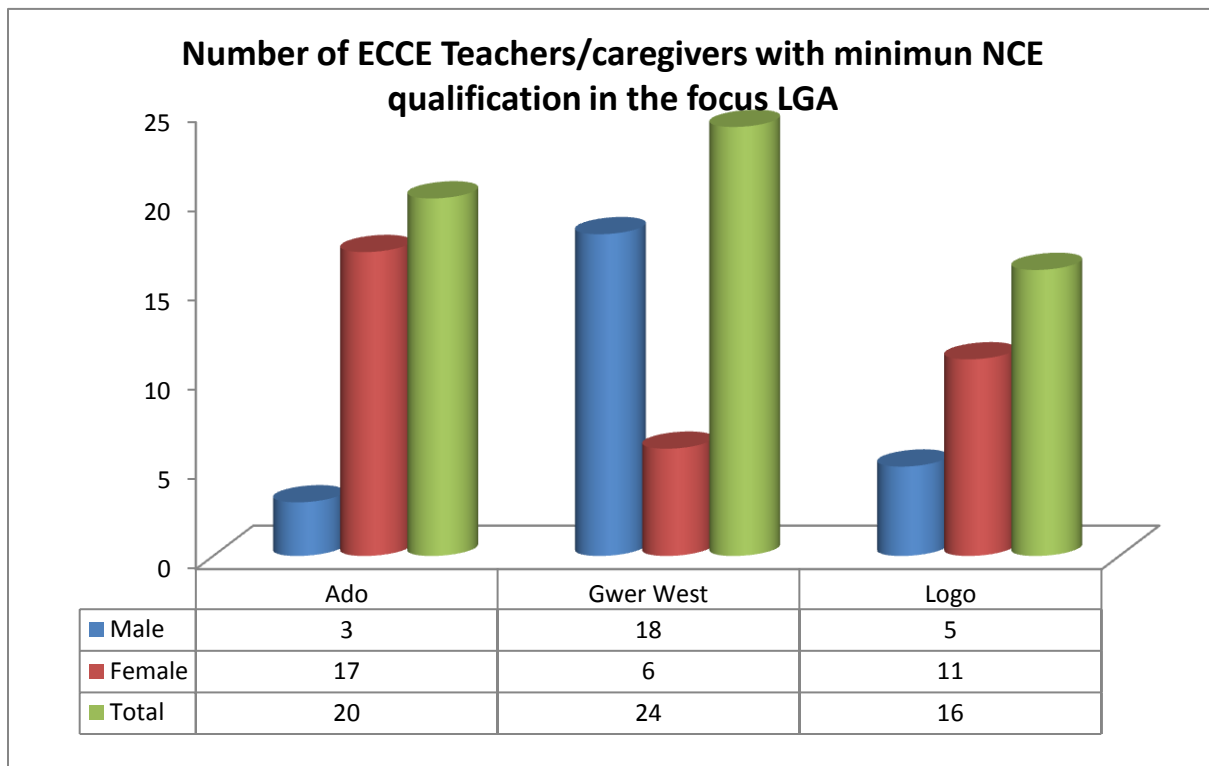
Number of teachers in focus communities



Graph 8: Number of ECCE teachers in the focus LGA

Teachers with minimum NCE qualification in the focus LGA

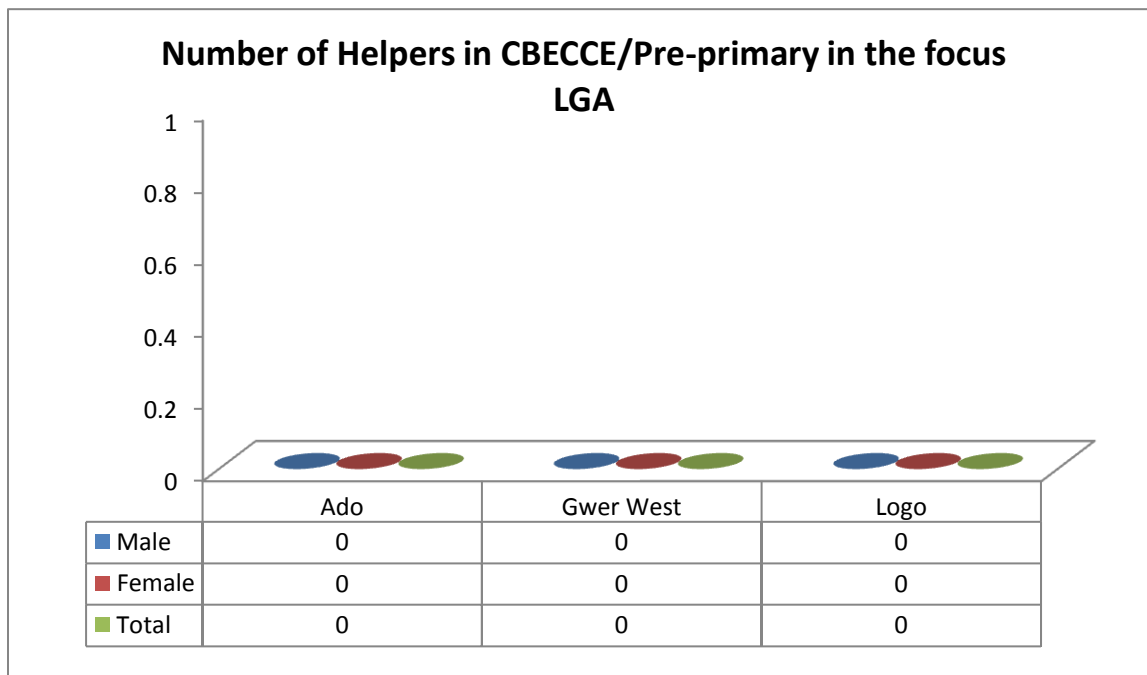
It is important to also note that quality is affected by the motivation and training of teachers/caregivers. Currently in Benue state 100% of the teachers attached to ECCE centers are NCE teachers, which show Benue state is in line with the directives. However, only very few caregivers who have been trained in toy making lack resources to put the training into practice. The teachers are not sufficient number per school; all the ECCE centers have just one NCE teachers per class without a helper, which is inadequate. The constant and prolong teachers strike in the state has also affected their morale and therefore affects their performance.



Graph 9: Number of teachers/caregivers with minimum NCE qualification in the focus LGA

Numbers of helpers in the focus LGA

There are no helpers in all the CBECCE/Pre-primary in the focus LGA, this can also affect quality care. Research evidence has proven that children thrive better when they have multiple caregivers. Having only one caregiver/teacher in ECCE center can affect quality of support provided to children.



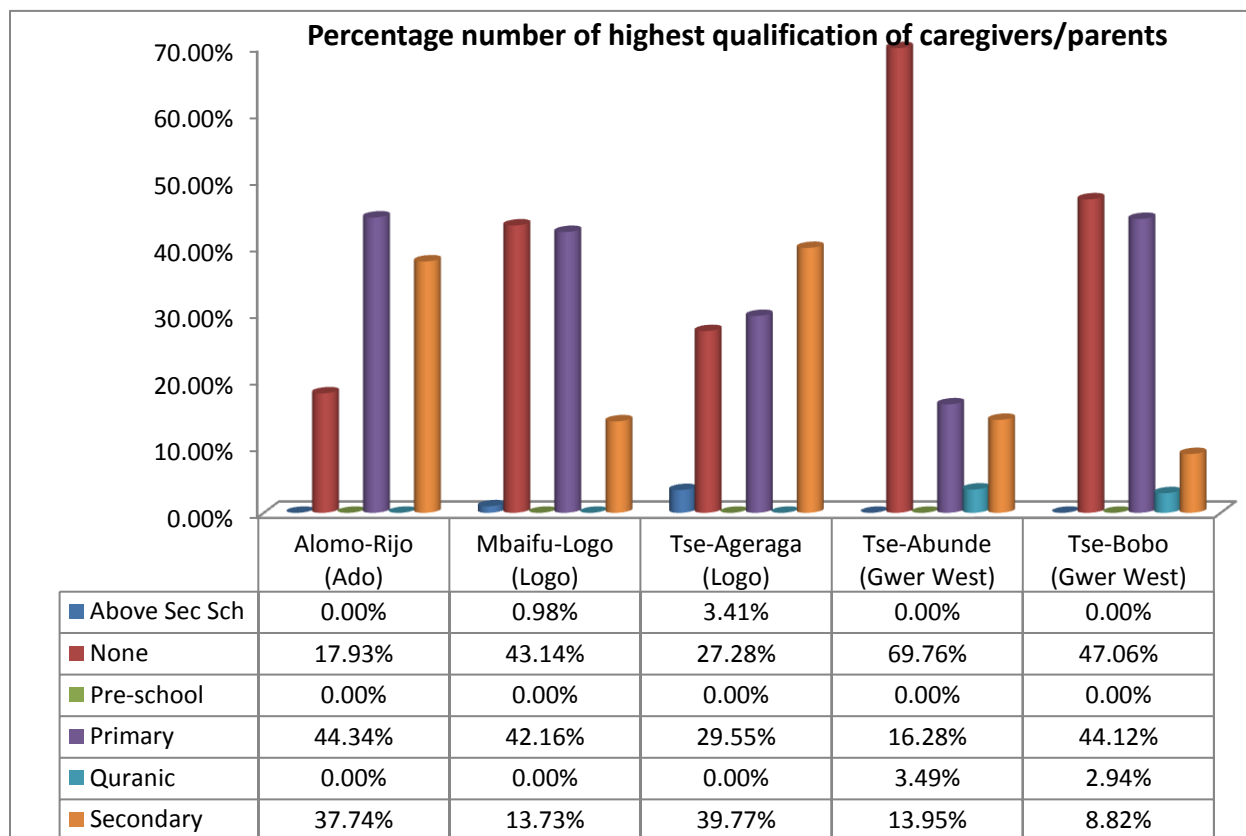
Graph 10: Number of helpers in CBECCE/Pre-primary in focus LGA

Caregivers/parents qualification

Young children are better prepared for school when their caregivers/parents are educated. The amount of formal education is the strongest predictor for ability to engage children in developmentally appropriate activities and positive interaction that better prepare them for school (educational journal of education science vol.1 issue 3 2013).

The survey report indicates that most parents/caregivers have not attended any form of education; the educational level of households varied from one community to another, the

dominant education completed is by head of households and caregivers is primary school in most communities. The educational qualification of parents is highlighted and discuss below community by community:



Graph 11: Percentage of highest qualification of caregivers/parents

Alomo-Rijo- 18% of the household interviewed did not attend any formal school, 44% attended primary school and less than 40% completed their secondary school.

Mbaifu-Logo- 43% of the households have not been to any formal schooling, 42% completed primary school, only 13% completed secondary school and less than 1% had above secondary school qualification. Literacy level is very low in the community especially amongst female.

Tse-Ageraga- 27% of the household have not attended any form of schooling, 30% completed primary school, 39% completed secondary school, and 3% have above secondary school qualification.

Tse-Abunde- 69% did not attend any form of schooling, 16% completed primary school, 14% completed secondary school, and none did above secondary school. Literacy level in this community is very low.

Tse-Bobo-47 % did not attend any form of education, 42% completed primary school, 13% completed secondary school and none attended secondary school. Literacy level in this community is quite low especially among females.

Engage with children U 5 in learning activities at household level

It is well recognized that a period of rapid brain development occurs in the first 3-4 years of life, and the quality of home care is the major determinant of the child's development during this period. In this context adult activities with children, presence of books in the home for the child and the condition of care are important of quality of home care (MICS 2011).

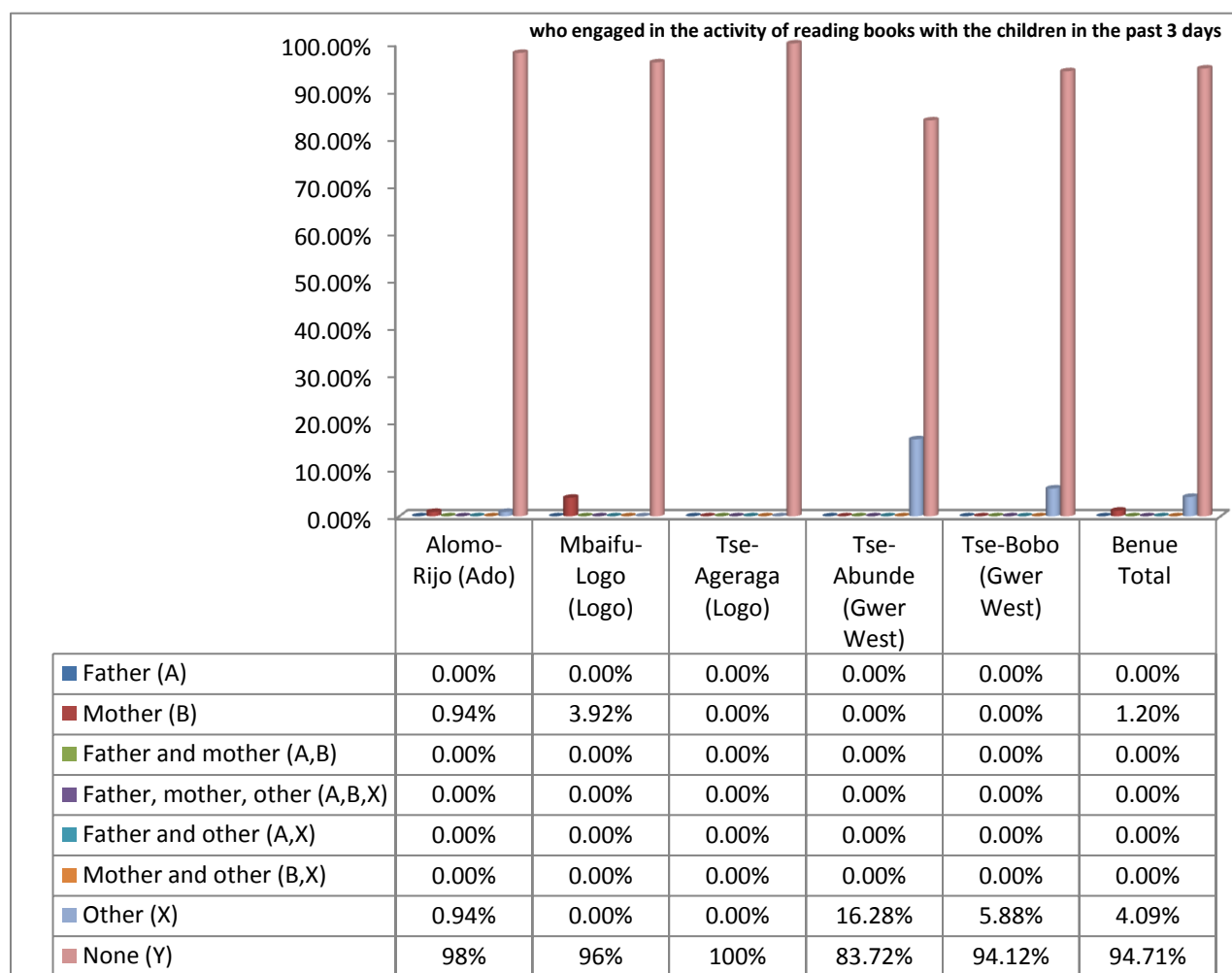
In the survey report information were gathered that support early learning at home level. These includes the involvement of adults/caregivers in the following activities: engaged in activity of reading books with the children, telling stories, sing songs, taking children outside the home, and playing with children.

The survey report indicate that very few caregivers and other household members engaged in learning activities at household level with U 5 children. And again the report also revealed that men and fathers involvement is insignificant in engaging with children in all the communities.

During discussion it was learnt that socialization of children from birth to puberty is gender specific. Women are responsible for caring for children 0-5 years irrespective of sex, while the fathers and other male family members take the responsibility of socializing children from six when he reaches the age of 6 years and continue until adulthood. This report shows gender inequalities in child upbringing in the communities and how girls are at a particular disadvantage right from the earliest years and how they are socialized to submit to others and are kept away from school to care for their younger siblings.

This means women are left with the responsibility of bringing up children of pre-school. Women in the focus communities are carrying an increasing share of financial responsibility for their children 0-5 years in addition to performing the traditional female role of house and farm work.

Engaged in activities of reading books with children



Graph 12: percentage of who engaged in the activities of reading books with the children in the past 3 days preceding the survey

Alomo- Rijo- during the 3 days preceding the survey, only 0.94% of mothers and 0.94% of other members of the families engaged in reading books with children 0-5 years. Majority of other adults did not.

Mbaifu-Logo- only 3.94% of mothers engaged in activities of reading books with children and 96% of the respondents did not engaged with anyone.

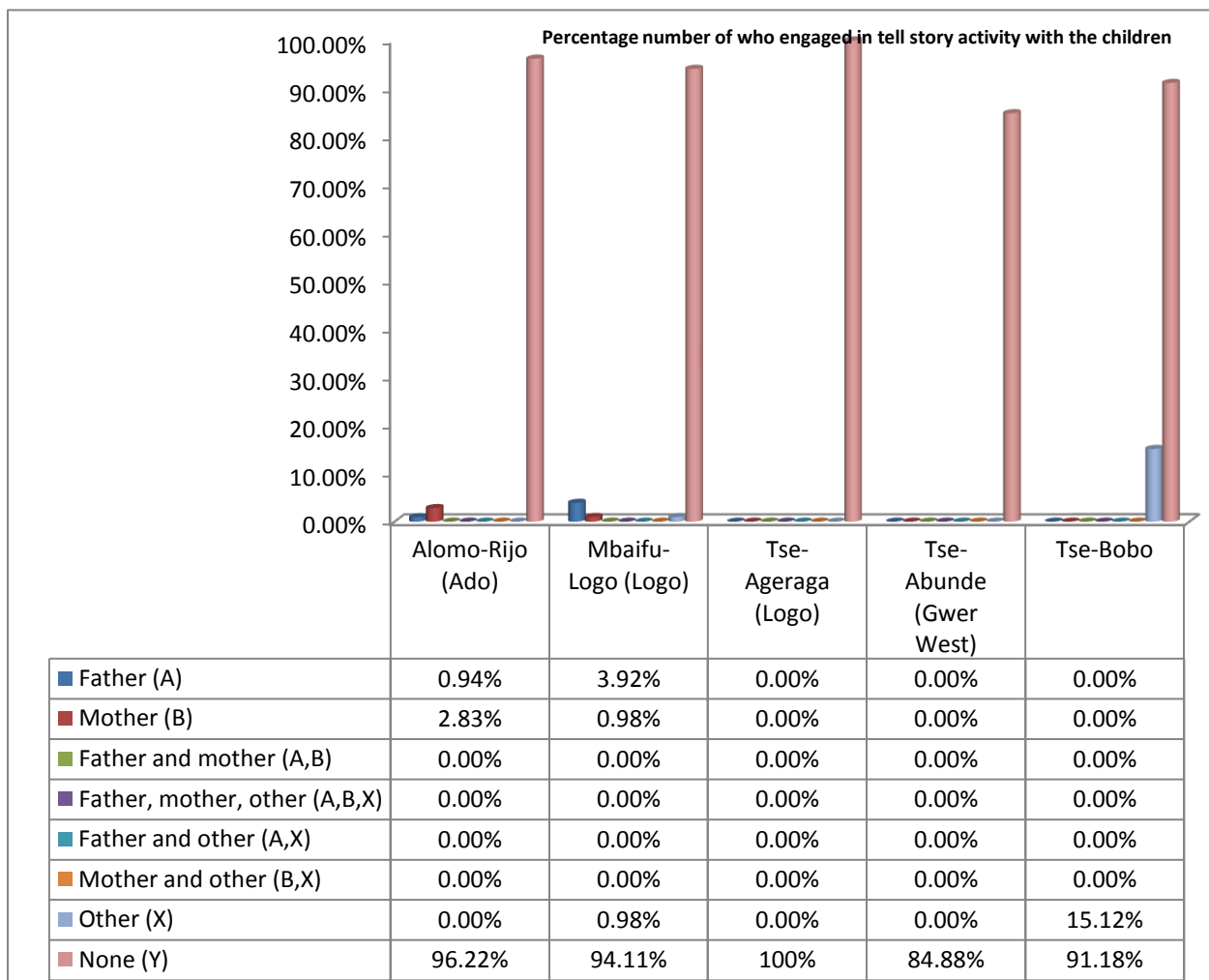
Tse-Ageraga- 100% of the respondent did not engaged in activities of reading books with children under 5 years old.

Tse-Abunde. Only 16.28% of other members of the families engaged in activities of reading books with children under 5 years old, 83.72% of other adults did not engage anyone.

Tse-Bobo- only 5.88% of other members of the family engaged in the activity of reading books, and 94.71% did not engage with anyone.

Tell story:

Children learn rules and regulations about life and their environments through stories. Therefore it is important that story telling is used as one of the method of helping children to learn at home and in ECCDE centre. It is very clear in the survey that parents and caregivers do not tell story to children.



Graph 13: percentage of who engaged in tell story activity with the children in the past 3 days preceding the survey

Sing songs

Evidence from research revealed that children love singing that song makes learning easier and help young children to remember. Again, song stimulates their interest. As caregivers and parents it is important that activities like singing are used daily at home and center level. This is an important indicator for quality of home care. The findings of the survey indicate that most of the adults in the households did not engage in sing song with the children during the 3 days preceding the survey, although father’s involvement in sing song in most of the communities is less that 4%. This shows a lot improvement compare to other adults. The result below shows the percentage of adult that engaged in sing song with children in the focus communities:

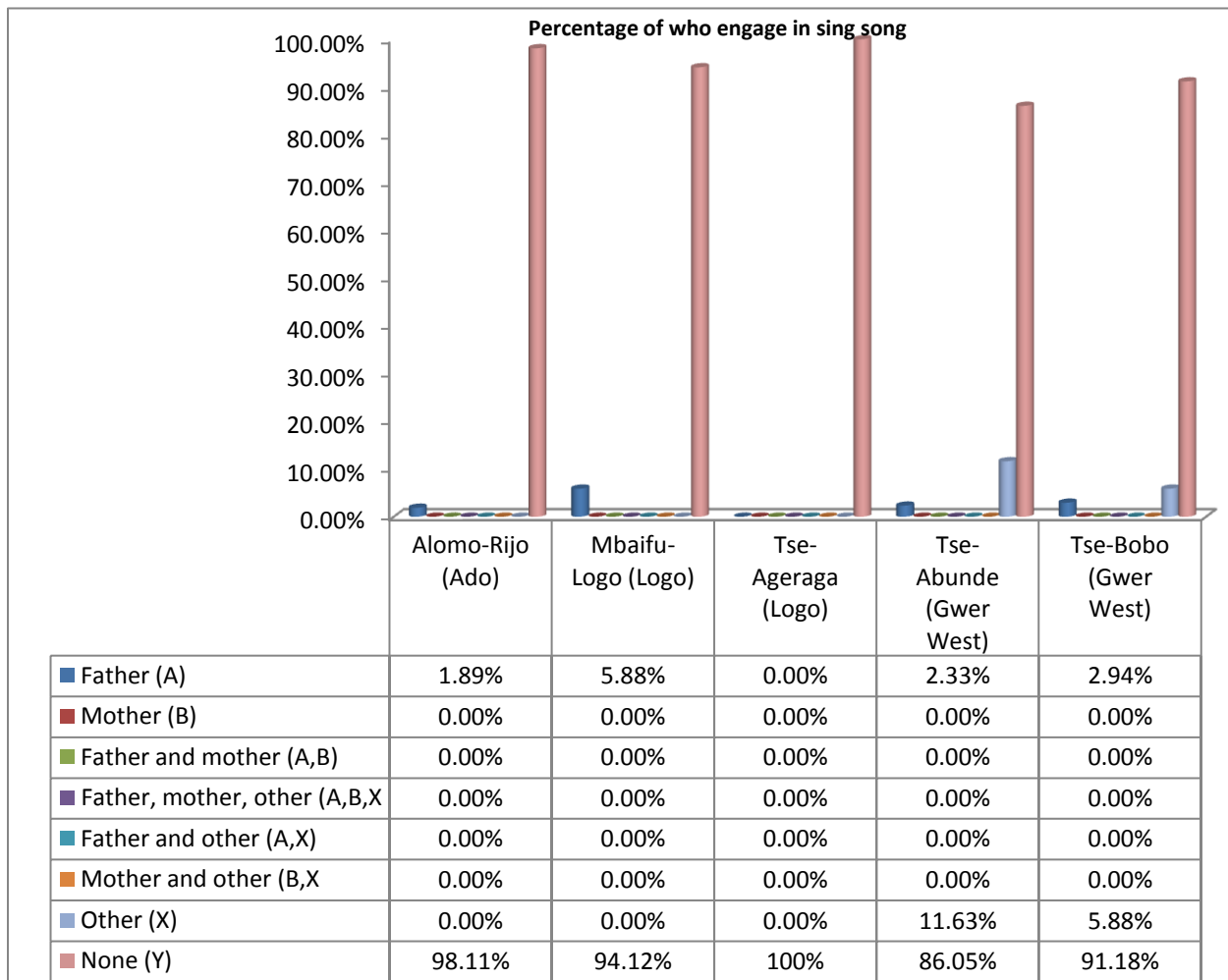


Chart 14: percentage of who engaged in sing song activity with the children in the past 3 days preceding the survey

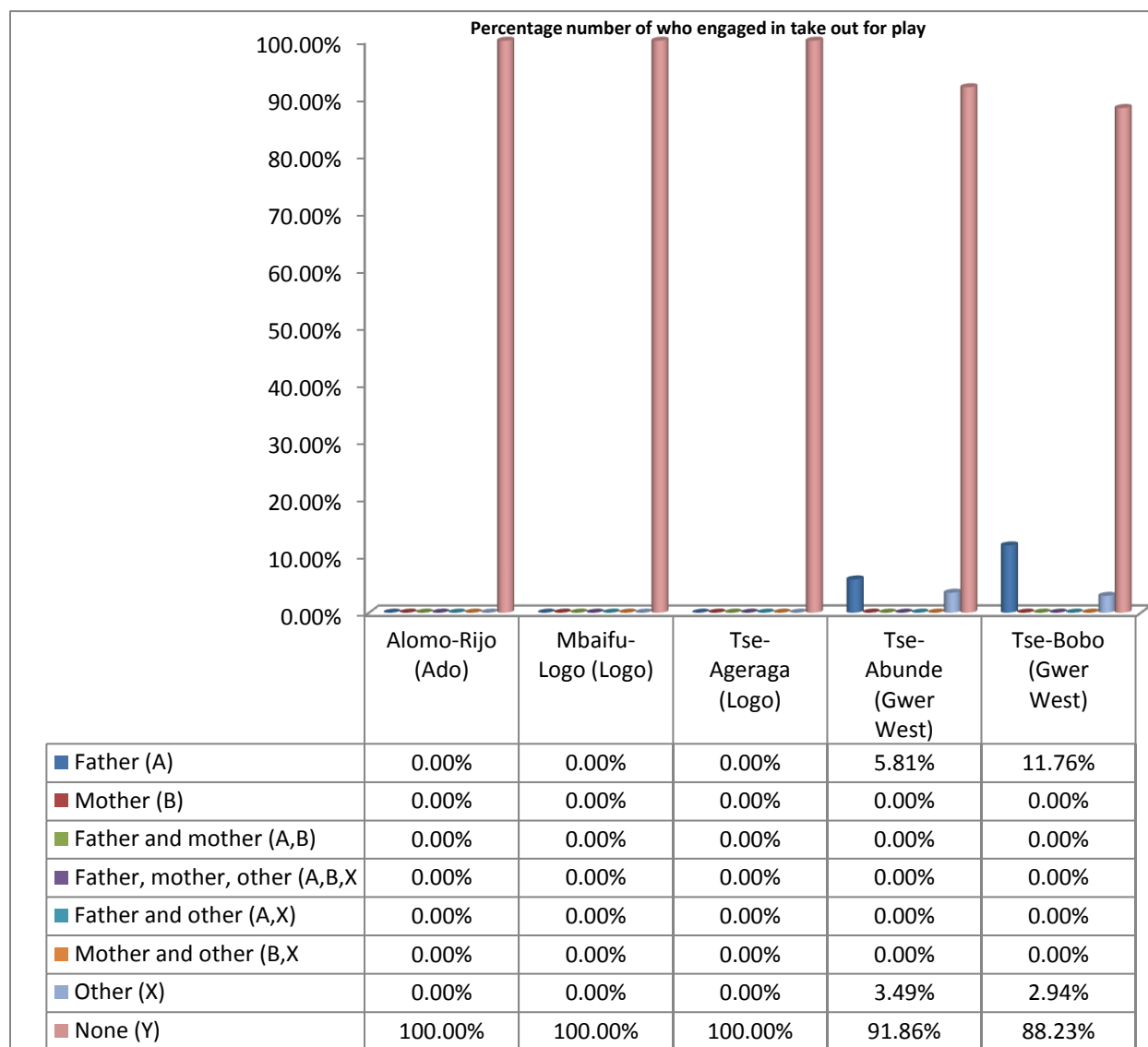
Alomo-Rijo- only 1.89% of fathers engaged with children in sing song with children.

Mbaifu-Logo-only 5.88% of fathers engaged with children in sing song

Tse-Ageraga- no adult engaged with children in during the 3 days preceding the survey

Tse-Abunde- 2.33% fathers and 11% of other adults engaged in sing song

Tse-Bobo- 2.94% fathers and 5.88% of other adults engaged in sing song

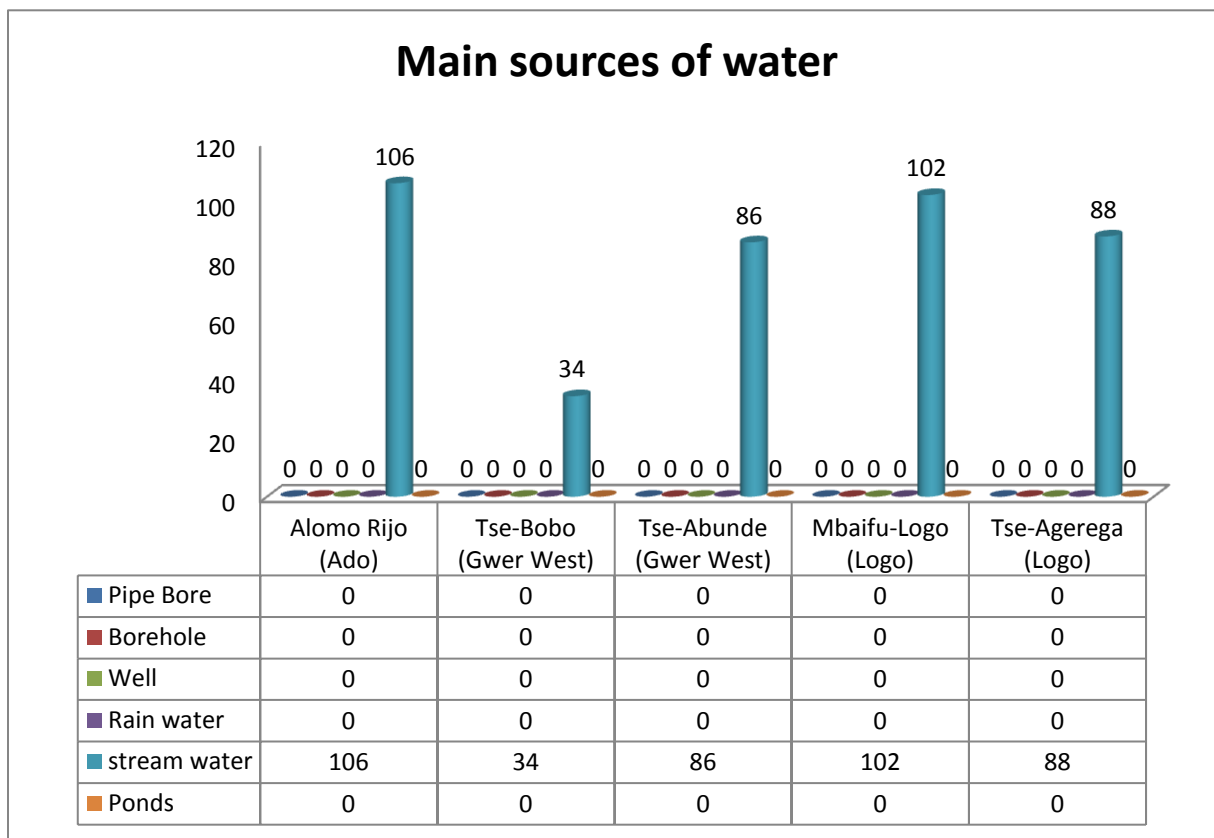


Graph 15: percentage of who engaged in take out for play activity with the children in the past 3 days preceding the survey

Environmental Water and sanitation

Access to improved water supply and sanitation has considerable health and economic benefits to household and individual. Findings from health and nutrition survey in Nigeria (2013) states

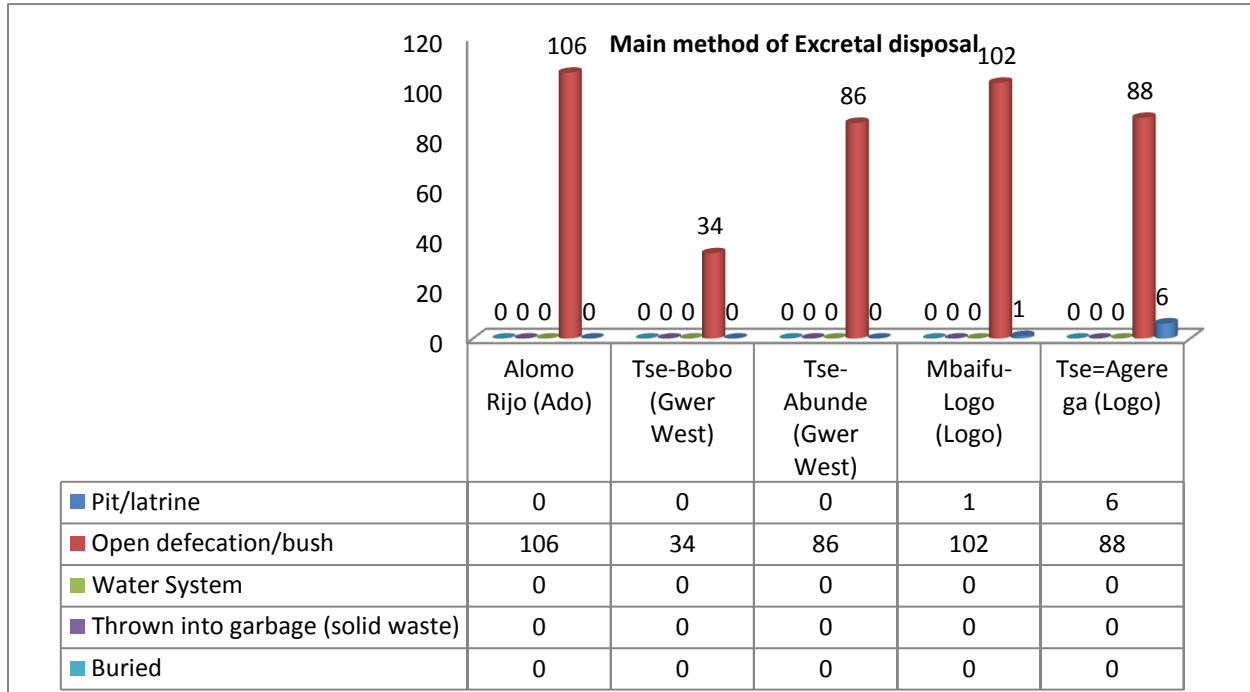
that diarrhea accounts for 9 percent of death of children under 5 globally, which makes it the second leading cause of death among children U 5 years next to pneumonia. The report further states that diarrhoea can be prevented by either reduce a child’s exposure to diarrhea causing pathogens (provision of immunization, improving access to safe drinking water and improving sanitation).



Graph 16: type of main source of water in the focus communities

Overall, 100% of the communities get their household water from the river and stream. Members of the communities do not have access directly to safe water. This means children U 5 years in the focus communities are exposed to water related diseases such as diarrhea, and typhoid.

Excretal disposal



Graph 17: main method of Excretal Disposal in the focus communities

100% of the community members practice open defecation, few of the households in Mbaifu-Logo and Tse-Ageraga have pit latrine but do not use them and have poor understanding of good hygiene.

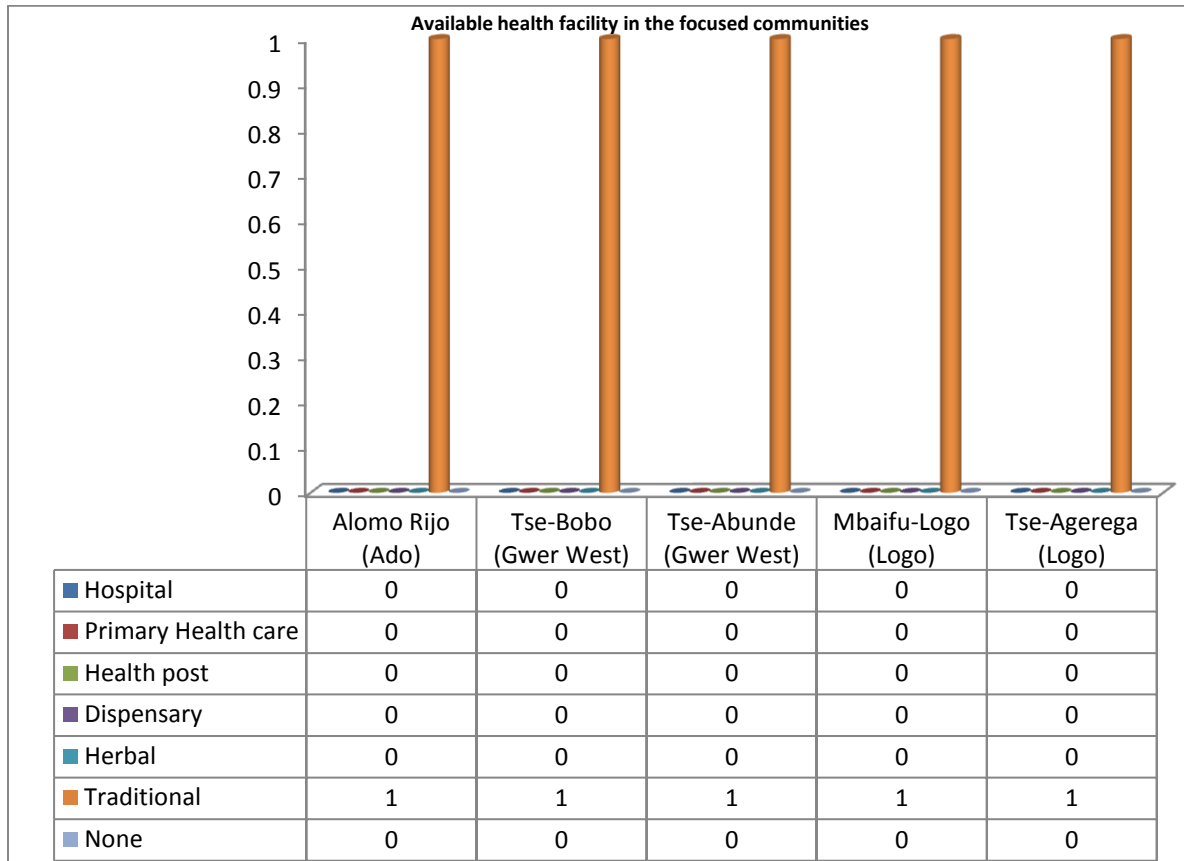
Refuse disposal

100% disposed their refuse in the compound/neighborhood. The improper garbage disposition is a very common practice in the entire communities. The entire household visited did not have hand washing facilities; most of the household practice one container system of hand washing.

Health care services

In this report unavailability of health facilities affects the 5 communities. On the average the distance to the nearest health clinic is about 10 kilometers; the discussion with the households revealed that most mothers are delivered of babies at home and most deliveries are not at the

instance of trained attendants. The use of traditional herbs for treating diseases, use of expired drugs; self medication is a common practice in the focus communities. This type of situation reduces the child’s right to survival. The survey report revealed the following:



Graph 18: Available health facilities in the focused communities

Availability of books and play materials at household level

According to the latest research, early exposure to books at home or center level can be an important component of a child's development, and will provide a solid foundation for the expansion of reading skills. Even infants can benefit from being read to, as they gain valuable practice with the many aspects of language and reading. In Nigeria only about 6% of children aged 0-59 months are living in households where at least 3 children's books are present, urban children appear to have more access to children's books than those living in the rural households.

The survey report revealed that all most all the households do not have children books at household level. This lack of books may be attributed to ignorance and poverty at the household level.

Community participation/government/development partners/NGO

Sustaining the benefits of any CBECCE/pre-primary intervention depends upon the buy-in from caregivers/parent, Local Government Authorities and community leaders. Through volunteer work, communities can play an important role in ensuring the effective management of CBECCE/pre-primary centers. Community members can be involved in activities such as, provision of land, supervision, cooking, taking active responsibility in terms of providing funds, material support, in-kind support, mobilizing community members to address childhood needs through awareness building activities that incorporate better nutrition practices, hygiene and safe water handling etc.

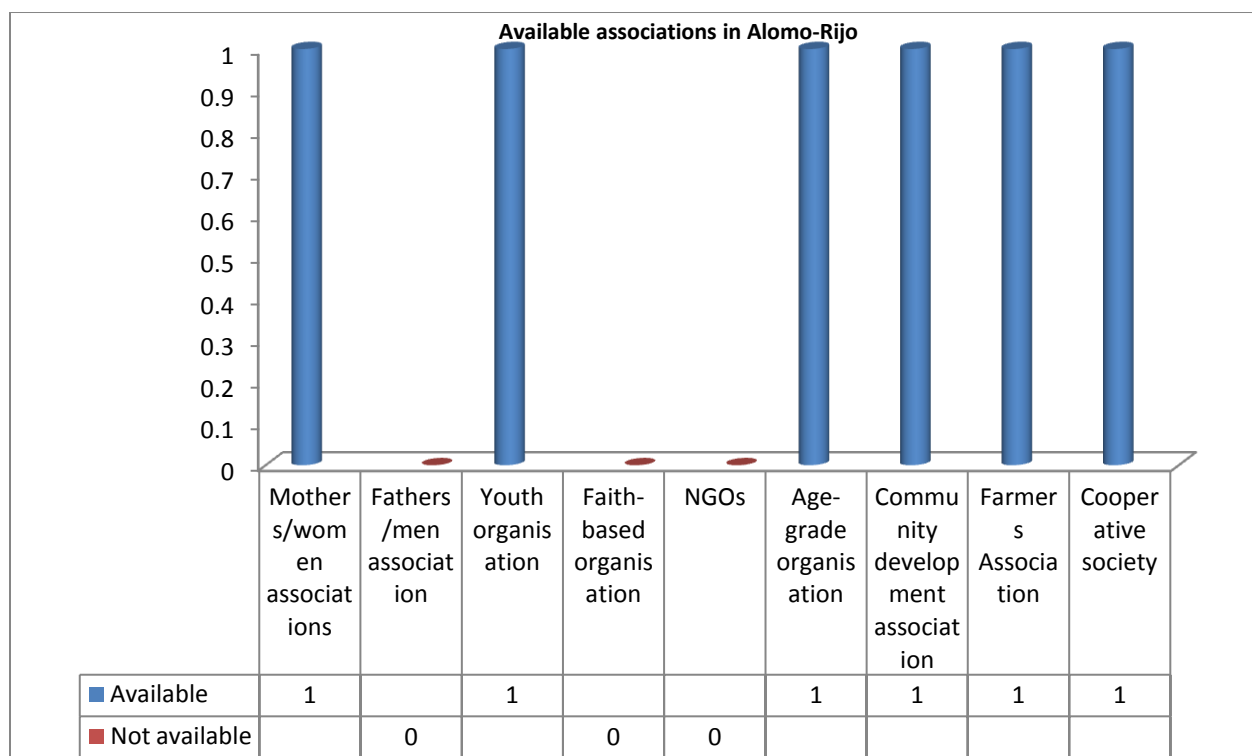
For sustainability of CBECC/pre-primary, it is important that the program should build on strengths of the community, these include: traditional family units and social structure that can be mobilized to take actions on children well being.

Evidence from research shows that community participation increases the effectiveness of most ECCE programs. Community participation also allows extension of services beyond what could be possible using only the budget and resources of the public sector.

Again, any improvement of CDECCE/Pre-primary at the community level will be short –lived without accompanying changes in state wide policies, laws, budgets and state action plans, active

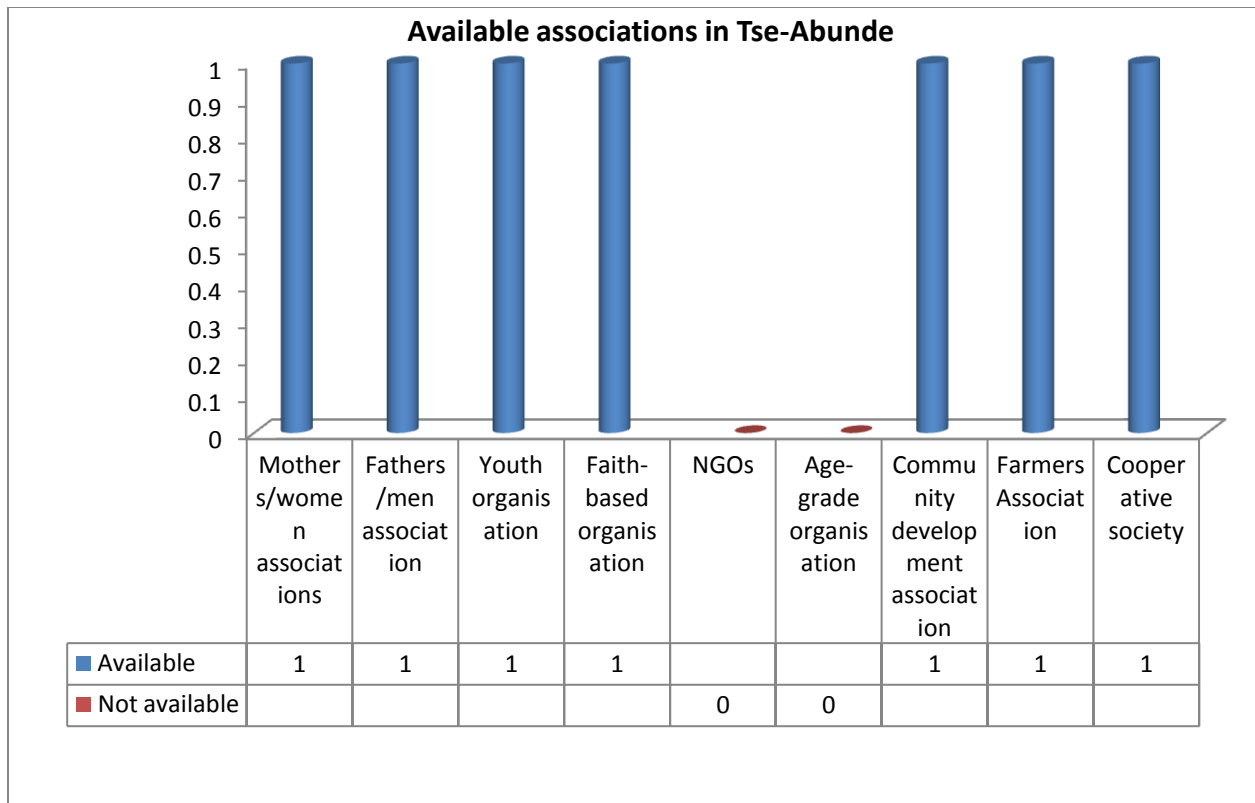
and robust Civil Society involvement that is active in issues affecting young children. Indicators selected to measure progress on participation of stakeholders are number of association existing in the community (fathers, mothers/youth), women/CBOs participating in CBECC/Pre-primary activities in the community, community mobilization for immunization of children U-5, community participation in enrolment drive, percentage of state education budget allocated and release to ECCE, government support to CBECC (teacher deployment, provision of classroom etc), availability of IECDC coordination body at state and LGA level, and type of support for ECD.

The finding of the survey report in 5 focus communities in relation to community participation indicates that in all the communities, community based association exist but they have not yet began taken action on the needs of children. The finding in all the communities indicates availability of associations:



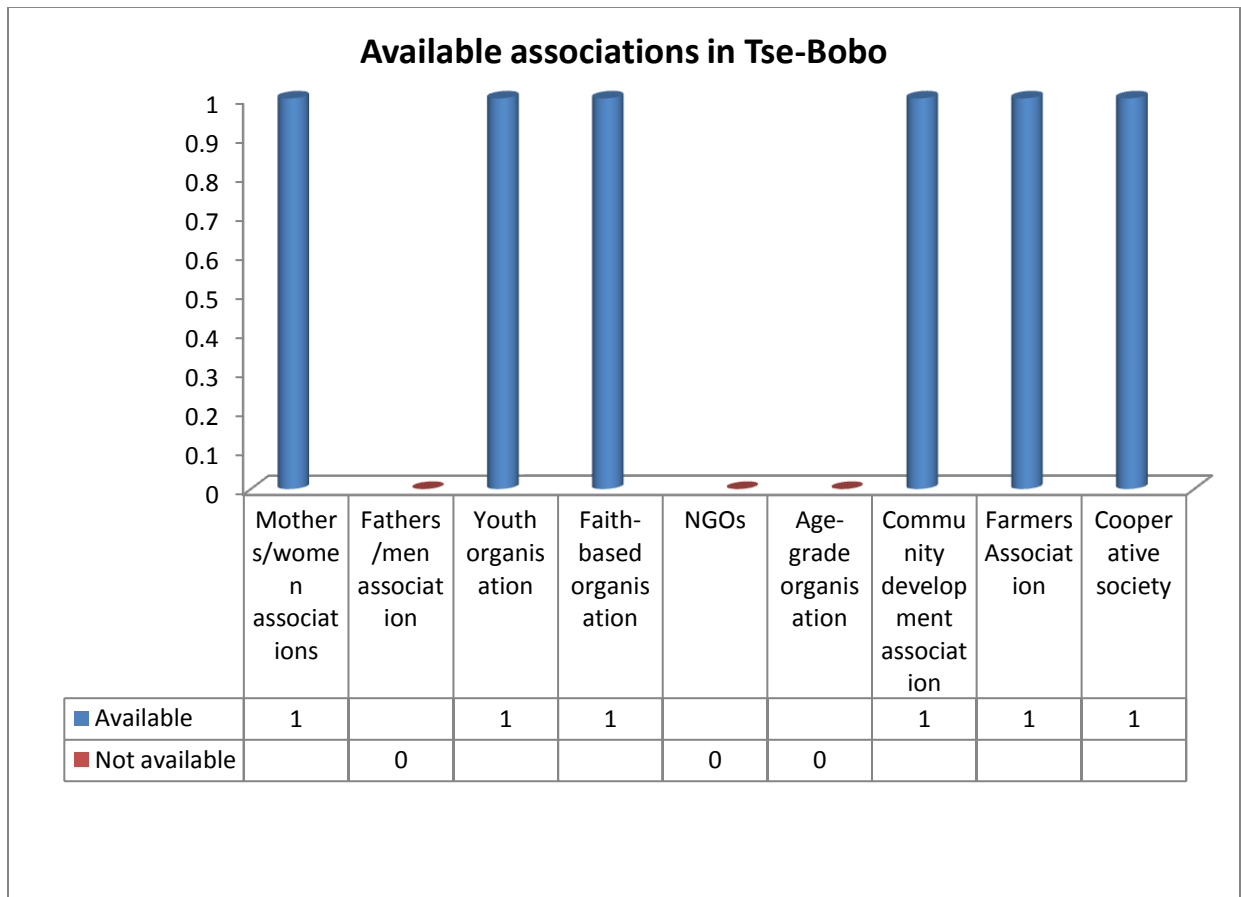
Graph 19: Available associations in Alomo-Rijo

Alomo=Rijo: mothers association,, youth association, community development association, age grade association, farmers association and cooperative society exist in the community



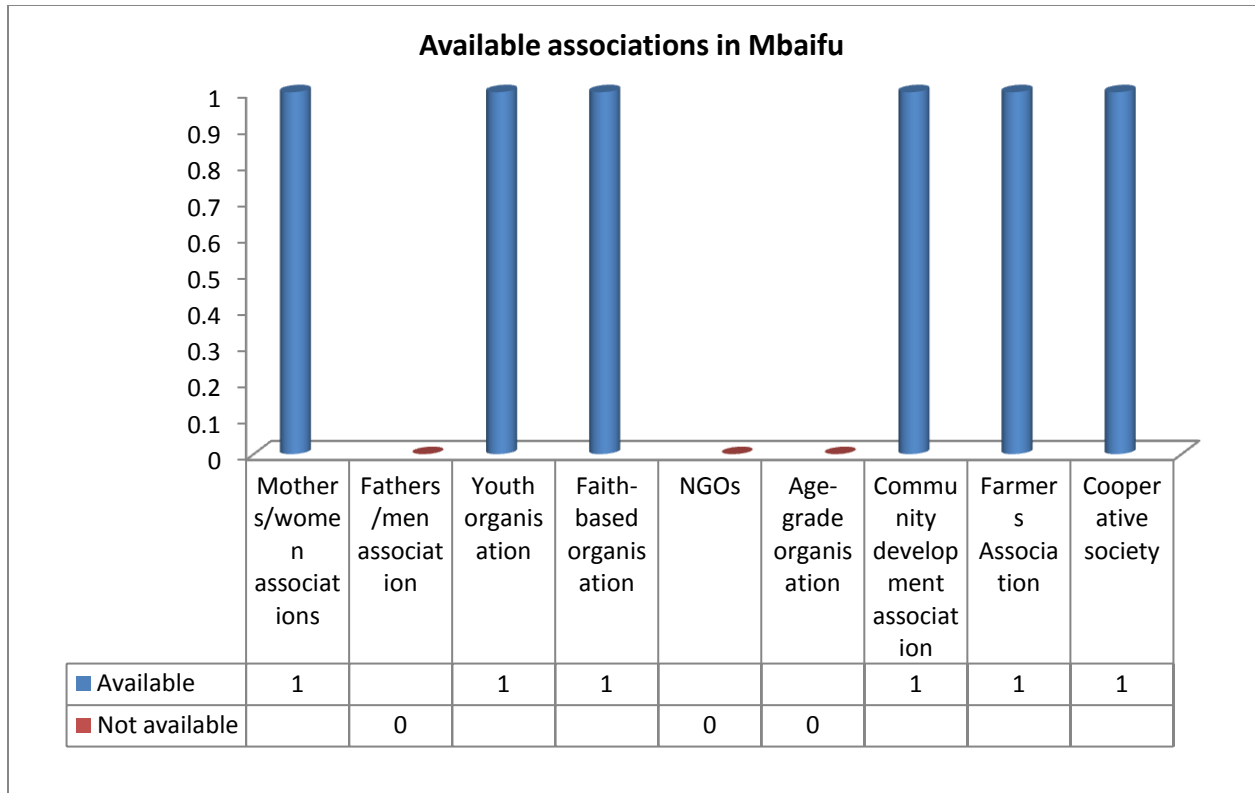
Graph 20: Available associations in Tse-Abunde

Tse-Bunde- Mothers association, fathers association (made up of men elders), youth association, community development, farmers association and cooperative society exist in the community



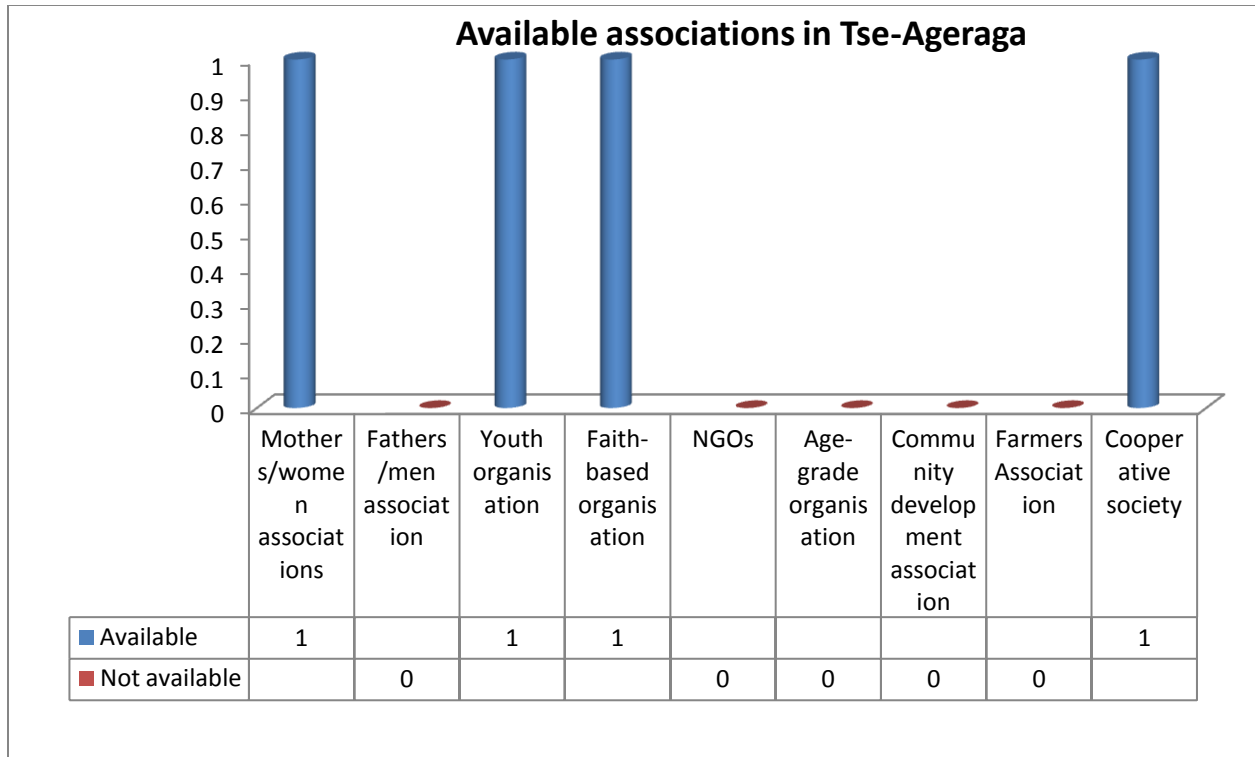
Graph 21: Available associations in Tse-Bobo

Tse-Bobo- mothers association, youth association, community development, farmers association and cooperative society exist in the community



Graph 22: Available associations in Mbaifu

Mbaifu- mothers association, youth association, community development, farmers association and cooperative society exist in the community



Graph 23: Available associations in Tse-Ageraga

Tse-Ageraga- mothers, youth, community development, farmers association and cooperative society exist in the community

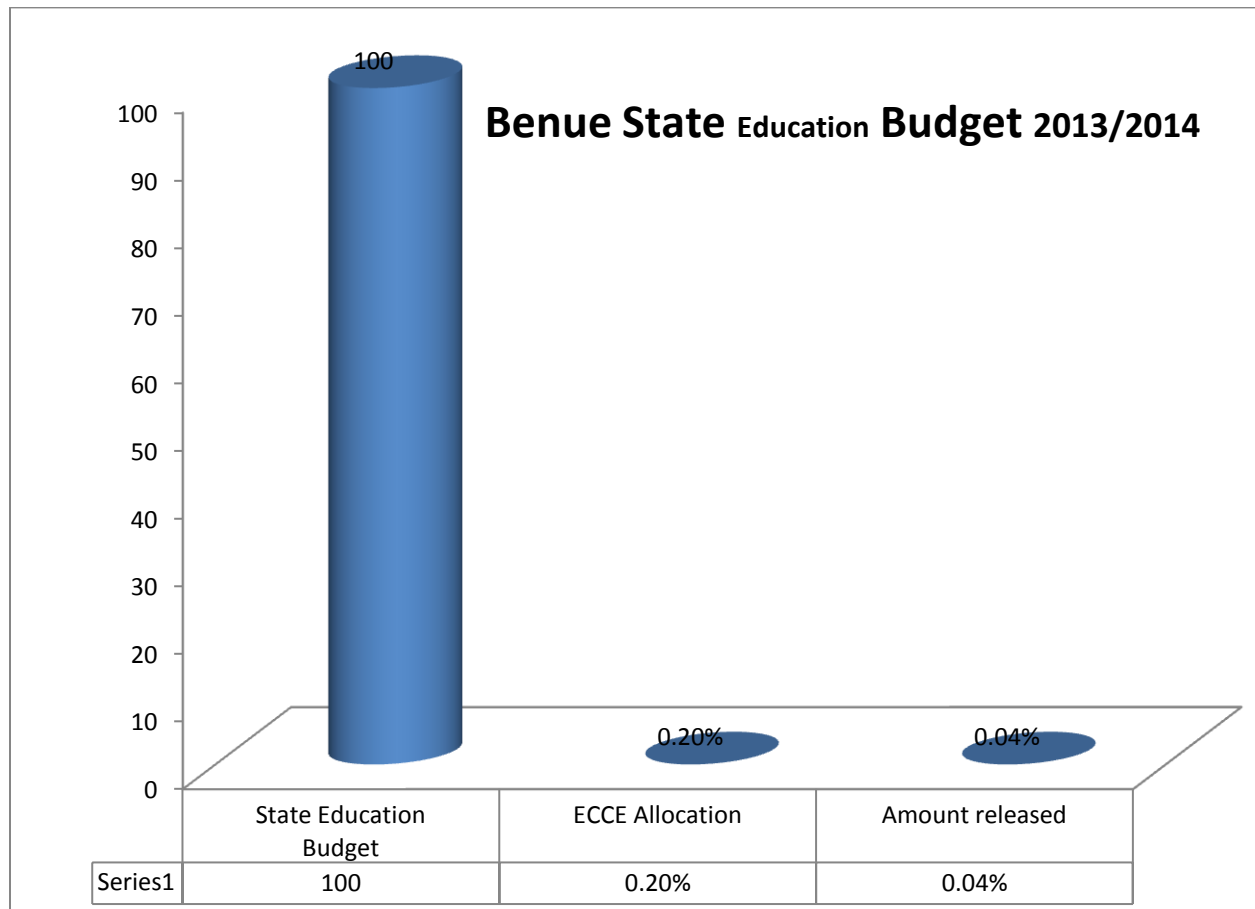
Government support on ECCE

State budget

The survey report indicates that 0.2% of state education budget is allocated to ECCE and only 0.04% was released for ECCD in 2013 (draw a graph showing the % coverage)

The problems regarding funding for ECCE was also identified in Benue State. First, ECCE is not designated category in the budget, making planning difficult both at the state and LGA level. Secondly, the allocated budget is not adequate to address the many systematic ECCE problems. The report also shows that at the moment, the SUBEB generally expends only a small percentage of funds allocated for ECCE. It is even worst at the LGEA level where nothing is spent. Therefore it is difficult to create a comprehensive integrated ECCE. For sustainability of CBECCE/pre-primary in the state, the state needs to begin to take financing decisions on programs or provision of goods and services by increasing funding and taking ownership of the program.

Although ECCE is captured in the education sector plan as a priority intervention, the education sector is yet to see early childhood as an important part of its responsibilities.



Graph 24: ECCE budget allocation and amount released.

LGEA budget:

At the LGEA level, the survey report indicates that there is no budget for ECCE. Only monthly impress is provided for the LGEA to run the office and ECCE is not always a priority.

Availability of IECDCC coordination body at State/LGA level

Resolving the issues of ECCE does not reside in education sector alone; the issue is a developmental problem. Therefore there is the need for adequate coordination and collaboration mechanisms that will result in free flow of information among relevant stakeholders in ECCE. This requires a good referral system in place. Increase collaboration and coordination will reduce duplication of services and increase understanding between CSO, and government about who is

doing what, where and when. Adequate collaboration and coordination will result in handling cases of food and nutrition, health, WASH activities etc.

There is no Integrated Early Childhood Consultative committee (IECDCC) in place both at the State and at the LGA level, which result to weak collaboration and coordination between education sector and Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs). Most organization tends to work independently of each other with little or no information shared. Inadequate collaboration limits the services that children receive such as legal, health, food and nutrition, WASH related activities and other child and family support

Government support to CBECCE/pre-primary

There is no CBECC being supported by government in the state in terms of teachers' deployment, development, provision of classroom, instructional material etc. where there is a support it is minimal.

Participation of development partners

Most of the financing of ECCE in the state is still highly dependent on international funds with UNICEF as the main source of funding. They have provided funds for planning, training, material support (toys/learning materials), monitoring and supervision of centers. This is only done to UNICEF catchment supported communities, which is inadequate because it has not been able to support the process by scaling-up to other communities

Recommendation

Accessibility to ECCE/pre-primary

2015 marks the deadline for achieving of both the Education For All (EFA) Dakar framework for action and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). MICS(2011) reports that currently only 50.9% of children in Benue state are attending preschool, majority of the children enrolled are in private primary schools and the pre-school centers are situated in urban and semi-urban environment. Despite these achievements, a large proportion of children whose parents are poor, HIV positive, who are physically challenged, who are girls, whose parents are migrant farmers and fishermen who live in rural communities, and river-rine areas in Benue State are completely side lined from the intervention. Access to ECCE/pre-primary is fundamental Human Rights to education. Therefore SUBBEB must work with all focus communities to established CBCC/pre-primary and ensure all children are enrolled.

SUBEB should see it as a matter of urgency to establish a functional CBECC in the 5 identified deprived rural communities in Ado, Gwer West and Logo LGA. They should also established primary schools in order to be in line with the new policy of one year compulsory primary education as an integral part of basic education system. This will transform access to all eligible children in the rural communities. This will be used as a pilot project that will be scaled up to reach more hard to reach rural communities in Benue State.

SUBEB should construct structures in all the 5 focus communities to be used as class rooms for primary schools and ECCE/Pre-pimary

There should also be massive enrolment drive campaign in the state, especially the focus LGA and communities through jingles, promotional material, town hall meetings and open air sensitization.

Traditional and opinion leaders should be involved in promoting awareness in communities after they have been made aware of the benefit and importance of ECCE.

Quality of ECCE

There are no sufficient teachers at the ECCE center at the state levels, where they have them, they are not adequately trained on ECCE. The environments are not safe for learning with no curriculum in most cases. This means the teachers do not respond effectively to the needs of the children. The number of skilled ECCE workers determined the adequacy of services provided to the children. Trained and skilled ECCE/pre- primary teacher/caregivers know how to handle young children. Most of the ECCE teachers in Benue State are not professionally qualified, poorly paid salaries in most cases the salaries are not always paid due to constant strike, majority have not seen the curriculum, where they have they have not been trained to use it. Teachers need to be adequately trained to respond to the need of children in ECCE/pre-primary in the State.

100% of the households in the focus communities have no access to improved water and sanitation facility. Access to safe drinking water supply and access to improved sanitation has considerable health and economic benefits to households and individuals. Equitable access to improved drinking water and sanitation is of fundamental importance to health, and will speed the achievement of all eight MDGs. On the other hand, its lack contributes to deaths and illness, especially in children. Access to improved water and sanitation can only work if SUBEB Can

collaborates with Benue Rural Water and Sanitation agency, and Water Aid Nigeria that are currently working in the intervening communities on the holistic approach to Water and environmental sanitation by empowering communities to improve their sanitation and hygiene practices.

Teachers' strength at the ECCE centers at the state level should be increased to include helpers. This will increase the number of teacher in the centers that will enable the center to be more effective in carrying out their responsibility. And also recruit qualify teachers and helpers in the proposed new ECCE centers.

The recruited teachers/caregivers should be trained on child stimulation, nutrition, health and psychosocial support component of children under 5 years old at the state, LG level and 5 focus communities. Teachers/caregivers trained will provide quality care and early learning.

Benue State through SUBEB and MOE should boost teachers/caregivers' quality through capacity building schemes and part-time enrolment in the colleges of education for specialist courses in ECD.

SUBEB should procure learning and play materials, NERDC curriculum that will improve child friendly learning environment. This should be distributed to all ECCE/pre-primary in the state and LGA, capacity of teachers/caregivers should be built on the usage.

SUBEB should procure NERDC curriculum for all the ECCE in the state and LGA level

SUBEB Can collaborates with Benue Rural Water and Sanitation agency, and Water Aid Nigeria that are currently working on WASH related activities to support the communities on Community led Total Sanitation and the provision of Water and Sanitation facilities in CBECCE in the 5 focus communities

SUBEB should collaborate and pay advocacy visit to MOH to establish health post and treatment centers in the communities to support the health of children and general population in the 5 focus communities.

Community participation/government/development partners/NGO

Budget for ECCE

There is no separate budget categorize for ECCE in the state to enable the education sector to create a well-functioning sector for ECCE. Without a budget for ECCE little can be done to address the issue of CBECC/pre-primary in the state. There are also funds donated to the state by UNICEF for capacity development to address issues of U 5 children. Access to these funds can only be made available when the state government signs the agreement on counterpart funding. Again, at the LGEA level they do not have a budget all training activities conducted at the LGEA level, funds are being provided and controlled by SUBEB.

SUBEB should begin to use education sector plan. This is because ECCE is already a priority intervention in the state. Again the education sector should to see early childhood as an important part of its responsibilities.

CSACEFA and other CSO should advocate to the governor for the proper implementation of bilateral agreement as provided and to regularly pay their contribution on time.

There is need for SUBEB, MOE and other line ministries involve in ECCE to pay advocacy visit to house of assembly and Ministry of Finance for the inclusion of ECCE in the budget and release of funds for implementation.

SUBEB should collaborate with Civil society Action Coalition for Education for All (CSACEFA) to advocate to Benue State government to begin accessing the FGN/UBE intervention funds by releasing the counter- part funds.

IECDCC coordination body of ECCE

There is no IECDC coordination body of ECCE in the state and LGA level. It is concluded that the absence of coordination a body for ECCE is a major concern for ensuring U 5 children and their families survive, grow and develop. A coordination and collaboration body is a key intervention that can address effectively CBECC/pre-primary in the state in terms of improved

service delivery, monitoring and evaluation, and resource mobilization. The integrated coordination body requires the commitment of all government departments and stakeholders. The coordination body will include Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of women Affairs and Social Development (MWASD) Ministry of Information, the media, Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission that is responsible for coordinating Nutrition committee in the state. The committee will work together as a technical working group for ECCE in the state. The main purpose is to improve the service children receive and avoid duplication.

Ministry of Education should establish a functional IECDDC coordination body for ECCE and a quarterly meeting should be created. The coordination committee will include SUBEB, MOH, Planning commission, BERWASSA, NGO representative, Ministry of Agriculture, and the media representative. A budget should be allocated that will cover the cost of these meetings. The quarterly meeting is to assess work on ECCE and discuss challenges and the way forward. Advocacy visits to the state government are needed for funds to be allocated to these meetings.

LGEA with support from MOE should establish a functional IECDDC that will involve traditional leaders, women representative, head-teachers, HOD health, WASH department, NGO representative and agriculture department. A budget should be allocated that will cover the cost of these meetings. The quarterly meeting is to assess work on ECCE and discuss challenges and the way forward. Advocacy visits to the state government are needed for funds to be allocated to these meetings.

The SUBEB and ministry of education should collaborate with NGOs working in the area of ECCDE to scale up its activities and work in rural communities.

Community participation

Different types of community associations exist in all the communities but they have not started taking actions on the need of children U 5 years. Without community participation there will be no sustainability and ownership of CBECC/pre-primary. Community participation builds local capacity to identify needs and seek local solutions; create ownership and accountability;

encourage unity and strength within the community and encourage people to make decisions in relation to all aspects of their lives.

SUBEB and NGO should work with existing community based organization by building and strengthen the capacity of identified community associations to respond to the needs of children.

Conclusion

The survey has determined the current situation of ECCE/pre-primary of children 3-5 years in the state especially hard- to- reach rural communities, access to preschool, quality of learning and community participation and government including development partners/NGO. The findings will lead to the development of programs and projects that are supportive of child survival, growth, development and protection. It will also support the new system of education that supports one year compulsory pre-primary education for 5 year old children as integral part of basic education system.

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Appendix 1

LIST OF ENUMERATORS

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