

Impact Evaluation of a Parenting Intervention for Rohingya and Bangladeshi fathers of 0-3 year old children in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Moving Minds Research Alliance

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play to learn



The LEGO Foundation



Global TIES for Children



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**The vision: to establish
play-based early childhood
development as an essential
component of crisis
responses**



**Reach
and
impact**



Learning



Advocacy



Father Engagement in Early Childhood

Fathers and Early Childhood Development

- Fathers have powerful effects on children's cognitive and social-emotional development; comparable to those of mothers
- Domains of importance: **responding to child safety and needs; warmth / play; stimulation; harsh discipline / corporal punishment; engagement with mother about child**
- But most Western theories of parenting based on mother only
- ECD parenting focus on mothers; a lost opportunity to engage fathers
- Jeong et al. (2023) conducted a systematic review of studies exploring father-inclusive interventions and their effectiveness on maternal, paternal, couples, and ECD outcomes

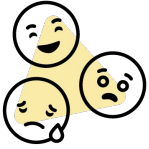
The Intervention

Father Engagement Intervention

- Father-focused parenting intervention component **added to HPL** for mothers of 0-2 year old children
- The mother-focused program is home-based model delivered by mother volunteers (in pockets; groups)
- All families received mother intervention – weekly, group-based sessions
- Fathers (in treatment group) received three weekly home-visiting sessions and one group-visiting session each month for 6 months



Objectives of Father Curriculum



Emotional
literacy



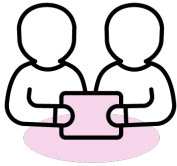
Responsive
caregiving



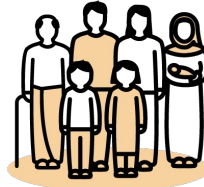
Engaging with
children for better
development



Coping
Mechanisms



Mental
Wellbeing



Healthy
relationship with
wife & family



Opportunities
to interact with
other fathers



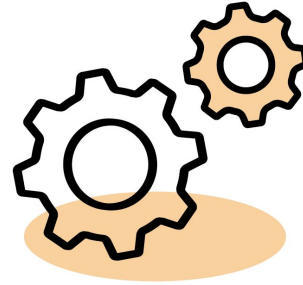
Overview of Impact Evaluation Study



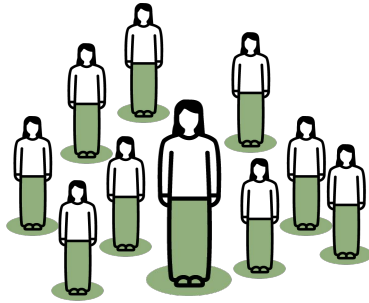
Confirmatory Research Questions

- What is the **added impact** of a parenting intervention for fathers of children 0-2 years old, consisting of home visits (every week) and group sessions (every three weeks) and delivered by father volunteers, **on fathers' engagement with children and wife**, in comparison to families who only receive a parenting intervention targeting mothers?
- What is the **added impact of this program for fathers on father well-being**, in comparison to families who only receive a parenting intervention targeting mothers?
- What is the **added impact** of this program for fathers on **child development (cognitive, language, and social-emotional domains)**, in comparison to families who only receive a parenting intervention targeting mothers?

Study Methods



Study Design: Randomized Controlled Trial

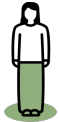


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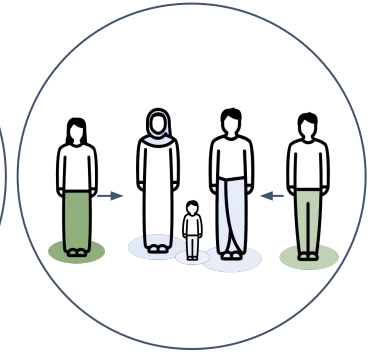
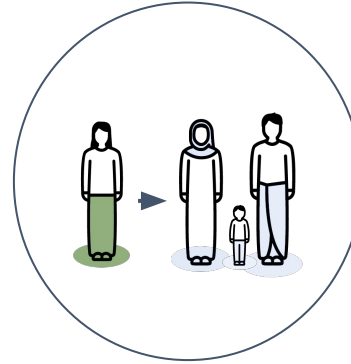
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Control Group

Treatment Group



Mother Volunteer's Entire Caseload



Analysis Plan - Estimating Equation

$$y_{ijk} = \beta_0 + \alpha tx_k + \gamma camp_k + \beta_{Ncov} N_{ijk} + \delta_{Mcamp} * covM_{ijk} + \zeta_k + \mu_{jk} + \epsilon_{ijk}$$

Mixed effects model where,

y_{ijk} is the outcome variable, measured at the individual level i within pocket j and mother volunteer k

α is the treatment effect

tx is the treatment assignment with a subscript k given cluster randomization

ζ_k is the random effect at the mother volunteer level

μ_{jk} is the random effect at the pocket level

and ϵ_{ijk} is the individual level error

Impact Evaluation Results



Positive impacts on several indicators of fathers' engagement with child and wife and father-child parenting

Father-reported

Outcome	coefficient	Adj p-value	Effect size
Responding to Child needs	0.0690	0.03	0.1175
Collaboration about child	0.1034	0.02	0.1473
Physical support for wife	0.0810	0.02	0.1446
Communication w/ wife	0.0072	0.32	0.0276
Father-child harsh discipline	-0.0349	0.22	-0.0526
Father-child warmth/play	0.0374	0.12	0.0696

Mother-reported

Outcome	coefficient	Adj p-value	Effect size
Responding to Child needs	0.0916	0.02	0.1521
Collaboration about child	0.0731	0.06	0.1094
Physical support for wife	0.0744	0.02	0.1590
Communication w/ wife	0.0049	0.36	0.0188
Father-child harsh discipline	0.0096	0.36	0.0142
Father-child warmth/play	0.0595	0.05	0.1159

Father-child stimulation	0.2026	0.00	0.2323
Beliefs about Fathering, Play and Family Engagement	0.1085	0.00	0.2097

No impact on father depressive or anxiety symptoms

No statistically significant impacts

Outcome	coefficient	Adj p-value
Depressive Symptoms (PHQ-8)	-0.0339	0.40
Anxiety Symptoms (GAD)	-0.0310	0.40

No effect on cognitive or language direct assessment or mother-reported development; positive impact on father-reported social-emotional

Positive significant effect on father-reported CREDI social-emotional scale

Outcome	coefficient	Adj p value
Bayley cognitive	0.0703	1.00
Bayley rec lang	0.0020	1.00
Bayley exp lang	-0.0496	1.00
Bayley language	-0.0538	1.00
MR credi COG	-0.0254	1.00
MR credi LANG	-0.1215	0.10
MR credi MOT	-0.0472	1.00
MR credi SEM	-0.0155	1.00
FR credi SEM	0.0770	0.05

The program has MORE of a positive impact on father and child outcomes for more disadvantaged families (statistically significant moderation results)

Father Outcome	Moderator
Father engagement, reported by father	LESS literate (driven by host)
	LESS educated (driven by host)
	Father went to PRIVATE school (compared to NGO school; driven by camp)
Father well-being, reported by father	MORE financial worry (driven by host)
	LESS literate (driven by host)
	LESS educated (driven by host)
	NOT in private or public school (driven by host)

Child Outcome	Moderator
Mother-reported CREDI	FEMALE children (both host and camp)
Bayley Expressive Language	LESS household resources and housing quality (driven by host)
Father reported SEL (CREDI)	WORSE mother health (driven by camp)
	LESS mother reported mother stimulation (driven by camp)

Key takeaways

- One of the very few IEs on a father engagement intervention in a humanitarian setting
- The program was designed with the fathers in mind and overall engagement was good
- We see positive and significant impacts on many engagement indicators
- Stronger effects for more disadvantaged families, including impacts on father mental health and children's vocabulary
- Further exploration: camp and host differences, role of implementation factors such as attendance, quality of visits, and interaction with program staff
- Promising ECD intervention

Thank You!

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