



Childcare and Women's Entrepreneurship

Insights from existing evidence



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Presentation



01

2Gen Perspective

- How do we define childcare?
- Who might benefit from childcare?
- What evidence currently exists?
- What are the most critical evidence gaps?

02

Evidence Review

- Insights from review of experimental evidence on childcare
- Focus on labor market outcomes for women

03

Individual Studies

- Multitasking
- Time use
- Household composition
- Service providers

A photograph of two women in black dresses and red headwraps walking along a beach. Each woman is carrying a young child on her back. The woman on the left is looking off to the side, while the woman on the right is looking down. The background shows the ocean waves and a clear blue sky.

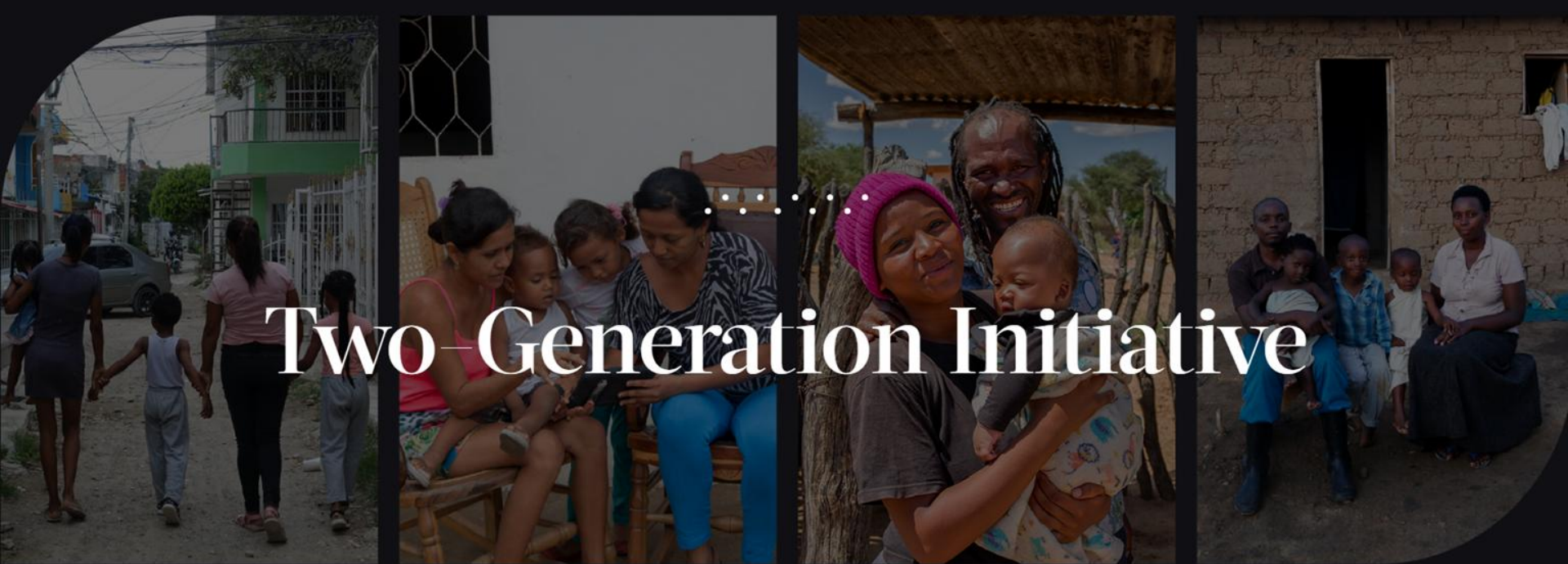
01

2Gen Perspective

What do we mean by childcare?

- **Triple / quadruple dividend** of childcare
 - Potential impact:
 - Child development, women's economic empowerment, business and employment, economy
- How do we **define childcare** and **who benefits**?
 - Early childhood care and education services that enable a caregiver to work or complete other activity
 - Childcare, day care, creche, nursery, preschool, pre-primary
 - Caregivers - mothers, fathers, grandparents, older siblings / Children - participating
- **Missing perspectives**
 - Research on early childhood care and education often does not consider impact on caregivers
 - 470+ studies of ECD interventions, only 22% consider outcomes for mothers beyond parenting and only 3% consider any outcome for fathers (Evans, Jakiela & Knauer, 2021)
 - Research on livelihoods and economic empowerment often does not consider impact for children
 - Of 10 RCTs of childcare interventions, only 6 measured outcomes for children





Two-Generation Initiative

Can 2Gen approaches generate more transformative impact across family members to improve early childhood development and address the intergenerational transmission of poverty?

IPA is working to support practitioners, policy makers, and researchers to design, improve, and assess two-generation approaches for improving outcomes for children and their caregivers

Two-Generation Initiative



- Exploratory research
- Stakeholder mapping
- Policy and practice needs assessments
- Evidence review and synthesis
- Practitioner MEL partnerships and incubators
- Research and learning partnership across 15+ policy makers and practitioners to support the use of data and evidence



A woman with a baby on her back and a young child walking away on a dirt path. The woman is wearing a striped shirt and a grey skirt, carrying a baby in a patterned sling. The child is wearing a red shirt and shorts. The woman is holding a blue and green backpack. The background is a vast, flat, reddish-brown landscape.

02 Evidence Review

A multigenerational review of childcare evidence



10 randomized evaluations of childcare interventions

All 10 assess outcomes for mothers
6 assess outcomes for children

+ **Insights from ECD literature**



A Multigenerational Perspective on Childcare: A
Review of Rigorous Research in Low- and Middle-
Income Countries

Sarah Kabay, Brianda Romero Castelán, and Rebecca Smith

June 2024



Key Insights



Focus on mothers The majority of research on the impact of childcare focuses on mothers and typically finds that it positively impacts mothers' participation in the workforce.

Secondary focus on target child Childcare improves outcomes for children, but depending upon the quality of the service.

Key evidence gap: impact on other adults and children in the household Available evidence suggests that childcare can enable fathers or male partners to increase their labor supply and income and potentially secure more favorable employment. Additionally, it may enable grandparents to increase their income.

Key evidence gap: childcare service providers and workforce

Key Insights



Cost as a Barrier

The cost of childcare remains the most significant barrier to its adoption. Subsidies or public services that reduce these costs typically lead to increased use of childcare

Positive Impacts for Mothers, Constrained by Gender Dynamics and Market Opportunities Gender norms and limited labor market opportunities present significant obstacles that can prevent mothers from experiencing the economic benefits of childcare.



Complexity in childcare research

Existing research typically does not assess the complete impact of childcare.

In most contexts, research is not able to assess the impact of the provision of childcare as compared to its complete absence and estimate its full impact.

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Impact varies by household composition - for example for single mothers as opposed to two parent households and by context - for example for settings in which both parents are already working.

COUNTERFACTUAL

Across contexts, there is a critical need to better understand what is happening in the absence of intervention - for example, to what extent are households already utilizing some form of childcare?

MULTI-TASKING

Childcare is often performed along with other tasks. The impact of childcare might need to be considered in relation to the reduction of multitasking rather than the change of activity.

A photograph of a woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a red shirt, holding a young child with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a light green shirt. They are outdoors, with a blurred background of a village and hills. The woman is looking down at the child, and the child is looking up at the woman. The text '03 Individual Studies' is overlaid on the image.

03

Individual Studies

Not just more time but better productivity

- Uganda small business owners (Delecourt & Fitzpatrick, 2021)
 - 37% of female owners bring small children to work, compared with 0% of men.
 - Women with children in the store are more likely to run out of stock than both men and women who do not have children in the store
- Rural childcare provision in DRC (Donald, Lowes & Vaillant, 2024)
 - Community childcare impact for women farmers
 - Provision of childcare reduces the number of times a woman's work was interrupted, her time multitasking, and her time unconcentrated



Time use and child age

- 2Gen Targeting the Ultra Poor Graduation (Kabay & Wuyts, 2026)
 - Intensive holistic livelihoods program did not take away or undermine time for childcare
 - Defining care: Distinction between direct interaction, multi-tasking, supervision and no supervision
 - Intervention might even increase direct interaction between children and caregivers - especially for livelihoods now conducted at the household
 - Rural context
- Child's age is a critical factor
 - Children in preschool age range 3-6 are already very independent
 - Dynamics around children 0-3 are very different



Household composition and dynamics

- Childcare subsidies and cash grants to mothers in Uganda (Bjorvatn et al., 2024)
 - Childcare subsidy increased labor supply and earnings of single mothers
 - No impact on mothers with male partners - instead increased fathers' salaried employment
- Public daycare in Brazil (Attanasio et al., 2024)
 - City of Rio de Janeiro lottery for public daycare for children 0-3
 - More time working and higher income for the household - driven primarily by grandparents and by adolescent siblings residing in the same household, and not by parents, most of whom were already working.



Supporting childcare service providers

- Kidogo study in Kenya (Beam, Fitzpatrick, Remaio, 2026)
 - Kidogo support to childcare providers
 - Improved quality of service
 - Spillover - improved quality of service of nearby competitors
 - Keeps childcare providers in business - less likely to close
 - Providers do not change costs
 - Enrollment and revenue stay the same
- External financial support, such as public financing, may be necessary to increase the quality and affordability of childcare.



Thank you!

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