Project Evaluation Report

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Evaluator:	Montrose
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Notes:

Some annexes listed in the contents page of this document have not been included because of challenges with capturing them as an A4 PDF document or because they are documents intended for programme purposes only. If you would like access to any of these annexes, please enquire about their availability by emailing uk_girls_education_challenge@pwc.com.

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Executive Summary

Through the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), FCDO aims to help the world's poorest girls improve their lives through education, supporting better ways of getting girls into school and ensuring they receive quality education to transform their future. Through the GEC-1 project implemented by Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU), 2,089 girls with disabilities from low-income communities in the Kampala Capital City area were able to complete their education. By the end of GEC-1 in February 2017, 2,063 girls had been retained, the lowest grade being P2 and the highest-level being S2.

As a follow-on project to the GEC-1, CSU now implements the seven-year (2018-2024) *'Empowering girls with disabilities through education in Uganda'* project under the Girls' Education Challenge Transition programme (GEC-T). This project aims to support the same girls from GEC-1, and about 586 boys with disabilities to complete the different education cycles - primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Children supported by the programme live in Nakawa, Kawempe, Rubaga, and Central divisions and are distributed in 335 primary and secondary schools, and 44 TVET institutions.

Theory of Change (ToC)

The programme is implemented within a legislative framework that recognises and guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities of respect and humanity as outlined within the 1995 Uganda Constitution and the Disability Act 2006. However, significant barriers remain for children with disabilities in the formal education system in Uganda, including poor provision of appropriately adapted learning materials, teachers who are not trained in inclusive education and infrastructural challenges of school facilities such as toilets and classrooms which are difficult to access for children with disabilities. These barriers lead to lower transition rates, poor attendance at school, weak learning outcomes and eventually to increased drop-out rates. High levels of poverty add an additional barrier with respect to parents' ability to pay for fees and scholastic materials required for children to stay in school.

The ToC underpinning this GEC-T project seeks to reduce the above-mentioned barriers and improve the life chances of girls with disabilities by improving their learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. To achieve this, CSU focuses on the following intermediate outcomes: attendance, teaching quality, self-esteem and life skills, economic empowerment, and inclusive environment (governance, environment, attitudes and perceptions). These intermediate outcomes are inextricably linked to the overall programme outcomes of learning, transition and sustainability.

Project Evaluation

The project evaluation assesses the impact of the GEC-T project outcomes and intermediate outcomes and takes a longitudinal approach involving four key evaluation points: baseline (2017/18), midline 1 (2019/20); midline 2 (2021/22) and endline (2023/2024).

This midline 2 study sought to answer two research questions as it assessed the impact of CSU's project implemented in line with the GEC-T framework. These questions and the analytical framework (Table 1) were devised to address the study's objectives that aimed to assess whether: i) CSU's inputs/strategies result in learning continuity, resilience, and improved social protection for girls with disabilities during the COVID-19 lockdown and school closure? and ii) if the inputs provided by CSU resulted in better outcomes or equity regarding school return and reintegration

after COVID-19? Under the themes of learning, economic support and empowerment, and transition, the study sought to find out:

- How children with disabilities and their families accessed support and materials to continue learning while schools were closed due to COVID-19
- The impact of school closures on loss of learning
- Whether the support and materials available helped families prioritise access to education when schools reopened
- Whether the investments in learning continuity during the pandemic were shown to have been effective when students returned to the classroom.

The ML2 sample of girls with disabilities in mainstream schools was taken from the sample selected at baseline and subsequently ML1 and used as the treatment cohort in the study, along with data from parents/caregivers, headteachers and teachers working in CSU-supported primary and secondary schools. Additionally, a sample of girls with profound hearing and visual impairments, who attend specialised schools was included for ML2.

During the ML2 inception period, it was agreed that the focus of the evaluation would shift from accountability to learning, using primarily *qualitative data* to report lessons learned from the impact of COVID-19 (successes and failures), particularly the effect of school closures on the delivery (design, implementation and process) of project interventions.

As a result, the methodologies used at baseline and ML1 were revised, replacing the comprehensive use of EGRA/EGMA/SeGRA/SeGMA with a scaled-down version of the assessments that focused on a small number of both the reading and mathematics subtasks. In addition, bespoke functional reading and mathematics assessments were created by Montrose and administered to look at the application of literacy and numeracy skills in life tasks such as reading and responding to an invitation or schedule, making a shopping list and calculating costs. The aim was to extend the continuum of reading and mathematics skills captured in the ML2 learning assessments to better measure the functional literacy and numeracy skills potentially developed in children during their extended time at home during school closures.

In addition to the above, four more changes were made to the methodology:

1) Journey mapping

For this evaluation, the child-friendly participatory research method of journey mapping was added as part of the pupil interview. Mapping the lived experiences of girls with disabilities during the COVID-driven education crisis provides a critical lens for identifying the conditions motivating their safe return to school and active participation in learning once there. To capture information on the educational and life experiences of girls with disabilities during COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures, the study gathered evidence on: 1) the environmental conditions of the homes and communities where they live; 2) their personal experiences and feelings about life and home schooling during COVID-19; 3) the social protection systems in place to support them; 4) household dynamics and demographics, including child safety and welfare, their consistent access to basic necessities, and the household's overall ability to withstand shocks and respond to emergencies; and 5) the family support systems and socio-economic networks driving their successful return to school.

2) Child poverty

This evaluation has measured and reported on household poverty levels since baseline to predict the economic capacity of families to sustain the costs of school for girls with disabilities after the project withdraws. However, such measures provide a limited picture of *child poverty* and the actual deprivations girls with disabilities may face. To better understand the child-level indicators

of poverty for girls with disabilities, ML2 examined their self-reported experiences of poverty by applying an internationally recognised multidimensional poverty measure that assesses linkages between deprivations for girls with disabilities and six social dimensions: education, health, nutrition, water/sanitation, shelter, and access to information. Girls with disabilities who suffer from two or more deprivations are considered poor, and each dimension is defined by thresholds that capture moderate as well as severe deprivations.

3) Resilience

To better understand the resilience levels of girls with disabilities and their parents/caregivers following COVID-driven education and economic shocks, ML2 used an internationally recognised tool, the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), to examine the impact of resilience on school and life outcomes. The BRS was created to assess the perceived ability of a person to bounce back or recover from stress using a unitary construct of resilience. It includes both positively and negatively worded items within six declarative statements. A respondent agrees or disagrees to each statement using a Likert scale. The BRS was also used to address the gap in the study's existing measures of self-esteem and life skills, which have failed to generate causal evidence linking strong social skills and high confidence levels to successful education, economic and life outcomes.

4) Exploring equity

In ML1, Montrose documented the support provided to girls with disabilities (as well as estimating the costs of various support strategies) and established baseline measures of differences between girls with disabilities in school attendance, reading and mathematics. CSU's COVID-19 response drastically altered its support, with changes such as replacing bursaries with unconditional cash transfers, providing home learning materials, and introducing support for parents and caregivers.

These responses and the closing of schools imply significant changes in the assessment of the impact of CSU support for girls with disabilities. The reopening of schools and girls' return to school offer opportunities to examine this impact: in the case of the participating schools in the CSU GEC-T project, Montrose will be able to assess the extent to which CSU support has had an impact on the relative likelihood of girls with disabilities returning to school versus children without disabilities from the same communities. It may also be possible to assess relative learning loss (or absence of loss).

In both cases – the likelihood of returning to school and the level of learning loss – implementation information provided by CSU and additional data to be gathered from girls with disabilities and households may provide important insights into what types/levels of support strategies and what other non-intervention factors were the key determinants of the likelihood of girls with disabilities returning to school or the level of learning loss. This information – identification of the most effective types of support and the critical factors determining school return or the impact of school closures on learning – can give CSU and the fund manager important insights into modifications of the current CSU programme and/or the development of initiatives for girls with disabilities.

The ML2 final sample and data collected

Data collection for girls with disabilities in mainstream schools was conducted over two rounds; a final tracking exercise was conducted to find missing learners. Fewer learners were found during ML2 than the target sample from ML1. From the total eligible sample of 237, 216 learners were successfully tracked in this study round, while 21 learners had either moved to schools that were outside the agreed radius of the evaluation or dropped out of school completely and were therefore excluded from the sample. Out of the total girls retained, 201 completed both foundation and functional assessments and the interview and were included in this analysis. Importantly,

during the period between ML1 and ML2, many learners had transitioned from primary school into secondary school or a TVET institution. Many of these learners were found to be attending non-CSU-supported schools, meaning that CSU's school-level interventions were no longer reaching them.

The evaluation also interviewed each learner who was tracked and assessed and their parent/caregiver. Some parents were not able to participate, citing prior engagements or, in the case of those with secondary school boarders, being too far from the school. Head teacher interviews were scheduled in every CSU-supported school. Some head teachers declined to participate, citing heavy workloads on the day of the team's visit. Teachers who received a CSU-led training in 2020 and/or 2021 were interviewed.

A new group of girls with disabilities was included in ML2 who had not previously been included at BL and ML1. Girls with profound hearing or visual impairments, who attend four selected specialist schools, were interviewed using the student questionnaire, but did not take the foundational or functional assessments. Whilst there is no comparable data to present at ML2, this data is relevant as the children have received CSU-supported services.

All data was collected in adherence to a disability adaptation guide developed for the evaluation aimed at facilitating the administration of the tools and enabling appropriate interactions between enumerators and learners in a gender-sensitive, inclusive manner. All necessary child protection and ethical protocols and guidelines were followed during the study.

Findings

1. Learning outcome

Foundational reading

Learning outcomes have improved from ML1 for learners in upper primary and secondary. The mean scores for the lower grades are affected by the small sample size for these grades at ML2 and by the fact that the girls found in these grades at ML2 have not successfully transitioned through the grades during the intervention. In fact, if all the students originally included at baseline had transitioned according to the regular transition path, we would not have found any student below P6 at ML2. It is to be noted that, even for the grades which show an improvement in mean scores at ML2, the difficulty level of the tests is below the current grade level of most learners, evidence shows they are still performing below expectation for their age and grade.

Foundational mathematics

Results for the mathematics assessment mirror those presented for reading. Mean scores have improved since baseline for learners in upper primary and secondary. Standard Deviation also improved at all grades except P6 and P7. This value for P7 is particularly worrying as P7 is a candidate class (to secondary) and this might affect their performance in the exams.

Table 1and Table 2 below show the difference between average mean literacy and numeracy score by grade from baseline to midline 2. Table 1 shows that for EGRA/SeGRA assessments the mean scores decreased for learners in P4, P5 and P6 and for learners in S2 and S3 between baseline and ML2. In P7, there was 7.1-point increase from baseline (but only a 0.9 increase from midline 1). In S1 data shows an increase from baseline values but a decrease from midline 1. Table 2 shows that for numeracy the average mean score decreased for the girls in P4-P6 while it increased for the girls in P7 to S3. Given that the majority of the sample is currently attending these grades, this can be considered an important outcome for the project.

Table 1 - Difference between average mean literacy scores from baseline to midline 2

Grade	Baseline mean literacy score	Midline 1 mean literacy score	Midline 2 mean literacy score	Difference baseline to midline 1	Difference baseline to midline 2
Primary 3	26.2	15.5		-10.7	N/A
Primary 4	29.5	34.6	7.6	5.1	-21.9
Primary 5	36.2	36.8	19.1	0.6	-17.1
Primary 6	39.9	51.2	39.2	11.3	-0.7
Primary 7	37.7	43.9	44.8	6.2	7.1
Senior 1	50.9	59.7	57.5	8.8	6.6
Senior 2	59.3	63.8	57.4	4.5	-1.9
Senior 3	69.5	61.5	62.3	-8	-7.2
Senior 4	N/A	N/A	64.7	N/A	N/A
Senior 5	N/A	N/A	60.2	N/A	N/A
Vocational	N/A	N/A	41.6	N/A	N/A

Table 2 – Difference between average mean numeracy scores from baseline to midline 2

Grade	Baseline mean numeracy score	Midline 1 mean numeracy score	Midline 2 mean numeracy score	Difference baseline to midline 1	Difference baseline to midline 2
Primary 3	44.4	40.7	N/A	-3.7	N/A
Primary 4	49.9	51.8	19.6	1.9	-30.3
Primary 5	58.7	54.5	34.8	-4.2	-24.0
Primary 6	61.2	65.1	41.2	3.9	-20.0
Primary 7	36.7	31.9	51.0	-4.8	14.3
Senior 1	53.8	38.1	67.5	-15.7	13.7
Senior 2	50.3	40.9	69.0	-9.4	18.7
Senior 3	71.5	39.6	73.5	-31.9	2.0
Senior 4	N/A	N/A	74.8	N/A	N/A
Senior 5	N/A	N/A	74.4	N/A	N/A
Vocational	N/A	N/A	48.4	N/A	N/A

Functional reading

Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering most items in the functional reading assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for reading to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong literacy. Findings indicate that learners can accurately recognise everyday vocabulary words and decode new words they do not know using their knowledge of the letter-sound system and alphabetic principle. Reading comprehension scores on the foundational and functional assessments were also equally aligned, though a significant number of learners still had zero scores. This points to some gaps in learners' ability to read for meaning and accurately process key vocabulary and concepts within simple functional texts, which might be a predictor of later reading difficulty as they progress through school.

Functional mathematics

Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering most items in the functional math assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for mathematics to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong numeracy. Findings indicate that learners can accurately recognise and perform everyday math tasks and processes accurately regarding pattern making and division – both of which are key foundational math skills applied here to functional tasks. Results in the functional and foundational math subtasks mirror one another, with few learners scoring zero on those subtasks. Conceptual math scores on the foundational and functional assessments were also equally aligned (e.g. number problems with market transactions), though there were several zero scores.

This points to some gaps in learners' ability to apply procedural skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to conceptual knowledge applied to functional, everyday tasks, which might be a predictor of later math difficulty as they progress through school.

Transition

Schools in Uganda closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19, just after the new academic year (which follows the calendar year) began in February 2020. Uganda's schools remained closed to all grade levels, except exam candidates and sub-candidates in upper primary and secondary[1], for nearly two years (2020 and 2021). Schools reopened to all learners in Uganda in January 2022. Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) issued guidelines for the reopening of schools, stipulating that all returning learners in primary and secondary would be promoted to the next grade level from the class they were in when schools closed in 2020 (e.g., a learner in grade 5 in 2020 would start grade 6 in 2022). As such, we expected all returning learners in our sample who successfully transitioned from their 2019 grade level (where they were at ML1) to the next grade in 2020 (before lockdown) to be found two grade levels above their ML1 grade level when ML2 was carried out in March 2022. Table 3 below outlines the expected transition pathways following the MoES' guidelines.

Table 3 - Expected transition from baseline to midline 2

Baseline 2018	Midline 1 2019	Midline 2 2022
P3	P4	P6
P4	P5	P7
P5	P6	S1, vocational school*
P6	P7	S2
P7	S1	S3
S1	S2	S4
S2	S3	S5, vocational school*
S3	S4	S6
S4	S5	Working, vocational school, university

At ML2, learners were asked to self-report their grade level in March 2020, before schools closed, while their actual grade level at ML2 was tracked by the evaluation team. Transition rates dropped for all grades except S3 between ML1 and ML2. This result is partly due to the way this indicator is calculated as learners who were not found at ML2 were considered as unsuccessful transition even if they were not technically lost to a learning journey (for example, learners transferred to another school, learners in VTI who could not be visited due to schools being closed or learners being on an internship away from Kampala). Additionally, school closures because of COVID-19 pandemic impacted heavily on learning and on return to school.

Sustainability

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[1] Learners that are going to sit for their primary or secondary leaving exams

The project has defined sustainability under this phase as the continuation of social protection measures to GWD and their families during school closures, including bursaries (redistributed as cash transfers during Covid), provision of teaching and learning inputs – both hardware and software (redefined as distribution of learning packets and teacher-led instructional workshops for GWDs to help them use the materials), and monitoring check-ins by CSU staff (for GWDs and their families to provide engagement and support). Additionally, CSU provided to parents and caregivers training and support to establish Income Generating Activities (IGAs).

Home Learning

Girls with disabilities reported extremes in their participation in home learning during COVID-19 school closures, with around 45% indicating a low level of participation and 45% reporting a high level of participation. The other 10% of girls with disabilities reported moderate levels of participation. During both years of school closures in 2020 and 2021, girls with disabilities in the study reported the same level of participation in home learning and self-study (around 80% each year).However, only about 55% of the girls who reported participating in home learning said they received home learning packs each time they were distributed in both years, indicating that the production and distribution of these materials by CSU only reached half of the intended recipients (at least those enrolled in the study) each year.

Income generating activities and support to the household

Only 57% of caregivers declared participating in a training organized by CSU on income generating activities. Out of the participants, only 11.5% declared that the training was useful to learn something to improve their income. The majority (71.1%) of caregivers interviewed have been members of a saving or loan group set up by CSU for a long time (41.5% for more than 3 years), however only 29% declare saving with this group. In order to ensure the sustainability of the activities, CSU should rethink their IGA activities or eventually direct them towards a sub-group of recipients' households in order to focus this type of support towards the GWDs most in need.

Intermediate outcomes

Attendance

At ML2, children in upper primary and secondary school reported being absent from school more than those in lower primary, which showed vast improvement from ML1. Learners in P5 and P6 reported the highest levels of absenteeism, followed by those in P7, secondary and vocational. The overall learner absenteeism rate at ML2 positively reduced in comparison to the absenteeism rate at baseline and ML1. Teacher absenteeism also significantly reduced from ML1 to ML2 for learners in all grades. Teachers also reported similar changes in leaner attendance in alignment with self-reported data from the GWDs in the sample.

Teaching quality

Teachers were asked about their opinion and classroom practices to promote inclusive education. At midline 2 96% of teachers declare having heard about inclusive education and bear a positive attitude towards inclusion in mainstream schools, believing that their school offers opportunities for inclusion to all students (100% of teachers). All these values are higher at midline 2 compared to baseline values. More teachers report some frustration in the adaptation of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students even if almost all (97.8%) declare that they are willing to do it.

Inclusive environment

GWDs reported extremes in their participation in home learning during COVID school closures, with around 45% indicating either low or high levels of participation, respectively. The other 10% of GWDs reported moderate levels of participation. During both years of school closures in 2020 and 2021, GWDs in the study reported the same level of participation in home learning and self-study (around 80% each year). However, only about 55% of the girls who reported participating in home learning said they received home learning packets each time, indicating that the production and distribution of these materials by CSU only reached half of the intended recipients (at least those enrolled in the study) each year. Given that the great majority of girls lived at home with their parents at that time (presumably in the same locations as they did prior to COVID and within reach of the CSU-supported school they attended), it is not clear why they did not receive home learning packets. Positively, nearly 90% of the GWDs in the study that did receive them each year reported that they were able to use the packets and that they were helpful for learning. However, teachers offered less learning support and fewer catch-up lessons to girls with disabilities than to other children. Learning support (including home learning lessons during COVID) significantly reduced during the lockdown period (2020 and 2021), but increased in 2022. Only about 40% of teachers provided catch-up classes for girls with disabilities during COVID-19.

Self esteem

Evidence indicates that childhood self-control, emotional stability, persistence and motivation have long-term effects on health and labour market outcomes in adulthood. These sorts of attitudes and behaviours appear to be stronger predictors than test scores of long-term outcomes such as further education, earnings, home ownership and retirement savings.

Based on this research and the current education crisis in Uganda post-COVID, persistence seems necessary to drive returns to school and continuation in education. The study therefore sought to understand the persistence levels of girls with disabilities. Girls scored highly on the ML2 persistence scale, with a combined 87% reporting moderate (52%) or high (35%) levels of persistence on a set of internationally recognised questions called the Brief Resistance Scale (BRS). Only 13% of girls reported low levels of persistence.

Around 74% of girls with disabilities in the study reported moderate (52%) to high (22%) levels of resilience on the BRS, which assesses resilience in its original and most basic meaning: to bounce back or recover from stress. Girls reported being able to recover from hard times and stress-inducing activities or events, or if something bad happens. They also indicated across all resilience categories that they can take a long time to recover from a stressful event, despite being able to get through difficult times without much trouble.

The study went a step further to modify the BRS and designed an education resilience scale. When using this scale, girls with disabilities overwhelmingly demonstrated high (67%) to moderate (28%) levels of resilience towards their education and school completion. These outcomes align with their rates of school return, self-confidence and persistence. Improved learning outcomes at ML2 and successful transitions from ML1 to date are all in keeping with these findings, as girls with disabilities in the study continue to persevere and persist in school.

Given the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic and the economic hardships faced by families regarding affording the costs of school, the resilience levels of girls with disabilities play a direct, critical role in their school success and survival. It is clear that the impact of boosting social and emotional skills to improve social outcomes provides a considerable reward, and is generally complementary to boosting cognitive skills. It is also documented that enhancing specific social and emotional skills improves students' ability to improve their cognitive skills.

Self-esteem and life skills

At ML2, 90% of parents overwhelmingly ranked their girls as having high life skills, with another 9% as having moderate life skills. Parents reported that their girls interact with others, solve problems, carry out tasks, follow instructions and resolve tasks mostly independently or with limited help. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children, pointing to a belief in their ability to successfully navigate their world and school and life choices.

This is important, since as the girls grow older and more mature, they are more likely to independently be able to care for themselves and develop into productive members of their households and communities. Parent findings also align with findings from the girls themselves, which also indicated high levels of confidence and persistence on similar scales.

Less than half of the girls surveyed reported attending any life skills training over the last three years, which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to many girls' ability to return to school. Nevertheless, 72.9% of teachers attributed a reported improvement in girls' confidence and self-esteem over the past year to CSU's life skills and mentoring support interventions.

Household economics (economic empowerment, household poverty and child poverty)

Questions on economic empowerment were aligned with the poverty scale used at ML1, which removed two questions from the baseline composite scale due to ceiling effects: one on land ownership and household equity, and a second on household assets. At ML2, the question related to household income was also removed from the composite. The rating scale was proportionally adjusted to account for this.

Improvements in household wealth and living conditions were registered, along with a slight reduction in the share of families with an unemployed head of household/primary caregiver. Importantly, while it seems that girls with disabilities still in the sample come from slightly wealthier households (relatively speaking, in comparison to their peers in the study at ML1 and baseline), they are still vulnerable to economic shocks – especially after the pandemic – as evidenced by the sharp increase in the percentage of families that have gone without eating or income in the last week at ML2, with twice as many families reporting they experienced this relative to findings from ML1.

Households were ranked at ML2 on the study's economic empowerment scale against three criteria levels from low, moderate and high empowerment. Evidence shows that the clear majority of households with girls with disabilities in the remaining sample – over 72% – are classified as having low economic empowerment; another 27% are moderately empowered. Only 1%, representing only one household in the study, are highly empowered. These findings indicate that the households of girls with disabilities in the study are unable to realise long-term economic growth, and they struggle to cover monthly bills, respond to acute emergencies, or to save for the future. When they do have to borrow money, it goes towards the daily costs of living and responding to shortages and shocks, rather than investments that grow their equity.

To better understand the child-level indicators of poverty for girls with disabilities, the study examined their self-reported experiences of poverty at ML2, where child poverty is defined as being deprived of essential resources needed for survival. An internationally recognised multidimensional poverty measure was applied that assesses linkages between deprivations for girls with disabilities across six social dimensions: education, health, accessible facilities, labour, living situation, and access to information. Each dimension is defined by composite binary score thresholds that capture moderate as well as severe deprivations.

Over half of the learners surveyed (about 55%) were not deprived at all, indicating they were not living in conditions of poverty. One-third (33%) were slightly deprived, while the remaining learners were very deprived (10%) or severely deprived (2%).

These findings show that most learners in the study were not living in any conditions of poverty, relative to their peers. This aligns with the parent findings on household poverty, indicating that this group of girls with disabilities was not disadvantaged in any perceptible way as individuals or as members of their household. They tended to live in safe, accessible and stable conditions, stayed with their biological parents, did not work outside of the home, talked to their parents about their bursaries and education, participated in home study activities during COVID-19, and had access to menstrual hygiene services.

2. Girls with severe and multiple disabilities

The ML2 study sought to evaluate the results and outcomes of CSU's support to girls with severe and multiple disabilities, particularly girls who have a profound hearing or visual impairment, during COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures. Before COVID-19 these girls attended specialist schools able to differentiate lessons and adapt teaching and learning materials. The schools are also able to provide assistive devices and specialist teachers. This group of learners may have experienced more severe impacts (positive or negative) during this period in:

- Achieving teaching and learning continuity through distance and home learning, including potential challenges related to accessing and using adapted home learning materials in Braille and Ugandan Sign Language;
- Communicating with family members in the household and engaging them to support home learning activities;
- The economic impact of COVID-19, especially regarding the costs of home-based care and support and general welfare; and
- Returning to school, transiting and continuing their basic education.

ML2 includes a sample of girls with severe disabilities to better understand their experiences during COVID-driven lockdowns and the role CSU played in providing inputs towards their support and wellbeing. The tools and analytical framework used for the longitudinal study was also applied to this analysis.

Findings on this group of girls and their parents were nearly exactly aligned with findings from the longitudinal study.

All families of girls with severe disabilities reported receiving some form of support from CSU, with just over 60% receiving bursaries. Parents also reported that if CSU's education support ceased, they would struggle to send their girls to school due to the high cost of education, especially post-COVID. Around four of every 10 girls in the severe disability group routinely experience moderate child poverty, while about one out of every 10 children experience more profound poverty in their daily lives.

Fewer households with children with severe disabilities were found to have gone without income in comparison to the longitudinal group, yet more households with children with severe disabilities had gone without essential medicines, medical treatment or clean water. Taken together, findings indicate that the living conditions of girls with severe disabilities may be unstable, leaving them more vulnerable to shocks and economic hardships that could push them out of school.

The majority of households with girls with severe disabilities – 71% – were classified as having low economic empowerment, 29% were moderately empowered and no households were highly empowered. These findings align closely to those of the longitudinal study, and indicate that the households of girls with severe disabilities are unable to realise long-term economic gains. As with the main sample, support from an organisation like CSU is vital for helping girls with disabilities from poor families to access and complete a basic education, as without it they are highly likely to drop out of school and not return.

Far less than half of the girls with severe disabilities surveyed reported attending any life skills training during school closures (37% in 2020 and 45% in 2021), which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to their ability to return to school in 2022. Moreover, 75% of the parents said their girls were unable to access life skills training during the pandemic, compared to 60% of parents in the longitudinal study. At ML2, over 80% of parents ranked their girls with severe disabilities as having high life skills, with another 11% having moderate life skills. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children.

Findings on home learning support during COVID for girls with severe disabilities correlate with those reported by households in the longitudinal study, although fewer parents reported high levels of support (a 10% difference compared with the longitudinal study).

Notably, parents of girls with severe disabilities reported slightly higher levels of access (though still low), and more appropriately adapted, home learning materials than girls in the longitudinal study when schools closed. During the period of school closures, girls in the severe disabilities study reported a decline in their participation in home learning and self-study from 86% to 78%, despite more learners reporting to have received adapted home learning packs during that time (44% in 2020 and 52% in 2021). Of those who received them, 100% said they were useable and 97% found them helpful. The poor rate of access to home learning packs indicates that the development, production, and distribution of these materials by CSU reached an extremely limited number of girls with severe disabilities. It is not clear why this was the case, nor why CSU did not make more of an effort to engage with this group, given their wide geographical distribution (most live far away from their school, especially in secondary) and needs related to the severity of their impairment.

Overall, girls with severe disabilities reported greater levels of moderate persistence than girls in the longitudinal study, and levels of high persistence were similar in both groups. Notably, girls with severe disabilities were 20% less likely to state that they could get through difficult times with no trouble or problem. They overwhelmingly demonstrated high (73%) to moderate (21%) levels of education resilience towards continuing in and completing school; findings directly aligned with results from the longitudinal study. Given the extended lockdowns and the economic hardships faced by families, this level of resilience plays a critical role in their school success and survival.

Conclusions

Overall, the findings in this report support the relationships, barriers and assumptions in the Theory of Change which details how the CSU project will improve the life chances of girls with disabilities in Kampala by: a) improving their learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy; b) ensuring that they transition through the appropriate grades from lower to higher institutions of learning; and c) sustainably improving the supportive environment in which they learn and live.

While this report addressed each of these three outcomes, significant differences in the methodologies and focuses of the study were necessary due to the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, introduction of functional assessments, reduction of foundational assessments,

discontinuation of teacher assessments due to school closures, attrition rates of the main longitudinal study group, and the decision to discontinue the study of the control group. This has inevitably led to a lack of comparability between baseline, midline 1 and midline 2 in some areas of the research.

Mean scores for learners in upper primary and secondary improved at ML2 compared to baseline. However, as the difficulty level of the tests is below the current grade level of most learners, evidence shows they are still performing below expectation for their age and grade.

The foundational and functional skills of girls with disabilities are aligned, and it appears that they are able to transfer classroom knowledge into real world applications that required basic reading and mathematics skills.

Transition rate dropped for all grades except S3, though this might be due to the self-reporting of students in relation to their grade in 2020.

Parent attitudes towards the education of girls with disabilities are positive, and GWDs are demonstrating high levels of education resilience that can support better education outcomes for their children.

Financial support emerged in this study as the most important input provided to girls and their households to ensure retention and completion of a basic education cycle, although as noted in the ML1 study, financial support is not a sustainable intervention. As well as attendance, self-esteem and life skills, sustainability in this ML2 study focused on persistence and resilience as emerging concepts in the context of COVID-19 school closures, as strength in these qualities was seen to complement the growth of cognitive skills as well as socio-emotional skills, implying that more efforts in these areas could positively impact the project's intended learning outcomes as well as its sustainability outcomes.

Attitudes to and experience of inclusivity was researched to a greater extent than in ML1 and revealed overwhelmingly positive responses from teachers, although the lack of teacher assessments means that there is no evidence of these attitudes being borne out in reality.

The ML2 study has assessed the progress of the project in addressing the inequalities faced by girls with disabilities and, instead of making comparisons with able-bodied girls, has focused on how the CSU GEC-T project might continue to strengthen the diversity of its interventions so as to provide an enabling learning environment for girls living with different disabilities and degrees of disability. A parallel research study was conducted with girls with profound disabilities to highlight the extent to which inclusive education and a greater impact can be achieved for the most marginalised.

Recommendations

Recommendations from the ML2 study findings include:

Learning and Teaching quality

- Increase the number of reading materials in schools and link reading to other inputs so as to encourage more learners to read more of the time, reducing non-readers and growing the proportion of capable readers who can comprehend text.

- Ensure learners are confident in their computational skills and knowledge and application of number facts by increasing the number of teaching and learning materials for mathematics and science in schools, and by training teachers in mathematics instruction and pedagogy.

- Ensure equitable access to learning support materials and interventions. This is critical in the final phase of the project to ensure girls have equal chances of benefitting from learning inputs.

- For both reading and mathematics it would be worthwhile to consult a technical expert to develop teacher training content.

- Specific support to different categories of girls with disabilities, depending on their needs, would be helpful to address gaps and ensure all students equally achieve core foundational skills in the coming years.

Transition

- Understanding the experiences of girls who attrited and what drove them to leave, or forced them out of, the formal education system is vital to generating evidence on the range of social protection measures needed to get, and keep, vulnerable girls in school. Support packages should be defined to better mitigate the vulnerabilities driving dropout and must be delivered directly to learners and their families from CSU in the locations where they are best accessed (e.g. their school and/or home).

- Financial inputs in the form of school fees and bursaries are the greatest contributor to retention and transition and must be continued in the final project phase if transition rates are to be maintained or improved.

- Engage with girls' new schools in the months ahead to ensure they complete their education and gain the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in work and life once they graduate. As a priority, restructure the approach to offer support for girls who have transitioned or transferred out of CSU-supported schools, as their new learning environments and teachers have not received these key project inputs.

Socio-emotional Learning

- Expand upon social and emotional skills development through the life skills component to drive up gains across all three project outcomes. Ensure that all girls with disabilities equally access life skills inputs by developing and implementing a new engagement strategy.

- Address deprivations related to information access with interventions targeting parents and households to give them strategies for talking to their children about school, life skills and how to use CSU's financial support.

Household economics

- Continue to increase attendance, as this directly counters instances of child labour, as attending school every day occupies children's time and limits opportunities for work. Offer guidance and counselling to girls and their families, with regular follow-up, to help them better manage their living situations.

- Consider developing new strategies to further reduce household poverty and achieve the project's sustainability outcome and economic empowerment target.

Outcome Indicator 1: Learning			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
Literacy • Overall achievement in foundational tasks showed that performance at ML2 was above the baseline level. • A drop in performance between ML1 and ML2 supported the hypothesis that school closures would result in a negative effect on learning outcomes. • Findings indicated that learners could accurately recognise everyday words and decode words they did not know, both of which are key foundational reading skills applied here to a functional task. • Learners had high mean scores across most functional assessment subtasks, answering on average between 75% and 95% of questions correctly in the word matching, receptive and expressive vocabulary subtasks • Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering the majority of items in the functional reading assessment. **Numeracy** • Learners who answered at least one item correctly had high mean scores across most core EGMA and SeGMA subtasks, on average correctly answering 70-80% of the items they attempted. • Sharp differences in performance across the EGMA and SeGMA subtasks demonstrate that learners have notably high skills in basic, procedural mathematics tasks, versus	• Home learning packs • Catch-up lessons • Learning at home rather than in the classroom may have supported good results in functional tasks. • Inclusive education – planning differentiated lessons and methods of communication for learners experiencing different types and severity of disability.	• Now that schools are reopened, an increased emphasis on teaching reading and mathematics in a functional (real-life, contextual) way is likely to improve overall learning outcomes, based on the evidence of the benefits of functional learning as a whole, and the results of these assessments. It is clear that skills are lacking in comprehension of texts and application of mathematical functions outside of the textbook. Sustainability of education requires learners to leave school in a position whereby they are able to apply their knowledge in any given context, so that is what must be facilitated. • The inclusive environment is improving in Uganda's mainstream schools, as evidenced by this study. There must be continued efforts to extol the virtues of inclusive education among schools, teachers, parents and learners on the understanding that the perceptions of all these stakeholders are interlinked – a school that demonstrates a commitment to inclusive education; a teacher who plans and teaches inclusive and differentiated lessons; a parent who recognises their daughter's achievement and enjoyment; a	• Consult a technical expert to advise on teacher training for teachers to learn appropriate content and strategies for teaching functional literacy and numeracy, particularly in upper primary and secondary school where learners should be able to build on their foundational skills. • See appropriate section below in this table for recommendations on improving the inclusive environment.

• significantly lower skills in conceptual, applied mathematics. • Very few learners – less than 5% – were innumerate across all grades and disability types in the subtasks evaluated in the functional mathematics assessment. • Learners across disability categories scored well in pattern-making and division – both of which are foundational mathematics skills applied to functional tasks – answering on average between 60% and 90% of questions correctly.		learner who achieves and participates – all positively influence each other.	

Intermediate outcome 1.1: Attendance			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
• Attendance at lower primary showed a significant improvement, from 51.6% learner absence at ML1 to 22.2% at ML2. • The overall learner absenteeism rate at ML2 reduced in comparison to the absenteeism rate at baseline and ML1. • Teacher absenteeism (self-reported) also significantly reduced from ML1 to ML2 in all grades, most notably to zero at lower primary level from about 30% at baseline and ML1.	• Learners reported that CSU's financial support promotes their regular attendance and encourages their overall retention and transition through the education system. • Home visits and monitoring phone calls were conducted with 75% of the study cohort, indicating good engagement between CSU and the beneficiaries.	• Providing monetary support in the form of school fees, materials and medical treatment is not sustainable in the long-term. As the project phases out and parents are expected to take on the burden of payment, girls' attendance is likely to fall. • Given the relatively small number of learners sustained by the project in proportion to the number of CSU field officers deployed to oversee them, building individual support teams should be straightforward. • Sustainability of activities that improved teacher attendance? • Providing guidance counselling/training on improved teaching techniques alone will likely not outweigh the importance of monetary assistance.	• Increase support for parents to have income generating activities that will be capable of supporting their children to attend school (and all associated costs) by the end of the CSU project. • Increase home visits and monitoring phone calls to 100% of the study cohort.

Intermediate Outcome 1.2: Quality of Teaching – Home learning			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
• Almost 90% of girls who received a home learning pack reported that they were able to use the packs and that they were helpful for learning. • 45% of girls reported a high level of participation in home learning and a further 10% reported engaging in a moderate level of home learning. • However, only about 55% of the girls who reported their participation said they received home learning packs, indicating that the production and distribution of these materials by CSU only reached half of the intended recipients.	• Development and distribution of home learning packs. • Home visits and monitoring phone calls.	• It is imperative that equitable access to learning materials is sustainable. Teachers and schools should be able to act as follow-up mechanisms for CSU's field staff and to support the sustainability of this activity.	• Explore the reasons behind the failure to deliver home learning materials to nearly half of the study cohort. • Distribution and tracking methods for home learning materials must be improved to ensure equitable access to interventions for learning support which is critical in the final phase of the project.
Intermediate Outcome 1.2: Quality of Teaching – Teacher training and student engagement			
• Around 60% of the teachers who received home learning packs said that the materials were adapted to cater for the different needs of girls with disabilities. • Teachers offered less learning support or catch-up lessons to girls with disabilities than to other learners. Catch-up lessons reduced during lockdowns but increased again after schools reopened in 2022.	• Development and distribution of home learning packs. • Planning and delivery of catch-up lessons.	• Delivering catch-up lessons in the long term to large numbers of learners is not sustainable in any context without sensible time management and conditions on eligibility. Learners must be made aware of those conditions to prevent them relying on catch-up lessons as a reason to be arbitrarily absent; schools should be mindful of disproportionately increasing teachers' workloads, particularly in respect of additional planning time.	• Continuing to work with teachers to provide in-school support to girls with disabilities can go a long way towards achieving all project outcomes and strengthening relationships between children, schools and families.
• A significant number of girls reported going to their teacher for help, advice, guidance and counselling, indicating that relationships are developing between teachers and learners that can further their achievement and persistence.	• Life skills interventions that boost social and emotional skills.	• Building such activities into the routine of the school day is one route to sustainability.	• Investments in life skills and extracurricular activities must be delivered consistently and in equal measure across all project beneficiaries, at all times if they are to be sustainable.

Outcome 2: Transition			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
• The average transition rate slightly improved from ML1 to ML2, from 55.2% to 61.6%. Despite the massive outlier at P3 influencing the mean average, and the fact that all grades bar P3 actually recorded a reduction in successful transitions, this outcome still represents an achievement for the project against the negative impact on education access, continuation and learning as a result of the pandemic and school closures.	• Direct support in the form of cash transfers, school materials and home learning support which lead to improved willingness to continue through the education cycle. • Improvement in families' economic empowerment which enables them to maintain their support of their daughters' education. • Accessible and maintained sanitary facilities for girls. • Accessibility features e.g. ramps, walkways.	• Direct support is not sustainable at all especially since these are some of the key barriers girls face to accessing education, and often parents are not willing to spend money on their child's education. Thus, if CSU scales down on the provision of these and hands over the responsibility to the parent, it's likely that the previously observed challenges of low enrolment and attendance will resurface. • Disability-friendly infrastructure is sustainable with adequate maintenance – sanitary facilities, ramps and walkways usually enjoy a long lifetime with minimal routine maintenance.	• It was not possible to accurately document the reasons for the dropout or transfer of girls who attrited, and as such it is not possible to identify trends affecting the project's transition outcome, especially regarding school retention or completion. This is a gap in the project design. Quality and timely data on the enrolment status, grade level, school attended and access to and uptake of project inputs must be generated and documented regularly. This is the responsibility of CSU's field officers and M&E team with oversight from CSU's senior management.
Intermediate outcome 2.1 Economic Empowerment			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
• Improvements in household wealth and living conditions were registered, along with a slight reduction in the share of families with an unemployed head of household/primary caregiver. • Girls with disabilities still in the sample come from slightly wealthier households in comparison to their peers in the study at ML1 and baseline, but they are still vulnerable	• Income generation training. • Opportunities for savings groups and loans.	• There is a need to intensify processes to have caregivers join saving groups to be able to access loans. • There is also a need to improve caregiver tracking or follow-up mechanisms to ensure the skills acquired in training are put to use to ensure the sustainability of the programme.	• Only 32% of parents surveyed were employed in the skilled formal sector. This is an opportunity for CSU to boost the remaining 68% of caregivers' existing ventures or help them venture into productive areas that can improve their incomes. The skills

to economic shocks – especially after the pandemic. • Using an internationally recognised multidimensional poverty index it was found that over half of the learners surveyed (about 55%) were not deprived and not living in conditions of poverty, relative to their peers.		• Supporting income generation activities for poor families in the project is unlikely to be successful in terms of transferring the complete cost burden of education to parents after the project exits – it is not likely that enough capital will be raised in vulnerable households to offset the high costs of schooling, and gains are not seen in a sufficient number of households to make a significant impact.	training and start-up capital are sustainable if the caregivers can be supported with business and finance management skills including coaching to sustain their business beyond the start-up capital.

Intermediate Outcome 2.2 Self-Esteem

Key finding/good outcome	Activities that contribute to outcome	Sustainability of activity	How activity can be improved
• 90% of parents overwhelmingly ranked their girls as having high life skills, with another 9% as having moderate life skills. Parents reported that their girls interact with others, solve problems, carry out tasks, follow instructions and resolve tasks mostly independently or with limited help. • 72.9% of teachers attributed a reported improvement in girls' confidence and self-esteem over the past year to CSU's life skills and mentoring support interventions. • Girls scored highly on the ML2 persistence scale, with a combined 87% reporting moderate (52%) or high (35%) levels of persistence and a combined 74% reporting moderate (52%) to high (22%) levels of resilience. • Girls with disabilities overwhelmingly demonstrated high (67%) to moderate (28%) levels of education resilience.	• Life skills training at school. • Career guidance and counselling. • Home learning.	• These are not sustainable if they are primarily hosted/funded by CSU. However, the study revealed positive responses from parents and teachers towards the concept and importance of self-esteem, resilience and persistence, indicating that they may reasonably be expected to support development of life skills and guidance towards positive life choices after the project ends.	• Seek ways to incorporate these activities into the routine activities of the school so that they will be carried on after the CSU project ends. • Continue efforts to engage parents and teachers in actively monitoring life skills and attitudes towards resilience.

Outcome 3: Sustainability

Intermediate Outcome 3.1 Inclusive Environment			
Key finding/good outcome	**Activities that contribute to outcome**	**Sustainability of activity**	**How activity can be improved**
• Nearly all teachers in CSU-supported schools have heard about inclusive education and bear a positive attitude towards inclusion in mainstream schools. • They believe that their school offers opportunities for inclusion to all students and that there is academic value in adapting school infrastructure and the curriculum to meet the needs of girls with disabilities. • Nearly all teachers are willing to adapt the learning and assessment environment to meet the needs of girls with disabilities in their classroom, and to ensure that they are able to communicate to girls with disabilities in their class and support their learning alongside other students. • Distance and home learning presented unexplored and perhaps unanticipated challenges related to accessing and using adapted home learning materials in Braille and Ugandan Sign Language.	• Sensitisation of parents, teachers and head teachers. • Ongoing teacher training in inclusive education.	• Mainstream education, even if to a small extent, will begin to meet the needs of children with disabilities, which will give them equitable chances in life when competing with their non-disabled counterparts. • Girls with disabilities have better chances of attaining higher academic qualifications with the positive changes in the attitudes of their teachers and caregivers who play such a major role in their transition and continued pursuance of education. • Good attitudes to inclusive education among teachers and schools gives parents/caregivers more confidence in mainstream schools being able to meet the physical and learning needs of girls with disabilities, lending support to attendance and retention as well as improved learning outcomes.	• Continue to inform parents and learners in Kampala of the existence of schools with disability-friendly adaptations. • Showcase schools and teachers that adapt lesson plans, resources and assessments for girls with disabilities. • Showcase girls that have achieved academic excellence as a result of being educated in an inclusive environment. These girls can act as role-models for those who might be less interested in pursuing education due to their disability. • Identify other disability organisations that will continue to encourage and sensitise CSU-supported parents/ caregivers after the project ends.

1 Introduction

The second midline evaluation of the CSU-implemented Girls Education Challenge Transition project took place between September 2021 and April 2022 and comprised of enumerator training, data collection, analysis and report writing.

1.1 Background to the study

Through the Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) aims to help the world's poorest girls improve their lives through education, supporting better ways of getting girls in school and ensuring they receive quality education to transform their future. FCDO supported the 1st phase of the Girl Education Challenge (GEC-1) that enabled 2,089 girls with disabilities from low-income communities in the Kampala capital city area (KCCA) to complete various levels of education. By the end of GEC-1 in February 2017, 2,063 girls had been retained, the lowest grade being P.2 and the highest-level being S.2.

As a follow-on project to the GEC-1, the Girl Education Challenge Transition programme (GEC-T) implemented by Cheshire Services Uganda (CSU) – *'Empowering girls with disabilities through education in Uganda'* – aims to support the same girls from GEC-1, and 500 boys with disabilities to complete the different education cycles - primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The project supports girls with disabilities in four low-income divisions of Kampala City: Nakawa, Kawempe, Rubaga and Central. As girls transition through the education system, they have the option of joining schools outside Kampala as well.

The project Theory of Change (ToC) is built on the need to address the individual gender and impairment related barriers to education; as well as the school-, home- and community-based and policy related barriers that prevent girls with disabilities from completing primary school and transitioning into a pathway of their choice and capability. Over the seven-year implementation period the project aims to achieve the following outcomes:
- **Learning** - Improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for girls with disabilities in participating schools
- **Transition** - Improve retention and transition rates (across grades and across levels) for girls with disabilities in participating schools
- **Sustainability** – Improve the supportive environment for learning and transition of girls with disabilities

Improved education outcomes are achieved through interventions that provide material and psychosocial support to girls with disabilities, that enhance the capacity of schools and households to meet the girls' basic needs and provide a foundation for their successful completion of a basic cycle of education.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in the past two years, CSU has had to modify its delivery of interventions to facilitate **learning continuity, resilience, and improved social protection for girls with disabilities during the COVID-19 lockdown**. Some of these interventions have included:

- Providing hard and soft copy learning packages and auxiliary learning aids to beneficiaries, engaging with caregivers and parents to encourage them to allocate time to supervise the children's learning.
- Continuous engagement with caregivers and beneficiaries to agree on the best ways to help children return to school on time when schools re-open.
- Providing cash transfers to support project beneficiaries' home needs.
- Continued provision of medical rehabilitation services through partner organisations for girls with disabilities.
- Working with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) to adapt distance learning material for deaf and blind children.

- Providing basic psychosocial counselling and support to children who have suffered various trauma during COVID-19 lockdown among others.

Therefore, during the ML2 study inception period it was agreed that the focus of the evaluation would shift from accountability to learning, using primarily qualitative data to report lessons learned from the impact of COVID-19 (successes and failures), particularly the effect of school closures on the delivery (design, implementation and process) of project interventions.

1.2   Purpose of the study

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to close and Ugandan children to stay at home for close to 2 years. In response to COVID-19, governments, global education stakeholders, civil society and educators collaborated to ensure measures to continue learning where put in place. Yet, from an equity perspective, significant concerns exist regarding the exclusion of the most marginalised groups – especially children with disabilities – from distance and home learning initiatives, particularly as children returned to school and resumed classroom instruction.

It was, therefore, important to understand how children with disabilities and their families accessed support and materials to continue learning while schools were closed due to COVID-19, as well as what impact school closures had had on learning loss for these children. Moreover, it was critical to study whether these inputs provided a platform for helping families prioritise education access and school return when schools reopened, and whether the investments in learning continuity during the pandemic were realised when students returned to the classroom.

Nationally (and globally, in general), provision of distance learning programming, content, materials, and adapted lessons for children or girls with disabilities was minimal in the extreme and, when provided, rarely monitored or measured. CSU had provided a range of inputs during the pandemic to support learning (detailed in the 'CSU MTR Document'), thus it was critical to track those investments and determine the changes/impact they had made in the lives of girls with disabilities and their families during COVID-19 restrictions and school closures in 2020 and 2021, and upon the reopening of schools to all students in 2022.

Additionally, studying the impact of the lockdown and school closures on girls with disabilities was an important task, as this data represented some of the only evidence captured on a longitudinal cohort of girls with disabilities in school before (and after) COVID-19. As CSU had been supporting these girls for years – even prior to this grant – their long-term retention in school and within the education system through bursaries provided by CSU provided a lens on the (potential) power of cash transfers (CTs) to girls with disabilities and their families, as well as a lens on how primary survival rates for girls with disabilities were impacted (or not) by the pandemic.

Importantly, most countries in the world struggled to disseminate distance learning materials to their students across all ages and grade levels. Given this, the evaluation provided an opportunity to study how CSU, a local organisation operating in Uganda, was able not only to adapt existing government-issued study materials for children with disabilities, but also distribute them to households and support teachers and parents to use them with children.

Finally, CSU also wanted to understand the impact on learning due to school closures for girls with disabilities in their programme to better inform current and future initiatives for schools, teachers, students and parents operating within Uganda's post-COVID education system and economy.

2   Methodology

This external midline 2 (ML2) evaluation report presents findings from the third of four formal evaluation points in the CSU GEC-T project. This ML2 study was conducted between September 2021 and April 2022;

the baseline and midline 1 evaluations were carried out in 2018 and 2019, respectively while the endline evaluation is scheduled for 2024.

A longitudinal sample of girls with disabilities, selected at baseline as the treatment cohort in the study, is being tracked throughout the project from 2017 to 2024, along with their parents and caregivers. Data was collected from these same beneficiaries at ML2, along with data from headteachers and teachers working in CSU-supported primary and secondary schools to gather evidence about the project's impact.

2.1   ML2 study design

The ML2 study design sought to answer the two following research questions. These were interrogated under three themes covering learning, transition and economic support and empowerment. During the inception phase, an analytical framework was developed expounding on how each research question will be addressed, the tools that will be used and the outcome measures. The ML2 study's analytical framework is summarised in inception report attached to the report as Annex 7.

Research questions

1. How did CSU's inputs/strategies result in learning continuity, resilience, and improved social protection for girls with disabilities during the COVID-19 lockdown and school closure?
2. Did the inputs provided by CSU result in better outcomes or equity regarding school return and reintegration after COVID-19?

Theme 1 - Learning: COVID-19 response and teaching/learning continuity

Evaluate the outcomes (immediate/intermediate) of CSU's strategies/inputs during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown and school closures to support girls with disabilities and their families.
Explore learning continuity and transition from school to home during the lockdown/school closures.

This is to be explored in relation to CSU's different hardware and software inputs and strategies to support learning continuity, as explained below.

a) Evaluate CSU's inputs related to adapting and distributing learning materials for children with disabilities in partnership with the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) and other disability-focused NGOs. [2]
b) Evaluate the inputs provided to teachers and parents to support at-home distance learning activities. Explore the role of parents and any other people in the household supporting distance learning for girls with disabilities (activities, materials, mentorship).
c) Explore any home-based or phone-based care, mentoring, learning support and psychosocial support provided to girls with disabilities.

Theme 2 - Economic support and empowerment: social protection and cash transfers

Explore the effect of bursaries/cash transfers and any other social protection measures for girls and their families provided by CSU to offset the economic impact of COVID-19.

d) Explore how bursaries were redesigned as cash transfers to support household economic needs, rather than school costs for girls with disabilities.
    *   How were they redesigned (packages, distribution, allocation, accountability)?
    *   Amounts/rates, frequency of distribution, conditional/unconditional amounts?
    *   How did parents take on the role of receiving and utilising the CTs?[3]

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[2] CSU led/supported the development of special home learning materials for children who were deaf and blind and the printing/dissemination of NCDC home learning packets. Adapting materials for children with disabilities is a critical input to support learning given that these materials require considerable effort and capacity and knowledge to create, distribute and utilise.

[3] Before COVID-19, CSU paid bursaries to schools directly for girls with disabilities. Look at the design and distribution before COVID-19, what was done during COVID-19, and what will be done after COVID-19.

e) Explore whether (and if so, how) parents utilised previous CSU inputs such as income generating activities (IGA) training and business-capital inputs (group borrowing) to maximise the use of the cash transfer. This was explored, where possible, through an equity lens by exploring how bursaries link to improved school access, return, retention and transition for girls with disabilities relative to their peers.

Theme 3 - Transition: return to school, education continuity, equity and life outcomes

For girls with disabilities, explore transitions back to school to evaluate whether CSU's inputs resulted in:

f) Higher rates of return to school for girls with disabilities and teachers targeted with distance learning under COVID-19.
   - Transitions (especially from candidate classes – P7, S4, S6)
   - Candidate exams and October 2020 return to school? (Link to CTs – did CSU get those children back to school? Did they stop paying CT and return to bursary? How did they ensure they got back?
g) Greater resiliency for girls with disabilities (self-esteem, life skills, confidence, agency, etc.), parents and teachers
h) Adequacy of social protection and financial support for girls with disabilities as they return to school.
   - Household cash transfers redirected back to school bursaries – impact on household economics and education support.
   - Experiences, beliefs and attitudes of parents and children related to economics, learning, school.
   Reduced cultural and societal shocks related to health and wellbeing for girls with disabilities (e.g., pregnancies, early marriage, forced work, etc.).

2.2   Data collection methods

2.2.1   Measuring Learning

We examined learning levels of girls with disabilities in April 2022 at ML2 as they returned to school following two years of school closures due to COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021. Measuring learning gain and loss within this sample was important to understand the effect of the learning inputs CSU provided for teachers, girls with disabilities and their parents during Uganda's lengthy education system lockdown. At ML2, learners took a scaled-down version of the **foundational learning assessments** that focused on a limited number of key reading and maths subtasks:

Table 4: Comparison of subtasks taken in the foundational learning assessment tools at baseline, midline 1 and midline 2

Foundational learning assessment tool	Subtasks administered at baseline and midline 1	Subtasks administered at midline 2
EGRA	Letter sounds, invented word reading oral reading fluency, reading comprehension and listening comprehension	Familiar word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension
EGMA	Number identification, number discrimination, missing numbers, addition, subtraction and word problems	Addition, subtraction, word problems
SeGRA	- Subtask 1 - Read a fiction passage and answer a set of closed comprehension questions - Subtask 2 - Read a non-fiction passage and answer a set of closed comprehension questions - Subtask 3 - Write a story about a time you helped someone else	Subtask 1 - Read a fiction passage and answer a set of closed comprehension questions

SeGMA	• Subtask 1 - Complete a series of multiplication, division, percentage, fraction, measurement, perimeter, area and volume math problems • Subtask 2 - Complete a series of simple algebraic equations • Subtask 3 - Answer questions about a pie chart and complete word problems using knowledge of algebra, multiplication and division	• Subtask 1 - Complete a series of multiplication, division, percentage, fraction, measurement, perimeter, area and volume math problems

In addition, we administered a newly created **functional reading and mathematics assessment** to look at the application of reading and mathematics skills in key life tasks. The aim was to extend the continuum reading and mathematics skills captured in the ML2 learning assessments to better measure the functional skills potentially developed in children during their extended time at home during school closures. These practical, functional skills are critical for lifelong learning, and they are directly aligned with some of the standard academic skills evaluated through the foundational learning assessments. The following tables provide a summary and comparison of the subtasks and skills assessed in the foundational and functional learning assessments administered at ML2.

Table 5: Functional and foundational subtasks and skills for ML2 reading assessments

Functional Reading Subtasks and Skills			Foundational Reading Subtasks and Skills (EGRA)		
Subtask	**Description**	**Skill Assessed**	**Subtask**	**Description**	**Skill Assessed**
Word matching	Match 2-10 letter identical and non-identical words; match functional and non-functional words from a group	Vocabulary – functional word recognition, decoding	Familiar word reading	Read aloud a set of common words	Vocabulary – grade-level word recognition; decoding
Expressive and receptive comprehension	Match pictures to vocabulary words and vocabulary words to pictures; follow 1- and 2-step spoken directions and commands	Reading/listening comprehension; word knowledge; communication; information processing and working memory	Familiar word reading; oral reading fluency; and reading comprehension	Read aloud a set of common words, read a story, answer questions verbally	Vocabulary – grade-level word recognition; decoding; reading fluency and comprehension
Functional text reading and comprehension	Read a flyer about an event, answer questions; read a schedule, answer questions	Reading fluency, comprehension of real-life texts related to daily activities	Oral reading fluency and reading comprehension	Read aloud a story, answer questions verbally	Reading fluency and comprehension

Table 6: Functional and foundational subtasks and skills for ML2 maths assessments

Functional Maths Subtasks and Skills			Foundational Subtasks and Skills (EGMA)		
Subtask	**Description**	**Skill Assessed**	**Subtask**	**Description**	**Skill Assessed**
Counting and matching quantities	Count out and match items; match number cards to a quantity	Number sense, number representation, quantity discrimination		Identify numbers from 1-100; compare quantities to identify the greater of two numbers	Number identification, quantity discrimination, compare and order whole numbers

Dividing items evenly	Dividing items equally with and without remainders	Division; *part-whole relationships (fractions); measuring**		Word problems	Oral word problems applying arithmetic concepts	Operations on whole numbers, arithmetic (multiplication, addition, subtraction)
Market transactions	Simulate the purchasing of food items in the market	Operations on whole numbers, arithmetic (multiplication, addition, subtraction)		Word problems	Oral word problems applying arithmetic concepts	Operations on whole numbers, arithmetic (multiplication, addition, subtraction)

**These are considered 'everyday' maths skills, though they are not part of the Core EGMA assessment.*

2.2.2 Measuring transition: exploring the effects of personal experience, environmental factors and household dynamics on school return, participation and continuation

Journey mapping

Understanding the educational and life experiences of girls with disabilities during COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures is critical to identifying the factors that aided their return to school in 2022, or not, and their ability to successfully reengage in the formal education system upon return. School participation (measured largely by school access/return and retention at ML2) and learning achievement are therefore predicated, in part, by the complex web of social and economic conditions that majorly impact the lives of children – especially those with special needs – far beyond school. To capture this information, we gathered evidence on: 1) the environmental conditions of the homes and communities where they live; 2) their personal experiences and feelings about life and home schooling during COVID-19; 3) the social protection systems in place to support them; 4) household dynamics and demographics, including child safety and welfare, their consistent access to basic necessities, and the household's overall ability to withstand shocks and respond to emergencies; and 5) the family support systems and socio-economic networks driving their successful return to school.

Mapping the lived experiences of girls with disabilities during the COVID-driven education crisis provides a critical lens for identifying the conditions motivating their safe return to school and active participation in learning once there. Documenting the complex and dynamic personal journeys made by girls with disabilities through the formal education system before and after COVID-19 helps us identify and analyse the implications of the extrinsic factors in their lives that directly affect their academic achievement, school completion, safety, wellbeing and overall learning continuity. The journey maps also documented the feelings and emotions of girls with disabilities over the past few years and their engagement with the learning communities (comprised of family, caregivers, friends and teachers) that support them to better understand the intrinsic factors motivating their life and education outcomes. We particularly explored their experiences during times when they made critical education or life decisions, or when they were due to make a major school transition during this period, such as completing primary school (P7), entering lower secondary (S1), graduating to upper secondary (S4), or leaving school.

Child poverty

Growing up in poverty can be damaging to a child's physical, emotional and spiritual development.[4] However, child poverty is rarely differentiated from household poverty, and its unique dimensions are seldom recognised in research. Child poverty[5] differs from adult poverty[6] as it has quite different causes

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[4] https://www.compassion.com/poverty/effects-of-poverty-on-children.htm

[5] World Vision UK describes child poverty as when a child is raised with limited access to or, in some cases, no access to, the essential resources they need to survive and live well. https://www.worldvision.org.uk/about/blogs/what-is-child-poverty/

[6] The United Nations defines adult poverty as a lack of income and productive resources in addition that manifests itself in form of hunger, malnutrition, limited access to education, social discrimination and exclusion and a lack of agency to participate in decision making. https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ending-poverty

and effects. The impact of poverty during childhood can have detrimental effects on children that are irreversible. Poverty impacts children more acutely than adults because of their vulnerability due to age and dependency. Poverty in childhood can cause lifelong cognitive and physical impairment, where children become permanently disadvantaged – in turn perpetuating the cycle of poverty across generations.

The most commonly used method to measure poverty is based on income or consumption levels, which means that a household is considered poor if their consumption or income level falls below a minimum level necessary to meet their basic needs. This evaluation has measured and reported on household poverty levels since baseline to predict the economic capacity of families to sustain the costs of school for girls with disabilities after the project. Yet, while such measures offer a broad understanding of the households in the project who are living in poverty, they provide a limited picture of child poverty and the actual deprivations girls with disabilities may face. Instead, social indicators provide a more accurate picture for measuring individual experiences of poverty among girls with disabilities. Such indicators can capture the multidimensional and interrelated nature of poverty as experienced by children themselves, for example that malnutrition can affect health and education, which in turn may impact a child's long-term development.

To better understand the child-level indicators of poverty for girls with disabilities in the study, we examined their self-reported experiences of poverty at ML2. To achieve this, we applied an internationally recognised multidimensional poverty measure that assesses linkages between deprivations for girls with disabilities across six social dimensions: education, health, nutrition, water/sanitation, shelter, and access to information. Girls with disabilities who suffer from two or more deprivations are considered poor, and each dimension is defined by thresholds that capture moderate as well as severe deprivations.

2.2.3 Measuring sustainability: the role of resilience and equity in maintaining education outcomes

Resilience

Research has found that childhood resilience – or coping ability – is built on positive relationships, and that connection with a parent, grandparent, or other consistent, caring adult can provide a solid platform for social development and positive education and life outcomes – even during challenging times. Schools are another stabilizing force in the lives of struggling families, anchoring communities and reducing the impact of shocks. They often provide meals, safe accommodation, health services, accessible learning spaces, and access to supportive information and resources.

To better understand the resilience levels of girls with disabilities and their parents/caregivers following COVID-driven education and economic shocks, we used an internationally recognised tool, the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), by Smith and colleagues,[7] for the first time at ML2 to examine the impact of resilience on school and life outcomes. The BRS was created to assess the perceived ability of a person to bounce back or recover from stress using a unitary construct of resilience. It includes both positively and negatively worded items within six declarative statements. A respondent agrees or disagrees to each statement using a Likert scale, and their resilience level is ranked on a scale from 1.00-2.99 (low resilience) to 4.31-5.00 (high resilience); scores between 3.00-4.30 are considered normal resilience.

We applied the BRS to extend the study's existing measures of self-esteem and life skills, which have failed to generate causal evidence linking strong social skills and high confidence levels to successful education, economic and life outcomes; the BRS is applied to close this gap. We also identify trends in the demographic, economic and behavioural characteristics of the sample according to their resilience levels, exploring which types of girls and parents/caregivers are achieving better results in the project and why.

Exploring equity

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[7] Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P. and Bernard, J. (2008). The Brief Resilience Scale: Assessing the Ability to Bounce Back. *International Journal of Behavioural Medicine*, 15, 194-200.

The goal of the CSU initiative in supporting girls with disabilities was to close the participation and learning gap between girls with disabilities and those without disabilities. In the first midline evaluation, Montrose documented the support provided to girls with disabilities (as well as estimating the costs of various support strategies) and established baseline measures of differences between girls with disabilities and those without disabilities in school attendance, reading and mathematics.

CSU's COVID-19 response drastically altered the implementation of their support provided to girls with disabilities. Among these changes was the reprogramming of resources including replacing school fees with unconditional cash transfers to households, provision of materials, and direct support to parents and caregivers for continuity of learning.

These responses and the closing of schools imply significant changes in how we can assess the impact of CSU support on girls with disabilities. The planned reopening of schools offers one opportunity to examine the impact of CSU support. One potential indication of the impact of the support on closing the gap between girls with disabilities and those without is the likelihood of returning to school. Globally there is concern that the extended period of school closures will result in significant numbers of children abandoning school permanently.[8] In the case of the schools participating in the CSU support initiative, Montrose was able to assess the likelihood of return to school of girls with disabilities receiving CSU support in addition to the relative learning loss (or absence of learning) among girls with different types of disabilities.

2.2.4 Measuring value for money: exploring the effectiveness of social protection investments on education outcomes

Value for money (VfM) was assessed at ML2 by comparing the costs of a discrete number of social protection and support packages provided by CSU to girls with disabilities relative to their effectiveness in improving education outcomes related to: 1) learning; 2) transition; and 3) life skills. Data collected during ML2 allowed the evaluation team to quantify differences in these education outcomes for girls with disabilities during and after COVID-19, including updating metrics where necessary to measure rates of change given adaptations to the support packages and delivery mechanisms provided by CSU. Transition at ML2 was measured through school return and participation, rather than grade advancement, given that Uganda automatically promoted all students to higher grades when they returned to school in January 2022.

CSU also provided cash transfers to households (rather than education bursaries) during COVID-19. At ML2 we examined how differences in the utilisation of these resources at household level impacted school return for girls with disabilities, including their retention and continuation once back. This analysis offered a prospective assessment of VfM for improving the efficiency of cash transfers to households to ensure girls with disabilities complete a basic cycle of education. The study sought to identify specific household practices in the utilisation of cash transfers that were associated with better outcomes for girls with disabilities and captured the required inputs (visits, materials, etc.) for promoting them. The team then assessed the potential return (or VfM) of incorporating similar strategies into future interventions.

Additionally, the team also explored how outcomes differed for girls with disabilities across the project population, examining the effectiveness of this support via reading and maths proficiency; children's ages, disability type and grade; economic circumstances and personal resilience.

2.3 Evaluation Sample

2.3.1 Tracking and attrition in the CSU ML2 Evaluation

Data collection for girls with disabilities in mainstream schools happened over two separate rounds with a final tracking exercise conducted to find missing learners. A school was visited over a course of 2 days to collect the necessary data. In round 1, learners were expected to compete the EGRA, EGMA, SEGRA, SEGMA and the pupil context interview. During round 2, the learners were expected to complete functional

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[8] https://www.unicef.org/uganda/press-releases/23-countries-yet-fully-reopen-schools-education-risks-becoming-greatest-divider

literacy and functional numeracy assessments. Parent interviews, teacher and headteacher interviews were also done during round 2.

In order to mobilise learners and caregivers for the ML2 data collection a four-steps procedure was followed:
1. Schools were informed in advance and asked to mobilise sampled learners and parents to school on the day of data collection.
2. Telephone calls were made to sampled students (or their caregivers) to inform about the data collection
3. The students who were not found at school during the first visit (round 1) were tracked individually by making phone calls to their caregivers/parents using the information from CSU and ML1 (including learners who were absent, dropped out or transferred).
4. When it was possible to find the students in the new location, they were visited if the site was in geographical proximity of about 3-hour drive from Kampala. Information on learners who had transferred or dropped out was provided by the schools and CSU. In the report, these learners are counted within the attrition rates as their transition cannot be tracked.

Fewer learners were found during ML2 than the target sample from ML1. From the total eligible sample of 237, 216 learners were successfully tracked in this study round, while 21 learners had either moved to schools that were outside the agreed radius of the evaluation or dropped out of school completely and were therefore excluded from the sample. Out of the total girls retained, 201 completed both foundation and functional assessments and the interview and were included in this analysis[9].

Table 7: Number of learners sampled and tracked at ML2

Description	Number
Number of learners in the treatment sample eligible for tracking from ML1	237
Number of learners found/tracked at ML2 of the eligible sample from ML1	216
Number of learners with complete assessments and interviews included in the ML2 analysis of those found/tracked at ML2	201

Similar to ML1, the study experienced attrition amounting 15% of the ML1 sample lost at ML2 as shown in Table 8 below. Across grade levels, the highest attrition (29%) was found in upper primary (P6 and P7) and at pre-candidate class (S3) of lower secondary which had an attrition of 14% (see Table 9 below). As mentioned before ML1 Is 2 years after ML2 and therefore learners were expected to be 2 years ahead of their ML1 class.

Table 8 - Midline 2 attrition calculations

Baseline sample	ML1 sample	ML2 sample	Attrition	Attrition %
268	237	201	36	15%

Table 9 - Attrition by grade level

Grade	Baseline	Midline 1	Attrition/ Lost (ML1)	% Attrition (ML1)	Midline 2	Attrition/ lost	% Attrition
Primary 3*	29	4	6	21%	N/A		
Primary 4	42	28	6	14%	3	4	
Primary 5	65	35	6	9%	6	4	100%
Primary 6	62	67	10	16%	22	8	29%
Primary 7	62	43	26	42%	34	10	29%
Senior 1	9	28	1	11%	34	4	6%
Senior 2	16	9	1	6%	26	2	5%

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[9] Additional decrease in total sample size was caused by the absence of the girls or refusal of the learner to participate in the study on the second day of the evaluation.

Senior 3	5	16	1	20%	33	4	14%
Senior 4	0	2	0	N/A**	6	0	0%
Senior 5	0	0	0	N/A**	6	0	0%
Vocational Level	0	1	0	N/A**	31	0	0%

Primary 3 learners at ML1 were found to have repeated a grade.
**N/A represents grades that were not sampled at baseline so attrition will only be calculated at future evaluation points.*

Importantly, during ML2, many learners had reached a critical age and grade where they transitioned from primary to secondary school or a technical training college. Many of these learners now attend non-CSU supported schools, meaning that CSU's school-level interventions were no longer reaching them. As such, they no longer receive the intended benefits of the larger package of inputs provided by CSU to help schools, teachers and school leaders offer a more inclusive, higher quality education. In this and subsequent evaluation rounds, outcomes for this group of students are now entirely dependent on the individual child, their family, and the scholastic support (in the form of bursaries and school fees) provided by CSU to some learners.

Table 10: Number of CSU- and non-CSU supported schools where learners were found

Description	Number
Number of CSU-supported schools in the sample where children were found and assessed	72
Number of non-CSU supported schools in the sample where children were found and assessed	17

The evaluation intended to reach the parent/caregiver of every learner that had been assessed and interviewed. Parents were invited to the learner's school during round 2 of the school visits. Some parents were not able to participate because they either had other engagements or were too far from the school. Head teacher interviews were scheduled in every CSU-supported school. However, some head teachers declined to participate in the study, citing heavy workloads on the day of the team's visit. Only teachers who received a CSU-led training in 2020 and/or 2021 during COVID-19 were interviewed.

Table 11: Number of parents, teachers and head teachers interviewed

Respondent	Baseline Sample Size (Actual)		Midline 1 Sample Size (Actual)		Midline 2 Sample Size (Actual)
	Intervention	Control	Intervention	Control	Intervention only
Pupils	272	266	237	179	201
Household Survey	459		166	152	N/A
Caregiver Interview	235	N/A	N/A	N/A	142
Teachers in CSU schools	133		120		81
Head teachers in CSU schools	56		58		53
Teachers in CSU schools (observation)	119		112		N/A

2.3.2 Sampling learners with severe disabilities in specialised schools

A total of four schools were visited to interview learners with severe disabilities i.e., completely deaf and completely blind children to understand their experiences with the CSU programme during and after school closures due to COVID-19. In these schools, only the student context survey was administered; no learning assessments were conducted. Two schools, one primary and one secondary, provide instruction for learners who are blind while the other two schools, also one primary and one secondary, teach learners who are deaf. Interpreters were employed to translate the conversation between deaf learners and the data collector using Uganda sign language. Parents, teachers and head teachers were also interviewed. The table below summaries the learners, school staff and parents interviewed during this phase of fieldwork.

Table 12: Summary of survey sample in schools for learners who are blind or deaf

	School	No. of learners interviewed	No. of parents interviewed	No. of teachers interviewed	No. of head teachers interviewed
1	Uganda School for the Deaf (Primary)	18	11	3	0
2	Wakiso School for the Deaf (Secondary)	18	7	2	1
3	Salama School for the Blind (Primary)	7	4	2	1
4	St Francis School for the Blind Madera (Secondary)	9	6	2	1

Data from these respondents was treated separately from the main sample and findings are presented in Chapter 7 of this report.

2.4   Data collection tools, analysis and ethical considerations

Data collection tools used at midline 2 were similar to those used at midline 1 and baseline. As explained above, slight modifications were made to the questions within the pupil context interview, household caregiver survey, teacher and headteacher interview tools. The modifications included removing certain questions completely or rephrasing questions to ensure data collected could be used for data analysis more efficiently. This was also done to ensure that the changes made to the project by CSU in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic at the time could be measured. Table 13 below shows the tools by respondent type.

Table 13: ML2 Tools and respondents

	Tool	Respondent
1	Learning assessments (EGRA, EGMA, SeGRA, SeGMA and reading and mathematics functional assessments)	Sampled Girls with Disabilities
2	Pupil context interview	Sampled Girls with Disabilities and Girls with severe disabilities in specialised schools
3	Headteacher survey	Headteachers of CSU supported schools and Headteachers of schools for girls with severe disabilities
4	Teacher Survey	Teachers of CSU supported schools who received a CSU training in 2020 or 2021
5	Household/caregiver survey	Caregivers of sampled Girls with Disabilities and of Girls with severe disabilities in specialized schools

Table 14: Summary of learning assessments that were administered to learners by class group

Class/Grade	EGRA	EGMA	SEGRA	SEGMA	Functional Reading	Functional Mathematics	Learner Context
P4	X	X			X	X	X
P5-P7	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
S1-S6 + VTI	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 15: Summary of learning assessment subtasks that were administered to learners

Tool	Subtasks to Administer to P4 – P7 students	Subtasks to Administer to S1-S6 and VTI students
EGRA	All subtasks: familiar word, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension; letter sound is administered if familiar words is discontinued	All subtasks: familiar word, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension
EGMA	All subtasks: number patterns, addition, subtraction, word problems	All subtasks: number patterns, addition, subtraction, word problems

SeGRA	Subtask 1 (except P4)		Subtask 1
SeGMA	Subtask 1 (except P4)		Subtask 1
Functional literacy	All subtasks: word matching, expressive and receptive comprehension, functional text reading and comprehension		All subtasks: word matching, expressive and receptive comprehension, functional text reading and comprehension
Functional numeracy	All subtasks: pattern extension, dividing items evenly, market transactions		All subtasks: pattern extension, dividing items evenly, market transactions

The tables below detail what each test entails are described in the tables that follow, along with a list of which learners were assessed in each test and sub-task at ML2 as compared to BL and ML1 and how the subtask was scored.

Table 16 - EGRA subtasks taken at ML2 compared to BL and ML1

Early Grade Reading Assessment				
Subtask Name	**Subtask Description**	**Who Took This Subtask (BL and ML1)**	**Who Took This Subtask (ML2)**	**Scoring**
Letter sounds	Identify the sound of letters in the English alphabet	P3-P6	Learners scoring zero on Familiar words	Number of letters correctly identified out of 26 possible letters
Invented word reading	Phonetically pronounce a series of 3-letter non-words	P3-P6	Not used	Number of words correctly identified out of 20 possible words
Familiar word reading	Read a series of familiar words		All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of words correctly identified out of 20 possible words
Oral reading fluency	Read a short text aloud	P3-P6	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of words correctly read in a 103-word story*
Reading comprehension	Answer literal and inferential comprehension questions about the story	P3-P6, P7, S1-S4 and vocational	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of questions correctly answered out of 5
Listening comprehension	Listen to a short text read aloud and answer literal and inferential comprehension questions about it	P3-P6	Not used	Number of questions correctly answered out of 5

Table 17 - EGMA subtasks taken at ML2 compared to BL and ML1

Early Grade Math Assessment				
Subtask Name	**Subtask Description**	**Who Took This Subtask (BL and ML1)**	**Who Took This Subtask (ML2)**	**Scoring**
Number Identification	Identify and name single, double- and triple-digit whole numbers	P3-P6	Not used	Number of numbers correctly identified out of 20 possible numbers
Number Discrimination	Identify the larger number of two whole	P3-P6	Not used	Number of questions correctly answered out of 7 possible questions

	single-, double- or triple-digit numbers			
Missing Numbers	Identify the pattern and missing number in a series	P3-P6	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of questions correctly answered out of 8 possible questions
Addition	Add single-, double- and triple-digit numbers	P3-P6	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of questions correctly answered out of 10 possible questions
Subtraction	Subtract single-, double- and triple-digit numbers	P3-P6	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of questions correctly answered out of 10 possible questions
Number (Word) Problems	Solve number (word) problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division	P3-P6, P7, S1-S4 and vocational	All learners (P4 to S6 and VTI)	Number of questions correctly answered out of 4 possible questions

Table 18 - SeGRA subtasks taken at ML2 compared to BL and ML1

Secondary Grade Reading Assessment				
Subtask Name	Subtask Description	Who Took This Subtask (BL and ML1)	Who Took This Subtask (ML2)	Scoring
Subtask 1	Read a fiction passage and answer a set of closed comprehension questions	P5-P6, P7, S1-S4 and vocational	P5-P6, P7, S1-S6 and vocational	1 point for each correct answer out of 10 possible points
Subtask 2	Read a non-fiction passage and answer a set of closed comprehension questions	P7, S1-S4 and vocational	Not used	1 point for each correct answer out of 13 possible points
Subtask 3	Write a story about a time you helped someone else	P7, S1-S4 and vocational	Not used	Scored on a rubric from 1-6 points (1 beginning, 6 exceptional) against 7 criteria (ideas, organisation, voice, word choice, fluency, conventions, presentation)

Table 19 - SeGMA subtasks taken at ML2 compared to BL and ML1

Secondary Grade Math Assessment				
Subtask Name	Subtask Description	Who Took This Subtask (BL and ML1)	Who Took This Subtask (ML2)	Scoring
Subtask 1	Complete a series of multiplication, division, percentage, fraction, measurement, perimeter, area and volume math problems	P5-P6, P7, S1-S4 and vocational	P5-P6, P7, S1-S6 and vocational	1 point for each correct answer out of 15 possible points
Subtask 2	Complete a series of simple algebraic equations	P7, S1-S4 and Vocational	Not used	1 point for each correct answer out of 8 possible points
Subtask 3	Answer questions about a pie chart and complete word problems using	P7, S1-S4 and vocational	Not used	1 point for each correct answer out of 7 possible points

	knowledge of algebra, multiplication and division			

Following the protocols used at BL and ML1, the same adaptations were used when administering EGRA and EGMA. For EGRA and EGMA, timed subtasks were extended from one to three minutes, processing time from three to 15 seconds and all the early stop rules were removed. For SeGRA and SeGMA, time to complete the subtask was extended from 15 to 30 minutes and enumerators read the instructions out loud to the students.

Other tools such as the disability criteria questionnaire, pupil frustration checklist and disability manual were also developed to guide the administration of the tools. All tools were delivered in adherence to a disability adaptation guide that was developed to facilitate the administration of the tools and enable appropriate interactions between enumerators and learners in a gender-sensitive, and inclusive manner.

2.4.1   Protocols for data collection and data quality

The data collection protocols included the child protection policy, confidentiality agreement and a disability manual containing the approved adaptions to be made per disability type. Before the data collection exercise began, all enumerators signed and confirmed their intended adherence to these data collection protocols. Additionally, all enumerators were provided with a manual containing the roles and responsibilities of the senior enumerators, enumerators and disability experts; the suggested daily schedule; activities to be done before the school visit; responsibilities of the team upon arrival at the school; instructions for drawing the pupil or student sample; summary of tests to administer to pupils or students; instructions for the EGRA/EGMA/SeGRA/SeGMA; instructions for the classroom observations; instructions for the Head Teacher and Teacher Interviews; instructions for the Head of Household and Caregiver Interviews and finally how to finish-up work at the school and the activities to be done after the school visit.

The quality of assessment data collected is critical. To ensure standard data quality, teams were supervised and monitored periodically by Montrose representatives to ensure high quality data was collected. During the data collection exercise, team leaders met the Montrose project staff every weekend to reconcile data and reconcile uploaded data with field documents. The team composition and this quality assurance process helped to improved monitoring and accountability of the EGRA/EGMA/SeGRA/SeGMA process. Additional monitoring via the GPS tracking on the tablets and data uploads enabled Montrose to ensure that assessments had been carried out as planned, and to a high standard. CSU field monitoring also further ensured there was consistency and good quality collection of data.

Child protection during data collection
Montrose adhered to CSU Child protection policy which underpinned all methodologic approaches implemented during data collection. All enumerators were taken through the child protection policy and required to sign a statement of commitment to the child protection policy as confirmation that they would abide by it while in the field. The policy covered topics such as the:
- Categorisation of child abuse,
- Child safeguarding/ protection and proceduresl
- Recruitment, selection and engagement of personnel
- Code of conduct
- Communication about children
- Standard reporting procedures including reporting steps and the information required when a report is being made and with whom the report should be filed
- Steps in conducting activities involving children
- Ramifications for misconduct
- Assessment and management of child protection risk

2.4.2   Ethical considerations

Throughout this study, Montrose adhered and shall continue to adhere to FCDO's ethics guidance for research and evaluation and FCDO's ethical principles for research and evaluations. Montrose also

adhered to both the 'UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations' and the 'UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis' and as a result endeavoured to adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Independence:** by ensuring that the research was free of bias through conducting personnel background checks to ensure total impartiality and ability to exercise independent judgement and escalating any issues that could have endangered the completion or integrity of the evaluation.
- **Impartiality:** giving a comprehensive and balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the programme - see section 2.5 below for challenges and limitations of the methodology and evaluation results
- **Credibility:** This research was credible as demonstrated through its evidence-base of reliable data and observations presented in this report taking into consideration the safety and security of Montrose personnel and the respondents whilst in the field by getting informed consent from each participant and ensuring anonymity of respondents as all respondent names were omitted from the dataset.
- **Conflicts of Interest:** Conflicts of interest were avoided as far as possible so that the credibility of the research process and product shall not be undermined. All personnel were asked to disclose any conflicts of interest arising which in turn would have been disclosed to CSU by Montrose had they occurred so they could be dealt with openly and honestly.
- **Honesty and Integrity:** Montrose employed honesty and integrity throughout the entire research process. This included but was not limited to the recruitment of Montrose staff and adherence to in-country laws and regulations.
- **Respect:** This research respected participant's rights to provide information in confidence and ensured all participants are made aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality prior to their participation.
- **Dignity and Diversity:** The Montrose team ensured to respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, and were mindful of the potential implications of these differences when planning, carrying out and reporting on the programme.
- **Rights:** Montrose ensured everyone participating in this evaluation had the right to self-determination where every participant will be treated as autonomous and given the time and information to decide whether or not they wish to participate and be able to make an independent decision without any pressure or fear of penalty for not participating. Participants were told they could stop at any time and there were instances where control group participants executed these rights.
- **Compliance with codes for vulnerable groups:** Montrose ensured members of vulnerable groups such as children or ethnic minorities participating in this research were protected through compliance with child protection policies and any laws governing interviewing children, young people and other vulnerable groups.
- **Redress:** Montrose ensured that all stakeholders and participants in this research received sufficient information to know how to seek redress for any perceived disadvantage suffered as a result of the research or the programme, and how to register a complaint concerning misconduct of the Montrose team. Phone numbers of people to call both at Montrose and CSU were distributed and enumerators trained to identify those who they felt required additional support from CSU through the project.
- **Confidentiality:** Montrose respected people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. Montrose ensured that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source by anonymising the dataset so that individuals were protected from reprisals. Montrose employed the use of unique identification numbers for each participant to ensure discretion in the data collected.
- **Avoidance of Harm**: Montrose sought to minimise risks to, and burdens on, those participating in the review and sought to maximise the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harms that might occur without compromising the integrity of the evaluation. Montrose analysed risks and identified mitigation measures through the use of a risk rating matrix which is completed for every Montrose project to ensure avoidance of harm.

- **Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability:** Montrose ensured that all reports such as this report were accurate, complete and reliable.
- **Transparency:** Montrose clearly communicated to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings as part of the introduction. Enumerators were given a script to read out to ensure that everyone involved was clear about the purpose of the evaluation and its intended use.
- **Omissions and Wrong-doing:** Had Montrose found evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, we would have reported it to CSU immediately and documented all evidence and actions taken to rectify the wrong-doing.
- **Beneficence:** Montrose ensured that actions done within evidence generating activities promote the well-being of individuals, communities or society as a whole. Where possible, any evidence generated will be conveyed back to the participants so that they may triangulate findings, contextualise their participation and potentially gain from the knowledge disseminated. This will be done as part of the dissemination process once this report has been finalised and approved.
- **Justice:** Montrose ensured that due reflection was given to determining the appropriateness of proposed methods of selecting participants and selection did not result in unjust distributions of the burdens and benefits of evidence generation on certain participant groups over others.

2.4.3   Data analysis

The data for the EGRA/EGMA assessments and pupil interviews were collected via tablet computers and uploaded through 'Tangerine'[10]. Data for the Teacher/Head Teacher interview and household/caregiver interview were collected using SurveyCTO[11], a cloud-hosted platform designed to assist data collection in the field. Both pieces of software came equipped with repositories where data could be stored for access at a future time. The SeGRA/SeGMA pupil responses were marked by hand using the pre-approved marking scheme (see Inception Report in Annex 7) and scores entered into Excel using data entrants.

This data was then compiled into two separate Excel spreadsheets for the project data analysts to clean. All data collected has been kept with the utmost confidentiality, only accessible to the data analysts and designated members of the evaluation team. Appropriate disclosure risk management measures were applied. The research removed any direct identifiers in the data and assigned a unique project ID to each study participant which also facilitated the linking of data sets. Once collected, the data underwent procedures to protect the confidentiality of individuals whose personal information was part of archived data.

The data cleaning process involved checking for consistency through the triangulation of the field documents submitted by senior enumerators and data reflected in the Tangerine and Survey CTO software. The main field document used for this purpose was the sampling register that summarised the team's work in a school, the enumerator's daily summary sheet and the senior enumerator's daily summary sheet.

SeGRA/SeGMA hard copies provided additional back-up to support any consistency checks. Together with the daily summary sheets the project staff and data analysts were able to check and solve any inconsistencies in the learner assessments and pupil interviews. Hard copies of the classroom observation, pupil disability criteria questions were also returned to the project and these also helped inform consistency checks.

Data analysis of quantitative data was carried out using STATA software to generate statistics for the tables within this report. The Chi-square test and Z test were used to conduct significance testing to provide the P values that can be found in tables throughout the report. To facilitate the further writing of the report, the

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[10] Tangerine is an open source software programme that has been developed by RTI to electronically collect EGRA and EGMA data on smart devices. http://www.tangerinecentral.org/

[11] SurveyCTO is a cloud-hosted platform developed from the OpenDataKit. This tool consists of the SurveyCTO Server which hosts all survey forms, SurveyCTO Collect (the mobile data collection app), and SurveyCTO Sync (the desktop software to export data onto your computer). http://impacttrackertech.kopernik.info/technology/surveycto

data analysts were required to develop composite scores using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in Stata software. These composite scores measured:

1. **CSU support to stay in school (Learners).** This score was constructed to assess if the girls in the sample received support to stay in school or not. It was constructed using 13 questions from the pupil context interview tool with "yes" responses coded as 1 and "no or don't know" coded as 0. Aggregation of points for all 13 questions for each individual learner resulted in scores ranging from 0 to 13 points. These scores were then ranked as low support (0-5 points), mild support (6-10 points) and high support (11-13 points).

2. **Learning support from CSU during Covid (Parents).** This score was constructed to assess if girls received any kind of learning support from CSU during the Covid period. It was constructed using four questions from the household caregiver tool (HCG) with "yes" responses coded as 1 and "no or don't know" coded as 0. Aggregation of points for all questions for each individual learner resulted in scores ranging from 0 to 4 points. These scores were then ranked as low support (0-1 points), mild support (2 points) and high support (3-4 points).

3. **Girl's participation in learning during Covid (Learners).** This score was constructed to assess if the girl had any learning activity going on during the Covid period. It was constructed using 10 questions from the pupil context interview tool with "yes" responses coded as 1 and "no or don't know" coded as 0. Aggregation of points for all 10 questions for each individual learner resulted in scores ranging from 0 to 10 points. These scores were then ranked as low support (0-4 points), mild support (5-7 points) and high support (8-10 points).

For more details on the questions used to create each composite score, see annex 12 attached as a separate document.

2.5   Limitations

The study design is longitudinal and centres around tracking the same girls and their families over time, yet the girls in our cohort are complex and vulnerable. While mechanisms were put in place to track these girls, we had a significant attrition rate in the study at ML1, as previously explained. While this was accounted for in the original sample (baseline), assuming there would be an attrition rate of up to 30% over time, that level of attrition was reached in the second study (midline 1). For ML2 it was therefore decided to exclude the control group from data collection. Tracking this group of children proved to be extremely difficult in previous studies as they did not have any obligation towards the programme and no incentive to remain in the same school over time since they do not receive any direct benefits from CSU compared to the GWDs. The ML2 report will be able to measure change in learning outcomes for girls in the intervention only but it will not be able to measure the difference (if any) between project beneficiaries and their counterparts in the same school (control).

Girls with disabilities are not a homogeneous group and trying to accommodate intersectionality in this set of participants in the study brings a high degree of complexity that is not easily accommodated. For this study, Montrose had to make choices regarding the extent to which multi-variate analysis would be used in the survey, and the extent to which results would be generalisable. As such, the analysis was selective rather than exhaustive and the important granularities for all respective groups could not always be identified.

Another major limitation is that the GEC-T programme is focused on measuring literacy and numeracy outcomes as part of programme impact yet CSU's learning interventions are more inclusive-centred and not designed to deliver purely technical teacher training in literacy and numeracy as would be found in a purely education focused project. The project is focused instead on school access and creating a positive, inclusive environment for girls with disabilities. Given CSU's input focus, we would need to assume that, just by providing access to school and improving the school environment for children with disabilities, this alone is enough to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for girls with disabilities.

Given the long school closures, it was deemed unethical during the inception phase to subject the learners to a full foundational learning assessment after the two-year gap in learning. It was therefore decided in the inception phase to reduce the number of subtasks in the foundational assessments used to measure

learning outcomes in ML2 compared to those used at BL and ML1 while adding a functional assessment for reading and for mathematics which was deemed best at measuring the learning which would have happened during the COVID-19 lockdown period.

COVID-19 restrictions resulted in the closure of schools in Uganda for almost two years. This meant a significant number of children were lost in the follow-up as it wasn't possible to track the control group as many children had moved out of Kampala to schools which were to spread out to be able to follow them any further. This significantly affected the number of respondents that could participate in the study.

3   Learner characteristics

Ages and Grades: A total of 201 girls with disabilities were successfully found and tracked at ML2. They took all the learning assessments and completed an interview, and their findings are included in this analysis. Most learners were aged between 14 and 16 at ML2, with most of them being in P6, P7, S1 or S3, followed by S2 and vocational. A total of 65 learners (32%) were in primary school, while 136 (68%) were in secondary or vocational schools. Close to 60% of learners were day scholars while the rest went to boarding school. Only 26 learners (13%) were the right age for their grade, while 175 learners (87%) were overage for their grade. This is not uncommon in Uganda, and certainly not for children with disabilities in our sample. However, mismatched ages and grades among learners has been identified as one of the drivers of dropping out, especially for girls, as they progress through school and matriculate to lower secondary or vocational programmes.

Table 20: Learner ages at ML2

Age	Number	Percent
10	1	0.5%
11	3	1.5%
12	14	7.0%
13	19	9.5%
14	27	13.4%
15	37	18.4%
16	45	22.4%
17	18	9.0%
18	18	9.0%
19	9	4.5%
20	10	5.0%
TOTAL	**201**	**100**

Table 21: Learners grades at ML2

Grade	Number	Percent
P4	3	1.5%
P5	6	3.0%
P6	22	10.9%
P7	34	16.9%
S1	34	16.9%
S2	26	12.9%
S3	33	16.4%
S4	6	3.0%
S5	6	3.0%
Vocational	31	15.4%
TOTAL	**201**	**100%**

Table 22 - Learners by age and grade at ML2

Age	Grade	Total

	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	Vocational	
10	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**0.5%**
11	0%	0%	1.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**1%**
12	0%	1.5%	3.0%	1.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**7%**
13	0%	1.5%	2.5%	4%	1.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**9%**
14	0%	0%	2.0%	3%	4%	3%	0%	0%	0%	1.5%	**13%**
15	0.5%	0%	0.5%	4%	6.5%	4%	2.5%	0.5%	0%	0%	**18%**
16	0%	0%	0.5%	3.5%	4.5%	2%	10%	0%	0%	2%	**22%**
17	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	3%	2.5%	0.5%	0%	1.5%	**9%**
18	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.5%	1.5%	1%	2.5%	3.5%	**9%**
19	0%	0%	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0.5%	2.5%	**4%**
20	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4.5%	**5%**
Total	**1%**	**3%**	**10%**	**17%**	**17%**	**13%**	**16%**	**3%**	**3%**	**15%**	**100%**

Disability Categories: Disability categories are aligned to the Washington Group classification structure and were confirmed for each child assessed during previous evaluations including ML2[12]. The majority of learners in the sample have a visual impairment, followed by those with a hearing or physical disability. The data presented below includes all disability categories in the study; however, given that very few learners in the sample have communication, self-care or multiple disabilities, main findings largely focus on the four main disability categories: hearing, visual, physical and intellectual.

Table 23: Learners by disability category at ML2

Disability	Number	Percent
Visual impairment	79	39.3%
Hearing impairment	37	18.4%
Intellectual disability	37	18.4%
Physical disability	32	15.9%
Communication	8	4.0%
Multiple	6	3.0%
Self-care	2	1.0%
TOTAL	**201**	**100%**

4 Outcome 1: Learning

This section presents key findings on 1) foundational learning outcomes; and 2) analysis of which learner and household demographics and socioemotional skills notably align with positive or negative learning outcomes. Additionally, it presents the analysis of functional learning outcomes which were measured only at ML2 as a supplement to the foundational learning outcomes.

4.1 Foundational learning assessments

Following the study methodology, a key component of the ML2 study was the administration of EGRA/EGMA/SeGRA/SeGMA. Results and main findings are presented below, initially by zero and mean scores, then through an analysis of learners' speed and accuracy in item-level responses, and finally by exploring which category, or proficiency profile, learners fall based on their performance at ML2. Due to the differences in the number of subtasks administered at ML2 compared to BL and ML1, the standard approach is presented first while standardised calculations are presented in the second part of this chapter.

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[12] Disability classification of learners was done medically by CSU who provided Montrose with a dataset containing each learner's information at the baseline. The categorisation by WGQs was done for purposes of reporting and to guide the administration of the learning assessment tools.

2.4.4   Standard approach

Tables below summarise learner results for literacy and numeracy. Results are grouped by grade level cluster and assessment type and are presented for BL, ML1 and ML2 with the analysis including mean and standard deviation calculations. Aggregate scores were calculated and weighted following the Fund Manager's original recommended procedure.

1. Weight the scores for each subtask
    - The number of items a child answered correctly in each subtask was counted
    - This was then divided by the number of total items in each subtask
    - The scores were then weighted for each subtask. For example, a child in P3-P4 was assessed using EGRA, which had a total of 5 subtasks. 100/5 = 20 points (or a 20% weight) per subtask
    - The number of items correct per subtask was computed against the weight (20%) for each subtask

2. Calculate the total weighted average
    - The weighted scores for each subtask were then added up to get the total weighted score for each assessment the child took
    - This process was repeated for each assessment and grade level category

In the series of tables below, the weighted group mean scores are presented for each assessment and for children who took the test in each grade level. . Finally, the standard deviation is included in the far-right column.

Reading results by grade

Error! Reference source not found. to Table 25 below outline the EGRA and SeGRA results for BL, ML1 and ML2 by grade together with the sample size for each grade at ML2. The mean scores for the lower grades are affected by the small sample size for these grades at ML2 and by the fact that the girls found in these grades at ML2 have not successfully transitioned through the grades during the intervention. In fact, if all the students originally included at baseline had transitioned according to the regular transition path, we would not have found any student below P6 at ML2.

The tables are colour-coded to show improvements and declines in the mean scores between baseline and midline 2. Orange is used to show where there was a drop/decline from baseline to midline 2 and green is used to show where there was an improvement/gain from baseline to midline 2.

Colour codes are also used to show increases and decreases in the standard deviation in the intervention group between baseline and midline 2. A green colour signifies a drop in the standard deviation which is positive as it implies that the gap between the best and worst performer in the grade level compared to the average reduced between baseline and midline 2. Meanwhile, an orange colour signifies a rise in the standard deviation which is negative as it implies that the gap between the best and worst performer in the grade level compared to the average increased between baseline and midline 2.

Table 24 - Reading assessment mean scores and SD - P5 and P6

Grade	Evaluation Point	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Primary 5	Baseline	67	36.2	20.3
	Midline 1	39	36.8	24.2
	Midline 2	6	18.2	9.8
Primary 6	Baseline	58	39.9	22.2
	Midline 1	62	51.2	20.6
	Midline 2	21	39.4	16.7

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Overall, we can see that there has been a decrease in mean scores for GWD across P4 to P6 while SD has improved for all grades. This might be due to the small sample size at these grades for ML2.

Table 25 - Reading assessment mean scores and SD - P7-S5/VTI

Grade	Evaluation Point	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Primary 7*	Baseline	55	37.7	13.9
	Midline 1	45	43.9	19.2
	Midline 2	34	51.5	22.8
Senior 1*	Baseline	9	50.9	14.9
	Midline 1	27	59.7	15.7
	Midline 2	35	75.5	20.2
Senior 2*	Baseline	21	59.3	13
	Midline 1	10	63.8	10.3
	Midline 2	26	77.3	20.3
Senior 3*	Baseline	2	69.5	0.64
	Midline 1	19	61.5	10
	Midline 2	33	83.6	16.8
Senior 4*	Baseline	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	2	71.5	11.9
	Midline 2	6	94.5	7.8
Senior 5*	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Midline 2	6	85.0	16.8
Vocational*	Baseline	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	2	9.6	5.8
	Midline 2	31	50.5	28.2

Table 25 above shows that for the grades between P7 and S4 and for VTI mean scores increased between baseline (or ML1 for S4 and VTI as there was no student at this grade level at BL) and ML2. SD values also increased for these grades except S4 denoting a larger gap between the best and worst performer in the grade. This could be a consequence of school closures as students experienced different learning experiences for an extended length of time, hence increasing the differences among them.

Mathematics assessment results by grade

Error! Reference source not found., Table 26 and Table 27 below present results for EGMA and SeGMA assessments disaggregated by grade level.

Similar to the section above, the tables are colour-coded to show improvements and declines in the mean scores and standard deviation in the intervention group between baseline and midline 2. Orange is used to show where there was a drop/decline from baseline to midline 2 and green is used to show where there was an improvement/gain from baseline to midline 2.

Colour codes are also used to show increases and decreases in the standard deviation in the intervention group between baseline and midline 2. A green colour signifies a drop in the standard deviation which is positive as it implies that the gap between the best and worst performer in the grade level compared to the average reduced between baseline and midline 2. Meanwhile, an orange colour signifies a rise in the standard deviation which is negative as it implies that the gap between the best and worst performer in the grade level compared to the average increased between baseline and midline 2.

As for the mathematics results, Table 26 shows a decrease in mean scores across grades P5 to P6. Similar to reading, Table 27 shows that mean scores increased between baseline (or ML1 for S4 and VTI as there was no student at this grade level at BL) and ML2 for the grades between P7 and S4 and for VTI. Standard

deviation improved at all grades except P6 and P7. This value for P7 is particularly worrying as P7 is a candidate class (to secondary) and this might affect their performance in the exams.

Table 26: Mathematics assessment means scores and SD P5-P6

Grade	Evaluation Point	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Primary 5	Baseline	67	58.7	20.3
	Midline 1	39	54.5	23.9
	Midline 2	6	34.8	13.8
Primary 6	Baseline	58	61.2	17.8
	Midline 1	62	65.1	17.3
	Midline 2	21	41.2	24.4

Table 27: Mathematics assessment means scores and SD P7 - S5 and VTI

Grade	Evaluation Point	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Primary 7	Baseline	55	36.7	11.7
	Midline 1	45	31.9	19.6
	Midline 2	34	50.9	20.0
Senior 1	Baseline	9	53.8	24.6
	Midline 1	27	38.1	23.5
	Midline 2	35	67.5	12.1
Senior 2	Baseline	21	50.3	13.1
	Midline 1	10	40.9	17.7
	Midline 2	26	68.9	12.8
Senior 3	Baseline	2	71.5	40.3
	Midline 1	19	39.6	16.7
	Midline 2	33	73.5	10.9
Senior 4	Baseline	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	2	32.6	1
	Midline 2	6	74.7	10.9
Senior 5	Baseline	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 2	6	74.4	10.3
Vocational	Baseline	0	N/A	N/A
	Midline 1	2	6.5	9.1
	Midline 2	31	48.4	23.7

Difference between average mean literacy and numeracy score by grade
Table 28 and Table 29 below show the difference between average mean literacy and numeracy score by grade from baseline to midline 2.

Table 28 shows that for EGRA/SeGRA assessments the mean scores decreased for learners in P4, P5 and P6 and for learners in S2 and S3 between baseline and ML2. In P7, there was 7.1-point increase from baseline (but only a 0.9 increase from midline 1). In S1 data shows an increase from baseline values but a decrease from midline 1.

Table 29 shows that for numeracy the average mean score decreased for the girls in P4-P6 while it increased for the girls in P7 to S3. Given that the majority of the sample is currently attending these grades, this can be considered an important outcome for the project.

Table 28: Difference between average mean literacy scores from baseline to midline 2

Grade	Baseline mean literacy score	Midline 1 mean literacy score	Midline 2 mean literacy score	Difference baseline to midline 1	Difference baseline to midline 2
Primary 5	36.2	36.8	19.1	0.6	-17.1
Primary 6	39.9	51.2	39.2	11.3	-0.7
Primary 7	37.7	43.9	44.8	6.2	7.1
Senior 1	50.9	59.7	57.5	8.8	6.6
Senior 2	59.3	63.8	57.4	4.5	-1.9
Senior 3	69.5	61.5	62.3	-8	-7.2
Senior 4	N/A	N/A	64.7	N/A	N/A
Senior 5	N/A	N/A	60.2	N/A	N/A
Vocational	N/A	N/A	41.6	N/A	N/A

Table 29: Difference between average mean numeracy scores from baseline to midline 2

Grade	Baseline mean numeracy score	Midline 1 mean numeracy score	Midline 2 mean numeracy score	Difference baseline to midline 1	Difference baseline to midline 2
Primary 5	58.7	54.5	34.8	-4.2	-24.0
Primary 6	61.2	65.1	41.2	3.9	-20.0
Primary 7	36.7	31.9	51.0	-4.8	14.3
Senior 1	53.8	38.1	67.5	-15.7	13.7
Senior 2	50.3	40.9	69.0	-9.4	18.7
Senior 3	71.5	39.6	73.5	-31.9	2.0
Senior 4	N/A	N/A	74.8	N/A	N/A
Senior 5	N/A	N/A	74.4	N/A	N/A
Vocational	N/A	N/A	48.4	N/A	N/A

Learning assessments results by grade and disability type
In Table 30 and Table 31 below, mean scores are presented for the EGRA/SeGRA and EGMA/SeGMA assessments by grade cluster and disability type. Disability categories are aligned to the Washington Group classification structure and were confirmed for each child assessed during ML2. Colour codes are used to show improvement or decline between baseline and midline 2 mean scores within a grade cluster. Green shows where there was an improvement in mean scores within a grade cluster between baseline and midline 2 while orange shows where there was a decline in mean scores within a grade cluster between baseline and midline 2. It is important to note that some disability types in some grade clusters show a zero value. This means that there were no children sampled in those disability types and grade clusters at that evaluation point.

Table 30 shows that there was a decrease of mean reading scores (EGRA/SeGRA) for learners with physical difficulties in P5/P6 grade clusters and among learners with difficulty seeing, communicating and multiple disabilities in P5/P6 grade cluster since baseline. An increase in reading mean scores was observed for learners with multiple difficulties in the P3/P4 cluster, learners with hearing and intellectual difficulties in P5/P6 grade clusters and across all disability types in P7-S5 + Vocational cluster since baseline. It is worth remembering that the data in these grade levels is derived from a limited sample of learners.

In numeracy, Table 31 shows a decrease in mean scores (EGMA/SeGMA) at lower grade clusters (P5-P6) for all disability types assessed at ML2 and an increase in mean scores for all disability types in the higher grades clusters of P7-S5 and Vocational cluster.

Table 30: EGRA/SeGRA scores by disability type

Disability type/ Grade	Mean Scores								
	EGRA/SeGRA Intervention group mean scores by disability type								
	Baseline	Midline 1		Baseline	Midline 1	Midline 2	Baseline	Midline 1	Midline 2
	P3-P4	P3-P4		P5-P6	P5-P6	P5-P6	P7-S3*	P7-S4 + Voc	P7-S5 + Voc
Difficulty hearing	33.8	55.9		47.2	47.8	49.5	50.3	54.9	64.8
Difficulty seeing	43.3	42.1		40.3	51.8	41.9	45.2	59.1	75.3
Physical difficulty	18.5	19.5		41.2	48	25.9	43.8	55.7	69.7
Intellectual difficulty	21.3	33.8		23.1	33	38.2	46.7	41	57.1
Difficulty communicating	26.2	11.7		47.1	54.3	27.0	0	46.1	67.3
Difficulty with self-care	11.6	52.3		33.4	4	0.0	20	46.3	59.9
Multiple difficulties	0	15.8		21.1	32.2	30.9	32.8	48	73.6

Table 31: EGMA/SeGMA scores by disability type

Disability type/ Grade	Mean Scores								
	EGMA/SeGMA Intervention group mean scores by disability type								
	Baseline	Midline 1		Baseline	Midline 1	Midline 2	Baseline	Midline 1	Midline 2
	P3-P4	P3-P4		P5-P6	P5-P6	P5-P6	P7-S3*	P7-S4 + Voc*	P7-S5 + Voc
Difficulty hearing	58.5	63.8		57.5	56.6	48.9	42	42.7	62.4
Difficulty seeing	61.3	57.4		64.9	67.2	53.2	42.3	37.3	67.9
Physical difficulty	39.7	41.7		52.9	62.7	33.5	47.5	39.2	57.8
Intellectual difficulty	40.4	44.9		57.8	52.1	27.8	39.6	22.6	52.8
Difficulty communicating	47.3	67.2		76.9	78.4	50.0	18.8	36	64.6
Difficulty with self-care	16	62.1		44.4	6.4	0.0	44.9	15.9	49.3
Multiple difficulties	0	37.6		43.2	75.1	30.8	47.1	32	67.5

2.4.5 Standardised approach

In the standardised score tables below, learner results are summarised for reading (EGRA/SeGRA) and mathematics (EGMA/SeGMA) assessments by grade level. Results are presented for baseline, midline 1 and midline 2 and include both means and standard deviation calculations. Standardised scores were calculated following the Fund Manager's new recommended procedure.

Depending on the assessments a child took, the following procedure was undertaken to calculate standardised scores:

1. Weight the scores for each subtask
   - The number of items a child answered correctly in each subtask was counted

- This was then divided by the number of total items in each subtask
- The scores were then weighted for each subtask. For example, a child in P3-P4 was assessed using the EGRA, which had a total of 5 subtasks. 100/5 = 20 points (or a 20% weight) per subtask
- The number of items correct per subtask was computed against the weight (20%) for each subtask
2. Calculate the total weighted average
   - The weighted scores for each subtask were then added up to get the total weighted score for each assessment the child took
   - This process was repeated for each assessment and grade level category
3. Calculate the baseline mean for each grade level
4. Calculate the baseline standard deviation for each grade level
5. Calculate the baseline standardised scores for each grade level
   - Subtract the mean of the grade level's baseline score from a learner's total weighted baseline score.
   - Divide the result by the grade level's baseline standard deviation
6. Calculate the midline 1 standardised scores for each grade level
   - Subtract the mean of the grade level's baseline score from a learner's total weighted midline 1 score
   - Divide the result by the grade level's baseline standard deviation

Table 32 below presents the standardised scores for literacy by grade level at baseline, midline 1 and midline 2. At ML2 standardised mean scores dropped from baseline and midline 1 values for students in P4, P5, S2 and S3 while they increased for students in P7 and S1. It is important to note that P7 is a candidate class in Uganda and therefore learners often work extra hard though participating in extra revision or even coaching in anticipation of the primary leaving exams held in the third term of the year.

Table 32: Baseline, Midline 1 and Midline 2 Standardised Literacy Score Outcomes

Grade	Baseline			Midline 1			Midline 2		
	Sample Size	Mean	SD	Sample Size	Mean	SD	Sample Size	Mean	SD
P3	27	0.547	1.00	5	-0.670	0.22			
P4	37	0.493	1.07	27	-0.121	1.11			
P5	67	-0.337	1.03	49	-0.192	1.30	6	-0.8	12.9
P6	58	-0.428	1.06	67	0.122	0.97	21	0.0	18.8
P7	55	-0.202	1.07	50	0.142	1.54	34	0.5	18.2
S1	9	0.094	1.28	28	0.876	1.33	35	0.4	14.0
S2	21	0.048	1.01	10	0.400	0.80	26	-0.1	16.3
S3	2	0.576	0.08	19	-0.442	1.26	33	-11.3	9.1
S4							6	N/A	5.9
S5							6	N/A	9.3
Vocational							31	N/A	19.2

Table 33 presents standardised scores for numeracy by grade level at baseline, midline 1 and midline 2. At Midline 2 standardised numeracy scores dropped for P4, P5 and P6 and increased for P7, S1, S2 and S3.

Table 33: Baseline, Midline 1 and Midline 2 standardised numeracy score outcomes

Grade	Standardised approach values								
	Baseline			Midline 1			Midline 2		
	Sample Size	Mean	SD	Sample Size	Mean	SD	Sample Size	Mean	SD
P3	27	-0.285	1.14	5	-0.462	1.00			
P4	37	-0.389	1.13	27	-0.247	1.02			
P5	67	-0.192	1.09	49	-0.369	1.33	6	-0.9	15.9

P6	58	-0.105	1.07	67	0.172	1.25	21	-0.8	27.1
P7	55	-0.034	1.12	50	-0.640	1.84	34	1.8	22.9
S1	9	0.035	1.23	28	-0.707	1.18	35	0.7	14.2
S2	21	0.058	0.88	10	-0.567	1.18	26	1.6	16.4
S3	2	0.124	1.38	19	-0.970	0.57	33	0.2	11.2
S4							6	N/A	9.4
S5							6	N/A	10.4
Vocational							31	N/A	25.5

In **Error! Reference source not found.**, Table 34 and Table 35, reading results demonstrating gaps in key skills are shown by subtask for each grade level cluster (P5-P6, P7-S4 and vocational respectively). The diagnosis of gaps in numeracy skills for each subtask were divided into bands of achievements as follows:

- Non-learner: 0% of items
- Emergent learner: 1%-40% of items
- Established learner: 41%-80% of items
- Proficient learner: 81%-100% of items

The tables are color-coded to show increases (represented by green) and decreases (represented by orange) between baseline and midline 2 for each grade level in each sub-task. This color-coding helps to show how the percentage of learners in each band of achievement is changing over time. Ideally, the percentage of learners will decrease from the 'non-learner' and 'emergent learners' bands and increase in the 'established learner' and 'proficient learner' bands over time. For midline 2 reading results are only shown for Oral Reading Fluency, Reading comprehension and SeGRA subtask 1 (for the grade levels which took this subtask during earlier evaluations). P3 results are not presented as no students was found at this grade level during midline 2. While some students were found in P4, results for this grade level are not presented due to the small sample. . It would be important for CSU to investigate further into the GWD who are not progressing in school beyond the P4 sample in order to understand what are the main barriers which are preventing their learning journey and what interventions could be put in place to aid their successful transition through the various levels of education.

Table 34 shows results by subtask for P5 and P6. For this cluster results are presented also for SeGRA subtask 1. For these grades we assist to an overall decrease of scores in Oral Reading fluency and an overall improvement in SeGRA results. For P6 results are better, with learners at this grade moving towards the Established and Proficient Learner categories in all subtasks. The same caution expressed for P4 applies also to P5 due to the small sample size at this grade. Additionally, since at this point in the evaluation all learners in the sample are expected to be in P6 and above, it would be important for CSU to investigate the barriers to learning for GWD like these (those who are still in P5 at the ML2) who are not progressing as expected.

Table 34: EGRA and SeGRA results by learner profile categories – P5 and P6

Learner profile categories	Grade	Evaluation Point	Oral Reading Fluency	Reading Comprehension	SeGRA
Non-learner 0% (0 - 5 wpm)	P5	Baseline	19.40%	34.33%	32.84%
	P5	Midline 1	23.08%	30.77%	30.77%
	P5	Midline 2	33.33%	100.00%	0.00%
	P6	Baseline	13.79%	31.03%	25.86%
	P6	Midline 1	11.29%	12.90%	12.90%
	P6	Midline 2	13.64%	40.91%	13.64%
Emergent learner 1% - 40% (6 - 44 wpm)	P5	Baseline	41.79%	37.31%	64.18%
	P5	Midline 1	28.21%	41.03%	58.97%
	P5	Midline 2	50.00%	0.00%	100.00%
	P6	Baseline	34.48%	24.14%	67.24%
	P6	Midline 1	16.13%	22.58%	67.74%

	P6	Midline 2	18.18%	40.91%	54.55%
Established learner 41% - 80% (44 - 80 wpm)	P5	Baseline	34.33%	22.39%	2.99%
	P5	Midline 1	33.33%	25.64%	10.26%
	P5	Midline 2	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%
	P6	Baseline	41.40%	36.20%	6.90%
	P6	Midline 1	37.10%	56.45%	17.74%
	P6	Midline 2	18.18%	18.18%	27.27%
Proficient learner 81% - 100% (81 - 100 wpm)	P5	Baseline	4.48%	5.97%	0.00%
	P5	Midline 1	15.38%	2.56%	0.00%
	P5	Midline 2	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	P6	Baseline	10.34%	8.62%	0.00%
	P6	Midline 1	35.48%	8.06%	1.60%
	P6	Midline 2	50.00%	0.00%	4.55%

Table 35 shows EGRA and SeGRA results for the learners in the upper grades, from P7 to S5 and Vocational. In P7 we see a slightly decrease in the results where more learners are "Non-learners" in the reading comprehension subtask than at midline 1 or baseline and a decrease in the percentage of learners at "Established" and "Proficient" levels both for reading comprehension and for SeGRA subtask 1.

For the secondary students, the results are slightly better, with an increase of the percentage of learners in the last two categories (established and proficient) on all subtasks. This might be in line with the fact that secondary students are often attending boarding schools where the catch up on lost learning might happen at a quicker rate in this context.

Table 35: EGRA and SeGRA results by learner profile categories – P7 to S5 and Vocational

Learner profile categories	Grade	Evaluation point	Oral Reading Fluency	Reading Comprehension	SeGRA
Non-learner 0% (0 - 5 wpm)	P7	Baseline	4%	7%	15%
		Midline 1	7%	9%	13%
		Midline 2	3%	24%	15%
	S1	Baseline	0%	22%	11%
		Midline 1	15%	15%	7%
		Midline 2	0%	6%	0%
	S2	Baseline	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	4%	15%	0%
	S3	Baseline	0%	0%	50%
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	0%	3%	0%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	0%	0%	0%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 2	0%	0%	0%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	100%	100%	0%
		Midline 2	10%	29%	6%
Emergent learner 1% - 40% (6 - 44 wpm)	P7	Baseline	15%	35%	64%
		Midline 1	22%	29%	47%
		Midline 2	18%	47%	24%
	S1	Baseline	0%	33%	44%
		Midline 1	4%	7%	26%
		Midline 2	3%	51%	11%

	S2	Baseline	0%	14%	29%
		Midline 1	10%	0%	20%
		Midline 2	4%	46%	19%
	S3	Baseline	0%	50%	0%
		Midline 1	0%	21%	37%
		Midline 2	0%	45%	15%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	50%	0%
		Midline 2	0%	50%	0%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 2	0%	50%	17%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	0%	100%
		Midline 2	19%	52%	52%
Established learner 41% - 80% (44 - 80 wpm)	P7	Baseline	42%	44%	20%
		Midline 1	33%	44%	36%
		Midline 2	29%	26%	35%
	S1	Baseline	22%	44%	44%
		Midline 1	19%	52%	56%
		Midline 2	14%	26%	31%
	S2	Baseline	29%	43%	62%
		Midline 1	10%	90%	80%
		Midline 2	4%	19%	31%
	S3	Baseline	50%	50%	0%
		Midline 1	16%	74%	53%
		Midline 2	3%	33%	12%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	0%	50%	0%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 2	0%	33%	17%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	29%	19%	10%
Proficient learner 81% - 100% (81 - 100 wpm)	P7	Baseline	40%	15%	2%
		Midline 1	38%	18%	4%
		Midline 2	50%	3%	26%
	S1	Baseline	78%	0%	0%
		Midline 1	63%	26%	11%
		Midline 2	83%	17%	57%
	S2	Baseline	71%	43%	10%
		Midline 1	80%	10%	0%
		Midline 2	88%	19%	50%
	S3	Baseline	50%	0%	50%
		Midline 1	84%	5%	11%
		Midline 2	97%	18%	73%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	50%	50%
		Midline 2	100%	0%	100%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 2	100%	17%	67%

	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Midline 1	0%	0%	0%
		Midline 2	42%	0%	32%

In Table 36 and Table 37 below, numeracy results demonstrating gaps in key skills are shown by subtask for each grade level cluster (P5-P6, P7-S4 and vocational). The diagnosis of gaps in numeracy skills for each subtask were divided into bands of achievements as follows:

- Non-learner: 0% of items
- Emergent learner: 1%-40% of items
- Established learner: 41%-80% of items
- Proficient learner: 81%-100% of items

The tables are color-coded to show increases (represented by green) and decreases (represented by orange) between baseline and midline 1 for each grade level in each sub-task. This color-coding helps to show how the percentage of learners in each band of achievement is changing over time. Ideally, the percentage of learners will decrease from the 'non-learner' and 'emergent learners' bands and increase in the 'established learner' and 'proficient learner' bands over time. For Mathematics, results are presented for Word Problems, Missing Numbers, Addition and Subtraction. SeGMA subtask 1 results are presented only for the grades which took it over the course of all the evaluations.

Table 36 presents EGMA and SeGMA results for the P5-P6 cluster. For P5 we can see that the majority of the learners are at Emergent level or below for the Missing Number and Subtraction subtasks. The percentage of students at Established level in the subtraction subtask decreased by ten points from midline 1. Half of the learners are at Established level on word problems, however the percentage of learners at proficient level decreased from midline 1. Also, at P6 values decreased since midline 1 with more learners at Emergent and Established levels.

Table 36 - EGMA and SeGMA results by learner profile categories - P5-P6

Learner profile categories	Grade	Evaluation Point	Word Problems	Missing Numbers	Addition	Subtraction	SeGMA
Non-learner 0% (0 - 5 wpm)	P5	Baseline	8.96%	13.43%	5.97%	10.45%	32.84%
		Midline 1	17.95%	12.82%	7.69%	15.38%	28.21%
		Midline 2	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%
	P6	Baseline	6.90%	8.62%	5.17%	6.90%	15.52%
		Midline 1	6.45%	6.45%	8.06%	4.84%	14.52%
		Midline 2	13.64%	13.64%	9.09%	9.09%	13.64%
Emergent learner 1% - 40% (6 - 44 wpm)	P5	Baseline	8.96%	22.39%	14.93%	28.00%	67.16%
		Midline 1	20.51%	25.64%	15.38%	28.21%	71.79%
		Midline 2	33.33%	50.00%	33.33%	66.67%	83.33%
	P6	Baseline	17.24%	39.66%	5.17%	26.00%	81.03%
		Midline 1	12.90%	22.58%	3.23%	16.13%	64.52%
		Midline 2	36.36%	50.00%	22.73%	45.45%	72.73%
Established learner 41% - 80% (44 - 80 wpm)	P5	Baseline	59.70%	44.78%	43.28%	51.00%	0.00%
		Midline 1	48.72%	38.46%	35.90%	48.72%	0.00%
		Midline 2	50.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%
	P6	Baseline	50.00%	43.10%	34.00%	52.00%	3.45%
		Midline 1	67.74%	41.94%	41.94%	46.77%	19.35%
		Midline 2	40.91%	27.27%	27.27%	27.27%	9.09%
Proficient learner 81% -	P5	Baseline	22.39%	19.40%	35.82%	10.00%	0.00%
		Midline 1	12.82%	23.08%	41.03%	7.69%	0.00%
		Midline 2	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%

100% (81 - 100 wpm)		Baseline	25.86%	8.62%	55.17%	16.00%	0.00%
		Midline 1	12.90%	29.03%	46.77%	32.26%	1.61%
	P6	Midline 2	9.09%	9.09%	40.91%	18.18%	4.55%

Table 37 presents results by subtask for the last cluster of learners, from P7 to S5 and Vocational. For this group of learners' results for word problems and SeGMA subtask 1 are presented and compared with baseline and midline 1 results. For the other subtasks performed at midline 2, only values for this evaluation are presented as the learners in this cluster did not take the remaining EGMA subtasks during previous evaluations. The table shows an overall improvement of results in word problems subtask for secondary school learners. P7 students are still struggling on the subtask even if the Word problems are set at P5 level. For the SeGMA subtask administered at midline 2, results are satisfactory for secondary learners, where the majority is to be found at "Established" level. Looking at the results for the other subtasks, it is to be noted that P5 students are still struggling with subtractions, with 16.6% being categorised as "Emergent" on this subtask (as well as 25% of Vocational students).

Table 37: EGMA and SeGMA results by learner profile category - P7 - S5 and Vocational

Learner profile categories	Grade	Evaluation point	Word Problems	SeGMA Subtask 1	Missing Numbers	Addition	Subtraction
Non-learner 0% (0 - 5 wpm)	P7	Baseline	0.00%	3.64%			
		Midline 1	6.67%	22.22%			
		Midline 2	5.88%	2.94%	5.88%	5.88%	5.88%
	S1	Baseline	0.00%	11.11%			
		Midline 1	14.81%	22.22%			
		Midline 2	0.00%	2.86%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	S2	Baseline	0.00%	4.76%			
		Midline 1	0.00%	10.00%			
		Midline 2	0.00%	3.85%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	S3	Baseline	0.00%	50.00%			
		Midline 1	5.20%	5.26%			
		Midline 2	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	0.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 2	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	50.00%	50.00%			
		Midline 2	6.45%	16.13%	6.45%	3.23%	16.13%
Emergent learner 1% - 40% (6 - 44 wpm)	P7	Baseline	1.82%	76.36%			
		Midline 1	13.33%	77.78%			
		Midline 2	23.53%	79.41%	23.53%	5.88%	29.41%
	S1	Baseline	0.00%	33.33%			
		Midline 1	0.00%	77.78%			
		Midline 2	8.57%	34.29%	5.71%	2.86%	5.71%
	S2	Baseline	4.76%	23.81%			
		Midline 1	0.00%	90.00%			
		Midline 2	15.38%	19.23%	15.38%	3.85%	3.85%
	S3	Baseline	0.00%	50.00%			
		Midline 1	10.53%	94.74%			
		Midline 2	6.06%	24.24%	6.06%	0.00%	0.00%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	0.00%	100.00%			

Category	Group	Assessment					
		Midline 2	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	N/A	50.00%			
		Midline 2	0.00%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	50.00%	50.00%			
		Midline 2	29.03%	48.39%	29.03%	12.90%	25.81%
Established learner 41% - 80% (44 - 80 wpm)	P7	Baseline	52.73%	20.00%			
		Midline 1	55.56%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	50.00%	17.65%	50.00%	38.24%	41.18%
	S1	Baseline	33.33%	56.00%			
		Midline 1	62.96%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	65.71%	62.86%	65.71%	17.14%	37.14%
	S2	Baseline	47.62%	71.43%			
		Midline 1	70.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	34.62%	69.23%	34.62%	26.92%	53.85%
	S3	Baseline	50.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 1	63.16%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	36.36%	66.67%	36.36%	27.27%	36.36%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	100.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%	50.00%	33.33%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 2	33.33%	50.00%	33.33%	50.00%	16.67%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	0.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	45.16%	35.48%	45.16%	45.16%	32.26%
Proficient learner 81% - 100% (81 - 100 wpm)	P7	Baseline	45.45%	0.00%			
		Midline 1	24.44%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	20.59%	0.00%	20.59%	50.00%	23.53%
	S1	Baseline	66.67%	0.00%			
		Midline 1	22.22%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	25.71%	0.00%	28.57%	80.00%	57.14%
	S2	Baseline	47.62%	0.00%			
		Midline 1	30.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	50.00%	7.69%	50.00%	69.23%	42.31%
	S3	Baseline	50.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 1	21.05%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	57.58%	9.09%	57.58%	72.73%	63.64%
	S4	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	0.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	83.33%	16.67%	83.33%	50.00%	66.67%
	S5	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 2	66.67%	33.33%	66.67%	50.00%	66.67%
	Vocational	Baseline	N/A	N/A			
		Midline 1	0.00%	0.00%			
		Midline 2	19.35%	0.00%	19.35%	38.71%	25.81%

4.2   Functional learning assessments

Studies have found an assessment framework that focuses on both standardised measures of formal mathematical learning (foundational skills) and contextualised measures of children's everyday mathematics (functional skills) can provide a completer and more nuanced picture of children's knowledge and taken together can inform the development of curricular materials and teacher training focused on early learning.

This study explored an innovative assessment framework for measuring children's formal and informal mathematical and reading knowledge using functional and foundational tests.

At ML2, we explored how functional assessments, using activities and content in children's natural settings and tasks derived from their real-world literacy and maths experiences, can illuminate literacy and mathematical knowledge and skills that may otherwise remain hidden when measured using foundational tests like EGRA and EGMA. This framework draws from mixed methods studies which focus on capturing the informal literacy and mathematical skills that children develop outside of school in various contexts (Guberman, 1996; Nasir, 2000; Sitabkhan, 2009; Sitabkhan, 2015).

2.4.6   Reading

At ML2, very few learners were non-readers across all grades and disability types in the subtasks evaluated in the functional reading assessment (less than 2% were non-readers, on average) as seen in Figure 1 and Figure 2 below. Reading comprehension for the two functional texts (an invitation and a daily schedule) had the greatest proportion of non-learners – still at only 1% on average across both disability types and grades – with learners in vocational school demonstrating the lowest scores overall. These girls with disabilities are mostly primary school graduates in our sample, and they have consistently presented some of the lowest scores across all the assessments administered at ML2.

Findings indicated that learners could accurately recognise everyday vocabulary words and decode new words they did not know using their knowledge of the letter-sound system and alphabetic principle – both of which are key foundational reading skills applied here to a functional task. Interestingly, learners in lower secondary had the greatest percentage of non-readers across the reading comprehension subtasks, even though their grade levels were far above the level of the vocabulary words in the functional texts.

Overall, findings for non-learners in the functional and foundational vocabulary subtasks mirror one another, with few learners scoring zero on those subtasks. Reading comprehension scores on the foundational and functional assessments were equally aligned, with more non-readers than any other subtask.

This points to some gaps in their ability to read for meaning and accurately process key vocabulary and concepts within simple functional texts, which might be a predictor of later reading difficulty as they progress through school.
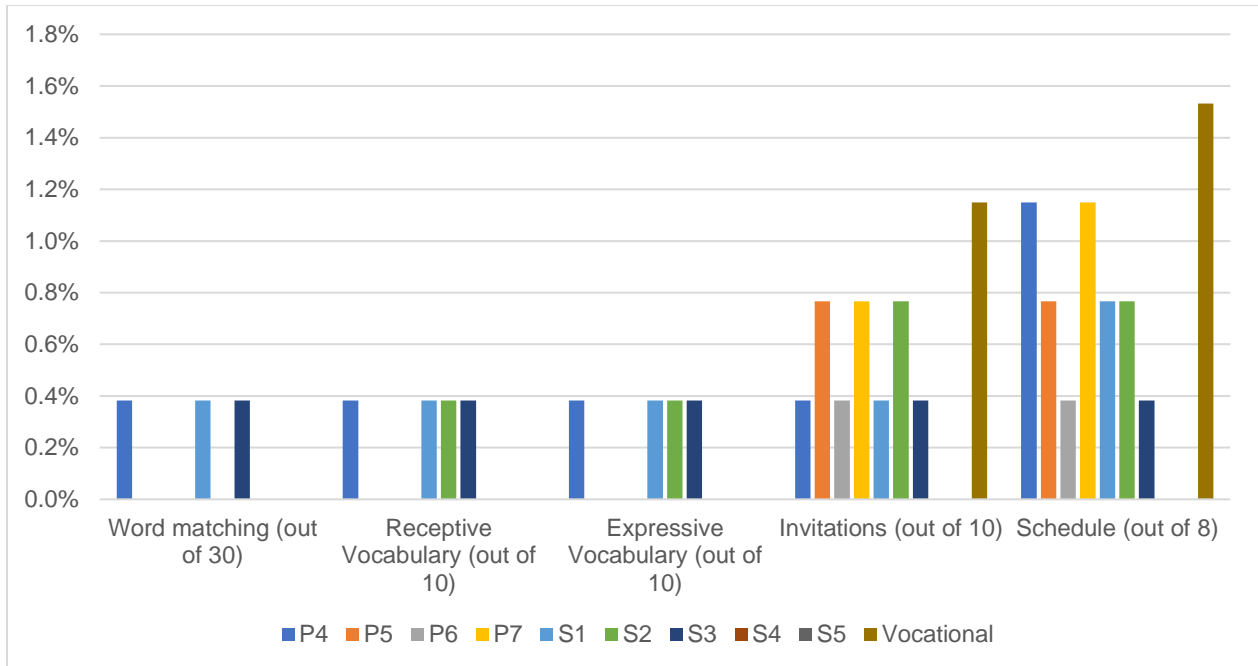
Figure 1: Zero Scores by Functional Literacy Subtask and Grade

Figure 2: Zero Scores by Functional Literacy Subtask and Disability

Overall, learners scored well in the functional literacy assessment, with high mean scores across all disability types in receptive and expressive vocabulary and word recognition subtasks. They performed moderately well in subtasks related to functional text reading and comprehension, getting around half of those responses correct (60% and 47%, as shown in the table below). Learners were consistent in their performance, with limited deviation in ability by individuals and across disability categories.

Table 38: Functional literacy subtask means - excluding zero scores

Subtask	Mean	Std. Err.
Word Matching (out of 30)	24.0	0.552
Receptive vocabulary (out of 10)	9.7	0.070
Expressive vocabulary (out of 10)	7.4	0.102
Functional text reading comprehension - Invitation (out of 10)	6.0	0.163
Functional text reading comprehension - Schedule (out of 10)	4.7	0.140

Interestingly, learners with communication disabilities and those with multiple disabilities, who scored worse than their counterparts on EGRA and SeGRA, did better, on the whole, than other learners on the functional test, with perfect scores on the receptive vocabulary subtask and higher mean scores in word matching and expressive vocabulary. Notably, their scores in functional text reading and comprehension surpassed those of other learners, perhaps indicating a greater ability to comprehend and make use of the practical, everyday texts that learners encounter in their lives (rather than the passage-style texts they encounter in formal reading assessments like EGRA). Learners with intellectual disabilities performed about the same, on average, as those with hearing or visual impairments, demonstrating a high degree of consistency across all subtasks in each disability category.

Table 39: Functional literacy subtask means by disability category - excluding zero scores

Subtask	Hearing	Visual	Physical	Intellectual	Communication	Multiple
Word Matching (out of 30)	24.4	24.2	24.2	22.6	22.5	26.4
Receptive vocabulary (out of 10)	9.6	9.9	9.8	9.3	9.4	10.0
Expressive vocabulary (out of 10)	7.6	7.4	7.5	7.2	7.6	8.0
Functional text reading comprehension - Invitation (out of 10)	5.9	6.4	5.6	5.0	7.4	5.2
Functional text reading comprehension - Schedule (out of 10)	4.7	5.0	4.2	3.9	6.3	3.8
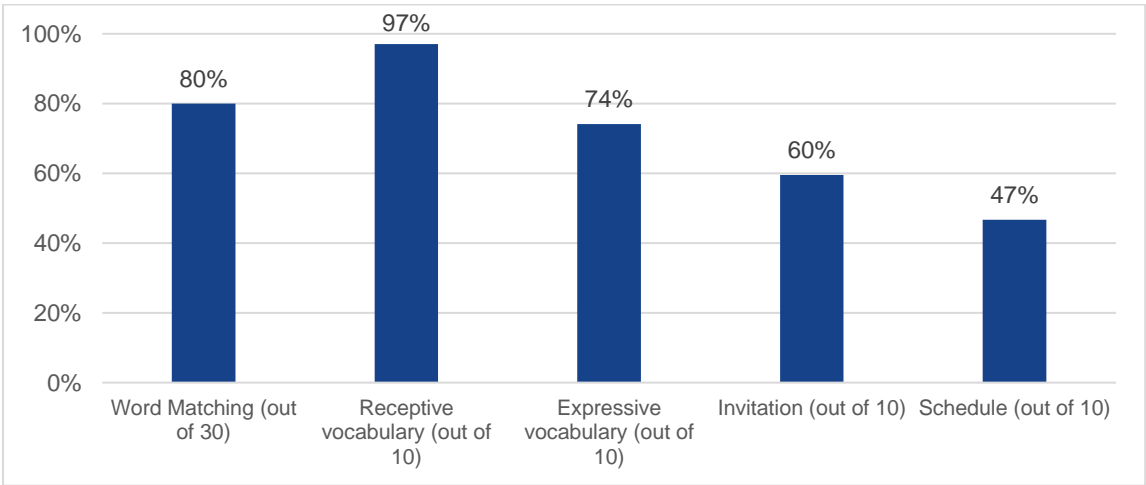
Figure 3: Percentage Score by Functional Literacy Subtask (out of total)

Reading accuracy by disability and grade: Learners had high mean scores across most functional assessment subtasks, with learners on average answering between 75% to 95% of questions correctly in the word matching, receptive and expressive vocabulary subtasks. They answered around 50% of the functional text reading and comprehension questions correctly, however, except for learners with communication impairments, who scored better across all these subtasks. Learners had a high degree of

accuracy in the items they attempted in each subtask except for text comprehension, where they answered correctly about half of the time.

Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering the majority of items in the functional reading assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for reading to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong literacy.

Learners in lower primary were less likely to produce correct answers for the items they attempted, as well as to attempt and get correct responses in the oral reading and comprehension subtasks.

Figure 4: Percentage Correct by Disability (out of total)
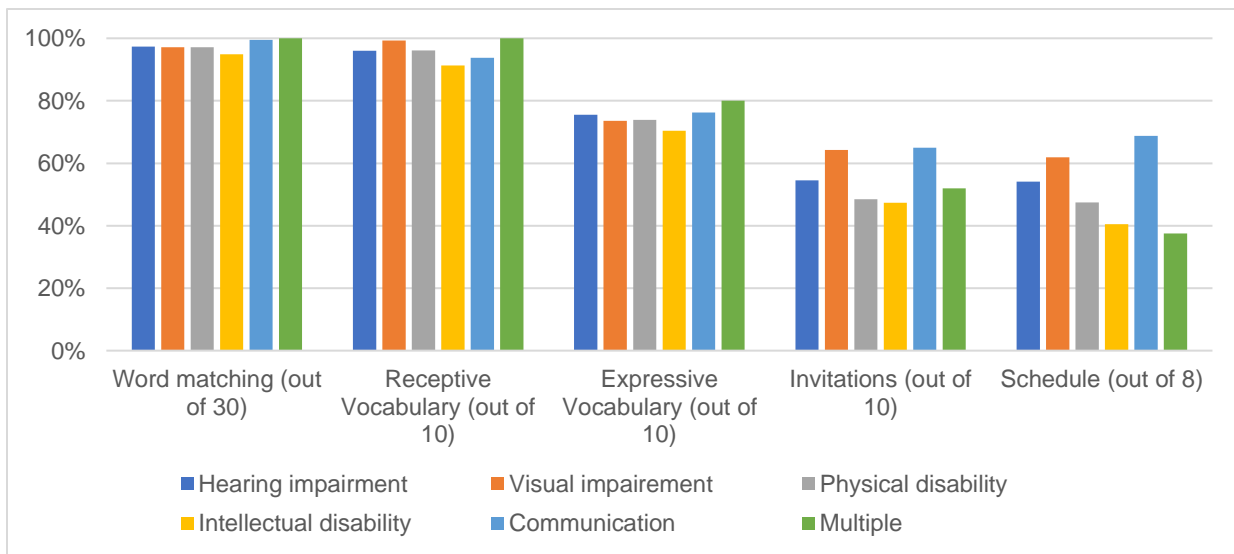
Figure 5: Percentage Correct by Disability (out of attempted)
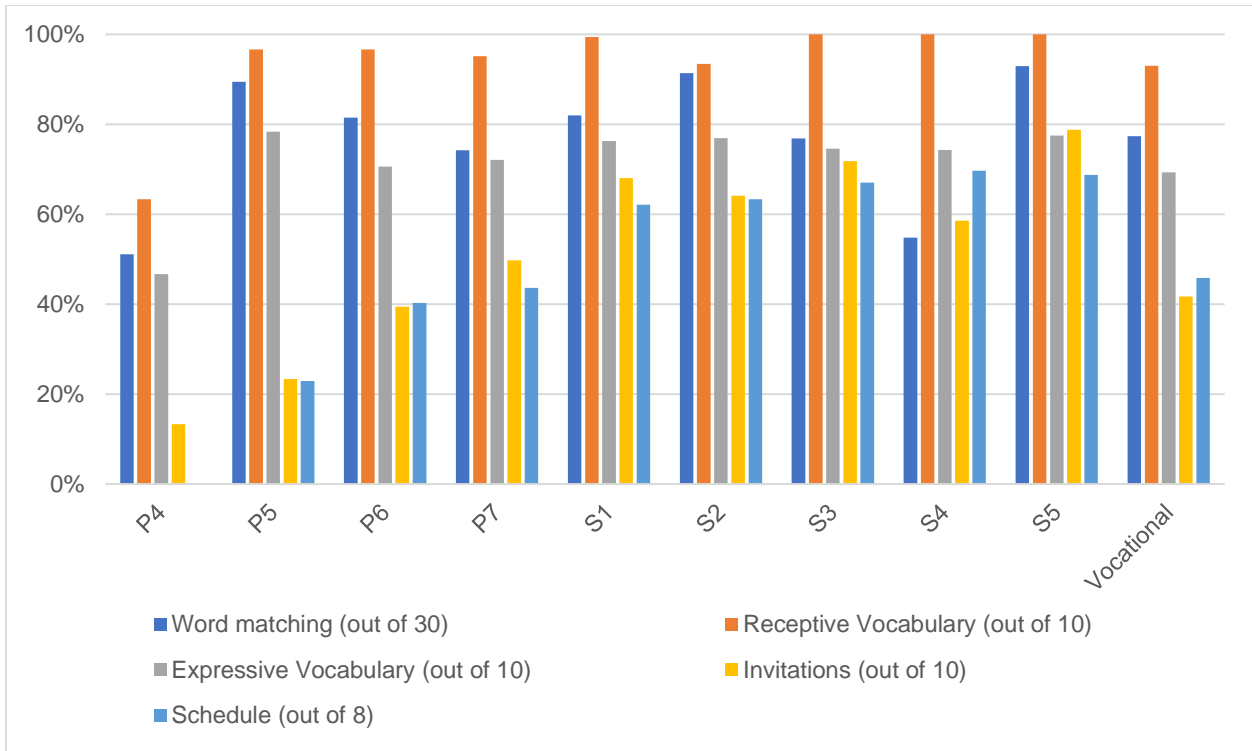
Figure 6: Percentage Correct by Grade (out of total)
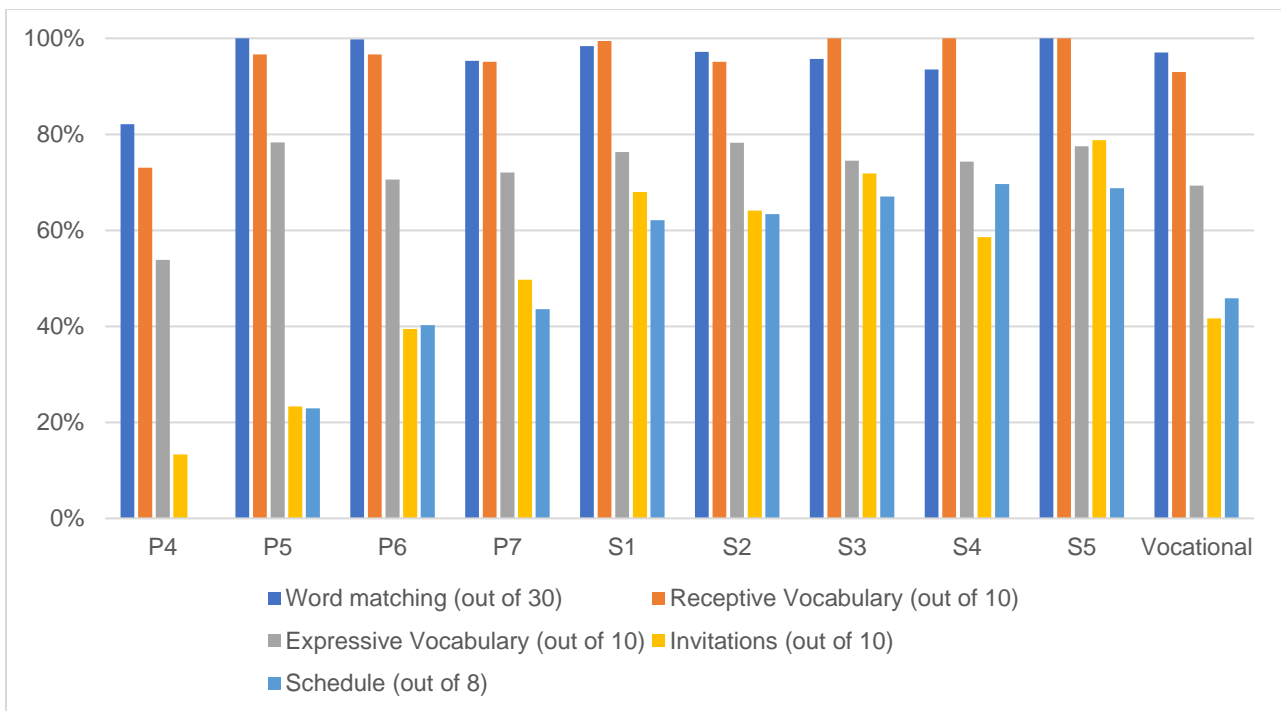
Figure 7: Percentage Correct by Grade (out of attempted)

2.4.7 Functional maths

Innumerate learners by disability and grade: At ML2, very few learners were innumerate across all grades and disability types in the subtasks evaluated as part of the functional maths assessment. Less than 5% of learners were innumerate, on average, across all subtasks except the market transactions activity, which asked learners to calculate costs for food items and give the correct change. This conceptual, applied skill had the greatest proportion of non-learners – ranging from 7-12% on average – with learners in P7 and vocational school demonstrating the lowest scores overall.

The girls with disabilities in vocational school are mostly primary school graduates in our sample, and they have consistently presented some of the lowest scores across all the assessments administered at ML2. The reasons for the poorer performance in P7 students could be due to a range of factors, including their limited exposure to conceptual maths tasks given their narrow focus at this grade on procedural maths tasks related to their primary leaving exam.

Findings indicated that learners could accurately recognise and perform everyday maths tasks and processes accurately regarding patternmaking and division – both of which are key foundational maths skills applied here to functional tasks. Interestingly, learners in P7 had the greatest percentage of non-learners across the market transactions subtasks, even though their grade levels are far above the level of the maths skills included in the assessment.

Overall, findings for non-learners in the functional and foundational maths subtasks mirror one another, with few learners scoring zero on those subtasks. Conceptual maths scores on the foundational and functional assessments were equally aligned (e.g., number problems with market transactions), with more non-learners than any other subtask.

This points to some gaps in the learners' ability to apply procedural skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to conceptual knowledge applied to functional, everyday tasks, which might be a predictor of later maths difficulty as they progress through school.
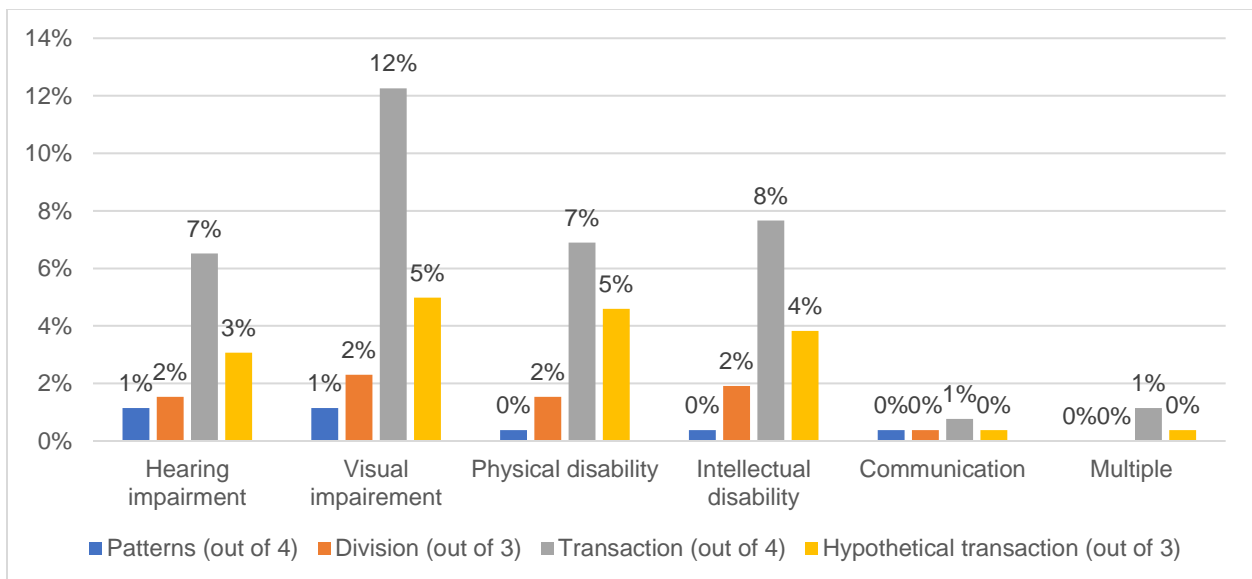
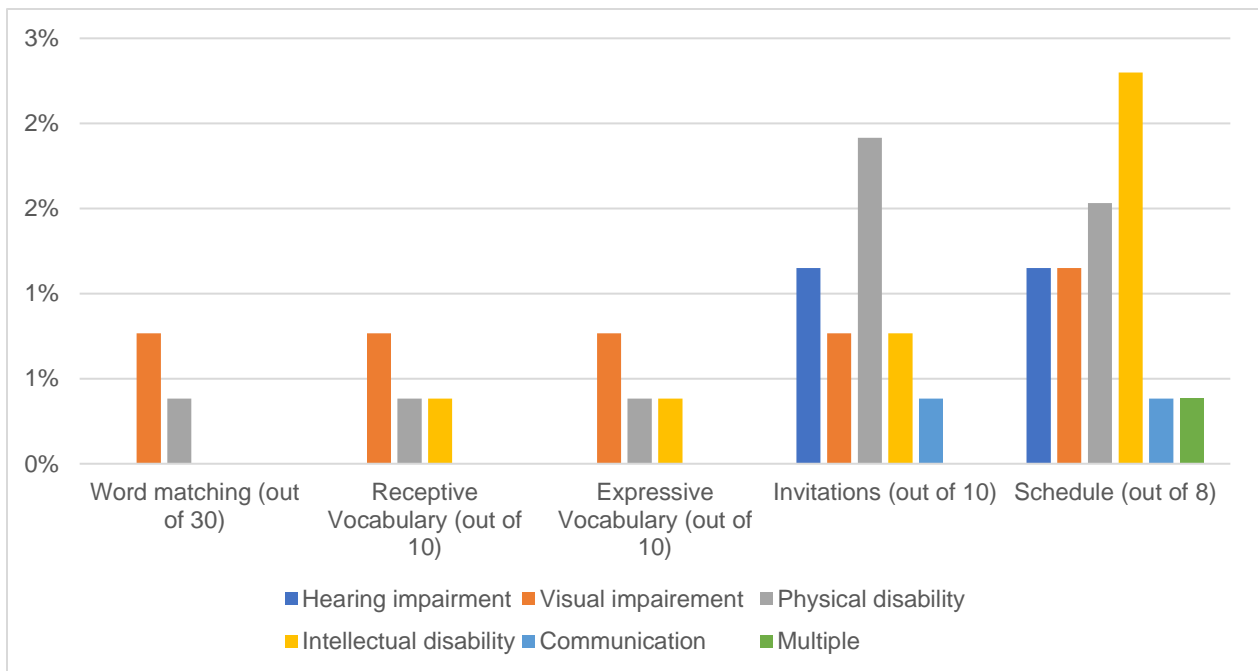***Figure 8: Zero Scores by Functional Numeracy Subtask and Disability***
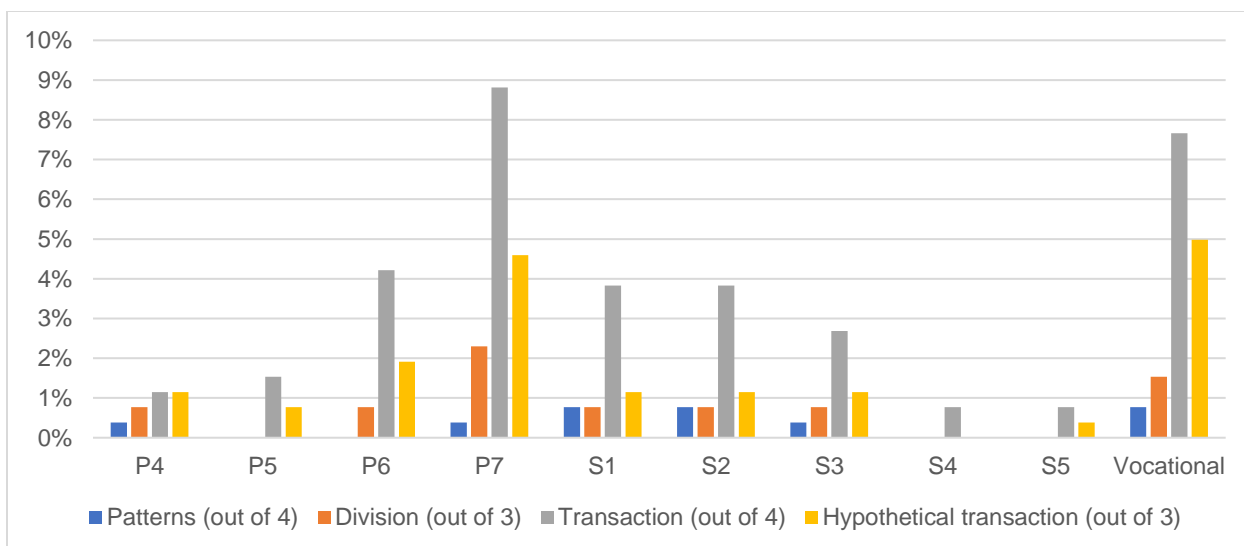
Figure 9: Zero Scores by Functional Numeracy Subtask and Grade

Mean scores in maths: Learners scored well, overall, in the functional numeracy assessment, with high mean scores across all disability types in the pattern extension and division subtasks. They performed moderately well in the market transaction subtasks, related to functional computation and monetary calculations in actual and hypothetical tasks, getting almost two-thirds of those responses correct, or between 63%-65%. Learners were consistent in their performance, with very limited deviation in scores and ability by individuals and across disability categories.

Learners with visual impairments consistently performed the best overall across all subtasks, followed by those with hearing impairments and children with physical or intellectual disabilities. Notably, learners' scores in functional maths were generally stronger than their foundational maths skills, indicating that they could more accurately apply their mathematical knowledge to everyday tasks, perhaps indicating a greater ability to comprehend and perform the practical, everyday maths calculations that they encounter in their lives (rather than the equations and exercises they encounter in formal maths assessments like the EGMA).

Table 40: Functional numeracy subtask means - excluding zero scores

Subtask	Mean	Std. Err.
Pattern extension (out of 5)	3.4	0.049
Division (out of 3)	2.2	0.049
Market transactions 1 - actual (out of 4)	2.6	0.061
Market transactions 2 – hypothetical (out of 3)	1.9	0.059

Table 41: Functional literacy subtask means by disability category - excluding zero scores

Subtask	Hearing	Visual	Physical	Intellectual	Communication	Multiple
Pattern extension (out of 5)	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.3	2.8
Division (out of 3)	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.2
Market transactions 1 (out of 4)	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.5
Market transactions 2 (out of 3)	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.0

Maths accuracy by disability and grade: Learners had high mean scores across most functional maths subtasks, with learners on average answering between 60% to 90% of questions correctly in the pattern extension and division subtasks. They answered around 50% of the functional market transactions

questions correctly, however, except for learners with communication and visual impairments, who scored better overall in these subtasks.

Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering the majority of items in the functional maths assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for mathematics to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong numeracy. This is critically important, as the ultimate goal of any in-school mathematics programme is to prepare students for life after formal education as they enter the workforce and apply their skills to their jobs.

Learners with intellectual and physical disabilities were less likely to produce correct answers for the items they attempted, as well as to attempt and get correct responses in the market transaction subtasks.

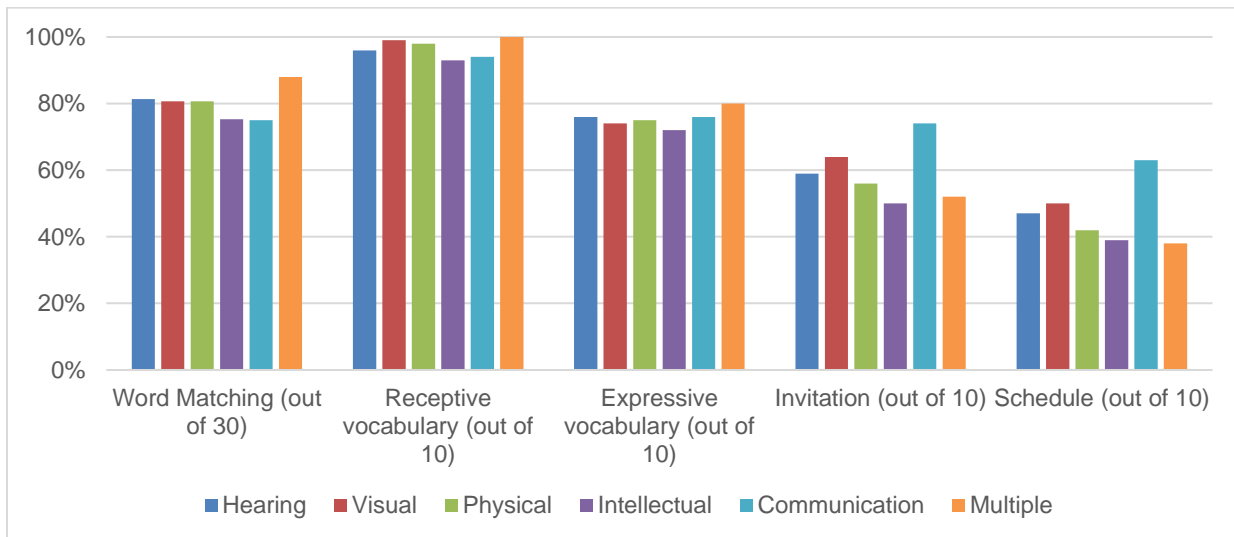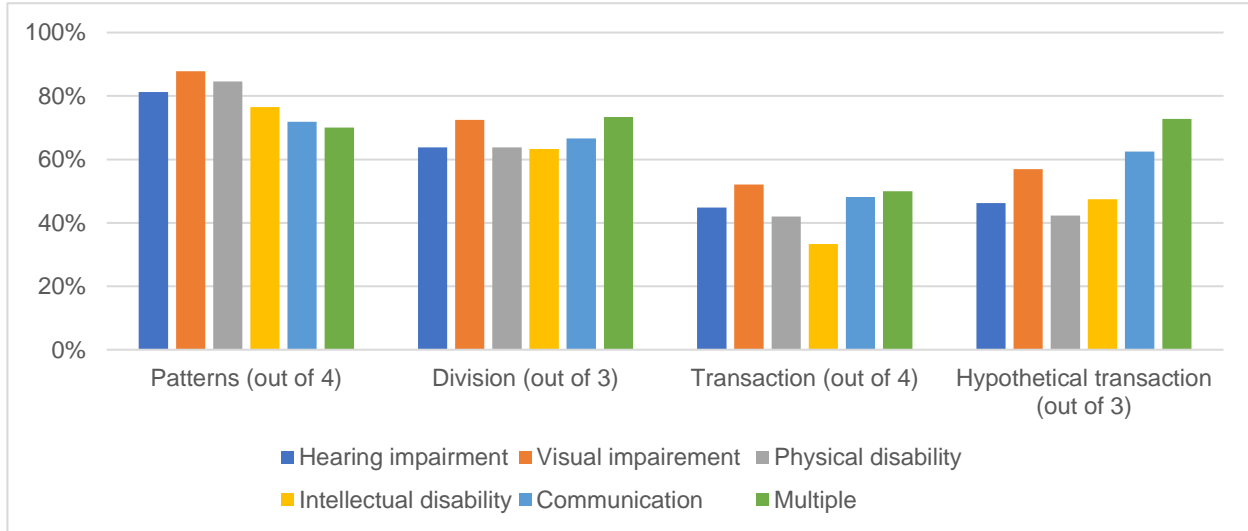*Figure 10: Percentage Correct by Functional Numeracy Subtask and Disability (out of total)*
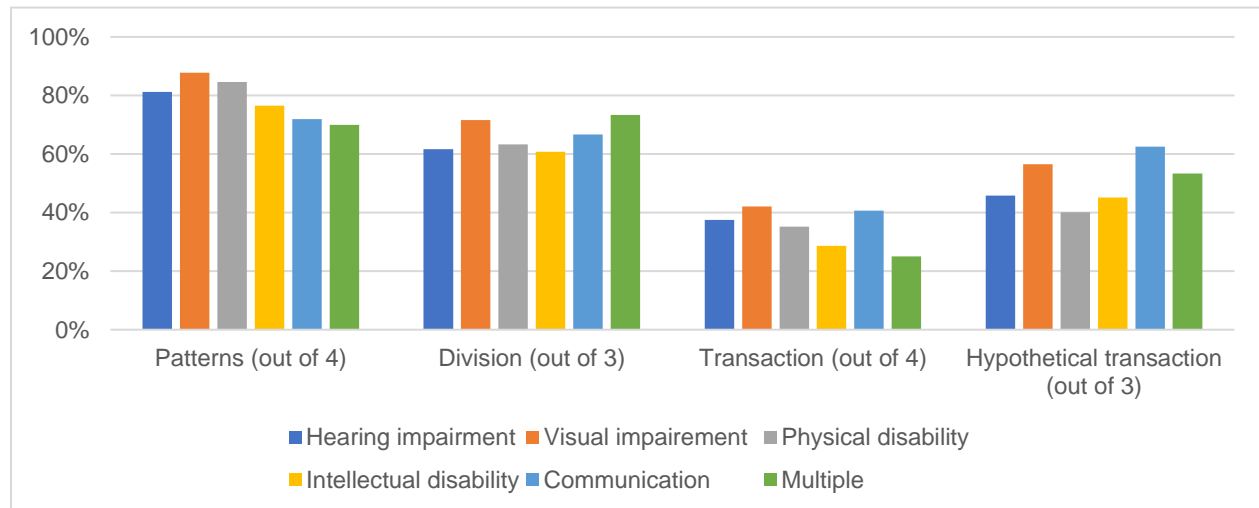
Figure 11: Percentage Correct by Functional Numeracy Subtask
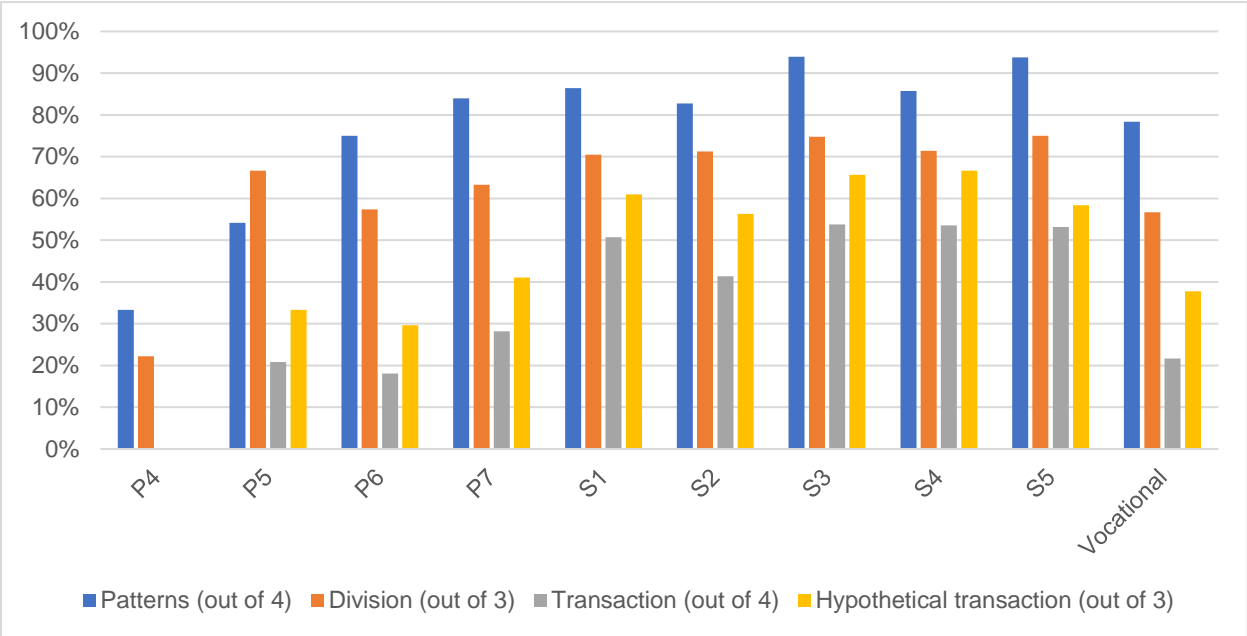
Figure 12: Percentage Correct by Functional Numeracy and Grade (out of total)
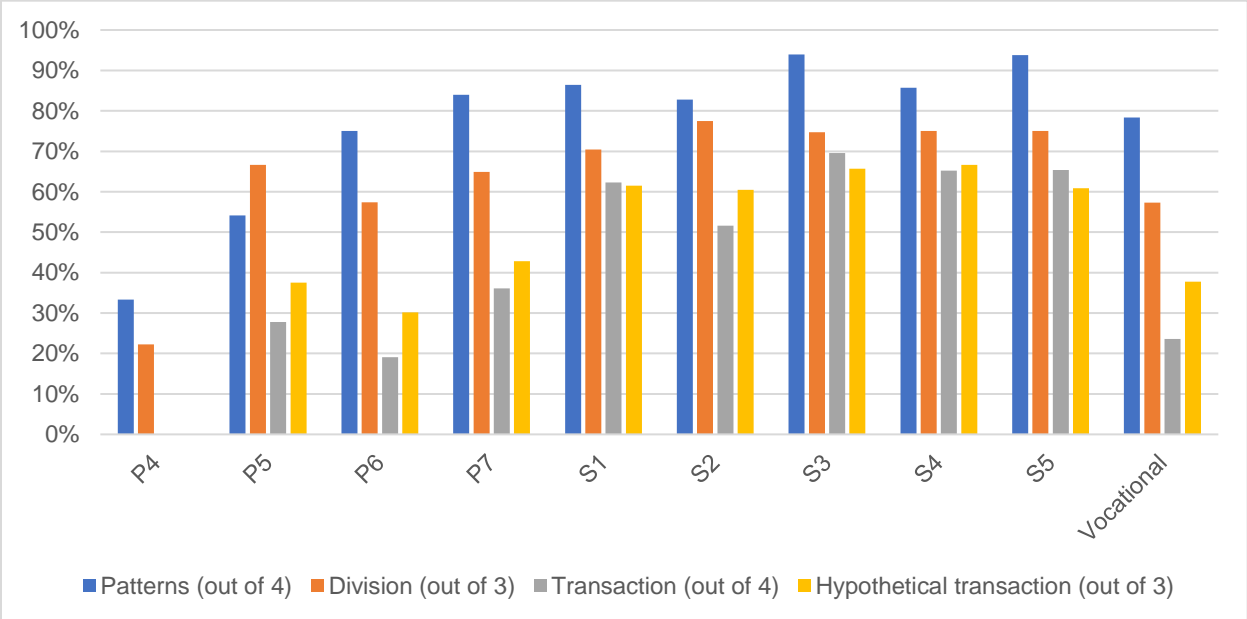
Figure 13: Percentage Correct by Functional Numeracy and Grade (out of attempted)

5   Outcome 2: Transition

To examine the research questions pertaining to transition, the study explored the demographics and experiences of the GWD during the period between ML1 and ML2: 2019 to 2022. This period represents exceptional circumstances as it corresponds to the time schools were closed in Uganda due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The study explores poverty and deprivation levels and how support from CSU, including bursaries, helped alleviate this to enable girls with disabilities to attend and attain education from primary to secondary on to tertiary and vocational education. Between 2019 and 2022, CSU pivoted its

implementation to respond to the emerging needs of learners during the pandemic including switching from bursaries to cash transfers. By 2022 CSU had moved back to the original implementation through the provision of bursaries. In this section the study examines whether the cash transfer had an impact on the retention of girls with disabilities during the pandemic and their subsequent return to school.

5.1   Learner demographic information

Grade level progression and COVID-19 school closures: Schools in Uganda closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19, just after the new academic year (which follows the calendar year) began in February 2020. Uganda's schools remained closed to all grade levels, except exam candidates and sub-candidates in upper primary and secondary[13], for nearly two years (2020 and 2021). Schools reopened to all learners in Uganda in January 2022.

Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) issued guidelines for the reopening of schools, stipulating that all returning learners in primary and secondary would be promoted to the next grade level from the class they were in when schools closed in 2020 (e.g., a learner in grade 5 in 2020 would start grade 6 in 2022). As such, we expected all returning learners in our sample who successfully transitioned from their 2019 grade level (where they were at ML1) to the next grade in 2020 (before lockdown) to be found two grade levels above their ML1 grade level when ML2 was carried out in April 2022. Table 42 below outlines the expected transition pathways following the MoES' guidelines.

Table 42: Expected transition from baseline to ML2

Baseline 2018	Midline 1 2019	Midline 2 2022
P3	P4	P6
P4	P5	P7
P5	P6	S1, vocational school*
P6	P7	S2
P7	S1	S3
S1	S2	S4
S2	S3	S5, vocational school*
S3	S4	S6
S4	S5	Working, vocational school, university

Some learners may leave formal school after completing P7 or S4; vocational school is considered a successful transition at that stage. Further details are included in the transition section of the report.

At ML2, learners were asked to self-report their grade level in March 2020, before schools closed, while their actual grade level at ML2 was tracked by the evaluation team. According to self-reported data, some learners did successfully transition in March 2020 from their ML1 grade and at ML2 these learners appear to have transitioned successfully to the next grade. However, learners in lower primary (P3-P4) and those in P7 and above present mixed transition outcomes, with numerous learners in these grades not meeting transition targets in either March 2020 or at ML2 in 2022.

Additionally, in Uganda nearly all learners at primary level are day scholars, which changes at secondary level as there are few secondary schools and they are often far from learners' homes. This is significant for the ML2 study as only 65 learners (32%) were in primary school, while 136 (68%) were in secondary or vocational schools. At ML 2 it was found that about 19% of the 136 girls who have transitioned to secondary school attend schools not supported by CSU and therefore there is a limitation in the assessment of the attribution of the programme as these girls are not reached by CSU's school-based support (teacher training and more inclusive school environment).

Table 43 shows the number of girls attending day or boarding schools disaggregated by school type. The findings show that most learners are in day school (56.7%) compared to boarding school (43.3%). As is the

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[13] Learners that are going to sit for their primary (P7) or secondary (S4 and S6) leaving exams

custom in Uganda, most girls with disability (61%) in boarding school are in secondary school. Table 44 provides information on whether girls are in the appropriate grade for their age and relays this information as a comparison between all schools visited in this evaluation and those specifically supported by CSU. Of the 118 girls with disabilities who are not in the correct grade for their age, 88% (104) of them are attending a school receiving direct support from CSU. Of the remaining 83 who are enrolled in the correct grade for their age, 74% (62) are attending a CSU supported school.

Table 43 - Distribution of sampled GWD between day and boarding schools

Type of school	Primary	Secondary	Total	Percent
Day school	61	53	114	56.7%
Boarding school	4	83	87	43.3%
Total	*65*	*136*	*201*	*100%*

Table 44 - Correct vs Incorrect Grade per Age

Correct age for grade	All schools		CSU supported schools	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
No	118	59%	104	62.7%
Yes	83	41%	62	37.3%
Total	*201*	*100%*	*166*	*100%*

5.2   Transition from baseline grade to ML2 grade

Table 45 outlines the potential transition pathways through education of the cohort of girls with disabilities being supported through the CSU GEC-T project. These were identified at the project design stage and have been updated for ML2 based on understanding of successful transitions at key points in a child's education – key stages being from P7 to S1, S4 to S6 and S6 onwards. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is now included as a successful transition at each of these key stages. Pathways that are linked to one another in this analysis are shaded with the same colour i.e., in-school progression and remaining in the same grade/being demoted.

As expected, enrolment of learners in lower levels of education decreases with every evaluation point as learners progress through the education system. At ML2, we didn't expect to find any learners in lower primary (given the 2-year learning gap caused by Covid-19) when compared to BL however, only 1 learner were found to be in the appropriate school progression because they were in P2 at ML1 and therefore should be in P4 at ML2. The number of girls with disabilities repeating a grade or being demoted decreased from ML1 to ML2 for lower and upper primary but increased by 8% for lower secondary. No reapers were found in upper secondary as all learner at this level progressed through their respective grades appropriately.

Majority of the girls with disabilities (99 of 201) were enrolled at lower secondary with 85% of them progressing appropriately through this level and 15% of them repeating. Very few girls with disabilities (6 of 201) were in upper secondary at this evaluation point however this is expected to change at the endline.

A total of 31 girls with disabilities were enrolled in TVET at ML2 with 13% of them found to have re-entered the education by ML2 and only 1 learner progressing appropriately in this stage of education and only 3% (1 out of 31) of the learners lost. Girls with disabilities in the upper primary level at ML1 transitioned to TVET at ML2 the most (55%) and were closely followed by those transitioning from lower secondary (26%). No learners transition to TVET from upper secondary while only 3% transitioned from lower primary at ML1 into TVET by ML2.

It is important to note that Uganda does not have a minimum wage so discussions with the FM on how this transition pathway will be reported on at the endline evaluation will have to be conducted.

Table 45: Transition pathways

Key stage of formal education	Successful transition pathway	No. of GWD (%)			Unsuccessful transition pathway	No. of GWD (%)		
		BL	ML1	ML2		BL	ML1	ML2
Lower primary	Enrolled in Grade 1, 2 ,3, 4	64	35	3	Drops out of school/couldn't be tracked		17% (7)	11% (4)
	In-school progression	N/A	54% (19)	33% (1)	Remains in same grade /got demoted		16	67% (2)
	Drops out but is enrolled into alternative learning programme/ TVET	N/A	0	3% (1)	Moves into work, but is below legal age		0	0
Upper primary	Enrolled in Grade 5, 6, 7	174	146	53				
	In-school progression	N/A	77% (113)	83% (44)	Remains in same grade /got demoted		25% (36)	17% (9)
	Moves into secondary school	N/A	28	58	Drops out of school/couldn't be tracked		76% (32)	58% (21)
	Enrols into technical & vocational education & training (TVET)	N/A	0	55% (17)	Moves into work, but is either paid below minimum wage or is below legal age		N/A	N/A
Lower secondary	Enrolled in Grade S1, S2, S3, S4		57	99				
	In-school progression	N/A	93% (53)	85% (84)	Remains in same grade /got demoted		7% (4)	15% (15)
	Enrols into TVET	N/A	2	26% (8)	Drops out of school/couldn't be tracked		7% (3)	28% (10)
	Enrols in to tertiary or further education	N/A	0	0	Moves into employment, but is paid below minimum wage		N/A	N/A
	Gainful employment	N/A	0					
Upper secondary	Enrolled in S5, S6	0	2	6				
	In-school progression	N/A	0	100% (6)	Remains in same grade /got demoted		0	0
	Enrols into TVET	N/A	0	0	Drops out of school/couldn't be tracked		0	0
	Enrols in to tertiary or further education	N/A	0	0	Moves into employment, but is paid below minimum wage		N/A	N/A
	Gainful employment	N/A	0	0				
TVET	Enrolled TVET	0	2	31				
	In-school progression	N/A	0	3% (1)	Remains in same grade /got demoted		0	0
	Couldn't be tracked at previous eval. But now re-enrolled into TVET	N/A	0	13% (4)	Drops out of school/couldn't be tracked		0	3% (1)
	Gainful employment	N/A	N/A	N/A	Moves into employment, but is paid below minimum wage		N/A	N/A

Out of school	Re-enrol in appropriate grade level in basic education	N/A	0	0	Remains out of school/couldn't be tracked i.e., attrited from the study		42	36
Total sample		276	237	201				

The transition rate from ML1 to ML2 is calculated based on the number of children reported to have successfully transitioned from ML1 (2019) to ML2 (2022) divided by the number of learners found and tracked at ML1. In some instances, more children were found in ML2 than were recorded as transitioned in ML1 as they had been absent on the day of data collection or had transferred to another school and have now returned. These learners were recorded with the attrition rate from baseline to ML1.

Table 46 presents transition data for girls with disabilities in the study at baseline, ML1 and ML2 disaggregated by 1) target sample found; 2) unsuccessful transition due to: dropout, transfer to a new school where the learner could not be tracked, repeater, and absent or lost from the sample; and 3) successful transition to expected class.

Table 46 - Transitions – BL to ML2

Grade	Sample Baseline	ML1 Sample Found and Tracked	ML1 Unsuccessful Transition: Dropped Out/Transferred to Unknown School	ML1 Unsuccessful Transition: Repeaters	ML1 Unsuccessful Contact: Sample Absent/ Attrited	ML1 Successful Transition: Sample Number	ML1 Successful Transition: Sample Rate Average %	ML2 Sample Found and Tracked	ML2 Unsuccessful Transition: Dropped Out/Transferred to Unknown School	ML2 Unsuccessful Transition: Repeaters	ML2 Unsuccessful Contact: Sample Absent/ Attrited	ML2 Successful Transition from ML1: Sample Number	*Sample Transition Rate Midline 1 to Midline 2	Target (Percentage points)	Was Transition Successful?
P3	27	5	3	5	3	16	59.3%	0	0	1	1	8	160.0%	8%	No
P4	37	26	4	6	1	26	70.3%	3	2	3	3	17	65.4%	8%	No
P5	67	39	5	9	1	48	76.2%	6	7	11	6	25	64.1%	8%	No
P6	58	62	8	8	3	37	66.1%	22	4	8	5	37	59.7%	8%	No
P7	55	45	19	1	2	33	60.0%	34	2	9	5	25	55.6%	8%	No
S1	9	27	2	0	0	8	80.0%	34	4	13	2	17	63.0%	8%	No
S2	21	10	1	1	0	18	90.0%	26	5	5	5	3	30.0%	8%	No
S3	2	19	0	1	0	1	50.0%	33	3	3	1	10	52.6%	8%	No
S4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	2	0	1	50.0%	8%	No
S5	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0.0%	8%	NA
S6	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%	8%	NA
Vocational	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	31	3	0	5	3	0.0%	8%	NA
Total	276	237	42	31	10	187	55.2%	201	30	55	33	146	61.6%	0.96	0

Transition rates dropped for all grades except S3 between ML1 and ML2. This result is partly due to the way this indicator is calculated as learners who were not found at ML2 were considered as unsuccessful transition even if they were not technically lost to a learning journey (for example, learners transferred to another school, learners in VTI who could not be visited due to schools being closed or learners being on an internship away from Kampala). Additionally, school closures as a consequence of COVID-19 pandemic impacted heavily on learning and on return to school.

5.3   Examinations and cash transfers

The evaluation sought to explore how learners accessed and utilised CSU-provided services including cash transfers and/or bursaries and the impact on learners and households even during COVID-19 when there was greater risk of vulnerable groups e.g., girls and leaners with disabilities of dropping out of school. Particularly examining whether the services provided contributed to learners returning to school.

5.3.1   Examinations

Girls with disabilities who were in P7 and P6 at ML1 (2019) were due to transition to secondary school in 2020 and 2021 respectively and would have taken the Primary Leaving Exam (PLE). However, COVID-19 lead to school closures throughout 2020 and 2021 meaning in most cases learners did not sit PLE as expected and therefore had to take them in the following year. Girls with disabilities in non-candidate classes (P3 to P5, S1 to S2) at ML1 (2019), were to be automatically promoted two grades up by ML2 (2022) as per the MOE guidelines as they did not need to take any transitional exams be it in Primary or secondary school.

Learners in P7 at ML1 (2019) transitioned to S2/S3 in January 2022 under a blended learning model that intends to combine the curriculum covering two grades within one academic year. Learners in P6 at ML1 (2019) returned to school in October 2020 to complete P7 and undertake the PLE six months later in April 2021 ready for transition into S1 in May/June 2021, which did not happen due to the ongoing pandemic and the re-closure of all schools. These learners eventually started secondary school in January 2022 also under a blended learning model that intends to combine the curriculum covering S1 and S2 within one academic year.

Learners who were in P6 in 2020 and would have transitioned to S1 in 2022 returned to school in October to complete P6 and subsequently promoted to P7 in April 2021 and expected to undertake the PLE within three to four months of entering P7 to enable them to transition into S1 as normal.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on the transition of learners through the normal pathways and education systems have adapted curricula and normal transition processes and requirements. This presents challenges for the longitudinal evaluation and assessment of the outcomes and intermediary outcomes of the CSU programme. There are limitations in the comparisons that may be drawn from baseline, ML1 and ML2 and this will continue to the endline evaluation. Information regarding examinations is limited as many learners were unable to sit these and were i) automatically transitioned into the grade they would be expected to be entering (for non-candidates) or ii) sat PLE in 2022 in order to be eligible for secondary school.

5.3.2   Cash transfers

As one of the project's strategies to support girls with disabilities during school closures, CSU pivoted their implementation modality with the use of direct cash transfers to learners' families part of the intervention rather than disbursing bursaries to pay school fees. During ML2 data collection, learners were asked whether they received this support from CSU and if the support had helped them come back to school after reopening. The type of support received in 2021 and 2022 is presented in Table 47 and Table 48 below.

Data shows that girls with disabilities were not fully aware of the kind of support they are receiving from CSU as some of the learners reported that their school fees were paid also in 2021, when CSU had pivoted to a different implementation method due to school closures. Girls in the sample mentioned more frequently that the material support they received from CSU included sanitary pads, transport, bursary; while activities related to support in the school and community were mentioned only by a small percentage of GWDs.

When asked about their opinions on the financial support, the sampled girls overwhelmingly believed that it allowed them to return to school in 2022 after nearly two years of school closures. Additionally, girls with disabilities reported that CSU's support promoted their regular attendance and encouraged their overall retention and transition through the education system. In addition to financial inputs, CSU's home visits and monitoring phone calls throughout school closures in 2020 and 2021 were conducted for 75% of the study population each year, which is a positive indication of the level of engagement CSU maintained during the pandemic, and a sign of the relative benefits girls with disabilities felt these interactions provided to them while they were away from school. Less than half of the girls surveyed reported attending any life skills training over the last three years, which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to many girls' ability to return to school and stay there.

Table 47 - CSU Support received (2021)

CSU Support 2021	%
Paying school fees	28.37%
Providing a bursary/restricted cash transfer (for clothes, uniform, shoes, etc.)	22.03%
Providing sanitary pads	15.21%
Providing an unrestricted cash transfer	9.19%
Providing free school transport	7.61%
Teaching me important life skills	6.34%
Helping increase my confidence and self-esteem	4.12%
Helping my teachers	2.38%
Providing assistive devices	1.90%
Helping my family to get involved in my school	1.43%
Helping my community and school understand the needs of children with disabilities	0.79%
Improving school environment	0.63%

Table 48 - CSU support received (2022)

CSU support 2022	%
Paying school fees	30.91%
Providing a bursary/restricted cash transfer (for clothes, uniform, shoes, etc.)	24.18%
Providing sanitary pads	15.52%
Providing free school transport	7.14%
Providing an unrestricted cash transfer	6.46%
Teaching me important life skills	5.36%
Helping increase my confidence and self-esteem	3.30%
Providing assistive devices	2.34%
Helping my teachers	2.06%
Helping my family to get involved in my school	1.37%
Helping my community and school understand the needs of children with disabilities	0.82%
Improving school environment	0.41%
Building an accessible toilet at my school	0.14%

6 Outcome 3: Sustainability

The project has defined sustainability under this phase as the continuation of social protection measures to GWD and their families during school closures, including bursaries (redistributed as cash transfers during Covid), provision of teaching and learning inputs – both hardware and software (redefined as distribution of learning packets and teacher-led instructional workshops for GWDs to help them use the materials), and monitoring check-ins by CSU staff (for GWDs and their families to provide engagement and support). Additionally, CSU provided to parents and caregivers training and support to establish Income Generating Activities (IGAs). For the analysis of sustainability, we will report on GWDs' access to inputs from CSU as well as on caregivers' participation to IGAs.

Levels of participation: In order to report on participation at M2, it was decided to create a score ranking participation into low, moderate, or high. This score was constructed to assess if the girl had any learning activity going on during the Covid period. A set of questions from the learner's questionnaire were used to create the score (see Annex 9) and girls scoring between 0-4 were reported as having "low" participation, from 5 to 7 as "moderate participation" and beyond 8 as "high" participation.

Home learning and support networks: Girls with disabilities reported extremes in their participation in home learning during COVID-19 school closures, with around 45% indicating a low level of participation and 45% reporting a high level of participation. The other 10% of girls with disabilities reported moderate levels of participation. During both years of school closures in 2020 and 2021, girls with disabilities in the study reported the same level of participation in home learning and self-study (around 80% each year).

However, only about 55% of the girls who reported participating in home learning said they received home learning packs each time they were distributed in both years, indicating that the production and distribution of these materials by CSU only reached half of the intended recipients (at least those enrolled in the study) each year. Given that the great majority of girls lived at home with their parents at that time (presumably in the same locations as they did prior to COVID-19 and within reach of the CSU-supported school they attended), it is not clear why they did not receive home learning packs. This outcome must be further explored with schools and CSU to understand why this happened and how to mitigate access and distribution challenges for materials in the future. Positively, nearly 90% of the girls with disabilities in the study that did receive them each year reported that they were able to use the packs and that they were helpful for learning.

Table 49: Responses to home learning questions

	Yes	No
Did you do any home learning or self-study during COVID in 2020?	80.9% (148)	19.1% (35)
Did you do any home learning or self-study during COVID in 2021?	80.8% (147)	19.2% (35)
Did you receive a home learning packet in 2020?	54.7% (93)	45.3% (77)
Did you receive a home learning packet in 2021?	55.8% (97)	44.3% (77)
Were you able to use the materials for home learning in 2020?	89.2% (99)	10.8% (12)
Were you able to use the materials for home learning in 2021?	89.0% (105)	11.0% (13)
Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning in 2020?	88.7% (94)	11.3% (12)
Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning in 2021?	86.7% (98)	13.3% (15)
Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning in 2020?	75.8% (119)	24.2% (38)
Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning in 2021?	76.1% (121)	23.9% (38)

Income generating activities and support to the household: Table 50 presents caregivers' information about participation to CSU IGAs activities. Only 57% of caregivers declared participating in a training organized by CSU on income generating activities. Out of the participants, only 11.5% declared that the

training was useful to learn something to improve their income. The majority (71.1%) of caregivers interviewed have been members of a saving or loan group set up by CSU for a long time (41.5% for more than 3 years), however only 29% declare saving with this group.

Caregivers were also asked about their view on the support received by CSU and whether this support had helped the GWD cope during the lockdowns. Table 51 reports on these results. While 95.5% of parents agreed that the cash transfer/financial support helped the GWD cope during lockdowns, 32.7% declared that the household would have been able to support the GWD's needs without the support.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the activities, CSU should rethink their IGA activities or eventually direct them towards a sub-group of recipients' households in order to focus this type of support towards the GWDs most in need.

Table 50: Participation to CSU trainings and IGAs

Question	Yes	No
Have you attended training run by Cheshire Services Uganda on income generating activities?	57.0%	43%
Did you learn anything during this training that helped you improve your income?	11.5%	88.5%
Have you set up a new business as a result of the training session?	57.4%	42.6%
Have you changed the way you save money?	45.9%	54.1%
Are you part of a savings or loan group set up by Cheshire Services Uganda?	71.1%	28.9%
Do you have any loans with the group?	39.0%	58.5%
Do you save with this group?	29.3%	68.3%

Note: the total is not always 100% because some respondents did not respond to certain questions

Table 51: Caregivers' responses - CSU support

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/No response
The [cash transfer/financial support] helped the GWD/HH cope during corona and lockdowns	95.5%	3.6%	0.9%
Without the [cash transfer/financial support] the household would have not been able to support the GWD's needs	66.4%	32.7%	0.9%
The [cash transfer/financial support] has made no difference in helping the GWD cope during corona and lockdowns.	10.9%	88.2%	0.9%
The [cash transfer/financial support] means GWD participated in home learning activities more regularly	80.0%	15.5%	4.5%
The [cash transfer/financial support] has made no difference in how often the GWD participated in home learning activities	13.8%	79.8%	6.4%
The [cash transfer/financial support] has meant that GWD participated less in home learning activities	11.0%	83.5%	5.5%

7 Key findings on intermediate outcomes

7.1 Intermediate outcome 1: Attendance

At ML2, sampled learners were asked questions about whether they missed school at least once during the previous week. Their responses are summarised in Table 52 below. Both learners in P5-P6 and in P7 and above reported being absent during the previous school week more frequently than at ML1 (though there was still a reduction from baseline values). Illness was the most common reason given by the girls with disabilities for their absence from school followed by lack of transport. The overall learner absenteeism rate at ML2 reduced in comparison to the absenteeism rate at baseline and ML1. Table 53 shows that teacher absenteeism also significantly reduced from ML1 to ML2 in all grades. Teachers also reported similar changes in learner attendance in alignment with self-reported data from the girls with disabilities in the sample.

Table 52: Learner attendance as reported by the learners

Attendance	Evaluation Point	P3 - P4	P5 - P6	P7 - S4 + Voc*	Average
Learner missed school within the last week	Baseline	23.2%	47.0%	43.1%	37.8%
	Midline 1	51.6%	27%	17.1%	31.9%
	Midline 2	**22.2** ⬇	**46.2%** ⬆	**20.0%** ⬆	**23.7%** ⬇

*P7-S3 students were measured in baseline; P7-S4 + vocational students were measured in Midline 1.

Table 53: Teacher attendance as reported by the teachers

Attendance	Evaluation point	P3 - P4	P5 - P6	P7- S5 + Voc*	Average
Teacher missed school in the last week	Baseline	30.3%	46.0%	43.0 %	**39.8%**
	Midline 1	31.0%	25.0%	21.9%	**25.9%**
	Midline 2	0.0%	7.7%	10.3%	**9.5%**

Headteachers were also interviewed about teachers' and students' absence. Table 54 reports on findings from these questions. At midline 2, 98.2% of headteachers reported that they use registers to track daily class attendance. This practice has increased by 18% since baseline. Headteachers also reported on strategies used in case learners are missing school. The majority reported talking with learners or with parents (78.6%) in order to understand the causes of the absences. Interestingly, only 7.1% of headteachers reported asking teachers to give extra support to students who had missed lessons.

Table 54: Head teacher response to tracking learner attendance

Question: How do you track learners' attendance?	Evaluation Point	Responses
Daily class attendance registers	Baseline	90.9%
	Midline 1	82.4%
	Midline 2	98.2%
Weekly attendance sheets	Baseline	9.1%
	Midline 1	13.2%
	Midline 2	23.6%
Monthly attendance sheets	Baseline	0.0%
	Midline 1	1.5%
	Midline 2	9.1%

	Baseline	0.0%
Course attendance sheets	Midline 2	5.5%

Table 55: Consequences for learners who miss school regularly

Question: What do you normally do to learners who miss regularly?	Evaluation Point	Responses
Discipline/punish them	Baseline	5.5%
	Midline 1	2.0%
	Midline 2	3.4%
Talk to the child and find out reasons for their absenteeism	Baseline	12.7%
	Midline 1	42.2%
	Midline 2	78.6%
Invite parent to school and find out reasons for absenteeism	Baseline	78.2%
	Midline 1	49.0%
	Midline 2	78.6%
Suspend/expel the child from the school	Baseline	0.0%
	Midline 1	2.9%
	Midline 2	1.8%
Force them to repeat	Baseline	0.0%
	Midline 1	0.0%
	Midline 2	0.0%
Request teacher to give them additional support	Baseline	1.8%
	Midline 1	2.9%
	Midline 2	7.1%

Tracking teacher attendance is critical for achieving improvements in the learning environment, as, if teachers are not in class and teaching, it is difficult for children to gain the maximum benefit from their learning environment and time in school. Table 56 reports on responses from headteachers about tracking teachers' attendance. At midline 2, 94.6% of headteachers reported asking teachers to sign a daily attendance sign-in sheet. There has been a sharp increase since baseline when only 56.4% of headteachers reported using this strategy. Headteachers are taking a more active role in disciplining absent teachers since baseline. At baseline 41.8% of headteachers responded that they would ask a colleague to talk to the absent teacher to find out the causes of the absences. At midline 2, following a trend already noticed at midline 1, headteachers are taking charge of the issue, with 78.6% of them reporting that they would talk directly with the teacher to understand the causes or discipline the absent teachers directly (10.7%). A small proportion of them (7.1%) said they would involve the school management committee.

Table 56: Head teacher response to tracking teacher attendance

Question: How do you track teachers' attendance?	Evaluation Point	Responses
Daily teacher attendance sign-in sheet	Baseline	56.4%
	Midline 1	63.3%
	Midline 2	94.6%
Use lesson plans and learners' classwork	Baseline	14.6%
	Midline 1	16.7%
	Midline 2	36.4%
Visit staffrooms/classrooms to observe presence of teacher	Baseline	21.8%
	Midline 1	15.6%
	Midline 2	40%
Ask learners	Baseline	3.6%
	Midline 1	3.3%

	Midline 2	10.9%
Others	Baseline	3.6%
	Midline 2	5.5%

Table 57: Teacher's consequences for missing school regularly

Question: What do you normally do to teachers who miss school regularly?	Evaluation Point	Responses
Discipline them	Baseline	14.5%
	Midline 1	7.5%
	Midline 2	10.7%
Talk to the teacher and find out reasons for their absenteeism	Baseline	10.9%
	Midline 1	53.2%
	Midline 2	78.6%
Request fellow teachers to talk to the teacher and advise him/her accordingly	Baseline	41.8%
	Midline 1	9.6%
	Midline 2	28.6%
Report them to the DEO/DIS/CCT	Baseline	10.9%
	Midline 1	3.2%
	Midline 2	1.8%
Make them write an apology letter	Baseline	5.5%
	Midline 1	7.5%
	Midline 2	7.1%
Issue them with a warning letter	Baseline	12.7%
	Midline 1	13.8%
	Midline 2	8.9%
Invite the SMC to have discussions with the teacher	Baseline	1.8%
	Midline 1	1.1%
	Midline 2	7.1%

7.2　Intermediate outcome 2: Teacher quality

In this section we will present data on teachers' responses to questions about inclusive education and inclusive learning environment in their schools, comparison values are provided with baseline and midline 1. A total of 134 teachers were interviewed for midline 2. It is important to note that the teachers interviewed at midline 2 were not necessarily the same teachers who were interviewed at baseline and at midline 1. The study assesses children in the classrooms where they are found at the current evaluation point, meaning that the teachers will likely change at each evaluation point as CWDs change grades. Therefore, teachers who had sampled CWDs in their classrooms during other evaluations were interviewed also at those points in time while teachers who only had CWDs at either baseline, midline 1 or midline 2 were only interviewed once. Part of the decision to follow students rather than teachers was taken because teachers who have CWDs in their classes during any given year receive the same programme inputs from the CSU intervention and measuring the changes among students was the priority.

Opinions on inclusive education: Table 58 presents data about teachers' knowledge about inclusive education. At midline 2, 96% of teachers declare having heard about inclusive education and bear a positive attitude towards inclusion in mainstream schools, believing that their school offers opportunities for inclusion to all students (100% of teachers). All these values are higher at midline 2 compared to baseline values.

Table 58: Inclusive education

Questions about Inclusive Education Knowledge	Evaluation Point	Responses	
		Yes	No
Have you ever heard of inclusive education?	Baseline	94.2%	5.8%
	Midline 1	92.7%	7.3%

	Midline 2	96.3%	3.7%
Do you agree that children with disabilities should be included in mainstream classrooms?	Baseline	95.2%	4.8%
	Midline 1	94.4%	5.6%
	Midline 2	95.5%	4.5%
Do you believe that inclusion happens in your school?	Baseline	97.9%	2.1%
	Midline 1	98.9%	0.0%
	Midline 2	100%	0%

Table 59 presents data about teachers' beliefs on inclusive education. All teachers are willing to adapt the learning and assessment environment to meet the needs of girls with disabilities in their classroom, and to ensure that they are able to communicate to girls with disabilities in their class and support their learning alongside other students (97.8% of teachers).

All of the values in the table below present improvements from baseline. However, while these are positive findings amongst CSU-supported teachers and schools, it is not clear whether these beliefs are shared by the schools and teachers that girls with disabilities have transitioned to between ML1 and ML2, or whether the girls are receiving the same level of adaption and support for their learning and assessment. This is a risk for the project, as the girls may face challenges remaining in school and succeeding while they are there.

Table 59: Teacher beliefs on inclusion

Questions about Attitudes and Beliefs Towards Inclusive Education	Evaluation Point	Responses	
		Agree	Disagree
I believe that an inclusive school is one that encourages academic progression of all students regardless of their activity.	Baseline	96.8%	3.2%
	Midline 1	94.9%	5.1%
	Midline 2	97.8%	2.2%
I believe that students with a disability should be taught in special education schools.	Baseline	15.3%	84.7%
	Midline 1	10.7%	89.3%
	Midline 2	7.5%	92.5%
I believe that inclusion facilitates socially appropriate behaviour amongst all students.	Baseline	97.4%	2.6%
	Midline 1	97.2%	2.8%
	Midline 2	98.5%	1.5%
I believe that any student can learn in the regular curriculum of the school if the curriculum is adapted to meet their individual needs.	Baseline	98.9%	1.1%
	Midline 1	99.4%	0.6%
	Midline 2	99.3%	0.8%
I believe that students with a disability should be segregated because it is too expensive to modify the physical environment of the school.	Baseline	3.2%	96.8%
	Midline 1	5.1%	94.9%
	Midline 2	2.2%	97.8%
I believe that students with a disability should be in special education schools so that they do not experience rejection in a mainstream school.	Baseline	11.1%	88.9%
	Midline 1	8.4%	91.6%
	Midline 2	5.2%	94.8%
I get frustrated when I have difficulty communicating with students with a disability.	Baseline	23.3%	76.2%
	Midline 1	23.6%	76.4%
	Midline 2	14.9%	85.1%
I get upset when students with a disability cannot keep up with the day-to-day curriculum in my classroom.	Baseline	22.2%	77.8%
	Midline 1	20.8%	79.2%
	Midline 2	11.2%	88.8%
I get frustrated when I am unable to understand students with a disability.	Baseline	38.6%	61.4%
	Midline 1	38.8%	61.2%
	Midline 2	25.4%	74.6%
I am uncomfortable including students with a disability in a regular classroom with other non-disabled students.	Baseline	6.9%	93.1%
	Midline 1	7.3%	92.7%
	Midline 2	6.7%	93.3%
	Baseline	95.8%	4.2%

I am willing to modify the physical environment to include students with a disability in the regular classroom.	Midline 1	97.8%	2.3%
	Midline 2	98.5%	1.5%
I am willing to adapt my communication techniques to ensure that all students with an emotional and behavioural disorder can be successfully included in the regular classroom.	Baseline	98.9%	1.1%
	Midline 1	99.4%	0.6%
	Midline 2	97.8%	2.2%
I am willing to adapt the assessment of individual students in order for inclusive education to take place.	Baseline	99.5%	0.5%
	Midline 1	97.8%	2.3%
	Midline 2	100%	0%

Table 60 shows level of agreement to a set of additional statements which were presented to teachers at midline 2. It is interesting to note that only 8.2% teachers get frustrated when they must adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students even if almost all (97.8%) declare that they are willing to do it. Adapting the curriculum is often a very hard task to accomplish for teachers, especially if they are teaching grades which are about to sit national exams. In order for this adaptation to be possible, teachers need to have a support network, within the school and beyond, to allow them to suitably adapt the curriculum to the needs of the learners.

Table 60: Additional questions on teachers' beliefs on inclusive education at midline 2

Categorisation	Agree	Disagree
I am disconcerted that students with a disability are included in the regular classroom, regardless of the severity of the disability	14.9%	85.1%
I get frustrated when I have to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students regardless of their ability	8.2%	91.8%
I am willing to physically include students with a severe disability in the regular classroom	80.6%	19.4%
I am willing to adapt the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students regardless of their ability	97.8%	2.2%
I am willing to physically include students with a severe disability in the regular classroom with the necessary support	90.3%	9.7%
Students with disabilities have lower self-esteem than children without disabilities.	47.8%	52.2%
Students with disabilities have less confidence than children without disabilities.	39.6%	60.5%

7.3   Intermediate outcome 3: Inclusive environment

This section of the report looks at how CSU support during school closures helped girls with disabilities remain involved in learning. First, we investigate the support offered to teachers to support GWD and then we report on opinions of parents and learners about the involvement of GWD in learning during COVID-19.

CSU support during COVID-19 lockdown period
During the period of school closure, learners across the country had to engage in remote learning. The government of Uganda partnered with media companies to provide media-based learning but most of this was not adapted to meet the needs of children with disabilities. The learners thus depended mostly on the materials provided for them by their schools and CSU. Given that CSU is not involved in pedagogy, CSU's learning support had to be channelled through the schools. In addition to providing materials for GWDs, CSU also trained teachers on how to support GWDs in distance/home learning during COVID-19 school closures.

Table 61 shows data on teachers' attendance of CSU's trainings on how to support GWD with home learning. Only 41.8% of teachers and head teachers reported having received a CSU training during COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. When asked about trainings since schools reopened, a similar percentage of teachers reported having attended a CSU training in 2022.

Table 62 shows data about CSU provision of home learning materials. About 40% of the teachers acknowledged receiving home learning packs for children with disabilities from CSU during COVID-19. The

majority of the teachers who received home learning packs said that the materials were adapted to cater for the different needs of the learners.

Table 61: Attendance of CSU training on home learning during school closure

Categorisation	Yes	No
Have you attended any CSU trainings for supporting distance/home learning for children with disabilities during COVID-19 in 2020 or 2021?	41.8%	58.2%
Have you attended any CSU trainings since schools reopened in 2022?	40.3%	59.7%
Have you ever (ever means at any time since the project started) attended an 'inclusive seminar' run by Cheshire Services Uganda?	79.7%	20.3%
Have you been receiving any other capacity building from CSU this school year (2022) or during COVID-19 (2020 or 2021)? *List the capacity building received.*	44.4%	55.6%

Table 62: CSU provision of home learning materials during the COVID-19 lockdown period

Categorisation	Yes	No
Did you/your school receive home learning packets for CWD from CSU during COVID-19?	43.3%	56.7%
If yes, were the materials adapted to children with disabilities' needs, based on their disability/impairment?	91.4%	8.6%

Supporting home learning: Teachers offered less learning support or catch-up lessons to children with disabilities than to other children. The learning support (including home learning lessons during COVID-19) significantly reduced during the lockdown period (2020-2021) but later increased in 2022. Only 41.1% of the teachers provided catch-up classes to children with disabilities. About 40% of the teachers did not find the home learning materials provided by the school useful for children with disabilities.

Table 63: Teachers offering extra lessons or catch-up lessons to students

Categorisation	Yes	No
In 2019 before COVID-19, did you offer extra help or catch-up lessons for children in your class who were falling behind?	91.8%	8.2%
In 2019 before COVID-19, did you offer extra help or catch-up lessons for children or girls with disabilities?	85.8%	14.2%
In 2020 during COVID-19, did you offer extra help or home learning lessons for children from your class/school?	69.4%	30.6%
In 2020 during COVID-19, did you offer extra help or home learning lessons for children or girls with disabilities?	65.7%	34.3%
In 2021 during COVID-19, did you offer extra help or home learning lessons for children from your class/school?	77.6%	22.4%
In 2021 during COVID-19, did you offer extra help or home learning lessons for children or girls with disabilities?	72.4%	27.6%
In 2022 since schools have reopened, did you offer extra help or catch-up lessons for children in your class/school?	92.5%	7.5%
In 2022 since schools have reopened, did you offer extra help or catch-up lessons for girls with disabilities in your class/school?	86.6%	13.4%

Table 64: Teacher provision of home learning materials during COVID-19

Categorisation	Yes	No
Did children with disabilities receive any instruction or support from you or any teacher at your school to use the home learning materials or to attend catch-up classes?	52.2%	47.8%
Did you teach any catch-up classes for children with disabilities during COVID-19?	41.1%	58.9%

Table 65: Usability of home learning materials provided during COVID-19

Categorisation	Yes	Somewhat	No
Were children with disabilities able to use the materials for home learning?	45.5%	12.7%	41.8%
Did you find the home study materials helpful for children with disabilities?	50.0%	8.2%	41.8%

Parent's finding on home learning: Over 55% of households reported receiving support from CSU during COVID-driven school closures in 2020 and 2021. This support included receiving home learning packs adapted to their disability needs, home visits and/or monitoring phone calls, and (for some) life skills training. Support from CSU for the ML2 study was categorized as "low", "moderate", or "high". This score was constructed from the caregivers' data to assess if the girl received any kind of learning support from CSU during the Covid period (see Annex XX). Findings also show, however, that close to 24% of families received only moderate support, and over 20% received low levels of support during this period. For these families, home learning packs adapted to the needs of their girls with disabilities were not accessed, and they did not receive home visits or monitoring phone calls. Moreover, life skills trainings were not received by the majority of girls with disabilities in the sample – nearly 60% – reported not accessing them during the pandemic.

Given that these learning resources and household and girls with disabilities engagement activities formed a core, critical part of CSU's COVID-19 response package, these findings are quite disappointing. From the data, it is not clear why the small remaining sample in this study did not equally access CSU support during this time, or why they were not specifically targeted with CSU inputs aside from financial support in the form of cash transfers. However, it is important to explore the reasons behind the variation in access to achieve a more equitable distribution of inputs in the future, which CSU is accountable for providing.

Table 66: Home learning support from CSU during COVID

	Low support (30)	Moderate support (34)	High support (80)
Home learning support from CSU during COVID	20.8%	23.6%	55.6%

Table 67: Responses to questions on home learning support from CSU during COVID

Questions	Supported	Not supported
Did your girl with disabilities receive a home learning pack from CSU/the school to use during COVID-19, when schools were closed?	76.8% (109)	23.2% (33)
If yes, were the materials adapted to your girls with disabilities' needs based on her disability/ impairment?	75.2% (82)	24.8% (27)
Did your girl with disabilities receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	79.4% (112)	20.6% (29)
Did your girl with disabilities receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	41.8% (59)	58.2% (82)

Educating girls with disabilities post-COVID: At ML2, CSU support for girls with disabilities still in the sample indicate a range of inputs related to financial and non-financial investments in girls and their families. All families reported receiving some form of support, with 74% receiving non-fees related financial report in the form of bursaries; nearly 70% of girls with disabilities also have their school fees paid by CSU. For 60% of families, this is the only support they receive from CSU, as only 40% reported that CSU helps their wider family.

Evidence from the few parents contacted at ML2 whose children have dropped out from the sample confirms they are no longer in school due to economic (lack of school fees), sociocultural (relocation, early marriage) and/or health problems (illness, pregnancy); it is probable that many of these families fall into the lowest economic brackets – poor or very poor. In keeping with this, we can also assume that many of the

girls with disabilities who dropped out from the sample between baseline and ML1 (though a far lower percentage than between ML1 and ML2) also faced similar economic, sociocultural and health challenges that forced them out of school – many permanently.

Support from an organisation like CSU is therefore vital for girls with disabilities from poor families to access and complete a basic education (P1 to S6), as without it they are highly likely to drop out of school and not return. It also means that supporting income generation activities for poor families in the project is likely to be unsuccessful in terms of transitioning the complete cost burden of education to the parents of girls with disabilities after the programme – it just does not raise enough capital in vulnerable households to offset the high costs of schooling and is not spread across enough households to make a significant impact.

Table 68: Responses to questions on CSU support for education of girls with disabilities after COVID-19 lockdown

Questions	Supported	Not supported
Is CSU helping to support your girl with disabilities?	100% (141)	0% (0)
Are they helping to support your wider family?	41.1% (58)	58.9% (83)
Has she received any non-school fee financial support from Cheshire Services Uganda towards her education in 2022?	73.8% (104)	26.2% (37)
Has your girl with disabilities had her school fees paid for in 2022?	68.8% (97)	31.2% (44)

7.4   Intermediate outcome 4: Economic empowerment

Note on creating the poverty scale composite
Questions were aligned with the poverty scale used at ML1, which removed two questions from the baseline composite scale due to ceiling effects: one on land ownership and household equity, and a second on household assets. At ML2, the question related to household income was also removed from the composite. The rating scale was proportionally adjusted to account for this.

However, at ML2, we deemed income measures an insufficient and inconclusive way to assess household poverty at this time due to the impact COVID-related lockdowns and financial instability have had on Uganda's economy and population at all levels. While there have been massive negative impacts on Uganda's poorest populations, the last two years of political and economic shocks have rendered many formal sector jobs just as volatile, as businesses have closed or scaled down staff and government and civil society offices have faced budget cuts. Today, income levels across all workers in the country fall short of meeting inflation and cost of living increases, and regular salary payments for formal sector jobs have been routinely inconsistent, both in the public and private sector.

While some of this shift in household economics to the highest ranks of rich or very rich may be due to the removal of the question on income, it does not completely explain why the distribution of households across the five criteria levels shifted so dramatically towards economic wealth in comparison to previous evaluation points.

The questions remaining in the composite at ML2 paint a picture of the daily lived experiences of girls with disabilities regarding general welfare: they live in relatively stable conditions, in permanent housing, with their biological parents, and they can largely afford to eat regularly, access clean water and treat medical conditions. This does not hold true for income, however, as 66% of respondents indicated they had gone without income over the last week – meaning that the household's formal and informal sector workers were either not working or were not paid for work they did – leaving them vulnerable to even minor economic shocks that can disrupt their ability to provide for the household's basic needs and welfare.

On the other hand, findings on parents also provided an additional lens on the extreme challenges households face providing for the daily welfare of their family members living at home. Households are large, with around 60% of households providing for between three and six children in addition to the adults. Parent education levels restrict their access to, and ability to engage in, paid formal sector work, leaving them vulnerable to income variation and financial instability while working in the informal sector. Average incomes are far below a living wage in Kampala, and study findings indicate that families largely cannot afford the costs of education for their children – especially as they transition to upper grades that require more financial resources for them to participate.

Parent finding – Household poverty changes between BL, ML1 and ML2: Positive and negative changes in household economic conditions at each evaluation point are detailed in the table below: cells coloured green indicate a positive change; red cells indicate a negative one. Improvements in household wealth and living conditions were registered, along with a slight reduction in the share of families with an unemployed head of household/primary caregiver. Importantly, while it seems that girls with disabilities still in the sample come from slightly wealthier households (relatively speaking, in comparison to their peers in the study at ML1 and baseline), they are still vulnerable to economic shocks – especially after the pandemic – as evidenced by the sharp increase in the percentage of families that have gone without eating or income in the last week at ML2 (19.7% at ML2 compared to 11% at baseline and at midline 1), with twice as many families reporting they experienced this relative to findings from ML1.

Table 69:Study sample economic comparisons baseline-ML1-ML2

Characteristics	Baseline	ML1	ML2
Household is in the lower/lowest wealth quintile	49.5%	38.3%	8.3%
Lives in a traditional, impermanent or semi-permanent house/hut	9.8%	9.7%	0.0%
Household has a roof with iron sheets or tiles	86.9%	98.7%	100.0%
Household unable to meet basic needs for medical care	20.2%	22.9%	23.2%
Gone to bed without eating	11.0%	11.1%	19.7%
Gone without income	46.1%	48.7%	66.2%
Head of household/primary caregiver is unemployed	46.7%	12.3%	10.7%

Parent Finding 4 – Household economic empowerment: Economic empowerment is the capacity of women and men to participate in, contribute to and benefit from growth processes in ways that recognise the value of their contributions, respect their dignity and make it possible to negotiate a fairer distribution of the benefits of growth.[14] The economic empowerment composite score developed for the study includes the domains of employment, health and income and measures the ability of households to resist shocks, and have enough disposable income to cover recurrent expenses without the need for additional input from loans or family members. These domains are drawn from the Women Economic Empowerment Index (WEEI), a UN Women Asia-Pacific index, which is defined as a: function of women's economic advancement and participation; their power and agency all gauged through choice; influence and freedom in decision-making; and access to and control over resources.[15] The WEEI is made up of five domains: employment, education, decision-making, political voice and health. The WEEI was deemed relevant for this study as the domains were suitable for East Africa.

Households were ranked at ML2 on the study's economic empowerment scale against three criteria levels from low, moderate and high empowerment. Evidence shows that the clear majority of households with girls with disabilities in the remaining sample – over 72% – are classified as having low economic empowerment; another 27% are moderately empowered. Only 1%, representing only one household in the study, are highly empowered. These findings indicate that the households of girls with disabilities in the study are unable to realise long-term economic growth, and they struggle to cover monthly bills, respond

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[14] http://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/womenseconomicempowerment.htm
[15] http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/pakistan/wee/wee-index

to acute emergencies, or to save for the future. When they do have to borrow money, it goes towards daily costs of living and responding to shortages and shocks, rather than investments that grow their equity.

Table 70: Household economic empowerment index

	Low empowerment (104)	Moderate empowerment (39)	High empowerment (1)
Household economic empowerment	72.2%	27.1%	0.9%

Table 71: Responses to questions on household economic empowerment

Question	Empowered	Not empowered
I spend less money than I make each month	14.8% (21)	85.2% (121)
I have an emergency fund to cover for unplanned expenses	6.3% (9)	93.7% (133)
I pay my bills on time	9.9% (14)	90.1% (128)
What would be the main reasons for borrowing money? *(not empowered = responding to acute emergencies or paying debt, rather than growing equity)*	43.7% (62)	56.3% (80)
Imagine that you have an emergency and you need to pay 114,000 shillings. How possible is it that you could come up with 114,000 shillings within the next month? *(not empowered = not likely)*	58.5% (83)	41.6% (59)
What would be the main source of money that you would use to come up with the 114,000 shillings within the next month? *(not empowered = unsafe or informal borrowing)*	60.6% (86)	39.4% (56)

7.5 Intermediate outcome 5: Self-esteem and life skills

Ability to transition through education requires resilience and this is particularly important for girls with disabilities. It requires the girls to be resilient, but also the parents and the teachers, even more so during COVID-19 when households and communities faced greater shock than normal.

In order to measure reliance during the course of ML2, the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) was used. The BRS specifically assesses resilience in its original and most basic meaning: to bounce back or recover from stress. Results are reported in Table 72. Around 75% of girls with disabilities in the study reported moderate (52%) to high (22%) levels of resilience. Girls reported being able to recover from hard times and stress-inducing activities or events, or if something bad happens. They also indicated across all resilience categories that they can take a long time to recover from a stressful event, despite being able to get through difficult times without much trouble.

The study went a step further to modify the BRS and designed an education resilience scale. When using this scale, girls with disabilities overwhelmingly demonstrated high (67%) to moderate (28%) levels of resilience towards their education and school completion. Education resilience rates are positively strong in the current cohort of girls with disabilities. Given the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic and the economic hardships faced by families regarding affording the costs of school, the resilience levels of girls with disabilities play a direct, critical role in their school success and survival.

Table 72: Brief Resilience Scale scores at ML2 only

	Low Resilience (50)	Moderate Resilience (99)	High Resilience (43)
Brief Resilience Scale	26.0%	51.6%	22.4%

Table 73: Responses to questions on brief resilience scale

Question	High	Low

Sarah/George sometimes goes through a hard time when things are tough. But she/he recovers quickly from the hard times and things get better. When you fall on hard times do you recover quickly? Are you like her/him?	**77.2% (139)**	22.8% (41)
Sarah/George does not like to feel any stress (pressure). She/he has difficulty participating in and completing an event or activity when it is stressful. Do you have a hard time getting through stressful events? Are you like her/him?	34.6% (63)	**65.4% (119)**
Sarah/George sometimes feels stress during an activity or event. But she/he recovers quickly and gets better. When you experience a stressful event, do you recover quickly? Are you like her/him?	**76.9% (140)**	23.1% (42)
Sarah/George does not like it when bad things happen. It is hard for her/him to recover after something bad happens. Do you have a hard time recovering when something bad happens? Are you like her/him?	38.6% (69)	**61.5% (110)**
Sarah/George can get through difficult times with no trouble or problem. Are you able to get through difficult times with no trouble or problem? Are you like her/him?	**72.2% (130)**	27.8% (50)
Sarah/George can take a long time to recover from a stressful event. Do you take a long time to recover from a stressful event? Are you like her/him?	**52.3% (93)**	**47.8% (85)**

Table 74: Child education resilience scale

	Low education resilience (11)	Moderate education resilience (53)	High education resilience (128)
Child education resilience scale	5.7%	27.6%	66.7%

Table 75: Responses to questions on child education resilience

Question	Yes	No
Do you like/enjoy going to school?	97.9% (182)	2.2% (4)
Are you happy you are back in school now?	98.4% (182)	1.6% (3)
Do you think you will stay in school the whole of this year?	95.1% (176)	4.9% (9)
Do you think you will stay in school after this year (from 2023 onward)?	93.5% (172)	6.5% (12)
Do you think you will finish primary school and sit the PLE?	94.7% (71)	5.3% (4)
Do you think you will finish senior 4 and sit the UCE?	94.1% (144)	5.9% (9)
Do you think you will finish senior 6 and sit the UACE?	90.3% (140)	9.7% (15)

At ML2, households were ranked against a newly formed education resilience scale to further explore their opinions and attitudes towards the education of girls with disabilities and their beliefs regarding their retention and completion in the system. Table 76 and Table 77 report findings from this analysis. Most families ranked as having high education resilience (over 76%), followed by moderate education resilience (nearly 21%) and low education resilience (just under 3%). Parent attitudes towards the education of girls with disabilities are positive, and nearly all believe that their girls will complete the 2022 school year and continue in school; they do not, however, expect them to reach the highest levels of education beyond lower secondary and into tertiary or technical school.

If their economic situation improved, nearly all families would personally continue supporting the education of their girls, and they positively believe in sharing income and resources equally with their girls with disabilities as well as their other children. However, as evidenced in the findings above, economic empowerment among all families in the study remains low, and it is unlikely that they will be able to assume the costs of education for their girls with disabilities alone going forward, despite their opinions that they would do so if their financial situation improved. This evidence points to the critical importance of the CSU-provided school support in the lives of girls with disabilities and their families, as it is likely they would not remain in school without it.

Table 76: Parent education resilience scale

	Low education resilience (4)	Moderate education resilience (30)	High education resilience (110)
Parent education resilience scale	2.8%	20.8%	76.4%

Table 77: Responses to questions on education resilience

Questions	High resilience	Low resilience
Do you think your girl with disabilities will stay in school throughout 2022?	99.3% (141)	0.7% (1)
Do you think your girl with disabilities will continue in school after this year?	93.7% (133)	6.3% (9)
If my income increased then I would continue to support my girl with disabilities	92.3% (131)	7.8% (11)
I would prefer to spend money on my other children than my girl with disabilities	97.2% (138)	2.8% (4)
Parents generally think it is not worthwhile for girls with disabilities to learn	65.5% (93)	34.5% (49)
Parents generally think children with disabilities can't learn	64.8% (92)	35.2% (50)
There should be special schools for girls with disabilities	80.3% (114)	19.7% (28)
It is pointless for girls with disabilities to study since they will not find any work	100% (142)	0.0% (0)
Girls with disabilities should be in the same class as non-disabled children	83.1% (118)	16.9% (24)

Table 78 and Table 79 present results about parent's perceptions of GWD's life skills. At ML2, 90% of parents overwhelmingly ranked their girls with disabilities as having high life skills, with another 9% as having moderate life skills. Parents reported that their girl with disabilities interacts with others, solves problems, carries out tasks, follows instructions and resolves tasks mostly independently or with limited help. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children, pointing to a belief in their ability to successfully navigate their world and school and life choices. This is important, since as the girls grow older and more mature, they are more likely to independently be able to care for themselves and develop into productive members of their households and communities. Parent findings also align with findings from the girls themselves, which also indicated high levels of confidence and persistence on similar scales.

Table 78: Parent ranking of girls with disabilities' life skills[16]

	Low life skills (1)	Moderate life skills (13)	High life skills (128)
Life skills ranking	0.7%	9.2%	90.1%

Table 79: Responses to questions on girls with disabilities' life skills

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[16] Life skills resilience was calculated as a composite score using 5 questions on life skills that with a total of 25 points. A learner with low life skill resilience scores 0 to 10 points, moderate life skills resilience scores 11 to 15 and high life skills resilience scores greater or equal to 16 points. Questions comprised how GWDs conducted themselves around people of the opposite sex, demonstrated leadership/ proactiveness, solved problems, resolved conflicts and understood instructions and followed them.

Question	Does not do yet	Does with lots of help	Does with some help	Does with a little help	Does independently
Does your girl with disabilities interact well with peers, staff, opposite sex? *(Does she communicate well with others? Does she show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings?)*	5.6%	0.7%	7.8%	17.6%	62.0%
Does your girl with disabilities find a way around problems that arise? *(Does she ask help appropriately from adults? Does she solve problems successfully?)*	6.3%	8.5%	21.1%	23.9%	38.0%
Does your girl with disabilities carry out tasks without being told? *(Does she show age-appropriate leadership?)*	1.4%	5.6%	9.2%	9.9%	73.9%
Is your girl with disabilities able to resolve disagreements appropriately?	4.9%	9.2%	12.0%	15.5%	57.0%
Does your girl with disabilities understand and follow instructions when given? (Does she ask for clarification when needed?)	0.7%	7.0%	12.7%	14.8%	64.8%

8 Findings on girls with severe disabilities in specialised schools

At ML2, we sought to evaluate the results and outcomes of CSU's inputs during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown and school closures to support girls with severe disabilities (GWSD), particularly girls who are blind or deaf. Before COVID they attended schools in Uganda that specialised in providing education services for children who are profoundly deaf, hard of hearing, totally blind or with low vision. These schools have the teaching and learning materials, supportive resources, assistive devices and specialised teachers required to communicate with them and facilitate their learning. The study proposed that this category of beneficiaries may have experienced more severe impacts (positive or negative) from this period related to:

- difficulties in realising teaching and learning continuity through distance and home learning, including potential challenges related to accessing and using adapted home learning materials in braille and Ugandan Sign Language (which required considerable expertise and effort to adapt and disseminate)
- communicating with family members in the household (especially for children who are Deaf) and engaging them to support home learning activities
- gaps in livelihoods and social protection measures specifically targeting GWSDGWSD and their families to offset the economic impact of COVID-19, especially regarding the costs of home-based care and support and general welfare; and
- returning to school, transiting and continuing their basic education.

As such, the evaluation specifically targeted a sample of GWSD at ML2 to better understand their experiences during COVID-driven lockdowns and the role CSU played in providing specific inputs towards their support and wellbeing, as outlined in the table below. The same set of tools and analytical framework was applied to the analysis.

Table 80: Research themes and outcomes for girls with severe disabilities

Evaluation Question	Themes to Explore	Outcomes Measured

| Did CSU's approaches and inputs contribute to learning continuity, resilience and improved social protection for children with severe disabilities during COVID-19 lockdowns and school closures? | • Access to adapted, specialised home learning materials for girls with severe disabilities (Braille and Ugandan Sign Language)
• Access to and uptake of home learning activities
• Teacher engagement and support
• Parent engagement and support
• Learner experience and support
• People (who), process (when, how), product (what)
• Use/expenditure of unrestricted cash transfers
• Household wealth and resilience | • Learning continuity and preparedness to return to school
• Access, reach, uptake, appropriateness of home learning inputs
• Resilience
• Safety, child protection
• Social protection, cash transfers as incentive and motivation to stay in school, learn (access, retention)
• Health (supportive/rehabilitative services and menstrual hygiene management)
• Wellbeing
• Equity – lens on severe disability
• School return and retention |

8.1   Household economics and multidimensional child poverty

Similar to the measurement of poverty with the GWDs, household poverty was not specifically measured for this cohort of learners. Nevertheless, findings showed that the type of house that GWSDs live in, as well as the occupation of their head of household, accounted for many differences between GWDs and GWSDs. They (GWSDs) are more likely to live in a traditional, non-permanent or semi-permanent home than their peers, and 60% have a parent or primary caregiver who is either unemployed or working in the informal sector (compared to 23% of GWDs in the existing sample). Notably, fewer of the households of GWSD have gone without income in the last weeks in comparison to other GWDs (possibly as someone in the household is a paid day labourer), while more of their households have gone without necessary medicines, medical treatment or clean water. Taken together, findings indicate that the living conditions of GWSDs may be slightly unstable, leaving them more vulnerable to shocks and economic hardships that could push them out of school. It is likely, given other findings in this study, that CSU's financial support is a critical factor in their access to and retention in the formal education system.

Multidimensional Child Poverty for girls with severe disabilities: Over half of the GWSD surveyed (about 52%, or 5 out of every 10 girls) do not face any deprivations, indicating they are not living in conditions synonymous with child poverty. Around four in ten girls (36%) are slightly deprived, while the remaining GWSD fall into the bottom two brackets – very deprived (8%) or severely deprived (4%). Findings for the existing cohort of GWD are virtually the same, with some marginal differences across the two lowest deprivation categories.

Positively, these findings show that most GWSD in the study are not living in conditions associated with child poverty, just like their peers. This largely aligns with parent findings on household poverty, indicating that the GWSDs are not disadvantaged as individuals or as members of their household. They tend to live in safe, accessible and stable conditions at school as boarders, and when they are not at school they stay with their biological parents. They can easily move around the school compound and access facilities; they attend school regularly; they do not work outside school or home; they have access to menstrual hygiene services; and they participated in home study activities during COVID.

Yet, around four of every 10 GWSD routinely experience moderate poverty, while about one out of every 10 GWSD experience more extreme poverty in their daily lives. Children's deprivations are mostly related to their: 1) access to information – namely about their bursaries and expenses as they are not consulted by their parents; 2) child labour – 10-12% have had to work outside the home during COVID to help their family earn money); and 3) health – they have suffered illnesses over the last three years and had a negative emotional outlook during COVID. These findings align with those from the main cohort of GWDs, indicating that – at least financially –the GWSD included in the study are from the same socioeconomic background.

Table 81: Child deprivation scale for GWSD

Respondent Type	Severely deprived	Very deprived	Slightly deprived	Not deprived	By no means deprived
Girls with Severe Disabilities	3.9% (2)	7.7% (4)	36.5% (19)	50.0% (26)	1.9% (1)
Existing sample of GWDs	2.1% (4)	9.9% (19)	33.3% (64)	51.0% (98)	3.7% (7)

Table 82: Responses to child deprivation questions from GWSD

Question	Not Deprived		Deprived	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Means of transport from where you currently live to this school? (ND-reliable and safe transport; D-unreliable and unsafe transport)	**100% (46)**	70.2% (132)	0% (0)	29.8% (56)
Is there any day last week that you did not come to school? (ND-no; D-yes)	**91.8% (45)**	74.7% (142)	8.2% (4)	25.3% (48)
In 2020, how many homes have you lived in? (ND-1; D-more than 1)	84.3% (43)	79.7% (145)	15.7% (8)	20.3% (37)
In 2021, how many homes have you lived in? (ND-1; D-more than 1)	**86.3% (44)**	75.7% (140)	13.7% (7)	24.3% (45)
In 2020, did you work outside of the home to help your family earn money? (ND-no; D-yes)	90.0% (45)	81.8% (153)	10.0% (5)	18.2% (34)
In 2021, did you work outside of the home to help your family earn money? (ND-no; D-yes)	88.0% (44)	78.1% (146)	12.0% (6)	21.9% (41)
In 2020, did you do any home learning or home study during corona (ND-yes; D-no)	78.0% (39)	80.8% (147)	22.0% (11)	19.2% (35)
In 2021, did you do any home learning or home study during corona? (ND-yes; D-no)	86.0% (43)	80.9% (148)	14.0% (7)	19.1% (35)
When receiving a bursary in 2020, did your parent/guardian tell you the amount and discuss how to spend it with you? (ND-yes; D-no)	18.4% (9)	40.7% (68)	81.6% (40)	59.3% (99)
When receiving a bursary in 2021, did your parent/guardian tell you the amount and discuss how to spend it with you? (ND-yes; D-no)	14.3% (7)	43.5% (74)	85.7% (42)	56.5% (96)
Right now, how do you feel on most days about your life? Do you generally feel happy, or low? (ND-happy; D-low)	80.4% (41)	81.6% (142)	19.6% (10)	18.4% (32)
How did you feel on most days about your life when you were home and school was closed during corona? (ND-happy; D-low)	17.3% (9)	14.7% (28)	82.7% (43)	85.3% (162)
Can you easily move around where you live? (ND-yes; D-no)	100% (3)	89.2% (115)	0% (0)	10.9% (14)
Can you easily see at home or boarding to read or do homework? (ND-yes; D-no)	76.5% (13)	75.7% (112)	23.5% (4)	24.3% (36)
Does your home or boarding facility have a quiet, suitable space for you to sit properly and read or do your homework? (ND-yes; D-no)	82.4% (28)	93.8% (121)	17.7% (6)	6.2% (8)
Have you suffered from any major sickness in the last 2-3 years (2020, 2021, 2022)? (ND-no; D-yes)	48.0% (24)	49.4% (87)	52.0% (26)	50.6% (89)
Do you have access to sanitary pads? (ND-yes; D-no)	97.5% (39)	90.1% (127)	2.5% (1)	9.9% (14)

Household economic empowerment: Evidence shows that the clear majority of households with GWSDs in the remaining sample – 71% – are classified as having low economic empowerment; another 29% are moderately empowered. No households are highly empowered. These findings align directly with those from the main study cohort and indicate that the households of GWSDs sampled in the study are unable to

realise long-term economic gains. They overwhelmingly struggle to cover monthly bills, respond to acute emergencies, and to save for the future. When they do have to borrow money, it goes towards responding to emergencies, rather than investments that grow their equity.

Table 83: Household economic empowerment scale

Respondent Type	Low empowerment	Moderate empowerment	High empowerment
Girls with Severe Disabilities	71.4% (20)	28.6% (8)	0% (0)
Existing sample of GWDs	72.2% (104)	27.1% (39)	0.9% (1)

Table 84: Responses to questions on household economic empowerment

Questions	Empowered		Not empowered	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
I spend less money than I make each month.	7.1% (2)	14.8% (21)	92.9% (26)	85.2% (121)
I have an emergency fund to cover for unplanned expenses.	14.3% (4)	6.3% (9)	85.7% (24)	93.7% (133)
I pay my bills on time.	7.1% (2)	9.9% (14)	92.9% (26)	90.1% (128)
What would be the main reasons for borrowing money? *(not empowered = responding to acute emergencies or paying debt, rather than growing equity)*	39.3% (11)	43.7% (62)	60.7% (17)	56.3% (80)
Imagine that you have an emergency and you need to pay 114,000 shillings. How possible is it that you could come up with 114,000 shillings within the next month? *(not empowered = not likely)*	60.7% (17)	58.5% (83)	39.3% (11)	41.6% (59)
What would be the main source of money that you would use to come up with the 114,000 shillings within the next month? *(not empowered = unsafe or informal borrowing)*	46.4% (13)	60.6% (86)	53.6% (15)	39.4% (56)

8.2   CSU support for education during and post-COVID-19

Parents' views on CSU support for education: Most households where GWSD live, receive low levels of support (43%) from CSU, followed by moderate support (39%) and high support (18%). All families of GWSDs reported receiving some form of support, with just over 60% receiving non-fee related financial support in the form of bursaries; nearly 65% of GWSDs also have their school fees paid by CSU. For 70% of families, education support for their GWSDs is the only input they receive from CSU, as only 30% reported that CSU helps their wider family. Parents also reported that, if CSU's education support ceased, they would struggle to send their GWSD to school due to the high costs associated with education today, especially post-COVID.

As with the main sample of GWDs, support from an organisation like CSU is vital for helping GWSDs from poor families to access and complete a basic education, as without it they are highly likely to drop out of school and not return. It also means that expecting families to take over the costs of education for their child after the programme is highly unlikely, posing a threat to the sustainability of the intervention if that continues to be the measure of long-term success for the programme.

Table 85: CSU support for education of GWSDs after COVID

Respondent Type	Low support	Moderate support	High support
Girls with Severe Disabilities	42.9% (12)	39.3% (11)	17.9% (5)
Existing sample of GWDs	34.0% (49)	42.4% (61)	23.6% (34)

Table 86: Responses to questions on CSU support for education of GWSDs after COVID

Questions	Supported		Not supported	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Is CSU helping to support your GWSD?	100% (27)	100% (141)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Are they helping to support your wider family?	29.6% (8)	41.1% (58)	70.4% (19)	58.9% (83)
Has she received any non-school fee financial support from Cheshire Services Uganda towards her education in 2022?	60.7% (17)	73.8% (104)	39.3% (11)	26.2% (37)
Has your GWSD had her school fees paid for in 2022?	64.3% (18)	68.8% (97)	35.7% (10)	31.2% (44)

Girls' views on CSU support for education: Over 90% of GWSDs receive moderate to high levels of support from CSU towards their education; these findings align with those from the main sample of GWD in the study, where 89% of girls reported the same level of support. Primarily, CSU's inputs come in the form of financial support, which nine out of 10 GWSDs believe allowed them to return to school in 2022 after nearly two years of school closures. Additionally, 96% of GWSDs reported that CSU's support promotes their regular attendance, though somewhat fewer girls (90%) believe it encourages their overall retention in and transition through the education system. It is possible that the one out of ten girls that did not agree with this statement receive low levels of support from CSU, largely linked to fewer financial inputs and less monitoring support.

In addition to financial inputs, CSU's home visits and monitoring phone calls throughout school closures in 2020 and 2021 were conducted for just over 60% of the GWSD families interviewed each year, which indicates that some attempts were made to maintain communication with GWSD during this time; communication outreach efforts dropped to only 37% in 2022 once schools reopened. These trends mirror those in the existing sample, which also saw more engagement in 2020 and 2021, with a drop in 2022. Interestingly, GWD in the main cohort were about 10% more likely to be engaged by CSU during the pandemic than GWSD, and proportionally more of them also continued to be contacted by CSU in 2022.

Far less than half of the GWSDs surveyed reported attending any life skills training during school closures (37% in 2020 and 45% in 2021), which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to many GWSD's ability to return to school and stay there in 2022, when less than 20% reported receiving any life skills training or support from CSU. Overall, these findings are a positive indication of the level of engagement CSU maintained with GWSDs during the pandemic, and a sign of the relative benefits the girls' feel these interactions provided while they were away from school.

It is clear, however, that the financial investment CSU has made in GWSD (and their peers) to ensure they are enrolled in school provides the most direct correlation to their attendance, continuation, transition – and eventual completion of a basic cycle of education. If this financial support was withdrawn, it is unclear whether this outcome would be fully achieved. Notably, household incomes at this stage of the programme are not able to absorb these costs (as reported by parents), and consequently we would expect many of these girls to drop out and possibly not return if they are withdrawn.

Table 87: CSU support for education according to GWSD

Respondent Type	Low support	Moderate support	High support
Girls with Severe Disabilities	9.6% (5)	55.8% (29)	34.6% (18)
Existing sample of GWDs	10.9% (21)	48.4% (93)	40.6% (78)

Table 88: Specific education support provided by CSU according to GWSD

Question	CSU Support		No CSU Support	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample

Financial support provided in 2020	97.9% (47)	96.5% (166)	2.1% (1)	3.5% (6)
Financial support provided in 2021	95.8% (46)	96.6% (169)	4.2% (2)	3.4% (6)
Financial support provided in 2022	95.9% (47)	98.3% (174)	4.1% (2)	1.7% (3)
Home visit or monitoring phone call in 2020	63.3% (31)	75.4% (132)	36.7% (18)	24.6% (43)
Home visit or monitoring phone call in 2021	65.3% (32)	75.7% (134)	34.7% (17)	24.3% (43)
Home visit or monitoring phone call in 2022	37.5% (18)	50.9% (85)	62.5% (30)	49.1% (82)
Life skills training in 2020	37.5% (18)	37.0% (64)	62.5% (30)	63.0% (109)
Life skills training in 2021	45.8% (22)	45.8% (81)	54.2% (26)	54.2% (96)
Life skills training in 2022	16.7% (8)	19.8% (31)	83.3% (40)	80.3% (126)
CSU support helped GWD return to school in 2022	93.6% (44)	97.1% (167)	6.4% (3)	2.9% (5)
CSU support promotes regular attendance	95.9% (47)	98.9% (176)	4.1% (2)	1.1% (2)
CSU support promotes school retention and transition	89.8% (44)	97.7% (172)	10.2% (5)	2.3% (4)

8.3 Support for home learning during COVID-19

Home learning according to parents: The majority of households (just over 64%) of GWSDs reported receiving high levels of home learning support from CSU during COVID-driven school closures in 2020 and 2021. Another 14% reported receiving moderate support, while the remaining 22% reported low levels of support. Findings for GWSDs correlate with those reported by households of GWDs in the main sample, though fewer parents in these households reported high levels of support (a 10% difference).

For these families, home learning packets adapted to the needs of their GWDs were not accessed and/or they did not receive home visits or monitoring phone calls. Notably, GWSDs reported higher levels of access to, and access to more appropriately adapted, home learning materials than other GWDs. However, 75% of parents of GWSDs said they were unable to access life skills trainings during the pandemic, compared to just 60% of parents of GWDs.

CSU's contributions to GWSDs and their households from 2020-2022 include: producing and disseminating adapted home learning packets for blind (in Braille) and deaf (adaptations not specified) learners in 2020 and 2021; home visits and/or monitoring phone calls from CSU staff all three years; and life skills trainings in 2020 and 2021. Adaptations regarding the delivery of life skills training materials and content for GWSDs who are blind or Deaf were not specified by respondents, but an equal percentage of GWDs reported the same rate of participation in this activity as GWSDs in both 2020 and 2021.

Given that monitoring actions and life skills training activities formed a core, critical part of CSU's COVID response package for GWSDs, these findings overall are quite disappointing. From the data, it is not clear why the small sample in this study did not equally access CSU support during this time, or why they were not specifically targeted with adapted inputs throughout by CSU, aside from unrestricted financial support in the form of cash transfers. However, it is important to explore the reasons behind the variation in access for GWSDs to achieve a more equitable distribution of inputs in the future, which (as previously indicated) CSU is accountable for providing.

Table 89: Parent opinions on home learning during COVID

Respondent Type	Low support	Moderate support	High support
Girls with Severe Disabilities	21.4% (6)	14.3% (4)	64.3% (18)
Existing sample of GWDs	20.8% (30)	23.6% (34)	55.6% (80)

Table 90: Parent responses to questions on home learning during COVID

Questions	Supported		Not supported	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample

Did your GWSD receive a home learning packet from CSU/the school when schools were closed?	82.1% (23)	76.8% (109)	17.9% (5)	23.2% (33)
If yes, were the materials adapted to your GWSD's needs based on her impairment?	78.3% (18)	75.2% (82)	21.7% (5)	24.8% (27)
Did your GWSD receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	85.7% (24)	79.4% (112)	14.3% (4)	20.6% (29)
Did your GWSD receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	25.0% (7)	41.8% (59)	75.0% (21)	58.2% (82)

Home learning according to GWSD: Like their peers, GWSDs reported extremes in their access to and participation in home learning activities during COVID school closures, with around 56% indicating high levels of participation, and 35% low levels of participation. Parents of GWSDs reported higher levels of access to and participation in home learning activities than the GWSDs did themselves. During school closures in 2020 and 2021, GWSDs in the study reported a decline in their participation in home learning and self-study from 86% to 78%, although more learners reported receiving adapted home learning packets during that time, an increase from 44% to 52%. Of those who received them, 100% said they were useable; nearly 100% found them helpful.

However, the access GWSDs reported having to home learning packets each year indicates that the development, production and distribution of these materials by CSU reached an extremely limited number of recipients with severe disabilities, (at least those enrolled in the study), each year. Given that the majority of GWSDs reported long-term engagement with CSU on education, it is not clear why they could not access these materials each year or why CSU did not make more of an effort to engage them, given their wide geographical distribution (most live far away from their school, especially in secondary) and needs related to the severity of their impairment. This outcome must be further explored with schools and CSU to understand why this happened and how to mitigate access and distribution challenges for materials and more consistent monitoring visits in the future.

Table 91: GWSD opinions on home learning during COVID

Respondent Type	Low participation	Moderate participation	High participation
Girls with Extreme Disabilities	**34.6% (18)**	**9.6% (5)**	**55.8% (29)**
Existing sample of GWDs	**45.3% (87)**	**10.9% (21)**	**43.8% (84)**

Table 92: GWSD responses to questions on home learning during COVID

	Learning		No Learning	
Question	**Severe Disabilities**	**Existing Sample**	**Severe Disabilities**	**Existing Sample**
Did you do any home learning or self-study during COVID in 2020?	86.0% (43)	80.9% (148)	14.0% (7)	19.1% (35)
Did you do any home learning or self-study during COVID in 2021?	78.0% (39)	80.8% (147)	22.0% (11)	19.2% (35)
Did you receive a home learning packet in 2020?	44.0% (22)	54.7% (93)	56.0% (28)	45.3% (77)
Did you receive a home learning packet in 2021?	52.0% (26)	55.8% (97)	48.0% (24)	44.3% (77)
Were you able to use the materials for home learning in 2020?	100% (31)	89.2% (99)	0% (0)	10.8% (12)
Were you able to use the materials for home learning in 2021?	100% (35)	89.0% (105)	0% (0)	11.0% (13)
Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning in 2020?	96.8% (30)	88.7% (94)	3.2% (1)	11.3% (12)
Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning in 2021?	97.1% (34)	86.7% (98)	2.9% (1)	13.3% (15)
Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning in 2020?	72.7% (32)	75.8% (119)	27.3% (12)	24.2% (38)

Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning in 2021?	77.3% (34)	76.1% (121)	22.7% (10)	23.9% (38)

8.4   Persistence and resilience of girls with severe disabilities

Persistence: GWSDs scored highly on the ML2 persistence scale, with nearly 94% reporting moderate (58%) or high (36%) levels of persistence on a set of internationally recognised questions to measure what is commonly referred to as 'grit'. Only 6% of GWSDs reported low levels of persistence – 7% less than their peers. Overall, GWSDs reported greater levels of moderate persistence than GWDs in the main sample, though levels of high persistence were virtually the same.

Notably, GWSDs with high levels of persistence indicated that they are: committed to the tasks they begin; are serious about hard work and put effort into assignments; not discouraged by setbacks. In sum, they are focused, motivated and interested in what they're doing, similar to their peers in the main study. At the same time, a significant number of GWSDs in the study (between 33-38%) believe intelligence is an immutable concept that cannot and does not change, even though we can learn to do new things; this surpasses the percentage of GWDs who believe the same thing (between 14-16%).

This is surprising, given that GWSDs reported higher levels of engagement in self-driven home learning, and higher levels of persistence overall than their counterparts in the main sample. It is possible that the education and learning experiences of GWSDs – due to the severity of their impairments and the quality of their learning environments and teachers – can in part explain these findings. Perhaps they correlate their own inherent intelligence relevant to their ability to engage and communicate with the people and world around them – and to learn and succeed in school. They may feel less able to do these things readily in their daily lives, leading to their overall more negative views regarding general intelligence.

Table 93: Persistence scale

Respondent Type	Low persistence	Moderate persistence	High persistence
Girls with Extreme Disabilities	5.8% (3)	57.7% (30)	36.5% (19)
Existing sample of GWDs	13.5% (26)	51.6% (99)	34.9% (67)

Table 94: Responses to questions on persistence

Question	High		Low	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Sarah/George often sets out to do a certain thing but ends up doing another thing altogether despite his/her plans. Have you ever done that? Are you like him/her?	**56.0% (28)**	**62.4% (113)**	44.0% (22)	37.6% (68)
Sarah/George can be obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time, but later loses interest when a new idea comes. Have you ever done that? Are you like him/her?	44.9% (22)	45.6% (83)	55.1% (27)	54.4% (99)
Sarah/George has difficulty staying motivated and focused on work or projects that take a long time to finish. Have you ever felt like that? Are you like him/her?	54.2% (26)	53.7% (95)	45.8% (22)	46.3% (82)
New ideas and projects sometimes distract Sarah/George from previous ones. He/she can start doing something very well, but along the way drop it and start a different thing altogether. Have you ever done that? Are you like him/her?	50.0% (25)	55.0% (99)	50.0% (25)	45.0% (81)
Sarah/George finishes whatever activity, task or project he/she begins. Are you like him/her?	91.8% (45)	91.0% (162)	8.2% (4)	9.0% (16)
Setbacks do not discourage Sarah/George when he/she is working on an activity or project. He/she believes it's possible to find solutions to your problems. Do you try and find solutions to your problems? Are you like him/her?	88.0% (44)	90.5% (162)	12.0% (6)	9.5% (17)

Sarah/George is very serious about work. He/she is puts a lot of effort into assignments and always completes them. When you have a task to do, are you serious about it? Are you like him/her?	98.0% (48)	95.6% (174)	2.0% (1)	4.4% (8)
Sarah/George is a hard worker no matter the task he/she is doing. He/she has no problem working hard, as he/she knows it will bring benefits. When you have a task, do you work hard at it? Are you like him/her?	94.0% (47)	92.9% (169)	6.0% (3)	7.1% (13)
Sarah/George believes that a person is either born intelligent or they are not, and they can't do much to change that. What do you think? Do you agree or not?	**32.7%%** **(16)**	**14.4%** **(26)**	67.4% (33)	85.6% (155)
Sarah/George thinks that being intelligent is just a trait or quality someone has that you can't change much. What do you think? Do you agree or not?	**38.0%** **(19)**	**16.2%** **(29)**	62.0% (31)	83.8% (150)
Sarah/George believes that people can always learn to do new things, but they can't really change their basic intelligence. What do you think? Do you agree or not?	**62.0%** **(31)**	**71.3%** **(129)**	38.0% (19)	28.7% (52)

Resilience: Seventy-seven percent of GWSDs in the study have moderate (54%) to high (23%) levels of resilience according to findings from the Brief Resilience Scale, meaning they can bounce back or recover from stress. Most girls with high resilience reported being able to recover quickly from hard times (74%) and stress-inducing activities or events (74%). However, over 67% also indicated that they do not like feeling stress and have difficulty participating in and completing an event or activity when it is stressful. GWSDs had a high level of resilience in similar questions as GWDs; their responses matched 66% of the time. Notably, GWSDs were 20% less as likely to state they can get through difficult times with no trouble or problem.

In a similarly designed education resilience scale, GWSDs overwhelmingly demonstrated high (73%) to moderate (21%) levels of resilience towards continuing their education and completing school; findings are directly aligned with results from the main cohort of GWDs. Overall, their education resilience rates are positively strong, and these outcomes align with their school continuation and transition rates to date, demonstrated self-confidence, and overall persistence. Given the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic and the economic hardships faced by families as a result regarding affording the costs of school, the resilience levels of GWSDs – who faced additional challenges at home regarding communication and mobility – play a direct, critical role in their school success and survival.

Table 95: Brief resilience scale for GWSD

Respondent Type	Low resilience	Moderate resilience	High resilience
Girls with Severe Disabilities	23.1% (12)	53.9% (28)	23.1% (12)
Existing sample of GWDs	26.0% (50)	51.6% (99)	22.4% (43)

Table 96: Responses to questions on brief resilience scale from GWSD

Questions	High resilience		Low resilience	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Sarah sometimes goes through a hard time when things are tough. But, she recovers quickly from the hard times and things get better. When you fall on hard times do you recover quickly? Are you like her?	74.0% (37)	77.2% (139)	26.0% (13)	22.8% (41)
Sarah does not like to feel any stress (pressure). She has difficulty participating in and completing an event or activity when it is stressful. Do you have a hard time getting through stressful events? Are you like her?	32.7% (16)	34.6% (63)	67.4% (33)	65.4% (119)

Sarah sometimes feels stress during an activity or event. But, she recovers quickly and gets better. When you experience a stressful event, do you recover quickly? Are you like her/him?	74.0% (37)	76.9% (140)	26.0% (13)	23.1% (42)
Sarah does not like it when bad things happen. It is hard for her to recover after something bad happens. Do you have a hard time recovering when something bad happens? Are you like her?	**48.0% (24)**	**38.6% (69)**	**52.0% (26)**	**61.5% (110)**
Sarah can get through difficult times with no trouble or problem. Are you able to get through difficult times with no trouble or problem? Are you like her?	**54.0% (27)**	**72.2% (130)**	**46.0% (23)**	**27.8% (50)**
Sarah can take a long time to recover from a stressful event. Do you take a long time to recover from a stressful event? Are you like her?	52.0% (26)	52.3% (93)	48.0% (24)	47.8% (85)

Table 97: Education resilience scale for GWSD

Respondent Type	Low education resilience	Moderate education resilience	High education resilience
Girls with Severe Disabilities	5.8% (3)	21.2% (11)	73.1% (38)
Existing sample of GWDs	5.7% (11)	27.6% (53)	66.7% (128)

Table 98: Responses to questions on education resilience from GWSD

	High (Yes)		Low (No)	
Questions	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Do you like/enjoy going to school?	98.0% (49)	97.9% (182)	2.0% (1)	2.2% (4)
Are you happy you are back in school now?	98.0% (49)	98.4% (182)	2.0% (1)	1.6% (3)
Do you think you will stay in school the whole of this year?	93.9% (46)	95.1% (176)	6.1% (3)	4.9% (9)
Do you think you will stay in school after this year (from 2023 onward)?	94.0% (47)	93.5% (172)	6.0% (3)	6.5% (12)
What education level would you like to achieve?	84.0% (42)	88.1% (163)	16.0% (8)	11.9% (22)
Do you think you will finish primary school and sit the PLE?	95.7% (22)	94.7% (71)	4.4% (1)	5.3% (4)
Do you think you will finish senior 4 and sit the UCE?	91.8% (45)	94.1% (144)	8.2% (4)	5.9% (9)
Do you think you will finish senior 6 and sit the UACE?	83.7% (41)	90.3% (140)	**16.3% (8)**	**9.7% (15)**

8.5 Parent education resilience and opinions on girls' life skills

Education resilience: At ML2, households were ranked against a newly formed education resilience scale to further explore their opinions and attitudes towards the education of GWSDs and their beliefs regarding their retention and completion in the system. Most families ranked as having moderate education resilience (54%), followed by high education resilience (46%); none had low education resilience. Parent attitudes towards the education of GWSD are positive: 100% believe that their GWSD will complete the 2022 school year and continue in school going forward; they do not, however, expect them to reach the highest levels of education beyond lower secondary and into tertiary or technical school.

If their economic situation improved, nearly all families would personally continue supporting the education of their GWSD, and they positively share the family's resources equally between their GWSD and their other children. However, as evidenced in the findings above, economic empowerment among all families in the study remains low, and it is unlikely that they will be able to assume the costs of education for their

GWSD alone going forward, despite their opinions that they would do so if their financial situation improved. This evidence again points to the critical importance of CSU-provided school support in the lives of GWSDs and their families, as it is likely they would not remain in school without it. Only half of parents of GWSDs (53%) think they should be in the same class as non-disabled children.

Table 99: Parent education resilience scale

Respondent Type	Low education resilience	Moderate education resilience	High education resilience
Parents of girls with severe Disabilities	0% (0)	53.6% (15)	46.4% (13)
Parents of existing sample of GWDs	2.8% (4)	20.8% (30)	76.4% (110)

Table 100: Parent responses to questions on education resilience

Questions	High resilience		Low resilience	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Do you think your GWSD will stay in school throughout 2022? *(high = yes)*	100% (28)	99.3% (141)	0% (0)	0.7% (1)
Do you think your GWSD will continue in school after this year? *(high = yes)*	100% (28)	93.7% (133)	0%(0)	6.3% (9)
What is the highest level of education you think your GWSD will reach? *(high = S6 and above)*	50.0% (14)	54.2% (77)	50.0% (14)	45.8% (65)
If my income increased then I would continue to support my GWSD *(high = yes)*	96.4% (27)	92.3% (131)	3.6% (1)	7.8% (11)
I would prefer to spend money on my other children than my GWSD *(high = no)*	96.4% (27)	97.2% (138)	3.6% (1)	2.8% (4)
Parents generally think it is not worthwhile for GWSDs to learn *(high = no)*	64.3% (18)	65.5% (93)	35.7% (10)	34.5% (49)
Parents generally think children with disabilities can't learn *(high = no)*	64.3% (18)	64.8% (92)	35.7% (10)	35.2% (50)
There should be special schools for girls with disabilities *(ED high = yes; ES high = no)*	85.7% (24)	80.3% (114)	14.3% (4)	19.7% (28)
It is pointless for GWSDs to study since they will not find any work *(high = no)*	100% (28)	100% (142)	0% (0)	0.0% (0)
GWSDs should be in the same class as non-disabled children *(high = yes)*	53.6% (15)	83.1% (118)	46.4% (13)	16.9% (24)

Girls' life skills: At ML2, over 80% of parents ranked their GWSDs as having high life skills, with another 11% as having moderate life skills. Parents reported that their GWSD interacts with others, solves problems, carries out tasks, follows instructions and resolves tasks mostly independently or with limited help. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children, pointing to a belief in their ability to successfully navigate their world and school and life choices. This is important, since as the girls grow older and more mature, they are more likely to independently be able to care for themselves and develop into productive members of their households and communities. Parent findings align with findings from the girls themselves, which also indicated high levels of confidence and persistence on similar scales.

Table 101: Parent ranking of GEWDs' life skills

Respondent Type	Low life skills	Moderate life skills	High life skills
Girls with Severe Disabilities	7.1% (2)	10.7% (3)	82.1% (23)
Existing sample of GWDs	0.7% (1)	9.2% (13)	90.1% (128)

Table 102: Parent responses to questions on GWSDs' life skills

Questions	Does not do yet		Does with lots of help		Does with some help		Does with a little help		Does independently	
	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample	Severe Disabilities	Existing Sample
Does your GWSD interact well with peers, staff, opposite sex?	3.6%	5.6%	3.6%	0.7%	7.1%	7.8%	7.1%	17.6%	67.9%	62.0%
Does your GWSD find a way around problems that arise?	0%	6.3%	10.7%	8.5%	21.4%	21.1%	10.7%	23.9%	46.4%	38.0%
Does your GWSD carry out tasks without being told?	0%	1.4%	3.6%	5.6%	0%	9.2%	10.7%	9.9%	85.7%	73.9%
Is your GWSD able to resolve disagreements appropriately?	3.6%	4.9%	3.6%	9.2%	14.3%	12.0%	21.4%	15.5%	50.0%	57.0%
Does your GWSD understand and follow instructions when given?	3.6%	0.7%	3.6%	7.0%	0%	12.7%	25.0%	14.8%	67.9%	64.8%

9 Conclusions and recommendations

The Theory of Change (TOC) below details how the CSU project will improve the life chances[17] of GWDs in Kampala by: a) improving their **learning outcomes** in literacy and numeracy; b) ensuring that they **transition** through the appropriate grades from lower to higher institutions of learning; and c) **sustainably** improving the supportive environment in which they learn and live. More specifically, the project aims to:

1) Improve **attendance** rates of GWDs in specific project schools by providing direct financial support to the GWDs and their families in addition to supporting to improve accessibility and sanitary facilities of 20 selected project schools.
2) Enhance the **teaching quality** experienced by GWDs within project schools by training teachers on how to deliver lessons using inclusive teaching practices.
3) Better the **self-esteem** and agency of GWDs to increase their ability to make informed decisions about their lives by providing training on life skills, self-esteem and child protection support.
4) Increase the ability and willingness of families of GWDs to **economically empower** them to finance their education by providing capacity-building in financial management to increase or diversify the family income.
5) Contribute to creating and maintaining an **inclusive environment** in the school, community and governance system to support the needs of GWDs and thereby contribute to learning and transition.

Impact: Improving life chances for girls and women with disabilities in Uganda

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[17] Life chances are considered as the following: financial independence, independent decision making, independent living, equal participation in sectors of education, health, governance and employment.

Outcomes	Improvement in literacy and numeracy **learning** outcomes of GWDs in Kampala		Improvement in **transition** rates of GWDs in Kampala		Improvement in **sustainability** of the supportive environment for learning and transition of GWDs	
Intermediate outcomes	Improved attendance rates of GWDs in project schools *(Attendance)*	Increased number of teachers demonstrating **inclusive teaching practices** while teaching literacy and numeracy in class *(Teaching Quality)*	GWDs have improved **self-esteem & agency** to make informed decisions about all aspects of their lives *(Self-Esteem)*	Families use their improved income to financially support the education of their GWDs *(Economic Empowerment)*	Inclusive environment (school, household, policy, system) maintained to support the needs of GWDs *(Inclusive environment)*	
Outputs	Output 1: 2060 GWDs receiving direct support to contribute to retention in school	Output 2: 20 schools supported to improve accessibility and sanitary facilities, to contribute to retention in school	Output 3: Teachers with improved knowledge and capacity to deliver lessons using inclusive teaching practices	Output 4: GWD receiving life skills training, career guidance, child protection, participating in extracurricular activities for successful transition	Output 5: Increased family income and increased willingness to support to the education of GWDs	Output 6: Schools, community, education actors sensitised on gender and inclusive education to promote the education of GWDs

9.1   Outcome 1: Learning

Overall Conclusions for Outcome 1: Learning

Learning outcomes have improved from ML1, with the majority of learners performing at established or proficient status on key assessments. However, as the difficulty level of the tests is below the current grade level of most learners, evidence shows they are still performing below expectation for their age and grade.

The foundational and functional skills of GWDs are aligned, and GWDs appear to be able to transfer classroom knowledge into real world application regarding basic reading and math tasks.

Learners in secondary school who are performing below grade level on key reading and math tasks face potential academic threats to their school continuation and completion, as they will likely increasingly continue to struggle with new and more difficult tasks in both subjects going forward.

Conclusion 1: Foundational reading
Learner profiles indicate that most GWDs – around 65% - are performing at an established or proficient level in reading, with 22% of GWD at emergent and 6% at non-learner status. The distribution of learners across the four profiles exhibits a positive trend toward proficiency, with the majority of learners demonstrating at least a basic capability in the foundational skill of reading fluency – albeit on a grade 5 text. It is expected that this trend will continue, given the positive shift in outcomes from ML1 to ML2.

Importantly however, the difficulty level of the reading passage is far below the grade level of most learners – over 80% are in P7 or above – indicating that, while learners are reading with relative fluency, they are doing so noticeably below grade level.

Trends in reading comprehension profiles demonstrate that learners are mostly at emergent status (just over 40%); around 23% of learners fall into the established category, while only 7% are proficient. Close to 20% of GWDs were non-learners in this subtask, unable to answer a single comprehension question correctly.

These findings suggest that, while learners are mostly able to read text fluently, their understanding of those words and content is limited, as is their ability to apply reading concepts learned to other tasks.

Recommendation 1: Foundational reading
Getting more learners reading more of the time, reducing non-readers and growing the proportion of capable readers who can comprehend text – both within and between different types of learners – must be a clear goal of literacy instruction. CSU can support such targeted interventions in the future, especially through materials procurement and distribution to increase the number of available reading materials in schools, and by linking reading to other inputs directed at teachers during training.

It would be worthwhile to consult a technical expert to advise on future trainings so teachers learn appropriate content and strategies for teaching reading in upper primary and secondary school. Using learner profiles going forward to monitor and track this achievement in individuals and groups of GWDs provides a clear mechanism for diagnosing progress, communicating results, and getting teachers and parents on board with discussing and monitoring change with their children.

Particular attention should be provided to those learners who are not progressing according to the expected progression rate (GWDs who are still below P6) as they are performing below average on all subtasks.

Conclusion 2: Functional reading
Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering the majority of items in the functional reading assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for reading to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong literacy. Findings indicate that learners can accurately recognise everyday vocabulary words and decode new words they do not know using their knowledge of the letter-sound system and alphabetic principle.

Findings in the functional and foundational vocabulary subtasks mirror one another, with few learners scoring zero on those subtasks. Reading comprehension scores on the foundational and functional assessments were also equally aligned, though a significant number of learners still had zero scores.

This points to some gaps in learners' ability to read for meaning and accurately process key vocabulary and concepts within simple functional texts, which might be a predictor of later reading difficulty as they progress through school.

Recommendation 2: Functional Reading
The ultimate goal of any in-school reading program is to prepare students for life after formal education as they enter the workforce and apply their skills to available jobs. CSU can build on these findings in the final project stage to offer opportunities for functional reading skills development through its life skills and career guidance programming, providing relevant real-world texts and practical exercises to build GWDs' everyday reading skills directly through the project's quality education interventions.

Conclusion 3: Foundational math
Learner profiles for the number problems subtask indicate they have gained basic developmental math skills, with the majority performing at the established level, just below proficiency level where they can work independently and readily apply math skills to conceptual tasks. Low proficiency levels across all categories

of GWDs (except for learners with visual impairments) suggest that, while learners are increasingly able to complete basic computations, their understanding of mathematical facts and strategies applied in new ways is limited, as is their conceptual ability to apply processes learned to other tasks.

> **Recommendation 3: Foundational math**
>
> Increasing learners' conceptual skills must be a central goal of instruction; this can be achieved, in part, by ensuring learners are confident in their computational skills and knowledge and application of number facts. Getting more learners confident doing math and capable of applying concepts readily to new equations must be part of any quality education programme undertaken going forward.
>
> CSU can support such targeted interventions, especially through materials procurement and distribution to increase the number of available teaching and learning materials for math and science in schools, and by training teachers on maths instruction and pedagogy. As with reading, it would be worthwhile to consult a technical expert to develop content for the trainings so teachers learn appropriate information and strategies for teaching maths in upper primary and secondary school. Using learner profiles going forward to monitor and track this achievement in individuals and groups of GWDs provides a clear mechanism for diagnosing progress, communicating results, and getting teachers and parents on board with discussing and monitoring change with their children.

Conclusion 4: Functional Math

Overall, learners were confident attempting and answering the majority of items in the functional math assessment, demonstrating an ability to transfer in-school knowledge and skills for mathematics to the more everyday language and tasks involved in daily, lifelong numeracy.

Findings indicate that learners can accurately recognise and perform everyday math tasks and processes accurately regarding pattern making and division – both of which are key foundational math skills applied here to functional tasks. Results in the functional and foundational math subtasks mirror one another, with few learners scoring zero on those subtasks. Conceptual math scores on the foundational and functional assessments were also equally aligned (e.g., number problems with market transactions), though there were several zero scores.

This points to some gaps in learners' ability to apply procedural skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to conceptual knowledge applied to functional, everyday tasks, which might be a predictor of later math difficulty as they progress through school.

> **Recommendation 4: Functional math**
>
> As with reading, the ultimate goal of any in-school math programme is to prepare students for life after formal education as they enter the workforce and apply their skills to available jobs. Opportunities to grow functional math skills present themselves in the career guidance and life skills programming implemented by CSU, particularly around entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

9.2   Outcome 2: Transition

> **Overall Conclusions for Outcome 2: Transition**
>
> **The transition rate decreased for all grades at ML2.**
>
> **Parent attitudes towards the education of GWD are positive, demonstrating high levels of education resilience that can support better education outcomes for their children.**
>
> **Financial support has emerged in this study as the most important input provided to GWDs and their households to ensure retention and completion of a basic education cycle. Without it, girls are likely to dropout and not return.**

> **While other supportive inputs help to ensure school success once a girl is retained, they must be delivered alongside – and not in absence of – financial social protection measures to ultimately be successful in ensuring the transition of GWDs through the education system.**

Conclusion 6: Transition Targets

Transition rates dropped for all grades except S3 between ML1 and ML2. This result is partly due to the way this indicator is calculated as learners who were not found at ML2 were considered as unsuccessful transition even if they were not technically lost to a learning journey (for example, learners transferred to another school, learners in VTI who could not be visited due to schools being closed or learners being on an internship away from Kampala). Additionally, school closures as a consequence of COVID-19 pandemic impacted heavily on learning and on return to school.

Evidence from the few parents contacted at ML2 whose children have dropped out from the sample confirms they are no longer in school due to economic (lack of school fees), sociocultural (relocation, early marriage) and/or health problems (illness, pregnancy); it is probable that many of these families fall into the lowest economic brackets – poor or very poor. In keeping with this, we can also assume that many of the GWDs who dropped out from the sample between baseline and ML1 (though a far lower percentage than between ML1 and ML2) also faced similar economic, sociocultural and health challenges that forced them out of school – many permanently.

> **Recommendation 6: Transition targets**
>
> At this stage, transition outcomes for learners should be tracked on an individual basis for the GWDs remaining in the study and those targeted in the overall project. At ML2, a number of GWDs in the study cohort was removed from the sample as they dropped out of school or transferred to another school or non-formal education programme; they could not be tracked either due to lack of information on their status and location, or due to distances between Kampala and their current residence that proved time and cost prohibitive for individual child tracking.
>
> Understanding the experiences of girls who dropped out and what drove them to leave, or forced them out of, the formal education system is vital to generating evidence on the range of social protection measures needed to get, and keep, vulnerable girls in school. Defining the package of inputs required to better mitigate the vulnerabilities driving dropout is a key goal of the Value for Money analysis currently underway for the ML2 data.
>
> The transition targets set by the project are still not being met – though they are within reach as long as interventions are targeted on a child-by-child basis. This support must come directly to learners and to their families from CSU and be delivered routinely in the locations where they are best accessed (e.g. their current school and home where their parents reside).

> **Special Note on Data Management and Tracking Costs**
>
> Data collection and management for all girls in the project – and especially for the small number of girls remaining in the study sample – must be a priority for CSU between ML2 and the endline in 2024. The tracking of girls in the study cohort between ML1 and ML2 (as it was between ML1 and baseline) was challenging given the lack of aggregated, complete data on each girl in CSU's records. A disproportionate amount of time was spent at the start of the data collection process harmonizing CSU records with the study's sample lists, which delayed fieldwork and made it difficult to track girls from their last known locations.
>
> Information on the whereabouts of numerous girls was limited if they had transferred or dropped out, leading to complications in the field when enumerators attempted to track them from their former schools or through their families where there were gaps or inconsistencies in CSU's records. Keeping these documents up to date between now and the endline must be a priority.
>
> A regular update calendar for the study sample lists should be set between Montrose and CSU to ensure maintenance of the records, including establishing processes and structures for immediate follow-up of

girls who transfer or dropout before the endline to ensure they can be found and tracked through family, school or friends at a later date.

Additionally, the costs of tracking individual girls in the sample who leave the Kampala area has been impossible to meet with the existing evaluation budget. If current trends are maintained, we can assume there will be an equal proportion of girls who attrit from the sample between ML2 and endline simply because we cannot afford the costs of individually tracking them across the country.

In Uganda, maintaining phone records for family and friends in the new locations that girls move to can be challenging, but not impossible. Montrose can work with CSU to establish procedures and data tools for this process to ensure record keeping adheres to study standards and provides the information necessary for follow-up to happen.

Remote interviews can be incredibly difficult to implement for such a detailed study, and phone-based learning assessments can only provide limited data at best (even when they are able to be executed). Plans should be put into place now regarding how the evaluation will deal with these issues at endline, including what level of attrition the study will accept if additional budgets for individual child tracking are not provided.

Conclusion 7: Education resilience

At ML2, households were ranked against a newly formed education resilience scale to further explore their opinions and attitudes towards the education of GWDs and their beliefs regarding their retention and completion in the system. Most families ranked as having high education resilience (over 76%), followed by moderate education resilience (nearly 21%) and low education resilience (just under 3%).

Parent attitudes towards the education of GWD are positive, and nearly all believe that their GWD will complete the 2022 school year and continue in school going forward; they do not, however, expect them to reach the highest levels of education beyond lower secondary and into tertiary or technical school.

Recommendation 7: Education resilience

Positive parent attitudes towards a basic cycle of education completion for GWDs can be capitalised on in the final project phase to ensure learners have the right mix of supportive structures and people to ensure their retention in school. Parents play a huge role in their child's 'learning community' and are pivotal in ensuring resources are directed towards the education of GWDs – whether those resources are provided externally by CSU or internally from the household.

Education resilience is an important marker to track going forward to determine what makes a child, and their household, more able to withstand basic shocks that can push GWDs out of school and prevent their return. Understanding the shocks that individual families might face – which will be different based on their household dynamics, economic situation, the age, disability and health status of their learner, etc. – is key to bolstering education resilience in vulnerable households. Once this is understood for individual GWDs it is possible to target specific social protection and quality education interventions to ensure their retention in, and transition through, school.

Conclusion 8: Transition - CSU support for GWDs' retention and transition

Nearly 90% of GWDs in the study receive multiple forms of support from CSU towards their education. Primarily, this comes through financial support, which they overwhelmingly believe allowed them to return to school in 2022 after nearly two years of school closures. Additionally, GWDs reported that CSU's support promotes their regular attendance and encourages their overall retention and transition through the education system.

In addition to financial inputs, CSU's home visits and monitoring phone calls throughout school closures in 2020 and 2021 were conducted for 75% of the study population each year, which is a positive indication of the level of engagement CSU maintained during the pandemic, and a sign of the relative benefits GWDs feel these interactions provided to them while they were away from school.

Less than half of the girls surveyed reported attending any life skills training over the last three years, which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to many GWD's ability to return to school and stay there.

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Recommendation 8: Transition - CSU support for GWDs' retention and transition

If investments in life skills, child protection, career guidance and extracurricular activities are meant to drive and/or support GWD's retention in and transition through school, they must be delivered consistently and in equal measure across all project beneficiaries, at all times. Findings from this study indicate that financial inputs in the form of school fees and bursaries to GWDs are the greatest contributor to retention and transition; without them, girls may drop out and never return. These must be continued in the final project phase if transition rates are to be maintained or even improved.

Additional inputs that encourage better learning outcomes, school experiences, and socioemotional skills development offer a supplementary supportive structure for GWDs outside of financing education that potentially have a significant impact on their retention, transition and completion – especially as girl's progress to more difficult levels of learning in secondary school. The Value for Money analysis will attempt to quantify the effect of these additional inputs on education outcomes to determine their significance and relative impact.

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Conclusion 9: Transition – Household support for GWDs' education

At ML2, CSU support for GWDs still in the sample indicate a range of inputs related to financial and non-financial investments in girls and their families. All families reported receiving some form of support, with 74% receiving non-fee related financial report in the form of bursaries; nearly 70% of GWDs also have their school fees paid by CSU. For 60% of families, this is the only support they receive from CSU, as only 40% reported that CSU helps their wider family.

Support from an organisation like CSU is vital for GWDs from poor families to access and complete a basic education (P1 to S6), as without it they are highly likely to drop out of school and not return. It also means that supporting income generating activities for poor families in the project is likely to be unsuccessful in terms of transitioning the complete cost burden of education to the parents of GWDs after the programme – it just does not raise enough capital in vulnerable households to offset the high costs of schooling, and is not spread across enough households to make a significant impact.

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Recommendation 9: Transition – Household support for GWDs' education

The finding that (despite inputs and training on income generation and financial literacy) poor, vulnerable households are unlikely able to absorb the complete costs of education for GWDs – especially once they transition to more expensive secondary school – is likely not new knowledge. However, it is critical to apply this evidence to the final phase of the programme to ensure CSU's household support for education supplies the right inputs to meet families' needs.

Additionally, it is vital to explore the specific economic hurdles families face affording the costs of school so that financial investments can be tailored to individual households, with the goal of helping guide families to finance all the education costs they can afford, with CSU providing a buffer for the remainder.

At the end of the day, the greatest outcome the project will achieve involves moving as many individual learners as possible through the system to complete a basic cycle of formal education. Every learner who successfully completes this represents a successful transition, and whatever inputs are required at a household and project level to achieve this should be documented and assessed to determine their effectiveness and identify trends that can inform future successful social protection programmes for education.

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9.3   Outcome 3: Sustainability

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Overall Conclusions for Outcome 3: Sustainability

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Attendance rates greatly improved among teachers and students at ML2. An increase in the number of GWDs in boarding is partially attributed to this success, at least in 40% of cases. Additional improvements, however, were positively realised within the study's cohort of day scholars.

Home learning inputs were fragmented across the study cohort during COVID, with GWDs and households receiving different level of support from CSU. Disappointingly, learning packets were only accessed by just over half of the learners, as were home visits or monitoring phone calls.

Teachers offered infrequent learning support and catch-up lessons to GWD during school closures in 2020 and 2021, though this has increased following school reopening's in 2022.

Most GWDs reported high levels of **persistence and resiliency**, evidenced by their concerted effort to return to school following the pandemic and continue their education.

Children experienced relatively low levels of deprivation on a **child poverty** scale, with around three of every 10 children routinely experiencing moderate poverty and one out of every 10 children experiencing more extreme poverty in their daily lives.

Improvements in **household wealth** and living conditions were registered, along with a slight reduction in the share of families with an unemployed head of household/primary caregiver.

Importantly, while it seems that GWDs still in the sample come from slightly wealthier households (relatively speaking, in comparison to their peers in the study at ML1 and baseline), they are still **vulnerable to economic shocks** – especially after the pandemic – as evidenced by the sharp increase in the percentage of families that have gone without eating or income in the last week at ML2, with twice as many families reporting they experienced this relative to findings from ML1.

Economic empowerment among all families in the study remains low, and it is unlikely that households will be able to assume the costs of education for their GWD alone going forward, despite their opinions that they would do so if their financial situation improved.

Many GWDs in the study cohort have **transitioned to secondary schools** where the CSU programme is not operating. These schools and teachers are not receiving any inputs to promote inclusive education, so we cannot necessarily attribute any positive or negative school-level outcomes regarding inclusive education upon their return to the programme.

The study found positive **inclusive education** outcomes amongst CSU-supported teachers and schools, but it is not clear whether these beliefs are shared by the schools and teachers that GWDs have transitioned to between ML1 and ML2, or whether the girls are receiving the same level of adaption and support for their learning and assessment.

This is a risk for the project going forward, as the girls may face challenges remaining in school and succeeding while they are there due to lack of inputs on inclusive education in their new locations.

Conclusion 10: Attendance

At ML2, children in upper primary and secondary school reported being absent from school more than those in lower primary, which showed vast improvement from ML1. Learners in P5 and P6 reported the highest levels of absenteeism, followed by those in P7, secondary and vocational. Illness was the most common reason given by the GWDs for their absence from school. A few learners pointed to menstruation or lack of transport as the reasons for their absence from school.

The overall learner absenteeism rate at ML2 positively reduced in comparison to the absenteeism rate at baseline and ML1. Teacher absenteeism also significantly reduced from ML1 to ML2 for learners in all

grades. Teachers also reported similar changes in leaner attendance in alignment with self-reported data from the GWDs in the sample.

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Recommendation 10: Attendance

Positively, ongoing reductions in absenteeism provide learners and teachers with more time on task to achieve learning gains. Efforts to maintain this trend must continue in the final project phase. Additionally, specific inputs to ensure day scholars consistently attend and benefit from more time in the classroom with their teachers is likely necessary in the coming phase. These interventions may need to be contextualised to certain groups of GWDs depending on their needs and the specific vulnerabilities contributing to their poor attendance.

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Conclusion 11: Teaching Quality – Teachers' opinions on inclusive education

Teachers were asked about their opinion and classroom practices to promote inclusive education. At midline 2 96% of teachers declare having heard about inclusive education and bear a positive attitude towards inclusion in mainstream schools, believing that their school offers opportunities for inclusion to all students (100% of teachers). All these values are higher at midline 2 compared to baseline values. More teachers report some frustration in the adaptation of the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all students even if almost all (97.8%) declare that they are willing to do it.

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Recommendation 11: Teaching quality

CSU should support teachers' willingness to support the individual needs of all students by supporting them in this activity. Specific trainings can be organized (for example, on how to teach a mixed-level class) as well as seminars with headteachers and other education authorities so that teachers are provided with support at multiple levels when curriculum adaptations are needed.

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Conclusion 12: Inclusive environment - Home learning during COVID

GWDs reported extremes in their participation in home learning during COVID school closures, with around 45% indicating either low or high levels of participation, respectively. The other 10% of GWDs reported moderate levels of participation. During both years of school closures in 2020 and 2021, GWDs in the study reported the same level of participation in home learning and self-study (around 80% each year). However, only about 55% of the girls who reported participating in home learning said they received home learning packets each time, indicating that the production and distribution of these materials by CSU only reached half of the intended recipients (at least those enrolled in the study) each year.

Given that the great majority of girls lived at home with their parents at that time (presumably in the same locations as they did prior to COVID and within reach of the CSU-supported school they attended), it is not clear why they did not receive home learning packets. Positively, nearly 90% of the GWDs in the study that did receive them each year reported that they were able to use the packets and that they were helpful for learning.

Over 55% of households reported receiving support from CSU during COVID-driven school closures in 2020 and 2021. This support included receiving home learning packets adapted to their disability needs, home visits and/or monitoring phone calls, and (for some) life skills training. Findings also show, however, that close to 24% of families received only moderate support, and over 20% received low levels of support during this period. For these families, home learning packets adapted to the needs of their GWDs were not accessed, and they did not receive home visits or monitoring phone calls. Moreover, life skills trainings were not received by the majority of GWDs in the sample – nearly 60% reported not accessing them during the pandemic.

Given that these learning resources and household and GWD engagement activities formed a core, critical part of CSU's COVID response package, these findings are quite disappointing. From the data, it is not clear why the small remaining sample in this study did not equally access CSU support during this time, or why they were not specifically targeted with CSU inputs aside from financial support in the form of cash

transfers. However, it is important to explore the reasons behind the variation in access to achieve a more equitable distribution of inputs in the future, which CSU is accountable for providing.

Recommendation 12: Inclusive environment – Home learning
This result must be further explored with schools and CSU to understand why this happened and how to mitigate access and distribution challenges for materials and other inputs in the future. Equitable access to CSU-driven interventions for learning support is critical in the final phase of the project to ensure GWDs have equal chances of benefitting from learning inputs. Providing a basis for this access through teachers and schools is critical, as is a follow-up mechanism from CSU's field staff. Given the relatively small number of children sustained by the project vis-à-vis the number of teachers and CSU field officers deployed to oversee them, building individual support teams between GWDs, families, teachers/schools and CSU field officers should be straightforward and pursued as a priority in the final stage of the project.

Conclusion 13: Inclusive environment – Teacher training and student engagement

Only 40% of teachers and head teachers reported having received a CSU training during COVID in 2020 and 2021. An almost equal percentage reported having attended a CSU training since schools reopened in 2022. About 40% of the teachers acknowledged receiving home learning packets for GWD from CSU. Around 60% of the teachers who received home learning packets said that the materials were adapted to cater for the different needs of GWDs.

Teachers offered less learning support or catch-up lessons to GWD than to other children. The learning support (including home learning lessons during COVID) significantly reduced during the lockdown period (2020 and 2021) but increased in 2022. Only about 40% of teachers provided catch-up classes for GWD.

Recommendation 13: Inclusive environment – Teacher training and student engagement
Teachers who build strong relationships with students can help them develop skills such as trust, cooperation and responsibility. As evidenced by their reported support networks, a significant number of GWDs reported going to their teacher for help, advice, guidance and counselling. This positively indicates that developing relationships between teachers and students can further their education achievement and overall persistence.
Continuing to work with teachers to provide in-school support to GWDs can go a long way in the final phase to further achieve all project outcomes and strengthen relationships between children, schools and families. Identifying ways to work with the new schools and teachers where GWDs have transferred or transitioned to should also be considered, as supporting the welfare and education needs of individual girls benefitting from the project remains paramount.

Conclusion 14: Self-esteem – Persistence

Based on this research and the current education crisis in Uganda post-COVID, determination and grit seem necessary to drive one's return to school and continuation in education. So, we sought to understand the persistence levels of GWDs in the study. GWDs scored highly on the ML2 persistence scale, with nearly 90% of girls in the study reporting moderate (52%) or high (35%) levels of persistence on a set of internationally recognised questions to measure grit. Only 13% of girls reported low levels of persistence.

Notably, GWDs with high levels of persistence indicated that they are: committed to the tasks they begin; are serious about hard work and put effort into assignments; not discouraged by setbacks. In sum, they are focused, motivated and interested in what they're doing. At the same time, GWDs in the study overwhelmingly indicated that they believe intelligence is an immutable concept that cannot and does not change, even though we can learn to do new things. This is surprising, given that all learners have improved their assessment scores, adapted classroom-based foundational learning to functional applications, and report high levels of confidence and motivation to continue in school.

Recommendation 14: Self-esteem – Persistence
Global evidence shows that they impact of boosting social and emotional skills to improve social outcomes provides a considerable reward, and is generally complementary to boosting cognitive skills. Enhancing specific social and emotional skills, notably persistence, enhances students' ability to improve

their cognitive skills and to persevere through difficult academic subjects and learning environments to achieve education outcomes. Social and emotional skills are also fundamentally dependent on cognitive skills such as perception, memory and reasoning; the development of one skill area thus enhances the development of the other.

Given that CSU are not technical experts on reading or maths (both cognitive skill areas), their efforts around social and emotional skills development through the life skills component should form a core focal area of the final phase. These inputs have already shown results in terms of persistence and resilience (see below), and they can be expanded to drive up gains across all three project result areas. Ensuring that all GWDs equally access life skills inputs is critical, and a new strategy for ensuring their engagement – even if they have transferred out of CSU-supported schools – must be developed and implemented.

Conclusion 15: Self-esteem – Resilience

Around 75% of GWDs in the study reported moderate (52%) to high (22%) levels of resilience on an internationally recognised tool – the Brief Resilience Scale. Girls reported being able to recover from hard times and stress-inducing activities or events, or if something bad happens. They also indicated across all resilience categories that they can take a long time to recover from a stressful event, despite being able to get through difficult times without much trouble.

In a similarly designed education resilience scale, GWDs overwhelmingly demonstrated high (67%) to moderate (28%) levels of resilience towards their education and school completion. Education resilience rates are positively strong in the current cohort of GWDs, and these outcomes align with their rates of school return, self-confidence and persistence. Improved learning outcomes at ML2 and successful transitions from ML1 to date are all in keeping with these findings, as the GWDs remaining in the study continue to persevere and persist in school. Given the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic and the economic hardships faced by families as a result, which effects their ability to afford the costs of school, the resilience levels of GWDs play a direct, critical role in their school success and survival.

Recommendation 15: Self-esteem – Resilience

Resilience is a critical factor in helping GWDs overcome personal and environmental vulnerabilities and persist through school to achieve a full cycle of basic education. Building on the existing resilience levels of GWDs and their families will strengthen outcomes related to learning and transition and help to prepare children for life after school. Resilience, as it relates to handling stressful situations, can be grown through life skills training and classroom inputs that develop social and emotional skills. As previously recommended to grow levels of persistence, life and socioemotional skills development – when targeted at strategies to reduce stress and to handle stressing situations or events – can directly support GWDs to develop and grow their resilience, which can help them better manage the vulnerabilities that may prevent them from learning, transitioning, or completing school.

Conclusion 16: Self-esteem – Life skills

At ML2, 90% of parents overwhelmingly ranked their GWDs as having high life skills, with another 9% as having moderate life skills. Parents reported that their GWD interacts with others, solves problems, carries out tasks, follows instructions and resolves tasks mostly independently or with limited help. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children, pointing to a belief in their ability to successfully navigate their world and school and life choices.

This is important, since as the girls grow older and more mature, they are more likely to independently be able to care for themselves and develop into productive members of their households and communities. Parent findings also align with findings from the girls themselves, which also indicated high levels of confidence and persistence on similar scales.

Over 95% of teachers and head teachers said that there has been an increase in access to education and retention as well as the learning outcomes of GWD ever since CSU started working in their schools. The clear majority of teachers attribute the change in GWD's confidence and self-esteem to CSU's life skills and mentoring support interventions, with almost 100% stating there has been a positive change in their confidence and self-esteem in the past year. This aligns with parent and learner findings of a similar nature.

Recommendation 16: Self-esteem – Life skills

Maintaining – and even expanding – life skills training and support for GWDs is a clear win for the project. Delivering specific content that will help GWDs further develop their persistence and resilience skills would be beneficial. Given the low levels of access to life skill trainings during the pandemic, this input should be developed and executed in earnest. Ensuring life skills trainings reach all beneficiaries is also critical, and strategies to achieve this must be developed and implemented – including for GWDs that have transferred out of CSU schools but are still supported by the project.

Conclusion 17: Economic Empowerment – Child poverty

Over half of the students surveyed (about 55%, or 6 out of every 10 children) are not deprived at all, indicating they are not living in conditions of poverty. Just over one-third (33%) were slightly deprived, while the remaining students were very deprived (10%) or severely deprived (2%).

Positively, these findings show that most children in the study are not living in any conditions of poverty, relative to their peers. This aligns with parent findings on household poverty in the next section, indicating that this group of GWDs is not disadvantaged in any perceptible way as individuals or as members of their household. They tend to live in safe, accessible and stable conditions, stay with their biological parents, do not work outside of the home, talk to their parents about their bursaries and education, participated in home study activities during COVID, and have access to menstrual hygiene services.

Yet, around three of every 10 children routinely experience moderate poverty, while about one out of every 10 children experience more extreme poverty in their daily lives. Children's deprivations are mostly related to their: 1) access to information – namely about their bursaries and expenses; 2) access to appropriate facilities relevant to their disability at home, school and on transportation; 3) lack of a stable living situation (they have lived in multiple households in the last two years); 4) child labour (requiring them to work outside the home during COVID to help their family earn money); and 5) health (they have suffered illnesses over the last three years and had a negative emotional outlook during COVID).

Recommendation 17: Economic empowerment – Child poverty

Nearly all the deprivations experienced by GWD in the study are possible to at least partially address through a combination of CSU-supported inputs and trainings, as well as ongoing initiatives to improve household finances through income-generating activities. To address deprivations related to information access, interventions need to target parents and households to give them strategies for talking to their GWD about school, life skills and how to use CSU's financial support. Given the close relationship most GWDs have with their mothers or caregivers, they can be used as an entry point for this engagement

Deprivations related to facility access, the child's living situation and child labour are more difficult to address, given that they relate to larger issues of household poverty. However, keeping GWDs in school can directly counter instances of child labour, as attending school every day occupies children's time and limits opportunities for work. Family living situations cannot be controlled, but CSU can offer guidance and counselling to GWDs and their families where possible to help them better manage the situation; regular follow-up is key in these instances, as situations are volatile and can change rapidly. Once GWDs enter secondary school, CSU could also provide financial assistance so they can board and focus on school in a stable environment.

Facility construction to improve access for GWDs can likely not be tackled at this stage in the project in either homes or schools, save for repairing existing facilities or ensuring GWDs access those that are already available. But GWDs who lack accessible transportation to school should be supported by the project to facilitate their movements between school and home (either daily or termly), as well as to other project activities. Moreover, ensuring that GWDs have appropriate and functioning assistive devices where required must be an area of focus, as this may also help close gaps in facility access with minimal investment from CSU.

CSU should further explore the health issues that affected GWDs during COVID to ensure they are getting the right inputs and support to maintain their overall wellness and health now and in the future.

Some of CSU's financial support has always been directed towards GWDs who have more significant health issues requiring specific inputs. It may be necessary to expand this component to additional GWDs that may be facing new health challenges since COVID to ensure they transition through and complete school.

Conclusion 18: Economic empowerment – Household poverty
Findings show that most households with GWDs in the remaining sample – over 80% – are classified as either rich or very rich; another 11% are middle income. At ML2 less than 8% of households fell into the two lowest economic categories, poor or very poor. This is down 30% from ML1, when just over 38% of households in the sample fell into the two lowest categories. ML1 had also registered a 10% decline from baseline, when just under 50% of households were ranked as poor or very poor.

Findings on parents provide a lens on the extreme challenges households face providing for the daily welfare of their family members living at home. Households are large, with around 60% of households providing for between 3-6 children in addition to the adults. Parent education levels restrict their access to, and ability to engage in, paid formal sector work, leaving them vulnerable to income variation and financial instability while working in the informal sector. Average incomes are far below a living wage in Kampala, and study findings indicate that families largely cannot afford the costs of education for their children – especially as they transition to upper grades that require more financial resources for them to participate.

Improvements in household wealth and living conditions were registered, along with a slight reduction in the share of families with an unemployed head of household/primary caregiver. Importantly, while it seems that GWDs still in the sample come from slightly wealthier households (relatively speaking, in comparison to their peers in the study at ML1 and baseline), they are still vulnerable to economic shocks – especially after the pandemic – as evidenced by the sharp increase in the percentage of families that have gone without eating or income in the last week at ML2, with twice as many families reporting they experienced this relative to findings from ML1.

Recommendation 18: Economic empowerment – Household poverty
Continuing with financial assistance to GWDs and their families is critical in the final project phase. All GWDs receiving support should be monitored and the inputs they receive clearly documented to inform the final internal and external evaluations of the project. Additionally, their expected transition rates should be plotted to inform whether they will graduate from a full cycle of basic education by the time the project closes. If not, CSU should reflect on and make provisions for how the costs of their final years in school will be catered for, as it is clear from this data that expecting households to absorb those costs is unlikely. If this is not done, more GWDs may drop out of the system before completing their basic education and not return.

Conclusion 19: Economic empowerment – Household economic empowerment
Evidence shows that the clear majority of households with GWDs in the remaining sample – over 72% – are classified as having low economic empowerment; another 27% are moderately empowered. Only 1%, representing only one household in the study, are highly empowered. These findings indicate that the households of GWDs in the study are unable to realise long-term economic growth, and they struggle to cover monthly bills, respond to acute emergencies, or to save for the future. When they do have to borrow money, it goes towards daily costs of living and responding to shortages and shocks, rather than investments that grow their equity.

If their economic situation improved, nearly all families would personally continue supporting the education of their GWD, and they positively believe in sharing income and resources equally with their GWD as well as their other children. However, as evidenced in the findings above, economic empowerment among all families in the study remains low, and it is unlikely that they will be able to assume the costs of education for their GWD alone going forward, despite their opinions that they would do so if their financial situation

improved. This evidence again points to the critical importance of the CSU-provided school support in the lives of GWDs and their families, as it is likely they would not remain in school without it.

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Recommendation 19: Economic empowerment – Household economic empowerment

Inputs to retain and grow parents' positive attitudes towards supporting and financing the education of their GWD must continue in the final phase. Potentially new strategies to further household poverty reductions that build on and/or expand current interventions should be developed by CSU to try and achieve the project's sustainability outcome and economic empowerment target.

Additionally, it is worthwhile to explore opportunities for reporting at endline on an expanded definition of empowerment, as we have applied in the design of ML2, using resilience and persistence scores for GWDs and parents/households as a proxy. These social and emotional measures of empowerment are examples of the wider range of capabilities CSU can focus on when working with girls and their families to address the vulnerabilities in their lives contributing to poor school and life outcomes.

Growing skills and strategies to respond to stress and instability, as well as developing 'grit' to address education and life challenges – including financial ones – is important: these capacities represent broader components of the empowerment spectrum and should not be overlooked when reflecting on and reporting the project's key (albeit perhaps unanticipated) outcomes, or when designing new programmes.

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Conclusion 20: Girls with severe disabilities

Findings on GWSDs and their parents were nearly exactly aligned with findings from the main cohort of GWDs in the longitudinal study.

All families of GWSDs reported receiving some form of **support from CSU**, with just over 60% receiving non-school fee related financial support in the form of bursaries; nearly 65% of GWSDs have their school fees paid. Parents also reported that, if CSU's education support ceased, they would struggle to send their GWSD to school due to the high costs associated with education today, especially post-COVID. Around four of every 10 GWSD routinely experience moderate poverty, while about one out of every 10 children experience more extreme poverty in their daily lives.

Regarding **household poverty**, fewer of the households of GWSD have gone without income in the last weeks in comparison to other GWDs (possibly as someone in the household is a paid day labourer), while more of their households have gone without necessary medicines, medical treatment or clean water. Taken together, findings indicate that the living conditions of GWSDs may be slightly unstable, leaving them more vulnerable to shocks and economic hardships that could push them out of school.

Evidence shows that the clear majority of households with GWSDs in the remaining sample – 71% – are classified as having low **economic empowerment**; another 29% are moderately empowered. No households are highly empowered. These findings align directly with those from the main study cohort and indicate that the households of GWSDs sampled in the study are unable to realise long-term economic gains. As with the main sample of GWDs, support from an organisation like CSU is vital for helping GWSDs from poor families to access and complete a basic education, as without it they are highly likely to drop out of school and not return. It also means that expecting families to take over the costs of education for their child after the programme is highly unlikely, posing a threat to the sustainability of the intervention if that continues to be the measure of long-term success for the programme.

Far less than half of the GWSDs surveyed reported attending any **life skills** training during school closures (37% in 2020 and 45% in 2021), which suggests that these initiatives were not a major contributing factor to many GWSD's ability to return to school and stay there in 2022, when less than 20% reported receiving any life skills training or support from CSU. A total of 75% of parents of GWSDs said they were unable to access life skills trainings during the pandemic, compared to just 60% of parents of GWDs. At ML2, over 80% of parents ranked their GWSDs as having high life skills, with another 11% as having moderate life skills. This is a positive finding and indicates that parents believe in the capacity and resourcefulness of their children, pointing to a belief in their ability to successfully navigate their world and school and life choices.

Findings on **home learning support** during COVID for GWSDs correlate with those reported by households of GWDs in the main sample, though fewer parents in these households reported high levels of support (a 10% difference). For these families, home learning packets adapted to the needs of their GWDs were not accessed and/or they did not receive home visits or monitoring phone calls.

Notably, GWSDs reported higher levels of access to, and **access to more appropriately adapted, home learning materials** than other GWDs. During school closures in 2020 and 2021, GWSDs in the study reported a decline in their participation in home learning and self-study from 86% to 78%, although more learners reported receiving adapted home learning packets during that time, an increase from 44% to 52%. Of those who received them, 100% said they were useable; nearly 100% found them helpful. However, the access GWSDs reported having to home learning packets each year indicates that the development, production and distribution of these materials by CSU reached an extremely limited number of GWSD. It is not clear why they could not access these materials each year or why CSU did not make more of an effort to engage them, given their wide geographical distribution (most live far away from their school, especially in secondary) and needs related to the severity of their impairment.

Overall, GWSDs reported greater levels of moderate **persistence** than GWDs in the main sample, though levels of high persistence were virtually the same. GWSDs had a high level of **overall resilience** in similar questions as GWDs; their responses matched 66% of the time. Notably, GWSDs were 20% less as likely to state they can get through difficult times with no trouble or problem. GWSDs overwhelmingly demonstrated high (73%) to moderate (21%) levels of **education resilience** towards continuing in and completing school; findings are directly aligned with results from the main cohort of GWDs. These outcomes align with GWSD's school continuation and transition rates to date, demonstrated self-confidence, and overall persistence. Given the extended school lockdowns during the pandemic and the economic hardships faced by families as a result regarding affording the costs of school, the resilience levels of GWSDs – who faced additional challenges at home regarding communication and mobility – play a direct, critical role in their school success and survival.

Recommendation 20: Girls with severe disabilities

Clearly the financial investment CSU has made in GWSDs to ensure they are enrolled in school provides the most direct correlation to their attendance, continuation, transition – and eventual completion – of a basic cycle of education. If this financial support is withdrawn, it is unclear whether these outcomes would be fully achieved. Notably, household incomes at this stage of the project are not able to absorb these costs (as reported by parents), and consequently we would expect many of these girls to drop out and possibly not return if they are withdrawn. As with the main sample, continuing financial assistance to these girls and their families must be ensured in the final project phase.

Given that home learning support and life skills trainings formed a core, critical part of CSU's COVID response package for GWSDs, findings on the levels of access are disappointing. From the data, it is not clear why the small sample in this study did not equally access CSU support during this time, or why they were not specifically targeted with adapted inputs throughout by CSU, aside from unrestricted financial support in the form of cash transfers. However, it is important to explore the reasons behind the variation in access for GWSDs to achieve a more equitable distribution of inputs in the future, which (as previously indicated) CSU is accountable for providing.

Life skills related to persistence and resilience must be delivered explicitly to GWSDs in the final phase of the project, adapted to their communication and mobility needs, as a priority. Growing social and emotional skills among GWSDs and reducing vulnerabilities among their families that lead to low levels of economic empowerment and education resilience will strengthen outcomes for this category of learners across all result areas.

9.4   Validity of the project's theory of change

Findings from the ML2 study provide a useful framework for reflecting on the project's theory of change and the validity of its strategy for achieving the project's three outcomes around learning, transition and sustainability.

To realize these results, CSU's interventions focus on efforts to improve the: 1) **attendance** of GWDs through financial support to families to offset school costs and renovating selected schools to enhance accessibility and sanitary facilities; 2) **quality of instruction** by training teachers on inclusive methods; 3) **self-esteem** of GWDs by providing life skills education and child protection support; 4) **economic empowerment** of families to help them finance the education of GWDs; 5) **inclusive environment** in schools, communities and the local education system to support GWDs' learning and transition.

The final section of this report examines the appropriateness of CSU's inputs and delivery approaches to achieving the TOC's outcomes and provides recommendations for the final project phase and future programme designs.

9.4.1 Reporting outcomes in the remaining sample of GWDs

The GWDs and their parents remaining in the sample, in many ways, represent an elite category of respondents within both the project and the longitudinal evaluation. Unlike their peers who have dropped out from the study, these GWDs have continued with their education and are (at least for most) successfully transitioning through school.

They benefit the most from CSU's support: all received annual cash transfers during COVID, and most receive bursaries and/or school fees now that they have returned. Their households are relatively materially comfortable, providing a stable environment that meets their basic needs. Their parents believe in and emotionally support their education, though they are largely not economically empowered enough (nor do they make enough income) to afford the costs of school alone – especially when the girls enter secondary.

At ML2 we do not see significant differences in the profiles of the remaining sample of GWDs or their parents regarding their individual and household demographics, household finances and economics, school access and attendance, learning outcomes, or socioemotional skills. We assume this narrower profile of the types of GWDs still in the sample will be maintained at endline.

But, to more accurately analyse results for different types or categories of GWDs in the study and determine which inputs and interventions provide the most value for money in achieving learning, transition and sustainability outcomes, it would be useful to: explore additional measures for assessing changes in GWDs and their families; further disaggregate findings to look for nuanced trends in different categories of GWDs and their families; and try to represent findings in new ways using longitudinal data on remaining respondents and targeted approaches to regression analysis.

These approaches will strengthen endline findings given the absence of a control group in the study and our limited access to GWDs in the sample who have already attrited from the evaluation (and those who will attrit) before endline to compare findings against.

9.4.2 Access to project inputs and CSU-supported schools and teachers

To fully explore, and be confident in reporting, final results, it is essential for all the project's inputs and interventions to be delivered (where possible) in full – and as intended – to all the GWDs and their families remaining in the study. COVID-driven school lockdowns have exposed significant challenges regarding access by schools and teachers to GWDs and their families to provide learning and socioemotional support, and moreover about the difficulties involved in monitoring the girls and maintaining direct contact and communication with them and their households.

This lack of access to and engagement of GWDs in project activities must be strategically addressed as an urgent priority, especially given their rates of dropout, transfer and transition out of the network of CSU-supported schools. A clear weak link in the project's TOC relates to only using specific schools as the entry

point for all project services related to improving GWD's attendance through school infrastructure, the quality of teaching, and the inclusive environment in schools.

As the project targets a specific group of GWDs for inputs, and measures results against their experiences, it is increasingly difficult to link CSU's intervention to their outcomes if CSU is not directly engaging with their schools and/or teachers. Leading up to the endline, the rate of transition out of CSU-supported schools for GWDs in the study will only increase, further limiting our ability to prove causality and analyse the effectiveness of the project's inputs on achieving outcomes.

If CSU does not engage directly with the GWD's new schools and teachers, it will be important to delink findings on school infrastructure improvement, teaching quality and inclusive environments in schools from outcomes, especially related to learning and transition. In effect, it might be that the only interventions relevant to assess against results will be those directly delivered to GWDs, their parents and households regarding self-esteem, financial support and economic empowerment. The possibility of linking long-term changes in GWD's learning and transition to CSU's initial investments in their schools and teachers can potentially be explored through the endline study's analytical framework, though that must be confirmed during the final evaluation design.

9.4.3 Measuring learning

The TOC related to the achievement of learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy largely has fallen short, particularly because CSU lacks the technical capabilities in this area to drive improvements through impacting the quality of teaching. CSU's core strengths are not related to pedagogy and instruction on foundational skills, and efforts to deliver these inputs have been a challenge. Rather, CSU's ability to improve instruction on social and emotional skills in the classroom should have been a key area of focus. Expanding investments in soft skills training and instruction to support academic achievement can help to close these gaps and provide a lens on the impact non-academic skills development has on learning.

Measuring GWD's socioemotional development, especially related to persistence, resilience and life skills, should be a core focus at endline using the new scales developed at ML2. These changes can be unpacked and linked to improvements in learning, school completion and readiness for life and work after school. Facilitating intentional conversations between GWDs, parents and teachers to discuss different beliefs about education and why socioemotional skills are critical to teaching and learning is key, as is supporting teachers to integrate academics and socioemotional learning into their teaching through training and coaching.

At present, we do not know how the GWDs who attrited from the sample perform on learning assessments or life skills outcomes – especially related to social and emotional development, persistence and resilience – as they are no longer in the education system or geographical coverage area of the project, and therefore are not accessible to us for assessments and interviews. The lack of a control sample for comparative purposes further contributes to this gap. As such, the only meaningful analysis we can produce relates to individual improvements in learning for the GWDs remaining in the sample.

Learner profiles can be used going forward to track GWD's individual progress towards achieving proficiency in foundational skills at each evaluation point and presented in a series of graphs showing their rates of change. By analysing progression on key subtasks for individual GWDs at each evaluation point to determine their achievement of core competencies, we can identify the key variables that may be positively or negatively affecting learning, and then aggregate the data to report on emerging trends. Functional skills can still be measured to explore the transfer and application of academic learning achievements to real world contexts. Moreover, exploring how the remaining sample of GWDs performed at previous evaluation points in comparison to their peers and the original control group can inform us whether they were high performers to begin with, helping us unpack the reasons for their achievement (or not) of learning targets.

9.4.4 Measuring transition

At this point in the study it is not known why the GWDs, their parents and households remaining in the sample continued transiting relative to the original cohort due to the overall attrition and dropout of

respondents in both the control and treatment groups from baseline to ML1 and to ML2, leading to a lack of data for comparative purposes.

Because we cannot accurately document the reasons for the dropout or transfer of GWDs who attrited, we are unable to identify trends affecting the project's transition outcome, especially regarding school retention or completion. This is a gap in the project design that undermines reporting on this outcome in the TOC. Understanding why these girls did not transition through or complete school is important, as is documenting and analysing the range of circumstances and vulnerabilities that prevented them from continuing. This data can be used to improve the focus of social protection inputs targeting education access and completion for GWDs in the future.

As GWDs in the sample progress through school this year and next, identifying and addressing changes in their school access, attendance and transition that either support or threaten their school continuation and completion is key. Quality and timely data on the enrolment status, grade level, school attended and access to and uptake of project inputs must be generated and documented regularly. CSU's field officers and M&E team must be directly responsible for this, and CSU's senior management team must monitor and respond accordingly to these efforts.

9.4.5   Measuring sustainability

Sustainability targets related to household poverty, school financing and/or economic empowerment should be reviewed in depth by the CSU team in the next months to determine their relevancy for assessing impact in this project related to the TOC. The reality is that such significant changes, though important to contribute towards through an intervention like this, are highly unlikely of being achieved solely by a single organisation like CSU. Rather, given the complexity involved in combating household economic vulnerabilities, this is an outcome CSU can only contribute to (but not solve) on its own. This is not accurately reflected in the project's TOC.

Analysing demographic, transition and sustainability data on key variables collected on at each evaluation point (including evidence from composite scores) on GWDs, their parents and households could inform whether these girls and their families have always been an elite group performing at the top of the sample economically from the beginning of the project, or whether these findings show progressive growth and change since the project started in their finances. This analysis can shed light on the role household finances, economic empowerment and family dynamics play on school completion and academic achievement, and inform which social protection measures have the greatest effect on GWD's learning and transition.

Finally, definitions of sustainability within the TOC should broaden to reflect the impact the project has had on sustaining the engagement of individual GWDs and their households in the education system as the main unit of change. If we invest in interventions that grow the academic and soft skills of GWDs and ensure they remain in school to complete a full cycle of basic education, we have contributed to helping that individual learner realise improved life outcomes and work opportunities after school. The more GWDs that achieve this, the greater the project's impact will be on their lives, their families and their communities – all of which positively affect outcomes for some of the most vulnerable members of society.

10 List of Annexes

All the annexes have been put in a separate folder
1   Annex 1: Project design and interventions - *This has been fully described in the report in sections 1 and 2 and in the conclusions and recommendations section as well.*
2   Annex 2: Midline/endline evaluation approach and methodology
3   Annex 3: Characteristics and barriers
4   Annex 4: Learning outcome data tables
5   Annex 5: Logframe and Medium-Term Response Plan Output Monitoring Framework

Annex 1: Project design and interventions

This has been fully described in the report in sections 1 and 2 and in the conclusions and recommendations section as well.

Annex 2: Midline 2 evaluation approach and methodology

Detailed methodology has already been included in the evaluation report under section 2

Table 2.1: Evaluation sample and attrition[1]

Cohort group	Baseline sample (n)	Midline 2 sample (total) (n)	Midline 2 sample (recontacted) (n)	Midline 2 attrition (n)	Midline 2 attrition (%)
Girls with disabilities	268	237	201	36	15%
Girls with severe disabilities (Only assessed at ML2)		52			

Table 2.2: Evaluation sample breakdown by region

	Baseline		Midline 2 (total)	
	% of total	n	% of total	n
% sample in region A (n)				
% sample in region B (n)				
% sample in region C (n)				
Total				

Data not broken down by regions

Table 2.3: Evaluation sample breakdown by age

	Baseline		Midline 2 (total)	
	% of total	n	% of total	n
% sample aged <10 (n)	12%	32	0.0%	0
% sample aged 10-11 (n)	23%	61	2.0%	4
% sample aged 12-13 (n)	33%	88	16.4%	33
% sample aged 14-15 (n)	27%	72	31.8%	64
% sample aged 16-17 (n)	4%	12	31.3%	63
% sample aged 18-19 (n)	1%	3	13.4%	27
% sample aged >20 (n)	0%	0	5.0%	10
Total	100%	268	100%	201

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[1] Attrition calculated as [(number of girls in baseline sample – number of girls recontacted at evaluation point)/number of girls in baseline sample] *100%.

Table 2.4: Evaluation sample breakdown by disability status

		Baseline		Midline/endline (total)		Variable name and source
		% of total	n	% of total	n	
Girls with at least one disability (% overall)						
WG Child subdomain	**Domain**	*Provide data per subdomain and domain*				
Difficulty seeing	Seeing	38.10%	102	39.3%	79	
Difficulty hearing	Hearing	18.50%	49	18.4%	37	
Difficulty walking or climbing steps	Walking	16%	44	15.9%	32	
Difficulty with self-care	Cognitive	1.50%	4	1.0%	2	
Difficulty with communication		3.70%	10	4.0%	8	
Difficulty learning		18.90%	51	18.4%	37	
Difficulty remembering		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Difficulty concentrating		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Difficulty accepting change		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Difficulty in behaviour		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Difficulty making friends		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Anxiety (feeling anxious)	Psycho-social	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	
Multiple disabilities		3.00%	8	3.0%	6	

Annex 3: Characteristics and barriers

Table 3.1: Evaluation sample breakdown by characteristic subgroup

Characteristics	BL	ML1	ML2	Source (Household and Girls School survey)
Sample Breakdown (Girls)				
Orphans (%)				
- Single orphans	22	23.4	27.6%	PCG_11g; ag_2, ag_4
- Double orphans	4.7	2.6	5.3%	PCG_13g; ag_2, ag_4
Living without both parents (%)	28.5	19.7	18.2%	PCG_10g; ag_1, ag_3
				PCG_12g; ag_1, ag_3
Living in female headed household (%)	56.1	65.6	56.4%	hh_2; hh_1
Poor households (%)				
- HOH is in the lower/lowest wealth quintile	49.5	38.3	8.7%	povertcat; WPI_comp
- Household doesn't own land for themselves	57.9	55.8	N/A	hhe_6e
-Girl receives support to stay school	82.3	N/A	67.6%	support_cat; sup_3d
- Lives in a traditional house/hut (e.g. from thatch or mud)/tent/shuck	9.8	9.7	7.7%	Hhe_1
- Lives in iron sheet roofed house	86.9	98.7	85.9%	Hhe_2
- Lives in a mud/thatch/wood/plastic/cardboard house	2.8	1.3	1.8%	hhe_2
- Household unable to meet basic needs	20.2	23.0	62.9	no_basicnds; hhe_20a
- Gone to sleep hungry for many days in past year	11	11.1	12.8%	hhe_6a
- Gone without income for many days	46.1	48.7	35.5%	hhe_6d
Language difficulties:				
- LoI different from mother tongue (%)	96.3	96.1	N/A	loi_mother
- Girl doesn't speak LoI (%)	50.9	41.6	N/A	speakloi
Parental education				
- HoH has no PLE certificate (%)	42.8	40.9	5.2%	hh_13
- Primary caregiver has no PLE certificate (%)	42.7	40.3	5.8%	PCG_6
Parental Occupation				
- HOH is unemployed	46.7	12.3	8.7%	hh_11new
- Primary care giver is self-employed	11.7	50.0	N/A	pcg_5new

Type of school				
- Primary school	88.1%	78.1%	32.3%	grade_primary
- Secondary school	11.9%	21.5%	52.2%	grade_secondary
- TVET	0.0%	0.4%	15.4%	grade_secondary
** *Implies that the difference between the intervention and control group for that particular characteristic is significant at 95% confidence interval*				

Table 3.2: Evaluation sample breakdown by barrier

Characteristics/Barriers	Successful transition		
	Baseline	Midline 1	Midline 2
	Intervention	Intervention	Intervention
HOH education level	P=0.609	P=0.978	N/A
No PLE certificate	84.8	86.2	37.1
O level incomplete	89.7	86.0	17.7
Above	89.5	84.9	31.2
Caregiver's education level	P=0.461	P=0.772	N/A
No PLE certificate	83.5	87.1	36.6
O level incomplete	89.4	87.0	18.6
Above	89.3	82.6	31.8
HOH Occupation	P=0.628	P= 0.759	N/A
Unemployed	87.0	89.5	8.7
Employed	85.6	86.7	90.1
Self-employed	94.1	83.3	7.6
Care giver Occupation	P=0.387	P=0.708	N/A
Unemployed	83.5	92.7	11.1
Employed	90.2	85.7	87.8
Self-employed	88.0	84.4	7.0
Poverty level	P=0.050	P=0.447	N/A
Poor/Poorer	87.6	84.7	8.7
Middle	97.5	91.9	12.2
Rich/Richer	81.7	82.8	79.1
Basic needs	P=0.861	P=0.986	N/A
Affords basic needs	87.1	85.6	N/A
Doesn't afford basic needs	86.1	85.7	N/A
Language of Instruction (LOI)	P=0.359	P=0.317	N/A
Child doesn't speak LOI	89.0	89.1	N/A
Child speaks LOI	84.5	83.3	N/A
Sex of household head	P=0.775	P=0.446	N/A
Male	86.2	88.7	38.2
Female	87.5	84.2	61.8
Girl living with parents	P=0.659	P=0.437	N/A
Girl doesn't live with both parents	86.3	90.0	18.2%
Girl lives with both parents	88.5	84.4	81.8%

Characteristics/Barriers	Successful transition		
	Baseline **Intervention**	**Midline 1** **Intervention**	**Midline 2** **Intervention**
Orphan	P=0.106	P=0.866	N/A
Not orphan	86.0	86.0	
Child is single orphan	93.6	83.3	27.6%
Child is double orphan	70.0	100.0	5.3%
Nature of transport to school	P=0.995	P=0.615	N/A
Walking	87.0	83.9	24.9
Bus/Taxi	86.8	93.7	7.9
Others (car, bicycle etc)	85.7	90.0	5.1
Time taken to travel to school	P=0.223	P=0.166	N/A
Less or equal to 30 minutes	85.2	83.5	32.4
Above 30 minutes	92.5	93.9	23.5%
Safety of disabled child to get to school	P=0.321	P=1.000	N/A
Safe	88.3	84.6	N/A
Unsafe	82.6	85.2	N/A
Household chore burden (HCB)	P=0.605	P=0.124	N/A
Girl has low HCB	86.7	89.8	N/A
Girl has moderate HCB	85.9	84.7	N/A
Girl has heavy HCB	94.4	69.2	N/A
Assistive devices	P=0.739	P=0.684	N/A
Girl has assistive devices	86.1	90.3	N/A
Girl lacks assistive devices	88.1	84.3	N/A
Disability type	P=0.764	P=0.779	N/A
Communication***	90.0	100.0	4.0
Hearing	92.5	87.1	18.4
Intellectual	81.4	89.2	18.4
Multiple	83.3	75.0	3.0
Physical	83.3	80.8	15.9
Self-care**	83.3	100.0	1.0
Visual	89.5	88.4	39.3
Pupil faces challenges daily at school (HH/CG)	P=0.946	P=0.450	N/A
Yes	85.9	83.0	31.2
No	87.5	87.5	62.4

N/A – Data not collected at this evaluation point.

Table 3.3: Evaluation sample intersectionality between subgroups and barriers

Barriers: (all values are given as %)	Characteristics							
	Household head has no PLE certificate		Girl is an orphan		Household is poor		Household is female headed	
	BL	ML2	BL	ML2	BL	ML2	BL	ML2
Parental/caregiver support:								
Girl has sufficient time to study [Low chore burden]	31.4	N/A	28.1	N/A	30.2	N/A	30	N/A
Gets support to stay in school and do well	100	N/A	66.7	N/A	100	N/A	90	N/A
Lack of assistive devices	70.4	21.2	75.9	18.8	68.3	4.1	68.5	39.4
Difficult for the girl to travel to school	24.4**	N/A	19.3	N/A	16	N/A	17.5	N/A
Girl always or sometimes misses school while menstruating	11.4	0	13	0	13.9	0	10.4	0
School level								
Disagrees teachers make them feel welcome	3.7	N/A	5.6	N/A	4.9	N/A	4.5	N/A
Girl attends school less than half time	9.3**	2.9	5.3	3.5	3.8	0.6	5	4.7
Girl faces challenges daily at school	38.4	11.8	26.3	7.6	38.7	2.9	39.2	18.8
Girl with disabilities interacts with other children at school	60	32.9	85.7	31.8	62.5	7.6	81.8	58.8
Community level								
Unsafe to travel to school	25.3	0	19.6	0	24.4	0	24.1	0
Takes more than 30 minutes to travel to school	25.3	2.4	25.5	0.8	24.2	0.8	24.1	4.0
**Indicates a statistically significant finding with a Confidence Interval of 95% *N/A – Data was not collected at this evaluation point.*								

Annex 4: Learning outcome data tables

Table 4.1: Literacy score averages (aggregate) across baseline and midline 2

Disability type	Literacy aggregate score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N=286)	**Midline 2 (N= 201)**		
Difficulty hearing	43.8	53.1	N/A	N/A
Difficulty seeing	42.9	57.1	N/A	N/A
Physical difficulty	34.5	41.4	N/A	N/A
Intellectual difficulty	30.4	43.2	N/A	N/A
Difficulty communicating	24.4	48.0	N/A	N/A
Difficulty with self-care	21.7	28.5	N/A	N/A
Multiple difficulties	18.0	44.9	N/A	N/A

Table 4.2: Literacy score averages (by subtask) across baseline and midline 2

Subtasks	Score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= 286)	**Midline 2 (N= 201)**		
EGRA				
Letter sounds	12.5	6.5	N/A	N/A
Invented word reading	11.1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Familiar words	N/A	43	N/A	N/A
Oral reading fluency	72.7	95.4	N/A	N/A
Reading comprehension	1.9	2.4	N/A	N/A
Listening comprehension	2.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
SeGRA				
Subtask 1 – (Fiction passage reading + a set of closed comprehension questions)	3.6	6.2	N/A	N/A
Subtask 2 – (Non-fiction passage reading + a set of closed comprehension questions)	1.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subtask 3 – (Written study)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A – Subtask not attempted at that evaluation

Table 4.3: Literacy zero scores (by subtask) across baseline and midline 2

Subtasks	% Zero scores		P-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= 286)	**Midline 2 (N= 201)**		
EGRA				
Letter sounds	4.7%	0.5%	N/A	N/A

Invented word reading	11.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Familiar words	N/A	0.5%	N/A	N/A
Oral reading fluency	3.6%	5.0%	N/A	N/A
Reading comprehension	12.9%	20.5%	N/A	N/A
Listening comprehension	19.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A
SeGRA				
Subtask 1 – (Fiction passage reading + a set of closed comprehension questions)	54.2%	5.0%	N/A	N/A
Subtask 2 – (Non-fiction passage reading + a set of closed comprehension questions)	11.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subtask 3 – (Written study)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A – Subtask not attempted at that evaluation

Table 4.4: Numeracy score averages (aggregate) across baseline and midline 2

Disability type	Numeracy aggregate score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N=286)	**Midline 2 (N= 201)**		
Difficulty hearing	52.7	67.0	N/A	N/A
Difficulty seeing	56.2	72.7	N/A	N/A
Physical difficulty	46.7	53.6	N/A	N/A
Intellectual difficulty	45.9	53.7	N/A	N/A
Difficulty communicating	47.7	67.9	N/A	N/A
Difficulty with self-care	35.1	37.8	N/A	N/A
Multiple difficulties	30.1	58.8	N/A	N/A

N/A – Subtask not attempted at that evaluation

Table 4.5: Numeracy score averages (by subtask) across baseline and midline 2

Subtasks	Score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= 286)	**Midline/endline (N= 201)**		
EGMA				
Number Identification	17.2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number Discrimination	5.7	2.8	N/A	N/A
Missing Numbers	3.7	4.7	N/A	N/A
Addition	7.1	8.3	N/A	N/A
Subtraction	5.1	7.1	N/A	N/A
Number (Word) Problems	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SeGMA				
Subtask 1 - multiplication, division, percentage, fraction, measurement, perimeter, area and volume math problems	4.7	5.9	N/A	N/A

Subtasks	Score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= 286)	Midline/endline (N= 201)		
Subtask 2 - of simple algebraic equations	1.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subtask 3 - questions about a pie chart and complete word problems	0.6	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A – Subtask not attempted at that evaluation

Table 4.6: Numeracy zero scores (by subtask) across baseline and midline 2

	% zero scores		p-value[2]	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= 286)	Midline/endline (N= 201)		
EGMA				
Number Identification	4.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number Discrimination	3.5%	4.5%	N/A	N/A
Missing Numbers	8.6%	5.0%	N/A	N/A
Addition	7.4%	2.5%	N/A	N/A
Subtraction	9.0%	4.0%	N/A	N/A
Number (Word) Problems	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SeGMA				
Subtask 1 - multiplication, division, percentage, fraction, measurement, perimeter, area and volume math problems	9.6%	6.5%	N/A	N/A
Subtask 2 - of simple algebraic equations	55.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subtask 3 - questions about a pie chart and complete word problems	75.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

N/A – Subtask not attempted at that evaluation

Table 4.7: Third learning outcome across baseline and midline/endline (if applicable)

	Aggregate score (average)		p-value	Statistically significant difference (Y/N)
	Baseline (N= XX)	Midline/endline (N= XX)		
[Cohort 1]				

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[2] Recommended to use a chi-square test.

Table 4.8: Learning outcome score averages (by disability status, subgroup, barrier and school status) across baseline and midline/endline

	Literacy aggregate score (average)		Numeracy aggregate score (average)	
	Baseline	Midline 2	Baseline	Midline 2
Disability status				
Girls with at least one disability	37.0	50.3	50.0	64.1
Difficulty seeing	42.9	57.1	56.2	72.7
Difficulty hearing	43.8	53.1	52.7	67.0
Difficulty walking or climbing steps	34.5	41.4	46.7	53.6
Difficulty with self-care	21.7	28.5	35.1	37.8
Difficulty with communication	24.4	48.0	47.7	67.9
Difficulty learning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulty remembering	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulty concentrating	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulty accepting change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulty in behaviour	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulty making friends	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Anxiety (feeling anxious)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subgroup				
Primary	N/A	38.8	N/A	51.0
Secondary	N/A	60.0	N/A	75.2
TVET	N/A	41.6	N/A	54.1
Barrier				
Difficult to move around school	39.4	54.1	50	53.9
Can't easily see at school in order to read	38.7	55.6	50.6	68.5
Latrine at school is dirty	36.5	N/A	47.2	N/A
Spends more than an hour travelling to/from school	30.7	42.6	34	56.9
Faces challenges when travelling to/from school	39.2	43	52.5	56.2
Disagrees teachers make them feel welcome	32.6	N/A	43.8	N/A
Was caned at school this year	36.2	N/A	50.8	N/A

Agrees teachers missed school within the last week	40.6	54.0	50.9	66.9
Taught in local language	26.6	N/A	36	N/A
Doesn't play sports at school	37.6	N/A	50.5	N/A
Learner missed school within the last week	35.7	40.0	47.3	46.8
Sent home for school fees	31.4	0	40.9	0
Does paid work outside home	24.7	N/A	34.4	N/A
Parent doesn't talk to child about things that matter to the child	35.4	N/A	50.1	N/A
Child can't stay focused when things get in the way	36.6	N/A	42.2	N/A
Not treated with kindness by their teacher	33.4	N/A	47.3	N/A
Schooling status at baseline				
Never been to school	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: before Grade 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed Grade 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed Grade 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed Grade 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed Grade 4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed Grade 5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dropped out: completed < Grade 6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
In-school	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Annex 5: Logframe and Medium-Term Response Plan Output Monitoring Framework

Attached as a separate document

Annex 6: Beneficiaries tables

Table 6.1: Direct beneficiaries

	Learners			HT/Teachers/other "educators"			MoE/District/ Govn't staff			Parents/ caregivers			Community members		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Total CWDs continuing to study	1,912	559	773	686	1,437	25	26	51	2,073	767	2,840	1,485	585	2,070	1,947
Total ≠ CWDs who completed vocational skills training	35	2													
Total CWDs continuing to study and those who completed	1947*	561**													

Disability Type	Sex		Level of functional difficulty					
	Female	Male	A lot		Cannot do at all		Some	
			Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Difficulty communicating	78	55	31	22	11	3	36	30
Difficulty hearing	429	50	125	28	89	8	215	14
Difficulty remembering	322	65	151	28	17	6	154	31
Difficulty seeing	703	138	253	78	27	2	423	58
Difficulty self-care	122	60	68	31	7	3	47	26
Difficulty walking	293	193	196	112	12	14	85	67
Grand Total	1947	561	824	299	163	36	960	226

*Since baseline, 113 GWDs have dropped out for various reasons including death, and relocation to areas unknown to the project.

** 25 BWDs have dropped out since baseline

Table 6.2: Indirect beneficiaries

	Learners			HT/Teachers/other "educators"			MoE/District/ Govn't staff			Parents/ caregivers			Community members		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
[Cohort 1]	34,134	23,297	57431	3,494	2,707	6,201	34	40	74	4,146	1,534	5,680	16,400	14,270	30,670

Table 6.3: Direct beneficiaries by intervention/activity

Intervention/activity			Total

	[School fees]	[Uniforms]	[Rehabilitation]	[Scholastic materials]	[life skills]	[Reproductive health awareness (and pads for girls)]	Learning and Mentoring camps	Start-up kits preparation	Alternative care	Transport	Career guidance	
Girls with disability	1826	1859	948	1921	1560	1829	831	35	86	438	1006	1947
Boys with disability	491	336	324	459	439	465	104	2		157	279	561

Annex 7: External Evaluator's Inception Report

Attached as a separate report.

Annex 8: Quantitative and qualitative data collection tools used for midline/endline

Attached as a separate document.

Annex 9: Qualitative transcripts

EE Guidance

Please provide two transcripts from qualitative data collection at midline/endline (if FGDs and individual interviews were conducted, include one FGD transcript and one interview transcript). These should be transcripts that were used during midline/endline analysis. They should be translated into English.

Submission of qualitative transcripts to the UK Data archive:

Where **consen**t has been obtained for data sharing and indefinite storing, qualitative transcripts should be submitted to the UK Data Archive. Audio recordings do not need to be submitted. A blank consent form, outlining the information provided when seeking consent, should also be submitted alongside the transcripts. Please read the following guidance on seeking consent for data sharing: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/legal-ethical/consent-data-sharing/overview.aspx

Please ensure the following points are followed:

- Full **verbatim** transcripts should ideally be submitted to the archive. However, where only summary transcripts are available, these can also be uploaded. Transcripts can be submitted in any language, but ideally in English, where possible. Transcripts should be presented in a consistent format with speaker tags and clear turn taking. Please read the following link for guidance on the recommended format for qualitative transcripts: https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/format/transcription.aspx

- Transcripts should be accompanied by a header or cover sheet which includes details about the date, time and place where the data was collected. Ideally, the transcripts should be accompanied with information about the **sampling** design, including approach used, overall sample size and any relevant details about sample composition.

- All transcripts should be **anonymised** to the extent which is appropriate given the nature of the data and the context in which it was collected. This will need to be based on a clear plan about the types of identifiable information which will be stripped out. At a minimum, all names should be removed and replaced with pseudonyms or numbers. If sensitive data has been collected, you may decide that additional data should also be removed, for example in order to further protect the identities of individuals, communities or schools. Your approach to anonymising should be set out and agreed with the Fund Manager before transcripts are uploaded.

Annex 10: Quantitative datasets, codebooks and programmes

EE Guidance

Submission of quantitative datasets to the FM:

Submit all the merged (previous time points, learning tests linked to survey data), cleaned and labelled quantitative datasets, specifically the school girls' survey data, the household survey data, and learning test data to the FM in advance of or as part of the midline/endline report submission. The datasets should be fully anonymised before submission. Ensure all datasets are clean and clearly labelled so individuals, and school/communities can be matched across datasets. Accepted formats are Excel, STATA, SPSS and R.

Provide all codebooks and STATA and R programs or SPSS syntax (where available) in addition to the datasets. This will facilitate the replication of the key learning data where applicable. Ensure the following information points are followed:

- Provide clear details on how many learning test subtasks were administered and how they were weighted.

- Include a variable that records the aggregate learning score for each girl and both literacy and numeracy, in addition to subtask and item scores.

- Wherever possible, provide one merged dataset.

- Ensure that you have one, definitive and clearly marked unique ID variable.

- Ensure you have only one, definitive and clearly marked variable for grade and for treatment status.

Submission of quantitative datasets to the UK Data Archive:

- **All datasets, codebooks, and accompanying tools** should also be uploaded to the UK Data archive. Your FM Evaluation Officer will provide further details on which catalogue the submission should be made under. Please read the following guidance to ensure the correct format for documents is used early on in the process to prevent additional work at the end.

- https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/deposit-data

- https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/deposit-data/how-to/regular-depositors.aspx

- https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/deposit-data/preparing-data.aspx

Annex 11: Quantitative sampling framework

Included in the EE inception report.

Annex 12: Composite score calculations to measure learning support and participation

1. CSU support to stay in school (Learners)

This score was constructed to assess if the girl receives support to stay in school or not. It was constructed based on 13 questions from the PCI data.

The composite score ranking is as below

Low support	Scoreless or equal to 5 (0 -5).
Mild support	Score ranging from 6 to10 (6 – 10)
High support	Score greater or equal to 11 (11-13)

Questions	Support	Non-support
C23_2020 Is Cheshire Services Uganda helping or supporting you and/or your family?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C23_2021 Is Cheshire Services Uganda helping or supporting you and/or your family?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C23_2022 Is Cheshire Services Uganda helping or supporting you and/or your family?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C29_2020 Did you receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C29_2021 Did you receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C29_2022 Did you receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C31_2020 Did you receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C31_2020 Did you receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C31_2020 Did you receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know

C33 Do you feel that the support you receive from CSU has helped you to return to school this year (2022), after the long school closures due to corona?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C35 Did you and/or your parent/guardian recently attend a back to school mobilization meeting led by CSU regarding returning to learning this year?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C37 Do you feel that the support you receive from CSU helps you/ will help you to regularly attend school?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C39 Do you feel that the support you receive from CSU will help you/helps you to remain in school and transition (as appropriate) from class to class, or from primary to secondary or vocational?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know

2. Learning support from CSU during Covid (Parents)

This score was constructed from the HCG data to assess if the girl received any kind of learning support from CSU during the Covid period. It was constructed based on the following questions and categorisations.

The composite score ranking is as below

Low support	Scoreless or equal to 1 (0 -1).
Mild support	Score of 2 (2)
High support	Score greater or equal to 3 (3-4)

Questions	Support	Non-support
hom_3 Did [GIRL] receive a home learning packet from CSU/the school to use during corona time, when schools were closed?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
hom_4 If yes, were the materials adapted to [GIRL'S] needs based on her disability/ impairment?	☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 Somewhat	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
Shl_8 Did [GIRL] receive a home visit or monitoring phone call from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
Shl_10 Did [GIRL] receive a life skills (resiliency) training from CSU during this time?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know

3. Girl's participation in learning during Covid (Learners)

This score was constructed to assess if the girl had any learning activity going on during the Covid period.

The composite score ranking is as below

Low participation	Scoreless or equal to 4 (0 -1).
Mild participation	Score ranging from 5 to 7 (5 - 7)
High participation	Score greater or equal to 8 (8-10)

Questions	Learning	No Learning
C1 Did you do any home learning or home study during corona time (2020), when schools and churches were closed?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C1 Did you do any home learning or home study during corona time (2021), when schools and churches were closed?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C4_2020 Did you receive a home learning packet from your school to use during corona time, when schools and churches were closed in 2020?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C4_2021 Did you receive a home learning packet from your school to use during corona time, when schools and churches were closed in 2021?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C7_2020 Were you able to use the materials for home learning?	☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 Somewhat	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C7_2021 Were you able to use the materials for home learning?	☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 Somewhat	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C10_2020 Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C10_2020 Did you find the home study materials helpful for learning?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C15_2020 Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know
C15_2020 Did someone at home help you use the home learning packets and support your learning?	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 0 No ☐ 99 Don't know

Annex 13: External Evaluator declaration

Name of Project: CSU GEC-T Improving life chances for girls with disabilities in Kampala project

Name of External Evaluator: Montrose Africa

Contact Information for External Evaluator:

Charlotte Kamugisha

Montrose Director of Programmes

+256 772 765 686

Names of all members of the evaluation team:

- **Alice Michelazzi**
- **Arbogast Oyanga**
- **Ichuli Consulting**
- **Charlotte Kamugisha**
- **Alex Gloria Nakamanya**

I <u>Charlotte Kamugisha</u> certify that the independent evaluation has been conducted in line with the Terms of Reference and other requirements received.

The following conditions apply to the data collection and analysis presented in the midline 2 report:

- All datasets/data were collected independently by the EE (CK)

- All data analysis was conducted independently and provides a fair and consistent representation of progress (CK)

- Data quality assurance and verification mechanisms agreed in the terms of reference with the project have been soundly followed (CK)

- The recipient has not fundamentally altered or misrepresented the nature of the analysis originally provided by CSU (CK)

- All child protection protocols and guidance have been followed (CK)

- Data has been anonymised, treated confidentially and stored safely, in line with the GEC data protection and ethics protocols (CK)

- All of the quantitative data was collected independently (CK)

Charlotte Kamugisha

_____

(Name)

Montrose Africa

_____

(Company)

12 October 2022

(Date)