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



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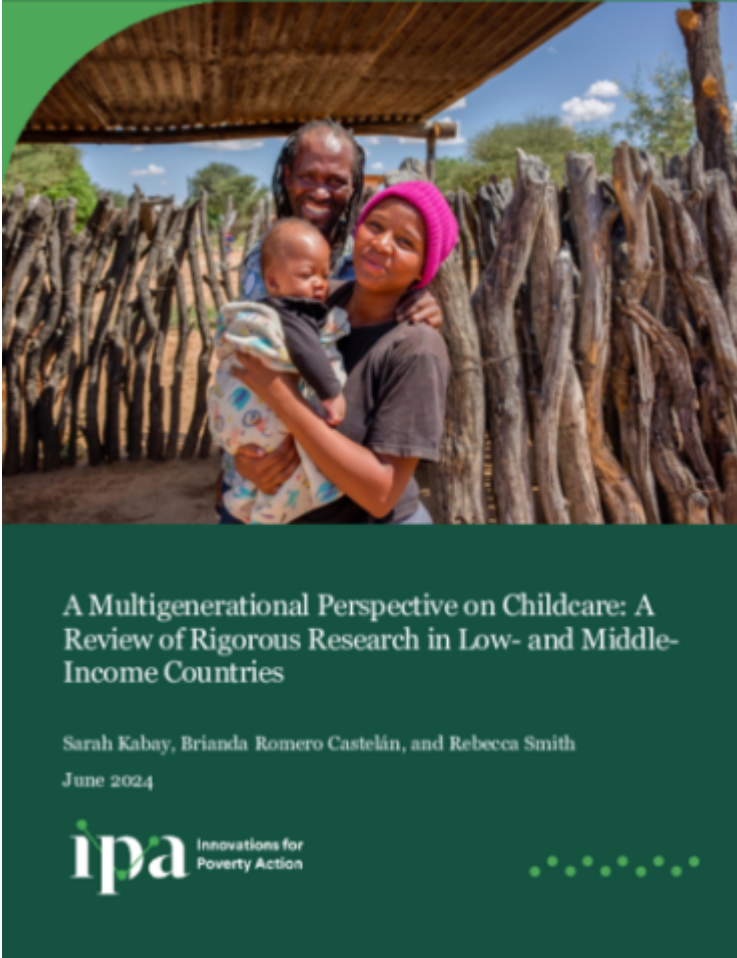
Affordable, accessible, and high-quality childcare has the potential to address multiple, widespread challenges felt by families worldwide. Childcare may contribute to what many organizations call a 'triple social and economic dividend,' by improving early childhood development outcomes, increasing women's participation in the labor market, and creating new jobs and businesses. As this brief highlights, childcare can provide benefits across two and sometimes more generations of family members.

However, research, policy discussions, and programs often operate in silos, focused on either early childhood development or women's empowerment. In reviewing ten randomized evaluations of childcare interventions for this review, for example, all ten studies reported impacts for women, but only six considered any outcomes for children. Research on the impact on fathers, grandparents, siblings, and the household is especially overlooked.

Additionally, while the childcare workforce and service providers play important roles in the childcare ecosystem, research on their employment, income, entrepreneurship, and other relevant outcomes is limited.

In recognition of the potential of childcare to improve outcomes for children, their primary caregivers, other caregivers in the family and the household at large, IPA conducted a review of rigorous research, synthesizing findings from ten randomized evaluations of childcare interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Particular attention was paid to the studies that report outcomes for both children and primary caregivers. The review also incorporates insights from quasi-experimental and other studies to provide context and complement the experimental research.

¹Childcare can be understood as an umbrella term that is used to refer to a range of different programs and services, providing care and supervision of children, particularly to enable caregivers to work. Key points of variation include the age of the child, the quality of care, the emphasis on education, part- or full-time care, and the formality of care.



Evidence Review

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Childcare for women's economic empowerment and child development is one of IPA's Best Bets.