

Global Technical Group on Psychosocial Well-Being

- **Vision:** We envision a more systematized, accountable field of psychosocial support in humanitarian crises in which strong evidence guides practice. We are a forum in which academic and NGO partners strengthen the evidence base through the collaboration of Southern and Northern partners and the use of conceptual frameworks, methodologies, and indicators that build on existing assets and resources, aid local empowerment, and respect the Do No Harm imperative.
- **Key Activities:**
 - Inter-agency workshops in various regions to build capacities for systematic evaluation of outcomes of psychosocial programs
 - Three inter-agency, multi-context studies on the outcomes of widely used but largely untested psychosocial interventions such as Child Friendly Spaces

What Are the Protection, Educational, and Psychosocial Outcomes of CFS for Young Children? Evidence From An IDP Camp in Northern Uganda

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Research Questions

- With regard to young children, do Child Centered Spaces/CFS
 - a. protect children from risks and threats in their environment?
 - b. improve children's psychosocial well-being?
 - c. increase children's knowledge and skill levels?



Context and Site

- Northern Uganda
- War since 1986-7
- Displacement of 1.7 million people
- Chronic poverty
- Living in overcrowded camps, gender-based violence
- Ongoing LRA attacks & abductions
- July, 2006—Juba peace process
- Increased resettlement & farming outside camps
- Shortage of developmentally supportive activities for children under 7 years of age
- Gulu District—April, 2007

Child-Centered Spaces

- Established April, 2006 by CCF/Uganda
- 3 CCSs in Unyama Camp each ran from 7:30 AM to 1:00 PM, Monday through Friday
- 1,361 children divided by age groups (3, 4-5, 6)
- 30 Child Activity Leaders (community selected volunteers facilitate) activities: singing, counting, reciting the alphabet, listening to stories, learning hygiene skills, free play, and helping pick up litter
- Child Well-Being Committee managed the CCSs





Methodology

- Comparison of two similar IDP camps:
 - Unyama (CCSs): population 12,593
 - Paicho (no CCSs or explicit supports for children): population 9,104
 - both: high levels of poverty; similar living conditions; half the population under 15 years of age; 60% of caregivers lived there over 10 years
- Caregiver interviews by trained Ugandan researchers who understood the local language and culture
- Focus group discussions facilitated by Dr. Kathleen Kostelny and Keri McGeehan

Sample

- Unyama (CCS group)--176 households selected randomly from lists of child participants
- Paicho (comparison group)--118 randomly selected households that have at least one child 3-6 years
- Both groups consisted of 48% males, 52% females

	Mean age of child in participating household	Median age of caretaker	Mean no. of children in household	% primary caregivers who were mothers
CCS group	4.3 yrs.	30.5 yrs.	4.2	80.1%
Comparison group	4.6 yrs.	30.6 yrs.	3.8	80.9%

Qualitative Data

- Ethnographic approach--elicitation of local understandings of child well-being
 - three focus groups with mothers and other adults, including Child Well-Being Committee members
 - identification of consensus items
- Narrative data on children--eight focus groups with elderly caregivers, single mothers and widows, and camp leaders

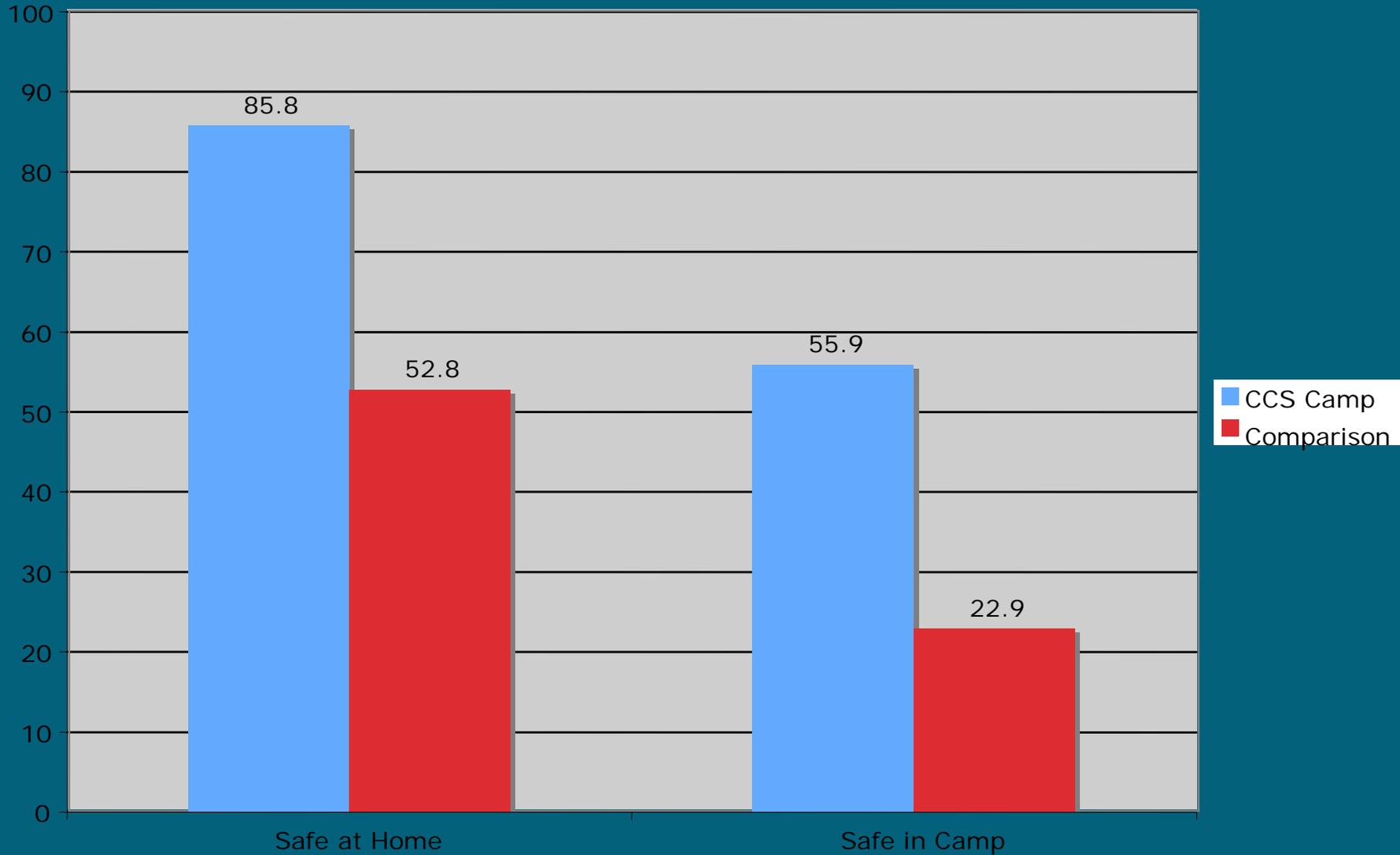
Quantitative Data

- 66-item Child Well-Being Questionnaire
 - 15 locally elicited items
 - 25 items from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (assets and deficits; subscales on emotional distress, behavioral difficulties, hyperactivity and attention problems, difficulties with peers, prosocial behavior)
 - items from the CCF child protection team
- questions read aloud, self-report using 3-point Likert scale

Sample Questions

	Local	SDQ	CP team
Often unhappy, tearful, sad	X	X	X
Often fights with other children	X	X	X
Solitary, plays alone	X	X	X
Shares readily with other children	X	X	
Safe at home			X
Liked by other children		X	
Plays with other children	X		
Has a good appetite	X		
Is clean and has good hygiene	X		
Uses the latrine correctly	X		

Protection



Protection Benefits

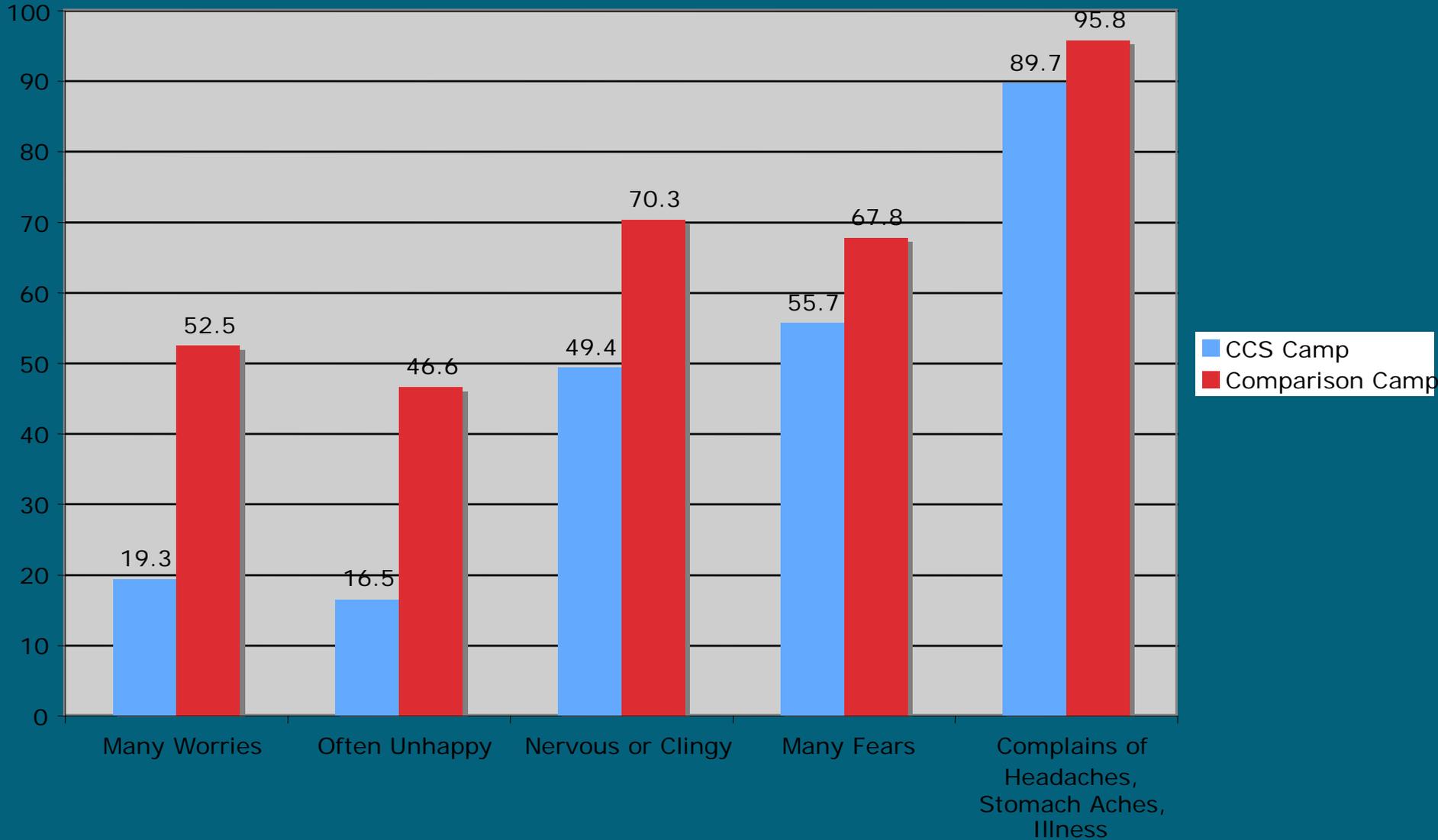
- Decreased sexual exploitation
 - fewer rapes of young girls
 - fewer girls used by and exposed to sex workers
 - less exposure to explicit sexual behavior and sexually explicit videos
- Decreased injuries from road accidents
- Reduction in house fires started by young children
- Reduction in injuries from dangerous items
- Decrease in seriously ill children being left alone



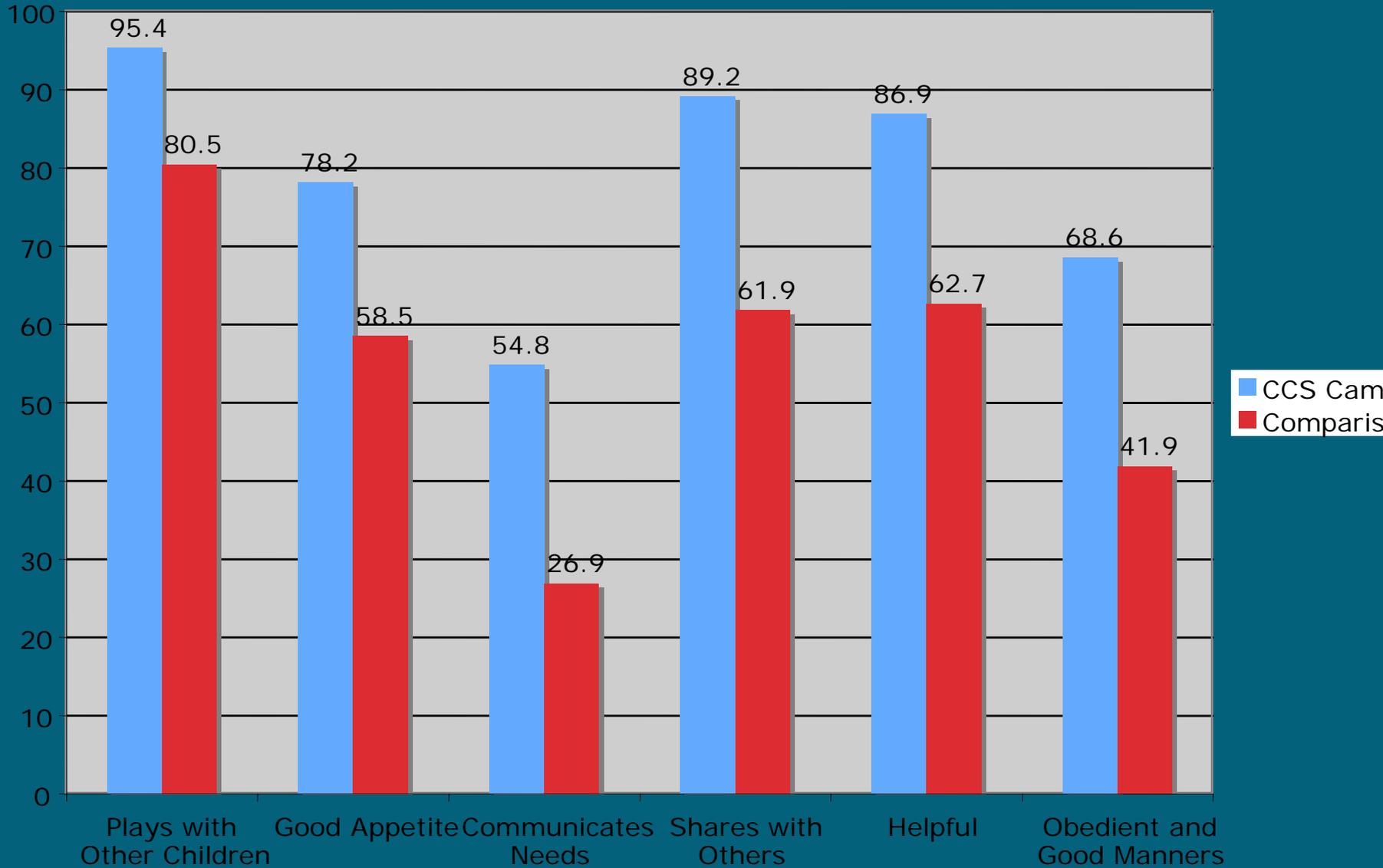
Narratives on Protection

- *Many houses are burned by children cooking in the home. This problem has been occurring for many years (Camp leaders, Paicho Camp).*
- *The children are left alone when the parents go to their gardens. The parents are away all morning and the children get hungry and try to cook something to eat. Because they do not know how to be careful, the fire spreads when they pour the kerosene trying to cook some things (Single/widowed mothers, Paicho Camp).*
- *Before the CCSs there were more than 200 houses burned. Now there is no burning by children -- only one case where a drunkard man burned five houses. Last week there were more than 100 houses burned in the camp nearby (Camp leaders, Unyama Camp).*

Emotional Distress



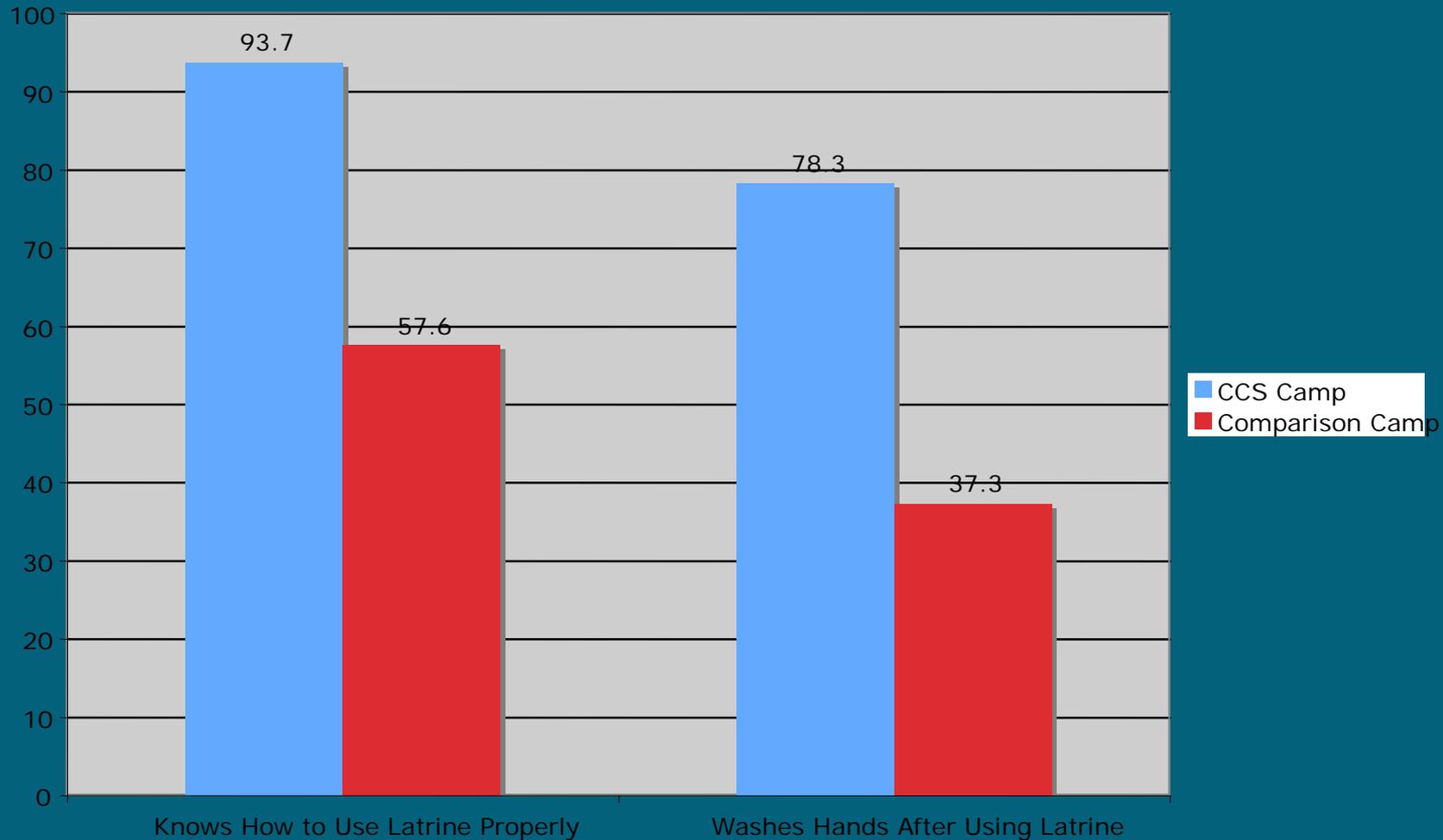
Local Indicators



Social Behavior

- Children in the CCS camp were:
- Less solitary
- Less likely to be bullied
- More considerate of others' feelings
- More likely to help others

Hygiene Knowledge & Skills



Hygiene Knowledge & Skills

- *Children used to defecate anywhere. Cholera was common before the CCS. Now it is not so common. Children at the CCS are taught how to use the latrine. They are not exposed to so much feces and there is less disease (Child Activity Leaders, Unyama Camp).*
- *Children are exposed to feces in the garden, in the house. Children don't know how to use the latrine (Elderly caretakers, Paicho Camp).*

Cognitive Skills

- *Children know counting, not just 1-10, but 1-20. They know their alphabet in English and Luo. When other children enter P1 (Primary School, Class 1), they still can't count. The CCS children know all these things when they enter P1. The parents are very happy and the teachers are very happy. (Elderly caretakers, Unyama Camp).*
- *Before my twins did not talk well. Now they know many words. They can count and know the alphabet. They know many things. (Single/widowed caretakers, Unyama Camp).*

Results Summary: CCS Outcomes

- Reduced physical protection risks to young children
- Reduced emotional distress
- Improved social behavior, including helping and prosocial behavior
- Increased knowledge and skills relevant to well-being and social role

Limits

- Convenience sampling of camps
- Only one setting
- Self-report
- Not a randomized control trial
- Stronger matching measures needed
- Instrument validation
- CCSs intermixed with CWBCs
- CCSs only small part of wider system of needed protection & psychosocial supports

Promising Results Invite Additional Study

