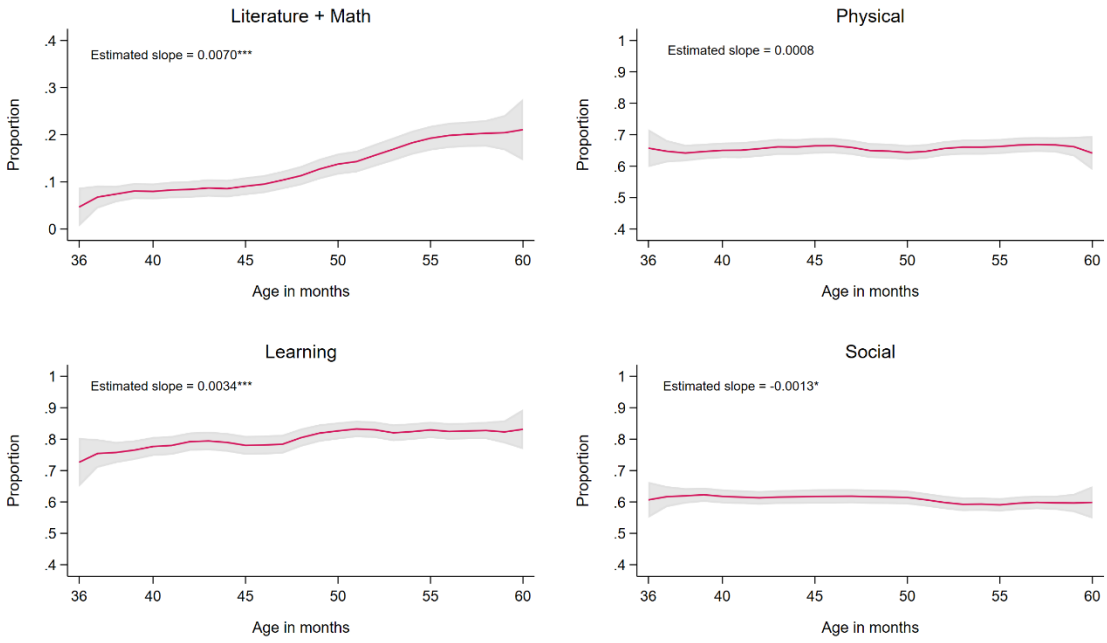
Task 2: Data Perspective on the Evolution of the Domains related to the Early Childhood Development Index.

Early childhood development is crucial for laying a foundation for long-term human capital building and well-being.[1] During the first years of life, a child rapidly progresses in cognitive, motor, language and socio-emotional skills, which are expected to play a key role in school. This note concentrates on analyzing the evolution of four domains related to the Early Childhood Development Index – literacy-numeracy, physical, social-emotional and learning – of children between 3 and 5 years old in Zimbabwe based on the MICS 2019.

Figure 1 presents monthly evolution for the four components underpinning the Early Childhood Development Index. Specifically, it shows a proportion of children for each month (between 36 and 60 months) who are considered developmentally on track for each corresponding domain. The most important finding is that the most progress is achieved the domain of Literature + Math, followed by more moderated improvements in case of the Learning domain. At the same time, the proportion of children, who are developmentally on track, remain around the same levels in case of the Physical and Social domains.

Figure 1. Monthly evolution for Literature + Math, Physical, Learning and Social domains of the Early Childhood Development Index



In addition to presenting the evolution, Figure 1 provides estimated slopes of statistical regression models that measure statistical relationship between age, measured in month, and a domain of interest. The statistical analysis broadly confirms the above findings. The largest

[1] UNICEF et al. Advancing Early Childhood Development: From Science to Scale. Executive Summary, The Lancet, 2016. https://www.thelancet.com/pb-assets/Lancet/stories/series/ecd/Lancet_ECD_Executive_Summary.pdf

statistical coefficient is observed for the Literature + Math domain – it suggests that the share of developmentally on track children increases by 0.7 percentage points with each additional month. This coefficient is nearly twice as low, but still statistically significant, when it comes to the Learning domain. The coefficient related to the Physical domain is not statistically significant, revealing that no progress is observed in this area with age.