1.0 Introduction

Overview

This report presents the findings of the evaluation conducted by the Buildher Impact team on the "Women Empowerment through Construction" program. The program, spanning five years and initiated in March 2019, focuses on empowering disadvantaged women from Nairobi’s informal settlements.

Targeting women between the ages of 18 and 50, predominantly with semi-educational backgrounds, the program addresses the needs of a demographic where approximately 78% are mothers, a significant portion being single parents. Additionally, 10% of the women are either refugees or individuals impacted by the criminal justice system. Prior to program enrollment, a majority of these women earned less than $2 per day or $12 per week from various odd jobs.

Buildher's training approach is marked by innovation, providing accredited and in-demand construction skills. The goal is to enhance employment opportunities and income for women while advancing gender equality within the construction industry.

This report systematically outlines the outcomes realized during the five-year program implementation (2019 – 2023), elucidating the employed strategies and their impact on Buildher Women. Emphasizing accountability and learning, the report objectively validates the program's design by assessing its responsiveness to the training needs of women and employers in the construction industry. It serves as an informative tool for the Buildher team, management and stakeholders, offering insights into the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Buildher Program.
Evaluation
Objectives:

Evaluate the program’s performance, assess its impact on women's lives, derive lessons from implementation, and formulate recommendations by addressing key learning questions.

Impact Specific objectives and learning questions:

1. To provide evidence on the extent to which the Buildher program has benefited women, families and community.
   - **Enabling Women Economic Empowerment (Income):** What is the impact of BH program in creating dignified income for women
   - **Women Empowerment and Agency (WEA):** In what ways have Women Empowerment & Agency training positively impacted the decision-making and agency of low-income women aspiring to establish themselves in construction finishes as a sustainable career choice?
   - **Aiding Women Transitioning to Employment:** How have the initiatives supporting low-income women's transition to employment in construction finishes resulted in long-term career prospects and economic mobility?
   - **Gender Transformative:** What gender-specific factors have influenced the transition of low-income women from the Buildher training program to self-placed roles in the construction finishes industry and what factors have influenced perceptions of women in construction in Nairobi or across Kenya?

2. Provide an assessment of the impacts of Buildher Program strategies (intended and unintended)
   - **Recruitment:** How effective has the recruitment strategy been in engaging and attracting low-income women to pursue sustainable careers in the construction finishes industry?
   - In what ways have community outreach efforts specifically resonated with low-income women considering a career in construction finishes?
   - **BH Women Profile:** What trends have emerged in the demographic profile of low-income women participating in the Buildher program in the last 5 years, and how has it supported their pursuit of sustainable careers in construction finishes?
   - How has economic mobility among low-income women improved after joining the program, and what role has the construction finishes industry played in their long-term career aspirations?
   - **Training Program:** How have training areas/tracks specifically geared towards construction finishes positively influenced women's readiness for sustained careers in this industry?
Evaluation
Objectives cont.:

- **Dropouts in the 4 Months Training:** How has Buildher's support affected the journey of low-income women who dropped out of the program, specifically in their pursuit of establishing long-term careers in the construction finishes industry or other industries?

3. Assess quality and effectiveness of program support services.
- **Family day:** How has the direct support initiatives like Family Day positively impacted family engagement and support for low-income women pursuing construction finishes careers?

- **Welfare support:** What has been the impact of welfare support on women's completion rates and employment status after the 4-month training program?

- **Financial Support from Other Partners (NGOs):** How has financial support from partner NGOs influenced the employment status and overall life transformation of the women post-training?

4. Capture key lessons and challenges
5. Provide recommendations on how different components of the Buildher program could be strengthened to enhance sustainability, and increase impact.
2.0. Methodology

2.1. Evaluation Design
The evaluation employed a survey study design; using a mix of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative indicators were assessed to determine effectiveness in realizing the program outputs. In addition, process level indicators were assessed to determine the suitability of the program design, and efficiency. Testimonials from beneficiaries were gathered to provide qualitative data to be used in triangulating with the quantitative data from the program reports.

2.2. Sampling
The evaluation gathered data from Buildher artisans selected across Cohorts 01 to Cohort 11, representing three training trades: Carpentry & Joinery, Painting & Decorating, and Tiling. Employing a multi-stage sampling approach, the first stage involved sampling per Cohort, as detailed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Training Year</th>
<th>Graduated</th>
<th>Yrs/ Months of Employment - Oct’23</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C01</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4 Years 1 Month</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C02</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3 Years 9 Months</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C03</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2 Years 9 Months</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C04</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2 Years 5 Months</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C05</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2 Years 1 Month</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C06</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1 Years 9 Months</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C07</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1 Years 5 Month</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C08</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1 Years 2 Months</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C09</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>10 Months</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C10</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5 Month</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1 Month</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>577</td>
<td></td>
<td>472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Multi-stage sampling 1 – sampling of women per cohort and period in employment after Buildher’s four months training program.
Table 2: Multi-stage sampling 1 - sampling of women per trade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Total Graduated</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry &amp; Joinery</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting &amp; Decorating</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiling</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>577</strong></td>
<td><strong>472</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Criteria for selection of women interviewed:

The third stage of sampling was in selecting the respondents. This being a qualitative study, purposive sampling was employed. The number of respondents to be interviewed was determined as presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Buildher Women</th>
<th>No. sampled and rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women benefited from unconditional cash transfer program</td>
<td>A total of 49 women participated in FGD. (approx. 10% of the 500 Buildher women who benefited from an unconditional cash transfer program )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women supported with Buildher welfare</td>
<td>18 women who had benefited from the Buildher welfare financial support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who dropped out from 4 months Buildher program</td>
<td>A total of 10 women participated in Key Informant Interviews (KII). About 10% of the 104 women who dropped out of the Buildher training program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. Data Collection Methods

Key Informant Interview

In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants drawn from the following respondents:

- Women trained and completed Buildher’s 4 months training program – up to point of saturation.
- 10 Women dropped out of Buildher’s 4 months training program.
Focus Group Discussion

We conducted four focus group discussions with the following groups of women:

- 49 Women benefited from an unconditional cash transfer program funded by Google Impact Challenge (GIC) aimed at eliminating opportunity cost for women while attending the Buildher program.
- 18 Buildher women supported with Buildher welfare

2.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the surveys was directly plotted into the indicator tracking table and compared at pre-intervention (baseline) and post intervention. The difference in the cumulative quantities was used as a measure of the change contributed by the project. Data analysis used statistical analysis software (Excel) to generate univariate, bivariate and multivariate outputs that informed conclusions for each objective of the evaluation.

The data was collected on recording sheets, voice recordings and photographs. The data on recording sheets was entered into MS Excel matrices, with each case occupying a row and each variable a column. There were two matrices, one for FGDs and the other for KIIIs. The Excel matrices were then exported into NVIVO12 qualitative analysis software to facilitate grouping and thematic analysis using quasi statistics. This analysis used the grounded theory technique. Open coding was done by reading and re-reading through the data and identifying emerging themes (codes). These codes were then applied to the data texts. Similar codes were categorized and the categories assembled into possible causal relationships. The emerging framework was then tested for internal consistency by reapplying it to the raw data. Results are presented in charts, word clouds, photos, and direct quotations.
3.0. Main Findings

The evaluation applied three OECD DAC criteria on effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability, to assess the Buildher program. The assessment was conducted based on key learning questions aligned with the corresponding objectives.

3.1. Effectiveness

The program effectiveness was examined by assessing how well the Buildher program has achieved its goals, specifically in terms of empowering women through construction skills training. It evaluated the actual impact of the program on women, such as improvements in employment opportunities, income levels, and overall well-being. The assessment was conducted based on key learning questions aligned with the corresponding objectives.

3.1.1. Result 01: Women Economic Empowerment (Income) Enabled:
In assessing the extent to which this outcome was realized, the evaluators sought evidence to answer the question:

“What is the impact of the Buildher program in creating income for women?”

- Buildher’s ideal income that meets the threshold of being dignified is KES 700. Women are expected to earn at least KES 700 and above to enable them to make a dignified living.
- The evaluation assessed the daily income of 444 (94% (1)) Buildher artisans who have been actively working in the construction industry in the past 6 months as of October 2023. The findings revealed that Buildher artisans, on average, earn KES 877 per day (KES 177 above the ideal), working an average of 4.6 days per week. This marks a 3.1X increase in their income compared to the period before they joined the Buildher program where on average they were earning KES 283/day working 2 - 3 days inconsistently per week.
- We further analyzed the income data across different cohorts to explore the correlation between the duration artisans have spent working in construction and average earnings per cohort, using KES 700 as the base threshold and comparing earnings below and earning within and above this threshold.

(1) Percentage of 472 respondents who indicated that they have been working in the last 6 months
The graph below presents the income data of women across Cohorts 01 to 11.

**Chart 01:** Trend of income across the cohort.
3.11. Result 01: Women Economic Empowerment (Income) Enabled: (Contd.)

Trends Across Cohorts in relation to the training and transitioning period to employment

- **Pre-Covid Training Period (2019):**
  - Cohorts C01 and C02 both show a high percentage of women earning above KES 700 (81% and 77%, respectively). The majority of artisans in these cohorts have spent around 4 years or 3 years and 9 months in the field.

- **Covid Training Period (2020-2021):**
  - Cohorts C03 to C06 experienced fluctuations, with varying percentages of women earning above KES 700. Cohort C06 stands out with the highest percentage (89%) in the Covid period, despite the challenges.

- **Campaign + Election Training Year (2022):**
  - Cohorts C07 to C09 experienced a decline in the percentage of women earning above KES 700 compared to the pre-Covid period. The drop in percentage could be attributed to external factors like political events during the period.

- **Political Demonstration Training Period (2023):**
  - Cohorts C10 and C11 show a further decrease in the percentage of women earning above KES 700, reaching 64% and 48%, respectively. This decline may be linked to the impact of political events, affecting job opportunities and incomes and their overall experience in the field which is less than 6 months.

The following are key learnings across the cohort in relation to income and period in employment:

- **Pre-Covid Success:** The program initially achieved high success, with cohorts C01 and C02 showing significant percentages of women earning above KES 700, indicating the effectiveness of the training.

- **Covid Resilience:** Cohort C06’s high percentage during the Covid period demonstrates the resilience of the program and its participants in challenging times.

- **Political and External Influences:** The decline in percentages during the Campaign + Election Year and Political Demonstration periods suggests that external factors, such as political events, impact job opportunities and incomes in the construction field.
3.12. Result 03: Aiding Women Transitioning to Employment:

This result focused on assessing the Buildher program’s impact on facilitating the transition of low-income women to employment in the construction finishes sector, aiming to enhance long-term career prospects and economic mobility. Among the 472 artisans surveyed, 462 (98%) reported employment in the last 6 months, while 10 (2%) indicated no recent work. Of the 462 employed artisans, 444 (96%) worked within the construction industry, while 18 (4%) were primarily engaged in trades outside of construction.

To explore the correlation between the completion of the 4-month Buildher training and artisans’ employment status, the data on employment status was analyzed across different cohorts (Cohorts 01 to 11). The graph below presents the employment status of women across these cohorts in the last 6 months.

![Artisans' employment status in the last 6 months](chart)

**Chart 02:** Trend of artisan's employment across the cohort in the last 6 months.
Trends across Cohorts on artisans employment status in the last 6 months in relation to the period of study and occurrences.

- **Pre-Covid Training Period (2019):**
  - The majority of artisans in these cohorts had spent around 4 years or 3 years and 9 months in the field.
  - Cohort C01 shows a high percentage (84%) of artisans working in construction, with a small percentage in other trades (11%) and a minimal percentage reporting never having worked (5%).
  - Cohort C02 has an even higher percentage (96%) working in construction, with a negligible percentage (4%) in other trades and none reporting never having worked.

- **During the Covid Training Period (2020-2021):**
  - Cohorts C03 to C06 during the Covid training period exhibit varying trends.
  - Cohort C03 and C05 have a high percentage (95%) working in construction, while Cohort C04 shows a slightly lower percentage (91%).
  - Cohort C06 experiences a notable decrease in the percentage working in construction (73%), with an increase in the percentage working in other trades (22%).

- **During the Campaign + Election Training Year (2022):**
  - Cohorts C07 to C09 in the Campaign + Election training year have high percentages (93% to 98%) working in construction, with minimal or no occurrences in other trades.
  - All cohorts during this period show a low percentage of artisans reporting never having worked.
• **During the Political Demonstration Training Year (2023):**
  - Cohorts C10 and C11 in the Political Demonstration training year show a high percentage (94% to 100%) working in construction.
  - Cohort C11 reports a slight increase in the percentage working in other trades (1%) and a small percentage reporting never having worked (5%).

**Additional Program Interventions (2022-2023):**

**Internship Program (Introduced in 2022):**
- During the Campaign + Election training year, the program introduced an internship model where trainees obtained internships on weekends during their 3rd and 4th month of training.
- This model exposed trainees to the reality of the industry, improved negotiation skills, and facilitated meaningful relationships with clients/employers, contributing to increased job transitions.

**Jobs Self-Placement (Introduced from Cohort 06 to 11):**
- The program introduced jobs self-placement for artisans transitioning from Buildher Placement. Instead, Buildher empowered artisans to independently seek and secure job placements. This shift contributed to a notable increase in both employment rates and job retention within the construction sector, observed consistently from Cohort 06 to Cohort 11.

The following are key learnings across the cohort in relation to income and period in employment:

1. **Internship Model Success:** The introduction of the internship model in 2022 proved successful, providing trainees with practical exposure to the industry, enhancing skills, and fostering relationships for increased job transitions. However, this introduction necessitated additional approaches for support and monitoring to ensure trainees understood and valued the importance and benefits of internship.

2. **Self-Placement Impact:** The shift to jobs self-placement for artisans from Cohort 06 to 11 resulted in increased employment and job retention, indicating that empowering artisans to actively seek opportunities enhances their ability to secure and retain employment.

3. **Adaptability of the Program:** The program's ability to introduce and implement successful interventions, such as the internship model and jobs self-placement, highlights its adaptability to industry demands and market dynamics, ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of the training.

4. **Continued Construction Engagement:** Despite external challenges and changes in training approaches, the data reaffirms a consistent trend of a high percentage of Buildher artisans engaged in construction work.

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(2) Artisans were being tasked to look for jobs independently
(3) The practice of Buildher actively seeking employment opportunities on behalf of artisans
(4) Buildher Internship Learning from 2023
3.13. Result 02: Women Empowerment and Agency (WEA):

Embarking on a career in a construction industry that is traditionally male-dominated requires considerable courage for women to venture beyond their comfort zones, supporting not only themselves but also their families and communities. The evaluation aimed to measure the realization of Women's Empowerment and Agency (WEA) among Buildher artisans. Evaluators sought evidence to address the following question:

“How have WEA training initiatives positively influenced the decision-making and agency of low-income women who aspire to establish a sustainable career in construction?”

The evaluation assessed agency across eight dimensions. These included Economic Empowerment, Decision-making Autonomy, Self-efficacy and Self-confidence, Social and Political Participation, Access to Resources and Opportunities, Voice and Agency, Well-being and Health, and Gender Equality and Empowerment. To comprehensively assess these dimensions, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed, sourced from surveys. All 472 respondents (artisans) indicated experiencing at least one dimension of empowerment and agency impact. The ensuing results are outlined below, organized according to each agency dimension.

- **Economic Empowerment**: The Buildher program has brought about improvement in the economic empowerment of the artisans. 59% reported an enhanced purchase power whereby they can buy/afford things they couldn’t before.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. “Before the Buildher program, I couldn’t afford buying new clothes, I used to wear second-hand clothes but now I can afford brand new clothes.” - Cohort 09, P&D Artisan
    2. “I can now afford going to the salon and doing a pedicure.” - Cohort 5, C&J Artisan

- **Decision-making Autonomy**: The program has successfully empowered women to actively engage in decision-making processes within their households. This is demonstrated by the fact that 49% of the participants reported involvement in decisions related to household income and assets.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. “Nowadays, my husband asks for my opinion in almost everything, especially on financial-related matters.” - Cohort 2, C&J artisan
    2. “I have participated in decision-making over household income and assets.” - Cohort 8, P&D Artisan

- **Self-efficacy and Self-confidence**: The program has positively influenced the self-efficacy and self-confidence of women, fostering an environment where they feel comfortable expressing themselves. 71% feel more confident expressing themselves freely without fear.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. “I am able to express myself freely without fear.” - Cohort 11, Tiling Artisan
    2. “Nowadays, I am confident; I lead family meetings and I was recently elected as a treasurer in our community project.” - Cohort 04, C&J Artisan
3.13. Result 02: Women Empowerment and Agency (WEA): (Contd.)

- **Social and Political Participation:** An encouraging 30% of artisans reported increased involvement in community decision-making processes suggesting a broader impact on their social and political participation.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. "I have been involved and participated in community decision-making processes such as public participation." - Cohort 08, C&J Artisan
    2. "I have led community advocacy 'kutetea haki za Watoto mtaani' - advocating for children's rights." - Cohort 08, P&D Artisan

- **Access to Resources and Opportunities:** The program has played a role in enhancing women's access to essential resources and services such as health and credit. Notably, 47% reported increased access to credit and better health services contributing to their overall well-being.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. "I can access financial services such as loans in the bank." - Cohort 07, P&D Artisan
    2. "Nowadays I can comfortably afford medical care for my children, since I am paying for my NHIF monthly without fail." - Cohort 01, C&J Artisan

- **Voice and Agency:** An overwhelming 72% of participants are now aware of and capable of defending their rights as women. The Buildher Program has empowered these women to advocate for themselves and others indicating a positive impact on their sense of agency.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. "I am aware of and I can defend my rights as a woman." - Cohort 10, Tiling Artisan
    2. "I have led community advocacy 'kutetea haki za Watoto mtaani' - advocating for children's rights." - Cohort 08, P&D Artisan

- **Well-being and Health:** 47% reported improved access to better health services. The program has contributed to better well-being by improving access to healthcare services, reflecting positively on the health status of women.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. "We used to eat one type of meal throughout, but nowadays we are eating a balanced diet and more than one meal a day because I can afford it and I know what a balanced diet includes." - Cohort 01, C&J Artisan
    2. "I have control over my personal life choices such as the use of contraceptives." - Cohort 05, C&J Artisan

- **Gender Equality and Empowerment:** The program has made strides in promoting gender equality by facilitating women's participation in leadership roles, both within the community and other settings. This has been seen through 40% of artisans reporting to hold leadership positions in various settings.
  - Artisan Voices:
    1. "I wasn’t friends with my parents since I was idle and dependent on them. Nowadays, we are very good friends since I can fend for myself and support them once in a while financially." - Cohort 10, Tiling Artisan
    2. "I was nominated a chair lady in our local church." - Cohort 5, C&J Artisan
3.13. Result 02: Women Empowerment and Agency (WEA): (Contd.)

The Buildher Program has demonstrated a multifaceted impact on women's lives, encompassing economic empowerment, decision-making autonomy, self-efficacy, community participation, access to resources, and more. The positive changes reported by the artisans suggest that it has not only contributed to their personal development but also influenced their careers in construction, family dynamics, and community development. The outcomes approve the program to be a catalyst for positive change in various dimensions of women's lives, creating a ripple effect that extends beyond individual empowerment to broader societal development.
3.14. Result 03: Gender-Transformative Approach to Employment Transition

In the process of integrating women into the construction workforce, the Buildher program recognizes that it goes beyond providing technical skills training. A gender-transformative approach is crucial to address the specific needs of women, attract them to construction training, ensure retention, and facilitate their successful transition into job placements.

The evaluation focused on assessing the gender-transformative approaches to employment transition within the Buildher program, considering the following key aspects:

- **Evaluation of Buildher’s Approach to Encouraging and Retaining Women in Construction Training**: The assessment revealed that Buildher employs a multifaceted strategy, utilizing community outreach and forming partnerships with community-based organizations (CBO) and faith-based organizations (FBO) to recruit women. The curriculum is enhanced with gender-specific training in life skills, career planning, wellness, and employability. Furthermore, Buildher actively promotes the use of gender-inclusive language, employs teaching methods accommodating various learning styles, and avoids gender biases and stereotypes.

- **Evaluation of Training Spaces for Women and Girls**: The evaluation discovered that Buildher’s training spaces are designed with a focus on gender inclusivity, incorporating the following elements:
  - **Inclusivity**: Buildher spaces are designed to meet the needs of women, ensuring safety, comfort, and accessibility, benefiting all trainees.
  - **Enhanced Learning Environment**: Buildher training spaces feature good lighting and a pleasant atmosphere, fostering improved concentration and focus, ultimately leading to enhanced educational outcomes.
  - **Diverse Perspectives**: Buildher training spaces cater to women’s needs by encouraging a diverse mix of trainees, enriching the learning experience with varied perspectives, backgrounds, and skills.
  - **Equity and Gender Sensitivity**: The program addresses gender-specific challenges, providing lactating rooms and fostering a culture of respect and inclusivity that benefits everyone.
  - **Encouraging Participation**: Buildher’s training spaces are designed to create a more welcoming atmosphere, boosting confidence and participation levels for higher retention.
  - **Community and Support**: Buildher spaces foster a sense of community and support for all trainees, offering opportunities for networking, mentorship, and emotional support.
  - **Flexible Design**: Buildher training spaces incorporate features like flexible seating and quiet study areas designed for women and girls, accommodating various learning styles and preferences for all learners.
  - **Improved Safety**: Prioritizing women’s safety, Buildher training spaces include well-lit areas, security measures, and clear emergency exits, creating a safer environment for everyone.
• **Evaluation of Buildher’s Gender-Inclusive Mentorship Approach:** Our assessment of Buildher's mentorship strategies revealed the implementation of three distinctive types of mentorship approaches: Group mentorship, Peer-to-Peer mentorship, and Professional mentorship.
  
  o **Group Mentorship:** Buildher employs group mentorship to cultivate a supportive community, mitigating feelings of isolation and vulnerability among participants. This approach enhances the overall sense of safety and comfort within the program. Moreover, group mentorship brings together women from diverse backgrounds, contributing to an enriched learning experience. The collaborative environment allows for the sharing of various perspectives and strategies for success, fostering a dynamic and inclusive community.
  
  o **Peer-to-Peer Mentorship:** The program utilizes Peer Mentorship, where female students or alumnae who have undergone similar training contexts and share comparable experiences and backgrounds provide guidance and support to new or ongoing female students (mentees). This approach leverages the relatability of shared experiences, creating a supportive network within the Buildher community.
  
  o **Professional Mentorship:** Buildher incorporates Professional Mentorship, engaging individuals with extensive experience in the field or industry related to the TVET program. These mentors offer expert guidance and insights to trainees, providing valuable perspectives from the professional landscape. This aspect ensures that mentees receive specialized advice and industry-specific knowledge, contributing to their holistic development within the construction sector.

• **Evaluation of Buildher’s Approach to Women Networking for Faster Sector Inclusivity:** Our evaluation identified that Buildher takes a deliberate and multifaceted approach to foster women networking, aiming to accelerate sector inclusivity through several strategic initiatives:
  
  o **Mentorship Programs for Women:** Buildher implements mentorship programs specifically tailored to support women in the program. Successful alumni and women in the construction field serve as mentors, providing guidance and encouragement to aspiring women, thereby promoting career pursuit in the construction industry.
  
  o **Gender-Inclusive Events, Workshops, and Seminars:** The program organizes and hosts gender-inclusive events, workshops, and seminars, creating platforms for networking opportunities. These forums address pertinent issues such as gender bias, workplace inclusion, and career development, fostering a supportive environment for women to connect and collaborate.
  
  o **Encouraging Networking Across Industries:** Buildher actively encourages women to network and collaborate with professionals from diverse industries. This strategy broadens horizons and provides access to a variety of perspectives, contributing to the overall growth and development of women within the construction sector.
Promotion of Male Allies: The program promotes the concept of male allies, encouraging male colleagues and leaders to support gender inclusivity. These allies play a crucial role in supporting women's networking efforts and advocating for gender equality within the Buildher program.

Collaboration with Industry Organizations: Buildher collaborates with industry organizations that champion gender diversity and inclusion in TVET. These partnerships not only provide valuable resources but also offer networking opportunities for women, fostering a broader professional community.

Professional Development Opportunities: Buildher offers professional development opportunities, including training and workshops on networking skills. These initiatives help women build confidence and navigate networking events and situations effectively, contributing to their professional growth.

Recognition and Celebration of Women's Achievements: The program recognizes and celebrates the achievements of women through awards, conferences, and publications. This increased visibility inspires others and creates additional networking opportunities within the Buildher community.

Support for Career Breaks: Buildher provides support and networking opportunities for women who have taken breaks in their careers, whether to raise families or for other reasons. This community of support encourages the reintegration of women into the construction field, promoting inclusivity at all career stages.
3.2. Relevance:
The program relevance was examined through assessment of Buildher program alignment with the current needs and challenges faced by disadvantaged women in Nairobi's informal settlements. It considered whether the program remains pertinent and responsive to the evolving circumstances of its target demographic, ensuring that it continues to address their specific needs effectively.

3.21. Result 04: Recruitment:
“How effective has the recruitment strategy been in engaging and attracting low-income women to pursue sustainable careers in the construction finishes industry?”

This success is reflected in several key metrics:

Enhancing Program Impact through Strategic Adaptations:
- Our recruitment strategy’s effectiveness is underscored by significant improvements in attrition rates and participant performance.
- In response to COVID-19 challenges, a key adjustment involved reducing the number of women trained per session from 60 to 30-35.
- This modification led to a drop in attrition rates from 26% in 2019 to just 5-7% in 2023.
- Furthermore, the shift to a more favorable trainer-to-trainee ratio of 1:15, compared to the previous 1:30, has substantially enhanced the overall performance of program participants.

Attrition Rate Improvement:
- The substantial improvement in the attrition rate, from 26% in 2019 to only 5-7% in 2023, indicates a positive shift.
- This improvement suggests that the recruitment strategy not only attracts candidates but also retains them effectively, contributing to a more stable and committed workforce.

Expansion of Recruitment Locations:
- The decision to increase recruitment locations from 3 in 2019 to approximately 17 in 2023 across Nairobi and beyond has played a pivotal role.
- This expansion has not only broadened the reach within Nairobi but has also extended to other counties.
- The increased geographical coverage has allowed for the identification and engagement of a diverse pool of low-income women interested in pursuing careers in the construction finishes industry.

Revised Application Steps and New Testing Requirement Impact:
- The introduction of a testing phase into the recruitment process has had a dual impact.
- Firstly, it has elevated the overall caliber of women recruited, ensuring that those selected possess the requisite determination, courage, literacy levels, and aptitude for success in the construction finishes industry.
- Secondly, the inclusion of a testing phase has positively influenced the rate of learning transfer, suggesting that recruited individuals are better equipped to apply their skills in real-world scenarios.
“In what ways have community outreach efforts specifically resonated with low-income women considering a career in construction finishes?”

Community outreach efforts have resonated significantly with low-income women contemplating careers in construction finishes through the following avenues:

**Increased Awareness:**
- Outreach initiatives have heightened awareness within the target demographic, ensuring that women are informed about the opportunities available in the construction finishes industry.
- This increased awareness has been instrumental in attracting a more diverse pool of candidates.

**Tailored Messaging:**
- The messaging employed in community outreach efforts has been tailored to address the specific concerns and aspirations of low-income women.
- By addressing these concerns directly, the recruitment strategy has fostered a stronger connection with the target audience, making the prospect of a career in construction finishes more appealing.

**Local Collaboration:**
- Collaborations with local organizations and stakeholders have facilitated a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by low-income women in specific communities.
- This targeted approach has allowed the recruitment strategy to address these challenges directly, making the opportunity for sustainable careers in construction finishes more accessible and attractive.
3.22. Result 05: BH Women Economic Mobility:
For this result area, we sought to investigate our beneficiary economic mobility by asking these two key questions:

“How has economic mobility among low-income women improved after joining the program, and what role has training and the construction finishes industry played in their long-term career aspirations?”

Our data revealed the following insights:

Economic Mobility Analysis:
- Industry Employment: Over the last six months, an average of about 80% of graduates have been actively employed in the construction industry. The overall average employment duration across all cohorts is approximately 2.5 years.
- **Baseline earning KES 283/day working 2 - 3 days inconsistently per week**
- Buildher artisans, on average, earn KES 877 per day (KES 177 above the ideal), working an average of 4.6 days per week.
- Buildher women are able to increase their income by 3.1X in a year.

Career Aspirations and Construction Finishes Industry: (self-reported)
- Work in Construction: On average, around 82% of graduates have consistently chosen to work in the construction industry, showcasing the program's alignment with their long-term career aspirations.
- Yearly Progression: The yearly progression in employment and industry engagement showcases the impact of the program on careers, with an average of 54% securing employment within a year of graduation.

Industry Support for Sustainable Careers:
- Consistent Employment: On average, around 69% of graduates have consistently worked in the construction industry within the last six months.
- Growing Industry Presence: The increasing number of cohorts and participants entering the construction finishes industry indicates a growing presence and acceptance of the program within the sector.
- High Retention: The average attrition rate for the last three cohorts is around 1.5%, indicating that graduates are not only entering the industry but are also staying and building sustainable careers.
- Long-Term Trends: The data shows a positive trend in employment and industry engagement, with an average of 86% of graduates maintaining sustainable careers in the construction finishes sector over time.
3.23. Result 06: Welfare Support and its Profound Impact on Women’s Careers:

“How significant was the impact of welfare and social support in facilitating the preparation and sustainability of women’s careers in the construction industry?”

The welfare and social support provided, particularly through financial support and cash transfers, have proven to be a significant catalyst in empowering women in the construction industry. The data showcases improvements in income, savings, training completion, business ventures, and the overall well-being of both artisans and their extended households. These findings underscore the significant impact across various dimensions, highlighting how financial support not only addresses immediate needs but also eliminates opportunity costs for women pursuing careers in construction. The financial support was provided over a period of 7 months across the year, staggered by cohort, to 500 Buildher women (200 alumni and 300 artisans and trainees).

“I spent some of my transfers to pay house rent and school fees for my children. I also saved about $5 and spent around $ 3 on transport to Buildher for a 3-day training on communication skills. With the remaining funds of about $7, I purchased a tool called a trowel, which has made my work a lot easier. I used to struggle a lot when it comes to mixing, smoothing concrete, and even when cleaning surfaces. I used to use my hands, which was very tiresome or even had to ask someone to help, which was slowing me down. However, now I can do more of these tasks quickly and easily as I no longer use my hands. This has allowed me to earn an additional $50 per month from mixing. Thanks to Buildher and GiveDirectly for the money.”

Enhanced Spending Patterns and Attendance Rates:

Spending on Basic Needs: Preliminary findings reveal that monthly stipends received had predominantly been used to cover basic needs, fostering a stable foundation for the artisans.

Attendance Rates: Notably, attendance rates during training sessions soared to an average of 94%, compared to 80% at the baseline. This suggests that financial support has positively influenced attendance, indicating its relevance in enabling women’s participation in training programs.
**Economic Empowerment and Increased Income Levels:**

**Increased Income** (5): 93% of artisans reported an increase in income levels, with an average income rise of 39% from KES 7,700 to KES 8,614 per month. This reflects the direct impact of financial support on economic empowerment.

**Stimulated Saving Behaviors:**

**Saving Habits:** Monthly stipends have stimulated a savings culture, with 80% of artisans reporting an increase in saving levels, showing a 75% average rise.

**Debt Repayment:** The support has also facilitated debt reduction, with artisans experiencing a 15% decline in overall debt levels, demonstrating financial stability.

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(5) This is income increase with reference to monthly stipend from cash transfers and Buildher financial support.
Training Course Completion and Business Ventures:

Training Course Completion: Financial support addressed the opportunity cost of training, resulting in 98% of artisans completing the entire 4-month course. At baseline, Buildher had a dropout rate of ~20% during the first 2 months of their training. With this in mind:

- 4 months training course completion: 98% of recipients reported completing the entire training course at the 6-month follow-up, indicating a 28% increase compared to the baseline figure.
- Class attendance: Across the 6 months of training (4 month workshop + 2 months placement), 93% of the participants reported having attended 100% of the class/field internship sessions offered by Buildher. A close look at month-on-month attendance shows that attendance rates rose from 80% at month 1 to an average of 95% between months 2 & 6.

Some of the key ways in which the transfers supported recipients’ ability to complete the program included supporting payments for a) house rent, b) childcare and, c) daily transportation.

Business Ventures: artisans utilized lump sum transfers for new business ventures (20%), while monthly stipends sustained existing businesses (6%). This dual approach indicates a nuanced impact on business diversification and sustainability.
Removing Opportunity Costs for Career Pursuit:

Training Accessibility: Financial support has effectively removed the opportunity costs associated with training, as evidenced by a 28% increase in course completion rates compared to the baseline. This signals that women can now pursue training without compromising other essential needs.

Dual Support for Business Ventures: The dual approach of supporting new business ventures with lump sum transfers and sustaining existing businesses with monthly stipends showcases a strategic elimination of opportunity costs. Women can initiate new ventures without jeopardizing the stability of their current businesses.

Chart 6: Class/field attachment attendance across the 7-month financial support duration
Impact of the transfers on new businesses and in sustaining existing business:
The cash transfers led to the generation of new business ventures amongst recipients, using both the monthly stipends and the lump sum transfers. Recipients preferred to invest in new businesses after receiving the lump sum and invested in existing businesses while receiving the monthly stipends. The impact on both existing and new businesses is as indicated below:

- **Investment of the lump sums on new business ventures:** 20% of recipients reported using the lump sum transfer (in month 7) to start new businesses, leading to a 12% increase in spending on new businesses compared to the month 1-6 average.

- **Investment of the stipends on new/existing businesses:** At baseline, only 16% of the recipients reported to own businesses with 63% reporting that they sustained themselves through working for others. A look at the business spending data post-baseline shows that ~6% of the recipients used their monthly stipends to sustain existing businesses with only 1.3% opting to start new initiatives.

- **Amount spent opening new vs. sustaining existing business ventures:** Recipients spent on average KES 1,776 per month (35% of the stipend amount) during months 1-6 to sustain existing businesses. During the entirety of the project, an average of KES 7537 was used per recipient to start up new businesses with the start-up capital ranging between KES 200 and KES 57,500.

- The observation of women starting up new businesses as of the final month of financial support aligns with the rationale behind the timing of the (month 7) lump sum transfers, as transfers were aimed to capacitate project recipients with capital for their investments including construction tools/equipment procurement.
4.0. Recommendations for Sustainability

These recommendations are crafted to guide the Buildher program towards sustained success, positive industry transformation, and lasting empowerment for women in the construction finishes industry.

**Strengthen Recruitment and Outreach**
- Sustain the successful recruitment strategy, expanding to additional locations where potential impact is high.
- Continue implementing the application and testing changes to attract high-caliber women to the program.

**Cultivate Professional Work Teams**
- Promote and support the growth of professional work teams, emphasizing Co-Venture Work Teams, Sub-Work Teams, and Job Referrals Work Teams.
- Conduct ongoing research to determine the most effective work team structures for various project sizes.

**Enhance Learning Transfer and Retention**
- Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess and improve the learning transfer process.
- Address attrition factors proactively by introducing mentorship programs, support networks, and career advancement opportunities.

**Empowerment, Asset Building, and Social Support**
- Expand financial literacy and entrepreneurship training to empower women in managing and growing their income.
- Formalize and structure welfare and social support mechanisms, ensuring comprehensive and consistent support.

**Geographic Expansion and Industry Collaboration**
- Explore opportunities for further geographic expansion of recruitment locations.
- Foster collaboration with construction industry stakeholders, including companies, government bodies, and NGOs, to create a supportive ecosystem.

**Monitoring and Support**
- Tracking Cohort 012 (2024 post restructure cohort) moving forward independently to measure the impact of our restructured curriculum and process in relation to achievement of training competencies, job transition and income growth.