

World Education Forum

Dakar, Senegal
26-28 April 2000

Education for All
2000 Assessment



T H E M A T I C S T U D I E S

Early Childhood Care and Development



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Early Childhood Care and Development

Co-ordinated by the United Nations Children's Fund

Robert Myers



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- My colleagues in the Consultative Group.

The responsibility for the content of this document, however, is exclusively mine.

Robert Myers

Introduction

Origins and purposes of this report

This report was commissioned as a contribution to the Year 2000 Assessment of Education for All (EFA). The Assessment aims to describe and examine global and national changes that have occurred in basic education and learning since the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien, Thailand, in March 1990. The results were used as a basis for discussing what can and should be done in the future to improve the learning and education of children. The discussions took place at regional meetings and at the Global Conference in Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000.

The particular topic of this study – early childhood care and development, or ECCD – emerged at Jomtien as an important extension of the more traditional approach to basic education that saw ‘education’ as beginning with entrance into school. Specifically, the Jomtien Declaration stated that:

Learning begins at birth. This calls for early childhood care and initial education. These can be provided through arrangements involving families, communities or institutional programmes, as appropriate.

Moreover, the Framework for Action fashioned at the World Conference set as one of the targets to be considered by signatories in their plans for the 1990s:

Expansion of early childhood care and development activities, including family and community interventions, especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children.

Thus, the Jomtien Declaration and Framework gave international presence and sanction to early childhood care and development and to ‘initial education’ in a way that it had not enjoyed previously, even during the 1979 ‘Year of the Child’. For some, the recognition of attention to learning during the pre-school years and to ECCD as part of basic education represented a triumph. Expectations ran high.

But what has happened since March 1990? Were early childhood care and development activities incorporated into national plans? Has early childhood care and development made significant advances? How are these defined? What conditions have helped or hindered advances? What problems remain? Where should we go from here?

In trying to respond to these questions, I first look briefly at the broader context, noting changes in broad conditions preceding and/or characterizing the 1990s. Then, trends and ‘advances’ are described in relation to: (a) the well-being of children; (b) enrolments; (c) conditions favouring improvement in ECCD

programmes; and (d) shifts in the type and quality of programme being provided. Finally, some continuing (or new) problems are identified and suggestions offered for trying to overcome problems and meet future challenges.

In this study, emphasis is placed on ECCD in the ‘Majority World’¹ with passing references to Western Europe, the United States, and other countries of the ‘Minority World’. There are two reasons for this decision. The first is that there is a tendency for programmes in Minority World countries to be taken as the template or standard for development of ECCD in the future. Although it is clear that ideas can be obtained from past experience in these countries, other countries must be counted on to develop their own systems appropriate to their particular circumstances. Second, most of these countries have seen their role in the EFA exercise as so-called ‘donor’ countries and have not reported on their own advances or setbacks in the field.²

Methodology

The information necessary to carry out this review and analysis comes from three main sources:

1. A review of the literature has been undertaken, relying heavily on the documents that have been amassed by the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development³ over the last fifteen years, but also drawing on recent material provided specifically in relation to this report.
2. Country reports prepared as part of the more general EFA Assessment have been reviewed in order to extract the statistics and general comments dealing with early childhood care and education.⁴ The quality of the country reviews, their treatment of ECCD, and the availability of statistics varied widely. It has also been possible to draw on summaries from the Johannesburg and Bangkok regional EFA meetings and on documents other than the country reports.
3. To supplement the more quantitative treatment expected from country reports and realizing that it might be difficult to obtain reliable data, a survey was also carried out of ‘knowledgeable people’ in different geographical, disciplinary and organizational settings. A qualitative analysis has been made of the sixty-two replies received to five general questions.⁵ The combined early childhood experience of the respondents amounted to over a thousand years. Additional details about the characteristics of those who responded may be found in Appendix 1. The analysis will be reported in greater detail in a subsequent publication; results have been drawn upon selectively in the present text.

Note on terminology

The phrase 'Early Childhood Care and Development' (ECCD) is used throughout this study. This phrase was used in the Jomtien Framework for Action. I realize that placing emphasis on care and development may lead some to think that the report has little to do with 'education' or 'learning'. But the point is precisely that education systems are, whether they recognize it or not, also systems of care and they should be directed towards promoting the integral development of the children in the system, not just towards preparing children for school. Accordingly, I have chosen to use this phrase in order to promote a broad and integral view of learning and education. 'Learning' and 'education' are embedded in care and development.

Among the other valid terms that might have been used (and that may have some tactical advantages) are Early Childhood Care and (Initial) Education (taken from the Jomtien Declaration and preferred by UNESCO), Early Childhood Education and Care (used by OECD), Early Childhood Care for Survival, Growth and Development (the current terminology used by UNICEF), or Early Childhood Development (favoured by the World Bank). ■

Changing demographic, economic, social and political contexts

It is impossible to understand changes in the field of early childhood care and development unless attention is given to the broader context in which those changes are occurring. This study cannot pretend to provide a detailed description and analysis of changing contexts⁶ nor of their effects on the status of children and the evolution of ECCD programmes during the 1990s. It can, however, highlight a number of trends and shifts to serve as a reminder that changes unrelated to anything that occurred at Jomtien are likely to have had as much, or more, impact on ECCD, for good and ill, than the World Conference and the ensuing activities could hope to have. Accordingly, it seems wise to celebrate modest advances and to be humble with respect to expectations.

Continuing shifts

At the outset of the 1990s, most of the major trends weighing heavily on early childhood care and development during the decade were visible, some with a long life, all varying from place to place. For example:

- Industrialization continues, accompanied by internal migration and urbanization. With these shifts have come important changes in family structure and composition, usually a reduction in extended families and an increase in nuclear and one-parent families. Industrial employment makes it more difficult to combine work and parenting roles than does agrarian employment. These changes, together with the crowded and insecure conditions of cities, create new demands for extra-domestic childcare and motivate changes in approaches to childcare and child-rearing.
- Declining birth rates in some countries have opened up opportunities for new educational initiatives as the numbers of children to be attended to prior to school entry (and in some cases now at the primary-school level) diminish. Declining infant mortality rates still offset declining birth rates in some countries but have also pushed societies to pay more attention to the education and development of young children who now survive, but in often deplorable conditions, negatively affecting development.

- Scientific and technological developments in communications, travel, health, and other fields have helped to change public awareness, are providing new options for promoting and fostering ECCD, and also present challenges to child-rearing at the dawn of the twenty-first century.
- Globalization and the turn towards market economies that gained momentum in the 1980s have been accompanied by increases in poverty levels and in economic and social inequalities. To try to counter this tendency, governments and international organizations have been pushed to support 'compensatory' programmes, among which figure many ECCD programmes. There is also a growing concern about changing values linked to globalization, leading to calls in some countries for new initiatives to counter the advance of consumerism and individualism, beginning in the early years.
- The mobilization and emancipation of women, which began in earnest in the 1970s, has helped to foster increasing participation by women in the paid labour force, creating new demands for programmes of early childhood care.

The 1990s

During the decade, some of the above tendencies intensified and several new major developments appeared with potential effects on early childhood.

- The technological revolution intensified.
- The pace of globalization picked up, accompanied not only by increases in inequality, poverty, exclusion and 'compensatory' programmes, but also by growth in employment in the informal sector (where employees do not have access to the childcare benefits sometimes given in the formal sector). The ability of low-income populations to buy services has been further reduced.
- Globalization has also helped to drive a redefinition of the role of the state, with implications for the handling of all social programmes, including ECCD. Budgeting processes have been affected.
- Internal strife and civil wars have increased in number, displacing many people from their homes and sometimes separating children from their families.
- Accelerated movement towards democracy has occurred in some areas but has receded in others, affecting priorities and policies.
- The Soviet Union has broken up, bringing about a decline of the socialist model which placed considerable emphasis on providing a particular kind of institutionalized childcare.
- The process of decentralization has accelerated in many countries.

- A major blip in the pace of economic development occurred in the Asian region, provoking some rethinking.
- The ecology movement has gained momentum.
- The pandemic of HIV/AIDS has reached disastrous levels in some countries, particularly those within sub-Saharan Africa.

All of the above have had important concomitant effects on the composition and structure of families, on child-rearing patterns and practices, on the welfare and quality of life of children, and on policies and programmes intended to improve that quality of life. In the survey of knowledgeable people, frequent reference was made to poverty, unemployment, economic crises and adjustments, inequality, erosion of social values and dislocation associated with conflict as barriers to the advance of ECCD.

These effects differ from place to place. There are immense differences in the timing and incidence of particular trends and conditions in particular countries, with accompanying differences in their influence on early childhood care and development, both across and within countries of the 'Majority World'. For example, it is difficult to discuss in the same tense and voice ECCD programmes in Eastern Europe (especially countries of the former Soviet Union) and in the African subcontinent. Most countries in both regions are struggling to construct 'new' identities while preserving traditions, and both are plagued by major economic problems, but the starting points are very different, the cultures are worlds apart, and the particular conditions (e.g. the relative presence of HIV/AIDS) make it difficult to include the two regions in the same conversation. It does not make much sense to try to directly compare ECCD programmes in China or India with those in, let us say, Niue (population approximately 2,000) or even Jamaica (population about 2 million). The current state of play in Afghanistan (with an under-5 mortality rate above 250, a per capita Gross National Product of less than US\$250, and a traditional theocracy) or Angola (U5MR 292, GNP \$270, continuing civil disruption) makes it difficult to bring them together in the same document with, for example, Singapore (U5MR 4, GNP \$30,550) or Chile (U5MR 13, GNP \$4,860).

Clearly, generalizations must be tempered. Templates and formulas and the search for a unique and magical solution must be avoided.

Against this background of shifts in demographic, socio-economic and geopolitical contexts, and with the caveat against generalization in mind, I now turn to an examination of how ECCD has changed since Jomtien. ■

Tendencies: the changing status of children and of ECCD enrolments

From reading the country reports prepared for the EFA Year 2000 Assessment and from the survey of knowledgeable people, many criteria emerged that might be applied to defining 'advances' in the ECCD field during the 1990s. Although, a priori, one might expect the main standard for improvement to be set in terms of the well-being (or development level or learning abilities) of children, most of the advances described refer to changes in programme coverage, to conditions that set the stage for increased availability and quality of ECCD programmes, or to actual changes in programming that, eventually, should bring improvements in the well-being of children. Changes in children and in enrolments are examined in this chapter; changes in conditions affecting programming and in programmes themselves are taken up in the following chapter.

Changes in the development and learning of children

Health and nutritional status

In many countries, important improvements have occurred in the health and nutritional status of children. Recognizing the importance of good health and nutrition for learning, some country reports made reference to these improvements. Many, however, concentrated on educational improvements, leaving health and nutrition aside.

Over the last ten years, major advances have been made worldwide in reducing infant and child mortality (see statistics provided yearly by UNICEF in the *State of the World's Children*). The effect of immunization programmes on infant mortality has been widely documented and the general tendency is clear.

The same clarity and general advance is not so evident for nutritional status and for the results of feeding components offered as part of ECCD programmes. Relatively high levels of undernourishment and vitamin deficiencies continue in many parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Moreover, feeding programmes have not always lived up to expectation. For example, two relatively recent evaluations carried out in Latin America found that there was little or no improvement in the nutritional status of participants in ECCD programmes despite a relatively high cost of feeding children in the programmes

(Ortíz et al., 1992, Colombia; Coa Clemente, 1996, Bolivia). The nutritional status of rural children in Mexico has not changed in more than twenty years (COMEXANI, 1998). These results are logical if one considers that feeding programmes do not necessarily change basic feeding habits at home, that they often do not provide food at weekends, that parents may reduce food provided to children at home because they are getting food (presumably supplementary) elsewhere, and that diarrhoea linked to poor sanitary conditions continues to offset potential gains from food supplementation. On the other hand, micronutrient supplementation programmes seem to have had important positive effects and intensive nutritional programmes in Argentina and Chile seem to have had good results in reducing malnutrition. Taken together, these results suggest that broad approaches need to be promoted if health and nutrition components of ECCD programmes are to be effective in improving the well-being of young children; simple supplementary feeding programmes are insufficient.

Although not present in reports from countries outside Africa, it is important to note the dramatic setback in general well-being related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly for Africa. For example, it is reported that Malawi, with a total population of about 11 million people, can expect to have 850,000 cases of *children* with HIV/AIDS in the year 2000 (Republic of Malawi . . ., 1998).

Psycho-social development and learning

Unfortunately, very few countries provide measures of the psycho-social well-being of young children or of their advances in learning during their early years. It is therefore impossible to judge advances in this area for national populations or to link advances to the many programme initiatives that have been undertaken. There are, however, exceptions at the level of particular programmes for which indicators have been created and evaluations carried out. Unfortunately, such information rarely appears in the country reports. Improvements are occasionally inferred from changes in subsequent school performance and retention (see, for example, the Viet Nam country evaluation), but these are at best indirect measures of a child's general development or psycho-social well-being. Various reviews of the literature suggest that there are indeed long-term effects (e.g. Myers, 1995; Karoly et al., 1998; Barnett and Boocock, 1998; Kaul, 1999). These reviews bring together results of specific studies of specific programmes and do not report results of systematic monitoring of *national* changes in children's development and learning during the early years. This remains a major challenge to which I return in the concluding chapter.

Specific studies, and the few cases where there has been some agreement on an indicator of psycho-social development and where consistent measurement has occurred over time (Chile, for example), show that:

- Programmes of reasonable quality do have important positive effects on early development, often with longer-term effects.
- The effects can favour rural children who are at a social disadvantage.
- An important improvement in the nutritional status of children does not automatically bring about the anticipated improvement in various dimensions of psycho-social development.
- The area of language development seems to show a consistent lag in development related to socio-economic conditions as well as to first language differences.

Changes in enrolment

Data

The two indicators that were suggested by the EFA Forum for use in the country reports presenting results of the Year 2000 Assessment are both quantitative indicators of access or enrolment. These are (a) the percentage of the age group enrolled, and (b) the percentage of new entrants to primary school who have had some early education. My analysis is concentrated on the first indicator, the gross enrolment ratio (GER), because this information was available in a wider range of countries. Table 1 presents information on GERs, organized by region, extracted from the country reports available to the author.

Cautions

Several cautions must be given before examining the figures in Table 1.

First, direct comparisons of enrolment levels and percentages among countries should not be made because there are significant differences in:

- the definition of the age group that is considered as part of ECCD and for whom data are presented;⁷
- the baseline year and the year for which the latest enrolment data are presented;⁸
- the definition of what constitutes an early childhood programme;⁹
- the days and hours that programmes are in session differ widely from country to country;¹⁰
- the degree to which centres providing early childhood attention are allowed to operate outside the official system, in an irregular manner, and therefore outside the official statistics, creating an underestimate of enrolment;
- the reliability of the figures.

(In spite of the above differences, it is possible to identify some trends and some obvious differences across regions and countries, taking into account at least the first two of the above factors.)

Second, when looking at *increases* in enrolment it is important to take into account the baseline from which the increases are being made.¹¹

Third, in a significant number of country reports, the requested data were not presented, sometimes because the enrolment statistics were lacking or because census or other population data for the relevant age group were lacking. The number of new entrants with early education was not presented for many countries because this information is not normally collected. This led to some innovative ways of estimating the percentage.

Fourth, and often overlooked: enrolment data tend to be collected at the outset of each year and are based on registrations rather than actual participation in a programme. Such information does not take into account cases of children who never arrive even though they are registered nor changes that occur during the year, including cases of children who decide not to continue after a few days or weeks. The stability of the enrolment of children in programmes varies from country to country.

Fifth, gross enrolment ratios (GER) are used. This does not make much difference for most countries because the incidence of children who are over or under the age range for which percentages are calculated is minimal. However, in other cases ECCD programmes include a significant proportion of children outside the age range chosen (e.g. Brazil, where more than 90% of the over 1 million children enrolled in a pre-school literacy programme were 6 years of age or older and about 40% were 7 or older).

Sixth, in some reports, the age range was not made clear. In others, there were inconsistencies in the data presented at different points of the report (usually minor, but nevertheless inconsistencies).

Taking these cautions into account, what can be said about overall enrolment in ECCD programmes during the period?

Tendencies

The general tendency has been for enrolments to increase since 1990

With the major exception of countries that were previously part of, or heavily influenced by, the Soviet Union and are now shifting away from a socialist orientation, the general tendency has been for enrolments to increase over the period. In Latin America and South and East Asia, all of the countries reporting data for two periods showed an increase, with the exception of Afghanistan. In the Caribbean, nine out of ten countries showed increases (or remained steady at over 100%), with the exception of Grenada. Cook Islands in the Pacific showed a decrease, but all other countries in the region increased their enrolments. A summary from the

Table 1. Gross enrolment ratios for programmes of early childhood care and education/development, c. 1990 and 1998.

Country/Territory	Age range	Enrolment:1990 (%)	Enrolment:1998 (%)
Latin America			
Argentina	3-5	48.4 (1991)	55.8
Bolivia	4-5	32.2	36.4 (1999)
Brazil	4-6	35.4 (1991)	45.6 (1996)
Chile	0-5	20.9	30.3
	0-2		3.5
	2-3		22
	3-5		35.5
	5-6		83.0 (1996)
Colombia	5-6	NA	41.7 (1996)
	0-6	NA	23.6 (1997)
Costa Rica	5-6	61.4	82.8 (1999)
Cuba	0-5	29.1	98.0
Ecuador	0-5	8.3 (1991)	14.2
Guatemala	5-6	31.3 (1992)	37.4
Honduras	4-6	17.1	38.9 (1999)
Mexico	3-5	62.2	76.3
	5	68.7	81.4
Nicaragua	3-6	12.4	23.6
Paraguay	3-5	8.9	22.6 (1997)
	5	36.7 (1994)	61.3 (1997)
Peru	3-5	52.3	60.9
	5	77.5 (1993)	87.7
Uruguay	3-5	51.9 (1996)	63.2 (1999)
	4-5		95.0 (1999)
Venezuela	4-6	23 (estimate, 1989/90)	68.2
	0-3	NA	4.9
Caribbean			
Anguilla	3-4	87.8 (1995)	92.7
Bahamas	3-5		100 (1997)
Barbados	3-5	52.7	76
	0-3	23	33
Belize	3-5	25	26
Dominica	3-5	44	54
Grenada	3-5	70	47
	0-3	3	4
Guyana	NA	88	91.5
Jamaica	3-5	104	104
	0-3	6	4
Montserrat	3-5	0	71
Turks and Caicos Islands	3-5	0	99
Middle East and North Africa			
Bahrain	3-5	27.1	36
Egypt	4-6	5	8
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	3-5	8.3	14.9
Iraq	3-5	8.2 (1991)	6.8 (1997)
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	4-5	2.5	9.7 (1999)
Oman	4-5	2.5	5.9 (1997)
Palestinian Nat. Authority	NA	NA	49.1
Saudi Arabia	3-5	3.7	8.6
Syrian Arab Republic	3-5	NA	7.7
Turkey	3-5	NA	6.9

Country/Territory	Age range	Enrolment:1990 (%)	Enrolment:1998 (%)
United Arab Emirates	3-5	NA	46.3
Yemen	3-5	0.7	0.6
Central and Western Africa			
Gambia	3-6	NA	17.7
Southern and Eastern Africa			
Eritrea	5-6	5.1 (1993)	6.5
Kenya	3-5	35	34.3
Malawi	3-5	0.4 (1994)	24.6 (1999)
Mauritius	4-5	78 (1993)	98
Namibia	0-5	6 (1992)	9 (1997)
Nigeria	3-6	4.7 (1992)	NA
Sudan	4-5	NA	19.2
Zambia	3-6	2	7.3
Zanzibar	4-6	4.9 (1993)	11.4 (1999)
Zimbabwe	NA	20 (estimate)	35
Western Europe			
Cyprus	3.0-5.5	NA	75
Finland	3-6	35	48
Ireland	5	NA	Virtually all
Italy	0-2	5.7 (1992)	8
	3-5	NA	95
Sweden	1	25	34
	2	45	60
	3	51	64
	4	57	69
	5	59	73
United Kingdom	3	40	50 (1997)
	4	90	95 (1997)
Central Asia and Eastern Europe			
Armenia	3-6	40.(88)	21
Azerbaijan	3-5 (NA)	27	17
Belarus	5	NA	61.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3-6	11.7	10.0
Bulgaria	2-7	52.4	58
Croatia	3-5	42	43.3
Georgia	3-6	44.1	29.3
Kazakhstan	2 months-6 years	47.9	10.8
Kyrgyzstan	3-6	0.3	0.1
Latvia	NA	28.(1993)	44.(1999)
Moldova	1-7	70	37.9 (1999)
	1-3		23.6
	3-4		42.2
	4-5		48.6
	5-6		58.4
	6-7		63.1
Mongolia	3-7 (NA)	27.9	27.3 ¹
	0-2	5.8	3.2 (1995)
Poland	3-6	56.3	63
Romania	3-6	54.5	64.2
Russian Federation	1-6	80. ²	53.8
Slovakia	NA	84.7	84.2 ³
Tajikistan	1-6	15.2	4.2
Ukraine	1-6	57	38
Uzbekistan	1-6	30.7 (1992)	16.1 (1998)

Country/Territory	Age range	Enrolment:1990 (%)	Enrolment:1998 (%)
East Asia			
Cambodia	36 months–72 months	5.3	5.8
China	3–5	28	47 (1997)
Indonesia	4–6	36.7 urban (1996) 8.9 rural (1996)	42.0 urban 11.2 rural
Japan	3–5	NA	82 (1997)
	0		2.9
	1		12.1
	2		18.7
	3		57.7
	4		92.7
	5		96.9
Korea (Republic of)	4–5	31.6	37.2
Lao People's Demo. Rep.	3–5	6.0	7.3 (1997)
Malaysia	4–5	75 (1991)	90 (1997)
Myanmar	3–5	2	NA
Philippines	4–5	8.0	14.0 ⁴
Thailand	3–5	26.7	40.1
Viet Nam	3–5	35.3	68.6
South Asia			
Afghanistan	3–5	2	0
Bangladesh	3–5	NA	22.4 (1999)
Bhutan	3–5	NA	0.66 ⁵
India	3–6	15	16.9 (1997)
Maldives	3–5	–	50.2
Nepal	3–5	NA	8.1
Pakistan	3–5	NA	8.5
Seychelles	3.5–5.5	104	107
Sri Lanka	3–5	43	63 (1999)
Pacific Islands			
Cook Islands	3.5–5	69.6 (1991)	64.2 (97)
Fiji	3–5	11 (1994)	15.3
Kiribati	3–5	32 est.	NA
Marshall Islands	3–4	14.3 (1995/96)	15.2 (1996/97)
Nauru	3–5	62.7	75.4
Niue	4	100 (1991)	100.0
Papua New Guinea	3–5	60.3 (1994)	72.8 (1996)
Samoa	3–5		38.4
Solomon Islands	No. of kindergartens	187 (1994)	395 (1996)
Tonga	3–5		10.1 (1999)
Tuvalu	3–5	100 (1994)	100 (1998)

NA: Data not available as this document went to press – Ed.

1. An additional 14.3% are enrolled in out-of-classroom programmes.
2. Estimate by the author based on figures in the report.
3. Dropped to 70.9% in 1995 and then recovered.
4. If child care and parent education institutions are included the figures would be 19.5% in 1990 and 55.7% in 1998.
5. However, all Western-model primary education has pre-primary classes. This corresponds to kindergarten classes in other systems. For the current worksheet, pre-primary is assumed to be part of primary and not ECCD.

Source: Country reports.

Spanish-, Portuguese- and French-speaking countries in Africa notes a marginal increase for the region over the period (from 0.7% to 3.6%) and specifically mentions a decrease only in Togo (UNESCO, n.d.). The Commission on ECCE from the African Regional Meeting at Johannesburg reported that 'enrolment has grown and access, although small, has improved' (*Report of Commission One . . .*, 1999); there is no indication, however, of cases in which there may have been a decrease. These summaries contrast somewhat with data from specific countries where enrolments seem to be much higher than the average (see Table 1) and where Kenya shows a very slight decrease over the period.

As can be seen from the appropriate section of Table 1, decreases in enrolments were found in all the Central Asian countries which were former members of the Soviet Union and for which data were available. These decreases are a product of the break-up of the former Soviet Union, of economic difficulties associated with independence and the shift to a market-based economic system, sometimes accompanied by civil war or territorial battles with neighbours, and of a decentralization process within the countries. With these changes, the centrally supported, extensive and expensive system of relatively high-quality early childhood provision broke down. This breakdown was particularly significant for rural areas where attention had been provided through rural co-operatives. Looking behind these data, there appears to be a tendency for enrolments to begin to recover slightly over the last year or more of the period, related to somewhat greater stability and to financial assistance from abroad, and to the emergence of a range of new alternatives.

Although there are a few cases of large, and even rather dramatic, growth during the period, enrolment increases can more generally be characterized as small and marginal

Although increases seem to be most significant in Latin America and East Asia it is difficult to generalize; increases seem to be more related to the conditions of particular countries than to regions. The most dramatic increase appears in the Caribbean where statistics for the tiny Turks and Caicos Islands show a jump from zero coverage at the beginning of the decade to a current enrolment of 99%. Cuba shows a major increase over the period from 29% to 98%, a result of having introduced (and having included in their statistics) a massive parent education programme. Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay show significant advances but begin from a relatively low baseline. The same is true of the Philippines. China, Thailand and Viet Nam show important enrolment increases over the period.

In most cases, however, change has been modest, slogging along at one or two per cent per year. This slow pace is not necessarily bad from a programmatic viewpoint because, in theory, it allows time for needed human resources to be put in place and for adjustment when new programmes are

introduced. Forcing a rapid pace can be particularly difficult and even inefficient if the human resources are not available to deal with the new situation. Moreover, real participation by communities in the creation and growth of early childhood programmes is difficult if a fast pace of growth is desired. It is likely, however, that the slower pace of increase in enrolments represents a kind of inertia and a failure to give priority to ECCD in often difficult economic conditions. Continued low enrolments also mean that many children are deprived of an experience that could help them to better realize their potential and perhaps even help to lift them out of poverty.

The African report from Johannesburg states that 'Ten years after Jomtien, despite efforts of some governments, very little progress has been made to achieve the set goals' (*Report of Commission One . . .*, 1999).

A rough conclusion can be drawn from the above that a great deal of work is still needed if ECCD programmes are to have a significant effect, nationally, on the lives of children, families and countries.

The variation in enrolment rates is huge, ranging from almost zero to more than 100% across countries

From Table 1, the variation by region and within regions is obvious. Countries are at very different stages in the process of developing and implementing programmes. This fact, when added to the obvious cultural and economic differences between countries, reinforces the idea that formulas should be avoided.

Attention to ECCD continues to be very much focused on 'pre-schooling' and is concentrated on the age just prior to entry into primary school

This pre-primary age may be as young as 4 (because kindergarten is considered part of the primary-school system and the enrolment at age 5 is virtually 100%, a situation found in various Caribbean countries), or as 'old' as age 6.

The fact that most countries have made their major advances in enrolment in the year immediately preceding entrance into primary school can be shown by looking at the countries in Table 1 that report data only for ages 5 or 5 to 6, and/or break down enrolment figures by each age from birth to primary-school entrance (e.g. Chile and Japan). These cases all indicate a strong bias towards 'pre-school' education as the main strain of ECCD. In Latin America, at least seven countries (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay) can point to enrolment figures over 80% for the year prior to entry into primary school.

Very few countries provided a detailed breakdown of enrolments for each age from 0 to 5 or 6. Exceptions are Chile and Japan, which present the following:

Age	Chile (%)	Japan (%)
0-1	3	2.9
1-2	4	12.1
2-3	22	18.8
3-4	35	57.7
4-5	36	92.7
5-6	83	96.9

The general point is reinforced when one takes into account that various countries include in their statistics special programmes designed specifically to prepare children for primary schooling (summer courses or, as in the case of Brazil, a 'literacy' programme). The data on new entrants to primary school with some ECCD experience (which are not analysed here) also reinforce the conclusion.

A corollary of the above follows.

Coverage is very low in institutionalized ECCD programmes for children under 2 (and even under 4) years of age

In most of the world, the tradition of mothers or other family members caring for very young children at home on a full-time basis continues to be the norm. Accordingly, parental support and education programmes that will guide parents in helping their young children not only to survive and grow but also to develop their full potential are extraordinarily important. Together with the hope that many people can be reached at a relatively low cost, this has led to a spate of 'parenting education' programmes during the decade. These are often mentioned in country reports but are not usually included in statistics.

Although countries in the Minority World (Kahn and Kamerman, 1994) and in Eastern Europe (Evans et al., 1996) and Central Asia are likely to provide families with non-institutionalized support (maternity and paternity work leaves, sick leaves, child payments, housing subsidies), this type of support for families with young children is seldom found in the Majority World where responsibility for the first years falls squarely, and even exclusively in some places, on family and community. Sweden reports a relatively high proportion of children aged 1 to 2 in childcare centres.

Urban children are more likely than rural children to be enrolled in some sort of ECCD programme

In their reports, many countries disaggregated enrolment figures into urban and rural coverage. Sometimes these figures compared the GER for urban areas with that for rural areas. In these cases, it seemed clear that urban children were favoured (see the case of Indonesia in Table 1). In other cases, however, the enrolment figure was simply divided into two parts, showing that a certain percentage of the total enrolment was in urban areas and the rest in rural areas. For example, the summary report for Spanish-, Portuguese- and French-speaking

countries in Africa indicates that 'more than 80% of the facilities are situated in urban zones...' (UNESCO, n.d., p. 7). In these cases the percentage of the total population that is urban (or rural), in order to calculate the relative coverage of the population group in each, is unknown.

In a number of countries there is a suggestion that rural enrolments have grown more than urban enrolments during the period but nevertheless continue to lag. The bias towards urban areas is probably greater for day care programmes, which are usually linked to urban work situations, but this information is not available in reports.

Children from families that are better off economically and socially are more likely to be enrolled than children from families with few resources and/or that are part of groups discriminated against socially

This bias is related to, but not congruent with, the urban/rural differences noted above. In the country reports, almost no attempt was made to present hard data showing how enrolment is related to economic or social status. The main exception is Chile, which presented information derived from household surveys. The Chilean data, presented in Table 2, show the direct relationship between enrolment and income. Note that the enrolment in 1996 was more than twice as high for children from families in the upper fifth of the income distribution as it was for children from families in the lowest fifth. (It is likely that the differences would have been much more dramatic if the upper and lower ranges were defined as deciles instead of quintiles.)

Table 2. Early education coverage by income level in Chile, 1990 and 1996, for children under 6 years of age

Income quintiles	Coverage 1990	Coverage 1996	Variation (%)
I (low)	19.9	22.3	32.0
II	17.5	26.8	53.1
III	20.4	30.0	47.1
IV	27.2	36.8	35.3
V (high)	32.4	48.4	49.4
Total	20.9	29.8	42.6

Source: Chilean Country Report, 1999, p. 53.

The data also show that increases over the six-year period for those in the lowest fifth lagged behind increases for those in the upper fifth, increasing the inequity of coverage during the period. The presentation of this type of information requires a certain degree of political maturity and a critical stance.

The above is significant but obviously cannot be taken as the basis for a generalization. The relationship between coverage and income will vary from country to country, but, despite recent efforts to 'target' programmes at lower-income groups

(see, for example, Peralta and Fujimoto, 1998, p. 106, for Latin America), the relationship probably holds for most countries.

Very little information could be found in the country reports on enrolment distinguished by cultural or ethnic groupings. However, there was evidence of special programmes for ethnic minorities in many of the reports, suggesting that these groups lag behind in attention within ECCD programmes.

In most countries, there is virtual parity between boys and girls, but there are exceptions to this generalization in which girls lag behind

Nepal, Pakistan, India, Maldives and the Islamic Republic of Iran are cases in point. Several of the countries in the Middle Eastern and North African area also show lower enrolments for girls but there is evidence that the gap is slowly narrowing. Gender inequality tends to be magnified in rural areas.

The role of the state, private-sector institutions and communities varies widely from region to region and country to country

In socialist countries (including former members of the Soviet Union, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Cuba and Sweden, among others) education in general has been a major responsibility of the state, including education and care during the pre-school years. Accordingly, important efforts were made prior to the 1990s to develop state-funded systems of comprehensive care and early education. During the 1990s, however, the role of the state changed dramatically in many of these

countries, with new-found independence and a shift towards a market economy.

The socialist stance contrasts markedly with that of the United States and the United Kingdom where ECCD has developed along mixed private and governmental lines, but with a heavy bias towards private and community provision regulated through the market.

In Africa, with some exceptions, governments have paid little attention to ECCD, which has been viewed as the responsibility of families and communities. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) – that are statistically labelled as 'private' but might better be considered part of a 'social' sector – have played an important role in the region.

In Latin America, the percentage of enrolments accounted for by non-governmental programmes runs between 10% and 15% for most countries.

In the Caribbean, heavy emphasis is placed on private and community programmes.

In South-East Asia, Indonesia reports 19% (1996) and Thailand reports 24% (1998) of their enrolments administered by organizations that are not part of the government.

Additional comments on this theme are offered later in the study. ■

Tendencies: changes in conditions affecting ECCD programming

In addition to changes in the demographic, economic, social and political contexts noted above, a host of more immediate changes affecting ECCD were noted in country reports and by knowledgeable people. These include changes in:

- knowledge and its dissemination: the conceptual and scientific bases available to be drawn upon and the formation of communication networks;
- attitudes and awareness of political leaders, funders, planners and the population at large about the importance of ECCD and its potential benefits;
- policies and legal and legislative frameworks for programming, internationally and nationally;
- the availability of resources, both financial and human;
- organizational bases, strengthened and consolidated, both governmental and non-governmental.

Changes in the knowledge base and conceptual shifts

The most frequently mentioned advance in knowledge related to ECCD during the 1990s was an advance in understanding how the brain develops and functions. To many survey respondents, it was clear that new discoveries in neuroscience¹² and their dissemination through scientific, professional and popular channels have had an important influence on the demand for, and the willingness to consider support for, early childhood education and development programmes.

Also mentioned with some frequency was a growing body of knowledge from research studies and programme evaluations showing long-term benefits of early intervention programmes for children at risk (Karoly et al., 1998; Barnett and Boocock, 1998; Schweinhart et al., 1994). It is now possible to point to longitudinal studies in various countries of the Majority World as well as studies in Europe, the United States¹³ and elsewhere in the Minority World, that show clearly how ECCD programmes can have effects on children in primary school. A prime example of such Majority World research is the excellent work done in Turkey in which children cared for in different settings, and whose mothers participated in a parent education programme, were shown to benefit in later life (Kagicibasi, 1996; Bekman, 1998). These studies have helped to convince policy-makers and programmers of the value of investing in ECCD. They reinforce the Jomtien commitment to including early education within basic education.

Other new avenues of research that are beginning to influence practice include studies of 'resilience' (Luthar et al., forthcoming), conditions under which programmes can have a negative effect on child development (see work of Kathy Sylva at the London Institute of Education), and child-rearing practices and patterns (Consultative Group . . . , 1994).

A range of conceptual shifts that seem to be 'in process' were also noted by survey respondents, for example:

- Although a behaviourist model that is not very 'child friendly' still holds sway in some countries, there has been a shift towards active learning and the constructivist ideas of Piaget. Although Piaget has had a strong influence on early childhood curricula and practices, particularly in the Majority World and in Latin America, even more of a shift has been noted towards programmes based on the thinking of Vygotsky. While not contradicting Piaget, Vygotsky places greater emphasis on social and cultural influences that affect all aspects of children's development (as contrasted with emphasis on individual discovery) and gives renewed importance to the role of the teacher and to the place of language in the teaching/learning process (Berk and Winsler, 1995).
- The influence of ecological and transactional models that gained prominence in the 1980s continues to provide a basis for complementary approaches to ECCD that work towards changing the family, community and broader institutional and cultural environments with which a child interacts in the process of developing and learning.
- The search for 'best practices' which took off in the 1980s continues, but the chorus of those who question the search for universals and the base for best practices in developmental psychology has grown ever louder (Woodhead, 1996). Additional importance is being attached to discovering, respecting, and incorporating cultural differences into thinking about how early childhood education and care 'should' occur (Penn, 1999). Viewpoints grounded in anthropology, sociology, ethics and other fields are being brought to bear on ECCD, highlighting the need to begin with the cultural and social definitions of childhood and education held by those who are the participants in early childhood programmes rather than with a predetermined set of definitions and models imposed from 'outside' (Dahlberg et al., 1999). This tendency is consistent with a strand of thinking about social and economic development that is grounded in local participation, and in 'putting the first last' (Chambers, 1997).

Comment

The search for 'best' practices need not be a search for practices that will be the same everywhere, although that seems to

be the implication. What is thought to be 'best' or 'most effective' must be defined in terms of some set of values and these values will differ. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international agreements provide general frameworks that attempt to capture a set of shared values. For example, various conventions, including that of the Rights of the Child, indicate that there should be no discrimination on the basis of gender. Nevertheless, certain forms of discrimination against women and girls are embedded in the value system of some cultures, creating a conflict between local values and 'international' values that needs to be resolved. Another authority to which international advocates appeal, Western science, is sometimes at odds with local cultural values. For example, Western research seems to show that physical punishment has detrimental effects on children, yet many cultures accept and even recommend physical punishment, feeling that in a cruel and unjust world it is the strong who survive.

To try to overcome inevitable tensions between international and local expressions of what 'should be', a third path has been evolving with the following characteristics.

- The search for 'best' practices begins by looking for and supporting those practices that are valued both in terms of traditional wisdom based on experience and in terms of their scientific value.
- A process is established in which points of difference are handled through dialogue, values are made explicit and knowledge from both traditional wisdom and from recent scientific discoveries is presented and openly discussed. In such a dialogue, the Minority World or its local representatives should seek to learn as well as to impose its views.

This process can lead to understanding of the legitimate bases for different practices. It helps to narrow or conciliate apparent differences and sometimes even validate them in new ways. For example, many indigenous child-rearing and teaching practices, which may not be similar to Western practices, are nevertheless being validated by recent neuroscience research because they effectively stimulate the child.¹⁴ A process of dialogue and reflection helps to identify changing circumstances that may require changes in practices, and opens up the possibility of incorporating new knowledge and new practices into child-rearing that are seen as valuable from *inside* cultures as they seek to adjust to a changing and ever more interrelated world, without, however, violating the process of honouring and constructing cultural heritage.

Consistent with the above, new knowledge and support for conceptual shifts is also emerging from experience on the ground within a host of new programmes that have appeared during the decade, many still small in coverage and conceived

as experiments. Increasingly, however, programmes have been 'going to scale' and, in the process, providing knowledge about what can happen when programmes expand and what kind of result may be expected under different conditions. More evaluations of, and systematic reflections on, ECCD project and programme experiences have appeared during the 1990s than in the past. More generally, however, evaluation has not been made an integral and continuous part of the ECCD programme process.

Participants in the survey of knowledgeable people were asked to indicate examples of programmes or projects they thought were 'effective' and to indicate why they thought so. Appendix 2 presents an analysis of the responses to this question. In addition, as part of collecting information for this study, a host of publications were received describing projects that, in one way or another, have been deemed to be successful, innovative or effective.¹⁵

From these examples, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1 There is no lack of examples of programmes that are considered effective.
- 2 Programmes are considered to be effective for extremely diverse reasons, some related directly to their effects on children, families and communities, some related to the characteristics of the programmes themselves, and some related to the prevailing conditions that facilitated or permitted success.
- 3 Many options are mentioned, including centre- and home-based programmes; governmental, NGO and community initiatives; formal, non-formal and informal programmes; child-, family-, and community-focused programmes; programmes using the mass media; programmes attached to health and/or nutrition initiatives; transition programmes; toy libraries; work-related care; action research projects; training and capacity-building programmes; programmes for displaced children; advocacy efforts.
- 4 Some programmes lose their effectiveness after a time, suggesting the need for a constant process of renewal.

Several respondents to the survey labelled as tendencies or 'advances' conceptual shifts directly related to the manner in which planning, programming and implementing organizations are going about their task of moving knowledge into action. For example, mention was made of:

- a tendency to set ECCD programming within broader frameworks, such as poverty alleviation, the need for a new citizenry as transitions to democracy occur, problems of street children or criminal behaviour, as well as to performance in school;

- greater acceptance of the idea that development is 'holistic' and integral programming cutting across sectoral lines;
- a tendency to think more in terms of programmes that prevent delayed or debilitated development, as contrasted with programmes focused on 'compensating' for these problems once they occur.

A conceptual shift in how governments see their role is also in the air, with a tendency to shift at least some of the burden of providing services from government to the market place through 'privatization'. Such a shift, although at an early stage, is being harshly questioned by some who see this as a way for governments to avoid their responsibility.

Frameworks for action created internationally also seem to be helping people to shift their paradigms of thinking and action. The conceptual frame provided at Jomtien by the inclusion of the phrase 'Learning begins at birth', was cited by several of the people surveyed as providing an important base for action. In some circles, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has begun to bring about shifts in the way ECCD programmes are conceptualized, beginning more from a universal 'rights' perspective and less from a 'needs' perspective which tends to be associated more directly with focused or 'targeted' interventions.¹⁶

Sceptical notes

A number of respondents noted advances in our knowledge base, but added qualifying statements. For example, a few respondents said that they thought current claims are exaggerated. From their perspective, the tendency to justify ECCD investments in terms of long-term economic benefits was seen as still resting on a weak base, both because economic outcomes are only part of the picture and because the research to date seems to involve creative but questionable premises as well as some leaps of faith when interpreting results. This seemed particularly the case when applied to settings with a high level of poverty. These respondents felt that although ECCD may help in a modest way to alleviate some aspects of poverty, hailing it as the means to emerge from poverty seems exaggerated and might even be a distraction from more fundamental questions about what causes poverty.

This scepticism is a useful reminder that there is much to be done to provide an even firmer base for action even as the considerable knowledge base we have is drawn upon to create and improve ECCD programmes. It also indicates that although there is increasingly strong evidence that programmes of early education and development can have important and lasting effects on children and are a good investment, it is well to be humble with respect to our expectations in the short term, and it is well to maintain a broad perspective on what needs to be done to overcome the conditions that lead to delayed and debilitated development.

Dissemination

Improvement in the knowledge base was seen both as an advance and as a condition that has permitted other advances in the field. However, new knowledge will not have much impact on actions if it is not disseminated widely (and/or to those knowledge brokers who help to move research results and theoretical advances from paper into practice). Accordingly, various respondents noted as an advance the increases in publications, the 'construction of knowledge in fora', and the growth of knowledge networks. However, despite these advances, several respondents lamented the fact that new knowledge does not seem to transfer into changes in policies or programming, that the dissemination process seems to be slow and deficient, and that the strategies for reaching policy-makers and planners, as well as the general public, are often inappropriate.

Changes in attitudes and awareness

Closely related to the growth of a knowledge base and to its dissemination, as well as to the conceptual shifts noted above, is the advance that was most often mentioned by respondents to the survey: an increased awareness of the importance of ECCD and its potential benefits on the part of political leaders, funders, planners and the population at large. Awareness, or 'consciousness' was seen to have improved within both governments and civil society, and among policy-makers and intellectuals, in relation to: (a) the importance of early childhood care and education (and particularly of the earliest years); (b) what early childhood development is; and (c) how to go about fostering it.

The following excerpts from responses to the survey of knowledgeable people indicate how the importance of ECCD was expressed. 'ECCD is on the agenda.' 'There is an increased awareness.' 'The need to invest is recognized.' 'ECCD is seen as of benefit to all.' 'Organizations and donors recognize the need to intervene.' 'The international community and national governments have been brought into ECCD.' 'Children are increasingly being seen as "core business"'

For some, this advance in awareness includes, and is linked to, broader changes such as 'an awareness of children's rights' or a 'globally felt concern and responsibility for marginalized children' or a 'greater sensitivity to the need to take cultural differences into account.' 'ECCD has emerged as a key field of social and educational development.' 'ECCD is seen as a springboard for development activities.'

Some saw the new awareness in terms of how early childhood development is conceived with, for example, 'greater acceptance that a child is not an "incomplete being" but thinks and feels' or of the idea that we must take a 'holistic view' and deal with the 'indivisible needs' of a 'whole child' or the 'need to involve children actively'.

In more than one case, the most important advance in awareness was linked to the idea that 'learning begins at birth' and/or of the 'importance of ages 0 to 2' or of 'the youngest children'. A new appreciation of the importance of the ideas of 'attachment' and 'bonding' was mentioned. In some of the above, the recognition of the importance of the early years was explicitly linked to a growing 'realization that the family has a pivotal role to play'.

These new levels and types of awareness bring with them specific implications for programming that, according to some respondents, now seem to be more widely accepted and practised. These are presented below when dealing with advances that were noted in the approaches being taken to programming within ECCD.

Although improvements in the knowledge base and in awareness were often mentioned as an advance and as a condition that has permitted or fostered progress in the ECCD field, at the same time a lack of knowledge and/or 'a lack of political will' seem to be recurrent complaints registered by survey respondents and in ECCD documents from various countries and/or regions.

Changes in policies and legal and legislative frameworks

Country reports and survey respondents often noted specific changes in laws for programming, internationally and nationally, the development of policies and the explicit inclusion of ECCD in national plans as advances in the field of ECCD. In some countries, major educational reforms occurred of which early childhood education was part. This was particularly true, of necessity, in nations of the former Soviet Union which, with independence, had to set about reconstructing their education systems.

Some cases of new regulatory legislation were mentioned. Various countries have either lowered the age of entrance into primary school, thereby giving what was one year of pre-school a new obligatory status, or have legally declared one or more years of early education to be obligatory (as in several Latin American countries). New policy statements have been issued in several countries, India being a prime example (Kaul, 1999). In Africa, new policies have appeared in at least ten countries (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe).¹⁷ In the Caribbean, a regional plan of action has been jointly approved and is moving into an operational phase.

At the same time, the lack of good and comprehensive laws and policies, particularly for children under 3 years of age, characterizes too many countries, notwithstanding efforts in several Eastern European countries to strengthen policies with respect to the earliest years by extending maternal (and some-

times paternal) leaves and by providing or increasing cash subsidies to families with young children. (This seems to be part of a policy shift returning the primary responsibility for child-rearing to the family.)

Several survey respondents specifically mentioned a need for better laws governing the growing number of independent private ECCD centres.

There was also considerable criticism of some of the broader governmental economic-adjustment policies that affect ECCD indirectly and are often linked to international agency policies.

Changes in the availability of financial resources

Interestingly, while few of the people surveyed pointed directly to lack of funding as a barrier to advance in the ECCD field, there is a widespread feeling that the field is underfunded, that public financial support is low and unstable, and that the lack of resources is an important problem. Although information is incomplete, there is evidence to both support and counter this feeling.

International financing

During the 1980s and the early 1990s, financing within the international community for projects related to young children was focused on survival, and, more specifically on health and nutrition. Guided by a consortium of donors (Bellagio Group) and by the energetic promotion efforts of a Child Survival Revolution by UNICEF and the World Health Organization, major lending agencies, bilateral organizations, major foundations and the larger international NGOs emphasized immunization, oral rehydration, feeding, and other actions that were directed primarily at reducing infant and child mortality rates. Very little attention was given to child development. Donors seemed to accept the half-truth that attending to health and nutrition would automatically benefit mental, social and psychological development.¹⁸

At the beginning of the decade, the Bernard van Leer Foundation was the only international institution with a history of consistent and significant support to early childhood development programmes located within the Majority World. That assistance was provided primarily within a child-centred, community-based development framework. UNICEF, because of its decentralized nature, also managed to fund a variety of projects through its field offices, but without much support from the centre (despite a position paper on the subject produced in 1985). Other organizations provided sporadic assistance for isolated projects. In general, the available financing was for pilot or demonstration projects, often with a training component included.

International educational assistance was seldom provided for pre-school or child development projects but was concentrated increasingly on primary schooling, representing a shift from an earlier tendency to favour support for university development.

During the 1990s, however, the picture began to change. Indeed, there is no doubt that the overall level of international financing available for ECCD has increased a great deal since 1990. The change was driven by a certain level of success with child survival programmes leading to a need to respond to the

Table 3. Summary data on early child development projects funded by the World Bank

Country and name of project	Project period	Bank credit/loan (\$ million)	Total project cost (\$ million)
<i>Freestanding early child development projects</i>			
Bolivia Integrated Child Development	1993–01	50.7	140.2
Colombia Community Child Care and Nutrition	1990–97	24.0	40.2
India Integrated Child Development I	1991–98	106.2	57.5
India Integrated Child Development II	1993–01	194.0	248.8
India Second Tamil Nadu	1990–98	95.8	139.1
Indonesia Early Child Development I	1997–03	21.5	5.5
Kenya Early Child Development	1997–02	27.8	35.1
Mexico Initial Education	1993–98	80.0	139.1
Nigeria Development Communications	1993–99	8.0	10.2
Republic of Uganda	1998–03	34.0	40.0
Subtotal		641.8	975.7
<i>Part of other social-sector projects</i>			
Argentine Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition	1994–00	10.5 of 100.0	160.0
Argentina Maternal and Child Health II	1997–04	81.3 of 100.0	171.0
Brazil Innovation in Basic Education	1991–98	36.2 of 245.0	600.0
Brazil Municipal Development: Rio Grande do Sul	1990–95	5.2 of 100.0	227.0
Brazil Municipal Development in Parana	1989–95	1.0 of 100.0	400.0
Chile Primary Education	1992–98	27.1 of 170.0	242.0
Ecuador First Social Development	1992–00	1.4 of 89.0	118.7
Ecuador Social Investment Fund	1994–99	0.6 of 30.0	120.0
El Salvador Basic Education	1996–01	6.5 of 34.0	80.2
El Salvador Social Sector Rehabilitation	1991–97	4.4 of 26.0	40.0
Guyana: SIMAP – Health, Nutrition, Water and Sanitation	1992–97	10.3 of 11.7	14.4
Kazakhstan Social Protection	1995–99	15.6 of 41.1	54.7
Morocco SPI Education	1996–04	19.4 of 54.0	97.7
Nicaragua Basic Education	1995–00	6.0 of 34.0	39.3
Panama Education Sector	1996–02	1.4 of 35.0	58.0
Paraguay Maternal Health and Child Development	1997–03	1.7 of 21.8	31.2
Trinidad and Tobago Basic Education	1996–03	3.8 of 51.0	121.3
Uruguay Basic Education Quality Improvement	1994–00	6.8 of 31.5	45.0
Venezuela Social Development	1991–97	57.6 of 100.0	320.9
Subtotal		360.9	2 995.8

Not included in the table is a recent loan to the Philippines, provided together with the Asian Development Bank that would easily put the total over the \$1,000 million mark. Also missing is a loan supporting a parent education programme in Turkey. The World Bank has also provided some funds for research and advocacy efforts in the field.

Source: <http://www.worldbank.org/children/costs/lending.htm>

question, 'Survival for what?' as well as by a search for something new. It was driven also by the changing knowledge base mentioned above, by a shift in demand related both to a desire to better prepare children for school and to the increasing participation of women in the labour force, and by international advocacy efforts. Both the Jomtien Declaration and the Convention on the Rights of the Child provided new frameworks for attending to children and brought pressure to bear on signers to define attention to children more broadly than in health and nutritional terms.

The greatest jump in available ECCD funding occurred within the World Bank. Table 3 presents summary data on World Bank loan funds, amounting to almost 1 billion dollars, provided to support ECCD projects during the decade. Note that these loan funds have been concentrated on Latin America and Asia, with only about 7% of the total (\$70 million) destined for three projects in Africa.

On a somewhat lesser scale, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) has increased its available funding for ECCD projects and has now made loans for ECCD projects in several countries. From 1991 to 1998, the IADB approved eight free-standing ECCD projects to the amount of US\$68.5 million (IADB, 1999). In March 1999, the President of the IADB promised to double the amount available. As suggested in the footnote to Table 3, the Asian Development Bank has also begun to be active in the field.

In 1999, UNICEF made early childhood care for development a high priority. UNICEF funding for such activities can be expected to increase over the next few years. In the foundation world, the Bernard van Leer Foundation continues to be a significant actor, joined by the Aga Khan Foundation which began its ECCD activities in 1984, and more recently by the Soros Foundation which has become a major actor in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. International NGOs (e.g. various members of Save the Children Alliance, Christian Children's Fund, World Vision and Plan International) have increased their attention during the decade to young children and their development as well as their survival. Bilateral organizations have not been swept along in this current but can be expected to increase their support moderately in the years to come.

With this increase in funding has come another change; support is now available for medium- and even larger-scale projects in the field. The types of project for which support is being provided have also broadened well beyond formal pre-school education to include parent education and a variety of non-formal approaches.

In brief, possibilities for external funding have increased in an important way during the 1990s. The closing chapter makes additional comments on financing and on the responsibility of international organizations in this respect.

National governments

The picture is less clear with respect to national budgets. The sections of country reports dealing with finances reveal that few have presented information specifically on the funding of early childhood programmes. There are several reasons for the gap in information, related to budget conventions and to the difficulty of bringing together information from the many administrative entities responsible for ECCD programmes.¹⁹

In a very few countries, funding for ECCD constitutes a significant part of the education budget. In one country, 18% of the education budget is devoted to early education. Chile's funding was at a level of 7.6% of the education budget in 1998 (down slightly from 8.2% in 1990). More common, however, is the case of Jamaica, where only about 2% of the education budget goes to early childhood, or Kenya where less than 1% is devoted to ECCD. The African report for Spanish-, Portuguese- and French-speaking countries indicates that 'Budget allocations are very meagre and are limited in most cases to staff welfare', (UNESCO, DATE, p. 8) noting also that the management of the EFA target for early childhood is usually not the National Education Ministry. The Report of the Commission on ECCD from Johannesburg stated that '. . . countries indicated that governments in general have neither the financial nor administrative capacity to engage in early childhood education in the way they are involved in the provision of primary universal education' (*Report of Commission One . . .*, pp. 39–40).

Other sources of funding

*Private and social sectors,*²⁰ *communities and parents.* Estimates are not available for the financial support that falls to the private and social sectors. In some countries, however, it is clear that an important part of the resource burden falls on non-governmental sources. For example, in both the Kenyan and Jamaican cases mentioned above, the burden of financing falls on communities. In Africa, 'In most countries, government efforts are supplemented by religious, non-governmental and community organizations In places such as Zanzibar, parts of Kenya and Uganda and the Gambia, with a strong Islamic presence, state provision up to primary school has supplemented by Koranic schools or *madrassas*. In Zanzibar, *madrassas* provide 62% of early childhood development schools' (*Report of Commission One . . .*, 1999, pp. 40–1). In the islands of the Caribbean, pre-schooling is dominated by private Christian or community organizations.

In Latin America and elsewhere, a large variety of 'non-formal' programmes draw heavily on the involvement of community members who 'volunteer'²¹ their services, thereby reducing the main cost of most ECCD programmes – salaries.

Discussions of the contribution to ECCD of the 'for-profit private sector' must be divided into at least two parts, involving (a) entrepreneurial institutions or individuals who offer ECCD services in order to make a profit, and (b) profit-

making companies organized for other purposes, which may provide resources from their profits to support early childhood, by offering ECCD services on the premises to employees, providing financial incentives to their employees to seek services elsewhere, or making contributions to ECCD through special taxes or related philanthropic efforts.

In many countries, entrepreneurs make an important contribution to ECCD. But sometimes it is difficult to determine whether or not such private efforts are really closer to community service than to profit-seeking behaviour. Indeed, when individuals set up centres catering for families with relatively low incomes, it is difficult for them to make ends meet let alone make a profit. At the same time, there is concern that the growth of private, for-profit centres attending to young children is a problem because it is chaotic and unregulated, creating greater disparities and providing services of poor quality for low-income families unable to pay for a better programme.

It is probably fair to say that, to date, the contribution of the second for-profit group – the non-ECCD part of the private sector – to the field of ECCD has been minimal (despite employee benefit regulations sometimes mandating companies to set up day-care centres). This may be changing as organizations such as the Soros Foundation make funds available for ECCD. Some governments and international organizations such as the World Bank wish to seek greater support for ECCD from this part of the private sector. The early efforts have had little real effect so far, but the tendency is present, and careful thought must be given to evaluating the different ways in which the sector might be involved in order to avoid discrimination or a lowering of programme quality, when the hope is that quality will be enhanced.

In all likelihood, the greatest source of support for ECCD still comes from parents. This is clearly true for the earliest years during which the overwhelming majority of children remain at home. But even in the countries with a relatively high enrolment for children age 4 or above, parents often contribute through payments of quotas, uniforms, or materials required in official as well as in private programmes. Clearly, in cases where the growth of ECCD is demand-driven and largely run by private entrepreneurs or community, these costs to parents will be higher, with greater possibilities of discrimination related to the ability to pay.

Changes in organizational bases; the growth of networks

In some of the country reports and in the survey of knowledgeable people, organizational changes were frequently mentioned as 'advances' in the ECCD field during the 1990s. The particular advance cited might involve bringing the field

under the control of the Education Ministry and sector, presumably to give greater attention to the educational quality of programmes. Advances were also cited relating to the creation of co-ordinating mechanisms reaching across sectors, parts of the same sector, or agencies responsible for 'care' as contrasted with 'education.'

Another organizational change that has occurred in many countries during the 1990s has been the decentralization of programmes. This change is seen by some as important in opening up the possibility for greater diversity related to local circumstances and cultural differences, increasing the level of local participation, and facilitating accountability. Others see decentralization as a new form of maintaining control from the centre, as a barrier to the important redistributive role that states should play, and as a formula for diminished quality related to the lack of adequately trained human resources at the local level. How decentralization is in fact affecting ECCD will have to be looked at closely in the coming years and the tendency will require greater attention to advocacy and training at local levels.

Another tendency that has intensified during the 1990s has been the increase in the organizational presence of NGOs. Several respondents to the survey noted this as a positive development.

Despite these changes, organizational weakness and the failure of co-ordination among organizations appear frequently as barriers to change and as problems that need to be dealt with in the near future.

Changes in programme strategies and quality

This set of changes moves beyond changes in *conditions* (knowledge, laws, attitudes, available financing) to focus on actual changes in the type and quality of programme offered. The discussion also goes beyond simply enrolment to look at enrolment in what kind of programme, directed to whom, and under whose auspices.

Changing strategies/types of programme

Shifts appear to be occurring, albeit slowly, as noted in country reports and responses to the survey, in the strategies used to foster early childhood development and to improve learning and education during the pre-school years. For example:

- Although most attention in the field continues to be focused on the immediate pre-school years, there is more attention to children under 4 years of age, not only through health programmes but also through programmes of parent education that also pay attention to psycho-social development. Parent education may be provided through

home visiting, as an adjunct to centre-based programmes (health or school), through the mass media, and/or in adult education classes bringing together groups of parents.

- Although fractured and uncoordinated sectoral and mono-focal programmes still predominate, much more attention is being given to multidimensional strategies that seek convergence, co-ordination, or integration.
- Strategies more often provide for a variety of service models, using a range of different agents, as contrasted with the still prominent strategy that insists on extending the same service and the same model to all families and children, regardless of their culture and circumstances.
- Somewhat greater attention is being given to adjusting curricula to culture. The idea of 'beginning where people are' is gaining ground.
- The presence of 'non-formal' programmes has grown.

Changes in the quality of programmes

The EFA Assessment did not include among its ECCD indicators any designed to help to identify changes in the quality of programmes. Nevertheless, some countries treated the quality issue, usually very briefly and in general terms, using their own definitions of quality.

Quality defined by inputs. In some cases countries presented information on the construction of buildings and the distribution of materials and equipment, focusing on a definition of quality related to material inputs to programmes. Using these indicators, for example, a setback in the quality of programmes in countries of the former Soviet Union was noted, related to deterioration in buildings and equipment during conflicts and to reduced budgets.

Moving closer to the heart of the ECCD process, many countries noted as advances in quality the initiation or expansion of training courses for early childhood caregivers and teachers. Important advances in the formation of ECCD agents were noted in a review of initial education in Latin America (Peralta and Fujimoto, 1998, pp. 105–6) International support for ECCD has often focused on training.

Quality defined by process. Many reports also mentioned curricular reforms during the period, generally oriented towards making the process more active, exploratory, democratic, culturally adjusted, etc. There was evidence of some importing of curricula, such as Step-by-Step, related to grants made by the Soros Foundation in Central Asia, or Montessori programmes in Africa, presumably with the assumption that tried and tested curricula will result in programmes of better quality.

The proportion of adults to children was also used in a few cases as an indicator of quality, again under the assumption that fewer children per adult improves the interaction between the education agent and the child. The ratio of technical-pedagogical supervisors to pre-school teachers was also mentioned as an indicator of quality.

Quality defined by results. Unfortunately, the most important indicator of programme quality – the changing developmental status and learning of children, was almost completely absent from evaluations. Again, Chile constitutes an exception.²²

In both the country evaluations and the survey, the quality of ECCD programmes was highlighted as a major problem, with expansion in the number of available places in programmes clearly outrunning quality. This tendency was linked by various survey respondents to discrimination against rural, indigenous, and low-income populations which tend to be enrolled in what appear to be programmes of inferior quality: 'poor programmes for poor people' as one person noted. ■

Problems and proposals: where do we go from here?

This section sets out problem areas and needs as identified by survey respondents and country reports and as found in recent publications. The following listing, which is expressed in terms of 'deficits', should not be interpreted to mean that countries have not made advances. Indeed, in addressing these deficits, it would be well to begin by securing and extending the gains already made in these areas. Some countries have made greater advances than others in particular areas, thus the priority given to areas of action differs from country to country.

Weak political will

In many, even most, countries the need continues to convince politicians, policy-makers, programmers and education officials, often now at local levels, of the importance of ECCD. In order to create political will, there is a need to develop:

- better strategies of communicating, lobbying and advocating. These will include strategies directed to groups that have not always been called upon to help in the process (e.g. the mass media) and groups that are emerging as important potential actors (governors, mayors and other officials operating at levels other than the national level).
- a better information base, with systematic descriptions of programmes thought to be effective, improved indicators (see attached note), more solid statistics, strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems, and greater attention to local research.

Weak policy and legal frameworks

In order to formulate and strengthen policy there is a need to:

- undertake analytical studies of existing policies affecting children, looking beyond narrowly conceived education policies to, for example, social welfare, health, and labour policies that affect childcare and development during the early years.
- seek conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, incorporating principles of the best interests of the child, non-discrimination and participation.
- work closely with the legal profession.

- establish norms and standards (for private as well as public, and including provisions for constant revision) which are not so rigid or high as to be unworkable but which will assure positive attention to children.
- provide a clearer legal base for assigning budget allocations. Operation.
- clarify the roles of the state, civil society and the private sector as well as forms of partnership among them.

Lack of, or poor use of, financial resources

ECCD programmes generally command a small portion of government budgets, relative to percentage of young children in the population. In budgetary terms, children (and especially young children) are clearly not placed first. There is therefore a need to:

- increase allocations to ECCD in national budgets and make more permanent commitments to such funding.
- strengthen the capacity of states and municipalities to obtain resources for ECCD.
- seek cost-effective approaches, including quality community-based non-formal approaches to ECCD.
- explore more vigorously such alternative (to government budgets) avenues of funding as debt swaps, philanthropic contributions, and private-sector involvement.
- co-ordinate the increase of financial resources with attention to the capacity to handle such resources and the strengthening of human resources.
- provide local organization access to central pools of money in order to better respond to demand originating in local communities.

Uniformity (lack of options)

The bureaucratically convenient tendency to extend the same programme to all children conflicts with the need to tailor ECCD programmes to cultural, geographical, economic and age differences. This tendency is reinforced by the notion that ECCD is the same as 'pre-school' which, in turn, is simply an extension downward of primary schooling. There is therefore a need to:

- think in terms of complementary and varied approaches to ECCD that include family and community-based programmes.
- involve NGOs more actively as partners.
- decentralize programme responsibility as well as administrative responsibility, with attention to building local capacity.
- construct culturally relevant programmes with local communities rather than impose ECCD practices from the centre.

Poor quality

There is a pressing need to:

- re-examine training and supervision and provide sound training (both pre-service and in-service) at all levels, with respect to a diversity of ECCD approaches.
- reduce the number of children (or families) per education/care agent.
- improve and reformulate curricula, taking into account not only 'best practices' but also local definition of what constitutes 'best practices'.
- draw upon existing experience in a more systematic way.
- establish better systems for monitoring and evaluating both children and programmes.

Lack of attention to particular populations

The following 'disadvantaged' populations need to be given greater attention: low-income, rural, indigenous, girls, HIV/AIDS, children age 0 to 3, pregnant and lactating mothers, working mothers, fathers.

Lack of co-ordination

If a holistic and integrated notion of learning and development is to be honoured and if resources are to be used more effectively, greater co-ordination is needed (a) among government programmes of health, welfare, social security, nutrition, education, rural or community development, etc.; (b) within the education sector, especially between ECCD and primary schooling; and (c) between governmental and non-governmental organizations. There is a need to:

- create intersectoral, interorganizational co-ordinating bodies.
- construct joint programmes crossing bureaucratic boundaries.
- strengthen the ability of families and communities to call upon and bring together services that are currently offered in an uncoordinated fashion.
- seek agreement on the populations that are most in need of attention and direct services to those populations in a converging manner.
- build partnerships. A clearer definition is needed of the roles of the state and civil society and of forms of partnership

Narrow conceptualization

The conceptual frameworks guiding programmes intended to improve early childhood care and development and early learning have come primarily from developmental psychology

and formal education. There is a need to go beyond the knowledge that these fields can provide to incorporate broader views with cultural, social and ethical dimensions brought to bear. There is also a need to relate ECCD programming, conceptually and operationally, to other programme lines that begin from analyses of children's rights, poverty, working mothers, rural development, special needs, street children, refugees, adolescents, gender, etc.

Where should efforts be concentrated?

The first answer to this question must be, 'It depends'. A point reiterated throughout this report is that regions and countries (and parts of countries) present extremely different conditions and cultural views and are at very different points in a process. It is therefore inappropriate to try to set general priorities for action in all situations. In some places emphasis must be given to advocacy and to getting the policy and legal frameworks right. In others, the emphasis needs to be on problems related to combating HIV/AIDS. In others again, facilities need to be repaired.

Consistent with this position, the second answer to the question must be, 'Each country (or perhaps even municipality) must take stock and decide upon its priorities'.

In the light of the above remarks, it seems appropriate to (a) present my own biased opinion of areas that seem to need special emphasis and that seem to encompass many settings; and (b) suggest some general guidelines that represent my particular view of what needs to be brought to the forefront as the field evolves. Some possible areas of special interest are set out below.

Training and supervision

Starting from the premise that the quality of programmes will be only as good as the people who operate them, it is logical to place emphasis on assuring that ECCD people at various levels are well motivated and are part of a continuous process of training. This does not mean that all those who attend to, care for, and educate young children or who work with parents and communities to improve care need to have university degrees. It does mean that they need both pre-service and in-service training. Experience suggests that early childhood programmes often suffer from weak systems of administrative supervision linked to 'inspection', when what is really needed is a strong system of technical supervision tied to improving continuous learning, including opportunities to interact with and learn from peers. Such training, done well, motivates as well as providing essential information and improving methods. A priority for many countries, then, might be to strengthen their pre-service and (especially) in-service training in combination with a reconstituted system of supervision that builds on

participation of education, care and development agents. In addition, training will be needed for administrators, supervisors, planners, evaluators and others who form part of an ECCD system. Increasingly, there is a need to assist local administrators, planners and functionaries to work in the ECCD field. Again, history and current conditions will dictate where more, or less, emphasis is needed within this priority area, but the need for better and more appropriate training at various levels will be, in my opinion, general.

Supporting, educating and involving parents and other family members

Parents and other family members will continue to be the main influences on young children's lives for the foreseeable future, especially for children under 3 or 4 years of age.

Perhaps the greatest and most lasting effects on a child's learning and development can come from improvements in the capacity of parents to provide a supportive environment for learning and development. As suggested above, there are many possible ways to support and work with parents and family members and the particular combination of how to go about this work will vary with conditions.

There is a tendency to view parent education as a kind of quick and cheap way of dealing with the early childhood area. There is also a tendency for some ECCD programmers to look at parents as instruments rather than as people. In addition, parent education is often thought of as mothers' education. A concerted effort will be needed to moderate these tendencies, providing more prolonged and better-funded programmes in this area, with the emphasis on those that help parents to grow as people, not just as parents, and involving fathers as well as mothers.

In institutional environments there is a tendency to keep parents at the margin, at best providing them with periodic 'talks', rather than seeking ways of involving them directly in setting the direction of an institution and in its functioning. This trend also needs to be countered because experience suggests that parental participation improves programmes.

Evaluation and monitoring

Giving priority to building monitoring and evaluation systems derives from more than an academic bias. Among the lessons learned from successful programmes is that effectiveness is fostered if programmes develop slowly and are monitored and adjusted regularly. The information from monitoring and evaluation will serve advocacy as well as policy and administrative purposes, and it should help the process of reconceptualization that many survey respondents feel is necessary.

The fact that countries did not provide information on how the well-being of their children has, or has not, progressed, has already been noted. This gap needs to be filled by supporting countries to define the particular outcomes and measures that they feel will provide essential feedback about how well they are doing with respect to the learning and development of their young children.

Other 'priorities' will be implicit in some of the following guidelines.

- Take a holistic view of the child and of the learning and development process, adopting cross-sectoral policies.
- Concentrate on the well-being of children and on active learning, not on the size of particular programmes or on building bureaucracies.
- Begin with pre-natal attention.
- Include the excluded. Focus on gender and social equity.
- Be family-focused and community-based, fostering participation.
- Seek cultural relevance, determined by those involved, and accommodation, beginning where people are, building on inherent strengths.
- Build child-focused partnerships.
- Seek cost-effectiveness, broadly defined.
- Avoid formulas. Be open to diversity and to complementary approaches.
- Seek quality, defined not only by the nature of inputs and processes, but also by outcomes.
- Incorporate monitoring and evaluation into programmes from the outset. ■

Closing thoughts: the role of international organizations

Within the International Consultative Forum on Education for All, run by international organizations, it seems appropriate to reflect on the role that has been, and can be, played by international organizations in promoting and supporting programmes directed at improving the care and development of young children. In gathering information for this review of ECCD, it was clear that international organizations have been given credit for and have played several important roles in helping ECCD to extend and improve. These include assistance in providing frameworks for analysis and action (Jomtien, the Convention), strengthening the knowledge base and disseminating information (supporting research, evaluation, monitoring, creating of networks, publications, etc), advocating (by organizing international fora, negotiating conditions for financial support, and marshalling the media), as well as by providing technical and financial support. These efforts have certainly contributed to many of the 'advances' noted here.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that these forms of assistance represent interventions that imply certain value positions, and that their results depend as much on the manner in which the assistance is offered as on the amount of assistance provided, which can have negative as well as positive consequences. Consider the following points.

Local knowledge and experience

Frameworks and knowledge – the basis for lobbying and constructing ECCD programmes – continue to originate, for the most part, in the Minority World. Accordingly, a tension often arises between 'received truth' linked to the Minority World knowledge base and values guiding an agency, and local knowledge linked to another set of values rooted in some part of the Majority World. These may overlap, but are different. There are also tensions within the international community. For example, the universal rights framework espoused by some can conflict with a needs-based approach and 'targeting'. The way in which these tensions are handled determines to some degree how a project's 'success' is defined and can eventually create a barrier to action because agreement is lacking. The implications are:

- Although the current attention to involving all 'stakeholders' in the process of creating a project represents an impor-

tant step towards breaking with the past tendency to impose, that participation is far from being real and meaningful. Additional work is needed to change past styles and methods.

- Major changes are needed in the consultant system that continues to depend for technical assistance on Minority World consultants (myself included). More effort should be made to draw upon local knowledge and experience, embodied in local consultants.

Innovative programming

Because programming for ECCD is at an early stage in many countries, it is possible to construct programmes in innovative ways, taking into account differing conditions, seeking convergence, and involving local communities in the process. This implies a need to move slowly, to experiment and reinvent, to build collaborative enterprises, to nurture, to support a variety of initiatives and to build capacity. Unfortunately, these needs run counter to social and political desires to move quickly so that as many people as possible are served. They run counter to bureaucratic desires to simplify administration by providing the same service to all and to avoid collaboration across sectoral lines. And they run counter to the characteristics of many international organizations where promotion and success is equated with the numbers of children and families served, with the ability to promote the particular doctrine of the agency, and/or with the ability to move money. The quantitative focus and a sense of urgency inhibits the development of quality programmes, current rhetoric notwithstanding. The implications are:

- Place less emphasis on expanding enrolments and on extending one particular programme to all; place more emphasis on quality, beginning with solid support for training, with local input into what is considered a quality programme, and with a vision of 'scale' as the sum of many efforts.
- Take a longer-term view and begin slowly; avoid financially overloading systems with too much money too soon.
- Develop loan and grant instruments that are demand-driven rather than supply-driven, allowing varied responses to differentiated local demands.
- Find ways to work more meaningfully on the ground with NGOs.

For many international organizations, the changes suggested above constitute a huge challenge that goes to the heart of how they function. In a meeting where commitment to change by national governments is being sought, a parallel commitment might be asked of international organizations that goes well beyond a resource commitment and includes re-examination of values and the ethics of intervention styles and modes of operation. ■

Notes

1. In this study the concept of 'Majority World' is used in preference to phrases such as 'developing countries', 'Third World' or 'The South'.
2. For descriptions of ECCD in European countries, the interested reader can consult such sources as: European Commission Network on Childcare (1996); the *International Journal of Educational Research* (2000); UNESCO (1997); Kagan and Cohen (1997). Also, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is currently carrying out a set of country studies that will be available in the near future, and the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research is carrying out a major research project entitled 'Family Change and Family Policies in the Western World'. See also the forthcoming issue of the *International Journal of Educational Research* dealing with Early Childhood Education and Care.
3. Information on the Consultative Group may be found on its web page at: <http://www.ecdgroup.com>
4. These reports may be found at: <http://www.unesco.org>
5. The questions were:
 1. What have been the main 'advances' or achievements in the ECCD field during this decade?
 2. What have been the major reasons for these advances and/or the major barriers to progress in the field?
 3. What ECCD projects or programmes do you think have been particularly effective?
 4. What are the most important problems in the field of ECCD that still need to be resolved?
 5. What would you suggest as priority lines of action for the next decade in ECCD?
6. An excellent framework for 'Framework linking macro-level causes and mediating influences with policy and program outcomes' is provided by Moncrieff Cochrane (1993) in the *International Handbook of Child Care Policies and Programs*.
7. The age group taken as the reference point varied widely, some using the period from birth to age 5, others ages 1 to 7, others focusing only on ages 5 to 6, and still others using the suggested age range from 3 to 5.
8. Many countries did not have data for 1990 so used an alternative baseline, in some cases as recent as 1996. In some cases countries could present data for 1999, but others used information from 1998 or 1997.
9. In some countries, statistics pertain only to formal programmes or to those in the education sector (omitting, for example, those run by a family welfare or social security organization). Very few countries include statistics for parent education in their total. An exception, Cuba, includes such figures and parent education accounts for 70% of the total enrolment.
10. In most countries, programmes are based on half-day sessions running throughout the school year but in some, early education includes cram sessions of two months just before entrance into primary school and in others, the standard is a day-long programme. A particular country may have various programmes that differ widely in terms of time of operation, but include all of them on an equal basis in its totals.
11. It is possible to have increased enrolment by, for example, 500% over ten years, but still cover less than 5% of the age group. And, as full enrolment is approached, it is more difficult, statistically and in terms of involving more students, to show an increase.
12. An example is the finding that there are 'windows of opportunity' for learning during the early years when learning particular practices is most efficient and which, if missed, make subsequent learning very difficult.
13. NA: Information not available as this document went to press – Ed.

14. I am indebted to Feny de los Angeles for this point and for challenging me to try to bring together in a more balanced way the search for 'effective practices' and the cultural critique of models that have guided that process. For a more complete discussion of these issues, see Myers (1995, Chap. 13).
15. A valuable addition to this knowledge will be made when the project entitled 'The Effectiveness Initiative', currently being carried out under the auspices of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, is complete.
16. It should be noted, however, that the Convention treats education as if it begins with schooling rather than at birth (Article 28).
17. Communications from Margaret Kabiru and from the UNESCO Regional Office in Harare.
18. Chilean data showing a dramatic decrease in malnutrition over a decade but virtually no change in measures of development prove how wrong this assumption can be (Chilean Country Report, 1999).
19. For some countries, an important source for financing in this area for Majority World countries comes from international loans or grants. These funds do not necessarily appear in government budgets and are accounted for separately. Loans usually appear in government projections of expenditures as debts that have to be paid back and are not shown in relation to a particular area such as education. The responsibility for many early childhood care and development and education programmes lies outside Ministries of Education. The responsibility for ECCD programmes may be placed in such ministries as Social Welfare, Rural and Community Development, Women's Programmes, Community Development, Interior, or National Solidarity. Attention to children under 4 years of age is often the responsibility of the health sector or social security whereas pre-schools may be the responsibility of education. In brief, it is difficult to have a complete picture of budgets (or of enrolments for that matter), given the organizational dispersion and frequency with which programmes fall outside education (see section on organizational bases). Some countries do not separate budgets for early education from budgets for primary schooling, making it difficult to determine what is spent, even within the education sector, for children under 6 years of age. For example, in the case of the Cook Islands, the Ministry of Education estimate for pre-school expenditure as a percentage of total education expenditure was about 2%, whereas a cost study (1997/98) taking into account expenditures of all government entities on pre-schooling (not just expenditures by the Ministry of Education) arrived at an estimate of approximately 6%.
20. For statistical purposes, the 'private sector' is usually defined as all programmes that are not supported directly, or administered, by government. This broad definition includes non-profit programmes administered by communities and churches and NGOs, which might more appropriately be referred to as part of a 'social sector' as distinguished from the private, 'for-profit' sector.
21. Often these volunteers receive a token payment well below a minimum salary and do not receive any benefits. By some this is seen in a positive way as a personal and community contribution involving sacrifice and solidarity; for others it amounts to exploitation, particularly of women.
22. Reference is made to various evaluations of ECCD programmes from which the following conclusions were drawn: (a) the effects of early education were greater for children in rural areas and in the social-emotional areas of development as contrasted with cognitive development; (b) a sustained effect was found for children from rural areas for whom entrance into primary without a pre-school experience constitutes a disadvantage; and (c) not all programme experiences are equally effective (Chilean Country Report, 1999, p. 55).

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Appendix 1.

Survey of knowledgeable people in the ECCD field

The Survey Instrument contained an introductory statement, a request for personal information (years of experience, present position, place of origin and present location) and the perspective from which the response to the survey was being made, together with the following five questions:

1. What have been the main 'advances' or achievements in the ECCD field during this decade?
2. What have been the major reasons for these advances and/or the major barriers to progress in the field?
3. What ECCD projects or programmes do you think have been particularly effective?
4. What are the most important problems in the field of ECCD that still need to be resolved?
5. What would you suggest as priority lines of action for the next decade in ECCD?

This survey does not pretend to be representative. The people chosen were known by the author to be knowledgeable about the field from a variety of perspectives or in a few cases were people recommended who fulfil the same criterion. The Instrument was sent by e-mail to 120 people. Sixty-two individuals replied (52%). Of these, thirty-seven replied with reference to the country in which they were living/working; nine replied from a regional perspective; and sixteen were global responses.

Geographical Distribution

The thirty-seven country-level replies came from twenty-six countries, distributed as follows:

Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Venezuela)	11	
Caribbean (Jamaica)	1	
Sub-Saharan Africa (Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zanzibar)	8	
Middle East and North Africa (Egypt, Turkey, Yemen)	3	
South-East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore)	4	
South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal)	6	
China, Hong Kong, Mongolia	3	
Europe (Sweden)	1	37

The regional responses came from:

Latin America	4	
Africa	4	
South-East Asia	1	9
Global responses		16
	Total	62

Institutional Distribution

The distribution of the institutional location of respondents was as follows:

University	13	
NGOs (including four international NGOs)	16	
Foundations (all from van Leer Foundation)	6	
UNICEF	16	
UNESCO	2	
Other UN-related agencies (World Bank, IADB, OAS)	5	
Other international (OECD, USAID)	2	
Government agency	2	62

Field of Expertise

Only two of four respondents came from health or nutrition backgrounds and programmes. Most came from an early childhood development and/or education background. Respondents also included people with backgrounds in economics, psychology, anthropology, and in several cases the background was unknown.

Accumulated Experience

The total experience in the field of early childhood that has been accumulated by the sixty respondents who indicated their experience was 1004 years.

Appendix 2.

Effective projects and programmes

The survey of knowledgeable people asked respondents to 'Identify the ECCD programmes and/or projects that you think are particularly effective and comment briefly on the reasons for their effectiveness'. In addition, the author received various publications describing programmes thought to be, in some sense, effective. This appendix reviews the answers from survey respondents. In presenting these results, the reader should understand that I am not endorsing any of the programmes as 'effective' but am simply reporting what others have said they think are effective programmes. The analysis that follows suggests that:

1. There is no lack of examples of programmes that are considered effective.
2. Programmes are considered to be effective for extremely diverse reasons, some related directly to their effects on children, families and communities, some related to the characteristics of the programmes themselves, and some related to the prevailing conditions that facilitated or permitted success.
3. Many options are mentioned, including centre- and home-based programmes; governmental, NGO and community initiatives; formal, non-formal and informal programmes; child-, family-, and community-focused programmes; programmes using the mass media; programmes attached to health and/or nutrition initiatives; transition programmes; toy libraries; work-related care; action research projects; training and capacity-building programmes; programmes for displaced children; advocacy efforts.
4. Some programmes lose their effectiveness after a time, suggesting the need for a constant process of renewal.

Some respondents replied in terms of general characteristics of ECCD programmes that they thought made programmes effective. These included characteristics such as:

- Community-based, with active participation and discussion, respecting cultural patterns.
- Attend to children in poverty situations in an integral way and in context.
- Build on and expand local knowledge and respond to local demand, engendering ownership.
- Respond to an identified set of parental and community needs, then adjust.
- Provide training and capacity-building; build cadres of new leaders.
- Improve family capacity for care.
- Directed to children in the earliest years (0 to 3) and to the most needy.
- Bring together financial and human resources.
- High quality (but not necessarily high cost).
- Find ways to institutionalize the programme/project within the community.
- Incorporate monitoring and evaluation to be able to adjust and disseminate to others.

(See also the general comments at the end of this appendix.)

Other respondents made reference to specific programmes in their country or elsewhere that they thought were effective, sometimes providing reasons. The following is a listing organized by country of the projects or programmes mentioned. It in no way exhausts the possibilities, which would have been increased manyfold by extending the number of people participating. Following each item is an indication of the perspective the respondent was applying when answering and the institutional location of the respondent.

Argentina

1. Programa Vida providing nutritional supplements to pregnant mothers and children 0 to 6 through a network run by community women. Effective because it appears to have virtually eliminated malnourishment in one province (Argentina/university).
2. Centros de Desarrollo de PROMIN. Effective because they have a solid theoretical base, continuous training, are integral, and have been sustained (Argentina/government).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. Building Community through Education. Programme to meet the needs of displaced women and their children. Has strengthened civil society and prepared children for school in a stable and secure environment. Success is linked to provision of a basic package of materials coupled with experienced pedagogical leadership, and training and capacity-building of local early childhood associations (international/NGO).

Botswana

1. Kuru Development Trust (international/foundation).

Brazil

1. Legal bases have been set in the Constitution and Educational laws (Brazil/UNICEF).
2. Also mentioned were a variety of general initiatives including centre-based programmes, radio and television programmes, health programmes, toy libraries and others but without mention of particular programmes (Brazil/UNICEF).
3. Child Development project in Curvelo using public and open spaces (Brazil/university).

Chile

1. Integra (international/bank; regional/university).
2. Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles (JUNJI) (international/bank; regional/university).

China

1. Parents-school initiative (international/UNICEF).

Colombia

1. The PROMESA Project. A parent education programme linked to driving a broader community development initiative. Effective because it 'transferred skills acquired in the context of early childhood development to the broader array of needs in severely deprived communities'; leadership; effective organization on the ground; systematic capacity-building (international/NGO; international/foundation; international/bilateral).
2. Rural Children. A variant of the national programme of home day care directed to rural areas. Effective because of strong leadership and organizational backing with courage to operate in a difficult environment; responds to the characteristics and needs of the participants; has good documentation (international/foundation).
3. Home Day Care and its variations throughout Latin America (international/UNICEF).

Cuba

1. Educa a Tu Hijo (regional/university).

Egypt

1. The Home-based Early Intervention Programme to Train Mothers of Young Handicapped Children at Home (regional; Arab countries/NGO).

El Salvador

1. Children of Street Vendors in San Salvador providing childcare and development in centres run by an NGO. It is successful because it was well designed and tested; included good training of local educators on the job; is multi-faceted; involves mothers in the centres; has a follow-up programme; has strong leadership; is well funded; has resisted attempts at politicization; keeps good records (international/foundation).

Haiti

1. A parent education programme called '*Konesans fanmi se lespwa ti moun*' (Knowledge of the parents is hope for the children) that takes place in health centres and non-formal pre-school centres. Effective because it developed a multi-alliance partnership, a variety of didactic materials, has trained workers well, and is co-ordinated with mass media (Haiti/UNICEF).
2. Les Centres de Mères Marchandes (The Trader Mothers Centre). Effective because it combined care for children while mothers were in the market with parent education and literacy programmes for mothers (Haiti/UNICEF).

India

Field-level examples (India/NGO).

1. Palmyrah Workers' Development Society, Tamil Nadu
2. Mobile Creches, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi
3. Apnalaya, Mumbai
4. Investment in Man, Pune

5. Society for Integrated Development of the Himalayas, Mussoorie
6. Aga Khan Education Services Day Care Centres, Gujarat
7. Deepalalya, New Delhi
8. Bodh, Jaipur

Training and capacity-building examples (India/NGO).

1. Chetna, Ahmedabad
2. Centre for Learning Resources, Pune
3. M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai
4. Mobile Creches, Delhi

Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS), project conceived but not implemented (international/foundation).

Also mentioned (India/NGO).

1. The Urmul Trust, Bajju
2. Family Day Care in Bombay

Kenya

1. Madrassa Resource Centres – community-owned pre-schools which use an integrated curriculum, incorporating secular teaching into Islamic centres (international/foundation; Zanzibar/government).
2. A training programme offered nationally and at district levels (international/freelance; international/university).

Lao People's Democratic Republic

1. Community-based programmes evolved on the basis of community-perceived needs (regional/UNICEF).

Malaysia

1. A ten-year research project identifying the increasing gap between advantaged urban children and disadvantaged urban and rural children (Malaysia/university).

Mongolia

1. Programme run by Save the Children/UK. In a poor country with a harsh climate, catastrophic budget cuts during a period of transition, it has worked within a broader poverty alleviation programme and with the existing system of kindergartens and local personnel to halt decline in provision and to develop the system to reach and support poorer families (international/university).

Nepal

1. Seto Gurans community-based development centres. Effective because local facilitators were trained to use local materials in multiple ways, focused on learning in the immediate environment in a hands-on and practical way (Nepal/NGO).
2. Parenting Education. A three-month non-formal programme implemented by local NGOs. Effective because participants really want to know the subject matter (Nepal/UNICEF).
3. Interactive Radio Instruction. A series of forty 20-minute radio programmes for groups of four or more children aged 3 to 5 and their caregivers (Nepal/UNICEF).
4. Community-based child development centres supported on a matching fund basis bringing community support and 'hopefully long-term sustainability' (Nepal/UNICEF).
5. Orientations for locally elected leaders (Nepal/UNICEF).

Netherlands

1. The Averroes programme that emphasizes helping communities design/choose their own programmes working from a menu of good practices and partial models (international/UNESCO).

New Zealand

1. Backyard pre-schools (international/NGO).

Peru

1. Programa No-formal de Educación Inicial (PRONOEI) (Peru/university).
2. PIETBAF (Peru/university; Peru/UNICEF).
3. PAIGRUMA (Peru/university; Peru/UNICEF).
4. Wawa Wasi. Potential for effectiveness linked to tapping natural and spontaneous networks of community support for stressed families not yet realized (Peru/university; Peru/UNICEF).
5. Also mentioned: credit programmes for women; radio programmes for families; the '*pastoral de la infancia*'; community kitchen programmes; immunization and other health initiatives; maternal-child social security programme; supplementary feeding programmes (Peru/UNICEF).
6. The Peruvian example was also mentioned for the variety of non-formal, non-conventional programmes that have grown over twenty-six years to cover about 40% of the population (regional/OAS).

Philippines

1. Community of Learners Foundation (COLF) (international/foundation)
2. The 'bridging' programme from early childhood to primary school through an 8-week early childhood programme in grade one. Effective because it helped to mitigate early disadvantage faced by poor children without prior ECCD programme participation (Philippines/UNICEF).

Singapore

1. Child care centres motivated by the need to encourage women to re-enter the work-force. Effectiveness because good pre-and in-service training, generous caregiver/child ratios, licensing of facilities, bilingual (regional/UNICEF; Singapore/NGO).
2. Regional Training and Research Centre. Effective because it provides a good integration of theory and practice (Singapore/NGO).
3. Children's Library. Effective because it has strong government funding and provides easy access for children in the local community (Singapore/NGO).

South Africa

1. The Rehlahlwe community motivators programme. Effectively meets community needs because it builds on community cultural values and child-rearing practices (South Africa/NGO).
2. The Centre for Early Childhood Development's leadership and management training programme. Effective because it enhances leadership and management skills of programme supervisors (South Africa/NGO).

Sweden

1. Swedish day care and pre-school programmes which are integral, train well, are intended to meet the needs of family, particularly of women, as well as those of children, are complemented by broader social programmes benefiting children and are set within a favourable economic setting (international/OECD; Sweden/university).

Thailand

1. Integrated Program for Child and Family Development. Effective because it improved child care and convinced government to support a nationwide venture. Built on what the community knows and does, adding technical components. Effectiveness at the pilot stage assured by excellent technical and conceptual planning, careful implementation including monitoring and evaluation (international/NGO; international/foundation).

Trinidad and Tobago

1. SERVOL.

Turkey

1. The Mother-Child Parent Education Programme (Turkey/NGO; international/bilateral).

United Kingdom

1. Perception. This programme is effective because it uses art and creativity as the basis for young children's learning (South Africa/NGO).

United States

1. The High/Scope Perry pre-school project. Effective because of its evaluation which had an impact on policy-makers (international/NGO; Peru/university).
2. Head Start (Peru/university; international/foundation).
3. CEDEN, a community based programme for Latin immigrant families. Successful because it was continuous, comprehensive, community- and home-based with a high level of parent participation and a fully built-in evaluation system (international/bilateral).

Zanzibar

1. The Ministry of Education/UNICEF project which reviewed the curriculum used in public pre-schools; established a multisectoral task force to help write training materials; trained pre-school teachers in the development of play materials; carried out studies; and advocated (Zanzibar/government).

Other

1. The 'Facts for Life' communication programme providing a limited number of key messages about early childhood. Effectiveness is linked to simplicity (a distillation of knowledge) and to the liberty to use the materials in what ever way seems most suitable, allowing 'ownership' of the ideas (international/UNESCO).
2. 'In Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Liberia the commercial privately owned services have not only been sustainable but have been remarkably popular – possibly because they meet a real need among the urban elite' (regional/UNICEF).
3. Child to Child – programmes that give space for older children to remain involved with younger siblings and neighbours (Peru/university).
4. Programmes that involve fathers and uncles (Peru/university).
5. The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development has been successful in pooling scientific, policy and programme knowledge and encouraging collaboration among actors (international/foundation).
6. The Joint Training Initiative that has been built into the ECCD policies of Mauritius and Namibia (international/freelance).
7. Various large initiatives by NGOs in countries such as Eritrea and South Africa that have concentrated on allowing local communities to take ownership of ECD programmes and not to become dependent on foreign funding (regional/university).

General Comments

1. Examples need to be treated with a great deal of caution because some lose their effectiveness after a time. 'There seems to be something about the process of creating that generates commitment. Once a programme goes to scale, or the context changes considerably, the nature of the programme changes and frequently they become less effective' (Evans et al., 1995).
2. There are literally thousands of successful initiatives in the region (Latin America) that need to be detected, evaluated and disseminated (Latorre).
3. Programmes are most effective that combine care and education, that respond to needs of parents as well as children, that are of good quality (offer diverse experiences, comfort and the joy of living and provide physical, moral and psychological help), and are flexible and adjusted to local conditions (Rosemberg).
4. Unfortunately, all the effective ECCD projects I have seen are small scale, driven by a particular individual/group/community (international/UNICEF).
5. The most effective programmes are the non-formal, non-conventional ones that respond to concrete socio-economic conditions; transcend the local in their outreach; reach the poorest and most isolated communities; value the cultural patrimony of each social group; involve parental and community participation; facilitate innovation; are integral and flexible; attend to needs of both children and adults; obtain a sound institutional base that sustains them; and include permanent training for staff (Gaby).

World Education Forum

Dakar, Senegal
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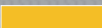
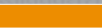












Education for All 2000 Assessment



This thematic overview of early childhood care and development since 1990 sets the topic in a changing context. It examines tendencies in the well-being of children, in enrolments, and in conditions affecting programming, including shifts in the knowledge base and changes in attitudes, awareness, policies, the availability of resources and organizational bases. The study also sets out problems and proposals, suggests possible emphases for the near future and challenges international organizations to re-examine their modus operandi as they increase their levels of financial support.

Early Childhood Care and Development is one of the thematic studies published by UNESCO for the International Consultative Forum on Education for All as part of the Education for All 2000 Assessment. This worldwide evaluation was undertaken towards the end of the decade following the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990) as preparation for the World Education Forum on education for all held in Dakar (Senegal) in April 2000.

The complete list of titles in the series is given below.

-  Achieving Education for All: Demographic Challenges
-  Applying New Technologies and Cost-Effective Delivery Systems in Basic Education
-  Community Partnerships in Education: Dimensions, Variations and Implications
-  Early Childhood Care and Development
-  Education for All and Children Who are Excluded
-  Education in Crisis: The Impact and Lessons of the East Asian Financial Shock 1997-99
-  Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis: Challenges for the New Century
-  Funding Agency Contributions to Education for All
-  Girls' Education
-  Inclusion in Education: The Participation of Disabled Learners
-  Literacy and Adult Education
-  Reason for Hope: The Support of NGOs to Education for All
-  School Health and Nutrition
-  Textbooks and Learning Materials 1990-99

Each thematic study aims to provide theoretical vision and practical guidance to education planners and decision-makers at national and international levels. In order to provide a global review, they draw upon and synthesize submissions from partner institutions and agencies in each of the EFA regions. They attempt to describe 'best practices' as well as successful and unsuccessful experiments in policy implementation.