



RIGHTS FROM THE START

Early childhood care
and education

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
EDUCATION
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Rights From the Start: Early Childhood Care and Education was written by Vernor Muñoz, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, on behalf of the Global Campaign for Education.

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Introduction: the Global Campaign for Education's vision for early childhood care and education

This report, by Vernor Muñoz, former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, is intended - from the title onwards - to highlight a truth that should be uncontroversial: that neither rights nor education begins when a child first enters a primary school. On the contrary, as the Jomtien Declaration of 1990 affirms (and every parent knows), “learning begins at birth”, and every person, regardless of age, is entitled to the exercise of rights including the right to care and education. As the report sets out, early childhood care and education – especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged – is included as ‘Goal 1’ of the six Education For All goals, agreed by 164 governments in Dakar in 2000, and is affirmed as an individual right in numerous international and regional treaties. For the Global Campaign for Education, this clearly means that it is also a state responsibility, which requires a strong and coordinated government response.

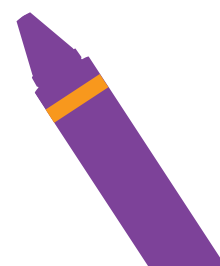
The right to early childhood care and education is, moreover, crucial to securing other rights (such as those to health and civic participation), to helping individuals escape from poverty and fulfil their potential, and to helping combat inequality within and between communities and nations. For example, The Lancet (one of the world's leading medical journals) published new research in 2011 demonstrating that early childhood – which is generally understood to cover the period from birth to the age of eight – is the period during which quality care and education programmes can do most to “break the cycle of inequities that has dominated the lives of millions of children and families”.

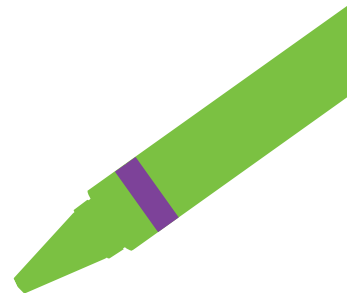
And yet, if we examine government planning and budgets, as well as donor assistance for developing countries, it appears that the right to early childhood care and education and its inextricable links to other rights are not widely accepted. With some laudable exceptions, most governments still do not prioritise – or

often even include – early childhood in their education strategies or other national plans. Barely half of the countries included in the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report on Education For All are confirmed as having official programmes which provide for children aged three or younger, and many of these reach only a minority of children. Average regional spending on preprimary education ranges from 0.5% of GDP in Central and Eastern Europe to close to 0 in South and West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The Committee on the Rights of the Child highlights that many states, in their reports to the Committee, provide very little information about early childhood, with comments limited mainly to child mortality, birth registration and health care.

This report argues that the failure to recognise young children as rights-holders is central to perpetuating these gaps. Without a rights framework, the pressure on governments to meet their responsibilities is weak or lacking. This leads both to a relative dominance of the private sector in early childhood provision, creating a cost barrier for the poorest and most vulnerable, and to a reliance on economic justification for providing early childhood education, with dangerous implications for the content and curricula of early childhood care and education as well as the distribution of provision.

The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) is calling for a transformation of this situation. Our members have voiced strong support for a focus on early childhood care and education, and in April 2012, GCE members in more than 80 countries have been taking action to demand recognition of “rights from the start”. A full recognition of these rights will have a number of implications:





Every child—including the most marginalised – should have the opportunity to access early childhood care and education

This should be available, even if not all families choose to make use of services outside the family. This will imply a considerable expansion of provision and a major focus on inclusion of the marginalised, including children with disabilities and special needs; groups at risk of discrimination such as girls, ethnic, religious or language minorities; children in conflict-affected states, and the poorest. More needs to be done to combat the situation in which, for example, the likelihood of a child from a poor household in Egypt accessing early childhood care and education is one twenty-eighth that of a child from a wealthy household.

Governments should ensure comprehensive and integrated services for young children – including care, health and education – that are regularly monitored to ensure high quality.

Given the primary responsibility of the family, this should encompass safe motherhood and parenting support programmes, as well as day-care and flexible care services, pre-schools, and the early years of primary school – when drop-outs and repetition can be particularly high. A comprehensive approach will also focus on the transition from pre-primary services to primary education.

Curricula and approaches should meet the educational, developmental, nutritional, health and individual needs of children.

They should be flexible, put the child at the centre and value all kinds of activities including, crucially, play: rigid, formal preschools that do not allow for play can be unpleasant for children and damage their development.

Teachers and other staff should be trained, qualified, supported and valued professionals.

States should offer upgrading programmes through institutional arrangements for unqualified and under-qualified teachers and caregivers, and improve pay and conditions of service.

A significant increase in financing is needed to provide these services.

There should also be clearer reporting of financing levels to allow for greater accountability. It is recommended that countries dedicate at least 1% of GDP to early childhood services, with a goal of at least 10% of education budgets and similar amounts from health budgets. Donors need to significantly increase their contributions.

Public policy and planning for early childhood care and education should be stronger and better coordinated, with proper oversight of private sector or NGO provision.

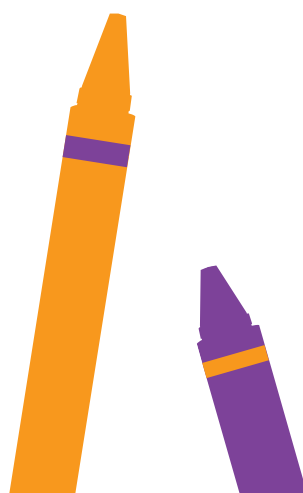
Governments should have a single, integrated early childhood policy, developed in the context of a national vision for young children. These plans should cover all relevant ministries and agencies, but with clear responsibility from a lead agency. Although the private sector has taken a rapidly expanding role in many countries, often this has not been well regulated, is not in the context of a national vision or plan, or is at the expense of states taking on their responsibilities.

GCE's more detailed campaign demands are presented at the end of this report.

There are 1 billion children aged under eight years old in the world, more than 10% of the world's population. The neglect of these children's rights – and the consequent impact on their other rights, their opportunities and their societies – is too devastating to continue. The argument, the evidence and the demand from families, campaigners and experts are clear, and the Global Campaign for Education thanks Vernor Muñoz for making that so evident in this report. Now it is the turn of governments around the world to take action to ensure the realisation of rights from the start.

**Global Campaign for Education
April 2012**

“There are 1 billion children aged under eight years old in the world, more than 10% of the world's population. The neglect of these children's rights – and the consequent impact on their other rights, their opportunities and their societies – is too devastating to continue.”



Message from Ms Irina Bokova

Director-General, UNESCO



UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova

This report, *Rights from the Start*, written by Victor Muñoz, former United Nations Rapporteur on the Right to Education, draws attention to a key dimension for the success of Education for All, which is an early start. Education is a breakthrough strategy for reaching all of the Millennium Development Goals, but this must start early and be as inclusive as possible.

No society can afford to leave any child behind. Early childhood care and education (ECCE) is a most powerful force for mitigating household deprivation and preparing children for school. International human rights instruments offer a solid framework for advancing the right to ECCE. Progress has been made since 2000, and there is much positive experience to share. However, we still have far to go to tackle inequity as early as possible and to prevent gaps from widening as life continues. Experience shows that we need strong public policies, which place an explicit focus on reaching the most vulnerable and on making the most of all forms of diversity. These policies must receive

adequate financing and be implemented with community support and rigorous monitoring. Explored in the Report, the initiative of La Case Des Tout-Petits, taken forward in Senegal with strong UNESCO backing, shows what an innovative community-based approach can do.

I commend the Global Campaign for Education for highlighting this issue for Global Action Week 2012. This is an opportunity to recall the commitments made at UNESCO's World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, held in Moscow in September 2010. Most of all, it is a chance for all to mobilize to translate these commitments into action. Investment in ECCE is still too low for countries to make progress towards the first EFA Goal.

Since the 2010 World Conference, UNESCO has launched an interagency process to develop a Holistic Early Childhood Development Index that will assist comprehensive monitoring of early childhood development. We are also acting on the ground to develop national childhood strategies and policy frameworks.

Early childhood care and education is a force for human dignity that carries lifelong benefits. It is also a powerful motor for the sustainable development of societies over the longer term. These are the key messages of Global Action Week 2012. Young children simply cannot wait.

Irina Bokova
April 2012

Executive Summary

Rights from the start describes the long road that peoples around the world must travel in order to respect, protect and realise the right to the care and education of children during their early childhood. Even with the proposals to expand and improve this human right that are being made in different international forums, the obstacles remain significant and the efforts to overcome them limited.

The notion of “early childhood” has been created over time, developing out of diverse and changing socio-cultural perspectives. In recent centuries, this idea has gained ground in defining universally what it means to be a young child. This understanding, however, generally excludes girls and boys – especially the youngest – from exercising their citizenship in the broadest sense of the term, which in turn limits the exercise of their rights.

Early childhood education is included in the universal right to education clearly detailed in international human rights law.

These international instruments have two common aspects: first, the recognition, be it explicit or implicit, that learning begins at birth; second, the acknowledgement that care and education in early childhood are not disconnected, unrelated issues.

Because of multiple factors (including the limited development of relevant laws, the persistence of patriarchal and adult-centric attitudes, the influence of international financing bodies on the definition education policy, the subordination of education policies to market needs and a lack of political will on the part of governments) an understanding of early childhood education as a human right has largely been superseded by an economic and utilitarian vision of education, based on the idea of creating “human capital”. Yet the concept of early childhood care and education based on a

human rights perspective is not only capable of preparing people for their future lives and building better economic conditions, it is also capable of promoting peace within communities and nations in order to increase equity, stimulate social mobility and overcome poverty.

A reductionist vision of early childhood education overshadows the key stakeholders (the girls and boys themselves) and prevents them from becoming active participants, by valuing their future over their present. This encourages significant structural imbalances, leading to the beginnings of exclusion and discrimination. Furthermore, it means that the cultural wealth and diversity intrinsic to the pedagogic process are reduced to simple mechanisms of accumulation.

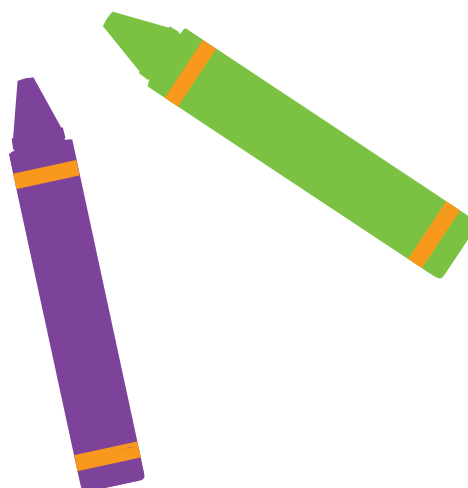
The report also reflects both the progress made and challenges encountered in the realms of public policy, budget allocation, enrolment, teaching staff, gender equality, health and other key areas for early childhood. Whilst important advances have been achieved in these areas, at times the change is excessively slow or inconsistent, leading to further delays in recognizing children’s entitlement to all human rights, and thus their right to full citizenship during early childhood.

The inclusion of examples of good practice (from Brazil, Pakistan and Senegal), allows us to examine innovative initiatives that adopt a holistic approach to early childhood care and education, yielding significant quantitative and qualitative results, measured in both political impact and structural change. However, the case studies also demonstrate serious limitations in the fulfilment of state obligations, such as limited budget allocations, which lead to inadequate education infrastructure, equipment and specialist resources, among other challenges.

Acknowledgements

The Global Campaign for Education would like to thank Vernor Muñoz and Teresa Artega Böhrh for their hard work on the writing of this report.

The author is grateful for the generous support provided by the secretariat of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) during the preparation of this report. He also thanks the GCE working group for the 2012 Global Week of Action on Early Childhood Care and Education, along with the three coalitions that shared material for case studies: the National Campaign for Education in Brazil, the Pakistan Education Coalition and COSYDEP in Senegal. The author would also like to acknowledge and thank the co-authorship of Teresa Artega Böhrh in preparing this report, and Peter Moss, for his important cooperation.



I. The right to early childhood care and education: the conceptual framework

The right to education¹, universally upheld in international human rights instruments², includes the right to early childhood education.

These international human rights instruments share at least two common elements: first, the implicit or explicit acknowledgment that learning begins at birth; and second, an integrated understanding of the care and education of children.

Clearly, the distinction between education and care is merely formal – cognitive process does not separate learning itself from the social interactions in which learning occurs³. This interaction points to a strong commitment to what Professor Peter Moss, an expert in early childhood provision, terms the ‘ethic of care’; this is based on the responsibility we have to others, and in the case of education it should be evident in all stages and levels of learning. According to Moss, the practice of education includes care not as an additional element, but rather as a characteristic of education – there is an ethic of care in education. We should therefore be thinking not about care and education, but rather care in education⁴.

The symbiosis between education and care is constant, and is due to the interconnection of factors such as health, nutrition, hygiene and cognitive, social, physical and emotional development, which facilitate survival, growth, development and learning in children from birth until primary school, in formal, informal and non-formal contexts⁵.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has defined early childhood as the period from birth to eight years of age⁶. The care and education of children of these ages include learning inside and outside of the home, as well as institutional and community services in comprehensive education and care.

Early childhood care and development⁷ – the providers of which range from public institutions, to NGOs, to private, community and home-based entities – is a continuum of interconnected elements with diverse actors. Family, friends and neighbours are involved⁸, alongside nurseries for groups of children, home-based childminders gathering children from several families, day care centres, kindergartens and pre-school programmes⁹. Certain programmes are run from centres, other classes and programmes from schools, and yet more programmes are aimed at parents.

According the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), early childhood education is classified as ‘Level 0’, and typically adopts a holistic approach to the early cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of children, introducing them to some form of structured learning outside of the family context. Level 0 of the ISCED refers to early childhood programmes that have a clear educational component, and which seek to develop the social and emotional skills necessary for participation in school and society.

¹ UNESCO. 2010. WCECCE Early Childhood care and education Action Framework, Building the Wealth of Nations. pp. 6-7.

² A more detailed description of the regulations guaranteeing this right can be found in the next section

³ Cf. Piaget, Jean. Psychology and Epistemology. Emecé Publishers, Buenos Aires, 1992.

⁴ Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education. Education in Early Childhood: A Field in Conflict. Sao Paulo. 2011

⁵ UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. Strong Foundations. Early Childhood Care and Education. 2007, p. 16

⁶ The Committee on Human Rights has defined early childhood as the period from birth through eight years of age. (General Comment No. 7: Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, pp. 4).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Education International. Early Childhood Education: a global scenario. 2010, pp. 10-11.



They also aim to develop certain initial academic skills, in order to prepare children for primary education ¹⁰.

This classification needs some modification. It is centred on the idea of preparing children to enter school and thus does not reflect their specific educational needs from birth forward. Moreover, its restriction to structured learning outside the family does not properly reflect the fact that learning begins at birth, and that the supply of institutional services outside of the family context is insufficient for guaranteeing the right to education in early childhood. Engaging the family is critical to guaranteeing this right.

Because of multiple factors (including the limited development of relevant laws, the persistence of patriarchal and adult-centric attitudes, the influence of international financing bodies on the definition education policy, the subordination of education policies to market needs, and a lack of political will on the part of governments) an understanding of early childhood education as a human right has largely been superseded by an economic and utilitarian vision of education, based on the idea of creating “human capital”.

This vision often leads to the belief that development (whether human, social or cultural) is possible without the recognition or exercise of rights.

The concept of early childhood care and education (ECCE) as a means to build human capital is based on the idea that early childhood provides an opportunity to invest in the workforce, encouraging the accumulation of (human) capital and social skills for the future ¹¹. According to this concept, the importance of care and education in early childhood is reduced to the idea that “investment in the quality of early childhood care and education (...) benefits those who contribute to it, and improves the economy” ¹².

This reductionist vision minimizes the role of the central actors – the children themselves – and impedes their active participation, since it considers and values them in their future rather than in their present. This encourages significant structural imbalances, leading to the beginnings of exclusion and discrimination. Furthermore, it reduces the cultural richness and intrinsic diversity of pedagogic processes to simple mechanisms of accumulation.

The human rights of children are indivisible, such that it is not acceptable to defer the application of their rights based on the pretext of realising other rights. Indivisibility is not only an essential characteristic of human rights, but it is also a pre-requisite for their effective guarantee and for processes towards sustainable development.

The disconnect between the purpose of education and what occurs in education creates serious inequalities, and promotes the false idea that economic development is the main objective of education, which in this context is usually considered as an expense and not as a human right ¹³.

¹⁰ UNESCO. General Conference. 36th Session. Revision of the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). 5 september 2011. 36 C/19. Parag... 100-103

¹¹ UNESCO. WCECCE. Early childhood care and education. Regional Report. Europe and North America. 2010, p.6

¹² Calman, Leslie y Tarr-Whelan, Linda. Early Childhood education for all. A wise investment. Legal Momentum, 2005, New York, p.1.

¹³ Muñoz, Vernor. Special Rapporteur's Report on the Right to Education. The Right to Education for Girls. Human Rights Commission. E/CN.4/2006/45 February 8, 2006, pp. 32-35.



Within a reductionist vision that relates education to human capital, there are attempts to measure the impact and future benefits of early childhood development (ECD) programmes without considering the impact that education has in important areas including ethical and aesthetic capacities, participation in and enjoyment of community life, cultural identity and the valuing of other cultures, tolerance, equality, respect and enjoyment the environment ¹⁴.

Yet an understanding of early childhood care and education from the perspective of human rights can not only prepare people for their future lives and building better economic conditions, it can also promote peace within communities and nations so as to foment equity, stimulate intergenerational social mobility and overcome poverty.

Early childhood care and education foments social inclusion and gives people an education that supports their active participation in community life, thereby contributing to the reduction of political instability and strengthening democratic stability. This is because schooling helps in teaching people to interact with others and improves the benefits of civic participation, including voting and organisation ¹⁵.

Education in early childhood based on human rights requires giving attention to the needs and rights of the child on an individual basis; with clear benefits for their future, though principally within the context of their current situation.

This manner of viewing education also makes it possible to address severe issues such as malnutrition, mortality and child poverty, and enables understanding of the fact that exercise of the right to education is often influenced by poverty, by gender inequality, by place of birth, by language, by ethnicity, by disability and

many other factors. Simply following the laws of the market will not overcome these structural obstacles: rather, there is a need for new initiatives based on respect for diversity and the exercise of the human rights.

Understanding of early childhood is built according to distinct worldviews, making it necessary to take interculturalism into consideration. This notion should not be reduced to inclusion of those social groups and people that have been historically excluded and discriminated against; rather it is a process that facilitates dialogue, respect and building real equality.

However, before being able to imagine a “world of equal people”, there must be recognition of and action addressing inequality, discrimination and power.

Embracing diversity as the focus of relations means accepting interculturalism and multi-culturalism as a new model for social organisation, in which the principles of social responsibility, active citizenship, empowerment, citizen participation and deliberative democracy are redefined and invigorated ¹⁶. For example, we can begin by considering diversity and interculturalism in the development and implementation of state public policies regarding children during the first years of their lives.

¹⁴ Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29.

¹⁵ A Commitment to Universal Access to Early Childhood Development Programmes.

¹⁶ Magendzo, Abraham. International Conference “Evaluation and Accountability in Human Rights Education”. April 4, 2004. Cited in Muñoz, *The River Between the Rocks*.

II. Legal framework for early childhood care and education

The right to education is guaranteed in international law through the majority of international human rights instruments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes that all individuals have the right to education. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reinforces this principle, making clear that education should be oriented towards full human development and dignity, and should enable people to participate effectively in a free society. The consideration of the best interest of the child and the elimination of stereotypes and prejudice in education is a central theme of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and of the Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons. The Convention of the Rights of the Child reaffirms this right, laying out the aims of education and the state obligation to guarantee the survival and development of the child from a basis of equal opportunities and inclusion of the most vulnerable or disadvantaged. This also reaffirms the right of children to participate in decision-making regarding issues that affect them.

These obligations have been clarified by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in General Comments 7, 9, 11 and 12. General Comment 7: Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood confirms that young children have all of the rights set out in the Convention. The Committee confirms that the right to ECCE begins at birth, and is intimately linked to the right of the child to the maximum possible development as laid out in article 6.2 of the Convention. In this way, the Committee affirms that the maturing and learning processes by which children progressively acquire knowledge, competencies and an awareness of their rights, can only happen holistically, through observance of all the Convention's regulations. This includes the right to health, to nutrition, to social security, to an appropriate standard of living, to a healthy and safe environment,

to education and to play (articles 24, 27, 28, 29 and 31). In the same way, the responsibilities of parents must be respected, and quality services and assistance offered (articles 5 and 18).

These Comments are based on the Committee's experience examining state reports, and recognise the significant contribution of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (2000) and the 'A World Fit for Children' declaration of the United Nations Special Session on Children (2002).

The World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) states that 'learning begins at birth', and the Dakar Framework for Action on Education For All (EFA), developed at the World Education Forum (2000), has as its first goal "expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children".

Following on from the process begun in Jomtien, UNESCO organised the first global conference on early childhood education in Moscow in 2010. The resulting Action Plan recognised the difficulty of achieving the first EFA goal by 2015, and urged governments to develop concrete legislation, policies and strategies; to increase access on a large scale; to boost analysis, monitoring and evaluation of this right; to improve the quality of programmes and to increase the resources and finances available to these ends.

In Africa, the right to early childhood care and education is guaranteed in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (also known as the Banjul Charter), the African Charter on the Rights and Wellbeing of Children and the Cultural Charter for Africa.

In the Americas, this right is guaranteed in the American Convention on Human Rights, in the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which establishes the right of all children to the protection that they require, including basic education (article 16). These principles are reiterated in the Hemispheric Commitment to Early Childhood Education (OAS 2007) and in the Education Goals 2021 (OEI 2009).

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union establishes that “everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training” (art. 14). The Additional Protocol of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms also recognises this right, as does Protocol No. 12 of the same Convention, which introduces the general prohibition against discrimination.

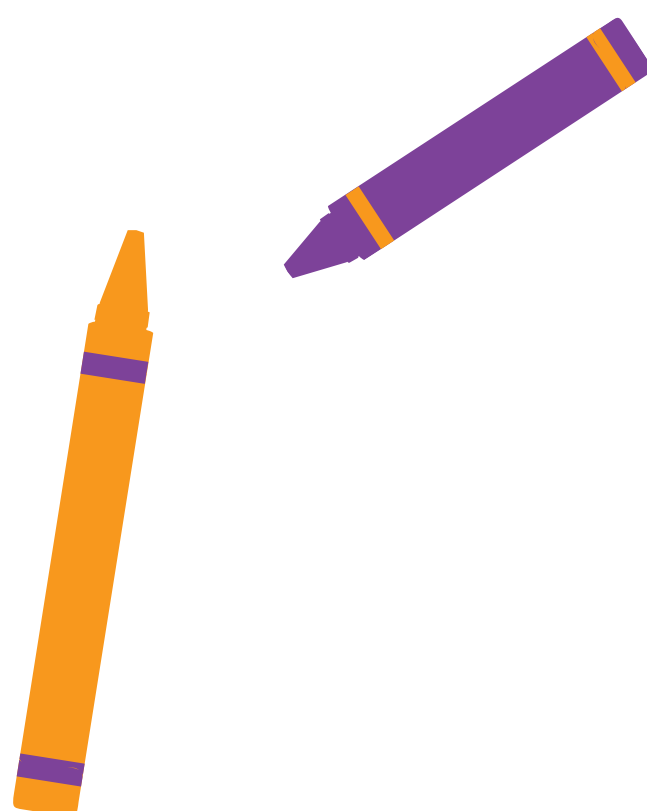
Despite the fact that the human right to education includes young children, there has been little legal development of it in international treaties; the major commitments have been made not in conventions but in declaratory instruments, as well as in the national legislation that has been a crucial development in many countries.

This failure to fully acknowledge the right to early childhood education in the same way as other stages of education ¹⁷ has led to the privatisation of service provision: without a fully accepted framework of rights – and corresponding state duties – the participation of governments in the financing, organisation and delivery of education for children in the early years of life remains deficient, whilst, on the contrary, private initiatives have been increasing. This means that poor families continue to be unable to offer education to their young children. This helps to explain the nature of prevailing discussions around the issue of education

in early childhood, in which it is often taken to be necessary to justify the use of public resources for ECCE through economic results-driven arguments ¹⁸.

¹⁷ “Monitoring of EFA Goal 1 has been limited – often to health monitoring for children ages 0 to 3 and to education monitoring for pre-primary education. Existing composite child well-being indices cover childhood outcomes, but do not examine the array of services for children”. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/world-conference-on-ecce/moscow-follow-up/global-follow-up/>

¹⁸ Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education. Education in Early Childhood: A Field in Conflict. Sao Paulo, 2011.



III. Early childhood care and education: progress and challenges

The progress and challenges examined in this report focus on the areas of public policy, budget allocation, enrolment, teaching staff, gender parity and equality, health and other areas of care for children in the early years.

Public policies, state plans and programmes:

Limited governmental involvement in caring for the educational needs of children in early childhood is in part due to the fact that, in many countries, the provision of education starting from birth is not compulsory, and when it is provided it is only considered to be a preparatory stage for formal schooling.

As previously noted, early childhood education is largely privatized¹⁹, particularly for the 0-3 years age group. Access to such programmes remains low in developing countries, particularly for children living in rural areas, or who have special educational needs²⁰.

Nonetheless, ECCE is increasingly considered as a part of basic education, although it is not formally integrated into the education system in many countries. It is therefore more usual to find initiatives that operate without adequate resources or support. Further, planning for early childhood education remains peripheral, and faces coordination challenges, leading to lost opportunities for many children²¹. Of the 204 countries included in UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report on education, in 2005 around half (104) were reported to have official programmes targeting children under the age of 3; a further 29 did not have such programmes, whilst for 71 there was no information²².

The tendency of most governments to focus on girls and boys above three years old means that younger children are largely catered for by private institutions²³. It is thus difficult to determine precisely how many children participate in ECCE programmes. Data sug-

gests, however, that children older than three years of age living in urban areas are twice as likely to access these programmes as rural children, with the poorest quintile of the population finding itself largely excluded from such educational opportunities²⁴. This type of exclusion is linked to the absence of affirmative measures seeking to support families financially and socially, as well as the need to make educational services more appropriate to the children's social and cultural contexts.

Although all European countries have adopted public policies around ECCE, access to these programmes varies from country to country. During the Barcelona Summit of 2002, EU member states recognised the importance of early childhood care for growth and equal opportunities, and consequently established goals for early childhood care by 2010. They aimed to reach 33% of children under 3 years old, and 90% of children aged between 3 years and compulsory school age.

¹⁹ UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education. p. 39

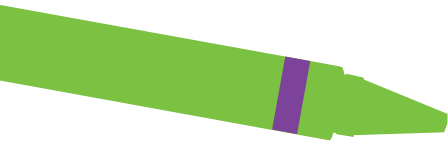
²⁰ Education International. 2010. Early Childhood Education: a global scenario. 2010, p16.

²¹ UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education pp.38-39.

²² UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education.

²³ Gwang-Jo Kim, Mami Umayahara. Early Childhood care and education: building the foundation for lifelong learning and the future of the nations of Asia and the Pacific. International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy. 2010, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1-13, p. 7.

²⁴ UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education, p.38.



These goals were driven by the economic pressures governments were facing, and by the fact that a high number of women were workforce participants²⁵. However, the 2008 evaluation of progress towards these goals revealed that only 7 states had achieved the 33% goal, and only 9 the 90% goal²⁶.

In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, ten countries had adopted policies on ECCE by December 2008. A further 20 were in the process of preparing policies, and 12 had not even begun the process. By 2010, 26 countries had included ECCE in their development plans²⁷, in the context of action plans which have three levels: a) awareness-raising for families and communities about their responsibilities concerning ECCE, b) improving access to and use of ECCE services, and c) integrating ECCE into national development plans and programmes²⁸.

Many countries in the region have curriculum proposals that apply from the first few months, yet the tendency is to only apply them from 3 years and above²⁹.

To comply with the regulatory framework surrounding the Convention on the Rights of the Child, public policies on early childhood must pay attention to a child's survival, development, participation and protection. However, given that for these children the most immediate environment in which they survive, develop, participate and are protected is the family³⁰, the State therefore has an obligation to support parents, particularly those who are particularly vulnerable, or who are affected by discrimination.

On the other hand, progress towards achieving the MDGs is measured predominantly through quantitative data³¹. The limited or non-existent development of qualitative indicators that can determine the nature and incidence of obstacles caused by exclusion, discrimi-

nation and the denial of human rights for children, and especially girls, seems somewhat paradoxical³².

When other basic human rights, such as the right to be included in a register of births, are also overlooked, inequality is reinforced, and the right to education becomes much harder to guarantee. As a result, clear policies should exist in order to progress towards universally available birth registries for all families, without any cost. Further, the requirement to present birth certificates in order for young children to enrol in education programmes should be eliminated.

²⁵ UNICEF. Innocenti Research Centre. El cuidado infantil en los países industrializados: transición y cambio, 2008, p.4

²⁶ European Commission's Expert Group on Gender and Employment Issues (EGGE). 2009. The provision of childcare services. A comparative review of 30 European countries. Belgium.

²⁷ UNESCO. WCECCE. Early Childhood care and education regional report. Africa. UNESCO. 2010, p. 13



²⁸ UNESCO-BREDA. Follow-up recommendations for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007.

²⁹ UNESCO. WCECCE. 2010. Early Childhood care and education regional report. Africa, p. 52

³⁰ Ramírez, Yenny, Cuellar, Julian and Vizcaíno, Jaime. Public Financing and Early Childhood Rights. Institute for Educational Development and Innovation - Bogota.

³¹ UNIFEM, Pathway to gender equality. CEDAW, Beijing and the MDGs, 2004.

³² Muñoz, Vernor. Special Rapporteur's Report on the Right to Education. The Right to Education for Girls. Human Rights Commission. E/CN.4/2006/45 February 8, 2006.



Budget allocations: Public financing of ECCE varies between regions and between countries, although it is generally low when compared to resources spent on other stages of education, especially given that financing for education of children ages 6-8 – usually the strongest part of early years provision – is generally part of the budget for primary education. However, the recommendation of Unicef³³, of Nobel Prize winner Professor James Heckman³⁴ and of other agencies³⁵ is that countries allocate at least 1% of GDP to early childhood services.

In Europe, only a few countries have reached the goal of allocating 1% of GDP, and in many countries the private sector contribution accounts for more than 50% of total provision, although there is a general trend of increasing resources for ECCE³⁶. In this region there is still a distinction between resources allocated for education and those allocated for care. The former is often considered an investment, while the latter is more frequently viewed as a cost³⁷.

In Africa, minimal attention has been paid to financing ECCE, whether by governments or by donors, with the current investment standing at 0.3% of GDP³⁸.

For Latin America and the Caribbean, processes of market segmentation in this area have had a significant impact on the marginalisation of children³⁹.

The percentage of education investment allocated to early years is not known in the Arab states. This is possibly because in many countries the cost of such programmes is divided between the Ministries of Health and Education⁴⁰, although here the cost is mostly borne by parents, who pay for private pre-school education for their children⁴¹.

According to available information on high-income countries and some middle-income countries⁴², public

and private sector spending on education in early childhood is generally a low priority. Even within the OECD, average expenditures (combined public and private) on pre-primary education (for children aged three to six) were equivalent to 0.5% of GDP in 2007⁴³. One third of OECD members invested more than this level, with Iceland leading (0.9%)⁴⁴. Expenditures on pre-primary education in 2009 averaged 0.5% of GDP in Central and Eastern Europe, 0.4% in North America and Western Europe, 0.2% in Latin America and the Caribbean and less than 0.1% in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia⁴⁵.

³³ UNICEF (2008) *The Child Care Transition: A League Table of Early Childhood Education and Care in Economically Advanced Countries*, Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

³⁴ UNESCO. 2011. *EFA Global Monitoring Report. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education*. p.38.

³⁵ See for example European Commission Network on Childcare, 1996; OECD (2006) *Starting Strong: early childhood education and care*, Paris: OECD

³⁶ UNESCO. 2010. *WCECCE. Early childhood care and education. Regional Report. Europe and North America*. 2010, p. 19

³⁷ Urban, Mahtias. Education International. *Early childhood education in Europe. Achievements, challenges and possibilities* September 2009, p

³⁸ UNESCO. 2010. *WCECCE. Early Childhood care and education regional report. Africa*. UNESCO., pp.13-14.

³⁹ UNESCO. 2010. *WCECCE. Early childhood care and education Regional report. Latin America and the Caribbean.*, op cit, p. 60.

⁴⁰ UNESCO. 2011 *EFA Global Monitoring Report.. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education*. p. 39

⁴¹ UNESCO, 2010. *WCECCE. Early Childhood care and education regional report. ArabStates*, op cit, p. 39-40

⁴² Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 2006. *Starting Strong II*, p. 105.

⁴³ As indicated, the education of children between six and eight years of age is generally included in the primary education budget.

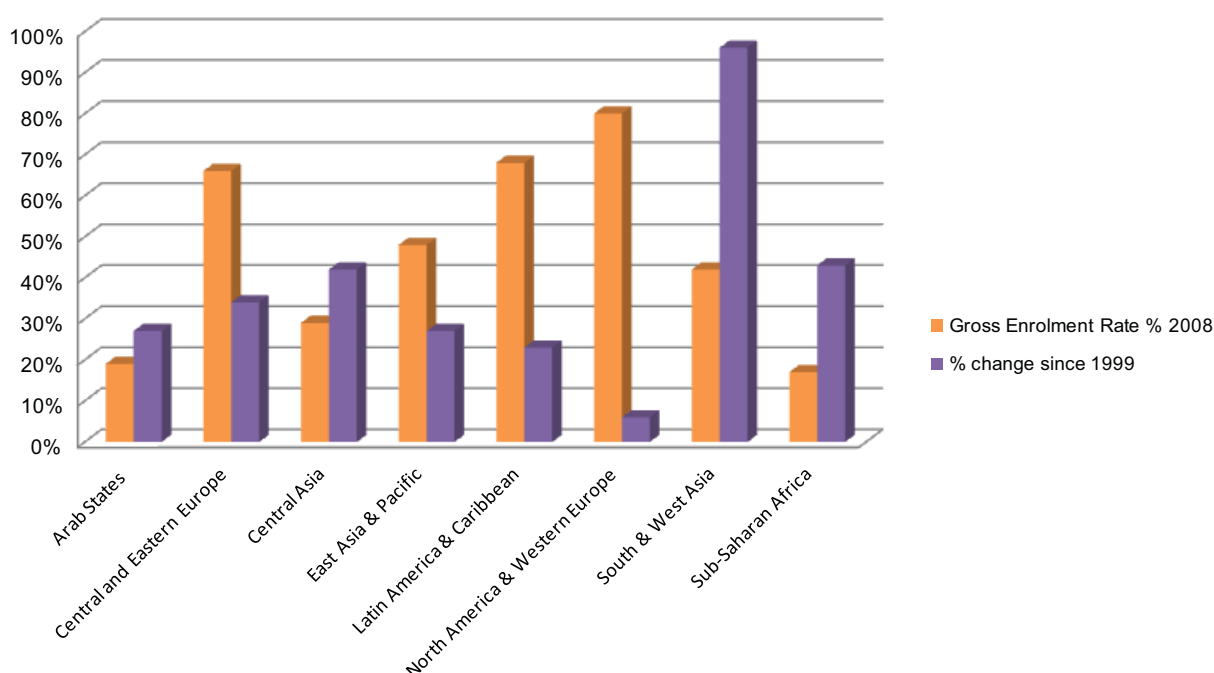
⁴⁴ OECD. *Education at a Glance: Indicators* (Paris). <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/39/45926093.pdf>, p. 218.

⁴⁵ Myers, R. G. 2006. *Quality in early childhood care and education programmes (ECCE). Reference document for the EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2007* (Paris). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001474/147473e.pdf>, p. 40.

The highest and lowest percentages of public or private financing can be explained by each country's tradition in regards to education policy, although the private sector tends to intervene to cover the gap when there is a historic dearth of funds to meet the demand for education in early childhood.

Enrolment: In 2009, 157 million children were enrolled in pre-primary education – a 40% increase since 1999. However, a gross global enrolment rate of 46% suggests that many young children in the world are excluded from educational opportunities. The most significant increases in enrolment have occurred in South and West Asia and in sub-Saharan Africa, in both of which enrolment more than doubled in the decade to 2009, representing an additional 6.2 million children in sub-Saharan Africa, for example. Despite these advances, there is much further to go: in the Arab states, the gross enrolment rate in pre-primary education is only 21%, and in sub-Saharan Africa it is 18% (2009)⁴⁶.

Gross Enrolment Ratio by region, 2008



Pre-primary (age 3 – official primary school entry age) gross enrolment rate 2008 and percentage change since 1999
Source: UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011: The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education



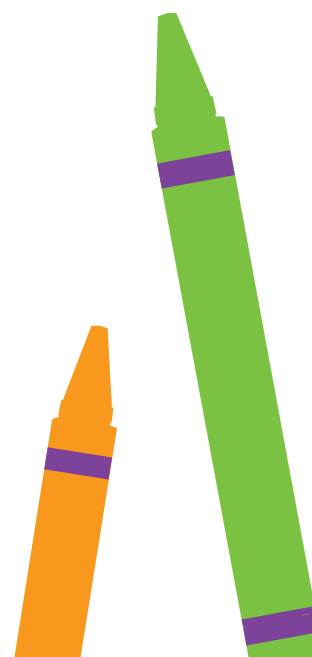
Taking the age range for early childhood into consideration, it is important to take into account not only the data covering the pre-school cycle, but also for enrolment in the primary education cycle.

Rapid progress has been made over the past decade towards universal primary education, given that from 1999 to 2008, 52 million more children were enrolled in primary schools. For 2008, a total of 695,952 million girls and boys were enrolled worldwide. In regards to distinct regions: 128,548 million were enrolled in Sub-Saharan Africa; 40,840 million in Arab states; 5,596 million in Central Asia; 188,708 million in East Asia and the Pacific; 192,978 million in South and West Asia; 67,687 million in Latin America and the Caribbean and 19,847 million boys and girls in Central and Eastern Europe.

Recent figures suggest that the number of children receiving early childhood care and education outside of the family home is increasing, particularly in developed countries, and in publicly-funded programmes⁴⁷, whilst the proportion of children aged between 1 and 6 enrolled in private institutions or programmes either remained unchanged or diminished in the period 2005 – 2011⁴⁸.

The provision of ECCE should be made available to all children; that is to say that the right to education for this population should be guaranteed. However, it can be observed that while supply has expanded significantly amongst the 3-5 age group, it has by no means reached all children in this age group, let alone adequately reaching children under 3 years of age. According to UNESCO's Institute of Statistics, the gross enrolment rate of children aged between 3 and 5 years rose from 56% to 65% between 1999 and 2007⁴⁹, a percentage that remains far from the universal right to education.

This disparity in coverage and enrolment between age groups also exists within countries. In general, the ECCE enrolment rate for children under three is considerably lower than for those in the 4-6 age bracket. This is in part a consequence of the belief that the education and care of children under 3 is the responsibility of the family, but also reflects the limited availability of early childhood education centres, be they public or private⁵⁰.



In North America and Western Europe, average gross enrolment rates for pre-school in 2010 averaged 80%, with percentages as low as 18% and 21% in Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab states, respectively. Only around one in six children in Sub-Saharan Africa is enrolled in an early childhood education programme, as compared to the average rate of one out of three children in developing countries. Substantial progress has been made in some regions, especially in South and West Asia (from 21% to 42% between 1999 and 2009)⁵¹.

In the last decade, net enrolment rates have varied enormously from country to country, even within regions, ranging from less than 10% in some cases to over 90% in others.

⁴⁶ UNESCO. 2011 EFA Global Monitoring Report: The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education.

⁴⁷ Ibid

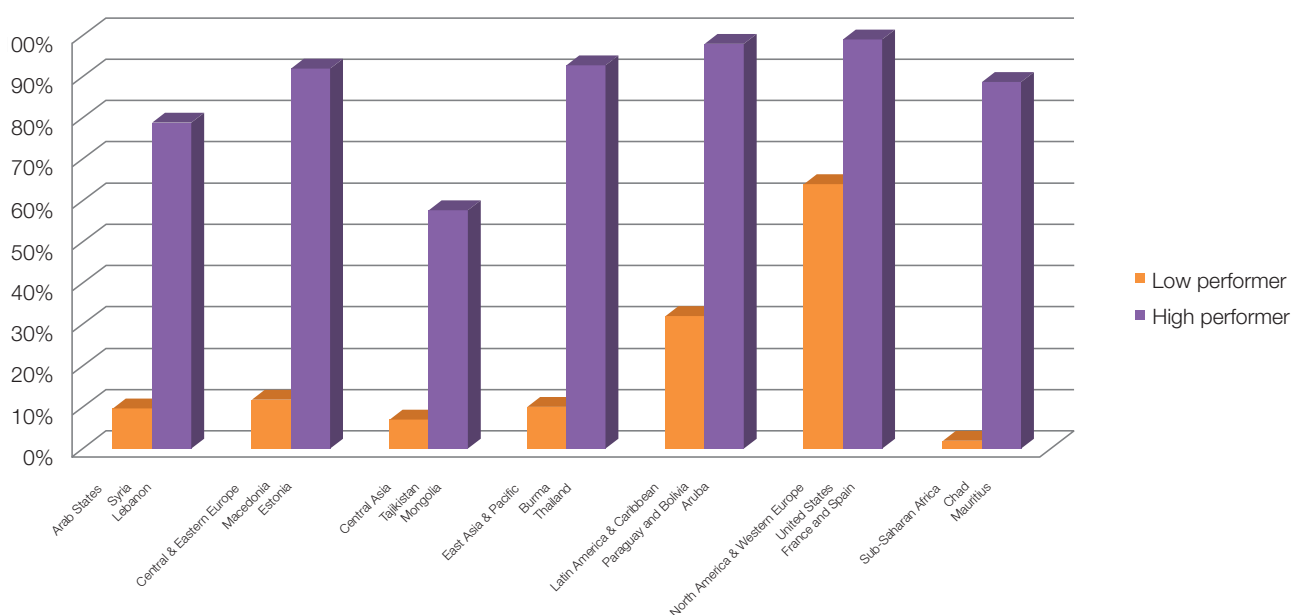
⁴⁸ 2011b. Responses to an ILO questionnaire on early childhood education (ECE). Op.cit.

⁴⁹ UNESCO. WCECCE. Early childhood care and education Regional report. Latin America and the Caribbean p.39-40

⁵⁰ ILO, Geneva. Right Beginnings: Education and Educators in Early Childhood. Report on the Debate in the Global Dialogue Forum on the Conditions of Personnel in Early Childhood Education (February, 22–23 2012) Geneva, 2012 In: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed.../wcms_171720.pdf.

⁵¹ UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UNESCO-UIS). 2010. Global Compendium on Education 2010 (Montreal). 2011. Data Centre, Pre-defined tables (Montreal). In: <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>. Op. cit.

Enrolment by region



The proportion of children of pre-primary school age who are enrolled varies enormously between and even within regions, from well under 10% up to 100%

Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=182>

Despite these important advances, when considering the population enrolled in primary school, a total of 40 million children still remain marginalised from educational opportunities. Enrolment rates are influenced by a variety of factors, such as poverty, gender and armed conflicts.

Children make up the majority of poor people in the world. Childhood poverty is distinct from adult poverty because of its different causes and effects, especially with regard to the long term impact it has on children. Children that live in poverty suffer from a lack of the material, spiritual and emotional resources that are necessary to survive, develop and prosper, which in turn hinders them from realising their rights, reaching their full potential or participating as full members and on an equal footing in society⁵³.

In this sense, the relation between poverty and realisation of the right to education is clear. For example, 49% of the poorest boys and girls between seven and 16 years of age in Pakistan did not attend school in 2007. There is also a link to high rates of school drop-outs, as poor children experience great pressure early on for generating income at home. The drop-out rate in Burkina Faso was less than 1% for children 6-8 years of age, but it increased to 6% for children between 12 and 14 years of age⁵⁴.

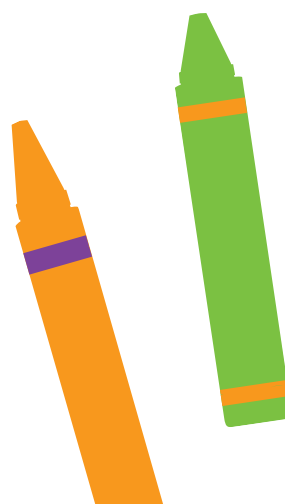
The probability of poor girls living in rural areas attending school is 16 times less than that of boys living in the richest homes in urban areas⁵⁵.

Armed conflicts are also an agent of discrimination, increasing the probability of not attending school among vulnerable children. Forty two percent of those children currently marginalised from education worldwide – 28 million children of primary school age in total – are in conflict-affected poor countries⁵⁶.

In Europe, migrant and Roma families in particular face barriers to accessing education at all levels, including in early childhood, highlighting the need for a strengthened intercultural perspective that would encourage a framework for multiple inclusion and development of community capacities⁵⁷. Structural inequalities are a key part of the difficulties migrant families face accessing education, along with low quality and limited relevance of the services they do receive.

In Arab states, access to ECCE is also lower amongst under 3s, and provision that does exist is normally private.

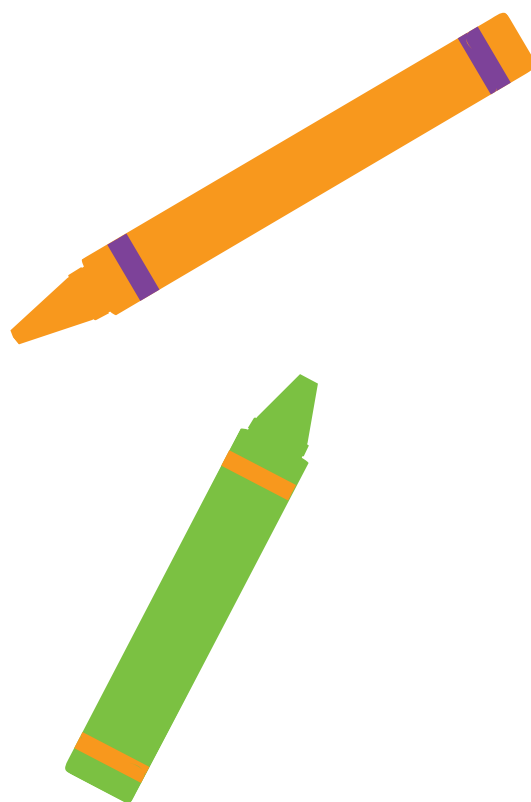
In Latin America and the Caribbean, the enormous cultural and linguistic diversity is at once one of its great riches, and one of its causes of exclusion and discrimination. This particularly affects children under 3, whose access to ECCE services is also affected by their socio-economic status, their place of residence, and the level of education achieved by their parents.



With the exception of Cuba, where 100% of the cost of services is borne by the state, mixed models of financing are common in this region, as, in the majority of cases, early childhood education is not considered compulsory.

National plans to increase enrolment in ECCE programmes have increasingly ambitious targets. Burkina Faso, for example, aims to increase the enrolment rate to at least 8% by 2015, and to 14% by 2020. Kazakhstan aims to reach an enrolment rate of 74% in 2015 and universal access by 2020, as is the case for Bhutan. Nepal has proposed attaining an enrolment rate of 87% in 2015; New Zealand's goal is to reach 93% in 2013 and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines hopes to reach universal access in 2012⁵⁸.

Pre-primary teaching staff: In 2009, the total number of pre-primary teaching staff was over 7.5 million. During the previous decade a significant rise in the number of pre-primary teachers occurred across all regions except Central and Eastern Europe, and was particularly pronounced in South East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa⁵⁹.



⁵³ Equality for Childhood. Poverty and Child Labour. In: <http://www.equidadparala infancia.org/newsletter.php?news=33>.

⁵⁴ UNESCO. 2011. EFA Global Monitoring Report. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Bennett, John. Expert meeting: "Towards quality education for Roma children: transition from early childhood to primary education". UNESCO, Paris, 2007, p12.

⁵⁸ Vargas-Barón, E. 2005. Planning Policies for Early Childhood Development: Guidelines for Action. (Paris, UNESCO). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001395/139545e.pdf> Op.cit.

⁵⁹ UIS, 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>

In many regions of the world, the rate of increase in the number of early childhood teachers is surpassing the increase in enrolment, at times significantly. This is also an indication of the investment many governments have made into training and recruitment of new teaching staff in this sector⁶⁰. This progress notwithstanding, Education International has demonstrated that staff responsible for early years education have less advanced numerical skills than those who are teaching at other levels, a reflection of the generally lower level of training provided and qualifications ensured at this level⁶¹.

In developing countries, much of early childhood education is concentrated in cities⁶². A study of countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) showed that numbers of pre-primary teaching staff are greatly reduced in underprivileged and rural areas⁶³. This issue must be resolved through due consideration of how to recruit qualified personnel for areas that are considered less desirable.

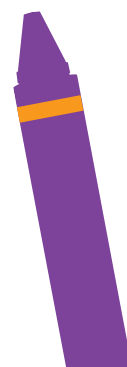
“In developing countries, much of early childhood education is concentrated in cities”

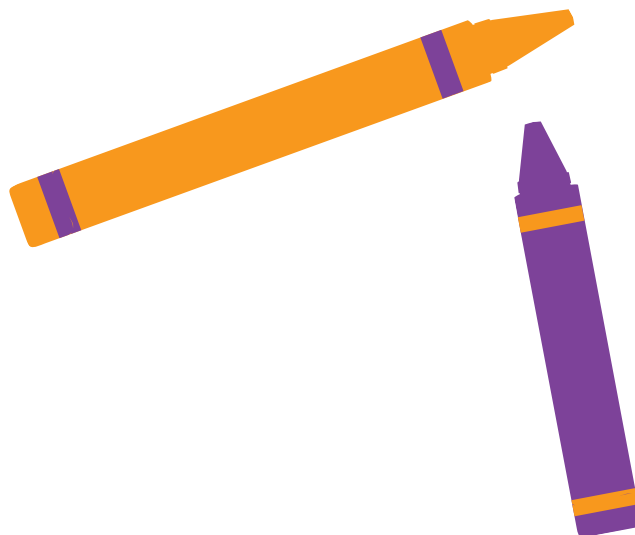
A determining factor in the quality of early childhood education is the ratios of pupils to educators or professionals; UNICEF⁶⁴ suggests a maximum ratio of 15 children to one professional, but data gathered in 2009 suggests that in reality the average at pre-primary level is closer to 21 pupils to one staff member⁶⁵. There are, however, significant regional variations; for example the ratio of pupils to staff in Central and Eastern Europe is 10 to 1, whereas in South West Asia it is 40:1⁶⁶.

Gender equality: The implications of gender equality issues here are clearly multi-faceted. Two however, are particularly noteworthy: firstly, the disparity between the sexes, and secondly, the feminisation of the pre-primary teaching profession.

The disparity between the sexes is slightly less pronounced in pre-primary education than at other levels. Yet in some countries girls continue to face sharp discrimination in access to pre-primary education – such as in Tajikistan and Morocco, which have a Gender Parity Index (GPI) below 0.90 at the pre-primary level⁶⁷.

There are three regions with countries that historically maintain a high level of services for children between six to eight years of age, placing them within the acceptable range for gender parity in primary education: North America and Western Europe, Central Europe and Central Asia.





Approximately 90% of the countries located in these regions have reached parity within primary education. The Latin American and Caribbean, East Asian and Pacific regions have intermediate rates, in that the percentage of countries within the range for parity have progressed from 50% to 60% over the last 40 years. However, the most notable advances in terms of parity between genders took place in regions where in 1970 the number of boys had been significantly greater than the number of girls attending primary schools: South and West Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and, in particular, the Arab states⁶⁸.

If in fact parity is high for enrolment in school, it is important to take into consideration that a greater percentage of boys are enrolled at the official age (six years), while girls experience an age-grade gap. This leads one to understand why in a relatively small number of countries (15 of 165) boys are at a disadvantage in relation to access to the first grade. The most marked inequalities (adjusted GPI rate greater than 1.06) have been identified in Anguilla, the Dominican Republic, Dominica, Iran, Mauritania, Montserrat and Nauru. Higher enrolment for girls could be the result of attempts to deal with situations in which the system previously had a greater number of girls who had not been attending school, and were thus behind in relation to age-grade levels, while the boys were attending school starting at the official age. As a result, what seemed to be a disadvantage for boys could in fact be a transitional stage to overcome what has historically been a disadvantage for girls⁶⁹.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Education International, 2010 Early Childhood Education: a global scenario, p16.

⁶² UNESCO-BREDA. 2010. Early Childhood Care and Education: A Regional Report: Africa, World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, Moscow, Russia, September 27-29, 2010 (Dakar). <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001894/189420e.pdf> In: International Labour Office, Geneva. Right Beginnings: Education and Educators in Early Childhood. Report on the Debate in the Global Dialogue Forum on the Conditions of Personnel in Early Childhood Education (February 22-23, 2012) Geneva 2012.

⁶³ OECD. 2010. Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators (Paris). <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/39/45926093.pdf>. Op. cit, pp.3-4.

⁶⁴ Education International (IE). 2010. Early Childhood Education: A Global Scenario (Brussels). http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/ECE_A_global_scenario_EN.PDF Op.cit.

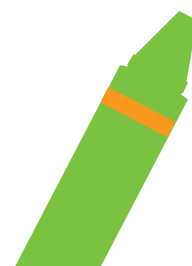
⁶⁵ UIS, 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx> Op. cit.

⁶⁶ ILO, Geneva. Right Beginnings: Education and Educators in Early Childhood. Report on the Debate in the Global Dialogue Forum on the Conditions of Personnel in Early Childhood Education (February 22-23, 2012) Geneva 2012.

⁶⁷ UIS. 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>

⁶⁸ UIS, 2010. Global Compendium on Education. Special Attention to Gender.

⁶⁹ Ibid





Of the 104 countries whose primary school enrolment rates are reported by UNESCO, 39 have reached parity or near-parity between genders (that is, a GPI above 0.995), while 65 have yet to address gender inequalities regarding access to primary education. Girls thus have the disadvantage in terms of inequalities in almost two thirds of countries with data ⁷⁰.

In the following 17 countries, boys outnumber girls at primary level by at least 10 to nine – and sometimes very much more (i.e. an GPI ⁷¹ below 0.90): Afghanistan, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, DR Congo, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Togo and Yemen.

Some of the greatest inequalities affecting girls are, unsurprisingly, detected in countries where access to school is most restricted. This is the case in Eritrea, for example, where the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is only 45% and the GPI is 0.87. A similar situation can be seen in Papua New Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire and Niger.

However, there are some exceptions to this pattern: the lowest rate for gender parity is found in a country with a fairly high GER: Afghanistan (GER 97% - GPI 0.69). At the same time, the countries of Angola, Benin, Cameroon and Togo also show very low levels of gender parity, which reflect the existence of intense inequalities affecting girls, despite having enrolment ratios that are higher than the world average (108%) ⁷².

Doing slightly better than these 17 very poor performers in gender parity at primary level is a group of 20 countries that display moderate inequalities that discriminate against girls (i.e. GPI between 0.90 and 0.96). All but three of these countries - Burkina Faso, Jamaica and Nigeria – have a GER above 100% ⁷³.

Universal access to primary education tends to be accompanied by parity between genders. Nevertheless, several countries have reached the goal of parity in spite of being far from attaining universal access ⁷⁴.

The total number of pre-school teachers in Arab countries in 2009 reached 173,230, of which 158,187 were women; in Central and Eastern Europe there were 1,104,312 teachers, of which 1,094,097 were women; in Central Asia, there were 141,259 pre-school teachers, of which 137,646 were women; in East Asia and the Pacific, there were 1,980,541 pre-school teachers, of which 1,909,393 were women; in Latin American and Caribbean, there was a total of 1,003,116 pre-school teachers, of which 955,170 were women; in North America and Western Europe, there was a total of 1,492,660 teachers, of which 1,395,764 were women; in Sub-Saharan Africa, there were 346,705 women among the total of 454,649 teachers; in South and West Asia data is available from 2007, which reports a total of 1,059,392 pre-school teachers, of which 968,203 were women ⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ UIS, 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>

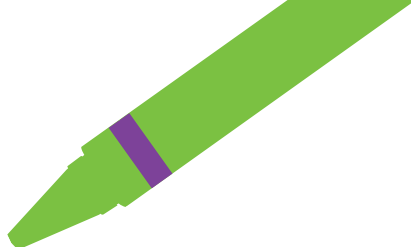
⁷¹ The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a measurement utilised to evaluate gender differences in education indicators. It is defined as the ratio between the value corresponding to the female gender and that corresponding to the male gender in relation to a specific indicator. A GPI of 1 means that there is no difference between the indicators for boys and girls; that is to say that they are identical. UNESCO (2003) has defined the GPI level for having attained parity between genders as 0.97 to 1.03.

⁷² UIS, 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>

⁷³ UIS, 2011. Pre-defined tables (Montreal). <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/ReportFolders/ReportFolders.aspx>

⁷⁴ UIS, 2010. Global Compendium on Education. Special Attention to Gender.

⁷⁵ Institute for Statistics, UNESCO. Teaching Staff by ISCED level. In: <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=181>



Worldwide, there are 7,535,743 ⁷⁶ male and female pre-school teachers, of which 7,098,232 (94%) are women, which means that the early childhood education sector continues to be a “gender ghetto” ⁷⁷. This is in part due to deeply rooted stereotypes about the traditional roles of mothers and women with respect to caring for boys and girls.

In 1996, the European Commission’s childcare network set a ten-year target for achieving 20% male participation in the pre-school sector – the advances made, however, have been minimal. To date, few countries have adopted policies that would help re-establish gender equality, with only Montenegro and Norway indicating that they intend to develop gender action plans for the sector ⁷⁸.

If there is a tendency towards gender parity, a certain correlation exists between the percentage of female teachers in primary education and the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in secondary education for girls. It is possible that this correlation reflects in part the positive role played by female teachers in primary education, making the classroom a safer and more welcoming place for girls and thereby motivating them to continue their education. In fact, countries with lower female enrolment rates also tend to have a lower proportion of female teachers in primary education ⁷⁹.

Salaries represent another aspect that stands out in regard to gender inequality. In general, inasmuch as a profession’s prestige deteriorates, there is a tendency for the proportional participation of women to increase in this sector. This phenomenon in turn is also associated with lower levels of remuneration.

Women make up the majority of primary education teachers (higher than 90%) in several countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the remuneration for these professionals is slightly below the per capita average GDP ⁸⁰.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Urban, M. 2009. Early Childhood Education in Europe: Achievements, Challenges and Possibilities (Brussels, Education International). In: http://download.eiie.org/Docs/WebDepot/2009_EarlyChildhoodEducationInEurope_es.pdf.

⁷⁸ ILO. Geneva. Right Beginnings: Education and Educators in Early Childhood. Report on the Debate in the Global Dialogue Forum on the Conditions of Personnel in Early Childhood Education (February 22-23, 2012) Geneva, 2012. In: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed.../wcms_171720.pdf.

⁷⁹ UIS, 2010. Global Compendium on Education. Special Attention to Gender.

⁸⁰ Ibid.



This analysis should also take into consideration the millions of women that are responsible for the education and care of their small children who have no access to any type of pre-school programme. This care and education is carried out free of charge by women, in order to preserve children's lives and health. When necessary, care includes an emotional component that obliges women to accept undervalued work or jobs that lead them into or keeps them in situations of inequality⁸¹.

This relation between mother and son/daughter makes the wellbeing and development of the child in their early years undeniably linked to the mother. For example, maternal malnutrition leads to the birth of babies with low birth weights and possible developmental delays. Equally, maternal education is closely related to better outcomes in the health of boys and girls, which makes it possible for educated women to achieve higher nutritional levels for their children⁸².

Health in early childhood: The general state of child health can be estimated examining global child mortality rates; whilst still unacceptably high, the number of children dying under the age of five stood at 7.6 million in children in 2010, compared to 12 million in 1990. However, of the 66 countries in the world with high infant mortality rates, only 11 are on target to meet the relevant MDG goal, and malnutrition is the direct cause of death for over 3 million children⁸³.

The highest rates of infant mortality are still reported in Sub-Saharan Africa, where one of every eight children dies before the age of five years; this is more than 17 times the average in developed regions (one in 143) and nearly twice that in South Asia (one in 15)⁸⁴.

The four principal causes of infant mortality for children up to five years of age worldwide are pneumonia (18%), diarrheal diseases (15%), complications from premature birth (12%) and asphyxia at birth (9%). Malnutrition is an underlying cause for more than one-third of children below five years of age. Malaria continues to be a significant

cause of death in Sub-Saharan Africa, causing around 16% of deaths of children below five years of age⁸⁵.

International data suggests that from ages 0 to 4, the difference in levels of nutrition between girls and boys is statistically insignificant. However, as children get older girls begin to experience a disadvantage in access to food, and are expected to experience more health issues related to malnutrition during adolescence than boys, particularly anaemia⁸⁶.

Governments continue to underestimate the educational consequences of early childhood malnutrition. In developing countries, approximately 171 million children under five – that is, around 28% of the entire population in this age-bracket – have not reached an appropriate height for their age, and suffer from rickets⁸⁷. Many of them suffer from malnutrition in their early years, a critical period for cognitive development. Malnourished children are less likely to develop to their full physical or mental potential. They are less likely to attend school, and those who do enrol achieve lower outcomes than other students⁸⁸.

⁸¹ Gimeno, B. Cuidado con el cuidado. In: <http://beatrizgimeno.es/2012/03/21/cuidado-con-el-cuidado/>

⁸² Global Campaign for Education. 2012. Rights from the Start! Global Action Week Resource Pack 2012

⁸³ UNESCO. EFA Global Monitoring Report. 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001911/191186s.pdf..>

⁸⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, World Health Organization, The World Bank, United Nations Population Division. Report 2011. Levels & Trends in Child Mortality. En: http://www.childinfo.org/files/Child_Mortality_Report_2011.pdf.

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ The State of the World's Children. 2011. http://www.unicef.org/devpro/files/SOWC_2011_Main_Report_SP_02092011.pdf

⁸⁷ Onis, Blossner and Borghi. Prevalence and trends of stunting among pre-school children, 1990–2020. NS. Public Health Nutrition. In: http://www.who.int/nutgrowthdb/publications/Stunting1990_2011.pdf

⁸⁸ UNESCO. 2011. EFA Global Monitoring Report. The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education.. Resumen. En: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001911/191186s.pdf.>

In 2006, at least 25 million of the 77 million out-of-school children suffered from a disability⁸⁹. This clearly demonstrates that millions of children are missing out on the specialist attention they need in their early years. Information about early childhood education centres that include provision for children with disabilities is very limited, but it is known that in many countries, disabilities prevent children from accessing education⁹⁰.

Other ECCE actors: NGOs, foundations and private initiatives: In 2009, private pre-primary education represented 31% of total global enrolment at this stage.

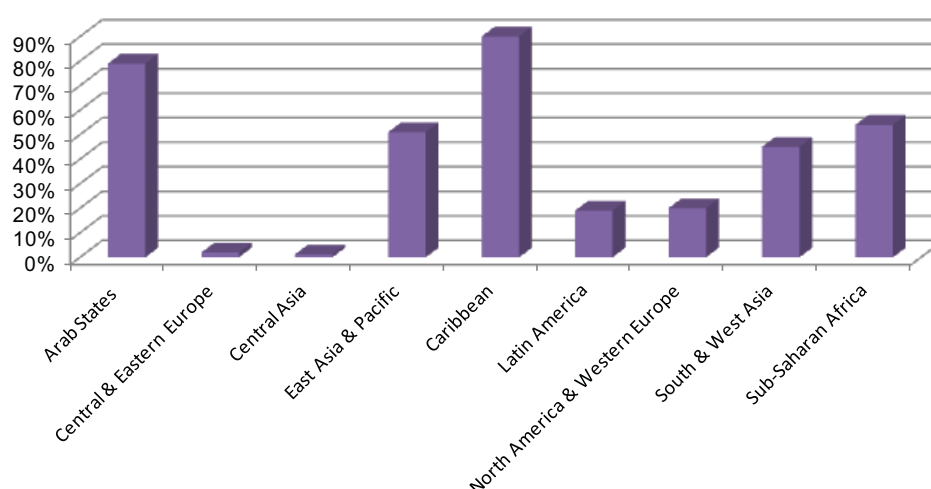
Community organisations, NGOs, faith-based organisations and for-profit enterprises can thus contribute to government efforts to broaden, improve and coordinate early childhood education services. In many countries, the proliferation of private providers is due to a lack of government support, financial restrictions and decentralisation. The diversity of providers encourages innovation, and yet at the same time can exacerbate inequalities of access⁹².

⁸⁹ Inclusion International. Better Education for All – When We're Included Too. In: http://www.ii.inclusioneducativa.org/content/PDF's/Backgrounder_Better_Education_for_All_Spanish.pdf

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.47

⁹² International Education Office – UNESCO (UNESCO-IEO) 2006. Compilation of National Profiles in Regards to ECCE. Reference Document for the 2007 EFA Global Monitoring Report, p. 193.

Enrolment in private provision by region



The proportion of children enrolled in pre-primary education who are in private institutions varies greatly by income level, and even more so by region. Source: UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011: The hidden crisis: Armed Conflict and Education

IV. Good practice, case-studies and testimonies

This section of the report details three examples of good practice that have led to good or even excellent outcomes, and which may serve as models or examples for possible replication.

Brazil: National Campaign for the Right to Education - “FUNDEB for real!”

Brazilian legislation determines that the right to education begins at early childhood care and education, extending through to post-graduation, and must be universalised across all basic education, which includes crèche (0-3 years), pre-school (4 and 5), fundamental education (6 to 14) and secondary education (15 to 17). In relation to the decisions taken at the last National Conference on Basic Education (CONEB for its acronym in Portuguese), of which the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education was a member of the Organising Committee, a constitutional amendment determined that, from 2016, education shall be compulsory from 4 to 17 years of age.

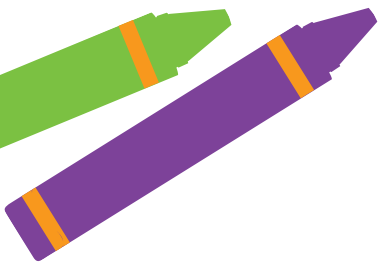
As Brazil is a complex and unequal federative republic, composed of 26 States, a Federal District and 5565 Municipalities, the Lula Government (2003-2010) proposed in 2005 the implementation of FUNDEB (Fund for Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and for Valuing the Teaching Profession), in order to finance the right to education. This replaced FUNDEF, an analogous fund which only encompassed what in Brazil is called fundamental education (6 to 14), and which had been established during the Fernando Henrique Cardoso Government (1995-2002). FUNDEB, as did FUNDEF, has status of law.

Although FUNDEB should encompass all basic education as conceived in Brazilian legislation (see first paragraph), the proposal of the Lula Government actually excluded the crèches, thus excluding the enrolment of millions of children aged 0-3 and gravely

violating their right to education. This is when, between 2005 and 2007, the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education triggered a strong and unique advocacy process for the correction of FUNDEB to include the 0-3 age group, mobilising and articulating civil society organizations, social movements, universities, among others, around the **FUNDEB for real!** movement.

The implementation of the **FUNDEB for real!** movement was based on the set of strategies that the Brazilian National Campaign for the Right to Education put forward: institutional articulation, political pressure on public authorities, social mobilisation, internal and external communication, knowledge production and capacity building of social actors. These are strategies that involve different focuses, actions and objectives, but that are conceived and put forward collectively and in an articulate manner. In delivering this set of strategies quickly and in keeping with the context, the **FUNDEB for real!** movement consolidated best practices and implemented a methodology using:

- Massive mobilisations and communication strategies were crucial to increase impact and political pressure in parliament, especially during the approval of FUNDEB;
- Constitution of a coordination group that fostered collective debate regarding the political context, the strategies and actions to be carried out;
- Development of public declarations on key issues regarding the FUNDEB law;
- Public audiences with parliamentarians and Federal Government;
- Implementation of seminars in all Brazilian States;



- Coordination of public events and demonstrations in National Congress;
- Increasing leverage of the action by involving new organisations in the **FUNDEB for real!** movement;
- Exchange of information among members;
- Communication using traditional communication methods as well as online.

The **FUNDEB for real!** movement had the following outcomes:

- Early childhood care and education fully included in FUNDEB: 13 million children aged 0-3 benefited and have or will have access to public education;
- Economic resources available for the implementation of FUNDEB. More than USD 550 billion in basic education will be allocated in the 14 years of existence of FUNDEB, with nearly USD 50 billion dollars coming from Federal Government – which, in the original project of President Lula, would not contribute a single cent;
- Additionally, the FUNDEB law now sets a basis for minimum standards of quality education;
- Furthermore, it establishes that teachers have the right to have a national common “floor” regarding their salary;
- Last but not least, different mechanisms to guarantee government accountability were included in the FUNDEB law, so as to promote social control and participation.

Pakistan: Teachers’ Resource Centre - Capacity building through effective ECCE

The work of the Teachers’ Resource Centre (TRC) in Pakistan to develop a curriculum and specialised teacher training for early childhood education, and its successful efforts to have this adopted as national policy, arose in reaction to the lack of institutional frameworks and guidelines on pre-school education in Pakistan.

During their work with government primary schools between 1992 and 1995, TRC noticed that when children under 5 came to school with their older siblings, they were either ignored, or left alone to memorize the alphabet or numbers. There was neither a dedicated space for them, nor an allocated staff member, and so they had no programme of studies. The TRC therefore decided to create an institutional framework for educating young children in public schools. The project began in 45 public schools in both rural and urban areas of Sindh.

The TRC focused on both on building skills and knowledge about ECCE amongst teachers, and on creating a learning programme for the early years. The ECCE curriculum they created is based on the principles of the ‘High Scope’ ECCE curriculum, but greatly modified to make it culturally appropriate for Pakistan. The training programme for teachers covered: basic pedagogy, the concept of holistic development, the importance of play, commitment to parents, evaluation of learning and, most importantly of all, creating an appropriate learning environment. The training was

Source: Brazilian National Campaign for the Right to Education

compulsory for all teachers, regardless of their professional experience or academic grade. After the training, a group of teachers were selected to replicate the training across their districts.

The TRC also ensured that a research and evaluation component was built into the programme to assess its effects, and found that it had led to significant positive changes in all areas of early childhood development. With this evidence, they began to seek political influence in order to see pre-primary education included in national guidelines.

One of the most significant achievements, unimaginable a decade ago, was the inclusion of ECCE in the three priorities of the National Action Plan. This is an essential component of the National Education Policy (1998-2010), and includes early years education as a formal class in primary schools.

The TRC also worked with the Ministry of Education on the curriculum. With the advent of these curriculum and policy developments, a series of programmes was promoted within the public sector and in partnership with civil society organisations.

Although the achievements of this programme in the areas of teacher training, political engagement and positive outcomes for children in the early years are clear, challenges remain. In particular, the ECCE framework still needs to be integrated into the existing budget and planning processes, and coordination between the Ministries responsible for ECCE must be improved and made more efficient.

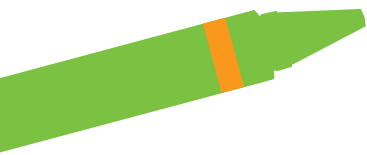
Senegal: “Case des Tout-Petits” (“The house of little children”)

The ‘Case des Tout-Petits’ (CTP) programme was introduced in Senegal in 2000, and placed under the responsibility of a dedicated national agency within the Ministry of Childhood and Early Years. A high profile was given to the programme, which began as a presidential initiative and was declared a national priority.

The stated aim of the CTP programme is to ensure that all Senegalese children from conception to the age of six – and most particularly marginalised children – “have access to adequate services ... to ensure that the needs of each are provided for in a positive and healthy environment.”

The CTP approach is deliberately holistic. It includes a wide range of services and support for both children and parents, and gives a formal role to mothers and grandmothers from the community, alongside trained teachers. The CTP programme includes education covering intellectual, psychomotor, social and emotional development; health services with a focus on preventative health; nutrition, including meals, supplements and advice; IT and multimedia education; financing for small income-generating projects; advice and support to parents, families and communities about early childhood development; and ‘sponsorship’ of new mothers and young children by other community members. Whilst the national agency sets policy and creates new CTP centres, management then passes to the community.

Source: Pakistan Coalition for Education

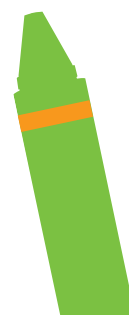
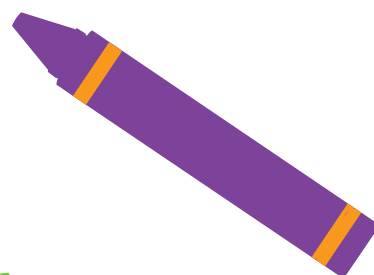


The introduction of the CTP programme was part of an undeniably dramatic increase in early years services in Senegal. According to official figures, the number of children receiving public or community-provided ECCE increased by more than six times from 2000 to 2010, from fewer than 23,500 children to more than 154,500. This was not all due to the CTP programme: alongside the creation of 427 CTPs there were more than 400 new community daycare centres, and a more modest (but still significant) growth in public nursery schools.

This is not to say that the programme is without obstacles: the emphasis on community management can sound admirable but the transfer of centres and responsibilities has happened with minimal support from the state, with an impact on equipment, maintenance, etc. Much is expected of the teachers in this model: yet they are unpaid volunteers. These kinds of concerns raise the question of whether this model is being funded sufficiently to ensure that it is effective and sustainable.

But arguably the more significant achievements of the CTP programme are in the holistic approach and in the emphasis on rooting learning in a context both of community support and of local cultural knowledge. There is an attempt to marry contemporary scientific and technological knowledge – in educational approaches, in IT education, and in current pilots of English and maths teaching via IT – with a firm foundation in local values and culture – for example, through the use of local languages and the engagement of grandmothers in recounting folk stories and legends. Attempts to replicate this model are now being made in parts of Mali, Gambia and Liberia.

Source: Coalition des Organisations en Synergie pour la Défense de l'Éducation Publique (COSYDEP), Senegal; Government of Senegal



Peter Moss

Emeritus Professor of Early Childhood Provision

Institute of Education, University of London

What story should we tell?

There is a story that many tell about early childhood education and care, as a silver bullet that can solve all the grand challenges we face today, a human technology that, if applied correctly and at the right time, will bring extraordinary returns on investment and cure our many problems and discontents – without having to disturb the injustices and inequalities that run rampant in our world today. For the problems and the discontents, so the story goes, are really caused by individual deficits and failings and can be fixed by working on young children, exploiting them as human capital and making of them redemptive agents for a smooth-running neo-liberal nirvana.

I think early childhood education and care matters, and have done so for 40 years. But I would tell another story to say why, for I find the first story naive in expectation, controlling in practice, and impoverished in outlook. Instead of factories where human technologies are applied to produce predetermined and standardised outcomes, I would talk of early childhood centres (but also schools) as vital public institutions in democratic, cohesive and solidaristic societies: public spaces – or forums – where children and adults encounter each other as citizens and engage together in projects of social, cultural, political, ethical and economic significance. They are, if you will, collective workshops capable of many, many possibilities, including inter alia: constructing knowledge (learning), identities, values; providing family support; building community solidarity; sustaining cultures and languages; improving health and well-being; developing the economy; promoting gender and other equalities; resisting injustice and exclusion; challenging and deconstructing dominant discourses and creating new ones; practicing democracy and active citizenship etc. etc.. Some of these possibilities we may know in advance, others will emerge unexpectedly from

encounters in the public space; for what we are talking about are multi-functional children's centres, responsive to their local communities and open to what Roberto Unger calls 'democratic experimentalism'.

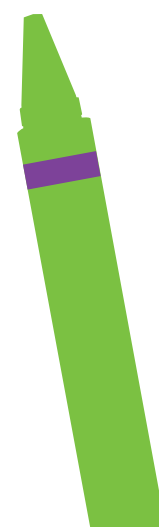
Of course, there is nothing inevitable about this story. It is just one of many stories we can tell about early childhood education and care, and in a democratic politics of education we should tell many stories and decide collectively which one to follow. And having chosen, we have to work very hard to make and sustain our choice, especially a story such as mine: much easier, some might say, simply to adopt the silver bullet story and get technicians to apply standard technologies. Easier perhaps, but far less telling for the silver bullet story has no place for those crucial ingredients of context and diversity, complexity and potentiality, uncertainty and subjectivity, participation and dialogue, surprise and wonder.

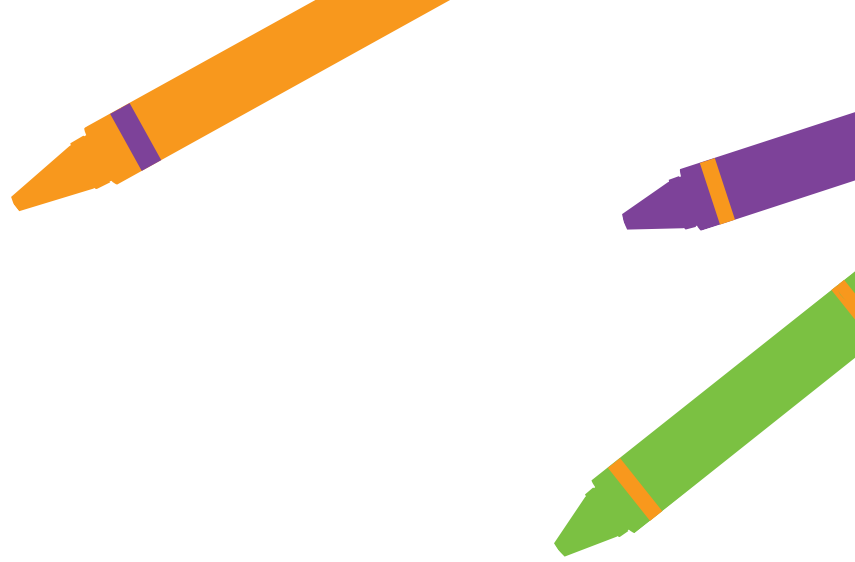
“...what we are talking about are multi-functional children's centres, responsive to their local communities”

V. Conclusions and recommendations

The following conclusions aim to outline general points that may inspire positive change.

- States must create or strengthen public networks for the promotion of effective early childhood care, both for children themselves, and in support of families, recognising that the wellbeing of families and the wellbeing of children are intrinsically related due to the family's role as primary care-giver.
- All States, in their role as guarantors of rights, should produce public policies and their implementation guidelines relating specifically to children in their early years.
- National policies should focus on the reduction of child poverty. To this end, low income families should be able to rely on income support, and access to health and education.
- It is vital that plans for early childhood education cross the line that exists between plans and concrete reality. This requires the adoption of indicators that measure changes taking place in the target population. This should be developed through establishing a monitoring and evaluation system that will not only measure impact, but could also encourage participation of the entire community through social transparency and accountability. Civil society coalitions play 'watchdog' roles here and they should be supported by donors.
- Systems used for registration and recording information must develop strategies to include data that indicates risk of discrimination or lack of access to education, for example, gender, ethnicity, disability etc. Data currently collected cannot be disaggregated in this way, which can hinder state action, and also hide the true situation of at-risk populations.
- In order that the plans and programmes operationalised are a reflection not of an idealised version of childhood, but of the diverse realities children face, studies must be undertaken that will account for a variety of worldviews whilst also stimulating debate that encourages participation in the development of policies capable of addressing urgent structural issues.
- Diversity and interculturalism are two vital elements in all educational processes, and should not be missing from the classroom. Teacher training should equip staff to create and strengthen respect for diversity and for other identities.
- The right to early childhood care and education should not be linked exclusively with improved economic development, human capital theory or any other approaches that lead to the marketisation of the human right to education.





GCE's campaign demands

The Global Campaign for Education 'Rights From the Start' campaign, which began during Global Action Week on Education in April 2012, is seeking a combination of commitments from donor and developing countries in order to realise the rights of children to early childhood care and education.

Teacher and curriculum development

- Governments must ensure higher standards for teacher education in early childhood and ensure that the qualifications of early childhood and child-care professionals are on a par with those of primary school teachers and beyond.
- Improve curricula and pedagogy in tune with childhood, valuing play, affection, cooperation, talent and creativity as well as fostering self-esteem and active methods that take into account children's view points.
- Encourage education ministries to ensure that adult education as well as all formal school curricula contains messages important to future parents on health and nutrition and the essential need for children to receive stronger cognitive and psychosocial support and stimulation from birth.

Removal of discrimination

- Take measures to overcome all forms of discrimination and guarantee quality early childhood care and education provision to boys and girls, children from poor and disadvantaged backgrounds, children with disabilities and those in emergency situations and marginalized communities.
- Reducing inequalities with integrated interventions that target the many risks to which vulnerable children are exposed.

Increased investment in early childhood care and education

- Governments must promote investment in ECCE and set up the framework for delivery of early childhood programmes that include civil society.
- Ensure governments set up an ECCE policy-coordinating mechanism to ensure that the programmes, activities and budgets of the various sectors involved in ECCE work together
- Governments should ensure that at least 1 percent of GDP is dedicated to early childhood services, including significant budget contributions to both pre-primary education and early primary school, and should report transparently and clearly on spending.

Donor governments:

- Donors must honour commitments to support all countries to achieve Education for All, especially Goal One.
- Raise awareness of the long-term national development gains in terms of poverty reduction of investment in ECCE.
- Align funding with national needs ensuring that those who lag behind the most get the most help.
- Ensure focused attention on early primary is incorporated as a critical piece of education reform to address the equity and learning crisis.
- Increase funding to the relevant sectors involved with ECCE to promote comprehensive ECCE programming.

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