Early Childhood Development: An Evidence-Based Strategy to Achieving Equality

What Future Do We Want for Young Children? The Role of Early Childhood Care and Development in the Post-MDG Agenda

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Overview

Part 1: Introduction to Key Topics

1. What is Early Childhood Development (ECD)? & Why is it important?
2. MDGs and progress to date

Part 1: Introduction to Key Topics

Early Childhood Development (ECD)
Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
What is Early Childhood?
What is Early Childhood?

- Conception to 8 years of age
- Young children grow more rapidly during the early years than at any other time in life:
  - Physical Health, Well-Being, and Motor Development
  - Social & Emotional Development
  - Approaches Toward Learning
  - Language, Literacy & Communication
  - Cognition & General Knowledge
  - Moral, Religious, & Ethical Development
ECD Policy Framework

Britto, P.R., Cerezo, A., & Ogbunugafor, B. (2008)
Why ECD is Important?

Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment

![Graph showing rates of return to human capital investment over age.]

Figure 1. Academic Abilities of Entering Kindergartners by Family Income

![Graph showing academic abilities of entering kindergartners by family income.]

Supportive services in early childhood change the trajectory of development, with long-lasting outcomes. The magnitude of this effect depends on:

- Quality of services
- Breadth of services
- Timing and intensity
- Responsiveness to individual needs

![Graph showing trajectory of positive development and delayed development.]

Cognitive Social Development

Trajectory of Positive Development

Trajectory of Delayed Development

Birth Age 3 Age 5 Age 9 Age 14 Age 24

Source: Charles A. Nelson, University of Minnesota
Brief Overview of MDGs

• The UN Millennium Declaration was signed in September 2000
  – 191 countries
  – Investment in development
MDG Successes

- Poverty rates have decreased
- Reductions in child and maternal deaths
- Access to safe drinking water has improved
- Vast majority of children enroll in primary school
- Improvements in gender parity in education enrollment
There is little to no mention of ECD in the Millennium Declaration.
Decline in survival rates masks the uneven progress leaving behind the marginalized – ECD parenting programs can a channel to reach these vulnerable populations and improve child outcomes

61 million out-of-school children are the hardest to reach – ECD programs are the most beneficial for those hardest to reach
Part 2: ECD a Strategy for Post-2015 Development Agenda
Framework for post-2015 Agenda

UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (2012) *Realizing the World We Want for All.* Report to the Secretary-General
Inclusive Social Development

Intergenerational Gender Equality: Girl Child; Older Sibling Sister; Mother
Inclusive Economic Development

- Intergenerational Poverty Reduction
- Lowered Health System Burden
- Improved Education System Internal Efficiencies
Sustainability: Environmental Sensitivity

- Love for the environment is developed during the early years
  - Biophilia: the love for nature is developed and sustained in early childhood

- Early childhood pedagogies can build an appreciation for the environment that is life long
  - Fiji Early Learning and Development standards include empathy for flora and fauna

(Kellert, 2012) *Birthright*
Security: Peace Building

Yale University- ACEV (2012): Ecology of Peace: Early Childhood Development
A Pathway to Peacebuilding
Good Governance: Health, Education & Protection
ECD Strategies for Achieving Human Rights, Equality & Sustainability
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