



Australian  
National  
University



WHAT FUTURE DO WE WANT FOR  
YOUNG CHILDREN?

THE ROLE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-MDG AGENDA

Children's Policy  
Centre  
Crawford School of  
Public Policy

ANU College of  
Asia & the Pacific



Plan International Australia

# SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW

**Thursday 14 March 2013**

9.00am – 5.00pm

**Springbank Room**

Level 1, JG Crawford Building 132, Lennox Crossing, ANU

This symposium on early childhood care and development (eccd) and its role in the post-mdg agenda is bringing together academics and students, civil society organisations, government, and donors. The symposium will be an opportunity to discuss, debate and inform current direction in policy, practice and investment in eccd focusing specifically on the post-mdg agenda and the key themes of inclusion, equity, security and social protection.

## Presenting Partners

### Plan International Australia

Plan is one of the oldest and largest children's development organisations in the world. Plan works with communities in 50 developing countries and raises funds to support work in 21 countries like Australia. By actively involving children, and working at a grassroots level with no religious or political agenda, Plan unites and inspires people around the globe to transform the world for children.

### Children's Policy Centre Crawford School of Public Policy

The Children's Policy Centre (CPC) is based at the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National University. The centre undertakes innovative, inter-disciplinary research on a range of issues relating to children's policy. The CPC is committed to securing the human rights, well-being and best interests of children. Through its research, contribution to policy and engagement in public debates, the CPC seeks to foster a paradigm shift in the way in which children and children's issues are dealt with in policy, whereby children are genuinely considered to be full and valued members of society.

# SYMPOSIUM AGENDA

- 8.30am **Registrations**
- 9.00am **Welcome and introduction**  
Dr Sharon Bessell Director, Children's Policy Centre, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU  
Ian Wishart CEO, Plan International Australia
- 9.30am **SESSION ONE: The world we want: ECD and equality**  
Chaired by Nicole Rodger, Program Manager, Plan International Australia
- Early childhood development: An investment in equality**  
Dr Pia Rebello Britto Assistant Professor, Yale University
- ECD as a focus for cross-sectoral coordination**  
Professor Charles Super Professor of Human Development and Paediatrics, University of Connecticut
- 11.00am Morning tea
- 11.30am **SESSION TWO: The world we want: ECD and inclusion**  
Chaired by Dr Sharon Bessell ANU
- 1+1 is 11!**  
Divya Lata Early Learning and Education Advisor, Plan Asia Regional Office
- Integrating cultural and developmental agendas for socially inclusive early childhood education**  
Professor Sara Harkness Director, Centre for the Study of Culture, University of Connecticut
- 1.00pm Lunch
- 1.45pm **SESSION THREE: The world we want: Security and social protection**  
Chaired by Charlotte Blundell Senior Education Specialist, Pacific Division, AusAID
- ECD and Security and Peace: Young children, emergencies and disaster risk reduction: Community level approaches**  
Professor Jacqueline Hayden Foundation Professor, Macquarie University
- Social protection and early childhood development in low- and middle-income countries: Unexplored potential**  
April Williamson, Travis Snow and Kedar Mankad Yale University
- 3.15pm Afternoon tea
- 3.45pm **SESSION FOUR: Reflection and the way forward**  
Chaired by Mari Fitzpatrick Policy Research Advisor, Plan International Australia
- Panel with speakers: providing a short take-home message regarding post-2015 directions for ECCD followed by audience discussion with a focus on the interface between international and domestic ECCD experience and practice  
Professor Charles Super University of Connecticut, Professor Sara Harkness University of Connecticut, Divya Lata Plan Asia Regional Office, Dr Pia Rebello Britto Yale University, Professor Jacqueline Hayden, Macquarie University
- 4.30pm **Closing panel**  
A review of the way forward and what Australia can do as a global citizen in terms of ECCD  
Dr Pia Rebello Britto Yale University, Charlotte Blundell AusAID, Nicole Rodger Plan International Australia, Dr Sharon Bessell ANU
- Rapporteurs**  
April Williamson, Travis Snow and Kedar Mankad Yale University

# SPEAKERS

## Welcome

### **Dr Sharon Bessell**

**Director, Children's Policy Centre, Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU**

Dr Sharon Bessell is Director of the Children's Policy Centre and senior lecturer at the Crawford School of Public Policy, has a research focus on social policy for children, including issues of children's participation and citizenship; child protection; support for children without parental care; children, communities and social capital; child labour; poverty and children's livelihoods; and quality education. Dr Bessell has a keen interest in research methodology, and has published widely on undertaking research with children. She has worked in Australia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific as a researcher, with non-government organisations and as a consultant. Her research has focused primarily on Australia, Indonesia and Fiji.



## Introduction

### **Ian Wishart**

**CEO, Plan International Australia**

Ian Wishart is one of Australia's most experienced professionals in international development. His involvement extends from the grassroots of rural development to senior leadership roles in international non-government organisations. Since 2001, Ian has been CEO of Plan in Australia and has led the organisation through a period of growth and renewal in Australia, lifting its profile and support. Ian is a member of the Executive Committee of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) which is the peak body for the international aid sector. Ian holds a Science Degree from ANU and a Graduate Diploma in Education from Canberra University.



## Dr Pia Rebello Britto

**Assistant Professor, Child Study Centre; Lecturer and Fellow, McMillan Center for International and Area Studies, Yale University**

Dr Pia Rebello Britto is known internationally for her work in the area of early childhood policy and programs. She is an Associate Research Scientist at the Yale Child Study Center faculty at the Zigler Center for Social Policy and Lecturer at the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University. She has worked with governments in over 40 countries on developing integrated systems for early childhood using a standards approach. In addition, she is also working with several countries on formulating and implementing national policies for the wellbeing of young children. In particular, she is investigating the role of governance and finance of national systems of health and education in achieving equity, access and quality. Dr Britto has also been involved in several early intervention program evaluations in Africa and Asia, including a 6 country evaluation of an innovative approach to improve school readiness. Other aspects of her international work include the conceptualisation of a measurement model for quality early childhood services and measuring and implementing the school readiness paradigm – ready children, ready families, and ready schools. Dr Britto is currently leading a multi-disciplinary group of global scholars in the examination of effective strategies to improve parenting practices and child outcomes in ECD. She has published extensively on ECD and presents regularly at international fora. She is currently co-Chair of the Global Consultative Group on Early Child Care and Development Policy Committee and a contributor and editor of the newly published *Handbook of Early Childhood Development Research and Its Impact on Global Policy*.

Further information: [ghi.yale.edu/faculty/detail/pia\\_britto](http://ghi.yale.edu/faculty/detail/pia_britto).



## Professor Charles Super

**Professor of Human Development and Paediatrics, University of Connecticut**

Professor Charles Super is Professor of Human Development and Pediatrics at the University of Connecticut, and is Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Culture, Health, and Human Development. He received his BA in Psychology from Yale University, and a PhD from Harvard University in Developmental Psychology. His training in child clinical psychology was completed at the Judge Baker Guidance Center in Boston, and he has been listed in the Registry of Health Providers in Psychology. He served as Field Director of the Child Development Research Unit at the University of Nairobi, Department Head for Human Development and Family Studies at the Pennsylvania State University, and Dean of the School of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Connecticut. He was recently elected to membership on the U.S. National Committee for the International Union for Psychological Science. Dr Super's research focuses on the cultural regulation of development in infancy and childhood, and on interventions to promote the health and wellbeing of young children. He has participated in research and interventions in more than a dozen countries, and is the author of numerous scientific articles and chapters. He is Editor (with Pia Rebello Britto and Patrice Engle) of the *Handbook of Early Childhood Development Research and Its Impact on Global Policy*, published with support from UNICEF and the Society for Research in Child Development; and Editor (with Sara Harkness) of *Parents' Cultural Belief Systems: Their Origins, Expressions, and Consequences*. In 2009, he received (jointly with Sara Harkness) the Society for Research in Child Development's Award for Distinguished Contributions to Cultural and Contextual Factors in Child Developments.



## Divya Lata

**Early Learning and Education Advisor, Plan Asia Regional Office**

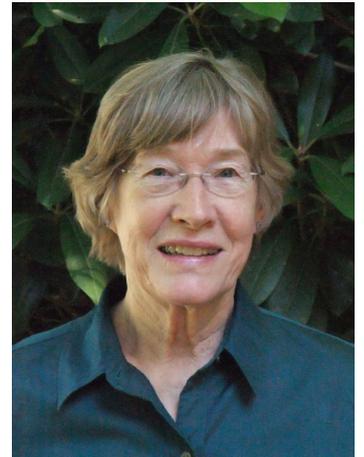
Divya Lata is currently the Early Learning and Education Advisor with Plan Asia Regional Office. She specialises in Disability Rights, Education and Early Childhood Development and has been working in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and countries of the former Soviet union (CEE/CIS region). She has had leading senior managerial and strategic advisory roles in well-known international organizations, notably the Aga Khan Foundation, the Save the Children Fund, the Open Society Foundation and Plan International. She has advanced child-focused programs in diverse long-term as well as fragile contexts and is strongly driven by a rights based approach in her work. Ms Lata currently serves as a trustee of the Child to Child Trust, London and is a Director on the Board of the Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood, Singapore.



## Professor Sara Harkness

**Director, Centre for the Study of Culture, Health and Human Development,  
University of Connecticut**

Professor Sara Harkness is Professor of Human Development, Pediatrics, and Public Health at the University of Connecticut, where she also serves as director of the Center for the Study of Culture, Health, and Human Development. This year, she is on leave from UConn as a Jefferson Science Fellow, serving in Washington DC as a senior advisor to programs in education and health at USAID. She earned a BA magna cum laude and with high honors in Comparative Literature from Brown University, and a PhD in Social Anthropology from Harvard University; subsequently, she was an NIMH post-doctoral fellow in psychology at Harvard, and earned a Master of Public Health degree from the Harvard School of Public Health. Her research focuses on how the culturally structured environments of children and families, in interaction with biological factors, shape children's health and development. She has been editor of *Ethos* (the journal of the Society for Psychological Anthropology) and is on the editorial boards of the *International Journal of Behavioral Development and Child Studies in Diverse Contexts*, as well as being editor of the *Temperament Newsletter*. In 2009, she received (jointly with Charles Super) an award from the Society for Research in Child Development for Distinguished Contributions to Cultural and Contextual Factors in Child Development. In addition to her cross-cultural research, she has also been involved with intervention programs to help disadvantaged families and youth in Connecticut, and has served on federal review panels for the National Institutes for Child Health and Development, the National Science Foundation, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, and the Agency for Health Research and Quality. She is the editor (with Charles Super) of *Parents' Cultural Belief Systems: Their Origins, Expressions, and Consequences*, as well as author of many journal articles and chapters.



## Professor Jacqueline Hayden

**Foundation Professor of Early Childhood and Social Inclusion, Early  
Childhood Institute, Macquarie University**

Professor Jacqueline Hayden is Foundation Professor of Early Childhood and Social Inclusion at the Early Childhood Institute, Macquarie University. She specialises in ECD analyses and developments at global and international levels, with a special focus on young children who experience emergency situations and/or fragile contexts and the role of the early childhood sector in terms of social change and economic development(s). She has worked in majority world or under resourced contexts on most continents. Professor Hayden has researched, consulted to, and/or directed emergency and development programs for young children around the globe including in Rwanda, Haiti, Cambodia, Namibia, eastern Europe, Timor Leste and the Asia Pacific Region. She has recently returned to academia after spending several years as the manager for social inclusion and respect for diversity at the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Netherlands. Her most recent book is the co-authored from *Conflict to Peace Building: The Power of Early Childhood Initiatives* (with P. Connolly). She is also a contributor to *Handbook of Early Childhood Development Research and Its Impacts on Global Policy*. For further information on research interests and publications see:



## April Williamson

### Masters Scholars, Yale University

April Williamson is pursuing an MA in International Relations at Yale, where she focuses on international development and concentrates regionally on Africa. April recently spent the summer of 2012 as a visiting researcher at the University of Cape Town's Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU), where she conducted research on short-term household change and its demographic correlates in South Africa. April's current research with Pia Britto, Travis Snow, and Kedar Mankad explores the link between social protection programs and early childhood development outcomes. At Yale, April also serves as the Executive Director of the *Yale Journal of International Affairs* and has worked as a research assistant to Sir James Wolfensohn, ninth president of the World Bank Group. April graduated with highest distinction from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2007 and spent the '06-'07 academic year studying African literature, civilisation and development, as well as Wolof and French language, at Université Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis, Senegal. While there she also conducted field research on the Koranic education system and volunteered with a youth services NGO. After graduating, April returned to Senegal with the Peace Corps. During her two-year service, she worked as a rural environmental and preventive health educator and as a regional volunteer leader.



## Travis Snow

### Masters Scholars, Yale University

Travis Snow is a second year Masters student in international relations at Yale University focusing on children's issues in international development. A fellow at Yale's Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy, Travis has researched issues related to early childhood development and social policy in low and middle income countries, conditional cash transfer programs in Latin America, and refugee education in the United States. Prior to his graduate studies, Travis served two years as a United States Peace Corps volunteer in Guatemala. In the Peace Corps, Travis worked with rural elementary school teachers developing a health education program in indigenous communities in the Guatemalan highlands. Travis has worked as a preschool teacher and has led trips for teenagers throughout Latin America. Travis graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Johns Hopkins University in 2005 with a BA in International Relations and Latin American Studies.



## Kedar Mankad

### Masters Scholars, Yale University

Kedar Mankad is a second year Master's Candidate in International Relations at Yale University's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs. His area of focus is agriculture, food security, and development. Prior to his matriculation at Yale, Kedar served for two and half years as an agroforestry volunteer with the US Peace Corps in rural Morocco. In Morocco he was building the capacity of local agricultural cooperatives, and creating and managing income generating projects for farmers and pastoralists. He previously worked in community development in underserved high schools in New York City. Currently, through coursework at Yale he is serving as a consultant to USAID's Office of the Global Climate Change Coordinator on researching ways to ensure smallholder farmer's livelihood security in commodity supply chains. He is also consulting with the US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency on building climate resilience in coastal communities. His current research is also focused on urban and peri-urban agricultural systems, and the viability of sustainable intensification in the developing world. Kedar became interested in ECD through Dr Britto's course last spring, and has since been working with the team on developing the systematic review on ECD and social protection programs.



## Nicole Rodger

### Program Manager, Early Childhood Care and Development, Plan International Australia

Nicole Rodger is a Program Manager for Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) at Plan International Australia and has worked in the field of international community development since 2005. With a background in politics and law (BA/LLB Monash University), she is interested in rights based approaches to development and inclusive practice that reaches the most marginalised. She helps to manage a range of ECCD projects for Plan in South Asia, South East Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa. These projects have an emphasis on holistic, integrated, community led approaches which seek to prove that 100% of disadvantaged children in targeted high poverty communities can achieve child wellbeing indicators and school success through effective and quality early childhood supports.



## Charlotte Blundell

### Education Advisor for the Pacific, AusAID

Charlotte Blundell is one of AusAID's senior education specialists. She has spent 15 years with the agency, involved with the delivery of aid in South Asia and the Pacific. She was a primary author of the recent publication *Helping the World's Poor through Effective Aid: Australia's Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework to 2015-16* and the 2005 publication *Better Education: A Policy for Australian Development Assistance in Education*. She is the co-chair of AusAID's Special Interest Group on early childhood development and Australia's representative on the Pacific Regional Council for Early Childhood Care and Education. Charlotte holds a Masters in International Development from the Australian National University and a BA in psychology.



## Mari Fitzpatrick

### Policy Research Advisor, Plan International Australia

Mari Fitzpatrick is the Policy Research Advisor at the Plan International Australia. She has over fifteen years' experience working in international development with a volunteer sending agency and with local NGOs in rural China.

# PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

## **Dr Pia Rebello Britto: Early childhood development: An investment in equality**

Social and economic inequality is an endemic problem around the world. The common, symptom-based responses have proven to be ineffective –eradicating these inequalities requires a focused effort on underlying mechanisms. Systemic approaches, often appear dissimilar to relief actions, but they are more effective, and longer-lasting. Effective, lasting, systemic solutions to the global challenge of social and economic inequality lie primarily in early childhood development (ECD). This paper will present evidence that ECD is not only a cost-effective way to improve the health and education of the next generation; it also empowers women, reduces violence, promotes environmental sensitivity, and holds the key to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. While addressing ECD might appear far removed from the issue of inequality, it is this systematic solution that addresses the cause and not the symptoms of inequality.

## **Professor Charles Super: ECD as a focus for cross-sectoral coordination**

Delivering the promise of ECD requires the participation of many sectors, including multiple government ministries, regional and local authorities, NGO's, commercial agencies, and community organisations. It also requires that all these entities successfully engage with the family, which is ultimately the primary access point for any direct influence on the child. As more agencies join in the effort, however, there is increased risk of service chaos, wasting resources and diluting effectiveness. In this presentation, I will (1) present several organisational models for intersectoral coordination that have been implemented to address this problem; (2) describe advances in the understanding of risk and protective factors for children's development, and how this newer understanding can foster effective coordination; (3) argue that innovative research strategies – especially using 'mixed-methods' – are needed to move the evidence base beyond 'Does ECD work?' to 'What factors promote ECD effectiveness?'

## **Divya Lata: 1+1 is 11!**

This presentation will draw upon the growing recognition of persons with disabilities as holders of human rights to advocate for investment in Inclusive Early Childhood Development systems. It will highlight the vision of persons with disabilities as competent, equal and active stakeholders in humanity, as advanced by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, alongside evidence around risks, protective factors and interventions that contour the developmental potential and life-long capabilities of young children. The two together offer a transformative approach to nurture the potential, dignity and self-worth of every child and lay the foundations of a vibrant and just society.

## **Professor Sara Harkness: Integrating cultural and developmental agendas for socially inclusive early childhood education**

A continuing challenge to international assistance programs in early childhood development is how to integrate local perspectives with 'best practices' derived from experience in other cultural settings, in order to achieve socially inclusive learning opportunities for all children. In this presentation, I will first review cross-cultural variability in parents' ethnotheories and practices of care related to young children, and the challenges they pose for ECD programs. Examples of successful programs will be discussed as they illustrate the kinds of cultural adaptation needed to support ECD programs that speak both to local goals for developing children's competence and new needs for helping children to master learning skills for school and beyond.

## **Professor Jacqueline Hayden: ECD and Security and Peace: Young children, emergencies and disaster risk reduction: Community level approaches**

Much attention is being paid to disaster risk reduction (DRR) as a critical component of emergency intervention. Children aged 0 – 8 years tend not be included in national and regional plans for DRR, despite being one of the most vulnerable groups in emergency and disaster situations. In a recent study, researchers from Macquarie University worked with teams from four nations within the Asia-Pacific region to identify how to determine and incorporate DRR needs for young children at national, community, and program levels. This presentation describes the findings from the research project including the development of a set of tools which are currently being promoted by UNICEF and other organisations for use around the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

## **Kedar Mankad, Travis Snow, April Williamson: Social protection and early childhood development in low- and middle-income countries: Unexplored potential**

There has thus far been relatively little inquiry into the relationship between social protection and early childhood development (ECD). This study utilises a systematic review methodology to examine the effects of social protection programs on ECD outcomes in low- and middle-income countries. This systematic review approach allows us to draw policy-relevant conclusions about the impact of social protection on ECD, by: identifying the social protection functions and programs most effective in promoting ECD; investigating potential linkages between social protection, education, and health in promoting ECD; and finally, considering which social protection programs can be scaled up to achieve equity in child outcomes, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations.



# CONTACT US

**Children's Policy Centre  
Crawford School of Public Policy  
ANU College of Asia and the Pacific**

JG Crawford Building 132  
The Australian National University  
Canberra ACT 0200

T +61 6125 6562  
E [cpc@anu.edu.au](mailto:cpc@anu.edu.au)  
W [cpc.crawford.anu.edu.au](http://cpc.crawford.anu.edu.au)

**Plan International Australia**

Level 18 / 60 City Road  
Southbank VIC 3006

T 13 75 26 or +61 3 9672 3600 (outside Australia)  
E [info@plan.org.au](mailto:info@plan.org.au)  
W [plan.org.au](http://plan.org.au)