

## Helpdesk Report: Early Childhood Development and Livelihoods

Date: 14 December 2010

**Query:** What evidence is there regarding the positive impact that ECCD has beyond the core benefits for children, particularly on the ability of women to engage in livelihoods activities and or work. Are there examples where ECCD is being implemented where this issue has been looked at, or where livelihoods impact has been a specific objective of ECCD programmes?

**Enquirer:** DFID Burma

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#### 1. Overview

There is some evidence that Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) has increased women's workforce participation:

- In Rio de Janeiro, poor women who used free childcare services outside the home were able to increase their income by as much as 20 percent.
- Evaluation of the Colombian programme *Hogares Comunitarios* found that mothers, on average, were 31 percent more likely to work.
- Another Colombian Home Day Care Programme reported 20 percent of women changing their employment status.
- Positive evidence is also found in Guatemala and Kenya.

The majority of the literature on ECCD comes from an education viewpoint and is child-focussed. It notes that parent or family carers are more able to work or study due to childcare programmes. The point generally seems presumed and further explicit evidence or explanation is not given.

Another body of research comes from more of an economic viewpoint and focuses on women's increased labour force participation but not always quality of childcare. This research often uses the term childcare rather than ECCD which may be interpreted differently and should be taken into account for the purpose of this query. Some childcare programmes did note development aspects but this was not always explicit. Some discussion of this is found in de Los Angeles-Bautista (2004). He notes that in Thailand and Viet Nam they try not to make a distinction between community childcare centres and kindergarten to promote all care as ECCD services.

There seems to be an absence of research or programme examples focusing on child development and livelihood improvements together.

One type of ECCD programme discussed in the literature is mother-training programmes. Evaluations of this as part of the *Turkish Early Enrichment Project* found, as a result, that mothers enjoy:

- higher intra-family status
- greater decision-making
- more role sharing
- better communication with their husbands
- long-term results.

Investing in young children is found to be economically efficient. It is more cost-effective to implement preventive measures and support for children early on than to compensate for disadvantages as they grow older. Research in the US found returns to dollars invested as high as 15-17 percent. Returns to ECCD in India have been found to increase the net present value of lifetime wages by US\$29 per child while costing US\$1.70.

Other benefits to ECCD beyond core benefits for children include:

- greater gender equality
- greater encouragement of women to participate in higher education or training to prepare for workforce participation
- improved maternal depression rates.

## 2. Women's labour force participation

### **Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Garcia, M., Pence, A. & Evans, J.L., World Bank, 2008

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079922573/DID42700\\_PUB\\_Africa\\_ECD.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079922573/DID42700_PUB_Africa_ECD.pdf)

Recent trends have increased the need for early childhood development policies and programmes. Today, the challenge is to provide good beginnings for the 130 million children under 6 in Sub-Saharan Africa. Urbanisation, with attendant changes in household structures, has reduced the role of extended family members as caregivers. The growing number of working mothers with young children has increased the demand for non-parental childcare.

This book draws from views of authors and watchers of African trends. It presents the case for investment in early childhood development based on new findings from neuroscience. The book includes several results of evaluations of the impact of programmes designed to promote children's care and development in various countries.

For families, ECCD programmes involving parents can improve parent-child relationships, "free up" older siblings from care-giving responsibilities to attend school, and enable mothers to participate in the paid workforce and increase the family's income. For families to benefit, it is essential to assure that ECCD services are affordable as well as accessible.

In Rio de Janeiro, poor women who used free childcare services outside the home were able to increase their income by as much as 20 percent. Studies in Brazil, Guatemala, and Mexico further show that access to childcare also "frees up" older siblings—usually girls—to

return to school or go to work.

Beginning in the 1940s, plantation owners established day-care centres for African children on agricultural plantations. These centres provided custodial care for children while their mothers worked.

### **Does Child Care Pay?: Labor Force Participation and Earnings Effects of Access to Child Care in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro**

Deutsch, R., IADB, 1998

<http://www.iadb.org/res/publications/pubfiles/pubWP-384.pdf>

This study undertakes an econometric analysis of data on childcare services usage and labour force participation drawn from a survey of 1720 households in 15 “favelas” or slums, in Rio de Janeiro. The analysis examines the impact which access to childcare services has on female labour force participation and final earnings.

Study results indicate that increasing the supply of low-cost childcare in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro would increase mothers’ labour force participation and their probability of utilising public care. When they work, women who avail themselves of external childcare services are also likely to earn more. Estimates for earnings elasticities for public childcare usage range from negligible negative effects up to a 20 percent increase in earnings, dependent upon model specification and sample definition. The positive effect on earnings is least for women who work more than 40 hours per week.

In conclusion, public financing (but not necessarily direct provision) of childcare services offers not only long-run hopes for poverty reduction, through improving the welfare and school-readiness of children in poverty, but also offers a more immediate pay-off in the form of increased employment and earnings opportunities for the mothers who are able to utilise such services.

### **The Promise of Early Childhood Development in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Vegas, E. and Santibáñez, L., World Bank, 2010

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079922573/ECD\\_LAC.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099079922573/ECD_LAC.pdf)

Some ECCD interventions are specifically designed to allow mothers to enter or remain in the workforce. The average rate of female labour force participation in Latin America is around 60 percent, a rate that varies widely by country. Very low levels of female participation in the workforce among the poorest households are particularly troubling, given the strong relationship between family income and ECCD outcomes. Most of the programmes examined in this chapter do not specifically focus on supporting women’s participation in the labour force, with the exception of *Hogares Comunitarios* programme (HCP), in Guatemala. HCP provides childcare for working parents. Evaluations found the programme provided a good work opportunity for caretaker mothers, who tended to be older than the average beneficiary mother.

Programmes that improve access to early childhood care and education can also have important effects on female labour force participation. For example, an evaluation of the Colombian programme *Hogares Comunitarios* suggests that the programme increased by 31 percent the average probability that mothers would work in the weeks prior to the study interview. In Argentina, assessment of the impact of the expansion of preschool infrastructure on maternal employment found a positive impact on the probability of maternal employment of between 7 and 14 percentage points.

With respect to the reasons why women's labour participation rate is so low in many countries, a 2007 joint study by the World Bank, the Chilean National Service for Women (SERNAM), and the Inter-American Development Bank found several contributing factors in Chile, including: (i) lack of access to quality education and training opportunities, especially for low-income women; (ii) family structures, specifically, families with a larger number of children under the age of 15 in which mothers serve as the principal childcare providers; (iii) shorter workdays for women than for men with the same employer and shorter periods of continuous employment, together with longer periods of inactivity and unemployment; and (iv) traditional cultural values and attitudes about gender roles, which constrain women's employment outside the home in the country.

In Jamaica, certain parenting programmes that have been rigorously evaluated also show benefits for the mothers, such as reduced maternal depression rates.

### **The Effect of Early Childhood Development Programs on Women's Labor Force Participation and Older Children's Schooling in Kenya**

Michael M. Lokshin; Elena Glinskaya; Marito Garcia, 2000, World Bank

<http://elibrary.worldbank.org/docserver/download/2376.pdf?expires=1291982672&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=B0F8942C3D5BDA9AB46827F743EA08A3>

The number of Early Childhood Development centres in Kenya increased 500-fold between 1963 and 1995 as a response to a rising involvement of women in the labour market and an increase in the number of single-parent households. Analysis of the 1995 Kenya Welfare Monitoring Survey shows that 30 percent of rural households in Kenya are headed by women, and over half of all prime-aged (15-45 years old) married women work in salaried occupations.

The government's annual expenditures on ECCD programmes can exceed its expenditures for one year of primary education, according to various estimates in developing countries. Such expensive investments in small children compete for resources with many other programmes and projects, and it is important to provide policymakers with information that allows them to judge which interventions are most beneficial.

The availability of affordable ECCD facilities may offer indirect benefits including increased participation of mothers in market work and increased school participation of older siblings (usually young girls) who are freed from the childcare chores. The impact of these benefits on the welfare of households with small children can be substantial. Freeing mothers for market work may improve household income status, and since households with young children and female-headed households tend to be poorer, an increase in the availability of ECCD services is expected to help alleviate poverty.

The results of this paper further contribute to the understanding of the interdependency of households' decisions about labour supplies of its members, childcare arrangements and schooling, and suggest policies that lead to investing in all involved. Research finds that the money spent in developing countries to educate girls is far more productive than any other social sector outlays.

This paper develops a simple theoretical framework of household utility maximisation that yields empirically testable implications for the relationship between the price of childcare and household behaviour. The estimations reveal that mothers' decisions about participating in the labour market are sensitive to changes in both wages and the cost of childcare. The estimations of the joint model of the household demand system confirm the predictions that economic incentives have a powerful effect on the work behaviour of women with children in Kenya.

### **Mother's Work Participation and Children's Cognitive Development in the Philippines**

Sonny Agustin and Socorro Gultiano, Princeton, 2008

<http://paa2008.princeton.edu/download.aspx?submissionId=81660>

This article investigates the effect of mother's work participation on early childhood development. It finds that mostly it does not affect childhood development and in some cases increases cognitive development, this may or may not be due to day-care or nursery.

### **Women, Work, and Early Childhood: The Nexus in Developed and Developing Countries. (2 parts)**

Choi, S-H, UNESCO, 2002

Part 1 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001373/137378e.pdf>

Part 2 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001373/137379e.pdf>

The first part covers the relationship between women in the labour force and government policy for supporting young children and their working parents. The hypothesis is that the relationship may not be so pronounced in developing countries as it has been in developed countries, given the differing employment status of working mothers in the two regions. Data from developed countries are presented and discussed, while data on female employment in developing countries and a discussion of implications for early childhood and family support policies is presented in part 2.

### **The Economic Benefits of investment in ECCD**

[http://www.ecdgroup.com/pdfs/The\\_Economic\\_Benefits\\_of\\_Investment\\_in\\_ECCD-16\\_05\\_2001-10\\_33\\_53.pdf](http://www.ecdgroup.com/pdfs/The_Economic_Benefits_of_Investment_in_ECCD-16_05_2001-10_33_53.pdf)

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development. World Bank, 1997

Many early childhood education programmes are often childcare programmes as well, permitting increased labour force participation by women and freeing older siblings (usually girls) to learn and earn at a higher level. In many cases, women without access to childcare and development alternatives are unable to consider employment in more economically productive jobs outside the home because they must care for young children. An evaluation of the Colombian Home Day Care Programme showed that 20 percent of the women with children in the programme changed their employment status after placing their children in childcare.

## **3. Other benefits of ECCD**

### **Early Childhood Care and Development Programs: An International Perspective (Draft not to be cited or quoted)**

Browning, K., The High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2006

[http://www.bernardvanleer.org/files/crc/4%20Kimberly\\_Browning.pdf](http://www.bernardvanleer.org/files/crc/4%20Kimberly_Browning.pdf)

Interventions can raise the status of mothers in the home and community.

By providing quality ECCD programmes, mothers are able to enter the labour force which often encourages them to participate in higher education and training to prepare for life in the labour force.

The *Turkish Early Enrichment Project* includes a mother-training programme. A four year investigation found significant effects on the mothers. Mothers were found to enjoy higher intra-family status, greater decision-making, more role sharing, and communication with their

husbands. They had greater satisfaction in their current life situations and positive expectations for the future. A second study, after seven years, showed that the mother training produced better long-term results than any of the educational programmes. This may be because the educational nursery schools did not have sufficient levels of enrichment to exert long-term influence.

(The study referred to above is available by subscription to Science Direct. **Long-term effects of early intervention: Turkish low-income mothers and children**  
Kagıtcıbası, C. Sunar, D. and Bekman, S. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 22, 4, 2001 <http://bit.ly/fVgJ9V>)

#### **Investing in disadvantaged young children is an economically efficient policy**

Heckman, J., University of Chicago, (2006)

[http://jenni.uchicago.edu/Australia/invest-disadv\\_2005-12-22\\_247pm\\_awb.pdf](http://jenni.uchicago.edu/Australia/invest-disadv_2005-12-22_247pm_awb.pdf)

This US report finds early interventions for disadvantaged children promote schooling, raise the quality of the workforce, enhance the productivity of schools and reduce crime, teenage pregnancy and welfare dependency. They raise earnings and promote social attachment. Focusing solely on earnings gains, returns to dollars invested are as high as 15-17 percent.

#### **4. Related documents**

#### **Strong Foundations, Early Childhood Care and Education, EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007 Summary**

UNESCO, 2007

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001477/147785e.pdf>

This summary says that ECCD is important because affordable, reliable childcare provides essential support for working parents, particularly mothers. Investment in ECCD yields very high economic returns, offsetting disadvantage and inequality, especially for children from poor families. It is also important in:

- reducing social inequality
- challenging gender stereotypes
- supporting early language development
- facilitating transition to primary school

The report suggests that it is more cost-effective to institute preventive measures and support for children early on than to compensate for disadvantages as they grow older.

Historically, childcare for young children was introduced in Europe to either address the needs of poor working mothers or provide an enriched pre-school education for middle-class children.

Parenting programmes have a positive impact on mothers as well as children. Evaluation of *The Community Mothers Programme* in Dublin, Ireland, shows significant beneficial effects for both mothers and children in terms of self-esteem, interaction and support for the child's learning experiences.

Economic returns to ECCD investment are found. Evidence is mostly from the US but evidence from developing countries is slowly emerging. A pre-school health programme in Delhi increased average school participation by 7.7 percentage points for girls and 3.2 points for boys. The same programme would increase the net present value of lifetime wages by US\$29 per child while costing only US\$1.70. In Bolivia, a home-based programme had

benefit/cost ratios between 2.4:1 and 3.1:1, with higher ratios for at-risk children; analyses in Colombia and Egypt find similar ratios. In all cases, the impact of ECCD is stronger for children from poor families than for more advantaged children: participation results in lower dropout and repetition rates in primary school.

### **The Compelling Case for ECCE (EFA report Chapter 5)**

UNESCO 2007

<http://www.unesco.org/education/GMR/2007/chapter5.pdf>

There is little in this chapter of the EFA report that discusses the positive impact that ECCD has on parents' livelihood activities.

It does discuss The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 18 calls for parties to provide assistance to parents and legal guardians in their child-rearing responsibilities, and to make childcare services and facilities available, especially to working parents.

### **Early Childhood Care and Education in South-East Asia: Working for Access, Quality and Inclusion in Thailand, the Philippines, and Viet Nam**

de Los Angeles-Bautista, F., UNESCO, 2004.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001378/137867e.pdf>

In Thailand, the types of childcare provision available have been increasing, as has the number of community-based nurseries and childcare centres, even in rural areas. These centres have become a vital lifeline for working parents with infants and very young children, but due to very limited resources their childcare services are minimal. Fortunately, full-day kindergarten classes in the public school system in Thailand are available, and actually serve as the most affordable alternative childcare support system for most 4- and 5-year olds.

Some people make a distinction between the primary purpose of these various ECCD programmes, differentiating between the limited care-giving function of the childcare centres and the dual purpose of the kindergarten that aims for both early childhood care and education. Kindertartens or pre-school classes are seen as important preparatory programmes for children's entry into primary school and are thus more closely associated with Early Childhood Care and Education, but there are those who consider even informal childcare programmes as provisions for ECCD.

The lines are becoming increasingly blurred as more and more childcare centres and early childhood programmes are appearing where daily activities are actually based on and closely resemble early childhood curricula for 2- and 3- year-olds. On the other hand, while the original goals of the kindergarten were primarily linked to preparing for "school readiness" and therefore the teaching of skills deemed necessary for entry and adjustment to primary-level education, there is often also a childcare element in the role of teachers and staff, who are thus responding to the family's needs for a full-day childcare support programme.

In Viet Nam, the relatively high rate of women's involvement in the labour force indicates that in both urban and rural areas there is a clear need for childcare support systems for the mothers of the 11 million children aged under 6 years.

It is reported that only 45 percent of 3- to 6-year-olds are cared for at home. Current forms of provision for early childcare and education include: crèches, community childcare centres and day-care centres (for infants up to three years); home-based childcare (for groups of five to 15 infants up to two years); and kindertartens and pre-schools (for three- to six-year-olds). As a matter of official policy, there is a deliberate effort to de-emphasize or remove the

distinction between the childcare centres and kindergartens and to promote all of these as ECCD services that are part of one developmental continuum. Kindergartens have always been defined in terms of both education and childcare while the day-care programme is also expected to provide early learning experiences.

### **Early Childhood Care and Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: What Would It Take To Meet the Millennium Development Goals? (Working document draft)**

Jaramillo, A. & Mingat, A., ADEA, 2006

[http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/adea/biennial-2006/doc/document/PL4\\_2%2BMingatJaramillo\\_en.pdf](http://www.adeanet.org/adeaPortal/adea/biennial-2006/doc/document/PL4_2%2BMingatJaramillo_en.pdf)

This report outlines an interesting case study. The Kushanda early childhood project in north-east Zimbabwe began in 1984 as part of a local development plan. It included an agricultural production co-operative and expansion of employment opportunities. By the end of 1992, 138 pre-schools had been established, and the programme is currently run by a federation of parents' associations. Due to distances, the programme adopted, from the beginning, an intensive on-site training on ECCD for women who had already been trained as farm health workers. To ensure the practical aspect of the training programme, the training of mothers/pre-school teachers, was only possible were ECCD centres existed.

## **5. Additional information**

### **Author**

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