Early Childhood Development in Public Policies - Why and How?

Inter-American Symposium
Understanding the State of the Art in Early Childhood Education and Care – The first three years of life
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Social Policy is defined as a series of public policies designed to promote social development, undertaken by a variety of actors through a range of instruments”

WB Concept Note – New Frontiers of Social Policy-2005
Puplic Policies – supply Sides

• Economic Growth Strategies
  – pro-poor (pro-young)-targeted infrastructure development – governance

• Improve service delivery
  – health, education and social protection

• Supply-side bottle necks – improved human capacity
Public Polices – demand side

• A multi-sectoral approach
  – Investment in a day-care programs can be co-targeted with increased participation of girls in education

• A targeted cash transfer approach
  – Providing cash to the poor – with or without a conditionality
Purpose of the presentation

• To discuss
  – Why should ECD be included in the series of all public policies? Both on supply and demand sides
  – How to include ECD in Public Polices?
Continuum of Child Development

- **Prenatal-1 month**
  - Survival, Gender Socialization

- **1 month-3 yrs**
  - Nutrition security, Vaccine introduction

- **3-6 yrs**
  - Gender Socialization, psychosocial interaction, play, school readiness

- **5-8 yrs**
  - Adjustment to formal school and learning of three R's while maintaining good health. (Classes 1-2)

- **8-11 yrs**
  - Completion of primary schooling and gain of improved life chances. (Classes 3-5)
UNICEF Conceptual Framework - revised

Child Survival Growth & Development

Nutrient Intake

Freedom from Diseases

Food

Care/
Stimulation

Health

Basic causes
Poverty, Status of Women

Enabling Environment
What is the result?

- 200 Million Children are not achieving their full developmental Potential — The Lancet ECD Series-2007
- Children are left home alone — Jodi Heyman — Forgotten Families
- Domestic violence and Child abuse? — UN Study
- Millions of children are OVCs
- Exclusion —
The inter-generational cycle of poverty

Arrows show high probabilities, no strict causality

Poor parents → Weak parenting skills

Under-nourished children; school drop outs → Excluded youth

The cycle continues.
ECD helps break the inter-generational cycle of poverty

Arrows show high probabilities, no strict causality

MACROECONOMIC & SOCIAL POLICY LOWER PROBABILITIES

ECD LOWERS PROBABILITIES

Weak parenting skills

Under-nourished children; school drop outs

Excluded youth

Poor parents
Enabling environment - integrating programs around the family

- Caregiver/Child
- Knowledge/Skills
- Services
- Resources
Opportunidades - Mexico

• Since mid-1997 combats poverty
  – Cash to mothers – on condition to send daughter to school
  – Positive results in educational achievements and nutritional status of the children
• Little attention to early childcare and development to improve psychomotor and cognitive development
Brazil’s Bolsa Escola & Poupanaca-Escola

• Since 1995:
  – Provides support to families with children 7 to 14 years.
  – Stipend to the families on condition that student passes his/her grade

• No attention to psycho-social and cognitive development in early years –
Chile - Solidarios

- Created in 2002 - to reach 225,000 families
- Three components
  - Family support – CTT
  - Monetary Subsidiary
  - Priority access to other social protection programmes
- Little attention to ECD…
Wawa Wasi- Peru

- Spontaneous community organization” in response to the lack of childcare services for working mothers.
- Government provides basic financing and trained supervision.
- *Is one of the good examples for – demand side policy*
Subsidized day care - Canada

• Addresses the needs of poor families and children in Canada -
• Sustained employment opportunities for parents
• Quality care for children – especially coming from single parent families (77%),
Social Protection System for all Children in Chile

Starting April 2007
“Chile Crece Contigo”
A Social Protection System for Children

– Universal coverage for all children.
– Will cover all children under 10 years with especial attention to those from 0 to 3 years and their family.
– Will focus in children from 40% poorest households which represent 60% of all Chilean children and their families.
“Chile Crece Contigo”
Components

1. Educational TV and radio programs for parents and children.
2. Legislation improvement to better reconcile work and family life.
3. Reinforcement of prenatal care with learning materials for new mothers and fathers.

Encouragement of fathers' involvement
“Chile Crece Contigo” Components

4. Humanized services at childbirth

5. Reinforcement of health controls for newborns with group activities for parents and early diagnosis and treatment for children with special needs.

6. Special attention for children from the 40% most poor with subsidies and free childcare provision when necessary.

7. Special needs children and families support.
Comprehensive programs and services

Age 3
- Health/nutrition
  - ACSD/IMCI
  - Care for Dev. Parenting Programs
- Community ECD Centers
  - Parenting Programs
  - ACSD
  - Nutrition, Health

Age 5
- Nutrition, Health Parenting Programs,
  Community Based ECD
- Group learning opportunities primary school-child to child

Social protection and Welfare polices – family empowerment

Good governance – Community Participation

National Social and Economic Policies
We should invest in ECD-

• **Human/Child Rights Argument**
  – Every child has the right to development

• **Scientific Argument**
  – Brain development

• **Economic Argument**
  – higher return and productivity

• **Equity Argument**
  – ECD can help breaking the poverty cycle
Scientific Evidence for the Importance of Early Childhood

• Early years are precious
  – Stimulation & Support (Halfon, Shulman, & Hochstein, 2005)
  – Prevention & Intervention (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)

Cost and impact of ECD

- PIDI: $1
- PEIP (high risk): $1
- Head Start*: $1
- Abecedarian: $1
- Chicago Child Parent Center: $1
- Perry Preschool: $1

Cost and Total Estimated Benefits
Economic Evidence for the Importance of Early Childhood

Rates of Return to Human Development Investment Across all Ages

- Pre-school Programs
- School
- Job Training

Economic Investment: Current Situation

Optimal vs. Actual Investment

Still many to cover!!
WHY ECD is not fully in Public Policies?
Not fully scaled up after all these years?
What is needed???
What is needed?

• State of the art Policy Research Analysis
  – Theoretical framework
  – Attention to social settings
  – Estimation of cost, and affordability,
  – Exploring financing and legislative mechanisms,
What is needed?

- Useable information
  - Causes for developmental delays.
  - Thresholds – how much is good enough
  - Effect size
- Interpretation of the results into the language of policy makers
What is needed?

- Clear links to Global and Local Agendas

- Capacity gap analysis and strategies for capacity development

- Links to other policies – social protection, labor (ILO), housing, environment….

- Alliance Building and partnership
UNICEF’s Approach

• Integrating ECD interventions into;
  – National Development Plans, PRS, MTFs,
  – Most importantly into demand-side policies

• A state of the art policy research studies for impact assessment and analysis of the public policies on children, families and communities

• Developing global ECD indicators to monitor progress through regular HH studies

• Partnering with others for a stronger policy advocacy to scale up ECD
Thank you..