

Early Childhood Matters

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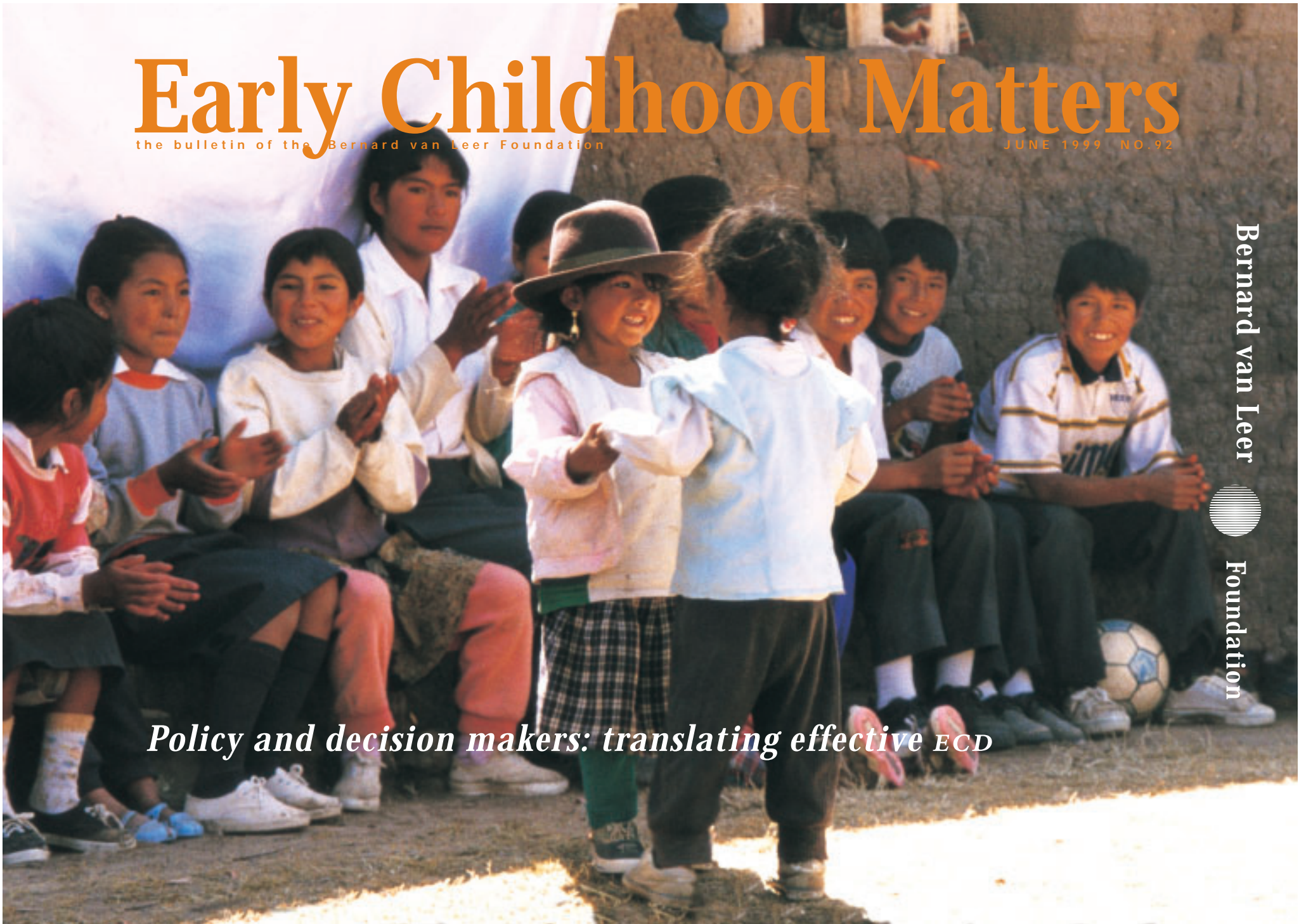
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Policy and decision makers: translating effective ECD



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Back cover: South Africa: *Everyone can make pictures*
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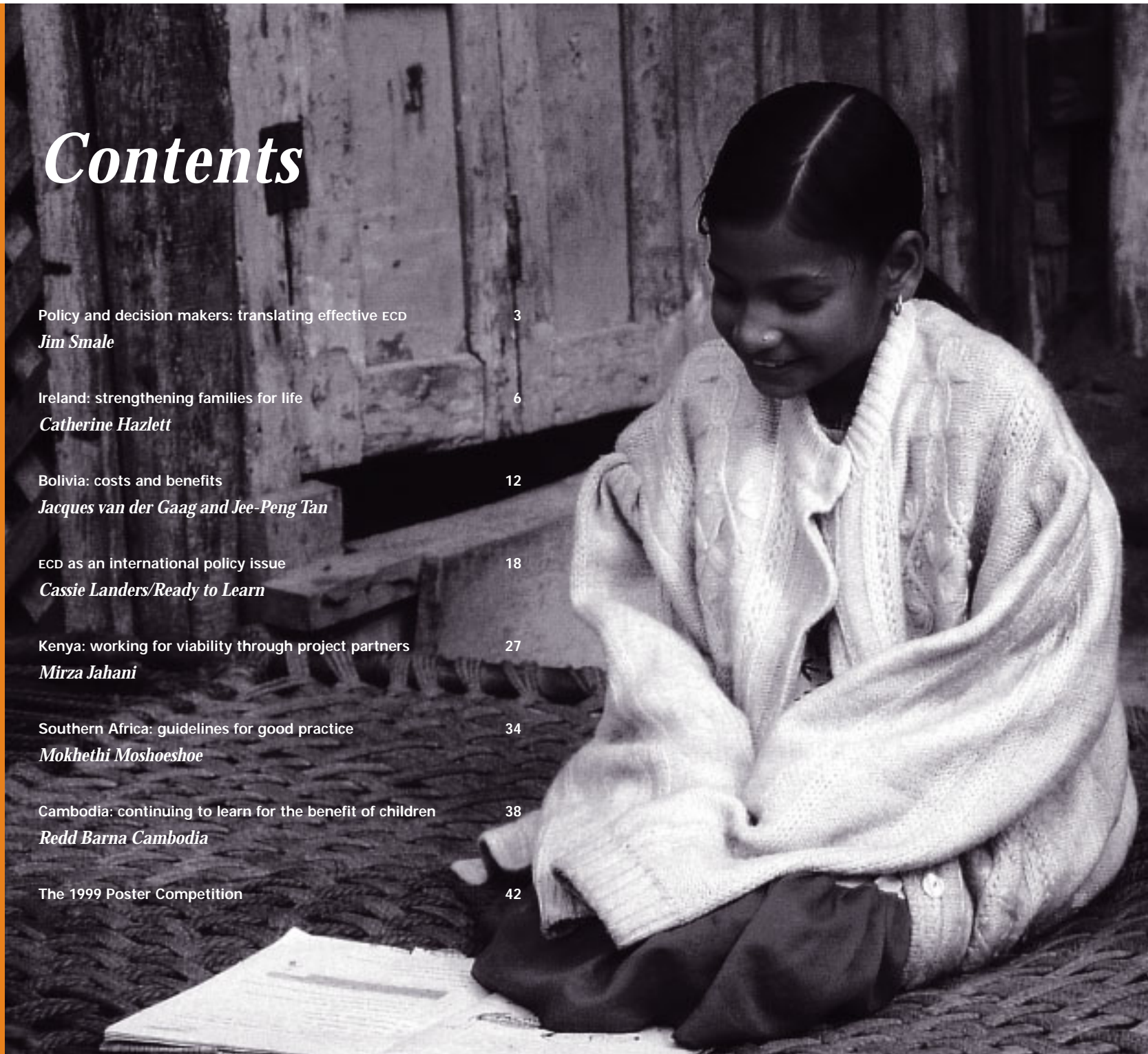
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Policy and decision makers: translating effective ECD

It's a rest day in the village. A small girl is busy learning to draw with a stick in the earth. She got the idea from her older brother who happened to be playing a simple mathematical game with his friend at the time. Soon her brother will teach her the game because he has learned to help her learn. Meanwhile, the girl is making patterns, sometimes carefully controlled, sometimes scribbled so quickly that the dirt flies. When she has finished, she might show her work to her mother or father, knowing they will discuss it with her, praise her, encourage her. Her parents are proud of her and they know she is doing well. For example, they know she is the right height and weight for her age in this community, and that she has had all her inoculations: there's

a chart on the wall of their house that they update regularly with the village health worker.

Today, her father is working with the girl's grandmother to complete some teaching materials that the local preschool teacher has asked them to make. These are about the memories the grandmother has of the old ways of gathering and preparing food, of treating common illnesses, of singing, dancing and celebrating, of filtering water. On Monday, the grandmother will lead the children out from the preschool that community members helped to build, through the village and into the surrounding countryside, bringing these traditions back to life – for the children and for herself.

In two years or so, the girl will move on to the primary school a few kilometres away. She'll be confident in who she is and what she can do in that new environment. And she will do well, often in ways that, a few years ago, her new teacher would have found hard to categorise or cope with.

Some time in the future, perhaps as she starts to take on some village responsibilities, she will learn that the environment in which she grew was influenced powerfully by remote policy and decision makers – those who, for better or worse, try to positively affect local economies, health and education provision, the supply of essential resources, the ability of people to provide the best for their children.

And she may be surprised to find out how long the list is. It includes people from national, regional and local governments and their agencies; non-governmental organisations; international financial institutions; international donors and grantmakers; and national and international lobbying groups. She'll recognise then that, on balance, the influences on her early childhood were positive, not least because those remote policy and decision makers were effective in what they set out to do. This edition of *Early Childhood Matters* shows how such people and their agencies – at international, governmental, regional and country levels – attempt to be effective, to have a positive influence on the lives of young children.



Zimbabwe: *Many hands make light work*
Centre for Development Information & Education
photo: Paula Nimpuno-Parente

Supporting families

Supporting families is one of the single most effective starting points for helping children enjoy the best possible start to their lives. Such support may include providing parents with the information they need; ensuring that the support they need is available; helping them gain the necessary skills; or improving the economic status of their family. It may be on a wide scale – for example, the support that governments can give by marshalling,

refocusing, supplementing and delivering the considerable resources that they control.

The first article considers the approach of the Irish government to providing that broad support. It established an independent Commission on the Family that spent a total of three years consulting, investigating, collecting and analysing information and ideas, and then devising practical ways of deploying existing and new resources effectively. As it did this, it took account

of what kinds of interventions had proved particularly effective. Notable here was its endorsement of the Community Mothers programme in which Family Development Nurses employed by the Regional Health Boards train experienced mothers to voluntarily support first time mothers. The Commission delivered its report – *Strengthening Families for Life*¹ – in the context of a new Programme for Government that was committed to a ‘families first’ approach in developing policies and services. The Commission’s recommendations included: broadening the remit of the Department of Social Welfare to include new responsibilities in family policy and services; the establishment of a Family Affairs Unit and the investment of carefully placed sums of new money. (page 6)

Effective investments

Supporting ECD costs money and that may invite the question ‘Is it only developed countries that can afford ECD?’ One answer is provided by the World Bank. Its endorsement of ECD programmes is based on a recognition of the importance of the early years not just for individuals – especially the

poorest – but for the direct economic benefit and future financial health of whole countries. As the article on page 12 shows, investments in the health and nutritional status of young children, and in their cognitive development, have multiple benefits. They range from a direct reduction in the number of children who suffer from ill health, to enjoying more productive lives as adults, to improving society by, for example, reducing crime rates.²

Many donor and support organisations have been involved in making ECD affordable by supporting the development of a huge range of highly effective, low cost approaches. They also look beyond providing direct technical support. An ‘Informal information exchange’ day organised by the Academy for Educational Development in November 1998, provided an opportunity for major players to compare notes about maximising their effectiveness. The article on page 18 shows that each has a range of carefully focused strategies while, overall, there is considerable diversity. It includes: identifying key objectives at particular stages of child development; social marketing campaigns; interventions to

break the cycle of poverty; improving monitoring and evaluation; supporting qualitative research; bridging the gap between the academic world and advocates; and supporting integrated development programmes.³

The article by Mirza Jahani, the regional representative of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in East Africa, shows why AKF supports a move away from stand-alone ECD programmes towards integrated development programmes. It is the one of the effective ways of guaranteeing the viability of the community in these remote and impoverished areas. His model also goes beyond development in individual communities. It includes the development of mutually supportive networks of communities that help to generate and circulate the wealth that can be used to pay for many necessities – including ECD programmes. Beyond this, the network can also serve as the basis for establishing or reinforcing grassroots structures through which regional and central government support can be lobbied for and channelled. (page 27)

The following article from Southern Africa offers Mokhehi Moshoeshe's own reflections on what it takes to build strong partnerships between the grantmakers and the grantees. He links these to the experiences of the Southern African Grantmakers Association as it developed its *Guidelines for good practice*. As he stresses, the point is to bring grantmakers and grantees into close and effective partnership. Few people are better qualified to discuss this: Mokhehi Moshoeshe has worked both in grantee organisations as well as on the grantmaking side. He is well aware of the practical difficulties that can arise, even when each side is of equal good will, and is committed to producing the same results for the same reasons in the same ways. (page 34)

The final article looks back over ten years of building on what was there, developing policies and making decisions in Cambodia. Once Redd Barna was able to establish a country office in 1988, it was able to start laying the foundations for long term sustainable development. The article indicates some of the difficulties in coming to the right strategic decisions in a particularly challenging context,

and stresses the need to be willing to learn. Policies and programmes have not remained static: they have evolved and developed to meet changing needs that are drawn from changing realities. (page 38)

Conclusions

This collection offers a spread of experiences from which many lessons emerge. For example, it shows the importance of maximising the potential of what is there – whether that is the synergy that can be developed between service providers, or the untapped talents of parents. It also shows that early childhood initiatives serve as excellent entry points to communities; and that they can also be excellent starting points for wider programmes: there is a motivation and commitment that can be built on. For example, parents – acknowledged and respected as first educators – are committed to enhancing the well-being of their children; and communities know that they must build towards a better future through each new generation. The challenge for remote policy and decision makers is – as Mirza Jahani puts it – to be a strong link in a chain

that stretches through to that little girl scribbling busily in the earth. Effectively, that means building strong partnerships with organisations who have, or can develop, close and productive relationships with the communities – partnerships that are built on trust, openness, realism, learning from each other and mutual respect.

The next edition

As part of the development of *Early Childhood Matters* I am very pleased to welcome a guest editor for the October 1999 edition: Ellen Ilfield. The edition will include a first report on the Foundation's 'Effectiveness Initiative', a major undertaking in collaboration with other key players, that will delve deep into 11 projects in 11 different countries to try to discover what has contributed to – or detracted from – their effectiveness. ○

Jim Smale Editor

notes

1. See page 6.
2. See page 12.
3. See page 18.

Ireland: strengthening families for life

Catherine Hazlett

Catherine Hazlett was Secretary to the Irish Government appointed independent Commission on the Family from 1995 to 1998. She is now a Principal Officer with responsibility for the newly established Family Affairs Unit in the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs of the Irish Government in Dublin.

This article highlights the work of the Commission on the Family that the Irish government entrusted with the task of producing a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the issues affecting families in Ireland; and with making wide-ranging recommendations across several different policy areas. The point is to make a positive contribution to developing coherent, progressive and effective policies for

families. The article is a celebration of processes of consultation and reflection that goes on to review some of the first results of implementation. It also includes boxes about two successful Foundation-supported projects. These illustrate effective work to benefit young children, their families and their communities: the Community Mothers Programme; and the Togher Family Centre.

The article is based on a presentation made at 'Supporting Families – A Consultation Conference' that was organised by the Family Policy Studies Centre in London in January 1999.

Strengthening Families for Life – the report of the Commission on the Family, published by the Irish Government in July 1998, is the outcome of a three year in-depth analysis of the situation of families in Ireland as we approach the new century. The work was undertaken by the Commission on the Family, an independent commission of family experts, established to recommend to the Government how families could be strengthened in carrying out their caring and nurturing roles for children in a rapidly changing social and economic environment.

The Commission's work was completed in the context of a new Programme for Government committed to a 'families first' approach to the development of policies and services. This included:

- a broadening of the remit of the Irish Government's Department of Social Welfare to include new responsibilities in family policy and services;
- the establishment of a Family Affairs Unit in the Department to coordinate family policy; and
- new investment for the development of a range of family services and support initiatives.

Family concerns – what families and others had to say

Early on, the Commission adopted an open and inclusive approach to carrying out its task. The objective was to encourage participation by all those who had an interest in families and the challenges they are facing today. The Commission received some 540 submissions from individuals, and families; from national organisations that work with families and children; and from voluntary and community groups. Leading experts in the fields of family law, the Constitution, childcare and services for children, employment

and workplace policies, parenting and healthcare also offered their advice and expertise.

Contributors wanted to promote family life and family well-being, and tackle the problems that families encounter while trying to carry out their functions. Children, their education, physical and emotional health and well-being, and the financial circumstances of their families were priorities. This was coupled with support for parents in providing for their families, in parenting and in meeting their childcare needs. The most prominent themes included:

Education – equipping young people for life; partnership with parents in educating children; the effects of educational disadvantage on children from poorer families.

Childcare – optimally developing children, particularly those in families with low incomes.

Child income payments – improving income support payments for families with children depending on social welfare.

Family in society – focusing on children, especially those living in poverty or with disabilities, and improving their health and well-being as societies change.

The role of the state – supporting families; funding services adequately; ensuring access to services for all; and putting in place the framework for the well-being of families and society.

The media – supporting values important to families such as stability and dependence on each other.

Family policy – a focus on support

The Commission concludes that policy needs to focus on supportive measures to strengthen families in carrying out

their functions and prevent difficulties arising for them; and sets out its views on the policy approaches that therefore should be pursued. As it does so, it makes wide ranging recommendations across several different policy areas.

Family well-being. Affirming parents as the primary carers of their children, the Commission sets out a number of essential principles that are fundamental to the development of a coherent, progressive and effective family policy. These are that:

- the family unit is a fundamental unit providing stability and well-being in our society;
- the unique and essential family function is that of caring and nurturing for all its members;
- continuity and stability are major requirements in family relationships – especially for children;
- equality of well-being between individual family members should be recognised;
- family membership confers rights, duties and responsibilities;
- a diversity of family forms and relationships should be recognised.

A strong institutional framework for family policy. The Commission seeks a radical new approach to the coordination of family policy and the delivery of family services built on these principles. Crucial to success is a strong institutional framework within which the State's response to families can be developed and delivered. Recommendations include:

- singling out family well-being as a matter of critical importance in the Government programme and in the Houses of the Oireachtas (the Irish Parliament); and
- the adoption by Government of a Family Impact Statement which would set out clearly the consequences of policies, programmes and services for families in all major fields of Government activity, central and local.



Togher Family Centre

Togher is a housing estate in Cork City, Ireland, comprising housing rented from the local authority. In 1988 the unemployment rate was 50 per cent, there was a high concentration of single parent families and a wide range of social problems. A Foundation-supported project was operated from 1989 to 1996, by Togher Preschool and Family Centre, that had been established in 1986 as an informal educational and development centre for the area. The premises were provided by the City Council and the Centre was run by the local residents. The project involved children ranging from zero to twelve years; their parents; community members; workers from various local and national services; and primary school teachers.

A range of formal and informal activities were run for adults and children, including a crèche for zero to three year olds; preschool for three to four year olds; after-school activities for four to twelve year olds; parenting and vocational activities for adults – including life skills, languages, sports, and crafts; forging links with relevant agencies; a home-school link programme; a primary school preparation programme for children, their mothers and their teachers; and annual Action Weeks on topics such as health, children's play and toys, partnership in education, and community involvement in management and all activities of the Centre.

The Centre operated with a strong sense of local identification and became a focal point for community life in the area. By mid-1992, parents were taking total responsibility for several programmes and were also closely involved in running other activities as well as the Centre itself. Over the following years, several new initiatives were undertaken including a mother and toddler group; a self-help community group to address the needs of families facing the increasing violence and vandalism in the area, and drama and storytelling. In July 1996, the Centre organised a men-only conference, the first of its kind, and built up a strong men's network.

Encouraged by courses run at the Centre, many members enrolled in further education. The Centre worked to establish a certificate course for childminders at University College Cork – the first in the country. It also maintained strong links with the five other family centres in Cork and played important roles in various advocacy groups in the city and nationally. It established relationships with a wide variety of statutory and other agencies and institutions and was able to secure funding commitments for its future existence. The Centre continues to thrive as an example of a community-based organisation, operated by local people, that is finding locally appropriate ways to meet the needs they determine for themselves.

Prioritising the most vulnerable families and their children. Within a policy approach that is empowering and builds on family and community strengths, the Commission makes a series of recommendations prioritising the needs of families who are trying to do the best they can for their children in difficult circumstances. These include:

- the development, with State support, of a nationwide network of Family and Community Resource Centres. The target is 100 centres over the next 4 to 5 years. The centres have their origins in community-based initiatives (see box). To this is coupled the transformation of local offices of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs into local 'one-stop shops' that provide a gateway to a range of services for families.
- Greater investment in family support work at a preventive level, including: the introduction in all areas of Family Support Workers to assist families who are experiencing difficulty in caring for children from toddlers to teens at times of crisis or

stress; and the extension of the Community Mothers concept (see box on page 11).

- Consistent support for families when a problem arises with a child's development, including better information and a single contact point with professional services.
- Close cooperative links between all local agencies, health boards, other state agencies and community-based services, in pursuit of shared family and community objectives.
- Exploring the potential of school settings for the delivery of health and social services to children and their families.

Preschool and primary school children.

The Commission recommends a substantial investment package for preschool and primary school children, including:

- an Early Years Opportunities Subsidy for three year olds, to be used in a wide range of high quality preschool settings. This is coupled to financial support for parents caring for their own children in their own home.

- A child-centred approach to the exploration of early years education issues.
- The development of quality standards in services for children, more support for community-based childcare and for childcare services for children with special needs.
- Further support for parents about parenting and family living through an accessible programme of parenting information.
- A recognition of a wide range of qualifications in relation to early years services to provide more choice for parents and increase opportunities for people to take up work with children.
- Greater investment in primary level education.

Educating young people for life. The report stresses the importance of the education system in preparing young people for family life and for parenthood, recommending a radical approach to the introduction of family life education throughout the school curriculum. The Commission also prioritises extra resources for the day to day running costs of schools in disadvantaged communities; action to

improve the educational facilities for children with disabilities; and action to help Traveller children to stay in education and to complete second-level studies.

Lone and teenaged parents. The Commission recognised the importance of supporting lone parents' participation in the workforce. It recommends increased access to education and training; one to one advice and assistance in finding a placement in training, education or a job; and help in arranging childcare. For teenaged parents it recommended a comprehensive policy response, involving:

- prioritising support services for teenage mothers; and more initiatives to keep them in school.
- Encouraging young people to defer parenthood by improving life choices through training and education, and by offering young women realistic hopes of success in education and in securing employment.
- Providing information to young people to influence their behaviour and their future choices.

- Strengthening and expanding the role of youth services.
- Providing greater resources for social, personal and health education programmes to reach young people who are out of school, including programmes for young men about sexuality and parenthood.

Promoting continuity and stability in family life. The Commission recommends that policy objectives should recognise the value of stability and continuity in family relationships, especially for children. Income support policies should contain no unnecessary obstacles to children having the advantages of the stability and security of a loving family. Also, family incentives to marry or to form long-term, stable relationships need more prominence. Joint parenting should be encouraged; and there should be better and more effective education and preparation for relationships, marriage and family life. Resources should also be invested in marriage and relationship counselling services to support marriage, provide family mediation and guarantee continuing parenting relationships for children.

Making progress

The Family Affairs Unit of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs started operations in July 1998. It has responsibility for pursuing the findings in the report of the Commission on the Family, following their consideration by the Government. The functions of the Unit also include coordinating family policy in cooperation with other Departments of State, undertaking research and promoting awareness about family issues. The Unit also has responsibility for the development of a number of family services and considerable extra resources have been allocated by the Government for the development of these services. Key developments include:

- a major programme of support for the provision of marriage counselling and child counselling. Several innovative programmes are being funded which provide bereavement support to children on the loss of a parent through death or through marital separation.

- The framework for a nationwide Family Mediation Service is now in place. The service is free and available to all couples who have decided to separate.
- This year, some 50 Family and Community Resource Centres throughout the country will be funded.
- A Families Research Programme has been launched to support independent research into family issues.

A parenting information programme is planned for later this year and a pilot programme to provide a local family information service through 'one-stop shops' is being developed.

The Unit has a series of family fora currently underway throughout the country, where voluntary and community groups get the opportunity to discuss the new services, and issues and concerns that they encounter in their work in support of families, with the Government Minister and with senior officials. The outcome of these discussions is proving to be of valuable

assistance in identifying priorities for family support developments.

Initiatives are underway in relation to early education and a White Paper (a statement of future government policy) is promised, addressing issues such as curriculum, catering for disadvantage, essential structures, and qualifications for teachers and childcare assistants. This will draw on the experiences and ideas that emerged from a specially convened National Forum on Early Education. The Forum took the form of multi-lateral discussions between representatives of major agencies involved in early childhood education. Investment in primary level education and in measures to tackle educational disadvantage has also been increased; while progress has been made in relation to the introduction of parental leave and investment in childcare projects in disadvantaged communities. A Working Group established to consider a strategy for childcare is expected to report in the middle of this year. This follows on from the publication in January 1999 of a report of an Expert Working Group on

Childcare under Partnership 2000 – a national agreement between Government and Social Partners. Work is underway on the development of a Children Strategy and extra resources have been allocated to family support services.

Conclusion

The report of the Commission on the Family sets out an ambitious agenda for policy makers and those who deliver family services. The publication of the report was widely welcomed by Government, social partners and family interests. Key priorities in the Government's pro-families programme cover areas highlighted by the Commission. The Commission's approach to some issues, as might be expected, continues to give rise to further analysis and discussion. This is a welcome development. In the words of the Chairman of the Commission, 'it would be presumptuous to assume that this report, though labelled 'final', is anything but a beginning ...'



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Community Mothers

The first Community Mothers programme in Ireland started in 1980 with Foundation support. It was operated by the Eastern Health Board (EHB) in partnership with the University of Bristol, England; and concentrated on an area of Greater Dublin in which families had been rehoused from inner city slums to new housing estates on the outskirts of the city, resulting in isolation of young families from wider family and friends. Many of the families were single parents, many of the mothers were still in their teens. Existing health services found great difficulty in reaching these parents and were alarmed by poor and unstimulating home environments, the poor health of children, their poor nutritional status and their poor school performance. The programme targeted infants and their parents; and the overall objectives were to establish and implement a home visiting programme to first time mothers in their homes, and institutionalise the programme in the EHB.

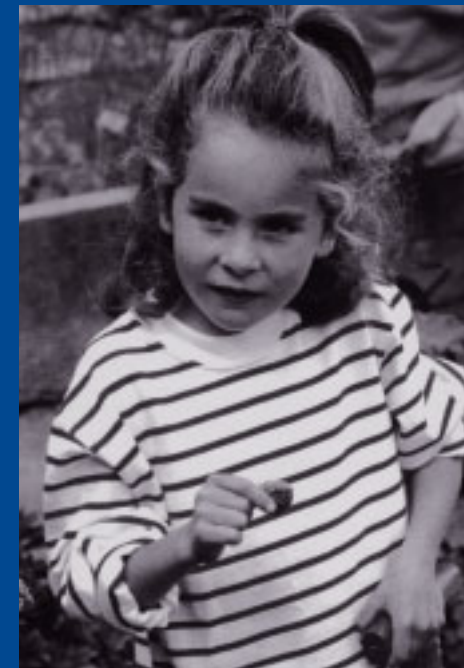
The programme retrained health nurses as Family Development Nurses (FDNs) to reorient them from routine medically-oriented short home visits towards longer monthly visits in which nurse and parents became partners in their efforts to benefit the child. From 1983 the programme focused on the training of mothers from local communities, by specially

recruited and trained FDNs, to be Community Mothers to new mothers. The Community Mothers made home visits monthly during the first 12 months of the child's life, using cartoon sequences to explain aspects of child development. Mother and toddler groups were also set up, as were breastfeeding groups and parenting courses. Complementing these were antenatal packs aimed at pregnant teenagers, and a regular newsletter for the Community Mothers – a forum for exchange of experiences, views and ideas among visited and visiting mothers.

During the 1990s the Community Mothers approach spread to other Health Boards across Ireland and, as a programme to benefit the very young children of families in disadvantaged areas, has proved extremely successful. Its methods, evolved over a number of years, ensured a peer-to-peer approach that was more appropriate and more acceptable to the target families than a medically-oriented professional approach. The women who became Community Mothers made many personal gains in self-confidence, skills and experience and, as time went on, most new Community Mothers were recruited from mothers who had been visited themselves. They formed and ran groups in their own areas, took advantage of further training

opportunities and initiated new activities such as a newsletter, antenatal care, breastfeeding and mother and toddler groups.

Effects on children were positive and mothers reported more knowledge of child development, nutrition and stimulation. Research showed that the beneficiaries of the Community Mothers programme were significantly advantaged compared with controls as regards parameters such as immunisation, nutrition of both child and mother, developmental stimulation, and mother's self-esteem and morale.



Bolivia: costs and benefits

Jacques van der Gaag and Jee-Peng Tan

Professor Dr Jacques van der Gaag was Chief Economist in the Human Development Network of the World Bank, and is now Dean of the Faculty of Economic Science and Econometrics at the University of Amsterdam. Dr Jee-Peng Tan is Principal Human Resources Economist in the Education Department of the Human Development Network of the World Bank.

This article is taken from The benefits of ECD programmes: an economic analysis, published by the World Bank. It deals with an analysis of the Proyecto Integral de Desarrollo Infantil (PIDI – Integrated Project of Early Childhood Development) in Bolivia that was designed to determine the likely economic benefits that could be expected by investing in this kind of early childhood development programme. Copies of The benefits of ECD programmes: an economic analysis are available from the World Bank, 1818 H Street NW, Washington DC 20433, USA. It is also available on the World Bank website: www.worldbank.org.

The PIDI Programme

The PIDI early childhood development programme consists of non-formal, home-based daycare centres where children receive nutrition, health and cognitive development services. Each centre serves 15 children, ranging from six months to six years of age. There is one mother/caretaker, who is assisted by one or two helpers, depending on the number of children under two in the PIDI. Children receive food that

provides 70 percent of their calorie requirements, and basic healthcare. They are immunised, weighed and measured; and go through a daily programme of games and age-specific exercises to stimulate their cognitive development.

They are from very poor households in peri-urban areas, many being recent migrants from rural areas. Social conditions are characterised by high levels of malnutrition, infant and child

mortality and disease, and by stunted psycho-social development. Primary school enrolment is very low. Repetition rates and drop-out rates are high. There is virtually no progression to higher levels of education.

The programme's objectives are:

1. to improve children's readiness to succeed in school and beyond by facilitating their physical, emotional, social and cognitive development;

2. to enhance the status of women by increasing their employment opportunities, and to expand their knowledge of health, education, and nutrition; and
3. to increase community and private sector participation in the social development process.

Direct benefits from service delivery

ECD programmes provide a number of services that directly benefit the

enrolled child and her family. They include: meals and healthcare, and childcare services. Additional direct benefits may include training the mothers (for example on a child's nutritional needs), which may be valued by these mothers for its own sake.

In general, it is not difficult to measure the value of the direct benefits. The value of the food benefit can be estimated as its market value. If healthcare services are provided, the cost of these services in, say, a clinic can provide an estimate of its value to the recipient. In the same way all other services that are provided directly to the child or her mother or parents can be included in the analysis.¹

If we restrict ourselves to the value of the two meals per day that PIDI children receive, the direct benefits would amount to USD 150 (about half of total service delivery costs²). Alternatively, we could use the total recurrent costs of the programme³ as a proxy for the service delivery benefits to the children and their families. This would put the direct service delivery benefits at about USD 300 per child per year.

Preparing the base-line data for the productivity analysis

This part of the analysis involves the benefits in the form of increased productivity resulting from more education. Therefore, we first need to characterise the Bolivian education system. There are four levels of formal education in Bolivia, from primary schooling to higher education, each of which requires a number of years to complete, and each year has a unit cost. For performance indicators we chose enrolment and repetition rates by level of schooling. Our data show that Bolivia has a long way to go before the education of the population reaches levels sufficient to compete successfully in an increasingly knowledge-based and competitive global economy.

Using data from a 1993 integrated household survey covering a representative sample of urban households, we estimated a wage equation that related differences in (the logarithm of) wages, to differences in education levels and years of experience. Our results imply that someone who completed primary education earns 42 percent more





Colombia: *One child is all children*

Fe y Alegria project

photo: Alejandro José Luna Fals

(is 42 percent more productive) than someone without schooling. Since primary school has five grades, this amounts to a modest 8 percent increase in wages per year of education. We also find that a college graduate earns on average 2.76 times as much as an unschooled wage-earner. The estimation results on experience imply that wages peak after about 35 years of experience.

Armed with this information, we can now quantify the benefits of ECD programmes that are manifested in increased productivity.

The impact of the PIDI Programme on social development

The first programme effect we look at is increased survival. Once a child is born she will grow up to become a productive member of society. The level of her productivity will depend on her physical and cognitive development during the early years of life, as well as on the investment in basic and higher education, and on subsequent investments in human capital, through continued learning and experience.

If the child dies prematurely, her future productivity, whatever its level, is lost for society. Preliminary results from the PIDI Programme suggest that the mortality of those enrolled is extremely low, less than one percent. This contrasts with the high child mortality rate – about 20 percent – of the target population in the absence of the ECD intervention. Once children are enrolled in a safe environment where life-threatening diseases (diarrhoea, severe malnutrition) are recognised and treated in time, children six months old or older have virtually a 100 percent chance to survive past the age of five.

Reliable information on changes in the nutritional status of enrolled children is not yet available. Possible changes in chronic malnutrition (stunting) may not be evident for years (they may not occur until the children reach puberty). Estimates on the programme's effect on acute malnutrition (wasting) also await future evaluation efforts.

Forty percent of children who initially enrol in the PIDI Programme show stunted psycho-social development.

After one year in the programme this percentage is reduced to 20 percent. After two years it is cut to five percent.⁴ If this result of tremendous progress in psycho-social development holds up under further scrutiny, it bodes well for the future chances of successfully educating PIDI graduates.

Before we can translate these results into monetary benefits, using the standard economics of education approach explained in *The benefits of ECD programmes: an economic analysis*, we need to translate these effects on nutritional status and cognitive development into expected changes in enrolment, drop out rates, repetition rates, and progression to higher levels of education. We are fortunate to have direct observations of changes in primary enrolment, but we have to turn to the literature (or to data on the general population) to obtain estimates for improvements in school performance.

Though the PIDI Programme is still young, the limited information available suggests that virtually all children who leave the programme at

the age of six enrol in primary school, up from 20 percent in the absence of the programme. Part of this large increase is probably the direct result of the improvements in the children's health and nutrition levels. Part, no doubt, also stems from parents' greater awareness of the benefits of education – a result of the parents' active participation in the programme.

Given favourable outcomes on nutrition and school preparedness (or psycho-social development), one would expect improvements in school performance, which are reflected in reduced drop-out and repetition rates and increased progression to higher levels of education. Due to lack of more detailed information, we will assume that PIDI graduates, once they are enrolled in primary school, will perform at the same level as the national average.

We worked with the relevant social indicators of two target groups, with and without the PIDI Programme (Scenario One and Scenario Two). Scenario One can be thought of as the result of a very narrow targeting effort

that reaches the most deprived segments of society. Scenario Two represents a part of society which already enjoys modestly favourable social indicators. The effects of the ECD intervention are therefore less dramatic than in the first scenario. We assume that the infant mortality rate and the primary enrolment rate can be improved to the national averages while progression to higher levels of schooling improves modestly. Results from both scenarios will give us a range for the cost-benefit ratios. We also assume that drop-out and repetition rates in primary school will be reduced by 50 percent.

The US Dollar value of increased productivity

We first estimate the net present value (NPV) of the education system as it currently functions for the target group (20 percent primary enrolment, 35 percent drop-out, 10 percent repetition, and no progression to higher levels of education). The 20 percent of children who do enrol have a higher level of productivity during their active lifetime than they would have had without this

education. We use the age-earnings function to estimate this increase in productivity. We calculate the present value of this increase by discounting it at an annual rate of seven percent. After subtracting the cost of education, we obtain the net present value of the current education system. For a cohort of 1,000 children in the target population, the current education system increases lifetime productivity by USD 264,517. These are society's profits from investing in the human capital of just 20 percent of 1,000 children in the target group – the net cost of education. This relatively high number is, of course, a direct reflection of the economic returns to primary education that were estimated from the wage-earnings function.

Next we reduce the under-five mortality from 200 to 10 per 1,000. This adds 190 productive people to the cohort, of whom 20 percent will increase their basic productivity by enrolling in primary education. This raises the net present value of the education system from USD 264,517 to USD 327,340. In other words, we could invest (USD 327,340 – USD 264,517) = USD 62,823 per

1000 high-risk children, just to increase their survival rates, and still break even. Given the relatively cheap measures that are available to prevent the premature death of a child (for example, a dose of oral rehydration therapy costs about two dollars) survival appears to be a good economic deal, on the sole basis of future productive contributions to society.

Increase in Net Present Value of productivity due to improved social indicators

Our study shows that, for Scenario One, enrolment in primary school increased from 20 percent to 95 percent. Even without taking into account increased survival, the net present value of this benefit (without increased survival and measured only by the increased productivity of the cohort) would amount to USD 1,256,458. We were also able to determine the combined impact of the programme on the lifetime productivity of 1,000 children in the target group. We did this by first combining the programme's impact on survival and enrolment; then adding a reduction in drop-out and repetition

rates; and then increasing progression rates for the target group to post-primary levels of education, from zero to the national averages. Under these assumptions, the combined impact of the programme has a net present value of USD 3,160,533.

A programme for preschool children that costs USD 3,160 per child, and that produces changes in the under-five mortality rate and in education indicators (in psycho-social development, and progress and performance in primary schools), would pay for itself in terms of higher lifetime productivity of the participants.

If a child enrolls for four years in such a programme, at USD 350 per year, for a total cost of USD 1400, the cost-benefit ratio of the programme, on the basis of this benefit alone, would be 2.07. In other words, the net present value of the productivity related benefits of the PIDI Programme, exceeds the initial investment by 126 percent. Scenario Two produces a cost-benefit ratio of 1.38.

Benefits other than increased productivity

Thus far, we have looked only at direct programme benefits and benefits that emerge through increased education. Among the latter, we looked at the effect of education on future productivity only. In this section we will look at one additional benefit that results from improved education: reduced future fertility.

We assume that because of the ECD programme, girls will enjoy six years education, instead of not enrolling in school at all. As a result of this, fertility could drop by 30 to 60 percent.⁵ Using the lower bound, and a current fertility rate of nine in the target group, the ECD programme could reduce the expected number of births in a group of 1,000 ECD participants (500 girls), from 4,500 (fertility rate is nine), to 3000 (fertility rate is six).

The alternative costs of one birth averted is USD 250. The economic benefits of the ECD programme, as a result of reduced fertility, amounts to $1500 \times \text{USD } 250 = \text{USD } 375,000$ for 1,000 children enrolled

in the programme. Since these benefits are savings on population programmes that would have to be implemented about 10 years in the future, the discounted value of this benefit amounts to USD 190,630 or USD 190 per enrolled child. It may seem contradictory to count both a death averted (reduced infant mortality rate) and a birth averted as programme benefits, but it is not. Under certain conditions, a reduction in fertility bestows benefits on society that go beyond the benefits in terms of improved mother's health or improved quality of life for the (fewer) children in the family. At the same time, once a child is born, it is beneficial for society to help her grow up and become a productive citizen. Both the increased levels of productivity and the lower number of births are benefits that result from ECD programmes.

Calculating the cost-benefit ratio of the PIDI Programme

On the basis of the results presented in our full study, we are now able to calculate cost-benefit ratios for the Bolivian PIDI Programme. We use the productivity gains as discussed for

Scenarios One and Two. We add the benefits (to the family) of direct services, as well as the benefits to society of reduced future fertility. We are unable to quantify all benefits. We use USD 350 as the total annual cost of enrolment in the ECD programme, and assume that children enrol for four years, for a total cost of USD 1400. The cost/benefit ratio of the PIDI Programme lies between 2.38 and 3.06, making it clear that the value of the investment in the PIDI Programme compares favourably with the so-called 'hard' sectors.

Conclusions

Investments in the health and nutritional status of young children, and in their cognitive development, have multiple benefits. They range from the direct reduction in the number of children who suffer from ill health, to enjoying more productive lives as adults; to improving society by, for example, reducing crime rates.

In our full paper we have tried to list all benefits of ECD programmes in a systematic way and quantify them in USD terms where feasible.

In general, ECD programmes are expensive. Moreover, ECD investments trigger further investments in human capital, thus increasing the total cost of the programme. We have compared the quantifiable benefits of one ECD programme, PIDI, with its costs, and obtained cost-benefit ratios between 2.38 and 3.06. This ratio is highest for interventions that target population groups whose social indicators show severe deprivation (for example, high infant mortality rates, high malnutrition rates, low school enrolment, poor school performance, and so on).

The combined impact of integrated ECD programmes result in a large increase in the accumulation of human capital. Because of this, ECD programmes as an investment compare favourably in terms of economic rate of return alone, with investments in the so-called 'hard' sectors.

Whether governments should invest in ECD is a different question. The answer depends in part on one's assessment of the societal benefits (the externalities) of ECD and in part on one's definition of what constitutes a just society. The

externality arguments in favour of public financing, are very similar to those for education in general.

We argue in the full paper that a strong case in favour of public financing (or subsidising) of ECD programmes can be made on the basis of a minimalistic sense of 'societal justice'. ECD programmes are likely to be most beneficial for children who grow up in the poorest households – the same households that cannot afford to pay for ECD services. This suggests that well-targeted public programmes can maximise society's benefits from ECD interventions while remaining affordable. Since a large part of the benefits of ECD are private benefits, it seems reasonable to expect better-off parents to contribute to the cost of this investment in the future of their children.

Societies cannot prosper if their children suffer. ECD programmes are a sound investment in the well-being of children and in the future of societies. By breaking the inter-generational cycle of deprivation, ECD programmes are a powerful tool to obtain the ultimate

objective of development: to give all people a chance to live productive and fulfilling lives. ○

notes

1. Schweinhart *et al* use the cost of childcare as an estimate for the 'baby-sitting' services of the preschool programme. Schweinhart LJ, Barnes HV and Weikart DP, *Significant benefits: the High/Scope Perry Pre-school study through age 27*; (1993) Ypsilanti, Michigan High/Scope Press.
2. See Ruiz F and Giussani J, *Estudio de costos del proyecto integral de desarrollo infantil (PIDI)*; (1997) UDAPSO, La Paz.
3. Net of overhead costs such as administration and evaluation.
4. Clemente RC, *Desarrollo psicosocial en menores a cinco años de edad*; (1996) UDAPSO, La Paz.
5. Throughout this example we use data from Summers LH, *Investing in all people: education of women in developing countries – Economic Development Institute Seminar Paper 45*; (1994) World Bank, Washington DC.

Early childhood development as an international policy issue

Cassie Landers/Ready to Learn

*This article has been prepared from
Early Childhood Development as an
International Policy Issue: Summary Report¹
produced by Cassie Landers for Ready to Learn:
The International Center on Care and Education of
Children at the Academy for Educational Development (AED).²
The report is about an informal information exchange that AED
organised in November 1998 for United States and international experts
on the care and development of young children. Among those attending were
representatives from multilateral donors, and implementing and
technical agencies.*

*This article consists of a selection of presentations from the day. It shows
the priorities and strategies of some of the agencies, and the sorts of
issues that are significant to them as they focus on being effective
decision and policy makers.*

International donor priorities and strategies for impact

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and early childhood development (ECD). *Presented by Sandra Huffman for Joseph Hunt.*

The ECD efforts at ADB focus on children from birth through eight years old with a particular emphasis on the interaction between nutrition, health, and school attendance and performance. For each of the age periods from prenatal to age eight, a specific outcome has been identified. The pre-pregnancy period is concerned with improved nutrition and pregnancy. In the newborn period the goal is to decrease low birth weight while increasing breastfeeding. For children in the first two years of life, the goal is to increase nutrition and health in order to decrease stunting, anaemia, vitamin deficiency and infections. The first three years should also focus on increased environmental stimulation

through play and feeding. Children between the ages of four and six should have access to preschool development programmes while children entering the first two years of primary school should have an enriched curriculum at school.

The World Bank and early childhood development (ECD).

Presented by Mary Young.

The World Bank has placed increasing importance on ECD over the past five years. It began with a set of arguments, designed to convince policy makers and field directors of the importance of investing in early childhood programmes. The series of arguments, based on the work of Robert Myers, Cassie Landers and David Weikart, and supported by scientific findings, addressed the effect of ECD on socio-economic development, social equity, and the interacting needs of women and children. In collaboration with other donors, a range of programmes and strategies are currently being supported

including integrated child development programmes, service delivery, caregiver education, and the creation of awareness and demand for ECD. Other initiatives have included the development of an economic model on the benefits of ECD programmes as well as a website on the design, implementation, and evaluation of field-based ECD initiatives. In 1996, the World Bank organised a conference focused on the first three years of life and a follow-up conference is planned for April, 2000.

Over the next two years, emphasis will be placed on broadening and strengthening the knowledge base about ECD. The World Bank intends to: (A) broaden clients' awareness and understanding of ECD and educate bank staff and partner agencies about ECD initiatives, (B) expand the content and increase the utilisation of the ECD computerised knowledge base, and (C) improve programme quality. In achieving the goal of improved

programme quality, attention is placed on the development of programme monitoring and evaluation instruments as well as those designed to measure children's cognitive performance.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and early child care and development (ECCD).

Presented by Ricardo Moran.

The IDB is in the process of creating a framework for policies and strategies to support ECCD initiatives. The IDB recognises that the future of a child, as both a producer and consumer, is dependent on the socio-economic status of the family. Since 1985, the IDB has supported 85 programmes in which attention to the developmental needs of young children has been either the primary focus or an integrated component of a health or education initiative. These programmes are intended to break the cycle of poverty by improving opportunities for children of poor families.

The inter-generational transmission of poverty is fuelled by the following cycle. Poor parents with little schooling have children early without fundamental means or skills. Children raised in these environments enter school with impaired learning capacity which ultimately results in school failure and functional illiteracy. This in turn leads to children who drop out of school and, therefore, have few skills or knowledge and generate little income. For these youth, parenting begins early and the cycle of poverty begins anew.

IDB goals include: (A) more effective use of existing resources, (B) increased social demand for ECCD and (C) increased programme coverage. The strategies proposed to achieve these goals are to use existing resources more effectively by increasing monitoring and evaluation, encouraging public-private partnerships, using inter-sectoral approaches to strengthen synergies, carefully designing and implementing

programmes, and using incentives more creatively and intensively. The strategies for increasing the demand for ECCD activities include social marketing campaigns, dissemination of hard data and increased parenting skills training. Finally, in an effort to increase ECCD coverage, additional support will be mobilised by shifting fiscal resources, tapping non-traditional funding sources, fund-raising efforts, and raising awareness of benefits through media campaign workshops and seminars.

In order to monitor the achievement of the above goals and strategies, emphasis is placed on the development of short and long term impact indicators including improved health and nutrition, emotional and social development, motor skills development, academic performance and mother's earnings. Long term impact will be measured by educational attainment as a proxy for life-time earnings.

Social sector initiative strategies

High/Scope Foundation.

Presented by David Weikart.

All children develop according to a series of sequential stages. In the first three years, the sensory motor period, the critical needs are in the areas of health, nutrition, and attachment. In the pre-operational period, the basic foundations are laid down, and include such behaviours as initiative, independence, responsibility, and social preparedness. Although the capacity for colour, shape, form, numbers, and vocabulary are all developing, the real issues are behavioural. If foundations are not instilled during this pre-operational period, it is too late. The next stage (the academic stage) is when children begin formal academic preparation.

Early childhood development (ECD) interventions work and provide an opportunity to break the cycle of

poverty. According to the findings of the *High/Scope Perry Study*, children who were exposed to high quality ECD programmes, when interviewed at 27 years old, were more successful and stable than those who did not attend good ECD programmes. High/Scope Perry found that children exposed to good ECD programmes committed significantly less crime, graduated high school at a higher rate, owned more homes, earned higher salaries and used welfare less than those that did not receive high-quality early childhood care. This impact is most striking when shown in terms of the return on investment and the sources of public costs and benefits per participant. These programmes, when properly implemented, will pay for themselves.

There is also a considerable amount of research confirming the benefit of specific approaches and organisation techniques for the education of young children, particularly those between

four to six years of age. For example, young children need to practise taking control, and learn how to plan, conceptualise, make decisions, and talk about what they did. This kind of information must be disseminated in order to promote and provide high-quality ECD programming since it has also been shown that not all preschool programmes are beneficial. The work of High/Scope Foundation has shown that preschool programmes based on child planning and social reasoning are the most effective in the long term. But scripted, directive teaching and/or programmes inappropriately matched to the developmental stages of children, can actually have a negative impact on them. ECD is a social and political issue. Within this climate, one must be careful not to lose sight of the knowledge base about programmes and what makes them effective or harmful.

Zero to Three.

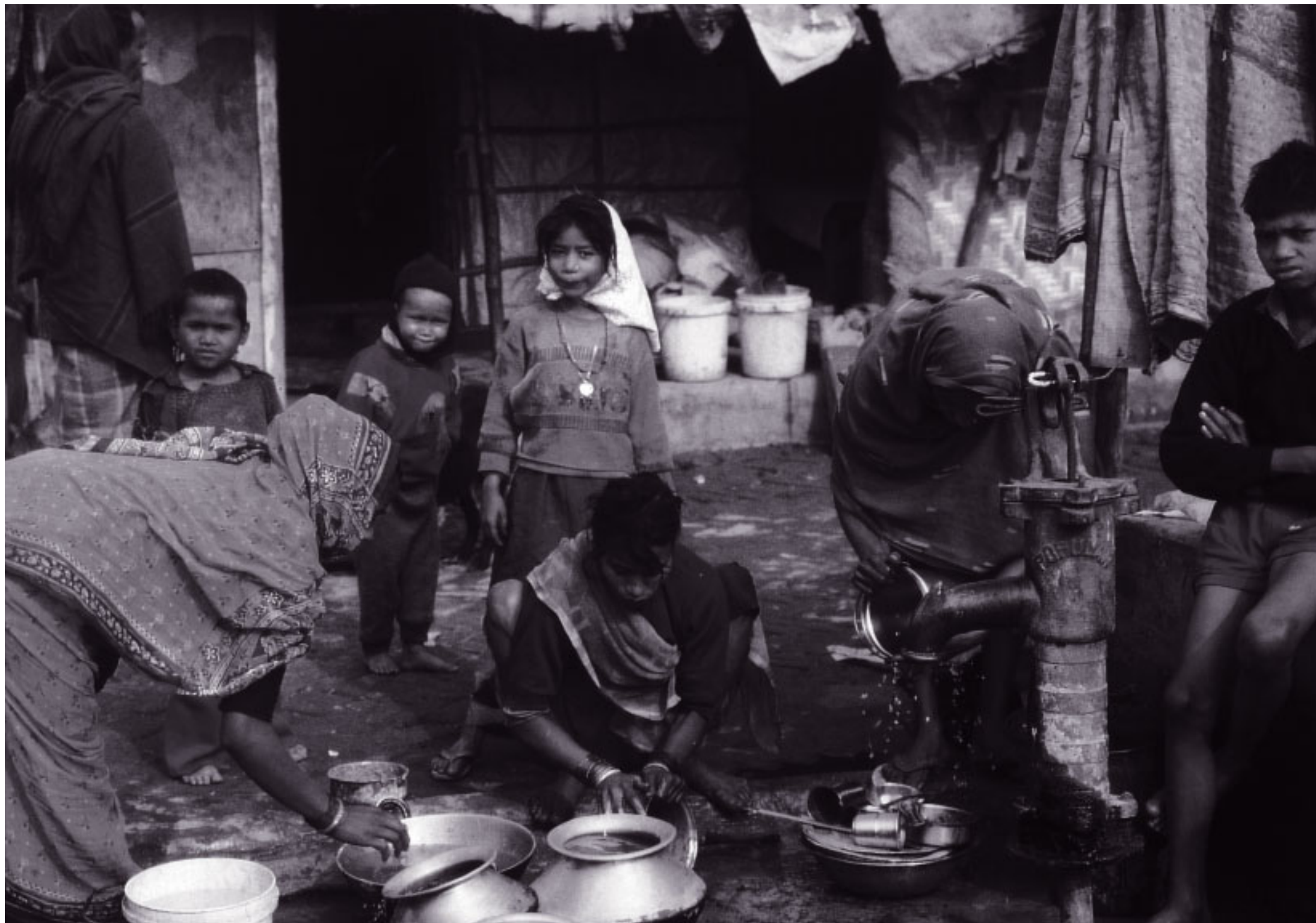
Presented by Abby Griffin.

Zero to Three is a national, non-profit organisation located in Washington DC, dedicated solely to advancing the healthy development of babies and young children. Founded in 1977, Zero to Three disseminates information on key developments, trains providers, promotes model approaches and standards of practice, and works to increase public awareness about the significance of the first three years of life. Zero to Three emphasises that by combining the talents of professionals from the fields of medicine, mental health, research, science, and child development, the diverse needs of the 'whole baby' can be met in the context of the family and community.

The acronym 'ACT' helps to define what Zero to Three is trying to accomplish. 'A' refers to Advancing

Zimbabwe: *Community kitchen*
Centre for Development Information & Education
photo: Paula Nimpuno-Parente





the state of knowledge through a range of conferences, workshops, and discussion groups. ‘c’ stands for Communication and the need to translate the former into messages available to all. Two interactive websites help to facilitate this communication. ‘t’ stands for Training and Technical assistance. In addition to training professionals, Zero to Three’s aim is to identify emerging leaders within communities and provide them with the skills needed to transfer information directly to their communities.

One of Zero to Three’s programmes, Heartstart, is concerned with the emotional foundation for school-readiness. It addresses questions like: What does it mean to be a learner? What does it mean to sustain it over time? What makes a life-long learner? In answering these questions, Heartstart found that the following characteristics are shaped in the first three years.

- Confidence and trust in yourself and others combined with the belief that you will succeed and that there are people there to help you. This is learned by 6 months.
- Curiosity and the freedom to explore and not be afraid of new tasks.
- Intentionality and the capacity to be persistent in achieving set goals.
- Self-control and the ability to take action when needed.
- Attachment, knowledge that the family is safe.
- Communication and the ability to express oneself through words, gestures and behaviours.
- Cooperation and the ability to share.

Zero to Three tries to integrate the basic needs of children into programmes, approaches and policies. These needs cut across cultures and include good physical health, safe supportive environments, unhurried time with primary caregivers, and responsive care giving.

The new research on the brain provides a strong foundation for the promotion of human capital development. Research suggests a need to support strong, consistent, caring relationships, and hire high quality staff. Programmes should be child-focused but include parent-focused activities utilising child, family and community-based approaches. Programmes should also focus on young children because the greater change occurs in them.

Effective communicating

The Benton Foundation: Effective Language for Discussing Early Childhood Education and Policy.

Presented by Paula Antonovich. Bridging the distance between scholars and advocates to advance public understanding of, and support for, children’s issues has been a major area of interest for the Benton Foundation. The Foundation hopes to provide child advocates with a body of work from

which they can pick and choose new ideas, new sound bites, new frames, and a new language. Hopefully, this will help advance policy solutions for children. There is no one answer that fits all. Rather, what is offered is a palette of responses for child advocates to experiment with and match to each particular media and political environment.

Together with the Human Services Policy Center at the University of Washington, the Benton Foundation sought to identify a different set of conceptual frames and metaphors that might guide the interaction with the media in an effort to ‘reframe’ ECD. For example, the simple change in terminology from daycare and childcare to early childhood education or early learning can make a significant difference in support level for ECD. Together with scholars, the Benton Foundation seeks: to identify, explore, and explain the various options

available to children's advocates in furthering public understanding of the importance of investing in early childhood education; to explain the dominant metaphorical streams associated with the issue; to suggest the pros and cons of these options; and to suggest the best ways to re-frame the issue to support progressive reform.

One major finding showed the importance of moving the debate towards issues of quality of child development as a collective responsibility and need. Advocates need to reposition their campaigns for quality childcare to draw energy from the increased public concern for education. Thus early education becomes a solution to a problem already of concern and interest to the public.

Another finding suggests ways to avoid parent versus provider confrontations and instead, enlist parents as partners without shifting the responsibility back on their shoulders. Advocates and policy makers must be clear in indicating what they want to do, and communicate

active, positive solutions because people are overwhelmed by big problems that don't seem to have any solutions.

The Academy for Education Development.

Presented by Bill Smith.

There appear to be three problems impeding clear and effective communication about policies and programmes for young children.

- *Science:* What works? (Especially for very young children, from birth to three years old)

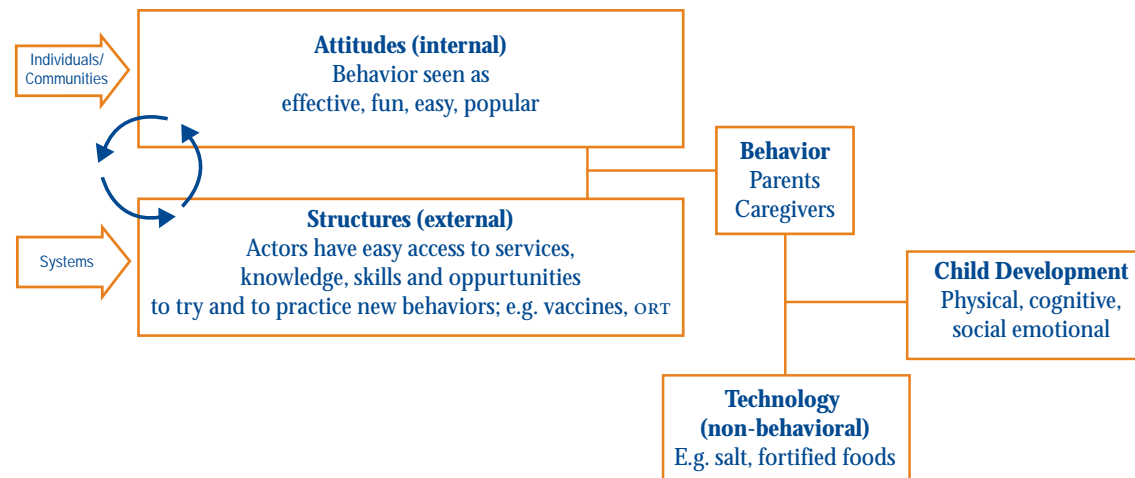
- *Scale:* How can we do enough of 'what works' to make a population-based difference?
- *Funding:* Given competing priorities, who will pay for it and why will they pay for it?

It is instructive to consider several experiences from the health sector which shed light on how effective communication strategies contribute to positive impact.

Bring parents and caregivers to the table. In the final analysis, it is they who

have the greatest impact on the lives of children. Parents and caregivers have their own priorities and strategies, and they can translate your messages into terms meaningful for them. In the campaign against AIDS, the inclusion and leadership of HIV positive people transformed the agenda and the strategy for public education and behaviour change.

Research should not interfere with the work of programmes. The need for clarity, indicators and measurement is a legitimate concern in the field of early



childhood as it is in health and education. However, debates over details and specifics must not confuse messages and weaken the impetus for change. If known benefits outweigh potential drawbacks, strategic communication with one voice may be called for. One example: oral rehydration packets were distributed while experts were still engaged in intense room debates over the best way to rehydrate during diarrhoea. Although the packet strategy may have been sub-optimal, the packets saved many children's lives.

The figure on the previous page presents a partial model of the flow of communication for behaviour change, using examples from the health field. The complexity of changing attitudes and structure contrasts with the relative simplicity of introducing a technology as the focal point for change.

This model suggests there are three basic paths to child development:

1. improved non-behavioural technologies;
2. structural changes to make behaviour change easily; and
3. changes in attitudes towards behaviour to overcome internal barriers to change.

The introduction of non-behavioural technologies is generally a faster approach than mounting campaigns to persuade people to adopt a new behaviour. Savvy efforts to promote specific models and tools for cognitive and social development – even if they are imperfect – may be a route to more effective communication about ECD. However, when non-behavioural opportunities are exhausted, a great deal can be accomplished through structural and attitudinal change. ○

notes

1. Copies of the summary and full reports can be obtained from Ready to Learn: The International Center on Care and Education of Children, The Academy for Educational Development, 1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington DC 20009-1202, USA; tel: +1 202 884 8261; fax: +1 202 884 8405; email: ready@aed.org.
2. Full details of Ready to Learn can be found on Internet at www.aed.org.

Peru: Ready for anything
photo: Gerry Salole





Kenya: working for viability through project partners

Mirza Jahani

Mirza Jahani is the Regional Chief Executive Officer of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) in East Africa. In this article, which is based on an interview with Jim Smale, he describes the approach of AKF to community development in Kenya: that it is by maximising the potential of communities to achieve social, economic and political viability that sustained development can be achieved. Within this broad approach, holistic early childhood development (ECD) programmes have their key places and roles – and the best chance of being sustained.

ECD has always been a core concern of the Aga Khan Foundation although, in the early years, it tended to stay within the area of education. Our philosophy now is that children's development is multi-faceted and education is one of the several components required in a holistic approach for effective ECD (see box on page 28). This reaches outside of what is obviously necessary to sustain healthy growth in all areas of a children's development. It also embraces family livelihood; communication; the number of siblings; maternal health and well-being; family stress; the roles and impact of fathers; and so on. It means paying careful attention to the local context and culture of families and thereby understanding, and then building on the strengths within families and communities.

However, as a policy maker wanting to be effective, I take this one step further: if communities are indeed to be the source of that enrichment, they have to be viable as communities – and that includes being economically viable. If this is to happen, it means that people have to understand how their community works, how they can organise themselves, what their opportunities are, how they could exploit those opportunities, and so on. That is where the roots of viability lie in marginalised communities and it means community development initiatives are essential. It is only within them that early childhood programmes can be launched and have much hope of being sustained adequately. That is why there is a necessary link between ECD and wider community development.

AKF's Young Children and the Family Programme

In 1983, when the Aga Khan Foundation formulated its education strategy, early childhood education (ECE) was included as an important element – making AKF one of the few international donors to specifically address the development and education of young children at that time.

Initially, the ECE work focused on the creation and testing of curriculum models that promoted cognitive stimulation of young children, and teacher training systems for school-based preschools. During the 1980s, research and the work of AKF and other agencies working on the ground, showed that young children actively interact with, and are influenced by, their surroundings from the very beginning. This enhanced understanding of the important synergistic relationships amongst the different environments in which children grow, demanded a wider approach.

AKF therefore broadened the title of its ECE programme to the Young Children and the Family Programme. This change was based on four principal lessons learned from AKF's work in ECE:

1. that early intervention programmes have a positive effect on later school experiences;
2. that parental and community participation is critical in early childhood efforts because of the interdependence that exists between child, family and community;
3. that women's and children's lives are closely linked and programmes for one should not be carried out without consideration of the needs of the other; and
4. that direct programming for women can be an effective way of influencing children's development and growth.

This is already common practice: work for children is often one element of a wider programme of development. There is a danger of course: if your aim is to be effective in ECD, you must make sure that children remain at the centre. And that is true if you are supporting a broader programme yourself, or if you are supporting an ECD programme that is a coherent part of a wider programme supported by other agencies.

Partners as catalysts

The roots of economic viability may lie within communities but that does not mean that the communities themselves are aware of them, or that they have the skills to identify and nourish them so that viability becomes a reality. Our partner organisations – those that actually operate the projects – have to work with communities to devise and operate projects that move them towards this goal. And it is the extent to which the projects that we fund enable communities to stand

on their own and control their own futures that provides us with the measure of our effectiveness. That is radically different from measuring effectiveness by the quantity of work, the number of beneficiaries, the extent to which a collection of relatively small objectives are realised, cost-effectiveness, and so on.

To achieve such a fundamental change demands a more capable kind of partner organisation to run projects, to make things happen. A partner that is only a specialist in a small range of development areas is too limited, we need enablers and catalysts.

That means carrying out an institutional analysis, finding out if the partner is a doer, a problem-solver, an organisation that is able to direct programmes in an ever-changing environment – because there are no blueprints. It means looking at its leadership to make sure that the organisation will stay on track while simultaneously adapting itself to provide

“

If you see the resources and you see the wealth and the talent of the people in East Africa, you think to yourself there is absolutely no reason why there should be so much poverty.

”

what the communities need. And it also means finding out how it is governed, how it is managed, how it makes decisions, how it operates its accounting system, and so on.

Now, the problem is that you don't find these sorts of organisations easily – if at all. But what you do find are organisations that clearly have the potential. You have to work with them to discover what they need to upgrade them so they are capable of delivering in the terms that I have discussed; and you have to make grants for that upgrading.

That is the kind of thing that the Bernard van Leer Foundation did with National Centre for Early Childhood Education in Kenya many years ago, and we in the Aga Khan Foundation now look at institutional capacity development much more systematically than we used to.

Economic viability in practice

At first sight, the potential for economic viability seems poor in many marginalised communities. But there has to be something to build on and, if the community is to survive there, it must be developed. In rural areas of Kenya the two principal assets that people have are their labour and their land. But the productivity of that labour and that land is often not very great – after all the community is marginal because the land is poor. The debate then is whether you take people away from their land so they can use their labour more productively elsewhere, or whether you try and make something of what they have where they are.

The Kwale Rural Support Programme on the coast of Kenya (see box on page 32) set out to see if it is possible to make sufficient improvements in the productivity of the land to carry a fairly large community of people. In general,

the starting point is self-sufficiency in food production and that is followed by a move on to income generation. In terms of food production, small changes in farming practice, the introduction of organic fertiliser, tree planting, soil conservation, improving the availability of water with small catchment dams, and things like that, actually produce massive improvements.

To achieve this, the community must organise itself and to do that it needs support – support that is provided by our partner organisations. They help the community to build robust village organisations that govern themselves, look for possibilities, make better decisions. As you see this happening it may appear that our project partners are simply helping communities to improve agricultural practice, or construct an irrigation dam. But something much bigger is going on. People are learning to express their

needs and aspirations, to contribute their ideas to finding ways forward, to learn to fend for themselves, to take decisions for the good of everyone. I'm constantly amazed and impressed by what people know, and how prepared and committed they are to improving their livelihoods. To encourage them, we directly support them by providing small incentives as they work to achieve what they want – for example, we might provide a pump that is part of a sustainable water system.

Keeping things alive

Whilst the AKF believes that a community development programme is a long term effort, we would normally only give support to individual villages for three or four years. This allows us to move our work to new villages as the older ones graduate. At the end of that time, a community should be skilled and experienced enough to sustain itself

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On an unannounced visit, we found the community members busy: they were fixing a valve in a water pipeline; they were fixing the roof of the school; they were planting trees. And it was totally self-generated. They didn't know we were coming, there was no dancing and parading for these visitors from outside. It so touched me because I realised that actually we had unleashed their energies and they were getting on with it.

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economically; run programmes in areas such as ECD; maintain economically crucial facilities such as the water scheme and a credit and loan scheme; and operate an economic infrastructure that will include a village development fund. It may well also be able to afford a small sum to pay a 'professional' village person for advice and support.

That is as far as we have reached and we are well aware that, by itself, a village institution with that capability is not only still fragile and vulnerable but also has clear limits to its potential for growth. However, we expect that the village now has a greater energy and that this can be used for the development of cluster-level institutions between villages. For this to happen, a suitable infrastructure has to be developed – something like a local council, the first

ever local government structure at this level. If that can be achieved, then it's necessary to make a formal link to existing government structures that currently stop at sub-locational level. Making that link is to establish continuity from the grassroots through to central government.

The next step is logical: that the resources have to be fed down the chain from central government into the villages. This is the aim and we are working towards it. Meanwhile, we also see that the chain does not have to be complete: we have already worked with the Kenyan Ministry of Health at the national level, along with many others, to help devise a decentralisation plan. We are able to say: 'In this district, we can help you implement that plan because we have already supported sustainable general development there'.

And we can add weight to our argument by agreeing to make a separate grant for strengthening district health management teams that have developed as a consequence of the work of our partner organisations.

From funding early childhood initiatives through to funding initiatives that develop these kinds of possibilities is a major advance in terms of our effectiveness. We use our money to better and more lasting effect, we draw on our experience at strategic level and we simultaneously monitor what is happening so that we can make additional key interventions at the most relevant times.

Looking to the future

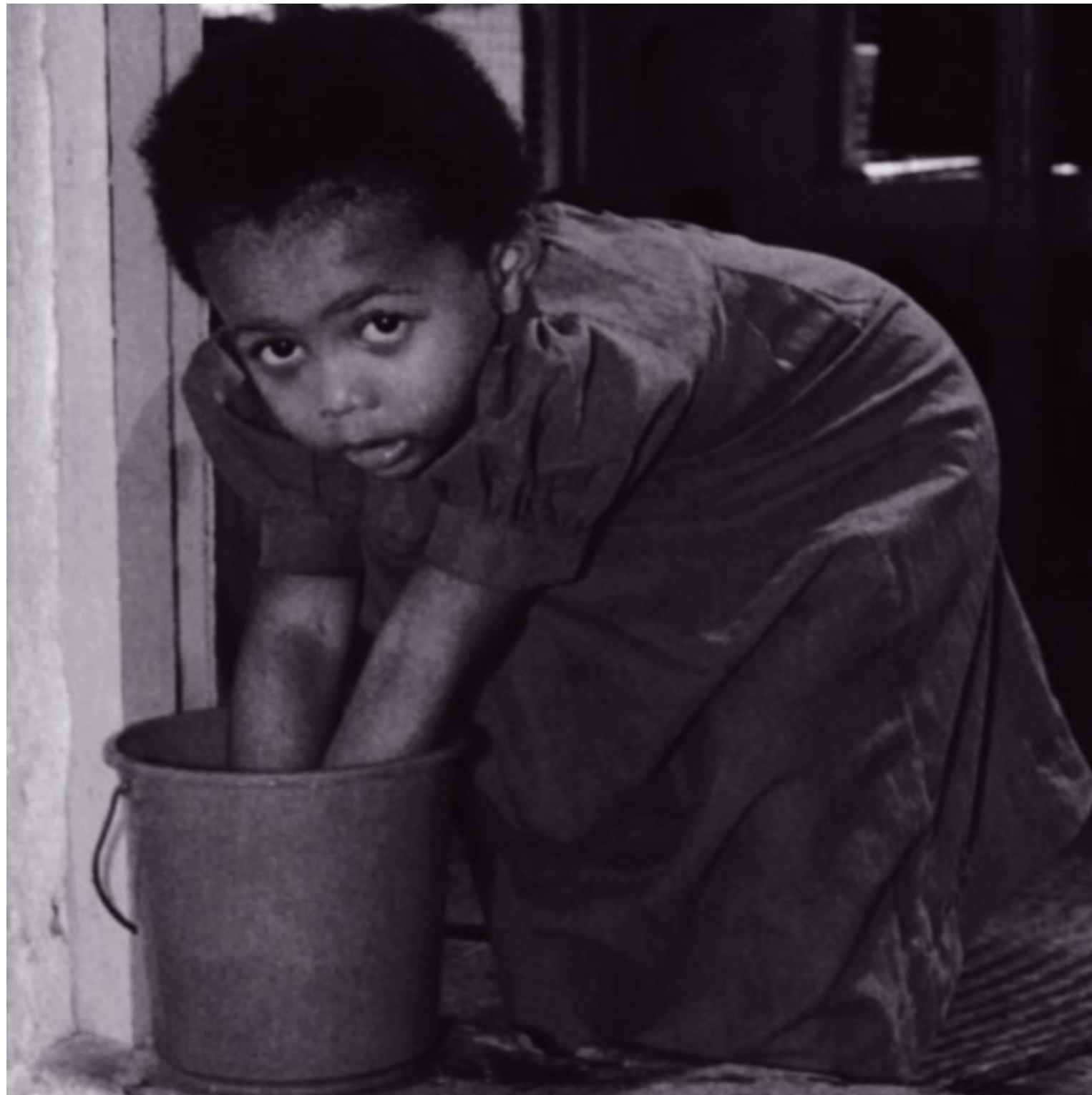
To make ourselves more effective, we have to plug gaps in our knowledge and experience. These are more in the 'how to do it' than in the 'what to do'. One example is the question of how to forge that missing link in the chain between grassroots village organisations and government. We'll spend a lot of our time looking at that.

A second challenge is to refine our advocacy role. That means further developing our capacity to hear what is coming up from the grassroots. In East Africa now there are opportunities for people to form groups and to debate and to question openly. This is supported by

a strong media that helps debate about how things should be done in areas such as developing a civil society. Our principal role here is to promote better policies, working with major partners.

A third challenge is to embrace the World Bank (in Kenya) and other large development agencies' willingness to examine examples of effective implementation of programmes and policies, and work with those who have the experience, the knowledge and the strategic perspectives. The most exciting opportunity here is the recent agreement by the World Bank to provide a large loan to the government of Kenya. The loan includes the condition that international organisations with extensive experience can advise on the effective allocation of those parts of the loan that are intended to support community development. The Government of Kenya has already taken the first step of inviting six NGOs to collaborate, including AKF and the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

The core task is to identify a group of NGOs that know what to deliver and how to deliver it so that it makes a difference. They then have to demonstrate to the World Bank and the Kenyan government



that the investment of loan money is best guided by their experiences. We have got to get this right: it is a major test of our effectiveness; and on it depends our invitation to the policy making table in the future.

For me, the role of an effective grantmaker is to be part of a chain that links to the village level committees and institutions. They work out what it is that they need, and we provide what is necessary for them to fulfil those needs themselves. For example, we might bring in a partner agency that is prepared to work with the villagers on their terms so that they absorb the technology and the ideas, and then are able to carry these forward. Of course there are problems in meeting certain needs. The most obvious one is when you have to connect villages to government services. In the short term, some elements of the supply side can only be sustained by the government – how can poor communities afford immunisation for example? In the long term most elements must come from the government. But the economic benefits of providing the means for highly capable village structures to deliver are obvious. ○

The Kwale Rural Support Programme

The Kwale Rural Support Programme (KRSP) enables communities to develop their potential. People from the programme talk to community members and explain what the programme is about. They explain that they are there to help but that there are certain conditions. These include that the villagers have to organise themselves into a village development organisation with a membership of at least 75 percent of the village; then elect a committee. That committee has to be representative. That means geographically if the village is scattered; and a balance between men and women. The Chair must be elected, as must the Vice-Chair and a Treasurer. If necessary, the programme trains them to actually get to that point.

After that KRSP enters into a partnership with the village. The terms of partnership are that KRSP will provide for one major economic asset that the villagers will identify by determining what their needs are via participatory

rural appraisals (PRAs). The asset must be of immediate benefit to more than 75 percent of the population of the village. Typically, because this is a dry area, that would be a dam. The programme then makes a grant for that asset.

The first PRAs are conducted by the KRSP team. But over time the villagers themselves should be able to conduct those sorts of exercises. The PRAs give them information about their own environment and their own social economic status. To be effective, they have to be done regularly so people see change and improvement for themselves.

One very interesting thing that's now evolving is that there are 70 villages involved in the programme, but there are hundreds of villages in the whole of Kwale. The question now is do you need KRSP to go around doing each village in turn, or can you get the developed villages somehow to offer services to other villages? This is something the

programme is currently struggling with.

As some of these community groups are maturing, they are beginning to identify health and education as issues that they want to take on next: 'OK, we know about better farming and we have water – but what about our children? And what about immunisation? And what about our school, it's pretty bad?' The response of KRSP is: 'Well we don't do that but we know someone who does and who can show you how'.

We are now thinking hard about whether the programme can enable communities and their organisations to take on the structural responsibility for education, health, and so on. After all, this is what towns do, so why not villages? It would mean the village committees really being responsible for everything, perhaps with sub-committees responsible for particular things.



Southern Africa: guidelines for good practice

Mokhethi Moshoeshoe

Mokhethi Moshoeshoe is Executive Director of the Southern African Grantmakers Association (SAGA), an independent, voluntary and non-profit association of individuals and organisations involved in the funding of development in Southern Africa. Its mission is to optimise the relevance, efficiency and impact of grantmaking in Southern Africa.

In this article, which is based on an interview with Jim Smale, Mokhethi

Moshoeshoe offers his own reflections on what it takes to build strong partnerships between the grantmakers and the grantees. As he does so, he blends them with the experiences of SAGA as it developed its Guidelines for good practice. Drawing on his own experiences both in seeking partnerships during his long career in NGOs, and in his current position as head of a major entity in the grantmaking world, he especially stresses the need for close and productive relationships across what has sometimes been a divide.

SAGA has invested a year in developing a document with its members that takes the question of effective grantmaking head on. It is called *Guidelines for good practice*. We did this because it sometimes seemed that there was a huge black hole between the grantmakers and the grantees. There was a sense of needing to somehow cross this gap or close it, to improve on the situation where all you might get back was a report to answer the question: 'What is the impact that we have been making?'

However, before I discuss this, I want to give some personal reflections on what development is because understanding

the nature of development actually guides us towards being effective as grantmakers. I believe development is a process of growth to enable human beings to reach their potential and handle their own situations. That means that development is also an empowerment process, which in turn gives foundations a way of measuring their effectiveness: the extent to which you empower people is also the extent to which you can reduce your support. I link this to the need to find ways in which communities can begin to recognise and build on their own assets so that they become major agents in ensuring the sustainability of their own development. I believe that all

communities have assets, just as businesses have. That doesn't necessarily mean money: there are assets such as trust, a sense of community, a sense of common wealth, a sense of common vision, willingness to form partnerships for the common good, a sense of needing to reweave the social fabric, and so on.

For the grantmaker, working with these intangibles is a challenge: it's easy to fund something that can be seen and clearly measured such as a building, or a piece of participatory action research. But grantmakers must accept that these intangibles are fundamental to moving communities away from dependency,

and therefore must find ways to support work that will strengthen them. This is in tandem with work that will make material differences in putting communities on the road to sustained development. All of this means that successful development processes are about much more than money. Of course, it is always money that people talk about but money from a grantmaker will never replace real livelihoods. And of course real financial independence is crucial in the long term, but that can only come via broad-based projects that take advantage of the tangibles and the intangibles – all the assets that communities have.

Key lessons from saga's Guidelines for good practice

1. *Be focused.* One key lesson that has emerged for us from our year of work in developing the guide is that you cannot successfully be everything to everybody as a grantmaker. You've got a certain amount of money and of course there are many ways in which it could make a difference in people's lives. But you will never have enough money to address all the social problems in the world. That is not a very startling idea. But it is important because many foundations currently have broad interests and it will be painful for them to make choices. This is because foundations are run by people, not machines. People see need and they want to respond. But if the people who run foundations really want to make an impact, they have to specialise, and – by setting precise goals – define exactly where their grants will make a difference.

2. *Build real partnerships.* You and your grantmaker must get together. I would like to add something here from my own experiences. Before joining SAGA,



I spent ten years of my life as a grantee approaching grantmaking foundations. From that side of the fence, it was clear to me that the nature and effectiveness of the relationships I had with those organisations were really determined by individual programme officers. It was not the organisations that determined the nature of those relationships, it was individuals: how we related to each other at the personal level; how we related to the needs and objectives of each other's organisations; how well each of us understood what the other expected. That means that a successful grantmaker has to have programme officers who can build that kind of relationship – and, by the way, it also means that applicants must be ready to build it too. What is required is much more than knowledge of the subject area and the ability to communicate well: it is a matter of being prepared to enter into and constantly preserve and improve a mutually beneficial relationship that depends on complete trust and confidence on both sides.

That means throwing away many of the things that work against that relationship. For example, since I have

worked on both sides of the fence, I know all the tricks there can be on both sides – I know that there sometimes can be hidden motives, agendas, realities, problems, failures, and so on. But if you really want to build this relationship, you have to make a real commitment to the project; you have to recognise that what you feel about a project is as important as what you know logically; you must give time to the project; you must be able to empathise with those in the project; and you must trust people, read between the lines, and sense the broader picture. And all of this is in addition to the huge amount of direct work that must be done. To accomplish all of this, you need programme officers who have a passion to do their job well, a passion to make a difference.

Sometimes programme officers do not have enough time to give more adequate attention, to build the necessary relationship. They are under pressure to give out the money appropriately, to ensure that it will make a difference, so they don't build that relationship because they haven't got the time to do it well. So, although they are not to blame, they actually fall

at the first crucial hurdle in properly supporting a project.

3. *Add value.* You can do this, for example, by supporting the building of institutional capacity and the professionalisation of people in the project. We have to ask ourselves if our grantee partners are experts in areas that they have chosen to work with. That sounds odd: if they don't know enough about their area of interest, why did we fund them? Well, perhaps we funded them because they have a good track record in operating well-focused, effective projects. Now there has to be an audit to find out what else they need to equip them for their work. Part of that capacity building can draw on resources that foundations have, and can also benefit from the ability of foundations to access knowledge. Those resources can be shared; that knowledge can be imparted. The grantees need this but they are very busy trying to survive.

4. *Don't be afraid of taking risks.* Running social enterprises means taking risks because, in the history of development, nobody has ever come up with infallible ways, perfect models,

magic wands. You have to accept that you are learning, that you learn through doing new things in new ways, and you learn a lot from successes but you can learn even more through mistakes. I link this to the relationship that you build with the project. A good relationship means that when the risk does not pay off either the grantmaker or the grantee will have the confidence to say 'We really got it wrong, let's work together at what needs to be done now'. That's such an uncommon reaction, but it does not help anyone's effectiveness if projects claim that everything has been 100 percent successful. Let's admit that we are all sticking our necks out; we are all vulnerable.

5. *Accept your limitations.* Admit that you don't know it all. What drives us is our passion to make a difference in people's lives and build up resources that will help us to do this. If we knew how to do this, the world would have changed a long time ago. But it hasn't, and we shouldn't waste time now worrying about if we can plan everything so that it will always come out as it should. We have got a long way to go in changing the world. In the

process of development enterprise, or social enterprise of any kind, there are many things that are way beyond our control – we have to accept this. We also have to accept that we have to feel our way in supporting projects, and that projects have to feel their way in doing the work. They have to learn as they go; they have to try out new ideas; they have to change processes, even approaches, as they try to reach their objectives. Again, I make the link to the nature of the relationship that we form with them: we need to know that they don't know; they need to know that we support them as they learn; they need to know that we are learning from them.

6. *Measure impact.* We have developed instruments and these take the form of indicators for success. They should help us to find out the extent to which our interventions actually have done what they were intended to – what return we got on the investment that we made. In doing this, we should look to see if we can learn

from business. That doesn't mean looking at the bottom line – trying to make a financial gain. But we could look at profit in terms of the quantity and quality of change that the projects we fund make. Loss is then a lack of impact or a negative impact. There's an example that we can study here: businesses are now beginning to carry out social and ethical accounting to measure their social impact. They forget about profit for a while and remind themselves that they affect people and they affect societies in both good and bad ways. We could usefully take account of their ways of measuring and understanding that.

But as we try to measure impact, we must avoid taking the blame for not changing things that are well beyond our powers to change. We are not the only players for good or ill here; and our capacities are anyway very limited when set against big or especially intractable challenges. ○

Community cash flows

People don't realise how much money actually passes through most communities, however poor they are.* Large sums come in, and go out. But their effect is marginal outside their role in helping people to survive. Those sums of money could be used much more effectively. As well as continuing to make sure people survive, they could circulate within the local economy, thereby generating more wealth. This happens when people say 'OK we are paying for that, why don't we supply it and pay ourselves for doing so, instead of paying someone outside the community?' And all communities have at least some potential for doing that.

What depresses me as I travel around is that you see so many opportunities being wasted. For example, you see poor farm workers loading cattle into trucks to send them to distant abattoirs in the bigger cities. This gets sent back in cans that the poor families can't afford, so you get malnutrition – and it's not just beef, you can see the same happening with all sorts of primary food products. In addition, there is the lost opportunity for creating jobs in the processing. You don't need vast factories to do this, it can be

small scale so as not to destroy the environment. I'm talking here about essential food stuffs, that can be processed easily, not the high tech food stuffs that need complex machinery. It's not a big deal to process milk, to pop wheat or make cornflakes. You could have hundreds of small enterprises like these, scattered all over the poorest areas, serving each other affordably, and sending their surpluses to the major cities to earn extra money.

It's spreading not just wealth, but wealth creation – the whole of business. You are ensuring that the primary producers – the people who do most of the hard work, take the risks, and yet do so badly at the moment – get more benefit from their hard work, because they are benefiting from the added value that traditionally only accrues to the dealers and the big processors.

* For a complementary discussion of this point see Adamson R, 'The basis of human brilliance', *Early Childhood Matters* 87. Copies are available from the Bernard van Leer Foundation at the addresses shown on the back cover.

Cambodia:

continuing to learn - for the benefit of children



photo: Redd Barna Cambodia

Redd Barna Cambodia

This article consists of extracts from the Ten Year Anniversary Report 1988-1998 of Redd Barna (Norwegian Save the Children) Cambodia.

It looks at aspects of 10 years of establishing policies and setting up programmes in a country that has experienced civil war, political turbulence and unrest – with children among those suffering most. The extracts review Redd Barna Cambodia's progression from providing emergency aid to establishing child-oriented development programmes that started from building local capacity. The impressive consequences of this evolution reflect the importance of identifying opportunities, being alert to changing circumstances, and being willing to learn.

More information about Redd Barna's programmes in Cambodia and elsewhere can be obtained from Redd Barna, Hammersborg torg 3, PO box 6902, St Olav's Plass, 0130 Oslo, Norway. Tel: +47 (0)22 990 900; fax: +47 (0)22 990 870; email: post@reddbarna.no.

From emergency relief to long term, child-oriented development

Redd Barna's history in Cambodia began in 1979 with emergency relief channelled through the Oxfam-led NGO Consortium. From 1983, activities for the rehabilitation of health, food production and education were carried out from the Thailand office in direct cooperation with authorities and other NGOs. Five years later, in November 1998, a country office opened its doors in Phnom Penh.

With the establishment of an office, a long-term development programme was set up. During its first years, Redd Barna's principal tools to help improve the living situation of children were on the one hand village-based community development, on the other institutional upgrading and training of personnel in the fields of education, health and child development.

From the early days, training of staff has been given much emphasis, to address the need for qualified human resources. In 1998, 70 qualified Cambodians worked in the organisation, including in senior

positions, and the number of expatriates was four.

As some of the needs seen in the early days had been met, and the conditions in general had changed significantly, Redd Barna reviewed and subsequently changed its strategy in 1996. Partnership, child rights, advocacy and focus on vulnerable groups of children were identified as the new core; and the emergency feature finally gave way to a long-term, child-oriented programme.

Building relationships, designing a strategy

This extract offers some reflections by Redd Barna's first Resident Representative in Cambodia, Per Egil Wam, on his return to the country.

Back for the first time in many years, Per Egil Wam recalls the setting in which Redd Barna Cambodia commenced its pledge to support Cambodian children. He was the organisation's first Resident Representative and ten years ago he arrived, to set up an office, and started chiselling out the role of the organisation.

photo: Edgar Kiøsterud/Redd Barna Cambodia



Education in Kampong Chang

The integrated basic education project embraces primary education, preschool education and educational alternatives for those with no access to school. The project aims to improve five components of the educational system: institutional management at provincial and school levels; learning and teaching activities; resource centres; community involvement; and the physical environment.

The project is run together with educational authorities on provincial and district levels, and the heads of core schools. Redd Barna provides technical assistance and guidance, as well as training.

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I hope we will continue to learn and develop, yet remain youthful, curious and open-minded.

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Per Egil Wam points out many changes since then: infrastructure has modernised, the issues fuelling discussions have altered, the general standard of living has improved. And international contacts are visible everywhere; Cambodia is now part of the international community.

The NGOs present in Cambodia in the late 1980s came to play a significant role in that regard, partly within the framework of the NGO Forum, according to Per Egil Wam: ‘We were determined to support Cambodia, and took an active part in the attempt to end the international isolation. Perhaps our influence and that of other NGOs came to enjoy (was bigger than) our budgets. But it was important that we tried to work out and stick to a firm line in the political context that we were in.’

This was far from the only challenge facing the development community. ‘The devastating results of genocide were evident everywhere’, Per Egil Wam recalls. ‘Starvation was a reality for many children, and the Khmer Rouge a large threat. Infrastructure was extremely basic, the needs of the people were endless and the structures to cater for development cooperation not yet shaped. The post office in Phnom Penh lodged the only international phone in the

country, mail arrived once a week and the city of Phnom Penh had a nine o’clock curfew.’

Although selective when giving NGOs permission to work in the country, the government backed those they had welcomed and worked closely with them, showing gratitude as well as resolution to bring Cambodia back to its feet. The Cambodian National Council for Children and the NGO Forum became increasingly important actors in coordinating efforts of NGOs. Redd Barna Cambodia was an active member of both.

For Per Egil Wam, the first year revolved around designing a strategy for Redd Barna Cambodia. Community development, health and education became the principal fields of work, and the specific role of Redd Barna was to build capacity and assist in institutional upgrading. Another important task was to form relationships and identify resourceful people to cooperate with, he recollects, adding that for him, those relations remain precious:

‘In spite of the hardship and predicaments I experienced on the part of the people, the children in particular, Cambodia is largely something positive in my mind and will always be special to me.’

Redd Barna in Cambodia today

This extract offers some reflections by Redd Barna Cambodia's current Resident Representative, Gunnar Andersen, about where the organisation stands today.

Childhood – the first, say, ten years of life – is a time when we learn basic skills and establish the platform for our future.

Adolescence is the crucial and often painful period between childhood and adulthood that follows, when we resist as well as embrace maturing. This is somehow also applicable to an organisation like ours. During our ten years in Cambodia, Redd Barna has learnt basic skills and developed, while questioning its role and surroundings. Mature adults at times believe they have all the answers, hence forgetting to challenge themselves, forgetting to listen to the young. Today, approaching adolescence, I hope the organisation will continue to learn and develop, yet remain youthful, curious and open-minded.

Four years ago, we had 18 expatriate staff. A tremendous and successful effort in the mid 1990s to develop human resources has allowed us to leave that stage behind. In 1999, the full-time expatriate staff have been reduced to two, and all departments in charge of our working areas are headed and staffed by well-qualified Cambodian nationals.

1998 was the initial year of our new strategic period, stretching into the next century. The new strategy has brought a clearer child focus, and a final transition from self-implemented projects to programmes carried out in partnership with local organisations and the Royal Government. Our main working areas are basic education; promotion of children's rights; and support to children in especially difficult circumstances, for example, sexually exploited children, street children, and disabled children.



photo: Redd Barna Cambodia



The 1999 Poster Competition

Once again the 1998 Poster Competition produced an excellent collection of high quality photographs and drawings, many of which offered tantalising insights into the world of early childhood. Now I would like to invite Foundation-supported projects to make the 1999 Poster Competition an equally big success! You can enter photographs, children's drawings or even children's collages: the important thing is that they show aspects of early childhood development. The winning entry will become the Foundation's 1999 Poster and this will be distributed in more than 100 countries worldwide. Others will be used throughout the Foundation's range of publications.

Criteria:

- photographs must show young children engaged in some kind of activity, experience or interaction that illuminates early childhood;
- photographs must be sharp and clear, with good contrast between the lightest areas and the darkest;
- photographs can be in black and white or colour, prints or slides;
- photographs should measure at least 9 x 13 centimetres;
- drawings and collages should be made by a child up to the age of 7 years old;
- drawings and collages should measure at least 9 x 13 centimetres and should be suitable for reproduction.

You can send in as many photographs, drawings and collages as you wish.

Please include the following details, if these are available and appropriate for publication – but please do not write on the backs of materials:

- the name of the photographer, or the child or children who made the drawing/collage;
- the context of the photograph – for example, at home, in centre, within a home visiting programme, and so on;
- some details about the children and adults featured in the photographs and what they are doing;
- some details about the child/children who made the drawing/collage (for example, their age, where they are from, where the picture was made – at home, in a centre or within a home visiting programme, and so on);
- some details about what the drawing/collage is about;
- the location – country, region, town/village, and so on;
- any other useful or interesting information.

Please note:

1. the copyright of submitted materials that we use will, of course, remain with the originator, but we may wish to use them in any other Foundation publications without specific permission, in which case all will be credited with the name of the originator;
2. because our publications are free, we are not able to make any payment for submitted materials;
3. unfortunately, we are not able to return materials submitted, whether we use them or not.

Please send your contributions to arrive by the end of September 1999, to the address shown on the inside front cover. The results will be featured in the February 2000 edition of *Early Childhood Matters*.

Sonja Wehrmann
Department of Programme
Documentation & Communication



About the Bernard van Leer Foundation

The Bernard van Leer Foundation is a private foundation based in The Netherlands. It operates internationally, concentrating its resources on early childhood development.

The Foundation's income is derived from the bequest of Bernard van Leer (1883-1958), a Dutch industrialist and philanthropist who, in 1919, founded an industrial and consumer packaging company that was to become Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer nv. This is currently a limited company operating in over 40 countries worldwide.

During his lifetime Bernard van Leer supported a broad range of humanitarian causes. In 1949, he created the Bernard van Leer Foundation, to channel the revenues from his fortune to charitable purposes after his death. When he died in 1958, the Foundation became the beneficiary of the entire share capital of the then privately owned Van Leer enterprise and other assets.

Under the leadership of his son Oscar van Leer, who died in 1996, the Foundation focused on enhancing opportunities for children growing up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage to optimally develop their innate potential.

In seeking to achieve this objective, the Foundation has chosen to concentrate on children from 0-7 years of age. This is because scientific findings have demonstrated that interventions in the early years of

childhood are most effective in yielding lasting benefits to children and society.

The Foundation accomplishes its objective through two interconnected strategies:

- 1 an international grant-making programme in selected countries aimed at developing contextually appropriate approaches to early childhood care and development; and
- 2 the sharing of knowledge and know-how in the domain of early childhood development that primarily draws on the experiences generated by the projects that the Foundation supports, with the aim of informing and influencing policy and practice.

A leaflet giving fuller details of the Foundation and its grant-making policy is available, as is a Publications List. Please contact the Department of Programme Documentation and Communication, at the addresses given on the back cover.

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