



CAPACITY STATEMENT:
**EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND
DEVELOPMENT IN EMERGENCIES**

August 2016

Early childhood care and development in emergencies (ECCDiE) is a key cross-sectoral area of work for Plan International. ECCDiE includes support from preparedness to response, recovery and resilience building in conflict and natural hazard situations. Plan International supports girls and boys from conception to eight years and their parents/caregivers through education and early learning, child protection, health and nutrition support.

OUR APPROACH TO ECCD IN EMERGENCIES

STRENGTHENING CAPACITY OF CAREGIVERS

Parents and primary caregivers are children's first and most important teachers. Strengthening their knowledge, skills and ability to support their own children is critical. Special effort is made to reach the most vulnerable parents including adolescent mothers and fathers.

TACKLING GENDER INEQUALITY

Early childhood is a critical period where identities are formed. We therefore tackle gender inequality through pre-school classrooms, community-based playgroups and parenting sessions. The latter includes discussions around traditional gender roles and encourages fathers to contribute more to their children's growth and development.

INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

Research indicates that multiple supports (i.e. nutrition, health, early stimulation, parenting) yield better survival and development outcomes than sectorally siloed services. Integrated programming therefore meets young children's multi-sectoral needs as well as being cost-effective as services can all happen in one location with fewer staff.

REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO FUTURE DISASTERS

Plan International uses play to engage children as young as three to identify and reduce risks in their communities, and make plans with supportive adults that can keep them safe.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN

From the initial assessment to design and monitoring of programmes, we actively engage and consult communities and children, wherever appropriate. They help ensure the response is culturally relevant and meets identified needs.

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

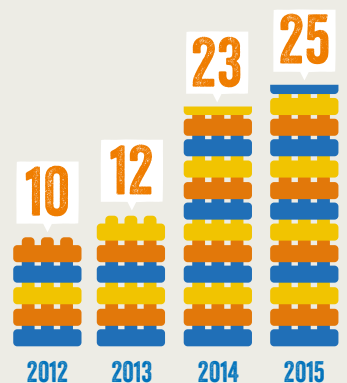
Governments are responsible for ensuring young children meet their developmental potential. We work closely with government to strengthen their capacity to increase access and quality of multi-sectoral services for young children. We bring various ministries together so young children's issues can be addressed in a multi-sectoral manner.

€118 MILLION

2015 expenditure for ECCD
(in development and emergencies)

35 OUT OF THE 50 COUNTRIES
WHERE WE WORK

have had some early childhood
care and development in
emergencies experience



Number of countries with early
childhood care and development
projects per year

OUR ECCD IN EMERGENCIES INTERVENTIONS

Parenting

- **Establish and support parenting groups** that use a peer to peer approach with mothers and fathers. Plan International targets the most vulnerable parents, including adolescent parents, fathers and single parents. These vulnerable groups are also referred to specialised care and integrated into other Plan International services (i.e. literacy, life skills, vocational training etc.)
- Parenting sessions' include:
 - » **Early learning:** the use of play for child development, learning and early stimulation
 - » **Child protection:** reducing violence, improved communication, reduction of stress, improvement of psychosocial care and well-being, birth registration
 - » **Health:** information on preventable diseases and how to get treatment
 - » **Nutrition:** the nutritional value of local foods, cooking demonstrations, breastfeeding support
 - » **Water and sanitation:** hygiene awareness

Early learning / stimulation

- **Early learning and stimulation for children 0-2 years** (mostly home-based with parents)
- **Pre-school education for children 3-6 years** (formal pre-school and community-based)
- **Support in transitioning to primary school for 6-8 years**
- Use of **play-based and hands-on activities** including activities around disaster risk reduction, caring for the environment etc.

Child protection

- **Psychosocial support for children and families** to reduce stress and violence against children in the family and community in child friendly spaces and other safe community spaces
- **Supporting with Family Tracing and Reunification**
- **Supporting with alternative care arrangements**
- **Birth registration**
- **Strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms** that support young children and families

Nutrition

- **Supporting exclusive breastfeeding** for the first six months of a baby's life
- **Prevention and treatment** for acute malnutrition
- **Micro-nutrient supplementation**
- **Provision of food** (i.e. in food insecure situations)

Maternal and newborn health

- **Antenatal care** for pregnant women
- Support for **breastfeeding**
- **Immunisations**
- **Child health checks**
- **Attended delivery**

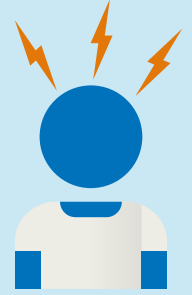
Water and sanitation

- Availability of **safe water, sanitation and hygiene**

Why is early childhood care and development crucial?



It supports brain development as **UP TO 90%** of the brain is developed in the first 5 years



ECCD saves lives and ensures children do not experience **TOXIC STRESS**



Evidence suggests it is more **COST EFFECTIVE** than remedial services for older children

We can tackle gender inequality, reduce vulnerabilities and promote peace as children **DEVELOP THEIR IDENTITIES** and learn about the norms and beliefs



On a purely economic basis, it makes a lot of sense to invest in the young ... Early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success ... It is a rare public policy initiative that promotes fairness and social justice and at the same time promotes productivity in the economy and in society at large. Investing in disadvantaged young children is such a policy.



James Heckman, Nobel Prize winning Economist, University of Chicago

HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY

Plan International has two global ECCD Advisors – one focused on emergencies and the other on development. We have technical staff throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East in its internal ECCD network and about a dozen people on its emergency roster ready to be deployed during an emergency. We have e-learning and face-to-face modules focused on ECCD in emergencies and have trained hundreds of people within and outside of the organisation.

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Global Consultative Group on ECCD
- Asia Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC)
- IASC Clusters (ie. Education, Child Protection)
- Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)
- Scale Up Nutrition (SUN)

TYPHOON HAIYAN MULTI-SECTORAL SUPPORT

After Typhoon Haiyan devastated parts of the Philippines, Plan International, in collaboration with the government and local partners, provided multi-sectoral support to young children 0-5 years and their caregivers. The focus of support for children 0-2 years was on strengthening the capacity of parents so they could support their children's development. The entry point for parenting services was through community management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) in collaboration with local health workers. Support for children 3-5 years focused on early learning and stimulation, psychosocial support, child protection and preparing children to enter primary school. Activities were conducted through mobile and home-based approaches using locally-made play and learning materials. Mobile ECCD teams led activities in child friendly spaces as well as temporary learning spaces as many ECCD centres were destroyed. A key element to the support for 3-5 year-old children was also parenting education which targeted the most vulnerable parents, including adolescent mothers and fathers. Stress is often elevated during emergencies therefore ECCD services also focused on helping parents lower their own stress. That way, they were able

to better focus on and support their children. Lastly referral mechanisms were established with other services so children and adults in need of additional services (i.e. protection, health) could obtain them.



Photo © Plan International – Girl taking part in a painting activity

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About Plan International: We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 75 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 70 countries.