

Editor's Note

Dear readers,

We are pleased to welcome you to the July 2017 CRPF quarterly newsletter. This edition brings to you news on inauguration of new children's centre and summaries of research pieces presented at the Ministry of Women & Children's Affairs CRPF monthly seminars on child protection, children's nutrition, and pre-primary education. We look forward to your comments, suggestions, and contributions. For more information, please contact us via crpf.ethiopia@gmail.com or 011-1-54-01-05/21.



News

New Ethiopian Center for Child Research Inaugurated

Yonas Tafesse

The Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) has established the Ethiopian Centre for Child Research (ECCR) in partnership with UNICEF Ethiopia and Addis Ababa University.

The Center's establishment was inspired by the collaborative work of EDRI and Young Lives longitudinal research in Ethiopia and motivated by the Child Research & Practice Forum, which was also initiated by Young Lives as well as other partners.

"The ECCR is a timely initiative and a fitting legacy for Young Lives," says Dr. Alula Pankhurst, Country Director of Young Lives Ethiopia.

The Center's mission is to generate multidisciplinary child-focused research and evidence on policy and practice to inform decision-making and enhance programmatic capacity concerning development, equity, wellbeing and protection for children in Ethiopia.

The ECCR has therefore developed research themes which include child survival and development, child protection, population dynamics and economic growth, young people's transitions to labor markets and to adulthood.

Dr. Alula says, "The Centre is already carrying out important policy relevant research on children and youth and hopefully will enable us to follow the Young Lives children into adulthood and to better understand key issues relating to youth training and employment, household formation, young women's empowerment and the transmission and means of breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty."

The ECCR is overseen by a multi-stakeholder advisory board.

More is available at www.younglives-ethiopia.org. ■



Research Summaries

Good Practices in Promoting Child Justice in Ethiopia

Aster Girma (Federal Supreme Court)

Introduction

The Federal Supreme Court's Child Justice Project Office (hereinafter referred to as "CJPO") was established in 1999 with the objective of enhancing the protection of children for the realization of their rights. It is one of the core institutional measures of the GoE to guarantee the realization of the best interest of the child in the process of administering justice for children.

CJPO follows four interrelated and interlinked strategies in implementing multiple activities: changing systems and structures; ensuring access to free legal aid; building capacities; and carry out public awareness and promoting multi-stakeholder approaches in the administration of justice to children.

CJPO Strategies

CJPO employs four key strategies to further its cause:

- **Research-based advocacy:** The office conducts research to promote pro-child policies, laws and practices.
- **Systems development:** The office is engaged in the establishment of child-friendly systems and structures within the justice system.
- **Capacity building and awareness-raising:** To enhance child-friendly approaches, CJPO organizes trainings for professionals in order to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to work with children. In addition, it uses different media to raise awareness among key stakeholders and create child safe environments.
- **Networking:** In order to serve the best interest of children, the Office has established networking opportunities and is participating on different networks/platforms.

CJPO's Major Achievements

▪ **Achievements in System/Structure Building**

CJPO has been able to set up and refurbish child-friendly systems and structures within the justice system such as victim and juvenile benches, the social work unit, and TVET program.

To sustain the structural set-ups in courts, it has developed a working document that defines minimum standards for the same.

▪ **Impacting Regions in Promoting CJ**

CJPO has established and is coordinating national experience sharing forums to replicate best practices from child justice. Accordingly,

► The Child Justice Program has now been integrated in all regional courts; and

► Social work has been integrated in all regional court systems of child justice administration.

The Way Forward

Sustainability

- The government is undertaking a study to integrate the project office as a national child protection structure. There is also a decision by high officials for courts to absorb key functions of the CJPO within the public sector scheme.

Promote Pro-child Policy and Practice

- There is the need to establish policy and practice forums that include media, parliament and other stakeholders.
- The promotion of practice-oriented research on child justice, via academic institutions, is given due consideration.

Expand and Improve Child-friendly Structures

- Attention will be given for expansion of child-friendly courts and police stations.
- Developing standard operating procedures to standardize and harmonize child-friendly spaces is a priority.
- The spaces will be equipped with child-friendly items.

Expand and Standardize Legal Aid Services

- Expanding free legal aid services via para-legal schemes and strengthening the Children's Legal Protection Programs (CLPCs) is the next focus.
- Compiling learning from CLPCs and developing a strategy in expanding multifaceted approaches for availing free legal and psychosocial services will be carried out with great care.
- Efforts must be exerted to develop standard operating procedures that supplement the quality of the legal aid services.
- Due attention needs to be given to scaling up the "victim fund scheme" by engaging other interested stakeholders.

Strengthen Capacities

- The Project Office scales up its training plan to developing and cascading training curricula and modules to enhance the skill and knowledge of professionals as well as quality of services.

Strengthen Coordination

- Ways of formalizing networks supporting child justice is underway.
- Activities are undertaken to strengthen psychosocial support services. ■

Research Summaries

Analysis of the Nutrition Sector in Ethiopia [2000-2015]

Kiyeon Yoon (UNICEF Ethiopia)



Introduction

The Ethiopian Government in introducing the 2013-15 National Nutrition Programme stated that ‘... attainment of positive nutrition outcomes will be achieved through evidence-based programming ...’. The EU with UNICEF has sponsored a situation analysis of the nutrition sector, to assess the evidence to be ‘... used to develop an EU+ Joint Nutrition Strategy and Joint Action Framework for Ethiopia ...’; the present report contracted by UNICEF aims to complement current capacity in Ethiopia to complete this task.

Methodology

Data were used from four DHS surveys (2000-2014), with focus on the larger ones of 2000 and 2011. Data on resource flows from donors were from the Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD/DAC), and from a study on nutrition stakeholder mapping, 2013-15. Weighing programme and evaluation data were also used.

Key Findings

Trends and differentials in nutritional status

- The national rate of improvement in stunting was estimated as 1.5 percentage points (ppts)/year, 2000-2011, likely continuing to 2014. This is presently the fastest in Africa, and may be the fastest national African level estimated at any recent time.
- Anemia in women is much different by region – more than double the national average for example in Tigray and Afar. Anemia is like child malnutrition in relation to wealth, only improving in the richest quintile.

Risk factors

- Poor water supply and sanitation were risks for child stunting, poor sanitation more so in the <24 month age group, and these associations were seen across most regions.

- Improving non-optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices at the appropriate ages provides a major opportunity for enhancing child growth, moreover one that is (unusually) equity-positive – the children worse-off social-economic status (SES) households would benefit more.

- While there is no doubt that access to health services, and the success of extending the Health Extension Program (HEP), is of central importance for child growth, development and health, the associations with these factors in the data were limited.

Gaps and opportunities

- Extending, reinforcing, and targeting the large programmes that directly impact food consumption and nutrition (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene, Community-Based Nutrition, PSNP, Health Extension Program); and taking advantage of, or mitigating, the effect modifiers (interactions) that are commonly found likely to affect these programmes’ impact on child nutrition.

- Many interventions – most of those examined in fact – have more impact on the less poor than the poorest.

Conclusion

As stated in the preamble to the 2013-15 National Nutrition Programme (NNP): The Ethiopian Government “found the high malnutrition rates reported in EDHS and various surveys over the years completely unacceptable. We shall work through enhanced strategic partnerships to prioritize the elimination of malnutrition from Ethiopia as one of the most viable strategies for achieving the Growth and Transformation Plan and the Millennium Development Goals.

Attainment of positive nutrition outcomes will be achieved through evidence-based programming and responsiveness and the promotion of accountability towards these results by each Ministry here undersigned”. ■

New Working Paper

Scaling-up Early Learning in Ethiopia: Exploring the Potential of O-class

Martin Woodhead, Jack Rossiter, Andrew Dawes & Alula Pankhurst (Young Lives)

Introduction

Young Lives began a specific strand of research into early childhood policies and services in 2007, with parallel studies around access, equity and quality in Ethiopia (Orkin et al. 2012) as well as in India and Peru (Woodhead et al. 2009).

Since 2015, we have been working closely with the government, NGOs, and other agencies and stakeholders to inform operationalisation and scale-up of early education policies set out in the Fifth Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP V 2015).

Purpose

Besides providing a case study into the scale-up of early learning, the paper highlights an approach to research-policy engagement built on close dialogue between government priorities and research insights embedded in a specific country context.

Methodology

Consultation visits were arranged in collaboration with the Ministry of Education School Improvement Programme for seven regions of Ethiopia and the findings presented to the Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) Taskforce in December 2015. A semi-structured protocol asked senior regional education bureau (REB) administrators about different questions.

Since the issue of teacher training seemed to be crucial, follow up visits of Colleges of Teacher Education in Amhara Region with the Ministry of Education enabled an understanding of how the O-class system was being addressed in the training of teachers.

Findings

- Consultations revealed the challenges of delivering ambitious national policies when there is a shortage of specialist ECCE administrators and little orientation or training has been provided regarding national plans for ECCE expansion.
- During the period to 2015, O-Class expansion had already been rapid (annual 25 per cent enrolment growth from 2011/12 to 2014/15) but very uneven across regions. Among the large regions, Amhara demonstrated the fastest expansion of O-Class.

- In all regions except Addis Ababa and SNNP, the share of schools offering an O-Class has increased over the period. Benishangul-Gumuz has shown the fastest increase, but five regions remain which have 50 per cent or fewer schools offering O-Class.

- The impressive growth in O-Class enrolment masks two important trends, related to gender and age. First, more boys than girls were attending O-Class in 2015. With a gender parity index of 0.95 across pre-primary, the opportunities to improve gender equality in the sector may be being missed. Second, the initial policy vision for O-Class has been as a single year for 6 year olds before entering Grade 1, at age 7. At the moment, however, O-Class is accommodating students as young as 3 years old and as a result, only 42 per cent of students enrolled in O-Class are 6 years old.

- Neither the instructors nor administrative staff responsible for ECCE training programmes expressed a clear understanding of what was expected of them by federal or regional government.

- Colleges of teacher education (CTEs) were also aware of shortcomings, and called for a technical link to federal and regional ECCE planners for training/awareness purposes – to improve understanding of programme objectives/constraints on all sides.

- Even if the planning and coordination processes can be improved, it is unlikely that traditional, and relatively expensive, pre-service training approaches are going to be sufficient to service demand for capable teachers.

Conclusion

There are many less instrumental and much more fundamental arguments for early childhood programmes, about young children's fundamental rights to a healthy environment, adequate nutrition, psychosocial support and early learning.

While all the evidence points to the potential of investment in early childhood, when it comes to delivering on that potential, many of the same challenges will face early childhood services as face primary education: namely ensuring good governance; sufficient resources, well-trained and remunerated teachers, and ensuring quality, age appropriate, child-centred curricula and pedagogy. ■



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Young Lives Ethiopia's website: www.younglives-ethiopia.org

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