Strategic action 1

Lead and invest

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The five strategic actions

1. LEAD AND INVEST
2. FOCUS ON FAMILIES AND THEIR COMMUNITIES
3. STRENGTHEN SERVICES
4. MONITOR PROGRESS
5. USE DATA AND INNOVATE
Lead and invest

Governance
How to coordinate decision-makers, at national and local levels, as they try to develop and achieve national policy objectives.

Planning
How to translate policy objectives into concrete activities.

Finance
How to fund the expansion and strengthening of services, and how to add interventions in an equitable and sustainable way, working through the appropriate ministries.
The continuum of care

Preconception care

Nurturing care for young children
Care for the caregiver

Pregnancy to age 3 3 – 5 years 5 – 8 years

Health and nutrition

Pre-primary education

Primary education

Early childhood development: children’s cognitive, physical, language, motor, social and emotional development between conception and age 8
Governance

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

• How to create political will
• How to facilitate multisectoral collaboration
• Is there need for one policy or many policies
• How to generate investment
• How to sustain momentum

STEPS THAT HAVE SHOWN TO BE EFFECTIVE

• Engage all relevant stakeholders in dialogue
• Discuss scientific advances
• Use national commitments to justify investment
• Find evidence about the current situation in the country
• Discuss practical policy options
• Discuss existing policies and strategies
• Develop a common vision, goals and targets
• Formulate and update policy
Three ways to coordinate sectors and stakeholders

- **High level leadership**
  - Coordination at level of the President’s or Prime Minister’s Office for a whole-of-government approach

- **Intersectoral leadership**
  - Leadership in one sector to coordinate actions across multiple sectors

- **Sector specific leadership**
  - Leadership within a sector to demonstrate results and facilitate engagement of other sectors
Planning

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

• Is there need for one plan or many plans
• Who is responsible
• What is the role of the national level
• What is the role of the local level
• What are attributes of a good plan

STEPS THAT HAVE SHOWN TO BE EFFECTIVE

• Do not wait for a national policy
• Plan together, implement by sector
• Know your current situation
• Build consensus of what needs to be done
• Set realistic and measurable targets
• Work in cycles and make adjustments
• Keep everyone accountable
Three principles

Remember
In all countries, activities that support nurturing care are already underway, in health, nutrition, education, child and social protection. Remember to continue to invest in them.

Strengthen
Existing policies and interventions may not be implemented with equitable coverage or adequate quality. Strengthen services so that they reach the whole of the population, especially the most vulnerable families and children.

Add
Services commonly do not support all components of nurturing care. Add interventions, such as for responsive caregiving or opportunities for early learning, for more holistic support for young children and their caregivers.
Example of a country process and timeline

Ethiopia
Financing

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- How to estimate costs
- What does it cost
- How to increase domestic funds
- How to share funds between different sectors
- How to optimize use of donor funds
- How to spend efficiently

UNICEF’s Global Resource Guide on Public Financing for ECD provides additional information and country examples
Steps that have shown to be effective

Understand the politics of financing for ECD - public financial management obstacles

• Understand the political economy/fiscal space around ECD; How is the ECD budget formulated?; Who are the influential decision makers and champions for change?; What is feasible?

Conduct evidence based and targeted advocacy

• Using the right evidence and language to win 'buy-in' from public finance decision makers
• Public expenditure tracking serves as baseline information for advocacy efforts
• Options for gradual expansion is helpful for financial decision makers

Mapping public financial management systems and budget actors
Steps that have shown to be effective

**Strengthen financing across all levels of the system** (devolved/decentralized services)
- Support subnational budgeting processes and build understanding on importance of NC among local government finance staff (demand more resources; effective utilization of resources)

**Ensure that sectoral budget plans include NC-related services and ‘add-ons’ needed to make services more ‘nurturing’**
- Identify type of ECD services for which financing is needed (coverage; quality standards),
- Cost ‘add-ons’ needed to make existing services more ‘nurturing’ (additional staff time, schedule changes; new job aids; training costs)
- Assess how much has been spent – including budgetary and non-public spending
- Determine how to fill the financing gap – considering all sources of funding

**Strengthen budget coordination across sectors and levels of government**
- Identification of gaps or overlaps in spending – which can lead to efficiency gains
Advocacy is essential

Advocacy toolkit

Key messages
Country experience
Country profiles for ECD

Frequently asked questions
Nurturing care explained
Quote cards

Advocacy ‘how to’
Thematic briefs
Resource repository

Iterative programme cycle

https://nurturing-care.org/advocacy-toolkit
Upcoming global goods to support evidence-based advocacy

Cost of Inaction Online Plug & Play Tool

- Collaboration between UNICEF and ECDAN
- Online tool with plug-and-play format to test different scenarios
- Calculates what the cost of not investing in ECD services will be in terms of future earnings

Cost of Inaction pilot countries
Brazil, Bulgaria & Madagascar
A national coordination mechanism is in place

There are champions for nurturing care in multiple sectors

Comprehensive policy objectives have been adopted and address the early years

A national roadmap or strategy for early childhood development has been developed and costed

Sector-specific plans have been updated and costed, fostering adequate and efficient spending

Government spending and action is equitable and properly tracked, leveraging planning and budget coordination for efficiency gains
Thank you

For more information:
nurturing-care.org
ecdan.org

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