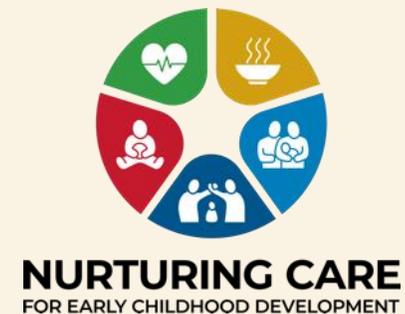




# Nurturing care framework progress report (2018-2023): Reflections and looking forward

GLOBAL LAUNCH  
THURSDAY 29 JUNE 2023

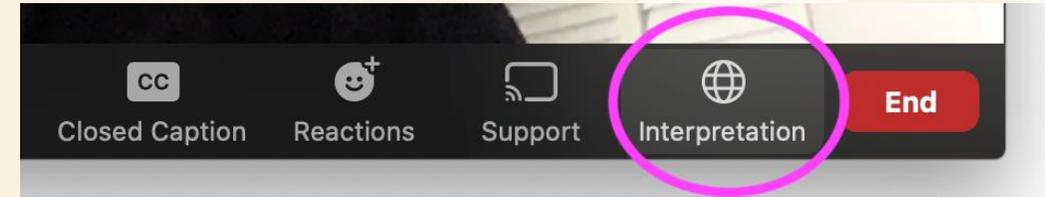
#NURTURINGCARE  
@NURTURINGCARE



# Housekeeping

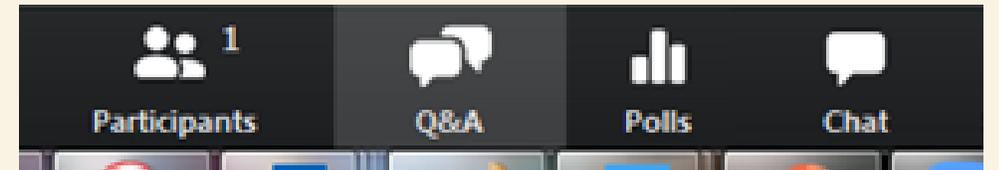
## Interpretation

There is available in **English, Serbian and Spanish**. Please click on the globe icon located in your Zoom Meeting control to select the language.



## Chat

Please use the **chat** feature located in your ZOOM Meeting Control to introduce yourself and exchange with participants.



## Ask questions

Please use the **Q&A** feature located in your ZOOM Meeting Control to ask questions.

## Recording

The session will be recorded and made available afterwards.



# Nurturing care framework progress report (2018 to 2023)

Moderated by Sheila Manji, ECD Specialist, Child Health and Development Unit, World Health Organization, Geneva



**NURTURING CARE**  
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

## Opening remarks

## Overview of the Progress Report

## Regional and country experiences

ARNEC, ISSA, Ghana, Serbia, Paraguay

## Questions & answers

Moderated by Maniza Ntekim, Senior Programme Officer for Early Childhood Development, East and Southern Africa, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

## Closing remarks



# Welcoming remarks



**Anshu Banerjee**

Director

Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child  
and Adolescent Health and Ageing  
World Health Organization, Geneva



**Victor Aguayo**

Director

Nutrition and Child Development  
UNICEF, New York



# Overview of the Progress Report



## **Bernadette Daelmans**

Unit Head  
Child Health and Development Unit  
Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent  
Health and Ageing Department  
World Health Organization, Geneva



## **Boniface Kakhobwe**

ECD Specialist  
Nutrition and Child  
Development Section  
UNICEF, New York



# Nurturing care framework progress report 2018-2023

REFLECTIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD



**NURTURING CARE**  
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

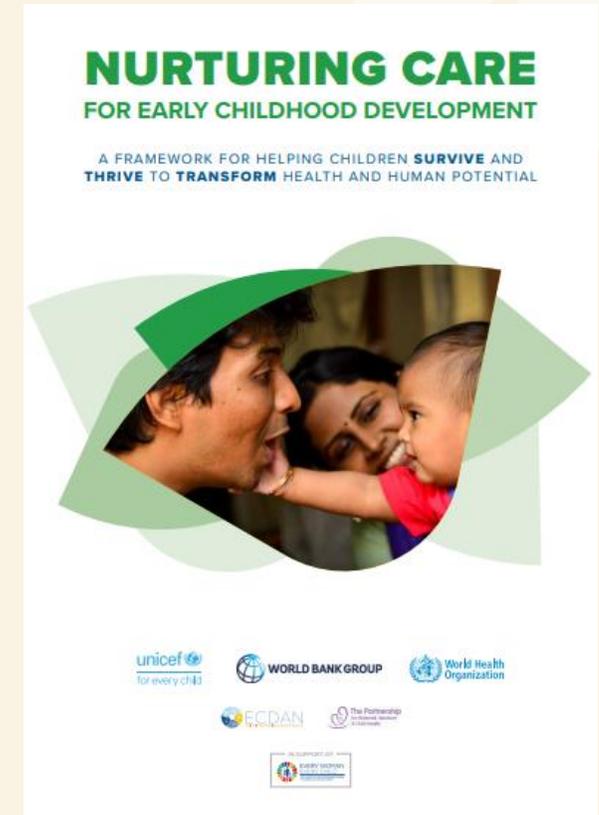
# Nurturing care framework progress report (2018-2023)

## OVERVIEW



# Our questions

- How has the concept of nurturing care influenced policy and strategy by governments and partners?
- How have the five strategic actions proposed in the Framework been translated into actions at global, regional and country levels?
- How has the Framework influenced the global child health agenda?



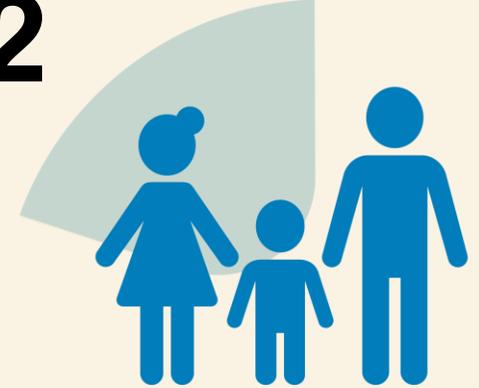
# The five strategic actions

1



LEAD  
AND INVEST

2



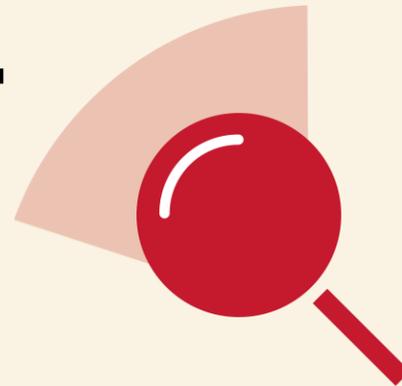
FOCUS ON FAMILIES AND  
THEIR COMMUNITIES

3



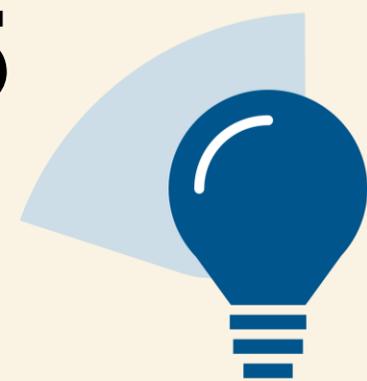
STRENGTHEN  
SERVICES

4



MONITOR  
PROGRESS

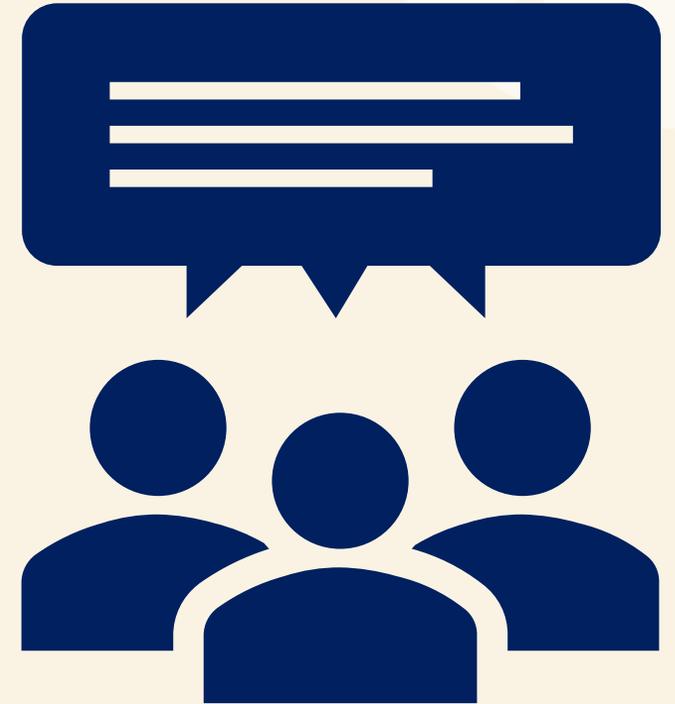
5



SCALE UP  
AND INNOVATE

# Methodology

- Interviews with 110 key informants with a wide range of stakeholders based in 30 countries.
- A robust literature review of technical reports, policy-related documents, published and grey literature, case studies and meeting notes.
- A rapid survey of 51 randomly-selected low and middle-income countries and areas, with sampling proportional to region.



Supported by an Advisory Committee

# The report sections

**Introduction** outlines the purpose and process for developing this report.

**The path to progress** describes the activities and resources that supported dissemination and operationalization of the *Framework*.

**Reflections on progress** presents the findings from the key informant interviews and rapid survey.

**Looking forward** outlines what areas need further attention so as to continue the momentum and advance progress.



# A short history

FIG. 1. BRIEF TIMELINE UP TO THE FRAMEWORK



# A snapshot of achievements 2018 to 2023



**NURTURING CARE**  
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Diverse stakeholders from multiple sectors **came together** to improve child development outcomes and create enabling environments for nurturing care.

Wider recognition exists of **ECD as an outcome**, not a specific programme or intervention.

Profiles for ECD have been developed for **197 countries** and are regularly updated.

**More than 80%** of countries and areas responding to a rapid survey reported that frontline workers were trained to strengthen caregivers' capacity to provide their children with responsive care and opportunities for early learning.

Digital traffic on the nurturing care website **increased by 650%** and continues to rise.

The concept of nurturing care was extended across the **first two decades of life**, articulating the health and well-being needs of children and adolescents.

The number of low- and middle-income countries with a national policy or action plan for ECD **increased by 48%**. Many new policies give attention to all components of nurturing care.

The **central role of the family** in creating a stimulating, safe and secure environment for young children is well recognized and includes attention to caregiver mental health and well-being.

Meetings were held with **nearly 1000 stakeholders from over 40 countries** to facilitate understanding of the Framework and agree on actions to advance nurturing care in each context.

**Over 570 scholarly articles** cited the Framework. Emerging findings are helping to build an evidence base on scaling up and innovation for nurturing care.

The *Early childhood development index 2030* and *Global scales for early development* marked an exciting **milestone in measuring and monitoring** children's development at population level.

**Over 30 resources** were developed to support operationalization of the Framework.

# Three strategic shifts

The Framework has:

- put emphasis on the youngest children
- put a spotlight on the health sector
- put caregivers at the centre of nurturing care

... reframed ECD as  
an outcome



Photo credit:

© Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health/Isabel Pinto

# Key finding #1

## NCF established a globally accepted conceptual framework

- The NCF created a **clear and widely acceptable goal and shared language** for early childhood development. It established:
  - ✓ a clear mandate for buy-in from multiple sectors
  - ✓ new focus on responsive caregiving
  - ✓ programme priorities for children under 3
- In turn, the NCF strengthened **alignment and coordination** for policy and programming processes at multiple levels:
  - ✓ across sectors and organizations
  - ✓ within organizations (internally)
  - ✓ across the lifespan



# Key finding #2

## NCF informed vital policy processes (and “got them on the right track”)

- Notable efforts have been directed at policy planning (strategic action #1), which some view as a precursor for actions in the other NCF strategic areas.

The number of low- and middle-income countries with a national policy or action plan for ECD increased **by 48%**. Many new policies give attention to all components of nurturing care.



BOX 2. SELECTED EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL POLICIES AND PLANS THAT INTEGRATE NURTURING CARE

<b>Belize</b> ECD National Strategic Plan 2017-2021	<b>Malta</b> National Policy Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care 2021
<b>Bhutan</b> National Multi-Sectoral Early Childhood Care and Development Strategic Action Plan 2021-2030	<b>Mexico</b> Estrategia Nacional de Atención a la Primera Infancia [National Strategy for Integrated ECD] 2020-2024
<b>Cambodia</b> National Action Plan on Early Childhood Care and Development 2022-2026	<b>Nepal</b> National Strategy for ECD 2020-2030
<b>El Salvador</b> Crecer Juntos [Grow Together Policy] 2020-2030	<b>Philippines</b> National Early Childhood Care and Development Strategic Plan 2019-2030
<b>Iraq</b> National Strategy for ECD 2022-2031	<b>Congo</b> Politique Nationale de Développement Intégré de la Petite Enfance [National Policy for Integrated ECD] 2022-2030
<b>Kiribati</b> ECD Policy 2022-2032	<b>United Republic of Tanzania</b> National Multisectoral ECD Programme 2021-2026
<b>Malawi</b> National Strategic Plan for Integrated ECD 2018-2023	<b>Vanuatu</b> National Policy for ECD 2023-2027

# Key finding #3

## NCF contributed to strengthening aspects of service provision

- Two common programme areas include:
  - Rapid uptake of **responsive caregiving**, **early learning** and other parenting interventions. Focused on strengthening health/nutrition workforce to support caregiver capabilities.
  - Giving more attention to monitoring early childhood development and early intervention for delays and disability.
- Additional areas of common interest related to NCF include **small and sick newborns**, **caregiver mental health**, **humanitarian contexts**, and **climate change**.

### Stories of change

#### BELIZE

Mainstreaming the Care for child development approach and supporting regional uptake

#### BANGLADESH

Strengthening the capacity of caregivers to responsively feed through nutrition services

#### INDIA, KENYA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Strengthening capacity and mentoring through paediatric associations

#### UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Using digital tools to train and support frontline workers

# Key finding #4

## Promising initiatives & progress made in other strategic areas

### Monitor progress

- Measures for assessing early childhood development in children 24 – 59 months and 0 – 36 months of age.
- Country profiles of valid and reliable indicators aligned with the Framework.
- Monitoring systems aligned with national ECD policies and strategies in countries.

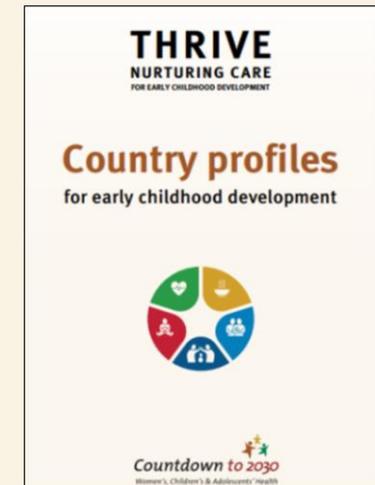


### Data and innovation

- Digital innovations that can be scaled to support caregivers in providing nurturing care.
- Family-friendly policy initiatives and private sector engagement.

### Focus on families and their communities

- Engagement of community workers, media, fathers, and mothers in the design and implementation of programmes and interventions.



“Our advocacy work in ECD picked up following the Framework. It provided the backbone for us.”  
*Stakeholder, civil society organization*

“The Framework created a common understanding of where we are and where we want to go – particularly where we want to go.”  
*Stakeholder, multilateral organization*

“The Framework helped us to identify priorities and gaps in service provision.”  
*Stakeholder, government*

“The Framework is practical and easy to use. Five years on, it continues to be the way to get everyone on the same page and make a case for ECD. The Framework gives us something that isn't everything but gives a holistic approach to understanding what children need. It has established a common agenda.”  
*Stakeholder, philanthropic organization*

Let's not forget how radical it was that ... responsive caregiving was picked up. This is a huge change and accomplishment. People understand it. We no longer deal with just the child but the whole system around the child. The Framework brought us a notion of family-centred care that we did not talk about before.”  
*Stakeholder, research institution*

## **Voices from the field**

# Key finding #5

## Common challenges

- Translating and operationalizing the NCF into sustainable practice.
- Coordination across sectors and between levels of government.
- Financial resources to implement (donor dependent).
- Data and evidence to monitor progress.
- Health system capacity and healthcare worker burden/capabilities.
- Health sector engagement.

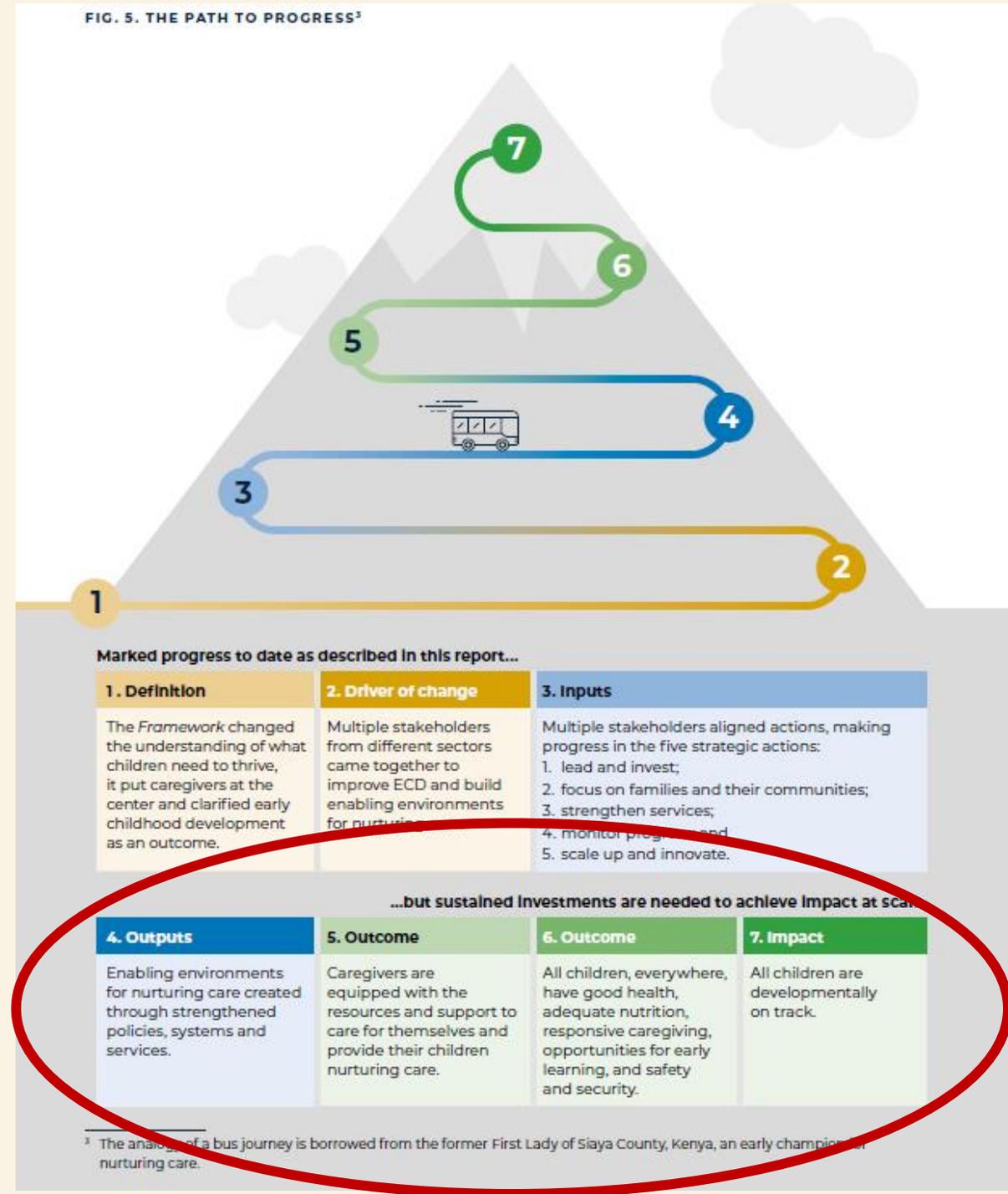


Photo credit:  
Aga Khan Development Network/J-L. Ray

# Looking forward

- Ongoing attention to each of the strategic actions will further strengthen the enabling environments for nurturing care so that caregivers can care for themselves and ensure every child receives nurturing care.
- Sustained investments are needed to achieve impact at scale.

FIG. 5. THE PATH TO PROGRESS<sup>3</sup>



# Areas that merit further attention



- Deepen coordination and collaboration mechanisms
- Strengthen policies and plans
- Improve public financing



- Involve families and communities in the design of policies and programmes
- Cultivate local champions and use multimedia



- Build a workforce fit for purpose
- Strengthen systems to provide care according to need



- Use data to inform planning, budgeting and programming
- Measure individual and collective impact



- Implement feasible, sustainable and scalable solutions
- Use implementation research

# Acknowledgements

Wholehearted thanks to

- The authors of the Lancet series *Early childhood development: From science to scale* (2017) that laid the foundation for the Nurturing Care Framework
- The key informants who were interviewed
- The UNICEF and WHO staff in countries who facilitated responses to the survey
- The advisory committee that accompanied the development of the report
- And last, but not least, Kerrie Proulx who managed the development of the report.



<https://nurturing-care.org/progress-report-2023>



# Regional experiences



**Evelyn Santiago**  
Executive Director  
Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early  
Childhood (ARNEC)



**Zorica Trikić**  
Senior Programme Manager  
International Step by Step Association  
(ISSA)





# Nurturing Care Framework and efforts to strengthen health systems for ECD in Europe and Central Asia

## International Step by Step Association

**Zorica Trikić**  
Senior Program Manager  
International Step by Step Association (ISSA)  
ztrikic@issa.nl

**Nurturing Care Framework (2018 to 2023):  
Reflections and Looking Forward**



Just under 5 million young children (around 1 in 5) are at risk of not meeting developmental milestones.

The new perspective on the role of health care in child development

## What do we want to achieve?

strengthen support for child development in all routine health care services



Enhance support for ECD in facility – based services



Bring ECD in home visiting



Support developmental monitoring



Support development of children with complex needs

- Supporting and counselling of parents on all aspects of nurturing care, addressing parental concerns
- Universal monitoring of child development based on validated tools
- Identification of children at risk of developmental difficulties
- Coordination of care and referral to other sectors/services, including for ensuring access of children to early childhood intervention services.

## How we make an impact?



Advocating for change



Curating core knowledge



Creating a learning community

- Website/Knowledge Hub <https://www.healthforecd.com/>
- More than 5000 website visitors since December 2022
- Since November 2022 seven webinars organized including the one on regional launch of the Nurturing Care practice guide - in total more than 1000 webinar viewers  
258 newsletter subscribers (more to come)
- 6 blogs (more to come)

# UNICEF/ISSA “Supporting Families for Nurturing Care” resource modules training package for home visitors

(<https://www.issa.nl/content/supporting-for-families-nurturing-care>)



- A growing set of training modules (soon to have 24 modules).
- Aiming to improve home visitors’ and other professionals’ **knowledge** of the key components of Nurturing Care and strengthen their **skills to support parents and children**.
- Supports different components of Nurturing Care and cover topics that are not routinely a part of pre-service or in service nursing and medical education in the region.

- Trained 40 regional Master Trainers
- Trained National Master Trainers in Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Albania, Kosovo (more than 100)
- Modules or elements of the modules integrated in preservice and in-service training
- Knowledge presented in the modules informed policies and practices on country level
- Contributed to building multisectoral teams of trainers and implementers

# ISSA's Initiatives in ECA region based on, or inspired and guided by NCF

**first years first priority**

THE CAMPAIGN NEWS ACROSS EUROPE TAKE ACTION RESOURCES

**IN EUROPE**

First Years First Priority is a Europe-wide campaign set up to advocate for prioritization of early childhood development in public policies, with a particular focus on families and children who are at greater risk of discrimination and exclusion.

We aim to ensure that all young children aged 0 to 6 have equal opportunities to safe, healthy and optimal development.

Join our community of followers and supporters to advocate for more political visibility and resource allocation to early childhood.

Join the ECD Community Share on social media

**ACROSS EUROPE**

Early Childhood Development in the countries where the campaign operates. [Learn more](#)

## ENGAGING MEN IN NURTURING CARE (EMiNC)



International Step by Step Association - ISSA

Centro de Estudios Sociales - CES

Centro per la Salute del Bambino - CSB

CONEXUS

Pinral Centre de Masculinitats - Ajuntament Barcelona

## EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

**HOME VISITING WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOL**

Home Visiting Workforce Needs Assessment Tool  
A User's Guide

## Primokiz

**Better, responsive and coordinated early childhood services**

### What is Primokiz?

- › An evidence-based program developed by Jacobs Foundation for increasing access to quality early childhood services for young children.
- › A phased methodology to be used by local governments to improve the services they offer for young children, in a strategic, participatory, and responsive way.

## #EUROMACHILDREN

### Breaking the silence

THE RIGHT OF EACH YOUNG ROMA CHILD IN EUROPE TO DEVELOP AND THRIVE

EUROPEAN REYN EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDY  
Exploring the Status of Young Roma Children and their Families



## TRAINING OF TRAINERS

Foundational training on psychological first aid and trauma-informed practices with young children and their caregivers.

A TRAINING GUIDE

In Partnership with



# Country experiences: Ghana, Serbia, Paraguay



**Kofi Issah**

Director of the Family Health Division of Ghana Health Services



**Slavica Djukic-Dejanovic  
MD, PhD,**

Special Adviser to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia for the Implementation of the UN Agenda 2030

Chair of Inter-sectorial Steering Committee on Playful Parenting in Early Childhood.



**Milica Pejovic Milovancevic**

Director of the Institute of Mental Health in Serbia

President of the MoH Working Group for the implementation of the National ECD Programme



**Sonia Raquel Olmedo**

Director General of Early Education in the Ministry of Education and Science in Paraguay

Member of the National Early Childhood Team (ENPI) that carries out the Kunu'u National Strategy for Comprehensive Early Childhood Care



# Closing remarks



**Helga Fogstad**

Executive Director  
Partnership for Maternal, Newborn  
and Child Health (PMNCH)



**Elizabeth Lule**

Executive Director  
Early Childhood Development  
Action Network (ECDAN)



# Thank you

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**For more information:**

nurturing-care.org  
eccdan.org

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**Join the conversation:**

#NurturingCare  
@NurturingCare

