



From Data to Action

Key insights into global early childhood development
from country-comparable data



NURTURING CARE
FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Launch of the 2023 ECD Country Profiles

Kigali, 25th October 2023

The ECD Country profiles **present in one place** the **latest information** to assess **country progress** in improving the health, development and future prospects of young children all over the world



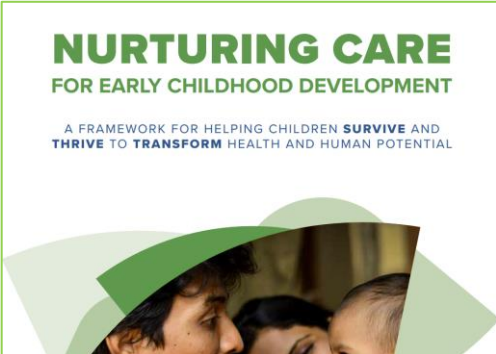
When and why were the country profiles developed?

Like all good things ... over dinner ... in Washington in October, celebrating the launch of the 2017 Lancet Series *Advancing Early Childhood Development: From Science to Scale*

“We need a way of monitoring the implementation and impact of Nurturing Care ... something like Countdown”



Nurturing Care moved quickly



May 2018, Geneva

– Launch of the Nurturing Care Framework during the 71st World Health Assembly

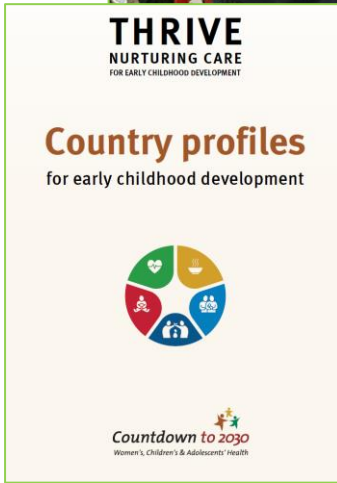
and

– Launch of the first ECD Country Profiles



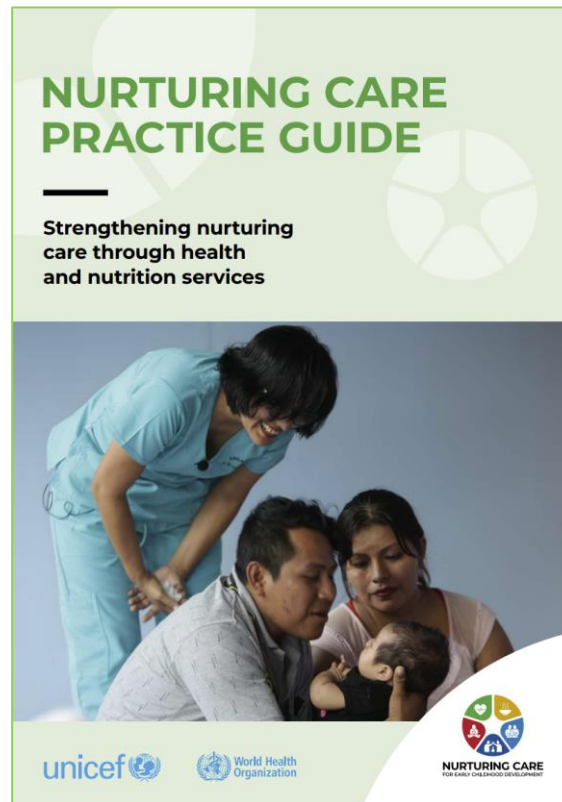
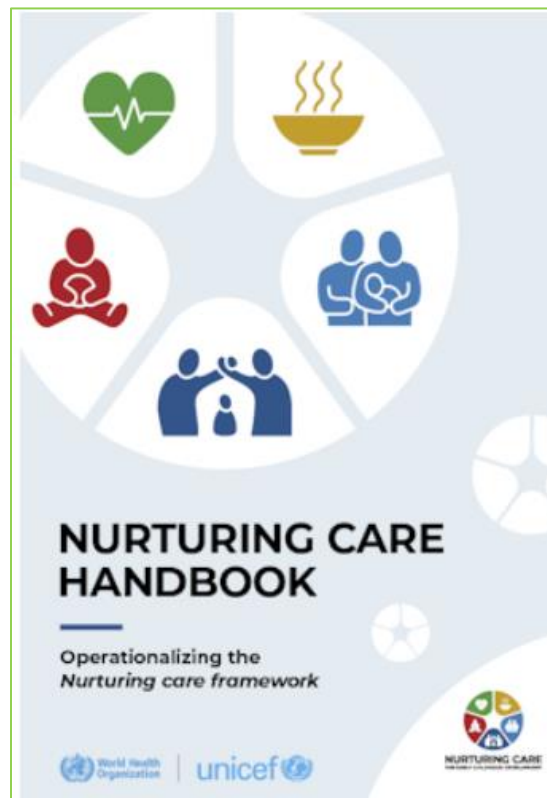
Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, WHO

“Never before has the opportunity of energizing investments in early childhood development been as good as it is now. We have a unique opportunity which is why we need the Nurturing Care Framework to help guide action to ensure that ministries of health are fully engaged in this effort.”



Nurturing Care has grown solidly...

A framework for helping children SURVIVE and THRIVE to TRANSFORM health and human potential



As have the country profiles ...

2018

The first ECD Country Profiles included data for **91 low- and middle-income countries.**

2019

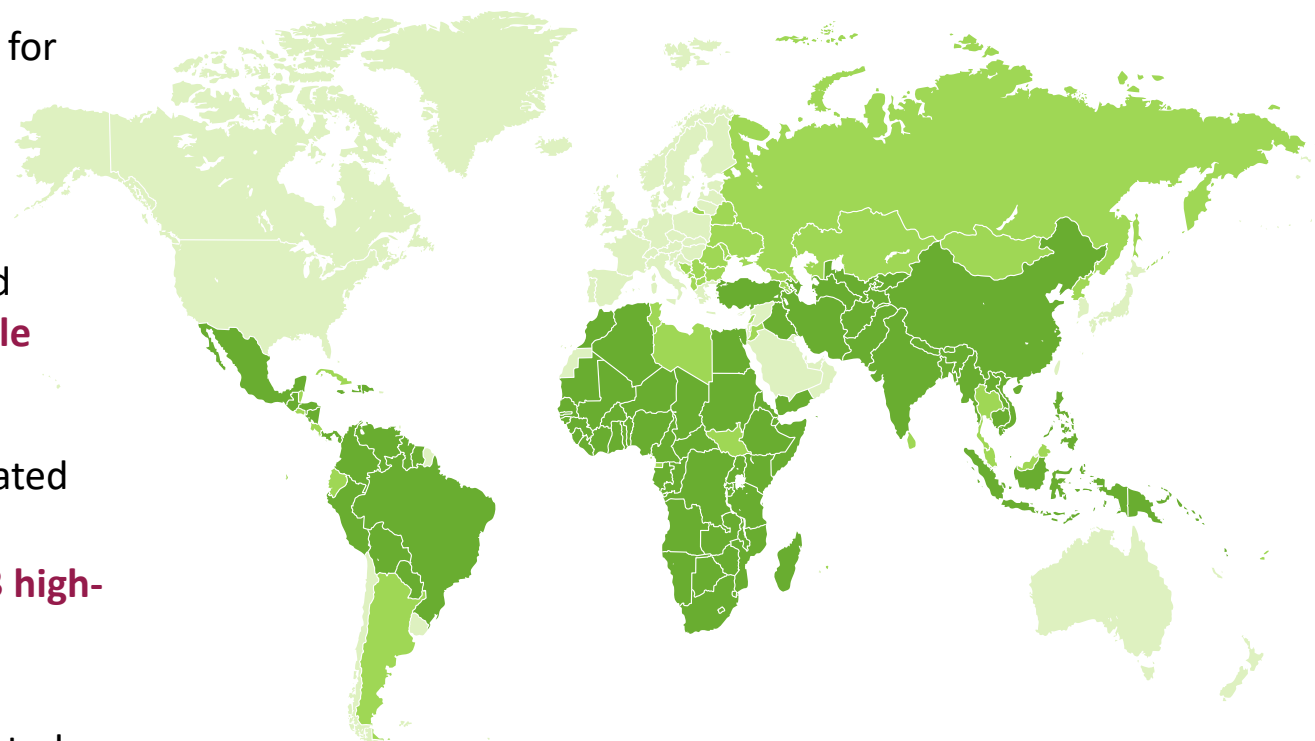
The Profiles were updated and extended to **138 low- and-middle income countries**

2020

The Profiles were updated and extended to **197 countries**, including **63 high-income** countries

2021
-
2023


The Profiles were updated and **regional profiles produced**



The Profiles are produced by the Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development Joint Technical Working Group of the Countdown to 2030

Linda Richter (chair), Diego Luna Bazaldua, Maureen Black, Claudia Cappa, Bernadette Daelmans, Amanda Devercelli, Tarun Dua, Joshua Jeong, Joan Lombardi, Elizabeth Lule, Chunling Lu, Dana Charles McCoy, Chemba Raghavan, Kate Strong and Emily Vargas-Baron.

The working group is part of the larger Countdown to 2030, chaired by Ties Boerma.



UNICEF serves as Secretariat for the TWG and is the institutional home for funding, updating and producing the profiles

ECD part of Countdown to 2030

- Started in 2003 as **Countdown to 2015** to track MDG Goals 4 and 5 (child mortality and maternal health to 2015)
- **Countdown to 2030** (2015-2019) to track the SDGs and particularly the Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016-2030)
- **Countdown 2020-2022** focus on collaborative country work



<https://www.countdown2030.org/>

Country profiles on:

- Women's Children's and Adolescents' Health
- Early Childhood Development
- Equity

Data for the country profiles

Compiled from publicly available global indicator databases

- UNICEF-supported Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS)
- USAID-supported Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)
- Other nationally representative household surveys and censuses (eg China)
- Agreed modelled estimates (eg stunting)

Country data published in high impact journals

Accompanied by a Technical Appendix with indicator definitions, together with the underlying Excel database



ECD data collected in Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) & and some USAID Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE	
UF	UNDER-FIVE CHILD INFORMATION PANEL
UB	UNDER-FIVE'S BACKGROUND
BR	BIRTH REGISTRATION
EC	EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
UCD	CHILD DISCIPLINE [1-4]
UCF	CHILD FUNCTIONING [2-4]
BD	BREASTFEEDING AND DIETARY INTAKE [0-2]
IM	IMMUNISATION [0-2]
CA	CARE OF ILLNESS
AN	ANTHROPOMETRY

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT MODULE

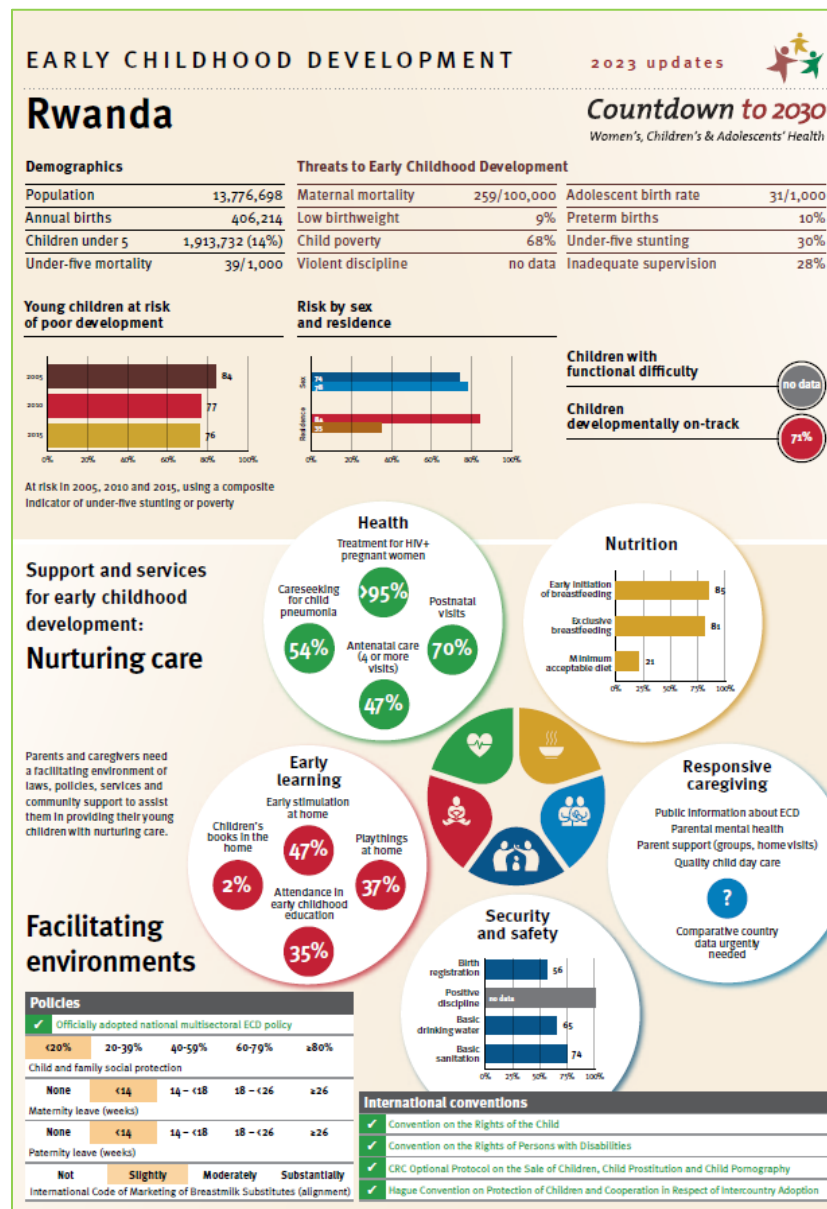
- ECDI (now replaced by ECDI2030)
- **Support for child development/early stimulation** – 1 question on 6 activities, eg *In the past 3 days told stories to NAME?*
- **Availability of books and playthings**
- **Attendance in ECE**
- **Inadequate supervision**

Child Discipline Module – 1+ question, multiple responses, eg *Shouted, yelled or screamed at NAME*

Complementary Module on Child Functioning (2-4y) – 14 questions, eg *Does NAME use any equipment or receive assistance for walking?*

40 Indicators

- Demographics (4), threats to ECD (8)
- Outcomes/impact
 - 2005-2015 trend in children at risk
 - Gender & residence differences
 - Children developmentally on track
 - Children with functional difficulties
- 5 components of nurturing care
 - Health (4)
 - Nutrition (3)
 - Security and safety (4)
 - Early learning (4)
 - Responsive caregiving (TBD)
- Facilitating environment
 - Policies (5)
 - International conventions (4)



Country profiles

for early childhood development



Countdown to 2030
Women's, Children's & Adolescents' Health

Available data

Table 3 lists the indicators included in the country profiles, the number of countries and areas with data for that indicator and the year(s) for the latest available country data updates or estimates.

Table 3: Indicators by number of countries and year(s) for the latest available country data updates or estimates

Indicator	Number of countries with data	Year
Demographics		
Total population	197	2021
Annual births	184	2021
Total under-five population	184	2021
Under-five mortality	193	2019
Threats to early childhood development		
Maternal mortality	184	2017
Preterm births	184	2010
Low birthweight	146	2015
Under-five stunting	155	2020
Child poverty	69	2006-2015
Violent discipline	85	2005-2020
Inadequate supervision	92	2005-2020
Adolescent birth rate	196	2006-2020
Young children at risk of poor development and lifetime cost of growth deficit in early childhood		
Composite burden of risk	91	2005, 2010, 2015
Risk by sex and residence	63	2006-2015
Lifetime cost of growth deficit in early childhood	123	2010
Early childhood development index (ECDI)	79	2010-2020
Child functioning	41	2015-2020
Components of nurturing care – Health		
Treatment for HIV+ pregnant women	90	2020
Antenatal care, 4 or more visits	103	1996-2020
Postnatal visits	96	2010-2020
Care-seeking for child pneumonia	123	2000-2020

Technical Appendix

Components of nurturing care: Early learning			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Children's books in the home	Exposure to written material and pictures, accompanied by caregiver narratives about words and pictures, are the foundation of early language and literacy development	Percentage of children aged 0-59 months who have 3 or more children's books at home (2005-2020)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Playthings at home	Play is natural to children, and the practice and pleasure they enjoy when playing is important to their cognitive exploration and expansion. Young children will learn from play with any safe, clean objects, most importantly when an adult engages and encourages the child and uses play opportunities to label objects and experiences for the child	Percentage of children aged 0-59 months who play with 2 or more of the following playthings at home: household objects or objects found outside (sticks, rocks, animals, shells, leaves, etc.), homemade toys or toys that came from a store (2005-2020)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Early stimulation at home	Children learn through their own exploration, but they learn more in interaction with others, especially adults who mediate a child's experience with written material, stories, excursions and other opportunities to teach young children words, numbers, colours and shapes, and to help young children to understand ideas not immediately present	Percentage of children aged 36-59 months with whom an adult has engaged in 4 or more of the following activities to promote learning and school readiness in the past 3 days: a) reading books to the child, b) telling stories to the child, c) singing songs to the child, d) taking the child outside the home, e) playing with the child, and f) spending time with the child naming, counting or drawing things (2005-2020)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Attendance in early childhood education	From about the age of 3 years, young children benefit from interacting and learning with other young children, and preparing for the environment of formal learning in school	Percentage of children aged 36-59 months who are attending an early childhood education programme (2005-2020)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Countries

An alphabetical list of the 197 countries and areas profiled is shown in Table 4, indicating which are also included in Countdown to 2030 and which have composite risk estimates.

Table 4: Alphabetical list of countries profiled

Country	Included in Countdown to 2030	Included in composite risk estimate
Alghanistan	✓	✓
Albania	✓	✗
Algeria	✓	✗
American Samoa	✓	✗
Andorra	✗	✗
Angola	✓	✓
Antigua and Barbuda	✗	✗
Argentina	✓	✗
Armenia	✓	✗
Australia	✗	✗
Austria	✗	✗
Azerbaijan	✓	✓
Bahamas	✗	✗
Bahrain	✗	✗
Bangladesh	✓	✓
Barbados	✗	✗
Belarus	✓	✗
Belgium	✗	✗
Belize	✓	✗
Benin	✓	✓
Bhutan	✓	✓
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	✓	✓
Bosnia and Herzegovina	✓	✗
Botswana	✓	✓
Brazil	✓	✓
British Virgin Islands	✗	✗
Brunei Darussalam	✗	✗
Bulgaria	✓	✗
Burkina Faso	✓	✓
Burundi	✓	✓

Indicator definitions, data availability by country and date

Available in 5 languages to facilitate uptake and use

Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish

The image displays five pages from the Countdown to 2030 report, each representing a different country. The pages are:

- Tajikistan (Таджикистан):** Focuses on early child development, including indicators for low birth weight, stunting, and underweight. It highlights the need for support and services for young children.
- Paraguay (Paraguay):** Discusses threats to development in the first 1,000 days, such as malnutrition and lack of stimulation. It emphasizes the importance of early learning and a safe environment.
- Algeria (Algérie):** Addresses risks for children's development, including malnutrition and lack of stimulation. It focuses on providing support and services to young children.
- Spain (España):** Examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's development. It highlights the need for early learning and a safe environment.
- Syrian Arab Republic (الجمهورية العربية السورية):** Discusses the impact of conflict on children's development. It emphasizes the need for early learning and a safe environment.

Each page includes a 'Countdown to 2030' logo, demographic data, and progress indicators for various child development domains. The indicators are presented as percentages and are color-coded to show progress towards the 2030 target. The domains include:

- Low birth weight
- Stunting
- Underweight
- Malnutrition
- Lack of stimulation
- Early learning
- Safe environment

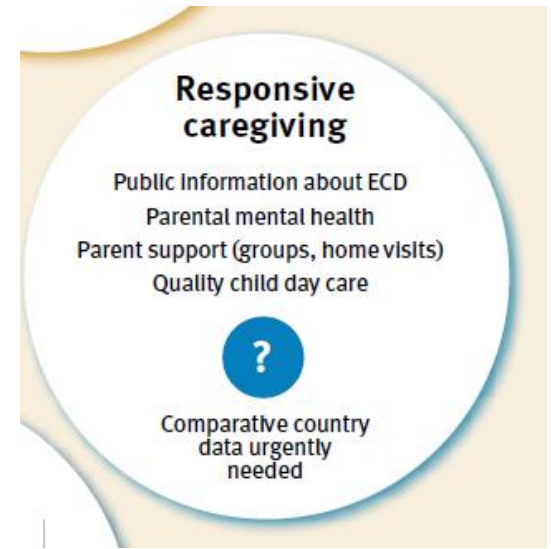
2023 – Added and improved indicators

- Officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy indicator (RISE Institute)
- SDG 1.3.1 on children/households receiving child or family cash benefits replaced previous indicator used for child and family social protection (ILO)
- Maternity and paternity leave indicators and data source revised (ILO)
- Removed indicators - national minimum wage & lifetime cost of child growth deficit (complex data, not updated)

Policies				
✓ Officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy				
<20%	20-39%	40-59%	60-79%	≥80%
Child and family social protection				
None	<14	14 – <18	18 – <26	≥26
Maternity leave (weeks)				
None	<14	14 – <18	18 – <26	≥26
Paternity leave (weeks)				
Not	Slightly	Moderately	Substantially	
International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (alignment)				

Gaps in data

- Responsive caregiving
- Trend data from repeat surveys
- Data gaps
 - Parental mental health, affordable quality day care, indoor and outdoor air pollution etc



- UNICEF working on caregiver self-report questions on responsive caregiving
- McCoy et al (2023) - summed each child's access to 10 indicators of nurturing care

Why disaggregate data at regional & sub-regional levels?

- Facilitate knowledge sharing and learning across regions and sub-regions by comparing progress on specific indicators
- Highlight with-in-region disparities and room for growth
- Tailor advocacy efforts to key issues in a sub-region
- Encourage uptake and use of the profiles and data with more focus and relevance

Regional and sub-regional profiles

Asia & the Pacific: 41 countries covering 320 million children under 5



East Africa: 10 countries covering 50 million children under 5



Central Africa: 8 countries covering 25 million children under 5



Southern Africa: 10 countries covering 30 million children under 5



West Africa: covering 66 million children under 5



Country Profiles: A resource for monitoring and to propel action

- The ECD country profiles are a **high-quality, untapped,** resource for countries to address data gaps and **propel action for change**
- **Country investment** needed in regular data collection to fill data gaps and contribute to trend analyses
- **Accelerated efforts** to collect, use & disseminate data to improve ECD before 2030

View and download the country profiles and related materials from the following web pages



<https://data.unicef.org/resources/countdown-to-2030-ecd-country-profiles/>



<https://www.countdown2030.org/early-childhood-development-profiles%20>



<https://www.ecdan.org/countries.html>



<https://nurturing-care.org/resources/country-profiles>

For research using global ECD data ...



HARNESSING GLOBAL DATA

TO ADVANCE YOUNG CHILDREN'S LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

<https://globaldata4kids.com/>

Thank you !

