

Technical Appendix

Countries

An alphabetical list of the 197 countries and areas profiled is shown in Table 1, indicating which are also included in Countdown to 2030 and which have composite risk estimates.

Table 1: Alphabetical list of countries profiled

Country	Included in Countdown to 2030	Included in composite risk estimate
Afghanistan	✓	✓
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 Virign Islands	✗	✗
Brunei Darussalam	✗	✗
Bulgaria	✓	✗
Burkina Faso	✓	✓

Burundi	✓	✓
Cabo Verde	✓	✗
Cambodia	✓	✓
Cameroon	✓	✓
Canada	✗	✗
Central African Republic	✓	✓
Chad	✓	✓
Chile	✗	✗
China	✓	✓
Colombia	✓	✓
Comoros	✓	✓
Congo	✓	✓
Costa Rica	✓	✗
Côte D'Ivoire	✓	✓
Croatia	✗	✗
Cuba	✓	✗
Czechia	✗	✗
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	✓	✗
Democratic Republic of the Congo	✓	✓
Denmark	✗	✗
Djibouti	✓	✓
Dominica	✓	✗
Dominican Republic	✓	✓
Ecuador	✓	✗
Egypt	✓	✓
El Salvador	✓	✗
Equatorial Guinea	✓	✗
Eritrea	✓	✓
Estonia	✗	✗
Eswatini	✓	✓
Ethiopia	✓	✓
Fiji	✓	✗
Finland	✗	✗
France	✗	✗
Gabon	✓	✓
Gambia	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✗

Germany	✗	✗
Ghana	✓	✓
Greece	✗	✗
Grenada	✓	✗
Guatemala	✓	✓
Guinea	✓	✓
Guinea-Bissau	✓	✓
Guyana	✓	✓
Haiti	✓	✓
Honduras	✓	✓
Hungary	✗	✗
Iceland	✗	✗
India	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓	✓
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	✓	✓
Iraq	✓	✓
Ireland	✗	✗
Israel	✗	✗
Italy	✗	✗
Jamaica	✓	✓
Japan	✗	✗
Jordan	✓	✗
Kazakhstan	✓	✗
Kenya	✓	✓
Kiribati	✓	✗
Kuwait	✗	✗
Kyrgyzstan	✓	✓
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓	✓
Latvia	✗	✗
Lebanon	✓	✗
Lesotho	✓	✓
Liberia	✓	✓
Libya	✓	✗
Liechtenstein	✗	✗
Lithuania	✗	✗
Luxembourg	✗	✗
Madagascar	✓	✓
Malawi	✓	✓

Malaysia	✓	✗
Maldives	✓	✗
Mali	✓	✓
Malta	✗	✗
Marshall Islands	✓	✗
Mauritania	✓	✓
Mauritius	✓	✗
Mexico	✓	✓
Micronesia (Federated States of)	✓	✓
Monaco	✗	✗
Mongolia	✓	✗
Montenegro	✓	✗
Morocco	✓	✓
Mozambique	✓	✓
Myanmar	✓	✓
Namibia	✓	✓
Nauru	✓	✗
Nepal	✓	✓
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	✗	✗
New Zealand	✗	✗
Nicaragua	✓	✓
Niger	✓	✓
Nigeria	✓	✓
North Macedonia	✓	✗
Norway	✗	✗
Oman	✗	✗
Pakistan	✓	✓
Palau	✗	✗
Panama	✓	✓
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓
Paraguay	✓	✓
Peru	✓	✓
Philippines	✓	✓
Poland	✗	✗
Portugal	✗	✗
Qatar	✗	✗
Republic of Korea	✗	✗
Republic of Moldova	✓	✗

Romania	✓	✗
Russian Federation	✓	✗
Rwanda	✓	✓
Saint Kitts and Nevis	✗	✗
Saint Lucia	✓	✗
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	✓	✗
Samoa	✓	✗
San Marino	✗	✗
Sao Tome and Principe	✓	✓
Saudi Arabia	✗	✗
Senegal	✓	✓
Serbia	✓	✗
Seychelles	✗	✗
Sierra Leone	✓	✓
Singapore	✗	✗
Slovakia	✗	✗
Slovenia	✗	✗
Solomon Islands	✓	✓
Somalia	✓	✓
South Africa	✓	✓
South Sudan	✓	✗
Spain	✗	✗
Sri Lanka	✓	✗
State of Palestine	✓	✗
Sudan	✓	✓
Suriname	✓	✓
Sweden	✗	✗
Switzerland	✗	✗
Syrian Arab Republic	✓	✓
Tajikistan	✓	✓
Thailand	✓	✗
Timor-Leste	✓	✓
Togo	✓	✓
Tonga	✓	✗
Trinidad and Tobago	✗	✗
Tunisia	✓	✗
Türkiye	✓	✓
Turkmenistan	✓	✓

Turks and Caicos Islands	✗	✗
Tuvalu	✓	✗
Uganda	✓	✓
Ukraine	✓	✗
United Arab Emirates	✗	✗
United Kingdom	✗	✗
United Republic of Tanzania	✓	✓
United States	✗	✗
Uruguay	✗	✗
Uzbekistan	✓	✓
Vanuatu	✓	✓
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	✓	✓
Vietnam	✓	✓
Yemen	✓	✓
Zambia	✓	✓
Zimbabwe	✓	✓

Indicators

Table 2 shows the indicators included in the country profiles, by category: the indicator name, the rationale for including the indicator, the definition of the indicator and the data source.

Table 2: Indicators: Name, definition, rationale and source of the data

Demographics			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Total population (millions)	The population size of the country	Total population (2024)	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population Prospects 2024, Online Edition
Total under-five population (millions)	The number of children under 5 years of age, and children under 5 as a proportion of the total population	Total population of children under 5 years (2024)	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population Prospects 2024, Online Edition
Annual births	The number of children born each year in the country	Annual number of births (2024)	United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Population Prospects 2024, Online Edition
Under-five mortality	The number of children under 5 years of age dying each year, per 1,000 live births	Probability of dying between birth and 5 years of age per 1,000 live births (2023)	United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME), 2025.

Threats to early childhood development			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Child poverty	Poverty is one of the major threats to the survival, health and well- being of young children and is shown to affect all aspects of development	The World Bank definition of extreme poverty in 2017, living on less than US\$1.90 per day, was used to generate a composite indicator for children under 5 exposed to stunting or extreme poverty. Poverty ratios of children under 5 were derived for a subset of countries using the World Bank’s poverty estimates and its nationally representative population surveys with wealth index (2006-2015)	World Bank, DHS, MICS, China Family Panel Survey, China Health and Nutrition Survey. Methods are the same as in: Lu, C., M.M. Black and L.M. Richter, ‘Risk of Poor Development In Young Children in Low-Income and Middle-Income Countries: An estimation and analysis at the global, regional, and country level’. <i>The Lancet Global Health</i> , vol. 4, no. 12, 2016, pp. E916-E922
Under-five stunting	Stunting among young children is associated with poor short- and longterm effects on school performance and adult earnings	Percentage of children aged 0-59 months with height for age below minus two standard deviations from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards (2024)	UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, Country Estimates, March 2025. Stunting estimates used in generating the composite indicator of risk exposure in 2015 were imputed from the existing data using the same methods as in Lu et al., 2016 (cited above)
Low birthweight	Low birthweight is an indicator of poor antenatal development and a predictor of poor childhood development in the early years	Percentage of infants weighing less than 2,500 grams at birth (2020)	UNICEF/WHO Low Birthweight Estimates, 2023 Edition

Preterm births	Preterm births are an indicator of poor antenatal development and a predictor of poor childhood development in the early years, including developmental delays and disabilities	Less than 37 completed weeks of gestation (2010)	Blencowe et al., 'National, Regional and Worldwide Estimates of Preterm Birth Rates in the Year 2010 with Time Trends since 1990 for Selected Countries: A systematic review and implications', <i>The Lancet</i> , vol. 379, no. 9832, 2012, pp. 2162-2172. Supplementary country tables. Data sources: National registries, reproductive health surveys and studies identified through systematic searches, unpublished data and data submitted during WHO country consultations
Maternal mortality	The death of a young child's mother increases the risks of child mortality, morbidity and poor early childhood development	Number of deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes per 100,000 live births during the same time period (2023)	United Nations Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group, composed of WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank and the United Nations Population Division, released in April 2025
Adolescent birth rate	It has been shown that children of young (versus older) mothers fare worse in school achievement	Annual number of births to females aged 15-19 years per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years (2004-2023)	SDG global database, updated May 2025
Violent discipline	Violence and maltreatment are associated with short- and long- term effects on children's health, well-being and social adjustment	Percentage of children aged 1-4 years who experienced any violent discipline (psychological aggression and/or physical punishment) in the past month (2006-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Inadequate supervision	Young children need adult supervision to protect them from danger, ensure adequate feeding, and provide them with support for learning	Percentage of children aged 0-59 months left alone or in the care of another child under 10 years for more than an hour at least once in the past week (2005-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Young children at risk of poor development

Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Young children at risk of poor development	Composite measure developed to assess risk of children not reaching their developmental potential. Stunting and extreme poverty serve as proxy measures because they are associated with children's development and are measured globally using uniform methods	Percentage of children under age 5 at risk of poor development as a result of stunting or extreme poverty (US\$1.90 or less) in 2005, 2010 and 2015	Method used for estimation in Richter, L., et al., 'Investing in the Foundation of Sustainable Development: Pathways to scale up for early childhood development', <i>The Lancet</i> , vol. 389, no. 10064, pp. 103-118, 2017. Available for a subset of countries (91) that were classified as high-risk
Risk by sex and residence	Differences in composite measure of risk exposure by sex and residence	Urban versus rural, male versus female (2006-2015)	Method used for estimation in Richter, L., et al., 'Investing in the Foundation of Sustainable Development: Pathways to scale up for early childhood development', <i>The Lancet</i> , vol. 389, no. 10064, pp. 103-118, 2017. Available for a subset of countries (63) with nationally representative micro-level data

Early Childhood Development Index 2030 (ECDI2030)

Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Children developmentally on track	A feasible population measure of early child development outcomes is critical to monitoring the impact of early childhood development interventions, and determining which children are on track or not, to ensure that all children benefit from interventions	Percentage of children aged 24-59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being (2010-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Child functioning

Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Children with functional difficulty	Discrimination against children with developmental delays and disabilities often leads to reduced access to basic social services, especially education and health, and a general lack of screening, identification, and access to early childhood intervention services. Addressing discrimination and promoting inclusion is important in all sectors, and can be accomplished through information and advocacy, strengthening policy and facilitating access to services.	Percentage of children aged 2-4 years with a functional difficulty in at least one domain (2015-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Components of nurturing care: Health			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Antenatal care (4 or more visits)	Antenatal care safeguards women's health during pregnancy and helps to prevent and prepare for complications during pregnancy and delivery	Percentage of women aged 15-49 years attended to at least four times during pregnancy by any provider (2003-2023)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Treatment for HIV+ pregnant women	Treatment of pregnant women living with HIV safeguards their health and prevents the transmission of the virus to their babies	Percentage of estimated number of pregnant women living with HIV receiving effective regimens (excludes single-dose nevirapine) of antiretroviral medicines for preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV (2024)	Global AIDS Monitoring and UNAIDS 2025 estimates
Postnatal visits	Postnatal visits help to detect and prevent post-delivery complications for women and newborns to ensure that they receive prompt treatment	Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who received postnatal care within 2 days after birth. The indicator refers to women who had a live birth in a recent time period, generally two years for MICS and five years for DHS (2010-2023)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys
Care-seeking for child pneumonia	Care-seeking for pneumonia indicates caregivers' ability to detect and act on their young child's health condition	Percentage of children under age 5 with symptoms of acute respiratory infection in the 2 weeks preceding the survey for whom advice or treatment was sought from a health facility or provider (2000-2023)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Components of nurturing care: Nutrition			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Early initiation of breastfeeding	Sucking at the breast within an hour of delivery ensures the baby receives the colostrum, the first milk that is rich in protective factors. Immediate sucking is instinctive for the baby and responds to the baby's attachment needs; it also helps establish exclusive breastfeeding	Percentage of infants born in the last 2 years who were put to the breast within 1 hour of birth (2004-2024)	UNICEF, Division of Data, Analysis, Planning and Monitoring (2024). UNICEF global databases: Infant and young child feeding, New York, December 2024
Exclusive breastfeeding	Receiving only breastmilk for the first 6 months of life provides babies with all the nutrients they need and protects the baby against common childhood illness such as diarrhoea and pneumonia. Breastfeeding also has longer-term benefits on children's future intelligence and health	Percentage of children aged 0-5 months who are fed exclusively with breastmilk in the 24 hours prior to the survey (2004-2024)	UNICEF, Division of Data, Analysis, Planning and Monitoring (2024). UNICEF global databases: Infant and young child feeding, New York, December 2024
Minimum acceptable diet	Young children need sufficient diverse food to satisfy their rapid growth	Percentage of breastfed children aged 6-23 months who had at least the minimum dietary diversity and the minimum meal frequency during the previous day AND the percentage of non-breastfed children aged 6-23 months who received at least 2 milk feedings and had at least the minimum dietary diversity, not including milk feeds, and the minimum meal frequency during the previous day (2010-2022)	UNICEF, Division of Data, Analysis, Planning and Monitoring (2023). UNICEF global databases: Infant and young child feeding, New York, December 2023

Components of nurturing care: Responsive caregiving

Note: no comparable country data available. Represented on the country pages by examples of indicators

Currently no comparable country data on policies and programmes that support responsive caregiving are being collected through Demographic and Health Surveys, nationally representative household surveys or UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys. In some countries, information on child day care is collected. However, to initiate discussions on the collection of data to indicate progress in responsive caregiving, we suggest that the following four indicators be considered:

National information and communication about ECD and services

Awareness by parents of their important role in young children's development; what parents, caregivers and families can do to support and promote the development of young children; and services available to assist parents of young children should they or their young child experience difficulties.

Maternal/paternal mental health

Both maternal and paternal mental health, and the mental health of caregivers, is critical to responsive caregiving. Lack of energy, preoccupation, anxiety, depression and other symptoms of mental distress make it very difficult for caregivers to be sensitive and responsive to the needs of a young child.

Parent support through groups and home visits

Support, either through parent groups or home visits, is of assistance to parents in receiving reassurance, the companionship of others with shared challenges, information about their baby's development and parent and family behaviours and responses that support infant development, demonstrations of how they can approach and resolve difficulties, and referral to additional services should they need them.

Good quality affordable child day care

In many countries, as many women as men are economically active, either in the formal or the informal sector. These families, and families with other challenges that require additional assistance, benefit from good quality, free or affordable child day care.

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 (2005-2024)	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 (2005-2024)	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 24-59 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 (2005-2024)	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 (2006-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Components of nurturing care: Security and safety

Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Birth registration	Through birth registration, a child acquires his or her identity as a citizen and a rights holder in a country. Registration is often a condition for the receipt of state services such as health care, education and social protection	Percentage of children under age 5 who were reported to be registered with civil authorities. The numerator of this indicator includes children reported to have a birth certificate, regardless of whether or not it was seen by the interviewer, and those without a birth certificate whose mother or caregiver says the birth has been registered (2006-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS, other nationally representative surveys, censuses and vital registration systems
Basic drinking water	Safe drinking water is especially important for young children to prevent infectious diseases that inhibit their physical growth and diminish their active exploration of the environment through which they learn	Percentage of the population using an improved drinking water source, where collection time is not more than 30 minutes for a round trip including queuing (improved sources include: piped water; boreholes or tube wells; protected dug wells; protected springs; rainwater; and packaged or delivered water) (2024)	WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, August 2025
Basic sanitation	Basic sanitation is also especially important for young children, to prevent infectious diseases that inhibit their physical growth and diminish their active exploration of the environment through which they learn	Percentage of the population using an improved sanitation facility that is not shared with other households (improved facilities include: flush/pour flush to piped sewerage systems, septic tanks or pit latrines; ventilated improved pit latrines; composting toilets or pit latrines with slabs) (2024)	WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, August 2025
Positive discipline	Positive discipline by parents and caregivers helps to socialize young children to understand how to avoid danger and what they may and may not do in their social context	Percentage of children aged 1-4 years who experienced only non-violent discipline in the past month, including a) explaining why a behaviour is wrong, b) taking away privileges or not allowing the child to leave the house, and c) giving the child something else to do (2006-2024)	UNICEF global databases, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

Facilitating environment: Policies			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Child and family social protection	Social protection for children and families protects children and families from destitution and the worst effects of poverty	The indicator reflects the proportion of children/households receiving child or family cash benefits (2015-2023).	SDG global database, updated July 2025, based on ILO's World Social Protection Database which compiles information from the Social Security Inquiry which gathers administrative data from national sources.
Maternity leave	Maternity leave enables women to prepare for and recover from delivery and establish exclusive breastfeeding	Number of weeks of leave available to mothers in national legislation	ILO, Care at Work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work , 2022.
Paternity leave	Paternity leave enables men to support their partners before, during and after delivery, and be involved in the care of their young children	Number of weeks of leave available to fathers in national legislation	ILO, Care at Work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work , 2022.
International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes	The Code prevents the marketing of breastmilk substitutes that threaten exclusive breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is essential to the nutrition, health, safety and psychological well-being of the baby, and has many benefits for mothers as well	Legal status of the Code	World Health Organization, Marketing of breast-milk substitutes: National implementation of the international code, Status report 2024. Geneva: WHO and UNICEF; 2024.
Officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy	One of the most important facilitating environments for improving and expanding ECD services is the participatory planning, development, adoption and implementation of national multisectoral ECD policy documents.	<p>Presence or absence of one or more officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy documents (policies, strategic plans or laws).</p> <p>Countries marked as having no officially adopted multisectoral ECD policy document are those for which it was confirmed that no policy exists or, in the case of a small number of countries, it was not possible to confirm the existence of a policy in any language.</p>	<p>Country-level data and files of officially adopted multisectoral ECD policy documents in the RISE Institute's ECD Policy Repository were reviewed against a set of pre-defined criteria.</p> <p>In 2022, an assessment of the availability of national multisectoral ECD policies using the documents gathered up to 2019 was published in Vargas-Barón, E., et al. (2022). The assessment was updated in July 2025, and it will be continuously updated.</p>

Facilitating environment: International conventions			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	The CRC is a protective mechanism for all children in countries that sign or ratify the convention	Signature or ratification as of July 2025	United Nations Treaty Collection, treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en .
General comment No. 7 (2005) on implementing child rights during early childhood Accepted by the Committee. Not ratified or signed by individual countries			
CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000	The protocol aims to prevent the exploitation of children in countries that sign or ratify the protocol	Signature or ratification as of June 2025	United Nations Treaty Collection, treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-11-c&chapter=4&lang=en
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006	The convention aims to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are protected	Signature or ratification as of June 2025	United Nations Treaty Collection, treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-15&chapter=4 .
Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, 1993	The convention aims to ensure that children are not exploited through intercountry adoption	Signature or ratification as of June 2025	Hague Conference on Private International Law, https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=69

Important indicators – no or insufficient comparable country data			
Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
<p>More data needs to be collected, recalculated or validated</p> <p>Many more indicators than are included in the country profiles are needed to monitor and inspire the scale-up of quality interventions and programmes to support the development of young children. Some of these are indicated below:</p>			
Government expenditure on ECD	Government leadership, programming and funding are needed to scale up efforts to improve facilitating environments and nurturing care needed by young children to realize their human potential		Some data available, minimum number of countries. Results for Development (R4D) has data on government spending on different ECD programmes in only 12 countries
Foreign assistance for ECD	International aid is important to leadership and funding of early childhood development programmes		The World Bank published estimates at the aggregate level (total \$ from the World Bank on ECD), but not at the country level. R4D has data on early childhood education, but not on other areas of ECD, and data are at the country level
Household expenditure on ECD (child day care)	Early indications suggest that, currently, families are spending a high proportion of household income on child day care and are often forced to compromise by accepting poorer quality, more affordable services		Some data available, minimum number of countries. Some data available from R4D
Low maternal schooling	Children whose mothers have no or only a few years of primary education have poorer health, nutrition, and cognitive development than children of better educated women. Education is empowering for women themselves, their families and their children	No education.	Countdown to 2030 reports on secondary education. There are no country-level estimates available for maternal education. Therefore, micro- level data has to be used to generate the estimates for countries with nationally representative data. In addition, categories of maternal education between DHS and MICS (and even within DHS and MICS) are not always consistent
Care for child development	The UNICEF/WHO Care for Child Development (CCD) materials are in use in a large number of countries and are often adapted to local circumstances. CCD is illustrative of a feasible, cost-effective intervention to promote nurturing care that can be incorporated into the delivery of services in different sectors	who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/care_child_development/en/ unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_68195.html	Informal repository of country implementation

Important indicators – no or insufficient comparable country data

Indicator	Rationale	Definition	Data source
Children in institutional care	Care of young children in large group homes (institutions) is a known and serious risk to children's development, since development is dependent on responsive human interaction best provided in a family environment		UNICEF's Data and Analytics Section maintains a global database on this indicator, but it is not currently available for public sharing, given the lack of comparability across countries
Maternal/parental mental health/depression	Parental and caregiver depression is prevalent in conditions of adversity and hardship, and significantly affects the development of young children through its impact on the motivational and emotional state of parents and caregivers		Some prevalence data, but with small non-representative samples and long intervals between dates of information, have been collected. For example: Gelaye et al., 'Epidemiology of Maternal Depression', <i>The Lancet Psychiatry</i> , vol. 3, no. 10, 2016, pp. 973-982; Ferrari et al., 'Burden of Depressive Disorder', <i>PLOS Medicine</i> , vol. 10, no. 11, 2016, p. E1001547
Female alcohol consumption	Drug and alcohol abuse are associated with prenatal complications, developmental delays and difficulties, the potential for violence in the home and other social problems. Data on female alcohol consumption may be one possible indicator for this threat to early child development	Total alcohol per capita consumption (APC) is defined as the total (sum of recorded APC 3-year average and unrecorded APC) amount of alcohol consumed per adult (15+ years) over a calendar year, in litres of pure alcohol	Recorded alcohol consumption refers to official statistics (production, import, export, and sales or taxation data), while the unrecorded alcohol consumption refers to alcohol that is not taxed and is outside the usual system of governmental control. The WHO Global Health Observatory, who.int/gho/en/ There was insufficient time to find a way to include the data in a simple and understandable way
Quality, affordable child day care	In a large number of countries, as many women as men are economically active, either in the formal or the informal sector. These families, and families with other challenges that require additional assistance, benefit from good quality, free or affordable day care		No globally comparable data on this indicator
Environment/air pollution	During pregnancy and early childhood, the rapid development of children makes them especially vulnerable to environmental toxins, including, among others, air pollution	Percentage of population breathing air with unhealthy levels of pollutants	WHO Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database (2018 update), who.int/airpollution/data/cities/en/ There was insufficient time to find a way to include the data in a simple and understandable way

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	2024
Annual births	197	2024
Total under-five population	197	2024
Under-five mortality	195	2023
Threats to early childhood development		
Maternal mortality	193	2023
Preterm births	184	2010
Low birthweight	157	2020
Under-five stunting	163	2024
Child poverty	69	2006-2015
Violent discipline	100	2006-2024
Inadequate supervision	102	2005-2024
Adolescent birth rate	195	2004-2023
Young children at risk of poor development		
Composite burden of risk	91	2005, 2010, 2015
Risk by sex and residence	63	2006-2015
Children developmentally on track	95	2010-2024
Children with functional difficulty	60	2015-2024
Components of nurturing care – Health		
Treatment for HIV+ pregnant women	90	2024
Antenatal care, 4 or more visits	148	2003-2023
Postnatal visits	108	2010-2023
Care-seeking for child pneumonia	124	2000-2023
Components of nurturing care – Nutrition		
Early initiation of breastfeeding	134	2004-2024
Exclusive breastfeeding	135	2004-2024
Minimum acceptable diet	95	2010-2022
Components of nurturing care – Responsive caregiving		
Public information about ECD	0	
Parental mental health	0	
Parent support in groups and home visits	0	
Quality child day care	0	

Indicator	Number of countries with data	Year
Components of nurturing care – Early learning		
Early stimulation at home	103	2005-2024
Children's books in the home	101	2005-2024
Playthings at home	101	2005-2024
Attendance in early childhood education	122	2006-2024
Components of nurturing care – Security and safety		
Birth registration	181	2006-2024
Positive discipline	98	2006-2024
Basic drinking water	185	2024
Basic sanitation	178	2024
Facilitating environment – Policies		
Child and family social protection	168	2015-2023
Maternity leave	184	2021
Paternity leave	184	2021
International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes	192	2024
Officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy	197	2025
Facilitating environment – International conventions		
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989	194	2025
Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000	194	2025
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006	194	2025
Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, 1993	197	2025



Countdown to 2030

Women's, Children's & Adolescents' Health

