AFRICA ECD VOICE

WGECD/GTDPE

Dakar Office
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Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

CONTENTS

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Welcome: Editor

Welcome to issue #3 of *Africa ECD Voice*. As noted in earlier issues, this ECD NewsJournal for Sub-Saharan Africa is published by the Working Group on ECD for Africa (WGECD), which is supported by ADEA and UNESCO-BREDA.

The first two issues of the *Voice* focused largely on scholars' workshops that were designed to "enhance Africa's efforts to better address the well-being of its children and to create a strong base for African-led research". The 2nd issue also included findings from surveys of post-secondary education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) regarding their inclusion of ECD and child development courses and programs. The first two issues lay a useful foundation for a key focus of this issue: collecting and analyzing the ECD literature of SSA .

The overview of that work provided here is based on a collaborative project between the University of Victoria ECDVU program and the Aga Khan University Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) based in Dar es Salaam. The two institutions received funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA—now subsumed within Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development) to undertake a major mapping project for ECCE/ECD in Tanzania and accompanying that work the creation of a compendium of internationally accessible literature re ECCE/ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa. The work inside Tanzania (including the collection of grey literature) has been led by the AKU-IED (Dr. Pauline Rea-Dickens, co-principal investigator), and the SSA work led by UVic-ECDVU, although both parties are involved with each component.

The primary focus for this issue of the *Voice* is an overview of the SSA literature. Emily Ashton, a doctoral student at the School of Child and Youth Care, UVic, took the lead with this issue of the *Voice*; she has been the primary collector of the SSA published data and has worked with Dr. Alan Pence (co-P.I. UVic) to analyze and present the findings. One of the recent SSA volumes highlighted in the latter part of the article, is authored by Dr. Andy Dawes, Emeritus Professor University of Cape Town, and it includes a set of interview questions posed by Emily Ashton to Prof. Dawes.

As with the first two issues of *Africa ECD Voice*, the first section provides a brief overview of news items. For this issue these items were collected by Emily Ashton with ECDVU and by the UNESCO-BREDA/WGECD team based in Dakar.

Sincerely,

Alan Pence, PhD
Professor, University of Victoria
Director, Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU)
UNESCO Chair in Early Childhood Education, Care and Development

News Section

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Day of the African Child 2014

June 16, 2014

On June 16, 1976, the children of Soweto instigated a series of protests that had consequential effects for the apartheid regime in South Africa. To honour the 1976 Soweto Uprising, the African Union and its partners celebrate the Day of the African Child (DAC) every year on the 16th of June. The general objective of the DAC celebrations in 2014, with the theme "A child friendly, quality, free and compulsory education for all children in Africa," is to appeal to African governments to fulfil their responsibilities in ensuring children's right to education in accordance with the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*. The 2014 theme is even more significant given that the Soweto Uprising which DAC commemorates was a protest for a more just education. The full concept note for DAC 2014 can be found at www.acerwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/DAC-2014-Concept-Note.pdf

Source: African Union

International Conference – 25 Years of the CRC

November 17-19, 2014 - Netherlands

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the most ratified human rights treaty ever. Marking 25 years since its initial adoption by the General Assembly on the 20th on November 1989, this conference presents an opportunity to take stock of the CRC's effect to date and to provide a space for deliberating about the future of children's rights. The conference aims to bring together scholars, professionals, and students from across the globe for a two-day program of knowledge sharing, discussion and reflection on the past and future impact of the CRC. The conference is a part of an entire week of anniversary celebrations organized by Leiden University, the City of Leiden, UNICEF, and the Dutch NGO Coalition on Children's Rights. Find out more by visiting the conference website at http://law.leiden.edu/organisation/private-law/child-law/25yearscrc.

Source: Department of Child Law, Leiden University

Appointment of Dr. Kofi Marfo as Founding Director of AKU's Institute for Human Development

Dr. Kofi Marfo has been appointed as founding Director of the Aga Khan University's (AKU) Institute for Human Development. Dr. Marfo will be based in Nairobi and will coordinate a research program aimed at producing scholarship that directly impacts policies, programs, and practices that enhance daily life experiences for people at all stages of human development. Dr. Marfo will bring together the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) with new international partnerships to generate knowledge, build capacity, and implement new early childhood development interventions. Dr. Marfo comes to AKU from the University of South Florida, USA, where he was the Founding Director of the Center for Research on Children's Development and Learning from 2000-2007. Dr. Marfo has been a co-convener of the African Scholars in Child/Early Development series and a long-standing professor for the Early Childhood Development Virtual University (ECDVU). Dr. Marfo has published more than 80 journal articles, and edited four books. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta, Canada (ME and PhD) and the University of Cape Coast, Ghana (BEd, Honors). Read the full announcement at: http://www.aku.edu/collegesschoolsandinstitutes/ihd/Pages/home.aspx.

Source: Aga Khan University and ECDVU

ACEI Launches Center for Education Diplomacy

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) has launched the Center for Education Diplomacy, an online clearinghouse for those interested in the concept of education diplomacy. According to ACEI, education diplomacy "recognizes the place of education at the heart of society and, therefore, its role as an essential vehicle for cultivating intercultural and interdisciplinary understanding and cooperation." As an educational approach to knowledge sharing, research generation, capacity building, and self-reflection, educational diplomacy promotes respectful communication and collaboration across cultures and nations. Sharing knowledge and ideas, while being mindful of the contextual and cultural complexities of theory and practice, will better prepare us to positively shape our globalized and interdependent world. The new website can be found at: www.educationdiplomacy.org.

Source: ACEI

Conference Reports and Past Events

Pan-African Conference on Parenting 2013

October 16-17, 2013 - Malawi

The Parenting African Network (PAN) in association with the YONECO (Youth Net and Counselling) recently held the 2nd Pan-African Conference on Parenting. The conference`s theme was "Understanding Realities Of Teenage Parenting: A Special Focus on Adolescents (Girls And Boys) with Parenting Responsibilities." Experts from local and international organizations, government officials, and other key partners came together to share evidence from research projects and collaborate on strategic plans to strengthen family relationships and child well-being in Africa. The conference took place in Mangochi, Malawi, where more than 60 delegates from 10 African countries were in attendance. The post-conference report provides summaries of each speaker's presentation and an overall synopsis of the event. The report includes the *Mangochi Declaration and Plan of Action* that highlight collaborative steps to bring focused attention to the issues raised and to address the gaps. The *Declaration* highlights, among other important action points, the dearth of research on parenting programs and interventions in sub-Saharan Africa. The conference then provided a much needed opportunity to share knowledge about current research and programs that will inform future advocacy actions. The full conference report is available at:
http://www.crin.org/docs/pan_malawi_2013_panafrican_conference_on_parenting_report_and_mangochi_declaration0_1.pdf.

Source: PAN Secretariat

Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education (RECE) Conference

November 3-7, 2013 - Kenya

The Department of Early Childhood Studies at Kenyatta University recently hosted the 21st Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education (RECE) Conference from the 3rd to 7th November 2013. The conference was attended by more than 100 participants from more than 20 countries. The Kenyan conference was the first ever RECE conference held in Africa since its inception in Madison, Wisconsin, USA, more than 20 years ago. The RECE conference is a forum with a unique history formed by a small community of scholars in the field of early childhood education to advocate for multiple perspectives in research in child development. This movement is a departure from the status quo of the dominant discourse that positions the study of childhood as a preserve of Euro-American research and scholarship. The theme of the conference was "Reclaiming the Indigenous Child, Family, and

Community: Pedagogies of Place," and the full program is available on the RECE website at www.receinternational.org. A summary of key research areas explored at the conference include: inclusive theoretical frameworks and research methodologies; childhood as contextually and culturally constructed; importance of culture and language in early childhood programs; learning based on indigenous knowledge practices and everyday experiences of young children; community based ECD models based on local child development practices; and ECD policies and challenges from different countries. The conference also provided an opportunity for Kenyatta University and the Kenyan Ministry of Education to strengthen collaboration in research in early childhood education in Kenya.

Source: John Ng'asike, PhD, Conference Host Committee Chair

ACEI Global Summit on Childhood

April 10-13, 2014 - Canada

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) recently held the Global Summit on Childhood in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The Global Summit is a platform for cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural, and international dialogue about the experience of childhood. Close to 500 attendees from more than 60 countries joined together for presentations, activities, and networking opportunities. Conference presentations addressed child rights, child health and well-being, ECD capacity building, global goal setting, and more. For more information the full conference program is available at http://acei.org/programs-events/summit.html. Keynote speeches by Karen Wells (University of London), David Anthony (UNICEF), and Jessica Ball (University of Victoria) are available on the ACEI YouTube channel, https://www.youtube.com/user/ACEImedia.

Source: ACEI

2014 World Forum on Early Care and Education

May 6-9, 2014 - Puerto Rico

Over 800 early childhood leaders, practitioners, and researchers from more than 80 countries came together in San Juan, Puerto Rico, for the 10th World Forum on Early Care and Education. The World Forum is concerned with improving the lives of children, families, and early childhood providers from all ethnic, cultural, political, and religious backgrounds in all regions of world. The conference delegates explored diverse practices and approaches to care and education of young children. In the words of spokesperson Roger Neugebauer, "For children of the world to have promising futures, early childhood programs must meet their needs for optimal growth and development." Presentations during the World Forum 2014 included topics such as: Connecting Children with Nature; Leadership in Early Childhood; Family Engagement; Multi-Cultural Education, Teacher Education; HIV/AIDS and Young Children; Peace Education; Preserving Indigenous Culture; Children with Special Needs; and more. The full conference program is available at www.worldforumfoundation.org/get-involved/2014-world-forum.

Source: World Forum

ADEA Early Childhood Development Inter Country Quality Node (ECD ICQN) - Mauritius
May 21, 2014

The vision of the ECD ICQN – *South-South/North-South Cooperation Programme on Early Childhood Care Education and Development Leadership and Capacity Building in Sub-Saharan Africa* is to contribute to the achievement of the Education For All Goals and Millennium Development Goals as well as strengthening of the Convention of the Rights of the Child in the Sub-Sahara African region. Mauritius has achieved all the EFA goals except literacy.

On May 21, 2014 Mr. Ram Prakash Ramlugun, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Education of Mauritius, met with Ann Therese Ndong-Jatta, Director of UNESCO-BREDA and the Chair of ADEA-WGECD to discuss the progress of the creation of the Mauritius ICQN.

The ICQN Secretariat has been established and Mauritius' Minister of Education and Human Resources, who chairs the Steering Committee, is keen to launch the ICQN which is anticipated to take place within 3 months.

For more information, contact Ms. Rokhaya Diawara, Co-ordinator WGECD via e-mail at r.diawara@unesco.org.

Source: UNESCO BREDA

Profiling ECD Initiatives

I.   The Big Push Initiative and Development of the Indigenous Early Childhood Care and Education (IECCE) model

Capacity development in early childhood development has been a hallmark of UNESCO's Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa (IICBA) since its beginning in 2007. At that time a research program was initiated in 6 African countries: The Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Nigeria and South Africa. The next year a validation workshop was held wherein Mauritius and Senegal were also invited into the ECD research group. The research findings revealed limited ECD policy implementation in some countries, a large capacity-gap both within and between countries to provide ECD services, and limited government investment in the ECD sector including the training and supervision of teachers and caregivers. Given these findings, IICBA decided to organize a curriculum design workshop with ECD experts and policy makers in the selected African countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Uganda) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in October 2011 and a validation workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, in April 2012.

These efforts resulted in the construction of Indigenous Early Childhood Care and Education (IECCE) model. The IECCE model is made up of 7 interconnected modules. The modules are (1) The Young Child, (2) The Child with Additional Needs, (3) Family and Community, (4) Needs and Rights of the Child, (5) Play and Learning, (6) The Caregiver, and (7) Assessment and Research. Taken together the curriculum model provides tools, skills and resources to people working with vulnerable children and their families. Teachers, caregivers, parents, older siblings, grandparents, and elders are all key contributors to children's education and well-being. Indigenous knowledges are the cornerstone of the model. The model gives attention to helping children learn in their local context from birth to age eight, and it promotes a smooth transition from ECD to primary education and beyond such that cultural values and practices that set the strong foundation needed to become contributive members of their society are ensured.

The next step was to ensure the piloting of the seven modules. In 2013, three countries (Burkina Faso, Kenya and Nigeria) indicated to IICBA that they will be willing and available for a pilot, but the constraint was funds. It was at this juncture that UNESCO office in Dakar invited IICBA to collaborate in hosting a capacity building meeting to sensitize member states involved in the EFA acceleration Initiative "Big Push" to speed progress towards achieving EFA Goal 1 on expanding ECCE to the vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The capacity building workshop was held at the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 9 to 13 December, 2013. It was a gathering of representatives from countries that had identified ECCE as one of the EFA goals they wanted to accelerate.

The implementation of the Big Push acceleration urges immediate action, and the existence of the Indigenous Early Childhood Care and Education (IECCE) modules was an excellent opportunity to assist countries to fast track their acceleration efforts in ECCE, while adopting socio-culturally and economically appropriate models. Taking into account the specific context of ECCE in Africa and the need to assist Member States in their efforts to reinforce the provision of ECCE services at country level, UNESCO Dakar office enthusiastically supported the pilot of the IECCE in the Big Push countries. Mr. Adote-bah Adotevi and Ms. Zulmira Rodrigues actively mobilized resources for this purpose. The UNICEF Uganda office, which is already using elements of the modules for training in Uganda, was also very supportive in this effort of resource mobilization that ensured a successful mission. The December workshop familiarized the pilot countries with the IECCE modules and ensured the achievement of the planned outcomes. A total of ten countries participated in the meeting. Five of the first phase Big Push countries were: Senegal, Swaziland, Zambia, Niger and Kenya, and three in the second phase were: Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe and Uganda. The other countries, Nigeria and Ghana, were represented as facilitators to plan for in-country implementations in 2014.

IICBA is currently working to disseminate knowledge of the IECCE curriculum framework to other UNESCO colleagues working in ECD to enlighten them about the approach and the planned way forward. Additional planning for an EFA Acceleration Capacity Building Workshop in 2014 is underway. This will require fund mobilization and close partnership with Member States who must have budgeted for ECD capacity building or have donor agencies for support. Technical and financial partners associated with the IECCE project include UNICEF, International Centre for Girls' and Women's Education in Africa (CIEFFA), Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA), Save the Children, Plan International, International Task Force on Teachers for EFA, and the ADEA Working Group on ECD.

Source: IICBA

II.   Survey on Global Early Childhood Intervention

The Open Society Foundation (OSF) and the International Society on Early Intervention are conducting a brief survey about the global status of early childhood interventions for children under the age of 3. In the survey, early childhood intervention (ECI) is defined as system-level provisions and services provided to families of infants and toddlers who have developmental delays, disabilities, atypical behaviours, or risk factors such as low birth weight, malnutrition, illness, abuse or neglect. They are seeking input from individual respondents who are knowledgeable about the ECIs in their specific countries. The purpose of the survey is to map the status of country-level policy, regulations, standards, guidelines, financing and service delivery across the globe. The survey is available at http://depts.washington.edu/isei/ECI-survey.html.

Source: International Society on Early Intervention

III.   Post-2015 Initiatives

The September 2014 announcement of the post-2015 development agenda is fast approaching. That said, over the next coming months much remains to be done to advocate for a global framework that will address the needs of young children. We believe ECD should inform all goals and indicators – from healthcare and education to sustainable food sources and climate change. Provided here is an overview of key advocacy efforts and websites that allow tracking of the place of children and ECD on the global stage.

The World We Want
United Nations

The World We Want is an interactive platform created by the United Nations and their partners to solicit individual citizen's opinions in the worldwide push to construct a global agenda for sustainable development. One facet of the site is a global survey that asks users to choose six issues that matter most to them and their families from options such as healthcare, climate change, fair government, affordable food, and a good education. The survey is available at http://vote.myworld2015.org/. The World We Want Trends section of the platform is explained as "a one-stop shop for people's participation and engagement with policy making. It also allows policy makers to better understand the needs and priorities of their constituents. At the same time, it is a place for local solutions to be shared and learnt from, a space for open-knowledge, open-data, and cooperation. Thanks to data-mining and visualization technology, and through quantitative and qualitative analysis, this space is meant to create a virtuous cycle for Sustainable Development." It can be accessed at www.worldwewant2015.org/www2015_trends_outcomes.

Global Petition on ECD
Tessa Jowell

After a visit to Malawi in 2013, Tessa Jowell was confident that an integrated approach to ECD could benefit children and families in spite of severe levels of economic poverty. Working in the UK through a government All Party Parliamentary Group, Jowell plans to present a petition to Ban Ki Moon at an UN event this June. In May the petition met its goal of 10,000 signatures and continues to climb; it has received to date signatures from individuals in over 150 countries. The petition reads: "Put early childhood development at the heart of the new post-2015 development framework with targets that promise all children care, support and services which work together for the best start in life." You can pledge your support at www.change.org/en-CA/petitions/un-secretary-general-ban-ki-moon-and-un-member-states-put-early-childhood-development-at-the-heart-of-the-new-post-2015-development-framework-to-give-all-children-the-best-start-in-life.

Education Post 2015 online hub
UNESCO

UNESCO recently presented its vision on the post-2015 education agenda to over 190 Member States attending the 37th session of UNESCO's General Conference. The full concept note is available at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/ED_new/pdf/UNESCOConceptNotePost2015_ENG.pdf. While there is much difference of opinion when it comes to specific articulations of post-2015 objectives, a conclusion of the Conference was that representatives should commit to promoting a single overarching goal on education in the future post-2015 development discussions. This goal is to be based on the principles of access, equity, and quality, in the perspective of lifelong learning for all. In conjunction, UNESCO has put together an online hub for presentations, blogs, papers, policy papers, and consultation submissions concerned with "Education post 2015." The site is consistently updated and currently provides an extensive collection of post-2015 educational-related resources readily available to a global audience. The "Education post 2015" website can be accessed at http://en.unesco.org/post2015/education-post-2015-what-next#sthash.hN6X94ZV.dpuf.

Early Childhood Development: The Foundation of Sustainable Human Development for 2015 and Beyond
Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (CG) has produced multiple reports detailing the absence of early childhood development (ECD) on the post-2015 development agenda. While it now seems reasonable to assume that ECD will not be singled-out as a priority area on its own, the CG argues that ECD importantly cuts across all health, education, social protection, women's empowerment, nutrition, and security proposals. In their latest publication with OSF, UNICEF and UN SDSN titled "Early Childhood Development: The Foundation of Sustainable Human Development for 2015 and Beyond," are three principles to guide advocacy efforts in the upcoming months: (1) link child survival and child development, (2) invest early for greatest returns, and (3) prioritize the most marginal children and communities. The report is available at http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ECDandSHDv5-050314-2.pdf. Other related CG reports include: (1) *The Right to Human Development: Where are Young Children in the Sustainable Development Goals?*, (2) *A Transformative Solution: Reducing Poverty and Inequality through a Post-2015 Early Childhood Development Goal*, and (3) *The Importance of Early Childhood Development to Education*.

(1)   http://www.ecdgroup.com/cg2/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/ECD-Response-to-OWG-Focus-Areas_March-4-2014.pdf
(2)   http://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/CG_-_A_Transformative_Solution_Post_2015_and_ECD.pdf
(3)   http://www.ecdgroup.com/pdfs/briefing-GlobalMeeting_Web.pdf

Canadian International Development Platform, Tracking Post-2015
The North-South Institute

The North-South Institute's Post-2015 Tracking Tool is an interactive mapping representation of post-2015 development proposal documents. Currently, nearly 80 proposals have been coded. Organized thematically, for example with education, food security, environment, and infrastructure as categories, the tool links to proposals where specific goals, targets and indicators for the post-2015 framework are identified. Find the Tracking Tool at http://cidpnsi.ca/blog/portfolio/tracking-post-2015/#sthash.w54jJuIf.dpuf.

Journal Section

Early Childhood Education, Care and Development (ECD) in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Glimpse at the Published Literature

As noted in the Editor's welcome, University of Victoria (UVic) doctoral student Emily Ashton has played a key role in developing this issue of *Africa ECD Voice*. Emily is employed as a research assistant in a CIDA-funded UVic-ECDVU joint project with the Institute for Educational Development (IED) of the Aga Khan University (AKU—Dr. Pauline Rea-Dickens co-PI), based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The Tanzanian component of that three-country project (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda) focused on "mapping" ECD in the country, but it also included a broader ECD "compendium" component designed to identify the internationally accessible literature that focuses on ECD in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This article focuses on early work within the SSA-ECD compendium project, and the lead author is Emily Ashton.

Large scale undertakings, such as the SSA compendium and the Tanzania grey literature search, have long been needed for SSA. Indeed, such needs were identified at the ECD/CD Scholars' Workshops described in Issues #1 and #2 of the *Voice*, and by others active in ECD in SSA. Related work had been undertaken earlier, but as noted below, either the focus was not fully on ECD or the depth of exploration was limited.

The broader SSA-ECD compendium project with an analysis of themes and authors over time will be described in a forthcoming Sage Handbook of Early Childhood Research publication (Pence & Ashton, in press), while this brief article focuses primarily on: earlier reviews, country sources of ECD literature, and several notable African led publications.

Review of Reviews: Research on child and childhoods in SSA

In order to clarify the terms of reference for the compendium project, previous attempts at surveying the ECD-related research in SSA are first noted. Each review takes as its main project a slightly different focus area, making direct comparison difficult. However, even with the short analysis provided here, the rich history of child-related research in SSA will become apparent.

Charles Super and colleagues: Child development research in Africa

African-based child development research has a long, influential history in the discipline of development science according to a review paper by Charles Super, Sara Harkness, Oumar Barry, and Marian Zeitlin (2011) entitled, "Think Locally, Act Globally: Contributions of African Research to Child Development." The authors highlight the "influential footprints from investigations carried out on the continent by expatriate scholars, especially in the second and third quarters of the twentieth century" (Marfo et al., 2011, p. 104). Key publications in international journals that emerged from this work include child development topics such as infant motor skills (Super, 1976), sibling caretaking (Ember, 1973; Weisner & Gallimore, 1977), child language socialization (Harkness, 1977), moral development (Edwards, 1975), to name but a small selection of the studies cited in the article.

Many of the studies featured in the article harken back to in-depth ethnographic studies undertaken in the late 50s bridging into the 80s, for example the work of John and Beatrice Whiting and their graduate students at the Child Development Research Unit (CDRU) in Kenya to the work by Edward Tronick and colleagues on the Ituri Forest project (Tronick, Morelli, & Winn, 1987). We note this fact because given the relatively recent

emergence of ECD on both the world international development and scholarly scenes, strict disciplinary borders must be relaxed in order to construct a fuller history of ECD-related work in SSA. So while our topical scope differs in some serious ways from the disciplinary field of child development and psychology, it is nonetheless important to note the relative invisibility of the studies cited in Super and colleagues' review in contemporary global discussions of ECD.

International Child Development Steering Group: ECD programmes in low-income countries

According to the two *The Lancet* (2007, 2011) series on "child development in the developing world" children are both at risk and a risk. The lead researchers make "a conservative estimate" that over "200 million children under 5 years fail to reach their potential in cognitive development because of poverty, poor health and nutrition, and deficient care" (Grantham-McGregor et al, 2007, p. 60). However, a solution is proposed: ECD interventions and "programmes designed to improve the survival, growth, and development of young children, prevent the occurrence of risks, and ameliorate the negative effects of risks" (Engle et al, 2007, p. 229).

In their contributions to the much-cited series, Patrice Engle and colleagues (2007, 2011) review ECD programs implemented in low- and mid-income countries. Their first report focuses on published studies in the years 1990 – 2006, whereas their second article picks up where the first left off covering the time span 2007 – 2011. The included studies were delimited by strict selection standards:

> We reviewed programmes...using six criteria: (a) randomized controlled trial or matched comparison group; (b) intervention before age 6 years; (c) effectiveness or programme evaluations (not efficacy trials); (d) child development assessed; (e) targeted disadvantaged children; and (f) developing country. (2007, p. 232)[i]

In the 2007 article only 35 possible studies were identified of which 20 met the complete criteria; in the 2011 article 42 studies met the inclusion criteria. We are concerned at the scarce number of studies based in SSA countries that made the cut - only 3 in 2007 and 4 in 2011. Despite widespread critiques of such restrictive selection standards, a "hierarchy of evidence" persists in excluding research undertaken in most of the majority world and SSA in particular (Petticrew & Roberts, 2003). On this note, Alan Pence (2012) reflects that that "very few locally initiated studies would pass 'high-level' evidence-based screening, creating the illusion of a void where useful activity and hard-acquired knowledge do exist" (p. 13).

Robert Serpell and Bame Nsamenang (2014) characterize the general approach taken by the International Child Development Steering Group (ICDSG) as tending "to exaggerate the degree of consensus within the scientific community in order to convince lay audiences and funding agencies that science has come up with a definitive solution" (p. 12). The Steering Group is representative rather than exceptional here, and one consequence is that too often ECD programs in the minority world are taken as the template for programmes anywhere and everywhere. This is not to say that models cannot be "amenable to indigenization" or "strengthened when they are reconceptualized from an African standpoint," but this is not often the reality on the ground (Prochner & Kabiru, 2008, p. 130). What the compendium project evidences is that there are many exceptional ECD programmes developed and sustained in SSA that deserve respectful and serious regard.

Barbara Koech and colleagues: The child literature in Kenya

In 2008 Barbara Koech was contracted by the National Council of Children Services to identify, review, and write abstracts for both the published and grey literature on children in Kenya with the intent of creating a synthesis report to inform future child and family policy developments (Koech et al., 2008). Over a period of 6 months, Koech and her team collected research studies from more than 50 institutions, mainly universities and NGOs in Kenya. The abstracts were sorted into 5 categories: child rights, survival, development and education, protection, and participation. At the end of the project over 1400 research studies had been reviewed; 531 were written-up in abstract form (Koech, 2011); and over 680 studies were cited in the final

report (Koech, 2009). Similar to other reviews, most of the studies collected concentrate on child health, protection and survival factors.

In the recommendations accompanying the main report, Koech (2009) envisions a SSA research agenda that is integrative and inclusive of indigenous voices, supportive of young students by stronger mentorship relations with senior scholars and university institutions, collaborative with children as participants in research, conducive to cross-regional research partnerships, and assertive of "a more informed community of scholars in the issues and factors impacting children and their families" by developing better dissemination channels for research findings (2009, p. 27).

In a later reflection on the collection, Koech (2011) raises some concern about the quality and interdisciplinary applicability of the collected materials including: an academic rather than pragmatic focus; methodologies that were short on rigor and complex analysis; findings that were ungeneralizable across populations; and limited geographic diversity (2011, p. 25). Explanations for this methodological, topical, and geographic restrictiveness warrant further exploration, and we anticipate that these limitations may be visible in the literature of other SSA countries as well. That said, Koech and colleagues' persistence in collecting the grey literature stands as a model of what can be undertaken in all SSA countries in order to better grasp the wealth of knowledge available.

Linda Richter and colleagues: Diagnostic review of ECD in South Africa

The second country specific review is by Linda Richter and colleagues (2012) in South Africa. They completed a diagnostic analysis and evaluation of the country's National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development 2005-2010, including focus on the contemporary ECD paradigm, policies, services, human resources, and funding arrangements. While much of the evaluative report focuses on the accomplishments and shortfalls of government policy and provisions, there are two appendices of particular interest here. The first appendix contains a listing of more than 110 documents on issues related to South African ECD, and the majority of documents are reports printed in recent years. Additionally, the second appendix includes 12 short review papers on topics such as parenting, child development science, early learning programmes, the role of the state, and data and monitoring systems. These papers collectively provide up-to-date synthesis of both international and national ECD-related research studies.

Childwatch International and CODESRIA: Child-based research in Africa

Maylene Shung King , Rose September, Frederick Moses Okatcha, and Carlos Cardoso (2009) served as editors for the Childwatch International and Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) monograph on child research in Africa for the timespan 1996-2006. In addition to an introductory piece which situates scholarly child-based research in the African context, the publication includes three separate papers (see Arojjo & Nyonyintomo, 2009; Mweru & N'gasike, 2009; Nwaba, 2009). The papers were prepared for a 2006 colloquium which involved forty participants from 13 different countries in Africa. The collection outlines many of the ongoing challenges including a lack of appropriate publication outlets and limited research funding for SSA researchers and institutions looking to lead research rather than play a subordinate, consultative role.

A paper specifically devoted to a review of the literature by Stephen Arjjo and Rebecca Nyonyintono (2009) reflects on 113 articles. Their findings indicate that the majority of studies found were health, nutrition and survival focused, and co-authored with Western academics – with the first authors being non-Africans. They conclude that "very few of the papers were produced by African authors exclusively" (p. 7), that there was a noticeable surge in publications between 2003 and their reporting period of 2006, and that studies did not tend to "involve children in a true child-participatory methodology, though children were usually the research subjects" (p. 8). Importantly, the reviewers challenge the "all too familiar phenomenon of 'problematising' African children and focusing on their being vulnerable, sick, abnormal or disadvantaged" (p. 8), although their collection itself does not cite studies that take-up an agentic view of children.

CODESRIA and Mwenda Ntarangwi: Children and youth in Africa

In 2014, on behalf of CODESRIA's Child and Youth Studies program, Mwenda Ntarangwi published a monograph titled *Children and Youth in Africa: Annotated Bibliography*. His text includes 324 entries spread over 12 categories, in addition to an important introductory chapter which situates the current state of child and youth research in Africa in a critical perspective. "Early Childhood Care and Development" was one of the review's 12 thematic focus areas; however, the ECD entries focus on "the overall well-being of children as it relates to nutrition and the related issues of health" (p. 12). Entries involving child health, illness, and mortality are the most frequent inclusions and the majority of studies involve children in the early years of formal education. Part of this focus is due to the fact that "HIV and AIDS have been the most researched and written about topics in the last ten years of research on children and youth in Africa" (p. 15).

This volume builds on earlier CODESRIA-sponsored work by Patti Henderson (2003) whose research review spanned the years 1995-2000. Henderson's volume presents studies from anthropology, sociology, psychology, political science, and economics which broadly relate to child studies. As inferred by the title, *Annotated Bibliography on Childhood with Emphasis on Africa*, Henderson's entries were not exclusive to Africa-based studies but included many texts from the minority world. The majority of her entries centre on issues of children's rights, child protection, child labour, and children and war. ECD was not a major focus area.

Like the literature review by Arjjo and Nyonyintono (2009), Henderson also interrogates the dominant image of the child produced by research and theoretical texts which constitute children as in need of protection and as adults-in-training. Ntarangwi similar finds that "the idea of children as vulnerable social subjects continues to shape much of the research that was carried out on African children in the period covered in this monograph" (p. 1). However, he purposefully offers counter-constructions of confident and capable children and youth – "active agents in their lives" (p. 9) - in his bibliographic selections. Also differing from Henderson, Ntarangwi's collected scholarly works from 2001-2011 focus exclusively on African-based studies found in both journals and books.

In his introduction, Ntarangwi notes that research on youth and children in Africa is plagued by "power inequalities between those shaping research and those being studied. These inequalities lead to research framing based more on a desire to have a globalized definition of childhood and a focus on specific topics than on the realities of lived experiences of children and youth in multiple African contexts" (p. 3). Rather than accepting the global-priority pushdown, and while noting that work by scholars such as Nsamenang defy this characterization, Ntarangwi proposes two directions for future research on children and youth in Africa: (1) the framing of research questions should be "Afrocentric," that is formulated on "contextualization and appreciation of African local knowledge and lived realities" (p. 5), and (2) qualitative research methodologies, such as ethnographic fieldwork, that allow for an in-depth and "nuanced understanding of social realities that are lived out and expressed by African children and youth" should replace the current primacy of questionnaires and surveys (p. 3). While acknowledging the complexities of such "thick" research – for example, limited funds and international donor priorities – Ntarangwi sees it as an ethical responsibility to match complex methods with the diversity of social and political experiences of African children and youth.

ECD in SSA Research Compendium

In collecting and assessing the ECD-related literature reviews we wanted to: (1) learn how ECD was understood by those in other fields/locations (e.g. development psychology, youth studies, governments), (2) explore what concerns cross-cut the different reviews, (3) confirm that our compendium project was not duplicating work already completed, (4) note areas in which we could make significant contributions; in other words, and to refer back to an earlier quotation, to purge "the illusion of a void" that many take to be the contemporary ECD research scene in SSA. Our overall aim was to better understand what had been produced,

when, where, and by whom, and to re-present the findings in an electronic database form that will be widely accessible to researchers both in SSA and other global settings.

What stands out from the other reviews – and in the studies those reviewers' reviewed - is that despite repeated calls for an "integrated" and "holistic approach" to ECD that equally takes into account the cognitive, social, physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural well-being of children - the dominant focus of African ECD-related research is child health and nutrition. We are not implying that these are not laudable areas of inclusion, but simply observing that these interest areas can have the effect of shadowing early caretaking and educative practices. So while we applaud advances made in maternal health care and child vaccination, for example, in the compendium we set out to prioritize the cultural caregiving and early learning of children in SSA.

In addition, and while taking into account the increasingly recognized convention that ECD encompasses the period of birth to 8 years, the preliminary review work found that the bulk of research undertaken concerned children in the upper range of 6-8 years. Or, stated another way, much research that gets labelled ECD has to do with children in the early years of primary school.

Rephrased here in the form of provocations for research projects going forward in SSA, the main points of concern that crisscross the five reviews summarized in the last section include: What image of the child is produced and reflected in research? Who is the research for? Where is research being carried out? What important distinctions might be made between research practices on, about, with or by children? What are the priority research areas? Who decides? What counts as research in international journals? What knowledge is available in unpublished research reports, student dissertations, and conference proceedings? What efforts can be made to better include this grey literature going forward? How might networks of African scholars be created, supported, and sustained in the future? Who are the local leaders in ECD research? How can methodological experimentation be supported? And, finally, how can we promote research that is based in lived realities and that recognizes, respects, and honours indigenous African knowledges?

Moving forward with the SSA-ECD compendium project

Having started the SSA-ECD compendium project by reviewing earlier reviews, we then identified key priorities for the literature search—these included: policy, programming (both centre and non-centre based), practices (both those pedagogical and care-based), provisions (state-based services), and pre-primary schooling. Another important decision was to intentionally search for studies led by SSA researchers and/or institutions. We also decided to start publication collection with those countries that best fit the ECDVU priorities for capacity development in SSA, which meant that we would leave South Africa for later work as it had a comparatively more developed literature.

In our opinion, excluding South Africa from the initial search proved beneficial to a more diverse collection. Methods that are considered to be customary approaches to desktop reviews – using scholarly search databases such as ERIC, Ebscohost, and Academic Search Premier - proved problematic. To clarify with an example: if one enters the search strings "early childhood development," "early childhood education," and/or "early childhood care" with "Africa" and 500 search results are returned, it is not an exaggeration to say 400 of those will be South African-based studies. The initial exclusion of South Africa forced us to find other ways to generate our database entries, including searching for specific scholars, known research institutions, and, most productive of all methods, following authors' reference lists.

As the compendium project exists today (in a Web-design test mode), South Africa has been included. Given their distinct political history, multiple university-level graduate degree programs in ECD, a core group of ECD researchers working in the field for almost 30 years, relatively well-funded research institutions, progressive child-related policy, and sustained international attention, we anticipated that South Africa would have a published research literature on par with other SSA countries when combined. This prediction has thus far proven correct. What also sets South Africa apart is that much of what would be considered grey literature in

other countries, for example in Koech and colleagues' 2009 Kenyan review, is accessible online in electronic form. Perhaps it is best to say that there are many shades of grey.

Currently, though by rough estimate and in consideration of our priority areas, the database contains more than 650 full-entries (and is growing as new entries seem to be always added). By full entries we mean a citation, author's institutional affiliation, abstract, country of reference, keywords, format, and available location. In the coming months as the annotated entries are inputted into the database more accurate summaries and statistics will be possible. In a rather uncouth categorization approach, an overview of the current country-based count of annotated entries is provided in Table 1. Evident from even a cursory glance at the table is the large number of South African contributions; this is due to many factors warranting a fuller analysis, a few of which were only noted briefly above.

Table 1

Range of number of publications per country based on compendium compiled to-date (May 2014)					
<5		5-20	21-50	51-100	250+
Angola Benin Burkina Faso Burundi Cape Verde Central African Republic Chad Comoros Congo Côte d'Ivoire D. R. Congo Djibouti Equatorial Guinea Gabon	Gambia Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia Madagascar Mauritania Niger Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Seychelles Sierra Leone Somalia South Sudan Togo	Botswana Cameroon Eritrea Ethiopia Lesotho Malawi Mali Mauritius Mozambique Namibia Senegal Sudan Swaziland Zambia Zimbabwe	Ghana Nigeria Uganda Tanzania	Kenya	South Africa

The majority of database entries have African authors as leads, and this is especially evident in the published work post-2007. As noted earlier, we are working with our partners at AKU-IED to collect and mount the grey literature of Tanzania. It is our hope that this process proves fruitful and will be replicated in other SSA countries in the future.

Before we shift topics, we feel that it is important to acknowledge some of the limitations of the database generation process. Firstly, the entries are those that are electronically accessible through the Internet and the University of Victoria licensing category. Included are mainly journal articles, books, chapters, and research reports. Less frequent formats include theses and dissertations, instructional materials, and government policy documents. Secondly, the literature reviewed has been English-language only. We realize this eclipses valuable contributions written in local languages, and those from both Francophone and Lusophone countries.

Research on ECD in SSA

As noted earlier, the ECD in SSA compendium project is envisioned as an on-going activity with the hope that countries in addition to Tanzania will be able to undertake grey literature searches and make additions to an openly accessible web-based database. At this stage of the work, certain patterns and storylines have been identified that characterize the SSA-ECD literature and these are a part of the chapter submitted for publication in the *Sage Handbook* referred to earlier. Some of the key authors, or key publications, identified

in the Handbook chapter are briefly described below to provide the readers of the *Voice* with an appreciation of the growing number of publications available since 2007. The final book noted, *Monitoring Child Well-Being: A South African Rights-Based Approach*, is followed by a set of questions and answers between Professor Andy Dawes and Emily Ashton on a topic that will undoubtedly be picked up in later issues *Africa ECD Voice*: international and national ECD monitoring frameworks.

A. Bame Nsamenang: African educational theories and practices

Throughout the 1990s and continuing to today, Nsameneng has maintained a critical and resistant pose, becoming the most prolific of all African child developmentalists. While much of his early work focuses more on developmental psychology and child and adolescent development, especially of late, Nsamenang has made substantial contributions to the broad-based international and African-led ECD field (see 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Pence & Nsamenang, 2008).

Throughout his career, Nsamenang has been consistent in his critique of the imposition of Western theories, discourses, and so-called best-practice models in SSA, and compellingly advocates for an African-led research agenda generative of Africentric knowledge.

> Our Africentric products make sense only within the exchange frameworks of trends in global knowledge waves and state-of-the-science scholarship and are designed to contribute to the corpus of universal human knowledge, where Africa deserves its own knowledge-niche. (HDRC, "Vision", 2010)

As founding director of the Human Development Resource Centre (HDRC), Nsamenang has put this vision into practice, co-editing an open-source volume titled *African Educational Theories and Practices: A Generative Teacher Education Handbook*, which is composed of 36 chapters by 45 contributors from 16 different countries (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011). The impressive volume navigates multiple streams: the promotion of traditional African educative strengths, the critique of imported and enforced Western education in Africa, the recognition of the importance of diverse global views, and proposals for a way forward in African that arise from the continent's educational leaders themselves. Taken as a hopeful indication of things to come, Nsamenang's work finds citation in a new generation of ECD in SSA-related work, including all the texts discussed in this section.

Auma Okwany, Elizabeth Ngutuku, and Arthur Muhangi: Indigenous knowledge and care practices

The Role of Local Knowledge and Culture in Child Care in Africa: A Sociological Study of Several Ethnic Groups in Kenya and Uganda (Okwany, Ngutuku, & Muhangi, 2012) contributes to the growing critique of the globalization of ECD (e.g. Nagasawa & Swadener, 2013), the unrooted "global child" of developmental science (e.g. Pence & Hix-Small, 2007), and the importation of ECD intervention models without due regard for context (e.g. BvLF, 1994). It also builds on the tradition of ethnographic child-rearing literature, produced mainly by expatriates in the last century, adding, however, a much needed Africentric grounding. All in all, the authors' central message is not in itself new – that "ECD strategies must strengthen rather than supplant the natural and local realities for children" (Okwany, Ngutuku, and Muhangi, 2012, p. 1) – but the path they take to get there is unique.

The strength-based emphasis in *The Role of Local Knowledge* derives from the relation of indigenous proverbs to caretaking practices. The proverb "every mother dances her baby" guides the authors' interpretations and methodological strategies, just as it leads the community's childrearing practices and philosophies. Indigenous songs, games, stories, proverbs, and community ceremonies founded on values of reciprocity, nurturance, community, and interdependence "dance" the baby's learning and development. Culture here is not safeguarded as a static, perfect traditional past either, but together with social, economic, and political change keeps "dancing" forward.

Much recent African-led writing regenerates the thematic interest in Indigenous childrearing practices; however, much of it seems a reaction to the importation and adoption of minority world ECD pedagogical approaches, without a detailed analysis or description of the Indigenous practices themselves. As readers we are sometimes left wondering what those local practices are that should be supported. This is not the case with Okwany, Ngutuku, and Muhangi's collaborative study. In the book's introduction Kofi Marfo calls the text "groundbreaking," and its methodological experimentation, resolute critique, ethnographic specificity, community collaboration, and practical recommendations find us in agreement.

Marito Garcia, Alan Pence, and Judith Evans: Spotlighting ECD in SSA

Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa (Garcia, Pence, & Evans, 2008), following on the 3rd African International Conference on ECD, held in Accra, Ghana, 2005, was the first edited volume to focus exclusively on ECD in SSA. The volume was able to build on growing engagement with ECD issues that followed the inaugural conference in 1999 and second conference in 2002. The volume sought to highlight the diversity of interests and authors active in SSA, ensuring that African authors were well represented (the majority of authors are African). The volume includes six sections with 24 chapters, addressing a range of topics from socio-historical insights to policy development, programming to health, nutrition and education/training. The timing of the publication was useful as it was available in time for the 2009 African International Conference in ECD held in Dakar, Senegal.

Hasina Ebrahim: Non-centre based care and child-to-child models

In a series of publications, Ebrahim mounts a challenge to the importation of centre-based ECD provision as a "best-practice" model (2012, 2013; James & Ebrahim, 2012). Ebrahim's work is specifically located in South African communities where such programming is neither culturally nor economically practicable. She highlights the benefits of a non-centre based, open-air preschool model called The Buddy Programme, which recognizes local ways of knowing as young children are provided opportunities to play and learn with older children, their "buddies" (2012). The Little Elephant Training Centre for Early Education (LETCEE) in rural KwaZulu-Natal developed this child-to-child ECD intervention wherein older children (8–13) are active participants in their own development and that of younger children (James & Ebrahim, 2012). Older children are taught knowledge and skills which they in turn pass on to younger children as they develop apprenticeship relationships (2013).

Expanding from Ebrahim's work we feel it important to note that the child-to-child caregiving research base – although modest – is available and assessable. The child-to-child approach, "which focuses on children's participation in and contribution to health promotion, child stimulation and development, basic education and nutrition, takes advantage of this indigenous strategy of raising children" (Zimba, 2002, p. 96). For decades child-to-child programs have been ongoing in Botswana, Nigeria, Uganda and Zanzibar (Hyde & Kabiru, 2006; Otaala, 1994). Since the 1970s Robert Serpell has been involved in child-to-child caregiving projects in Zambia for which multiple research studies have published, including long-term follow-ups with former student participants (Serpell 2008, 2011)[ii]. In Zanzibar and Botswana child-to-child programmes have become part of the primary school health education curriculum, and the child-to-child model features prominently in Ethiopia's new national ECD policy.

Andrew Dawes, Rachel Bray, and Amelia van der Merwe: A South African monitoring framework

Andrew Dawes, Rachel Bray, and Amelia van der Merwe's (2007) edited volume, *Monitoring Child Well-Being: A South African Rights-Based Approach*, provides the most culturally and contextually sensitive example of an indicator framework that we have come across to date. The volume itself represents a multi-year, multi-level, co-funded project by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and Save the Children. The extensive consultation and layered peer review process led the editors to remark that the volume is "the most reviewed volume on the planet" (p. xiv). In the opening sections the editors acknowledge the ideological assumptions

inherent in international initiatives such as the CRC and EFA; explicitly name the past apartheid and present racism that complexifies South African ECD; recognize a strong and competent image of the child; advocate for foregrounding a child-rights rationale rather than human capital and brain arguments; problematize international monitoring frameworks narrow conceptualization of ECD (i.e. survival, health, enrollment) and their Eurocentric values (e.g. ideal parenting practices, ideal configurations of family); and accept the complexity of policy development while also proposing pragmatic solutions.

The first part of the volume lays out the rationale for the monitoring framework while the second section outlines an evidence and rights-based contextual approach to monitoring the well-being of South African children. Included are a detailed set of indicators which are linked to existing data sources, an outline of strategies for new measurement acquisitions, and an explicit alignment of the proposed indicators with current policy frameworks. This volume stands as an example to other nations looking to connect data with policy and practice in ways that respect context and culture. To sum, we turn to the editors own words:

> Across the continent, and particularly in South Africa, a key challenge lies in ensuring that the goals and accompanying indicators are meaningful across diverse cultures and do not inadvertently impose a set of northern standards and values. Careful thought should be given to the point at which goals relating to child development are best incorporated into the process of defining indicators, and the means of measuring each indicator. One possibility is to use understandings of child development that exist in South Africa to define indicators required for different ages of children. (2007, p. 32)

At a glance: *Monitoring Child Well-Being: A South African Rights-based Approach*

- Book editors: Andy Dawes, Rachel Bray and Amelia van der Merwe

- Funded by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and Save the Children

- Participants included academics, international experts, multiple-peer reviewers, governmental stakeholders, NGOs, focus groups, child-rights legal experts

- Part 1 provides the conceptual and theoretical groundings; Part 2 includes a detailed set of indicators

- Contextually relevant to RSA: builds on South African Constitution and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children; uses RSA research on ECD to inform indicators

- Find the full-text book on the HSRC website: http://www.hsrcpress.ac.za/product.php?productid=2200

Q & A with Prof. Andrew Dawes

EA: In *Monitoring Child Well-Being* you speak about the tendency of international monitoring frameworks and reports to focus on more easily measurable survival and health dimensions, or, for example, school enrolments rather than a multi-layered, subjective concept such as quality ECD programmes. Included in your Introduction is the following statement:

> *We acknowledge that complexity should be avoided in international surveys, but draw attention to their limitation in reflecting areas of child vulnerability relating to social inequalities, or children's interrelationships with their social and physical environments. (p. 14)*

Do you think there are any available avenues to account, on a global scale, for the complexities of children and childhoods and the cultural contexts in which they live and grow?

AD: As I recall, our caution about complexity arose when we reflected on the challenges that would be faced by national indicator systems in providing the data to populate more complex and nuanced indicators. Also expense is a consideration – particularly in the global south. So while we would agree that it is essential to go beyond access and embrace the measurement of quality and learning contexts, dedicated studies would be needed on a regular basis in order to generate the necessary data to populate quality indicators. Of course this is desirable but feasibility remains an important consideration. The solution would lie in finding some simple regularly assessed measure of quality and other such variables. This would be difficult, to say the least.

EA: As a follow-up to the last question, given the current power of international indicators – and the certainty that they are not going away any time soon, how might the hegemony of *more data* be interrupted for a collection of *good data* (i.e. that better respects complexity)? Or, at a global level when cross-country comparison is the goal, is this possibly unrealistic?

AD: One way to proceed is to undertake qualitative studies with both adults and children in order to illustrate these complexities. I think this can be done on a cross country basis using qualitative work. The Young Lives project at Oxford which has cohort studies running in Peru, Vietnam, Ethiopia, and India is a fine example. I don't think this sort of thing is likely to move forward on a global scale, but it is important to consider at country level. One benefit is that in-country differences can be highlighted including those linked to inequality. Some of the work I've completed in the past for UNICEF is applicable here. They're available as 2 reports - Phase 1 & 2[1] and Phase 3[2] (refer to box on page 20 for reference and web links).

EA: Under the auspice of measuring child development, many global surveys ask questions about the practices of caregivers that seem to pre- and re- legitimize childrearing practices normalized in minority world countries. Questions that disparage sibling caretaking or make causal inferences between cognitive development and picture-book reading, for example, seem to prefix how many countries/cultures/communities will fare. A particular quotation stood out for me in *Monitoring Child Well-Being*:

> *The association between parenting style and cognitive development differs across cultural contexts, and probably concerns different goals in the socialisation process...Careful selection of indicators is needed so that blame is not attached to practices which are culturally sanctioned. (p. 177)*

What examples come to mind here? What did you do differently in *Monitoring Child Well-Being* to address this? Can you recount examples of indicators from your framework that would be considered "culturally sanctioned"?

AD: Take a look at the reports I have mentioned as I think they might provide specific details. I agree fully that the examples you cite reinforce a minority perspective. Similar problems arise when children in the global south or in poverty are seen to have 'inadequate stimulation.' This is evident in the 2007 Lancet series. In our view it is not about 'inadequate stimulation' but rather 'different stimulation'. And of course that 'different' form of stimulation commonly does not equip children well for text rich formal schooling. That is another discussion.

EA: In earlier work, for example Dawes and colleagues (2004), you elaborate on the challenges of "developing a set of culturally appropriate standards broad enough to capture the capacities that children require to take advantage of learning opportunities of both their local and wider world (school) in the culturally and economically diverse South African context." Do you feel that *Monitoring Child Well-Being* was able to capture some of these "capacities"?

AD: To answer the question, take a closer look at Chapter 9 of *Monitoring Child Well-Being,* where some attempt is made to grapple with this issue. Perhaps this chapter in particular speaks to the need for national indicator systems in the south to be particularly cognisant of the role of contextual supports for well-being at the family level.

EA: What are some of the key differences between *Monitoring Child Well-Being* and international indicator frameworks? What lessons might *Monitoring Child Well-Being* offer to other SSA countries looking to develop both child well-being policies and their subsequent monitoring and evaluation?

AD: This is of course a complex matter. I am more familiar with Africa than elsewhere, and on this continent the resources for sophisticated indicator systems for monitoring children just don't exist. So it is essential to prioritise what is to be measured, and those priorities must be chosen with action in mind. They must also be measurable and cheap to measure on a regular basis so I suppose I have a minimalist approach. Success with a few key indicators of child status - the usual suspects, but beyond that - and most important, ways of measuring key elements of the child's context that are likely to support or compromise development. This includes measures of access to services such as water and sanitation. Building key questions into the national census is a cheap way of getting information on a range of key issues. Beyond that purpose built surveys - but these are very expensive and probably need external funding.

EA: As an update for readers – what effects has *Monitoring Child Well-Being* had on early years policy in South Africa?

AD: I have heard it said that the links between research and policy are like water dripping on limestone. You never know what paths will be cut or how long it will take to make an impression. In our case, the model had a fairly quick impact on the policy making of one of our provinces - the Western Cape. As we were wrapping up the big volume, we were asked to develop indicators for the Western Cape provincial government. A summary report from that project is available[3]. In 2009, the monitoring framework provided the foundation for a set of indicators Malibongwe Gwele, Linda Biersteker and I used to evaluate the realization of children's rights in South Africa for the Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security (ACESS). The ACESS *ECD Scorecard*[4] is available through the Bernard van Leer website. We did do quite a bit of training on the model around the country, but not a lot resulted from this. We also sent copies of the volume to UNICEF (also headquarters) and to the South African Office on the Rights of the Child – which at the time was charged with monitoring the rights and wellbeing of children. Years after sending the copies, I was asked in 2012 by the national government to assist in the development of a national set of indicators for monitoring child rights[5]. We used the model developed in the book for this purpose, and the set has been adopted. What they will do with it remains to be seen.

Reports:

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[2] Dawes, A., Bray, R. Kvalsvig, J., Rama, S. & Richter, L. (2004). *Indicators of children's psychosocial development in the early childhood*. Phase 3 Report for UNICEF. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council. Available at http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/research-outputs/view/1783+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=ca

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[i i] The criteria for the 2011 review: "All studies included in the review had to have either a randomised controlled design at the individual or cluster level, or a cohort analytic design, defined as an observational study design where groups are assembled according to whether or not exposure to the intervention has happened and study groups might be non-equivalent or not comparable on some feature that affects outcome" (Engle et al, 2011, p. 1340).

[ii] For more publications and presentations on child-to-child work in Zambia see Serpell & Nsamemang (2014).