



AT A GLANCE CHILDCARE

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Childcare is one of the best investments a country can make, by advancing child development outcomes, increasing and improving workforce participation (especially for women), stimulating economic growth, and reducing inequalities. It's time for governments to increase investments in affordable, accessible, and high-quality childcare and early education systems for a more equitable future.

Why High-Quality Childcare Matters

With nearly 350 million children across the globe in need of high-quality childcare, it is critical that we build stronger, more resilient early education and care systems to improve life outcomes for children and create stronger, more equitable economies.

ECDAN's Work on Childcare

Through the ChildCare4All campaign, ECDAN and its partners seek to:



Elevate the issue of childcare within the global policy agenda.



Improve cross-regional knowledge exchange.



Support country-level advocacy to strengthen childcare systems.



Align diverse partners working across the care agenda behind a common narrative and shared objectives.

KEY ADVOCACY MESSAGES

High-quality childcare is good for children, women, and families. It stimulates economies and reduces inequality.



In most countries, the childcare system is inadequate and not able to meet the need for services or support the childcare workforce.

40 percent (350 million) of the world's children below primary school age are in need of childcare services but lack access.

World Bank, 2020

The global childcare workforce is affected by **by significant shortages of workers and poor working conditions** conditions including low wages, low status, and limited or no social and labor protections, etc. ILO, 2018

An estimated **35 million children under five** are sometimes left **without adult supervision**, leaving them in potentially unsafe situations without the opportunity to grow socially and cognitively. Access to quality childcare services for children under three is particularly low. UNICEF, 2020



These inadequate childcare systems place significant barriers on women's workforce participation.

In 2018, 606 million women were unavailable for employment due to unpaid care work, compared to only 41 million men. Globally, mothers of children aged 0 to 5 years accounted for the lowest employment rates (47.6 percent), compared to men and women without young children. ILO, 2018

Globally, women spend two to ten more time on unpaid care work than men. Unpaid care work must be recognized, reduced, and redistributed to address gender inequality in the workforce. OECD, 2014



Strengthening childcare systems are potentially transformative investments and will create socioeconomic value for the country by driving outcomes for both children and women, building human capital, and stimulating economies.

Advance children's development and help them reach their full potential. High-quality childcare can positively address their needs for good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving, and opportunities for learning. Nurturing Care Framework

An estimated 43 million new jobs worldwide could be created to meet the need for childcare services while allowing more parents, particularly women, an opportunity to seek or return to employment. World Bank, 2020

Lay the foundation for learning and developing positive social relationships by improving children's cognitive skills, psychosocial outcomes, school readiness, and academic achievement, as well as reducing repetition and drop-out rates.

World Bank, 2020; Heckman and Masterov, 2007; Engle et al., 2011

Investing in comprehensive and gender-transformative care policy packages, including universal childcare services, could generate up to 299 million jobs by 2035. Approximately 78 percent of these new jobs would be held by women, and 84 percent would be in the formal economy. ILO, 2022

High-quality early learning and care programs impact both family finances and the broader economy.

By providing opportunities for both parents to work, it will increase family earnings, create jobs, increase tax revenue, and spur economic growth. These benefits offer a rare opportunity to have a multigenerational impact through government investment.

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS DO?

- Invest in publicly financed policies and systems that expand access to quality, affordable childcare services.
- Ensure caregivers of all kinds have a seat at the table to help develop policies that work for them.
- Develop strong quality assurance systems that meet the needs of children and the childcare workforce.
- Encourage entrepreneurship in childcare through grants, subsidies, tax and other incentives, training, accreditation, and formalization.
- Support all childcare workers with a living wage, social protections, sustainable funding, proper training, professionalization, and representation.

Visit www.childcare4all.org or email Info@ecdan.org to learn about how you can get involved.

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