

Key Research Findings

Stimulating Global Partnerships and National Action for Young Children

Executive Summary

A survey of 29 organizations explored stakeholder perspectives on the potential for increased global advocacy around early learning, specifically in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Stakeholder interviews revealed:

- There are windows of opportunity to influence at the global and national levels
- There is interest in joining a coalition rooted in the Global South
- Advocacy should focus on creating a common message, using evidence, and strengthening regional and national efforts
- A campaign should focus on behavior and policy change at the country level

Case studies identified key components that have made other global campaigns and partnerships successful.

Case studies highlight the need to:

- Partner with experienced advocates,
- · Cultivate champions, and
- Actively engage the Global South, among other lessons.

How can the ECD field drive this forward?

Options for consideration:

- Form a broad global early learning coalition
- Launch a global early learning campaign in target countries
- Support and build off existing early childhood networks and efforts.

Further research is needed around hot spots, potential Global South leaders, and messaging.

Rationale & Methodology

Why the Need for Global Advocacy?

The time is right – momentum around early learning is building.

Access & demand

Pre-primary enrollment has grown by nearly twothirds in the last decade, ¹ yet remains low and varies in developing countries by wealth and geography. Parents do not sufficiently know how to assess the quality of these services, which is variable, and often low.

Evidence base

There is a growing evidence base around benefits of investing in early learning, but still a lack of program models and lessons from and evidence of scaled interventions.

International commitment

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 4.2 explicitly focuses on access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.

Government & Donor interest

There is a critical mass of governments and donors interested in pre-primary education, yet government systems are uncoordinated and do not systematically engage the private sector. There is insufficient investment in pre-primary programs and systems, with most countries spending less than 10% of education budgets on these years.

Through a coordinated global advocacy strategy, actors can push for increased:

- Political commitment
- Collective knowledge on how to scale successful ECD models
- Financial resources
- Partnership, collaboration, alignment in the sector.

Purpose and Guiding Questions

CIFF commissioned R4D to:

- Explore ECD stakeholder perspectives on the potential for increased global advocacy around early learning,² specifically in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Stakeholder interviews were designed to gather insights on the following:
 - To what extent is there alignment among key stakeholders around similar priorities?
 - Is there interest in joining an early learning or broader ECD coalition?
 - What are important first steps or actions for a coalition?
 - What would an early learning campaign look like?
 - What are hotspots and opportunities to advance early learning?
- Identify the key components that have made other global campaigns and partnerships successful and the lessons that can be drawn for ECD. Initiatives in ECD and allied fields of health, nutrition, social protection were reviewed for effective convening and advocacy mechanisms, as well as overall mission, geographic reach, governance and structure, and advocacy approach.
- Guide CIFF and potential partners as to how and where to invest in global advocacy around early learning.

¹ EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2015

² Early learning, for the purpose of these interviews, was defined as any mode of delivery for children ages 3 to 6, though stakeholders varied in their interpretation of the scope of this term.

Interviews with Stakeholders from 29 Organizations

Development Partners	Foundations	ECD Networks & Initiatives	NGOs & Implementers	Academia & Research
 DFID GPE IADB UNESCO UNICEF USAID World Bank WHO 	 Aga Khan Foundation Bernard van Leer Foundation LEGO Foundation Open Society Foundation Porticus UBS Optimus Foundation 	 ARNEC Africa ECD Network (AfECN) Group on ECDE & Transition to Work, Sustainable Development Solutions Network Ilifa Labantwana Inter-Country Quality Node (ICQN) on ECD International Step by Step Association (ISSA) Tanzania ECD Network 	 PAL Network Plan International Pratham RTI Tayari project Save the Children 	Centre for ECED, Ambedkar University Business & Private Sector Biz4ECD ReadyNation

Stakeholder selection: The sample of stakeholders interviewed oversampled towards foundations, actors working in education, and organizations operating in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. While these stakeholders do not include government officials, many work directly with governments. These actors represent a wealth of expertise and perspectives on the global early childhood field.

Methodology

Identification & desk review of ECD actors

 From a list of more than 100 stakeholders, conducted an extensive document review of 45 institutions, agencies, and individuals involved in ECD to map activities and priorities. Sample focused on those active in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia and is illustrative of the variety of actors in the ECD field.

Stakeholder interviews & analysis

- Interviewed 33 key informants from 29 institutions
- Used a protocol to gather data on: (a) each organization's involvement in ECD; (b) opinions on the potential for a new global coalition; and (c) insights on a potential campaign
- Analyzed areas of convergence/divergence and key themes.

Review of other advocacy efforts

- Mapped 21 advocacy initiatives in ECD and allied fields through document review
- Conducted 6 case studies (with accompanying phone and in-person interviews) to identify advocacy lessons for the ECD field.

Main Findings: Stakeholder Interviews

Main Findings

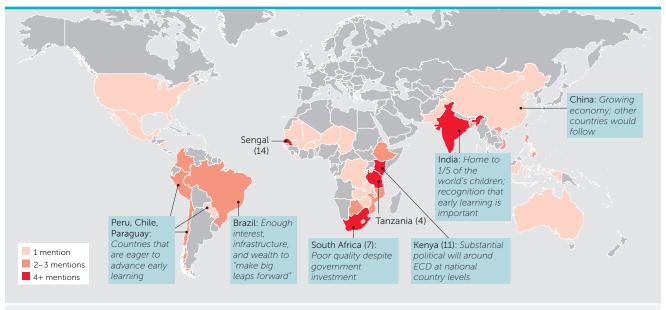
- 1. There are **windows of opportunity** to influence at the global and national levels, especially in the context of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs).
- 2. Many stakeholders are interested in joining an **early learning coalition** that is rooted in the Global South.
- 3. Actions of the coalition could focus on helping actors come together with a collective voice, using evidence, and strengthening regional and national efforts.
- 4. An **early learning campaign** should focus on behavior and policy change at the country level.

1. Windows of opportunity to advance early learning

Stakeholders identified political moments, events, publications, and tools which provide opportunities to influence political commitment and funding for young children.

- The SDGs were cited most frequently as a window of opportunity to take advantage of political momentum and unprecedented global collaboration
 - Other opportunities included: the new GPE strategic plan; launch of Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes (MELQO) tool; the new Lancet series on ECD.
- Missed opportunities due to uncoordinated advocacy efforts:
 - World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon
 - Oslo Summit on Education for Development
 - International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa.
- Several "hot spots" for advancing early learning at the country level were also identified
 - Stakeholders identified both countries that are ripe for policy change as well as those with the greatest need.

Potential hot spots for national advocacy and stakeholder-cited reasons



Notes:

- Map reflects specific country mentions; most regions were also mentioned more broadly
- Interviews were intentionally conducted with stakeholders who have a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and India
- Additional research is needed around these national hot spots

2. Is there a need for a global coalition³ on early learning?

	Response	Reasoning	Respondents
12 informants	Early Learning Coalition is Needed	 A more focused agenda is easier to coordinate and influence "ECD" is vague and leads to fragmentation; early learning is a better first step Education Ministers are more likely to take responsibility for "early learning" than "development" There is no strong voice around 3-6 year olds 	Mostly global actors in ECD; evenly split across stakeholder groups
6 informants	Broader coalition is needed	A broader agenda can strengthen the coalition base and address holistic development The bigger and more powerful constituency you can build, the more you can have an influence on what kids need A broader coalition can help mitigate the risk of "schoolification" (downward expansion of formal schooling) A child who isn't well-fed can't learn. A child who is abused can't learn."	Primarily foundations and ECD initiatives across global, regional, and national levels
4 informants	No coalition is needed	 Coalitions can be burdensome and ineffective Coalition might not be the most effective way to grow awareness; existing structures and networks are better placed to do advocacy Any coalition would inevitably be dominated by a single group or partner type and fail to represent the needs of the target population There is a risk of creating a heavy, bureaucratic structure 	Two respondents were large development partners
7 informants	Unsure or No response	Form should follow function: Need to determine the goals before creating the coalition Depends on the goals of the coalition and what it is trying to achieve Depends on whether there is agreement among stakeholders	Largely global actors (development partners or foundations)

Any coalition formed should be rooted in the Global South

- Global coalition needs to be shaped by country contexts and priorities.
- Another coalition based in and directed by donors and foundations in North America or Europe will not be sustainable.
- Global South countries need regional examples and opportunities to learn from and alongside one another.
- However... there is still a role to be played by the Global North in supporting advocacy.

"[A coalition] will be dead in the water if it doesn't actively engage the South."

Stakeholder Interview

"Recognize that each country has something to contribute."

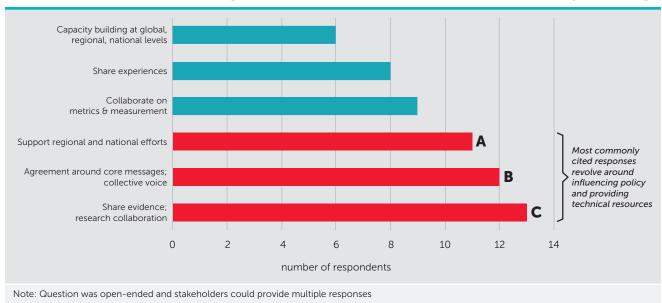
Stakeholder Interview

³ Coalition: A formal structure with members making long-term commitments to share responsibilities and resources to advance a common agenda. Pact Tanzania. (n.d.) Advocacy Expert Series: Building and Maintaining Networks and Coalitions.

3. Actions of the coalition

Actions of the coalition could focus on helping actors come together with a collective voice, using evidence, and strengthening national efforts.

What actions should a new global coalition undertake to advance early learning?



Support existing regional and national efforts

- 11 informants cited the need to support existing country-level efforts, priorities, and capacities and build off existing efforts of regional and national ECD networks
- 6 informants suggested the coalition should build capacity in countries.

Help actors come together with a collective voice

- The field needs a more coordinated effort with core messages to agree on, even if each organization has its own priorities
- Shared goals can help improve accountability and track progress as a community.

Sample Efforts in ECD based on a desk review

National & Regional ECD Networks	Advocacy & Knowledge Dissemination	Tool & Research Development	Initiatives Focused on Implementation & Scale	
 International Step by Step Association (ISSA) Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) Africa ECD Network (AfECN) Red del Grupo Consultivo para la Primera Infancia en América Latina Tanzania Early Childhood Development Network (TECDEN) Rede Nacional Primeira Infância (RNPI) – Brazil 	 Forum on Investing in Young Children Globally (iYCG) Consultative Group (CG) on ECCD Rights from the Start (Global Campaign for Education) 	 Measuring Early Learning Quality and Outcomes (MELQO) LEGO Foundation Research Network Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) (ECD, Education and Transition to Work thematic group) 	Ilifa Labantwana (A South African initiative, supported by a donor partnership, that provides practice-based evidence, builds national capacity, and generates support for quality ECD at scale) Early Learning Partnership (A multi-donor trust fund catalyzing large scale, quality provision of early learning services)	
Note: this is not an exhaustive list, but illustrates regional and national efforts that a coalition could support				

"What is causing mass confusion in this sector is that governments are being told different things, we are absolutely scattering their time and financial resources across a whole range of things that do not add up to a coherent whole. Any kind of coordination of a new initiative needs to build together all of those different layers of influence so that we have champions at all levels that are speaking with one voice."

Stakeholder Interview

Share and use evidence

Advocacy should move from "why" to invest to "how" and "where" to invest, specifically around:

- Evidence on scalable models; a menu of options for policymakers
- How to operationalize and coordinate across systems
- Demonstrable examples of success in low-income contexts
- An agreed technical approach; consistent measurement and monitoring of outcomes.

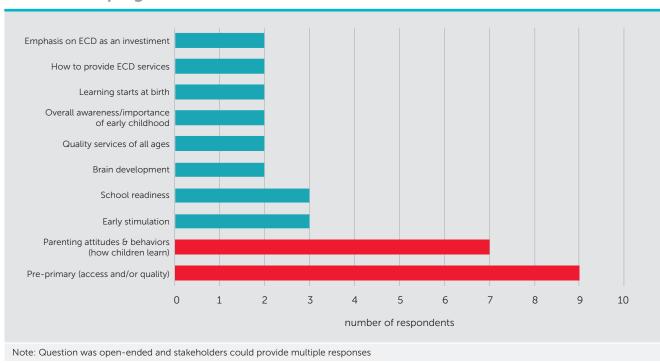
"There is a need to bolster the evidence base to advocate for quality and scalable models that work in lowresource settings, by sharing existing evidence as well as more coordinated efforts on research agenda[s]"

Stakeholder Interview

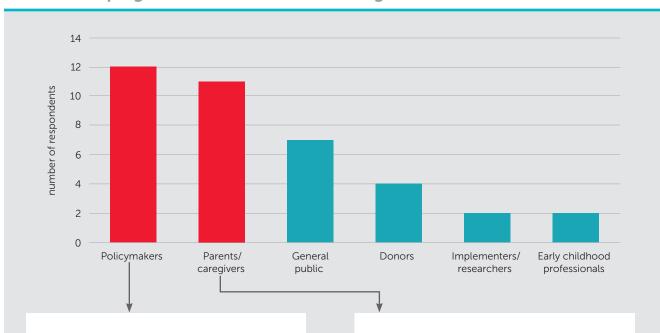
4. Early learning campaign

An early learning campaign should focus on behavior and policy change at the country level: "We need to be country-based and context-driven."

What a campaign should look like: The Issue



What a campaign should look like: The Target



Target policymakers and government officials:

- To increase domestic investment and political commitment
- To provide decision makers with practice-anchored research and lowcost, scalable models
- Stakeholders cited specific targets: mayors/local decision makers, ministers of finance, ministers of education

Target parents and families:

- Too little attention paid to the demand-side of ECD; parents need to understand early learning to be able to demand quality services
- Parents need to understand how children learn in order to support their development

Note: Question was open-ended and stakeholders could provide multiple responses

Main Findings: Advocacy Case Studies

Global Advocacy Partnerships in Allied Fields

Four advocacy efforts were chosen based on global reach, demonstrated achievements, and diversity of their constituencies. Most focus on multi-sectoral issues, such as nutrition, which can be informative for the similarly multi-sectoral and complex field of ECD. They provide the following lessons:

The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

 How global and national actors previously working in silos can come together to focus multi-sector advocacy and action at the country level.

Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)

 How diverse stakeholders can build consensus on the best evidence for solving an issue in low-resource settings and make it accessible to partners and national governments.

1,000 Days

 How to simultaneously target and partner with donor governments as well as make a complicated message relevant and accessible to different audiences.

ACTION Global Health Advocacy Partnership

 How to create a truly global, inclusive movement through a unique global partnership between actors from both donor and high-burden contexts.

The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

Global (2010 – present)

- ▶ Has grown from 4 to 55 member countries
- Increased national commitments to prioritize nutrition strategies
- Increased investments and multi-sector alignment
- Strengthens political commitment and accountability to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by building capacity in countries
- Comprises 5 networks (for countries, civil society, business, donors, and UN organizations)
- Carefully packages the evidence and frames nutrition as "a human issue with human principals"
- Brings consistency to how the nutrition community talks about nutrition through its Common Narrative tool.

Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, & Child Health (PMNCH)

Global (2005 – present)

- ▶ 600+ members
- ► In 2011, global consensus reached on key evidence-based interventions for MNCH
- Has supported specific campaigns to raise awareness (e.g. Every Newborn)
- 3 leading women and children health coalitions (WHO's Partnership for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health, Save the Children's Healthy Newborn Partnership, and UNICEF's Child Survival Partnership) joined forces to launch PMNCH
- Focuses on strategic areas where combined efforts can do more than individual agencies could do on their own
- Online portal includes resources from 1,500+ sources, including research institutes, journals, and members. PMNCH synthesizes evidence into easily digestible Knowledge Summaries.

1,000 Days

Global (2010 - present)

- ▶ 80+ partners worldwide (governments, researchers, civil society organizations [CSOs], foundations)
- In 2014, helped launch the first Global Nutrition Report
- Key advocate for USAID's Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014-2025
- Focuses on improving nutrition for mothers and children between pregnancy and age 2 (the 1,000 day window)
- Mobilizes domestic and international resources to provide necessary vitamins and minerals, promote good nutrition practices, and treat malnourished children
- Both advocates to and partners with donor governments (e.g. United States)
- Makes research and interventions accessible for various audiences by dividing the 1,000 day window into 3 clear stages (pregnancy, infancy, and toddlerhood) and identifies simple interventions for each.

ACTION Global Health Advocacy Partnership

Global (2004 – present)

Has helped generate...

- ► US\$16.5 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria
- ▶ US\$5 billion for the GAVI The Vaccine Alliance
- ► US\$3 billion for nutrition following 2013 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit.
- Mobilizes international and domestic resources and effects policy change around: TB, vaccines, and child nutrition
- North-South partnership made up of 10 civil society organizations (CSOs) from high-burden and donor countries
- Partners with experienced advocates
- Cultivates local media champions by providing training for them to learn how to talk about the issue.

National Campaigns in Early Childhood

Two national early childhood campaigns demonstrate varied country-level approaches to raising public awareness, advocating for policy reform, leveraging increased investments, and homing in on a more targeted issue within ECD. A number of the strategies employed by these campaigns can be adapted for other country-level efforts.

Pre-K Now

 This U.S. preschool campaign has many lessons for other countries looking to tackle a narrow issue within the broader early childhood field and successfully engage nontraditional stakeholders as advocates.

7 is Too Late

 Turkey's national campaign illustrates how clear and specific asks can raise public awareness around early childhood education (ECE) and influence government response to increase access to preschool.

Pre-K Now

USA (2001 - 2011)

- Helped double state funding
- ▶ Public enrollment grew by 450,000 children
- ▶ 6 states & District of Columbia (DC) promised Pre-K for all 4-year olds
- Number of states meeting quality benchmarks grew from 5 to 23 (and DC)
- 10-year campaign to advance high-quality prekindergarten (Pre-K) for all 3- and 4-year olds by targeting state and federal policies
- Chose to "home in tightly" and focus on a narrower issue
- Provided financial and technical support to local organizations in 30+ states
- Partnered with "strange bedfellows" (e.g. law enforcement, businesses, pediatricians, military)
- Used strategic communication and research to supply timely and accessible data.

7 is Too Late

Turkey (2005-2012)

- ▶ 40 million people exposed to media coverage
- ➤ Preschool made mandatory and universally accessible in 57 of 81 provinces
- ➤ Preschool enrollment more than doubled (from 19% in 2005 to 67% in 2012)
- The Mother Child Education Foundation (AÇEV) launched the campaign to raise public awareness and government response around the importance of ECE
- Learned that changing national policy requires a long-term plan with resources to support it and continued momentum by constantly finding new pieces of news and research
- Used a phased approach:
 - Initially had a focused goal of pre-primary access
 - After 5 years, focused on quality
 - Now (after 10 years), revitalizing campaign to focus on parents and years 0-6.

What are the key features of successful advocacy efforts?

Features	SUN Movement	PMNCH	1,000 Days	ACTION	Pre-K Now	7 is Too Late
Selects a sharp policy focus for a campaign with clear, specific asks					✓	1
Partners with • Diverse group of stakeholders	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Non-traditional actors			✓		✓	1
Global/local champions			✓	✓		
Makes evidence accessible to mobilize resources and track progress	✓	✓	✓	1	✓	✓
Promotes a common narrative or agrees on the right technical approach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	1
Emphasizes country-level engagement	√	✓	√	✓		
Centers the partnership in the Global South	✓			✓		

Options For Consideration

What could the ECD community do next?



Launch a global early learning campaign

What would this entail?

 Supporting a set of coordinated national campaigns and cultivating global and national champions to carry the message.

More discussion needed around:

- Which countries to target?
- Depending on the context, who is the audience (policymakers, parents)?
- What approach? Should it focus on interventions, child outcomes, or the whole system?

"The central principle of any partnership is looking at an advocacy role where [a] combined voice is much more effective than individual voices."

Case Study Interview

Lessons from advocacy case studies:

 In addition to issue experts, campaigns should partner with experienced advocates and nontraditional stakeholders (e.g. businesses, religious leaders, law enforcement)

"You don't necessarily go find the issue experts... you go find the best advocates."

Case Study Interview

• Country-level research is needed to highlight contextual needs, tactics, and new evidence.

Form a global coalition

What would this entail?

 Global actors uniting behind a common message, coordinating research agendas, and agreeing on the best strategies to improve early learning

"I think it would be a mistake to have a coalition that shut out a large part of the people that are interested in this topic."

Stakeholder Interview

More discussion needed around:

- What should be the scope of the coalition?
 How broad should it be?
- What is the best structure? How formal should it be?
- What should be the geographic focus (global vs. I MIC: low- and middle-income countries)?

Lessons from advocacy case studies:

• Any coalition should be driven by the Global South and include strong civil society representation.

Support and build off existing early childhood networks & efforts

What would this entail?

• Providing financial and technical support to existing regional and national networks and initiatives.

More discussion needed around:

- What networks or initiatives should be prioritized?
- How to ensure these efforts are financially sustainable?
- What capacity development or other support is needed to boost impact?

Lessons from advocacy case studies:

- Regional and national networks and other initiatives are better positioned to target and partner with governments and local organizations.
- Networks are already learning from each other informally, and a global coalition can bring the regions together for a South-South exchange of knowledge and experience.

Suggested Next Steps

Building on this initial stakeholder analysis and review of advocacy efforts, to further develop a global strategy around early childhood, we suggest:

► Follow-up consultations and interviews with:

- Government officials in the Global South
- Other foundations and donors (especially potential "first movers" and "new recruits")
- Civil society organizations (CSOs) and parents' associations
- Influential actors in sectors outside the ECD and education spaces

Analysis of regional and national "hot spots"

- Assessment of political will
- Which countries are ripe for action ("low-hanging fruit"), which have the greatest need?
- Potential champions and leaders in these countries

Communications research and message development

- What resonates with target audiences?
- Development of advocacy tools
- ➤ Deeper analysis of institutional architecture options for better coordination in the early childhood field

Appendix

Stakeholders Interviewed

Informant	Organization
Caroline Arnold	Aga Khan Foundation
Rukmini Banerji	Pratham
Penelope Bender	USAID
Andrew Bollington	LEGO Foundation
Jo Bourne	UNICEF
Pia Rebello Britto	UNICEF
Phyllis Costanza	UBS Optimus Foundation
Amanda Devercelli	World Bank/Early Learning Partnership
Tarun Dua	World Health Organization
Michael Feigelson	Bernard van Leer Foundation
Liana Ghent	International Step by Step Association
Sonja Giese	Ilifa Labantwana
Randa Grob-Zakhary	Porticus
Rachel Hinton	DFID
Peter Holland	World Bank
Venita Kaul	Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development, Ambedkar University, Delhi
Sarah Klaus	Open Society Foundation
Divya Lata	Plan International
Sheila Manji	Aga Khan Foundation
Junko Miyahara	Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC)
Karen Mundy	Global Partnership for Education
Sophie Naudeau	World Bank
Evangeline Nderu	RTI International/Tayari project
Lynette Okeng'o	African Early Childhood Network (AfECN)
Sara Poehlman	Save the Children
Abbie Raikes	[Formerly] UNESCO
Arcard Rutajwaha	[Formerly] Tanzania Early Childhood Development Network (TECDEN)
Sarah Ruto	Peoples Action Learning (PAL) Network
Maya Soonarane	Inter-Country Quality Node on Early Childhood Development (ICQN-ECD), ADEA
Stephan Turnipseed	Global Business Coalition for Education, Business for Early Childhood Development Task Force (Biz4ECD)
Emiliana Vegas	Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
Sara Watson	ReadyNation
Hirokazu Yoshikawa	Group on Early Childhood Development, Education, and Transition to Work, Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

Case Study Informants

Case Study	Informant	Position	
	Claire Blanchard	Coordinator, Civil Society Network (CSN), Save the Children	
Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) Movement	Cara Flowers	Lead on Social Mobilisation Advocacy & Communications, SUN CSN, Save the Children	
	Edwyn Shiell	Policy and Strategy Advisor- Advocacy and Communication	
Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health	Vaibhav Gupta	Technical Officer, PMNCH Secretariat	
1,000 Days Partnership	Lucy Sullivan	Executive Director	
	John Paul Fawcett	Director for Global Policy & Advocacy	
ACTION Global Health Advocacy	Kate Goertzen	Senior Associate, Nutrition & Child Health	
Partnership	Allison Grossman	Senior Legislative Associate	
	Mandy Slutsker	Senior Associate, TB & Global Fund	
Pre-K Now (USA)	Sue Urahn	Executive Vice President, Pew Charitable Trusts	
7 is Too Late Campaign (Turkey)	Ayla Göksel	CEO for AÇEV	

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