

When ECD works:

mapping the contours of effective programming

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When visiting a programme or engaged in an ECD-related activity, we all tend to ask ourselves whether the situation appears to be 'working.' Sometimes the sense of what is working is an intuitive, overall impression. Sometimes we are consciously checking off features on a mental priority list we've developed through experience. For example: children are: active ✓ clean ✓ well fed ✓ mentally and socially stimulated ✓... setting is: full of materials children can explore ✓ safe and well-ventilated ✓... adults are: engaged with children ✓ encouraging children to use language ✓... What signals a sense that a programme is working may be quite different for each of us, and is likely to include a whole range of factors that each of us will define according to our own professional experience and goals.

In order to examine what makes ECD programmes work, and more specifically, what makes them effective, in diverse contexts, for diverse participants and stakeholders, the Bernard van Leer Foundation has launched the Effectiveness Initiative (EI). This is a three-year exploration

(1999-2002) that we hope will give us greater understanding of what makes programmes work – for the diverse people who take part in them, and for the communities and cultures that are meant to be enriched by them. It is an effort that will allow us to take a qualitative look at programmes with at

least a ten-year track record that are widely considered to be effective, and to develop methods and maps for examining other programmes in the future.

The EI effort is grounded in the in-depth study of ten specific

programmes. It is also designed to be a cross-site, cross-agency collaboration and exchange that stimulates ongoing dialogue about effective programming. Furthermore, it is designed to test the application of qualitative research methods, well tested in other development arenas, to the field of

international ECD. The goals of this effort are two-fold: to gain deeper insights into what makes ECD programmes effective, and to activate international dialogue on effectiveness that takes us, as ECD professionals, beyond our present scant measures and indicators of programme success.

For each site, a team of at least four people (some local, some from other sites) will establish the initial site-specific issues to explore, and will set up processes for engaging diverse stakeholders in mapping the evolution, experiences and details of the programme. The teams are supported by a cross-agency Advisory Committee of ECD programmers, policy makers and practitioners from around the world¹. The teams and members of the Advisory Committee met together as a whole group in July, 1999, to identify a set of basic questions and concerns they wish to examine across all ten sites. They will continue to meet periodically to share their tools, methods, experiences, questions, concerns, and evolving maps of understanding. The methods used by each team will be

created or selected from the entire 'toolkit' of options offered by the rich experience of the talented individuals who are taking part in this effort.

Those of us active within the Effectiveness Initiative do not expect to come up with a template of what a successful or ideal programme must have. Rather, we are attempting to map both programme-specific dimensions of effectiveness and to look for patterns that appear to be true across diverse settings. We want to be true to each programme included in the study, but also to extrapolate shared patterns and superimpose them on each other.

One of the primary objectives of the Effectiveness Initiative is to create a set of methods and data that is much broader than, but as persuasive as, current economic analyses of the benefits of early childhood programmes. There are now data available that demonstrate the economic benefits of investment in the early years. But while the early childhood field as a whole has benefited greatly from the research that has

generated these data, this should not limit the search for effective ECD programmes. Unwittingly, programming planners and policy makers often allow the economic data to limit their imagination when considering programming possibilities. The economic analyses have focused us on a search for economic outcomes and this narrows understanding of the full impact of effective early childhood programmes, on individual children, families and communities.

Furthermore, the current research findings have focussed attention on centre-based preschool programmes, since this is the early childhood strategy often used as the basis of analysis. Planners have become so susceptible to this that the potential benefits of alternatives such as homebased, parent support, and community development programmes have not been explored in any depth. This project is an attempt to get beyond this, and the qualitative research tools being used in the EI offer us methodologies to complement what has already been researched using quantitative techniques.

Thus, within the Effectiveness Initiative we are asking questions like:

- 'What makes a programme effective?'
- 'What makes it work?'
- 'What aspects of a programme are working?'
- 'What can we learn from programmes that feel right in one aspect but wrong in another?'
- 'How does a programme change over time?'
- 'Are effective programmes always effective, and for different sets of stakeholders?'
- 'Are they effective in the same arenas?'
- 'Can a programme that is failing to intervene in one dimension nevertheless be effective in another?'

The Effectiveness Initiative: getting started

As the EI was being created, organisations working in the field of ECD were consulted as to what programmes they thought were 'effective.' The EI staff at the Bernard van Leer Foundation began by asking partners in The Consultative Group on

Early Childhood Care and Development² and this led us to consult others who were there. From this consultation more than forty programmes were identified for consideration. We then contacted the programmes and told them about the project. Where there was initial interest we took the process a step further through dialogue with key people in the programme. This narrowed the field further, and when the proposal was sent to the Board of Trustees of the Bernard van Leer Foundation there were eleven possible programmes, one of which subsequently withdrew.

From January to June 1999, teams of two outsiders (one from the Foundation, one from another programme participating in the EI) made site visits to each of the ten programmes. They met with programme staff, explained the concept and ideas behind the EI project, and presented some of the questions that had arisen so far. There was no blueprint of how to proceed: they were looking for resonance between the EI and the concerns and questions that were arising and being articulated within the programmes. As in all negotiations, there was a need to clarify goals and objectives.

It took a full day at most sites for the notions, assumptions and beliefs behind the Effectiveness Initiative to be understood. However, in each case, over the following two days, the ideas began to take hold and a real dialogue began. It soon became evident that many of the programmes that joined with us were asking similar questions of their own work, and they had other questions they had been asking. Yet, prior to their involvement in the EI there had not been an opportunity to validate or explore these questions.

Ultimately, those who joined the EI found resonance with what we had wanted to explore on a wider scale and could see ways in which the activities of the EI would help them do their work. As a result of the site visits – through the dialogue and discussions – the EI began to take shape.

Today there are ten programmes involved in the Effectiveness Initiative, six of which have received funding from the Bernard van Leer Foundation. They represent geographic diversity and are illustrative of a variety of approaches. The programmes included in the Effectiveness Initiative are listed in the Table.

Programmes included in the Effectiveness Initiative	
Country	Programme name and description
Kenya	Madrasa Resource Centre (MRC) The MRC provides training and ongoing support to preschools in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda that have been created to provide early childhood experiences for Muslim children within the context of their religion.
Mozambique	Associação da Criança Família e Desenvolvimento (CDF) This evolved from an effort during the war to reunite children with their families. It now focuses on a variety of community based activities, one of which is ECD.
India	Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) SEWA was created to support women in the non-formal sector, organising them into cooperatives that are self sustaining. Childcare was added as a component to support women's work.
Israel	ALMAYA – Association for the Advancement of the Ethiopian Family and Child This programme works with Ethiopian families that have migrated to Israel. It provides children with experiences that honour their traditional culture and prepares them to enter primary school.
The Philippines	Mount Pinatubo Project When Mount Pinatubo erupted families living at the base of the mountain were resettled in other parts of the Philippines. This programme works with the community as a whole to meet their needs at all levels. A significant activity is home based playgroups for children and families.
Colombia	PROMESA – Proyecto de Mejoramiento Educativo, de Salud y del Ambiente A community mobilisation project that began 25 years ago in an isolated area of Colombia. Activities within the programme have now been taken over completely by the community itself.
Peru	PRONOEI – Programa No-formal de Educación Inicial This started out as a nutrition programme 25 years ago in the Altiplano of Peru and evolved into a community-run preschool programme. It then became a model for non-formal education that was adopted by government and was also disseminated widely throughout Latin America and beyond.
The Netherlands	Samenspel This programme provides a playgroup setting that helps integrate migrant (primarily Turkish and Moroccan) women and children into the Dutch culture.
Portugal	Agüeda Movement – Bela Vista The movement works to identify and then provide services for children at risk, socially and in terms of special needs. Work is with communities to maximise their access to available services, and with the services so that they more appropriately meet the needs of children and families.
Honduras	Madres Guías – Guide Mothers Within this programme, mothers are trained to run preschool programmes. The programme has now been extended into the early primary years to upgrade quality and facilitate the transition of children from the preschool to the primary setting.

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*As soon as data are reduced we are distanced from
what we want to know and understand*
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The creation of teams

Teams are evolving and networking is beginning.

Each programme, in collaboration with EI staff, has been responsible for the selection and preparation of its EI team. Teams consist of four or more people, depending on the needs at a given site. Team members have been drawn from:

- programme staff and local consultants;
- staff from other programmes in the EI;
- staff from the Bernard van Leer Foundation;
- disciplines where expertise is required to better understand a given programme (for example: in statistics, data analysis and cost/benefit studies); and
- staff from international organisations involved in funding ECD programmes.

We are already experiencing the benefits of the synergy of the different programmes, team members and methods coming together as a result of our first workshop that took place in The Hague in July 1999. This workshop proved to be a very stimulating and rewarding launch of the EI. Bringing people together from different programmes was extremely helpful because it was done within a setting where it was safe

for people to be open with one another, and where the facilitator worked with the group to create a shared vision.

During the workshop we observed, we learned and several things were reinforced:

- we learned that the open architecture of the project, while initially confusing, permits participants to let themselves ask questions collectively in an open forum, that they previously had hesitated to explore on their own. This has resulted in some questions emerging, and others being formulated more thoughtfully; while those of us involved with the EI are honing our ability to listen more attentively.
- As the skill, knowledge and abilities of the individual team members became more evident to people on other teams, cross-programme exchanges – always a hoped for outcome – began to develop. Teams proposed bringing in specific people to join their team at different points in time. For example, one of the team members from India made the initial site visit to the Philippines. One of the team members from Peru will visit Colombia as part of a site visit

to the community involved in the programme there. An individual who is central to the programme in Kenya will be part of the India team, and a person from the Israel programme has been invited to work with the programme in the Philippines. We are anticipating that the addition of one time or focused visits and exchanges will enrich the cross-programme work, and that the number and variety of these exchanges will increase over the life of the EI project and beyond.

- Most excitingly, we have come away from our first joint team workshop with the conviction that people have even more instruments at their disposal than we initially gave them credit for. The workshop also helped people to validate what they wanted to do. This has freed them to use their own tools more confidently, and to create new ones.

The teams at each site are now in the process of developing site-specific instruments and gathering data. We will all come together again in early 2000 to share the process and findings so far, and work on data analysis techniques.

The development of questions

We are asking questions differently and are beginning to hear a different set of questions asked.

A key to generating understanding will be in the framing of the questions asked within the EI. When we, as development workers and/or funders, ask questions, people can and are willing to respond. However, we need to be aware of the fact that the questions we ask may well limit how people respond, and may not be the salient questions they themselves would ask. We may not have thought to ask the kind of questions that will help reveal the real meaning of the experience for all those involved, and we may not be skilled enough to hear the meaning for the respondents of what they tell us.

It is extremely difficult to move beyond what we already know how to ask and hear while, from the other side, Pearce (1971) would claim that: 'We hear only the question to which we are capable of finding an answer.' (page 70) We are very aware that we have only a very narrow repertoire of questions and tools for investigating those questions. This is extremely limiting. The question for us is: 'Can some new questions be developed?' If so, there is the possibility that we can collectively begin to answer them.

In this light, we also want to validate intuition. We want to help explore the use of tools that will allow us to better articulate or justify our sense that things are,

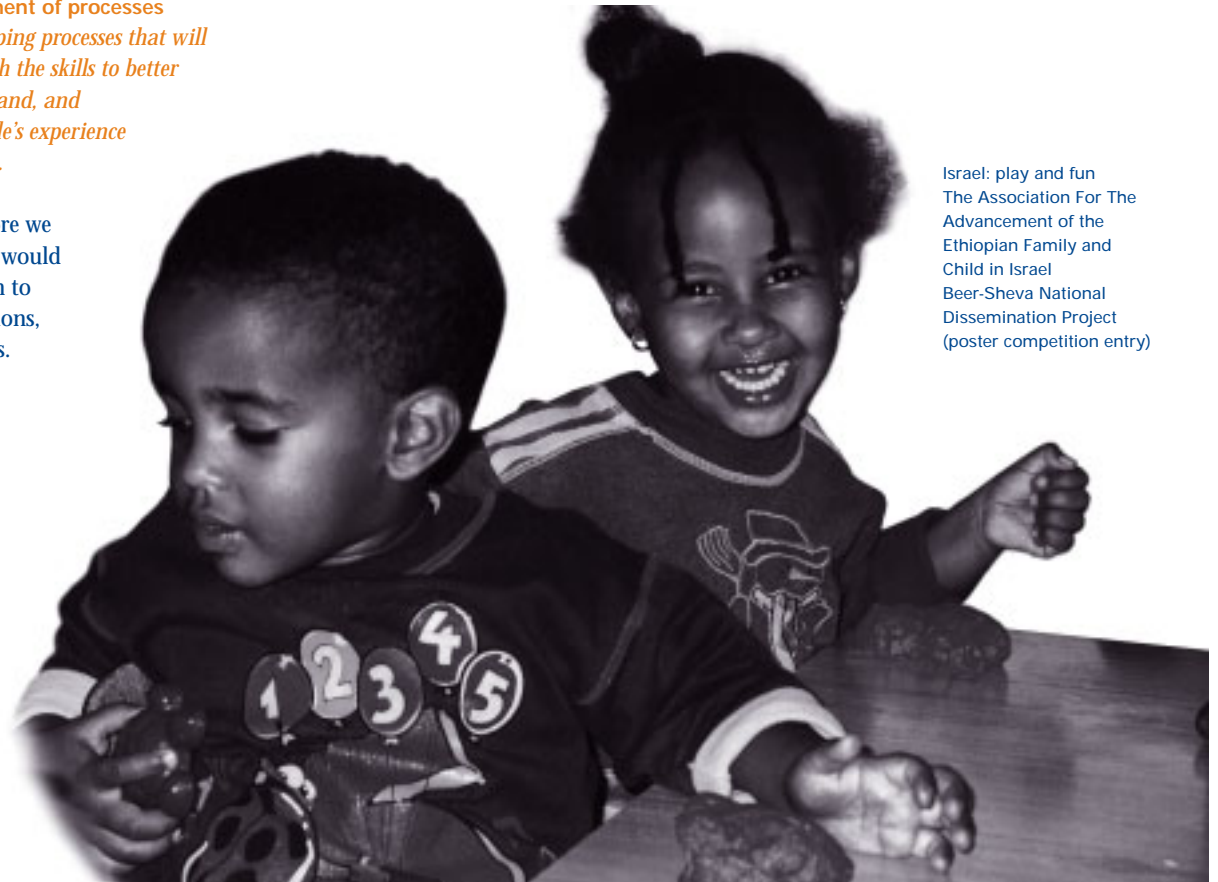
or are not working, without being able to justify that sense by recourse to a checklist or a standardised instrument. We are hoping to add to the development workers' toolkit by creating some additional methods for observation and making sense of the contexts in which programmes are conducted. In a way we need to find adequate language outside the usual research frameworks to validate experiences and so on.

The development of processes

We are developing processes that will provide us with the skills to better listen, understand, and interpret people's experience and situations.

We knew before we started that it would not be enough to just ask questions, even new ones.

Nor would it be enough to merely repeat what has been said for at least the last 30 years in the development world: that we need to listen better in order to better understand the responses we get; that listening does not mean a condescending, perfunctory half-hearted listening where the listener is drawing conclusions while the information is presented;



Israel: play and fun
The Association For The
Advancement of the
Ethiopian Family and
Child in Israel
Beer-Sheva National
Dissemination Project
(poster competition entry)



July 1999 Effectiveness Initiative Workshop, The Hague
photo: Angela Ernst

that listening means finding ways to receive people's responses fully before trying to analyse, interpret or categorise their meaning; that listening means staying open to hearing and seeing and understanding. We knew we would have to go beyond this rhetoric. One way in which we will do this is to turn each person in the EI into an 'outsider' looking in, and simultaneously an 'insider' looking out, at the programme and its context and environment. This approach of combining an 'etic' (outsider's objective) perspective, with an 'emic' (insider's subjective) perspective, will allow us to honour our commitment to getting at what are sometimes self-contradictory understandings of what is being achieved in programmes.³

We will also incorporate other successful strategies. For example, within the development organisations working in the majority world, in areas such as agriculture, water and sanitation, and micro credit, a number of strategies have been perfected to try to listen to people and to get an understanding of their lives, their needs and their desires. These include techniques such as Participatory Learning for Action (PLA) that help stimulate conversations that were not possible when communities were only observed by outsiders. These techniques have allowed us to collect new kinds of data. But is that enough?

Robert Chambers' (1997) reflections on the development of the PLA methods,

which he has so successfully promoted, reveal that he has realised the limits of open methodologies in getting at meaning. This is partly because it is not enough to only use more open methodologies for the gathering of data. Understanding of meaning can only come if we learn to work more skilfully with the data we generate.

One difficulty in the current use of PLA techniques is that within them the data are sometimes reduced or summed up too quickly. For example, a comparison between how a girl child or a boy child spends the day in a given setting can quickly get summed up as 'Boys are favoured in this culture'. Yet that tells us little about the values, beliefs and practices that lead to boys being favoured, and provides no insight into how one might work within the culture to bring about more gender equality.

Thus, in addition to creating and using rather open methodologies, we need to develop a variety of tools for analysis

that provide us with a layered understanding of meaning. It is not a matter of working towards a reductionist summing up of the data to yield one single conclusion. We want to take pictures from a number of angles; not to reduce the complexity of the situation but rather to recognise and explore the complexity as fully as possible. This requires a variety of analytical techniques. Even when brought to bear on a single data set, the use of a variety of methodologies can reveal different facets of meaning. The form of research that we are engaging in sees people as analysers of meaning even as they create it. (Barritt, *et al* 1979)

At the heart of meaning is language. In both the gathering and analysis of data we are reliant on language. As noted by Barritt, *et al.* (1979), within qualitative research we seek data dominated by language and cultural understanding, not by numbers. Numbers are important, but they should not be the

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We live our lives embedded in language. So why do we turn to numbers to define our truth?

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only points of reference. The kind of study we are undertaking lives within the tradition of language that has an important history, especially for most of the cultures whose experience we are trying to understand. Language allows us to highlight aspects of experience that might otherwise go unmarked. ‘Analysis of language requires rhetorical skill, the attention to meaning, and the struggle to say it right; we cannot escape the tradition; we have to use it.’ (Barritt *et al*, chapter 6 p3)

One of the things that excites us about the EI is that it provides an opportunity to validate an approach that allows people to tell their stories in their own language, without our immediately classifying, censoring or interpreting the stories or leaping to conclusions too quickly. Part of our collective work across the whole project is to interpret the stories together, broadening the basis for analysis, in the hopes that this will allow us to truly hear what we are being told.

Establishing a framework

We will be producing ‘cuts’ or ‘maps’ of programme contexts.

As the Effectiveness Initiative was being developed, the Advisory Committee met in September 1998, to develop a set of questions that its members initially had in mind about the nature of effective organisations. Those questions were related to different ‘cuts’ or ‘maps’ that reflected the histories of programmes.

During the initial site visits, these questions were shared with people as examples of the kinds of things we were interested in knowing more about. People immediately identified with the notion of telling the story of the programme by answering the questions for themselves. In some instances people were already asking similar questions of themselves. In other instances programme staff thought that by answering the questions they could do their work better. And still others

saw the opportunity to reflect on their organisational history as a way of guiding their work in the future. Thus, all the programmes adopted this set of questions, and their associated cuts or maps, as a place to begin.

One particular cut that was recommended by members of the Advisory Committee – the project timeline – took on a life of its own during the site visits. This has now been adopted by all the sites as a kind of initial framework upon which the story of each organisation can be anchored. It provides a starting point for people to reflect on what they set out to do and how that has changed over time. In essence, the initial questions, now organised around the

timeline, have become a vital, universally embraced tool in the EI toolkit. The timeline incorporates the following ‘cuts’ or ‘maps’.

- *Influences.* This cut consists of a description of all the things that have influenced the programme at different points in time. For example,



Belgium: learning to listen, Liege Pilot Project

Guatemala: tell me your story ...
 Quiché Fundaespro Project
 photo: Trustee Dr R Freudenberg



these might well include a description of the context (economic, political and cultural) when the programme began; how the context has changed over time; and how those involved perceive that these changes have affected the programme. Within this there is interest in capturing the ways in which serendipity and personal

choices have affected the programme; and in gaining some understanding of the resources (financial and physical) available over the life of the programme, and what this has meant for the programme.

- *Attitudes/Stance.* This cut is about people exploring the underlying

assumptions (implicit as well as explicit) within the programme. It is an attempt to identify the assumptions of those working in the programme. For example, what are the values and beliefs about children's development and the way children learn, that determine the kinds of activities undertaken in the programme? What are people's beliefs about the value of intervening and about kinds of interventions?

- *The structure of the organisation.* This mapping will produce an organisational chart and a description of how that has changed over time. There will also be information on the leadership of the project and how that has changed (or not) over time.
- *The culture of the organisation.* This cut reveals the culture of the organisation as it is demonstrated by the processes used within the organisation to address problems; overcome obstacles; make decisions; recruit, hire and train staff; and so on. It will also include information on who participates, at what points in time, and in which ways.

- *Linkages.* This mapping will show the kinds of linkages that have been formed with other organisations, individuals, donors, and government; as well as the networks that the organisation is part of and the roles that it plays in those networks.

- *Outcomes.* This cut will show the kinds of influences – looked at from the perspectives of some of the stakeholders – that the organisation has had and is having on others: the children and families involved in the programme; staff; the community; other organisations – And it also includes the broader context (such as government policy).

- *Mapping the future.* This speculative mapping will show how programmes envisage the future and how they see the programme developing over time with respect to: its underlying philosophy; its assumptions, goals and activities; the nature of the organisation; the processes used to make decisions; the kinds of linkages with other organisations; and the nature of the outcomes.

Telling the story

The stories are beginning to be told – however, the story of a programme is not self evident.

One of the things we have begun to realise is that people do not always find it easy or natural to tell their own story; we are all used to censoring ourselves and shortcutting the process. This was so vividly brought home in the first visit made to one of the programme sites. There it became clear that in the telling of a complicated story that is full of twists and turns and different experiences, there was a tendency to take shortcuts, avoid uncomfortable topics and to merely describe the final outcome.

This is compounded by two things: first, that those involved in a programme as implementers or beneficiaries do not necessarily know what it is that outsiders want to know about their story; and second, that generally outsiders are not very good at getting at an experience from the point of view of the person experiencing it. The result is that, if they were to tell the story of the programme, their stories would often not be recognisable to

those in the programme. Even if they were to get the story right, they would not necessarily be able to identify the aspects of experience that make the programme effective, or even know whether that dimension is perceived by others as being effective.

Thus, eliciting the story, in all its richness, is the challenge for the EI teams. Here we have to remember that people within the programme have very different perceptions of what has happened over the years: they have different entry points and, coming from diverse backgrounds, each brings a unique perspective to the effort. Putting their story together with the perceptions and experiences of people who are outside the programme adds an additional challenge. Yet ultimately, success will revolve around good, sound storytelling.

The approach to the task and the methodologies being used, place an emphasis on making meaning out of the material we gather, and telling it all in a way that resonates with, and is appreciated by others. Already, through interviews and activities that help provide an understanding of how

organisations have arrived at where they are, and what that means in terms of their impact, many stories are being told. Documentation is usually thought of late in the process. However, we want to set processes in motion to tell the story while it is evolving. We have begun to think that each site should have a writer working with them to bring out the story by creating a drama, or producing a film, or writing a novel, or using a variety of media to convey the various aspects of the programme.

Some assumptions we carry with us

Despite all our best intentions, we are aware that we are not going into this activity with a blank slate, theoretically or in terms of our own practices and experiences. We bring with us a set of assumptions, first of all about how the world operates; and second, about what we are going to find out about effective ECD programmes. We have tried to articulate our assumptions knowing well that such an exercise can only be part of the picture. Some of these assumptions were explicit when we began, some implicit. In either case, nine months into the project, here is what we have to say about our assumptions.

We have an agenda

No matter how purist we try to be in being open and in listening and hearing, we do have our own perspective and agenda.

We would not be working in this field if we did not think that we had something to offer to others, yet it is not politically correct to talk about the ways in which we would like to see people's lives changed. We tend to end up working with communities until their needs fit our ability to respond to their needs. One development specialist made the comment, 'If we want them to respond we have to teach them to respond.' But, we lose when we have taught people to respond.

As interventionists we have to be conscious of our imposition of goals, perspectives and agenda for action, and understand the impact – positive and negative – of the criteria we are imposing. At the very least we should not delude ourselves that we are working in a completely value-free way.

We begin with some beliefs about effectiveness

From our beliefs come assumptions that we make as we try to understand effectiveness. These include that effectiveness:

- *cannot be defined in terms of a universally accepted truth.* There is no single dimension that would make every early childhood programme 'effective'. We are assuming that there are multiple truths and that there is disagreement about what constitutes an effective programme. We are seeking to know where there is agreement in people's experiences and we are trying to understand something of the nature of the disagreements.
- *Is a fluctuating concept.* The effectiveness of an effort changes over time and as a result of changing conditions.
- *Cannot be placed on a linear scale* along which programmes can be ranked from most to least effective.
- *Resides in an organisation,* yet varies within an organisation. Some parts of the organisation may well be much stronger than other parts.

Thus, effectiveness is best represented as a profile that is compounded from the cuts and maps.

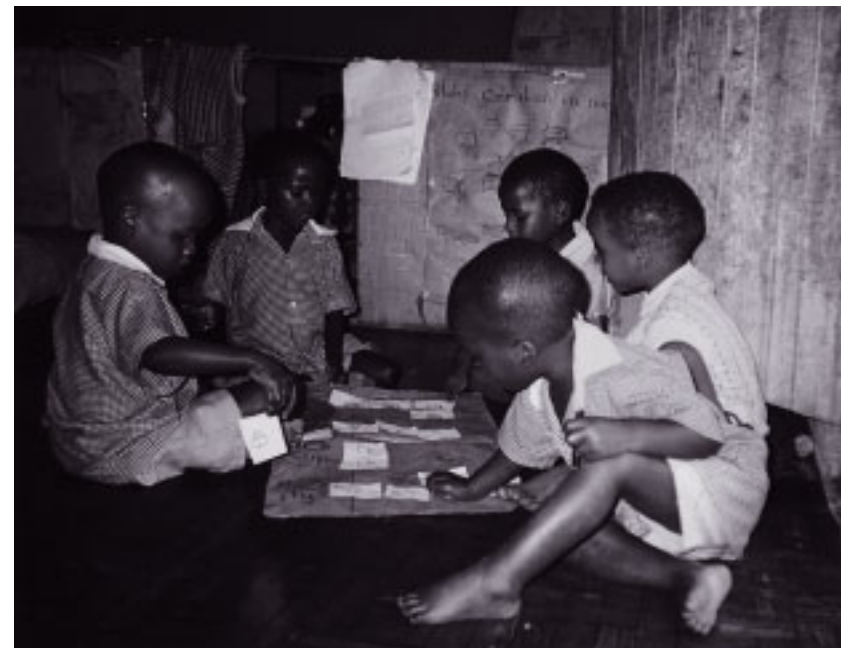
- *Takes time to identify and understand. It is not possible to capture an understanding of what constitutes effective ECD programming in a snapshot.* It requires living with and experiencing multiple situations that cannot be reduced to a static study of a single point in time. It requires time to recognise how and when something is effective in process and outcomes.
- *Is the result of experience, and a composite of many experiences.*

Fashioning tools as we proceed

We are being willingly changed as we assemble, develop or invent the tools that we are using; as we move away from the relatively cosy approaches we know and have trusted; as we struggle to cope with the stresses and complexities of being creative with what we have; as we combine so many different skills; as we try to operate successfully with them; and as we bring them to bear in different combinations for different places and circumstances. For example, we are having to become

much more open, much more sensitive, much more quick footed, much more competent in coping with nuanced realities as we take on qualitative research approaches and methods. These offer us validated and tested tools but we have to adapt them to the specific uses and purposes of examining ECD settings, in all their complexity and in the wealth and interplay of dimensions that they embody. They

help us to identify new data sources such as stories and anecdotes, interview transcripts, field notes, recordings of natural interactions, and documents, pictures, and other graphic representations; they allow us to carry out studies of human experiences that are not approachable through quantitative methods – and they also change us, and make us different personally and different professionally.⁴



Uganda: learning to express a story. Madrasa Resource Centre/Kiti Muslim Nursery School (poster competition entry)

Where we are now

In summary, we believe that bringing the use of qualitative tools into the world of ECD, for gathering and processing data, will give a better understanding of what we see and hear and distil from the process: it is the first time for many. We know that in quantitative research it is considered crucial to begin with a fixed/prescribed set of methods and procedures that are to be used with conformity across all study sites. However, in this effort, we are consciously working without a normative blueprint in the hopes that we will be able to identify patterns and individual differences in the case studies that would not appear if we started with a fixed constellation of assumptions. By taking this approach we get both information and process.

It may be that the outcomes confirm what we already knew intuitively. How valuable that would be, given that so much of what we know is not validated by existing research and is not taken into serious consideration when our organisations make programming decisions. However, we feel that the process we are engaged in is of equal or

even greater value than the outcomes we might discover. The fact that there are over fifty people embarking on a journey together, and actively engaged in a dialogue together to generate both the questions and the methodologies to address those questions, contributes to the creation of a process that will last far beyond the EI. The cross-site exchanges, the periodic meetings of all the team members to create a way forward together, the frequent exchanges and sharing of information and activities along the way: they all contribute to joint ownership of a set of qualitative research strategies that can be used with a wide variety of ECD programmes.

Over the course of the dialogues with EI participants, the analogy of a river began to emerge as a way of talking about what happens within programmes. Rivers start small. Where they go, their depth, and breadth, are determined by multiple factors within their environment. Some rivers flow along a rather predictable path, but most are diverted from their natural course in some way – and they also create their own courses. At times they are fed by tributaries and widen as a result, covering more ground; at other

times they shrink as a result of drought. At times there are dams that impede their progress altogether, or cause them to flood and destroy otherwise fertile ground. Some flow into lakes and maintain an identity all their own; others flow into the ocean and, as part of that ocean, are no longer apart and unique. And as rivers flow and grow, they also shape and influence the environments through which they pass and of which they are a vital part. Like rivers, programmes have progressed, have been influenced and have had influence in their own distinctive ways. As we trace their courses, we can begin to map the contours of the territory that each programme has covered and we can see their influence. Even as the EI is getting underway, we can see that the work will result in new ways to navigate, and that the voyage will have been well worth the effort.

Notes

1. The Advisory Committee consists of: Robert G Myers (Consultative Group); Kathy Bartlett (AKF); Dr S Anandalakshmy (Consultant); Kirk Felsman (Duke University); Leonardo Yanéz (Consultant); Michelle Poulton (CCF); Caroline Arnold (SCF) and Feny de los Angeles Bautista (Community of Learners Foundation).

2. The Consultative Group joined the effort as a partner, and focused their April 1999 meeting on the topic of indicators of effectiveness.

3. It is important to point out that we do not mean to create a dichotomy between literal 'outsiders' and 'insiders' here since we know that both insiders and outsiders can simultaneously hold 'emic' and 'etic' perspectives. We are trying to suggest that it is in the synthesis between these two approaches that a fuller picture of effective programming will emerge.

4. Salole G; *Learning to hear with the third ear: bricolage and its importance for possible new directions in ECD*; (June 1995) address to National Educare Forum, South Africa.

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