

Early Childhood Development in the SDG Era

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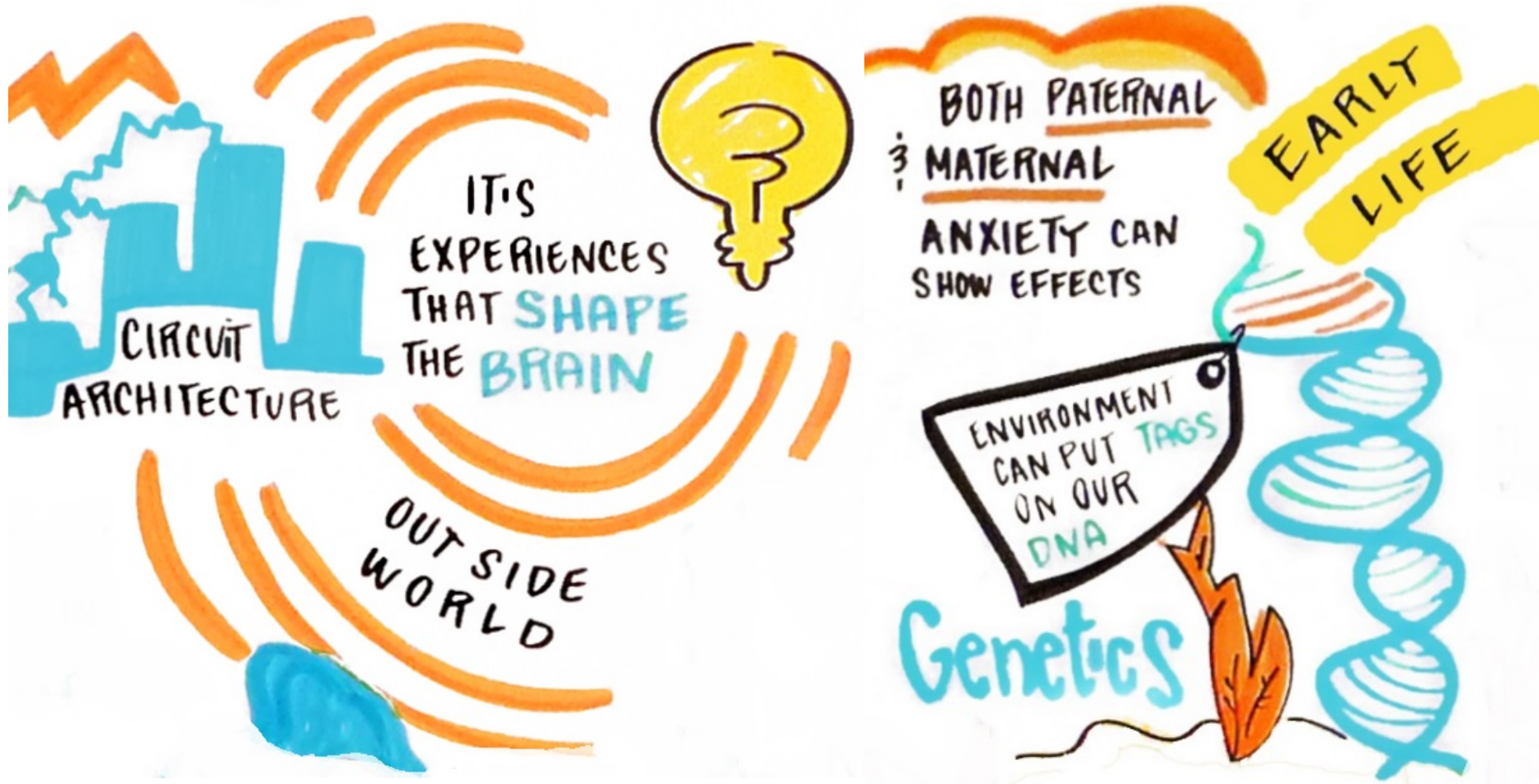
IT IS A HISTORIC MOMENT FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The science and
evidence of ECD
interventions is
coming of age to
inform
implementation
at scale

ECD is recognized
for the 1st time as
part of the 2030
Sustainable
Development
Agenda

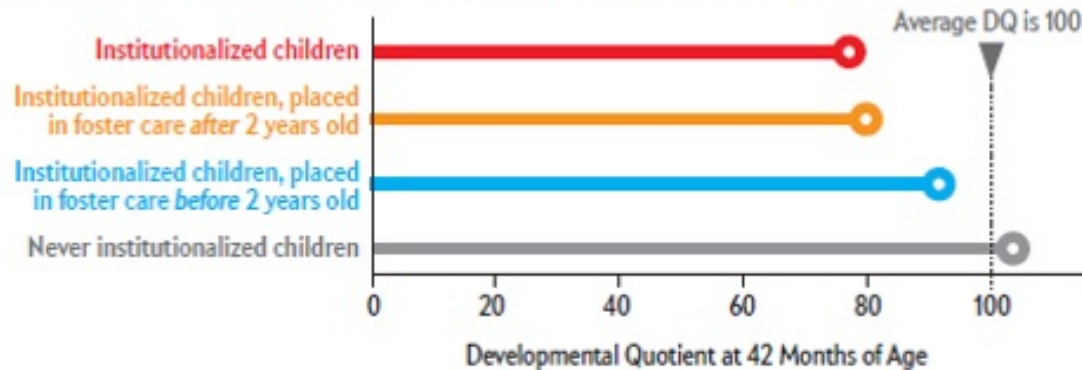
Key Message 1: The relationship between genes and environment is closer than ever before

DNA is not your Destiny – Environment Matters

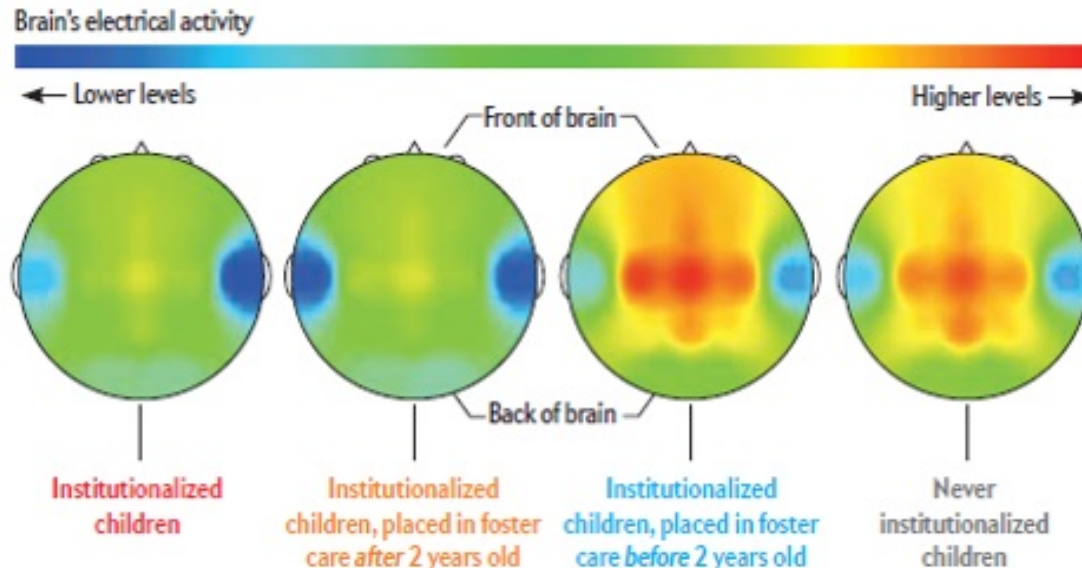


Key Message 2: Timing matters - EARLY intervention is the answer

Early Entry into Foster Care Resulted in Higher Average Intelligence ...



... and Brain Functioning at Age 8 Almost Matched That of Never Institutionalized Children



Key Message 3:

Nourishing the mind = nutrition + stimulation



MAKING THE BODY
MORE RECEPTIVE

Environment

nutrition

WHAT'S
HAPPENING IN
THE BRAIN DURING
MALNUTRITION?
← POOR
STRESS
RESPONSE
↓
DECREASED IRON ABSORPTION



IRON
PROTEINS — FIGHT OR FLIGHT

Message 4:

Toxic stress during early childhood = Lifelong impact

POSITIVE

Brief increase in heart rate, mild elevation in stress hormone,
Cortisol

TOLERABLE

Serious temporary stress responses, buffered by supportive
relationships

TOXIC

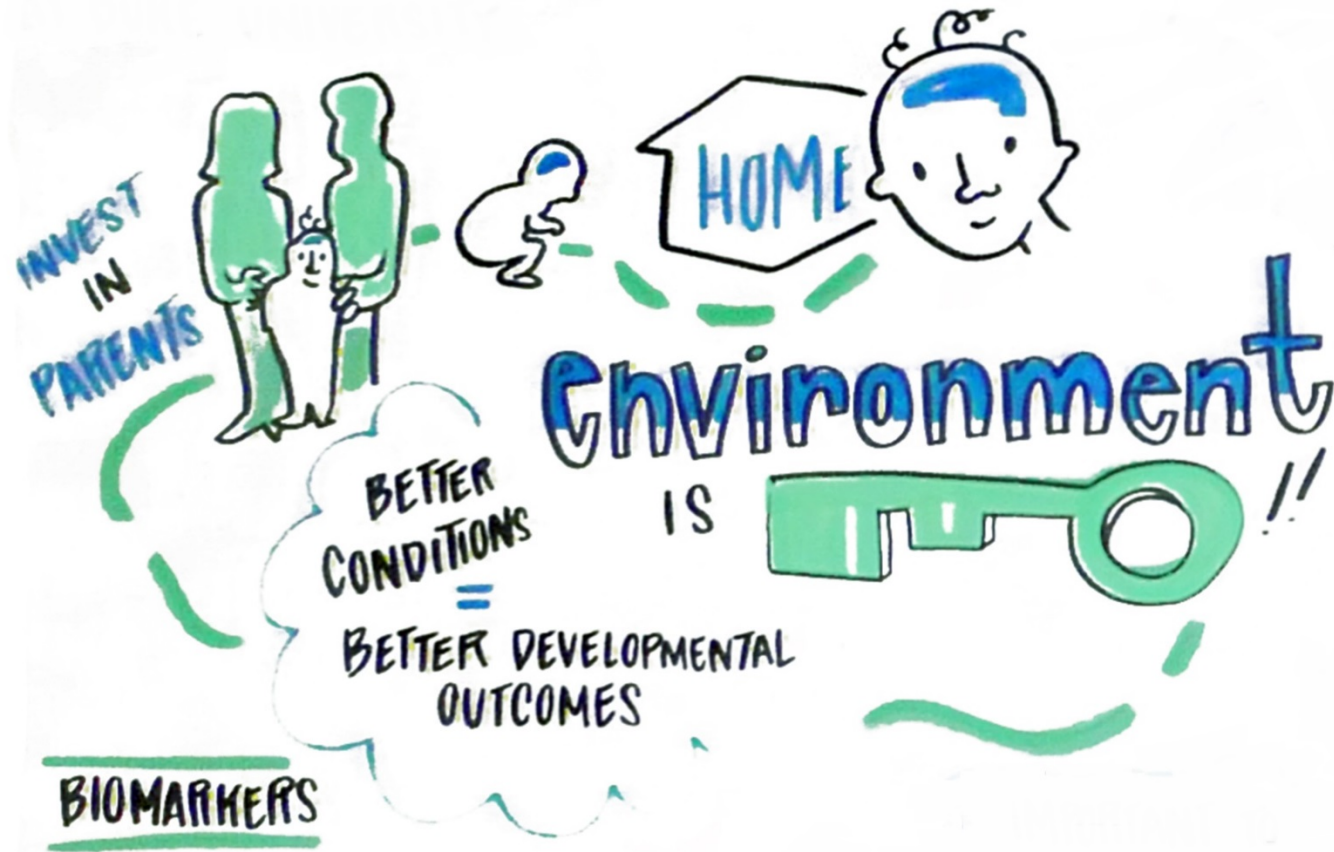
Prolonged activation of stress response systems, in the absence
of protective relationships

Key Message 4: Protecting the brain from “toxic Stress”

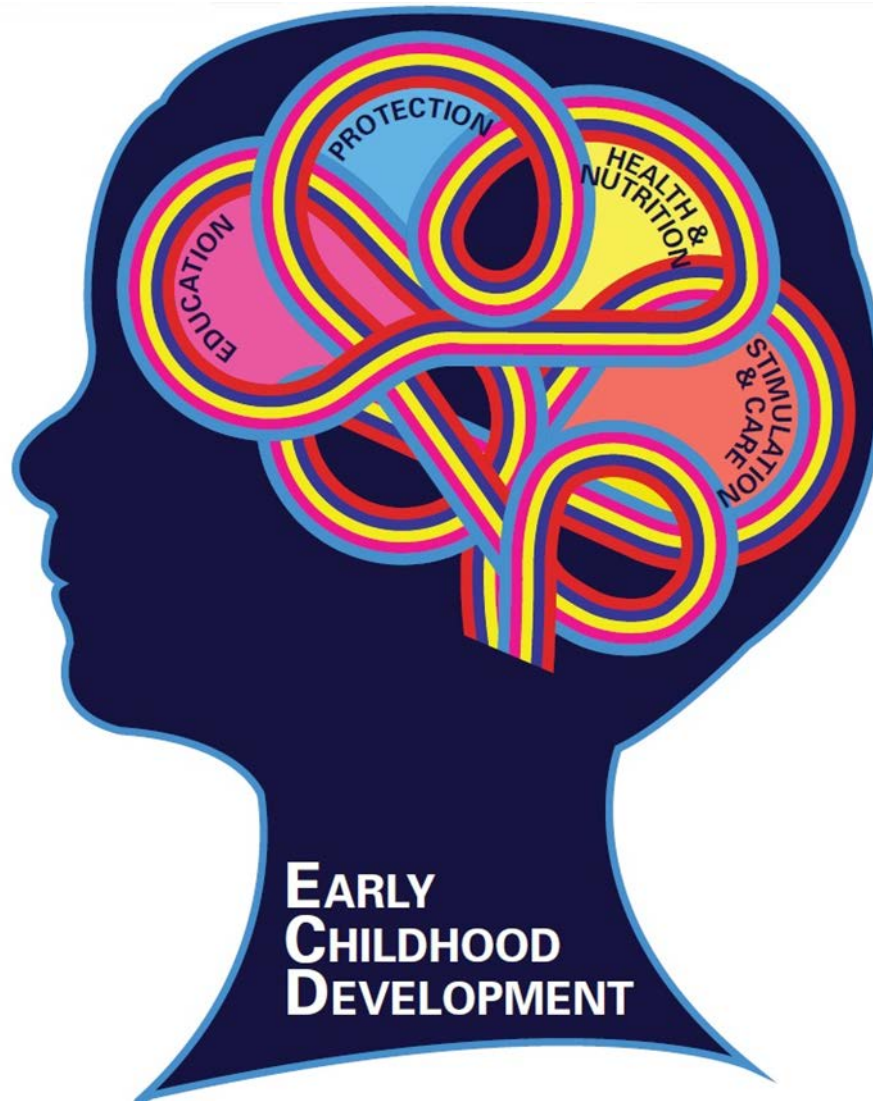


Key Message 5:

Stimulation is the foundation of learning



Science of ECD has Come of Age



Early Childhood Development:
Maturational process of Skills and abilities in Cognition, language, Social, emotional, and Motor development
- Prenatally to 5 years

Historic Moment – ECD recognized in Sustainable Development Goals



In the words of the UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon



“The Sustainable Development Goals recognize that early childhood development can help drive the transformation we hope to achieve over the next 15 years”

On 22 September, 2015 at the UNGA side event “Meeting of the Minds”

SDGs are meant to work together





Goal 1 - Eradicate Poverty

ECD has been documented to be one of the most cost-effective strategies for poverty alleviation.

Early in life, when the brain has the maximum capacity to develop in the fullness of its complexity children learn the skills that will help them flourish in a 21st century economy.



Goal 2 - End hunger and improve nutrition

Children who receive early stimulation with nutrition supplements have better outcomes than children who only receive nutrition supplements, thereby amplifying the impact of nutrition.

Furthermore, ECD interventions, buffer the negative effect of stress thereby improving absorption of nutritional intake.



Goal 3 - Ensure Healthy Lives

ECD interventions, early in life set a trajectory for good life long health, lower cardiovascular, non-communicable disease and well-being.

With ECD not only do children survive, they thrive.



Goal 4 - Ensure Life long learning

Learning begins at birth and ECD interventions have proved to be the foundation for later learning, academic success and productivity.

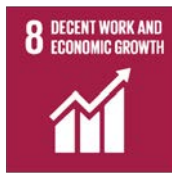
A study on increasing pre-school enrolment in 73 countries found higher future wages of \$6 – \$17 per dollar invested, indicating potential long-term benefits ranging from \$11 to \$34 billion.



Goal 5 - Achieve Gender Equality

The nexus between early childhood and women's economic empowerment is clear.

Greater investment in quality, affordable child-care is linked with greater opportunities for women, economic advancement and empowerment



Goal 8: Promote Decent Work for all

- Adequate child-care is a critical element of the decent work agenda
- Investments in professionalization of the early childhood workforce contribute to full and productive employment, especially for women



Goal 10 - Reduce inequality within and among countries

Inequality often begins, at birth, or even before birth. ECD is the powerful equalizer because it is that window of opportunity that can close the inequality gap.

Disadvantaged children who receive ECD services earn up to 25% more, as adults, compared to their peers who did not receive these services and almost catch up in earning to their non-disadvantaged peers.



Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Characteristics of ECD spaces embody safe, sustainable and biophilic features, thereby providing the entry point for cities and human settlements.



Goal 16 Promote peaceful societies

The neurobiology of early childhood has the potential to reduce violence and promote peace.

ECD interventions demonstrate lower rates of violence in the home and greater social cohesion in communities.



Goal 17 - Strengthen the means of implementation

Measurement of early childhood development, at the population level – global, regional and national – can serve as a powerful tool to revitalize global partnerships.

Track generation 2015 to see how well the SDG agenda had done by its youngest global citizens.

ECD as the foundation for the SDGs



Target 4.2

By 2030 ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

- **Indicator 1: Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being**
 - (Disaggregation: sex, location, wealth (and others where data are available))
- Indicator 2: Participation rate in organized learning
 - (one year before the official primary entry age): [Consider participation rate of specific "age" for all countries (i.e. 4 or 5 years)]

Target 4.2/ Indicator 1: Child Development Outcomes

- No more proxy indicators: Possible to measure child outcomes at a population level
- Credible measures
 - E.g., Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS/UNICEF): Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI)
- These measures could be incorporated into existing data collection systems and can be collected periodically to become an integral part of national and global monitoring efforts

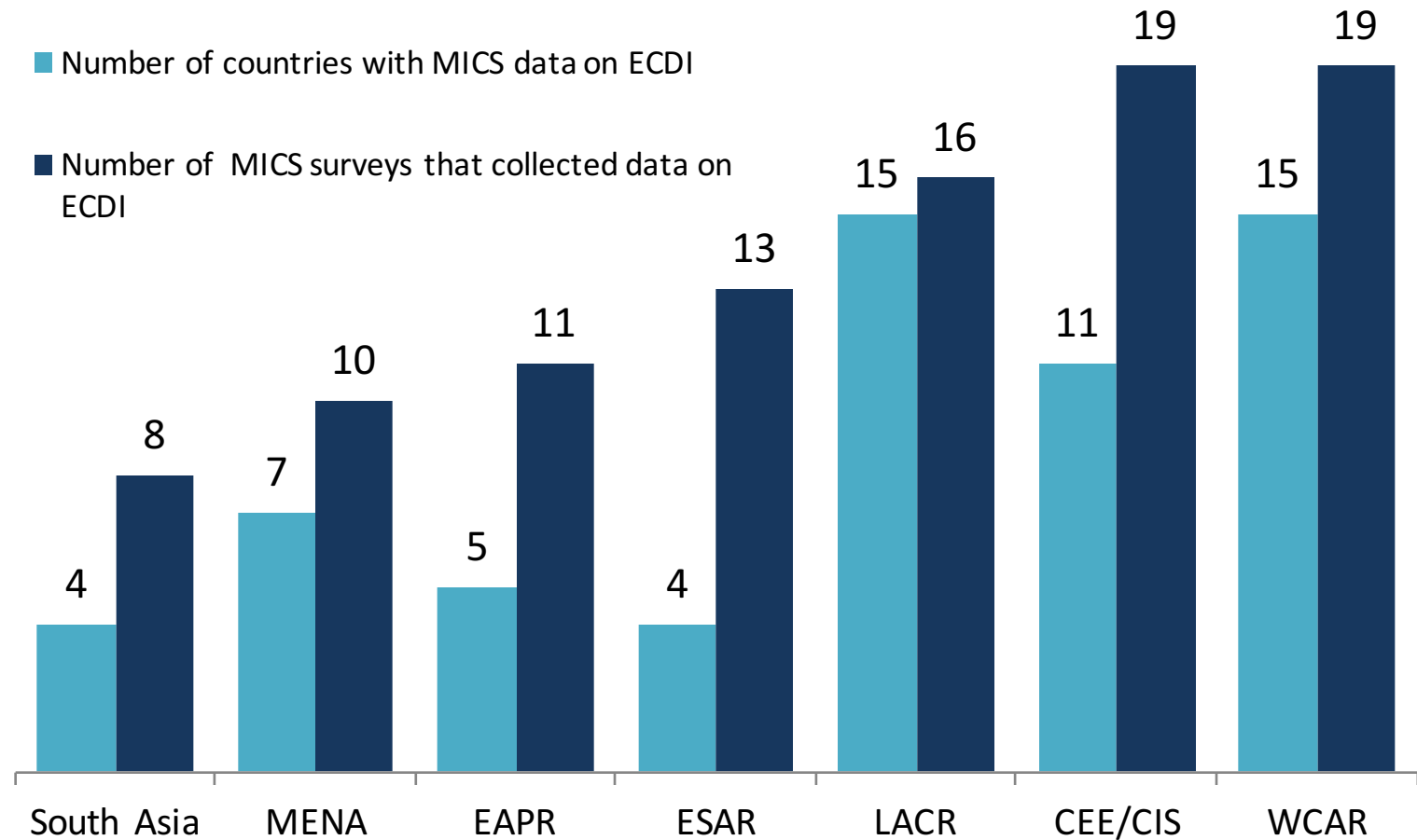
ECDI

- **Early Childhood Development Index**

Percentage of children age 36-59 months who are developmentally on track in literacy-numeracy, physical, socio-emotional, and learning domains

ECDI = percentage of children who are developmentally on track in at least three of the four component domains

Data availability



Target 4.2/ Indicator 1: Child Development Outcomes



Early Childhood Development
is the indispensable foundation for sustainable development

THANK YOU!