Letter from the Executive Leadership Council Co-Chairs

Dear Partners,

The Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN), as a global network of networks, would not exist without the continued engagement and contributions of partner organizations. What we are able to achieve is a result of our collective commitment to serving all young children and their caregivers and our awareness of the reality that if we want to go far, we must go together, as the African proverb states. In the midst of busy days and compounding crises, it can be hard to find time to collaborate, share, and co-create, yet this is how we will unlock our collective potential and solve the incredible challenges facing young children everywhere.

We want to express our deep gratitude to all the members who take time to attend webinars, download and localize toolkits shared, submit testimonials, or forward resources to a colleague. All these actions build momentum for the movement and help us ensure that what ECDAN offers is relevant and applicable.

We also want to recognize the significant contributions of the Executive Leadership Council, Technical Advisory Group, collaborative initiative partners, and our donors for sharing your expertise and valuable time to co-create and innovate together.

Though the state of the world may be bleak, we must sustain ourselves and each other so that we can keep doing whatever is necessary to improve the situation for young children everywhere. We are making a difference.

With sincere appreciation,

Borhene Chakroun  
Co-chair, ECDAN’s Executive Leadership Council

Lynette Okengo  
Co-chair, ECDAN’s Executive Leadership Council
Dear Partners,

As I reflect upon 2022, I am struck by how many global events amplified the hardships children and their caregivers around the world were already facing with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The devastating conflict in Ukraine was a defining event of the year, one which, sadly, has no end in sight even as I write this. There were also terrible floods in Pakistan and other climate-related disasters, which are becoming ever more common. Rising inflation and economic uncertainty have been other hallmarks of 2022 that have added stress and strain on families everywhere.

It has been hard to witness so much suffering and struggle, all of which negatively affect the prospects of young children. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) produced a report, Prospects for Children in 2022: A Global Outlook, which demonstrates the dire situation. For example, nearly 1.2 billion children—almost double the number in 2019—now live in countries with complex emergencies driven by inequality and fragility. This weighs heavily on my heart, as I know it does on yours.

Yet, what gives me hope is the way that you, our partners, continue to rise to meet each challenge. You are coming together in important ways to innovate and collaborate, sharing resources and joining forces to achieve more than you can alone. I will remember 2022 as the year when the world began opening up again and we were able to gather together in person for the first time since the pandemic began. Being together again has provided renewed energy, deeper connections, and increased momentum.

Some of the highlights that I am most proud of in 2022 include the way that our collaborative initiatives have strengthened and are showcasing the power of collective action. The Global Childcare Campaign has continued to advance its agenda by developing tactical strategies to connect more closely with country-level concerns. Our joint advocacy has resulted in a new source of funding, the Invest in Childcare Initiative, which is being made available by the World Bank in many countries and is a considerable opportunity to leverage. The Global Initiative to Support Parents was formalized, and this platform enabled dozens of key resources to be quickly mobilized, translated, and made available to hundreds of local implementing partners responding to both the war in Ukraine and the floods in Pakistan. This year, we also were able to launch a new collaborative initiative with funding from a coalition of five different donors, all committed to developing and scaling successful models of home-based childcare (HBCC). Our new HBCC collaborative seeks to test models and levers of change in three different countries. It is ambitious but exciting and important work, which ECDAN will continue to support in the years to come.

Despite many obstacles, together, we continue to make notable progress. You’ll see these achievements detailed in this report, along with some personal stories about ECDAN’s impact. Without the trust, engagement, and commitment of each one of our funders, implementing partners, and members, none of this work would be possible. The challenges ahead will require the best of all of us. Stay engaged, and convince others to join the movement.

Elizabeth Lule
Executive Director
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## ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AfECN</td>
<td>Africa Early Childhood Network</td>
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<td>ANECD</td>
<td>Arab Network for Early Childhood Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARNEC</td>
<td>Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus disease 2019</td>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early childhood development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECDAN</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development Action Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>ELC</td>
<td>Executive Leadership Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>International group of seven (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom &amp; the US)</td>
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<tr>
<td>G20</td>
<td>International group of 20 - intergovernmental forum comprising 19 countries and the European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>GISP</td>
<td>Global Initiative to Support Parents</td>
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<td>HBCC</td>
<td>Home-Based Childcare</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Association</td>
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<td>ISSA</td>
<td>International Step by Step Association</td>
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<td>NCF</td>
<td>Nurturing Care Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAG</td>
<td>Technical Advisory Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCECCE</td>
<td>World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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OUR MISSION, VISION, AND HISTORY
VISION
ECDAN envisions a world where every young child is safe, healthy, well nourished, happy, and learning.

MISSION
ECDAN recognizes that the early years of life are critical to long-term development, and so its mission is to advocate for prioritizing and investing in essential, high-quality ECD services; facilitate knowledge exchange and learning; and connect and align global and regional partners and networks across sectors to drive collective action at scale so that all young children can realize their full potential.

HISTORY
The Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN) was launched in 2016 by the leaders of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank Group to serve as a global network of multilateral agencies, international financial institutions, regional ECD networks, faith-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), foundations, universities, think tanks, practitioners, and advocates working together and independently to support early childhood development (ECD).

ECDAN serves as a multisectoral platform to bridge silos, stimulate collective action, innovate through collaboration, and produce benefits at scale, beyond what individual partners and sectors can do on their own.

INTENDED IMPACT
ECDAN activities are geared toward accelerating scale-up of equitable and high-quality multisectoral ECD policies, programs, and services to ensure all young children’s optimal brain development and productive potential.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- Be accountable
- Be collaborative and respectful
- Be inclusive, diverse and equitable
- Be rights-based
- Be synergetic, relevant, innovative, and catalytic
- Be transparent
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In 2019, ECDAN developed its first strategic plan (2020–2023), with four strategic objectives. Each objective links to a core function and provides the framework we use for planning and reporting. As 2022 marked the third year implementing the plan, our reputation and ways of working were stronger, enabling us to build momentum and replicate some of our most successful activities, while innovating and launching new collaborative initiatives. This report includes a summary of the key achievements from 2022, by strategic objective.

1. Advocate and communicate
Increase and sustain international and domestic political support for and investments in evidence-based ECD policies and programs to ensure that all young children thrive.

2. Learn and share
Increase access to and use of evidence-based knowledge to advance ECD policy and practice.

3. Coordinate, connect, and align
Improve alignment, coordination, and collaboration on common goals among ECD stakeholders and across sectors.

4. Strengthen the network
Expand and sustain an effective and efficient global network.
In 2022, ECDAN continued a steady drum beat to draw attention to early childhood issues at every opportunity where policymakers, funders, and implementers across sectors gathered. We elevated key messages at global convenings, mobilized actors around shared goals, developed resources for local and national advocates to use, and lifted up stories about the impact of ECD across different platforms. We leveraged our partnerships and connections to influence the agenda at important gatherings, identify champions to speak on behalf of young children and their caregivers, circulate calls to action, bring new actors to the table, and coordinate collaborative efforts toward shared advocacy goals.

**Highlights include:**

- **We participated in and helped to organize side events or special sessions at six major global convenings**, including the Transforming Education Pre-Summit in June, the G7 Summit special event on childcare in June, the Transforming Education Summit in September, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September, the World Bank’s Civil Society Policy Forum in October, and the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE) in November. These moments were used to increase awareness and political commitment, make the case for investing in high-quality and inclusive early learning and care policies, highlight successful models from different regions, and offer concrete action steps to move the agenda forward.

- Through our Global Childcare Campaign, which seeks to expand access to high-quality, affordable, and accessible childcare services through increased public spending, we worked with partners interested in the broader care economy to provide strategic input into including childcare in the International Development Association funding (IDA20) replenishment. We also advised on the development of the World Bank’s new Invest in Childcare initiative. This fund is comprised of pledges totaling $180 million from philanthropy and governments to support new programs and policies that expand access to high-quality, accessible childcare in low-income countries. The World Bank launched this exciting opportunity in April.

- To support the campaign, together with Global Policy and Advocacy Advisory Group (GPAAG) members, we developed a suite of resources, including a set of key messages, a social media kit, a slide deck, and a library of resources for advocates to use with policy makers related to childcare. We created plans to make all these resources, and more, available on a microsite in 2023.
• We launched two calls to action, including the Childcare Call to Action in March, which received 26 individual and 17 organizational signatures. In early April, we released a joint statement—together with the International Step by Step Association (ISSA), Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN), Arab Network for Early Childhood Development (ANECD), Early Childhood Peace Consortium, World Organization for Early Childhood Education, and Moving Minds Alliance—in response to the Ukraine crisis, calling upon the global community to increase critical ECD funding.

• By participating in more than 15 listening sessions with partners at the global and country levels, we learned about local childcare ecosystems, strategic priorities, key partners, policy models, and advocacy support needs which we are able to elevate in various forums.

OUR REACH

- INCREASED LinkedIn followers to 6,533
- INCREASED Twitter followers to 3,123
- INCREASED E-News subscribers to 4,087

IN 2022, ECDAN HAD 5,540 Webinar Registrants

POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AT COUNTRY LEVEL

Brazil’s Supreme Court ruled that the state is responsible for ensuring daycare and preschool for children up to five years old.

Kenya is developing an unpaid care work policy to advance outcomes on gender equality and child development as well as stimulate economic growth. In July, Kenya’s new Children Act 2022 took effect, which enhances legal protections to safeguard rights of children, prohibits corporal punishment, and establishes the National Council for Children’s services.

In Vietnam, One Sky is partnering with the Ministry of Education and Training to plan, design, and pilot a government-led model to train home based childcare providers in five new provinces.
ECDAN is a platform for cross-country learning through resource dissemination, facilitated discussion, and evidence generation. In 2022, we built on successful strategies from prior years, such as coordinating communities of practice (CoPs), hosting webinars, publishing newsletters, mentoring early-career ECD professionals, displaying a library of resources, and creating new tools for ECD stakeholders. Also in 2022, we increased our focus on parenting, applying systems thinking to ECD, and considering the needs of children in disaster situations. From our wide range of global partners, we were able to collect and distribute new research, promising practices, helpful tools, and expert advice on these and many other topics.

**Highlights include:**

- **To help visitors to our website more easily find the resources they seek,** we *revised our search engine* and categorized into 12 themes, each with its own sub-page. The redesigned site went live in March, along with our COVID-19 ECD digital knowledge hub microsite.

- **Together with our partners,** we *produced eight unique blog posts* reflecting on current events and developments in the global ECD field. We also posted and shared 20 newly produced resource materials, including in-depth reports, toolkits, guides, and policy briefs published by our partner organizations.

- **We hosted 13 webinars, together with partners, which were joined by 2,214 live participants.** All 5,540 registrants received follow-up emails with recordings and links to relevant resources so that they could access the information at a time convenient for them. The webinars covered a wide range of topics, including: integrating ECD into health services, promoting fathers’ participation in parenting, strengthening childcare in humanitarian settings, understanding the intersection of ECD and climate change, and promoting tools for effective ECD program costing.

- **ECDAN’s community discussion platform, ECD Connect, gained 224 new members, for a total of 6,189 by the end of the year.** Some of the topics that gained the most dialogue included reimagining playful parenting during COVID-19 and addressing the needs of young children with developmental delays and disabilities.

- **We continued to facilitate a new CoP focused on childcare, bringing 15 childcare providers from across the globe together** every other month to share models, discuss common needs, identify barriers and opportunities, and create an informal space to connect and learn.
• We strengthened the Systems Expert Advisory Group, engaging more partners and sharing learning. Three meetings were held with up to 17 participants, during which ways to disseminate and build upon the mixed-method evidence review of potential applications of systems thinking to accelerate ECD (published in February) were planned.

• To further dialogue on topics of critical importance, ECDAN and partners organized two parallel sessions during the WCECCE held in November, one on parenting and one on systems, each attended by more than 150 individuals. ECDAN staff moderated or presented in various sessions and participated in the committee that drafted the Tashkent Declaration.

• ECDAN continued to support knowledge sharing by facilitating and participating in three other CoPs: (1) Playful Parenting, supported by the LEGO Foundation and FHI 360; (2) Costing ECD, with the Brookings Institution; and (3) Scaling Pre-primary Education, managed in partnership with UNICEF.

• We continued ECDAN’s flagship Knowledge Fellows program for a second year, receiving 41 applications from early-career ECD professionals from 29 different countries. After careful review, six Fellows were selected for the 2022 cohort—from Brazil, Bhutan, Ethiopia/Ireland, India, Malaysia, and Vietnam—and we matched each Fellow with one or two seasoned ECD professionals to serve as mentors. Together with his or her mentor and ECDAN, the Fellows each co-defined and carried out a knowledge project.
Knowledge Fellows and Mentors

ECDAN knows that expanding access to quality ECD services for all children across the globe is hard and complicated work that requires energy, innovation, wisdom, and collaboration from all types and levels of stakeholders. We want to engage with individuals young and old, male and female, at the household and national level, as well as those from developed and developing countries. For this global movement to succeed, more people from different sectors and walks of life must develop a passion for ECD and commit themselves to seeing greater investment in services for young children and their caregivers. ECDAN’s flagship Knowledge Fellows program is based on the belief that supporting early-career ECD professionals from around the globe to develop their skills, knowledge, and professional connections will not only help them increase their interest in continuing in the ECD field but also enrich conversations in the global ECD sector by elevating their perspectives and voices.

FIRST COHORT
The first cohort of Knowledge Fellows concluded and disseminated their work in early 2022.

CARLOTA NELSON (Spain)
KEISHA CONSTANTINO (Philippines)
JORGÉ CUARTAS (Colombia)

DENISE BONSO (USA)
TASHAR SIMASIKU (Zambia)

SECOND COHORT
We recruited the second cohort of Knowledge Fellows in late 2022.

AANCHAL KAPUR (India)
JAQUELINE F. NATAL (Brazil)
GIANG LE (Vietnam)

BETHLEHEM GIRMA (Ethiopia/Ireland)
PEMA THINLEY (Bhutan)
SAI DURGESHWARI RAJANDIRAN (Malaysia)
Learn more about the impact of this special program through the stories of one Knowledge Fellow and one mentor from ECDAN’s first cohort.

MEET JORGE CUARTAS

Jorge grew up in Colombia and studied economics for both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees. His studies and personal experience, however, led him to begin investigating factors that influence child development. In particular, Jorge developed a strong conviction around the need to end corporal punishment. In Colombia, he started a nonprofit called Apapacho, which aims to use the science of ECD to help caregivers create peaceful homes where children thrive. Jorge had already earned a second master of education in human development and psychology from Harvard University when he applied to be an ECDAN Knowledge Fellow. During his fellowship, Jorge was paired with Helen Baker-Henningham, professor of psychology at Bangor University in Wales.

Jorge is now a PhD candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, researcher at the Centro de Estudios sobre Seguridad y Drogas (Center for Security and Drug Studies) at the Universidad de los Andes, senior consultant on violence against children at the World Bank, graduate student affiliate at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science, and a National Academy of Education / Spencer Dissertation Fellow (2022-2024).

“The Knowledge Fellowship was a wonderful opportunity for me to develop my research agenda, learn about translating evidence into action, and connect with key people in the field of early childhood development. During the fellowship I worked on a policy brief, with guidance from ECDAN, End Violence against Children, and my mentor, that synthesizes evidence on the prevalence, consequences, and prevention of violence against children. The fellowship was a critical step for me to continue developing my career with the goal of becoming a global ECD research and policy leader.”
MEET KIM FOULDS

Kim is vice president of Content Research and Evaluation at Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind Sesame Street. In this position, Kim oversees Sesame Workshop’s educational impact research globally. During her years at Sesame Workshop, she has played a key role in researching the impact of the organization’s innovative programs to serve parents and children in crisis situations, such as the Syrian refugee crisis and the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh.

After agreeing to join ECDAN’s Knowledge Fellows program as a mentor, Kim was paired with Knowledge Fellow Carlota Nelson. She supported Carlota in creating an Online Open Source Library of Early Learning Community Radio Programs.

Kim connected with Carlota’s vision to create resources and tools to share with families in the most vulnerable communities. She helped Carlotta make connections and was surprised to see how many existing resources were available and how many creators were willing to share these resources. But still it was not an easy task.

As Sesame Workshop is working in more humanitarian spaces, Kim now wants them to consider how they advocate for technical infrastructure so that children in all settings can have access to content that is designed for them.

The fellowship was a rewarding and thought-provoking experience for Kim as well as Carlota. Kim remains involved with the Knowledge Fellows program and is providing input to help strengthen the program. She believes that more time and resources should be devoted to projects and programs like these.

“It was useful to me to see how challenging it is for independent scholars and creators to navigate without legal and technical resources. That shined a spotlight on how Sesame thinks of its work.”

To see a list of mentors from the first two cohorts and members of the Knowledge Fellow program Steering Committee, see page 31.
COORDINATE, CONNECT, AND ALIGN

As a “network of networks,” one of ECDAN’s core functions is bringing partners together to share resources and expertise, break down silos and competition, and initiate joint undertakings to maximize impact. In 2021, we launched the Global Initiative to Support Parents (GISP), together with four other agencies. In 2022, GISP formalized and ramped up its efforts to provide parents around the world with critical and timely resources. Also in 2022, we launched a new collaborative with Spring Impact focused on identifying, testing, and scaling models of Home-Based Childcare (HBCC) in three countries, which brought together five funders. In addition to these new efforts that ECDAN is incubating, we have continued to participate in existing multisectoral and multiagency initiatives, such as the Harnessing Data for Young Children project and Nurturing Care Framework (NCF) core group. Our aim is to see that tangible learnings and resources are generated and applied at the country level. We also partner with regional ECD networks to elevate their visibility and amplify their work at the global level.

Highlights include:

• In October, we convened an inaugural in-person meeting with the four regional ECD networks: International Step by Step Association (ISSA), African Early Childhood Network (AfECN), Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), and Arab Network for Early Childhood Development (ANECD). We discussed shared goals and agreed upon a framework for improved collaboration. We also provided two regional networks with subgrants from the Bainum Family Foundation.

• To maximize efforts to find solutions to meet families’ childcare needs, we strengthened our relationships with gender equity partners, such as the International Center for Research on Women, joining its global WeProsper coalition and contributing to meetings and convenings. We also organized a specific webinar with gender equity partners on the intersection of gender and ECD through childcare and the need for increased investments.

• Building on the needs identified by partners and our desire to unite the ECD and gender equity movements, we began crafting a strategy for a ChildCARE Fund to Catalyze Advocacy, Research, and Engagement at the grassroots level aimed at strengthening childcare policies and increasing investments. We designed the concept together with AfECN, the WeProsper coalition, and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, who have all agreed to join the steering committee. We are actively seeking funding to operationalize this idea.

• In September 2022, together with ARNEC and AfECN, we launched a global webinar series on the intersection of ECD and climate change. The webinar brought in a range of speakers from both fields to share the evidence and implications of climate change on young children, discuss strategy leading to the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (held in November 2022), and lay the groundwork for a global campaign.
GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT PARENTS (GISP)

PARTNERS

End Violence against Children  University of Oxford  Lego Foundation
UNICEF  World Health Organization

FOCUS

To provide families around the world with the tools, knowledge, and support they need to cope with stress, improve parenting, and reduce violence in the home—across the lifespan of parenting, not just in the early years.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

We hired a coordinator for GISP who has been able to lead formalization of an interagency vision, results framework, communications plan, and website design. To approach this task effectively, we coordinated the first in-person planning workshop of GISP partners in Oxford, UK, in October. This was a productive gathering which helped to cement ways of working and agree on upcoming priorities.

Due to the number of natural disasters and political conflicts in 2022, GISP partners focused on supporting parents in crisis situations. GISP collected and translated resources for parents in emergencies in response to the conflict in Ukraine and the floods in Pakistan. The resources related to Ukraine were widely circulated and the flood-response materials were translated into eight languages for use by local implementing partners.

Another significant achievement of GISP in 2022 was coordination of three regional convenings focused on parenting, co-hosted with regional ECD networks:

1. African Regional Convening to Support Parents and Caregivers, which was held virtually over three days in June, reaching over 1,500 people from 742 countries and presenting more than 50 evidenced-based programs.

2. Virtual Regional Meeting on Supporting Fathers, Mothers, and other Caregivers to Improve the Health, Development, and Well-Being of Children and Adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held over three days in October and brought together 109 representatives from government ministries in 31 countries.

3. Regional Consultation on Parent Support for Early Childhood Development and Adolescent Health in Southeast Asia, which was held in hybrid format over two days in October and brought together 66 people in person in New Delhi, including government representatives, United Nations agencies, international NGOs, civil society organizations, and others.
ECDAN Secretariat staff supported these events by providing opening or closing remarks and moderating sessions, on behalf of GISP.

GISP partners were also instrumental in organizing several parenting-focused webinars and co-hosting the webinar series for the Asian Regional Convening to Support Parents and Caregivers with ARNEC. The interest and turnout for these events, along with the parenting-focused side events at both the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE), built momentum for the work ahead.

In 2023, GISP expects to launch its new website and a communications campaign to raise awareness during Parenting Month, plan another UNGA side event, and hold a Global Parenting Pre-Summit in preparation for the Global Summit 2024. GISP also aims to support implementation at the country level by developing additional resources and creating a framework for program quality, as well as mapping parenting programs and scaling up work to support parents in crisis settings.

COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

HOME-BASED CHILDCARE COLLABORATIVE (HBCC)

**PARTNERS**

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<th>Spring Impact</th>
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<td>Jubilee Foundation</td>
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**FUNDING PARTNERS**

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<th>Echidna Giving</th>
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<tr>
<td>ELMA Foundation</td>
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<td>UBS Optimus Foundation</td>
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<td>Imaginable Futures</td>
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**FOCUS**

To scale support programs for home-based childcare workers by identifying successful models.

**2022 HIGHLIGHTS**

Five funders formed a collaborative initiative committed to scaling up support programs for home-based childcare workers. The collaborative began operations in 2022, and we hired a Director for the initiative in July. The focus will be on Kenya, Rwanda, and India, and the work began by seeking to understand the childcare ecosystem in Kenya. The Global Development Incubator was contracted to support this work and, together with the Director, they held listening sessions with key partners and provided support to HBCC workers, as well as conducted field visits to five different providers.

The HBCC collaborative formed its own governing board and began participating in policy dialogues held in Kenya as opportunities for legal and regulatory reform to take root. The collaborative was invited to take part in dialogues on unpaid care work that were held in Nairobi, Kenya, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in an effort to build bridges and consolidate collaboration with women’s empowerment actors.

Going forward in 2023, the HBCC collaborative will finalize systems mapping in Kenya, design and roll out pilot projects in select counties to test different levers of systems change within the childcare ecosystem, begin engaging stakeholders in Rwanda and India, and document results as well as lessons learned.
HARNESSING GLOBAL DATA TO ADVANCE YOUNG CHILDREN’S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PARTNERS

University of Oxford  
University of Hong Kong  
World Health Organization (WHO)

University of Witwatersrand  
University of Pennsylvania  
UNICEF

Brigham and Women’s Hospital  
University of Nebraska  
Inter-American Development Bank

Harvard University  
World Bank Group  
Regional ECD networks

FOCUS

To leverage data on children in low- and middle-income countries to improve child development, early learning, and pre-primary education through better understanding of determinants of and risks to children’s development, the economic consequences of inaction, and policy and legal frameworks to address challenges.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

The Harnessing Global Data project published several joint papers, launched its website, and held an in-person meeting for three days in October. Its members planned posters for dissemination and advocacy which were displayed at the WCECCE in November. The project also undertook work to collate available courses and knowledge-sharing initiatives that train stakeholders in how to interpret and use relevant data when conducting advocacy or programming.

The project also identified new areas of research and key themes on which to focus data application. These themes include climate change, children in crisis situations, equity in ECD, and the early learning curriculum. In the year to come, more work will be done in these areas, as well as in indexing and disaggregating data by region to promote use of data when project planning. A measurement meeting will be held in 2023 in Africa to harmonize measurement tools developed by UNICEF, WHO, and the World Bank.

Harnessing Global Data project in-person meeting.
COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

SYSTEMS FOR ECD

PARTNERS
Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Murdoch Children’s Research Institute

FOCUS
To explore the potential application of systems thinking in accelerating progress in equitable and sustainable promotion and implementation of ECD at scale.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

Together with the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute and Harvard University, ECDAN published a mixed-method evidence review of the potential applications of systems thinking in scaling efforts to enable every child to thrive, titled Accelerating Promotion of Early Childhood Development through Systems. Partners at the University of Melbourne screened 40,000 papers and interviewed over 20 cross-sectoral systems experts to produce this report. ECDAN and its collaborative partners worked to disseminate and share findings from this report and organized a side event focused on promoting systems thinking for ECD at the WCECCE in November.

The Systems Expert Advisory Group that was set up in late 2021, formalized and added 11 members. This group met three times virtually and then in person in Tashkent.

The collaborative is interested in identifying country-level partnerships to learn about effective systems work that is happening and facilitate exchange between countries. In May, our partners participated in initial in-country dialogues in Tanzania with multisectoral stakeholders. The conversation revealed strong political will to embed systems approaches within Tanzania’s National Multisectoral Early Childhood Development Programme (2022-2026).

In 2023, collaboration with Tanzania will continue and new countries, who are pursuing systems approaches to ECD, will be visited and supported. The selected countries include Australia, Ireland, and Ghana.
NURTURING CARE FRAMEWORK (NCF) CORE GROUP

PARTNERS
World Health Organization
World Bank
UNICEF

FOCUS
To collaborate on advocacy activities which will increase the uptake of the Nuturing Care Framework, as well as capture and share lessons learned from its application.

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

As part of the NCF core group, ECDAN followed up on the roundup of 411 peer-reviewed, publicly available scientific research studies published in 2021 that were related to COVID-19 and ECD in low- and middle-income countries by surveying global ECD stakeholders on our mailing list to identify top research priorities. The survey provided a list of 15 topics and asked what funders and implementers should invest in going forward. In January, we published a report titled Research priorities for early childhood development in the context of COVID-19, which detailed the top five research priorities that came out of the results.

As the NCF approaches the five-year milestone since its launch in 2018, the core group embarked upon a strategy review process, which ECDAN contributed to developing. The team also worked to create an implementation guide and dissemination plan to invigorate enthusiasm for using the NCF now that lessons have been learned. In 2023, the team will publish a progress report, develop a new strategy, and hold events to promote use of the new implementation guide.
STRENGTHEN THE NETWORK

ECDAN’s governing bodies were strengthened in 2022 with the first-ever in-person meeting since the Executive Leadership Council (ELC) was formed in 2020. It was also a successful fundraising year, with seven new grants awarded, including four from new funders. Our overall 2022 portfolio, with a total expenditure of US$1,940,726, represents an increase of 54 percent from 2021. This growth enabled us to launch and expand our collaborative initiatives, plan for new positions that will strengthen our capacity to respond to the many requests we receive from partners, and set up more sustainable systems for the network.

Highlights include:

• The ELC met virtually in April and in person in November, as a side event after the WCECCE in Tashkent.

• The Technical Advisory Group met three times virtually. These meetings focused on guiding ECDAN’s technical priorities.

• Seven new grants were awarded, assisting us to increase total revenue by US$680,514 compared to 2021.

• We recruited and onboarded three new staff to the Secretariat, one filling a newly created position of Communications Associate to respond to the growing demand for communications and advocacy materials and events.

• We developed a new partner application and onboarding process. We also created an online partnership engagement feedback survey, which was sent out at the end of the year to ECDAN’s mailing list to learn more about what partners appreciate most and where we can improve our offerings.
IMPACT STORY

Partnership Experience

MEET SUMITRA MISHRA

Sumitra Mishra is the Executive Director of Mobile Creches, a nongovernmental organization which provides quality childcare services to marginalized children of informal female workers in India. Mobile Creches has pioneered holistic early childhood development practices, programs, and policies over five decades. Sumitra views her role as, “ensuring that every young child and her poor working mother, who needs such services, feels supported by Mobile Creches and its network of partners.”

Mobile Creches is a partner of ECDAN and is particularly involved in educating other ECDAN partners and informing ECDAN’s advocacy agenda on childcare, given their technical understanding of ECD and childcare. They participate in communities of practice and regularly share their experiences with other partners around the world. Mobile Creches appreciates the role that ECDAN plays to expand the community of organizations interested in advancing childcare solutions and bring global north and south experiences together to advocate with a unified voice.

Sumitra notes that the community ECDAN provides not only makes the work more effective but also more enjoyable.

“ECDAN and its team feel like a home away from home. We share, talk, lament, vent. Then we rally together for the larger mission and make things happen. We make lasting friendships, feel supported, and offer solidarity and strength to each other.”

Regular and consistent sharing in the ECDAN community opened new connections for Mobile Creches in 2022. One partner connected them to a Childcare Convening hosted by The Asia Foundation in the sidelines of Indonesia’s G20 presidency. One thing led to other and today Mobile Creches and the Forum for Creches and Child Care Services (FORCES) network are center-stage during the care economy discussions happening within India’s G20 presidency. This reflects ECDAN’s convening power to bring multiple players together to transform childcare provision globally, especially for the poorest children and their families.
FINANCIAL PROGRESS AND CONTRIBUTORS
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

ACTUAL EXPENDITURE, BY CATEGORY (USD)
January 1–December 31, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONNEL</td>
<td>$645,292</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRINGE BENEFITS</td>
<td>$187,876</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSULTANTS</td>
<td>$286,771</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
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<td>TRAVEL</td>
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<td>SUBAGREEMENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>WORKSHOPS &amp; TRAINING</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTHER PROJECT COSTS</td>
<td>$182,502</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS</td>
<td>$350,467</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$1,940,726</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funders

Our work would not be possible without the generous support of the following foundations, which provided sustaining financial support. The grants provided enabled us to maintain and expand our core functions and efforts to realize collective impact for young children. In 2022, we utilized grant funding from the 12 entities below:

- Bainum Family Foundation
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Echidna Giving
- Imaginable Futures
- LEGO Foundation
- Open Society Foundations
- Porticus
- UNICEF
- University of Oxford
- USB Optimus
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- World Health Organization

ECDAN also benefited from significant in-kind contributions, as the ELC, TAG, and other partners voluntarily committed their time to support ECDAN’s goals.
We expect 2023 to be a year of growth and new horizons for ECDAN. This year marks an important milestone, as it is the last year of our current strategic plan. We will, therefore, be reflecting on all we have achieved, documenting lessons learned, assessing the changes and challenges affecting young children and their families globally, and charting the path forward by undertaking a strategy refresh. Over the past few years, ECDAN has proven its value as a convener, advocate, mobilizer, and connector for ECD actors at all levels. Despite the many wins that have been achieved, several challenges persist and others are amplified due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, frequent natural disasters, prolonged political conflicts, rising inflation, increased consequences of climate change, and other converging crises. Addressing these complex challenges will take multisectoral, collective, and innovative action, which is ECDAN’s shared purpose.

In 2023, we aim to develop a strategy that will build on the foundation we have created yet move us to the next stage of organizational maturity, with a more efficient and sustainable Secretariat, a more dynamic platform to catalyze collective action, deeper engagement with a diverse cross-section of partners, increased investment in promising collaborative practices, and clearer measurement of our collective impact.

In addition to the new five-year strategy, some plans that we are most excited about include:

• **Launching the childcare microsite** and expanding our external communications to lift up the work of childcare partners across the globe.

• **Collaborating with local childcare providers** to create a series of videos from the perspective of childcare workers which make the case for investing in childcare solutions.

• **Setting up and administering a ChildCARE Fund** which will support country-level policy change by offering funding for locally-led advocacy and communications activities and providing capacity-strengthening support.

• **Launching the GISP website** and developing additional materials relevant to organizations supporting parents across the lifecourse that touch on topics shown to be in high demand, such as parenting in crisis situations, fathers’ engagement in parenting, and mental health support for caregivers.

• **Organizing a Global Parenting Pre-Forum** to bring stakeholders together from the regional convenings ahead of the Global Parenting Forum in 2024.

• **Increasing visibility of the Knowledge Fellows program** and strengthening the support offered to Fellows and their mentors.

• **Implementing a communications strategy** to disseminate the primary findings and implications of ECDAN’s *Accelerating Promotion of Early Childhood Development Through Systems* report.

• **Rolling out HBCC pilots** in select counties in Kenya, in partnership with local partners, and starting stakeholder engagements in Rwanda and India, following a similar process.

• **Raising funds and increasing efforts to build bridges** between ECD and climate change movements.

We are optimistic about the year ahead, but the task is large, and we need everyone’s contributions to achieve our collective goals. Join the movement today to build a better future for all young children and their caregivers!
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Executive Leadership Council (ELC)

ECDAN is governed by the ELC. This body was established at the start of 2020 when ECDAN launched its first strategic plan. The role of the ELC is to oversee management, support fundraising, manage risks, and guide strategy. Nine seats on the ELC are reserved for specific partner agencies, and other NGOs and individual members can be elected. ELC members volunteer their time and make considerable in-kind contributions with their resources and expertise, which enable the success of ECDAN. We are deeply grateful to the ELC members and the institutions they represent:

Dr. Amina Abubakar, Aga Khan University*

Dr. Borhene Chakroun, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, co-chair*

Eduardo Queiroz, international executive in the field of philanthropy and social activism*

George Kronnisanyon Werner, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Center

Dr. Ghassan Issa, Arab Network for Early Childhood Development*

Ifath Sharif, World Bank Group

Dr. Joan Lombardi, international expert in child and family policy*

Liana Ghent, International Step by Step Association*

Dr. Lynette Okengo, Africa Early Childhood Development Network, co-chair*

Marcy Vigoda, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement

Dr. Mark Tomlinson, Stellenbosch University*

Dr. Muhammad Musa, Care International

Nikolaj Gilbert, PATH

Omar Abdi, UNICEF*

Dr. Peter Laugharn, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

Dr. Rukmini Banerji, Pratham Education Foundation

Her Royal Highness Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Patron for Maternal & Newborn Health

Dr. Sheldon Shaeffer, Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood

Sherrie Westin, Sesame Workshop

Sneha Sheth, Dost Education

Dr. Youssef Hajjar, Arab Resource Collective and Arab Network for ECD

Dr. Zsuzsanna Jakab, World Health Organization

* Member of the Steering Committee
Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

ECDAN’s TAG works closely with the Secretariat to identify ECDAN’s technical priorities, provide expert technical advice and direction, and make recommendations to the ELC to inform their strategic decisions. TAG members are specially selected to ensure cross-sectoral, cross-disciplinary, and cross-regional representation:

**Dr. Aisha Yousafzai**, Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health  
**Dr. Amina Abubakar**, Aga Khan University, Co-Chair  
**Dr. Bernadette Daelmans**, World Health Organization  
**Dr. Boniface Kakhobwe**, UNICEF  
**Claudia Cappa**, UNICEF  
**Dr. George Evans Owino**, Africa Early Childhood Network  
**Javier Curcio**, Instituto Interdisciplinario de Economía Política  
**Dr. Jill Popp**, LEGO Foundation  
**Katie Murphy**, International Rescue Committee  
**Lara Aoude**, Arab Resource Collective and Arab Network for ECD  
**Lisa Bohmer**, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation  
**Mahmuda Akhter**, Institute of Child and Human Development  
**Dr. Mark Tomlinson**, Stellenbosch University, Co-Chair  
**Dr. Maureen Samms-Vaughan**, University of the West Indies  
**Melanie Swan**, Plan International  
**Melissa Kelly**, World Bank Group  
**Dr. Muideen Bakare**, Childhood Neuropsychiatric Disorders Initiatives  
**Nathaniel Foote**, Harvard University Center on the Developing Child  
**Rachael Glaser**, International Development Consultant  
**Robert Hughes**, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
**Dr. Romilla Karnati**, Save the Children  
**Sanjana Janardhanan**, Grand Challenges Canada  
**Sonia Giese**, Innovation Edge  
**Vidya Putcha**, Results for Development  
**Wanjiku Kuria**, World Vision Kenya
Knowledge Fellows Program Contributors

The Knowledge Fellow program is guided by a Steering Committee that works to short list Knowledge Fellow applicants and quality assure the entire program. Mentors are carefully selected and matched with a Fellow to guide him/her in carrying out a specific knowledge project and support the Fellow’s professional development generally. All mentors and Steering Committee members volunteer their time and generously offer their expertise to empower early career ECD professionals.

**KNOWLEDGE FELLOWS STEERING COMMITTEE**

Dr. Aisha K. Yousafzai, Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health  
Dr. Beatrice Matafwali, University of Zambia  
Dr. Frances E. Aboud, McGill University, Co-Chair  
Dr. Joan Lombardi, Georgetown University  
Lucy Basset, University of Virginia  
Dr. Nirmala Rao, University of Hong Kong, Co-Chair  
Dr. Steve Lye, University of Toronto

**KNOWLEDGE FELLOW MENTORS**

**COHORT 1**

Dr. Aline Kapeu, World Bank Group  
Dr. Helen Baker-Henningham, Bangor University - UK  
Dr. Kerrie Proulx, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute  
Dr. Kim Foulds, Sesame Workshop

**COHORT 2**

Dr. Emily Gustafsson-Wright, Brookings Institution  
Dr. Kate Milner, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute at the Royal Children’s Hospital  
Dr. Kim Boller, American Psychological Association  
Dr. Naercio A. Menezes Filho, Academia Brasileira de Ciências Dr.  
Dr. Rumaya Juhari, Universiti Putra Malaysia  
Sabine Rakotomalala, World Health Organization  
Tran Thi Thu Ha, Research and Training Center for Community Development

Massey Samuel Tucker, UNICEF-Sierra Leone
Secretariat

ECDAN’s Secretariat is made up of dedicated professionals who carry out the strategic vision, make programmatic decisions, and manage the funds raised. It is the day-to-day contributions of these team members that bring ECDAN’s mission to life:

FULL-TIME STAFF

Elizabeth Lule, Executive Director

Shekufeh Zonji, Global Technical Lead

Brett Weisel, Global Policy & Advocacy Lead

Jacqueline Deelstra, Communication & Knowledge Management Lead (former)

Caroline Mochoge, Communications Associate

Nina Garcia Wright, Program Assistant (former)

Kayla Callicut, Program Assistant (former)

Amanda Germanio, Global Initiative to Support Parents Coordinator

Lucy Minayo, Home-Based Childcare Director

PART-TIME STAFF

Hamid Mahamat, Web Manager

Wairimu Macharia, Web Manager (former)

PATH STAFF WHO SERVE PART-TIME TO SUPPORT ECDAN

Sarah Marjane, Director of Finance and Administration

Carrie Hubbell Melgarejo, Partnership Engagement Manager

Debjeet Sen, Partnership Engagement Manager (former)

Sheila Maina, Program Assistant

Hosting Entity

ECDAN is hosted by PATH, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization (EIN number 91-1157127). PATH provides ECDAN with financial, administrative, information technology, human resource, and travel services. We are grateful for their flexibility, professionalism, and continuous support.