Internship Report

On

Early Childhood Care and Development Program of Save the Children in Bangladesh

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1. SAVE THE CHILDREN: BRIEF PROFILE

Save the Children (SC) believes every child deserves a future. Around the world, SC gives children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. Eglanyne Jebb founded the Save the Children Fund in England in 1919 to aid children in war-ravaged central Europe. At this stage, Save the children is working with 128 different countries from all the regions. Approximately 20,000 direct staff members, interns and consultants are working with Save the Children.

Vision:

'A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation'

Mission:

'To inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives'

1.1 Save the Children in Bangladesh

Save the Children in Bangladesh is working with its sectors wide approaches and there are five different sectors with different programs and projects underneath every sectors. Bellow Table describes Save the Children's programming structure. An indicative staffing and HR resources plan is included as Appendix B. Save the Children have nearly 1000 staffs working for children's life. A total of 105 partners are working in different thematic areas. Key donors of SCI are – USAID, DFID, Save the Children Korea, Australia and other Member countries.

1. Child Protection	2. Education	3. Health and Nutrition	4. Child Rights Governance	5.Child Poverty
1.1 Appropriate care	2.1 Child Sponsorship	3.1 Maternal, newborn and reproductive health 3.2 Child health	4.1 Good governance delivering child rights	5.1 Child- sensitive social protection
1.2 Protection of children from violence	2.2 Early childhood care & development	3.3 Infant, young child and maternal nutrition	4.2 Monitoring & demanding child rights	5.2 Child- sensitive livelihoods
1.3 Child protection systems	2.3 Basic education	3.4 Adolescent sexual and reproductive health	4.3 Public investment in children	5.3 Adolescent skills development
1.4 Protection of children from harmful work		3.5 Clinical services (humanitarian)		
		3.6 WASH 3.7 HIV		

1.2 Sponsorship Work in Bangladesh

Individual child sponsorship began in response to the plight of children caught in the crossfire of the Second World War in Europe, prompting Save the Children to expand its programs overseas. Since 1972, Save the Children in Bangladesh has worked with local communities

and organizations to design Sponsorship programs for kids. Targeted to help children from early childhood to early adulthood, programs work to make a healthy and safe environment where children can learn and grow. The program nurtures healthy moms and healthy babies by providing access to high-impact, low-cost care, working to stop preventable death in both mother and child. Its early childhood programs help prepare toddlers and young children for school by giving them access to quality preschools and early literacy programs, while programs designed for primary school-aged kids work to transform students into lifelong learners by building strong curriculums and passionate teachers. It focuses on adolescent



transition between childhood and adulthood, helping ensure it is a positive one by teaching them money, job and communication skills. Program also provide health education and care to children in need through school health programs to help children stay healthy, well-nourished and in school.

Sponsorship program has an overarching goal 'Children Learn and Develop to Their Full Potential' for the new impact area. The three strategic objectives to contribute in the goal are:

Strategic Objective 1:

Children learn and develop with age appropriate care and education

Strategic Objective 2:

Improved use of key health, hygiene and nutrition services and practices

Strategic Objective 3:

Adolescents contribute positively to the well-being and betterment of society

2. BACKGROUND OF THE INTERNSHIP

I have selected Save the Children (SCI) in Bangladesh as the area of my Internship due to its one of the largest INGO in Bangladesh working for children's development in regards to Education, Health, Nutrition, Protection and their rights. I have worked with Child Sponsorship program to learn about the Early Childhood intervention and its impact on child development in rural Bangladesh.

I have learnt a lot in my theoretical courses which helped me to understand development works for wider social development through education and health.

I tried to understand how SCI is supporting Bangladesh's attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the experiences of the MDG can be linked with SDG.

2.1 Objectives of Internship

- a) To gather knowledge on measuring effectiveness of program activities through result monitoring approach;
- b) To apply the theoretical knowledge gathered from the MDMP into the practical field.

2.2 Objectives of Report

- To keep a written record of internship activities accomplished at Save the Children in Bangladesh.
- 2) To reflect on ongoing practical learning, link with past theoretical aspect of MDMP program and future potential application.
- 3) To share feedback with stakeholders, namely BRAC University and SCI Bangladesh

3. ASSIGNMENTS UNDER THE PROGRAM

During the internship period, I was assigned to work with Early Childhood Development Program with an objective to create evidence(s). The activities, I performed in this assignment are summarized below:

3.1 Internship tasks:

- 1. Manage new parent education interventions of ECCD program;
- 2. Administer action research to measure effectiveness of the program for child development -
 - Develop assessment tool for data collection
 - Train data enumerator and accompany to collect data
 - Field testing
 - Facilitate FGD sessions with parents
- 3. Support the Principle Investigator (Dr. Ivelina Borisova, Senior Advisor ECCD) in preparing report

3.2 Working team:

During this internship I have worked with different team of Save the Children, which comprises- ECCD, Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation. I was reporting to the Senior Manager – Education during this period of internship, who was responsible to oversee ECCD work.

In ECCD team, there were total 6 member staffs and 18 temporary enumerators.

- 1. Senior Advisor ECCD
- 2. Senior Manager Education
- 3. Manager ECCD
- 4. Officers (2)
- 5. Data enumerators and Field Supervisors (14 and 4)

Description of team work

I directly work with ECCD team to understand the program modality, implementation history etc. I have also worked with international staff to design and finalize the assessment tool, design for data collection, and report preparation.

Besides ECCD team I had to seek supports from Administration, Monitoring and Documentation team members to ensure all supports in time. Supports from Administration

team were such as – contracting enumerators, purchasing training materials, booking training venue, arranging logistics during training and data collection, and arranging vehicles.

Intensive supports were given by the Monitoring and Documentation team in case of reviewing program reports, selecting and finalizing indicators for assessment, preparing and field testing assessment tool, selecting enumerators, planning for data collection, technology support for data collection and reporting. One of the monitoring officers also worked full time in the project.

Supervisory role

I used to supervise 14 enumerators and 2 officers for this particular work. I trained all of them on how to deal with the assessment tool during data collection. During data collection period there was daily monitoring and supportive supervision for the officers and enumerators. Feedback to the team leaders (from enumerators) was very regular to address issues identified during data collection.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND LEARNINGS

4.1 Document Review

During this internship period, one of my major tasks was to go through several documents to get some idea about the basics of SC Bangladesh's sponsorship-funded program known as *Shishuder Jonno* ("For the children"). The program aimed to ensure that children in Meherpur learn and develop to their full potential. These documents included different reports, concept notes, and program implementation guidelines, Common Approach Module for ECCD, country strategic plan, and detailed implementation plan. As the program component had wide range of documents in the form of printed and soft copy published under different journal and websites, adequate information was available to understand the issue. There were some international reports on the same issue which had also given me wider opportunity to understand the program in different part of the world.

4.2 Managing new intervention

Since 2008, *Shishuder Jonno* has been operating different ECCD interventions in all three *upazilas* (sub-districts) of Meherpur which has followed a gradual expansion manner. The population of this area is religiously and linguistically homogenous, as the vast majority of inhabitants are Muslim and speak Bangla as their native tongue. The economy is based primarily on agriculture. The Population and Housing Census, 2011 shows that the literacy rate in the Meherpur Sadar upazila is 49.4% while the rate is 42.2% in the upazila of Gangni.

There are major challenges considering parental engagement in child rearing and caring, which is also a national challenge to engage rural parents in children's learning. More specifically, parents of young children in Meherpur are more conscious about children's

health and nutrition compared to their other development and learning. Considering the situation, in Bangladesh Save the Children has introduced parents' awareness program from 2009 in Meherpur as well as other districts. Earlier parenting programs focused on a wide range of issues including- health, nutrition, diseases and care, child development milestones, positive discipline, play for children. But there were no specific sessions on how



parents can be more engaged with children's early learning. Meanwhile, SC's Early Literacy and Math Intervention package which includes a strong Emergent Literacy and Math

parenting curriculum focuses on building parental capacity specifically in support children's school readiness skills. This new parenting package (ELM) has aimed to strengthen home level environment for children early learning regarding literacy and math skills. This package has total of 8 sessions comprises 24 literacy and math related activities for parents, which can be played at home with their children to support them to learn basic early literacy and math skills.

My key role was to manage the new pilot intervention to maintain quality and control other programs' possible effect on the results. I have learnt that if parents are aware about their role and believe they can be the best teacher of their child. The key challenge of the program was to convince parents to sacrifice their time (twice in a month) during their busy daily schedule. However, this challenge can be overcome through good facilitation.

4.3 Developing Assessment plan and tools

The next most important task was to design assessment plan with ECCD Advisor, who was the principal investigator of this assessment. I have supported advisor by providing information of the population, the context of the program, and implementation modality. This assessment has two parts; one is qualitative and another one is quantitative. I have designed the qualitative data collection method and that was accepted by the principal researcher. Quantitative data collection process and tool has been developed thorough discussion process. This task has given me chance to learn to design action research, which includes setting research questions, selecting methodologies, selecting sample, designing assessment tool, designing data collection process.

Designing assessment tools - parents and children

To complete this action research, I, from Bangladesh team, participated in the assessment tool development process with the teams of Bhutan and Ethiopia. Here we have got technical support from the principal investigator based in Save the Children US. To measure our research questions, I developed key indicators with technical support from the Principal Investigator to measure children's and parent's data. I have learnt to select measurement indicators related to research questions and how to validate this measurement for an effective assessment. I, along with 4 more members from different corner of the world has got Save the Children's President's award for this assessment tool development work which is now being replicated through different organization in many countries in Asia, Africa and East Europe. The assessment was pretested at field level to validate the tool and made adjustment based on Internship Report on Early Childhood Care and Development Program of SCiBD

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learning from field test of the tool. Based on field test I have translated and back-translated the tool to understand its reliability.

We named the assessment instrument as 'International Development for Early Learning Assessment (IDELA). Items covered the domains of motor development, emergent literacy, emergent numeracy, and socio-emotional development. In addition, observational items asked enumerators to assess children's persistence when working to solve difficult questions.

To measure parental outcomes, a caregiver questionnaire was developed and used (See Annex 1). The questionnaire included items related to parents' age and educational status, resources in the home, learning materials for children in the home (reading materials and toys), parental engagement with children in the home, and parental attitudes about their role in their children's development.

Through this process I have developed my knowledge and skills on how to develop measurement tool as part of monitoring and evaluation. I also learnt how to make validation of a measurement tool to serve its purposes. This process has given me the confidence of preparing measurement tool following scientific way.

4.4 Plan and Implementation of field work under research work

In the field with support from Monitoring and Evaluation team I have made an intensive field work which includes selection and train data enumerators, preparing logistics, data collection – clustering for data collection, data cleaning, and FGD session plan. I had to follow a rigorous plan for enumerator and field supervisor selection as the assessment has some technical issues which require specific quality to execute field data collection. The following process was undertaken in this regard:

- Circulation of the work in different newspaper
- Collect CVs and applications
- Review applications
- Interviewing applicants and selection for training
- Hands on training to enumerators and field supervisors on data collection process and tools
- Final evaluation based on performance during training session
- Contracting enumerators

This whole process was done by me with some logistics support from SCI's M&E and Administration team. I have trained four days long training for the assessors including field test.

During this task I have learnt – recruiting enumerators is crucial to get quality data with expected reliability. It is also very important to recruit right people who have prior experience to collect qualitative and quantitative data. As the main part of the population are children, it is equally crucial having skill to make good rapport with children and community. A basic technological skill is also important for the enumerators.

4.5 Supervise and support data collection and cleaning

I have hired 14 enumerators for conducting the assessment and 4 field supervisors to monitor and support during field data collection. Approximately two weeks were taken for data collection. A face to face, one-to-one interview procedure was followed. Data was collected using 7-inch electronic tablets. The questionnaire was uploaded by Tangerine software for the students and caregivers. The field data collection was monitored daily by the field supervisors. I used to visit randomly different clusters and did some assessment with the enumerators to show the accurate way of questioning. Once the survey was done, the data was downloaded in Excel format from the Tangerine central website. Datasets was cleaned by me before sending it to the Principal Investigator for analysis. My key learning from this part of the task are —

- i) Building rapport with the children and community is crucial for the children;
- ii) Permission from relevant authority should take place before data collection;
- iii) Data collection time should be considered well ahead of time;
- iv) If the field/cluster supervisors can check reliability of the data on an random basis that can reduce error;
- v) Using software (i.e. Tangerine) to collect data has a greater benefit considering time, cost and effort from human resources;
- vi) I have also learnt people management issues through this team work experience.

Conduct FGD

To collect qualitative data at field level I have conducted 4 FGDs (out of 6) with 3different groups of children. I have prepared report based on all 6 FGDs for comparative analysis with the quantitative data.

While conducting FGDs, I learnt how to ensure everyone's participation in the discussion. I have also learnt to when to stop and change the direction of the discussion. Another key

learning from this session was – if the session is taking place at the community level, gate keeper is a must keep the environment as require.

4.6 Data Analysis and Report writing

Principal investigator and I together planned for the report- what to include and how to analyze data for further uses of the program. We fixed the criterion of comparison, key areas of description. I have learnt how to developed correlation among different sets of data, how to compare between different groups. I also have learnt how data should be interpreted in the report and how can it help a manager to take appropriate decisions from any study.

Overall, this task has given me scope to learn how an action research should be planned and how to execute that at field level. Through this process, I have learnt Action Research planning, tools development. The most important learning from this work was intensive field visits. It was realized that to conduct such research, researchers should make a detailed and comprehensive plan from the beginning up until report writing.

5. SELF-EVALUATION

5.1 Summary of my experience

It was an opportunity for me to work with SCI ECCD program. Throughout the internship period, I received great cooperation from the team members and I found myself as a part of them. Beyond cooperation, it is to be noted that the program maintained quality and was organized that I found every documents those supports accomplishment of my work.

Another advantage I enjoyed from the assignment was- as an action research it has given me to learn from beneficiaries' end what changes the program made through its interventions. It has also given me to learn from field level data collection process throughout data analysis and report writing. It has provided me the opportunity for deeper learning of different developmental interventions with real dataset. As ECCD is an emerging area of development and also considered by the government of Bangladesh, it is highly important to identify the effective and efficient intervention of ECCD for larger scale. This understanding should suggest appropriate actions which may also contribute to SDG4. Thus, I felt myself fortunate to work with such the team, and contribute to the program.

At the very beginning of my joining, I was attached with an experienced staff and evaluator of this program. The administration and monitoring team also provided me sufficient time to review available literature to acquire adequate knowledge to work with. I also have got consultation support from monitoring and evaluation team while adopting and finalizing children assessment and parent's FGD tool. Having properly introduced with the program through literature review and several consultation meeting, I was then assigned for the job being considered to have strength on administering the field level assessment and data collection and also supporting the principal evaluator to analysis dataset and prepare report.

5.2 Key Challenges and Ways to overcome

Challenges

The most challenging thing was time constraints. As I had very limited time, I had to rush during data collection. Other challenge was to work with evaluator who worked from distance. Due to this constraint, I had to plan for out of work time schedule and provide support to finalize data analysis and reporting. For the same reason, I had limited chance to visit field to see all the enumerators work at field, which might have strengthened my

understanding on the working modality at community level and thus could be able to recommend more realistic action for future programming. Due to time constraint, I also couldn't do all the FGD which I aimed for initially. Those FGDs might help me to learn more realistic view of parents.

A major limitation was data quality. Data, I handled, were collected by dedicated enumerator, but the children's assessment tool was long and enumerators had challenging targeted number. As time was very limited, enumerators may focus on number of data rather than data quality.

Challenges in data collection process, as the tool was long and normally takes approximately an hour, it was difficult to hold children's concentration during the assessment.

The Principal Investigator worked in different country with different work time. Sometimes, it was difficult to consult for spot solutions and had to wait which creates some delay in field work.

Ways to overcome challenges

All those challenges can be overcome, if the plan has taken well ahead of time and the whole process can take more time. Or, there are another way may reduce challenges if we could recruit more enumerators at a time. If we can critically analyze the assessment tool, we may be able to drop some item and with one item we may try to measure multiple developmental aspects. If we were able to shorten the tool, it can also help reducing test time and children may not feel bored to complete the session.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be said, children in all groups are showing strong baseline scores as well as strong learning and development gains over time, but few significant differences are found between the gains made by parents or children participating in the various parenting interventions. Given that all children are enrolled in high quality ECCD centers it is probable that child learning attributable to parent interaction is substantially mediated by the stimulation and learning happening in ECCD centers.

It can also be said that, this internship work has created a platform to learn field level program operation, program evaluation as well as planning and administering action research. Participating this work, I have gained significant knowledge on measuring outcome of development actions.

This process helped and enhanced my knowledge regarding people management, research plan, administer field research, conducting FGDs. But, it could be more relevant and important scope of learning, if I can learn more about quantitative data analysis, data interpretation, regression analysis and report.

Overall, it was an incredible experience working with Save the Children's ECCD program as a whole. Effective team work condition is an asset for this organization.

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APPENDIX - A

 Table B1. Sample of FGD questions responses from parents

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting	
Do you think as a parent you can support your child's physical and cognitive development? If yes, how? If no, why?	 Yes: Sending children to school Feeding children well Monitoring school attendance Playing with children 	 Yes: Sending children to school Feeding children well Playing with children Teaching counting with food Telling stories/talking & listening Asking children what 	
Do you think it's important to take care of your child before schooling? If yes, why and what are the benefits? If no, why?	 Yes: They will learn skills for school (e.g., counting, measuring, letters, writing) They will not be afraid to go to school Their habits will change 	 they learned after play Yes: They will learn skills for school (e.g., counting, measuring, letters, writing) They will not be afraid to go to school "Children will give their best if we teach them while they are young." 	
What are the key areas children should know for being ready for school? What type of support you can give to child to be ready for school?	 Learn to read Send to school neat & clean Feed them properly Give them time to play 	 Learn to read, letters and counting with specific techniques like: "While sweeping at morning we can teach them about different leaves colors, sizes, numbers and small-big." Send to school neat 	

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting
		&clean Feed them properly Learn to respect elders and love younger children
What do you think about the importance of play for children? How can you support them? What are major benefits of play?	 It makes children happy It helps them concentrate on studying later Different games improve their cognitive functions Playing games keep children healthy 	 It makes children happy It helps them concentrate on studying later Different games improve their cognitive functions Playing games keep children healthy
Do you think it's important to make time for your child? If yes, how can you make time for your child? If no, why?	 Make time for them in morning and evening. Giving them time after lunch. Make time for them in between work. 	 I give my child time while cooking. I make time at noon. I make time after prayers at night. I make time before going to sleep. I give my child time while cooking or during bath.

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting
	My elder daughter read	
	books to them.	 My elder daughter reads
	 I read books with the 	books to my child.
	child 6/7 times in a week.	I read books with the
	I read books with the	child 4/5 times a week.
	child at morning and	I read books with the
	evening everyday	child at every evening.
	 Children enjoys reading 	My child's father reads
Do you read book with your	books	the book with him/her
child? How many times in a	They learn new things	every day.
week you can read? What	like the name of family	■ They will learn many
are the benefits of reading	members, animals,	things, it will develop
book with child?	colors, plants, fruits,	their cognitive skill and
	words, letters	they will enjoy.
	■ They will get more	Even we can learn.
	interested on study.	They learn new things
	■ They will learn to	like the name of family
	imagine about new	members, animals,
	things.	colors, plants, fruits,
	It increase their	words, letters
	intelligence and	
	perceptions.	
	They learn from mother	Children learn language
	how to talk with others.	from the mother.
Mother is the first and but	 Mothers give more time 	• The child's first friend,
'Mother is the first and best	to the child.	playmate and favorite
teacher for child' do you	 Mothers teach the child 	person is the mother.
agree with this statement?	with patience.	 Mother's responsibility is
Please explain why (for	 Mothers can teach the 	more than father's.
both of the answers	child new things while	 Mother can teach so
yes/no)?	giving them bath or	many different things
	feeding them.	while doing household
	 Children learn language 	chores like counting

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting
	from their mother.	numbers.
		• If we sing with them they
		will understand the lyrics
	Story telling with child	of the songs. For
	helps language	instance, if we sing "Ei
	development.	Padma ai Meghna ai
	Children can tell stories	Jamuna while singing
What are the benefits of	to others after listening	this song they will be
talking, singing or story	one.	learning the name of
telling with your child?	 Important for cognitive 	rivers.
	and social development,	Storytelling to the child
	• Children get interested to	will help with their
	tell stories.	cognitive development.
	They do not fear or	■ Children will be enjoy.
	hesitate to talk.	 Children will be happy
		■ They will be interested in
		study.
		■ The child will be happy.
	The child will be happy.	• They will be interested in
Do you believe that praise is	They will be interested in	doing good works.
very important for child	doing good work.	■ They will try to do
development? Why?	• They will be interested in	something good.
*	learning new things.	 It will decrease their
	 Decrease their fear. 	wrong doings.
		Decrease their fear.

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting
What did you enjoy/appreciate the most from your participation in this program?	 I enjoyed the session where discussed about how to discipline children without punishing them. I liked the session where child rights and child labor were discussed I liked the session discussed about food, nutrition and hygiene. I enjoyed the session where Child Development was discussed. Learning through playing. 	 I enjoyed the session where discussed about how to discipline children without punishing them. I liked the session where child rights and child labor were discussed I liked the session discussed about food, nutrition and hygiene. I liked the 'Separate & Rearrange' session. Clapping hands, jumping with one leg, 'chotto kolabang' enjoyed the most. Counting numbers session I enjoyed most. 'Let's learn alphabets' enjoyed the most.
What sessions were most useful to you and why?	 Most important session for children is to discipline them without punishing. Also enjoyed the session where discussed about learning through playing. The child's health and disease preventing session. 	 Counting numbers session I enjoyed most. I liked the separate and rearrange session. 'Lets learn the Alphabets'. Size and measuring is important. Each card is important.

Question	Traditional parenting	ELM parenting
What sessions are most interesting?	 Most interesting session was how to discipline children without punishing them. I liked each sessions and the discussion specially learning through playing 	 Listening and Talking was most interesting session. Most interesting session was 'Let's count'
What sessions you found hardest to apply?	 I didn't find any session hardest to apply 	'Let's learn Alphabets'were the hardest to apply.'Size and measuring' was the hardest to apply.
Were you able to use what you learned in these sessions with your child?	 Yes. We did. Children enjoyed it and even we enjoyed it too. 	 Yes. We did. Children enjoyed it and even we enjoyed it too. We did everything at home whatever we learned from the session.

APPENDIX - B

Table B2. An Indicative Organogram of Save the Children, Bangladesh

SCI Bangladesh Country Organogram

	Target grades	Program Staff	Non-Program Staff
ın	Executive Band	Director of Function	Director of Function
Lincton	Director	Thematic area Director Program Director	Function Director
Managerial	Senior Manager	Project Director – Focus area Deputy Project Director – Focus area Advisor – Focus area Senjor Project / Senjor Manager – Focus area	Senior Manager — <u>Function</u> , Focus area Deputy Director — <u>Function</u> , Focus area
	Manager Manager	Project Manager/Manager — Focus area Deputy Project Manager/Manager	Manager - Eunction , Focus area
	Senior officer	Senior Project Officer – Focus area Senior Officer	Senior <u>Function</u> Officer – Focus area
# ups	Officer	Project Officer – Focus area	Function Officer - Focus area
Suema	Admin support officer	Field Officer – Focus area	Assistant Officer – Focus area Administrative Assistant
0	7 Driver	Not applicable	Technician Driver
	Office-support	Not applicable	Office Helper & Care Giver

