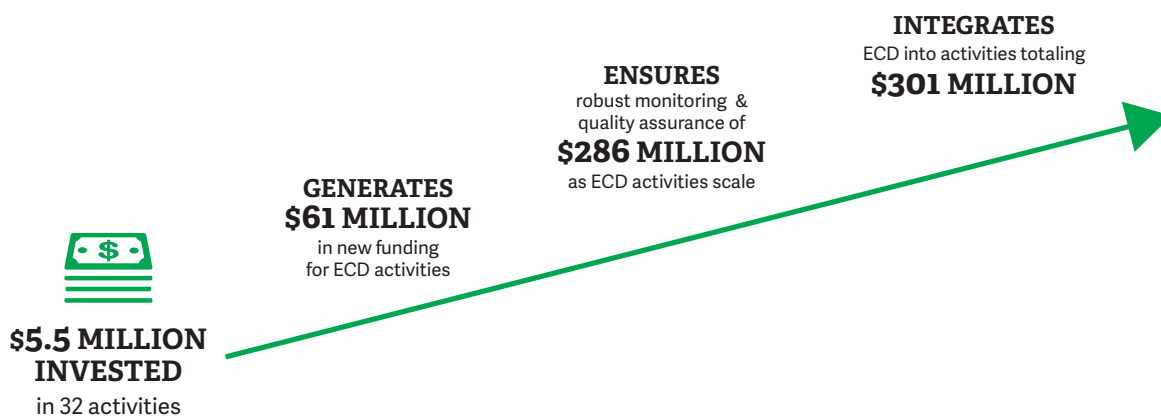


How do ELP Investments Generate Big Returns for Young Children?

Since 2012, ELP has strategically invested \$5.5 million in activities to improve the life chances of young children in Africa and South Asia. To date these funds have supported 32 activities in 26 countries, including project preparation, action research, and piloting and evaluating new approaches.

That initial investment has already catalyzed significantly more funding for early childhood from World Bank resources, host country governments, and other donors. This includes \$61 million in direct financing for new activities that promote early childhood development (ECD), as well as the integration of ECD expertise, training, and services into preexisting activities totaling \$301 million. In addition, ELP funds are providing critical resources to ensure activities totaling \$286 million are evidence-based, with adequate monitoring and quality assurance as they scale.



How does it work?

Countries determine how World Bank resources are allocated to different sectors. Historically, investing in the early years has not been a priority area for allocation, despite robust evidence of the benefits. Since 2012, the ELP has been working with World Bank staff and country clients to raise awareness of these benefits and catalyze greater demand for investments in ECD. Now that demand is growing rapidly, we are working with countries to design and implement effective activities.

Our approach at the country level is simple. We invite World Bank staff and partners to apply for funding to support early learning and ECD in their work programs. Through this competitive process, we respond to specific country needs and opportunities, stimulate creativity, and ensure that funding goes where it can be used most effectively. Using ELP funds, World Bank staff then work with country clients to develop, pilot, and evaluate activities that will be financed through a combination of World Bank financing, partner funding, and domestic government funds.

While the process works differently in each country, there are typically three different scenarios for leveraging or influencing funds:

1. ELP funds are used to develop new project activities, or **generate “new funds”** for ECD
2. ELP funds are used to **ensure** that previously funded early childhood services are using evidence-based approaches.
3. ELP funds are used to **integrate** ECD into planned project activities that did not previously include early childhood.



CASE STUDIES: ELP in Practice

PAKISTAN

Generating new resources through the launch of a massive scale-up of early childhood education

FOCUS: Scaling up preschool

ELP INVESTMENT: \$200,000

LEVERAGE: \$33 million in World Bank finance plus domestic government commitment to build thousands of new classrooms and recruit thousands of new teachers

ELP funding has supported the design of an innovative early childhood component within the Third Punjab Education Sector Project (PESP III), a results-based project that disburses funds tied to meeting achievement of specific targets and outcomes.

The early childhood target is 7,000 newly established preschool classrooms meeting quality standards, including a trained teacher, quality materials, and regular visits by district quality assurance officers to mentor newly qualified teachers. Planned project activities also include a strategy for engaging parents and an innovative pilot to partner with district health and nutrition officers to promote child development. Children's development and school-readiness will be measured throughout the project, which will serve an estimated 210,000 children.

The \$200,000 invested by ELP will leverage a projected \$33 million in new development finance for early childhood from a World Bank loan to the Government of Punjab. In addition, the government is hiring 4,200 new early childhood teachers this year. In the next 2-3 years the government will construct 6,000 new preschool classrooms and hire an additional 6,000 new teachers.

BANGLADESH

Integrating ECD into a cash transfer program to reach poor mothers

FOCUS: Integrating ECD into a cash transfer program

ELP INVESTMENT: \$125,000

LEVERAGE: \$267 million in World Bank financing plus government financing for human resources and service delivery

Bangladesh has the sixth highest rate of stunting in the world, indicating low height for age and a serious risk to child development. The Bank's Social Protection team is working closely with the Government on a cash transfer program targeting mothers. The Income Support Program for the Poorest (ISSP) project targets the poorest 40% of households with pregnant women and/or mothers of children below 5 years of age in rural areas.

ELP funds are being used to integrate ECD into this cash transfer platform, so that when mothers come to get quarterly cash transfers, they will also engage in information sessions and activities to promote child development, including: bonding with infants; and developing cognitive, social, language and motor skills. ELP funds are also financing assessments to test mothers' retention of information and behavior change.

Once proven effective, this approach will be scaled through the \$267 million ISSP project. In addition, the content will be integrated into the Government's efforts to scale pre-primary education through learning centers across the country, thus leveraging substantial government and donor funding.

MADAGASCAR

Promoting an evidence-based approach to multi-sectoral programming to promote ECD

FOCUS: Designing and evaluating cross-sectoral programming to promote ECD

ELP INVESTMENT: \$215,000

LEVERAGE: \$45 million in World Bank financing

In Madagascar, more than 50% of children are stunted and less than 10% have access to pre-school.

ELP funding is being used to promote ECD in Madagascar through health, nutrition, and education interventions. The majority of ELP funds are supporting a community-based pilot that will identify cost-effective, integrated interventions to tackle chronic malnutrition and promote child development. ELP funds are also being used to finance a process evaluation, which complements an impact evaluation funded through other sources. Since ELP's inception, we have learned the importance of process evaluations to tell us not just "if" an intervention has an impact but also to make sure we understand the "how" and "why," so that interventions can be implemented effectively as they scale. ELP funds are also supporting a diagnostic of the pre-primary education system and the quality of pre-primary classrooms to support national ECD policy planning.