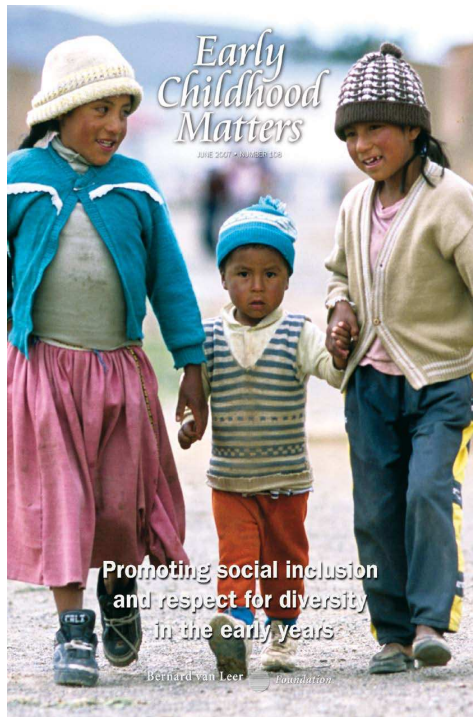


Social Inclusion and Respect For Diversity

A framework for early childhood programs



Dr Jacqueline Hayden

Program Manager, Social Inclusion and Respect for Diversity
Bernard van Leer Foundation

Dr Oscar Odena

Project Manager, JLI on Children and Ethnic Diversity
Queens University Belfast

Presentation

1. **A conducive landscape**
2. **Some premises and practices**
3. **A framework for research and practice in EC**
4. **Enhancing the evidence base: The *Joint Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity***

Step one: Scoping the field

A conducive landscape

Discourses for EC

- **Changes in perceived role of women**
- **Female workforce participation**
- **Perceived need for compensatory experiences to address children who fail at school**
- **Increasing the efficacy of the school system by focusing on readiness - including pre literacy, numeracy and social skills of all children**
- **Addressing support needs for (specific groups of) children and their families**
- **EC as an entry point for community development**
- **EC as a way to address macro social issues...eg social cohesion**

The current landscape affecting EC sector

- **Globalization – rapid spread of ideas, western hegemony**
- **Neo liberalism -reduction in state/govt interventions, unequal distribution**
- **Economic rationalism-benefits in terms of financial outcomes**
- **Children’s rights –locus of authority devolved, focus on child’s autonomy**
- **Diversity --ve outcomes: rapid change - migration, displacement, conflict, war**

Premises re Si and Rfd

1. **Diversity is a global reality**
2. **All children are affected by environments where discrimination prevails**
3. **Mounting evidence on development of ethnic awareness, identity and prejudice**
4. **Non intervention is destructive**
5. **Interventions in EY contribute to social cohesion****

Premise 1. A global reality: 'diversity' is –ve . All are affected

➤ **War/conflict affecting millions of young children (22)**

Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Mano River and Great Lakes region of Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Chechan Republic, Burundi, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic republic of Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Myanmar, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, Columbia, Nepal, Phillippines, Sri Lanka, and Uganda (UN Report of the Secretary General, 2006)

➤ **Environments marked by deep division and fear -**

Includes Rwanda, Bosnia and Herzagovina, Albania, Turkey, Croatia, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and others.

➤ **Border areas/displacements: cross border raids/unpredictable dislocations.**

Includes Mexico, Chad, Thailand, Cambodia and Tibet.

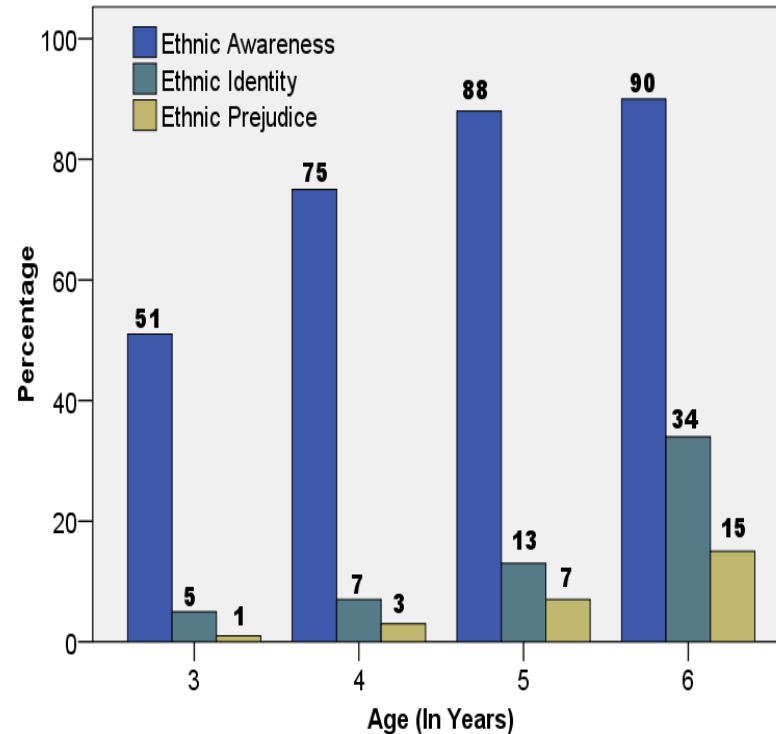
➤ **Underlying divisions/ increased migration**

No conflict but diversity is a source of bias and discrimination. Children may be subject to stigma because of their ethnic, religious or other cultural inheritance or they may become perpetrators of prejudice and hate. European countries, the USA, Canada, Australasia and the UK are examples of this^[1].

(UN Report of the Secretary General, 2006)

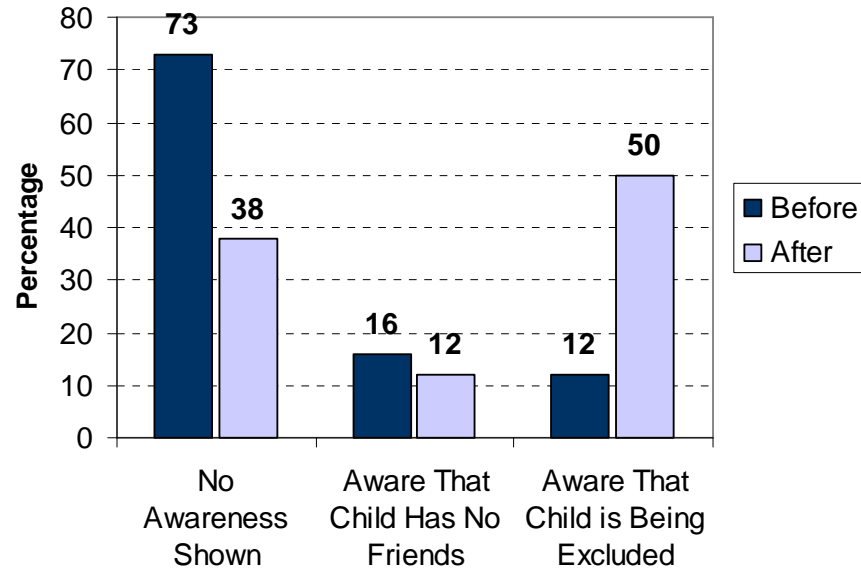
Premises for focus on si and rfd

Ethnic awareness. Identity and prejudice take hold in early years. Interventions make a difference.

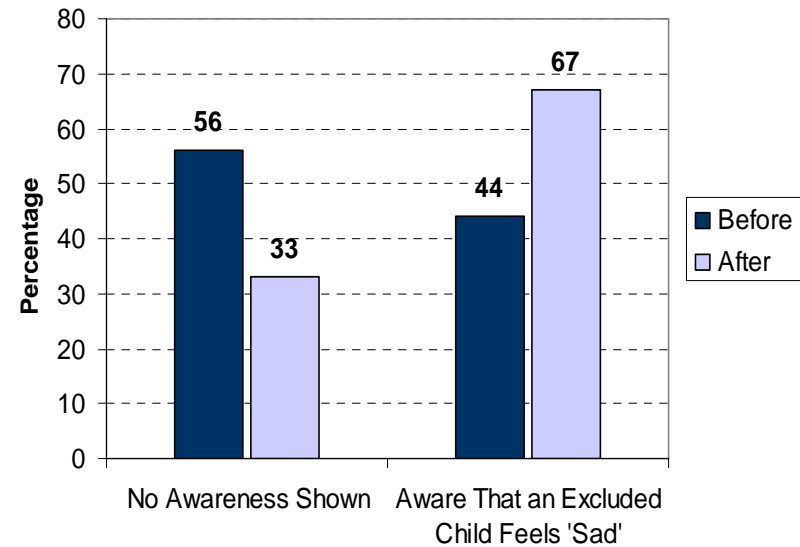


Connolly, P.(2006). Addressing Diversity and Inclusion in the Early Years in Conflict-Affected Societies: A Case Study of the Media Initiative for Children--Northern Ireland. *International Journal of Early Years Education* Vol.14 n3 p263-278.

It is possible to increase young children's ability to recognise instances of exclusion



Preschool Children's Ability to Recognise How a Child Who is Excluded Feels (%)

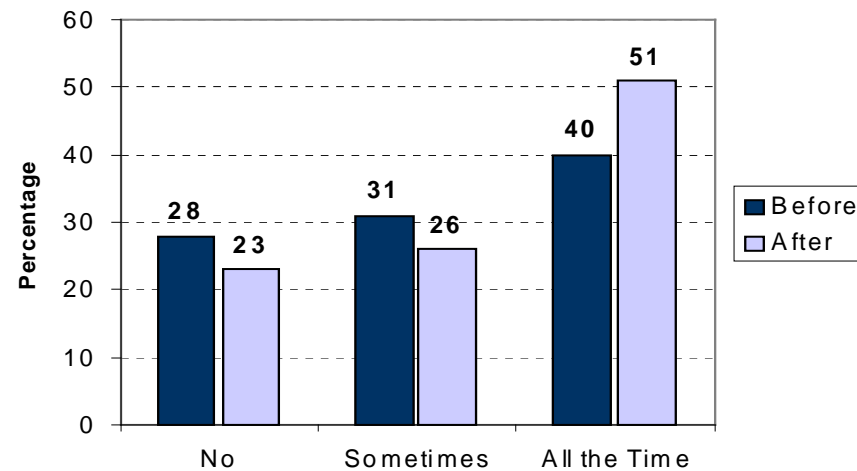


Preschool Children's Ability to Recognise that a Child is Being Excluded (%)

It is possible to increase sensitivity re how being excluded makes someone feel

It is possible to increase young children's willingness to be inclusive of others different to themselves

Preschool Children's Willingness to Play with a Chinese Girl (%)



Young children are making meaning - non intervention has outcomes

Premises for focus on si and rfd

Premise - Interventions in EY contribute to social cohesion**

A focus on facilitating Si and RfD for young children and their families is seen as a way to counter forces of exclusion, voicelessness, vulnerability and inequities (Laidlaw Foundation foreword pviii - ix).

Practices - si and rfd in ece

BvLF partners and others -documented approaches re using EC programs to ...

- **Develop positive self/social identity**
- **Facilitate a sense of belonging**
- **Address the development of critical thinking, negotiation, empathy**
- **Train adults re si and rfd issues**
- **Network at several levels- work with and within communities**
- **Model meaningful participation/equity within 'meeting places'**
- **Advocate for appropriate policy development**

.....*Basis for the 3rd issue are of BvLF*

Program areas of BvLF

Strengthening the Care Environment -conditions that promote young children's physical, cognitive and social-emotional development.

Successful Transitions: the Continuum from Home to School ensuring that young children realize the opportunities generated through formal education. (strengthening schools, enhancing access)

Social Inclusion and Respect for Diversity facilitating the promotion of inclusion and respect as a reality in young children's lives,

Mission: To develop and support programs that create significant positive change for children up to the age of eight who are growing up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage.

The BvLF framework on si and rfd

- ❖ **Rights base**
- ❖ **Outcome statements**
- ❖ **Key messages**
- ❖ **Guiding Questions –Knowl,Pract,Policy**
- ❖ **Continuum from practice to policy**
- ❖ **Joint Learning Initiative**

The BvLF framework on si and rfd

Rights base

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child

The right of all children to grow up in surroundings that are characterized by equality and respect for diversity, free from any form of discrimination due to their 'race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status' (Article 2).

Outcome Statements

❖ Children live in more equitable societies, and within environments that model and encourage mutual respect, empathy and conflict resolution.

Sub-goal si

❖ *Programs model meaningful participation, equity and inclusion for all children and families.*

Sub-goal rfd

❖ *In everyday settings, the behavior of young children and the adults around them reflect mutual respect and reciprocal understanding.*

Key messages

Early life as a critical period during which *all* young children (and their families) will benefit from

1. access without discrimination
2. meaningful participation
3. developing a sense of belonging within their communities and the wider society
4. positive exposure to the many social identities
5. becoming aware of the effects of prejudice and learning to respect diversity
6. deepening their capacities for empathy by imaginative engagement with other people's realities
7. learning the social skills of negotiation, perspective taking, anger management and conflict resolution.

The BvLF framework

Guiding Questions

Knowledge questions

- **What evidence is available or can be generated in relation to interventions which deflect development of prejudice and discrimination in young children?**
- **What evidence is available or can be generated about the relationship between early childhood programs and services and the ability to address enhanced social inclusion**

Practice questions

- **What do we know about strategies for influencing and facilitating social inclusion within early childhood environments?**
- **What processes are related to the creation of inclusive and respectful environments for young children and families?**

Policy and advocacy questions

- **What kinds of policies are supportive of enhanced social inclusion and respect for diversity?**
- **What evidence, processes and strategies are successful in influencing policies?**

The BvLF framework

Continuum from practice to policy

Supporting *inclusiveness and mutual respect* through

- the development of quality early childhood environments,
- training and support to educators and other childcare professionals,
- awareness raising with all relevant parties,
- the meaningful participation of families in decision making and service delivery,
- integration of projects and programs into community networks.
- **evidence gathering and documentation of experiences and lessons learnt,**
- **the development and dissemination of advocacy messages that acknowledge and promote the potential of early childhood programs to contribute to cohesive and respectful societies. (Evidence base)**

What we want to know -

- Methodology(ies) for measuring si and rfd outcomes**
- Indicators of effective programs/services**
- Dissemination of findings in a way that will influence policy makers**

Joint Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity

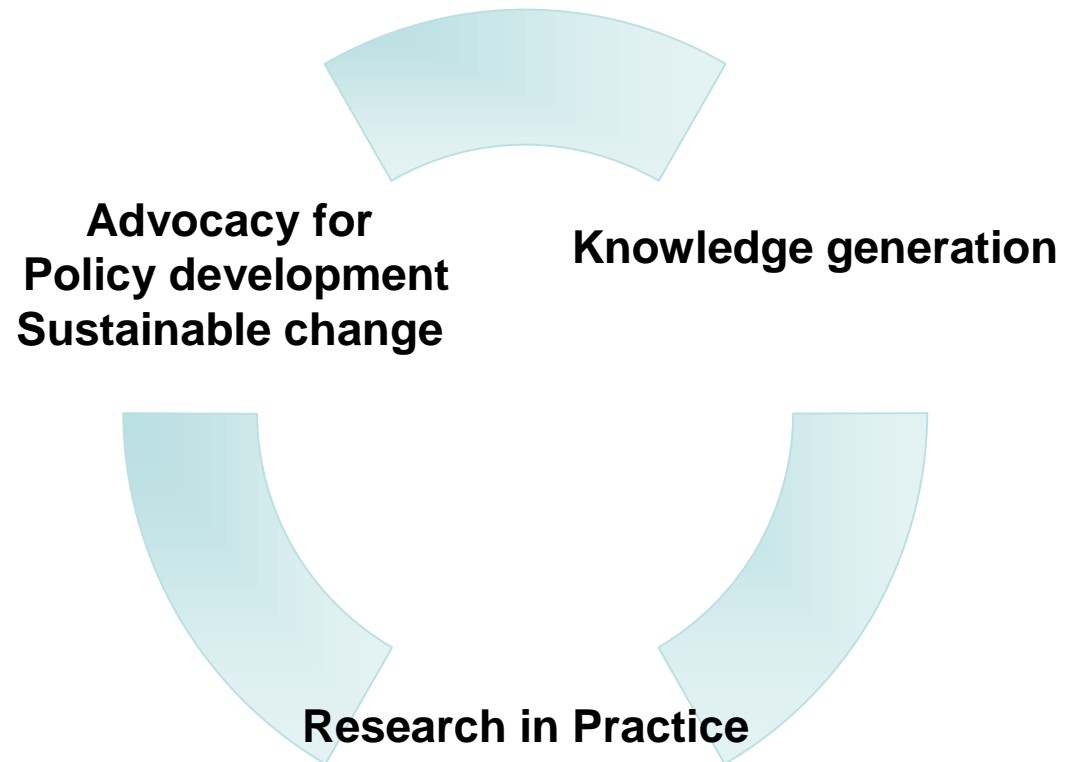
Hypotheses

*It is possible to develop effective EC programmes that address issues of *si* and respect for diversity*

Interventions in early childhood make a contribution to creating more integrated and socially cohesive societies.

Contributing to the evidence base for change

International framework



Goals and activities of the JLI

Collate and enhance knowledge base	Support research in practice	Influence Policy
To scope the field.	To build capacity among researchers and ec professionals	To facilitate an intl network of academics, policy-makers and practitioners
To disseminate and share findings.	To support innovative approaches to research and evaluation	To raise awareness of the importance of ec services for social cohesion
To identify research needs	To use findings towards for the development of effective diversity programs.	To engage strategically with key policy makers, multi-nationals, govts & agencies
To develop research projects		To secure policies and other supports for the development and delivery of effective early years diversity programs.

Plan for the JLI 2007- 2013

- 1. Bring together players and experts (steering comm)**
- 2. Organise Learning Groups – north/south – Themes**
 1. War/Post conflict /Displacement/Divisions
 2. Methodology
 3. Policy
 4. Networks
 5. Other
- 3. Choose representative regions (capacity build)**
- 4. Undertake empirical research which will provide evidence of effectiveness**
- 5. Identify generalisable processes and context specific approaches**
- 6. Identify messages for advocacy (levels and contexts)**
- 7. Disseminate findings at all levels (throughout)**
 - Website
 - International conference(s)
 - Books and publications

The JLI

Step one: Scoping the field

Dr Oscar Odena

Advantages of Systematic Searches

Background information

Systematic review systems are established in Medicine and Social Sciences (Cochrane & Campbell collaborations)

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES:

- **Questions & criteria to appraise the studies reviewed**
- **Explicit & detailed methods used collaboratively / Transparency**

ADVANTAGES:

- **More clarity in reporting search strategies than in standard academic reviews (e.g. criteria for including/excluding studies)**
- **Policy makers & professionals less likely to misread research for their own purposes**
- **Possibility of replication / Accountable / Easy to update**

Joint Learning Initiative on Early Childhood and Ethnic Diversity (JLI-ECED) – Phase 1

Two main search questions

- **1 What research has been published to date on young children's acquisition and development of ethnic attitudes and identities?**
- **2 What research has been published to date that describes and/or evaluates early childhood programmes that include a focus on ethnic diversity and that aim to promote social inclusion, mutual respect and/or pro-social behaviours amongst children within and/or outside settings?**

Inclusion Criteria for Systematic Search

- **For publications they needed to be:**
 - **original research (qualitative or quantitative), thus omitting opinion/theoretical publications and reviews;**
 - **in English or Spanish;**
 - **on children aged 0-8 years;**
 - **and they needed to include a focus on either acquisition/development of ethnic attitudes or diversity education programs aimed at ethnic inclusion/respect/pro-social behaviours.**
- **‘Ethnic’ and ‘Ethnicity’ are used in a generic sense to refer to people’s group identities, based upon one or more of the following: race, nationality, religion, language and/or shared history.**

Some results: systematic searches with international databases (*Dialnet, ERIC, etc.*)

- Key words:

AGE	DIVERSITY	PROGRAMME	GOAL
early-childhood early-years preschool young children	cultur\$ ethnic\$ race racial	curricul\$ initiative intervention program\$	<i>anti-bias</i> <i>cohesion</i> <i>empathy</i> <i>inclusion</i> <i>prejudice</i> <i>respect</i>

- Searches: (1st) early-childhood AND cultur\$ AND curricul\$
- (2nd) early-childhood AND cultur\$ AND initiative...and so on
- From 64 combinations...up to 384, if needed

Example of documents retrieved from *ERIC* until 17 August 2007

- Summary table:

	Total number
Documents retrieved	1047
Documents omitted	925
Documents included (with Abstract)	122
Documents included (without Abstract)	0
Total number of documents without repetitions	63

- Currently analysing the emerging data

Comprehensive early childhood care is key to creating a world characterized by hope and change rather than by deprivation and despair and to building countries that are thriving and free (UNICEF, 2001)

Social inclusion and respect for diversity within any situation or context do not take hold by happenstance

(Friendly and Lero pg 20).

For more information).

www.bernardvanleer.org

Dr Jacqueline Hayden

Jacqueline.hayden@bvleerf.nl

Dr Oscar Odena

o.odena@qub.ac.uk

Based on...

- Bernard van Leer Foundation (2007). *A framework for social inclusion and respect for diversity*. Unpublished report.
- Odena. O. (in progress) *Review of literature on young children and ethnic diversity, BvLF*
- Connolly, P. & Hayden, J. with Levin, D. (2007) *From conflict to peace building: The power of early childhood initiatives –Lessons from around the world*. Seattle: Exchange Press

AND

120 (BvLF supported) projects or programs around the world