

Expert Consultation on Age-Related Public Expenditure and Policies

UNICEF Innocenti – Global Office
of Research and Foresight
(Florence, Italy)
12-13 April 2023

Summary

The purpose of the consultation is to develop a shared understanding of a conceptual and analytical framework, and a basic set of comparable data that countries should collect, to monitor public policies and public finance for children, including both domestic expenditures and foreign assistance, with a focus on what data and research would be of most use to policymakers.

The datasets derived from this data will not be restricted to existing models, but will seek to develop greater granularity suitable for understanding in finer detail the type, timing, amounts and coverage of public expenditures on children, as well as key policies for children behind these expenditures. Expert participants are invited to freely contribute experience, opinion, and evidence to each discussion in regard to conceptual and methodological issues of achieving this goal.

The consultation will be made up of six sessions, presented over a day and a half, and culminate in recommendations for priority actions for children, data collection, and an associated collaborative research agenda. The expert consultation will take place at the offices of UNICEF Innocenti in Florence, Italy.

Existing cross-national datasets of public expenditures on children in the developing world are partial in terms of country coverage, and do not follow best-practice examples seen for high-income settings. The dependence on existing data means that the conceptualisation and monitoring of public finance for children is limited, and broadly unsuitable for the increasing demands of practitioners, donors, researchers, and policy makers seeking to improve the strength of social systems in low- and middle-income countries.

Following a review of current state of evidence of age-related spending on children, and key considerations for delivering on a portfolio of Universal Social Protection policies for children, on the first day, the consultation will address the availability and quality of both family and child policy descriptions and expenditure data on the second day. The meeting will then move to discuss issues for prioritisation and concerted action among participants. The final session of the meeting will seek to develop an agreed position on how to address existing challenges in the availability of necessary evidence for government and development partners working with children, and a position on a more impactful balance of expenditures by type across the lifecycle.

Additional notes

All participants will be asked to present the work of their organisation in a 3-to-5-minute round table discussion in the first session of the meeting.

Day 1: Wednesday the 12th of April

13:00 to 14:15	Welcoming comments and roundtable introductions of participants and organisational priorities Chair: Bo Viktor Nylund (Director, UNICEF Innocenti)
<i>14:15 to 14:30</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
14:30 to 16:00	Too Little Too Late – An Assessment of Public Spending on Children by age in 84 Countries Chair: Prof. Mario Biggeri (University of Florence, Italy) Presenters from: Dr Dominic Richardson (UNICEF Innocenti); Dr David Harris (UNICEF Innocenti / Columbia University); Prof. John Hudson (University of York, United Kingdom); and Dr Sophie Mackinder (University of York, United Kingdom). <i>This session will introduce a recent report that maps age-related public expenditure on children – based on available data and policy descriptions worldwide.</i>
<i>16:00 to 16:15</i>	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:15 to 17:30	Data on child policies – data sources and management of information systems Chair: Prof. John Hudson (University of York, United Kingdom) Presenter: Prof. Jody Heymann (UCLA); Dr. Raul Frick (ILO/ISSA); Dr. Mohamed Bubaker Alsafi Almenfi (World Bank). <i>This session will introduce three global efforts to map social security/protection policies which to different extents cover child and family policies. The presenters will introduce content, coverage and challenges experienced in their work, and proposal for future development.</i>
<i>18:00 onwards</i>	<i>Museum tour and Aperitivo</i>

Day 2: Thursday the 13th of April

09:30 to 10:45	Delivering on a portfolio of Universal Social Protection for children: What do we need to know? Chair: Dr Oliver Fiala (Save the Children)
-----------------------	--

	<p>Presenters: Dr Ian Orton (ILO), Sophie Collyer (Columbia University); Britta Olofsson and Lisa Hjelm (Sida, Sweden); Dr Matt Fisher-Post (World Inequality Lab).</p> <p><i>This session will introduce national and global efforts to deliver on USP for children, and the challenges that different contexts bring. The presenters will introduce evidence on the design and implementation of USP for children from defining political economy through to evaluation and reforms.</i></p>
10:45 to 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 to 12:30	<p>Data on expenditures by sector – data sources and management of information systems</p> <p>Chair: Matt Brossard (UNICEF Innocenti)</p> <p>Presenter: Dr Amory Gethin (Paris School of Economics); Valeria Nesterenko (ILO); Emil Daniel Tesliuc and Claudia P Rodriguez Alas (World Bank ASPIRE), Pauline Fron (OECD).</p> <p><i>This session will introduce three cross-national efforts to map social expenditures on children from different sectors. The presenters will introduce content, coverage and challenges experienced in their work, and proposal for future development.</i></p>
12:30 to 14:00	Lunch
14:00 to 15:15	<p>Prioritising action - building evidence for governments and development partners working to improve results for children</p> <p>Chair: Dr Dominic Richardson, UNICEF Innocenti</p> <p>Presenter: Prof. James Heckman (University of Chicago) and Prof. Jorge Garcia (Clemson University).</p> <p><i>What do we need to know – or have in hand – to be ready to promote cross-sectoral child policy system-strengthening globally? This session introduces evidence on the importance of age-sensitive public expenditures in high-middle and low-income settings. The discussion will focus on whether we have sufficient evidence to meet the evidence needs globally.</i></p>
15:15 to 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 to 16:45	<p>Next steps – mapping priority actions in finance for children, possible drafting of agreed work plan</p> <p>Chair and rapportuer: Natalia Winder-Rossi, Director Social Policy and Social Protection, UNICEF</p>

	<p>Presenters: Rosa DeLauro (US Representative for Connecticut); Prof Elena Bonetti (former Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family, Italy)</p> <p><i>The purpose of this session is to have a chaired discussion, and to reach agreement, on the 'next steps' or priority actions for data and evidence on mapping social expenditures and child and family policies in low- and middle-income settings.</i></p> <p><i>To close, a rapporteur will summarise the position of the consultation participants, and agree plans to draft a meeting note/position paper with group recommendations.</i></p>
<p><i>16:45 to 17:00</i></p>	<p><i>Final words, and goodbyes</i></p>