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CATALYZE ECCE TOGETHER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EVIDENCE (T4ECE)

BACKGROUND

Enhancing access to low-cost and high-quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) provides a solid foundation for advancing inclusive development objectives. It can improve child development and learning outcomes, promote women's economic empowerment, enhance family welfare, and drive overall economic growth. Yet, [less than half of children](#) living in low- and middle-income countries are enrolled in pre-primary education. Pre-primary education systems are still developing in many countries, and the quality and coherence of the services are fragmented. These emerging pre-primary systems require reliable information about program quality and child development outcomes to ensure they provide high-quality services and to track progress toward [achieving universal access to quality pre-primary education](#).

Expansion of pre-primary education is the fastest growing area within ECCE. Information about the quality and outcomes of pre-primary education programs is essential for improving policies and programs [in this area](#). Reliable evidence on how children are learning and how teachers deliver instruction can be invaluable to stakeholders at all levels of an ECCE system, from parents to policymakers. While there are many tools for measuring child development, early learning, and the quality of early education environments, less is known about how that data can be used to improve pre-primary systems over time.

CATALYZE T4ECE

Life of Activity: October 2023 – September 2025

Countries: Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda, and South Africa

Prime implementer: Palladium

Implementing partner: ECD Measure at University of Nebraska Medical Center

In-country implementer: University of Liberia (Liberia); Ethiopian School Readiness Initiative, Addis Ababa University, and Educational Assessment and Examination Service (Ethiopia); University of Malawi (Malawi); Save the Children Rwanda (Rwanda); Ilifa Labantwana (South Africa)

The USAID CATALYZE ECCE Together for Early Childhood Evidence (CATALYZE T4ECE) Activity is designed to build the capacity of host country governments, USAID Africa Missions, and local country partners to engage in ECCE work, with an emphasis on generating evidence to inform future policy and activity design. CATALYZE T4ECE is a continuation of previous work initiated by ECD Measure at University of Nebraska Medical Center. Since 2018, T4ECE began convening government, academia, and civil society stakeholders across four African countries and identified their needs related to ECCE data and measurement, drawing on global and regional expertise.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Convene a consortium** of global early childhood partners, including policymakers, researchers and practitioners engaged in measurement and monitoring pre-primary education in sub-Saharan Africa.
2. **Create an information hub** for exchange of lessons learned and experiences in pre-primary education data and measurement across sub-Saharan Africa and other geographies.
3. **Support USAID and partners** in building data-informed early childhood systems improvements in countries through locally-led country projects and technical assistance.

In each country of implementation (Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, Rwanda, and South Africa), CATALYZE T4ECE establishes and works through a Task Force team to identify priority data or measurement questions for early childhood education and determine how best to design country-led research projects. The Activity administers small subcontracts to local partners to answer country-specific research questions based on the priorities identified by the Task Force. The Activity further convenes interdisciplinary teams (e.g., various ministries and departments focused on women and children, education, health, child protection) to collaborate on building data-informed early childhood systems.

GLOBAL EVIDENCE BUILDING

In addition to informing ECCE country-specific policy and activity design, CATALYZE T4ECE evidence contributes to a broader goal under the CATALYZE Education portfolio. All learning and evidence generated under CATALYZE T4ECE is integrated into a dissemination effort to make the case for blended finance approaches to address substantial global education funding gaps and improve and sustain learning outcomes for children and youth globally, particularly those most vulnerable.

MORE INFORMATION

Join: [CATALYZE T4ECE Newsletter](#) (via ECD Measure) | **Visit:** [CATALYZE T4ECE Website](#) |

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