

Call to action

Research has proven play interventions to be a powerful, cost effective poverty reduction tools with sustained impact. If the next generation is to succeed, governments, education ministries, and the international development community must take bold action to increase access to quality play, particularly for children in disadvantaged contexts.

We call on both public and private sectors that oversee the welfare of children to:

1. Ensure every child under the age of 12 has substantial daily access to a stimulating, safe space for play. Early academic study should not take precedence over play, as play is proven to lay a better foundation for later academic and life success. Every school and childcare center should provide a safe, stimulating outdoor space and adequate daily time for free play with other children.

2. Emphasize the importance of early play opportunities from 0-3. All children require play for health development, but the first years of life are foundational to later life development and interventions made in the first three years of life have the highest payoff in the long run. For young child whose development has been stunted due to malnutrition, parent training in socio-emotional stimulation is essential to counteracting the negative affects of poor diet.

3. Prioritize play as a basic right for children in crisis. For children in contexts of war, displacement, or emergency, play is essential to alleviate the negative affects of trauma. In situations of crisis, play provision must be top priority. Graphic/Icon

