

Challenges in evaluating ECD-focused interventions targeting at risk population groups (Case study: *Un villaggio per crescere*)

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The Human Safety Net – For Families



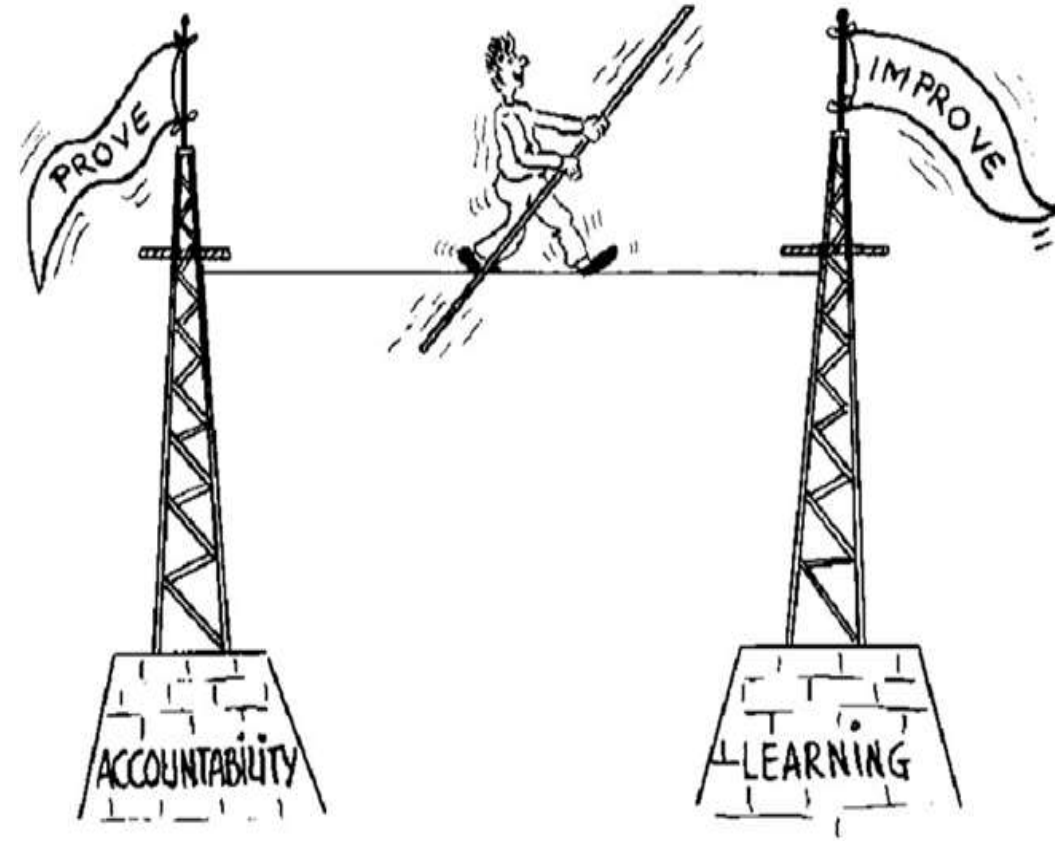
For
Families

- The Human Safety Net is the new Generali flagship initiative for the community active on three programmes worldwide (*For Families, For Refugees start-ups, For New-borns*)
- The Programme For Families commits to the call for action of the **Nurturing care framework** (NCF), and invest to promote **early child development** (ECD) in vulnerable populations with children aged 0 - 6
- Partnerships are set with small/medium non profit organizations (NGOs) working where Generali operates, currently there are almost 15 countries active, and approx. 20 NGOs partnering



Accountability & learning for the Programme For Families

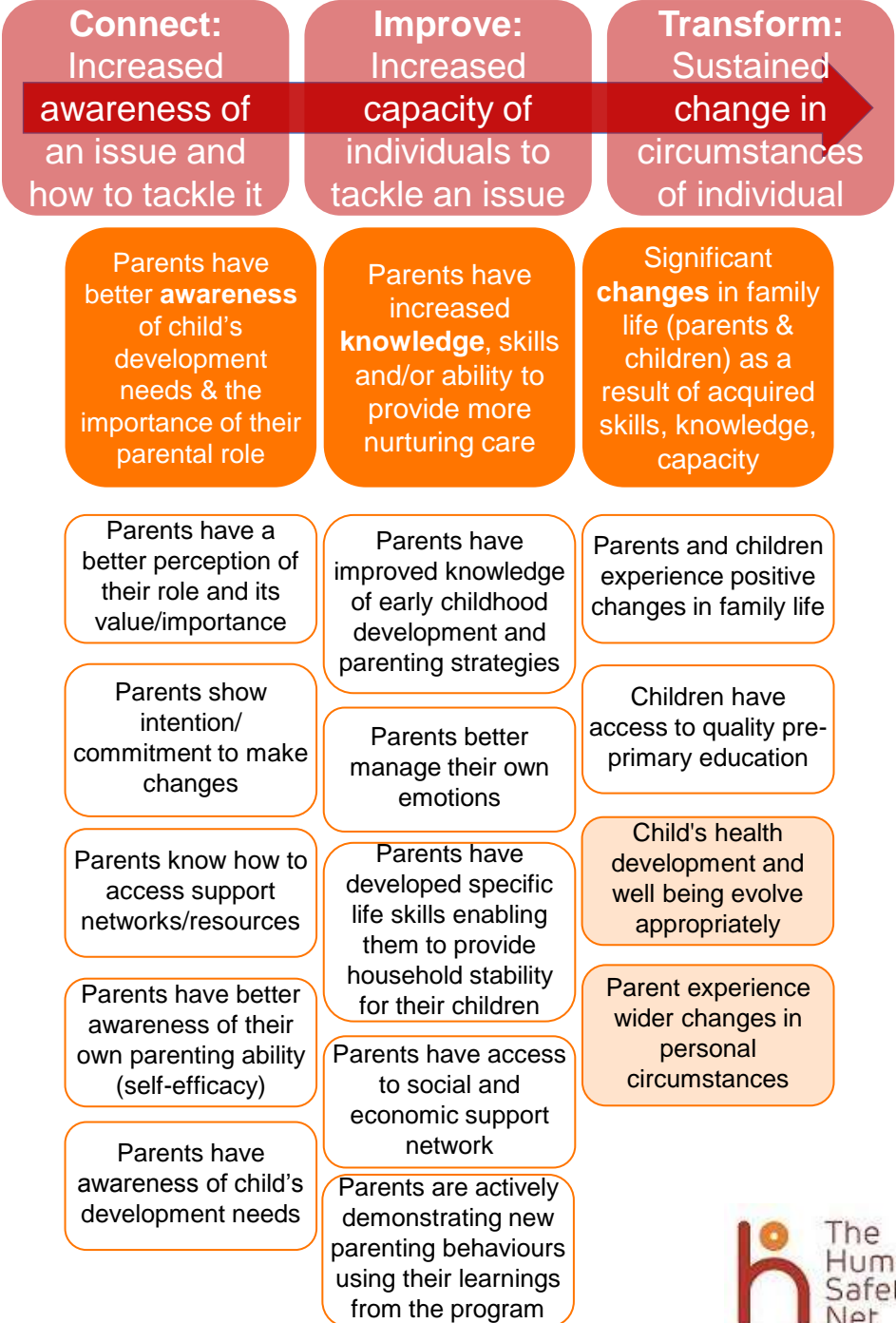
- Objective: to **Prove**, **Improve** and **Share**, what we do collectively, and as an NGO
- We developed a **Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework** to standardize the evaluation process
- The MEL framework includes a set of **impact dimensions related to changes that can occur to individuals**, organizations and the society as a consequence of our programmes
- **Comprehensive and flexible** enough to balance the tension between **standardization and local application**.



Source: Terry Smutylo & Daniel Morales-Gomez

MEL framework – Impact on individuals

- **Degree of impact:** awareness, knowledge, practice (*from connection, to transformation*)
- **Target:** parents and children
- **Timeframe:** short-term and long-term impacts
- **Impact dimensions:** menu to guide NGOs, streamline language
- **Impact selection:** informed by evidence - top down, and practice - bottom up



Case study: Un Villaggio per Crescere, with Centro per la Salute del Bambino

- **Organizational profile:** small team, strong expertise on ECD, multidisciplinary team (*paediatricians, educators, academics*), familiarity with monitoring & evaluation
- **Model:** open hub in a disadvantaged community, embedded in the system (*location in public primary care facility*), outreach through local network, activities based on demand

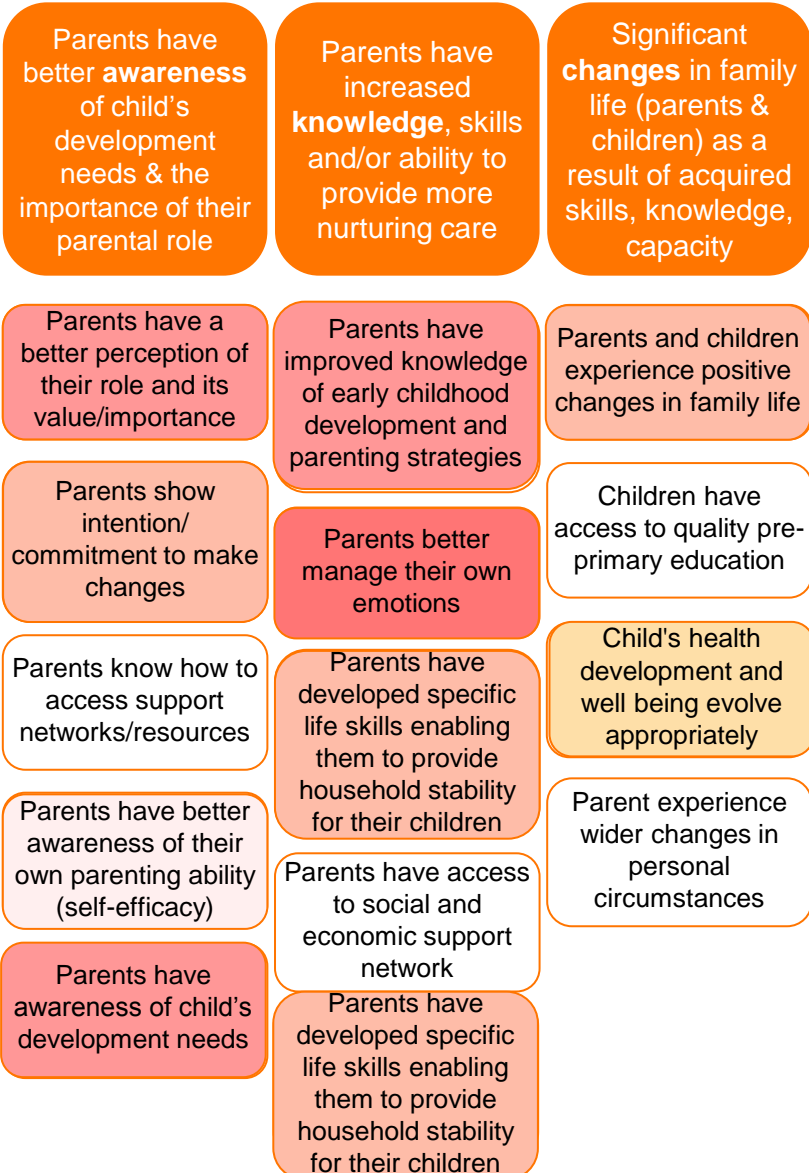
Strengths

Sustainability, systemic approach, beneficiaries centred, high potential to scale

Opportunities

Use The Human Safety Net MEL framework to develop a MEL plan, prove the impact of this model and compare with NGO partners

Case study: MEL plan



- **Degree of impact:** all degrees from connection, to transformation
- **Target:** parents and children
- **Timeframe:** short-term and long-term impacts
- **Tools:**
 - Self perception of parental role questionnaire
 - Family routine questionnaire
 - Perceived self efficacy questionnaire
 - Parental stress questionnaire
 - GMCD

Case study: MEL plan roadmap and challenges



Actions / opportunities

- translation and validation of tools locally
- training of staff and educators
- redistribution of time management between activities and evaluation
- engagement of beneficiaries
- use of validated tools in Italy
- organizational strengthening

Challenges

- limited budget and human resources
- tension of focus (*research vs. activities*)
- definition of target group (*fixed cluster vs. open hub; control group - collect and not act seen as unethical*)
- short term engagement (*child development vs. development due to the intervention*).



Lessons learnt from The Human Safety Net MEL framework

- **Testing innovative interventions** to promote nurturing care for early childhood development is a recognized **global priority**
- Evaluations should be **valid, driven and owned by implementers**
- Evaluation methods require a shift from traditional experimental designs towards **real life, dynamic quasi-experimental, mix methods approaches**

Design-Target

- Controlled, blinded and rigid approaches vs. intrinsically open, inclusive nature interventions

Tools

- Easy (non skilled professionals), combine developmental assessment with promotion and evaluation (*care for attrition and sensitive data*);
- Sensitive to transformation in target population independently from the intervention