Ensuring Equal Educational Opportunities in Ecuador: 
On the Relation between Public Policy and Perceived Quality of Early Childhood Development Centers

Nicky Buizer
Student number 5782287

Thesis Supervisor: Margriet Poppema
Second Reader: Graciela Paillet

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Cover photo: Children playing outside at one of the early childhood centers.
(Nicky Buizer 2011).
Abstract
This thesis investigates the underlying theoretical concepts of current early childhood development policy in Ecuador and its relation to stakeholder’s perceptions on the quality of the early childhood development centers. The theoretical framework that is used consists of the human capital, human rights and social justice approach. The main methods applied include semi-structured interviews and participant observation. The contribution of the present study is twofold. Firstly, whereas previous studies have focused on quantitative outcomes, this study provides a qualitative understanding of the inputs and process dimensions of the early childhood centers. Secondly, it makes the link between public policy and the reality in the centers.

The main findings include that current public policy seems to be part of the social justice approach as it aims to transform the neoliberal development model and redistribution of educational opportunities. However, elements of the human capital approach, from previous policy, are persistent. The presence of social justice as well as human capital elements in current policy, is linked to the perceptions on the quality of the centers. Inputs that remain to rely on private funding cause differential quality, while publicly funded inputs, like nutrition, are considered to be of equal quality in all centers. The main obstacle for the implementation of social justice, in both policy and practice, is the lack of recognition of the care-related labor of the center’s staff.

Key words: early childhood development, Ecuador, quality, social justice, public policy, recognition.
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List of Abbreviations

CBO Community Based Organization
CCDI Centro Comunitario de Desarrollo Infantil (part of ORI)
CIBV Centro Infantil del Buen Vivir
CNH Creciendo con Nuestros Hijos (part of INNFA and FODI)
CONAIE Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador
CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECCE Early Childhood Care and Education
ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECD Early Childhood Development
EFA Education for All
FODI Fondo de Desarrollo Infantil
GAD Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado
IDB Inter-American Development Bank
INFA Instituto de la Niñez y la Familia
INGO International Non-Governmental Organization
INNFA Instituto Nacional del Niño y la Familia
MBS Ministerio de Bienestar Social (now MIES)
MCDS Ministerio de Coordinación de Desarrollo Social
MIES Ministerio de Inclusión Económica y Social
MSP Ministerio de Salud Pública
NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
ODNA Observatorio de los Derechos de la Niñez y la Adolescencia
ORI Operación Rescate Infantil
PNN Programa de Nuestros Niños
SEDLAC Socio-Economic Database for Latin America and the Caribbean
SITEAL Sistema de Información de Tendencias Educativas en América Latina
UNCRC United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund
Chapter 1: Introduction

My research will focus on early childhood development programs targeted at children from poor and vulnerable households in Ecuador. Early childhood, generally the period spanning the first six years of life, is an important period for cognitive, socio-emotional and motor skill development. Research has shown that these are the critical years, especially between zero and three years of age, in which the neurons in the brain develop their connections (Rosero Moncayo 2009). Since this is a key period, positive external stimulation, in the form of e.g. a language rich environment and a good nutrition are vital for the healthy development of the child. When this development process is disrupted it will be more difficult to restore in later periods. Skills and connections build in these years foster learning in the years to come, as Cunha and Heckman (2006) have put it: “skills beget skills.”

As many young children in Ecuador live in adverse environments in which poverty and vulnerability can have negative effects on their development, it is important to offer these disadvantaged children early childhood development services that can mitigate the negative environmental factors they are exposed to. Since the 1980s Ecuador has had several programs that provided center-based care, and to some degree education for young disadvantaged children under the age of six. At first, these centers were mainly a response to the increased maternal labor market participation and were seen as a low-cost public investment in times of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2011).

Although, over the years coverage has expanded, young children from poor families still score on average lower on many cognitive, socio-emotional and motor skill development tests (Paxson and Schady 2005). The government of President Correa, elected in 2007, led to a renewed interest in early childhood development, now as a part of his socialism of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. In this line, in 2008, the Instituto de la Niñez y la Familia (INFA) was created as the public institute to unite all programs directed towards vulnerable children under five. These programs all shared the objective to create equal opportunities so that all children can develop to their full potential and to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty. The new institute and policy on early childhood development seem to value aspects of social justice: recognition, redistribution and participation. This makes at an interesting time to investigate the changes in public policy and its repercussions in practice.

As Penn (2004:13) notes, many existing studies on early childhood development programs are quantitative rather than qualitative. In Ecuador, the focus has also been on the measurable outcomes of these programs, i.e. test scores, in monitoring their impact. What has not been documented are the characteristics of the early childhood centers; in terms of inputs, processes and stakeholders’ perceptions. As the quality of the daycare centers will matter for whether the programs can create better opportunities for the children of the poor, I am interested to find out how local level actors, such as parents, the center’s staff and community members, view the quality conditions of the centers. My
research aims to fill the existent gap in the research literature on early childhood development programs in Ecuador in two ways: it will provide insight into the inputs and processes dimensions of quality of the daycare centers, as it aims to develop a more profound and qualitative understanding of perceived quality. Secondly it will analyze human capital, human rights and social justice elements in public policy and investigate how this relates to the perceived quality. My research question will therefore be:

Which elements of the human capital, human rights and social justice approach can be found in the new early childhood development policy and how are they related to the perceptions of different stakeholders on the quality of public early childhood development centers?

The thesis is structured as follows to answer this main research question. Chapter two will set out the theoretical framework of the different approaches to early childhood development and their perspectives on quality. The theoretical approaches discussed are the human capital, human rights and social justice approach. Chapter three will continue with the research methodology used to answer the main research question. This chapter will discuss the starting points of this research, explain the selecting of the sample, the research techniques that were used and will end with an ethics statement. Chapter four will provide a brief contextual background of Ecuador and demographic, economic, health and educational factors that matter for early childhood development. Chapter five will answer the first part of the main question by discussing and analyzing previous and current public policy on early childhood. Chapter six will deal with the last part of the research question by setting out the perceptions of monitors of INFA, executing organizations, center’s staff, kindergarten teachers and parents on the quality of early childhood development centers, in terms of input, process and outcome aspects. Each dimension of quality will be followed by an analysis of how the perceived quality relates to elements of the different theoretical approaches in current policy. Finally Chapter seven will conclude, by returning to the main research questions and discussing the main contributions and implications of this research.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

In the theoretical literature and reports of major international organizations involved in early childhood, various approaches exist. Though they show some overlap it is useful to make a distinction between three main approaches, according to their definitions, objectives and methods of evaluation. Tikly (2010) distinguishes between the human capital approach, the human rights approach, and the social justice approach to education. Chan (2007) makes a similar distinction between a neoliberal, human and post-developmentalist approach, to the role of education in development. I will use Tikly’s terms and apply these approaches to early childhood. There is a general consensus on the fact that “quality” matters as to whether early childhood services can achieve their objectives. Opinions on what constitutes quality, how to measure it, and whose perspectives matter, differ per approach to early childhood services and should be contextualized.

Before turning to the different approaches and their ideas on quality, I want to make clear that when using the term “early childhood services”, I will refer to all services for children up to compulsory school age, including all forms of care and/or education (Moss 1996). These can both be formal and non-formal services, funded through public or private funds, and also include nutritional components, health care services, parental education and home visits. Though different international organizations employ different terms; UNESCO uses Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), while the World Bank refers to Early Childhood Development (ECD) interventions or programs, generally they include all services for young children, with either a care or education component, or both. There are also overlapping definitions regarding the definition of the period of early childhood. The World Bank, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, UNESCO and the Bernard van Leer Foundation refer to the period between birth and the age of eight, as early childhood (World Bank 2010; Bernard van Leer Foundation, UNICEF and UN CRC 2006; UNESCO 2007). For the operationalization and targeting of their programs UNESCO (2010a:20) and UNICEF (2010) conceptualize early childhood as the prenatal period up to the age of compulsory education, which is generally at the age of five or six.

I will now provide a short introduction to the human capital, human rights and social justice approach to early childhood services.

2.1 Human Capital Approach

The human capital approach primarily considers early childhood services important for their future value and economic returns. This approach generally assumes that child development follows the same universal pattern for all children (Soto & Swadener 2002:40). The positivist nature of this approach is reflected in its preference for scientific measurement of quantitative and ‘objective’ variables (Soto & Swadener 2002:53).

Human capital theory is built on the idea that investing in education and health, is an investment in human capital. Investing should have a rate of return, and therefore this theory largely...
bases its argument on rates of returns on education and health investments. Authors, like Cunha and Heckman (2006) have applied this theory to the different stages in life to find out whether investing in human capital creation during certain stages of life had a higher return than others. They came to the conclusion that investing in ECD has the highest rate of return, around 10 percent, because investments in early childhood still have still a long time to ‘pay themselves back’. Heckman (2009) has designed an equation that displays the relation between investing and receiving a return: \( \text{invest} + \text{develop} + \text{sustain} = \text{gain} \). Investing in education and child development for poor families, while developing cognitive, social and physical skills, and sustaining these skills with quality lifelong learning, will result in a “more capable, productive and valuable workforce” that will in turn pay back the initial investment plus a return (Heckman 2009).

From this perspective investing in ECD is seen as a cost-effective measure and mostly valued for its \textit{future} worth, as it can result in lower education costs and increased efficiency. The emphasis is thus on creating productive adults. The argument for investing in poor children to create equal access to a healthy development is primarily based on the idea that this is where the greatest returns can be realized. These returns can be individual, but society is also assumed to benefit, as results can include less crime, fewer high school dropouts, improved health and higher productivity of the labor force (Heckman 2008:55). There is no so-called efficiency-equity trade-off. Investing in the poorest children is efficient, as it raises the highest social returns, while enhancing the equity of the services offered (Heckman 2008:56). Investing in early childhood is often seen as the primary way for nations to help households escape poverty (Young 1995:4-5; Behrman et al. 2004:109; Van der Gaag & Tan 1998:5-10; Chan 2007:371). Though early childhood development programs can thus have private returns, these collective benefits for society give the government a significant return on investment. This supports the choice for public provision of early childhood development programs. Within this public provision, targeting the poorest is promoted to ensure cost-effectiveness (Deutsch 1998:15). This reflects the neoliberal credo of “doing more with less” (Chan 2007:371). Another way of keeping costs low is by supporting community participation, while not eschewing private partners like Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the provision of early childhood services (Deutsch 1998:2).

This approach has been used by the World Bank in its analytical work and reports since the 1960s to calculate returns to formal education (Heyneman 2003:316). Since the 1990s the World Bank has applied human capital theory to early childhood development (Young 1995). The human capital argument is the basis on which the Bank has launched their Early Childhood Initiative for Latin America. This is illustrated by a quote from the Regional Director of Human Development: “Early Childhood Development programs concern a well-defined population and are \textit{investments with proven returns}, only recently are Latin American countries moving towards a holistic approach for ECD implementation” [emphasis added] (World Bank 2009). The World Bank has contributed to the institutionalization of this approach to early childhood services, as the human capital argument is now used by several international organizations, like the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
(Deutsch 1998). Even UNICEF (2010) and UNESCO (2007:114) have used it to strengthen the argument for investing in this period, though it is not their main argument.

The human capital approach mainly sees early childhood as a period in which all children go through the same development process. The World Bank (2010) provides a scheme that sets out the development of the child. This scheme includes development points for age, capabilities and needs of the child. This universally “standard” development path is used to detect deviations and accordingly apply developmentally appropriate practices to normalize the child’s development (Soto & Swadener 2002: 40).

Many authors have criticized the human capital approach for being overly simplistic. First of all, the rate of return only has meaning when wages reflect the productivity of the employees. In many cases, discrimination and imperfect competition through adverse selection distort this relationship (Klees 2009:118). A second critique on human capital theory is that it assumes all education has the same effect on everybody. It assumes that individuals with the same level of education will be able to get jobs at a given wage level, which is higher than for individuals without education (Bonal 2007:6-7). Schooling is, however, not always equivalent to learning, because of the fact that quality and content of education matters as well (Bonal 2007:7). Quality of education and care services varies widely, and access for the poorest is often restricted to services of inferior quality (Rosenberg 2003:252).

2.2 Human Rights Approach
The human rights approach considers early childhood care and education as a right in itself. The fulfillment of rights and freedoms is the center of development in which the poor should be able to deploy their own capabilities. Education then, is a way of developing capabilities and freedoms (Chan 2007:372). This approach is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989 by the UN General Assembly (UNDPI 1995). This important convention has been ratified by 193 countries, almost all UN members except for the United States (UNTC 2011). UNESCO has contributed to the creation of General Comment 1. This first general comment was added in 2001 and concerns the right to education and is not just concerned with access, but also with content. UNESCO is seen as the agency with the primary responsibility concerning all provisions related to education in the CRC (UNESCO 2001).

In 2005, General Comment 7 (GC7) was added to the Convention, concerning “Implementing child rights in early childhood” (UNCRC 2005). With this addition the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the body that monitors and supports governments with aligning their national laws, shows a strong focus on early learning. For this General Comment, UNICEF and the Bernard van Leer Foundation were consulted by the Committee and submitted background papers that informed the deliberations (BvLF et al. 2006). Furthermore, UNICEF has a role in monitoring the impact of the CRC and facilitates consultations with nation states.
GC7 defines early childhood as the whole period from birth through infancy, and proposes a working definition of 0-8 (UNCRC 2005:2). GC7 emphasizes that, young children are active participants in their own lives and development, “actively ‘being’ in the here and now rather than solely as a ‘becoming’ for the future” (Kikuchi-White 2006:1).

According to this framework ECD services are a right and therefore, it is the task of the government to guarantee access for all. The Committee “recommends that States’ parties support the activities of the non-governmental sector as a channel for program implementation” (UNCRC 2005:14), and emphasizes that the role of civil society should only be complementary, as the prime responsibility lies with the state (UNCRC 2005:19). Where the majority of ECD provision is in the hands of non-state providers, it is the responsibility of the state to safeguard the quality and equitable access, so that the best interests of the child are served (UNCRC 2005:14). This rights-based approach emphasizes that rights are universal and are to be realized, whereas needs, can only be satisfied and not claimed. In addition, a child’s right to education starts at birth and is closely related to its right to development. Education has a broad meaning here, and includes all forms of early learning in which parents play a fundamental role (UNCRC 2005:8-9). The convention places the prime responsibility for the realization of rights with the parents, as they are first educators and are of importance in the identity construction of the child. States should consult with parents to develop coordinated multisectoral policies and laws that support and complement family environments (UNCRC 2005:7; 10; 13). In community based programs the role of the State is to monitor quality and ensure adequate resources (UNCRC 2005:14).

The UNCRC states that among the objectives of early childhood programs are ensuring continuity and progression in the transition to primary education and building “children’s confidence, communication skills and enthusiasm for learning” (UNCRC 2005:14). According to the UNCRC, play is an important way to achieve these objectives, as through play children explore their environment and expand their capacities. Children have the right to play and childcare settings should be designed to accommodate this (UNCRC 2005:15).

Concerning the role of equity in early childhood services, the Committee puts emphasis on ensuring access for children at risk of discrimination, including poor children, indigenous children, children with disabilities and migrant children, as non-discrimination is a right (UNCRC 2005:11). States should step up to ensure that “all children have an equal opportunity to benefit from available services”, and in this way “do more with more” (UNCRC 2005:6; Chan 2007:371).

### 2.3 Social Justice Approach

Some authors take the rights-based approach further, like Tikly (2010), Bivens et al. (2009) and Soto and Swadener (2002). The social justice approach underlines the importance to see the young child in relation to the broader social structure of which he/she is a part (Tikly 2010; Bivens et al. 2009). This approach leaves scope for alternative and critical perspectives as it is based on the principles of
inclusivity, democracy and relevancy (Tikly 2010). Inclusivity of early childhood education means that early childhood strategies should be part of a larger process to redress economic and social injustice caused by the neoliberal capitalist mode of production (Chan 2007:369). The democracy principle refers to including multiple perspectives in defining learning outcomes through public processes; e.g. parents should be provided with the option to participate in the design of the education system. Finally, relevancy entails that education must contribute to local livelihoods (Tikly 2010). This approach thus leaves an important role to be played by the community in which the early childhood service is located (Bivens et al. 2009; Katz 1999).

Tikly’s (2010) social justice approach draws from Fraser’s (1996) theory of social justice. She argues that both redistribution and recognition matter for fighting injustices. Parity of participation is conditioned on a just distribution and reciprocal recognition and entails the representation of different parties on equal footing in decision making and evaluation. In early childhood this leads Soto and Swadener (2002) to point to the need of including multicultural and bilingual perspectives in early childhood education.

Recognition of cultural, socioeconomic and linguistic diversity is important to a child’s development, especially in early childhood. Introducing numbers, the alphabet and first writing exercises in the mother tongue foster the cognitive development of the young child (Chartier & Geneix 2006). It is however, not only valued for aiding development, as it is primarily a way to ease the transition from the home environment and to enable “children to build an enhanced image of themselves and of the community to which they belong” (Chartier & Geneix 2006:35). In this way culturally and linguistically relevant programs become an important way to engage communities in the program. Recognition of socioeconomic differences requires that caregivers take into account that some parents may not be able to contribute financially and that more resources may need to be assigned to disadvantaged children to compensate for their home environments.

There is some overlap between this approach and the human rights framework, as bilingual education is a right for all children according to the CRC. Next to that, the right to not be discriminated can be realized through recognition of diversity in multicultural education and care. If these aspects are included, early childhood can be a window of opportunity, to counteract discriminatory and racist views that can be internalized as early as the age of four (Soto & Swadener 2002:44). Multicultural education in early childhood demands more from teachers or caretakers (Han & Thomas 2010; Soto & Swadener 2002:45).

The pedagogical perspective that both Moss (2006) and UNESCO (2010a) take, points to the necessity of integrated early childhood services that cater to the holistic development of children. It suggests that services not only include education and care, but also nutritional advice or components, hygiene, health check-ups, access to clean drinking water, emotional contact, protection, parental and community involvement. In this way all areas of child development, cognitive, socio-emotional and
physical are taken into account, while linking the home and school environment to the individual child (Moss 2006; UNESCO 2010a:30).

One of the main objectives of early childhood services, according to the social justice approach, is to ensure equality of opportunity, through inclusion of all children. Equality of opportunity has been defined by Dupriez and Dumay (2006:244) as, “the lack of any statistical association between indicators of students’ achievement and indicators of their social origin.” This is however, also true for the human rights approach. The social justice approach adds the interest in the link between early childhood services and wider social injustices, that is, these services are seen as part of transforming the wider society. Furthermore, Tikly (2010:13) recognizes that “social justice does not require all learners have access to the same kind of quality inputs. [but that] Past injustices along with differing educational needs mean that learners require different kinds and levels of resource in order to develop their capabilities” This legitimizes compensatory policies targeting more resources towards disadvantaged children within a system of universal provision to create an equal start in compulsory education (Mkandawire 2005:17).

2.4 Quality in Early Childhood Services

The human capital, human rights and social justice approaches maintain different objectives and will thus have different perspectives on quality (Evans 1996:8). Before I discuss these perspectives on quality, I will introduce some general views on how to operationalize quality. One way to do so, is distinguishing between input, process and outcome indicators of quality. Inputs are also referred to as structural or distal aspects of quality, whereas processes are proximal aspects of quality (Dunn 1993). Another way of looking at quality is through distinguishing top-down approaches and bottom-up approaches (Katz 1999). Top-down approaches are hierarchical and focus on the perspective of the researcher. These approaches have been criticized for being insensitive to diversity and based on Western notions of appropriate practices that value individuality and verbalization (Evans 1996; Soto and Swadener 2002). Bottom-up approaches can be seen as more inclusionary, as they aim to equally represent the opinions of different stakeholders and to be horizontal in that they aspire to include and affect the wider society (Pence and Moss 1994; Woodhead and Keynes 1996).

2.4.1 Human Capital Approach to Quality

The human capital approach assigns a functional role to early childhood services as they have future returns. These returns consist in the short term run of an increase in the efficiency of the primary education system, that is, less repetition and dropout rates, and improved health outcomes, and in the long term run in a higher productivity of the labor force. Since the increase in efficiency of the primary school system depends on the learning capacity of the children starting primary education, the main objective of early childhood services for the human capital approach is to increase the measurable
cognitive development of the children (Bivens et al. 2009:99). Scores on standardized tests are seen as good indicators of the effectiveness of a program. The human capital approach then looks at the links between children’s scores (outcomes) and the structural characteristics of early childhood services (inputs) to determine whether a program is delivering ‘quality’ (Huntsman 2008). Quality is seen as important since it “maximize[s] the returns to early childhood development investments” (Vegas & Santibáñez 2010:113).

The human capital approach defines quality in terms of measurable aspects. On the input side Dunn (1993) defines structural or distal aspects of quality as experiences that are potentially available and beneficial for children’s development. These include child-adult ratio, group size, caregiver characteristics, such as education, qualifications and training, staff turnover and wages, and physical aspects of the setting. Dunn (1993) and Huntsman (2008) consider universal quality assessments tools, such as the widely used ECERS: Early Childhood Environment rating scale, its revised version (ECERS-R) and the toddler/infant version (ITERS), to be measurements of the structural dimension of quality. Others, e.g. Barros and Aguiar (2010), Philips et al. (2000) and Blau (1997), argue that these ratings scales can be used to assess process aspects of quality, as they include a rating scale for caregiver-child interactions. Many studies investigate the link between children’s development outcomes and structural aspects of quality. Weikart et al. (2003 in Myers 2004:13) have found for instance, that language skills at age 7 improved in relation to the years of schooling of the pre-school teacher, and that cognitive skills improved with amount of materials and equipment available to children.

The popularity of assessing these aspects of quality is explained by the fact that they are relatively easy to measure and regulate, being quantitative and of low inference in nature (Huntsman 2003; Ceglowski & Bacigalupa 2002).

On the outcome side, most studies look at the impact of the early childhood program on cognitive and socio-emotional development outcomes, and measures of physical health (Vegas & Santibáñez 2010:55). Common tests for measuring cognitive development of under 5 year olds in the U.S. are the Woodcock-Johnson and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary tests (Burger 2010:149). Measuring socio-emotional development is done with behavior checklists, such as the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (Vegas & Santibáñez 2010:89). Measures of health include malnutrition rates, height, weight and development of fine or gross motor skills. Many of these tests have Spanish versions and are widely used by, for instance, the World Bank to assess the impact of the early childhood programs for which they provide loans (Vegas & Santibáñez 2010:90).

It is, however, difficult to assume such a linear relation between inputs and outcomes. Many authors have acknowledged that process aspects of quality matter as well (e.g. Scarr 1996; Huntsman 2008; Dunn 1993; Burchinal et al. 1996; Dowsett et al. 2008; Philip et al. 2000; Irwin et al. 2007). Dunn (1993) defines the process or proximal aspects of quality as describing the actual experiences a child has within the structure of the settings. Process aspects include child-caretaker interactions and
are usually less quantifiable, more qualitative and based on observations. To measure these aspects of quality, agreed upon guidelines are used. An example is the developmentally appropriate practices guideline of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This guideline sets a standard on appropriate curriculum goals, requiring that children’s needs in cognitive, social, emotional and physical development areas are met and individual needs are taken into account. The caregiver’s strategies to achieve the curriculum goals, should be such that the environment stimulates exploration and interaction with materials, peers, and caregivers, rather than just providing adult-led activities, and that children's activities are facilitated (Dunn 1993). Finally caregivers’ guidance should support children’s social-emotional development, through praising, providing help and suggesting alternative ways to do something, while setting limits that are followed up (Dunn 1993).

Several studies have been devoted to the link between structural and proximal dimensions of quality (Cryer et al. 1999; Philips et al. 2000). Barnas and Cummings (1994) find that low staff-turnover (structural aspect), and thus more stability and continuity of caregivers, positively relates to caregiver-child interactions and that children that are attached to their caregivers develop more secure relationships. This in turn is beneficial for their social-emotional and cognitive development (Maggi et al. 2005; Prince & Howard 2002). Philips et al. (2002) found teacher wages to be strongly correlated to classroom or process quality (measured by the ECERS rating scale).

Processes of good quality care and education are, however, “subjective, value-based, relative and dynamic, with the possibility of multiple perspectives or understandings” (Dahlberg et al.1999:5). Therefore, the danger with relying on structural aspects and ready-made process guidelines is that they are insensitive to “the learning needs of different groups of learners and to diverse learning environments” (Tikly 2010:9).

### 2.4.2 Human Rights Approach to Quality

According to the human rights approach the objective of early childhood programs is the realization of children’s rights to development, non-discrimination and education. What constitutes quality according to this approach is closely linked to the objectives it aims to achieve. Therefore, more emphasis is put on indicators of quality that are process related. Inputs are valued for their facilitating function and the fulfillment of rights is seen as the desired outcome. Whether quality in this perspective can be achieved depends on the social and political context of the programs, i.e. has the country ratified the CRC and how is this implemented.

A first dimension that is important to the human rights approach is equality. This is linked to the right of non-discrimination, in that treatment within early childhood settings should be equitable and not depend on the gender, ethnicity or socioeconomic background of the children (Evans 1996). Furthermore, the right to develop and enjoy education and care is linked to equality in access to quality services (Myers 2004: 22). This means that services should be affordable.
Affordability depends on the costs of early childhood services. Costs mainly consist of teacher or caregiver salaries, infrastructure of the center, pedagogical, nutritional and material resources and support. Katz (1999) illustrates the trade-off between costs, quality and affordability with the QCA trilemma. High quality (Q) requires well trained and well paid staff, with appropriate and sufficient resources (Cost), making the service less affordable (A). This link between process quality and teacher wages was also distinguished by Philips et al. (2000). As public funds are often limited, especially in developing countries, resources often have to come from parents, which results in “poor schools for poor children” (Rosenberg 2003). This points to the fact that the lack of financing for early childhood services can lead to differential quality and can reproduce social inequalities; perpetuating social stratification and the intergenerational immobility of educational attainment (Entwisle et al. 2005; Pfeffer 2008; Wiggan 2007).

This infers that the quality of an early childhood program from the human rights perspective depends on the degree to which the State implements its ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and succeeds to ensure universal access to early childhood services. Whether the rights to development and education are fulfilled depends on policies at the national level, as well as the implementation at the local level. At the national level the Committee on the Rights of the Child urges States to develop a monitoring system that tracks the universality of access and the progress in outcomes, that is, the fulfillment of rights (UNCRC 2005:19). At the local level the focus is on the process in the early childhood program in which children and their parents are active participants in their communities.

To further support the realization of the right to development and education for all, early childhood services should provide nurturing environments. Such an environment should, according to Ramey and Ramey (1998) encourage exploration, provide mentoring in basic cognitive skills, celebrate all development advances, guide the extension of new skills, protect the child from inappropriate disapproval, punishment or bullying and provide a responsive and language-rich environment. To guarantee the right to non-discrimination, Evans (1996:9) poses that the child’s identity should be valued, which asks for care and education that recognizes cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. This dimension is also based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989: art.29). According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, assessment of these dimensions of quality should look at whether the right inputs are there, e.g. well-trained teachers and learning materials; whether these inputs are used to create a nurturing environment; and whether all children and their perspectives are included in the evaluation process (UNCRC 2005:19).

The human rights based approach attempts to distinguish universal components of quality. Rights are, nevertheless not unproblematic. They may seem universal, but are interpreted in the political, economic, social, religious and cultural context (Evans 1996:9). The same holds for children’s needs. Woodhead and Keynes (1996:37) distinguish some basic fundamental or biological needs such as nourishment, shelter and protection to survive. However, according to Evans (1996:10),
responses to these needs should vary by culture. This does not mean that quality is arbitrary. It is relative, but there are certain aspects that can and must be agreed upon (Woodhead & Keynes 1996:28). This is why different perspectives on what constitutes quality should be made explicit.

2.4.3 Social Justice Approach to Quality

The social justice approach values inclusivity, democracy and relevancy, and sees early childhood services as part of a broader approach that should lead to a more just and equal society. This includes the recognition of diversity, ensuring parity of participation in decision making and redistribution of opportunities for development to overcome historical inequalities. These conditions can be achieved through quality programs that ensure equality, a nurturing environment and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity. To overcome inequalities, one of the main prerequisites for quality services for children of the poor is sufficient financing. This partly overlaps with the human rights approach. The social justice approach, however, views that “it is impossible (and probably undesirable) to produce a single ‘blueprint’ for quality in early childhood care and education, and apply it – universally – in everyday education settings around the world” (Nutbrown 2006:111). This approach goes further than the human rights approach, as it strives for representation and parity of participation at all levels of society. What matters for quality is that the different backgrounds of children should be recognized so that “the provision is meaningful […] to those who use it” (Nutbrown 2006:111). This is why Dahlberg et al. (1999:113) would rather use the term meaning making instead of quality. Meaning making “assumes multiple perspectives and voices, and the possibility of finding some areas of agreement with others, while being wary of total agreement or consensus” (Dahlberg et al. 1999:113).

Giving a voice and recognition to all groups that are involved in early childhood services and may be excluded from top-down approaches to defining quality, are conditions for parity of participation in decision making on what matters most in early childhood (Fraser 1996). To include the perspectives of the participant at the local level that have often been excluded in the process of defining and determining what quality of early childhood services constitutes, Katz (1999) suggests to include the bottom-up perspectives of the four main participating groups in early childhood services: children, parents, caregivers/teachers and the community. According to Katz (1999:6), the central question to the children’s perspective is, “what does it feel like to be a child in this environment day after day after day?” This question is asked to try to grasp the daily realities and experiences of the children. The second perspective is the outside-inside perspective, or the parents’ perspective (Katz 1999; Ceglowski & Bacigalupa 2002). This dimension asks the question whether relationships between parents and teachers of caregivers are respectful and inclusive, and whether the goals and values for their children are respected. The third, inside perspective reflects the perspective of the staff on relationships between colleagues, with parents and with the sponsoring agency. This last relationship between teachers and to whom they are responsible, will also be of importance to stability and staff-turnover. Finally the outside perspective links the early childhood program to the community.
and society at large to which it is directed. Questions that can be asked include: whether current resources available to the program are sufficient to yield benefits to children and families; whether high quality programs are affordable to all families that need the service; is the staff qualified and well trained; and are their working conditions adequate (Katz 1999).

The focus thus lies on the perspectives of local level stakeholders, but parity of participation should be accomplished at all levels of society. It is therefore, important to also include participants at other levels, such as the district, regional or national level. Since early childhood services are seen as part of the broader society, giving all children the best opportunities to participate is a way to “address structural issues of inequity and injustice and bring about social change” (Westheimer & Kahne 2004:254). According to Howe (1992 as cited in Sleeter & McLaren 1995:206) the principle of equal educational opportunity can only be realized when these opportunities are “worth wanting”, which means that children should not have “to give up their identities in order to enjoy them.”

Figure 1 provides an overview of the different dimensions and aspects of quality in early childhood development centers. The human capital approach focuses on the inputs, processes and outcomes that determine the quality of the center. Inputs can come from organizations, both public and private in the wider socioeconomic, cultural and political context, but also from families and communities. Outcomes can be observed on different levels: in the center, in the family, in the community and in terms of e.g. increased productivity in the wider society. The human rights approach links the center to the community and family environment as it underlines the importance of their participation. The elements in the socioeconomic, cultural, political context that are of importance for quality in the human rights perspective are: the ratification of the CRC and State responsibility. The human rights approach links these dimensions to recognition of diversity, here located among the social justice aspects on the right-hand side of the figure. Finally, the social justice approach sees the center in connection with not only the family and community environment but also the wider socioeconomic, cultural and political context as its aim is a transformation of the larger society. Inputs, process and outcomes of the center are interconnected with the different aspects of social justice: recognition, redistribution and participation (Fraser 1996). Quality inputs, process and outcomes are then, those that ensure the realization of the three aspects to transform the outer circle of the model.
Table 1 summarizes the different approaches to early childhood services. For the purpose of this research I will define early childhood as the period between birth and the age of five, as this is the age at which compulsory education starts in Ecuador. Furthermore, I will not choose one of the approaches up-front. I will try to distinguish which approaches are taken on the national level and look at the perspectives of local and other level participant to see which aspects of quality matter to them most.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Human Capital Approach</th>
<th>Human Rights Approach</th>
<th>Social Justice Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reform ideology</td>
<td>“do more with less”</td>
<td>“do more with more”</td>
<td>“we are equal partners”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of education</td>
<td>For growth and poverty alleviation</td>
<td>As freedom and capability</td>
<td>For cultural/ re/survival, as resistance to neo-liberalism and developmentalism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objective of investing in Early Childhood | Less repetition, less drop out, increased maternal employment, higher productivity | To realize human rights:  
- Right to live  
- Right to education  
- Right to develop  
- Right to non-discrimination | Early childhood services are part of a transformation of society through:  
Redistribution, recognition and participation |
| Role of equity            | Investing in disadvantaged children is more efficient as it yields a higher individual and social return (Tikly 2010) | Equality of opportunity for all, universality | Equity as part of redistribution through compensatory policies, to achieve equality of opportunity |
| What is quality?          | Effective development of needed skills, through the appropriate inputs (input→outcome model) | Realization of the above mentioned rights. Focus on processes that have the best interest of the child in mind | Recognition of background, redistribution through compensatory policies, transformation through parity participation at all levels |
| Why does quality matter? | Quality programs yield higher social returns:  
improved health, more efficient education systems, more productive workforce | Everyone has the right to the same level of quality education and care. Participation of parents and community so that the child is able to participate in society as a full human being | Quality matters because only when the above mentioned aspects of quality are realized, ECS can be part of a more equal and just society |
| How to measure it         | Quantitative, positivist:  
Rating scales  
But also: Developmentally Appropriate Practice (NAEYC) | Are the rights: to live, to education, to develop and to non-discrimination realized? | Recognition of background: is care/education multicultural, bilingual and does it take different socioeconomic backgrounds into account?  
Redistribution: do programs assign more resources to poorer children?  
Participation: are parents & communities involved on equal footing in decision making process on all levels? |
Plan Nacional para el Buen Vivir |
| Main authors/based on     | Heckman, Cunha, van der Gaag, Behrman, Young | CRC, UN organizations | Soto and Swadener, Tikly, Biven et al., Evans, Katz, Sleeter, Fraser |

Table 1: Overview of the different approaches to early childhood services
Chapter 3: Research Methodology
The epistemological position that is taken is interpretivist, as “the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated” (Cohen & Manion 1985: 27). Understanding the perceptions of my interviewees is done from the inside. The ontological position that stands at the base of this epistemological stance is constructionist, as I take the point of view that reality is constructed by the interacting individuals which are part of the same reality (Bryman 2008: 366). This chapter will be organized as follows. First the methodology will be explained, continuing with the research questions. The third part will describe the empirical setting, including the selection of the centers and sample. The fourth part will discuss the research techniques used. The last parts will conclude with a description of the data analysis and the ethical statement.

3.1 Methodology
My research combines policy analysis with short-term ethnographic evaluation (Fettermann 1988). To be more specific, my research evaluates public early childhood development programs and has ethnographic elements as it aims to “‘get inside’ the world of program participants and to understand, describe, and explain the program and its effects from participants’ points of view” (Dorr-Bremme 1985:65).

Guyette and Churchman (1981) distinguish between a micro-ethnographic and a macro-ethnographic standpoint. Although my focus will be on perspectives of local level stakeholders, the macro-ethnographic will be more suited for my research, as it acknowledges that daycare center do not exist in vacuum, but are part of the community and society and are affected by national policies.

3.2 Research Questions
My main research question will be:

*Which elements of the human capital, human rights and social justice approach can be found in the new early childhood development policy and how are they related to the perceptions of different stakeholders on the quality of public early childhood development centers?*

This research question will be answered through the following sub-questions:

- What has been the national early childhood development policy and what has changed since the government of Correa and the creation of INFA in 2008?
- What are the underlying theoretical concepts, i.e. which elements of the human capital, human rights and social justice approach can be found in the current policy?
- What are the perspectives of monitors of INFA, executing organizations, center’s staff, kindergarten teachers and parents on the quality of early childhood development centers, in terms of input, process and outcome aspects?
- How does the perceived quality relate to elements of the different theoretical approaches in current policy?
The scheme I used to operationalize the complex term “quality” can be found in the appendix.

3.3 Empirical setting

I had the opportunity to be hosted by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Coordination of Social Development and to have a local supervisor at FLACSO University in Quito. In the Ministry I had a workplace, where I prepared and processed my interviews and visits. Advantages of being hosted by the Ministry were that I could see up close how the inter-ministerial coordination on the early childhood development strategy functioned. Furthermore, their support enabled me to get timely responses from staff working at the Institute of Childhood and Family (INFA)\(^1\) which whom I had to coordinate my visits to the centers. They facilitated my access to the centers and gave me more credibility. It also influenced the location of my research, since the Ministry’s contacts were mainly based in the province of Pichincha. Finally, a staff-member of the Ministry told me that I could not ask about the working conditions of the staff working in the centers. This made me hesitant to touch upon this subject in my interviews at first. After several interviews I realized that the staff was eager to talk about this topic.

3.3.1 Selection of the Centers

Eight early childhood centers or *Centros Infantiles del Buen Vivir* (CIBVs), were visited, two in each coordination of INFA in the province of Pichincha. Pichincha is a province in the *Sierra* or Highlands of Ecuador. Each region, the Highlands, the Coast and the Amazon, has its distinct cultural characteristics, which is also reflected in e.g. the food, customs and socio-economic factors. My findings would probably have been different if the research would have been conducted in the Coastal or the Amazon region.

The contact at INFA-Pichincha helped me coordinate with the heads of their subdivisions (*coordinaciones*) to facilitate my access to the centers. Because of transportation and safety issues, I could not go too far from Quito by myself. In the subdivisions of INFA, the centers were selected together with their technical staff, called *técnicos*, which can be seen as monitors of the early childhood development centers. In figure 2 an overview is given of the organization of the different levels of INFA in the province of Pichincha.

\(^1\) INFA is a public institute belonging to the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES)
Figure 2: Organization of the different levels of INFA.

The selection criteria included whether a center was located in a semi-rural or urban area to get a balanced sample. This was done to control for the difference in access to basic services and the degree of community organization. Household surveys show that the access to basic services is lower in rural areas\(^2\), whereas the degree of community organization from the literature is shown to be higher in rural settings. In table 2 an overview of the visited centers is given with their main characteristics. In figure 3 the location of the centers mentioned in table 2 is given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Subdivision/Region</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Urban/Rural</th>
<th># of children</th>
<th>Executing Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center 1</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>La Argelia</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Community Based Organization (CBO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 2</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>Guamaní</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>CBO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 3</td>
<td>Los Valles</td>
<td>Mejía</td>
<td>Uyumbicho</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 4</td>
<td>Los Valles</td>
<td>Mejía</td>
<td>Cutuglagua</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Local government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 5</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>Cotocollao</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 6</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>Calderón</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 7</td>
<td>Cayambe</td>
<td>Pedro Moncayo</td>
<td>Tabacundo</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>CBO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center 8</td>
<td>Cayambe</td>
<td>Cayambe</td>
<td>Cangahua</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Local government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Overview of visited early childhood centers

\(^2\) E.g. access to a sewage system is 66% in urban areas, against 15.7% in rural areas on the national level according to INEC 2001.
The number of children that assist at a center generally varies from 20 up to 100. My sample includes centers with 30 to 100 children, with an average of 60, and can thus be seen as quite representative in this aspect. The size of the centers in my sample also facilitated the practical issue of being able to interview one cook and caregiver per center without leaving the children or the kitchen unattended. Centers of INFA are obliged to have approximately one caregiver per ten children and one cook per 20 children. Table 3 shows the more precise ratios of caregiver to children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caregiver</th>
<th># of Children</th>
<th>Age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>3 months – 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2 - 3 year olds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>3 – 5 year olds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Caregiver: children ratios  

The children in each center are divided into groups according to their age. All centers had groups for 0 to 2 year olds, 2 to 3 year olds, 3 to 4 year olds and 4 to 5 year olds. The last group is also called pre-kinder, as it prepares them to go to the first year of basic education, which is comparable to kindergarten. Each center with more than 45 children has their own coordinator. Smaller centers have to share their coordinator with a second center (IntT06).\(^3\) In five centers the caregivers received pedagogical support from a kindergarten teacher form the Ministry of Education.

\(^3\) When I refer to interviews I will use codes like this, a list of the meaning of the codes can be found in the appendix
Parents are involved in the center mainly through the parent’s committee. This committee consists of a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary and some members, depending on the size of the center. These parents are in close contact with the center and can be called if there is any need for help at the center. They also collect the financial contributions of the other parents and lead the monthly meetings on deciding how to spend the funds. The participation of the community depends on the degree of organization and preoccupation for early childhood in the neighborhood. When there is a community committee, their members sometimes assist at monthly meetings in the centers to coordinate or plan mingas, which are voluntary events through which the parents and/or community help to improve the center.

INFA, the public institute which is responsible for the centers works with executing organizations. INFA signs an agreement with the executing organization which can be local governments, private not-for-profit organizations or religious organizations. The funds for food, cleaning materials and the payment of the staff are transferred to these organizations, which in turn distribute it to the center and the staff. The monitors of INFA have the obligation to visit the centers monthly for monitoring the quality and to give support to the staff.

Challenges with the selection of the centers were that the technical staff of INFA had the tendency to send me to centers that were functioning quite well: that had active parent committees and where the community was really involved. For my last four centers I explicitly asked the heads of the subdivision of INFA to send me to their worst centers. Because of transportation issues it was still not possible to visit really isolated rural centers, but all in all, the sample was balanced with four centers considered to be of low quality and four centers of high quality.

In six out of the eight centers visited I was accompanied by a monitor of INFA on the first day I visited. They introduced me to the coordinator and staff of the center, helped me get in touch with the legal representative of the executing organization and informed them about the reasons of my visit and what I needed to do. This gave me credibility and gained their trust, enabling me to walk around the center, play with the children and assist in activities. Being introduced by INFA may have influenced the information from the interviews slightly. However, since the monitors of INFA did not have a lot of time, as they are assigned 20 to 40 centers each, they would leave me alone at the center and it was easier for the staff to air their possible discontents with INFA. Just one of the kindergarten-teachers was slightly careful in airing her opinion on the centers of INFA in the interview, as she worked for the Ministry of Education and INFA belongs to the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion.

3.3.2 Selection of the Sample
My research focuses on the perceptions of stakeholders on quality of public early childhood services on the local level. My units of analysis therefore are the stakeholders of the center. In line with Katz (1999) I include parents, staff and community members as important participants in the center. I have
not included the perceptions of children, as this type of research would have required me to stay longer at the centers to build a trust-relationship, which schedule and limited resources did not allow. My main informants were the staff working at the centers consisting of coordinators, caregivers and cooks. Other important stakeholders were parents, as they play a fundamental role in the development of their child; they are seen as co-beneficiaries of the early childhood centers and are assigned an important role in the centers through their expected contributions and participation. Community representatives knew the conditions and the history of the center quite well. For the specific Ecuadorian context I have added legal representatives, monitors and kindergarten teachers as stakeholders. Legal representatives of the executing organization were interesting because of their central role between the centers and INFA in mostly financial aspects. Monitors of INFA were knowledgeable on the topic of early childhood development and the monitoring of quality in the centers. Finally, two kindergarten teachers of the Ministry of Education were interviewed to find out what their take was on the centers of INFA and early childhood development.

Coordinator, coordinadora, is a new function in the system of early childhood centers in Ecuador. This function was introduced in January 2011 with the new management model of INFA. Coordinators are required to have a high school diploma (bachillerato); preferably have a teaching degree (normalista) and two years of experience with early childhood centers (MIES-INFA 2011b). All the coordinators I interviewed were women. Most of them previously worked in the center as caregiver and were selected by either the parent committee or the executing organization to become the coordinator of the center. She has a central role at the center as all the communications between INFA, the staff of the center and the executing organization go through her. Her task is mainly administrative, making liquidations and justifications of the expenses of the center. She also checks the inventory and grocery lists for the week and sends them to the supplier. Often she helps the caregivers with making their week plans of activities for the children and the cooks with the menus. Whenever parents or staff have a problem or complaint they turn to her. I interviewed a total of seven coordinators; all but one of the interviews took place at the centers. One of the centers did not have a coordinator as she recently resigned her function and a replacement had not yet been found.

The caregivers are called promotoras de cuidado; all of them were women. Caregivers that started working after January 2011 are required to have completed a basic ten year education, but preferably they should have a bachillerato or normalista degree. In addition, they should have one year of experience in early childhood development and live in the community were the center is located (MIES-INFA 2011b:11). I interviewed caregivers of different age groups. The group of 4 to 5 year olds was also called pre-kinder. I interviewed four caregivers of this oldest group, one caregiver of the 3 to 4 group, two of the 2 to 3 group and one of the 0 to 2 age group. This bias towards the older age groups can be explained. The pre-kinder group was usually the largest group in the center, causing this

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4 From here on when using “staff” or “staff members” I refer to the group of coordinators, caregivers and cooks.
5 More on the Ecuadorian education system in Chapter 4.
group to have more than one caregiver, allowing one of them to leave the group to talk to me. In addition to that, I usually asked for a caregiver with some experience at the center, so she would be able to tell me more about how the center functioned before the creation of INFA. Generally the more experienced caregivers worked in the older age group, as this year is considered to be the most important year, just before the children enter primary education. I interviewed a total of eight caregivers. All the interviews took place at the center.

The cooks are called *promotoras de alimentación*. They are responsible for the preparation of the four meals the children receive during the day. According to the INFA manual the cooks are required to have completed their basic education and/or have one year of experience (MIES-INFA 2011b:11-12). Some of the cooks that were interviewed used to be caregivers in the same or a different center. This is because some of the centers have a system of rotating, which is based on the idea that everyone working at the center should be able to operate in different areas. Seven cooks were interviewed and one of them filled out the questions on paper due to lack of time, of course this resulted in less elaborate answers.

Most of the parents I interviewed were part of the parents’ committee. The coordinator of the center would call someone from the parents’ committee to come talk to me. Seven out of the nine parents that were interviewed, were mothers. Two fathers were interviewed, one together with his wife as they were both part of the parents’ committee. This might have created a bias, as the opinions of the more involved parents were included, since access to the other parents was limited.

It was not always possible to interview community representatives. Some centers were located in neighborhoods where the community was not that organized or was not involved in the center. In three urban and one rural parish a community representative was interviewed. The degree of community organization seemed, therefore, not to depend on whether a center was located in a rural or urban setting, but more on the composition of its inhabitants. Three community leaders who were part of the community committee and one spokesperson of the *junta parroquial*, the parish board were interviewed. They gave a clarifying insight into the daily life and functioning of the community. However, as most of the staff of the center lived in the community as well, they were usually able to also tell me things about their neighborhood.

I interviewed seven legal representative of the executing organization as I had two centers that belonged to one organization. It was generally harder to get in touch with them, as they had their own meetings and schedules, but they were always willing to meet with me. The executing organizations included three Community Based Organizations (CBOs), two municipal organizations, one Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and one church. Some of them had had an agreement with INFA for several years; others just started working with them since January 2011. Every January the agreements are renewed.

Finally, I interviewed the monitor of INFA that monitored the centers visited. They were usually really busy, but at the same time were quite knowledgeable about the topic of early childhood
development and the changes in public policy. In total six monitors were interviewed, as one supervised two of the centers I visited and another did not have time.

3.4 Research Techniques
My methods follow from the ethnographic evaluation methodology. I used qualitative research techniques to see through the eyes of my interviewees, to understand their perceptions as they may view the quality of the centers differently than outsiders, or people on the policy level (Bryman 2004:385). My main method was, therefore, qualitative in-depth interviewing, which I triangulated with (participant) observations, monitoring sheets of the monitors of INFA, records kept by the centers and policy documents.

3.4.1 Policy Documents
To be able to answer the first part of my research question I have used policy documents of the different ministries involved. This was done, to first of all, make a description of previous and current policies on early childhood development and secondly to be able to make an analysis based on the elements of the theoretical framework. Some of these documents were sent to me internally, while I was hosted by the Ministry of Coordination of Social Development, others were published online on the site of the respective ministries.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews
In-depth semi-structured interviews were used to collect data on the perceptions of local level stakeholders on the quality and functioning of the centers (Mack et al. 2005:2). They helped me explore their experiences and get their opinions on different topics including those that were considered slightly more sensitive, such as working conditions.

Most interviews took place in the centers. There usually was an area where I could sit more or less undisturbed while interviewing. In some centers children would run around in the same area, and of course be really interested in my tape recorder, making my recordings sometimes harder to understand. For the staff, this was a place where they felt comfortable. Parents would usually come to the center as well after being contacted by the coordinator. Community members would also come to the center. Three of the seven legal representatives were interviewed in their offices. The monitors of INFA were interviewed, whenever we had time during the day or later in the same week, this could be in the center itself, in the coordination’s office or during a car ride to the center.

The interviews were semi-structured as I prepared a list of topics and potential questions which I at least had to touch upon. I asked all my interviewees to describe a day of their work for me, to get a better grasp of the daily reality of the centers and of the actors involved in it. Furthermore, I asked most of my interviewees what they thought were the most important factors and obstacles for early childhood development. Finally, I asked all them what they thought about the quality of the center, mostly in terms of infrastructure, what could be improved or was missing, and how this could be achieved.
Next to these topics which were of importance for answering my research questions I had some topics on which I focused depending on the actor who I was interviewing. The interviews with the coordinator focused on the relations with INFA, the staff and the general functioning of the center. When I interviewed the caregivers I tried to find out what kind of curriculum or methodology they used when working with the children, how they monitored their physical and cognitive process and if they received any support in all this. The interviews with the cooks were, logically, focused on the nutritional part of the services of the center, if they had a different way of feeding malnourished children, what kind of food they served, if they received Chispaz, an iron supplement, from the national campaign Aliméntate Ecuador. Interviews with parents were mostly about how they thought their children were taken care of in the center, whether they received enough attention, stimulation, food etc., whether they had noticed changes in the behavior, skills and weight for height of their children and how they were involved in the center. I also asked them if the parent contribution was not too high and if they thought that barriers existed for other parents to allow their children to assist at the center. The interviews with the legal representatives were focused on the financial aspects, relations with INFA and the support they gave to the center. The interviews with community members were centered on describing the neighborhood in terms of ethnic, cultural, socio-economic characteristics, whether there were many migrants, amount of young children, availability of early childhood centers and schools and what the community did for the center. With the monitors of INFA I talked about early childhood development, the new management model of INFA, how it used to be, and about the process of monitoring quality.

I taped the interviews, as I wanted to make sure that I would not miss anything because of the language barrier or because of focusing on writing instead of listening. All interviews were conducted in Spanish. Only several interviewees said they were learning English or could speak it a little. However, I figured that they would feel more comfortable and speak more freely in their native language. Most interviewees were glad I visited their center and by doing so, came to understand more about the reality of the centers. They felt that policy makers at the national and provincial level had no idea of the reality of the centers at the local level.

Finally I have had two unstructured interviews with a staff member at the national level of INFA. These were more like conversations to clarify things I had found in the field and to get insight in the policy developments at the national level.

3.4.2 Participant observations

I used informal observations to collect data on “naturally occurring behaviors in their usual contexts” (Mack, et al. 2005:2). In some cases I became a participant in the activities that were going on in the center. I assisted the caregivers by watching the children, preparing didactic material and lending a hand to the cooks by handing out plates and cleaning the tables. I also played with the children when they went outside. When I was done with my interviews I helped to feed the little ones during lunch
times and afterwards I had lunch with the cooks and some of the caregivers when the children were taking their afternoon naps. Though I could only spend one or two days at a center, through these activities I got a better insight into “what life is like for an “insider” while remaining, inevitably, an “outsider”’’ (Mack et al. 2005:13).

Next to observing as a participant, I also engaged in informal conversations with the staff working at the centers as well as staff at the subdivisions of INFA. As soon as I was able to, I noted down my observations as carefully as possible. Next to taking field notes, while in the centers I always drew a map of the center I was visiting, sometimes with the help of the staff if time did not allow me to thoroughly explore the center on my own.

### 3.4.3 Monitoring forms
At the moment there are no up to date quality standards of INFA. At this moment the monitors of INFA implement a simplified monitoring form, which is included in the appendix. Most of the times I accompanied the monitors of INFA when they implemented the monitoring sheet. Afterwards I got a copy of the sheet. I would always also fill them in for myself, just to see how I would have judged the different aspects of the center. These forms contained the following elements: administration, physical conditions of the center, cleanliness of the classrooms, hygiene of the staff, hygiene of the children, learning environments, disposition of the children, pedagogical plan, nutrition, nap-time, information and management. The administration part was sometimes harder for me to observe, but of most of the other areas I could get a pretty clear impression by just observing. Filling in the forms helped me keep track of my observations and triangulate these with the observations of the monitors of INFA and the perceptions of the local stakeholders.

### 3.5 Data Analysis
After I transcribed all the interviews I had a good idea of which topics were mentioned often and thus were considered important by my interviewees. I made a list out of the main recurring topics and used it together with the concepts from my operationalization scheme to code the transcripts. By listing all quotes belonging to one code and listing links between codes, I was able to get a clear overview of my main findings. Though I could also have organized the data per center, it made more sense to categorize the findings by stakeholder group, since the variance in perceptions of desired quality is larger between groups than within actor groups. For coding I used the qualitative data analysis software program Atlas.ti. I triangulated the analysis of the transcripts with my own notes from observations and sheets from the monitors of INFA.

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6 Before January 2011 the quality standards for community early childhood centers were used in the centers I visited. These standards were established through the Ministerial Agreement No. 1713 of November 29, 2000 by the Ministry of Social Welfare (MBS now MIES). According to this agreement there were four dimensions of the quality of the offered services: physical infrastructure and environment conditions; equipment: availability, use and access; training, organization and management of human resources; and processes of health, nutrition, the affective environment, education and stimulation, offered to the children.
3.6 Ethics statement
I have respected the dignity and autonomy of all my participants through seeking informed consent. I have done so by explaining the aims of my research, what I expected of them, how long the interview would take approximately, that participation is voluntary, that they could withdraw at anytime and that confidentiality is protected. In addition to that, the monitors of INFA who usually accompanied me on my first day in the center introduced me to the all the people working and also explained what I came to do. I have anonymized all interviewees and centers, including just their parishes in the overview of centers I visited, so that none of their expressions can be traced back to them.

Furthermore I have taken into account the beneficence principle of doing no harm and to maximizing possible benefits for the participants and minimizing possible harm for participants. This leads to the principle of reciprocity, that is, those who participate should be the ones to also benefit from their participation (NCPHSBBR 1979). I made clear that I was a Master’s student trying to get a better understanding of the functioning of the centers and not in the position to provide funds or look for funds to improve the center. Nevertheless, I hope to ensure reciprocity through recognizing and including the voice of local stakeholders in the process of quality evaluation. I will share my main findings with the Ministry of Coordination of Social Development and through them with INFA.
Chapter 4: Contextual Background

Dahlberg et al. (1999:10) note that, “young children are of and in the world; their lives are constructed through interaction with many forces and in relationship to many people and institutions.” Vegas and Santibáñez (2010) also acknowledge that there are many factors that can affect early childhood development. Therefore this chapter will provide an overview of the most important background factors for early childhood in Ecuador. In the first part the relevant demographical characteristics of Ecuador will be discussed. The second part will continue with the economic factors affecting the environment of the young child. The last two parts will, respectively, discuss important health factors and some of the actions taken by the Ministry of Public Health; and educational factors. I will conclude with the interrelation between the different factors and their effect on early childhood development.

4.1 Demographics

Ecuador has a young population. In 2009, 12.3 percent of the population was under 5, constituting 1,719,665 children (SITEAL 2009:30). This means that the demands on early childhood development services are high at the moment. However, population growth seems to be slowing down to 1.6 percent per year and the total fertility rate is now 2.5 children per woman (UNICEF 2010). This implies that Ecuador has entered the third phase of demographic transition: the dependency rate is decreasing and the pressure on early childhood services will reduce in the coming years (SITEAL 2009:33).

Ecuador has population that consists of different nationalities. According to the population census the majority of the Ecuadorians, 77 percent, is mestizo, while 5 percent is of Afroecuadorian descent (INEC 2001). The indigenous population forms a historically excluded group, which can be seen in the current distribution of wealth and their lack of access to basic services (Zoon 2010:53-4). Yashar (1997) estimates the indigenous population of Ecuador to form around 37.5 percent of the total population. However, in the 2001 national census only 7 percent of the Ecuadorians declared themselves as indigenous (INEC 2001). There are 13 recognized indigenous nationalities and languages, but Shuar and Quichua are the most common and are used for intercultural relations (Chisaguano 2006; Art. 28 2008). The largest percentage of the indigenous population live in the rural areas of the Highlands and the Amazon; most Afroecuadorians live in the Coastal areas; and the larger cities are primarily inhabited by mestizos (ODNA 2007:5). As the indigenous constitute the poorest group in the Ecuadorian society I will distinguish between the indigenous and non-indigenous when discussing economic and health related factors.

The different indigenous languages seem to suffer an intergenerational loss as more parents than children master native tongues (ODNA 2010:19). Children that only speak an indigenous language are concentrated in the Amazon region and make up only 1 percent of the total population of children. Indigenous languages are primarily preserved in a bilingual manner, as 6 percent of the
children in 2010 spoke Spanish as well as an indigenous language. More children are bilingual in rural areas (13 percent), the Highlands (11 percent) and the Amazon (16 percent) (ODNA 2010:18).

In brief, the Ecuadorian population is young and diverse. As the research will take place in the Highlands bilingualism and the ethnic and cultural diversity of the children assisting at the center are factors to take into account.

4.2 Economic Factors

The level of economic development, migration, urbanization, poverty and maternal employment are all factors that can affect the political and social commitment to early childhood development, but can also influence the opportunities that children have in their lives.

Ecuador is considered to be a lower middle income country with a GDP per capita of $4,202 in 2009 (World Bank 2009). Due to large emigration flow at the end of the 90s, remittances from international migrants now make up 5.8 percent of the 2010 GDP (World Bank 2011). Another consequence of migration is a changed composition of households. Though most children in Ecuador still live in two-parent families, single parent families make up 9 percent of the households, and 35 percent of the children lives with their extended families (ODNA 2010:25). Internal migration consists primarily of migration from rural areas, or the campo, to the cities where there are more job opportunities and access to basic services. Urbanization has, however, slowed down, from 4.4 percent over the 1970-1990 period to 2.2 percent over the 2000-2009 period, making the urban population 66 percent of the total population. Compared to the Latin American average of 89 percent of urbanization, the rural population remains to constitute a relevant part of the population in Ecuador (UNICEF 2010). Due to internal migration from different parts of the country to the cities, the composition of urban neighborhoods becomes more diverse in terms of ethnicities and cultures.

Other important factors include poverty, income inequality and maternal employment. In 2009 42.2 percent of Ecuador’s population lived below the poverty line of $2 a day and 15.5 percent lived in extreme poverty (ECLAC 2010:14). There are large disparities between indigenous and non-indigenous children. The poverty rate and extreme poverty rate for non-indigenous children were, respectively, 63 percent and 34 percent in 2004. For indigenous children these were, correspondingly, 77 percent and 49 percent, significantly higher (ODNA 2007:7). Income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient decreased during most recent years, from 0.55 in 2003 to 0.49 in 2009 (SEDLAC 2011). Though this is still high, Ecuador is not among the most unequal countries in Latin America. Poverty can affect early childhood development in multiple ways. Biological risk factors include, nutritional deficiencies of mothers and children, and increased vulnerability to infectious diseases due to living conditions. Psychosocial risk factors of poverty are increased stress and depression levels among parents or caregivers, due to poverty and vulnerability. These biological and psychosocial risk factors affect the current and future school performance of the child, its future job opportunities and

The mothers in Ecuador carry a double burden, as they often both work and take care of the children. In 2008 the female labor market participation rate was 46.8 percent, just under the Latin American average of 51 (World Bank 2008). At the same time, mothers continue to be the main caretakers, as 79 percent of the children under five spend the largest part of workdays with their mothers (ODNA 2010). This implies a double burden for working mothers and a serious barrier for women to enter the labor market to earn an income (UNESCO 2010:26). This is especially a concern in poor households, where women have to work to make ends meet and leave their children at home alone, with older siblings or take them to work. For these women, access to good quality and affordable childcare, is of the utmost importance.

In short, factors that should be taken into account include the changing composition of children’s households and neighborhoods due to emigation and internal migration. Poverty still affects the lives of many children, especially indigenous children and thwarts their opportunities to develop and grow. Early childhood centers are of importance to mitigate risk factors related to poverty and to support mothers in their double burden of work and care.

4.3 Health Factors
For early childhood development it is important to take the following health factors into account: malnutrition; infant mortality; maternal health; and health controls.

Malnutrition and infant mortality rates remain high for all children but inequalities between non-indigenous and indigenous children are reflected in higher rates for indigenous children. Of the under five year olds 23 percent suffers from chronic malnutrition, meaning their height is low for their age (ODNA 2010). For indigenous children this rate is two times as high: 41 percent (ODNA 2007:9). In 2009 under five mortality had decreased to 24 per 1000 births, which is under the Latin-American average of 27 per 1000 (UNICEF 2009). In 2004, the under five mortality rate for indigenous children was more than 60 percent higher than for non-indigenous children (ODNA 2007:9).

Poverty is frequently linked with poor maternal nutrition. Maternal nutritional intake affects fetal health, which results in low birth weight and often has an impact on health outcomes during childhood (Maggie et al 2005:6). Ten percent of the children in Ecuador are born with low birth weight (UNICEF 2009). To address this it is important to provide prenatal health check-ups for pregnant women from low-income classes, to detect maternal malnutrition, anemia and other diseases and to be able intervene by providing nutritional supplements (ODNA 2010:34). The law of free maternity of the Ministry of Public Health (MSP) 7 ensures access to prenatal care for the poor by making the services free of charge. The MSP in Ecuador has set a norm of a minimum of five prenatal controls. In 2009 73 percent of all pregnant women had regular controls, while only 48 percent of the

7 Ministerio de Salud Pública (MSP)
indigenous population was reached (ODNA 2010:34). Another issue is the health risk women and their children face when giving birth. This risk is considerably lower in formal institutions like hospitals, than in informal settings. Only 52 percent of indigenous women that gave birth did so in a formal institution, this contrasts with 92 percent at the national level (ODNA 2010:26).

Exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months of a child’s life can protect it from diseases, provide a reliable nutritional intake and encourage the bond between mother and child. Breastfeeding is a common practice in Ecuador, but the duration depends on social economic situation of the family (Rosero Moncayo 2009:73). UNICEF (2010) reports that of the children that are younger than six months, only 40 percent is exclusively breastfed.

Summing up, early childhood centers have an important role to play in reducing malnutrition levels, especially for indigenous children. With the support of the Ministry of Public Health steps are met to ensure that poor mothers have access to free health check-ups and nutritional supplements. Though the importance of breastfeeding is recognized, early childhood centers can play a role in informing parents and strengthening these practices.

4.3 Educational Factors
Parental education and socioeconomic status of the parents are strongly correlated with educational attainment of their children (Breen & Johnson 2005; Pfeffer 2008). Furthermore, the degree of poverty is not only a consequence of a low education level; it is also a strong determining factor of education levels (PREAL 2006:16). It is especially important to look at maternal educational levels, as many children remain for the most part in the care of their mothers (ODNA 2010). In 2004, 40 percent of the women of childbearing age had not completed primary education (ODNA 2005). For mothers with secondary education, the vaccinations of their children are more frequently complete, their children are less often ill or malnourished and infant mortality is lower than for mothers with primary education (ODNA 2005). Educating women, thus, has a strong positive effect on the wellbeing of their children.

As many poor parents have low levels of education, early childhood centers can play a role in compensating for the possible lack of physical, cognitive and social stimulation. ODNA (2010:27) refers to initial education when talking about care and education for children from their birth until the age they enter the first year of basic education. Initial education is not obligatory. INFA caters for this age group, focusing on children from poor families. Though in popular speech the centers of INFA are still referred to as guarderías, the term early childhood center, or centro infantil is now preferred to emphasize that these centers do not just guard the children but offer them integrated early childhood development.

The education system in Ecuador recently changed through the 2007 curricular reform of basic education. This reform implied that basic education now should start at the age of five with one year of pre-primary education (UNESCO 2010b:10). This policy has had effect as enrolment in the first year of basic education is now 82 percent for all five year olds (UNESCO 2010a:37). Though some
neighborhoods have public primary schools that already have the facilities to teach five year olds, in other areas this gap is filled by kindergartens who teach five to six year olds. Most kindergartens now ask for a certificate that states that the child has attended an early childhood center, at least for the year before entering kindergarten. This shows that increased importance is given to early childhood centers. After this year children enter primary education, which lasts six years. According to Rames et al. (2010) the transition from preschool to primary education is an important phase in a child’s educational career. A successful transition partly depends on the coordination between early childhood centers, kindergartens and primary schools.

The education system is structured in the way that when children finish their primary education they continue their basic education career in secondary education or ciclo básico, at college. At age 15 students start their specialization or bachillerato, which can be seen as higher secondary education which is compulsory and usually located in the same college (UNESCO 2010b). Students can continue their studies in a licenciatura, which is comparable to undergraduate studies and after that pursue a maestría, or Master’s degree.

Table 4 provides an overview of the current education system in Ecuador, which is also helpful for understanding the education level of staff in the centers later in the following chapters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligatory/ Part of</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Name Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Obligatory</td>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Initial Education</td>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>Early childhood centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory / Basic Education</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Pre-primary/ 1st year of basic education</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Jardín/ Kindergarten or in a primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>Ciclo básico (Secondary education)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory</td>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>Bachillerato (Specialization)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not obligatory / Superior Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>Licenciatura (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>4-5 years</td>
<td>University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maestría (Masters)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>University/Post-graduate institute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Overview of education system

To sum up, there is a strong relation between the educational level and socioeconomic status of parents and the wellbeing and educational attainment of children. Poverty is related to low education levels. Early childhood centers can compensate for this. The recent reform of the educational system in Ecuador recognizes the importance of pre-primary education by including it in the obligatory basic education cycle. This leads to a pre-primary enrollment of five year olds that is well above the Latin American average of 65 percent (UNESCO 2010a:36). However, the reform is not yet implemented in all primary schools.

4.4 Sub-Conclusion
The different factors influencing early childhood development are interrelated. To start, internal migration and emigration are often linked to poverty. People migrate in search of better job opportunities. Internal migration and emigration can change the composition of communities, and can, therefore lead to fragmentation and weaker organization within the community. In addition, poverty
affects the nutritional status of young children in two ways. First, maternal nutrition affects the birth weight and health of the child. When a mother is malnourished during her pregnancy, it will be harder for their children to achieve a healthy weight and height for their age, when growing up. Secondly, when resources are scarce at home, the child often does not receive an adequate meal both in quality and quantity, leading to malnutrition. Malnutrition, in turn, affects the ability of young children to interact with their physical and social environment, thwarting their cognitive, social and motor skill development (Maggi et al. 2005:9). This may affect these children’s future school achievements. In this way poverty may lead to lower education levels. Poverty is also often associated with both parents having to work as much as they can to make ends meet. Adding this to the fact that children remain to spend most of their time in the care of their mothers, this implies that mothers face a double burden of work and care.

Engle et al. (2007:230) show that early childhood development interventions can prevent risks that are associated with living in poverty, or mitigate the negative effects through, for instance through supplying nutritional supplements and relieving some stress of the parents and especially mothers by caring for their children during work hours. When early childhood programs have an educational component, they can, in this way also compensate to some degree the effect of parental education and socioeconomic status on the school achievements of their children.
Chapter 5: Analysis of Public Policy

Though my research will focus on the period from 2008 until now, it is important to set out the legal and institutional provisions for early childhood development that were made in earlier periods. In addition, the current government of Correa underlines that his government and policies break with the neoliberal past. The interviewees referred to the current policy changes as well. In this light, it is interesting to see how this is translated into the early childhood development strategy: which elements are new and if there is a continuation of elements of earlier periods. I will first describe the milestones in early childhood development services before Correa’s government. Thereafter, I will continue with the national narrative of the Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir, the national development plan for 2009-2013, followed by how the objectives of the early childhood development strategy fit into this national plan and how the provision of services is organized nowadays. The final section will end with an analysis and comparison of the old and new policies.

5.1 History of ECD in Ecuador

Figure 4: Timeline of milestones for early childhood development in Ecuador

The history of the provision of early childhood development services in Ecuador is characterized by changing priorities and policies due to governmental change and the involvement of international organizations and civil society. Figure 4 gives a chronological overview of the periodization and milestones of public policy on ECD in Ecuador.
5.1.1 Period of Structural Adjustment

In the 60s and 70s the institutional environment of many Latin American countries, including Ecuador was characterized by state-led development (Robertson et al. 2007:40). After the return to democracy in the 1980s, Ecuador continued this development model by supporting Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) and seeing social policy as an important component of development (Molyneux 2008:777). The social democratic government of Roldós in 1980 adopted social progressive policies, which included the creation of the Ministry of Work and Social Security and the Ministry of Social Welfare (MBS) (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010).

However, in the aftermath of the Latin American debt crisis of the eighties, the Christian-Democrat government under pressure from the so-called, Washington Consensus of the international financial institutions, abandoned the state-led development model and introduced some moderately neoliberal policies (Zoon 2010). The IMF and the World Bank tied conditionalities to their loans in the form of the structural adjustment program, which promoted the opening of Ecuadorian markets, increasing the vulnerability to external shocks (Acosta 2001). In addition, public expenditure was reduced by eliminating subsidies for basic services, cutting back on educational and health expenditure, while increasing the expenditure on debt services (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010; Acosta 2001). These measures increased income inequality as the poor were affected the most, resulting in an increase and deepening of poverty. These impacts were even more pronounced in rural areas and for female headed households. The targeted direct cash transfers to the poorest, that followed remained ineffective, they were not linked to a macroeconomic policy reactivated national production and created employment (SAPRIN 2002:23)

Another important policy preference dictated by the international financial institutions, was to decentralize public services. This decentralization and the weakening of the State led to more space for the emergence of civil society (Robertson et al. 2007:42). At the same time the demand for daycare had grown due to the increased entrance of women to the labor market (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010). These two processes led to a rise of community based organizations of mothers that organized themselves in order to guarantee childcare for their children. Responding to this, in cooperation with UNICEF, the MBS built the first non-conventional centers for early childhood development for the most vulnerable population (MIES-INFA 2011a:6). “Non-conventional” basically meant that the MBS relied on community organizations for the execution of early childhood services. Daycare for children took place either in a community house or in one of the caretaking mothers’ own houses (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010). The model of provision complemented the neoliberal agenda of the international organizations as it was a low-cost public investment that heavily relied on the participation, and voluntary or semi-voluntary work of the community and families (Rosemberg 2003:256; Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010; Molyneux 2008:784). During this period family committees were created, which were given the task to determine the main problems, select the
community mothers and were also involved in the daily functioning of the service. These family committees continue to play a role in the programs today (OEI 2002).

By the end of the eighties, the social democratic government ran a moderate neoliberal model in which the state controlled the market and there was more room for investment in social issues, with particular concern for vulnerable children. In this light, free public health care and a literacy campaign were introduced (Zoon 2010:56). Indigenous movements had started to strengthen and mobilize due to the decentralization and weaker role of the state, leading to the creation of the CONAIE (Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) in 1986 (Yashar 1997:6). In 1989 their demands for a national program of bilingual and bicultural education were granted by the Ministry of Education of the social democrat government (CONAIE 1989).

5.1.2 Focus on Human Rights and Institutionalization of ECD

Beginning in the nineties, the international human rights perspective was to gain more ground in discussions on social development (Chan 2007:365). In Ecuador this interest in human rights, and more specifically children’s rights, was marked in 1990 by the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 2011).

The commitment of the State to ensure that all children can exercise their rights was demonstrated by the introduction of two national programs: one private program called INNFA8 and a public program called Red9 under the MBS.10 INNFA was partly public and partly privately funded, and it was headed by the country’s first lady. This private program offered two types of services. First, they worked with child development centers for which the implementation was placed in the hands of NGOs in coordination with family committees (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010; Rosero Moncayo 2009; OEI 2002). The second modality was Creciendo con Nuestros Hijos (CNH), targeted towards families in which one of the parents stayed at home. In this program the focus lay on educational support for parents through home visits. Children under the age of two were visited once a week in their home, while children between the age of 2 and 5 attend group activities in a community building (OEI 2002). INNFA has many partners including international institutions such as UNICEF, the World Food Program, Plan International and World Vision. At the national level they partnered with municipalities, universities, schools, community organizations, churches, ministries and the NGO Asociación Solidaridad y Acción (ASA). Setting INNFA apart from public services was its funding from the private sector, i.e. national oil companies, international airline companies Microsoft, and Toyota (OEI 2002).

In the MBS program the State directed the services in cooperation with community organizations. The services were provided through community centers for child development

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8 Instituto Nacional del Niño y la Familia
9 In full: Red Comunitaria de Atención a la Infancia (Community Network for Childhood Care)
10 An overview of the different early childhood development programs can be found in table 5 on page 38
The targeting of the CCDIs was based on poverty mapping; building centers in urban marginal and rural areas. Although the MBS took a leading role in services for vulnerable children, other ministries started to get involved as well: the Ministry of Health (MSP) assisted the centers with health care and the Ministry of Education and Culture provided funding for *educadoras* to give pedagogical support to the caregivers (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010; OEI 2002). The offer of early childhood services was, however, insufficient and dispersed, covering just 10.3 percent of the poorest population (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010). At the same time, the fragmentation of services provided by the *Red* and INNFA resulted in an overlap between their coverage. Therefore in 1993, the first steps were made to combine the efforts and align the strategies of the different ministries involved: together with the programs of INNFA and *Red*.

However, in 1994 the MBS program had to stop due to administration problems. The *Red* became the Operación Rescate Infantil (ORI) (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010).

In conclusion, the main differences between INNFA and Red/ORI include, according to my interviewees, that INNFA had its own resources and therefore did not have to justify its expenses: there was less control. The private program received support from other countries and foundations and therefore always seemed to have had more money. In contrast, in Red/ORI the control and monitoring of the expenses through justification and liquidations has always been stricter, as the public program could only expect funding from the government.

### 5.1.3 Neoliberal Period and Stronger Role of Civil Society

In the mid-nineties, a rightwing government introduced a less moderate neoliberal model, turning the market into the regulator of the economy. A process of privatization reduced public spending and policies were taken to stimulate a more flexible labor market (Zoon 2010). At the end of the nineties Ecuador entered a severe economic crisis, due to el Niño, a shrimp sector bust, a drop in oil prices, rising foreign debt, the fall of 16 banks and a devaluation of the Sucre (Zoon 2010:100). High unemployment and underemployment brought half a million Ecuadorians to migrate to the U.S. and Spain. President Mahuad eventually dollarized the Ecuadorian economy which was not appreciated by most Ecuadorians and led to his deposition (Halperin et al. 2005:145). The IMF, World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) provided a “relief package” of loans to support Ecuador’s structural reforms (Halperin et al. 2005:146). This led Ecuador to spend almost three times as much on debt service, than on health, education and agricultural development in 2000 (Acosta 2001).

Due to the economic crisis and neoliberal reforms, a large part of the Ecuadorian population lived in poverty. In 2001 a social plan was launched to fight poverty based on four main pillars: 1. targeting - to make the poor and extreme poor the prioritized, benefit recipients of public action; 2. making the poor productive; 3. investing in human capital through decentralization and 4. social

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11 Centro Comunitario de Desarrollo Infantil (CCDI)
12 The Single System for Childhood Services/ Sistema Único de Atención a la Infancia (SUAI)
participation. According to this plan the ideal citizen was a conscious and responsible one, aware of its rights and obligations (Soto et al. 2002:44). In view of this decision to make the poor productive, the main focus of expanding the early integration of children in the education system was to “reduce the necessity of women to stay at home and to facilitate in this way, their entrance into the labor market” (Soto et al. 2002: 42).

At the same time Early Childhood Development became an upcoming topic on the international agenda, with the World Bank labeling it to be a high return investment and UNESCO putting it at the top of the Education for All agenda. In the setting of increased international attention for early childhood and the involvement of the international financial organizations in Ecuador’s economy, the IDB started to provide funds through Proyecto Nuestros Niños to strengthen existing programs of INNFA and ORI (Soto et al. 2002: 41). Funds for new projects were also made available through a highly competitive system of bidding, in which NGOs had to present their projects which would be judged by a number of factors including the number of children they aimed to attend to (Rosero Moncayo 2009).

In the meantime, children’s rights were further institutionalized by the implementation of the Code for Children and Adolescents in 2003, which was based on the CRC. This Code puts the responsibility to guarantee integrated protection for all children with the State, society and the family. Together they should ensure that children can develop and fully enjoy their rights, in freedom, dignity and equity. To regulate and apply this code the National Board of Children and Adolescents was created (MIES 2011b). In addition to that, in 2002, civil society organizations united with UNICEF, to create the Observatory for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (ODNA)13 in order to raise awareness about the precarious situation of the Ecuadorian children. ODNA has created a children’s rights index that reflects the fulfillment of rights in different developmental stages. The index for early childhood is the IDN-114; this index includes three dimensions and is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The first dimension is the right to live, which is infringed by early death, measured by the under five mortality index. To improve this dimension, according to ODNA the coverage of quality health care services for children and mothers should be widened. The second dimension is the right to healthy growth, which cannot be achieved when a child is chronically malnourished. Chronic malnutrition is measured by low height for age. To ensure children of this right, living conditions should be healthy, that is, have access to safe drinking water and sewage. Finally this index includes the right to emotional and intellectual development. This right is not fulfilled when a child lacks cognitive stimulation. This lack is made measurable by taking as indicators the participation of under five year olds in some form of initial education and the level of maternal education. To improve the score on this last dimension ODNA strives for the universalization of preschool education and educating parents on good parenting practices (ODNA 2005:58). The IDN-1

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13 Observatorio de los Derechos de la Niñez y la Adolescencia (ODNA)
14 Índice de los derechos de la niñez = Index of the rights of the child
increased from 3.9 to 4.3 on a scale from one to ten, between 2002 and 2004 for all children (ODNA 2005:63). The differences in the fulfillment of rights between indigenous children and non-indigenous children is stark: the IDN-1 score is, correspondingly 2.2 and 4.7 (ODNA 2007:8).

Furthermore, in 2005 the IDB funded project of Nuestros Niños was taken over by the MBS, changing its name to Fondo de Desarrollo Infantil (FODI), but using the same bidding system. With the creation of FODI the first steps were taken to recognize the cultural diversity of Ecuador’s children through the modality Wawakamayuk Wasi (WKW) for indigenous children. This program was born out of the demands of indigenous movements because of the lack of early childhood services in rural indigenous communities and the tendency of children losing awareness of their cultural roots (Ramírez Eras & Jones 2008:15). The goals were, therefore, to strengthen their identity and intercultural practices (Rosero Moncayo 2009).

Table 5 provides an overview of the different early childhood development programs and their main characteristics. The last program INFA will be discussed in the next part on the current policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program components</th>
<th>INNFA</th>
<th>Red/ORI</th>
<th>FODI</th>
<th>INFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>1989 (since 1993 under the name ORI)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Contribute to comprehensive child development through, daycare that provides health care, nutrition psychosocial development and recreation, parent education, developing the concepts of rights and duties in the parent/child relation</td>
<td>Comprehensive development of children in households that are poor and vulnerable, as well as to provide adequate nutrition, promote maternal labor market participation.</td>
<td>To secure comprehensive child development, in cognitive, motor and social skills before initial education</td>
<td>Improving levels of comprehensive development of children that live in poor and extreme poor families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target population</td>
<td>Children between 6 months and 5 years</td>
<td>Children between 6 months and 6 years</td>
<td>Children between 0 and 5 years and 11 months, that live in poverty</td>
<td>Children between 0 and 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls under</td>
<td>Private with public funds</td>
<td>MBS (now MIES)</td>
<td>MIES</td>
<td>MIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Partly private; partly public</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Public (initially with IDB loan through competitive assignment)</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program components</td>
<td>Centros de Desarrollo Infantil (CDI): health, nutrition, psychosocial affective, community and family participation</td>
<td>Centros Comunitarios de Desarrollo Infantil (CCDI): health nutrition, psychosocial affective development, community participation</td>
<td>CDI Creciendo con Nuestros Hijos (CNH) (home visit program) Wawakamayuk Wasi (WKW)</td>
<td>Since 2011: Centros Infantiles del Buen Vivir (CIBV) CNH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage in 2009</td>
<td>186,666</td>
<td>48,570</td>
<td>298,272</td>
<td>539,980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Overview of public early childhood development programs in Ecuador
5.2 Analysis of Previous Policies
For the analysis of the public policy in the previous periods, the theoretical framework of the second chapter will be used. In this chapter a distinction was made between different approaches to early childhood development: the human capital or neoliberal approach, the human rights approach and the social justice approach.

Elements of the neoliberal or human capital approach can be distinguished in the previous periods. These elements are more present in times of crisis, i.e. after the debt crisis and in 2000, when the reliance on loans from international financial institutions and their conditionalities was great. During these periods the market was seen as the way to get the economy back on track. Social policy had to be, above all, cost-efficient. The neoliberal credo of “doing more with less” (Chan 2007:371) is reflected in cost-sharing through co-management of the community in the first non-conventional centers of UNICEF and MBS (Molyneux 2008:784). The community had to actively participate to guarantee some childcare for their children. As the community, therefore, provided the housing for the center and supported the center through food donations and voluntary work, this was a low-cost public investment (Cáceres Loyola & Pérez García 2010).

Another neoliberal element is the reliance on NGOs for service delivery and on the private sector for funding (Molyneux 2008:788). In 1988 INNFA started to work with national NGOs, international institutions and the private corporate sector, to manage the early childhood development centers. It were organizations of civil society, like NGOs and CBOs, therefore, that detected communities in which there were families that needed the service, communicated this to the State in order to get (partial) funding to provide the service. The State did, thus, not respond directly to the demand and needs of families. This relationship is shown in figure five.

![Figure 5: Relations between the State, civil society and families](image)

Source: IntINFA01; IntINFA02 and conversations with local supervisor

This trend continued in the IDB project of Nuestros Niños of 2000 and later in public program of FODI. Staying with the “more with less” idea, targeting and efficiency can be seen as a neoliberal element as “more poverty alleviation could be achieved with less expenditure” (Mkandawire 2005:3). Thus, although the public program of Red/ORI first started by geographically targeting the poorest families through poverty mapping, this has led to high levels of undercoverage as there was no mechanism to ensure that just the poorest would have preferential access to the centers (Mkandawire 2005:9; OEI 2002). As stated in a policy document of that time, the main objective of early childhood
development services for the poor was to enable mothers to enter the labor market to increase productivity (Soto et al. 2002).

Another neoliberal element was the market mechanism of competitive assignment of funds for projects in *Nuestro Niños* of the IDB and later in FODI. In this way funds were likely to be unequally distributed, as projects in communities that were more organized and received more support of NGOs or other civil society actors, were chosen above projects that did not have this kind of support. In addition, as funds were assigned based on the number of children the project claimed to attend, there was an incentive of over reporting, leading to false coverage (IntINFA01).

From the 90s onwards there are also elements of the human rights approach to be found in the public policy. After ratifying the CRC, children’s rights were further institutionalized through the Code for Children and Adolescents. The human rights approach demands public provision of early childhood programs to ensure access for all. In this case, Ecuador made the first steps through the public program of Red, later renamed to ORI, and tried to ensure the inclusion of poor children as well as those identified through poverty mapping. From the human rights perspective the State should safeguard the quality of the services, even if the provision may not be in their hands. In 1993 the government took the first steps to align the strategies of the public and private programs to ensure coverage and quality. Civil society has played a supporting and watchdog role in creating the observatory of children’s rights. The indigenous movement pushed to promote the recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity which was taken up by the Wawakamayuk Wasi program of FODI.

The social justice approach was not present in the policies of the described periods. Though recognition of diversity was to gain ground and the participation of the community was promoted, this was not yet part of a larger process of redressing economic and social injustices.
5.3 Current Policy
I will now turn to the current political and social commitments to early childhood development. In the first part, the Constitution of 2008 and the National Development Plan will be discussed to describe the general public policy of Correa’s government. Within this framework the strategy and organization of early childhood development are then discussed.

5.3.1 Constitution of 2008 and Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir
When President Rafael Correa was elected in 2007, he promised “to end what he often referred to as the "long and sad night of neoliberalism””, and to introduce Ecuador to a, "socialism of the twenty-first century”(Conaghan 2008:46). One of his first steps was to set out a referendum to form a constitutional assembly aimed at developing a new constitution. The referendum was passed and the new constitution was approved. In this constitution a leading role is given to citizens in the form of participation in decision-making, planning and the management of public affairs (MIES 2011:7). The constitution establishes that Ecuador is an intercultural and plurinational country that promotes intercultural dialogue and the conservation and use of indigenous languages (Art. 1 & Art.28 2008).15 The new constitution, furthermore advocates a new development model in which economic and social policies are inherently linked and complementary (MIES 2011:6). The new constitution states that the State, society and the family should guarantee the right of children and adolescents to integrated development, i.e. to healthy growth, to develop intellectually and to expand their capacities, possibilities and aspirations in an effective and secure family, school, social and community environment (Art. 44 2008). Article 46 and Article 69, in particular, establish, respectively, the State’s responsibility to adopt measures to ensure the integrated development of children under six years and the promotion of responsible parenthood (Art. 46.1 & Art.69.1 2008).

The national development plan translates the constitution into lines of action for the period of 2009-2013 and is called Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir. This plan uses the notion of “Buen Vivir”, a translation of the Quichua “Sumak Kawsay”, which means to live in “harmony and equilibrium between men and women, between different communities, and, above all, between human beings and the natural environment of which they are part” (Bizerra 2009). The concept of development is restructured to have as objective “Buen Vivir”, transforming the economic model to foster processes of redistribution for groups that have historically been excluded by the capitalist market system (PND 2009a:10). Such a model of development must also, “pursue a fairer social caring regime, in which caring activities are better valued,” while aiming to eradicate the sexual division of labor (PND 2009a:20). According to Léon (1999 in PND 2009a:20), the reproductive and care-related labor of female Ecuadorians represents around 25 to 50 percent of the GDP. At this moment this is not rewarded accordingly, causing social injustice, inequality and exclusion (PND 2009a:20).

15 The text of the relevant articles of the constitution of 2008 can be found in the Appendix
The early childhood development policy falls under the first objective of the National Plan “to foster social and territorial equality, cohesion, and integration with respect for diversity” (PND 2009a:73). The policy to achieve this objective is to assure children’s integral development for the full exercise of rights, through expanding family, community and formal education to ensure protection, care and good treatment. This is done by publicly promoting early childhood development programs and services that include health, healthy and nutritious food, initial education and adequate stimulation for children, while respecting the cultural practices and values of all nationalities (PND 2009b:150). It aims to include children as key participants in the design and implementation of policies and programs and to encourage integrated actions to prevent child labor and maltreatment in families (PND 2009b:150). The goal is that 75 percent of all Ecuadorian children under five participate in some form of early childhood development program by 2013 (PND 2009a:74). In 2009 the coverage among all children under five was 37.7 percent (own calculations based on MCDS 2011 and Rosero Moncayo 2009). The idea of aligning economic and social policy is also reflected in the renaming of the Ministry of Social Welfare (MBS), to the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) (Registro Oficial 2008).

5.3.2 Early Childhood Development Strategy
In line with the new constitution and the national development plan, a new national strategy for early childhood development had to be initiated. This started in 2008 with the initiative to align all the programs for children under five that live in poverty, i.e. INNFA, ORI, FODI in the Institute for Children and Families (INFA) as an agency of the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion\(^\text{16}\) (MIES) (Rosero Moncayo 2009). Since the government policy is to offer integrated early childhood development, many ministries are involved. To align their actions the Ministry of Coordination of Social Development in 2010 formed an Inter-Ministerial Committee, consisting of the directors of the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES-INFA), Education (ME) and Public Health (MPS).

The Inter-Ministerial Committee defines early childhood as the period between conception and the age of five. When children turn five they enter basic education and therefore fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and no longer belong to the target group of the early childhood strategy. Referring to Article 44 of the Constitution, the committee defines integrated early childhood development as encompassing the three dimensions of the biological, i.e. physical growth; the psychological, i.e. development of motor skills, language, affection and cognition; and the social, i.e. adoption of norms and values of living together (MCDS 2011).

According to MIES-INFA the early childhood development program has, as its main objective, to contribute to improving the levels of integrated development of children under five that live in the country and whose families live in poverty or extreme poverty (MIES-INFA 2011a:10). This objective should be achieved through: guaranteeing quality daycare with equity of gender and

\(^{16}\) Ministerio de Inclusión Económica y Social (MIES)
interculturality; optimizing health conditions through providing health checks in the centers; reducing malnutrition by providing four healthy meals; and reducing the delay in psycho-motor and social affective development (MIES-INFA 2011a:10-11). In this objective the main approach taken is that children have rights and should be able to exercise them without discrimination through age, gender, ethnicity, culture or health status, in order to guarantee gender equality and respect for cultural diversity (MIES-INFA 2011a:11) In regard to child care, the co-responsibility of the family and community are promoted (MIES 2011:9).

Within the strategy of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (MCDS 2011:48) as well as the documents of the MIES (2011:19) the overall aim is to make coverage universal, that is, for all children under five. However, the policy includes a focalization, because of the large inequalities present in Ecuador. This focalization or targeting entails that children from families in the two lowest income quintiles have preferential access to the public early childhood centers (MCDS 2011:46).

In table nine an overview is given of the annual budget for early childhood development over the last five years. Remarkable is that after the creation of INFA in 2008, the budget was almost halved. The Ministry of Coordination of Social Development explains that this is due to the fact that the offer became less dispersed, cases of double coverage were eliminated so that the spend resources were “optimized” (MCDS 2011:22). Also important to note is that, in the budgets of 2007 and 2008, the budget of INNFA which was partly private, was included. From 2009 to 2010 there was an increase of 18.3 percent of the annual budget of INFA spent on early childhood development, reflecting the increased importance given to early childhood development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual budget (in million USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>55.3 (FODI &amp; ORI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>164.5 (FODI, ORI &amp; INNFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>204.1 (FODI, ORI &amp; INNFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>107.7 (INFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>127.4 (INFA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Annual budget for early childhood development 2006-2010
Source: MCDS (2011:22)

**5.3.3 Organization of the Program**

The tasks of different ministries involved are accordingly divided. The Ministry of Public Health (MSP) provides advice and support for pregnant women in the form of prenatal health checks and offers preventive health checks for children under five (MCDS 2010:13; ODNA 2010:34). Their cooperation with the early childhood centers is primarily coordinated with the health sub-centers present in each parish. In the case of vaccinations, a coordinator explains that during national vaccination campaigns, the doctors from the health center come to the center and will vaccinate the children (IntC05).

The Ministry of Education provides pedagogic support to the caregivers in the early childhood centers for the children between three and five years of age (Acuerdo Interministerial 0002-
This support comes in the form of kindergarten teachers that visit the center twice a week, organize activities with the children and assist the caregivers in planning activities for the rest of the week (from interviews/observations). In order for a center to get this support, a legal representative explained that a center has to apply for a kindergarten teacher at the Ministry of Education (IntRL06).

Finally, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) is directly responsible for the early childhood development centers through its institute called INFA. The early childhood program of INFA still works with the same two modalities as the previous programs, that is, early childhood development centers, now called Centros Infantiles del Buen Vivir (CIBVs) and the home visits of CNH. The Wawakamayuk Wasi modality for indigenous children remains to exist as well, working through special CIBVs and the CNH program. The CIBVs are the focus of this research. The organization of INFA is decentralized into provincial divisions, and subdivisions. At the level of the subdivision, experts of INFA are responsible for monitoring the quality of the centers, the administrative aspects of the center and the coordination with the executing organization. The experts of INFA also provide training to the staff working in the centers; this can range from first aid training to pedagogical support. An expert of INFA explained that usually the coordinators of the centers are trained, and they in turn, train the caregivers and cooks through a cascade model. INFA signs a contract with an executing organization, which should be not-for-profit organizations, i.e. NGOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and churches. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2011 preference is given to sign contracts with organizations of the public right, i.e. local governments such as municipalities and parishes (MIES-INFA 2011). Local governments are expected to co-finance the centers with their own resources. While not-for-profit organization can either look for ways to raise financial support or provide material or a building to the center. Executing organizations can have several centers under their responsibility. These organizations receive funds from INFA which they transfer to the center. These public funds cover compensation for the center’s staff, food for the children and fungible materials, like cleaning and arts-and-crafts materials (MIES-INFA 2011). As anemia is a large problem among Ecuadorian children, MIES started the national campaign “Aliméntate Ecuador” which supplies iron supplements (ChisPaz) to all centers of INFA (interviews).

The organization at the center level is as follows. Each center has a coordinator who handles the paperwork, justifies all the expenses of the center and reports back to INFA. The coordinator receives a compensation of 220 dollars per month. The caregivers and cooks that work at the center are under the supervision of the coordinator. Caregivers and cooks receive a compensation of 200 dollars a month. The contract model of MIES-INFA emphasizes that this compensation or bonificación, “does not constitute, in any way, a salary or remuneration for delivered services, neither does it imply a work relation of any type” since it is seen as volunteerism, which is a form of social participation as established in Article 97 of the Constitution (Anexo 2 Modelo del Convenio, MIES-INFA 2011).
The co-responsibility of parents is an important component of the daily functioning of the center. This co-responsibility should, according to the manual of INFA, not be financial. The executing organization cannot charge parents for the services the center offers. Parents are expected to be involved in the development of their children and therefore to actively participate in workshops, parent meetings and voluntary activities to improve the center. Parents are also obliged to form a parent committee that has a leading role in reviewing economic reports of the center and discussing possible improvements to the center. The emphasis on community is shown by the requirement for the staff that work in the center to be from the community. The center must coordinate its activities with the community committee, if present (MIES-INFA 2011). In figure 5 an overview is given of the organization of the early childhood program.

Figure 6: Overview of the organization of the early childhood development program

5.4 Analysis of Current Policy
Based on the outline of current policy and the literature on the different approaches to early childhood development an analysis can be made. President Correa calls his government socialism of the 21st century and clearly claims to break with a neoliberal model of the economy, through among other lines of action investing in the social sector, including in early childhood development. Interviewees across the different stakeholder groups mentioned this change. The current policy would thus be expected to contain elements of the social justice approach and break with neoliberal elements of the
previous period. I will discuss elements of continuity and discontinuity from the previous to the current policy.

According to authors like Bivens et al. (2009) and Katz (1999) that fall within the social justice approach the community and parents have a key role to play in the early childhood center. Their parity of participation should be ensured through representation at all levels of society. In the current policy the State, society, parents and community are seen as important educational actors.

The link between the community and the center is established through the requirement that staff is from the community and that the center should coordinate with the community. Though the centers do no longer have to rely on the community to provide food, INFA does not support the centers by covering housing costs. This implies that the community is implicitly expected to provide housing to the center. The rationale for involving the community in the center in current policy is framed as a form of citizenship participation.

The responsibility of parents for the integrated development of their children is established in Article 69 of the constitution. Their participation in relation to the early childhood centers is primarily functional. They are informed about the development of their children and the economic situation of the center. Though charging parents for the services is prohibited by INFA, most centers ask for a monthly contribution. The parent committee in accordance with the rest of the parents decides how to spend it and which improvements the center needs. Though parents assist in organizing celebrations at the center, they are not involved in the daily activities or the design of the curriculum.

Although the costs for the community have been reduced through public funding of food, communities and parents still have to contribute in different ways which can lead to differential services according to economic capacity of the parents and community. Community and parent participation fits well with the social justice approach, but it is also a way to make the program low-cost and can thus be seen as a continuation of the neoliberal approach to early childhood development. In addition, the participation remains superficial as the community and parents are not provided with the option to participate on equal footing in the design of the content (Tikly 2010; Fraser 1996).

A second element of the early childhood development is the provision. In the previous periods NGOs played a major role in the execution of the program. In the current policy this continues to be the case, but the requirement that these NGOs should be not-for-profit organizations is now underlined. Furthermore, since the start of 2011 preference is given to local governments as executing organizations. This is done, because municipalities and parishes have their own budget and are therefore thought to be better able to co-finance the centers (MIES-INFA 2011a:18). This places more responsibility with the State, albeit at lower levels of the State. State provision fits well with the human rights approach as well as the social justice approach. In addition, this shows the State’s commitment to provide universal access, which is a human rights approach requirement for quality.
The involvement of local governments in the provision of early childhood services has lead to a new, seemingly, more direct relationship between the demand of families and the funding and provision from the government. These new relationships are shown in figure 7.

![Diagram of new relations between the State, civil society and families](image)

*Figure 7: New relations between the State, civil society and families*

Source: IntINFA01; IntINFA02 and conversations with local supervisor

What must be noted is that, although local governments usually have more resources than CBOs or other not-for-profit organizations, their involvement does politicize the early childhood centers. Municipalities might discriminate against centers in which the staff is not in favor of the current mayor, leaving these centers with less options for additional funding.

Within the goal of universal provision preferential access is given to the poorest children to redress historical inequalities and promote redistribution of opportunities and wealth. This last point corresponds with the social justice approach (Tikly 2010). In the manual of INFA there is however, no obligation for parents neither to report whether they work nor to report their income. In this way the compensatory character of the program cannot be guaranteed.

The funding is a third element that can reflect different approaches to early childhood. Under INNFA the funding partly came from the corporate private sector. With the new model of INFA the majority of the funding is public. The model states that funding cannot come from parents, as executing organizations cannot charge them for the services of the center. Executing organizations can and are expected to co-finance the functioning of the center. When not-for-profit organizations use their own budget or raise funds from other sources this can be seen as private funding. Though public funding has expanded as percentage of the budget of the centers, reliance on private funds remains, reflecting human capital as well as human rights and social justice approaches.

The objective of the early childhood program is directly linked to the right of the child to integrated development, corresponding with the human rights approach. The objective also includes giving children from poor families equal opportunities to integrated early childhood development. This reflects the redistribution ideal of the social justice approach (Dupriez & Dumay 2006). To achieve the objective the approach of ensuring the fulfillment of the right of non-discrimination is taken. The State, thus, according to their policies takes a leading role in the recognition of the different cultures and languages of Ecuador, which should be reflected in the pedagogical processes in all
centers. In addition, with the continuation of the Wawakamayuk Wasi modality special attention is given to the culture and customs of the indigenous.

In order to truly reflect the social justice approach to early childhood development the current policy and strategy should make the link between the program and wider society. The national plan underlines that the early childhood development program is part of the transformation of the development model of the State, which links economic with social policies. For the center’s staff it is important that the national development plan now recognizes the value of care-related labor. This statement seems, however, not to be further operationalized in the strategy and organization of the program as the labor of the center’s staff falls under volunteerism, referring to article 97 of the constitution. This together with the lack of a targeting mechanism seems to be the key impediments to classifying Correa’s current policy on early childhood development as reflecting the social justice approach.

After the discussion of the research results a more profound analysis of the reality of the current policy will be given, through reflecting on the elements of the social justice approach: recognition, redistribution and participation.
Chapter 6: Research Results

Hitherto previous and current policies on early childhood development in Ecuador have been discussed and analyzed. For the period of ’80 till 2007 it was discussed that policies contained some neoliberal elements as well as elements of the human rights approach. With the new government and policy it looks like a new era has begun, changing the socioeconomic, political and cultural context for early childhood development centers. Interviewees across the different actor groups mentioned this change. A community leader said it like this “all those presidents haven’t done anything, with this señor at least we have education, hospitals, highways, in every sense I see it’s better now.” A legal representative explains that “this president of the Republic is contributing quite a lot to education at the level of public schools, he is strengthening education. I want to contribute to this, because I believe in this.” In this chapter I will further elaborate the perceptions of the participants on the early childhood centers in relation to the different dimensions of quality; inputs, processes and outcomes. As Correa’s government proclaims to be socialist and current policy on early childhood development has many social justice elements, I will analyze the perceptions on the different dimensions of qualities in their relation to the different aspects of social justice: recognition; redistribution; and participation, using figure 1.

6.1 Inputs

According to the literature the inputs of an early childhood development center can be subdivided into infrastructure, financial resources, nutritional resources and pedagogical inputs. Only the perceptions on the most mentioned inputs will be discussed.

6.1.2 Infrastructure

Almost all interviewees across the different participant groups mentioned that the indoor and/or outdoor space of the center was too cramped for the number of children that attended. According to the monitoring sheets that monitors of INFA use, each child should have two square meters at his/her disposition. A monitor explained that to measure this, they take the total surface of the center and divide it by the number of children assisting (IntT06). In this way, the size of the classroom is not the main measure. Some centers had cramped classrooms but a large common dining hall and/or kitchen. These centers were considered to have enough space for the number of children by the monitors, though their classrooms just provided around one square meter per child (observation). Many parents and caregivers mentioned that they wanted more space in and outside the centers. A caregiver explains:

“I feel really bad to see that they do not have enough physical space to be able to develop, because they need to run, play, free their minds for a bit. This is really necessary for children in this age: activities in the open air” (IntPC05)
The outside areas of the centers varied in the space available per child and the number and variety of outdoor games present. Some had spacious grass areas with a lot of games, while others just had a cement patio. The perceptions on this infrastructure element therefore, differed. When the center had a small outdoor space, the children usually went to play outside in turn, per age group. Coordinators, community members and legal representatives mentioned that having more indoor and outdoor space was primarily of importance to be able to attend to more children as the demand is really high. A coordinator states that:

“We lack a bit of space to have more children, because there are quite a lot of children that come to ask for a place and unfortunately we cannot take them all in. We have to give priority to the children that really need it” (IntC02)

Three of the centers that were visited were housed in a rented building. This had several consequences. First the space was not adequate for young children: small rooms, danger of falling of the stairs, not enough bathrooms. On top of that, the contribution of the parents is higher in these centers because they had to pay the rent each month as INFA does not support these costs. Some parents were really concerned with this and were trying to find a better place for the center:

“I was trying to find something close to the center, but we have not succeeded in finding another house. I would like to find another bigger house, but the cost will be higher” (father in IntM06).

Lowering the number of children in the center does not seem to be an option because according to the new constitution children cannot be denied their right to development and these centers depend heavily on the contribution of parents to pay the rent, and other basic services (IntC05). The centers that were housed in communal houses, were located in areas where the community was more involved in the wellbeing of the children of the center. The kindergarten-teachers, who support some of the centers in the initial education for 3 to 5 year olds, were less satisfied with the classrooms in the centers of INFA. Two kindergarten-teachers explain how they experience working in the centers:

“It is a bit difficult because when the children cry, they distract the other children. There are no doors, everything is open” (IntPARV01)

“We have to adapt to the realities in which we come to work, but obviously it would be better to have one area for every group” (IntPARV02).

Especially for kindergarten-teachers who are used to school environments, the transition to community centers with little resources is large. In addition to the small rooms, the classrooms are often not well separated, with the consequence that children distract each other, thwarting their learning.

An important place in the early childhood center is the kitchen since the children receive four meals a day as malnutrition is a large problem. In general the cooks were quite satisfied with the state of the kitchen. Frequent deficits in the kitchen were a refrigerator or gas pit that did not work adequately. The cooks said that in these problems were fixed by using the parents’ contribution to pay a repairman or buy a new one. The safety of the children was safeguarded by not letting them enter the kitchen.
The cleaning of the kitchen, classroom areas and bathrooms is equally divided through a rotating system between the caregivers and cooks.

Other missing infrastructural inputs mentioned by caregivers and cooks, included chairs and tables. There were usually enough of these in the classrooms for children to work, but for breakfast and lunch tables and chairs had to be moved to the dining hall (*comedor*). In one center the cook even said “sometimes they have to eat while standing” (IntPA06) because of the lack of chairs. In all but one center all children took a nap after lunch. INFA requires the centers to have a quiet, darker, separate room with enough beds or mats for children to sleep on. Caregivers, coordinators and parents often said that they wanted a more adequate space for napping, as children often have to sleep on the cold floor on thin mats. Furthermore, community members and coordinators often expressed the need to improve the safety of the center. Some centers were robbed during the night time. During the day the entrance of strangers was controlled by only allowing registered family members to pick up the children.

All in all, several inputs related to the infrastructure of the early childhood center are missing or not adequate, affecting the quality of educational and developmental processes of the young child.

### 6.1.2 Financial Resources

The financial resources of the center can be divided into public and private resources. The public resources a center receives are from MIES-INFA. In table 6 an overview is given of these funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Resources of INFA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition of the children</td>
<td>$1.10 per day per child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fungible materials</td>
<td>$1.67 per month per child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation for the caregivers and cooks</td>
<td>$ 200 per month per staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation for the coordinator</td>
<td>$ 220 per month per coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Overview of public resources of a center

Source: interviews with coordinators and annexes of manual of MIES-INFA (2011)

Public resources can thus be used for the nutritional component of early childhood development, fungible materials, like cleaning materials, toilet paper, and arts and crafts material and the compensation of the staff of the center. In the part on working conditions the compensation of the staff of the center will be further discussed.

Private resources primarily come from parents. The monthly contribution parents pay can range from $5 to $15 dollar and can be charged per parent or per child. The support from parents is used to pay the bills of basic services: water, electricity and gas. One center did not have sewage and most did not have a telephone line, making them use cell phones in case of emergencies. If after the paying of the bills, funds remain from the parent’s contribution the parent committee in agreement with the other parents can decide on which improvements and purchases to make for the benefit of the center. Since INFA does not provide funds for didactic materials such as books, contribution of the parents are also often used for this. All in all, parents contribute to “the needs of the center, to make it adequate, to fix it, and to paint it. It is used for all the expenses we have here” (IntC01). When the
monthly contribution is not enough to cover these expenses the center and/or the parents can organize rifas, lotteries to raise extra funds.

Most parents and staff indicated that this parental contribution is “voluntary but also obligatory” (IntM05). They referred to the new model of INFA which prohibits charging parents for the services of the center. A legal representative explains why all centers do ask a monthly contribution:

“[Not charging parents] is something that we cannot do, because they [INFA] are not giving anything for didactic material. They give us for fungible material, but it is not enough for the need there is. Therefore we need parents to collaborate when the infrastructure deteriorates, for kitchen utensils, pedagogic material and basic services. We as organization do not have the budget to support the center; we help them in the administrative part” (IntRL03).

A coordinator at another center also expressed this reliance on the parent’s contribution for the functioning of the center:

“When we lower the number of children, I do not know how we are going to pay the rent. We increased the coverage; to be able to solve the rent, water, electricity, telephone” (IntC05).

The amount of the contribution is determined with the parent’s committee and all other parents. They agree upon an amount that is acceptable for all parents. To be considerate with families that have more than one child in the center, most centers charge per parent or give a discount for more children. All parents that were interviewed acknowledged that there were needs in the center, not covered by public funds of INFA, for which they had to contribute. Because the contribution is officially not obligatory, parents can delay their contribution for one or two months if they do not have the money at that time:

“It is like a bit obligatory, but if they do not have it this month, we wait for the other month. Thus, it is not like we are saying “when you do not pay, the children cannot assist.” It is like voluntary: when they can pay, they pay” (IntM03).

In just three centers parents and staff acknowledged that there were parents that were unable to contribute financially, for them an exception was made. These poor parents “collaborate in the form of working, in cleaning or some type of support” (IntRL01). Their children are seen as “becados”, like they receive a scholarship. This solidarity for poor families was especially strong in one of the centers. A community member explained that:

“We cannot tell them “you cannot leave your child here”, because then they will leave them in the street, which is worse, more dangerous. Thus, in this way we lend them a hand, solidarity works here” (IntMC01).

“Here you cannot see who does not have money. It is supposed to be a community service. It is that hardship does not only come once, neither just for one person, hardships often overcomes us as well. If you cannot pay it does not matter, but do not take your child out of the center. So there is help from the community because I also have experienced these sorts of times” (IntPA01).

Private funding or support in other forms can also come from international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) such as Plan International, SOS Children’s villages and World Vision. Five of the visited centers received some kind of support from one or more of these INGOs. SOS Children’s
villages supports some centers with funds for didactic material, and have an agreement with INFA to provide workshops on pedagogical issues in three of the visited centers (Aldeas SOS 2011). A mother explains that:

“These workshops are good, because they teach us to value ourselves as women and to love our children” (IntM05).

Plan International has funded the construction of one of the centers and supports another center financially (Coordinator in IntM05). World Vision works with one of the executing organizations and funds travel expenses of the coordinator to assist workshops on early childhood development (IntC06).

Additionally, the centers are often supported by the parents and/or the community in mingas, which are gatherings to paint, clean or make improvements to the centers. Mingas are usually organized in weekends and all parents are expected to participate but especially the parents that are not able to contribute financially. Voluntary work to support the center can also consist of doing chores for the center like doing laundry (IntC01).

To sum up, centers receive resources from public and private sources. The reliance on private funding, primarily from parents, remains large. This makes the wealth of the parents an influencing factor for the quality of the center. These results confirm that lack of sufficient public financing for early childhood services leads to “poor schools for poor children”, i.e. differential quality leading to the reproduction of social inequalities (Rosemberg 2003; Entwisle et al.2005; Pfeffer 2008; Wiggan 2007). This affects as well the lack of didactic materials, centers have to rely on parents and INGOs to be able to purchase these materials. Leading to inequality in the availability, quantity and quality of didactic resources.

6.1.3 Nutritional Conditions
Nutrition is an important element of the early childhood centers in Ecuador. Since the national malnutrition rate is quite high and anemia is a real problem in children under five, receiving a good nutritious healthy meal each day can make a difference. Taking into account that these centers are meant to cater to the children from poor families, their nutritional status is probably worse than the national average.

INFA acknowledges this importance through providing funds for nutrition. Many interviewees, especially the cooks mentioned nutrition as the most important factor to facilitate healthy early childhood development. The children in the early childhood development centers of INFA receive four meals a day. The time schedule depends on the schedule of the center, but basically looks like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>What?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>A nutritious drink, with milk, grains, fruit and a piece of bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>Morning snack</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00/12.30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Soup, rice with chicken/fish/lentils, salad and a juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>Afternoon snack</td>
<td>Can be a porridge like drink or fruit, popcorn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Menu schedule of the centers
Source: all interviews with cooks and own observations (and tastings)
All parents that were interviewed were satisfied with the amount and variety of food their children received in the centers. According to parents, children in the centers receive just the right amount of food per day.

As of April 2011 all children in the centers of INFA receive ChisPaz of Alimentate Ecuador. ChisPaz is a nutritional supplement which consist of iron and vitamins that boosts the appetite and prevents anemia. In the provinces with the highest levels of anemia the pilot project of ChisPaz started already a year ago. The first results show that the children in the centers now have lower levels of anemia. The children receive the ChisPaz usually during lunch in the soup. The supplement has to be mixed just before consumption, preferably in a thick soup, without any dairy products. All cooks and caregivers knew how to serve the ChisPaz. Parents are informed about this supplement and its function through parent meetings.

The caregivers and coordinator weigh and measure the children bimonthly to detect malnutrition. In general the cooks receive a list from the coordinator with the names of malnourished children. The special attention in the meals for malnourished children consisted of receiving a bigger portion of the same food, serving them an extra nutritious drink, or putting a spoon of oil in the soup of the children. The cooks said they had learned this last measure in a workshop of INFA. In every center the staff members were keeping an eye on the children to make sure they finish their plates. When a child is malnourished caregivers usually alert the parents, because it could be the case that the child is sick, or is not receiving adequate nutrition at home. Many staff members stress the importance of collaboration from the parents in nutrition, by giving the children a balanced meal at home as well.

Centers together with executing organizations can take the initiative to organize meetings or workshops for parents about nutrition. Some coordinators and caregivers think that children do not receive the same quality of food in their homes during the weekends. A caregiver said that:

“They only eat here from Monday to Friday. Saturday and Sunday we do not know if they eat or do not eat in their homes. This affects the children, for the time they are here and are taken care of and looked after, but when they become five years old they go to the first year of basic education and they will not have this concern that the child has to eat, has to be nourished to be able to pick up knowledge and develop its intelligence” (IntPC01).

Another problem is, thus, that once children leave the early childhood center to go to primary school, they do not receive the attention in nutrition. Some primary schools provide a school breakfast, but around “one o’clock school is over and the children go home and you do not know if they have had lunch or not”, explains the same caregiver (IntPC01).

In general the executing organizations work with a food provider to deliver the groceries to the centers. The cooks place an order with the items they will need for the whole week. A monitor of INFA explains that the executing organizations:

“are the ones responsible for the managing of the funds and they have to correctly justify all the funds that the institution provides to them for the attention to the children” (IntT04).
In almost all centers the coordinators and cooks complained that the funds INFA provides for food are often delayed. The delay has as a consequence that centers have to turn to providers that trust them enough to sell them the groceries on credit. These providers, however, do not always have the best quality of products. In addition, they groceries are sold for a higher price than when they would be paid for in cash.

Though in general the nutritional conditions of the centers seem to be good: the children receive a varied; nutritional; healthy and balanced meals during the day, some problems remain. Due to the level of poverty of the child’s parents and in some cases their lack of knowledge of balanced nutrition, may lead to an inferior quantity and/or quality of meals at home. Though the centers can compensate for some part for this lack, children’s development and nutritional status is affected by the lack of continuity between the center and home. To ensure the link the home and the center, the staff can inform parents about nutrition through meetings, workshops of informal conversations. Furthermore, it seems that the concern with nutrition for children ends once they enter basic education. Finally, when the funds of INFA are delayed this affects the availability and quality of the ingredients of the meals in the center.

6.1.4 Health

Another component of the integrated early childhood development is health. The early childhood centers are supposed to work together with health sub-centers of the Ministry of Public Health to make sure that children’s health is regularly checked. Whether this was the case in the reality of the center seems to depend on the distance of the center in relation to the health center. When the center was just across the street the health check-ups and contact with the health center were obviously more frequent. In centers that were close to a health centers the children were checked around every three months. The staff could easily take the children in groups to the doctors and have them all checked within the day. However in centers that are further away from a health center visits to the doctor are less frequent. A coordinator in such a center explains that:

“We do have health visits, but not many. You have to make a request. I make a request every year and it is complicated, because they do not come. Just once a year” (IntC05).

According to caregivers and coordinators vaccinations are the responsibility of the parents. Parents are told before their children start assisting at the center that every child that enters the center is required to have all its vaccinations. Only when there are national campaigns, doctors come to the center to vaccinate children. These campaigns are usually just for the little ones, as a coordinator explains:

“Just for those under the age of two. Recently there was a campaign for swine-flue, they only vaccinated the under two year olds, the other remained without vaccination, because they say that the little ones have a higher risk of contamination” (IntC05).

The centers thus differ in terms of the availability of health services for the children. The responsibility of bringing children to the health center is divided between the center and the parents. In
the early childhood strategy the involvement of the Ministry of Public Health is promoted. However, who has to be the initiating party in the relationship between the early childhood center and the health center is not explicit. Due to this lack of clarity the distance to the center becomes the main influencing factor of the frequency of health check-ups. Parents and the center’s staff had contradictory ideas on to whom the responsibility of vaccinating the children belonged. Some parents pointed to the center, while the center thought it was the parent’s responsibility.

6.1.5 Pedagogical Inputs
Following the literature on early childhood development, among the inputs that matter for the perceived quality of early childhood services are pedagogical inputs, like availability of didactic materials and group size.

The availability of didactic materials is a prerequisite for the quality of the pedagogic process. Part of the funds that INFA gives for fungible materials can be used to buy arts and crafts materials. However, more durable didactic materials that caregivers said to use, such as books, CDs, movies, puzzles, construction material like blocks and Lego, scissors, musical instruments and toys, are not covered by public funds. In some centers the before-mentioned INGOs provided funds for these kinds of expenses, but other centers relied on what was left of the contribution of parents. Many parents and caregivers and coordinators mentioned that the center was lacking in didactic materials. A caregiver said to work around this by making the children in her group work on different activities or borrow materials from another group so that all could work on the same thing. Coordinators, caregivers and parents also stated that they work with collected recycled materials to make their own instruments and materials.

Most caregivers had an opinion on group sizes. All were satisfied with the new guidelines of INFA on the caregiver: children ratio. Caregivers that had worked in the center for many years mentioned that in the past they had worked with much bigger groups up to 25 children per caregiver. Also caregivers that just had worked for one or two years in the centers noticed the difference in group size. A caregiver said “a few months ago I had 17 children in my group, now I have half of that.” Caregivers say that these group sizes are better because “this is a good group to work with and to be able to teach the children more easily” (IntPC01). In general the centers complied with the guidelines of INFA.

In summary due to a lack of public funding of didactic materials, centers have to rely on parents and INGOs to be able to purchase these materials. This leads to inequality in the availability, quantity and quality of didactic materials. On the contrary, the group sizes seem to have improved with the new model of INFA.
6.1.6 Working Conditions and Development of Staff

An important part of the inputs of the center is the staff working there: their education and training, but also the conditions in which they work. These conditions consist of the staff turnover, staff wages and motivation.

The education level and work experience of the staff matters for the quality of the pedagogical process. As discussed before, the INFA manual requires caregivers to have finished higher secondary education and cooks to have finished basic education or have one year of work experience. Five of the eight interviewed caregivers and all cooks met their respective requirements. One caregiver had just finished primary education, but already had 22 years of experience working in early childhood centers. A second caregiver had only finished lower secondary education, but also had been working with the other modality of INFA, CNH for several years. Finally, in some centers the caregivers and cooks were encouraged to finish their higher secondary education. In this way one caregiver almost had obtained her bachillerato, working, studying and taking care of her daughter at the same time.

It is important to note that the educational requirements for cooks are lower than for caregivers, as four centers managed a rotating system for caregivers and cooks, i.e. the staff rotates between the areas of care and nutrition. According to a monitor of INFA this is done to make them deploy their possibilities and develop in different areas. Coordinators and legal representatives believe that it is important that every staff member knows something about the other areas to be able to better inform the parents. A caregiver liked these ideas because “you gain experience with each group; the idea of rotating is also to prevent that one gets bored of doing the same thing” (IntPC05). The new operative guide of INFA, however, states explicitly that rotating between the cooks and caregivers is forbidden, because everyone has their own specialty. In addition, the education level of the cooks was lower: only three of them had finished higher secondary education, and they had less or no experience working directly with children. I also spoke informally with most of the center’s staff, and some of them did not like the idea of rotating, because they liked their areas and were good at it.

Most staff had already some years of experience in working in the centers when they started to work in the new model of INFA. A legal representative explains that those that enter without being used to working in the centers often have a hard time in adapting to the work:

“It is difficult to find new staff. For example, we have a new colleague but she is from another guardería, so she adapts well, because it is hard to make them adapt, they need experience, they need to learn,” (IntRL07).

Center’s staff members with more work experience in early childhood center already had received additional training in the past. Most caregivers recalled the themes in which they were educated, including initial education, nutrition, health, on applying development scales like the Nelson-Ortiz test, how to treat children with disabilities.
“I have had training sessions on making dolls, music, singing, dancing, games with children […] but because the majority of the colleagues are new, they have not received these workshops, it was 5 years ago” (IntPC05)

Many staff members mentioned that “in the past” they received more training. The latest training of INFA was on the topics related to the new management model, and the new function of the coordinator. Staff at the center mentions that when there is a training only one staff member can attend. This is because of the cascade system INFA uses in giving training. The problem of this system according to a monitor of INFA is that:

“The information, as it comes down from the top, is distorted a little. When giving the training directly to the caregivers and coordinators, the information will arrive adequately. When training them directly they will know it as we know it” (IntT06).

As mentioned before some INGOs also provide training but not in all centers. The training sessions that they do participate in, are found to be useful:

“In this way we gain more confidence in ourselves and we learn new things. It really serves us in the center but also in our families” (IntPC02)

Some expressed the desire to receive more training:

“You always learn something that you did not know and that you can put in practice. I would like to have more training because it helps quite a lot” (IntPA04)

Training of the staff of the center is considered to be important by nearly all interviewees because if it “is not permanently, this can form an obstacle for early childhood development” (IntT03).

Another obstacle for early childhood development can be a high staff turnover rate. When the center’s staff and especially the caregivers change frequently, children are not able to attach to their caregivers, which is really important in their first years. A kindergarten-teacher explains that: “to change the caregiver every month affects them, because a new person comes and again they have to adapt” (IntPARV01). A monitor of INFA agrees that “a child needs emotional stability and thus stable staff” (IntT02). Though this importance is recognized by actors from both INFA and the Ministry of Education, the working conditions have made many caregivers quit. The compensation they receive is $70 under the minimum wage in Ecuador; they have no contract with INFA and thus no social security. The staff receives only a compensation because their work is seen as volunteerism. A monitor of INFA explains:

“Now we have a chapter in the constitution about citizenship participation in which volunteerism is considered to be participation, like voluntary work. Thus, the women who work in the early childhood centers are part of this group. Now, what he has told us, our current president, is that in the long term he is thinking of giving them a better salary, but not for now. Thus, we hope that this will materialize in reality, because they deserve this, because they work a lot, the work is very hard, very intense” – (IntT06)

Caregivers that have worked in the centers for a while are used to these working conditions. Their motivation to work in the centers is primarily intrinsic. Most say that they work in the centers because they like children. A caregiver affirms this by saying:
“It is not that we benefit from it economically, we do not have social security, nothing. Seeing that the children who went to this center, now are grown ups, are professionals and bring their children here, this is the satisfaction that we get from helping the children”

She goes on, underlining the altruistic character of their work:

“We work from Monday to Friday, from morning to evening and when there are mingas, we work on Saturdays and Sundays, but for us it does not matter. We give our time to work and help the children of our community that need it” (IntPC01).

All staff members were mothers and had around two to three children. Almost all interviewees called the staff working at the centers “mothers” or a derivation of this, instead of calling them by their official functions of promotora or coordinadora. This shows that working with, caring for and teaching children is seen as an extension of motherhood. A cook said “I like to work with children because I am a mother” (IntPA06). A kindergarten teacher pointed out that the center’s staff has more experience as mothers than as educators, because they know how to raise a child (IntPARV01).

Monitors point out that the working conditions are like this because the State cannot afford a contract for the entire center’s staff. There are around 10,000 coordinators, caregivers and cooks at the national level. At the moment the government does not have the funds to raise their compensations and give them social security. A legal representative states that this is also because they do not want to commit. These working conditions make it harder to find new staff.

“When new staff starts to work in the centers, the first thing they tell them: these are the conditions; these are the difficulties that exist. If they agree with that, they are welcome, if not, nothing happens, life continues” (IntT06)

Staff that has worked in the center for more years says that the compensation is higher under INFA:

“This presidency, the minister of education, everything is done so that education improves and they have made sure that the compensations of the caregivers are higher now. They are looking for a possibility to raise our compensation to the minimum wage, because we still do not earn the minimum. Before it was less, but now we are well, we are going well” (IntPC02).

However in addition to the lack of contract and the small amount the staff receive, the payment is often delayed. In almost all centers the staff mentioned this. Monitors of INFA explain that the payment of the compensations of the center’s staff is often delayed because of the many formal procedures. They stated that at the beginning of each fiscal year agreements are signed with the executing organization. During this process, this transition, the payment does not arrive on time. After the agreements are signed, the Ministry of Finance has to authorize INFA to transfer the resources to the executing organization. Therefore it can take up to two to three months for the compensation to arrive at the staff. “It is always like this in the public sector”, one of the monitors said (IntT04).

The delay is an important problem, especially because many caregivers are single mothers and need the compensation to pay their rent. A coordinator underlines that “this is what we live from” (IntC04). All this makes it hard for new staff to enter and some of the staff with more experience has to quit, because they cannot pay their bills when the payment is delayed. It is important to find the right staff because “we need people that are really competent to work with children, because it is
difficult to work with them. Because we are the pillar, the cement so that a child can go and develop” (IntPARV01).

In short, the main issues concerning the development of the staff include that, although work experience seems to be valued in the new model of INFA, there is a general dissatisfaction with the training provided. Staff members indicate that they would like and are in some cases used to receiving more training than they do now. In addition, the training should be more direct to all staff members to prevent information loss. With regard to the working conditions, there seem to be many problems: staff members have no contract, receive a disproportionate low wage, which is, in addition often delayed and are therefore not recognized in their work. These working conditions lead to a high staff turnover and ask for a high intrinsic motivation and feeling of altruism among the remaining staff.

6.1.6 Sub-Conclusion
I will now discuss the main problems in the input dimension, using the concepts of recognition, redistribution and participation.

In terms of recognition, the socioeconomic status of the families for which the service are meant is recognized by INFA by prohibiting centers to request a parental contribution. However, in reality many centers cannot adapt to this, as they do ask a monthly contribution. A monitor of INFA airs his opinion on the parental contribution in relation to poverty:

“What would happen if we would really be working with the poorest, do you think a parent can support the center with 3 dollars? No, because they have nothing and we are putting our hands in their pockets, this does not seem right to me, it is not ethical” (IntT03).

Often the co-responsibility argument is used to justify the contribution that parents have to make. If they cannot pay they have to participate in other activities like mingas. As these centers are officially meant for the poorest parents, who make long days to make ends meet, this should be taken into account and they should not be obliged to work even more.

The other consequence of the reliance on parent’s contribution are the differences in their availability, quantity and quality. All centers rely on parents for covering expenses like rent, electricity, water, gas and telephone; but also for didactic materials and maintenance of the infrastructure. When a center thus, caters to many parents from the poorest income quintiles, the quality of these inputs will be less. The redistribution of educational and developmental opportunities is therefore thwarted. As the early childhood development strategy sees education as one of the main dimensions of integrated early childhood development, more public support in this part would be needed.

In terms of nutrition, this difference in quality and quantity seems to be less defined, as these inputs are publicly funded by INFA. The main problem is, however, that when the transfers of INFA are delayed the quality, quantity and availability of the food depend on whether the executing organization has a trust-relationship with their provider, as they have to buy on credit.
Finally, the rewarding of the center’s staff does not seem to contribute to the transformation of society, as the National Development Plan describes. The lack of a contract, social security and a decent wage, of which the payment is often delayed, do not value the staff accordingly. The work is hard; they make long days, work some weekends and still their labor is not recognized as employees but merely as volunteers. Additionally, this affects the attractiveness of the job, making it hard to find new staff and leaving the current staff sometimes with no other options than to quit because they cannot cover their monthly expenses. It is often just because of the large intrinsic motivation and even altruism of the staff that they continue working in the centers, helping the children of their community. Rosemberg (2003:253) and Molyneux (2006:438) both point to how public policies use female altruism to make public programs a low-cost investment.

Concerning parents’ participation, parents have a say in the amount of the monthly contribution they make, and to some degree on the way these funds are spend. Parents, thus, have a voice in prioritizing the improvements and purchases a center can make. Nevertheless, as far as I have observed the role of the parent committee seems to be merely functional to the financing of the center. There is no insight into how these meetings with the parent’s committee work, as not all parents might be able to assist because of work obligations and can therefore be excluded.

6.2 Processes
From the literature, it has been concluded that the process dimension of quality in early childhood development consists of the processes inside the classroom: the interactions between caregivers and children. In addition relations between caregivers, cooks, coordinators and parents are of importance for the creation of an open and affective environment in which children can deploy their capacities.

6.2.1 A Day at the Center
A regular day at the center consists of pedagogical activities and free play separated by different meals. Play is seen as important for a child’s development according to different actors:

“Through play children learn a lot. They overcome their shyness and lose their fear when they start sharing and playing together” (IntPC01)

“Through playing they learn faster and better than when you make them do something” (IntC01)

“To me it seems good that they play and make contacts, and that they are not shy. Some children that do not assist at a guardería are shy” (IntM03)

Because of the importance given to play within the planning for the day, there are some moments included to play. The day starts when the caregivers and cooks arrive at the center between 7 and 8 in the morning. They receive the children until 8.30 am. Sometimes the caregivers arrive early to finish their planning for the day and to get everything ready. The caregivers make sure the children have washed their hands before they have their breakfast at 8.30am. In some centers the children eat in their
own classrooms in others they have a separate dining hall where all children eat at the same time or rotate. The caregivers help the children with the meal and wait till everyone has finished their plates.

After breakfast most children go to the bathroom, the little ones have their diapers changed, teeth are brushed, and hands are washed to be ready to start working. Till 10 am the caregivers realize activities from the pedagogical plan with the children. Activities can be centered on the recognition of metric figures, colors, numbers and the children´s addresses. Activities can include cutting and painting to develop fine motor skills while working on the recognition of colors. When the children are done with their works, the caregivers put their name on their paperwork and file them in their personal folder or hang it in the classroom.

At 10 am all children receive a mid-morning snack. After this snack, they go outside to play if the weather is nice, or they stay inside to play with Lego, modeling clay or puzzles. When they still have an activity to finish they go back inside to finish it till around 11.30 am. Around that time they go to wash their hands to prepare for lunch. In most centers lunch is served around 12 am. When children are done eating they can go outside to play. After lunch they brush their teeth in most centers, change the diapers of the little ones and make them ready for nap time. In all except for one center, all children of all ages took a nap after lunch for about an hour, until 2/2.30 pm. While the children sleep the caregivers keep an eye on them, but at the same time have to clean their classrooms and bathrooms. When the children wake up or are woken up by the caregivers, they receive their afternoon snack. Finally the caregivers wash the children’s faces and comb their hair to make them ready to go home. In some centers they play outside or when it is cold or rainy they let them watch a movie, if they have a television. Parents usually come to pick up their children between 3pm and 5pm. The caregivers clean their areas in the afternoon and go home to their own families.

The working days of caregivers, but of cooks and coordinators as well, are thus filled with many responsibilities and tasks. This makes the recognition of their work an even more important issue.

6.2.2 Curriculum
The activities realized during the day are planned on a weekly basis. The way this plan is made depends on whether the center counts with a kindergarten teacher and on the age group.

In 2009 the emphasis shifted from care to education by introducing a pilot program in which kindergarten teachers of the Ministry of Education started to provide support to the caregivers (Acuerdo Interministerial 0002-09 2009). Five of the visited centers counted with the support of a kindergarten teacher. This teacher supports the caregivers in the making of pedagogical plans for activities with the children from three to five year old and gives “lessons” once or twice a week. Caregivers working in centers that received this support from the Ministry of Education were usually satisfied with the help.
In these centers the curriculum used for this age group originates from the Ministry of Education. The methodology of the Ministry is child-centered. A kindergarten-teacher described that at the beginning of the week children tell about what they experienced in the weekend. One of these experiences is taken as the “significant situation” of the week. An example is that children saw national flags hanging in the neighborhood. Activities related to this theme: a dialogue about the different aspects of the theme; recognizing patriotic symbols; doing something creative with the colors of the national flag; play, and listen to the national anthem (from pedagogical plan of a center). Next to these activities, the planning consists of some routine activities that are repeated everyday: the children sing a welcome song; discuss the weather and sing to the sun or about the rain; their assistance is checked after they present themselves; ending with stating the date and day of the week and another song to “lady of the week” (pedagogical plan).

The focus on the three to five year olds in the centers supported by a kindergarten teacher, led in some centers to a lack of activity planning for the zero to three year olds. For them the emphasis remained more on care, as stimulating activities were not part of the daily activities.

Not all centers have the support of a kindergarten teacher. Some were not aware of this agreement between INFA and the Ministry of Education. In order to qualify for this support, centers are required to have at least 15 children in the three to five age group. The requesting procedure is quite a bureaucratic process and has to be initiated by the coordinator of the center (IntRL05).

In the centers that did not have a kindergarten teacher, caregivers are supposed to base the activities on a new operative pedagogical guide, which INFA introduced in April 2011. This guide can be seen as the curriculum guiding the pedagogical processes in the center. Though all centers were visited in May 2011, none of the coordinators or caregivers had this guide at their disposal. The pedagogical plans were either made in collaboration with the coordinator or by using pedagogic handbooks of the previous programs. Therefore the quality and the presence of a pedagogical plan depended on the pedagogical knowledge of the coordinator and caregivers. Though in some centers the coordinators were almost kindergarten teacher themselves and were capable of supporting the caregivers, in other centers the coordinators had no previous experience working with children. In these centers the focus was also more on the three to five year olds.

Summing up, a serious recent effort has been made to put more emphasis on the educational component of early childhood development, through the support program of the Ministry of Education and the new curriculum. However, not all centers are aware of the possibility to request the support of a kindergarten teacher and the new curriculum of INFA is yet to be implemented in the centers. Therefore presence and content of the pedagogical plan differs between centers. At the same time it is not a total solution as kindergarten teachers are trained to work with the three to five year old children, so in practice the youngest children receive less stimulation and pedagogical attention.
6.2.3 Recognition of Diversity

The operative pedagogical guide of INFA promotes an inclusive culture, with respect for different ethnicities, cultures and to treat boys and girls the same. According to the coordinators and caregivers the majority of the children are mestizo. In some centers, there were some indigenous and Afroecuadorian children. A coordinators clarifies that “here we are from different provinces […] everyone is equally respected and the children are taught that every province has its culture” (IntC04).

Caregivers and coordinators stated that mutual respect is important and that they try to teach this to the children. A caregiver expressed her doubt that in other centers this might be different as the Afroecuadoreans came to the center “with fear and doubt, because they were told they cannot take them in, but we do. All children are welcome here” (IntPC01).

Though the variety of culture and ethnicities was recognized by center’s staff and INFA’s curriculum, caregivers did not organize many intercultural activities. Caregivers and coordinators emphasized the equality of different cultures and ethnicities. Some said only to organize activities about the different cultures when there were more Afroecuadorian and indigenous children assisting at the center. Other centers seemed to dedicate more time to sharing the customs and traditions of their community and/or of other cultures, in this way:

“We try to conserve our culture. We always share the culture of Ecuador with the children. We include activities in the pedagogical plan, so that they do not lose the values that belong to our country” (IntC02).

Examples of intercultural activities include dressing up in typical clothing, performing dances, and preparing typical plates. These activities are usually centered on a holiday celebration, like San Pedro. A caregiver noted that once children enter primary school they learn more in-depth about the different cultures (IntPC05). A coordinator recently received a pedagogical workshop on interculturality and was planning to create a thematic play corner for the children with all the ethnicities represented (IntC06).

In terms of the recognition of different indigenous languages, all staff at the centers pointed out that they did not know of any children that spoke Quichua or another indigenous language in a monolingual manner. In five of the centers children assisted of whom the parents were bilingual, speaking Quichua as well as Spanish. Some children continue to speak their indigenous language, but more at home. One of the visited centers was located in an indigenous community. The community leader however stated that “in our community the Quichua language is lost […] because there is no interest among the youth” (IntMC04). It must be noted that this last center the coordinator had started the procedure of requesting the support of a bilingual kindergarten teacher of the Ministry of Education (IntC07). Furthermore, the visited centers did not belong to the Wawakamayuk Wasi variant of early childhood centers. In these centers the emphasis will probably lie more on preserving indigenous languages, culture and practices.
In conclusion, in relation to the recognition of different cultures and ethnicities the emphasis seems to be on non-discrimination. Some centers organize intercultural activities, but often these are only incidental activities e.g. around the different holidays. Recognition of different cultures and languages does not seem to be an integral part of the pedagogic vision in the visited centers. All children spoke Spanish and only some did so in a bilingual manner. This might, however, imply that the centers can play a role in the loss of indigenous languages.

6.2.3 Affection

In addition to the pedagogic part of the process in the centers, affection and the loving care of parents and caregivers, is important for the healthy development of the child. Most of the monitors of INFA and the caregivers even emphasized that this is the most important factor that enables a child to develop and grow. Therefore, a lack of affection can be an obstacle for children to develop their capacities (IntT04). Due to poverty, psychosocial factors, such as stress and depression levels among parents can be increased. This can all affect the early development of the child, in terms of physical, social-emotional and cognitive development (Nunes 1993:19). As mitigating factors, Nunes (1993:19) mentions a supportive environment, which the staff of the centers tries to provide for the children to compensate for their home environments. Center’s staff and monitors of INFA mentioned that many children in the centers come from households where love and care are lacking. This importance of affection from the parents is emphasized by a caregiver:

“A child can learn in the center, but the parent is the one who bathes them, hugs them and gives them all the things that a child needs” (IntPC02).

Many parents, kindergarten teachers and community members underline that a child’s education and development start at home with the loving care of their parents. In some centers the staff had noted children with a lack of affection in their homes. According to a caregiver, these children “arrive sad, do not feel like doing anything and behave differently” (IntPC05). According to a kindergarten-teacher it is a common factor for the centers that the children come from homes that lack stability, i.e. their parents are separated and they live partly with their mother and father (IntPARV01). A legal representative stated that children’s development is not just thwarted due to lack of financial resources, but also because of a lack of care of their parents (IntRL06). The link between a lack of affection and the economic situation of their parents is often made by the interviewees. As parents spend their days working to make ends meet, they have no or do not make the time to spend with their children (IntPARV01). When both parents work, the child is already asleep when they get home (IntPC01). According to another kindergarten teacher:

“The bond between mother and child is a bond that we as teachers cannot substitute for, but parents are not aware of this” (IntPARV02)

Some coordinators had even detected maltreatment of children in their centers. A coordinator explains:
“Children come to the center with bruises and their parents tell me that they have fallen, but I listen to the children and according to what they say I go up to talk with the parents (IntC05).

When caregivers or coordinators suspect maltreatment they first have to confirm this by visiting the family of the child. When a home visits confirms suspicions caregivers can turn to the child protection department of INFA (IntT04). For children who do not have affection in their homes, receiving loving care from their caregivers is even more important.

Some interviewees suggested that workshops and meetings on the topic of maltreatment for parents might make a difference. According to them these workshops should discuss the rights of the child, explain what maltreatment entails and give advice on how to raise their children. Gender differences exist in the level of participation in these meetings: mothers generally participate more. According to a coordinator this has to do with machismo, which dictates certain gender roles. Women are expected to be concerned with raising the children and are therefore expected to be more involved in the early childhood center (IntC07). A legal representative of a women’s organization stresses the importance of involving the fathers in these meetings, because, according to her, maltreatment more often comes from fathers. She states that “because of machismo, there is maltreatment” (IntRL07). This legal representative is fighting machismo by educating women to raise their sons differently and by promoting the involvement of fathers in their child’s development. Another coordinator also tried to engage more fathers in the processes in the center and so far seemed to be successful (IntC02).

To conclude all interviewees agree that affection is one of the most important elements for the healthy development of the young child. A lack of it can therefore thwart this process. According to the staff many children lack affection in their homes and some are even maltreated, therefore the staff tries their best to compensate for the children’s home environment by giving them love and affection in the center. In addition, through parent workshops they promote the involvement of both mothers and fathers and try to foster affective home environments.

6.2.4 Parent and Community Participation

Every center had a parents committee. Their role is to collect parent contributions, decide how to spend them, help organize celebrations, and discuss pending issues. The parent committee members interviewed often complained about the low level of participation of the other parents. The main cause, according to them, was ignorance. According to the parent committee members the other parents, just did not realize that they need to be involved with the development of their child. According to them, other parents just leave their children at the center, and consider them the responsibility of the caregivers. According to monitors, the lack of co-responsibility of parents is a serious obstacle for children’s development and the functioning of the center:

““There is a lack of co-responsibility of the parents, because they still consider the center to be like a guardería. They do not realize yet that the development is integrated: the participation should, therefore, not only be of the caregivers and the State, but also of the family and the community” (IntT02)."
For caregivers the main disagreement with parents is about the punctuality of the parents, because often they often arrive late when picking up their children at the end of the day. Officially the centers are open for eight hours a day, usually from 8 am till 4 pm. Sometimes parents arrive later and caregivers or cooks have to stay with the children until their parents arrive. When parents have to work late, they have to let the center know in advance and send a family member or neighbor. A mother admits that this is troubling for the center’s staff as “the ladies cannot stay, they also have their homes and families to attend to. Often the ladies stay until late” (IntM01). According to a caregiver it is also important for the children to be picked up on time “because when it is late, they begin to cry, and say “my mommy is not coming”, because they see that the other children go home and they stay” (IntPC07).

The importance of the community is reflected in the manual of INFA, which stimulates executing organizations to hire staff that is from the community. This is done, to make the link between the center and the community stronger and so that the children receive the attention that they are used to at home (MIES-INFA 2011a). This preference is shared by legal representatives: “we as organization prefer to look for someone from here, from the sector” (IntRL02). All the staff members lived in the same community as the center. Most of them had been living there for over 10 years and some were even born there. A community member explains that “we know all the caregivers thoroughly, everyone who is working here is approved by the community, no one is from outside the community, and everyone is from here” (IntMC04).

The degree of participation of the community in the center differed. Especially in neighborhoods which did not yet have all the basic services the priorities of the community and local government lie with “everything that is infrastructure and basic needs. They do not see the early childhood center as a priority for the population” (IntT06). Another monitor of INFA explains that:

“In neighborhoods where they do not have basic services, they forget the children, because we want to have a good road, we want to have light. This is also important, but the most important is the treatment that we give to our children” (IntT03).

In three of the visited centers the community was strongly committed to the center’s needs. In these communities there was a feeling of solidarity. As one community leader puts it "always when you are united you can achieve anything, although alone you can do nothing" (IntMC04). In communities where the participation was lacking, center’s staff talked about their struggles to gain support of the community. A coordinator points out:

“I have asked the executing organization to let us meet with the president of the neighborhood committee. We met with their treasurer and the secretary, and they told us it did not interest them. They asked me “what do we gain from being with the center?” (IntC06).
The low level of community participation can partly be explained by internal migration. Many people have migrated from the countryside or coastal areas to the urban parts of the Highlands for job opportunities. This means that the composition of the children in the centers is mixed. As one mother explains, they moved to a parish closer to Quito because “in the countryside there are no opportunities for work, there is nothing, I would die of hunger there”, moving means for her that now “we are closer to a city, for a better future for our children” (IntM05). Centers do not only accept children from the same community but also from other parishes because “we all have to be there and give each other a hand as Ecuadorians” (IntC04). This however, has as consequence that there is not always a strong community behind the center. Two legal representatives have noted this relation:

“In this early childhood center I have seen many migrated families, because the majority is not from here, they are from outside. It is thus, an early childhood center that is a bit complex, because there are migrants” (IntRL05).

“Here the children and parents are from different neighborhoods, because we attend to children from parents that work in houses in the neighborhood. When they finish their work they pick up their children and go home to their neighborhood. It is like an early childhood center without a community” (IntRL03).

Another reason often mentioned is that in urban areas the people are more individually oriented and that the solidarity that exists in rural communities is lacking. However, two of the centers in which the community actively participated were considered to be in urban areas.

As noted earlier the center’s relation with health centers that are close by are usually established. However, in none of the centers there was direct relation between the center and the primary school in the neighborhood. Often the first year of basic education to which the children leaving the center at age five should go, is lacking in the primary schools. This is because the law that makes basic education start at age five, has only been put into action since 2007. To bridge this gap in some neighborhoods there are kindergartens that offer this first year of basic education. However, often the public ones are full and waiting lists are long and often parents had to sleep in front of the kindergarten to get a place for their child (IntPC07). When they cannot get into the public school or kindergarten, parents have no other option but to go far outside of the neighborhood, or send their children to private education. Therefore the transition between the early childhood center and subsequent education is not smooth.

Summing up parents are expected to participate in the center, mainly by assisting at meetings and helping out in mingas. According to many interviewees this co-responsibility of parents is lacking either because of work or a lack of concern. The model of INFA tries to make the link between the center and the community by only allowing persons from the community to work in the centers. The involvement of the community, however, differs. This mainly seems to depend on the level of community organization already present and the composition of the center, that is, whether the children are (originally) from the community. The link between the early childhood center and public institutions that offer the first years of basic education in the neighborhood is not present at the
moment and could be strengthened to ensure a smooth transition for the children leaving the center at age five.

6.2.5 Sub-Conclusion
An analysis will now be made of the process dimension of the quality of the centers through the concepts of recognition, redistribution and participation.

In terms of recognition of cultural, ethnic, linguistic diversity, efforts are made by giving centers the possibility to request the support of a bilingual kindergarten teacher and by including a chapter on “inclusive culture” in the new curriculum of INFA. The emphasis in most centers seems, however, to be on equality and non-discrimination instead of recognition of diversity.

Centers have the objective to redistribute educational opportunities to children from the poorest families. One way to achieve this is the educational component through the support of the Ministry of Education and the new curriculum. Nevertheless not all coordinators are aware of the possibility to request the support of a kindergarten teacher and the procedure attached to it. A monitor of INFA, however, warns that these kindergarten teachers should not be seen as a “panacea, the caregivers working in the centers have tons of experiences, they have knowledge as well” (IntT05). Through the support of the Ministry of Education the learning process of three to five year olds is strengthened. As one mother puts it “the children leave here knowing how to learn really well, therefore they do not need an expensive school or institution” (IntM01). Most parents and center’s staff in the role of parents mentioned that assisting at a center prepared their children for basic education. However, to ensure the continuation of education for the children, the community has to have a public primary school or kindergarten, that offers the first year of basic education.

This increased attention for three to five year olds in the pedagogical plans has the consequence that some centers served more as guarderías for the for the zero to three age group, as they were seen as less important. INFA seems however, to be working on this, as a new training on the curriculum from zero to five was planned in June 2011.

The participation of parents and the community in the center differs. Parents are expected to participate in the improvement of the center by “voluntarily” working on some Saturdays and Sundays in mingas. The show-up rate is however often low. Parents are blamed by center’s staff, legal representatives and monitors of INFA for not taking their co-responsibility in the development of their children in the center. However, this perceived lack of co-responsibility seems to be the consequence of having to work long hours to make ends meet and not being able to find the time to participate. In practice, this principle puts a high burden on the parent’s committee. In one of the centers I witnessed a legal representative explaining to the president of the parent committee, what her role should be. According to both the coordinator and the legal representative the committee has to channel and express the ideas that they have; they have to find people who can help the center, because they know the organizations that exist in the neighborhood (IntM05). The mother said that in the committee they
had ideas but they never had known to whom to turn to put these into practice (IntM05). A community member in a center with a strongly involved community, also underlines the importance of families, and sees the education of the under five year olds as an essential part of transforming society:

“Attentiveness to childhood is essential [...] from the State as well as from families. The children that assist now, will improve and develop the country” (IntMC01)

However in the majority of the visited centers the community does not seem to be really involved in the needs of the children in the center. The reliance on the co-responsibility of the parents and the community is thus in practice, not self-evident. Nevertheless, in some communities their organization stems from many years back, often from fighting for a common cause. In two of the three centers where the community was united and active, the executing organization of the center was a community based women’s organization that had been founded to answer the need for childcare in their neighborhoods. The other center was located in an indigenous community in which the community was strongly organized to fight for basic services, as well as for the care of their children. Thus community and parent participation is not something that can be created in an instance. It is part of an organizational process, “a change in the way of thinking” (IntM04). The consequence of the current policy is the overreliance on parents to supplement the lack of public funds available to early childhood centers. This implies that access to quality early childhood centers is not universal but is greatly dependent on the communities and parents and not solely on public funding.
6.3 Outcomes
The outcome dimension of quality can be divided into physical outcomes and cognitive-social outcomes in the development of the child that assist at the center. This study did not include any measurements, by literally measuring and weighing the children nor by testing their development with standardized tests. Therefore, an overview of the perceptions of parents, caregivers, cooks and coordinators on the change in the children will be given.

6.3.1 Physical Outcomes
Most of the caregivers and in some cases the coordinator weigh and measure the children every few months. The ones who are in the risk of being malnourished are monitored closely. Around ten percent of the children in the centers I visited were malnourished according to the center’s staff. They distinguished between “underweight”, in risk of being malnourished and actually being malnourished. Most caregivers think that the malnutrition is not caused by assisting at the center, but is prevented, because “here there is the possibility to eat” (IntPC04). Most of the children that are underweight are ill or enter the center like this, because they did not have a good nutrition at home before entering. It is harder to fight malnutrition in children when the mother was malnourished during her pregnancy (IntC02).

All parents had children with the appropriate height and weight for their age, except for two. These two children were struggling with health problems. “The children had a better weight, every time when they went to medical consults” (IntM08). Another mother said that her daughter had gained weight since she went to the center (IntM03).

Parents mentioned some of the fine and gross motor skills their children had learned through going to the center. These skills included: holding a pencil, cutting on a line, drawing, walking, indicating different body parts, imitating the movements of their caregivers and washing their hands (IntPC08; IntM08; IntM03).

All in all, the centers seem to be contributing to reducing malnutrition among under five year olds and to improving their fine and gross motor skills. In this way the centers can be contributing to a more equal distribution of educational opportunities, when the children assisting at the center are actually from the poorest families.

6.3.2 Cognitive and Social Outcomes
Most centers applied the Nelson-Ortiz test, which is a standardized test from Colombia for children under the age of six, which tests four different areas of their development. These areas are: gross and fine motor skills; language; and social-personal development. Many parents mentioned the language use of their children as one of the things they had noticed about the behavior of their children since they went to the center. “She is an expert in talking now” (IntM02). Other parents said that their daughter is just three years old and knows how to sing and talks about everything she experiences in a day (IntM08).
Caregivers and coordinators, who had applied the Nelson Ortiz test, said that they had to work on the language component, because children were mostly lacking in this area (IntPC02; IntPC05). What they do to improve the levels of the children is singing to them, talking to them, showing them pictures and telling them stories with pictures (IntPC02). Coordinators explains that with the children that are in “alert” you have to work more, so that they can achieve the “adequate” level for their age (IntC05; IntC06). A kindergarten teacher sums up the improvements she has noticed in the children she teaches:

“Here are quite a lot of children in whom I have seen a major change and this is because they are in an early childhood center. Children that did not speak now do speak and express themselves try to communicate with other persons, with the older persons, with other children, they play. Thus, this is a great benefit, besides that they develop cognitively; they learn the meaning of words. Thus, there are a lot of benefits from being here in an early childhood center” (IntPARV02).

In conclusion, parents seem to be satisfied with the progress in cognitive and social development of their children since assisting at the center. Caregivers use the outcomes of standardized test to guide them in which areas of development should be strengthened in which children and stimulate them accordingly.

6.3.3 Coverage

In 2009 INFA attended to 539,980 children under the age of five. As Ecuador has 1.4 million under five year olds, 37.7 percent is reached by the public early childhood development centers and home visit programs. Half of Ecuador’s children under five live in poor or extreme poor families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population under 5</th>
<th>Children under 5 living in poverty*</th>
<th>Children under 5 living in Extreme poverty*</th>
<th>Total children living in poverty/extreme poverty</th>
<th>In centers of MIES-INFA</th>
<th>Coverage As percentage of total # children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,431,904</td>
<td>296,116</td>
<td>405,570</td>
<td>701,686</td>
<td>539,980</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Coverage of early childhood development centers (MCDS 2011; Rosero Moncayo 2009).


The coverage of this target population is, however, unclear. If we would assume that all children in the centers are from the poorest two income quintiles, the coverage gap would be 23 percent. However, in the worst case scenario, all children assisting in the centers are non-poor, making the gap 100 percent. Probably the real coverage gap for the poorest lies somewhere in between. It is unclear whether the children in the centers do indeed come from poor families because; although the policy is to grant preferential access to these children there is no mechanism to ensure this. According to Mkandawire (2005:9) “to target successfully a mechanism is needed that discriminates the poor from the non-poor.” INFA provides a long list of obligations and responsibilities that parents should meet when they send their child to a center, but handing in income and job information is not among these requirements. From the interviews it also became clear that most centers do not check the income or whether both parents are employed. A coordinator expressed that “we know that for the majority of the
children both parents work” (IntC04). In this way the under-coverage of children of the poorest parents is high, while the leakage leads to preferential benefits for the better off among the poor (Mkandawire 2005:9; Tejerina Silva et al. 2009:229).

Two main aspects influence this selection, first the lack of early childhood development centers and the extra costs. In all centers the demand was higher than the amount of places available for children. Often the center’s staff mentioned that everyday parents came to the center to ask if their child could attend. Main reasons for parents to send their children to an early childhood center are: the socializing aspect, to become more independent and to interact with other children; out of the necessity, because parents have to work; cognitive socializing, i.e. to ease the transition to basic education; because experiences with other children or family member have shown that the center offers a reliable service and finally because of the meals the children receive. Reasons that were mentioned for not assisting were: the reliance on a broader social network to look after the children; dissatisfaction with the centers due to previous experiences and the (perceived) costs. This last reasons explains why the target population, the children from the poorest families is not reached. A caregiver expressed that:

“The poorest parents often do not send their children to an early childhood center and they do not hire someone to take care of them in the house, because the parents do not have the funds to cover these expenses. I think a part of the poor population has this problem: that their children do not receive initial education. Others, who earn a bit more, look for an early childhood center or hire someone” (IntPC07).

A legal representative reflected on the lack of coverage of the poorest:

“Actually, the service should be for the poor and extreme poor, but INFA does not even have the required resources to give everything a center needs, so that everything is free of charge. If the service would be free, the centers would not function, because they rely on the funds from parents to cover basic services and purchases of didactic material” (IntRL03).

A community member in a center with strong community organization explains that the problem lies more with the perceived costs:

“Parents think it is expensive to put your child in a guardería. […]I tell them there is stimulation, meals, they have everything, and they are taken care of. On the other hand, on the street or in the house, they do not have that. They spend their days playing with the dogs, nothing more” (IntMC01)

Concluding, the coverage of the public centers of INFA does not cover parents’ demand for early childhood development services. Though the policy mentions preferential access for the poorest, it is not clear what percentage of the children of poorest families actually assists at the centers as there is no targeting mechanism. It is most likely that the poorest are not reached because centers ask for a monthly parent contribution.

6.3.4 Sub- Conclusion
For the children assisting in the center the nutrition and education they receive, helps them catch up and to be able to make better use of the subsequent educational opportunities. Parents and center’s
staff notice positive changes in both the physical and social-cognitive development of the children assisting. The emphasis of this research has, however, not been on measuring outcomes.

More can be said on another “outcome”, that is, the coverage that the centers achieve. Inequalities in access to early childhood services seem to remain. There are several processes of exclusion at work here. First of all, because centers ask contribution and this is known in the neighborhood, the poorest families do not think they can send their children there. Especially the poorest parents are not aware of their children’s rights to assist at the center; neither do they know that the parental contribution officially is supposed to be voluntary and that many centers have ways of recognizing their low socioeconomic status by giving a “sibling-discount” or waiving the contribution, when parents support the center in another way. The first reason of exclusion could thus, be labeled as lack of information. In addition to that, coordinators, monitors of INFA and legal representatives admitted that centers would not be able to function would they cater to just children from the poorest parents. Though centers claim to be working with poor families, in reality they are not serving the poorest. A monitor explains:

“They tell me that they are working with poor families, but they have no embarrassment or problems with asking them for more money. Thus, I tell them, so they are not poor. I tell them what would happen when the majority of these children would really be super extreme poor. What will you do with the fees you are asking now?” (IntT03).

Another monitor agrees that “the coverage is not for the population that should be attended. This is what is missing and we are purifying this now” (IntT05). Though the centers may not be serving the poorest, they are also not serving the richest. A mother concluded that the center was probably serving poor parents, since “if they would be rich, they would not bring their children here” (IntM06). Richer parents, including the monitors of INFA, often bring their children to private centers. This in addition to the reliance on parent’s contribution implies that “benefits meant exclusively for the poor often end up being poor benefits” (Sen 1995:14 in Mkandawire 2005:7). This could be circumvented when the government would really ensure universal access for all children by funding all early childhood development centers, but allocating more funds according to the number of children from poor families that assist (ECLAC 2000:78–79). Only then, will these early childhood centers be able to redistribute educational opportunities of quality to the poorest of the poor.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this concluding chapter the main research question will be answered:

*Which elements of the human capital, human rights and social justice approach can be found in the new early childhood development policy of Ecuador and how are they related to the perceptions of different stakeholders on the quality of public early childhood development centers?*

The four sub-questions have helped to answer the above research question. The national early childhood development policy and its changes after the election of Correa and the creation of INFA were discussed in Chapter five. The underlying theoretical concepts of previous and current policies were respectively, discussed in the analytical second and fourth part of same chapter. The perceptions of the stakeholders on the different dimensions of quality are described in Chapter six. Finally, the sub-conclusions in that chapter analyze these perceptions using the theoretical framework of the social justice approach. I will now continue with summarizing the main findings.

7.1 Changes in the National Early Childhood Development Policy

This thesis has argued that the previous public policies on early childhood development in Ecuador were characterized by neoliberal elements that reflected the human capital approach. These elements included the involvement of the private (corporate) sector in the funding and provision of early childhood services, targeting, reliance on communities and the introduction of market mechanisms, such as the competitive assignment of funds to NGO projects. In this way, under previous policies the relation between the State and families that needed early childhood development services was distorted, as was shown in figure five.

As the government of Correa, elected in 2007, claims to break with the neoliberal model of development and to introduce socialism of the 21st century, it would be expected that the new early childhood development policy contains less neoliberal elements. A first step in the new policy was the creation of the Institute for Childhood and the Family (INFA) in 2008, which aligned all existing early childhood development programs under one public umbrella. The funding of the early childhood development centers remains to go through organizations of civil society: NGOs, CBOs and churches. However, since 2011 the State can also provide funding to local governments as executing organizations of early childhood centers. This made on the one hand the relation between the State and the families and children that need the service more direct, while on the other hand it has politicized the centers, as local governments are more likely to become the executing organization of a center that is in favor of the current mayor. Since local governments have more resources than regular not-for-profit organizations, this may lead to inequality in terms of additional funding.

Elements of the current policy on early childhood development that reflect the social justice approach include the expansion of public funding, the intended preferential access for the poorest two income quintiles and therefore the prohibition of asking for parent contributions, the recognition of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity and the promotion of parent and community participation.
However, what makes the policy truly belonging to the social justice approach is its place within the transformation of the neoliberal development model into the current model. The new development model links economic and social policy to fight historical injustices. However, though the aspiration, expressed in the National Development Plan, is to value and recognize care-related labor, the (mostly) women working at the early childhood centers are not recognized as employees but as volunteers, resulting in a low and often delayed compensation, no contract, and no social security. There seem, thus, to be continuations of the neoliberal credo of “doing more with less”, by a lack of state commitment to provide the center’s staff with the rights they deserve to keep the service cost-efficient.

7.2 Perceptions on Quality and their Relations to Social Justice
On a brighter note, the stakeholders’ perceptions, especially of parents, on quality were rather positive. Among the wider group of interviewees there was agreement on some of the improvements that were made by the creation of the public INFA and its policy. First of all, all children receive a balanced and healthy nutrition of four meals a day; while anemia is prevented by giving them iron supplements. Furthermore, group sizes seem to have improved, as caregiver: child ratios now enable personal attention, which fosters education and affection processes in the classroom. An effort is made to strengthen the educational component through the support of kindergarten teachers of the Ministry of Education and the new operative curriculum guide of INFA.

Remarkably, the inputs and processes mentioned as improvements are all publicly funded, and therefore more equally distributed between the centers. Regarding the educational component not all centers are beneficiaries of the support program. Coordinators of the centers have to be aware of the possibility to request the support of a kindergarten teacher and of which procedural steps to take. In addition, as kindergarten teachers are there to support the education of the older children, in some cases the centers remain guarderías, for the youngest children. The new curriculum of INFA includes ways to cognitively and socially stimulate and promote the development of motor skills of under three year olds as well. In the near future the center’s staff will probably receive training on this topic.

Through improvement of nutrition levels and the emphasis on education, educational opportunities for poor families can be leveled. However, there remain inequalities between centers in terms of didactic material and infrastructure. This differential quality can be explained by the reliance on private funding and support. All visited centers asked for a parental contribution which is used to pay basic services, didactic material and improvements of the center. This leads to a “perverse mechanism” in which centers that are intended for the poorest parents, will not “recruit” children from the poorest families as this makes the centers unable to function. Therefore, centers that attend to children from the better off among the poor are more likely to have sufficient didactic material and adequate infrastructure. In this way the poorest of the poor are still excluded. The poorest are also excluded, because they often are not aware of the fact that the centers are supposed to be free and that their children have a right to assist. Another source of difference is community participation. Some
communities are more organized than others. Centers that are supported by their community can, even when the community is poor, rely on more help in improvements in the centers through e.g. mingas but also in attracting additional (external) funding. This external funding or support in form of workshops can come from INGOs, as in some cases the involvement of INGOs was linked to having a stronger community.

From the interviews with center’s staff became clear that their working conditions are a serious issue. They do not feel recognized in their labor and sometimes have no other option than to quit because they are unable to pay their rents because of the delay in payment. This leads to a change in staff on a regular basis which does not promote the emotional attachment of the children who need it because many lack affection in their homes according to my interviewees. They make clear that their work is not in the slightest way volunteerism: they have a demanding job, work schedules to keep to, even work in some of the weekends to improve the center, and many have years of work experience but are still not recognized by a contract. According to my interviewees this is because of a lack of resources of INFA but also because of an unwillingness to commit.

All in all, public funding has a positive effect on the nutrition, care and to some degree education of the children that assist. At the same time, however, public funds remain insufficient for leveling educational opportunities and creating more equality because of differential quality created by the reliance on private funding and support from parents, INGOs and the community. In addition, to be able to ensure the emotional stability of children working conditions should be improved. Not only for the children but also for the women, to give them the recognition and rewarding of their care – related labor that they deserve.

7.3 Contribution and Implications

One of the contributions of this research is the integrated model displayed in figure one, which could be applied in analyzing which elements of the theoretical approaches of human capital, human rights and social justice are present in other public educational programs and to guide the analysis of perceived quality of these programs.

My research has aimed to contribute to a more qualitative understanding of the quality of early childhood development centers. Until now the research on these centers in Ecuador seemed to concentrate on the outcomes of the centers, especially the measurable outcomes in terms of standardized development tests taken by the children. Though this can be indicative of main problems that need to be addressed, the underlying inputs and processes were less researched. In addition, this study has shown how the quality and availability of inputs and the consequent processes, are affected by public commitment and the reliance on private funding and support.

My findings confirm and explain some of the findings of a quantitative study on the same early childhood development centers by Rosero Moncayo (2009). Rosero Moncayo found that children assisting at the centers come from homes in which physical punishment is common (59
percent) and which score higher on an indicator of less affective home environments. The indications of my interviewees that many children in the center lack affection at home, confirm these quantitative findings. In addition my interviewees suggest that this can improved by parent workshops to raise awareness of good treatment of children. Furthermore, Rosero Moncayo (2009:60) finds that the living conditions of the children in the centers are below the national average in terms of access to basic services. He therefore, concludes that the targeting is adequate. However, my interviewees indicated that the poorest of the poor remain unserved. In this way, my qualitative research adds a layer of insight to the perceived coverage of the programs, unveiling that the compensatory character of the program can be improved.

Another important contribution to the knowledge on this topic is the part on working conditions. This always seems to have been a subject that is treated with caution, illustrated by the Ministry’s staff member asking me not touch upon this in the interviews. However, the center’s staff wanted their voice to be heard and was eager to talk about this. They were very aware of their situation, but as far as I observed did not organize or unionize themselves in any way. To support them at least through the help of a kindergarten teacher, the awareness of the program of the Ministry of Education should be increased.

Furthermore, in order to make the poorest aware of their rights to let their children attend a center, executing organizations, centers and/or the State could start an awareness campaign. Such an effort will however be fruitless, if the State in does not open up more public resources for the centers, to be able to function and offer quality care and education without the financial support of parents.

In the end, though the underlying theoretical approach of the government of Correa overlaps with social justice and some positive steps are made, due the overall insufficient public funding, equal educational opportunities for the poorest of the poor are not ensured.
References


Reconcile the Employment and Family Responsibilities of Men and Women.


APPENDIX

1. Interviews conducted by researcher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>How many?</th>
<th>Why missing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Coordinator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>One center did not have a coordinator at the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cook</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(one interview just on paper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Caregiver</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Kindergarten Teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Only in two centers a parvularia was present when I visited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Community Member</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>In the 4 other centers the community was less involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Legal representative of the executing organization</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Two centers belonged to the same organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Monitor of INFA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Two centers belonged to the same monitor. At one center the monitor did not have time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Coordinadora</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Promotora de Cuidado</td>
<td>Caregiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Promotora de Alimentación</td>
<td>Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Madre/Padre</td>
<td>Mother/Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RL</td>
<td>Representante Legal</td>
<td>Legal Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Miembro de Comunidad</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Técnico/a</td>
<td>Monitor of INFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARV</td>
<td>Parvularia</td>
<td>Kindergarten teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFA</td>
<td></td>
<td>National director of Risks and Emergencies at MIES-INFA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>IntINFA01</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>National Director of Risks and Emergencies at the national level of MIES-INFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>IntC01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a bachillerato degree, has worked in the center as caregiver for five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>IntPC01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished primary school, has 25 years of experience as caregiver in these kind of centers. Age group she attended: 4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>IntPA01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a bachillerato degree, has worked in the center since her husband lost his job, which was 3 years ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>IntM01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished her ciclo básico, owns a copy shop at her home. Is president of the parents’ committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>IntMC01</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Has finished primary education, his official job is cameraman, he is the president of the neighborhood committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>IntT01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a licenciatura in pedagogy, has been working for 12 years in this kind of services, used to work as a kindergarten teacher in a private institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>IntC02</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Is in university, is finishing her thesis. Has been working with children since 10 years. Has two centers under her supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>IntPC02</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a bachillerato degree. Has been working in the center as a caregiver for nine years. Age group she attended: 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>IntPA02</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a bachillerato degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>IntM02</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a bachillerato degree. Is not working at the moment because of an injury, for this reason she does not have to pay the parent’s contribution. Is president of the parents’ committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>IntRL01</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Legal Representative of a women’s and family association. Has a university degree. Started working with children as being a caregiver in the center 12 years ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>IntMC02</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Is the community leader, works in the construction business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>IntT02</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a university degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>IntC03</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Is in the fourth year of her licenciatura</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

85
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education/Professional Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>4-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished <em>ciclo básico</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Has worked in the center since 3 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>4-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished <em>ciclo básico</em>. Is the vice-president of the parents’ committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>4-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Is the president of the parents’ committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>5-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Is the vice-president of the <em>junta parroquial</em> (the parish board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>5-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a university degree. Works at two centers of INFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>9-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a university degree. Legal representative of a Committee that belongs to the municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>9-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Has two centers under her supervision. Has worked in the center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>9-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>9-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished primary education. Has worked of an on in the center for 8 years (resigned for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>9-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Is the vice-president of the parents’ committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>10-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a university degree in educational pedagogy. The organization is called *Asociación</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>11-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has almost finished her university education. Has worked in the center for 5 years. Used to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>11-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Works in the center as caregiver for 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>11-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished primary education, has worked in the center for 4 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>11-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Has finished primary education. Has migrated from Colombia, works six days a week, eleven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>11-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Used to work with INNFA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>12-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>12-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Almost finished her higher secondary education. Was pregnant at the time of the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>12-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Works at a bar at a college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>12-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Used to work with ORI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>12-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Visits the center on Tuesday and Thursday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>13-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Legal representative of a church that functions as executing organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>16-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Used to be a caregiver for 5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>16-5-2011</td>
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<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>16-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has finished <em>ciclo básico</em>. Works in the center since 7 months, used to work in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>17-5-2011</td>
<td>Female/</td>
<td>Father and mother were interviewed at the same time. They both were</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>17-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Has a university degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>18-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a <em>bachillerato</em> degree. Is 21 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>18-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Is the vice-president of the community committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>19-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Is in the last year of higher secondary education. Has worked in the center for 9 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>19-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Is in the last year of higher secondary education. Has worked in the center for 11 years,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>19-5-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has a university degree. Is the legal representative of the municipality that works as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>19-5-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Has a university degree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>3-6-2011</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Has not finished higher secondary education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Characteristics of Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of housing</th>
<th>Parent contribution</th>
<th>Community organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Communal house</td>
<td>$5 per month per child</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Communal house</td>
<td>$5 per month per child</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Communal house</td>
<td>$10 per parent</td>
<td>Not so strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Communal house</td>
<td>$ per parent</td>
<td>Not so strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Rented</td>
<td>$15 per child ($26 for 2 children)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Rented</td>
<td>$12 per child</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Rented</td>
<td>$12 per child</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Communal house – thanks to Plan International</td>
<td>$5 per child</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Operationalization Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>Input</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Space per child&lt;br&gt;Building&lt;br&gt;Kitchen&lt;br&gt;Toilet&lt;br&gt;Water&lt;br&gt;Electricity/lighting&lt;br&gt;Chairs&lt;br&gt;Tables&lt;br&gt;Beds&lt;br&gt;Playground&lt;br&gt;Safe&lt;br&gt;Clean&lt;br&gt;Orderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Financial resources</td>
<td>Private&lt;br&gt;Public&lt;br&gt;Compensatory&lt;br&gt;Distribution of financing across inputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other support and resources</td>
<td>Nutritional conditions</td>
<td>Meals provided per day&lt;br&gt;Calorie intake per meal&lt;br&gt;Other food/drinks provided during the day&lt;br&gt;Kitchen staff&lt;br&gt;Information provided to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>Regular health checkups&lt;br&gt;Vaccinations&lt;br&gt;Attendance when sick&lt;br&gt;Information provided to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedagogical conditions</td>
<td>Caregiver qualification&lt;br&gt;Caregiver education&lt;br&gt;Caregiver training&lt;br&gt;Caregiver wages&lt;br&gt;Group size&lt;br&gt;Child-caregiver ratio&lt;br&gt;Staff turnover&lt;br&gt;Books&lt;br&gt;Toys&lt;br&gt;Other pedagogical materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Methodology&lt;br&gt;Pedagogical vision&lt;br&gt;(dis)agreement between parents and caregivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pedagogical process</td>
<td>Skills of the caregivers&lt;br&gt;Knowledge of the caregivers&lt;br&gt;responsive to children’s needs&lt;br&gt;encourage them&lt;br&gt;interact with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Child-centered&lt;br&gt;Adult –centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Equal treatment</td>
<td>Gender&lt;br&gt;Socioeconomic status&lt;br&gt;Ethnicity&lt;br&gt;Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Weight for age&lt;br&gt;Height for age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality in the Social Justice perspective</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Test scores</td>
<td>Language use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-emotional</td>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>Interactions with peers, parents, caregivers</td>
<td>Test scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistribution</td>
<td>Compensatory programs</td>
<td>Private resources</td>
<td>Public resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in- or exclusion of children</td>
<td>Estimation of % of children assisting early childhood service</td>
<td>Reasons for not assisting (can’t afford, have to work/take care of sibling, too far)</td>
<td>Reasons for assisting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>Socioeconomic</td>
<td>Fees/ affordability for parents</td>
<td>Teacher awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/linguistic</td>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>Multicultural</td>
<td>Teacher awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relevance of methodology &amp; resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation / inclusivity</td>
<td>Parents’ role in</td>
<td>In deciding on curriculum-methodology</td>
<td>In activities at the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In deciding on curriculum &amp; methodology</td>
<td>In financing prioritization</td>
<td>Link between home and centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In deciding on curriculum-methodology</td>
<td>In financing prioritization</td>
<td>Including all children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relation with parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relation with primary school in community to ease transition</td>
<td>Are caregivers from the community?</td>
<td>Is the curriculum relevant for the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What role does the community play in the daycare centre?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is role of the centre in the community?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4. Monitoring Sheet

**MODALIDAD CENTROS INFANTILES DEL BUEN VIVIR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOMBRE DE LA ENTIDAD EJECUTORA</th>
<th>Nº DEL CONVENIO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMBRE DE LA UNIDAD DE ATENCIÓN</td>
<td>____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROVINCIA</td>
<td>DISTRITO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCALIDAD</th>
<th>FECHA DE SEGUIMIENTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº DE NIÑOS/AS CONVENIO</th>
<th>Nº DE NIÑOS DE LA UNIDAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nº DE NIÑOS/AS SEGÚN GRUPO DE EDAD</th>
<th>Nº DE NIÑOS ASISTENTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### CATEGORÍA: Revisión de instrumentos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Observaciones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cuenta con la carpeta del niño y niña actualizada?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Los niños y niña cuentan con el esquema de vacunación básica completo de acuerdo a su edad?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cuenta con una planificación de actividades pedagógicas según el Referente Curricular y las orientaciones emitidas por el INFA para los niños y niñas de 0 a 26 meses, y hasta los 59 meses en el caso de que no se cuente con parvularia?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>En el caso de contar con el apoyo de Educadora Parvularia del Ministerio de Educación, cuenta con la planificación de actividades pedagógicas para los niños y niñas de 37 a 59 meses?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>En la cocina cuentan con un menú equilibrado que contenga los tres elementos básicos (carbohidratos, proteínas, vitaminas y minerales) es balanceado, variado e incluye alimentos de la temporada?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cuenta con la guía de compras de alimentos actualizada y según el menú de la semana?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal

#### CATEGORÍA: Condiciones Físicas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Observaciones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>El espacio interno del centro dispone de 2 metros cuadrados por niño que asiste a la unidad de atención</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>La unidad de atención cuenta con baterías sanitarias de acuerdo al número de niños y niñas?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>El espacio del CIBV cuenta con espacios separados para cocina y los niños no pueden ingresar?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>La infraestructura del centro se encuentra en buen estado (piso, techo, paredes, ventanas, puertas etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Los espacios cuentan con iluminación y ventilación</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal

#### CATEGORÍA: Higiene del Local

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Si</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Observaciones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Cuenta con espacios de aprendizaje limpios y ordenados</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Los baños de la unidad están limpios y desinfectados</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>La cocina y el menaje se encuentran limpios y ordenados</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>El espacio destinado al comedor se encuentra limpio y ordenado</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higiene del Personal</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>La coordinadora y promotoras del CIBV tienen certificado del MSP actualizado</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>La coordinadora y promotoras del CIBV usan prendas de protección limpias, ropa cómoda- adecuada para el trabajo con NN?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>La coordinadora y promotoras del CIBV mantienen uñas cortadas y cabello recogida?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>La coordinadora y promotoras del CIBV mantienen un adecuado aseo personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higiene de los Niños y Niñas</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas mantienen un adecuado aseo personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas se lavan las manos antes de comen y después ir al baño</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas se lavan los dientes después cada comida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambientes de Aprendizaje</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas se encuentran organizados en el espacio de la unidad de atención por grupos de edad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Existe ambientes de aprendizaje estructurados y con materiales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Se utiliza el material del medio para realizar trabajos con niños y niñas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Existen trabajos elaborados recientemente por los niños y niñas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejes Transversales</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>La atención es cálida y afectiva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas se muestran espontáneos y participativos en las actividades desarrolladas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Los niños y niñas saludan, conversan con las personas adultas y sus iguales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planificación Pedagógica</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>La promotora conoce los objetivos y el objeto de aprendizaje que va a desarrollar con la experiencia de aprendizaje planificada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>La promotora desarrolla la experiencia de aprendizaje planificada y organiza la mismas tomando en cuenta el qué, el cómo, el cuándo, el dónde y el con qué trabajar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Usa los materiales didácticos para generar nuevos aprendizajes tomando en cuenta las experiencias previamente adquiridas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Aprovecha los recursos del medio en la ejecución de las actividades educativas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Momentos de Alimentación</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Se dispone de tiempo suficiente en la alimentación para cada niño y niña</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>El mobiliario para la alimentación de los niños y niñas esta acuerdo a la edad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>El menaje de cocina utilizado es manejado higiénicamente antes durante y después de la alimentación?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Las promotoras de alimentación diariamente hierve cucharas, platos, tenedores, cuchillos, cucharetas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>En el menú está planificado el desayuno?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>En el menú está planificado el refrigerio en la mañana?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En el menú está planificado el almuerzo?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>En el menú está planificado el refrigerio en la tarde?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Cuenta con alimentos suficientes para toda la semana, están ordenados higiénicamente y en buen estado?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>La preparación de alimentos se realiza en forma adecuada? (limpieza, condiciones de preparación)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subtotal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Para los momentos de siesta se contempla el equipamiento y ambientación del sitio? (cómodo, luz tenue, ausencia de ruidos, abrigado o ventilado)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Se garantiza que el momento de la siesta de los niños y niñas sea seguro?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subtotal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>El centro cuenta con el apoyo de docente parvularia del ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>El número de promotoras que atienden a niños esta en relación al número de niños de la unidad (10 niños/as por promotora)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>El número de promotoras responsables de alimentación esta en correspondencia al número de niños (1:20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Se ha distribuido el número de niños/as por promotora considerando de la edad, características y necesidades de los niños</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Hay ejercicio de buen trato entre las promotoras y la coordinadora CIBV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Los compromisos a los que llega la coordinadora las promotoras y el técnico distrital se los cumplen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Se cumple con el horario de atención de 6 a 8 horas diarias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Se cuenta con el equipamientos, espacio adecuado y de uso exclusivo para la atención de los niños menores de un año</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subtotal**

**Totales**

---

FIRMA DEL TÉCNICO DISTRITAL  
FIRMA DEL REPRESENTANTE O DELEGADO DE LA ENTIDAD EJECUTORA
5. Relevant Articles of the 2008 Constitution

Art. 1 - Ecuador is a constitutional State of rights and justice, a social, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, multinational and secular State. It is organized as a republic and is governed using a decentralized approach.

Sovereignty lies with the people, whose will is the basis of all authority, and it is exercised through public bodies using direct participatory forms of government as provided for by the Constitution. Nonrenewable natural resources of the State’s territory belong to its inalienable and absolute assets, which are not subject to a statute of limitations.

Art. 28 - Education shall be for general welfare of the public and shall not be at the service of individual and corporate interests. Universal access, permanence, mobility and graduation without any discrimination shall be guaranteed, as well compulsory attendance of initial schooling, basic education and secondary education or their equivalent.

It is the right of every person and community to interact among cultures and to participate in a society that learns. The State shall promote intercultural dialogue in all of its many dimensions.

Learning shall take place with schooling systems and non-school modalities. Public education shall be universal and secular at all levels and shall be free of charge up to and including the third level of higher education.

Art. 44 - The State, society and the family shall promote as a priority the integral development of children and adolescents and shall guarantee the full exercise of their rights; the principle of the higher interest of children shall be upheld and their rights shall prevail over those of other persons.

Children and adolescents shall also enjoy the right to their integral development, construed as a process of growth, maturity, and deployment of their intellect and capabilities, potential and ambitions in family, school, social and community environments marked by affection and security. This environment shall make it possible to meet their social, emotional and affective, and cultural needs, with the support of national and local intersectoral policies.

Art. 97 - All organizations shall be able to develop alternative forms of dispute mediation and settlement, in those cases permitted by law; to act as delegates of the competent authority, with acceptance of due shared responsibility with this authority; to call for reparation of damages caused by public or private institutions; to draw up economic, political, environmental, social and cultural proposals and claims; and to propose other initiatives contributing to the good way of living (buen vivir)

Volunteer work for social action and development is recognized as a form of social participation.

Article 46 - The State shall adopt, among others, the following measures that safeguard children and adolescents:

1. Care for children under six years of age that guarantees their nutrition, health, education and daily care in a framework of integral protection of their rights.

Article 69 - To protect the rights of persons who are members of a family:

1. Responsible motherhood and fatherhood shall be fostered; and the mother and father shall be obliged to take care, raise, educate, feed, and provide for the integral development and protection of the rights of their children, especially when they are separated from them for any reason.

93
4. The State shall protect mothers, fathers and those who are the heads of family, in the exercise of their obligations and shall pay special attention to families who have broken up for whatever reason.

5. The State shall promote the joint responsibility of both mother and father and shall monitor fulfillment of the mutual duties and rights between mothers, fathers, and children.

6. Pictures (Taken at the different research locations by Nicky Buizer, 2011)

Figure 8: Children receive ChisPaz in their soup

Figure 9: Children playing outside

Figure 10: Dining hall^*

Figure 11: Pre-kinder group with significant situation in the background ^

Figure 12: Children receiving their afternoon snack

Figure 13: A center housed in a rented building

Figure 14: Daily schedule