

The Official Newsletter of the Institute of Early Childhood Development



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Children 1st



Editor's Message



To our faithful readers in Seychelles and around the world, as we bid farewell to the year 2025, we extend our sincere gratitude for this opportunity to thank you for your steadfast support, partnership, and belief in our Institute. Your trust fuels our mission to secure a brighter future for our children. We have proven, and will continue to prove, that we stand firm in our commitment to creating the best start in life for them.

This festive season provides us with another opportunity to rejoice in our successes and reflect on areas for improvement. As in recent years, it has not been without its challenges. Yet at the IECD, we view challenges as a source of strength, giving us the resolve to push harder toward our goals, even if it means achieving them with delays. Our fierce commitment has enabled us to overcome significant obstacles—including limited capital and human resources, evolving legal frameworks and lack of expertise—allowing us to deliver on our legal mandates and international obligations. Even amid external challenges and difficult

times, we are proud to have implemented a new policy on staff and child quota for the Home-Based Child Care Service this year. We are also pleased to note that Centre-Based Child Care Services will soon be quality assured under new regulations, giving parents greater confidence in their children's safety, early learning and care. Simultaneously, we are laying the necessary groundwork to begin regulating state crèches and private preschools.

Our strategy to transform the IECD as a leading digitally modern institution continues to bear fruit with the recent launch of a new online platform – 'Child Care Registration and Inspection Information System' (CRIIS). This new system comes just over a year after the introduction of the Child Care Benefit Information System Seychelles (CBISS). The aim is to streamline and optimize registration, inspection, and reporting procedures of child care services. The anticipated result to increase internal efficiency, accuracy, and regulatory compliance, and timely reporting by all relevant partners. CRIIS is one of IECD's six projects contributed to the National Action Plan for ECCE 2025-2027, launched last June.

You will have the opportunity to learn more about our achievements in this 17th issue of the Children 1st Newsletter.

I am pleased to highlight our recent successful hosting of the Regional Workshop on the Tashkent Declaration and ECCE for Arab countries. This year, as a country, we concentrated on implementing the Tashkent Declaration through

the NAP 2025-2027 and on following up on the Framework for Actions.

Participating countries are eager to initiate partnerships with us in 2026, which will be formalized through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).

None of these achievements would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our staff, the collaboration of our partners and stakeholders both locally and internationally, and the support of the Boards.

To the Government of Seychelles and line Ministries providing dedicated early childhood care and education services – thank you for your unwavering commitment and engagement.

To the child care service providers, their staff, parents, our social media friends and followers, and members of the public—we extend our deepest gratitude.

I hope you enjoy this special edition of Children 1st. On behalf of the Boards and Staff, I wish you a blessed Christmas, and a joyful and fulfilling New Year.

Mrs Shirley Choppy

Chief Executive Officer

IECD Category 2 Institute Under the
Auspices of UNESCO

Incident Tracking and Management System

In line with the national drive to digitalize services across Government, IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute developed a digitalization plan to integrate the use of innovative medium and technologies within its operational administrative and management system.

In June 2024, the Institute launched its first online platform, the Child Care Benefit Information System Seychelles (CBISS), which supports the management of the financial assistance scheme for parents and registered child care providers.

As a follow-up, a new system will be introduced: The Incident Tracking and Management System. This will ensure a systematic method of managing internal files, documents, information images, and workflow. Moreover, it will facilitate communications among staff within their respective roles and responsibilities to enhance internal accessibility and effectiveness.

Once again, the Institute's main collaborator in this project is the Department of Information, Communication and Technology (DICT). Recently,

the Department has procured the system, to be used across Government Ministries/Departments/Agencies (MDAs) with modification based on the specific requirements of the organisation.

Currently, DICT is making the necessary internal adjustments, and, if all goes well, by the end of October, the system should be ready and training of personnel should start. It is expected that the pilot implementation will begin before the end of 2025 and a soft internal roll-out will be held during the first quarter of 2026. The full implementation of the project should take place around mid-2026.

The system will be beneficial in searching for, retrieving, and managing documents whilst minimizing unauthorized access; it will also be useful in sharing information and providing feedback in a timely manner whilst minimizing unauthorized access.

IECD as a fast-growing organization is working towards achieving its goal to be a fully digitalized by 2029.

IECD TO REVISIT INSPECTION PROCESS

The Institute for Early Childhood Development (IECD), a UNESCO Category 2 Institute, has launched an internal review to improve inspection procedures and the training of its Monitoring and Evaluation Officers. This decision comes in response to preliminary findings from the Childminders' Excellence Award Committee, which identified concerns over staffing, safety, and nutrition in home-based childcare facilities.

The move was confirmed by IECD CEO Mrs. Shirley Choppy following a meeting in October where the independent committee presented its findings to the Institute's Regulatory Affairs Staff. The committee's report, based on unannounced visits to selected facilities conducted for the September 2025 Childminders' Excellence Award, highlighted specific issues with staff-to-child ratios, safety protocols, and nutrition.

These visits were designed to assess compliance with mandatory national standards, covering key areas such as Child Rights and Protection, Health and Hygiene, and Early Learning. The committee recommended that "consistent and regular follow-up inspections should be reinforced" to address the identified gaps.

The IECD, which has run the 0-3 Home-based Child Care Programme since 2013, will communicate the committee's final report and any resulting changes to the inspection process to all registered childminders at its upcoming general meeting in December.

International Desk

The year 2025 has been vibrant with extensive connection and dynamic collaboration. Guided by IECD's strategic priority to **optimise cooperation and collaboration, and enhance technical assistance and support**, our efforts this year focused on strengthening partnerships and expanding opportunities to better deliver on IECD's international mandate as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute.

From overseas missions, new funding collaborations, to staff webinars and knowledge-sharing exchanges, each initiative has brought us closer to building a stronger global network for Early Childhood Care and Education in the region and beyond.

Explore some of the highlights and memorable moments from our international journey this year!



A fact-finding mission and engagement with various government and private organisations dedicated to Early Childhood Development was undertaken by the IECD/UNESCO Category 2 Institute from Seychelles to Sri Lanka from January 27 to January 31, 2025. The delegation strengthened regional cooperation for Early Childhood Development by exchanging knowledge and exploring collaboration opportunities with key government and private organisations in Sri Lanka.

Two IECD staff namely, Nathalie Malvina and Vanessa Philoe, participated in the UNESCO MGIEP–IUCTE Training Programme on Social Emotional Learning for ECCE and Digital Pedagogy in Varanasi, India from March 17 to 24, 2025. The transformative training aimed to build capacity for quality Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) by integrating social-emotional learning and digital pedagogy in early childhood education.

The IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute welcomed an exchange visit from Mount Abu Public School (India) on July 31, 2025, at the IECD Head Office. The visit provided an enriching opportunity for cultural and educational exchange, bridging learning across borders.

Seychelles proudly represented at the ACF Kigali 2025 conference, championing quality childcare in Africa from May 6-9, 2025. Through IECD's contribution, Seychelles actively participated in regional discussions on advancing early childhood care and education policies and practices. The CEO delivered the main keynote address which focused on transformation of ECCE and child care economy in Seychelles, strengthening government's coordination of ECCE among others. Dr. Javier Rose and Ms. Marie-France Barra were also part of the delegation for this mission.





Best Diplomats Simulation Conference under the theme 'Engaging in Youth Diplomacy' - Dubai, UAE – 5th to 8th September 2025. Ms. Maria Emmanuel from IECD joined global participants at the Best Diplomats Simulation Conference in Dubai to strengthen leadership and negotiation skills for international cooperation.

Introductory meeting with the Principal Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Department on the UNESCO Category 2 Institute, its legal mandate, positioning and resourcing including exploring new financing avenues, to deliver on its mandate – 25th August 2025

The IECD team led by Governing Board Member, continued to strengthen international partnerships, holding follow-up meetings with key stakeholders from July to October 2025. Discussions were conducted with the British, Russian, and Indian Embassies, as well as Nouvobanq and other partners, to explore potential collaboration and funding opportunities for early childhood initiatives.

Courtesy visit and meeting with delegation from UNESCO Category 1 Centre, the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) in India – 21st October 2025. Both UNESCO's Category 2 Organizations exchanged experiences and discussed areas for cooperation and collaboration in implementing Social and Emotional Learning initiatives in ECCE.

Publication and dissemination of the Final Report and Framework for Action on the 1st Regional Workshop on Tashkent Declaration for Southern and Eastern African countries held in Seychelles in June 2024.

The IECD delegation attended the 43rd Session of the UNESCO General Conference in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 30th October to 5th November 2025. In a statement, the Seychelles delegation head highlighted Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as a strategic priority for Seychelles, recognizing the crucial work and achievements of IECD as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute. Specifically, the hosting of Regional Workshops on the Tashkent Declaration and Commitments to Action for African and Arab Countries demonstrated Seychelles' commitment to regional solidarity and knowledge-sharing on best practices in ECCE. The statement also highlighted areas where IECD could provide potential support and assistance.



Delegation in Uzbekistan with Ambassador Tirant and DG Azolay

The 9th Annual Meeting of UNESCO Category 2 Centres in Education was hosted by the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) – Category 2 Centre, in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on 1st November 2025. At the meeting, the CEO presented IECD's progress and achievements over the past year, highlighting successes, challenges and plans for 2026. Notably, the chairperson praised IECD for its impressive track record, given its relatively short time as a UNESCO Category 2 Centre. They also expressed a commitment to supporting IECD's crucial work in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).



Annual Meeting of UNESCO Category 2 Centres and Institutes

Webinars

As part of Institute's strategy on staff capacity building and continuous professional development, staff attended a series of webinars organized and facilitated by UNESCO and other international organizations.

- **Connecting the Dots: A Systems Approach to Transforming Childcare** – 1st October, 2025

A global conversation on transforming childcare systems to ensure holistic development and equitable access for all children.

- **ECD & Climate Change** – 24th September, 2025

Exploring the intersection of early childhood and environmental sustainability: global experts discussed the impact of climate change on young children and responsive policy solutions.

- **Online Inaugural Meeting of the Community of Practice (CoP) on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)** – 27th June 2025

Bringing professionals together: IECD participated in the inaugural CoP meeting, fostering collaboration and shared learning within the global ECCE community.

- **Virtual Consultation: Charting the Way Forward for Young Children After Foreign Aid Cuts** – 3rd November, 2025

Discussing global resilience: IECD joined partners to explore strategies for sustaining support to early childhood programmes amidst funding challenges.

IECD UNESCO-Category 2 Institute, Governing Board Sessions

The Governing Board convened two sessions this year, with a focus on strengthening governance, direction, and providing technical support. The meeting reviewed progress, discussed the 2nd Regional Workshop, presented activities for 2026, proposed a budget, and outlined the way forward to advance IECD's mission as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute.

- 1st Virtual Session of the Governing Board Meeting – 5th June 2025

· 2nd In-Person Session of the Governing Board Meeting – 12th December 2025



IECD'S CPD INITIATIVE STRENGTHENS REGULATORY STAFF AND CHILD CARE QUALITY

As part of the Institute of Early Childhood Development-UNESCO Category 2 Institute ongoing commitment to excellence and professional growth, a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) session for regulatory staff was held on 16th December, 2025. The session was facilitated by Dr. Geraldine Zuzarte, a member of the IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute Governing Board. This was the second time Dr. Zuzarte, a board member, conducted a CPD session for staff. The Board and Management warmly welcomed this initiative, viewing it as an important component of their efforts to support the Institute's international collaborations and mission.

The session focused on 'Quality Improvement' and 'Quality Assurance within Early Childhood Education and Care Services'. It was designed as an interactive and reflective conversation, encouraging meaningful exchange of ideas among staff and this fosters a collaborative learning environment.

Dr. Zuzarte shared insights from recent inspection visits to several childcare facilities, including 'Footprints Beta Day Care Centre' at Ile Perseverance (owned by Mr. and Mrs. Juddy Jean-Baptiste), 'Kids Play Child Care' at Les Cannelles (owned by Mrs. Alice Jean), and 'Kiddies Childminding' at Perseverance 2 (owned by Ms. Natasha Reine). She expressed her positive observations, stating, *"I am impressed with the significant improvements in quality and standards since my last visits in 2019. I commend and appreciate IECD's relentless efforts and exemplary work over the past few years to enhance service provision and elevate the quality of childcare."*

A key highlight of the session was the sharing of international best practices, notably from Singapore—a small island developing nation. Dr. Zuzarte presented the 'SPARK Accreditation Framework', which illustrates preschools' commitment to quality through ongoing reflection and practice refinement. The session was further enriched by informative videos on the SPARK accreditation process and insights into her current school in Singapore, providing valuable global perspectives.

In conclusion, the CPD session was both informative and inspiring. It reaffirmed the value of continuous learning, reflective practice, and professional integrity within IECD. Staff departed with renewed motivation and a clearer understanding of how professional development directly contributes to the enhancement of quality Early Childhood Education and Care Services.



2nd Regional Workshop on Early Childhood Care and Education 18th to 20th November 2025



LAUNCHING OF THE IECD-UNESCO CATEGORY 2 INSTITUTE 2ND REGIONAL WORKSHOP

The second regional workshop on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) officially opened yesterday late afternoon at the Savoy Resort and Spa, under the theme “Progress and Way Forward on the Tashkent Declaration and Commitments to Action for Transforming ECCE.

The three-day event is hosted by the IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute, Seychelles.

In an impressive display of cultural appreciation, IECD CEO Mrs. Shirley Choppy welcomed delegates from the United Arab Emirates (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), Oman, Saudi Arabia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Seychelles, greeting each group in their respective languages. She emphasised the significance of convening such a regional dialogue three years after the World Conference on ECCE in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

“Today, as leaders and experts in ECCE, we come together with a single purpose: to reflect on our progress and to collaboratively chart the way forward,” she said. “Over the next two days, we will have valuable opportunities to assess our achievements, identify shared challenges, and develop collective strategies.

Our focus will be on pinpointing priority areas that require urgent attention or strengthening, so we can advance ECCE effectively within our countries and regions.”

Following her address, Mr. Borhene Chakroun, Director of the Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems Division and Acting Director of the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC), delivered remarks in which he shared his vision of the IECD in Seychelles evolving into a regional hub for excellence and leadership.

A key moment of the ceremony was the unveiling of a new logo and the official launch of an online system for the registration and inspection of child care services.

The workshop itself was officially launched live from the UNESCO office in Paris by Dr. Mmantsetsa Marope, Chairperson of the Governing Board of the IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute.

The ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, including several Ministers and principal secretaries.



LOGO UNVEILING OF THE NEW ONLINE SYSTEM FOR REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

Guests at the opening of the workshop also witnessed the unveiling of the logo for the new online system for registration and inspection of child care services, by the Institute of Early Childhood Development (Seychelles) IECD.

In a detailed presentation, Mrs Marie France Barra, Director General Regulatory Affairs Division at IECDUNESCO category 2 Institute explained in careful detail the meaning of each letter of the logo:

The Acronym itself highlights the two core regulatory pillars of IECD-Registration and Inspection. The two C's symbolize Child Care. The letters "R" and "I" illustrate registration and Inspection. The second Letter I and 's' represent information System and digital solution, The two human figures convey collaborative partnership in ECCE and oversight in regulation and child care services.

Key milestones of the various stages of the system were also presented to the audience, from conceptualization to planning, design and development, piloting of the system and organised visits, feedback, inspection and renewal.



LAUNCHING OF THE INSTITUTE'S NEW ONLINE SYSTEM



Following the unveiling of the logo, was the launching of the Child Care Registration and Inspection Information System (CRIIS), an IECD-UNESCO category 2 Institute project in collaboration with the Seychelles Department of Information Communications and Technology (DICT).

This development represents another important step in the digital transformation of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Seychelles, particularly in the child care sector.

CRIIS is also designed to streamline registration, inspection, and reporting processeses, which will improve accessibility and accountability in service delivery.

"As the ECCE sector continues to grow, a digital platform like CRIIS becomes essential if not an indispensable tool to ensure consistency, to reduce administrative burden and to provide real-time data to support regulatory oversight and informed decision-making" said Mr. Benjamin Chopp, the Principal Secretary from the Department of Information Communications Technology, in his remark at the ceremony prior to the launching of the online system.

The system will allow first and foremost for early childcare providers to apply or renew their operating licenses or certificate of registration online, secondly enable inspectors to record and upload reports in real time, to automatically generate notifications and reminders, and lastly to produce analytical reports and dashboards.

This system is showing concrete results of reducing processing time significantly, and if all goes according to Plan, Mr Chopp announced that CRIIS will come into full operation at the start of 2026. He concluded his remark by launching the CRIIS platform.

IECD-UNESCO CATEGORY 2 INSTITUTE 2ND REGIONAL WORKSHOP

DAY 2 HIGHLIGHTS

The second day of the 2nd Regional Conference workshop was packed with presentations and interventions from various partners and participants, starting in the morning with the Tashkent Declaration and commitments for action to transforming Early Childhood Care and Education.

This presentation was done live from Paris UNESCO office by Rokhaya Fall Diawara; a Specialist and the Global Lead for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at UNESCO.

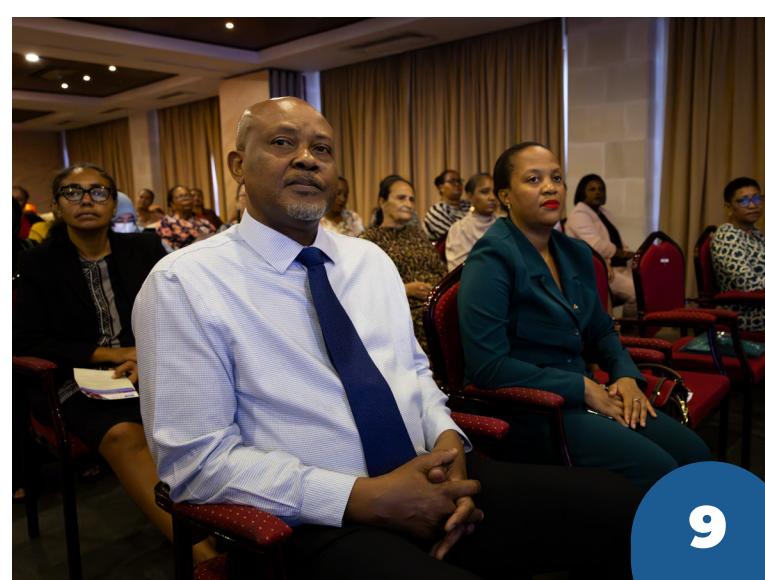
Mrs Diawara's presentation set the scene with global direction in the implementation of the Declaration with UNESCO, energizing the transformation, using digital tools along the way and confronting global challenges in the face of many.

In the second presentation of the day, the Chief Executive Officer of the IECD-UNESCO Category 2

Institute, Mrs Shirley Choppy spanned an overview of the ECCE system in Seychelles in her presentation. The strategic priorities, key programme areas and future plans for capacity building, research and knowledge production workforce and advocacy provided a backdrop of expansion and coherence of the institute which now has a more significant role nationally and internationally.

This was reinforced in a presentation by the Regional Centre for Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE); a category 2 regional centre in Saudi Arabia. Their presentation centred on the quality perspective and project of RCQE as a region reference for education quality and excellence.

Representatives of the two centres will be meeting during the week to discuss possibilities of collaboration between the two UNESCO Category 2 Centres/Institute.





COUNTRY PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

The rest of the day featured presentations from participating countries, focusing on progress in achieving the Tashkent commitments.

The presentations from the United Arab Emirates—Dubai and Abu Dhabi—showcased significant developments in early childhood care.

For Abu Dhabi, the discussion highlighted progress in developing parent-friendly workplace policies and nursery subsidies, generating strong interest among participants.

The presentation from Oman depicted progress made in the field of early childhood in line with international commitments.

Côte d'Ivoire spoke about ongoing efforts to ensure quality learning for all children, including basic literacy, numeracy, and socioemotional skills. The country also conducts various awareness campaigns nationwide to help parents understand the importance of ECCE.

Seychelles showcased, through a video presentation, the progress being made, through the best practices pillars, in advancing early childhood care in the country.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY

Wrapping up the day, Education consultant for the IECD-UNESCO category 2 institute; Dr Andre Leste outlined global and regional progress in implementing the Tashkent Declaration, with UNESCO energizing the transformation.

Dr Leste identified in his address areas where progress has been made: Access and Inclusion: New policies, legislation, and quality standards are expanding enrolment, improving facilities, and supporting children with special needs and disadvantaged families.

Workforce Development: Continued efforts to upgrade teacher qualifications and improve working conditions, with a growing call for professionalisation and clearer career paths.

Quality Learning: Updated curriculum, early learning programmes, and school readiness tools are enhancing early learning outcomes. New components on citizenship, health, financial literacy, and sustainability are being integrated.

Digital and Data Systems: Countries are adopting digital platforms to manage childcare services and strengthen monitoring, accountability, and reporting.

Financing ECCE: While funding varies, many countries are increasing budget allocations, subsidies, and pursuing public-private partnerships to sustain progress.

Multi-Sector Collaboration: Stronger coordination across education, health, nutrition, and social sectors is emerging as a key driver of holistic early childhood development.

Although long, the day was a fruitful one with a lot of discussions, networking and interest to keep improving early childhood care and education in the region and globally.



IECD-UNESCO CATEGORY 2 INSTITUTE 2ND REGIONAL WORKSHOP DAY 3 HIGHLIGHTS

The final day of the conference concluded with rich experience-sharing and focused group discussions in a warm and collaborative setting.

Mrs Amna Hamad Al Mulla, Acting Director of Curriculum from the UAE Ministry of Education Development Department, opened the day with a presentation on the UAE's integrated ECCE system for children aged 0-8, guided by the Tashkent Declaration and SDG 4.2.

Participants then worked in groups to identify key strategies, good practices, and partnership opportunities to accelerate ECCE progress across the region.

Key strategies discussed included:

- Strengthening government commitment and financing for early childhood.
- Enhancing collaboration between local and federal levels.
- Improving teacher preparation and leadership capacity.
- Prioritising quality, governance, and cognitive/emotional development.
- Updating policies and legal frameworks.

Good practices highlighted:

- Measuring school readiness and tracking child competencies
- Strengthening training for childcare providers.
- Improving data management and M&E systems.
- Enhancing workforce qualifications and professional development.
- Expanding multisectoral collaboration. Introducing autism screening at 18 and 24 months in Seychelles.
- Proposed actions for IECD as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute Establishing MOU's with Oman, RCQE, and the UAE to enhance technical support and cooperation in the area of early childhood care and education.
- Strengthening cross-country networking and sharing of early learning programmes.

The day closed with a strong shared commitment to advancing



REGIONAL WORKSHOP CONCLUDES WITH RENEWED MOMENTUM

The 2nd Regional Workshop on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) wrapped up Thursday 20th November 2025 after two productive days of dialogue, shared experiences, and strengthened collaboration. Delivering the closing remarks, the Chairman of the IECD Local Board Dr. Javier Rose thanked international and local delegates for their valuable contributions, which enriched discussions and reinforced the region's commitment to the Tashkent Declaration.

Dr. Rose emphasised, in his speech, the meaningful progress of the discussions which included:

- Expanding access and inclusion
- Strengthening the ECCE workforce development
- Improving curriculum and assessments practices
- Enhancing digital monitoring systems for monitoring and evaluation
- Promoting stronger multi-sectoral coordination

He also acknowledged persistent challenges which included:

- Manpower shortages
- Financing limitations
- Service gaps
- Need for stronger mechanism

The Chairman reaffirmed IECD's dedication as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute to supporting Member States through capacity building, policy development, research, and regional collaboration.

Special thanks were extended to all participants, speakers, organizers, local education consultant Dr. Leste, the group deliberation chairpersons, and the CEO and staff of IECD for ensuring the successful organization of the workshop.

The workshop closed with a call to maintain the momentum and strengthen partnerships for a brighter future for every young child.



IECD-UNESCO CATEGORY 2 INSTITUTE 2ND REGIONAL WORKSHOP

DAY 4: A DAY OF DISCOVERY AND EXPERIENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES

International delegates attending the 2nd Regional Workshop on Early Childhood Care and Education enjoyed a full day of engaging activities yesterday.

Despite the scorching hot sun, they joined IECD Chairperson Dr Javier Rose, CEO Mrs Shirley Chopp, and her employees in a brief ceremony to inaugurate a new billboard near the Perseverance market.

The billboard campaign celebrates progress in early childhood development and promotes the Institute as a UNESCO Category 2. In addition, two more billboards were unveiled at Gordon Square and Le Chantier.

Following the ceremony, delegates then split into groups for field visits based on their areas of interest. These visits included child care services, private and public preschools, and the Victoria Hospital.

Dr Latifa Abdullah Al Awadhi from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, visited the Seychelles Hospital, where Dr Juliette Rioux guided her through the children's ward, labour room, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and the Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Diagnostic Centre.

During her visit, she exchanged insights with staff, discussed daily challenges, and encouraged mothers to breastfeed during conversations.

Other groups explored institutions in Perseverance, including Trotters Stop Preschool, Footprints Day Care Centre, Kiddies Childminding, and Perseverance North Crèche.



TREE PLANTING AT THE HEART OF ONE OF SEYCHELLES' NATIONAL PARKS



Another highlight of the day took place at Tomazin, located within the heart of the National Park in Sans Soucis. Delegates participated in a symbolic tree-planting activity, each planting a young and endemic palm with care and enthusiasm. Many silently wished to return in a few years to see how their trees had grown.

"We felt today's programme was meaningful, as it allowed delegates to discover some of our early childhood institutions and witness firsthand the progress we shared during the workshop. The tree-planting activity was also a powerful way to showcase our commitment to nature conservation and to actively involve them in this effort," remarked an IECD representative.

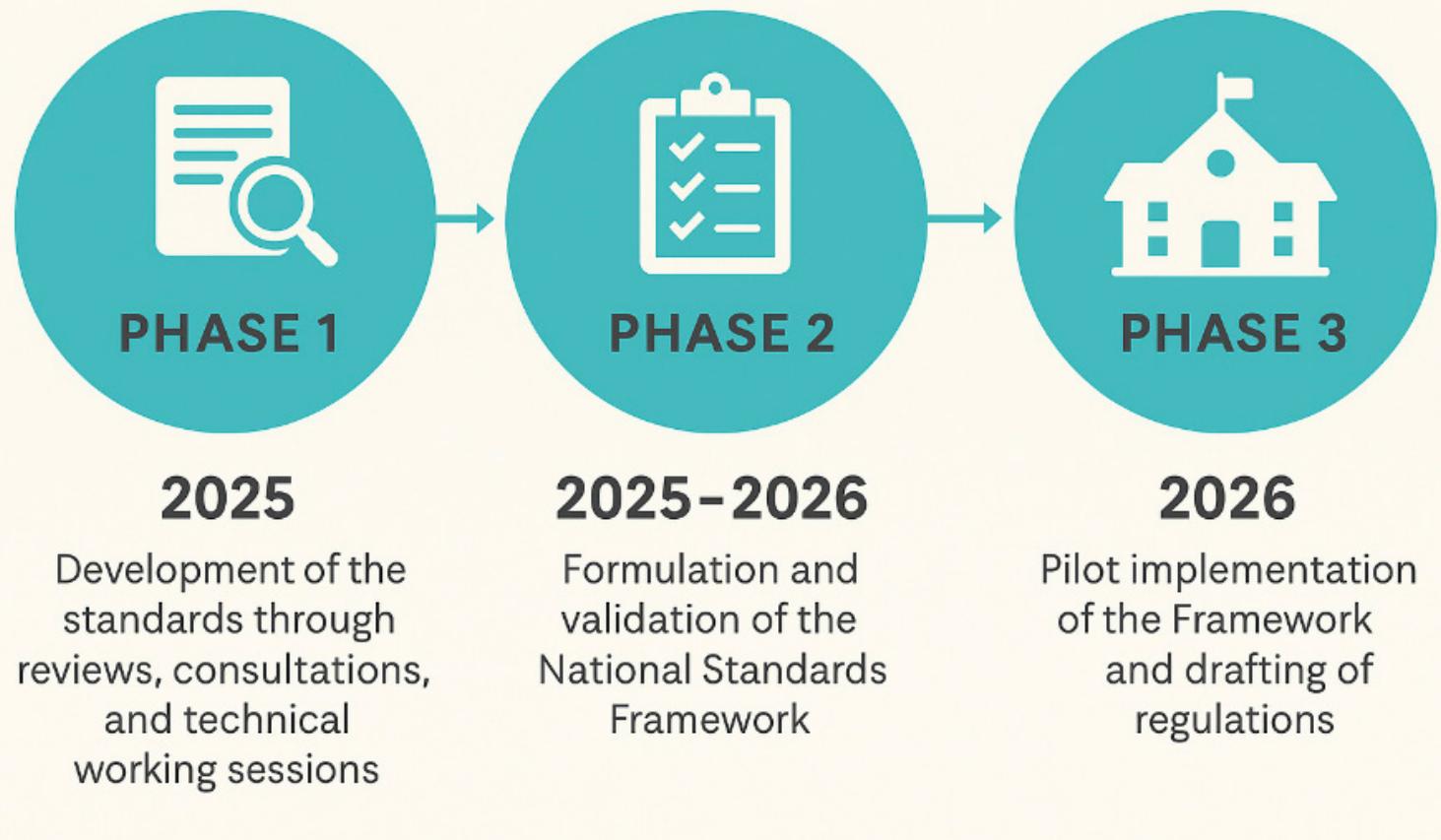
Delegates expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the thoughtful organisation of the day and the warm Seychellois hospitality they had received.

"We have never done this before in our lives—thank you, thank you, thank you," one participant shared.

"We have travelled to many countries around the world, but we have never met such hospitable people. It has been a real pleasure," added another.

The morning concluded at the Mission Lodge in Sans Soucis, where the group enjoyed a tranquil tour of the historic site. This was followed by photography sessions capturing the breathtaking panoramic views of the western coast, as well as the lush mountains and dense forests surrounding the area.

Progressing Toward Quality: Development of National Standards for Pre-School Education in Seychelles



The Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) is moving forward with its main project, the Development and Implementation of National Standards for Pre-School Education, to ensure that all crèches and private pre-schools in Seychelles provide consistent, high-quality learning for children aged 4 to 5 years. Based on the ECCE Framework 2023, this initiative aims to set national standards that cover curriculum, health and safety, staffing, child protection, and teaching methods, in line with SDG 4.2 and the Tashkent Declaration (2022). The project is led by IECD's Regulatory Affairs, Quality Assurance and Standard Settings Division. It involves collaboration with partners from the Ministry of Education, Public Health Authority, and Planning Authority. The project follows a cooperative model that builds on the success of previous childcare standards.

IECD has reached an important milestone in creating the National Standards Framework for Pre-School Education by recruiting a consultant

to guide its technical development. The draft framework will be completed by mid-December 2025, followed by discussions in early 2026 and Cabinet approval later in the year.

This initiative is a significant step toward strengthening Seychelles' quality assurance system for early learning. It establishes clear standards to guarantee high-quality education for all preschoolers. It helps educators use age-appropriate practices and encourages caring, inclusive learning spaces.

As Seychelles works toward this goal, IECD reaffirms its commitment to collaboration, evidence-based policy, and engaging stakeholders. This approach lays the foundation for a standardized, high-quality pre-school education system that promotes lifelong learning and supports comprehensive child development.

DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR INTERVENTION IN UNREGISTERED CHILD CARE SERVICES

In line with **Section 4 (1) (k)** of the ECD ACT 2022, which stipulates that IECD shall promote the wellbeing and holistic development of the child in his or her early childhood, a framework was developed to mitigate the unregulated operation of unregistered child care services in Seychelles. The project is featured in the National Action Plan 2025-2027 Early Childhood Care and Education and it is being led by Mr. Alix Joubert, Director for Regulatory Affairs for Home-Based Child Care Section, assisted by other key partners.

When the Institute was first tasked with regulating child care services in the Seychelles, the majority of home-based and center-based child care services operated informally without clear standards, oversight, or accountability mechanisms. This revealed the need for a regulatory system to quality assure child care services. As a result, the National Standards for Childminding Services Regulations (2016) was produced and formally adopted. The implementation was preceded by a Pre-Registration Sensitization and Training Program to assist service providers in fulfilling the necessary requirements to meet the standards.

The program's objectives are to increase awareness of quality standards and give aspiring childminders the fundamental skills they need to offer secure, caring, and developmentally appropriate care.

Since the program's inception in 2016:

- 14 training cohort have been effectively delivered
- 461 participants have been trained
- 130 Home-Based Child Care Services have been formally registered with IECD.

Research and assessment results—such as those from the Assessment of Early Learning Readiness—consistently show that children enrolled in registered and regulated care services demonstrate stronger performance in developmental outcomes compared to those in unregulated settings. These findings highlight the urgent need to safeguard children's rights to quality early care through the establishment of a clear and actionable framework to address unregistered child care operations.

The implementation of this project is led by the Institute in collaboration with key national stakeholders, including the Attorney General's Office, Police Department, Public Health Authority, District Administrators, Social Services, and other relevant entities. Each partner will contribute their expertise and support towards achieving a coordinated and sustainable approach to attend to unregistered child care services in Seychelles.

This project will be implemented in two main phases:

Phase 1 is concerned with the development of the policy. This will involve stakeholder consultations, data gathering, and drafting of the framework and SOPs.

Phase 2 consists of policy implementation activities (2026 -2027). This will include piloting and roll out. Related actions are stakeholder training, awareness campaigns, distribution of materials, and strengthening enforcement.



DRIVING DIGITAL INNOVATION: IECD CONTINUES THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHILD CARE SERVICES INTO THE DIGITAL ERA

IECD is improving its regulatory systems through the Digital Transformation of Registration, Inspection, and Reporting in Child Care Services project. This project is led by the Regulatory Affairs, Quality Assurance and Standard Settings Division, in partnership with the Department of Information, Communication and Technology (DICT). The initiative aims to modernize and simplify regulatory processes by replacing manual, paper-based workflows with a digital platform that automates registration, inspection, and reporting. The transformation boosts efficiency, transparency, and data-driven decision-making. It enables real-time data collection, automated compliance tracking, and centralized record management. This leads to faster decisions, greater accuracy, and better service delivery across Seychelles' Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) sector.

Recent Developments

As part of the project's phased rollout, the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) has formed a Technical Committee made up of representatives from Space95, the system developer, DICT, the IECD Chief Executive Officer, the Project Officer, and other key staff members. This diverse team is responsible for the technical design, validation,

and implementation of the digital platform to make sure it meets regulatory demands and user needs. In recent technical sessions, the committee outlined the entire workflow of the current manual registration and inspection process to guide the system's development. They want to ensure that the new platform reflects existing procedures while improving efficiency and user experience. The project has now reached an important milestone, with the registration module scheduled for a pilot in October 2025. Feedback from this pilot phase will help refine and adjust the system before the official launch in November 2025, which will introduce a completely digital registration process for child care service providers across Seychelles.

Looking Ahead

Once fully implemented, the digital system will change child care service regulation by simplifying registration and inspection processes, automating compliance reporting, and allowing real-time data sharing among regulatory partners. This innovation supports IECD's vision of modern, efficient, and accountable service delivery. It will strengthen quality assurance and match Seychelles' national digitalization agenda.



READING HAS NO BOUNDARIES

“Empowering Childminders in Establishing a Conducive Reading Corner in their Home-Based Child Care Service”

Imagine being surrounded by four blank white walls, hearing sounds but unable to connect to what's surround you. It is a nightmare no one would wish to endure. And yet, for some young children this might actually be their daily experience. This project was born from a deep desire to change that.

In an effort to foster a love for reading at an early age, the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), Category 2 Institute under the Auspices of UNESCO, in collaboration with selected partners, successfully completed a pilot project aimed at helping registered Home-Based Child Care Services establish age-appropriate reading corners.

This initiative started from July to September 2025, directed on empowering a group of selected Childminders from different regions on Mahe and Inner Island to create dedicated and appropriate reading spaces for the children in their service.

The training sessions conducted both on Mahe and Praslin was very successful with active participation of Childminders. It was a whole day session with well-structured activities.

Highlights of the Project Journey

Training: Childminders attended an engaging workshop where they learned how to set up an age-appropriate reading corner and how to make Storytime interactive and fun. Topics included choosing age-appropriate books, using voice and expression, and creating a cozy reading atmosphere.

Guidelines: A comprehensive guideline was presented to help childminders design reading corners adapted to different age groups.

Hands-on Implementation: Childminders were given resources, working in groups they set up a reading corner. They had the opportunity to observe and make constructive suggestions.

Follow-Up and Monitoring: After the training, Childminders had to set up their reading corner between July and September. Visits were conducted at some childminders service. Before and after photos captures the transformation of the spaces. Good feedback has been gathered from parents and Childminders.

The project was warmly welcomed by the group of childminders, who approached it with open minds and great enthusiasm. Following the sessions, many expressed eagerness to implement the project within their own services.

This initiative does not end here; we plan to train more childminders in setting up reading corners within their services.

“By providing children a conducive space where books are accessible, visible, and celebrated, we are planting the seeds of lifelong learning,” says Miss Brigitte Evenor, the project officer.



FIRST EDITION OF EARLY STIMULATION & LEARNING PROGRAMME (ELP) FOR HOME-BASED CHILD CARE SERVICES

Together. We Play and Learn



IECD successfully launched the Early Stimulation and Learning Programme (ELP) for registered Home-Based Child Care Services. This landmark initiative is a dynamic step toward enhancing the quality of early learning experiences for young children in home-based Child Care Services across Seychelles. The ELP was designed to support two key focus areas outlined in the National Standards for Childminding: Early Learning and Interaction.

The ELP was designed to support two key focus areas outlined in the IECD National Standards for Childminding. An Early Learning Committee led by CEO Mrs. Shirley Choppy was formed to spearhead the implementation of the project. Through a comprehensive process in 2024 and 2025, the ELP was developed. With direct input and feedback from childminders and other stakeholders, the programme was reviewed, re designed, and translated from Creole into English, ensuring accessibility for a broader range of users.

The Early Learning Pack consists of five essential documents, three of the core Early Learning documents were translated from Creole to English:

1. The Early Learning Programme
2. A Guide for Childminders
3. The Children's Progress Record
4. Big Books designed for interactive storytelling
5. Resources Workbook aligned with the 10-month structure of the programme

In a sensitization session conducted by the ELP Committee, each of the 124 childminders who attended the Official Launching Ceremony received a full programme pack and was introduced to its content and structure.

This programme represents a significant achievement for IECD and reflects its continued commitment to supporting Child Care Services and promoting quality early learning. The Childminders are better equipped to foster meaningful learning experiences, support children's development, and meet National Standards requirements for early education.



SENSITIZATION SESSION TO EMPOWER MORE PARENTS TO CREATE AN EARLY STIMULATION AND LEARNING EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT AT HOME

The project has been extended to 2025–2026. During this phase in 2025, the Sensitization Sessions targeted parents working in large organizations as well as those in regional districts. The Early Learning Team facilitated by four experienced Early Childhood teachers namely Ms. Marie-Claire Leon, Mrs. Elisca Zialor, Ms Marie- Helene Adrienne, including the project officer Ms. Renelle Anacoura. The Team strategically brought the sessions closer to parents—either at their workplaces or within their communities—and sessions was ran during a week day from 9.00 a.m to 12.00 p.m to make participation more convenient and impactful.

The programme aims to equip parents with practical knowledge and skills to create stimulating learning environments at home. It also encourages positive parent-child interactions and promotes learning through play as a key approach to early childhood development.

Following the main presentation, parents participated in group-based practical exercises designed to foster creativity, engagement, sustainable activities and hands-on learning. Activities included designing scrapbooks, conducting language development exercises using a basket of fruits, engaging in free play with colorful educational toys, and storytelling with large illustrated books, Gross motor activities.

These interactive sessions provided parents with valuable insights into how simple, everyday materials and playtime can significantly contribute to a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development. The parents expressed great enthusiasm and appreciation, noting that the sessions inspired them to apply new

ideas at home to enhance their children's learning experiences. This initiative continues to strengthen parental involvement in early childhood development and underscores the importance of play-based learning as a cornerstone for lifelong education and success.

Date	District & Large workplaces	Participants
7th March	Anse Etoile	13
11th April	Plaisance (Foot Prints Day Care)	30
25th May	Buzzy Bee Day Care Takamaka	33
12th June	La Digue	39
11th July	Au Cap & Anse Aux Pins	30
23rd August	Anse Aux Pins (Kinder-Land)	36
23rd October	Central Region	20
Total		201

Table one: Number of participants participated in the session in Regional Districts and Large organizations on Mahe and La Digue



IECD ISSUES NEW SIX-YEAR PROVISIONAL LICENCES TO REGISTERED CHILD CARE CENTRE PROVIDERS

The Institute of Early Childhood Development is proud to announce that seven child care centre managers — Maggie André of Beau Vallon Day Care in Beau Vallon, Stella Marie of Rise & Shine in Mont Fleur, Nanette Monty of Noah's Day Care in Baie Lazare, Marwis Mangroo of Mummy Phoebe's in St. Louis, Margaret Chang-Time of Maggy's Day Care in Pointe Larue, and Marie Hoareau of Mariema's Day Care in Barbarons, Grand Anse Mahe have been issued with their new six-year provisional licences as registered Child Care Centre providers.

Granted in accordance with the Early Childhood Development Act (2022) and guided by the Proposed Framework on National Standards for Centre-Based Child Care Services (2021), these licences highlight the Institute's strong commitment to promoting quality, safety, and accountability within the child care sector.

By providing a six-year provisional licence, renewable every two years through regular inspections and compliance checks, the institute continues to take meaningful steps toward raising professional standards and reinforcing parents' confidence in the quality of care their children receive.

It serves as a guarantee and reaffirms the providers' commitment to maintaining high standards of safety, care, and quality in the delivery of early childhood services.

We congratulate all the licensed child care managers on this important accomplishment!



Marwis Mangroo
Mummy Phoebe's
St. Louis



Maggie André
Beau Vallon Day Care
Beau Vallon



Margaret Chang-Time
Maggy's Day Care
Pointe Larue



Marie Hoareau
Mariema's Day Care
Barbarons



Stella Marie
Rise & Shine Day Care
Mont Fleur



Nanette Monty
Noah's Day Care
Baie Lazare



Charline Labrosse
Count and Read Day Care
Sans Soucis

Where Play Meets Learning: Kids' Play Date a Big Hit!



Friday, 24th October, marked an exciting new beginning with the launch of the pilot project "Kids' Play Date." The event brought together childminders and children from the central regions Mont Fleuri, Plaisance, Les Mamelles, and Roche Caïman for a day filled with joy, learning, and connection.

A total of 12 childminders and 83 children gathered at the Roche Caïman Community Centre, where a vibrant atmosphere awaited them. The event was designed to promote holistic child development, offering a balance of fun and educational experiences through five interactive stations focused on Oral Health, Nutrition, Health Check-ups, Early Learning, and Physical Development.

Children were divided into mixed groups to encourage socialization and teamwork, one of the key objectives of the day. They enthusiastically rotated between the stations every 15 to 20 minutes, discovering something new and exciting at each stop. The event ran smoothly, with laughter and energy filling the air.

Adding a touch of magic, Mickey Mouse made a special appearance, delighting the children and creating unforgettable memories.

Behind the scenes, a dedicated IECD team, led by Project Officer Miss Brigitte Evenor, worked tirelessly to make the day a success. Their commitment and teamwork ensured that "Kids' Play Date" not only brought smiles but also strengthened early childhood development in the community.

A heartfelt thank you to the Institute of Early Childhood Development Category 2 Institute (IECD) for supporting this wonderful initiative and for their continued dedication to nurturing the growth and well-being of young children across the region.

Encouraged by the success of this pilot project, the "Kids' Play Date" initiative is set to expand to other regions on Mahé and the Inner Islands, reaching even more children and families and continuing to build stronger, more connected early learning communities.

SUPPORTING QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EARLY LEARNING READINESS ASSESSMENT

Early Learning lays the foundation for lifelong development. In its continued commitment to promoting high quality early childhood and education, the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) conducts its annual initiative: The Early Learning Readiness Assessment. This assessment, targets children aged 3 to 4 years across both registered and unregistered early childhood settings.



Purpose

The primary goal of the assessment is to identify each child's strengths and areas of growth before their transition to primary school. It ensures that children begin their educational journey well prepared and supported. This year's assessment was conducted from August to October across 32 centre-based services (commonly referred to as day cares) and 118 home-based settings (often known as childminders). Additional children were assessed in unregistered settings as well.

Assessment Domains & Participation

The assessment focuses on three key developmental domains:

- Pre-Language
- Pre-Mathematics
- Social-Emotional

A notable achievement is the expansion of the social-emotional domain, which grew from 9 to 15 items, reflecting a deeper commitment to supporting children's emotional and interpersonal development. It is worth noting that the number of children assessed has consistently hovered around 1,200 since 2021, our established baseline year. Another key achievement is the ongoing transition of children from unregistered to registered early learning settings, ensuring more of our young learners benefit from structured, high-quality programmes. Despite minor setbacks, such as temporary closures of childcare services due to vacation periods and instances of absenteeism, the assessment was successfully administered. These challenges were tackled efficiently thanks to our dedicated team of data collectors, many of whom are retired early childhood educators. Their proactive communication with childcare providers as well as parents and continued presence in the field ensured the smooth continuation of the project.



What's Next

The next phase will focus on a rigorous data cleaning and verification process to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the collected information. This step is essential before moving into analysis and preparing findings for dissemination to relevant stakeholders. We aim to foster constructive discussions that recognize existing strengths and identify areas for improvement. The success of this project relies heavily on collaboration and teamwork among partners, parents, and the wider community.

A Note of Appreciation

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the parents who participated in the assessment, and to the childcare settings that graciously adjusted their routines to accommodate the process. We also acknowledge the unwavering commitment of our data collectors, whose efforts were instrumental to the success of this initiative. Our sincere appreciation goes to all IECD staff who ensured the timely dispatch of assessment materials, their dedication and efficiency were key to the smooth rollout of this important phase. Every parent aspires for their child to receive quality care that nurtures key developmental milestones. We look forward to continuing this collaborative effort to support the growth and success of our young learners.

"Every child has a different learning style and pace. Each child is unique, not only capable of learning but also capable of succeeding" – Robert John Meehan



INSIDE THE SEYCHELLES ECCE FRAMEWORK: THE ISLAND PARADISE LEADS THE WORLD IN ECCE



The Seychelles Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education

Version 2.0, 2023



A Multi-Sectoral Policy Document for all Partners and Stakeholders in the Early Childhood Care and Education

Developed and Published by
Institute of Early Childhood Development
September 2023

Seychelles is globally celebrated for its pristine natural beauty and unique endemic wildlife. Yet, its commitment to excellence extends beyond ecology to human development, where it has emerged as a surprising world leader. This is powerfully exemplified by its hosting of the world's only UNESCO Category 2 Institute for Early Childhood Care and Education, proving that national influence is not dictated by size but by visionary commitment.

Building directly upon this legacy, the island nation has systematically fortified its commitment through the Seychelles Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education Version 2.0 of 2023. This comprehensive strategic blueprint translates high-level principles into a unified, high-quality national system, providing the operational engine to integrate a diverse network of public, private, and community-based services and moving decisively from a fragmented model to a cohesive one.

This entire system is spearheaded by the Institute for Early Childhood Development (IECD), which provides robust

governance and oversight. Mandated inter-ministerial collaboration ensures a holistic approach to child well-being by integrating efforts from health, education, family, and social affairs.

Guided by the 2023 Framework, the IECD has made significant strides in elevating quality and expanding access, all grounded in the foundational Early Childhood Development Act of 2022. In the realm of quality assurance, a major initiative involves launching comprehensive new National Standards for Centre-Based Child Care, which establish clear benchmarks for learning environments, staff qualifications, and developmental outcomes. Simultaneously, a strategic focus on expanding access was demonstrated in 2025 by an update to the Home-Based Child Care Policy, which safely increased the child-to-provider ratio from 10 to 12 to meet growing national demand. This expansion is rigorously balanced with a commitment to quality, built upon the existing foundation of the National Standards for Childminders from 2016.

Great emphasis is also placed on empowering those at the heart of the system: the workforce and families. The sector is being professionalized through targeted training, including certificate courses offered by SITE and mandatory continuous professional development for childminders, who are supported by pedagogical guidance like the Early Simulation and Learning programme. To ensure equitable access, the government offers subsidies to families, while the IECD and its partners run sensitization programmes for parents to enhance their skills in child development.

Looking forward, the system is dynamic and future-focused, with several key initiatives underway. The IECD is awaiting cabinet approval for the National Standards for Centre-Based Child Care Service and is developing a framework to regulate preschools—a new mandate for the Institute informed by a recent assessment of preschool standards. Furthermore, a new Child Care Expansion Framework is being developed to encourage the provision of childcare in large workplaces, particularly in the tourism sector, with implementation anticipated in 2026. Parallel talks with financial institutions are exploring schemes to encourage private investment in childcare services. Finally, a new Child Care Operation Framework will introduce mechanisms to ensure year-round service availability, directly addressing parental challenges during school holidays and ensuring providers can take annual leave without disrupting this essential service for families.

PRESET 2025

(PRE-REGISTRATION SENSITISATION TRAINING FOR PROSPECTIVE CHILDMINDERS)



Pascalina Joseph - General Helper (Au Cap DA's Office) receiving her Certificate of Attendance from former Minister of Education, Dr. Justin Valentin

My name is Pascalina, and I recently completed the PRESET program with the Institute of Early Childhood Development. It's been a journey—one that I wasn't sure I could finish when I first started.

My mum has been running a childminding service with my sister for years, but now she's getting ready to retire. I'm the one who is supposed to take her place. At first, I was excited—but also a bit overwhelmed. When I realized I'd have to wake up early every Saturday for training, I honestly wanted to give up.

But the support I found in the group really kept me going. There was this sense of togetherness that made a big difference. We encouraged each other, and the facilitators were always there to push us forward and remind us why we started. Slowly, I began to look forward to each Saturday.

Through the PRESET program, I gained so many new ideas, experiences, and skills. I learned things I didn't even know I needed to know! It opened my eyes to what childminding really involves and how important our role is in early childhood development.

Now that I've completed the training, I feel proud and happy. I'm ready to step into the business with confidence, and my mum can finally relax knowing I'm prepared to take over. Thanks to PRESET, I'm not just continuing a family tradition—I'm doing it the right way.

I've worked at the School for the Exceptional Child for over 20 years. One day, I heard an advert for the PRESET programme on television, and it immediately caught my attention. I spoke to someone at the school about it, and she encouraged me to apply. I'm so glad I did.

Having worked closely with children with special needs for so many years, I've become deeply inspired to create a service that caters just for them.

When I joined the PRESET programme, I had hope that it would guide and support me in making this dream a reality. And now, after completing the programme, I can say I've received a whole "baggage" of knowledge, tools, and ideas to help me get started on this new path.

I now feel more confident and better prepared to open my own childminding service dedicated to children with special needs—something I believe is truly needed in our community.

To anyone out there thinking of becoming a childminder, I encourage you to join the PRESET programme. You'll learn so much, and it might just give you the foundation you need to turn your passion into purpose—just like it did for me.



Lindy Adelaide - Teacher Assistant
- School of Exceptional Child

I'm a full-time housewife. I often felt lonely sitting at home, and when I became pregnant with my daughter, I started thinking seriously about creating a safe and nurturing space for her.

That's when the idea came to me—since I'm already at home, why not start a childminding business? I called the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) to get more information, and that's how I was introduced to the PRESET programme.

From the very first session, I was impressed. The programme was informative, rich, and exactly what I needed. I learned so much—not just about caring for children, but about how to support their development in meaningful ways. I even started applying what I learned with my own daughter at home, and the difference has been amazing.

It's been a truly fruitful journey. Now that I've completed the training, I'm ready to open my own childminding service. I feel confident and well-prepared to provide a safe, loving, and educational environment—not just for my child, but for others too.

My goal is also to teach other parents how they can bring this experience into their homes. My advice to anyone thinking about joining: make the first step. Be a positive image for young children, be their role model. If you love working with little ones and want to make a difference, I strongly encourage you to join the PRESET programme.



Agnes Adrienne - Unemployed

I used to work in a daycare. When the daycare closed down, I found myself thinking seriously about the next step. That's when I decided to join the PRESET programme—not just to keep going, but to deepen my knowledge about caring for children.

To be honest, I was scared at first. I didn't know exactly what the sessions would be about or what to expect. But what I did know was that reaching out to the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) was the right move. And it truly was.

After the very first session, I found the programme fantastic—it immediately changed my outlook. I felt inspired and motivated to continue. What also helped was seeing two of my former colleagues, who once trained me at the daycare, also attending the programme. Their presence made me feel even more relaxed and supported. Now that I've completed the training, I'm filled with excitement. I'm already starting to put everything in order to begin my own childminding business.

Thank you, IECD, for this opportunity. This programme gave me the confidence and knowledge I needed to start this new chapter.



Jessica Quatre - Housewife proudly posing with her certificate received from former Minister of Local Government and Community Affairs, Mrs. Rose-Marie Hoareau

IECD'S 2025 ECCE THEME DAYS: A YEAR OF UNFORGETTABLE SUCCESS!

Let's look back on an extraordinary year brought to life by our electrifying calendar of ECCE Theme Days. Each month offered a new reason to celebrate, advocate, and champion the cause of our youngest citizens.

Spearheaded by the Section for Advocacy, Information and Capacity Building, the 2025 ECCE Theme Days transformed important dates into dynamic, unforgettable experiences for the entire ECCE community.

Each theme day served as a powerful platform to educate, forge stronger partnerships, and celebrate the incredible people dedicated to our children's futures.

The 2025 calendar was a rich blend of globally recognized UN observances and uniquely Seychellois celebrations, including the institute's historic milestones such as the official inauguration as a Category 2 Institute under the auspices of UNESCO.

From award ceremonies and workshops to powerful advocacy campaigns and heartfelt tributes, every event provided the opportunity for us to witness communities uniting, voices rising together, and the message of ECCE resonating louder than ever across the nation.

As we reflect on a triumphant year, we extend our deepest gratitude to every staff member, partner, and community member who made this journey so special. Your energy and passion were the driving force behind every success.





IECD EMPOWERS CAREGIVERS WITH HEALTH AND WELLNESS CAMPAIGN ON MAHÉ AND PRASLIN

Building on the success of a Cancer Awareness Talk for staff, the IECD launched an impactful health campaign for child care providers on Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue. The initiative, led by CEO Mrs. Shirley Choppy and born from popular demand, focused on strengthening the health and well-being of both children and the women who care for them.

Under the powerful theme, "From Cradle to Care: Strengthening Child and Women's Health Through Awareness and Action," the sessions provided essential knowledge and practical strategies. They served a dual purpose: as a vital welfare initiative for staff and a capacity-building tool to further professionalise child care services.

In collaboration with the health sector, the IECD hosted leading experts - Dr. Javier Rose, Senior Medical Consultant and IECD Local Board Chairperson, highlighted the critical role caregivers play in a child's holistic development. He offered a thorough understanding of child health, with practical advice on preventing and managing common childhood conditions. His session empowered caregivers to create nurturing environments where every child can thrive.

Dr. Johanna Rapanarilala, Medical Oncologist at Seychelles Hospital, led an empowering session answering a key question: What Women Should Know About Cancer? She focused on prevention, early detection, and actionable steps women can take to prioritize their health, encouraging them to become ambassadors of this vital information in their communities.

The sessions fostered vibrant discussions, creating a valuable platform for learning and connection. This initiative underscores IECD's commitment to raising the standard of child care by investing in the well-being of the dedicated professionals at the heart of early childhood development.



THE IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN CHILD CARE TO BUILD HUMAN CAPITAL

On April 1st, I had the pleasure of delivering a presentation on a topic that has captured my attention since I began working with IECD. Over the past two years as an accountant here, I have come to truly understand the vital role our childcare system plays in supporting economic growth.

As a mother, I have experienced firsthand how access to quality childcare allows me to pursue my career with peace of mind. Knowing my child is in a safe, nurturing environment helps me focus and be more productive at work.

While preparing for this presentation, I researched deeper into the importance of investing in childcare systems. Seychelles, for example, is a country that actively supports childcare through financial assistance and infrastructure development. As a result, more women are able to return to the workforce after childbirth, thus contributing significantly to national development. With reliable childcare services, women can also pursue better paying jobs, work longer hours, and improve employment prospects.

Increased availability of childcare directly links with higher and better quality employment for women. It also reduces the need for social welfare support as dual-income households become more common. This, in turn, enhances the overall quality of life for families. With both parents working and earning more, families are in a better position to invest in their children's education, healthcare, and nutrition.



The early years especially from the age 0 to 3 years are critical for a child's development. During this period, the brain develops rapidly and is highly receptive to learning. A well structured childcare system that emphasizes nutrition, safety, child protection, early learning, and public health can provide the stimulating environment children need to thrive.

Investing in childcare is a long-term economic strategy. The outcome of supporting one child today with proper care, health, and early education is a successful adult and responsible citizen of tomorrow. This reduces future financial burdens on government welfare and justice system.

In conclusion, it is essential for governments to invest in the early years of a child's life. A strong foundation leads to a thriving economy. Supporting parents through accessible, high quality childcare builds a resilient and productive workforce. It has been said that investing in early childhood is one of the smartest decisions a country can make.

Poem

*Mon en zanfan
Kirye e inosan*

*Mwan osi mon anvi epanourir
Pa kre lafreyer otour mwan
Pa les mwan reste dan kwen
Donn mwan mon lezel
Les mwan anvole dan tou pti kwen
Antrap mwan e mars avek mwan,
pour ed mwan devlope
Pti pa, pti pa, parey en torti mon pou reisi.
Pa dout mwan, kuar dan mwan.
Mwan, mon annan abilite
Menm dan moman difikilte
Koste zepol ansanm
Donn en koudmen
Fer li pour mwan
Fer li pour tou nou bann pti zanfan Sesel*

Par Alkirra Forte, P1 – Anse Etoile School

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:

Amina's journey

When the Institute for Early Childhood Development (IECD) gained autonomy in June 2023 to manage its own accounting function, one of the first key appointments was Ms. Amina Sarah as Accountant. Amina's journey reflects not only her professional expertise but also her resilience, creativity, and dedication to IECD's mission.

Her most notable achievement has been her involvement in the development of **CBISS**, a new online system designed to streamline the management of government financial assistance. This project modernized processes and enhanced transparency, marking a significant milestone for IECD.

The CBISS initiative also became a personal journey of growth for Amina. She describes the experience as "interesting and full of learning opportunities." Conducting numerous media interviews something she had never done before gave her newfound confidence and allowed her to represent IECD with professionalism and poise.

Her contributions extend beyond accounting. In January 2025, Amina joined a delegation to Sri Lanka. This international exposure broadened her perspective and reinforced her commitment to advancing education and community development.

Amina has been an integral part of IECD's logistical team for major events. She has coordinated impactful activities such as tree planting at schools and Centre base centre, fostering environmental awareness among children and communities. As Treasurer of the Social Committee, she also organizes staff activities that strengthen workplace culture and camaraderie.

Her versatility shines through her creative side as well. Amina has developed skills in design, creating invitation cards, birthday cards, and posters for the institute. This blend of analytical precision and artistic flair highlights her ability to contribute across multiple dimensions of IECD's work.

Balancing these responsibilities, Amina is also a hardworking mother of two, embodying resilience and dedication as she pushes forward IECD's mandate as a Category 2 institute.



Amina Sarah's journey at IECD is a testament to adaptability, creativity, and the power of embracing new opportunities. Whether managing finances, representing IECD abroad, coordinating community initiatives, or designing creative materials, she continues to inspire colleagues and strengthen the institute's mission.



WORK-LIFE BALANCE SESSION WITH MR. ROBERT AHWENG

On July 25th, Mr. Robert Ahweng led an inspiring professional development session on Work-Life Balance. The session began with a warm welcome, a blessing, and a beautiful gospel song, "The Goodness of God."

Mr. Ahweng reminded us that we all have 24 hours each day, and how we use them shapes our lives and those around us. Key takeaways included the importance of self-love, modeling balance for our children, and embracing each day as a chance to grow.

The session was filled with meaningful conversations, laughter, and positive energy. Many staff expressed gratitude and asked for more sessions in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Ahweng, for your inspiring session.



EMPOWERING CHILDMINDERS THROUGH PEDIATRIC FIRST AID TRAINING

Participants who successfully completed this year's Pediatric First Aid trainings have been awarded a Pediatric First Aid Certificate and a credit voucher, both valid for two years. This certification empowers childminders with renewed confidence and formally recognizes their competence in safeguarding the well-being of children under their care.

The trainings, which directly support compliance with the IECD National Standards on Childminding Regulations (2016), were conducted between July and August across Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue. A total of 38 participants took part, with registered childminders undertaking a refresher course and others attending the basic course as first-time participants.

Organized in partnership with the Red Cross Society of Seychelles and coordinated by Project Officer Ms. Aniela Sophola from the Home-Based Child Care Section, the sessions combined theoretical instruction with hands-on practical exercises. This dual approach ensured participants could not only learn about life-saving techniques but also practice them in real-life emergency response scenarios, solidifying both their understanding and application of key skills.

The sessions were facilitated by trainers from the Red Cross Society of Seychelles. Their expert guidance was instrumental to the success of the programme. Special thanks are extended to those facilitators for their commitment to empowering childminders and strengthening the quality of early childhood care services nationwide.



SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process which allow children to learn to understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, show empathy so as to make responsible decisions. It helps young children develop essential life skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and social interaction.

A five-day Workshop for Master Trainers was held from 14th to 20th October 2025 as part of the Education Sector's ECCE NAP 2025–2027 project. Two officers from the IECD, Ms. Vanessa Philoé, Senior Compliance Officer, and Mrs. Nathalie Moustache, Director for International Cooperation, took part in the training. This is a follow-up of the training the two officers attended earlier this year in India, and also as part of the Institute's strategy to train and build capacity of its managers and officers.

The workshop brought together a group of professionals from primary schools, from both state and Private, representatives from the Seychelles Institute for Teacher Education (SITE) and IECD, among others. Both institutions share a common interest in promoting quality and holistic early learning, and thus can apply the training within their respective organisations. The training provided the necessary guidance on how to use the newly launched handbook to deliver SEL sessions for children aged 3–6 years and on how to train teachers and other relevant personnel in their respective schools and organisations.

This workshop marks a major step towards strengthening the integration of SEL into early childhood education in Seychelles. By giving teachers useful practical knowledge and tools, the programme aims to help all children build strong social and emotional skills that support their overall development and prepare them for future success.



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY: A YEAR OF JOY, CONNECTION, AND TOGETHERNESS

This year, the Social Committee has truly been a shining light, filled with warmth, laughter, and togetherness. Our goal has always been to bring all staff members closer, creating moments of joy and connection that remind us of the wonderful community we are part of. It's been a year full of delightful activities that brought smiles to everyone's faces. We celebrated our staff members' birthdays with special lunches and heartfelt cake-cutting moments, sharing happiness and good wishes.

For Valentine's Day, staff had the lovely opportunity to come together over a cozy tea session, engaging in fun and interesting activities that fostered friendship and camaraderie. These small moments of connection mean so much.

One of the most memorable events was our Labour Day celebration. It was a well-deserved barbecue at Chalet des Vacances in Takamaka, where staff and their families gathered to enjoy good food and great company. Each team brought their special touch to the day, making it a truly unforgettable occasion filled with laughter and warmth.

We also hosted the Excellence Childminder's Award Ceremony at Eden Bleu Hotel, a proud moment where we honored our dedicated childminders. High-level government officials, special guests, and staff came together to celebrate excellence. Awards were presented in five categories, honouring those with five and ten years of dedicated service. The evening ended beautifully with a gala dinner and lively dancing, leaving everyone with wonderful memories.



Our end-of-year gathering was a heartfelt occasion where board members, staff, families, and key partners shared a convivial atmosphere. The Chairman and CEO reflected on our collective accomplishments, inspiring us all. The night was made even more special by performances from our popular artists, 'Champion' and 'Extra Big,' who truly brought joy and energy to the event.

As we approached the close of the year, we will be celebrating with our traditional Christmas high-tea and thankfulness gathering, hosted by the CEO. It is usually a warm moment for staff to share personal reflections, enjoy a creative 'paint and sip' activity, and exchange thoughtful gifts in our Secret Santa. What a wonderful way to end the year—with gratitude, friendship, and hope for the future!

The Social Committee wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to all staff for your participation, dedication, and unwavering support throughout 2025. We eagerly look forward to creating more joyful memories together in 2026.







NEW REGISTERED CHILDMINDERS IN 2025

Empowering Early Childhood, One Home at a Time

The year 2025 marks another step forward for early childhood care in Seychelles as new childminders join the IECD family. Through their love and dedication, they play a vital role in shaping brighter futures for our youngest learners.



Brigitte Lesperance
Little Diamond Childminding
English River



Cherylynn Samsoodin
Nana's Daycare
Cascade



Mervin Serret
Barney and Friends
Perseverance 1



Sharon Rosette
Shaeve Childminding
Pointe Larue



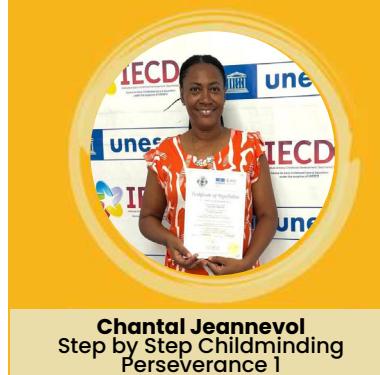
Cathrina Henriette
BLESSED Childminding Services
Bel Air



Claudette Larue
Smart Start Childminding
La Passe, La Digue



Militna Dufresne
Smart Start Childminding
La Passe, La Digue



Chantal Jeannevol
Step by Step Childminding
Perseverance 1



Hadassah Thelermont
Spiritual Journey Childcare
Cascade



Charlotte Malbrook
Little Cha's Childminding
Baie Ste Anne - Au Cap



Lynn Azemia
Little Lion
Perseverance 2



Rania Francois
Amitie Childminding
Grand Anse Praslin



Shana Aglae
Isha's Childminding
Perseverance 2





Seasons Greetings

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année

Zwaye Noel e Bonn Ane

Warmest Wishes!

The Governing & Local Boards, CEO and Staff
IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute

