

A look inside IECD's Archive...

Memorable Moment



In a special ceremony held at State House on 25th August 2014, President James Michel was presented with a book entitled 'Seychelles A Determined Island Nation: The Aspirations of Early Childhood Children' by Andrea Matombe from crèche, year two, Baie Lazare school; Liam Alexander, primary one, Independent school and Christie Sedgwick, primary two, Takamaka school.

All three children won first place in their respective category in the drawing and writing competition under the banner 'Early Childhood Islanders Aspirations 2020+: Letter to the President'. The competition was launched in support of last year's national theme 'International Year of Small Island Developing States: Seychelles a Determined Island Nation'.



July 2015

Editor's Note



Greetings! Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 2nd edition of IECD's Newsletter in which is outlined the various projects which the Institute has been involved in since our last publication.

Amongst a series of interesting articles and pictorial representations, highlighted are: the 3rd Biennial National Conference on Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE), and a sequence of workshops involving all relevant partners.

Thank you to my staff, for their invaluable professional input to successfully realise the multiple activities and projects last year and during the first half of 2015.

The Institute of Early Childhood Development appreciates your support and commitment to improving early childhood development in the country.

I am honoured once again to share the work and ongoing progress of IECD in the realm of Early Childhood in Seychelles.

Mrs. Shirley Choppy
CEO

3rd Biennial National Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)



"No child should be left behind. By fulfilling the rights of all young children and nurturing their potential and well-being, we will be building the wealth of nations"

This was said by the Vice-President, Mr Danny Faure as he officially launched the 3rd Biennial Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at the Eden Bleu Hotel, Eden Island on 20th February 2015.

The conference, hosted under the theme "National Action Plan for ECCE 2013-2014: Sharing Progress" on 20th and 21st February 2015, was jointly organized by the National High Level ECCE Policy Committee and the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), and gave all stakeholders and partners the opportunity to share their achievements, participate and discuss on progress made at the level of each of the main Sectors in the implementation of the National Action Plan for ECCE 2013-2014 and discuss on challenges in ECCE for the past two years.

A series of presentations by International Speakers were made by:

- Professor Andrew Hills, Professor of Allied Research- Maternity and Neonatology, Queensland University, Australia
- Ms Rebecca Sayre, Early Childhood Development (ECD) Specialist at World Bank – New York USA
- Dr. Hasina Ebrahim, Associate Professor Early Childhood, University of the Free State, South Africa and Ms. Margaret Irvine, Research Associate, Centre for Social Development, Rhodes University, South Africa—consultants who worked with the Ministry of Education to develop the Early Learning Framework
- Dr. Mmantsetsa Marope, Director UNESCO International Bureau of Education, Geneva

Among the recommendations, Seychelles was highly regarded for the remarkable progress in ECCE, in particular 0-3 years of age. "Seychelles needs to reaffirm its leadership role by becoming a global hub and an exemplary global practice in the provision of high quality ECCE services" Dr Mmantsetsa Marope told guests at the conference.

Staff of IECD celebrate Children's Day with children from Childminding Establishment

To mark the occasion of this year's National Children's Day, staff from IECD paid a visit to one of the Childminding Establishments on Mahé, where they got to spend a half day with the children.

The staff got a very warm welcome from the establishment owner – Ms Ruth Sopha and her assistant, as well as all the children, who were very excited and enthusiastic to participate in the fun games lined up for them. Mrs Felicia Lafortune, Senior Programme Development Officer at IECD, who is also a qualified Early Childhood Teacher by profession,

regaled the children with short funny stories such as 'The Three Little Pigs', which had the children laughing and clapping for joy.

Other games included dancing to the 'Pti Marmit' song, singing along to famous nursery rhymes and the most loved game of all, playing with the colourful balloons!

After the fun games and activities, the children enjoyed some delicious snacks and fruit juice, amid much happy chattering and laughter.

The activity, which took place on 03rd June 2015, ended on a very cheerful note. The lovely smiles on the faces of all the children and their innocent laughter left bigger smiles on the faces of the staff, especially after they received an invitation from the children to come back for another day of more fun!!



National Validation Workshops on the Draft National Standards for Childminding Services (Continued)



Meeting with stakeholders and partners with interest in ECCE, on 22nd May 2015



Meeting with childminders from Praslin and La Digue on 23rd May 2015



1. Title of Presentation: Prevention of Childhood Obesity: All we need to know for healthy growth and development should be introduced in the early childhood years Professor Andrew Hills 2. Title of Presentation: Childminding Services Standards Project Ms Rebecca Sayre 3. Consultants who worked with the Ministry of Education to develop the Seychelles Early Learning Framework Ms Margaret Irvine and Dr. Hasina Ebrahim 4. Title of Presentation: Global Progress on ECCE Provision: Challenges for Post-2015 Dr. Mmantsetsa Marope

Staff engage in Spiritual Blessing Session



Bishop James Wong was invited to do a spiritual blessing session with staff of IECD at the end of June 2015 to mark the end of the first half of 2015.

The prayers and blessings were very specific to the work of the Institute and brought much solace to the staff, who enjoyed the session tremendously.

"Brothers and Sisters, let us give praise and thanks to the Lord, who took little children into his arms and blessed them" Bishop Wong said.

"Jesus welcomed children, believed in their dignity, and held them up as a model for all who are seeking the kingdom of God."

"We pray that you, Father, will also send your blessing on all our children so that they may grow in maturity, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, become true and faithful witnesses in the world, and great leaders, spreading and defending the faith and the cause of your love and peace" Bishop Wong said during the prayer of blessing.

The spiritual blessing session also included the blessing of all offices of IECD

Our Vision: Seychellois Children enjoying quality early care and education through the shared commitment of all partners

Our Mission: To provide leadership in ECCE and to ensure, through collaboration with all other partners, the coordinated implementation of policies and programmes in order to improve the quality and the accessibility of early childhood care and education so that every child develops holistically, has positive learning experiences, and builds a strong foundation for success in school and everyday life

Our Motto: "A winning start for all"

National Action Plan for ECCE 2013-2014: Findings of the Evaluation Report

The Third Biennial National Conference on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) also led to the convocation of side events to cover the many facets of the Action Plan. As part of this process, IECD organized a workshop on 26th February 2015 at the STC Conference Room with the aim of generating discussions on the draft evaluation report and receiving feedback from the ECCE sectors and partners directly involved in the implementation of the Plan. More specifically, the ECCE Technical Teams and Senior Management Officials from the Education, Health and Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports sectors were invited.

The Action Plan is the official document that promotes the holistic development of young children and brings to salience some of the initiatives of Early Childhood Care and Education Sectors in line Ministries. It has influenced sectoral plans and led to projects, programmes, research, and monitoring and developmental activities within the two-year implementation cycle. The evaluation sought to document achievements, trace progress and confront the challenges.

Dr André Leste, Director for Programme Coordination at IECD made a presentation in three segments: achievement of outcomes, operational effectiveness, and assessment of impact. After each segment, participants had the opportunity through a group exercise to compare their judgments and perceptions with those presented and engage in a feedback plenary session. The workshop's consultative style allowed the



participants to express their opinions and exchange ideas regarding the evaluation results. They also expressed their views regarding the role of the ECCE Technical Team and its effectiveness in the implementation of the Action Plan. There was general agreement that considerable progress has been made. Through the implementation of the Action Plan, sectoral projects and programmes had been designed and some of them implemented, collaboration within and between sectors have been initiated or strengthened, partnership across sectors have been built or enhanced. There is substantial evidence to show that the objectives of the Action Plan are important for the development of ECCE provision in Seychelles.

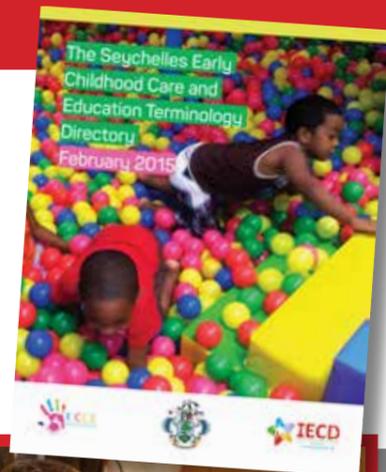
The workshop concluded with a discussion on emerging issues to be considered for the future. These include research actions, baseline data, action planning framework, and information on child development outcome.

The Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Terminology Directory – A first of its kind in Seychelles!

The Terminology Directory' was officially launched during the opening of the 3rd Biennial National Conference on ECCE. The idea of the Terminology Directory Project emanated from the Seychelles Framework on Early Childhood Care and Education, translated into the National Action Plan 2013-2014.

It is a comprehensive guide to the most commonly used terminologies in Early Childhood in Seychelles. The process of developing this project and such a document was a unique collaborative effort of a group of professionals dedicated to the further advancement of Early Childhood Development in Seychelles. They

came from the Ministries most directly concerned with early childhood care and education — namely the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports. The Directory provides advice and practical tips to professionals, caregivers working with children, and facilitate communication plus information sharing between Sectors, Institutions and individuals active in improving the situation of children and quality of services.



Mrs Choppy presenting Vice-President, Mr. Danny Faure with a copy of the Seychelles ECCE Terminology Directory at the 3rd Biennial National Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, on 20th February 2015



IECD News & Activities



Code of Conduct & Ethics at the workplace (March 2015) – A professional development workshop was organized on “Code of Conduct & Ethics at the Workplace” for all staff of IECD. The workshop was facilitated by the Chief Executive Officer of the Public Ethics Commission – Mrs Mina Créa. It was a very informative workshop which was well appreciated by the staff.



Official handing over of the Seychelles ECCE Terminology Directory (March 2015)

– The Kannu's Group sponsored SR50,000 towards the production and printing of the “Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Terminology Directory”.

The official handing over of the Terminology Directory took place on 31st March 2015 in a short ceremony held at the Kannu's Group Head Office, at Michel Building. It was Mr Kannan Pillay – Managing Director and Mr Shan Pillay – Director of the Company who officially handed over the “Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Terminology Directory” to the CEO



2nd National Action Plan for ECCE: Planning Workshop (April 2015) –

A one-day workshop was organized on 10th April to trace the way forward in the design of the next action plan, following the evaluation of the first plan: 2013-2014. Participants from the four ECCE sectors, namely Education, Health, Social Affairs and Community Development and Sports, brainstormed, analyzed and conceptualized a project-based method for the development of the next national plan for ECCE. This is in line with the new approach to budgeting that the Ministry of Finance is promoting



Fond Des Liannes supports our Media Campaign! (February 2015) – Fond des Liannes, a small water bottling company, donated 500 bottles of water with special stickers of the conference theme to IECD as part of the promotional and marketing strategy for the 3rd Biennial National Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education.



Poem Competition promotes this year's National Theme

– In its effort to sensitize young children on the concept and importance of the national theme (*I Love Seychelles*) for this year, the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) launched a poetry competition in April 2015. The competition was open to all children (local and foreign) who are in primary/ year two (P2) in 2015. The aim of which was for children to showcase their love and affection for their beloved country, Seychelles, as well as develop their artistic talents, creative and writing skills in any of the three national languages



Programme Performance-Based Budgeting

– Since the beginning of the financial year, the Institute of Early Childhood Development, an agency under the portfolio of the Ministry of Education, is piloting the Programme Performance-Based Budgeting (PPBB). There are four programmes and each of which has a programme manager, notably the directors of respective sections.

An in-house training session conducted by the CEO, Mrs. Shirley Choppy was held in February 2015, with the assistance of the Ministry of Finance. The aim of which is to sensitize the programme managers on their essential roles and expectations vis-à-vis the effective implementation of the set targets. This includes; the principles of PPBB, accountability and management of the budget allocation to achieve the desirable outcomes, as set out in the PPBB Statement.

During this pilot phase, the Programme Managers are being assisted and supported by the HRBMO. So far, good progress has been recorded and it has been an exciting learning experience for all of us.

Childminding Services – An Action Research Project



Name of Childminder: Ms Ruth Sopha

Location of Childminding Establishment: North Region

Area of intervention: Early Learning

Number of children benefiting from childminding service: 8 children aged between 18 months to 3 years

The Intervention Plan implemented at the Childminding Establishment included the following phases:

- 1 Observation and Assessment of Early Learning Activities
- 2 Identification of specific Early Learning Activities and consultation with Childminder
- 3 Development and implementation of basic training sessions
- 4 Delivery of the programme, in particular storytelling by Childminder
- 5 Monitoring and evaluation of the Intervention Plan

The Intervention Plan started in February 2015. As part of the training, the Senior Programme Development Officer, Mrs Felicia Lafortune, as well as the trainer, carried out simple and interesting demonstrations on the basics of storytelling, using the popular Children's Classic – "The Three Little Pigs". This was accompanied by big, colourful and attractive posters depicting the story, where the children had the opportunity to talk freely and express themselves.

Following the guided demonstrations and trialed sessions, the Childminder put into practice what she had learnt, for a few weeks. This was monitored and supported through a series of visits and follow-up actions, to improve practice.

Conclusion

Ms Sopha showed great positivity and eagerness to learn new ways to improve her area of early learning. Whilst there is still a lot to learn in that area, with perseverance and the great love she has for her job, Ms Sopha feels confident that she will be able to surmount all challenges and offer the children at her establishment a good head start for further learning and development.

objective of fine-tuning the standards document. Early Learning, Nutrition, Staffing, Administration and Safety were the standards that sparked more debates and discussions.

The National Standards Document for childminding services is another step towards achieving high quality care and education, and ultimately contributes in building a strong foundation for our young children.

(more photos on back page >>)



Meeting with childminders from Mahe, on 16th May, 2015



In 2013, IECD conducted a Childminding Study to assess the current situation of childminders who looked after four or more children. Results from the National Childminding Study indicated clearly that there was a need to attend to the health and safety aspects of childminding, to establish minimum level of provision and to train and support childminders.

Beginning of the year, two childminders were selected as part of an intervention plan to assist them with improving certain specific areas of their services. In this issue, we meet up with Ms Ruth Sopha and look at her area of intervention using an action research model.



Validation Workshops on the Draft National Standards for Childminding Services

IECD held a series of National Validation Workshops during the month of May with childminders from Mahe and Inner Islands as well as stakeholders and partners with interest in early childhood care and education, to give them the opportunity to share their views and suggestions a propos the Draft National Standards for Childminding Services.

Ms Rebecca Sayre, the Consultant from World Bank, who has assisted the Institute and the National Core Team (comprising of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Department of Social Affairs, Department of Community Development and the Seychelles Fire & Rescue Services Agency), with the development of the national standards for childminding services, also attended the workshops and provided technical assistance.

The participants got the chance to deliberate on specific standards in various groups with assigned Chairpersons and Resource Persons. Valuable comments, suggestions and issues were put forth with the

Upcoming Activities

Launching of Advocacy Campaign on ECCE

Launching of National Standards for Childminding Services

Launching of National Action Plan for ECCE (2015-2017)

Training Workshop on ECCE Data Collection/Management System Project

Pre-Registration Training Workshop for Childminders on Mahé and Inner Islands

Publication of Children's Poem Repertoire

Christmas Recital with National Children's Choir

Dissemination of survey results to key stakeholders and partners in ECCE