



# Children 1st

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ISSUE No. 3 May 2016

## World Bank Virtual Discussion Series: IECD Shares Experience on ECCE

Organised by the World Bank, the Early Learning Platform and virtual discussion series provide an opportunity for countries to share best practices and learn from each others' experiences. This is very important as it encourages continuous growth in the field of early childhood development.



Seychelles in partnership with the World Bank has recently developed the national standards for Childminding services. According to the World Bank, this project is exemplary and considered as a best practice for some countries in Africa, Asia and even Latin America. These countries are yet to develop policies, quality programmes and standards for 0-3 years of age.

childhood development and for Seychelles - An example for IECD to share and other countries to emulate!

It is for this reason that IECD has been chosen and invited to participate in the virtual discussion platform. The objectives of this discussion were to showcase our achievements, provide information and share experiences on the National Standards for Childminding projects. The CEO of IECD, Mrs Shirley Choppy opened the discussion by situating early childhood care and education nationally, the establishment of IECD and the rationale for the standards project. She reiterated that the success of the project lies on the good cooperation between the World Bank and Seychelles.

The presentation was followed by questions from interested individuals from many countries as far as Colombia and as close as Tanzania; many of those countries are yet to develop standards for 0-3 years and regulate the Childminding Sector.

Ms Rebecca Sayre, the Education Consultant from the World Bank, on the other hand, expanded on the collaborative process of developing the standards, consultations and validation, and unwavering support from sectorial teams and other stakeholders, leadership of IECD and commitment of the Government of Seychelles. This model has proven to be extremely successful and is a milestone achievement for early

Representatives from ECCE Sectors joined the Institute's management and staff in the Conference Room at Eden Bleu Hotel to participate in this first virtual event. The event was hosted and sponsored by the World Bank. The one-hour timing for the presentation was not quite sufficient for the many questions and clarifications from the overseas participants, but the team attempted to answer some of them. However, contacts were exchanged and related documentation will be circulated for more information and consideration in future projects.

In spite of the above, perhaps it is better for the participants to consider taking a trip to the Seychelles Islands to learn, consult, experience and appreciate the best practices and developments in ECD. What a practical and convenient way to get their questions answered!

## Editor's Note



Dear Readers,

Since the last edition of IECD Newsletter we have been very busy and it gives me great pleasure to share the work that we have been doing with you.

The IECD family is getting bigger and we have also been able to achieve a milestone in ECCE, as there are now National Standards for Childminders. This has not kept us from launching the National Action Plan towards the end of last year as well as a collection of poems by some of the youngest Poets Seychelles has known. Further details about these activities are available in this edition of our Newsletter.

I feel privileged to be working for such a worthwhile cause and to have the opportunity to make children's lives better. However, none of it would have been possible without a team of like-minded individuals who are equally passionate about their work and fulfil their function with such dedication. Thank you team for the hard work and I look forward to achieving even more together.

We would also like to thank you dear reader for your interest in the work that we do and for your continuing support.

Happy reading!

**Mrs. Shirley Choppy**  
CEO



## The Launching of the National Action Plan 2015-2016 Early Childhood Care and Education: Commitment and Partnership

The launching of the National Action Plan 2015-2016 Early Childhood Care and Education was a landmark event in the calendar of the Institute of Early Childhood Development, and on the national agenda for Early Childhood Care and Education. The Seychelles Trading Company (STC) Hall, where the ceremony was held last year exhibited an expectant atmosphere on this Monday morning: a table lined with neat rows of the colourful action plan, a prominent Head Table with writing materials, and promotional banners from a range of business organizations dotting the front area. A double event, a double ceremony was about to take place where the symbolic launching of the plan was strategically linked with concrete arrangements for financing the plan.

The Honourable Minister for Education, Mrs Macsuzy Mondon, in her opening address, directed attention to the common cause of the two parties coming together to demonstrate commitment to and support for the holistic development of the children in Seychelles. She went on to explain the collaborative development of this new plan, as a sequel to the previous plan, with added emphasis on parental and community participation, child development outcome, enhanced service provision and expanded programme delivery. She emphasized the result-oriented, outcome-based approach which characterized this plan. However, she noted that financial investment for the smooth and successful implementation of the plan was a crucial factor and she expressed her satisfaction with the response of the business community. She further commented on the importance of this event in the formalization of support from private business partners.

The speech was followed by a general overview of the plan in which the priority areas were justified, their relevance to the context of Seychelles was assessed and the thirteen sector projects emanating from the plan were described. But, the unique aspect

of the ceremony was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.

The highlight of the ceremony was the signing of the MOU between the Principal Secretaries of the four ECCE Sectors including the Institute of Early Childhood Development, and the business and private organizations, namely, Seychelles Trading Company, Seychelles Ports Authority, Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority, Constance Lemuria Resort, and Airtel Seychelles. Amidst the exchange of signatures from one set of partners to another, one could feel a real sense of commitment to work towards the common goal of building a strong foundation for children's development. To top it all, the Chief Executive Officer of STC made a generous donation intended to contribute towards specific projects in the ECCE Sectors. [It is to be noted that the representative of Temooljee and Company Ltd was not present at the Ceremony but the MOU was signed in January 2016.]

Words of encouragement from Colonel Andre Ciseau, the Chief Executive Officer of the Seychelles Ports Authority and a closing address by Dr. Danny Louange, Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the Seychelles Health Care Agency brought the short ceremony to a fitting conclusion. Colonel Ciseau congratulated IECD's fervour in forging this new partnership. Dr. Louange commended the plan and acknowledged the generosity of the sponsors in boosting ECCE provisions in Seychelles.



## Launch of Children's Poetry Collection and Christmas Recital

As is customary, the Institute of Early Childhood Development organised its Christmas Recital on the 22nd of December to thank its valued partners and sponsors for their assistance and support throughout the year 2015. The Children's Choir entertained the audience and those present could sing along to old time favourites Christmas carols throughout the ceremony.

The activity, coincided with the launching of the Poetry Collection based on the theme "I love Seychelles" from the children in the early childhood stage across around the country. During the ceremony the top three winners for the poems and the

illustrations were rewarded. The other participants whose poems also featured in the collection received a gift from Santa, the special guest at the ceremony.

The booklet is a beautiful work of art and makes for a very interesting read; it clearly shows the talent and skills of the early childhood children. As a means of encouraging the young artists and poets, IECD has published the collection and it is on sale at Rs 50 a copy. The Institute, the children whose poems featured in the collection and their parents wish to thank the Special Children's Fund for sponsoring the publication and the ceremony.



## 2nd ECCE Forum: Advocacy Survey on ECCE Issues

It was in the SITE Auditorium that a group of people with vested interest in ECCE gathered on Friday the 8th of April 2016 for the presentation of the results of a survey that gauged the level of understanding of ECCE issues nationally.

In his presentation, the Consultant, Mr Egbert Benstrong, explained that the survey was trying to understand the respondents' current knowledge about a general or specific issue related to early childhood and the way that this influences the respondent's behaviour. The survey addressed elements of health and safety, education, policy, social and child protection, parental and community links as it relates to early childhood. Mr Benstrong further explained that the IECD expected 60% of respondents to have a good knowledge of ECCE issues and indeed the survey results confirmed this.

The audience was in disbelief with certain results as they learnt that Childminders and Day Care Operators were scoring the lowest in aspects of health and safety and Education of children, whilst Professionals were scoring the lowest on aspects of child and social protection and parental and community links. This generated certain debates that were aimed at understanding those figures and their implications.

To further shed light on the matter there were interventions from various Panellists representing the different sectors; Dr Adeline spoke on health and safety, Mrs Chantal Cadeau addressed social and child protection, Dr Purvis expanded on parental and community links and Mr Cyril Pillay on education. The interesting discussion was moderated by the Principal Secretary in the Vice President's Secretariat, Mrs Jeanne Simeon.

The audience had the opportunity to also make their contribution to the Panellists' views, and given that it was an audience of Policy Makers, Educators, Health Professionals, Day Care Operators, Social Workers amongst others, the discussion was very fruitful. Amongst the recommendations made, was the fact that there needs to be more targeted advocacy campaigns so as to increase the knowledge of the public as well as those working with children.



## Bann Aktivite pour Dezyenm e Trwazyenm Kar Lannen 2016

**Louvertir Legzibisyon "Mon kontan ou" par bann Zanfan dan Staz Pti Lanfans**

**Formasyon bann Profesyonel dan Sektor Pti Lanfans lo Teknik ek Metod Resers**

**Lansman Sitweb e paz "Facebook" pour Lenstiti Devlopman Pti Lanfans**

**Kanpanny ek Promosyon Standar Nasyonal pour Servis Vey Zanfan**

**Lansman Prosis Lanrezistremman pour bann Dimoun ki Vey Zanfan dan Lakour**

**Trwazyenm Forum lo Letid Pilot baze lo Devlopman Zanfan**

**Premye Faz Proze "Etabli Striktir ek Prosedir pour anmas Data ek Lenformasyon dan Sektor Pti Lanfans"**

## IECD as the Regulator for Childminding Services

**The Regulatory Affairs Section was set up in January 2015 and its roles are as follows:**

- Grant registration as provided under the IECD Act;
- Ensure that Childminders comply with the guidelines and standards of Childminding Service and Childminding Establishment as may be prescribed by regulations
- Monitor and evaluate the Childminding Establishment and Childminding Services provided by a Childminder
- Perform other functions as may be prescribed by regulations

The section is currently undertaking preparatory activities for the official registration of Childminders. This includes the drafting of regulations on National Standards, on-going training and sensitisation of Childminders, development of promotional materials to raise awareness on national standards and sensitisation of partners and stakeholders.

Mrs. Vereine Louis-Marie joined the Regulatory Affairs Section as Director in September 2015. She has ten years working experience as a Nutritionist and is specialized in Public Health. She has been heavily involved in the development and implementation of infant and young child nutrition initiatives in Seychelles.

Ms Lianette Morel, a newly recruited Senior Compliance

Officer is a Nurse and Midwife by profession with more than fifteen years experience. She has specialised in Neo-Natal Nursing and is a recipient of the Seychelles Young Leaders Programme (SYLP).

Under the direct supervision of Ms Morel, are three Monitoring and Evaluation Officers.

Mrs. Lydianne Jean-Louis, an Early Childhood Teacher with over ten years' experience and has assumed the role of Language Coordinator in a Primary School. She also holds a Diploma in Early Childhood Education.



Vereine Louis-Marie



Lianette Morel



Lydianne Jean-Louis



Stephanie Payet

Mrs. Stephanie Payet is a Secondary Trained Teacher with six years of experience working with students from diverse backgrounds. She holds an Advanced Diploma in Education and a Diploma in Secondary Education.

Ms. Romia Elizabeth holds a Diploma in Social Work. She has eight years experience in working with people from all walks of life from several communities as a Social Worker.



Romia Elizabeth

# National Childminding Standards: Presentation and Certification

Following successful completion of a series of seven intensive pre-registration training sessions which varies from early learning, interaction, safety, nutrition and child rights and protection, a total of 70 Childminders proudly received their certificates in a special ceremony on the 5th March 2016. The presentation took place at the STC Conference Room in the presence of Minister of Education, Chairperson of IECD Board, Chief Executive Officer of IECD, among other senior officials in government, and the Global Solutions Group Lead for Early Childhood Development at the World Bank, Dr. Sophie Naudeau. The visit of Dr. Naudeau coincided with the certification ceremony and the presentation of the national standards project developed in collaboration with World Bank.

In her opening address, the Minister for Education, Mrs Macsuzy Mondon commended the Childminders for their hard work, attendance and described the Childminding standards as a milestone achievement in ECCE nationally and further confirmation of the government's commitment to the holistic development of children in Seychelles. She also emphasised the important role of World Bank in ECCE and technical assistance provided to the Institute of Early Childhood Development to develop the national standards for Childminding Services.

As part of the ceremony, the Director for Regulatory Affairs, Mrs Vereine Louis-Marie gave an overview of the training initiative, methodology and delivery. She

explained that whilst IECD initiated and coordinated the training programme, specialized inputs from ECCE Sectors and other agencies were sought for the delivery of the training programme based on the agreed ten standards. Dr. Naudeau and Ms. Sayre of the World Bank on the other hand, provided an overview of the global perspective and initiative of the World Bank in area of Early Childhood Development, partnership and collaboration between the World Bank and Seychelles on the national standards project.

Speaking on behalf of the Childminders, Ms. Linda Auguste from the Au Cap District thanked the Government and IECD for the opportunity to

further their knowledge and skills in early childhood development and this was through an experienced-based approach employing a variety of hands-on and practical activities. This unique opportunity has also enabled them to meet their fellow colleague Childminders across the country and build a network of support.

The ceremony was animated by great performances of young children from the Children's House Pre-school and the Anse Royale Primary School. The certificate presentation ceremony for the second cohort of Childminders will feature in the next IECD Newsletter.



# 1st ECCE Forum:- Platform for Sharing Good Practices

Professionals working in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Sectors and prospective Early Childhood Teachers had the opportunity to engage in a lecture by the Global Lead for Early Childhood Development at the World Bank, Dr Sophie Naudeau and a Consultant from the World Bank, Ms Rebecca Sayre. Ms Sayre had been working closely with the IECD over the last few months to develop the National Standards for Childminding Services. This was Dr Naudeau's first visit to Seychelles which coincided with the Presentation and Certification Ceremony of the National Childminding Standards.



Dr Naudeau's presentation brought forth the importance of investing in ECCE as a worthwhile goal to pursue for optimal holistic development of young children.

Ms Sayre on the other hand, spoke of the partnership that exists between the IECD and the World Bank through the development of the National Standards for Childminding Services. The development of the National Standards was undertaken through a participatory and consultative process involving the ECCE Sectors, relevant agencies, stakeholders, and partners.

Dr Naudeau also spoke about future possibilities for collaboration between Seychelles and the World Bank. She explained that the World Bank is very keen on providing technical expertise and assistance in the domain of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and encouraged those present to seize the opportunity for the improvement of ECD development in Seychelles. One of the future IECD projects with the World Bank is the "Establishment of Structures and Procedures for Data Collection on Early Childhood Development Indicators".



## A Closer Look at the Implementation and Progress of the Programme Performance-based Budgeting (PPBB) From January 2015 – March 2016

	ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS		COMMENTS
		YES	NO	
1	Conduct Evaluation of National Action Plan 2013-2014	✓		Evaluation Report produced in collaboration with all Sectors
2	Development of Policy document on National Standards for Childminding Services	✓		Implemented in collaboration with World Bank
3	Drafting of Regulations on Childminding	✓		First draft completed and approved by Cabinet.
4	Development of National Action Plan 2015-2016	✓		Completed and implementation started in 2015
5	Implementation of Pre-registration Sensitization and Training of Childminders	✓		Two batches of 116 Childminders completed training and received attendance certificates.
6	Monitoring and Evaluation of National Action Plan 2015-2016	✓		Report produced. Monitoring ongoing. Evaluation will start during 4th Quarter of 2016
7	Conduct a baseline survey on Understanding of ECCE Issues	✓		Report produced. Dissemination forum held. Percentage of targeted audience showing understanding attained.
8	Implement media advocacy programmes	✓		Implemented an additional of three programmes in 2015. Ongoing for 2016.
9	Implement project to improve data collection (including statistics) and reporting on ECCE based on Early Childhood Development indicators		✓	Project is still in infancy stage. Confirmation of funding is being awaited from World Bank to officially commence the project.

## Pre-registration, Sensitisation and Training Programme for Childminders on National Standards

Caring for other people's children is a serious responsibility and can be very demanding. It requires a variety of skills and experience; however, many do it with endless passion. A person who chooses to become a Childminder must be able to provide a reliable, high quality service that contributes to the development and education of children. Childminders are not only someone with whom one leaves the child whilst working but are also educators and professionals in their own right as they provide stimulating play activities. They ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment and work in partnership with parents to promote optimal child development. For many, Childminding is also a business and Childminders need to adopt a professional approach and develop friendly and harmonious relationship with the parents and families.

In Seychelles, Childminding is a popular community service. The Childminding Study conducted by the Institute for Early Childhood Development (IECD) in 2013 established that 1159 children were being cared for by 147 Childminders across the country. The same study reported gaps in areas such as health and safety, early learning and support and training for Childminders. This brought forth the need to develop standards to measure the quality of services. Pre-registration and sensitisation training programme has been developed based on the standards for Childminders on Mahe, Praslin, and La Digue.

The training was based on the ten standards; Early Learning, Interaction, Health, Nutrition, Safety, Children's Rights and Protection, Staffing, Physical Environment, Family and Community Engagement and Administration. The modality of the training was mainly experience-based, with hands-on activities aimed at building on the knowledge and experience of Childminders to raise the quality of early childhood services. It was facilitated by experts from the Health, Education, Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports, as well as Seychelles Fire and Rescue Services Agency. The training programme began with a general meeting with Childminders and was followed by a series of training sessions from November 2015 to April 2016.



Childminders during training



## Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) Board of Directors

The IECD Board of Directors was appointed on 15th May 2015 for a period of three years, by the President of the Republic, Mr James Michel. The appointment was in accordance with Section 19 (2) of the IECD Act, 2014. The Board is responsible for the administration and management of the Institute.

It consists of eight members, including the CEO as ex-officio member representing the four sectors in ECCE, namely Social Affairs, Community Development and Sports, Education, and Health, Non-Governmental Organizations, Attorney-General's Office and professionals with proven expertise and experience in the area of early childhood development.

Three meetings have been held to date. Captain David Savy, the Chairperson urged all members to focus on children, their holistic development, and to always act in their best interests. Members were reminded to take note of IECD's achievements so far, reflect on how best to move the Institute forward and bring fresh ideas to create new synergies for the development of early childhood in Seychelles.

