

Editor's Note



Greetings to our readers!

It is an immense pleasure to launch the 6th edition of the Institute of Early Childhood Development's Newsletter. This newsletter serves as an additional channel of communication between the IECD, our partners in ECCE and our growing readership. In this issue, we will recount, through interesting articles and pictorial representations, the various projects and activities in which the IECD and its partners were actively involved in. Highlighted in this edition, you will find details on:

- The 2nd Advocacy survey on ECCE Issues,
- The Data Management Project in ECCE
- The Implementation of the National Standards for Childminding Services
- The Assessment of Early Learning Environment in Pre-School (Crèche) Settings
- The ECCE Awareness Campaign,
- The Training of Childminders and the Annual Recital.

A huge thank you goes to all ECCE Sectors, partners, sponsors and friends of IECD for their commitment towards the development of Early Childhood Care and Education. I further extend my gratitude to the Chairperson and Members of the IECD Board for their continuous support. Last but not least, a special thank you goes to my devoted and hardworking members of staff who are also the contributors of articles for this edition.

2nd Advocacy Survey on ECCE



Family photo with the Data Collectors before commencing the survey

The role of the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) is to provide leadership in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), to improve the quality and accessibility of early childhood care and education to ensure the holistic development of all children. Through its advocacy initiatives IECD collaborates and synchronizes its effort with professionals in ECCE in creating awareness among policy-makers and the population in general.

The first phase of the survey conducted in 2015, highlighted important gaps in the participants' knowledge on a wide range of ECCE issues. It was recommended therefore that the survey be replicated to determine if there are positive shifts in respondents' knowledge, attitude and practice pertaining to Early Childhood Care and Education.

The main purpose of the 2nd Advocacy Survey which was conducted in August 2017 was to evaluate whether there had been a change in the level of knowledge and understanding of policy makers, professionals in ECCE and the population in general on ECCE issues. The results will determine areas of strength, weakness in ECCE and appropriate measures required.

The survey's respondents included policy makers, ECCE technical team members, practicing professionals in Health, Education and Social Affairs, other professionals and community leaders. The sampling of the wider community and printing of maps were done in collaboration with the National Statistics Bureau (NSB). The general population was sensitized about the survey through a quiz on the IECD's Facebook page.

This survey (biennial) started off with the training of thirteen data collectors on Friday 21st July and was facilitated by the project Consultant, Mr. Egbert Benstrong. The data collection phase ensued on Monday 21st August and ended on Friday 1st September in twenty-three districts on Mahé, Praslin and La Digue. Two enumeration areas which consists six households were selected per district.

A very promising preliminary result was presented by the Consultant to the IECD Management and Staff on Monday 18th December 2017, ahead of a dissemination workshop, as part of the ECCE Forum, for professionals in ECCE, stakeholders, partners and members of the public. The Forum was held on March 29th 2018.

Data Management in ECCE: A Pilot Study in the Health Sector

Introduction

The Institute of Early Childhood Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, supported by technical assistance from the World Bank, recently concluded a pilot study on data management for the health sector. The conduct of the pilot study was motivated by the Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Framework (2011), which championed the right to high quality, comprehensive, and integrated system of early childhood from conception onwards.

Why Data Management?

One of the framework's core principles called for the need for data and evidence to monitor outcomes and guide effective policy response. It recognized also that there are currently many gaps in information and inconsistencies in collection and reporting of data across different sectors. Hence, it placed emphasis on the need for an integrated and comprehensive information system to provide reliable and up to date data on all indicators not only in health but all sectors involved in Early Childhood Development or ECD.

Aims and Objectives of the Pilot

The pilot study which covered the months of October and November in 2017, aimed at strengthening the policy environment for ECD for decision making and reporting based on ECD indicators, through readily available information. More specifically, it was intended to:

- assess data collection procedures in the Health Sector for review
- develop a National Indicator Framework to collect information systematically
- produce a Procedural Manual, with data gathering tools and establish an information pathway with IECD for ECD indicators
- build capacity of ECD Professionals, in particular the health sector on international ECD indicators and information gathering practices
- test the procedures and data gathering tools
- develop a national database to record data and information based on ECD indicators for reporting purposes.'

Coverage

In terms of coverage, for this pilot data were collected on nutrition from a sample of 6973 children between 0 to 60 months. Data were collected for all the 17 health centres covering all the 27 administrative districts. For anemia in pregnant women, data were collected from a sample of 310 mothers, 124 for diabetes among pregnant mothers, 160 for anemia in young children, and 276 children for cases of low birth weight.

Indicators used in the Pilot

The following 9 indicators were selected for the pilot, based on WHO (2006) standards and references:

- Prevalence of anemia among pregnant women (prevalence of haemoglobin <11 g/dL in pregnant women)
- Prevalence of anemia among young children (prevalence of a haemoglobin concentration of < 11 g/dL in the blood of children 6 through 59 months of age)

- Prevalence of low birth weight (defined as babies born weighing less than 2500 g.)
- Prevalence of stunting (prevalence of low height – for – age in children under five years of age)
- Prevalence of wasting (prevalence of low weight-for-height in children under five years of age)
- Prevalence of overweight in young children (prevalence of high weight-for-height in children under five years of age)
- Prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding (defined as no other food or drink, not even water, except breast milk for the first six months of life)
- Prevalence of continued breastfeeding (proportion of children who are breastfeeding at 1 year)
- Prevalence of gestational diabetes (proportion of pregnant women with gestational diabetes mellitus based on glucose test results)

Final Remark

This pilot study has given both the IECD and the Ministry of Health the opportunity to work with benchmark indicators from WHO for child health and care. It has been a fruitful experience for all those involved in the trialling of the indicators dictionary and the data collection manual and the many lessons learnt will surely be valuable when the project is extended during the course of the year. The challenges of systematic data collection and efficient data management processes were evident in the pilot study and these will necessitate further training prior to the project roll out. This pilot has also demonstrated that results can be further disaggregated for more targeted interventions and policy discussion.



Health officials attending the Pilot study meeting at the IECD Headquarters



Presentation of the Pilot study findings to the Minister for Health and the Senior Management team.

Implementation of National standard for Childminding services: Pilot Study

In July 2016, the National Standards on Childminding Regulations, 2016 was legislated and formed the basis for monitoring and evaluation of registered home-based Childminding Services in Seychelles and their registration. The Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), the mandated regulator of Childminding Services in Seychelles, undertook a pilot study in 2017 to evaluate the implementation of the ten core national standards by the registered Childminders.

The objective of the pilot study was to monitor the level of implementation and maintenance of four mandatory standards which the Childminders are required to comply with for registration Health, Safety, Child Rights and Protection as well as Staffing. Additionally, the team measured how far the other six national standards i.e. Early Learning, Interaction, Administration, Nutrition, Family and Community Engagement and Physical Environment were being applied since these standards were not part of the initial registration requirements as they were to be implemented gradually. The pilot study also provided an opportunity for IECD as the regulator to determine the challenges in the implementation of the ten standards as well as gauge the understanding and knowledge of the registered Childminders and parents on the ten quality standards.

Preparation for the study began mid-year with the assistance of an external Consultant, Dr. Andre Leste who developed the research instruments and trained the data collectors. Data was collected by Staff of the Regulatory Affairs Section through Observation

Checklists plus Childminder and Parent Questionnaires. Nine registered Childminding Services selected by convenience and seventy-one parents participated in the study.

Preliminary results indicated that the Childminders were generally in compliance with the standards and their understanding and knowledge of the standards was at a reasonable level. However, knowledge gaps in some areas were identified which indicated the need for further training. The findings also indicated that parents' sensitization on the standards needed to be intensified and their role in the development of their children required reinforcement. On Saturday 25th November, IECD held a workshop to share the preliminary results with the participating Childminders and parents and obtained their views for finalization of the study report.



Childminders and IECD Staff during the group discussions

An Assessment of the Learning Environment in Pre-school Settings (Crèche) to Develop Quality Standards: Pilot Study



Presentation of the preliminary results to the participants

The importance of a safe, responsive, and nurturing learning environment cannot be over emphasized as it forms the basis for healthy growth, development and early stimulation. In the Seychelles Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education (SF_ECCE, 2011), the limited resources and manipulative materials in Crèche were noted and the need to develop and revise core standards was advocated. The Systems Approach for Better Education Results – Early Childhood Development (SABER-ECD) Country Report (2013) insisted that quality standards must go beyond the minimum infrastructural facilities. The setting up of the early learning environment is one of the key practices elaborated in the Seychelles Early Learning Framework (2014) as the fundamental baseline for education activities, wellness of the child and a boost for relationship

and experiences. Furthermore, in a situational analysis carried out by UNESCO in 2016, the need for “a better defined learning environment” for ECCE in Seychelles was expressed.

As part of the National Action Plan for Early Childhood Care and Education 2017-2018, the IECD in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development is implementing an assessment on the quality of the learning environment in Crèche in Seychelles. Through the study, four main areas of quality will be investigated: the physical environment indoor and outdoor, material resources and their organization, human resource input (teacher qualification, teacher pupil ratio) and classroom climate.

The first phase of the project consisted of development of measures, trial data collection instruments and data collection procedures. These were trialed in September 2017 in four selected Crèches - Anse Royale, Plaisance, Bel Ombre and Labourdonnais. Data was gathered through an observation checklist (for both creche Year I and Year II classes) which was supplemented by responses to questionnaires administered to the Head Teacher, Class Teacher, Teacher-in-Charge and the Early Childhood Coordinator in each of the participating school.

Preliminary findings of the pilot study were presented to the Data Collectors, Head Teachers of the piloting schools and IECD staff in a short session in November 2017. Subsequently, it was presented to the Minister for Education and Senior Management Members of the Ministry in December last year. Minister Joel Morgan and his team have welcomed the project and pledged their support for the main study which began during the first quarter of 2018.

IECD

NEW STAFF



Miss Jill Emile (left) joined the team in August 2017 as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in the Regulatory Affairs Section. With the New Year, came two new Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, Mrs Patsy Francourt (right) and Ms Marvel Marengo (bottom) who joined the same section on January 03rd. A very warm welcome to our new colleagues!

INCULCATING GOOD MORAL VALUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CHILDREN



On Monday 19th February, a group of Seychelles Young Leaders Program students made a presentation to the CEO and staff of the IECD on inculcating good moral and spiritual values in Early Childhood Children. This initiative comes after a two week internship in Indonesia. The IECD wishes them all the best in their program. Keep up the good work!

ECCE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN LAUNCH



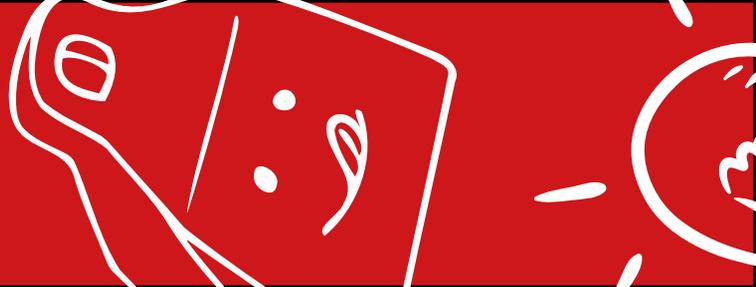
On November 21st, the Advocacy & Information Section launched an awareness campaign which aims at promoting the importance of early childhood development among the public. The boards will be displayed in various key location around Victoria and on Praslin. The event was a double celebration as the IECD marked its 5th anniversary on that day.

THE BOARDS



After successfully launching a number of strategic locations for the awareness boards. The first location to be installed was at the IECD Headquarters, Ile Du Port. The installation was done by Patrick Pillay, was installed on the 21st of November. A proud moment for the Adv

NEWS



1ST YEAR REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION 17-18



The Programme Coordination and Research Section hosted the review of the 1st year of the National Action Plan Early Childhood Care and Education 17-18 on Friday 01st December at the Roche Caiman Community Centre. Present were the Chairpersons and Members of Sectoral Technical Teams including IECD Technical Team, relevant project officers and other partners. The aim of the review was to share progress and challenges of the first year of implementation of the National Action Plan.

A JOB SUITABLE FOR MEN TOO!



From September to November 2017, a third group of Childminders received training on the National Standards for Childminding. However, things were done differently this time around with the participation of Assistants Childminders. Three of the assistants who attended the sessions were men. Messrs. Dodin, Joseph and Cupidon were the first men to follow this training. They are encouraging other men to step forward and take up childminding as a profession as it is a job suitable for men too.

BOARDS ARE UP!



During the ECCE Awareness Campaign, a number of locations were earmarked to install the message boards. The first to receive theirs was the National Assembly. The board, which features a quote from Mr. ... was installed on Tuesday 12th December 2017. The board was installed by the Advocacy & Information Section.

5 YEARS ALREADY?!



On Tuesday 21st November 2017, the IECD had many reasons to celebrate. One being the launching of a new project and the second was reaching an important milestone. We celebrated our 5th anniversary alongside our Chairperson and Members of the IECD Board, other partners, families and friends. A special logo was designed to commemorate the occasion. 5 years might not seem like much, but the IECD has come a long way in such a short period of time.

Training of childminders



Mr Joseph learning about appropriate dosage of detergents for effective cleaning



Battling the flames at the SFRSA Headquarters

Continual upgrading and improving quality in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Seychelles, is of paramount importance to the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD); hence its recent training for a 3rd group of Childminders alongside a training programme in Basic Paediatric First Aid.

The Pre-Registration Training Programme took place over seven Saturdays, from the 16th September until the 4th November 2017. These sessions were organized and coordinated by IECD and facilitated by specialists from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, Department of Youth and Sport and the Seychelles Fire and Rescue Service Agency. It was aimed at providing the home based care providers knowledge and skills on the National Standards and Childminding Regulations, 2016. This group of participants consisted of both practicing and prospective Childminders as well as Childminding Assistants.

For the first time in Seychelles, three men who are currently working as Childminders' Assistants completed the Pre-Registration Sensitization and Training Programme.

It confirmed the fact that men are just as capable of being great teachers, role models and positively influence children's lives. Gender should not be a factor in determining ability, positive experiences and genuine willingness to enrich a child's life.

A group of 37 Childminders completed the Basic Paediatric First Aid Training Programme, organized jointly by IECD and the Red Cross Society of Seychelles. The training is aimed at equipping the Childminders with the knowledge and skills to better cope with minor or even major incidents or accidents that may occur within their childminding establishment. The participants from both programmes found the training to be very informative and the knowledge gained will assist them in offering a better service. The participants were awarded their certificate in a special ceremony on December 7th which was held at the STC Conference room.



The ladies during the always fun and colourful Early Learning Sessions

ECCE Awareness Campaign

An important role of the Institute of Early Childhood Development is to advocate for Early Childhood Development. This requires the Institute to provide pertinent information on early childhood to all partners concerned and the public in general through print, media-based campaigns and programmes thus promoting insight into development issues of early childhood. With that in mind, message boards on Early Childhood Care and Education were conceptualized in May 2017.

The IECD chose key public locations to showcase important messages relating to children, their growth, development and family life as a means to launch their awareness campaign. This simultaneously highlights the significance of ECCE and provides information and advice on good practice.

The Advocacy and Information Section of IECD spearheaded and oversaw the project which was carried out in three phases. First appealing messages about Early Childhood Development were selected, photo shooting sessions were carried out and draft message boards were designed. Secondly, the message boards were approved and produced. On 21st November 2017, to coincide with Universal Children's day our message boards were unveiled to the public. The event was attended by the Chairperson of IECD Board, Captain David Savy, The CEO of IECD Mrs. Shirley Choppy, IECD staff, children featured on the message boards and their parents among other friends and partners.

Currently, the project is in its final phase which is the display of message boards in strategic public locations. Approval has already been sought with different organisations for this purpose. We have received overwhelming support from different organisations for this project. Our first message board was displayed on the premise of the National Assembly on Tuesday 12th December 2017. This was followed by other locations such as the Victoria Bus Terminal, Airport, PUC (Maison Malavois), Maternity ward at the Seychelles Hospital, Civil Status, Baie Ste Anne Praslin Hospital and Count and Read Day Care Centre at Grand Anse Praslin. IECD also plans to install billboards in Strategic public locations in Victoria during the second quarter of 2018.



Maternity ward staff posing with the newly installed board

Upcoming Activities

Official launching of data management in ECCE in the Health Sector

Training of the 4th Group of Childminders

Operationalization of the IECD's Documentation Facility

**Implementation of the National Standards for Childminding Services:
Main Study**

**Assessment of Early Learning Environment in Pre-School (Crèche) Settings:
Main Study**

IECD's End of Year Recital: A Special Ceremony

On Thursday 7th December 2017, the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), for the second time this year, presented Attendance Certificates to twenty-eight Childminders upon successful completion of the pre-registration training programme. A second group of thirty-six Childminders were also awarded Certificates in Basic Pediatric First Aid following a series of training conducted in the last quarter of 2017. The ceremony was a special one as it coincided with the Institute's fifth year anniversary and took place during its annual Christmas Recital.

The special event was graced by high government officials including the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development, Mr. Joel Morgan; Minister for Family Affairs, Mrs. Jeanne Simeon; Principal Secretary of the Social Affairs Department, Mrs Linda William-Melanie and the Chairperson of the IECD Board, Captain David Savy. In attendance also were the families and friends of the Childminders and partners of the IECD, sponsors, and facilitators of the training programme.

The activity kick started with a performance by the Angels Choir, which instantly heightened the festive spirit. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the IECD, Mrs. Shirley Choppy delivered her welcome remarks which recounted the institute's successes throughout 2017. She offered her gratitude to all the partners, sponsors, facilitators, IECD staff and to all those who contributed to the many achievements of the organization.

The Director for Regulatory Affairs, Mrs. Louis Marie presented a brief overview of the training programmes attended by the Childminders which was based on the National Childminding Standards, Regulations 2016. Childminders were sensitized on national standards on Health, Child Rights and Protection, Staffing, Safety, Early Learning, Interaction, Administration, Nutrition, Family and Community Engagement and Physical Environment. The pre-registration sensitization and training programme is an essential first step for all Childminders before they can proceed to registration. They are now better equipped to implement the standards in their respective practices.

Awarding of Attendance certificates to Assistant Childminders. Mr. Joseph Antoine, Mr. Terence Dodin and Mr. Brian Cupidon, Seychelles first men to have attended the pre-registration training and to join the childminding service.

The Ministers in attendance and the Chairperson of the IECD Board received a token of appreciation on behalf of the IECD for their unwavering support for all projects initiated by the Institute. Six Childminders who participated in activities as part of the pre-registration training also received tokens of appreciation. A selection of Posters of the recently launched ECCE Awareness Campaign was presented to the Chairpersons of the 4 ECCE Technical Teams by the Director of Advocacy and Information, Ms Julina Francoise.

The ceremony ended with a Christmas jingle Potpourri by the Angels Choir.



Mrs Choppy welcoming delivering the welcoming remarks



Ministers Morgan and Simeon and other distinguished guests



Angels Choir keeping the guests entertained



Family photo with the Childminders who completed their training



Mr Cupidon receiving his attendance certificate from Minister Morgan