

Building an inclusive system of education from the start: A reflection on Inclusive Education policies across the SADC region

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Introduction

- **Purpose:** Share some insights from recent policy review in all SADC countries on Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)
- **Aim:** Promote integrated ECD in broader movement of inclusive education
- **Focus:** Not merely “disability” but rather social justice through addressing all barriers to inclusion, learning and development



Mauritius

- ❑ Implementing integrated approaches to support young children and promote inclusive education
- ❑ Young child is at centre of education from birth to preschool, and then to primary school
- ❑ Strategies for early screening, early intervention, remedial action, and evaluation are critical components of larger plan of action to prevent exclusion of children with special needs from the education system
- ❑ Parents integral part of the educational and rehabilitation process



Mauritius continued

- Specialised outreach programmes include training of educators, facilitators and special personnel who work in home settings and preschool
 - A 'Bridging the Gap' initiative helps children experiencing transition from pre-primary to first grade of primary school
- Chung and Dalais(2008: 258 in Garcia et al),



Inclusive education

- Strategy for identifying, challenging and removing barriers to social justice, equity and democratic participation (Barton 2006)
- Continuum of barriers to learning
 - Intrinsic
 - Social
 - Systemic
 - Including **poverty**



Continuum

well-being
resilience

vulnerability



Protective
factors



Risk factors



Inclusive rights discourse

□ Salamanca statement 1994

- Every child has the right to education
- Uniqueness of every child

□ Education for all

- Access to education for all
- Rights **to, in** and **through** education
- Goal: inclusive quality education to end all forms of discrimination and foster social cohesion (EFA 2011)



Tanzanian National Strategy Inclusive Education

..... inclusive education is a **system** of education that must be **mainstreamed at all levels** within the sector and other sectors and calls for robust strengthening of educational **institutional arrangements** as well as ongoing **capacitation** of education administrators who play a key role in the **systemic implementation** of inclusive education in the sector. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has established a cross-cutting technical working group with **representation from various ministries** and other education agencies to oversee the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into the education system at all levels



Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL)

□ **SADC Ministers of education**

responded to severe challenges facing children and families in the region

- 2005 Swaziland communique – schools become centres of care and support
- Initiated CSTL
 - Child centred
 - Rights-based and inclusive
 - Addresses challenges and provides services
 - All children access schooling, stay in schools and progress
- National model SA (2010)



Integrated approach to ECD

- Recent research about brain development
 - Evidence of long term benefits of ECD interventions
- “research and common sense both suggest that all programmes for young children should be **multi-dimensional** and **seek integration**, attending to health, nutrition and psycho-social well-being” (Evans 1997)



Seychelles

“In these formative years which are so crucial to the future health, emotional stability and mental development of the child, it is of utmost importance that the **child is viewed as an integral whole** and that balanced provision is made for all his/her developmental needs: nutritional/physical, emotional/social, cognitive. This calls for the closest possible **collaboration** between the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Affairs to ensure that quality services are provided to this most vulnerable group.”
(Education for a Learning Society, 2001)

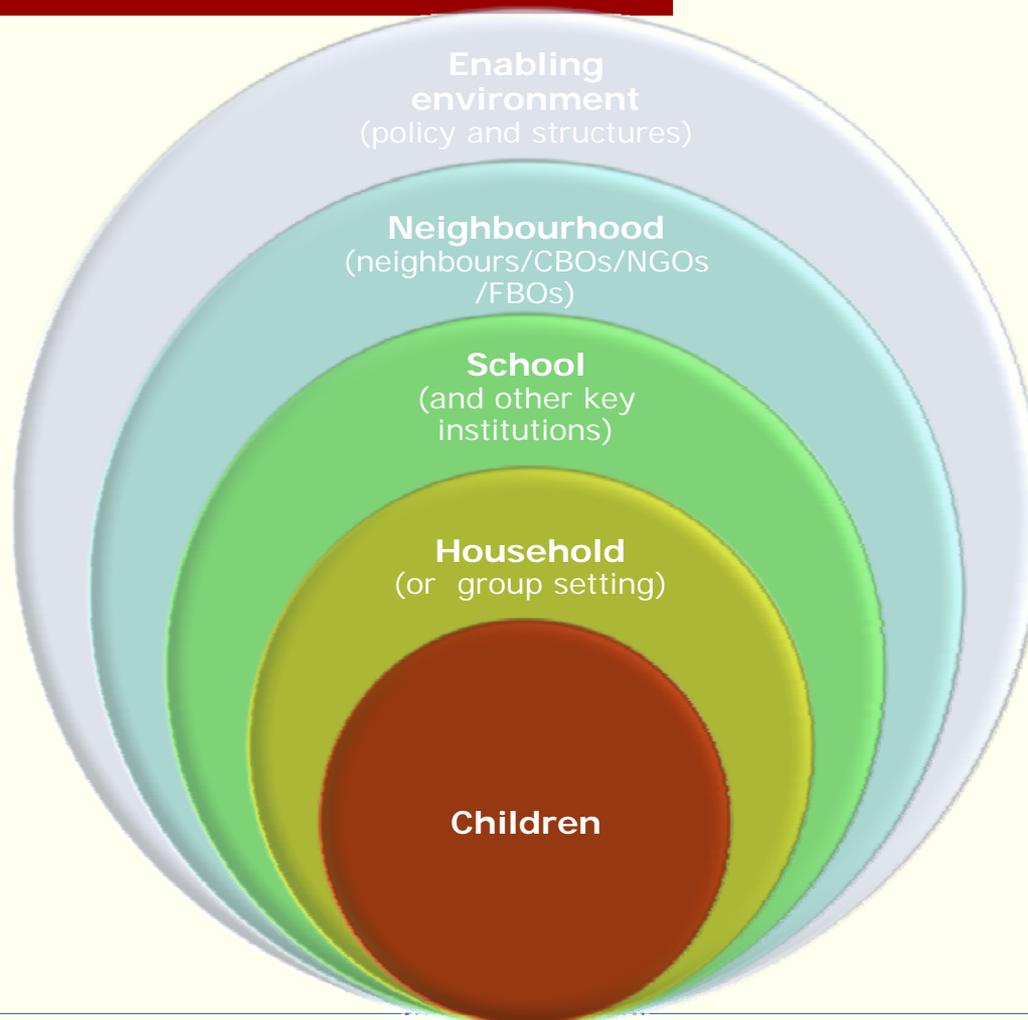


Common features of IE & IECD

- Systemic and rights-based
- Multi-sectoral networks of care
- Contextually relevant evidence-based policy development



Ecosystem



South African CSTL framework

Within the context of large numbers of vulnerable learners in mainstream public schools “struggling with extraordinary challenges” the focus of the South African CSTL framework is on “putting in place processes and strategies for **facilitating collaboration between mainstream public schools and formal and informal support structures within the broader school community**” such as social workers and child protection agencies, health facilities, traditional and civil leaders, Home Affairs, CBOs and NGOs (DBE and MIET Africa 2010:50).

It acknowledges the need for a range of stakeholders to work in and through schools to improve the lives of learners and educators

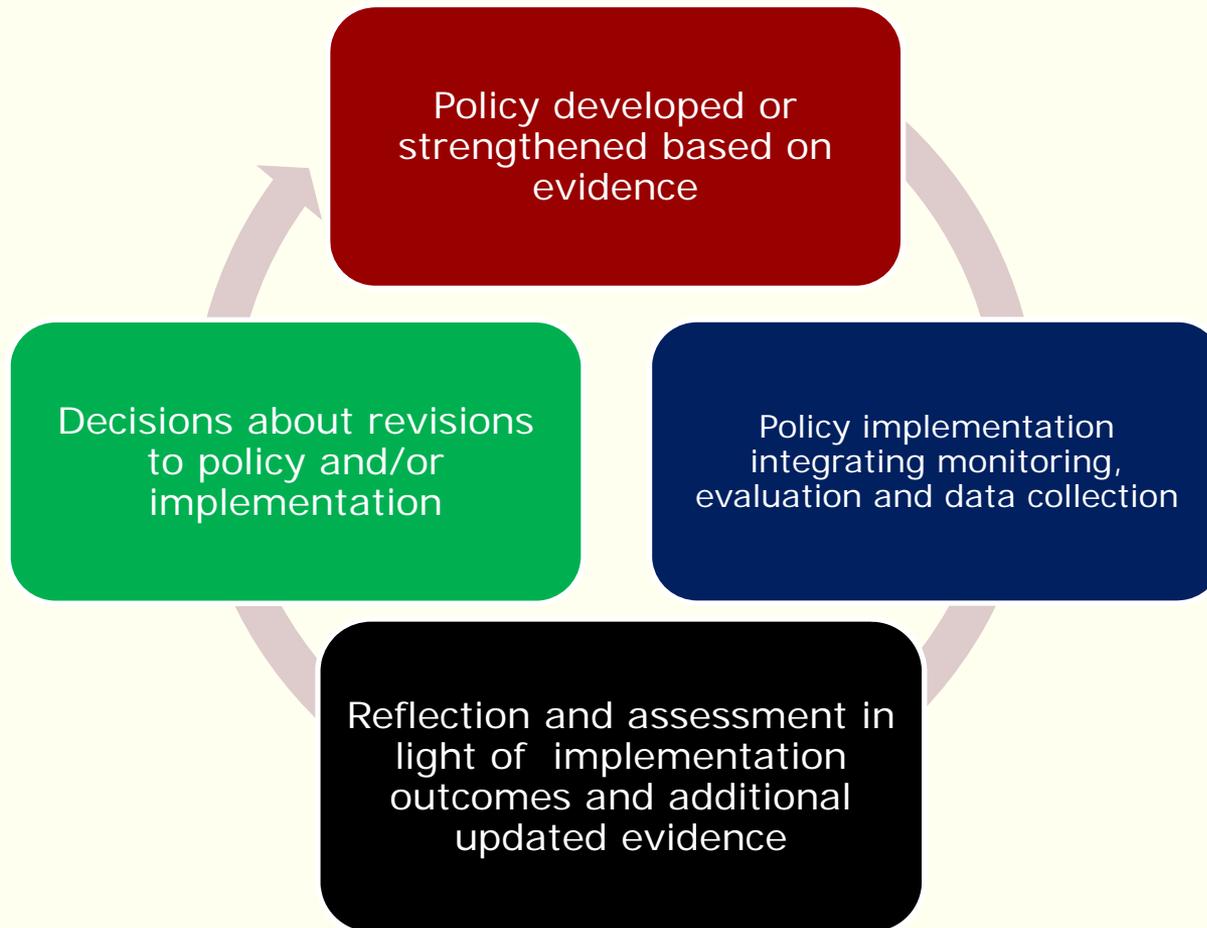


Multi-sectoral

- Partnership
 - across all government spheres and sectors
 - Families
 - Neighbours
 - Service providers
- Networks of care
- Effective care pathways or referral systems



Evidence-based policy development



Evidence-based policy

□ Three kinds

- Symbolic
- Conceptual
- Instrumental

- “**Protecting the rights** of all children does not lie merely in seeking equity through the equivalence of isolated components, but on **how responsively and effectively the system works** in a constantly changing context. Attention is directed to the **policy development process** rather than merely giving attention to the elements” Badcock–Walters 2010



SA Vision 2030

□ Evidence

- In 2009 only 25% two-year olds attended early childhood development centres, compared to 60% of four year olds"

□ Target

- "universal access to two years of early childhood development with focus on children under five years"

□ Some questions

- Is an ECD centre always the best place for a two-year old?
- What is happening now to the 40% of four year olds who are entering school without having had access to the same opportunities that 60% of their peers have had?
- What programmes are in place to assist the 40%?



Conclusions

- Given **common features** IECD and IE
- We encourage **systemic integration**
 - Across age range conception to 18 years
 - Highlight importance of critical early years
 - **Policy development**
 - Collaborative structures and institutional arrangements
 - **Networks of care**
 - **Care pathways** or referral systems



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