Reflecting on ECD Policy and Programmes in Namibia

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Outline

• Background
• Legislative and Policy Framework
• Programmes
• Challenges
• Recommendations for 2016
Background
Rates of enrolment in ECD centres by age and gender (2012)

- **0-2 YEARS**
  - Both sexes: 2.1
  - Girls: 2.3
  - Boys: 1.8

- **2-3 YEARS**
  - Both sexes: 9.4
  - Girls: 9.5
  - Boys: 9.2

- **4-5 YEARS**
  - Both sexes: 24.6
  - Girls: 25.6
  - Boys: 23.6

- **6.7 YEARS**
  - Both sexes: 18.7
  - Girls: 19.5
  - Boys: 18.0

- **>7 YEARS**
  - Both sexes: 2.4
  - Girls: 2.7
  - Boys: 2.1
Numbers and percentages of ECD Centre where none of the caregivers were trained - 2012
Child Wellbeing: The rural/urban dichotomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 Census Data on children:</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to clean water</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No toilet</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in an ECD facility</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a disability</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In household relying on social grant as primary source of income</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially deprived</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Legislative and Policy Framework
Legislative and Policy Framework

IECD Policy of 2007

• Promotes a rights-based approach to early childhood development;
• Premised on the principles of equal access, quality, sustainability, flexibility, diversity and inclusion;
• Focus on 0-8 years old with more emphasis on 1st 1000 days.
• Holistic:

“While survival is essential, it is not enough. If children are to reach their developmental goals, their basic physical needs for protection, food and health care must be met along with developmental basic needs for affection, interaction and stimulation, and learning through exploration and discovery”.

IECD Policy of 2007

Legislative and Policy Framework
Legislative and Policy Framework (2)

National Legislation and International Frameworks

• NDP 4
  – “..., there are no Government-owned ECD centres ...no legal regulations for ECD centres; ...few qualified teachers/educarers; ...severe undervaluation of ECD-trained individuals ...investment in ECD is low – although the potential returns of quality ECD have been shown to be very high.

• Child Care and Protection Act No.3 of 2015
  – The minister responsible for education must administer all matters relating to activities at early childhood development centres registered under this Act.

• SDGs Goal 4
  – By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education
• **Education Act Issues Paper**
  
  *The Minister, after consultation with interested persons and the Ministers responsible for Finance, Health, Social Services, Birth Registration, Child Protection and Care, Local Government and other relevant Ministries must include in the Ministerial Policy a comprehensive national strategy aimed at securing a properly resourced, coordinated and managed ECD system, giving due consideration as to children with disabilities or chronic illnesses.*

• **2011 Education Conference, NDP4 & Child Care and Protection Act No.3 of 2015** recommend the transfer of ECD.
IECD Policy of 2007

- **Purpose:** To enhance multi and inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration to ensure quality and equitable provision of sustainable IECD services.

- **Action:** Request for UNICEF to provide technical and financial support to develop an IECD Framework.
Programmes
IECD Advocacy & Community Engagement

- National consultations/advocacy on IECD with a focus on the 1st 1000 days.
  - 2 consultations - January and June 2015.
  - A session with the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resources Management and Community Development - June 2015
  - Radio and TV interviews.
- Submission the IECD Framework – October 2015.
- Funding OFL and 5 IECD pilots in 5 regions.
Challenges

Transfer

- Timeline for the transition to be initiated
- Coordination issues
  - Education, health, birth registration, disability, protection
- Capacity of ECD caregivers
- EMIS for ECD and quality of monitoring
- Teacher Training institutions
- Human and financial resources
Recommendations

- Implementation of the IECD Framework.
  - Establishment of high level policy and strategic body to spearhead the coordination (ToRs) and Unit with MoEAC.
  - Study the cost and financing of future IECD programmes.
  - Review the National IECD Policy of 2007.
  - Phased transfer of ECD functions to MoEAC.

- Needs assessment of IECD in 8 regions of Namibia (OFL).
- Evaluation of the IECD pilot in the 5 regions.
- National IECD consultation in collaboration with OFL.
- Advocacy for the professionalization of IECD and research.
- Advocacy to promote the inclusive education Policy at ECD Centre level.
“ECD is so important, if you start from a foundation that is flawed, you will continue to study on flawed structures” Monica Geingos, 2015

“I Thank You!”
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