



CHILDREN 1ST

NEWS MAGAZINE
FIRST EDITION JUNE 2024



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Under the auspices
of UNESCO



IECD

Institute of Early Childhood
Development (Seychelles)

**Congratulations to IECD on your
first anniversary as a category 2 centre
for Early Childhood Care
and Education under the auspices of UNESCO.**

**Chalk up many more success on
your journey to achieve excellence.**

All the best!

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Inside CHILDREN 1st

Parents Empowerment in Early Learning and Readiness for Formal School

New Innovation Using Technology in Early Childhood Care and Education

Quality Assurance and Capacity Building Initiatives for Child Care Services

IECD / UNESCO Category 2 Institute - A Global Leader in ECCE

Importance of the Media in ECCE

IECD / UNESCO Category 2 Institute Special Advocate



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Shirley Choppy Chief Executive Officer

Hello everyone and welcome to the inaugural edition of Children's First, the news magazine of the IECD UNESCO Category 2 Institute. As the CEO of Seychelles' first Category 2 Institute, I am thrilled to present this first issue, which coincides with our hosting of the first Regional workshop for countries in South and East Africa.

Within these pages, you will discover some of the key achievements of our Institute in the field of ECCE in recent years. We are incredibly proud to have attained UNESCO Category 2 status last year, and we are excited to share some of the exciting developments that have taken place since then.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who have contributed to the realization of this dream. From the Government of Seychelles for their unwavering support, to our partners in ECCE, UNESCO, and the Private Sector for their sponsorship, we are thankful for your collaboration.

A special thank you goes out to our Governing and local boards, chaired by Dr. Maroppe and Captain David Savy, as well as to all the management and staff of IECD.

To our guests and participants of the regional workshop on the Tashkent Declaration for South and East African countries, welcome. We look forward to productive deliberations and to exploring opportunities for future collaboration.

Thank you all for your continued support, and here's to a bright future ahead. Enjoy the read!



Within these pages, you will discover some of the key achievements of our Institute in the field of ECCE in recent years.



A portrait of Dr. Mmantsetsa Marope, a woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a light-colored blazer and a necklace. The portrait is set against a white background with a large, light blue abstract shape behind her. The image is partially framed by a white curved shape on the left side of the page.

Dr. Mmantsetsa Marope
Chairperson of the Governing Board
*Institute of Early Childhood
Development Category 2 Institute under
the Auspices of UNESCO*

'As a UNESCO Category 2 Centre for ECCE, the Institute of Early Childhood Development is to provide global intellectual and operational leadership, as well as capacity building for UNESCO Member States to advance the development of ECCE. The geographical scope of the UNESCO Category 2 Institute means that Seychelles has acceded to a global recognition as a leader in this field. In executing its mandate, the IECD will among others, lead global intellectual dialogue on the importance of ECCE, provide operational guidance on how to give effect to its intellectual insights, lead global policy dialogue on ECCE, as well as promote the strengthening of ECCE systems across UNESCO Member States.

With 2030 around the corner, and with current assessments showing that the world is not on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) and its targets, the Republic of Seychelles IECD UNESCO Category 2 Institute for ECCE must advocate for, and support the realization of SDG 4.2. A tall order for a small Island State, but one that does not surpass the capacity of giants whose shoulders carry and propel forward this Island State to critical global acclaim. I am proud of what we have achieved together for Seychelles and happy to note that my contribution has been well valued and appreciated.

'I wish Madame Choppy and the Staff of the Institute much success in this critical international endeavor. Keep flying the Seychellois flag very high'

THE JOURNEY TO UNESCO CATEGORY 2 INSTITUTE

Marking a major milestone in early childhood education, IECD's recognition as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute has solidified its position as a global leader in the field. This esteemed designation was achieved through collaborative efforts.

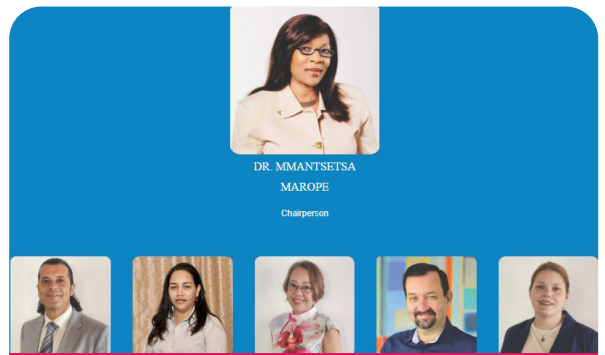
The journey began in April 2021, when the historic agreement was signed by the Government of Seychelles and UNESCO that paves the way for IECD to set a new benchmark for excellence in early childhood care and education. With this prestigious recognition, IECD is poised to inspire and empower young minds worldwide, fostering a brighter future for generations to come.



In June 2021, the Minister of Education, Dr. Justin Valentin, signed the Agreement on behalf of the Seychelles Government.



President of the Republic of Seychelles, Mr. Wavel Ramkalawan, assented the Early Childhood Development Act, 2022 in December 2022, allowing the IECD to operate as an International Centre for ECCE.



Appointment of the Governing Board in October 2023 by the President of the Republic



Official inauguration of the UNESCO Category 2 Institute in October 2023, with His Excellency President of the Republic and distinguished guests in attendance, further solidifying IECD's Commitment to excellence in the field



At the UNESCO International Conference with UNESCO's Director General, Ms. Audrey Azoulay and Minister of Education, Dr. Justin Valentin in November 2023

As IECD embarks on a new year in 2024, it is committed to building upon its foundation as a leading Category 2 Institute under the auspices of UNESCO.

With a steadfast commitment to fostering international cooperation and knowledge-sharing, IECD is dedicated to driving excellence in ECCE services, with a focus on Seychelles, in the region and globally.



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EMPOWERING PARENTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S SCHOOL READINESS

In a nation where children are the future, empowering parents to support their children's early learning and development is not just a priority but an imperative. SENSPA has helped to sensitize more than a hundred parents from the community, emphasizing the power of parental engagement in laying the foundation for a brighter educational journey for the youngest members of family.

SENSPA initiative was set to be a key component of the 2023-2024 National Action Plan for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). This project, among four others by the Institute of Early Childhood Development, focuses on educating parents on the importance of creating a nurturing and stimulating learning environment for children aged 2 to 3 years.

With a significant number of children in Seychelles not benefiting from structured early learning programs due to being cared for at home, this initiative has marked a pivotal step towards enhancing early childhood development and school readiness. Aligned with the UNESCO Sustainable Goal 4.2, the project leverages the Strategic Framework 2022-2026 to promote multi-sectoral partnerships and empower parents to take an active role in their child's education.

Through the sensitization programme, parents have been equipped with essential information, resources, and strategies to create a conducive learning atmosphere at home that arouses their child's cognitive, social, and emotional growth. By promoting early engagement in learning activities, parents can positively impact their child's developmental trajectory and academic success later in life.

This proactive approach not only contributes to individual child outcomes but also aligns with broader educational goals and national priorities. It recognizes the critical role of parental involvement in shaping a child's early learning experiences and sets the stage for long-term educational success.

Through sensitization sessions for parents or legal guardians, the initiative can track participation rates and assess the satisfaction levels and awareness of parents. By monitoring the number of children from unregistered settings who attain specific readiness assessment levels, the initiative can gauge the effectiveness of the programme in reaching and impacting a broader range of children.

SENSPA – a new innovative project of IECD, targeting parents or legal guardians as critical partners in ECCE. Their proactive engagement and participation in their children's development highlights the potential for significant progress in early childhood and formal education in Seychelles. This was revealed in the recent assessment of Early learning readiness for preschool/crèche in 2023. With increased parental involvement and awareness, more children can access quality early learning opportunities, setting them on the right path for success in their future educational undertakings.



EARLY CHILD CARE BENEFIT GOES ONLINE

The Government's commitment to embrace technology and digitalize services reflects its dedication to improving efficiency, transparency, and accessibility in the provision of public services. By leveraging technology to streamline processes and offer convenient access to essential services, the IECD's new online digital system promises to revolutionize the way parents and childcare providers engage with the institute, ultimately benefiting the entire community.

The Government of Seychelles has also adopted its Digital Economy Agenda which is aimed at enhancing efficiency and productivity in the country. This includes a component relating to the implementation of the digital platforms.

The coming into operation of the CBIS is aligned with this and its implementation is set to make a significant impact in early childhood development. The introduction of a new digital system by the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) is expected to revolutionize the way parents and childcare providers engage with the institute on a daily basis.

The new digital system will facilitate the process of registering young children in childcare services and assist childcare providers with the administration of the services they provide to parents. This will not only benefit parents and childcare providers but also improve the overall efficiency in the operations of the IECD, the implementation of the digital platforms.

Increased access to IECD's services will be made possible through the digital platform, overcoming geographical barriers and time constraints. This will enable parents and childcare providers to access services from anywhere at any time.



Jean-Luc Marie & Jude Louis - DICT



New [DICT new website was launched! See what's new >](#)

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To enable the government to effectively utilize ICT for service delivery and establish the essential framework (policies, laws, and regulations) to harness ICT's full potential for national advancement.





CHILD CARE BENEFIT INFORMATION SYSTEM, SEYCHELLES (CBISS)

Modernizing the provision of Early Child Care Benefit with an Online System

The Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) has rolled out its Early Childcare Benefit Information System (CBIS), a cutting-edge online platform, to optimize the management of financial assistance provided by the Government for early childcare. This innovative system is designed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in administering the early childcare benefit scheme and its related processes.

The IECD is embracing technological advancement for the delivery of the scheme by transitioning to an online platform for registering children for financial assistance. This innovative system, developed in partnership with the Department of Information Communications Technology (DICT), aims to simplify the registration process for parents, guardians, and service providers. Through this online digital service, users can expect to receive updates on registration promptly, while also having access to detailed reports for monitoring and evaluation purposes. By going paperless, the delivery of early childcare benefit is taking a significant step towards increasing the efficiency in service delivery for early childcare.

A committee comprising of representatives from IECD, DICT, and the contractor for the system, SPACE 95, was formed to supervise the progress of the project. The committee was responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the system, which will be a centralized one accessible on different devices. Registered Childminders and Childcare Center Managers can now access and utilize the various modules available to them with ease.



Ms. Laurette Lebon and
Ms. Amina Sarah - Project Officers

“By embracing technology and aligning with the national drive for the digitalization of Government services, IECD is also meeting the country’s commitments under the Tashkent Declaration to make increased use of technology in the ECCE sector”, said Ms. Laurette Lebon, the CBIS Project Officer at IECD

The implementation of the new system marks a significant step in providing much-needed support to childcare providers, who play a vital role in our communities. By streamlining the registration process and ensuring timely processing of payments, this initiative is set to improve the administration and management of the delivery of childcare benefits. We look forward to the expected positive outcomes for both, providers and parents,

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THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERTIPS



Mrs Nathalie Moustache - Director (Home-Based Child Care Service)

"In the past, childminding services in Seychelles were often informal and unregulated, with caregivers operating in a private capacity without any official oversight.

However, in recent years, there has been a significant shift towards professionalizing the childminding industry in Seychelles. The government has introduced regulations and standards for childminding services, requiring caregivers to undergo training and certification in order to operate legally.

This has led to a higher quality of care for children in Seychelles, with trained and qualified caregivers providing a safe and nurturing environment for children to learn and grow. The transformation of the childminding service in Seychelles has been met with positive feedback from parents and the community, who now have peace of mind knowing that their children are in good hands."

IECD TAKES LEAD IN QUALITY ASSURING & REGULATING CHILD CARE SERVICES, CREATING GROWTH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE & EDUCATION

In 2015, tragedy struck as reports of accidents involving children in the then child minding services surfaced, prompting the Government to step in and establish a framework to quality assure and regulate child minding services. Thus, the Institute for Early Childhood Development became the regulator for this service, setting standards to measure quality, developing a comprehensive training programme and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

Since then, IECD has been proactive in reaching out to childminders across districts on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, providing capacity building sessions on the new national standards for child minding regulations (2016). A first group of 115 unregistered and practicing childminders underwent the training in 2015, signaling a new era in the delivery of child care services in the country. From the 115 childminders 4 registered their service in 2016. Since then, the child minding service has seen significant growth, with a total of 111 registered childminders in 2024. Over the years, more than 400 individuals have undergone training with IECD, indicating a strong interest in the child minding profession.

The efforts of IECD have not gone unnoticed, with an increasing number of individuals expressing interest in becoming childminders. Mrs. Nathalie Moustache, Director for Home-Based Child Care Services at IECD, attributes this growth to the formalization of the child care service through regulation and government incentives, and capacity building initiatives.

Government Incentives

In 2011, the Government established a National ECCE Trust Fund as the first financial mechanism for ECCE, with its own legal framework and administered by a Board of Trustees. The Fund is to promote, support and mobilize funds for projects and programmes for early childhood development in the country, and provide grants for projects to upgrade facilities, purchase toys and educational materials to meet the required standards, to conduct training and professional development activities for professionals and practitioners working in ECCE sectors. Since then, it has funded many small and big national projects that have directly contributed towards the holistic development of young children and raising the quality of ECCE provision.

The introduction of a financial assistance programme for parents whose children are enrolled in a registered child care facility, salaries for assistant childminders among other incentives, have played a crucial role in attracting individuals to venture in this business and register their services with IECD. Additionally, IECD offers support to childminders through continuous professional development initiatives, further enhancing the professionalism in the delivery of the child care services.

As the child minding service in private residential homes continues to thrive within the remit of the legal frameworks under the guidance of IECD, the future looks promising for both childminders and the children entrusted in their care.

Regulation & Registration

The legal frameworks and national standards introduced by IECD in 2014 and 2016, have transformed the child minding sub-sector, raising the level of professionalism and changing the perception of the home-based service from a casual caregiver role to a respected career with opportunities for professional development. Parents now have greater peace of mind knowing their children are in the care of an IECD regulated service, while childminders themselves feel valued and more appreciated for their hard work and commitment to providing high-quality care and early education to young children.

As a result of these efforts, the home-based child care service has seen a significant increase in the number of qualified professionals entering the field, including teachers and nurses. The sub-sector is no longer seen as a last resort for those unable to pursue post-secondary education, but as an important and rewarding career path for individuals dedicated to the well-being of children.



New Initiatives

Back in 2013, IECD conducted a Child minding Study to establish the status of the service in the country. The findings were that 1159 children were being cared for by 147 unregistered childminders across the country, and gaps were reported in the areas of health and safety, early learning, support and training for childminders. This led to the development of national standards to measure and raise the quality of services nationally.

The revolutionary transformation of the home-based child care service in Seychelles can be attributed to a combination of factors such as close collaboration with ECCE partners, the development and advocacy of national standards, new initiatives to address gaps, technological advancements, and increased government support. These efforts have collectively contributed to improve the quality of care and education provided to young children and have elevated the status of the service in the country.

Additionally, the incorporation of technology has also played a significant role in ECCE, in particular in the child care services. IECD, in collaboration with Department of Information Communication & Technology (DICT), has developed an online information system for the financial assistance scheme for child care service providers and parents with children in registered child care services. This is in line with the national drive for technological innovation in service delivery, the Tashkent Declaration and the Seychelles Framework for ECCE.

The online system coined as the 'Child Care Benefit Information System, Seychelles' (CBISS) is a new digital platform consisting of practical and user-friendly features, aimed at improving the management of the scheme and ensuring a more efficient delivery of the service.



Training & Professional Development & Qualification

The Institute for Early Childhood Development (IECD) is taking strides to enhance the quality of child care in Seychelles by introducing new training and professional development programmes for personnel in home-based child care service. These programmes aim to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide high-quality services in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment for young learners.

One of the key initiatives, is the introduction of a first of its kind Early Learning Programme (ELP), designed to assist childminders and their assistants to enhance their practices in order to better deliver educational activities for children aged between two years to three years. The programme includes play-based and pre-learning activities to stimulate children's cognitive, social-emotional and physical development in readiness for crèche or preschool education. This programme is linked with two national standards, namely the 'Early Learning' and 'Interaction' which emanates from the IECD National Standards for s Child minding Regulation 2016.

In addition to the ELP, IECD is also offering professional development sessions focusing on the national standard relating to 'Administration' which covers important topics such as budget management, staffing, and letter writing to name but a few. These sessions are with the objective to ensure that childminders and their staff adhere to the mandatory requirements related to these standards. This regulation provides that they attend two such sessions once every two years.

Moreover, following the promulgation of the regulation back in 2016, IECD embarked on a comprehensive pre-registration and Sensitization Training programme, known as PRESET, for prospective childminders as a prerequisite for registration of home-based childcare services. The programme covers all ten national standards in its entirety, and is implemented with the assistance and support of experts from the relevant sectors in ECCE as well as IECD. Over almost a decade, IECD has trained over 400 participants with the 13th group completing the nine-week long training in 2024.

Another flagship initiative targeting registered childminders to raise the level of qualifications in ECCE and professionalize the child care service is the 'Recognition of Prior Learning' (RPL) Approach. This programme is an initiative of the Seychelles Qualifications Authority, in partnership with IECD and Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education. The first cohort of 26 graduants received their 'Certificate in Child Care and Development' in 2021. It is a long term plan of IECD to ensure that all personnel working in registered child care services obtain this certificate as per the minimum requirement for qualifications prescribed in the regulations.

Mrs. Shirley Choppy described the first group of 26 registered childminders who have received their certificate in care child and development from SITE in 2022, as a landmark achievement for Seychelles ECCE and Education system. We are very happy and exceedingly proud because IECD is putting a lot of emphasis on formal training of childminders and their staff, and this is certainly one of the key predictors of success in early childhood development," she said.

She further explained that formal training and professional development is a 'must-have' for child care and early childhood educators as it helps them stay abreast with advances in early childhood education and care, and improve their existing skills. It also allows practitioners to identify areas to further advance their knowledge and practice. However, effectively building the skills, raising the quality of service and overall performance can have an enormous and lasting impact on the success of service provision and the facilities.

'With one third of registered childminders holding a certificate in child care and development, IECD plans to achieve a target of 80 percent of qualified personnel in the child care service by 2030' – said Mrs. Choppy





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SEYCHELLES BROADCASTING CORPORATION (SBC) RADIO

A VOICE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN SEYCHELLES

In an age where information is more accessible than ever, the role of mainstream media remains the gateway to access to information. Despite the proliferation of digital platforms and an ever-growing world of Social Media channels, mainstream media outlets continue to be a cornerstone of informed societies.

The SBC Radio stands as a supporter to the work of the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) / UNESCO Category 2 Institute (C2I), leveraging its platforms to advance the cause of the institute in Seychelles.

One of the key ways this platform bolsters the work of the IECD UNESCO C2I, by crafting content specifically geared towards Early Childhood Development (ECD). In the past the SBC Radio has ensured that crucial information reaches the IECD's target audiences namely parents, caregivers and various stakeholders through tailored programmes.

These programmes researched various facets of ECD from health to nutrition, to cognitive and emotional well-being. By disseminating these information and knowledge, SBC Radio has equipped individuals with the tools to foster optimal development in children during their formative years.

Moreover, SBC Radio has amplified the message of ECD across Seychelles with collaborative initiatives between the two stations – Paradise FM and Radyo Sesel, resulted in educational programmes designed to reach an even wider audience. Through these joint efforts, the importance of ECD was underscored, sparked conversations amongst the wider public and drove positive action within communities.

The importance of SBC Radio's role extends beyond programming. The station actively participates in IECD'S endeavors, including conference and national action plans. The collaboration witnessed during the 2019 IECD Conference exemplified this commitment. By providing coverage and technical support, SBC Radio ensured that the IECDs initiatives garnered the attention and engagement it so rightly deserved.

Crucially, SBC Radio serves as a conduit for dialogue and exchange of information. Through interviews on both stations, pertinent issues related to the National Action Plan for ECCE were brought to the forefront. These discussions facilitated a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in different areas of ECCE, fostering a collective effort towards meaningful change.

By supporting the ECD initiative, SBC Radio is fulfilling its mandate to educate and inform the public. A formidable partnership dedicated to laying a strong foundation for the future of Seychelles – the children who will shape tomorrow's society.



By Carol Nicette
Producer
(Radyo Sesel)



IECD STRENGTHENS GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS TO LEAD THE WAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ADVANCEMENTS

IECD's commitment to building strong global partnerships reflects its dedication to promoting inclusive, equitable, and high-quality early childhood education for all children. By working collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, IECD is able to drive meaningful advancements in the field and ensure that every child has access to the resources and support they need to thrive and reach their full potential.

As a distinguished UNESCO Category 2 Institute dedicated to early childhood education, we are making strides in strengthening our global partnerships to drive advancements in the field. By collaborating with esteemed international partners, the institute gains access to cutting-edge research, diverse perspectives, and valuable resources that enhance its programs and initiatives, ensuring its work remains relevant and impactful.

One of the institute's key strategies for leveraging partnerships is through joint research projects, curriculum development collaborations, exchanges, and policy advocacy efforts. By teaming up with distinguished universities, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies, IECD is able to implement effective early childhood education interventions, conduct comparative studies, and provide training and support to communities. An upcoming regional workshop in June will bring together ECCE policymakers and experts from the Southern and Eastern African Region to address challenges and offer innovative solutions.



In order to maintain and foster relationships with its international partners, IECD actively participates in conferences, workshops, and seminars related to early childhood education. The institute also upholds regular communication through various channels such as email, video conferencing, and social media platforms, where it showcases its work and expertise. Additionally, joint projects, collaborations, and reciprocal visits play a pivotal role in facilitating face-to-face interactions and deepening understanding among partners.

Despite obstacles such as language barriers, cultural differences, and logistical challenges, IECD surmounts them through effective communication and the cultivation of strong personal relationships. Looking towards the future, the institute aims to further enhance partnerships with key stakeholders to expand its network and share best practices on a broader scale. By utilizing online tools, advocating for early childhood education policies, and maximizing digital platforms for communication and knowledge exchange, IECD is poised to lead the charge in advancing the ECCE agenda. Nationally, regionally, and internationally to make a positive impact on children's lives worldwide.





Mrs. Fanchette Manager of The Family Day Care receiving Provisional Licence of Operation from IECD

IECD'S NEW MANDATE TO REGULATE AND ENHANCE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE CENTRES



Mr. and Mrs. Jean-Baptiste of the Foot Print Day Care accepting a Donation of Educational Materials from IECD



The Ministry of Education has historically been responsible for Day Care services, as stated in the Education Act 2004. However, the Education (Amendment) Act 2017 removed the provision related to Day Care Centres, as part of the Ministry’s plan to expand regulatory powers and consolidate regulatory functions. This responsibility has now been transferred to the IECD-UNESCO Category 2 Institute, following the enactment of the Early Childhood Development Act 2022 in December 2022. The IECD now oversees child care services in both home and center settings.

Under the new regulations, childcare providers will be required to adhere to a comprehensive set of standards and sub-standards to ensure the holistic development of children in their care. By complying with these standards, childcare facilities can offer parents greater assurance of their children’s well-being and development.

The implementation of these regulations stems from the recent passing of the Early Childhood Development Act 2022, which transferred the legal responsibility for daycare services from the Ministry of Education to IECD. This transfer of responsibilities underscores the government’s commitment to improving the quality of early childhood education and care in the country.

To facilitate the transition to the new regulations, IECD has developed a comprehensive action plan that includes sensitization sessions for childcare personnel. The first phase of the plan kicked off with a session on April 8, 2024, to familiarize childcare providers with the upcoming changes.

Moving forward, IECD will closely monitor compliance with the new regulations through inspections and enforcement mechanisms outlined in the legislation. Childcare providers are urged to seek guidance from IECD to ensure they are well-prepared to meet the new standards.

The introduction of the Early Childhood Development (National Standards for Child Care Centres) Regulations, 2024, marks a significant milestone in enhancing the quality of center-based childcare services in the country. With these new regulations in place, childcare providers can strive towards providing high-quality services that prioritize the well-being and development of young children.



Mr. Selby Dora addressing Child Care Managers at the Launch of the Sensitisation on New National Standards for Centre-Based Child Care Services



Mrs. Renelle Anacoura Acting Principal Officer Centre-Based Child Care Service



2021-2023: Accelerated progress and achievements culminating in the transformation of IECD into a Category 2 Institute for ECCE under the Auspices of UNESCO.



The Promise

title to the IECD's theme song is perhaps one of Joe Samy's notable achievements in the recent past. In this interview, Joe shares his experiences working with IECD, from the earliest days of the organization to its current global presence.

He also takes us behind the scenes of his creative process, revealing the inspiration and motivation behind the hauntingly beautiful melody that has become synonymous with IECD's mission.

Together lets explore the intersection of journalism, music, and arts, and learn more about the story behind 'The Promise'

Can you tell us about your inspiration behind writing and composing the IECD song "The Promise?"

My inspiration and motivation behind "The Promise" was to deliver to the best of my ability an act that would represent the voice of the children of the Seychelles to the world. It has been proven that dialogue can contribute towards trust and understanding, and that's the reason why I built the lyrics into a conversation of mutual respect between a child and adult.

How did you become involved with the IECD organization and what motivated you to create a theme song for them?

A few years back I found myself performing songs at IECD events notably at the SMB Hall on the organization's invitation. I have also in the past produced television programmes at the request

of the IECD management. It is during one of my musical performances that I met Mrs. Shirley Choppy, the CEO of IECD where we talked very briefly about the need for an inspirational anthem song for the IECD. This idea was casually put aside until one morning CEO Choppy called me in excitement saying, "Do you remember the song project we talked about?" I said "Yes!" "Mr. Samy, the time has come!" She had kept her promise. I instantly named the song "The Promise" even before the music and the words were written! I did not sleep that night!

What message or emotions were you hoping to convey to listeners through the lyrics and the melody of the song?

The moment the green light was given to start creating the song, I organized a meeting with the staff of IECD to collectively jot down as many messages and ideas as possible they would

wish the song to convey. Following this exciting exercise, my job was to delicately extract the most beautiful out of this mountain of gemstones. My most challenging job started when I was faced with what I had to keep and what I had to sadly put aside. After many sleepless nights I came back to the IECD team and staged the song on my acoustic guitar. Everyone was happily humming with the birth cry of their new song. "The Promise."

How do you feel about the positive impact the IECD theme song has had on the organization and its supporters?

My first public impression with the song is when it was performed in public for the first time at Eden Bleu in front of local dignitaries, UNESCO representatives and invited guests. The public was very attentive to the words and was moved by the children's voices and their messages. The ambiance in the hall was exuberant and "The Promise" was blessed with its first standing ovation.

Have you received from fans or listeners about how "The Promise" has touched or inspired them?

After the IECD's post of the song on its website, messages of appreciation started flooding in. It has reached more than 12 000 likes to this date. I have shared a separate post of the live performance on my page. My friends from all over the world have contributed messages of amazement that the IECD Seychelles can stage such international quality events. Some even mentioned "The Golden Buzzer."

How has your involvement with IECD and creating "The Promise" influenced your own personal beliefs and values?

My brief encounter with the IECD world after writing "The Promise" I felt so uplifted to discover that our tiny country holds this many caring and passionate people striving tirelessly for the well-being of our children.

Being a Dad myself, I am again ready to contribute in my capacity as a Journalist and Artist to the well-being of children everywhere!

What advice do you have for aspiring musicians who want to use their talents to make a difference in the world?

We Artists and particularly musicians must realize that we have the necessary influence to draw attention to issues such as inequality, discrimination, environmental degradation and in our particular case the well-being of children. Together with IECD Seychelles, we can also contribute to "Promise to make this world a better place" for the children of the Seychelles and the WORLD!

Thank you IECD Seychelles for putting your trust in me to deliver one of the most challenging experiences of my life!

I wish to thank Mr. Micky Anthony, Mr. Darren Bonnelame, Sir Bennet Accouche and his amazing "Twinkle Choir" and IECD CEO Shirley Choppy for keeping her promise to make "The Promise" a promise come true!



Chevalier Joseph Samy with
His Excellency, Wavel Ramkalawan
(President of Seychelles)



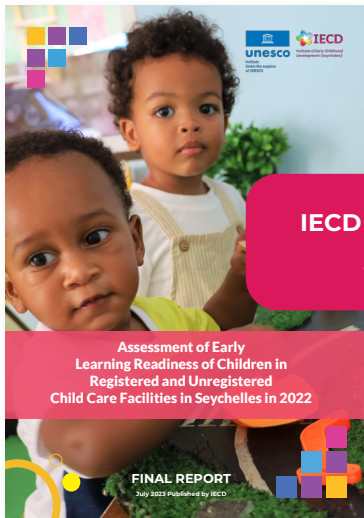
Publishing regularly may be challenging, but it is essential to our growth. Some exciting publications are planned for 2024, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff. While publishing requires perseverance, long hours of research, and unwavering determination, with confidence IECD will excel in this endeavor.



Mrs Shirley Choppy

On the occasion of the International World Book Day 2024

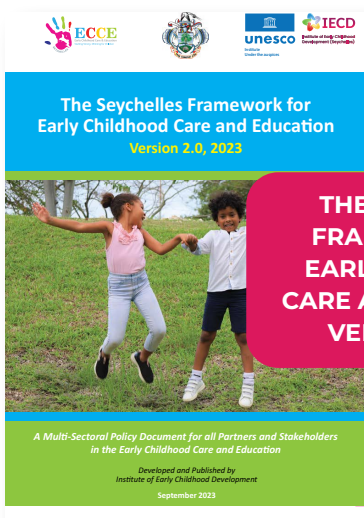
WRITTEN PUBLICATIONS



**IECD FINAL REPORT
JULY 2023**



**EARLY LEARNING
READINESS FOR
CRECHE/PRESCHOOL**



**THE SEYCHELLES
FRAMEWORK FOR
EARLY CHILDHOOD
CARE AND EDUCATION
VERSION 2 2023**



**IECD ACTION PLAN
AUGUST 2023**

**NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2023-2024
EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION**

HARMONISING THE ISLANDS: Chevalier Joseph Samy



In the bustling heart of our little town, we hear the echoes of 'Victoria, ohhh Victoria' and it is no other than renowned Seychellois singer-songwriter, musician, artist and legendary journalist by profession, Mr Joseph Samy otherwise known as Joe Samy or more formally, Chevalier de L'Ordres des Arts et Des Lettres.

In his extensive career as a Journalist, Television Producer and Director, Mr Samy has produced and presented countless programmes on the environment and education, engaging young children from all primary schools in Seychelles.

During his tenure at the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC), Mr Samy has also produced various TV programmes for the promotion of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), since its inception in 2013.

From a small island nation dreamer to an illustrious musician, singer-songwriter and artist, 'Joe' - as he is affectionately known amongst the people - is a great part of our Seychellois folklore but has just as great of a presence on the international scenes. A majority of his visionary songs and tunes are known by heart by other local performers and aspiring young singers in Seychelles.

Mr Samy holds a Diploma in Modern Literature and Communication from the University of Nantes, France. In 2014, the French Government awarded him with the title of Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

In 2023, Mr Joe Samy was further decorated with a Medal of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Seychelles by His Excellency, President Wavel Ramkalawan.



Bernard Shamlaye
Ambassador

A Reflection from Our Partner

2023 was an eventful and most productive year for the IECD, and one when its vision embraced wider horizons. It was the year of the Institute's tenth anniversary and the celebration of ten years of dedicated work and incremental successes in various aspects of early childhood care and education. The second Seychelles Framework on ECCE, prepared with the participation of relevant sectors and launched following approval of the national authorities, laid out the policy objectives for the next decade. And the action plan for the first two years was promptly prepared and launched. The inauguration of the Institute as a UNESCO Category 2 centre raised its sights to added and greater responsibilities nationally and internationally.

Having seen the Institute in its fledgling stage, it is with much satisfaction that I have witnessed its progress and accomplishments. I am confident that with the guidance of its governing board, the dedicated leadership of its management, the continuing commitment of its staff and partners, and the necessary resourcing, the IECD will equip itself for higher flight and the effective delivery of its mandate, in Seychelles and beyond.



Board Members, Management & Staff gearing up for the inauguration of IECD as a Category 2 Institute under the Auspices of UNESCO



The Local Board - From left to right: Beryl Laboudallon, Laurette Lebon, Sirley Choppy, Amelie Nourice, Sonia Mancienne, Magda Rose, Germaine Gill, Juliette Henderson, Captain David Savy



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