

ISSUE 3
SEPTEMBER 2019

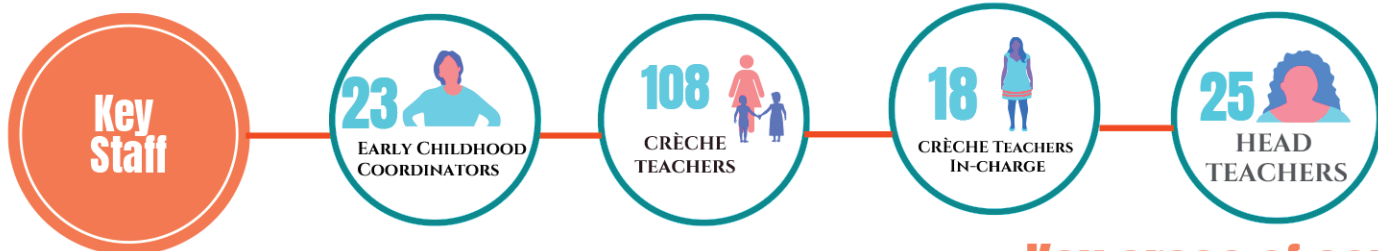
ASSESSMENT OF THE EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN PRE-SCHOOL (CRÈCHE) SETTINGS

Early Years Factsheet is an initiative of the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) that presents a snapshot of the research carried out in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). Through this Factsheet, IECD aims to widely disseminate the findings in a manner that is simple and easy to understand for the general population.

The Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD) conducted an assessment to gauge the quality of the early learning environment in Government Pre-schools (Crèche) to develop a baseline for resource provision.

This Factsheet presents the results of observational and questionnaire information on the early learning environment in Crèche. This includes classroom and outdoor space, human resource capacity and the views of early learning educators. In addition, recommendations that emerged from the study are presented for policy discussion.

Location



Key areas of concern

ECCE BUDGET

- Allocation not enough
- Lack of parity between regions
- Tardiness in provision of funds

TRAINING

- Head Teachers are not receiving In-service Training/ Professional Development
- Teachers are not confident about their knowledge of some ECCE issues.

FACILITIES

- Insufficient & unsafe for climbing, sliding & swinging. Inadequate for sand and water play outdoors
- Inconsistent provision across regions E.g. : Multipurpose Hall and Tea Room
- Inadequate provision within regions E.g. Counselling Room
- Toilets
- Library
- Pantry/store

CLASSROOM

- Not well lit
- Not well ventilated
- Not enough resources & activity material available in the Learning Areas

Policy Recommendations



EDUCATION & TRAINING

- All Crèche Teachers should have a formal qualification. Prior learning should be recognized for Crèche Teachers who have experience but are not formally qualified.
- MEHRD* and SITE** should continue to recruit and train pre-service Early Childhood Teachers at Diploma and Degree Level.
- Professional Development: Plans for regular in-service training should be developed by the Early Childhood Section at MEHRD, particularly on the design and management of Early Learning Centres.



HR SUPPORT/ STAFF

- Clear benchmarks should be established by MEHRD regarding the number of pupils per Teacher.
- Transfer policies should be reinforced to ensure that the pupil-teacher ratio is maintained consistently across Crèche.
- Efforts to recruit Teacher Assistants should be renewed.

* MEHRD : Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development

CLASSROOM



Standards should be set with regards to essential Early Learning Resources in Crèche.



RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- When making allocations, MEHRD should take into account the number of classes and number of pupils.
- The budget given to schools for Early Childhood Care and Education should be clearly justified.
- The Finance Section and the Early Childhood and Primary Education Division at MEHRD should have discussions with Early Childhood staff in Crèche to develop a plan for smoother processes.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Program Officers from MEHRD should visit all Crèche facilities to carry out an inventory and stock taking. Corrective actions should be suggested on this basis.
- A set of standards should be developed for Crèche facilities.
- A Model Pre-School, well suited for the context of Seychelles should be planned in consultation with Planning Authorities, local early childhood specialists and international experts.

* * SITE : Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education

This study has provided a clearer picture of the Early Learning Environment in Crèche in Seychelles. The results are expected to be used by MEHRD in the development of standards, strengthening of human resource capacity and improvement of infrastructure, leading to an improved environment for learning during the early years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & APPRECIATION

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