



From the Editor



Greetings dear readers!

I am delighted to bring you our last newsletter for this year, our 12th issue. Inside, you will find some of our essential and buzzworthy news about Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

It brings forth information on our latest advocacy initiatives – the ECCE Advocacy Award and the launch of the Institute's podcast, titled The Early Childhood Care and Education Podcast. It also covers news

relating to implementing the National Action Plan ECCE 2021-2022 (NAP ECCE 2021-2022), the regulation of childcare services and policy work, amongst other activities.

I take this opportunity of our last newsletter of 2021 to thank the IECD Board, the ECCE community and our partners for their continued commitment to ensuring our shared vision of supporting the holistic development of every child in Seychelles.

This year, we have enjoyed many noteworthy moments and accomplishments, including the Cabinet's endorsement of the Framework on the National Standards for Day Care Centres, the launch of the National Action Plan (NAP) ECCE 2021-2021 and best of all, the signing of the agreement to establish IECD as a UNESCO Global Category 2 Centre for ECCE. Your support has been instrumental to all we have achieved this year.

I would also like to wholeheartedly thank the IECD staff for their hard work and efforts in 2021, as well as their patience, resilience and tolerance shown especially after the fire incident at our head office.

In addition, I am equally grateful to the Ministry of Education, in particular the Principal Secretary, Dr. Odile Decommarmond for providing us with temporary accommodation to allow IECD to continue with its operations. My staff and I wish to convey our heartiest gratitude for the assistance received.

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year 2022!

I look forward to working with you in the following years!

Mrs Shirley Choppy
Chief Executive Officer
Institute of Early Childhood Development

National Workshop: IECD and ECCE Sectors review NAP ECCE 2021-2022 implementation one-year on

As part of the mechanism to monitor and report on the implementation of projects in the National Action Plan Early Childhood Care and Education 2021-2022 (NAP ECCE 2021-2022), a national workshop was held by the IECD and its ECCE sectoral partners, namely Education, Local Government, Health and Social Affairs. The workshop took place on Friday 10th December 2021 at the Seychelles Trading Company (STC) Conference Room.

The workshop brought together the five ECCE sectors to review



the first-year implementation of the projects in the NAP ECCE 2021-2022. It included a series of presentations delivered by each ECCE Technical Team, where they shared the progress made as well as discussed challenges and lessons learned from the implementation of their projects in 2021. The workshop was also an opportunity for them to obtain feedback and suggestions on the way forward from leaders and other professionals in ECCE who were in attendance.

Part of the event included a fruitful and engaging panel discussion, which was highly appreciated by the participants. Moderated by a local consultant, Dr Andre Leste, the panel involved the participation of members from various areas of expertise and organisations, included expert statistician, Mr Egbert Benstrong; Ms Gina Balette from the Ministry of Education (MOE); Dr Bernard Shamalaye, a former Ambassador and Minister of Education and Ms Fatma Bibi from the National Council for Children (NCC).

They deliberated on the benefits of these projects in enhancing the provision of ECCE services in Seychelles and shared their feedback and sought clarification on the implementations of projects.

In his opening remarks, the Minister for Education, Dr Justin Valentin welcomed the participants and said "The multi-sectoral workshop has become a high point in the ECCE Calendar to take stock of progress made."

"Most importantly, the workshop is intended to galvanize the multi-sectoral collaborative actions towards the implementation of



The Education Sector Technical Team sharing their project updates through an engaging and inspiring presentation.

the National Action Plan. Sectoral participation in the realization of the projects in the National Action Plan demonstrates determination, resolve and conviction. Evidence of the leadership, drive, and commitment of the ECCE Technical Teams and the meaningful support at every level of the system has accumulated from the four past editions of the Plan. This has helped to keep the ECCE vision in sight and to address ECCE priorities," added the Minister.

The NAP ECCE 2021-2022 was launched in July this year.

However, implementation of the projects commenced well before it was launched, at the beginning of the year. The new NAP ECCE consists of 16 projects, ranging from tracking and monitoring of early childhood performance at schools, establishing structures and procedures for the management of information, capacity building of ECCE professionals, and increasing access to quality ECCE services, promotion of ECCE programmes to the implementation of research-based projects.

Collaboration and coordination across sectors are at the heart of the country's holistic approach to early childhood development, which is sustained through joint national action planning. The NAP is instrumental in strengthening the policy environment and, equally, in motivating the ECCE sectors to initiate actions aimed at improving provision and services for children, their parents and the community. It spans over two years, and it has been consistently and systematically implemented by IECD and its ECCE sectoral partners since 2013.



Members of the panel (from right) Ms Bibi, Dr Shamlaye, Ms Balette and Mr Benstrong

DRAFTING OF REGULATION FOR DAY CARE CENTRES UNDERWAY



The Technical Working Committee discusses the drafting of regulations for Infrastructure and Design with sectoral representatives.

The transition and Implementation Plan for the migration of Day Care Centres from the Ministry of Education to IECD is one step closer to being fulfilled as the regulation for this category of childcare establishment is being drafted.

Working on this crucial step is the Technical Working Committee of the National Standards of



The Technical Working Committee meeting held with SFRSA representative

Centre-based Childcare services, which comprises the Chairperson, Mrs Shirley Choppy and Vice-chairpersons, Mr Selby Dora from the Ministry of Education and Ms Amelie Nourrice from the Attorney General's Office. Other committee members include the consultant, Dr Andre Leste, Director of Programme Coordination and Research, Ms Marie-France Barra and Research Officer, Ms Theresia Esparon.

The committee is working in close collaboration with professionals from various sectors, among which are Ms Betty-Mai Sofa

(Local Government & Community Affairs), Mr Terrence Arnephy (Seychelles Fire Rescue & Services Agency), Mr Ashely Philoe (Planning Authority), Ms Monia Course (Public Health Authority) and Mrs Julina Madeleine and Mrs Michelle Adeline (IECD).

12 National Standards for Day Care Centres are reviewed and formulated into regulation. So far, the below eight National Standards have been thoroughly examined:

1. Infrastructure and Design
2. Safety
3. Physical Planning & Development
4. Public Health
5. and 6. Early Learning and Interaction
7. and 8. Training and Staffing

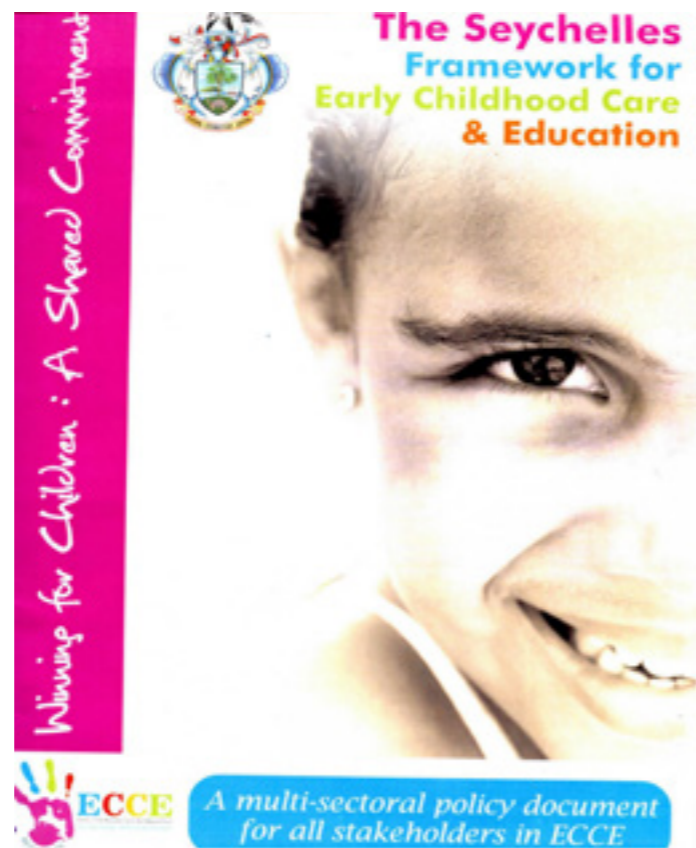
The remaining four standards will be revised and finalised in the first quarter of 2022.

IECD undertakes a comprehensive review of The Seychelles ECCE Framework

It has been a decade since 'The Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Framework' was introduced in 2011. Since then, the ECCE sector has seen several developments and transformed significantly. A comprehensive review of the Framework is thus necessary to evaluate progress and take an in-depth look at the current status of the ECCE system in Seychelles, including the policies and programmes in place.

The Seychelles ECCE Framework was a commitment made by all sectors to ensure the overall development of children in Seychelles is guaranteed. It was an important development in bridging the gaps in early childhood care and education, ensuring that the right of every child is met and their potential developed. Most importantly, the Framework guides the inter-sectoral collaborative approach, which is at the core of the Seychelles ECCE system.

Dr Andre Leste, an external consultant has been solicited to review the Framework with the support of Ms Theresia Esparon, the Research Officer at IECD. Work to study this critical document began in September 2021 to assess various structures and components in ECCE. The study involved a deep analysis of existing laws, policies, guidelines, practices and reports in all ECCE sectors.



The new Seychelles Early Childhood Care and Education Framework will be completed and published in 2022.

Milestone Moment: IECD registers its 100th Childminder

The IECD has again reached a historic milestone; the registration of its 100th Childminder – Ms Beverly Cadence, whose childminding service is at Maldives, Anse Etoile. She successfully registered her service with IECD in September 2021.

Ms Cadence is a trained nurse who has been working with children for more than ten years. While talking to the staff of the Regulatory Affairs Unit, Ms Cadence noted that Childminding is a demanding job that requires a lot of love, patience, compassion and understanding. She feels that she has a special bond with the children, especially the

younger babies, and loves working with them. Ms Cadence has cared for her younger siblings



and always wanted children of her own. Being a Childminder allowed her to care for her son and observe his milestones.

Ms Cadence conducts various indoor and outdoor early learning activities, such as singing, colouring, counting and finger painting. In her service, she provides breakfast and lunch and promotes healthy eating. Her establishment is open from 7 am to 5 pm and caters for children aged three months old to 4 years old.

The IECD team would like to congratulate Ms Cadence and wish her the very best on this new and exciting step in her business!

A word of congratulations also goes to the Regulatory Affairs staff for their accomplishment!

National Standards for Childminding Service: Registered Childminders' capacity on 'Administration Standard' enhanced

The National Standard for Childminding Service on Administration is a significant aspect of running an effective and successful home-based childcare establishment. Good administrative practices allow Childminders to take charge of their business, increasing work efficiency and ensuring positive business decisions.

Essentially, it contributes towards children's safety and high attainment. However, some Childminders find it quite challenging to adhere to the prerequisites of this Standard.

Therefore, a project to enhance their capacity to implement the Administration Standard was designed. The project involved a series of one-on-one sessions held with the

registered Childminders between June and October 2021. On offer were practical guidance and hands-on support on effectively implementing the Administration Standard.

"We felt that it was important to provide this group of registered Childminders with direct help



to boost their capacity and skills in maintaining and complying with the requirements of the

Administration Standard," said the Director of Regulatory Affairs, Mrs Nathalie Moustache. "The intervention has helped to better establish administrative practices in these registered childminding settings. It also shows that anyone can do it with the right mindset and constructive attitude," she added.

IECD intensifies efforts to ensure compliance with National Standards for Childminding Service

One of the core roles of the IECD is to regulate home-based childminding settings to ensure compliance with the 10 National Standards for Childminding Service. One strategy for maintaining its regulatory functions is conducting random visits to monitor adherence to the standards.

In recent months, the Regulatory Affairs Section has amplified its efforts in conducting a series of such visits at registered childminding establishments. This initiative complemented the formal inspection and monitoring that IECD usually carries out every six months.

"It was a productive endeavour, as it allowed detection of non-compliance to National Standards for Childminding Service and for appropriate remedial action to be taken," noted the Regulatory Affairs team.

The Institute collaborated with relevant authorities to tackle areas of concern. This initiative also included multi-sectoral visits at non-registered Childminders in Perseverance 1. The Chief Executive Officer, Mrs Shirley Choppy, was among the team, showing her commitment towards the health, safety and wellbeing of young children.



The delegation who conducted the visits at non-registered Childminders in the district of Perseverance 1

'Recognition of Prior Learning' – a first of its kind project for Registered Childminders

This year, as part of the National Action Plan for ECCE 2021-2022, the IECD, in partnership with the Seychelles Qualifications Authority (SQA) and the Seychelles Institute of Teacher Education (SITE), is implementing a project with a group of 30 registered Childminders. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a first of its kind to be conducted with Home-Based Childcare Providers in Seychelles.

The said project aims to recognise and assess knowledge, skills, and competencies that the Childminders have acquired formally and informally against standards or learning outcomes of the qualification: Certificate in Childcare and Development. For this, six RPL Coordinators have followed training with SQA to assist the candidates in compiling their portfolios.

The project implementation involves two phases:

1. Compilation, pre-screening and assessment of individual portfolios and

2. Assessment of competencies by SITE.

Upon completing the project, a certificate in Childcare and Development will be awarded to the participants.

To date, 27 Childminders have submitted their portfolios to SQA. They have received supportive assistance and guidance from the coordinators. A pre-screening assessment has been undertaken by SQA in collaboration with the designated assessors, in readiness for the final assessment by SITE programmed for early 2022.



Data Governance in ECCE



The IECD project team meets with the Social Affairs' management team to organise the Situational Analysis

IECD rolls out the Data Management in ECCE Project in the Social Affairs Sector

Research has shown that a child's development and growth depends highly on their early experiences. For this reason, the IECD is working to ensure that every child in Seychelles has a winning start in life. An essential aspect to achieving this is having access to reliable data to inform policy decisions and strategic actions on ECCE.

To this end, the IECD, with recommendations made by the World Bank due to the 2013 Seychelles Systems Based for Better Education Results-Early Childhood Development Country Report (SABER-ECD), took up the challenge to improve the availability of reliable data in ECCE.

A longitudinal project aimed at establishing structures and procedures for data collection was thus conceived, based on early

childhood development (ECD) indicators in all the main ECCE sectors. Ultimately, the project seeks to standardise data collection procedures, to strengthen ECCE monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

A replication of the one implemented in the Health sector (2017-2018), this unique project has been introduced in the Social Affairs sector as part of the NAP ECCE 2021-2022. It is also being piloted in the Education sector.

As in the two previous sectors, the Social Affairs sector has carried out a Situational Analysis to assess the data collection processes used to identify the indicators it employs to collect information on ECD. This exercise also looked at challenges that the Social Affairs sector is encountering in data management. Mr Egbert Benstrong, the Project Consultant and local expert statistician helped conduct the exercise.

Social workers from 11 districts across Mahe successfully took part in a series of individual interviews, which was conducted over four weeks (23rd October – 15th November 2021) by the project team. Additionally, three focus group discussions were held with the Family Affairs and Legal Units, the Child Protection Unit and the team of Social Workers on Praslin and La Digue respectively.

"A lot of information has been obtained through the analysis, all of which will help guide the next step in the execution of the project, especially in developing the Indicators for the collection of data in this sector," said the Director of Advocacy & Information, Ms Line Mancienne. She is leading the implementation of the project.

The management team of Social Affairs and social workers who participated in the situational analysis will receive the findings in a national forum planned for next year. In conclusion, the CEO, Mrs Shirley Choppy remarked, "without the support of Minister Patricia Francourt and Principal Secretary Linda William-Melanie, and not forgetting the active participation of the informants, we would not have reached this far and completed this milestone phase.

On behalf of the project's team, I wish to thank the sector and count on its continued support in 2022."

Advocacy Award in Early Childhood Care and Education & Launching of New ECCE Initiative

On Saturday 27th November 2021, the IECD hosted a special ceremony recognising five ECCE professionals contributing to their early childhood sector and institution. Their dedication has ensured our young children continue to enjoy their rights, and Seychelles fulfils its commitment towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In recognition of their hard work, devotion and contribution helping to build the resilient ECCE system uniquely were; Mrs Rose-Mai Jolicoeur (Ministry of Education), Mrs Florida Bijoux (Ministry of Health), Ms Brenda Dick (Ministry of Social Affairs), Ms Begita Melanie (Ministry of Local Government & Community Affairs) and Ms Marvel Simeon (The Institute of Early Childhood Development).

This momentous occasion was organised in line with the commemoration of this year's Universal Children's Day, celebrated each year on 20th November. Present at the event were the CEO of IECD, Principal Secretaries for ECCE, the IECD board members and staff, among other guests, including sponsors of the event – GranKaz, Skychef Servair and Island Motors.

To convey her deep gratitude and thanks to her role model in ECCE, Ms. Marvel Simeon and her daughters presented a gift and a copy of a poem which she has composed especially for this auspicious occasion to Mrs. Choppy.

It was also a day for the Institute to launch, for the first time, its new



ECCE podcast series, titled 'The Early Childhood Care and Education, which explores meaningful topics and stories relating to ECCE and features various professional practitioners and individuals in the sector.

This new initiative is an addition to the Institute's communication mix. The idea behind the introduction

of the podcast is for the Institute to broaden its reach and tap into new potential audiences to drive awareness of the importance of ECCE.

The podcast is available for listening at: <http://www.iecd.gov.sc/resources/podcasts/>

IECD says farewell to a special lady and colleague – Ms Marvel Simeon



With the birth of her twin daughters, Ms Simeon quit her job to care for them for three years. She learned a lot about early childhood and child development while caring for her children, igniting in her a deep interest and desire to work with young children.

In 2018, when the opportunity presented itself for her to work with young children at a national level, Ms Simeon joined IECD as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, a position that she has held until now.

The knowledge, skills and experience she had amassed in her previous jobs as a Public Health Officer, a Health and Safety Officer for Barclays Bank and a Supply Teacher at the Beau Vallon Primary School came in handy in the new post. She took on this new role with much enthusiasm, confidence, and zeal and has developed

a strong working relationship with her caregiver colleagues and those at IECD.

Part of her duties includes ensuring the implementation of the mandatory standards before the registration for Childminding services. She also conducts inspection visits to ensure compliance, which involves other partners such as Health, Social Affairs and Fire Safety. Additionally, she provides support to child caregivers and put a lot of emphasis on improving the quality of service they offer.

Whilst working with the IECD, Ms Simeon has gained numerous personal and professional development opportunities, both at national and international levels. Additionally, with the assistance of the management and dedicated team, she has been instrumental in planning, leading and successfully implementing a few small projects

for the benefit of young children. Ms Simeon cannot envisage a future without being around small children, so after much reflection, she has decided to step into new responsibilities taking her closer to child care and development. As of January 2022, she will be the proud operator of a new daycare centre in the district of Glacis, a job that will allow her to practice all aspects of childcare and education services she has learnt, acquired a wealth of experience and put into application in the Regulatory Affairs Section at IECD and experienced at IECD.

We wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms Simeon on her well deserved award in ECCE, and thank her for all her dedication and hard work at IECD throughout the years. On this same note, we also wish her all the best in her new endeavour.

Mersi pour sa ki mon ete.

Dan mon lakour mon en manman.
Dan mon legliz mon en kretyen.
Lo semen, mon kapab en pyeton, en drayver ou menm en pasaze.
Dan mon travay, mon en prfesyonel dan devlopman pti lanfans.
Mersi pour tou sa ki mon ete.

Lekel kin dir ki sa parkour i fasil?
Me mwan, mon apresye ki mon parkour in anmenn mwan kot IECD.
Laba, monn resewar loportinite, kin fer mwan dekouer sa ki mon ete.
Monn santi lapresiasyon, e monn resewar lankourazman pour bouz pli devan.

Mersi pour sa ki mon ete.
Parfwa, sitiasyon dan lavi i seye pou zet ou ater.
Me non! Debout for e persevere.
Apresye sa ki ou fer, e fer li avek lanmour.
Napa fason ki ou pa pou satisfè.
Toultan dir mersi pour sa ki ou ete.

Regard sa zanfàn inosan.
I pe esper nou pou atrap son lanmen.
I depan lo nou pou tras son fitir.
Anou konstri sa pon pou zot traverse.
E plitar, zot ava dir nou
Mersi pour sa ki zot ete.

Poem composed and interpreted by Ms. Marvel Simeon



Health Sector
Mrs Florida Bijoux, National Programme Manager for the Child Health and Immunization Programmes
"My vision is to ensure of my organisation's delivery of a high-quality Child Health Programme. Accessible to all, ensuring that no child is left behind when in need of care; so that they stay healthy and reach their full potential in all aspects of life."



Social Affair Sector
Ms Brenda Dick,
Social Worker at Anse Royale District
"As professionals we should be a positive model towards the young ones, have a good listening ear to see what is happening around them."



Education Sector
Ms Rose-Mai Jolicoeur,
Principal Education Officer at Early Childhood Unit
"My vision is a team working together to promote a good culture for the betterment of every child."



The IECD
Ms Marvel Simeon,
Monitoring & Evaluation Officer
"Where there is a will, there is always a way. Change and challenges should be regarded not as barriers but stepping stones in life journey, destined to make one robust, more resilient and firmer in purpose."



Local Government & Community Affairs Sector
Ms Begita Melanie, District Administrator for Cascade
"Be committed to providing the necessities that will give our children a winning start in life."

Meet our ECCE Advocacy Award Recipients

THANK YOU!



Presenting Mrs Chippy with the monetary gift was Ms Shama Amesbury, the PR and Communications Manager of GranKaz.

GranKaz generously supporting ECCE!

The IECD is once more a beneficiary of the generous local business – GranKaz, which has gifted the Institute with SCR50 000 in support of ECCE.

After she has accepted the cheque, Mrs. Chippy informed the audience that the funds will go towards advocacy initiatives, such as the ECCE Advocacy Award and the Assessment of Early Learning Readiness Project. This commemorative event occurred during Universal Children's Day, held on Saturday 27th November 2021.



Another year is coming to an end and we would like to express our deepest gratitude and support throughout 2021. With your continuous help and commitment towards ECCE and the Institute of Early Childhood Development we have yet again achieved our milestones for 2021.

We would like to wish all a Christmas that's merry and bright! We hope your holiday season is full of peace, joy and happiness.

Wishing you a joyous Christmas and New Year!

