

ECCE



ECCE SERIES 3
**ECCE SYSTEM
DIAGNOSIS TOOL**



ECCE SERIES

Covering children from birth to 8 years old, Early Childhood Care and Education, also known as ECCE, “aims at the holistic development of a child’s social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing” (UNESCO). It is not only at this stage of life that the development of individuals is the most crucial, but also that the environment around them is the most influential. It is therefore necessary to be able to guarantee each and every child a quality and equity access to education, care, health, nutrition and protection.

In line with target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 which stipulates that ‘by 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education’, IBE-UNESCO, mandated to support Member States in the curriculum development, has elaborated the “ECCE Series”. These publications are an agile collection of tools, policies and good practices in ECCE as well as the result of IBE’s activities in the field. Thus, the purpose of these series is to share practices as a way to contribute to a thriving environment for children’s development while providing them with the necessary tools in becoming good and responsible citizens in the future.

The issues of this ECCE Series are to be considered as working instruments, alive, open, everchanging documents aimed at inspiring policy-makers and professionals of the Early Childhood community, in creating better and better curricula and enabler (tools, curricula, policy documents and training processes) with the final goal of giving children the better opportunities in their early years.

IBE-UNESCO, Geneva, 2021 | www.ibe-unesco.org

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Quote as:

UNESCO-IBE (2021).

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

System Diagnosis Tool,

Geneva, UNESCO-IBE

Graphic

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February 2021, Version 1



Supported by

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Dubai Cares

ECCE

ECCE SERIES 3

ECCE SYSTEM DIAGNOSIS TOOL



Introduction by IBE

It is during their early years that children receive the educational keys necessary to acquire the skills that will influence their future lives. Therefore, the development and education of the earliest years are at the heart of IBE's priorities. The development of prototypes framing early children education and care (ECCE) and presenting the overall ECCE system is representative of IBE's values such as respect for curricular and global development. The ECCE framework is translated into a series of documents of which the *ECCE system diagnostic instrument* is one part. Its purpose is to provide a detailed inventory of the six ECCE domains (including Programs and services, Institutional players, Policies, Regional and local cultural considerations, etc) in order to propose a coherent and holistic national ECCE system. It is a regulatory document for the national organisation of ECCE, outlining, among other things, a National Committee responsible for the development of a coherent ECCE system.

Thus, the *ECCE system diagnostic instrument* contains the quality criteria to be a reference in the field of ECCE while responding to the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals in particular SDG4 for quality education for all, especially Target 4.2 on early childhood education and care.

Finally, I would like to wish all users a good use of this document.

Mr. Yao Ydo
Director of IBE

Introduction by Dubai Cares

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) has been an integral part of Dubai Cares' mandate to ensure underserved children and youth have equitable access to quality education and learning opportunities. We strongly believe in the role that ECCE plays in fostering children's holistic social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Through our strong programmatic partnerships, support to research, advocacy, and global platforms, we aim to build resilient and sustainable education systems through evidence-based interventions focused on capacity building and systems strengthening.

We are pleased to see the strong and solid outputs produced through our partnership with UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE-UNESCO). The significant support that they have extended to the four countries under this partnership (Laos, Rwanda, Cameroon and Eswatini) for over four years, has resulted in developing strong and replicable prototypes, guidelines, M&E tools, and delivery mechanisms for ECCE. Additionally, one of the key milestones of this initiative was the development of the Holistic Early Childhood Development Index (HECDI) framework, which provides indicators and targets for more comprehensive monitoring of the child's development, which can be implemented at both country and international levels.

We strongly believe that these series and the tools that were developed would greatly contribute to the existing body of knowledge for ECCE and better inform both practitioners and policy makers; not just in specific countries included in this partnership, but also for countries that are looking to strengthen its existing ECCE frameworks and modalities. We also hope that this initiative will create a space for much needed dialogue, complementarity and collaborations to take place both on the national and international levels and for more partners to converge and work together in ensuring that ECCE is appropriately positioned within policy and practice.

His Excellency Dr. **Tariq Al Gurg**,
Chief Executive Officer at Dubai Cares
and Member of its Board of Directors

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Glossary

CRC: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

ECCE: Early Childhood Care and Education

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GEQAF: General Education Quality Analysis Framework

HECDI: Holistic Early Childhood Development Index

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

MS: Member State

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PISA: Program for International Student Assessment

SDC: System Design Committee

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. Background

The significance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in building a strong foundation for lifelong learning and for personal, social and economic development is well documented. In 2010, the first ever World Congress on ECCE held in Moscow reaffirmed the right of all children to ECCE, and underscored it as the basis for “building the wealth of nations” (UNESCO, 2010). More recently, in Incheon, the 2015 World Education Forum (UNESCO, 2015a) recognized ECCE as an inescapable enabler for realizing “equity of education quality and lifelong learning for all”. A sizeable body of upper tier research initiatives worldwide has created a knowledge base across all sectors of ECCE, not only benefiting service provision but also supporting advocacy of ECCE investments worldwide. This literature includes major initiatives that have synthesized research (e.g., Britto et al., 2017), clarified it for various audiences (e.g., World Bank, 2016), and produced important tools for monitoring and evaluation and for developing effective interventions (e.g., UNESCO, 2015a). The ECCE research and development community are vibrant, lively, and making sophisticated advances.

Yet ECCE practices remain profoundly and unnecessarily inadequate in most countries. In the Moscow Framework for Action on ECCE, UNESCO conceptualizes ECCE as a holistic, integrated and multisector service focusing on health, nutrition, early stimulation, education, social protection and a supportive environment as means of fostering children’s holistic development. It turns out that such holistic, multisector integration is not merely beneficial, but is essential for effective ECCE. In practice, though, the level of integration ECCE requires is at almost reverse polarity with how organizations furnishing ECCE actually function. **The gravitational pull away from coherent, multisector integration and towards fragmentation is intense, complex, and systemic.** The reality is that the multisector nature of ECCE does not fit within common organizational categories such as governmental departments with fixed budget lines, institutional boundaries, or traditional bases of support and advocacy. The sophistication and vibrancy of the ECCE research and advocacy communities’ merit strong admiration, yet more than research and advocacy are needed to overcome this resistance to the

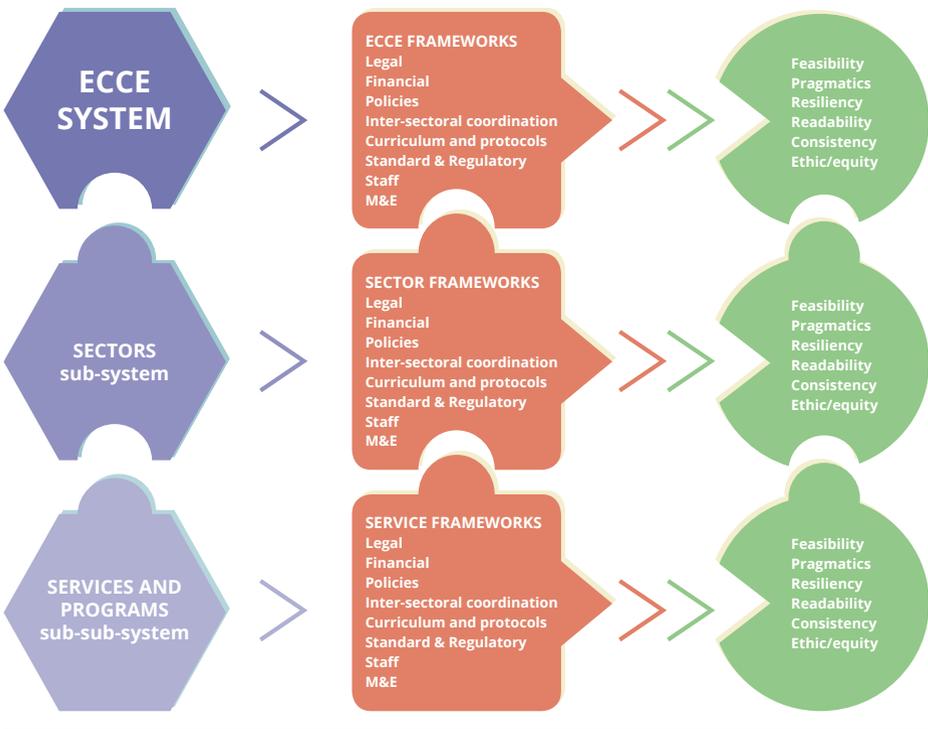
holistic service envisioned by the Moscow Framework and virtually all other initiatives that frame ECCE from national or global perspectives.

Beyond programmatic challenges, current inadequate institutional, legal, policy, and financing frameworks that are not mutually informed or supported by a system of data collection and evaluation characterize the infrastructure of ECCE. Most countries do not have formal ECCE systems nor do most countries conceive of what they have as “ECCE.” Instead, they carry out uncoordinated and unevenly developed individual elements of education, healthcare, and other forms of protection and services for children. ECCE is at best a fragmented enterprise in most countries, when it is operationally crucial to be the opposite. The level of neglect varies across regions, starting with sheer lack of access to ECCE, predominantly in developing regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab states. The quality and equity of access to ECCE remains a global challenge. The neglect is even deeper for children of ages 0 to 3 years, which is the most critical age range with the highest returns to investment in ECCE. This prevailing context risks the attainment of ECCE target 4.2 of SDG4, which states that:

“By 2030, countries should ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”.

In fact, fragmentation and inadequate ECCE infrastructure risks negating or diminishing the impact of virtually all other development efforts, especially for countries and individuals who need them most. Furthermore, ironically, external agencies that promote and support ECCE initiatives have tended to adopt a non-systemic and piecemeal project approach that has consistently failed to be sustainable systemically or after external project support has ceased.

Figure 1: Prototype ECCE system



2. ECCE system Diagnosis tool

This ECCE System Diagnosis Tool is a resource whose overarching purpose is to provide practical assistance to Member States (MSs) or regional blocks as they address this fragmentation, **repositioning ECCE into an interconnected, high priority, multisector system**. Toward this end, we invite Member States to submit practical accounts, case descriptions, or examples from their own context of the process of planning, building, and implementing sustainable, comprehensive, and integrated ECCE systems so these may benefit other Member States who are currently facing similar situations.

The process of converting disparate ECCE services in a country into a well-defined system requires not only support across the stakeholder groups that contribute to or bear on ECCE, but purposeful analysis and planning. This ECCE System Diagnosis Tool guides stakeholders, envisaged here as organized into what are referred to generically as system design committees (SDCs), through an in-depth analytic and diagnostic situation analysis or inventory of the sectors and supporting infrastructure that must function interdependently and in mutually reinforcing ways for effective ECCE to take hold as a sustainable system. This inventory is anchored in a set of questions related to each part of the system and its interactions with other parts. Through this process, SDCs will develop what can be called a sophisticated system craftsmanship or dexterity (Carbonell, Stalmeijer et al., 2014). Such system dexterity involves competences discussed further, competences that rarely appear in the professional training for any of the sectors contributing to ECCE but that are crucial for ECCE system development.

The ECCE System Diagnosis Tool does not seek to serve as a point-by-point blueprint for action, but instead as a workbook to assist in system analysis design. It calls for design committees to delve deeply into literature and resources as a precursor to a comprehensive inventory process. As an analytical tool that begins with this inventory, the ECCE System Diagnosis Tool is not meant to tell Member States what is wrong with their ECCE endeavors or how to repair them. It is rather meant to help Member States raise key questions about and develop strategies for converting those endeavors into functioning systems.

The ECCE System Diagnosis Tool is thus generalized and must be adapted to national, regional, or local context, circumstances and joint ownership by system stakeholders. It can simplify and hasten ECCE system design, though, by clarifying tasks and considerations that are relevant across most national contexts. And more importantly, it is the process of adaptation that constitutes the complex work of ECCE system building, and of closing the gap between the sophisticated ECCE literature and fragmented global practices.

The ECCE System Diagnosis Tool begins in the next section by briefly summarizing elements of that research base and rationale for ECCE, largely from a) the economic and social vantage of ECCE's remarkably high rate of return as an investment, and b) the vantage of the rationale for a systems orientation. This summary relies on the literature and gives extensive references to it, and includes as annex five important and publicly available documents that constitute an ECCE primer and more in-depth immersion into the literature.

This document's purpose is not to furnish a new, comprehensive review to add to these able productions that are already available. Instead, the need this Tool seeks to fill is provision of hands-on tools for ECCE analysis and identification of critical constraints that prevent MSs from attaining and sustaining comprehensive, integrated ECCE systems.

The final scope of this document is to create the proper environment for the development of the ECCE curriculum (see UNESCO-IBE, 2021), by generating an appropriate context whereby curriculum developers can create the better condition for learning in ECCE provision.

3. Audience

The primary intended audience of SDCs refers to individuals representing a country's multiple ECCE stakeholders who convene and are committed to carry out the planning necessary to iteratively design, implement, test, and revise an ECCE system. In practice, an SDC will likely have fluid membership and will take different form depending on its context. More generally, the System Diagnosis Tool audience is intended to include ECCE professionals, policy-makers, researchers, community members, and parents, and thus to serve as a lingua franca or common language for communication between sectors and levels.

As fully as possible, the Tool avoids language or terminology specialized to individual ECCE-relevant fields. Yet as a caution, efforts to plan and create multisector and multilevel systems are fraught with difficulty and with the need to understand the perspectives, ways of thinking, and approaches of others. Genuine and productive collaboration and communication require a sophisticated competence of stepping out of familiar conceptual frameworks and internalizing unfamiliar frameworks in service of productive joint results. A document meant to speak to all stakeholders will inevitably make references unfamiliar to each. This dynamic is familiar in any type of collaborative activity, yet it is especially urgent for ECCE stakeholders to brace for the hard work of crossing communication boundaries to enable the healthy and holistic early life experience that is the right of every child.

4. Research supporting vigorous and systemic investment in ECCE

Investment in ECCE helps to fulfill the most humane instincts for the formation of caring and cohesive societies. And it is profoundly wise, with unparalleled returns. Countries that invest in ECCE reap rewards in long-term economic and political stability and in social well-being. Because the early years of childhood so uniquely and permanently influence the entire life cycle, and are so sensitive both to nurturance and deprivation, it is not surprising that an extensive research base confirms that investments in ECCE have widespread benefits and payoffs for children, their families, and national economies (e.g., Heckman, 2000; UNESCO, 2015b). Investments in adequate, healthcare, childcare, maternity care (Nores and Barnett 2010, Engle, Fernald et al., 2011), pre-primary and primary education, and a stable and nurturing upbringing for all result in large societal cost savings (Barnett and Masse, 2007) and more productive adults who are themselves then able contribute to the nurturing of a new generation. While researchers note that causal explanations require further study, investments in ECCE seem particularly effective strategies in narrowing income gaps and achieving greater equity along dimensions of ethnicity, gender, and disability status (Reynolds and Temple, 2008; Barnett and Nores, 2015).

4.1 Long term benefits

The rewards are significant and compounded. Researchers estimate economic returns equivalent to 10 times their costs, or more (Barnett and Masse, 2007; Engle, Fernald et al., 2011). Economists have made a compelling case that public investments in ECCE are economically justifiable given their “public goods” character. In traditional markets, private individuals are unsuitable investors in ECCE infrastructure or systems, given their limited ability to gain benefits from any investment beyond the individual level; private organizations are similarly unsuited for investing in government

services. Outsized societal benefits - benefits otherwise simply unattainable - constitute precisely the basis for government absorbing the investment cost. The benefits of a strong ECCE system accrue to society far beyond any single beneficiary.

Additionally, the return compounds significantly. Those benefiting at the individual level are equipped to play a greater role in passing the benefits on to others and successive generations. As a result of these accumulating societal advantages, ECCE is among the most compelling developmental strategies (Barnett and Nores, 2015).

Although much of this research originated in North America (Camilli et al., 2010) and Europe (Vandenbroeck, 2012; Van Lancker, 2013; Legrand, Grover et al., 2015) subsequent research in Africa (Sall, 2015; Serpell and Nsamenang, 2015), Asia (Rao and Sun, 2015), Latin America (Vegas and Santibáñez, 2009) and other contexts has confirmed that ECCE has compelling economic and social payoffs in the range of economically advantaged and disadvantaged economies alike and across regional and cultural landscapes Vargas-Barón, 2009; Vegas and Santibáñez, 2009; Burger, 2010; Nores and Barnett, 2010; Engle, Fernald et al., 2011). Meta-analyses by Camilli et al. (2010) and Nores and Barnett (2010) of child development programs in high-, middle-, and low-income countries indicate ECCE benefits across a wide range of political, socio-cultural, and economic contexts (Baker-Henningham and López Bóo, 2010).

4.2 Short-term and immediate benefits

There is an impressive body of evidence coming to light, including formal cost-benefit studies, that confirm not only the long-term benefits of ECCE but also short-term ones (Camilli et al., 2010; Nores and Barnett, 2010; Engle et al., 2011). Some of these benefits are clear. Reliable childcare enables women to join the workforce in larger numbers (Barnett and Nores, 2015). But some of them are more subtle—proper nutrition, a life free of violence, and early cognitive stimulation can lead children to become better adjusted adults who are healthier mentally and physically, cost society less in terms of anti-social behavior, and contribute more (Engle et al., 2011; Nores and Barnett, 2010). Other benefits of ECCE include areas of cost savings within public education—kids require fewer special learning accommodations, repeat fewer grades, have greater cognitive achievement, and become more willing to take charge of their education as they grow older (Camilli et al., 2010). The high cost of chronically mentally ill and physically ill individuals to the healthcare system and the criminal justice system is lessened (Economic Opportunity Institute, 2018). In healthcare systems, often a small segment of beneficiaries originates a disproportionately large share of the costs. Healthier, well-adjusted children become healthier adults and require fewer health and social services along the way. Thus, since more

people are able to enter the workforce, economic inequality declines and tax revenues are enhanced (Heckman, 2008).

long term benefits at a glance

- » Overall system efficiency and sustainability
- » Economic (Human Resources, Human Capital Accumulation, 10x earnings, productivity, growth, redistributive effects,...)
- » Health (bills, well-being, enjoyment of life,...)
- » Social (low incarceration rates, low violence, adjustment, protection bills,...)
- » Justice (Human rights, social justice, equity and participatory)

short term benefits at a glance

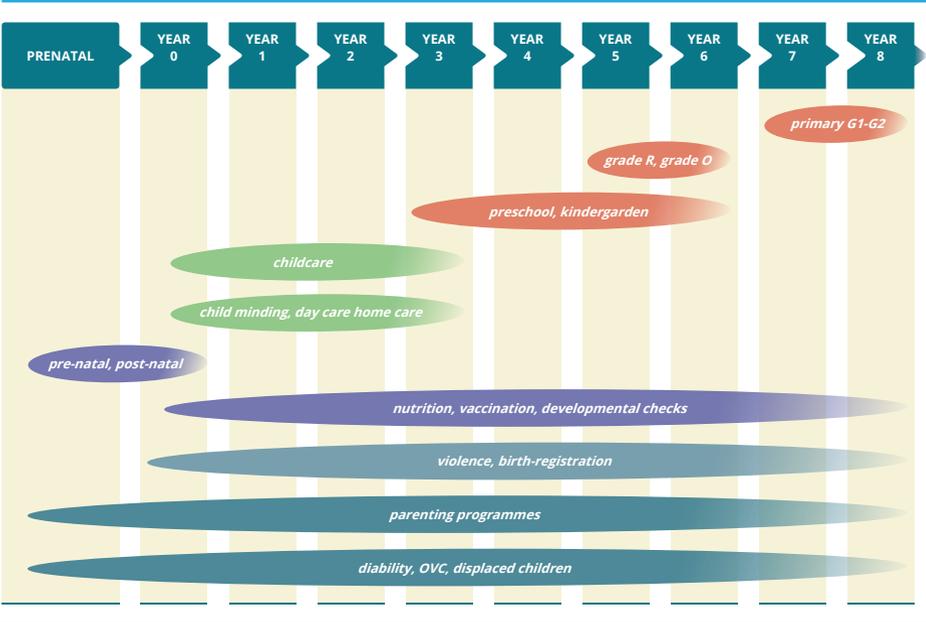
- » Learning effectiveness and outcomes
 - » Internal efficiency of education systems (drop out and repetition rates)
 - » Better health and nutrition
 - » Fewer health and social services
 - » Emotional adjustment and balance
 - » Social adjustment
 - » Gender balance in labour market and earnings
 - » Female siblings partition in education
-

4.3 Learning outcomes

Research shows robust evidence of the positive effects of participating in ECCE on children's learning outcomes. Children who have been enrolled, even for a short period, in ECCE are less likely to drop out in primary school and are more likely to complete longer-term basic education (Global Partnership for Education, 2011). These effects persist as students age, favoring acquisition of measured skills and abilities in secondary school and beyond. The 2015 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) comparative study, which assesses competencies of adolescents in mathematics, reading, and science and was conducted in 72 countries, demonstrates this lasting impact. Children who attended at least one year of ECCE performed higher compared with peers who had not had such experiences (Raikes, Devercelli et al., 2015). Children such as these have greater access to higher education and other opportunities in the future (Reynolds, 2000). Since learning is a cumulative process of knowledge acquisition, ECCE is the building block of a successful and efficient education system, leading to enhanced national human resources wealth.

It should be noted, however, that the quality of ECCE is strongly related to its outcomes and, therefore, its economic return (Barnett, 2011a; Engle et al. 2011; Britto et Ulkuer, 2012; Britto, Yoshikawa et al., 2014). For example, while providing substandard quality childcare does enable women to enter the workforce thereby enhancing national economics, it may fail to pay off in terms of the investment value in the development of the child per se. This is why many experts advocate multisector integrated initiatives packaged for all (Daelmans, Black et al., 2015; UNESCO, 2015; Britto, Lye et al., 2017; Norell, Janoch et al., 2017). Providing comprehensive services for all children avoids commonplace problems with unequal access to programs and unequal levels of quality. It also achieves cost economies, allows children from diverse backgrounds to interact, and reinforces and incentivizes parents and other caregivers to access multiple health, educational, and social services (Britto, Lye et al., 2017; Costello, Peterson et al., 2018).

Figure 2: ECCE Programs and services



5. Reframing the ECCE system

The impetus to take action in ECCE systems planning can come from higher levels of government, middle levels, or lower levels. It may come from within the national political context, a regional model within a country, or from the international context. It may come from outside of government or the political system altogether, such as from the children’s advocacy community, concerned citizens, or scholars within the higher education community. The push may very well have been building for some time from multiple points in multiple contexts within the broad systems architecture of ECCE. But once a determination has been made to pursue development of a comprehensive, integrated ECCE system, it is highly recommended to form a multisector SDC. At least at the beginning, an SDC may have formal or informal status, and may be appointed or composed of volunteers. The term “System Design Committee” is used here simply to denote its overall responsibility, but in practice its name will depend on who forms it and how it forms. Any term such as ECCE Planning Council or Steering Committee may be used. The term SDC is used here generically as a catch-all for the collection of individuals from different sectors who are appointed or agree to collaborate in developing a systemic approach to ECCE.

Regardless of how it is formed, the SDC should meet two minimum requirements. First, it is important to be a working group focused principally on the design of an integrated, multi-sectoral ECCE system. Second, it should represent key stakeholders across all relevant areas of ECCE such as early childhood healthcare, nutrition, childcare, child protection and family services, and education. While dozens of countries have policies that create such ECCE-related committees, they do not intrinsically bring a systems approach, are not usually vertically integrated, and their actual results vary significantly (Vargas-Barón, 2015).

To reframe the ECCE system, the SDC’s work is recommended to begin with three major steps:

1. Grounding in the resources and literature

Given that members of an SDC will represent expertise and viewpoints across ECCE areas of concern, one immediate step would be to form a common reference point within what is already known. Often, professionals settle into what can be referred to as routine expertise in their fields (Carbonell, Stalmeijer et al. 2014). System design requires more. SDC members must exercise a form of adaptive expertise that enables them to function at sophisticated levels in areas outside of their specialization and cultural context. Osaka University’s Nobuhide Swamura (2002, 2004) has adopted the telling phrase “local spirit, global knowledge” to capture the juxtaposition of retaining the character of a local context and culture in development, while taking advantage of the knowledge created in related efforts worldwide. The ECCE SDC’s core identity is local, but it must add to its identity the status of learning community based on global knowledge resources.

We recommend five documents that fill in background knowledge, furnish important resources, and foster informed inventory analysis and system development. The references to this System Prototype also should be consulted wherever possible.

- » **Investing Against Evidence:** The Global State of Early Childhood Care and Education (UNESCO, 2015b)—This fourteen-chapter overview of the status of and developments in ECCE across the world, summarizes the ECCE research base and policy rationale, provides a vision for a holistic multisector strategy, and seeks to motivate action based on the investment potential of ECCE.
- » **Holistic Early Childhood Development Index (HECDI) Framework:** A technical guide (UNESCO, 2014)—This document provides a framework for an index that can be used to comprehensively describe the status of young children across the world. It suggests indicators to track progress, inform policies, and guide practices in ECCE.
- » **A Toolkit for Measuring Early Childhood Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries** (Fernald, Prado et al., 2017) (World Bank)—Provides measurement resources for researchers, evaluators, and program administrators interested in assessing early childhood development for the purposes of planning and evaluating programs and services, monitoring development over time, or conducting situation analyses.
- » **Nurturing care: Promoting early childhood development** (Early Childhood Peace Consortium (Britto et al., 2017))— Describes a multisectoral ECCE approach via a series of intervention “packages” of programs and services for children and families at developmentally appropriate points in the early childhood age range.

- » **Stepping up early childhood development:** investing in young children for high returns. Identifies 25 key interventions from a multisector perspective (World Bank, 2014) – Recommends 25 interventions grouped into five age-based integrated packages for an enhanced ECCE service delivery strategy. A set of guiding principles for their implementation is offered.

2. Inventory analysis and diagnosis

The second major step of the SDC is to carry out an inventory of all existing ECCE programs and services, whether they are sponsored by government, non-governmental organizations, or private entities. ECCE services have been categorized in various ways in the literature. This inventory adopts with modification the five categories appearing in (Britto, Lye et al. 2017): (1) **health**, (2) **nutrition**, (3) **education**, (4) **child protection**, and (5) **social protection**. It adds and treats as separate categories (6) **family services** and (7) **childcare services**, simply for the pragmatic reason of recognizing their importance and ensuring that they not be lost to broad terminology. It is also noted and recognized in this schema that the seven categories overlap and are classified differently by organizations.

While these are indeed “categories” of services, they are more commonly referred to as “sectors,” a terminology also used in this System Prototype, but with reservation. The term “sector” reflects the reality that these services have been historically provided in isolation from each other. For example, health services are typically provided a “healthcare sector” which is overseen by a Ministry of Health. Similarly, education services have been delivered by an “education sector” which is overseen by a Ministry of Education. The unfortunate and unintended effect of this history of segmentation is that governmental and provider institutions have rarely built collaborative ties and interactions among each other vertically and across sectoral boundaries. Policies, financing, and laws have been developed that cement that isolation in the form of stratification and silos.

This is precisely what a “multisector” approach seeks to overcome. Incidentally, it should also be noted that while these are indeed categories of services and sectors of service provision, they are first and foremost areas of need of children. It is in all three senses of this terminology that the SDC will conduct an inventory. Finally, the inventory process will not just identify the services or programs themselves but will also identify the institutional actors, policies, laws, and financing arrangements that may need to change if Member States are to achieve a true ECCE system.

This inventory analysis and diagnosis process is detailed in the following section, but one of its key features is that SDC members contribute to inventories outside of their own specialization. The inventories consist largely of probes specific to domains that underpin ECCE. The overall process is similar to that involved in the GEQAF (UNESCO-IBE, 2012). The probes should take place with individuals who bring detailed knowledge about the area, but also individuals from outside, to create broader range of perspective, more

fluid connections between areas, and greater mutual understandings.

3. Formulating a system strategy for planning

After its grounding in the literature and after an in-depth analysis of the full scope of ECCE efforts and their context, the SDC should develop a strategic framework for the design of the ECCE system. The strategic framework has four locally formulated components:

- » A. vision of quality early childhood care and education for all that reflects national culture, context, and values;
- » B. the overall goals and objectives for the ECCE system,
- » C. a set of design principles, including the constraints under which the system can function;
- » D. a process for indicators and measures development and collection that will operationally serve the multisector collaborations and interdependencies while also furnishing information necessary to yield iterative design improvements.

6. ECCE service inventory: analysis and diagnosis

Helping MSs organize ECCE efforts fragmented across seven sectors—health, nutrition, education, child protection, social protection, family services, and childcare services—into a coherent system, in which each part brings greater value to the other parts, is the commission or brief of the System Design Committee. But this process must begin with the backbone of the SDC task which is an inventory of the current state of ECCE within country. The inventory process enables vigorous analysis and diagnosis of the overall state of early childhood care and education. It will focus on an inventory in six contexts or “domains” relevant to ECCE: its (1) programs and services, (2) institutional players, (3) policies, (4) laws and legal basis, (5) financing arrangements, and (6) national, regional, and local cultural considerations.

6.1 Core inventory probes that apply to each sector and domains

The questions that define the inventory generally differ for each sector and domain and are discussed in the section of this document exploring framework development, yet some questions cut across all, and constitute core questions that should preface each part of a more in-depth inventory.

It is useful to step back to understand the complexity of transitioning fragmented services to a planned and sustainable system. Each ECCE service is affected by each contextual domain. Each sector has de facto connections to other sectors, and each domain has connections to other domains. None of this is static – each is in change. The ECCE sectors and the contextual domains evolve and change daily, and each comprises countless details, programs, initiatives, and competing interests and priorities. The number of

interactions or connections is countless, as is the number of ways that individual efforts can be undermined or isolated.

A systems approach stressing interconnectivity and synergy does not address the myriad interactions individually, but rather structures connections to reduce or remove impediments in the overall ECCE and to enable mutual reinforcement of service providers. It creates opportunities for greater family-centered access ECCE, installs low overhead means to monitor indicators required to inform service providers and to regularize system assessment and improvement, and brings the knowledge and wisdom held by each sector's practitioners and policy-makers to bear in the other sectors.

The process necessarily involves each of the six domains as the embedded context in which services operate and are delivered. It will recommend both minor and more significant adjustments in each of the domains to facilitate higher-functioning and sustainable ECCE system connections. Thus, the process of design includes construction of new affordances as well as the dismantling of impediments for the ECCE services as well as for the context in which services are provided.

The system dexterity that the design committees must acquire will begin to emerge through the inventory process. The inventory process does not simply answer questions; it creates shared meanings, shared language, and new insights about how other parts of the whole enterprise operationalize commitment to early childhood care and education. The process of jointly creating the inventory is a design committee process that intrinsically builds and exercises the essential collaborative competences that are thematic to this System Prototype.

probes that apply to developing each framework

- » What is the current status of each context domain—such as institutional players, laws and policies, cultural considerations, etc.—within each sector of ECCE?
 - » What are the current unmet needs of children and how does that vary by characteristics of children and families?
 - » What indicators are collected in conjunction with large-scale efforts such as the Holistic Early Childhood Index (HECDI, UNESCO 2014)? What indicators or measures not currently collected are possible?
 - » What are the ways in which the contextual domains enable or hinder service sector efforts?
 - » What are the most promising ways that sector services can be coordinated with each other in ways to produce increased return?
-

plan and design

- » What new services will need to be added? Where can current services be adapted and redesigned to meet the program vision, goals, and design principles? Where might current services need to be expanded or broadened?
 - » How can services be integrated or packaged within and across sectors in ways that attend to family needs and preferences while achieving possible cost economies?
 - » How can services be delivered in alternative ways that encourages parents and children to enroll in other services thereby incentivizing comprehensive ECCE participation?
 - » How may services need to differ by region, or for different family needs and characteristics, or to appropriately reflect different cultural heritages within country?
 - » Do newly designed services meet the specified vision, goals and objectives, and design principals?
 - » How is service design or redesign integrating indicators and measures and monitoring and evaluation activities for the purpose of program improvement and accountability?
 - » Are services (newly designed or redesigned) commensurate with the cultural context and is the cultural context being built upon to increase the probability of successful implementation?
 - » What are the other impediments not otherwise noted that will impede the functioning of an integrated system of services? Where can obstacles be anticipated in implementation?
 - » To what extent is the program framework flexible to unanticipated needs and future directions and adaptable to regional or other localized needs?
-

7. Developing the systems strategy

System strategy development begins with the construction of a vision to guide the designed ECCE system. That vision is a statement of what the SDC hopes to achieve in its proposed ECCE system and will emphasize the goal of healthy children empowered to meet their full potential via the provision of a quality and accessible set of integrated ECCE services available to all children ages 0-8. Each SDC will seek to craft a vision that is uniquely applicable to its own MS cultural and country context. Toward this end, the vision statement will recognize recent developments within the political and social context of the country concerning the welfare of children and the social and economic development goals of the nation. It must seek to tap a national consensus while recognizing deficiencies within that environment and capitalizing on its strengths.

Next, a set design principles will need to be crafted to guide the overall design of the ECCE system. Here, many possible principles may be considered. Some basic examples include:

- » **Multisector Integration:** Services and programs—and especially the purposes they embody—must form an integrative whole that cross sectoral boundaries. This boundary crossing is vertical, across organizational layers; it is horizontal, between organizations; and it moves across government, private, and civic organizations.
- » **Continuous/Sustainable:** Services and programs must form a seamless continuation (sustained) of service delivery from prenatal maternal care and parental preparation to neonatal care to each year of the child’s life until age eight.
- » **Cost-effective/Resilience:** Services and programs must be articulated in such a way as to avoid duplication and exploit opportunities for cost savings and reinforce parent and child choices to participate in all facets of the system.

- » **Culturally Appropriate:** Services and programs must be aligned with societal values and the national or regional cultural context.
- » **Continuous improvement and Accountability:** Services and programs must be designed in concert with a system for evaluation and monitoring for the purpose of program improvement and accountability.

The end product of the SDC's work will be a recommended set of five designed frameworks that organize the ECCE services so that they are more interconnected and integrative in providing holistic and accessible care to all children. These designed frameworks are derived from what was previously called domains in the inventory process. The frameworks are, in essence, designed domains and as such are detailed models to guide development and implementation of the new ECCE system.

The **program** framework, which outlines the proposed comprehensive set of services, is the centerpiece of these designed frameworks. It will require most of the design attention of the SDC. Yet other frameworks will need to be designed to create a supportive context for these services—to enable the effectiveness of the program framework. The **institutional** framework identifies the organizational stakeholders in the design and provision of ECCE services and specifies their role and the scope of their authority. The **legal** framework involves the laws, rules, and regulations for the ECCE system and delineates the rights, protections, and entitlements of citizens in regard to ECCE services. The **policy** framework involves defining general instructions or societal expectations with which SDC efforts must comply and which enable or constrain ECCE efforts. The **financial** framework involves the source and flow of fiscal resources that enable ECCE services to operate. Finally, two other frameworks play important supporting roles: The **cultural context** unique to each country shapes all of the frameworks and their interactions, and the **evaluation and monitoring** framework supports ongoing participation tracking, service improvement, and system accountability.

It is recognized that what are conceived in this document as separate design frameworks, in working reality, depict parts of a highly interactive and enmeshed facets of the actual systems architecture or, more properly, systems-to-be. While creating these frameworks, SDCs will necessarily need to recognize the inherent ambiguity of the systems design process; will need to develop frameworks stepwise and in tandem; may need to make temporary accommodations for practical planning purposes; and will need to iteratively design, revise, and refine them to accord with each other and to ensure no area of concern is left unaddressed.

benchmark

- » What benchmarks exist internationally for ECCE goals, vision, and design principles that may be useful in program design within country?
 - » What definitions and measures of quality in service content and delivery are available internationally and within country that can be benchmarked?
 - » Are there services available internationally and within country that are exemplary and can be used as models for the creation and design of new services or for the revision of existing services?
 - » In which sectors and for what age ranges are services best developed and where is coverage of children highest? What lessons can be learned from these cases for what is possible within country?
-

describe

- » What are all the relevant governmental policies (national and regional) that affect ECCE? What sectors do they affect? Do they affect service planning, access, financing, and/or delivery? Do they affect children and families or organizations or other entities? Which subgroups within those categories are addressed or ignored?
-

8. Institutional framework

The institutional framework identifies the organizations involved in the design and provision of ECCE services and specifies their role and the scope of their authority. The multilevel, multisector nature of effective ECCE systems becomes evident in creating the institutional framework. In fact, the institutional framework describes that distributed system of actors—what organizations (governmental and nongovernmental) are part of that system, what their function is, and how they relate to each other in ensuring integration and continuity of services in the operations of the functioning ECCE system.

The organizations that are part of the institutional framework will vary across MSs and should include all organizations that play a part in designing, operating, regulating and overseeing, and supporting the ECCE system. This will include major ministries, bureaus, or departments of government—there may be multiple relevant parts thereof—in healthcare, family and social services, and education. Although these may be the central players, there are other relevant governmental organizations such as those charged with disaster and refugee issues, justice and legal matters, nutrition, housing, environmental safety, statistics and accountability, budgeting, and taxation and regulation that should be included as ECCE may be relevant to one or more of their secondary missions. For countries who have decentralized governmental systems, regional and municipal governmental institutions will need to be included in a similar fashion.

Outside of government, advocacy organizations, NGOs, community-based organizations, international organizations, private or public foundations, professional membership groups, labor unions, international relief organizations, religious, and civic institutions also hold a stake in the charting a MS's institutional profile. Academic institutions that train education, healthcare, other professionals who are a part of the ECCE system, and conduct research relevant to ECCE, will also need to be represented. Major players in the private, for profit sector should be included when relevant to the MS's ECCE context.

The roles and legal authorities of these organizations will need to be revised or rescoped in accordance with the program framework. Incentives to work together will need to be put in place and obstacles to collaboration removed. For organizations listed in the framework, particularly governmental ones, this implies considerable redirection of resources (available staff and budget) and considerable intensive work and collaboration across various organizational levels. It is not likely that these organizations have previously put in place strong mechanisms for coordination and communication among each other. Strong mechanisms will likely require new organizational policies, procedures and routines, task forces and committees, and perhaps some restructuring.

The greatest challenge of the institutional framework is often in the inherent difficulties in genuine coordination and synergistic cooperation. Thus, the institutional framework cannot assume that such coordination and cooperation is easily performed or will come about through mere mandate. The framework must acknowledge these difficulties and design incentives for coordination and cooperation into the framework itself.

8.1 Institutional framework probes

describe

- » Who are the organizational players relevant to ECCE—including traditional government organizations, supporting organizations, providers of services, or other stakeholder organizations—whether public, nonprofit, or private?
-

assess

- » Have all appropriate organizations been included across and within each ECCE sector? Have regional and municipal government organizations been included? Have all appropriate non-profit organizations, international organizations, and private firms been included? Are there plans to validate this list of players with key experts and the stakeholders themselves?
 - » Which of these organizations are currently involved, are involved tangentially but whose role may need to change, or are new to ECCE? How might their needs differ?
 - » Which organizations are key to the success of the design of the system and must be involved in decision-making and which are interested parties who need to be consulted but not necessarily involved in design?
 - » Which organizations are key to the success of the implementation of the system and must be involved in decision-making and which are interested parties who need to be consulted but not necessarily involved in implementation?
 - » Are organizational players currently capable of carrying out new or enhanced responsibilities? What organizational capacities will need to be enhanced and who will undertake that capacity development? Do organizations have access to sufficient pools of skilled human resources to carry out the designed ECCE program?
 - » What other (non-organizational) stakeholders groups (e.g., parents, professionals, researchers) should be involved in design and implementation and how will their views be represented?
 - » What individual players, roles, and role positions are crucial in delivering support within stakeholder organizations and within country? How will they be incentivized to participate?
-

benchmark

- » What approaches for involving stakeholders exist within country or internationally that can be used as models?
 - » What current inter-organizational arrangements/strengths within country or internationally seem to be successful and can be used as models? What arrangements seem to be not advisable in this context?
-

plan and design

- » What roles will each of the organizational players play? Are roles and responsibilities clear and well-defined?
 - » Do players currently have authority to undertake their new responsibilities? Will changes (e.g., legal, policy, organizational) need to be made to provide necessary authority?
 - » Are players currently capable of carrying out new or enhanced responsibilities? What new or revised operating/business practices will players be expected to adopt? What organizational capacities will need to be enhanced and who will undertake that capacity development? Do these organizations have access to sufficient pools of skilled human resources to carry out the designed ECCE program?
 - » What new partnering arrangements, organizational structures, inter-organizational agreements, coordinating bodies, or connections/ties must be established across and within these players to ensure integration of services, proper coordination, and adequate communication? What existing strengths or preexisting models can be built upon?
 - » How will oversight/regulation/accountability be achieved for involved organizations?
 - » Where is institutional conflict and friction (e.g. principal-agent problems) likely to develop as a result of changed responsibilities and resources? Where are obstacles likely to be encountered?
 - » Is this framework consistent with the contents of the other frameworks?
-

9. Legal framework

The legal framework contains a description of the legal basis (laws, rules, and regulations) for the ECCE system and, often, delineates rights, protections, and entitlements of citizens in regard to ECCE services. The legal framework mirrors, yet enables, all other frameworks described herein and provides the legal justification necessary for the operation of the ECCE system. This likely necessitates changes to a country's existing system of laws and regulations and it may also require changes to how lawmakers divide up and originate their work within legislative bodies. Historical situations, special populations, national and regional priorities and values, and cultural traditions will require review and consideration.

The legal framework must recognize that law is a layered phenomenon that includes international, national (constitutional and other), regional, and local/municipal jurisdictions. Particular laws may lie within a single ECCE service sector, may transcend ECCE sectors, or may lie outside of the ECCE sectors entirely. Law enables governmental authority and restricts and regulates its use. It sets rewards and sanctions and may frame bureaucratic rulemaking and policy development authority. In short, MSs will need to take a wide angle view when examining relevant law.

As in the case with the other frameworks, to construct the legal framework, a review and inventory of existing laws will be necessary as well as the construction of a broad outline of legislative actions to bring the designed ECCE system into fruition. Also like other frameworks this will necessitate reviewing the laws, regulations, and rules in obvious sectoral areas—health, nutrition, education, child protection, social protection, family services, and childcare services—but also in other areas, such as those outlined in the policy framework. The policy and legal frameworks will thus need to be developed iteratively.

In seeking to bring the MS into alignment with international consensus, a legal framework may draw from international law, conventions, treaties, and agreements of cooperation with international organizations. There are many such agreements that can be used as a basis and justification for MSs' constructed ECCE laws

such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), the Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation (2010), the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action [Education 2030] (2016) to name but a few. Beware some of these agreements are conventions and resolutions of joint purpose and do not themselves have the power of international law. However, they may have moral authority, whether legally binding or not, and can be used as models or sources of inspiration.

In member states with decentralized, shared or regional governance systems, laws and regulations must be consistent across these levels which may require honoring autonomy and differences across these levels. This may be viewed as a challenge or as an opportunity to combine different perspectives and approaches. And, notwithstanding its tradition toward centralization or decentralization, the legal apparatus can ill-afford inconsistency around the rights of young children. Finally, it should be noted that the legal framework is created to guide legislative bodies in revising existing laws or passing new ones. As a framework, its purpose is to outline and guide the necessary course of legal work.

9.1 Legal framework probes

describe

- » What are all the relevant laws, rules, and regulations (national and regional) that affect ECCE? What sectors do they affect? Do they affect service planning, access, financing, and/or delivery? Do they affect children and families or organizations or other entities? Which subgroups within those categories are addressed or ignored?
 - » To what degree do national laws explicitly afford legal rights and legal protections to children? Is ECCE specifically called out as a legal right of children and families?
-

assess

- » In what ways are the existing laws facilitating or impeding the provision of quality ECCE to all children? Where are the gaps in law?
 - » Where are legal protections for children insufficient and where and how must they be strengthened? Do certain groups require (additional) special protection in the law?
 - » Where are laws in conflict with each other and need to be changed?
 - » Where are laws (in areas not directly relevant to ECCE) creating negative, unintended consequences for ECCE service provision and access and for the construction of an integrated system?
 - » Where and in what ways have existing laws failed or failed to be enforced? What lessons can be learned for the construction of new laws and provisions for their enforcement?
-

benchmark

- » Are there existing laws within country that can serve as models for the writing of new law?
 - » Where are impediments and obstacles to change in law likely to be encountered?
 - » How can international agreements be enacted into national law in a way that accords with country priorities and historical practices?
-

plan and design

- » What new laws, regulations, and rules must be passed or established and which existing laws must be revised or repealed?
 - » What would a model national law or laws for ECCE contain? Construct a model law. What legal rights and protections will it ensure for all children? What specific groups of children and families may need special protections? What appeals processes may be needed? How will these protections be enforced in provision of law?
 - » How are cultural traditions and historical precedents honored within any new or revised laws?
 - » To what extent is the legal framework flexible to unanticipated needs and directions and adaptable to regional or other localized needs?
 - » What accountability checks are needed in law? To what degree are monitoring and evaluation practices codified in law?
 - » Is this framework consistent with the contents of the other frameworks (in particular, the policy framework)?
-

10. Policy framework

The policy framework provides a strong statement of intention and vision for ECCE as a basis for public understanding, consensus, and national action. It will contain a coherent set of interrelated, integrated policies that provide guidance to the content and scope of the ECCE program, its financing and sources of financing, its governmental and nongovernmental players, its standards of quality and accountability practices, and any necessary legislative requirements. In its most basic form, it should reflect a national commitment to bring about or advance ECCE for all children. In practical terms, it outlines the what, when, why, where, how, how much, for whom, and by whom of the ECCE system. The policy framework should draw heavily from the SDC's vision for the ECCE system and objectives and goals, and should outline the broad means to reach those goals.

The inventory and analysis of existing policies is necessary to make recommendations for their alteration in service of a systems approach to ECCE. All countries have existing policies relevant to ECCE—usually myriad policies—although they may be disconnected, not identified as such or identified as something else, conflicting, or implicit and unstated. These policies may come under one or more of the multisector labels (i.e., health, nutrition, education, child protection, and social protection) but they may fall in the domain of tax and revenue policy, accountability, licensing and credentialing practices, housing, income transfers, environmental safety, disaster relief, etc. They may be embodied in legislation, in the nature and scope of existing governmental programs and practices, and in ministerial budgets. It should be kept in mind that no policy at all concerning ECCE per se, is in fact, a de facto policy, albeit not one conducive to advancement.

The policy framework can be used to identify and analyze where changes to the existing practices are needed, what specific extant policies are relevant and may need to be altered, what governmental organizational structures may need to be changed, and how budgets need to be enhanced or redeployed. Some of these changes

are potentially formidable to some stakeholders because of their implications for the redistribution of organizational resources and power.

The SDC's work involves inventorying the relevant policies and determining what needs to change. The end product that the SDC will seek to create is a coherent statement of MS's ECCE policies based on the SDC's vision and goals and objectives and a set of proposed changes or deletions to the extant array of policies. As such it will reflect a nation's cultural practices and priorities, its historical path, its values, and its ways of addressing national policy problems and bringing about change. To be effective and compelling, the policy framework will need to relate the ECCE policy to the country's overall economic and social development strategy. A functioning ECCE system is based upon a strong statement of national intention. A coherent set of integrated policies operationalizing that intention is the policy framework.

10.1 Policy framework probes

describe

- » Who are the organizational players relevant to ECCE—including traditional government organizations, supporting organizations, providers of services, or other stakeholder organizations—whether public, nonprofit, or private?
-

assess

- » In what ways do existing policies conflict with one another? In what ways do they facilitate or impede the construction of an integrated ECCE system?
 - » Have relevant policies in all relevant other areas such as tax and revenue, regulatory, finance, and accountability been reviewed to ensure consistency?
 - » Where are the gaps in policy coverage? How will policies need to be added to, changed, or removed from operation?
 - » Where are current areas of policy strength and weakness? What are some of the common weaknesses that need to be avoided in the construction of new policies? Where specifically has existing policy failed children and families and specifically which children and families have been under recognized and underserved by policy?
 - » How are these policies implemented and by whom? Do they provide mechanisms to ensure implementation/are they enforced?
 - » Are there existing policies about government policymaking and change or about personal information that curtail and constrain the processes by which ECCE policy can be changed?
-

benchmark

- » Are there existing policies within country or internationally that can serve as models for policy development?
 - » Where are impediments and obstacles to policy change likely to be encountered?
-

plan and design

- » What would an ideal overall national policy (i.e., a framework policy) for ECCE look like? Construct a new framework policy(ies).
 - » How does the constructed ECCE policy or policies articulate with and support the country's economic and social development policies in general?
 - » What processes will be used to overhaul existing policies in order to bring them into alignment with the constructed ECCE policies? How will conflicting policies be repealed?
 - » Where will buy-in from key stakeholders be needed and by what process will it be obtained?
 - » How will the public be informed and participate in shaping the constructed ECCE policy framework?
 - » To what extent is the policy framework flexible to unanticipated needs and directions and adaptable to regional or other localized needs? Will policies need to differ by region or reflect cultural heritages?
 - » To what degree does the policy framework place priority on data collection, measurement, and evaluation?
 - » Is this framework consistent with the contents of the other frameworks?
-

11. Program framework

The ECCE program framework outlines the scope, purpose, content, and design of the services embodied in a coherent and multisector ECCE system. The framework effectively defines what will be provided and the manner it will be provided to whom. It demonstrates how the ECCE services constitute a comprehensive, integrated, and continuous whole from parental preparation through primary school. Children age 0-8 have interdependent needs—their family bonds, nutrition, daily health, education, and early cognitive stimulation needs are essentially one integrated, undifferentiated need. The SDC's overall aim is to develop a system that ensures that as young children begin to develop, all these needs are addressed in concert and on a continuous, regular basis. The program framework must yield a system that has the capacity to achieve that goal and address that synthetic need.

Ultimately, it can be expected that the designed ECCE system will be more efficient and effective because multiple needs are targeted and addressed simultaneously (i.e., integration). Resiliency of the system is embodied if the services catalyze behavioral changes on the part of key stakeholders such as parents, caregivers, and children and incentivize further participation in the system.

The programmatic framework is the centerpiece or keystone of an effectively designed system of ECCE. Its main goal is to transcend the fragmentation of services that is a historical result of the way in which services and programs came into being across a host of ministerial missions and areas of authority. The SDC will need to draw heavily from its vision statement, goals and objectives, and design principals in conducting its work and it will need to use those documents as touchstones in determining when existing services can be revised or repurposed.

What services are commonly considered part of a robust ECCE system? Integrated services depend on the age of the child and include the following.

Before and After Birth: Early childhood care and education begins with maternal health, parenting education, and medically attended delivery. Services in this time period typically include proper maternal nutrition (and micronutrients), regular prenatal checkups and monitoring of mother and fetus, and other areas of the mental and physical health of prospective mothers. Parenting training and preparation services may be available at this time and continue into the child's early years. Nurturing parenting practices are critical for early child development and may be learned in the family and community contexts supplemented by professionally trained counselors (Engle et al., 2011). Britto and Lye et al. (2017) defines these services as “interventions...aimed at improving parenting interactions, behaviours, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and practices” (p.94). At this point, parents may be made aware of the comprehensive ECCE services available to them and their child and the benefits and responsibilities they have in this respect. Proper medical attendance and care at the time of birth, assistance with establishing breastfeeding practices, and official birth registration are essential requirements during this phase. Birthing centers and hospitals can serve as logical points of access to parents and children for health, nutrition, education, child protection, and social protection services.

From Birth to Preschool: Neonatal health, continuing care for mothers, and access to healthcare for newborns and young children includes regular check-ups and home visits, the monitoring of physical and mental development (including screening for physical and learning disabilities), and a regular regime of vaccination to prevent childhood diseases. In addition to health services, in this phase supportive environments for parents may be needed which may include parental leave, parent co-ops, and play group opportunities. Adequate childcare, child minding, and daycare and, later, preschool including opportunities for early physical development, recreation, play, social interaction with other children, and cognitive stimulation is crucial to future life outcomes for the child. This is an sector of ECCE that is most often left to families and one common area where accessible ECCE services are often neglected.

Some countries have a well-developed infrastructure of community childcare centers. Others provide opportunities through multiple, dispersed mechanisms. In either case, ensuring and facilitating access to childcare and preschool, in a way that respects societal values, are crucial to the child's early development and will directly affect that child's future development in primary school. Childcare centers and preschools can serve as important points of access to children in delivering health, nutrition, education, child protection, and social protection services.

Preschool to Primary School: Young children's learning is sustained through interaction with the physical and social worlds. Recreation, game playing, and physical exercise are paramount to motor skill development and physical health. Children's interaction with other children and adults helps them to develop social skills, empathy, respect for others, and language. In preschool and primary school, children begin to grasp basic concepts such as counting, quantity, basic arithmetic and early mathematics, arts, natural science, and language development such as oral comprehension and expression, reading and reading

comprehension, writing, spelling, and second-languages. During this phase, additional afterschool care and programs, in-school nutrition supplementation, and continued health care monitoring and vaccination are required. Schools can serve as logical points of access for integrated health, nutrition, education, child protection, and social protection services.

Parenting programmes: Parenting programmes may cover a wide range of topics, from care to education, and from health to nutrition, including nurturing practices and elements of protection, enabling parents to tackle the problems and co-operate in removing the obstacles to a holistic development of children. Parenting programmes might be provided in preschools, health centers, family centers, community centers or other institutions. Parenting programmes are not only for parents, as citizens, community, families might act as facilitators for parents if they are involved, at different level, in the provision of ECCE.

Child Protection: This sector is usually scattered in different ministries and institutions, but the outcomes of it is a general protection of children from different point of view: legal, social and emotional. A fundamental concept to bear in mind is that the basic condition for a correct development and an effective education is a status of general, psychological wellness of child. This set of programmes is aimed at giving each and every child the basic condition for the best development possible. These programmes, which cover the entire spectrum of childhood, from birth to 8 years of age, aim at enforcing the respect of children's body and mind. Legal protection starts with registration at birth; other programmes entail protection for violence (both on children and women), legal support to children the parents of which are certified not being able to take care of, adoption processes. Banning of corporal punishment, in respect of CRC, is the baseline for legal protection. Social protection entails a wide range of actions, from banning of child labour; parenting programmes aimed at supporting the development of the child. Emotional development is rapidly growing in importance in this sector. It entails special care and therapies to children victims of violence or abuses as well as protection of children from trauma, violence, abuses that might harm their cognitive, physical, socio-emotional development¹.

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (including children with HIV-AIDS): This group include children affected by HIV and AIDS and other children living in vulnerable condition and without decent care and support. This programme should provide this children with better living conditions, special therapies and education for overcome their conditions or live a decent life². The programme includes therapies (both physical and psychological), education, parent programmes, nursing care and specific vaccination³.

1 Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group, *Measuring Violence against Children: Inventory and assessment of quantitative studies* (2014), Division of Data, Research and Policy, UNICEF, New York.

2 Guidance Document. *Developing and Operationalizing a National Monitoring and Evaluation System for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS*. UNICEF Working Paper.

https://www.unicef.org/aids/files/OVC_MandE_Guidance_FINAL_v3.pdf

3 UNICEF (2017). *Children and AIDS. Statistical Update*.

<https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/HIVAIDS-Statistical-Update-2017.pdf>

Child registration at birth: this programme is aimed at detecting, stopping and preventing child labour in work spaces, communities situations and at home. Guidelines on child labour prevention and detection should be issued, accompanied laws restricting abuses. The guidelines should produce guidance on actions of control of workplaces via:

- » Labour inspectors,
- » Sensitization of employers and workers,
- » Presence of Social workers,
- » Presence and formal recognition of NGOs.

The same control actions should be extended to schools and services through school inspectors, parents groups, presence and formal recognition of NGOs. Assessment of communities through community councils, women's groups, Youths groups, NGOs enlarge the action of this programme to the whole community.

In order for the Country to be able to develop these actions, human and financial resources should be in place, and management infrastructure (and capacities), including a skilled child protection workforce across all relevant sectors, able to respond and deliver services.

Throughout these phases, from age zero to eight, a strong ECCE system ensures child rights and social protections. Child protection services begin with protection from domestic violence (both children and women), the banning of child labor; as well special social and emotional programming for children who are victims of violence, abuse, or structural and civil dislocation due to civil strife and natural disaster. Protection service needs can be identified and implemented through variety of points of care, such as childcare, community health centers and hospitals, pre-primary schools, primary schools, and other local governmental offices. Social protections involve detecting and addressing special needs that a child may have due to physical and learning disabilities, mental health challenges, or due to systemic poverty. Families in poverty with children may require food services, public housing, and other cash transfers to ensure basic care, clothing, and other material needs.

11.1 Program framework probes

describe

- » What current ECCE services available, to whom, and under what conditions?
 - » What is the cost of providing current services and how is it paid?
 - » What are the gaps in service or where (and in what ways) are services deficient in availability?
 - » Are these services integrated across and within sectors?
 - » Are services segregated by income level or ethnic heritage or disability status or are children grouped heterogeneously?
-

assess access

- » Are all children being served equally? Where are the gaps? Where or in what ways are children not being reached or covered by services?
 - » Is the full range of ages, 0-8, continuously covered?
 - » Are children of all ethnic heritages, races, religions, or linguistic backgrounds equally covered?
 - » Are all regions and localities within country served?
 - » Are girls able to access the same services consistently and without difficulty as boys?
 - » Do children with disabilities have equal access to services and are accommodations available when needed?
 - » Are rich and poor children served equally?
 - » What children/families are currently not able access (some) services?
 - » How does access differ by child and family background characteristics? Where are the gaps?
-

analyse quality

- » How is quality defined and measured in context within each ECCE service sector (both for content and delivery of services)? Do such current definitions exist and is information available on quality levels?
- » How do current definitions and measures of quality need to change and be improved upon? What quality standards need to be put in place or raised and how?
- » Given above quality probes, what is the overall quality level of current services?
- » How does quality of service vary within and across ECCE sectors?
- » What specific services are deficient in quality and in what ways are they deficient?
- » Does quality of services differ by background or other characteristics of the child or family?
- » Where and in what ways are the current collection of ECCE services meeting or failing to meet the vision and goals constructed by the SDC?
- » Where and in what ways are specific ECCE services meeting or failing to meet the design principles and criteria developed by the SDC?

benchmark

- » What benchmarks exist internationally for ECCE goals, vision, and design principles that may be useful in program design within country?
 - » What definitions and measures of quality in service content and delivery are available internationally and within country that can be benchmarked?
 - » Are there services available internationally and within country that are exemplary and can be used as models for the creation and design of new services or for the revision of existing services?
 - » In which sectors and for what age ranges are services best developed and where is coverage of children highest? What lessons can be learned from these cases for what is possible within country?
-

plan and design

- » What new services will need to be added? Where can current services be adapted and redesigned to meet the program vision, goals, and design principles? Where might current services need to be expanded or broadened?
 - » How can services be integrated or packaged within and across sectors in ways that attend to family needs and preferences while achieving possible cost economies?
 - » How can services be delivered in alternative ways that encourages parents and children to enroll in other services thereby incentivizing comprehensive ECCE participation?
 - » How may services need to differ by region, or for different family needs and characteristics, or to appropriately reflect different cultural heritages within country?
-

12. Financial framework

The financial framework assesses the scope of financing that will be required and identifies from where and how those funds will come. This may include national and regional government budgets, new sources of public revenue, private and nongovernmental sources, debt relief, and international funding agents. The framework should discuss how these sources of financing are predictable, sustainable, and affordable.

Finances may be considered the greatest obstacle to the enactment of national ECCE systems but it is often the fragmentation of authority across disparate actors and programmatic fragmentation that poses even larger challenges. If these are overcome, cost savings will result and revenue sources can be redirected. Thus, the system of financing must recognize societal direct and indirect cost savings and budgetary economies that will occur as a result of a sustained and resilient ECCE system. These resources can be computed as a percentage of a country's GDP to gain a sense of a country's operational fiscal commitment to ECCE and to benchmark that commitment with comparable countries. International benchmarks developed by ECCE experts suggest at least one percent of GDP be expended for pre-primary education and 0.5 percent for child and maternal health and care, as the minimum required to ensure sustainability, equity, and quality services. These may or may not be relevant to the needs and situations faced by particular member states but the overall level of commitment of societal resources is a question worth considering.

In creating the financial framework, a number of financial analyses will need to be conducted. First, the overall, current expenditure by source of funds on ECCE must be examined. This will require examining expenditures in national budgets, in regional or municipal governments, and for nonprofit and private sector entities. Second, the cost of the proposed ECCE program of services will need to be estimated. Third, financial analyses will need to be conducted that will examine possible areas of cost off-sets as a result of savings, increases in revenues in the future as a result of ECCE enactment, and new sources of possible revenue/financing—such as through NGOs,

international organizations, country aid, and possible debt relief. These analyses can be conducted in a number of ways germane to the budgetary practices of individual MSs, however, sound financial planning will be needed to undergird the sustainability of the ECCE system and to understand practical financial impediments.

The financial framework should also consider the allocation of resources on various components of the ECCE system. The analysis of current expenditures can serve as a baseline for the current allocation but it is likely that reallocation across ECCE functions will be needed for system enactment.

The financial framework has the power to make real the ECCE system proposed under the program framework. Without sound financial planning and options, the program framework cannot be realized. The framework may lay out various options and scenarios given financial forecasts and projections for the consideration of policymakers. It should be kept in mind that the framework is a proposed allocation of societal's resources that contains analyses to back up that proposal. To influence legislators in the actual allocation of government resources, the framework may also address how ECCE is to serve as an important strategy in the country's overall economic and social development plans.

12.1 financial framework probes

describe

- » How can current expenditures be identified across traditional budgetary lines and organizations to get a full and accurate picture of the cost to society of the current state of ECCE services or lack thereof?
 - » Specifically, what resources are currently expended by government (all levels) for what specific forms of ECCE services? What forms of international aid or financing are currently being utilized? What is the financial contribution of employers to ECCE in terms of employee benefits and in what ECCE capacity? In what other forms are private firms contributing? How are non-profit (and charitable) organizations contributing to ECCE? Estimate the sum total in financial value of current ECCE expenditures by ECCE sector.
-

assess

- » What share of the fiscal estimate is malleable or available to be redirected toward new priorities?
 - » What additional sources of financing might become available or made available for ECCE? Where might those be found?
 - » Can cost savings be realistically expected by providing multiple services around specific points of entry to the ECCE system? What resources might these savings free up for new priorities?
 - » What is the estimated cost of the proposed (constructed) new ECCE system? What shortfall exists and how might that be covered?
-

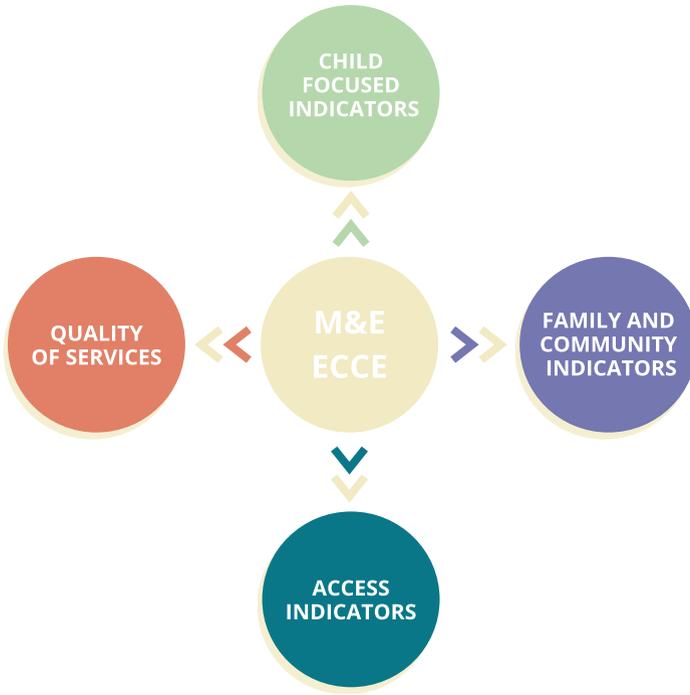
benchmark

- » How does within country current expenditures for ECCE compare with similar countries as a proportion of GDP?
 - » What exemplary financing approaches can be identified within country or internationally that can be used as models to be adapted or expanded?
-

plan and design

- » How can a reliable source or system of financing—that may make use of multiple revenue streams and forms of cost control—be developed that can provide a stable financial foundation for the ECCE system? Describe how that model system might work. How does that model work within (or how can it make use of) the larger economic and social development strategies/plans/goals of the country?
 - » Does the model financial system promote and reward organizational behavior that reinforces integration and organizational synergies in the provision of services across sectors?
 - » How can financing be used as a leverage for sustained and comprehensive participation for individuals served by the ECCE system?
 - » Are adequate support resources in place to build a stable financial system for ECCE? What data are currently collected about financing and how must these sources be augmented? What information systems must be put in place to adequately manage resources, expenditures, and costs? What other resources will be necessary to conduct the requisite financial projections and analyses? How can those resources be put in place? How can a solid financial system breed trust and ensure accountability?
 - » To what extent is this framework flexible to unanticipated needs and directions and adaptable to regional or other localized needs?
 - » Does the framework make financial provision of resources for data collection, monitoring, and evaluation?
 - » Is this framework consistent with the contents of the other frameworks?
-

Figure 3: Monitoring and Evaluation system for ECCE



13. Monitoring and evaluation framework

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework describe the plan for how data will be systematically gathered, analyzed, and interpreted in a way that serves the needs of accountability and program improvement. Monitoring can be defined as “the ongoing, systematic collection of information to assess progress towards the achievement of objectives, outcomes and impacts,” while evaluation is “the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results, with the aim to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability”. These two statements imply that the M&E framework should contain the outlines of a plan for how that will be carried out systematically, by what means, by whom, how frequently, and for what purposes (e.g., accountability, sustainability, service improvement, cost accounting etc.).

The framework should state an overall, integrated set of ECCE system objectives and goals in a measurable fashion. A set of core measures or indicators should be proposed to provide information to policymakers, the public, and service providers about what progress is being made and in what areas progress is not yet observable. One such conception, organized by various types and purposes of indicators, is shown in Figure 3.

There are a number of internationally recognized indicators germane to the ECCE enterprise and many others can be identified in benchmarking systems of countries with more advanced systems. One such resource developed by UNESCO is the HECDI. This index comprises a basket of indicators across ECCE spectrum. Its technical guide is included in the Annex, and it should be seriously considered as a number of advantageous accrue to adopting already tested, validated, and accepted indicators or indicator systems. In addition, the World Bank sponsored Toolkit for Measuring Early Childhood Development in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (Fernald, Prado et al., 2017) is an excellent compendium of resources. In short, a combination of standardized measures and measures unique to the design of the MS will be needed.

This will require that some form of an organized data system be developed that will allow stakeholders to determine the coverage of eligible participants (e.g., who is being left out?) over time and the degree of participation of individuals in specific ECCE system services so that program effects can be associated with participation rates. Key concepts, outputs, and outcomes will need to be defined in a way that supports valid and reliable measurement. The M&E plan need not go into detail in this respect but it should discuss these matters pointedly require establishing a timeline of regular reporting and discussion opportunities. Questions surrounding the use of research and evaluation-based information by program administrators and designers, users, and policymakers is not a new one. Ultimately, data-based and research-based knowledge must successfully compete with other sources of information in human decision making. A comprehensive review of this topic in the context of healthcare suggests that factors such as timing of the availability of findings, relevancy to problems encountered, and actual collaborations between researchers (or evaluators or other scholars) and policy makers or other decision makers increase use (Oliver, Innvar et al., 2014).

13.1 Monitoring and evaluation framework probes

describe

- » What is the current state of data collection, monitoring, and evaluation in areas related to ECCE as conducted by any entity (governmental or non-governmental) within country? What such activities are being undertaken, for what purposes, and how is the information being used, by whom? How do these practices differ across ECCE service sectors?
 - » Which of these projects within country or internationally may be readily useful for ECCE system design and planning?
 - » What current policies and laws are in place in terms of data collection and storage, monitoring and evaluation, and the use of such for program improvement, accountability, and decision-making?
 - » How are data collection, monitoring, and evaluation currently financed and how much is being spent?
-

assess

- » How can existing forms of data collection, monitoring, and evaluation practices be adapted or built upon for ECCE use? Where are these existing practices strong and weak? What gaps exist in current practice?
 - » What technical skills and capacities of designers, service providers, and other stakeholders need to be enhanced to ensure integrity of data collection and its use in program design and improvement? How will that capacity development be provided?
 - » Is there a logical organization or set of possible organizations within or outside government that can serve as the headquarters of the monitoring and evaluation activity or should that activity be distributed?
 - » Do (previously discussed) frameworks include an appropriate emphasis and level of detail about how monitoring and evaluation will be incorporated? Are ECCE system goals and objectives measurable and appropriate from the perspective of monitoring and evaluation?
-

benchmark

- » What exemplary approaches to monitoring and evaluation can be identified within country or internationally that can be used as models to be adapted or expanded?
 - » What existing sources of domestic or international indicators (e.g., HECDI) or standards for the development of such can be identified as models and built upon?
 - » What processes for designing and constructing a monitoring and evaluation activity exist within country or internationally that can be adapted and used as model?
-

plan and design

- » What major questions concerning the operation and implementation of an ECCE system would ideally be answered by a newly designed monitoring and evaluation activity?
 - » What are the major priorities in terms of the capability and function of the monitoring and evaluation activity? Do those include: ensuring laws and regulations are adhered to, the tracking of individual children's participation over time, child progress and outcome measures, assessment of the quality of services provided, assessment of service provider performance, assessment of equity goals, measures of progress in implementing the ECCE system country-wide, an assessment of whether objectives and milestones are being met, an assessment of overall outcomes useful for policymakers?
 - » How can the monitoring and evaluation activity promote continual ECCE program and service improvement and evidence-based management and decision-making? What steps can be taken in ECCE program design to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation activity is useful and used by managers, decision-makers, and policy-makers?
 - » What planning processes, policies, practices, and organizational arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that a high-quality monitoring and evaluation activity is designed and implemented?
 - » What safeguards need to be put in place to ensure confidentiality, individual privacy, data quality, and integrity?
 - » How should cultural values and differences inform data collection, monitoring, and evaluation approaches? How can monitoring and evaluation be used to ensure equity of access and outcomes?
 - » How can regular collaborative contact between program designers, service providers, decision makers, policy makers, evaluators, researchers, and other experts be established for the purpose of continual improvement of the monitoring and evaluation activity and the ECCE system as a whole?
 - » Is this framework consistent with the contents of the other frameworks?
-

14. Cultural context

All cultures value early childhood growth and wellbeing in their own way. Yet, as Investing Against the Evidence shows, what might be considered as a universal cultural norm turns out not to translate readily into practice or into effective care and education systems. Childhood care and education occupy significant priority and resolve in Nordic cultures, and have in both less affluent and more affluent eras. That priority and resolve, in turn, have yielded the kind of high-performance indicators discussed in the following section. Moreover, some countries with more modest national products commit substantial effort and resources to ECCE while more affluent countries do not.

In addition to financing, cultural traditions, value systems, and historical precedence play large roles in how countries design and enact ECCE systems (Britto and Engle, 2015), including the extent to which public and private entities are relied upon to fill the gap in services and the extent to which group needs versus individual choice and preferences are respected. All ECCE systems must guarantee a base level of services and an integrated, coordinated, and holistic approach for all children. It is clear from the trajectory of country policies and international consensus that that is indeed the trend. However, ECCE systems must be adaptable to cultural differences across and within countries and to differences within cultural subpopulations. How this prototype is made workable within each country is in large measure a cultural phenomenon.

More of an opportunity to reflect on societal values and routine ways of addressing problems than a “framework” itself, the cultural context gives recognition that there are multiple ways to put in place a sound ECCE system for all children. Culture plays a central role in shaping these differences, may preclude certain paths, but it does not preclude the possibility of success in ECCE system building—for all countries and in any specific MS.

With this in mind, the cultural context gives pause to consider societally held shared values about the political system and the ways in which societies distribute resources, cultural phenomena that shape

collective understanding of routes to success in individuals' lives, and regional and ethnic differences and viewpoints.

14.1 Cultural context probes

describe

- » What ethnic, racial, linguistic, regional, religious, cultural, or other subpopulations exist within country whose needs, values, and practices should be honored and recognized within the design and operation of the ECCE system? Construct a cultural context statement of these needs etc.
-

assess

- » What level of priority will diversity and equity of access and outcomes be given in ECCE system design and implementation/operation? How will that level of priority be enacted in the design process and incorporated into specific design features affecting children's experiences (e.g., heterogeneous grouping of children) and system policies and practices?
 - » What other special circumstances, traditions, and historical precedents need to be recognized and incorporated into the development of the ECCE system as a whole?
-

benchmark

- » What exemplary equity and cultural diversity practices can be identified within country or internationally that can be used as models to be adapted or replicated?
-

plan and design

- » How will alternative viewpoints be represented and heard in the ECCE system design and implementation process?
 - » How can cultural differences be seen as assets in the generation of societal consensus, system design, and implementation and as opportunities to ensure the effectiveness of that system? How can this approach be used in the construction of previously discussed frameworks and in ECCE system design?
 - » To what extent does the designed ECCE system honor adaptability to subpopulation, regional, or other localized needs?
 - » How will data collection, analysis, and evaluation processes be used to monitor equity and diversity goals and priorities?
 - » How can cultural values and differences be recognized within data collection, monitoring, and evaluation approaches?
 - » Is this context recognized in the contents of the other frameworks?
-

Annex: table of illustrative examples of common ECCE programs

Health

Nutrition

Education

Child protection

Social Protection

Childcare

Health

- » Prenatal/antenatal, neonatal, obstetric, postnatal physical and mental healthcare for women
- » Obstetric and neonatal care for challenging/at-risk pregnancies
- » Skilled attendance at childbirth
- » Birth registration
- » Healthcare home visits
- » Breastfeeding promotion, education, or support
- » Smoking cessation, drug and alcohol interventions for parents
- » Early bonding programs
- » Programs to prevent early pregnancy
- » Pediatric care for children
- » Mental health care for children
- » Medical care supplemental programs for children with disabilities
- » Childhood vaccination programs
- » Treatment of malnutrition in children
- » Deworming treatments
- » Hygiene and sanitation programs for prevention of disease transmission
- » Medical and mental health screening programs
- » Screening and intervention services for children with developmental delays or disabilities
- » Disease, prevention, reduction, and eradication programs

- » Healthcare promotion and awareness campaigns
- » Health education and preventive healthcare training for parents and children
- » Pregnancy prevention programs for young adults
- » Prevention of exposure to toxins such as lead, mercury, pesticides, and pollutants
- » Prevention of indoor and outdoor air pollution
- » Assistance with accessing health care services

Nutrition

- » Multiple nutrient and micronutrient supplementation during pregnancy
- » Multiple nutrient and micronutrient supplementation in children
- » Supplementary food support for children
- » Supplementary food support for pregnant women
- » Nutrition education and training programs for parents and children
- » Prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition

Education

- » Nursery school, preschool, kindergarten, early start programs
- » Early reading and language programs
- » Elementary school
- » Extended day programs
- » After-school and community-based education programs
- » Supplementary education programs for children with special needs
- » Supplementary education programs for disadvantaged children
- » Supplementary services for children with developmental delays or disabilities
- » Private or home-schooling programs

Child protection

- » Birth registration
- » Safe places services
- » Interventions to prevent child maltreatment
- » Family violence, abuse prevention, and intervention programs
- » Violence against women prevention and treatment programs and services
- » Children and women's legal aid protections and services
- » Child protective and abused child services
- » Foster care for displaced children
- » Adoption services
- » Child-labor prevention
- » Programs for institutionalized children
- » Medical and mental health services for abused children

Social protection

- » Conditional/unconditional cash and in-kind transfer programs
- » Supplemental income programs
- » Housing and shelter programs
- » Home heating and electricity supplementation programs
- » Migrant worker family programs
- » Immigrant/refugees services and programs
- » Displaced family services
- » Emergency management services
- » Mental health services for children
- » Services for children with disabilities/special needs
- » Clean drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation services
- » Environmental care and prevention of exposures to pollutants and toxins
- » Public safety programs for children

Childcare

- » Informal child minding, babysitting, or extended family childrearing
- » Childcare, daycare, or afterschool care centers and programs/services
- » Community, home, or neighborhood-based programs and groups for childcare
- » Parent co-ops
- » Play groups and recreation programs and services
- » Supplemental stimulation programs for early youth
- » Cultural or religious programs for young children

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