



## KwaZulu-Natal Early Childhood Development Community of Practice

### Meeting Notes

St Thomas Children's Home  
2 November 2017, 10.30 – 14.30

#### Welcome and background

The provincial ECD Community of Practice (ECD CoP) in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) is a BRIDGE convening that provides a platform in the province for ECD stakeholders to connect, share and collaborate. This was the fourth KZN ECD CoP meeting and it involved 19 diverse ECD stakeholders from NGOs, training organisations, government institutions, etc. The meeting included an update on the October National ECD CoP meeting and a follow-on discussion on ECD centre registration, as well as discussions on key sector developments.

Patsy Pillay of New Beginnings Training and Development is the KZN ECD CoP Champion and Facilitator. Patsy opened the meeting by welcoming new participants and noting the apologies. Using the icebreaker of sharing three things about yourself, delegates introduced their partners to the CoP. The facilitator provided an introduction to BRIDGE for the new delegates in the meeting.



#### Open Sharing Session: Showcasing working practice

Given that Dr Dumisa, from the Department of Education was present, the plenary requested his input on ECD. ECD has never had qualifications for practitioners prior to 1994, SAQA ensured that ECD practitioners did not get compromised when it created the first ECD qualifications. Dr Dumisa agreed to speak in his personal capacity.

The drive for ECD to be recognised has paid off, and this is evident in the development of numerous ECD policies. On a positive note, he mentioned that the salaries for the Grade R unqualified and under qualified Educators have been approved in principle this year. He noted that the feedback received on students who were given bursaries to study toward a Diploma and a teaching Degree was concerning due to a high drop rate and low pass rate. He highlighted his call years ago that matric was important to obtain a grade R teacher job, and noted that this is still valid to open up the paths to Higher Education. Some people thought that matric was equivalent to FETC: ECD, but Dr Dumisa said that this was not equivalent. There are many practitioners without matric and with L4 qualifications that still cannot get jobs. He further highlighted the point that it was positive that there was new ECD higher education qualification for those specialising in the 0-4 year age cohort, and asked if it can articulate with the formal qualifications e.g. B.Ed. Secondly, who will be the employer? where will the funding come from even if the responsibility is transferred to DBE, what of personnel in the Department? He also noted with concern that teachers specializing in Grade R were practicing in higher grades in school, for which they were not trained. Due to poverty issues, Grade R classes with children aged below statutory requirements were entering classes so that they can benefit from the schools programmes e.g. nutrition programmes, and parents can pay school fees which may be lower than private ECD sites.

**Questions for Dr Dumisa:** If the teachers are qualified, do they register with SACE or the DBE? What is the future guarantee of the Grade R qualification?

**Answers:** SACE is an educators' council, like the nursing council is to the nurses. Circular number 81 is being used, the minimum requirement to teach in Grade R is a Grade R diploma (L6). He noted that in some cases if there are posts available, they look for teachers that are closest to finishing the relevant studies. A degree in teaching is a preferred option. He further noted that in creating the career path for Grade R teachers, the Diploma was initiated, but highlighted the fact that some can get locked in as they cannot pursue further higher education qualifications due the limited credits.

Dr Dumisa shared that in April 2018 a recommendation is being tabled in the Department that the Diploma be removed and the Degree will be put in place as a requirement to teach Grade R. Patsy spoke to the new occupational qualifications in ECD (part L3 and L4). Questions were raised on articulation from the Occupational qualification to teach Grade R, and with higher education qualifications and which path do they follow in upward mobility?

Dr Dumisa also advised that there will be a provincial consultation in February 2018 on the new ECD higher education qualifications. The plenary also requested that BRIDGE take up the need for advocacy on the ECD occupational qualification. Dr Dumisa was thanked for his "on the spot sharing".

## Report back on October National ECD CoP Meeting

The report was presented using a slide presentation which highlighted the sessions held at the last National ED CoP meeting, including the Lego six brick, living and learning with barriers, Tools for Schools, Online PLAY programme and other sectoral development updates. The Meeting Highlights Report and presentations from the National ECD CoP meeting can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

The question of registration of NPO providers as PTY LTD companies was raised and the facilitator said this matter was being addressed by the national structures and we are awaiting feedback. Implications on the possible move of the 0-5 years from DSD to DBE was also discussed. Who do the 0-4 year's practitioners register with, SACSSP or SACE? The plenary recommended SACE as a way of professionalising the field. In this regard the members wanted BRIDGE to share more on this issue.

### Questions and issues raised:

- If there is limited ECD sites registered, where will the students go for practice teaching? The notes from the national meeting were referred to, regarding liaison with the ETDP SETA
- Who is responsible for the ECD practitioners?
- There is a budget allocated for ECD but when there is a deficit it is easily used to save the other departments. Who takes up this issue? A delegate noted that each department was given a budget for ECD. Action: CoP to investigate ECD budgets and what it is used for? How much is used in ECD?
- Dr Dumisa attending a meeting with UNISA, discussing social workers that will be working in the schools, what will happen when they open the door for internships? Will these people be in the class or will be given a space in the school, somewhere else, these matters need to be addressed?
- For the past 7 years there been no learnerships from ETDPSETA in KZN. Action: CoP to follow up given the thousands that need training
- Site registration – need more support.



## Presentation: DSD support for ECD Centre Registration

Rookshana Ganie from KZN Department of Social Development shared the steps that centres should follow to become registered (Refer to docs sent separately). Here are the general step and important considerations:

Steps:	Important considerations:
1. Registration is ward based	
2. Make an appointment with Social Worker for an application	Indicate that you are operating as a crèche and want to register as a crèche
3. Interview	Take note of 20point checklist requirements (refer to guideline document sent separately). Not in any order. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution: developmental issues, safety issues, objectives, aims daily planning</li> <li>• 4 weekly: menu must be drafted, include 1/3 nutritious meals</li> <li>• Include organogram (nothing fancy)</li> <li>• Copies of ID of all staff and their qualifications (include every staff member including driver, cleaner, gardener etc.)</li> <li>• Building plan (draw it if necessary)</li> <li>• Business plan</li> <li>• If you have registered before, then send in previous report</li> </ul>
4. Submit documents	Only once checklist is complete
5. Health Inspector visits	
6. Submission to district office	

### Discussion and other issues raised:

- There are master copies, saving them makes it much easier.
- Most of the crèches are not registered.
- One participant said “Social workers are often not helpful i.e. documents get lost, the social workers are not friendly and do not want to help”
- Most of the social workers are not knowledgeable about ECD, and need ECD training
- In some cases social workers do not visit the ECD sites.

***Wendy Gwabuzele contributed to the discussion and highlighted the fact that the health inspectors also serve as Peace Officers and if they find that the crèche was problematic, abuse evident, they can shut them down, pending an investigation.***

Members said that they did not know of this and now they can share this critical information. The importance of Departments working together, and having a common data base of registered, not registered sites per district was recommended. Wendy shared the document that they used. Sent separately (all docs referred to above available from kaley@bridge.org.za)

Contact R Ganie with issues raised above – 031 3368788

## Planning for 2018

The facilitator recommended a SWOT ANALYSIS to address the way forward for the KZN CoP next year. The plenary was divided into three groups, and were given a copy of the swot analysis and they recorded the points of discussion and shared this in the plenary.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths:</b></p> <p>Creates awareness, increase of knowledge, open and honest, sharing information, specialists speak about specific areas, opportunity to meet with different stakeholders, networking, support received, recognition through invitations received, open to all, regular meetings and feedback, research feedback, updated &amp; new information as they happen, written feedback.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Not all ECD forums included, not all areas are included, everyone functions on their own levels, absence of other key stakeholders, not enough people know about BRIDGE absence of members, reliable on national office resources and lack of knowledge on KZN stakeholders.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <p>New training, marketing, host an ECD indaba in the province, learnerships and bursaries, advocacy, learning and sharing, take back to own constituency, growth of COP, access to key meetings and workshops.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats:</b></p> <p>DSD vs. DOE for children in the younger cohort, government not funding 0-4 years, ECD qualifications change implications, differences in national structures in working as a collective may impact on membership drive and cause confusion.</p>

### Way forward & plenary discussion:

One participant raised concerns about duplication of National ECD Networks and questioned the need for the ECD CoP given the existence of other coordinating bodies such as NECDA.

The facilitator said that CoP is an open body, anyone can join, whereas NECDA represents mostly ECD training providers and a membership fee is required. The SA ECD Congress represents the practitioners. At a national level, all 3 organisations agreed to work for the common cause of ECD. The facilitator noted that there is a collaboration strategy meeting proposed for early next year for the three national to work together for the common vision. The results of the meeting will be forwarded to members. Romany and Rookshana said they belonged to many other ECD forums but saw value in the CoP. They said it is a platform for sharing, networking and for receiving the most updated information of key developments. The plenary agreed there was value to CoP and it should continue. Some members also noted lack of information received even though they were paid up members of other structures. Another participant said that the “CoP is a good place to network’. Romany noted as a result of the CoP, she was invited to the ECD Conference hosted by UKZN.

## Issues to take up and recommendations:

- DSD vs. DBE
- how to speed up registration - invite town planning to 2018 meeting
- Career pathways info required
- ECD Indaba
- SACE vs SSP
- Advocacy on new occupational qualifications
- Facilitator asked if CoP should have sub committees on specialist committees. The plenary agreed and noted the value of ownership and developing skills

Three sub committees were suggested and volunteers accepted:

- **Qualifications** - Patsy and Romany
- **Policy and Legislation** – Rookshana, Verona and Wendy
- **ECD Forums** – Lynette, Rookaya

It was recommended that the committees meet half hour before plenary.

**Way forward:** remain committed and interested, keep in contact, continue to share information and work together..

## Upcoming meetings and events

- University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Conference- 10/11/2017
- UNICEF – Knowledge Building Seminar - 29 and 30 November (free to attend. Registration closes on 24 Nov)
- Australian International Early Childhood Symposium
- Provincial consultations on new HE ECD qualification – February 2018
- WORLD FORUM coming up in 2018 – venue will be announced in dec 2017

## Tentative future KZN CoP Meeting dates

These are proposed to take place 2 weeks after National ECD CoP meetings.

- 29 March 2018
- 14 June 2018
- 30 August 2018
- 31 October or 1 November 2018

To take place at the Durban Teachers Centre venue, agreed to rotate if needed.

Action: Invite child line, SETA rep, other govt reps

## Vote of thanks

Romany thanked Patsy on behalf of the members for the excellent facilitation of the meetings and in ensuring that the information that is presented is up to date. Patsy thanked members for their positive comments and their commitment. Thanks was also extended to Kaley in her absence for the administration support. Thanks was also extended to staff of St Thomas Home for proving the venue for the meeting. Members then adjourned for refreshments.

## Meeting Participants:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Organisation:</b>
Charmaine Cupido	Candy Floss
David Dillon	ELET
Dr Dumisa Thabisa	DBE
Easlyn Young	ELET
Hlengiwe Mkhize	New Beginnings Training and Development Organisation
Lilly Zulu	LETCEE
Lynette Francis	NECDDF
Mariam Ally	Malaikas Education nResourcingmConsultants
Nozizwe Dladla-Qwabe	Cotlands
Patsy Pillay	New Beginnings Training
Promise Majola	Save the Children
Romany Roberts	WECDF
Rookaya Henry	School Sanctuary of Learning Pre School and Edu Centre
Rookshana Ganie	Dept of Soc. Deve
Sammy Louw	Kids Paradise
Verona Smith	School Sanctuary of Learning Pre School and Edu Centre
Violet Joshua	ELET
Wendy Gwabuzela	Health Inspector- local govt department
Zandile Mchunu	LETCEE