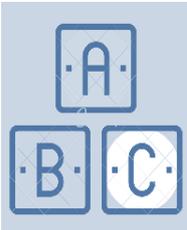


## Western Cape Early Childhood Development Community of Practice Meeting Highlights 27 February 2020

### WELCOME & INTRODUCTION



The National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (NIECDP) 2015 stipulates roles and responsibilities for a number of government departments in the delivery of ECD services. In our first ECD CoP for the year, we aimed to unpack all these departments to better understand what their mandate is, what to expect from these government departments and how we can meaningfully engage them as the ECD community. The CoP was attended by practitioners and NGOs from Western Cape and Limpopo all working to support and further the ECD sector. The session was facilitated by Carol van Rheede, Western Cape ECD CoP champion.

### ECD SECTOR UPDATES



As a Western Cape CoP ritual, members are given an opportunity to share news and events from their organisation or relevant committees:

#### News from CoP members:

- SA Congress for ECD (SACECD) made an announcement on a march planned in April 2020 lobbying for the rights of ECD practitioners; please refer to their Facebook page for updates.
- Mellissa Jacobs now sits on the National SACECD Board

The CoP is reminded of BRIDGE's knowledge management role. All meetings, presentations and discussions are captured and shared on BRIDGE's Knowledge Hub, as are any other specific knowledge products relevant to ECD. [Here](#) is the link to this.

### BRAINSTORMING SESSION



*Chapter 6 of the NIECDP 2015 clearly outlines the various Government departments that are mandated to support the ECD sector*

The purpose of the brainstorm session was two-fold, (1) to give CoP members the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the various supporting departments

and (2) to map their sphere of influence by noting a contact person in the departments (should they have access to one).

Each work group was handed a table to collate information about selected departments and map the roles and responsibilities envisaged in the NIECD at Local, Provincial and National government. The information collated during this exercise will be used as a tool in planning the proposed ECD government support services information session, an idea of the Western Cape ECD CoP since 2019. The idea is to host the session in the second half of 2020 and invite each of the supporting departments to share information on how they can assist the ECD sector.

## **FEEDBACK DISCUSSION**

The workgroups unpacked Chapter 6 of the NIECDP 2015 with particular focus on the Department of Social Development (DSD), The Department of Health (DoH) and The National Development Agency (NDA). Below are some of the points shared in the feedback session:

- There was unanimous agreement that ECD practitioners on the ground and NGOs find it hard to distinguish between the local, provincial and national role of the government departments, specifically the DSD.
- ECD Centres do not understand the role of DSD beyond the administering of monthly social grants.
- ELRU has an active relationship with DSD in the Western Cape, Northern Cape and North West Province and acts as middleman between their ECD centres and the DSD.
- It is clear that departments do not always do what is mandated by the NIECDP 2015, however, many departments perform useful functions that they are not mandated to do.
- The policy is very succinct and well written but unfortunately it is not a reflection of what is actually happening in the sector.
- As a sector, we could try shifting our thinking by not criticizing these departments for what they are not doing but rather highlighting what they should be doing and look at ways we can work together giving them a clearer understanding of sector's needs.

The roles of each supporting department are succinctly stipulated in the Policy but it is not a reflection of what is actually happening in the sector.

### **KEY THEME**

The majority of the departments may not be aware of their mandate to provide support to the ECD sector.



## Facilitator Reflection on the CoP

Given the feedback, a future topic to consider is to look at how the CoP goes about engaging these supporting government departments as they may not know the extent to which they should be supporting and engaging with the ECD sector. Carol suggested that the topic and mapping of roles and responsibilities exercise be continued at our next **CoP meeting on Thursday 28 May 2020.**

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