



Western Cape Early Childhood Development Community of Practice

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS 11 February 2021

Virtual Meeting



SETTING THE SCENE

The W.C Cape CoP convened its first CoP for the year on 11 February with the topic 'The Sector in 2021'. The intention of this CoP was to have a conversation around a number of ECD projects in an effort to better understand our position as a sector. The CoP was attended by various NGO's and ECD practitioners and facilitated by Kayin Scholtz. The agenda touched on many aspects, feedback from the previous CoP meeting; The Presidential Stimulus Package for ECD; The ECD census by the Department of Basic Education and an interesting brainstorming session.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS CoP MEETING

The last CoP meeting was held on 28 October and focused on the new directives issued by the Department of Social Development and how it related to the guidelines and procedures of reopening and running an ECD programme as per the Disaster Management Act. In addition, the CoP sought to take stock of how ECD programmes were managing issues of reopening and running programmes in line with the new directions and subsequent changes in the standard operating procedures. After an in-depth discussion the CoP resolution was to put together a Knowledge Product that would present the changes in simple language to allow for easy implementation by ECD sites. CoP members also made mention that this communication, ideally should come from government.

As a follow -up, Thandeka Rantsi, BRIDGE ECD Project Manager made contact with the Intersectoral Forum (ISF) to find out the capacity of DSD to develop a simplified version of the standard operating procedures. The ISF confirmed that DSD does not have the capacity to engage this idea. However, NGO's such as The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Smart Start have produced resources of the same nature. BRIDGE therefore concluded creating a KP would be duplication of what already exists in the sector

Full meeting highlights and presentation of the meeting on 28 October is available [here](#).



SESSION 1: THE SECTOR IN 2021

In this session the CoP discussed the Presidential ECD Employment Stimulus Package and the Department of Basic Education Early Childhood Development Census

Presidential ECD Stimulus Package

The Presidential ECD Employment Stimulus Package is an emergency relief intervention that promises to offer income support to approximately 108 333 ECD practitioners to counter the some of the loss of income as a result of the pandemic. Detailed information about the Presidential ECD Employment stimulus package can be found [here](#).

Kayin Scholtz facilitated the discussion on the Presidential ECD Employment Stimulus Package by touching on its rationale and how it will be carried out. CoP members spoke about some of their challenges and concerns. Below are questions and recommendations that derived from CoP member discussion around the Stimulus package.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

Will the application deadline be extended?

CoP members raised their concerns around the short timeframe ECD sites had to complete the rigorous application. Kayin Scholtz explained that the official deadline is 19 February and the Department would expect submissions to be made by this date. The deadline is as such due to the financial year ending 31 March, for all approvals to happen with in the financial year applications will need processed by 15 March.

The foremost challenges are the requirement of an institutional bank account and the Central Supply Database registration for ECD services not funded by the DSD. The application barriers are proving to be a great struggle in the efficacy of the Stimulus Fund. The Department is aware of the challenges and there is advocacy for them to extend this deadline but there has been no confirmation of this.

Can funds be transferred to an intermediary to allow for a deadline extension?

The use of intermediary organisations is not something The Department is open to. There is no chance that these funds will be transferred to an intermediary to allow more time for applications to be processed. However the W.Cape and Limpopo will work with intermediary Social Service Organisations that will (among other functions) support site verifications and make the initial payment and potentially the 2nd and 3rd payment to sites.

If fund is not spent will it be put back to the ECD sector?

If monies are not confirmed to be paid to ECD sites, it will be returned to treasury and spent on other worthy causes.

Department of Basic Education and Early Childhood Development Census

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) in partnership with the LEGO Foundation planned to undertake a nationwide census of Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes to better understand the ECD landscape in South Africa. It will be the first National ECD census that aims to collect data at this scale and will enable a count of all registered and non-registered ECD sites in South Africa (an estimated 40 000 sites). This will be an assessment of how accessible learning through play opportunities are at these sites, with a view to expand them.

Discussion

There was general uncertainty from the members about the census, particularly around the selection of service providers, when the process will take place and what the census questions will cover. Kayin shared that the initial process was running last year and it has been extended as organisations are still been contracted to conduct the survey, the hope is that the census will be completed by the end of 2021.

With Covid-19 they are looking at innovative methods to conducting the census. It is also important to note that the Vanagsali process is distinct from the ECD census in that the key aim of the Census is to conduct a baseline for an ECD management Information System (MIS) and it will not have anything to do with registration. One of the aims is to look at what technological solutions could support an annually updated MIS which will give DBE a full picture of the ECD sector.



SESSION 2: THE SECTOR IN 2021 – KEY UPDATES

1. Function Shift – was planned for Feb -March this year but it may only take place February-March 2022.

2. Real Reform for ECD Campaign-The ECD Amendment Bill will be presented to parliament in March. There will be a roll out campaign for drawing attention to the parliamentary presentations, educating the portfolio committee members on those issue as well as trying to draw political will down on issues such as registration and support for the sector. More communications will come out late February early March. Pam Picken from the Do More foundation appealed to all BRIDGE members to support the campaign by rallying practitioners to make their voices heard.

3. The National ECD CoP-The CoP meeting will take place on 25 February and will focus on Skills Development in the context of Covid-19'. There will be key updates from QCTO, ETDP SETA and DHET. Additionally, the CoP will have the Project of Inclusive Early Childhood Care Education (PIECCE) contribute to the conversation around qualifications they provide an update on the work of completed by the PIECCE project.

4 W.C CoP Meeting Dates- The CoP will meet for times in 2021, the dates are: 29 April ,22 July and 22 October from 13h00-14h30.

5. ECD CoP member updates- News from the attending organisation

- **The DO MORE Foundation**-Created a Parenting Resources hub for parents during Covid-19 to try to help parents get access to educational resources. The Hub has links to Wordworks, Naliballi etc. as well as all Covid -19 related information. They are in the process of getting this site zero-rated to further extend its reach.
- **Mikhulu Trust**- In celebration of our traditional stories and diverse mother languages, the [Mikhulu Trust](#) is launching the #MyStoryMyLanguage competition, which will culminate on International Mother Language Day on 21 February 2021. The lucky winner will receive a selection of beautiful South African young children's storybooks, kindly donated by partner organisations, in the winner's mother-tongue or preferred languages. Please check-out their Facebook page for more information. <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=900486647192236>
-**Mikhulu Trust** finished a book and will be launching at the LITASA AGM. Have received funding to create 5 wordless books which will be focussed on stories on violence against children and violence in the homes.
- **True North** is moving into their handover phase from 2021- 2027 this entails the handover of activities and connections that was started by the current team to a local coordinating body. Vicky Kumm is now on the board as non-executive directors; this is to line up with the new phase of their organisation.



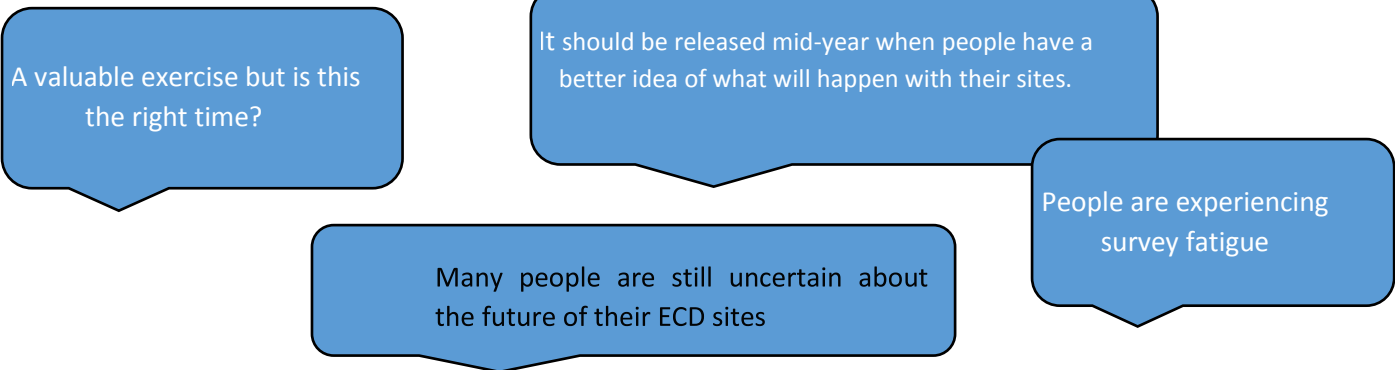
BRAINSTORMING SESSION

W.C inactive ECD programmes survey.

Thandeka shared the thinking on conducting a survey amongst BRIDGE ECD CoP members to get a look at what our provisioning looks like. The ECD community was hit hard in 2020, some have closed

permanently and others may be able to re-open. This survey might be useful to map what is happening within our CoPs. A google form has been created for this purpose.

Thandeka asked for thoughts from the CoP members on the usefulness of a survey exercise.



Parenting- a possible CoP?

BRIDGE recognizes the pivotal role parents play in education. We looked to CoP members to hear their thoughts on parenting in the ECD space and whether this conversation should take place as a CoP Topic or perhaps a standalone CoP.

Kaathima -we could possibly frame the conversation on parenting by unpacking what effective systemic support can look like for parents of young children. What does the system (clinics, libraries etc) offer parents and what can we tangibly do to elevate the role of parents?

Pam -supports the ideas and added that COVID-19 has highlighted the important role of parents in young children’s lives and the importance of education on early childhood nutrition.

Kayin suggested organising an initiation of a conversation perhaps in the form of a summit.

Thandeka mentioned the monitoring and evaluation aspect of parenting programmes that could be included in the conversation. This conversation could also be a useful Knowledge Product.

Resolution

CoP members agreed that an initial conversation should take place and should include parenting organisations and ECD site managers. This conversation will take place within the next W.C ECD CoP on 20 April.

COP ATTENDANCE LIST

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