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**COMPREHENSIVE APPROACHES
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: THE
MAURITIAN EXPERIENCE**



A Presentation

by

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Mauritius 2008 Basic Facts

- **Small island state in the Indian Ocean**
- **Former British colony, gained independence in 1968**
- **Multi-ethnic, multi-cultural Population of 1.2 million**
- **Narrow resource base with natural resources**
- **From a sugar based, mono-crop economy to a diversified ,multi-pillar economic structure: Tourism, Textile, Financial Services, ICT, Sea Food Hub etc**
- **Per Capita Income at US \$ 7000**



The ECCE Sector

LONG HISTORY OF ECCE CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD (1979)

LATER CONSOLIDATED BY DECLARATIONS AT JOMTIEN (1990) AND DAKAR(2000)

AND NOW BEING IMPLEMENTED IN LINE WITH THE CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD(Art 18,27,28 and 29 1999)



The ECCE Sector : Core Data

ECCEA Pre-Schools.....181

Private Pre-Schools.....839

- Total enrolment in 1,020 pre-schools : 31,590
- Educators (ECCEA) : 433
- Educators (Private) : 1,933



The ECCE Sector

1984.....setting up of the Pre-School Trust Fund(PSTF) to promote and provide pre-school education and service
FUNCTIONS

- Registration of schools
- Supervision of Educational activities
- Teacher Education and Training
- Implementation of the “three earlies.....screening,intervention and referral programme”
- Provide support services like Documentation Centre,Play and Toy Library



The ECCE Sector

- Educational Reform Plans and Policies – the last 20 years
- ECCE/D has had an important place in the different reform plans and policy development



The ECCE Sector

Master Plan for Education (1990)

National Children's Policy (2003) and Plan of Action (2004-2015) focusing on :

- Creating a Republic fit for children
- Achieving the Millennium Goals with the young child figuring as an important element in reaching the goals.
- The promotion of inclusion and integration as approaches based on intersector collaboration.

THE PRE-SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN OF 2003



The ECCE Sector

- THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT PROGRAM(2005/2010 & PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT (JULY 2005))

Focus

- Provide a "world class quality education" for all and "No Child Left Behind" commitment
- Combat exclusion, promote inclusion
- Ensure inter-sector collaboration.



The ECCE Sector

2008.....Replacement of the Pre-School Trust Fund(PSTF) by the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority

Additional FUNCTIONS

- Strengthening of inter-sectoral service delivery**
- Parental education and empowerment**
- Pastoral care, Counselling and Community involvement**
- Preparing the ground for the Centre of Excellence for the region**



The ECCE Sector

The ECCEA Board is represented by all sectors namely:

- Care and welfare department/ institution
- Health and nutrition department/ institution
- Education and protection department/ institution that serves the Child
- Parents,
- Managers of the federated private pre-school units,
- NGO's and community based organizations.



The ECCE Sector

Technical committees set up within the ECCEA Framework to :

- Develop and implement pedagogical program
- Develop safety and security norms
- Ensure a smooth transition from home to school through Parents empowerment programs,
- Develop and sustain the "bridging the gap initiative" which provides the smooth passage of children from home, pre-school to primary sector.



The ECCE Sector

- A new institutional framework -the **Early Childhood Care and Education Authority** to manage and regulate the sector set up
- Implementation of "integrated programs" that presently serves nearly 90 per cent of children of pre-school, and "prepare the child for school and the school for the child" (ADEA, Libreville Gabon, March 2006).



The ECCE Sector

- Development and implementation Eradication of Absolute Program to support the inclusion of 5000 children not attending pre-school and marginalized populations with the present Government setting provisions for some 7000 families living in absolute poverty (EAP Project 5000, 2008).



The ECCE Sector

Policy Dialogue EFA Global Report "**Strong Foundations: ECCE**" 2007

- Mauritius convened several workshops including an international meeting early 2007



The ECCE Sector

Participants endorsed :

- An integrated programming processes with more focus on policy development
- Strategic planning and close monitoring of services for the Young Child
- Starting early with parental empowerment program with comprehensive services to ensure overall development of the young child and preparedness for learning and educational achievement at end of Primary schooling.
- Implementation of a poverty alleviation strategy with active support and participation from partners in development.



The ECCE Sector

Capacity Building:

The Mauritius Initiative sets out an accelerated training program for :

- Management Cadres involved in implementation of ECD programme and quality assurance
- All ECCD Educators up to certificate level by the Mauritius Institute of Education with option to diploma level
- Cadres involved in the development of supportive material for training and services to the young child (0 to 8 years) and their parents and families.



The ECCE Sector

Expected Outcome of the capacity Building programme and other support services:

- Better monitoring and evaluation
- Development of key indicators for the sector
- Development and promotion of innovative approaches - non-formal and formal - within an Action research framework
- Contribution to informed policy dialogue and development in favor of the Young Child.



The ECCE Sector

Mauritius :as a "Center of Excellence"

Purpose: to help nearly thirty countries in sub-Saharan Africa through offer of services in:

- areas of training
- research
- documentation
- innovative approaches
- Sharing of best practices of the work of well established institutions in the sector of Child development, education, protection.



The ECCE Sector

North-South/South-South collaborative program

The Mauritius Initiative relies on a **North-South/South-South collaborative program** that will :

- accelerate the training of cadres
- reinforce its approach to inclusive education
- set up research and better ways of documenting best practices for advocacy and informed policy dialogue in the sector of Young Child Development, Education and Protection.



The ECCE Sector

The ECCE sector concerns our children....our future

Let us invest in them ...generously