Quality curricula and learning outcomes from the very early years do matter!

Background information

To renew efforts of policy makers, teachers, families, caregivers and other stakeholders around Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and in particular SDG4.2, the UNESCO General Conference at its 41st Session approved the Government of Uzbekistan’s proposal to host a World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE). This Category-2 intergovernmental conference will provide an important forum for policy learning and scaling-up of effective/promising programmes and innovations on ECCE across all regions and countries. The WCECCE2022 will be held from 14 to 16 November 2022 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Approximately 1,500 participants, including online participants, will be part of the Conference. The Member States delegations shall include heads of governments, ministers in charge of education, finance/planning, health, and protection, practitioners, development partners and civil society organizations at national level. At international and regional levels, UN agencies, bi and multilateral organizations, international non-governmental organizations, civil society organization including ECCE networks, youth and parents’ organizations among other will be invited.

The specific objectives of the WCECCE2022 are to:

- take stock of the progress of Member States towards achieving the SDG 4.2 target and other early childhood related SDGs targets.
- exchange knowledge about key enablers, emerging research results, promising practices, and innovations to put in place and scale up quality ECCE policies and programmes.
- reaffirm quality ECCE as a right of all children and as the essential foundation for lifelong learning and socio-cognitive development.
- identify opportunities, develop, and agree upon a set of priorities and strategies to accelerate SDG 4.2 progress and increase investment in ECCE on the part of governments and their partners.
• further strengthen global partnership and solidarity for the cause of early childhood to expand and improve ECCE services in all Member States to help all children attain their full potential.

UNESCO International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE) in its renewed mandate, aims at consolidating and synergizing the work of UNESCO in curriculum, fostering a forward-looking vision to contribute to equitable and inclusive education and sustainable development for all, as outlined in its IBE Medium Term Strategy 2022-25. UNESCO-IBE aims to support the transformation of the curriculum and the pedagogy as well as to inform the processes of teaching and learning, aligned with UNESCO’s Report “Reimagining our futures together. A new social contract for education” prepared by the International Commission on the Futures of Education. The Report underlines the role and contribution of curricula in developing learners’ abilities to engage with today’s and tomorrow’s challenges successfully. Similar messages are being reiterated in the context of the upcoming “Transforming Education Summit” convened by the UN Secretary-General in New York. Despite gains in access to education, learning gains remain limited. There is growing awareness today that access does not automatically enhance learning quality.

As it articulates a societal vision on education and provides avenues and spaces for defining meaningful learning experiences in a transformative way, curriculum is central to unlock the potential of very young learners and therefore to achieve quality education for all. Curriculum is the driving force defining “what”, “why”, “for what”, “how” and “how well” students should learn.

Given its global mandate as UNESCO Institute for curriculum development, UNESCO- IBE has been designated to coordinate and lead the Global Thematic consultation on a “Acting towards a Transformative and Forward-looking ECCE Curriculum for Lifelong Learning” ahead of WCECCE2022.

As a joint initiative with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, this thematic consultation on ECCE Curriculum aims to reaffirm the critical importance of quality education and lifelong learning from the very early years and to accelerate the achievement of SDG 4.2 and other-related SDGs, by:

- stimulating a renewed way of mainstreaming some of the critical and urgent issues in the processes of curriculum transformation undertaken in ECCE.
- promoting innovative and evidence-based avenues of work and reflection on issues related to the complex task of improving relevance and effectiveness of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment processes and outcomes.
- integrating early childhood education curriculum in an efficient and relevant manner into the overall education system, while supporting quality transition to upper levels by taking the learning continuum into account.

Objectives, participants and expected outputs

Ahead of WCECCE2022, thematic webinars on “Acting towards a Transformative and a Forward-looking ECCE Curriculum for Lifelong Learning” are set across all four UNESCO regions (Arab Region, Latin America, Asia & Pacific Region, Africa Region) in order to:

1) Share strategic insights with the Member States related to Quality Education through the lens of ECCE Curriculum and expected learning outcomes for early years.

2) Raise Members States political commitment and engagement to develop evidence-based, ambitious, relevant, action-oriented and culturally appropriate ECCE Curriculum frameworks.

3) Facilitate discussions among Member States and gather insights and recommendations from participants to inform the development of the WCECCE Global thematic report on ECCE Curriculum.

This thematic webinar will invite Arab countries representatives, as well as other key stakeholders, such as experts in curriculum and representatives of academia and international and regional organizations.

At the end of the online consultation, the key messages of the presentations and feedback/comments from regional perspectives about key priorities and enablers will be integrated into a final report on the specific theme of ECCE Curriculum. The finalized document generated and enriched through consultations across all UNESCO Regions will be shared with the WCECCE Secretariat as inputs on ECCE Curriculum that shall be taken into consideration as candidate themes and sub-themes of the upcoming conference.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12:00 – 12:10PM (10’) | Opening remarks                                                          | Mr. Yao Ydo, Director UNESCO-IBE  
Mrs. Costanza Farina, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States |
| 12:10 – 12:15PM (5’)  | Group photo                                                              |                                                                              |
| 12:15 – 12:20PM (5’)  | Setting the scene – High level perspectives on the role of ECCE Curriculum | Mrs. Ann Therese NDONG JATTA, Formerly Ministry of Education in the Gambia and Former UNESCO Director of Regional Bureau, Chair of Pool of Ministers Ambassadors for ECCE |
| 12:20 – 12:30PM (10’) | TOPIC # 1: Cognitive sciences, Neurosciences and early learning          | Prof. Chloé Farrer, Cognitive neuroscientist, Brain & Cognition Research Centre, CNRS/University Paul Sabatier (Toulouse III)  
Which mechanisms for early learning?  
Implicit and explicit learnings: what impact on ECCE curriculum and pedagogy? |
| 12:30 – 12:45PM (15’) | TOPIC # 2: Key evidence-based findings on ECCE Curriculum                | Prof. Dr Paul Leseman, Professor of Education, Utrecht University  
Key challenges & priorities  
How do they impact Quality Education? |
| 12:45 – 1:05PM (20’)  | Feedback discussion from Topics # 1 & 2                                  | Q&A questions to Experts  
Open discussion from the floor |
| 1:05 – 1:25PM (20’)   | Self-reflecting dialogue: Which contextualization on those evidence-based insights on ECCE Curriculum? | Mr. Sadiq Al-Khudour, Assistant Undersecretary for Student Affairs, Ministry of Education (Palestine)  
Tunisia (tbc)  
Mrs. Sameera Al Hosani, Director, Department of Humanities and Languages, Ministry of Education (United Arab Emirates) |
| 1:25 – 1:30PM (5’)    | Closing remarks – Key takeaways                                          | Mrs. Maysoun Chehab, Regional Education Program Coordinator for the Arab States  
Mrs. Aurélia Rabe, Head of ECCE Unit, UNESCO-IBE |

Format, dates and working languages

The online thematic webinar for the Arab Region will be held via Zoom webinar on **Thursday 22nd September 2022 from 12:00PM to 1:30PM (Beirut time)**.

The duration of this preparatory event will be of **90 minutes**.
The working languages will be **English and Arabic**. Simultaneous interpretation services will be **available (using the “Interpretation” button)**.

An **active Q&A Session** will be available for webinar participants during the whole duration of the sessions (using “Q&A” button).

**Registration**

To participate in this thematic webinar, please register via the following link:  
[https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mytyuOiZT3SKshhinkBADg](https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mytyuOiZT3SKshhinkBADg)

**Contact**

For more information, please contact **Ms. Aurélie Rabe, Head of ECCE Unit, UNESCO-IBE** ([a.rabe@unesco.org](mailto:a.rabe@unesco.org))  
and/or **Ms. Maysoun Chehab, Regional Education Coordinator, UNESCO Beirut** ([m.chehab@unesco.org](mailto:m.chehab@unesco.org))