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on Early Childhood Care and Education
Moscow, Russian Federation
27-29 September 2010

Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation:

Harnessing the Wealth of Nations





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**World Conference on
Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
Building the Wealth of Nations**
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Cooperation**
Harnessing the Wealth of Nations

Moscow, 29 September 2010

Moscow Framework for Action and Cooperation

Harnessing the Wealth of Nations

PREAMBLE

1. We, Ministers, Heads of Delegations, representatives of UN agencies, development cooperation agencies, civil society organisations, education agents and experts express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation for having hosted the first World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, and for their warm welcome, generous hospitality and organization of the Conference.
2. We met in Moscow from 27 to 29 September 2010 and reviewed challenges and progress made towards EFA Goal 1, in the particular context of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) as a social, human and economic development imperative. We adopt a broad and holistic concept of ECCE as the provision of care, education, health, nutrition, and protection of children aged zero to eight years of age. ECCE is therefore a right and an indispensable foundation for lifelong learning. Its proven benefits are manifold, and include better health and nutrition, improved educational efficiency and gender equity, greater employability and earnings, and better quality of life.
3. We understand early childhood care and education must foster in children a spirit of peace, understanding, non-discrimination and harmonious relation with nature, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We recognise the intrinsic value of childhood and children's inherent rights to provision, protection and participation.
4. We base our conclusions on the shared, but also specific, issues, challenges and critical development trends identified during the Regional consultations (Declaration of Damascus, High Level Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, Damascus, Syria, September 2010, -Communiqué: A Call to Action, Fourth African International Conference on Early Childhood Development, Dakar, Senegal, November 2009, - Regional meeting on ECCE, Chile, May 2010) and in the special reports that have been produced for this conference.
5. We reaffirm our commitment to ECCE goal expressed in Jomtien (1990) and Dakar (2000) but we conclude that Education for All (EFA) Goal 1 of expanding Early Childhood Care and Education is at great risk of not being achieved by 2015 unless urgent and resolute action is taken. We therefore reiterate our determination to accelerate the achievement of this as a prerequisite for reaching the other EFA goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, as well as other regional and national agendas and priorities. We welcome and support the fact that Africa has demonstrated a clear commitment to ECCE and has prioritised it in its Second Education Decade.

THE CHALLENGES

6. ECCE is part of the right to education and the main foundation for holistic human development. In addition ECCE is instrumental in poverty eradication and a critical stage to seed foundation for sustainable development. ECCE is an investment in the wealth of nations. There is a strong knowledge base; there are models, including at national levels, of high quality scalable provision; there is good evidence that families and communities respond to high quality initiatives; there is knowledge of how to build capacity. But we do face challenges.
7. ECCE policies are not always part of national socio-economic development plans and do not reflect a holistic and integrated approach; they are insufficiently backed by political commitment and are not on a scale to reach all parts of the population. Inadequate core public funding and low external support continue to impede sustained ECCE provision. Existing levels of integration, articulation and coordination of services, institutional weaknesses and poor operational frameworks limit the effectiveness of ECCE programme delivery.
8. Lack of infrastructure, and persistence of cultural and poverty barriers deny access to ECCE to millions of marginalised children, including those living in occupied territories and conflict and disaster affected areas. The benefits of ECCE are put at risk by low quality and lack of inclusiveness of services. There is lack of reliable and timely information on the provision of equitable holistic ECCE services.
9. Low capacity at multiple levels and among various stakeholders' compromise ECCE programmes. Partnership for provision is not what it could be, and there is a need to for all partners to heighten their contribution to service provision-at the household/community level with civil society, the private sector, government and development partners.
10. To address the challenges we need to take advantage of the knowledge base and good experiences that already exist, and universalise these.

ACTION AGENDA

We thus call upon the governments to:

11. Mobilize stronger commitment to ECCE

i) Legislation, Policies and Strategies

- a) Develop legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms that are conducive to the implementation of the right of children to ECCE from birth;
- b) Adopt and promote an approach to ECCE that is both holistic and multi-sectoral to ensure good birth outcomes, (prenatal stage), neonatal health and nutritional well-being, care and education of the zero to eight, with a special focus on the zero to three age group;
- c) Integrate ECCE policies into human and socio-economic development policies and thus as a shared responsibility across sectors and departments, parents, families, communities, civil society and the private sector;
- d) Strike an appropriate balance between centralised and decentralised governance guaranteeing collaboration among all spheres with related responsibilities, level of authority and resources;
- e) Strengthen political commitment through evidence based advocacy on the benefits of ECCE for human development.

ii) Access and scaling up

- a) Scale up ECCE efforts, identifying enabling factors in effective ECCE programmes, with careful attention to flexibility and adaptation to diverse contexts and income groups, particularly targeting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and promoting partnerships with stakeholders at all levels;
- b) Place a key emphasis on achieving good birth outcomes to mitigate poor outcomes for neonates through developing and expanding parenting programmes to orient families in good ECCE practice, with particular emphasis on the 0-3 year old age group;
- c) Develop a framework to improve pathways for successful transitions within ECCE and to primary schooling.

iii) Assessment, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

- a) Enhance reliable and timely assessments of ECCE services;
- b) Strengthen and institutionalise monitoring and evaluation of ECCE programmes to guide sound policies through the provision of reliable, relevant and timely disaggregated data for informed decision making;
- c) Use locally relevant knowledge for informing policy-making, strengthen ECCE research capacities and contribute to knowledge creation across all regions.

12. Reinforce effective ECCE programme delivery

i) Equity and Inclusion

- a) Take innovative measures to overcome all forms of discrimination in compliance with all Human Right's Conventions and make quality ECCE provision available to children from poor and disadvantaged groups, children with disabilities, as well as to marginalized populations, those in emergency situations affected by conflict and disasters. Special attention should be devoted to overcoming gender discrimination (EFA goal 5);
- b) Value cultural and linguistic diversity, especially in regard to indigenous and minority languages, and encourage the use of familiar language in ECCE and provide adequate resources as part of good teaching. Value multilingualism as an asset;
- c) Take targeted measures to put in place early detection interventions for children at high risk of developmental delays and disability.

ii) Quality

- a) Empower and strengthen the capacity of parents, families and service providers, so that they can provide protective relationships, quality care and education to the young child;
- b) Improve curriculum and methodology in tune with childhood, valuing play, affection, cooperation, talent and creativity, joy, the fostering of self confidence and autonomy, as well active learning pedagogies that take into account children's point of view;
- c) Focus on programme outcomes by adopting consistent assessment criteria and methodologies;
- d) Explore and use the full potential of ICT to promote all aspects of ECCE;
- e) Include education for sustainable development as a central part of quality ECCE;
- f) Put in place human and material conditions required to achieve quality for ECCE; committed valued and trained professionals, appropriate ECCE environments as well as context sensitive curricula and materials.

iii) Capacity building

- a) Develop new approaches and methods to build professional capacity, in areas of critical importance to quality improvement;
- b) Improve and expand teacher training, accreditation and the professional development of ECCE professionals;
- c) Increase knowledge of medical professionals, social workers, parents, caregivers and other professionals about children development and how to promote it.

iv) Partnerships

- a) Proactively involve civil society and local communities in the policy debate, programme development, implementation, and monitoring of ECCE policies as well as in guaranteeing the respect, protection and realisation of children's rights; invite national international organizations to facilitate and support national ECCE policies and programmes;

- b) Enhance, when appropriate and with the necessary regulations, resources through partnerships with the private sector. Encourage the regulatory, operational and financing convergence between these schemes and programmes of different ministries, departments and agencies of the government;
- c) Pay close attention to parental voices and take steps to balance power relationships and foster collaboration among different actors of ECCE.

13. Harness resources for ECCE

- a) Support the above measures by increasing budget allocations by all government departments concerned with ECCE promotion, and mobilize diverse and innovative financing sources and mechanisms in support of ECCE. Invest as much as it takes to meet all rights to ECCE according to set quality standards;
- b) Increase targeted resources for programmes for 0-8 years old, with particular attention to the early years due to their importance for human development;
- c) Conduct and encourage finance analysis of ECCE provisions and service delivery.

14. Cooperation

- a) Identify specific aspects of ECCE programming for mutual cooperation and exchange;
- b) Call upon countries to work with UNESCO and other international organisations to mobilize international donors.

15. We call upon Donors to:

- a) Honour their commitment to support all countries in achieving the EFA Goals, especially Goal 1, with increased attention to quality and relevance;
- b) Align external funding with national needs in ECCE giving special priority to countries lagging behind;
- c) Articulate ECCE targets in their sector plans, in line with government priorities.

16. Further, we call upon UNESCO to:

- a) Champion holistic ECCE globally based on the principles of children's rights, in cooperation with other agencies;
- b) Work closely with Member States, UN agencies, civil society, specialised agencies, partners and experts to develop holistic integrated ECCE programmes, with due attention to the 0-3 year old age group;
- c) In consultation with Member State and other organisations, to establish a working group to explore the development of an instrument capable of tracking progress towards EFA goal 1, with particular attention to quality and the holistic aspects of ECCE;
- d) Promote ECCE investments through the corporate and business sector worldwide. Collect and disseminate good practice and lessons learned from experience, in particular those demonstrating the multiple and diverse benefits of ECCE;

- e) Support the creation of ECCE networking at the national, regional and international level and level with related clearing house services;
- f) Intensify efforts aimed at developing affordable, readily available and user-friendly tools and models for assessing child development.