

ECD DISCUSSION DOCUMENT #5:

PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) (PART 2 OF 2)



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Project Preparation Trust of KZN

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PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) (PART 2 OF 2)

This is a series of five papers aimed at stimulating discussion and awareness about local government matters that affect the delivery of Early Childhood Development (ECD) services. These papers are a product of a series of work that the Nelson Mandela Foundation commissioned the Project Preparation Trust to do.

The discussion papers cover the following topics:

- 1) Land-use and related challenges
- 2) Simplifying land use processes
- 3) Barriers to effective ECD delivery
- 4) Developmental role of the LM/ Metros in ECD
- 5) Programmatic approach

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SUMMARY

FOCUS OF THIS DISCUSSION DOCUMENT: This document provides the rationale for adopting a programmatic ECD infrastructure response model which includes the development of a municipal ECD Strategy and a five-year ECD Infrastructure Sector Plan. For context, although Early Childhood Development is a high national priority, most ECD facilities in low-income communities are under-resourced, leaving large numbers of children vulnerable and without access to acceptable early learning. Poor infrastructure, a lack of capacity, funding constraints and a rigid regulatory environment are amongst the barriers which exclude centres from government's system of monitoring and support. These barriers also prevent a scaled-up ECD response in South Africa to meet the national goal of all young children having access to adequate ECD services by 2030. Municipalities, working with other stakeholders, have a key role to play in helping to overcome these barriers and thus enabling a more developmental and programmatic approach.

OVERVIEW: A PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH TO ECD

The current approach to supporting ECD in South Africa is insufficiently programmatic, and still tends to be reactive and ad-hoc. There is typically no clearly focussed and well-coordinated response at population-level (e.g. within a local municipality) which optimally supports and includes all young children and under-resourced facilities within low income communities as effectively as possible within the prevailing fiscal and other resource constraints. There is also typically limited knowledge of existing and often unregistered ECD facilities, the services deficit at population-level and how best to bridge the gap by means of an appropriate mix of ECD responses. Some elements of a programmatic response are fortunately already underway. The implementation of the new incremental ECD Registration Framework, the roll-out of the national Vangasali ECD registration programme¹ and related development of a national Online ECD Registration and Management system and improved collaboration between EHPs and DBE are all positive developments and provide good impetus for a more programmatic approach. However, further work still needs to be done at municipal-level including:

- More effective coordination: Effective ECD coordination is key for a more effective and programmatic ECD approach. Key actions required include:
 - *Assignment of a lead municipal department to deal with ECD* in an integrated fashion (internal coordination between municipal line departments, coordination with the ECD sector lead, the DBE (from 1 April 2022) and other external stakeholders, dealing with ECD strategies, planning, budgeting, infrastructure support, reviewing of bylaws etc.).
 - *Establishment of a Municipal Multi-Stakeholder ECD Committee (MEMSC)* comprising representatives from key municipal line departments (e.g. environmental health, planning, human settlements, social services), provincial/national departments (Provincial educational departments, DOH, DSD, COGTA) and support NGOs. The function is to ensure effective ECD coordination (as outlined above) and also to ensure the development of a municipal ECD strategy and sector plan and undertake ongoing monitoring of implementation.
- A clear Municipal ECD Strategy: A municipal ECD strategy is essential in order to establish consensus and a clearly defined and appropriate ECD approach, including the optimal mix of ECD services and support initiatives, which will achieve maximum impact and population coverage within available fiscal and other resources. The Strategy should be collaboratively developed by the above-mentioned key stakeholders. Amongst other things it would include:

¹ Country wide ECD service identification and registration through improved DSD and EHP working relationships

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- *Assessment of services deficits at population-level* taking into account existing services (supply) and needs (demand) in order to gauge the current backlogs (principally by means of an analysis of existing ECD data, demographic and other data sets).
- *Assessment of available resources to support ECD* service delivery including institutional and fiscal resources, government grants, support organisations etc.
- *Determination of optimal mix of ECD services and support interventions* at municipal-level (including those relating to infrastructure support, ECD registration and regulatory change e.g. in terms of enabling bylaws and land use management).
- *Institutional arrangements* which enable effective ECD coordination including ECD strategy, ECD Steering Committee, etc.
- *Funding arrangements* including expected funding sources and other resources to be tapped.
- An effective Municipal ECD Five-year Sector Plan: The ECD Strategy would inform the five-year ECD Sector Plan which would be a multi-year plan with budget allocations which would be reviewed on an annual basis as part of the IDP review. Amongst other things it would address:
 - *ECD infrastructure plan and budget allocations* (mix of improvements, new builds and utilisation of any under-utilised existing municipal buildings). This budget allocation would need to be on the basis of an agreed prioritisation framework.
 - *ECD budget allocations for other chosen ECD support interventions* (e.g. skills development, nutritional support).
 - *Timetable for implementation of other key non-financial deliverables* arising from ECD Strategy including: ECD regulatory changes (e.g. relating to bylaws, land use management); planning of ECD sites in new developments)

1 INTRODUCTION: PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

There is a need for a more pro-active and well-coordinated mode of response for the delivery of ECD services in under-served communities. This can be achieved by adopting a programmatic approach to how ECD services are delivered, with a programmatic approach being defined as:

“A multi stakeholder process that leads to organisations working together, based on a joint analysis, shared vision and objectives and clear perspective on the results of the cooperation. In such a process all actors can do different things, work at various levels and use their specific strengths for the common purpose and objectives as well as share activities, and in particular participate in the mutual linking and learning processes. The programmatic approach aims at change in the systems rather than addressing single problems.”²

What does a programmatic ECD approach mean in the South African context and what would the key principles be?

- a) **Consensus:** Establishing consensus about how to do things (in light of national policy, local demographics, local facilities and resources, etc.) – agreeing on our collaborative approach at municipal-level, what we want to achieve and how we are going to do it.
- b) **Co-ordination:** Effectively coordinating and communicating amongst the key role-players – working together, avoiding duplication, supporting each other, understanding each other (Provincial educational departments, DOH, municipality, support organisations, NPOs).
- c) **Inclusion:** Reaching as many beneficiaries as possible, including all, or as many, children and ECD facilities and services as possible. All to receive some level of assistance – whether in terms of registration, training, infrastructure support etc. With this said, the most poor and vulnerable children should be prioritised.
- d) **Resource efficiency:** Optimising the use of scarce resources (funding, capacity, infrastructure etc.) in an appropriate mix of responses, including those which support and improve existing facilities/services and those used to establish new ones (which is typically much more costly).

What does a programmatic ECD approach mean in practice?³

- a) **Coordination and communication:** Establishing effective communication and coordination within/among municipal line departments and externally with sector departments (DBE, COGTA, DOH) and support NGOs. Agreeing on the roles and protocols of communication and information sharing. Establishing a Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC). Assigning a municipal lead department. Workforce planning/organogram review to assign sufficient personnel to ECD functions. Developing a functional relationship with the ECD service providers and community through infrastructure support (e.g. water, sanitation, improvements to existing or construction of new buildings) and the delivery of services (e.g. refuse removal services, fire safety course for ECD operators, indigent support such as free basic services). Embedding ECD as an important municipal programme.
- b) **Planning and monitoring:** Determining demand and supply of ECD services. Identifying all existing facilities and services⁴ via the Vangasali campaign and national 2021 DBE ECD Census and the development of the

² Hettie Walters (2011), Guidance notes for the programmatic approach of the ICCO Alliance (Interkerkelyke Coördinatie Commissie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking)

³ A programmatic response is bringing together all these different components which include the components listed here. This does not mean that these are all the components which are the responsibility of local government as different stakeholders would be responsible for delivering on different components.

⁴ Including location (GPS), number of children benefitting, what the current supply is, the adequacy of current facilities and their potential to be improved.

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national Online ECD Registration Management tool which will be replaced by an online Registration and Management System currently being designed by the DBE. Determining deficits in terms of ECD services relative to total demand (i.e. number of under-serviced children). Based on this, undertaking population based ECD planning. Understanding settlement patterns and local needs. Determining optimal mix of ECD services (ECD centres, playgroups, homebased services e.g. childminders), support services (e.g. toy libraries, mobile units) and infrastructure support responses (including improvements⁵, extensions, new builds, availing of community facilities, re-purposing of underutilised buildings, etc.) in terms of cost-benefit and population coverage. Establishing a pro-active, developmental response. Developing municipal ECD strategy/sector plan (five-year plan). MTREF budget allocations. Monitoring performance of the programme over time.

- c) **Registration and subsidisation:** Visiting and assessing all facilities used for ECD purposes by district educational officials and municipal EHPs for partial care registration via Phase 2 of Vangasali which is an ECD 'massification' initiative. Registering of as many centres as possible in line with the new ECD Registration Framework which will set them on a development path of incremental progression to the next registration level and avail operational per child subsidies (R17 per child per day) to eligible ECD Centres. Playgroups must also be registered with provincial educational departments and may also benefit from per child subsidies. Provision has been made for a R6 subsidy per qualifying child per session within designated wards. Childminding services must also be inspected by EHPs and registered with the Municipality. Although the ECD Policy (8.2.1) mentions that the per capita programme support to childminders will be paid though the Municipality if they are providing child-minding services to CSG-eligible children from birth until the year before they enter formal school, no such mention is made in the DORA for 2022/23.
- d) **Regulation:** Reviewing existing or compiling new bylaws relating to: a) ECD bylaw on environmental health and child care in line with new incremental ECD Registration Framework; b) land use framework and schemes/bylaw (providing appropriate flexibility regarding zoning, building plans and tenure for ECD). Developing appropriate responses for each situation rather than following a one size fits all approach in dealing with formal and informal areas. This supports and helps establish a more enabling and developmental ECD approach. This is in addition to routine environmental health functions i.e. EHP visits to centres, assisting with assessments and conditional registration and issuing health certificates.
- e) **Training for ECD related staff:** Arranging training and mentoring for ECD service providers' management committees, ECD practitioners and support staff (e.g. by NGOs), to ensure improved quality of services and safety issues such as first aid and firefighting. Identifying eligible CWP workers for training as playgroup facilitators. COGTA to arrange training and capacity development opportunities for municipal and departmental staff involved in ECD. Similar capacity building arrangements for other sector departments.
- f) **Health and nutrition:** Providing basic health care services by Community Health Care Workers (CHCW) working with children and mothers e.g. help with Road to Health Card. Providing guidance on nutrition, menu planning etc. (typically provided by DOH, sometimes also by municipalities). Also feeding schemes and food gardens at centres usually provided by non-profits and/or involvement of EPWP and CWP.
- g) **Infrastructure support:** Improving and extending basic services for ECD centres (water, sanitation, electricity) and building improvements to meet norms and standards, mitigating health and safety threats.

⁵ Based on their potential and other factors e.g. their registration level, potential to improve, NPO status, the condition of their facility, land use rights etc.

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Extensions to existing facilities or, where appropriate, building new facilities⁶ to extend ECD services to more children through efficient and appropriate procurement and delivery systems.

- h) **Funding:** Providing sufficient funding, for an appropriate mix of ECD responses/facilities from various sources, via relevant government entities e.g. ECD Conditional Grant for per child subsidies, infrastructure maintenance and construction of new facilities; municipal infrastructure funding for ECD infrastructural improvements and construction of new facilities; donor funding for ad hoc ECD support and feeding support. Project funding allocations need to be coordinated by the municipal-ECD multi stakeholder committee working towards eventually One Plan for ECD in terms of government's District Development Model (DDM).

⁶ Note that, in the case of new facilities, suitable ECD operators must be found who can run and sustain them – noting that government does not generally have the desire/capacity/resources to become a major owner and operator of ECD facilities outside of grade R and RR.

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	ACTIVITY	ROLES	TIMEFRAMES
Programmatic Municipal ECD Response Planning (establish process and capacity)	<u>Establish municipal stakeholder cooperation</u> including Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC): Provincial educational departments, municipal EHPs, COGTA, DSD, municipal line departments (e.g. social services or human settlements), support NGOs for ECD.	Municipality with provincial educational departments, support NGOs	Month 1-3, then ongoing meeting quarterly
	<u>Assign lead municipal department</u> to deal with ECD planning and infrastructure support (e.g. community services, human settlements, special projects). Officer assigned to coordinate with provincial educational departments and others, convene Multi stakeholder meetings, coordinate budget, procurement, reports to council, review of bylaws etc.	Municipality	Month 1-2, then ongoing coordination
	<u>Establish capacity for ECD</u> via a) arranging training of ECD service providers, and b) via assigning municipal personnel and/or procuring and/or partnering with support NGOs or other spheres of government. Synergising the Expanded Public Works Programme and Community Work Programme with the community-based human resource provisioning and training (e.g. as ECD playgroup facilitators, or support services).	Municipality with provincial educational departments support NGOs and with COGTA/DPWI for municipal personnel	Month 1-4, then ongoing
	<u>Identify & map existing ECD facilities and programmes</u> using up-to-date data obtained from the National Online ECD Registration Management Tool - which includes data collected from the Vangasali campaign and the national 2021 DBE ECD Census updated on a continuous bases via the ECD registration process - to track progress and map centres/services.	Municipality with provincial educational departments and support NGOs	Month 2-6, then update annually
	<u>Initiate ECD massification registration & subsidisation programme:</u> Provincial educational departments and municipal EHPs start visiting and assessing centres (w.r.t. compliance with various norms and standards). Issuing of inspection reports and/or certificates indicating which improvements are required to move to next registration level. Conditional registration of centres at appropriate level. Allocating operational funding (per child subsidies to all eligible ECD centres).	Municipal EHPs and provincial educational departments	Month 2-6, and then ongoing
	<u>Undertake population-based planning</u> by determining supply (existing ECD centres and services and services deficit relative to total demand and number of under-served children). Must take into account the demographics, environment etc.	Municipality with provincial educational departments / Support NGOs	Month 6-8
	<u>Develop and adopt municipal ECD strategy/sector plan</u> setting out status quo, services backlog, ECD infrastructure approach, improvement/new build mix, municipal role, funding, procurement approach, flexibility (e.g. in by-laws, improvements on land not formally planned etc.). Emphasis should be on improvements. 5-year plan for inclusion in IDP.	Municipality with provincial educational departments, COGTA, DOH and support NGOs	Month 4-8, update every 3 years
	<u>Review Environmental Health/Child Care and Land Use bylaws & related matters to</u> ensure the adoption of a developmental and pro-active approach to create an enabling environment.	Municipality with provincial educational departments	Month 8-12 Review every 3 years

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	ACTIVITY	ROLES	TIMEFRAMES
	Arrange basic health care and nutritional services with the DOH and food provision with municipality (e.g. food gardens with assistance of EPWP or CWP) and feeding schemes with NGOs.	DOH with Municipality and NGOs	Month 3-6 and then ongoing
	Reserve ECD infrastructure budget in the form of an initial municipal e.g. MIG/USDG block allocation on the MTREF. This ensures that some budget for ECD has been reserved or set aside and establishes a budgetary mandate to proceed with assessing centres and developing infrastructure improvement plans.	Municipality with COGTA	Month 6-8, then update annually
	Decide procurement and delivery solutions – need for efficient solutions, especially for improvements (small, non-standardised works and rectifications across geographically dispersed sites). Consider options such as NGO partnerships, special purpose vehicles, managing contractors, or framework contract arrangements.	Municipality	Month 6-9, then review every 3 years
ECD registration, support and infrastructure improvement (annual cycle)	Prioritise facilities for infrastructure improvements & new builds over next MTREF using existing data/set lists and specified criteria via ECD PSC. Provincial educational departments & donors to submit their ECD infrastructure projects & budgets for inclusion in the Municipal IDP.	Municipality with provincial educational departments & support NGOs	Month 10 OR By Sept annually
	ECD infrastructure assessments and planning including on-site assessments by an infrastructure specialist & the EHP, based on a schedule of work, specifications and estimates will be compiled by the infrastructure specialist. The EHP is expected to co-sign the improvement plans to confirm that it satisfies minimum norms and standards which will enable PCR (gold level).	Municipality with provincial educational departments & service provider(s)	Month 11-13 OR Oct-Feb annually
	Allocate ECD infrastructure budget to batch facilities for the following year from the reserved block sum. Council approval of the batch may be required. Update MTREF (with specific facility allocations) and IDP.	Municipality with COGTA	Month 14-15 OR Mar-Jun annually
	Sign agreements with prioritised/selected ECD operators for the improvement/extension of their ECD centres including commitment to use facility for ECD and meet required standards ⁷ .	Municipality	Month 16 OR By July annually
	Procure for ECD infrastructure using procurement solutions established. Possible refinement may be necessary.	Municipality	Month 17-20 OR Jul-Sept annually
	Build and hand over ECD infrastructure - Obtain infrastructure completion certificate ('happy letter') from ECD operators and EHPs.	Municipality/service provider(s)	Month 21-22/27 Oct-Jun annually
	Centre registration or reregistration. This will entail follow-up visits by EHPs and provincial educational departments. Full or conditional registration is allocated based on the inspection report and/or certificates submitted by EHP which guides the ECD Sector Lead as to which level of registration should be assigned. Childminder facilities with 6 or less children must also be inspected and registered by Municipalities as currently set out in the ECD Policy	Municipality EHPs, provincial educational departments	Month 23-28 (& ongoing)

Table 1: ECD Infrastructure Response Model - main activities and roles

⁷ For a proforma agreement, refer to Municipal ECD Guide 2019. <https://www.pptrust.org.za/wp-content/uploads/delightful-downloads/municipal-eed-guide.pdf>

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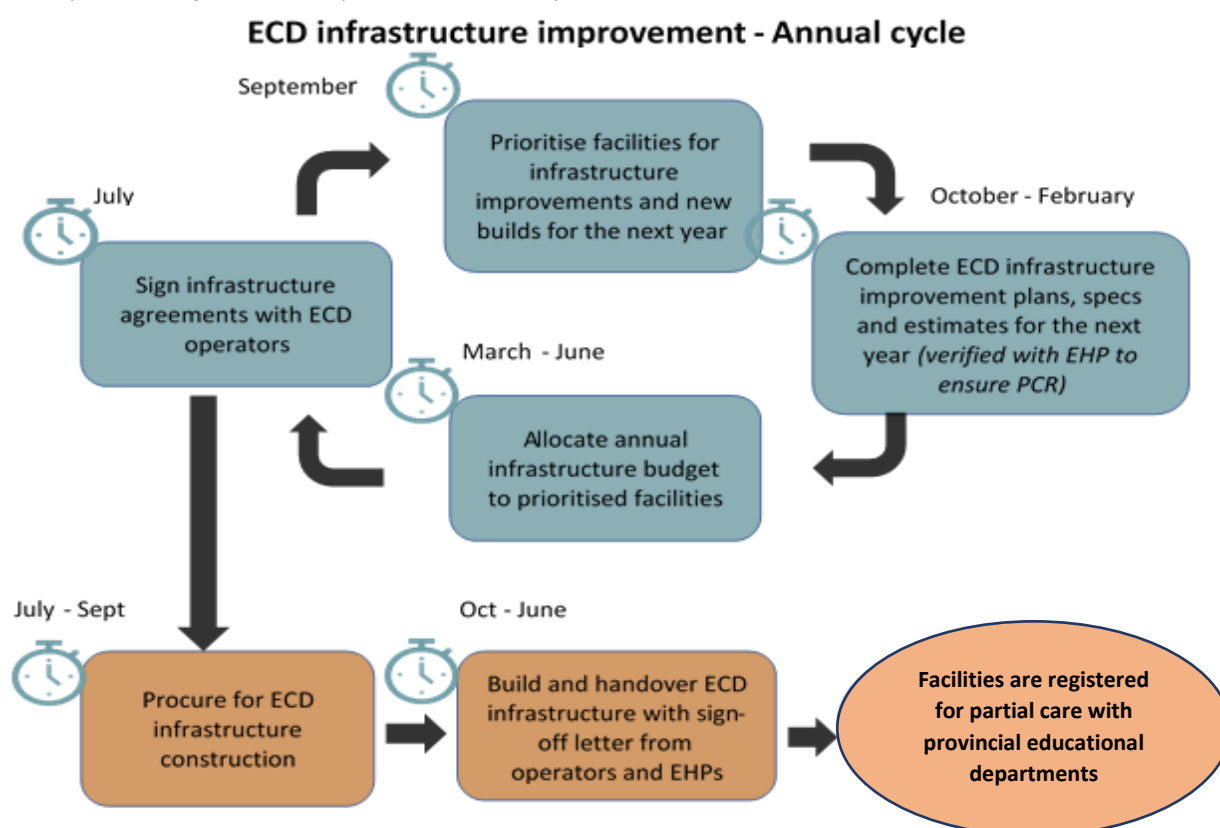
LEARNING STORY

The Ngqongeni Crèche in Msinga was built as part of an ECD infrastructure pilot programme overseen by the Umzinyathi District Municipal ECD Project Steering Committee comprising senior district representatives of sector departments, the District Municipality, Local Municipalities, NGOs and the funder - Assupol Community Trust. It needs to be noted that due to the commitment of stakeholders, all 40 ECD centres that were improved, extended and newly built were registered and either received or was due to receive ECD subsidies. It also needs to be mentioned that KZN COGTA IDP Section, encouraged all municipalities to include ECD in their IDPs. District Municipalities were advised to include ECD in their District Growth and Development Plans as was done by Umzinyathi DM. Success stories such as these illustrates that multi sector programmes can work provided there is a dedicated driver of the process.

2 PROGRAMMATIC INFRASTRUCTURE RESPONSE MODEL

Municipalities are required to include ECD within their IDPs. It thus stands to reason that the planning for ECD should be following the municipal IDP process plan. Municipalities are well familiar with this process and municipalities will handle it like any other capital programme. The planning for ECD infrastructure should be informed by a) a comprehensive ECD database e.g. National Online ECD Registration Management Tool / Registration and Management System, b) the population base plan, c) the ECD strategy.

Figure 1: Proposed ECD infrastructure improvement – annual cycle



The Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC) should initiate and oversee:

- a) The prioritising of ECD facilities for infrastructure improvements or identifying areas where new ECD centres must be built. Ward needs identified will be taken into account. EHPs and the ECD Sector Lead are expected to be directly involved in the prioritisation process.
- b) The development of ECD infrastructure improvement and/or feasibility plans that includes specifications and costing.
- c) The recommendations to the relevant Municipal Standing Committee and Council for approval of the project list and allocation of the budget to be included in the IDP that will be signed off by the Mayor and eventually by the MEC for COGTA in that province. COGTA and the municipal IDP officials will provide guidance in this regard.
- d) The implementation process undertaken by the municipality by getting reports on the:
 - i. signing of agreements with ECD centre management committee/principal
 - ii. procurement of contractors

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- iii. construction process. The Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC) and the Mayor and MECs (e.g. Provincial educational departments/COGTA) will attend hand overs of centre and the launching of new centre.
- e) Timeous registration or re-registration of improved or newly built ECD centres and the subsidisation of the centres

Overview of ECD infrastructure response typologies:

Response typology	Description	Investment value	Main eligibility requirements for state infrastructure funding**
Basic/minor improvements (building and services) - normal	These are required at most centres and are the top priority. They will typically include improvements to the building (e.g. roofing, windows etc.) and/or the services (e.g. toilets or fencing) or outdoor play equipment.	Typically, R50,000 to R200,000. Cost per child will typically average R2,500.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ECD Operator</i>: Registered NPO or a 'community-based centre' where improvements are smaller in value. • <i>Facility type</i>: Dedicated ECD site or facility in separate space on site. • <i>Categorisation</i>⁸: Category A, B1 and B2 (i.e. registered or with potential to improve and achieve partial care registration) • <i>Ownership/land</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Formal townships/traditional land</i>: Preferably secure tenure either in the form of a title deed, long lease or PTO. ○ <i>Informal settlements</i>: Provided settlement is regarded as either permanent (not to be relocated) and destined for in-situ upgrading, or the intended relocation will be substantially deferred, and where there are no other alternatives for children, then functional tenure may be regarded as sufficient. In this case, the underlying land may not yet have been subdivided and zoned.
Major improvements and extensions	As above but to a higher level of investment and including extensions typically for new kitchens, playrooms or ablution blocks.	Typically, R200,000 to R400,000. Extensions on their own typically R290,000 to R315,000 & R85,000 to R130,000 for stand-alone ablution facilities. A typical edutainer costs between R577,300 for 25 children to R1,2million for 55 children depending on size, finishes, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ECD Operator</i>: Registered NPO with good capacity and governance. • <i>Facility type</i>: Dedicated ECD site or facility in separate space on residential site. • <i>Categorisation</i>: Preferably A-B1 (good potential), sometimes B2 if provincial educational departments comfortable. • <i>Ownership/land</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Formal townships/traditional land</i>: Secure tenure either in the form of a title deed, long lease or PTO. ○ <i>Informal settlements</i>: Government should own the underlying land (regardless whether or not such land is

⁸ PPT developed a categorisation model to assist Multi-Stakeholder ECD Committees with the selection of ECD centres for infrastructure improvements based on agreed criteria as it is not easy to randomly determine which 10 of the say 50 bronze level ECD centres to select for infrastructure improvements. Categorisation is based on ECD survey data relating to three key areas: a) capacity and governance, b) ECD programme and c) infrastructure health and safety to group centres in one of 5 categories of functionality Cat. A: Well-functioning; Cat. B1: Basic functioning with good potential; Cat. B2: Low functioning with moderate potential; Cat. C1: low functioning with limited potential; and Cat C2: high risk and dysfunctional. Refer to <https://www.pptrust.org.za/wp-content/uploads/delightful-downloads/eec-centre-categorisation-framework-2019.pdf>

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Response typology	Description	Investment value	Main eligibility requirements for state infrastructure funding**
			subdivided or zoned); or the municipality should have commenced a process of acquisition or the land should be earmarked for development and the municipality be committed to obtaining the land in due course and have advised the land owner accordingly. Alternatively, non-permanent solutions such as 'edutainers', modular/mobile facilities and 'wendy houses' might be appropriate.
New Builds	New buildings are only appropriate where necessary and after careful consideration of the need, given the significantly higher costs. New builds should meet minimum norms and standards. Fencing and outdoor equipment would normally be included.	Typically, R838 775 (40 children) to R1.7million (100 children) at average cost per child of between R20,969 to R17,609 - This is at NPO/NGO specification. State-owned facilities are typically significantly more expensive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ECD Operator</i>: Registered NPO with good capacity and governance. • <i>Facility type</i>: Dedicated ECD site (being used only for purposes of ECD). • <i>Categorisation</i>: Preferably A-B1 (good potential), sometimes B2 if provincial educational departments comfortable. • <i>Ownership/land</i>: As for major improvements and extensions.
Emergency mitigations only	Only last resort - the provision only of basic/emergency mitigations to address serious health and safety issues (mostly relating to basic water and sanitation, fencing or minor building repairs).	Typically, R25,000 to R100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ECD Operator</i>: Registered NPO or 'community-based centre' or private centre. However, centres operating from within private homes should be excluded. • <i>Facility type</i>: Dedicated ECD site or facility in separate space on site. • <i>Categorisation</i>: Category A, B1, B2. Category C1 (that are otherwise not eligible) can be assisted where there are no alternatives to children in which case investment should be kept to a minimum. • <i>Ownership/land</i>: No specific requirement. All centres should be eligible unless there is specific opposition from the landowner.

Table 2: ECD infrastructure response typologies

3 Municipal ECD Strategy / Sector Plan

Municipalities are not required in terms of legislation to provide a sector plan. The ECD programme as a whole and as a function is however complex and involves numerous role-players from different sectors. The ECD Infrastructure Sector plan can play an important enabling role in unlocking change, not only in terms of establishing consensus on the overall approach at municipal-level but also in terms of determining optimal stakeholder roles and how limited budgets can be used more effectively. Most importantly, an ECD Infrastructure Sector Plan can help ensure a more coordinated and better integrated ECD response. Such plans need to go further than merely outlining national policy and the municipality's regulatory role. They also need

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to be developmental in their orientation so that they can help establish more effective ECD service delivery and population coverage through a variety of coordinated efforts which involves government, NGOs and the private sector. Effective and practically-orientated sector plans are the building blocks of an effective IDP, which they form part of, and to which they must obviously be aligned in terms of strategic and spatial orientation.

Whilst each municipality will need to determine what developmental approach works best within its local environment, certain general principles are likely to apply. In addition to the coordinated and better integrated approach already referred to, it is noted that, in general, it is government policy that ECD services (like many other social services) are provided principally by registered NPOs in terms of prevailing statutory frameworks and related grants. A large percentage of ECD centres is also provided by privately owned ECD centres. Most municipalities will not have the necessary capacity or appetite to own and operate ECD facilities. Supporting and enabling both the NPO and private sector to meet the demand would normally be the primary strategy. Furthermore, given the high costs of new builds, supporting existing facilities to improve will afford a better return on investment and population coverage relative to capital investments in infrastructure. Where new builds are necessary, they need to be done on an affordable, basic specification. Whilst non-centre-based services such as playgroups and mobile toy libraries can contribute to ECD service provision, it should be accepted that ECD centres will constitute the primary form of service and should therefore receive particular priority in terms of planning and resource allocation.

The ways in which a practically-orientated ECD Infrastructure Sector Plan can add value are as follows:

Evidence-based planning	• Enables the consolidation of information relating to ECD services, including demand for ECD services, and helps to establish a better picture of actual service deficits from which priorities can be determined.
Consensus on optimised ECD approach	• Can be used to develop consensus on a practical and developmental approach, that moves beyond regulation and compliance, and which facilitates improved and expanded service provision and population coverage.
Defining roles & responsibilities	• Helps to build understanding and consensus from key role players as to their integrated roles and responsibilities, and obligations including the municipality, national departments as well as the NGO and private sectors.
Coordinated strategies & approach	• Can ensure that practical strategies and plans (over a 5-year period) are developed with multi-stakeholder buy-in.
Budget allocation, coordination & optimisation	• Sector plans ensure that budgets from various sources are optimally allocated, against planned objectives, over a three year MTREF period.
Coordination of ECD infrastructure planning	• Can enable more integrated and coordinated ECD infrastructure planning between local, district and metropolitan municipalities, and provincial educational departments.
Data & information sharing	• A common ECD services database can be established through this process for the district/metro which can be shared with provincial departments and support NGOs.
Regulatory flexibility	• To develop practical solutions for more statutory and regulatory flexibility and fit for purpose can best be achieved (e.g. relating to tenure, zoning, building plans) in order to scale up ECD infrastructure improvements and new builds.

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a) Key aspects of an ECD Infrastructure Sector Plan

An ECD Infrastructure Sector Plan (ECDISP) should cover the following key aspects:

- i. Situational analysis to determine the status of ECD in the municipality
- ii. The formulation of a strategy (at least 10 years) and programme
- iii. A five-year plan towards implementation of the ECDISP that addresses strategic activities and projects addressing ECD in terms of institutional, land use and town planning, health and safety as well as infrastructure targets.

The key element of the sector plan is the strategy, which should include:

Vision	All infants and young children and their families live in environments conducive to the optimal development of young children
Mission	To ensure quality ECD services that would be universally available in sufficient quantities and proximity so that all young children enjoy an equal opportunity to access them
Strategic objectives	<p>Develop strategic objectives aligned to the National Integrated ECD Policy, and provincial ECD objectives, ECD Registration Framework e.g.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase the number of children that have access to quality centre and non-centre based ECD services in safe, healthy and compliant physical environments. b) Expand and facilitate mechanisms for integration, co-ordination and inter-sectoral collaboration c) Gather and share quality information to internal and external ECD stakeholders and role players d) Facilitate targeted integrated planning and funding of an appropriate mix of ECD centre improvements and new buildings meeting norms and standards to be reflected in the IDP and a 5-year sector plan for ECD. e) Support ECD centres and services in various ways (e.g. through the EPWP and CWP); Create an enabling environment by adopting a developmental approach to the alignment of bylaws and sector policies with the National ECD Policy, ECD Registration Framework, and legislation etc. g) Promote basic health, nutrition, security and safety programmes. h) Plan, identify and allocate appropriate land, sites and buildings to organisations or private individuals wishing to provide services for children. i) Develop a policy on non-centre based ECD services e.g. childminding services, playgroups
Principles	<p>The achievement of the desired outcomes for ECD is based on the following principles e.g.:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The needs and the rights of children are central to all services and provisions. b) Equitable services must be rendered to ensure that the most disadvantaged and those with the fewest resources have the same opportunities as all other children. c) Nurturing care is a fundamental prerequisite to protect children's wellbeing and development. d) All stakeholders and partners must be accountable for achieving the objectives and outcomes of this strategy and sector plan.
Population based planning approach	The intention is to ensure a rational approach which takes into consideration a) the total backlogs, especially in most underserved communities; b) where children are; c) what type of service they are receiving (including informal services); and d) those who are receiving no services. A simple population-based planning approach requires an understanding of both the supply of ECD services as well as the demand (demographic information).

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	Population based planning should be undertaken with provincial educational departments. Population based planning can only realistically be done if the Municipality and stakeholders have a clear picture of the demographics for the municipality as a whole and per ward, the environment in which ECD centres operate e.g. the settlement patterns, urban growth patterns, population growth figures as well as detailed information about the ECD centres and services rendered as obtained from the survey e.g. number of ECD centres, number of children served per age group, the non-centre based ECD services rendered, number of children reached, infrastructure conditions (basic services and condition of buildings) etc.
Programmatic approach to ECD infrastructure response planning	It is imperative to follow a programmatic approach to optimise the use of limited financial, human and other resources in order to assist existing ECD centres to meet acceptable norms and standards and to provide new facilities in terms of the population based ECD plan to ensure access to ECD services for all young children. It is very important that the ECD programme becomes embedded within the municipal system. The proposed annual cycle for infrastructure improvements aligns closely with the IDP cycle.
Infrastructure approach	<p>Implementation will be done in terms of the Infrastructure Delivery Management System (IDMS) and the associated Standard on Infrastructure Procurement and Delivery Management (SIPDM) (recently revised to FIPDM and effective of 1 October 2019). This will be done with the support of Treasury, the custodian and driver of the development and roll out of IDMS for national and provincial departments and now also on district, local and metropolitan government levels and the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA). The IDMS has been endorsed by the provincial IDMS Framework documents, sections within the annual Division of Revenue Act (DORA) and the Presidential Infrastructure Coordination Committee.</p> <p>Long term planning (e.g. 10 years) should be based on the population based planning and should take into account the demand/backlog; the expected number of 0-2 year olds (e.g. 30%); the estimated 3-4 year olds not having access to ECD services; the period available to eradicate the backlog; the anticipated number of children to be accommodated each year and the number of existing centres. Such calculations should provide the Municipality with a rough idea of the number of facilities to improve, extend, or build and what the total estimated cost per MTREF is, and over a period of 10 years.</p> <p>It is imperative to determine the preferred mix of improvements vs new builds. It needs to be noted that new builds are about 6x more expensive than improvements and serve less children. The optimal mix seems to be 70% improvements and 30% new builds until the existing centres have been assisted to meet the required norms and standards.</p> <p>Infrastructure planning should include: basic services (water, sanitation, electricity); improvements to existing ECD centres including extensions and affordable new builds; availing of municipal land and facilities for centre and non-centre based ECD services and maintenance.</p>
Funding	<p>Funding should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Municipal capital funding for ECD infrastructure b) The provincial educational departments ECD Conditional Infrastructure Grant for maintenance and new builds as well as the operational funding grant (per child subsidy) c) Existing municipal policies offering relief to the cause of ECD d) CSI/Donor funding
Streamlined registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ECD Registration Framework to be implemented for ECD centres and programmes b) Registration process to be followed for partial care registration

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	c) Childminders to be inspected and registered by the Municipality
Institutional arrangements	a) Indicate which municipal department will be leading the ECD programme b) Functions, roles and responsibilities of municipal departments and stakeholders c) Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC)
Developmental approach and administrative flexibility	It is imperative that a developmental approach be taken to overcome administrative obstacles in the roll out of the ECD programme. The ECD Registration Framework approved by the DSD and now DBE, makes provision for some flexibilities and conditional registration (gold, silver bronze) that allows a graduated progression towards full registration. Additional flexibility is required with regards to bylaws, zoning, land ownership issues, tenure, building plans to enable ECD centres to meet the regulations and to register
Monitoring and evaluation framework	Indicate how monitoring and evaluation will be done by the Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC). Each stakeholder to take responsibility for specific activities and reporting on verifiable indicators at each Municipal ECD Multi Stakeholder Committee
Reporting	Municipalities should report on an annual basis to District Municipalities (where applicable) and Province on provincial ECD indicators

Table 3: Key aspects of the Sector Plan

The purpose of preparing a multi-year programme and budget is to ensure improved integration of inter-departmental strategies and budgets and to facilitate better planning and co-ordination between all spheres of government. In this regard the multi-year programme and budget is expected to highlight certain implications for the municipal IDP and provincial departments.

b) Five-year Plan

The main purposes of the 5-year plan are as follows:

- i. To obtain political consensus on the adoption of a formal and practical method of prioritizing ECD projects and the sequencing of their implementation.
- ii. To ensure the effective allocation of limited financial resources to a large pool of potential development interventions.
- iii. To ensure improved integration of inter-departmental strategies and budgets and to facilitate better planning and co-ordination between all spheres of government.
- iv. To ensure that there is a definite ECD focus for the IDP.

A 5-year plan must be developed with the Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC) and should at least cover the following aspects which should be tracked and reported on an annual basis:

- ECD infrastructure plan and budget allocations (mix of improvements, new builds and utilisation of any under-utilised existing municipal buildings). This budget allocation would need to be on the basis of an agreed prioritisation framework.
- ECD budget allocations for other chosen ECD support interventions (e.g. grants in aid, ECD field surveys, skills development, and nutritional support).
- Timetable for implementation of other key non-financial deliverables arising from ECD Strategy including: ECD regulatory changes e.g. relating to bylaws, land use management; planning of ECD sites in new developments; Refer to example below

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Strategic objective	Activities	Indicator	Medium Term Targets (These are example targets)				
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Effective, programmatic ECD coordination, planning and budgeting:	Establishment of a Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee (MEMSC)	TOR for Municipal Multi-stakeholder ECD Committee (MEMSC)	1				
	Regular MEMSC meetings	No. of meetings	6	6	6	6	6
	Develop ECD strategy / 5-year sector plan collaboratively with sector departments & other stakeholders	No of ECD 5-year sector plan prepared	0	1	Annual review	Annual review	Annual review
	Develop population based ECD planning	No. of population based planning		1	Annual review	Annual Review	Annual Review
Improved ECD data, data management and data co-ordination	Gain access to National online ECD Registration Management Tool / Registration and Management System for all stakeholders for planning purpose	List of stakeholders with access No. of different type of ECD services	20 baseline	Update Update via registration	Update Update via registration	Update Update via registration	Update Update via registration
	Map all centre based and non-centre based services	Overall map (overall), per town or region and per ward	baseline	update	update	update	update
	Complete 100 ECD improvement/feasibility plans over 5 year period	No. of improvement plans for existing ECD Centres compiled	0	25	25	25	25
		No. of under-utilised municipal buildings re-purposed for use as ECD centres	0	5	5	5	5
		No. of feasibilities done for ECD new builds	0	6	6	6	6
	Planning 20 ECD sites in new townships	No. of Municipal stands planned for ECD		10	0	10	0
	Support 12 non centre based services	No. of Municipal properties availed for non-centre based		3	3	3	3

Table 4: Typical 5-year plan

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c) Implementation and integration

It is anticipated that during the course of the preparation of the ECDISP a number of cross-cutting issues will be identified that stakeholders may have to take up with their respective provincial departments. Possible cross-cutting issues may include:

- Land use management e.g. zoning, consent use in terms of the incremental registration of ECD centres
- Ring fencing of ECD funding through existing funding instruments e.g. MIG, USDG
- Concurrent delivery of ECD facilities (e.g. Provincial educational departments, private sector)
- Delivery of basic services (water, sanitation) in informal settlements and rural areas
- Capacity building and training of staff in the management of ECD programme on municipal level and required support from provincial departments
- Partnering with support NGOs and the private sector
- Improved information management and sharing of data with key stakeholders

Constructive collaboration will be key in addressing potential blockages. The municipality should indicate how these issues will be resolved e.g. that these issues will be addressed at the Municipal ECD Multi-Stakeholder Committee and that provincial decision makers will be invited to such a meeting.

The purpose of preparing a multi-year programme and budget is to ensure improved integration of inter-departmental strategies and budgets and to facilitate better planning and co-ordination between all spheres of government. In this regard the multi-year programme and budget is expected to highlight certain implications for the municipal IDP and provincial departments. The implications of the proposed projects and activities **for the municipal IDP** can be set out in a typical table as set out in the table below:

Project title / Activity	No of children	Time frame	Water Plan	Integrated Waste Management Plan (including sewerage, storm water, solid waste)	Local Economic Development	Integrated Transport Plan	Human Settlements Plan	Other
Upgrading of 3 informal ECD centres in XXX informal settlement	67	2020/21 - 2021/22	Standpipe for all 3 centres	Container ablutions for all three centres	None	None	None	Investigate functional tenure in Informal Settlements

Table 5: Implications of ECD projects and activities for the IDP

Project title / Activity	Local Municipality	Time frame	DBE	COGTA	DoH	Other
Food gardens for ECD centres	LM 1 & 3	2020/21 - 2021/22	None	EPWP to assist ECD centres with establishment and maintaining of food gardens	Training: preparation of nutritious meals	Dept. Agriculture to assist with garden tools, seeds and training
ECD skills development	All	2020/21 - 2021/23	Budget for training of ECD practitioners & nominate candidates	None	Training on Nutritional Guidelines	None

Table 6: Implications for ECD projects and activities for provincial departments

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d) Municipal budgeting and MTREFs

The Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) is annual, rolling three year-expenditure planning. It sets out the medium term expenditure priorities and hard budget constraints against which sector plans can be developed and refined.

A cash flow can be done once infrastructure improvement plans and planned new build centres have been costed. Such a spreadsheet should include the cash flow requirements (5-year time horizon) for all of the current projects and feed into the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) for the year ending 30 June.

4 CONCLUSION

There are 7 years left to meet the goal of ensuring that all young children have access to adequate ECD services by 2030. Municipalities are not yet geared to adequately support ECD service providers to incrementally meet norms and standards. A developmental and enabling regulatory environment; programmatic response that is proactive, well-coordinated, based on reliable data; population based planning; effective municipal level response plans (that optimise the use of limited resources); good communication; and active inter-sectoral collaboration are thus needed to upscale ECD services in low income and under resourced communities. Effective ECD infrastructure sector plans included in the IDP can ensure well integrated, more effective ECD service delivery through a variety of coordinated efforts which involves government, NGOs and the private sector.

