

4th National Early Childhood Intervention Conference (NECIC)

Sibu, Sarawak

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children

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Our Children – Our Asset and Our Future

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Introduction

- Birth to age 6 - extraordinary physical and intellectual development for the child
- Time of remarkable brain development, but also an extremely vulnerable time for young children; where a child has a four in ten chance of living in extreme poverty and 10.5 million children under age of 5 die from preventable diseases every year



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Introduction

- Development of the brain in the early years affects physical and mental health, learning, and behaviour throughout the life cycle.
- Early childhood care and education programs yield greater investment returns than any other level education.



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Introduction

- Well nurtured and cared for in their earliest years, children are more likely to survive, to grow in a healthy way, to have less disease and to develop thinking, language, emotional and social skills.
- Sound investments in ECCE offer outstanding returns – both in human and financial terms.



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School – the rite of passage

- Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees “the right to education...directed to the full development of the human personality and promot(ing) understanding, tolerance and friendship
- But, no more than 5% of children with disabilities complete even a primary education. Most of these children live in developing countries.



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School – the rite of passage

- UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Article 24 calls for States parties to “ensure an inclusive education system at all levels”
- The 1994 Salamanca Statement recognizes education a fundamental right of ALL children, including children with disabilities. It calls for education systems to be inclusive and designed to take into account the diversity of all children.



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School – the rite of passage

The Statement calls on governments to – among others:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems;
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise,



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School – the rite of passage

- develop demonstration projects and encourage exchanges with countries having experience with inclusive schools;
- establish decentralized and participatory mechanisms for planning, monitoring and evaluating educational provision for children and adults with special education needs;



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School – the rite of passage

- encourage and facilitate the participation of parents, communities and organizations of persons with disabilities in the planning and decision making processes concerning provision for special educational needs



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School – the rite of passage

- invest greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocational aspects of inclusive education;
- ensure that, in the context of a systemic change, teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, address the provision of special needs education in inclusive schools.



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UNICEF and ECCE

- UNICEF's contribution to the welfare of children will come through the development of strong partnerships with key actors responsible for ensuring that the rights of children are realized.
- UNICEF has supported the MOE Malaysia in improving the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children with special needs



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UNICEF and ECCE

- **Access to ECCE**, especially for children in lower income households, rural and geographically remote populations, indigenous communities and children with special needs;
- **Quality of ECCE**, including age appropriate curriculum, trained teachers, facilities for play, books and other educational materials, nutrition, and parental involvement;
- **Effective monitoring and evaluation**, coordination and standardization across different ECCE providers.



UNICEF and ECCE

- Mother tongue based bilingual education or MTBBE at the preschool level
- Children build up a strong conceptual picture of the world and academic concepts through a language they understand first, and later on transfer that to a second or third language



Strategic Partnership and Alliances

- The holistic nature of ECCE requires collaboration, consensus and partnership across all the different actors and sectors involved in different aspects of ECCE



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National ECCE Conference 2011

Conference Statement

- Ensuring equity by providing ECCE for every child in the country irrespective of his/ her origin, social and economic status, geographical location, religion or capability, in particular children in the remote interiors of Malaysia;



National ECCE Conference 2011

Conference Statement

- Enhancing mechanisms for early detection and intervention for children with special needs, including increasing the pool of specialists and equipping early childhood educators with knowledge and competence to assist these children;



In conclusion

- Children are our most precious resource.
- By investing in the early years, the whole of society will be enriched
- Our Children are our Asset and our Future. We should not let them down



