ENHANCING QUALITY IN ECCE ACROSS DIVERSE SETTINGS:

Innovations In Pedagogical Approaches and Human Resource Development

(Sub-theme 4)
OVERVIEW

- SDG Target 4.2 – ‘quality’ early childhood development, care and pre-primary education
  - Challenges & opportunities for this region related to Human Resources

- ‘Documentation of Innovative Pedagogical Approaches and Tools in ECCE in the Asia Pacific region’ project
  - Highlights & ‘Learnings’ relevant to Human Resource development

- Policy Implications
SDG Target 4.2

By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to ‘quality’ development, care and pre-primary education (36-59 months) so that they are ready for primary education.

Taken from ‘Principles for Framing the SDG’s’ (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2014):

The SDG’s should ‘Inspire active problem solving by all sectors of society’ …the post-2015 goals can promote active problem solving by government, the private sectors, and civil society’

So – what ‘problems’ do we need to solve in ECCE within this region in order to reach Target 4.2?
Research into quality over the past three decades has ‘overwhelmingly’ been conducted in ‘mainstream’ American and European early childhood education contexts (Fenech, 2011)

Major focus on: Settings & facilities; teacher qualifications; cognitive child outcomes
DIFFERENT, NOT LESS....
ECCE - ISSUES

Challenges

- Access
- ‘Quality’
- ‘Capacity’ – ECCD workforce / communities
- Rapidly changing world
- Funding

Opportunities

- ‘Intact’ communities
- **Potential** village, district and provincial level coordination links – possibilities for mobilising communities
- Holistic and flexible nature of ECCE
- **Commitment - innovations**

*Tried & tested approaches won’t do the job – haven’t done the job!?!*
‘Documentation of Innovative Pedagogical Approaches and Tools in ECCE in the Asia Pacific region’ project

Development of a set of cases that provides insights / source of inspiration (to ECD practitioners; policy makers) into innovative approaches, possibilities and inspirations unique to this region

Documentation of 9 selected cases

- Development of conceptual framework – definition of key terms documentation process
- Narrative reports on each ‘case’
- Video documentation
- EC practitioner resources

Process & product reviewed by group of regional experts
‘INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES’ – OUR CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

**PEDAGOGY - VALUES-BASED:**

‘Pedagogy is not just the “act of teaching” but instead is the act of teaching as informed by the ideas, values and beliefs which sustain and motivate it.’

**INNOVATION - GRASS-ROOTS / FOCUSED:**

An ‘innovative’ pedagogy in any particular context could possibly be defined, then, in terms of its effectiveness in challenging, or at least adapting, dominant approaches to produce experiences for participants that empower, equip and support within a particular set of everyday lived experiences.

**Micro (personal) level**
- Personal values / goals
- Knowledge & skill sets;
- 'local' practices & customs;
- children’s teachers’ / parents’ backgrounds

**Macro (policy) level**
- Values / goals;
- Curriculum;
- Regulatory mechanisms;
- Dominant ‘discourses’

**Meso (environment) level**
- Organisational values / goals;
- Resources / funding; colleagues’ / superiors’ perspectives

**Documentation of Innovative Pedagogies**
- Personal values / goals
- Knowledge & skill sets;
- 'local' practices & customs;
- children’s teachers’ / parents’ backgrounds
‘Especially for the most marginalised children’
FOUNDATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS: THAILAND

➤ Purpose
➤ Provide mother-tongue based ECCE in Pwo Karen communities to enhance primary school enrolment & completion rates

➤ Innovative approach/es
➤ Uses unique language and traditions as a basis for early learning – child-centred strategies through a focus on positive relationships between teachers and children; creation of appropriate learning materials

➤ Outcomes – Empowerment; Awareness; Engagement
➤ Increased attendance at primary school (children more motivated and confident)
➤ Positive sense of identity for children
➤ EC ‘Assistant teachers’ have received training in mother-tongue-based teaching and preparation of learning materials
➤ Transformed communities: Written version of an oral language produced: adult learners now motivated to learn how to read and write
➤ Local government has taken over operation of several mother-tongue-based ECED Centres
WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM THESE ‘INNOVATIONS’ IN TERMS OF ‘HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT’?

- Clear, relevant pedagogical objectives & processes mobilise commitment / motivation
  - Thailand - increased access to marginalised group of children through the use of mother-tongue-based learning approaches
  - Alignment between learning goals (curriculum) and focused training in implementation for ECD / ECE Facilitators increases confidence
    - 12 days? No time for generic skills training?
  - Clear, realistic learning goals enable ECD / ECE Facilitators to see the impact of their teaching on children – strong source of motivation
    - Enables them to develop relationships / more potential for child-friendly approaches

- Community / stakeholder involvement & support for ECD / ECE = strong source of motivation & confidence for ECD / ECE Facilitators
  - Parents; trainers; local govt / village leaders
‘HUMAN RESOURCES’ IN ECCE

The critical importance of *early relationships*

‘Children’s brain cell connections depend on the quality of human interactions……thus the quality of care ...............is one of the key determinants of the future wellbeing of children…’

*(Forum Sub-theme Concept Paper)*

Major focus on:
*Empowerment; community support & involvement; supportive networks* (community; local government);
*building confidence; creative solutions to resource constraints*

Innovative approaches draw on and support a range of ‘human resources’
*(from parents & extended family members to ‘teachers’, community elders, health care professionals, local government officials and community ‘artisans’)*
INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES CAN BE TRANSFORMATIVE!

a truly transformative agenda that is both universal and adaptable to the conditions of each country, and that places people and the planet at the centre. ...........

The Road to Dignity by 2030 (Secretary General’s Synthesis Report on SDG’s, Dec. 2014)
TAKING THESE INNOVATIONS ‘TO SCALE’?

What we found was important

- ‘Theory of change’
  - Clarity of goals, interventions / resources and desired outcomes, in order to achieve
  - Awareness & documentation of impact
POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR BUILDING HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

- Strengthen coordination between levels of government decision making (*linkage between state; district; local govt*)
  - Allow for bottom-up flow of information to ensure clarity of goals; effective use of existing human resources

- Capitalise on & support efforts / knowledge of local non-government organisations (*strengthen EC Networks*)
  - They work on the ground and have valuable insights

- **Targeted**, realistic, simple but effective monitoring- *what is the purpose of this programme? What will make it effective?*

- Invest in & strengthen *community-based, on-going professional development / support* for ECD teachers / facilitators (*training; education; awareness raising*)
  - Child-friendly; play-based approaches!
THE FUTURE STARTS NOW

SDG Goal 4.2

By 2030, ensure that **all** girls and boys have access to ‘quality’ development, care and pre-primary education (36-59 months) so that they are ready for primary education.

‘The central question before us is not whether strategic risk-taking and fresh thinking are important……The more compelling questions are – How can we make that happen? What will it take to reduce ….. barriers and provide incentives? How can we come together across multiple sectors to learn from both failure and success?’ (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, Harvard University, 2016)

*Inspiration....*
REFERENCES
